# Destination Branding and Constructing Symbolic Capital in the Reproduction of Heritage Space: the Case of UNESCO Designated Hanseatic Old Towns

ALEKSANDR  MICHELSON

TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration
Department of International Relations

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**Supervisor**:    Professor Katrin Paadam, PhD
                   Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia

**Opponents**:     Professor Gert-Jan Hospers, PhD
                   University of Twente and Radboud University Nijmegen,
                   The Netherlands

                   Professor Katri Kerem, PhD
                   Estonian Business School, Estonia

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Declaration:
*Hereby I declare that this doctoral thesis, my original investigation and achievement, submitted for the doctoral degree at Tallinn University of Technology has not been submitted for any academic degree.*

Aleksandr Michelson



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# Sihtkoha brändimine ja sümbolilise kapitali konstrueerimine pärandiruumi taastootmise protsessis UNESCO maailmapärandi nimistusse kuuluvate hansalinnade vanalinnade näitel

ALEKSANDR  MICHELSON

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# INTRODUCTION

In the ever more competitive and annually growing tourism market, destinations are increasingly adopting marketing and branding techniques to enhance the differentiation strategies they adopt to build on the uniqueness of their attributes and features. Destination branding is seen as a strategic tool to sustain and gain a competitive advantage in the global tourism market and concomitantly to contribute to the long-term economic sustainability of a destination. Given the destinations comprising heritage objects and landscapes, they share the potential of becoming economically advantageous due to the presence of these particular local assets that are strategically used in destination branding practices and made accessible through socioeconomic activities. As concerns, heritage is mobilised into the production of symbolic value, and therefore, construction of an appealing destination identity to attract tourists through affecting a destination image. Likewise, UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHSs), including the 981 properties in the World Heritage List (World Heritage List Statistics, n.d.), are utilised and re-presented by destinations to (re)produce symbolic value drawing on the acknowledgement of the uniqueness of the property of outstanding universal value and the quality attributes associated with the UNESCO brand. To understand the processes forming behind destination branding assumes, as claimed by Saarinen (2004) and Saraniemi and Kylänen (2011), complex understanding of structural and discursive processes.

Despite the insights from the growing literature on destination branding, there remains considerable scope for further study of (1) its interrelations with the process of construction of symbolic capital and as a premise for building economic capital, as well as (2) with the conceptualisation of the conduct of agents and their dispositions towards heritage and actions in heritage sites, and (3) its differentiated (re)production in multi-destination research. Furthermore, academic publications on destination branding comprise no binding framework that relates the two theoretical concepts (destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital) and the multiple interactions of agents who perform in the urban heritage space by drawing on and contributing to the (re)construction of symbolic capital indispensable for building competitive advantages of a destination. In general, the problem identified within the scope of the field, which the present research is about to tackle, is the lack of binding conceptualisations on the interrelations among destination branding, symbolic capital, and spatiality.

Starting on the basis of constructivism as the general philosophical position of the study, and the ontological position of the duality of agency and structure, as conceived by Bourdieu (1972/2002), and the social constructivist epistemology, the current study considers socioeconomic activities as the basis for (re)constructing the dimensions of destination branding, which incorporates meanings (re)constructed by agents through their professional and daily experiences, and also conceives of destination branding, tourism, and heritage

as social constructs that are mediated in discursive and complex interactive processes in destinations.

Presenting an *interdisciplinary* research that combines the disciplines and fields of destination branding, tourism and heritage studies, urban design, and urban sociology, and thus drawing on the multiple theoretical frameworks centring on destination branding, the construction of symbolic meanings and the production of the urban space, in association with an understanding of the activities held in and around heritage buildings in WHSs, the study discusses heritage space as it becomes valued, interpreted and (re)used within the duality of the processes of (re)constructing symbolic capital and destination branding. The present research scrutinises the concepts of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital as central with regard to destination branding, as part of the optimum spatial practices for generating and improving gains from exploiting symbolic value in various social practices through communicating a destination's unique identity, thus (re)creating a destination's image. Moreover, the study considers symbolic capital as consecrated in the material heritage as a resource recognised for its symbolic value and converted into economic value, and therefore, utilised in destination branding practices.

The *aim of this research* is to understand the reciprocal interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in the urban heritage space in the context of building the competiveness of a destination in the tourism market of heritage sites. The focus of the research is predominantly on the part of agency from the "supply side" of the (re)production of the tourism space, i.e., on the activities of local agents in the heritage space, incorporating both public and private sectors. The approach of the present study forms on the conceptualisation of competitiveness and the practice of increasing the economic well-being of the local people in the long term by achieving competitive advantage in the tourism industry by means of ensuring that the overall 'appeal' of a destination and the tourist experience offered is superior to that of alternative destinations open to potential tourists (Dwyer & Kim, 2003, p. 369, p. 375). As such, this approach aims to contribute to our understanding of potentially efficient and effective ways of mobilising heritage in the activities agents (business and cultural agents, residents as property owners and investors into heritage buildings and local authorities) conduct in different tourism contexts that would simultaneously contribute to gaining economic benefits on the level of a whole destination and improving the quality of the spatial practices of local people and tourists.

Informed by the need for further knowledge about the processes behind destination branding, which is inextricably interconnected with the value of heritage and socioeconomic activities, the current study focuses on exploring the terrain of WHS destinations by seeking answers to the following *questions*:

1. how is destination branding spatially informed in the heritage context?
2. how do agents from various interacting fields perceive and comprehend the resourcefulness of heritage space in terms of its value; and in what

ways does the perceptive and experiential acknowledgment of heritage value apply to the actions and construction of strategies of agents?

3. how do the spatially interrelated socioeconomic activities, conducted in various fields, continuously contribute into the (re)production of heritage space in its different dimensions and conceived meanings?

4. how do the agents' activities of a reproductive nature interconnect with the construction of the identity and image of a destination?

5. how do agents' ways of (re)constructing symbolic capital contribute to the (re)production of the heritage space in relation to building the competitiveness of a destination?

As the central theoretical focus of the current study is built on creating an understanding of the reciprocal processes forming upon the interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in the context of a medieval urban space with heritage value, then the present research essentially discusses its conceptual foundations by aiming to present an interdisciplinary approach (see Chapter 1). It is worth noting that UNESCO is incorporated into the present study as a phenomenon that serves as a criterion for the selection of urban spaces for investigation and connotes an outstanding value for both the researcher and the researched. Therefore, not the UNESCO brand itself but the material heritage of outstanding value (thus given UNESCO status because of the symbolic attributes of the property), laying the foundation for interrelated cultural and economic assets of a destination is what brings the issue into the focus of the present study. Based on the *interpretative qualitative methodological perspective*, the study applies method triangulation combining a preliminary textual analysis, observation using visual input, and in-depth interviews to generate research data to provide the analysis with a deeper insight into the phenomena under study and enhance the validity and reliability of the results of the qualitative study (see Chapter 2). Studying the social world in qualitative terms, interpretivism allows us to understand, describe and explain social phenomena in a number of different ways by analysing experiences of individuals and interactions in the making. As for the primary criterion of the selection of study sites, seven European towns were chosen from amongst the UNESCO World Heritage List. Followed by the criterion, which stated the presence of medieval architectural landscapes (not by single or groups of objects) of outstanding universal value in these towns, the third criterion stipulated the towns' tight connections with the history of the Hanseatic League[1]. Imposition of these criteria enabled contributing to research practice in the field of tourism where medieval architecture from the time of the Hanseatic League has been significantly under-represented.

As the present study applies, firstly, visual and observational methods (see section 3.1), and, secondly, interviews (see section 3.2), the analysis (see

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[1] The Hanseatic League (or the Hansa) and her kontors (trading posts) were an integral part of the medieval trade system and formed the principal agent of trade and cultural exchange in Northern Europe and the Baltic during the late medieval to early modern periods (Burkhardt, 2010, p. 60; Gaimster, 2005, p. 408).

Chapter 3) is designed to represent the logical methodological sequence where different analyses are combined in the final stages (see section 3.3). Section 3.1 aims to show how the spatially identified dimensions of the dual relationship between destination branding and constructing symbolic capital are informed by the medieval urban heritage as visually identifiable through various socioeconomic activities. Section 3.2 then moves on to elucidate how agents from various fields perceive and comprehend the discursive tourism space of heritage value within which they are acting and how the medieval heritage space is maintained and (re)produced as a liveable and attractive asset of a destination through contemporary ways of (re)using an urban space of heritage value. Section 3.3 proceeds to synthesise perspectives on the dual relationship of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital, by further conceptualising the analyses of the two focuses discussed in the previous sections (3.1 and 3.2), and thus enabling us to understand how this dual relationship is continuously (re)produced in the heritage space.

The current research closes with final conclusions from the main findings, presenting the highlights of the analysis and considerations related to the theoretical and methodological implications of the study (see Chapter 4). It also describes the practical potential of the research outcomes and implications in the field of tourism and heritage destinations, in particular. Finally, the need for further investigations and the directions in which they may proceed, as well an assessment of the limitations of the current study are presented.

**Contributions**

Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of business studies as related to interdisciplinary knowledge on destination branding, and more specifically, to the field of tourism in theoretical and practical terms. The contribution of the thesis lies in the following:

1. Providing knowledge on how *destination branding strategies* underpinned by the mobilisation of symbolic assets and values in the (re)construction of a destination identity could be enhanced to reinforce the competitive position of WHS destinations.
2. Identifying *built heritage and heritage space as economically significant resources* and providing knowledge on how they are interrelated with destination branding through socioeconomic activities of agents in the reproduction of the symbolic value of heritage space and its consequent conversion into economic capital.
3. Providing knowledge on ways of gaining more economic and experientially satisfactory *benefits for the local people* of a destination by empirically identifying the key practices and strategies of agents in the heritage space.
4. Further input into business studies by applying *sociocultural approach* to investigate destinations and destination branding practices seen as social constructs enabling a deep and ubiquitous insight into the

complex and discursive processes forming on the dual relationship between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital.

5. A thorough investigation of the "*supply side*" within the (re)production of the tourist urban space in tourism studies, which predominantly focuses on research from the tourist perspective, thereby shifting the focus of the research from tourists' perceptions and experiences towards locally conducted socioeconomic activities, conceiving of the *local people as agency of tourist heritage space*.

6. An *interdisciplinary* approach benefitting the research on destination branding combines the disciplines and fields of destination branding, tourism and heritage studies, urban design, and urban sociology to provide a more comprehensive and theoretically informed understanding of the potential of conceiving of *dual relationship between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital* in a tourism destination.

7. *An innovative methodological* approach, which by combining observational and visual research, applying various data collection and analytical techniques, creatively selecting units for analysis, and through the direct perceptions by the author, enabled constructing the specific spatial feature "view corridors" as a distinct spatial value and economic advantage distinguishing between destinations and applicable in future studies of multiple-destinations of similar category.

The consideration of the theoretical and practical aspects of the contributions of the present study should further enrich the understanding of processes associated with destination branding and yield more effective ways of achieving competitive advantage in the global tourism market.

**Overview of the approval of the research results**

**List of Publications**

Michelson, A. (2012). Destination Branding and Social Interaction in the Urban Heritage Space: Comparative Spatial Approach. In R. Amoêda, S. Lira, & C. Pinheiro (Eds.), *Heritage 2012 – Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development* (pp. 955–963). Barcelos, Portugal: Green Lines Institute.

Michelson, A. (2011). Marketing Medieval Heritage - Spatial Consumption. *Acta Universitatis Bohemiae Meridionales. The Scientific Journal for Economics, Management and Trade, 14*(2), 89–94.

Michelson, A. (2011). Pedestrian Networks, Cultural Built Heritage and Destination Marketing: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives. In G. Thomas, C. Fleaurant, T. Panagopoulos, E. Chevassus, A. Zaharim, & K. Sopian (Eds.), *Recent Researches in Energy, Environment and Landscape Architecture* (pp. 31–36). Angers, France: WSEAS Press.

Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2010). The Construction of Commodity-Signs upon Medieval Heritage Architecture: Spatial Approach. In S. Juan (Ed.), *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research* (pp. 91–94). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IACSIT Press.

Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2010). Residential cultural heritage: constructing symbolic capital in the urban space. In R. Amoêda, S. Lira, & C. Pinheiro (Eds.), *Heritage 2010. Heritage and Sustainable Development* (pp. 1041–1050). Évora, Portugal: Green Lines Institute for Sustainable Development.

**Conferences and PhD colloquia**

07.–10.11.2012 the presentation „Destination Branding and Constructing Symbolic Capital in World Heritage Sites" on the conference "21st Nordic Symposium in Tourism and Hospitality Research" in Umeå, Sweden (http://www.nordicsymposium2012.se/)

06.09–07.09.2012 the presentation "Destination branding and constructing symbolic capital in urban heritage space: theoretical and methodological perspectives" on the GLTRG (the RGS-IBG's (the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers) Geographies of Leisure and Tourism Research Group) PhD Colloquium 'Current Issues and (Im)possible Solutions: an interdisciplinary dialogue in tourism and leisure', the University of Surrey Tourism Research Centre (STRC) with the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management (SHTM), Guildford, UK

19.–22.06.2012 the presentation „Destination Branding and Social Interaction in the Urban Heritage Space: Comparative Spatial Approach" on the conference "Heritage 2012, 3rd International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development" in Porto, Portugal (http://heritage2012.greenlines-institute.org/H2012website/); chairing Session S50, Heritage and Governance for Sustainability - V

18.–20.04.2012 the presentation „World Heritage Sites and Constructing Symbolic Capital: Tourism Performance Management Issues" on the conference "TTRA Europe 2012 Conference" in Bilbao, Spain (http://www.ttraeurope2012.org/); TTRA Europe - the European Chapter of the Travel and Tourism Research Association

02.04–03.04.2012 the presentation "Destination Branding of World Heritage Sites: Spatial Approach" on the PhD Colloquium 'Innovative Approaches to Tourism Marketing and Management Research', University of Exeter Business School, Exeter, UK

17.–19.11.2011 the presentation „Pedestrian Networks, Cultural Built Heritage and Destination Marketing: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives" on the conference "4th IASME/WSEAS International Conference on Landscape Architecture" in Angers, France (http://www.wseas.us/conferences/2011/angers/la/)

06.10.2011 Guest lecturer, 'City branding and constructing symbolic capital in the heritage space', Gotland University, Sweden

07.–10.12.2010 the presentation „Marketing Medieval Heritage: Spatial Consumption" on the conference "Conference on International Trade, Education and Marketing (CITEM 2010)" in České Budějovice, Czech Republic (http://www.citem.info/home)

26.–28.11.2010 the presentation „The Construction of Commodity-Signs upon Medieval Heritage Architecture: Spatial Approach" on the conference "2010 International Conference on Business and Economics Research (ICBER 2010)" in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (http://www.icber.org/)

22.–26.06.2010 the presentation „Residential heritage: constructing symbolic capital in the multidimensional cultural urban space" on the conference "2nd International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable development HERITAGE 2010" in Évora, Portugal (http://heritage2010.greenlines-institute.org/)

22.–25.04.2010 the presentation „Sustainable Adaptation of a World Heritage Site to the International Tourism Market: the Perspectives from Economic Anthropology" on the 3rd international conference on Sustainable Tourism: Issues, Debates & Challenges in Anissaras-Hersonissos, Crete, Greece (http://www.sustainablecrete.com/)

09.–13.10.2009 the presentation „The Presence of the Past in Medieval Old Town of Tallinn: Involvement of Residence in the Public Space" on the conference „CIB WO 69 Housing Sociology 25th Conference "Residential Heritage and Modern Life Quality"" in Sofia, Bulgaria (http://opss-conference.blogspot.com/2009/10/residential-heritage-and-modern-life.html; http://cibworld.xs4all.nl/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=Commission&-loadframes)

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*The Middle Ages sells – it is a saleable commodity.*
*(Lilley, 2002, p. 18)*

# 1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Within the field of tourism, the current study seeks an understanding of the reciprocal processes forming upon the interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in the context of urban space with medieval heritage value. The research employs an interdisciplinary approach, where the theoretical frame integrates approaches from destination branding, tourism and heritage studies, urban design, and sociology, and urban sociology in particular, in regard to the production of space and the construction of symbolic capital. Special conceptual insights into the notion and phenomenon of destination branding are drawn from the interrelationships between the theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1972/2002), the production of space (Lefebvre, 1974/1996) and considerations of the production of symbolic value.

## 1.1 Destination branding as a key means of achieving a competitive advantage in postmodern destinations

Today cities, nations, and regions are widely acknowledged to exist in strong competition with each other for companies, business, tourists, residents, and most of all, talent (Dinnie, 2011; Kotler et al., 1999; Morgan et al., 2011, p. 3; Pasquinelli, 2010; Short, 2006, p. 111; Zenker et al., 2013) in a crowded global market with an experience economy in the post-Fordist era (Allingham, 2009). Consequently, tourism consumption acquires more flexible forms of post-Fordist, or in other words, postmodern patterns, and assumes the creation of more specialized, individual and niche markets, which are seemingly tailor-made to meet the changing needs of tourist demand (Shaw & Williams, 2004, pp. 114–115). Therefore, accentuating local specificity, destinations become highly exotic, local in character and traditional in order to become competent enough to enter the global market for tourism (Santos, 1999, p. 217). To become differentiated from other cities, the city is established as a brand and marketing techniques are adopted to brand and position it as a destination (Crouch, 2011; Hospers, 2011; Zenker et al., 2013). The city emphasizes its uniqueness (Parjanen et al., 2011, p. 122; Vanhove, 2011, p. 116) and accumulates symbolic capital (Steiner, 2010, p. 250) to establish a strong positive brand image (Qu et al., 2011). A strong brand has a positive 'reputation' that builds place competitiveness and creates a reservoir of goodwill (Morgan et al., 2011, p. 5). Thus, marketing the city is seen as an opportunity to raise its competitiveness, attract inward investment, and improve its image (Kolb, 2006, p. 2; Paddison, 1993) and the well-being of its population (Paddison, 1993), while the importance of intangible differentiators is increasing (Clifton, 2011). In the global tourism market, where the desire to travel, to just go someplace, is, as a deeply seeded human need for many people,

an important means of self-actualization (Lew, 2003, p. 381). Therefore, branding is employed by destinations in the field of tourism to become more competitive: to distinguish themselves from competitors and competing products (Vanhove, 2011, p. 116) through adjusting offerings to meet the needs of an ever increasingly demanding customer base (Martin et al., 2013, p. 689), effectively communicating urban signs and symbols, facilitating enjoyable experiences (Smith, 2007, p. 82) and building emotional destination attachment to affect tourist perceptions of destination satisfaction (Veasna et al., 2013).

## 1.1.1 Recent research on destination branding and the social construction of a destination

The marketing of tourism is seen as "applying the appropriate marketing concepts to planning a strategy to attract visitors to a destination, whether resort, city, region, or country" (Kolb, 2006, p. 2), where branding and packaging are viewed as one part of the promotion process within marketing (Kolb, 2006, p. 12). If the notion of place branding, first conceived by Kotler and Gertner (2002) and Hankinson (2004b, 2007, 2009), is a wider perspective that involves various interactions of the place (e.g., investment, exports, culture, sports etc.), then 'destination' implies a tourism perspective (Govers & Go, 2009; Morgan et al., 2011; Rothschild et al., 2012) in the broad sense of branding a country, a region, or a city (Govers & Go, 2009). Thus, branding, being a central element in the strategic positioning of tourism products and destinations (Vanhove, 2011, p. 182), involves promoting the unique benefits that the tourist will experience while visiting the city, rather than the city itself (Kolb, 2006, p. 18). Blain et al. (2005) define destination branding as follows:

> Destination branding is the set of marketing activities that (1) support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that readily *identifies* and *differentiates* a destination; that (2) consistently convey the expectation of a memorable travel *experience* that is uniquely associated with the destination; that (3) serve to *consolidate* and *reinforce* the *emotional connection* between the visitor and the destination; and that (4) reduce consumer *search costs* and *perceived risk*. Collectively, these activities serve to create a *destination image* that positively influences consumer *destination choice*. (p. 337)

This definition could be further enhanced by how Sartori et al. (2012, pp. 328–329) consider the complexity of destination branding, when they assert that "it is often difficult to define a brand message that effectively conveys the complex identity of a tourism destination" (p. 329). Therefore, destination branding is more than a deliberate strategy aiming to identify and differentiate a tourist destination from its competitors. The necessity of the *identification* and *enhancement* of the *most appealing assets and values* with the exclusion and marginalization of some resources that potentially create conflicts among destination stakeholders (Sartori et al., 2012, p. 329) could be regarded as

complimentary to the definition provided above, and therefore, to the meaning of the identification process that is perceived as an explication of the source of the product to consumers involving a generalization of the identity or of the desirable characteristics projected by the supplier's perspective (Qu et al., 2011, p. 466). Identification and enhancement of available resources construct the specific features of a destination. Depending on the type of resources, Andergassen et al. (2013, p. 95) identify the following classification of destinations: (1) *resource based destinations*, where the tourism product is based on local resources (either natural, cultural or artificial), with a very limited variety of differentiated goods; (2) *sophistication based destinations*, where local resources are very limited but the tourism product is based on a large variety of local goods and services; (3) *mixed based destinations*, where there is a balance between local resources and a certain degree of sophistication of the tourism product.

If it had been asserted that destination branding is a relatively new theoretical notion and its conceptualisation had been lacking (Balakrishnan, 2009, p. 611; Park & Petrick, 2006; Pike, 2004, pp. 74–75; Pike, 2008, p. 3; Qu et al., 2011), then nowadays there is a growing body of practice and research around place branding (Hanna & Rowley, 2011; Voase, 2012), as well destination marketing and management (Fyall et al., 2012).

Destination branding is often viewed in relation to city branding, albeit, in only a few studies (Allingham, 2009; Bickford-Smith, 2009; Brandt & de Mortanges, 2011; Cosma et al., 2009; Grodach, 2009; Merrilees et al., 2009; Okano & Samson, 2010; Paliaga et al., 2010; Shen, 2010), some of which have been conducted specifically on urban competition (Medić et al., 2010; Zhang & Zhao, 2009). Research on destination branding that centres round heritage and urban heritage in particular (Chang & Teo, 2009; Cocola Gant, 2011; Connell & Rugendyke, 2010; Geary, 2008; Michelson & Paadam, 2010; Ryan & Silvanto, 2009; Stern & Hall, 2010) has been enlightening in various respects, though on a limited scale in regard to the complexity of the interrelationships forming between destination branding and urban built heritage. Most works in this field tend to be confined to the analysis of single cases.

Moreover, there have been a range of papers that challenge heritage in the urban context from the viewpoint of place branding or marketing, and city branding or marketing (Agyei-Mensah, 2006; Chang, 1999; Giovanardi, 2011; Ismail & Mohd-Ali, 2011; Lorenzini et al., 2011; Rothschild et al., 2012). In these papers along with the research mentioned above, aspects approached and challenged in terms of the interconnectedness of the notions of destination branding, urban heritage, and tourism, are rather place-specific and do not conceptually involve the complex interrelations between agents, urban heritage (intrinsically connected to destination branding), and the spatiality of the activities of agents in particular.

As the present study focuses on medieval architectural heritage, it is necessary to point out that there are only a few studies dedicated to the medieval phenomenon of Hanseatic towns that centre around the investigation of events

or built heritage, and their combined symbolic effect on attracting tourists to destinations. Taalas (2006, p. 304), having investigated the organization of medieval-themed festivals in Visby, Sweden, and Turku, Finland, points to the symbolic value of a site of entertainment forming an integral part in the organization of a consumption event. Other researchers identify medieval architecture from the times of the Hanseatic League as a major contemporary tourism attraction applying to a whole country, as in the case of Estonia (Brüggemann, 2003; Jarvis & Kallas, 2008) similar to Art Nouveau heritage in the case of Riga, Latvia (Rozite & Klepers, 2012).

In some studies a destination has been conceptualised with greater emphasis on considerations of wider sociocultural contexts. Tourism (Urry & Larsen, 2011, p. 4), places (Jensen, 2007), tourist places (Young, 1999), tourism destinations (O'Hara, 2001; Ponting & McDonald, 2013), place attraction (Guttormsen & Fageraas, 2011, p. 442), tourist consumption (Ateljevic, 2000), contemporary tourism (Iwashita, 2003), place identity (Huigen & Meijering, 2006, p. 21), and images, that reproduce signs with a meaning, (Chronis, 2012; Galí Espelt & Donaire Benito, 2005; Gao et al., 2012; Kanemasu, 2013) have been conceived as socially constructed and negotiated phenomena. Furthermore, the destination is considered a result of an on-going, contingent and sociomaterial process (Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011, pp. 423–424) as it is shaped by multiple dynamic and interactive forces: global economics, local cultural-politics, and social-communal concerns (Chang, 1999, p. 101).

Recently, more holistic approaches to understanding the notions of destination and destination branding as complex social phenomena have been developed. Both the process behind branding campaigns (Ooi, 2004) and destinations and their development and change (Saarinen, 2004) are regarded as complex social and discursive phenomena that construct spaces: as Hultman and Hall (2012, p. 549) assert, places are constituted according to social relations and practices; therefore, place-making is conceptualised as a phenomenon involving social construction. Within the concept of the sociocultural construction of destination, Saraniemi and Kylänen (2011) argue that places and spaces are the result of social practices that make them processual structures of meanings and values, and the destination is a construction that takes distinct discursive forms and practices across various spatial and temporal contexts. The authors (2011, p. 138) conclude that destination marketing or branding is therefore not about managerial choices over "the right marketing techniques" but about understanding the markets in their symbolic, discursive, and process-related nature.

Therefore, through the conceptualisations of a destination from the sociocultural perspective, a destination can be seen as a sociocultural construction with its social and discursive processes of producing spaces underpinned by a social complexity and multiplicity—processes forming via a combination of materiality and social processes constitute destination branding in order to differentiate a destination in a global tourism market.

## 1.1.2 The competition drawn on the reciprocity between destination brand identity and destination brand image

In an attempt to differentiate themselves from competitors, cities design a consistent differentiation strategy (Balakrishnan, 2009, p. 621) and project their unique image (Bickford-Smith, 2009) as a component of destination brand associations along with cognitive and affective associations (Qu et al., 2011). Projecting a unique image refers to the poetics of destination branding that "is defined as the process of inventing and presenting a unique and attractive brand story to tourists and tourists-to-be about the destination, so as to influence their perceptions of the place in a positive direction" (Ooi, 2004, p. 109). The relationship between destination brand identity, projected by the sender through all the features and activities that differentiate the destination from other competing destinations, and brand image, built by tourists in their minds based on the brand identity projected by the destination marketers, builds on reciprocity (see Figure 1): brand image plays a significant role in building brand identity, but it is also a reflection of brand identity, and brand identity is established and enhanced on the basis of the consumer's brand image of the particular destination (Qu et al., 2011).
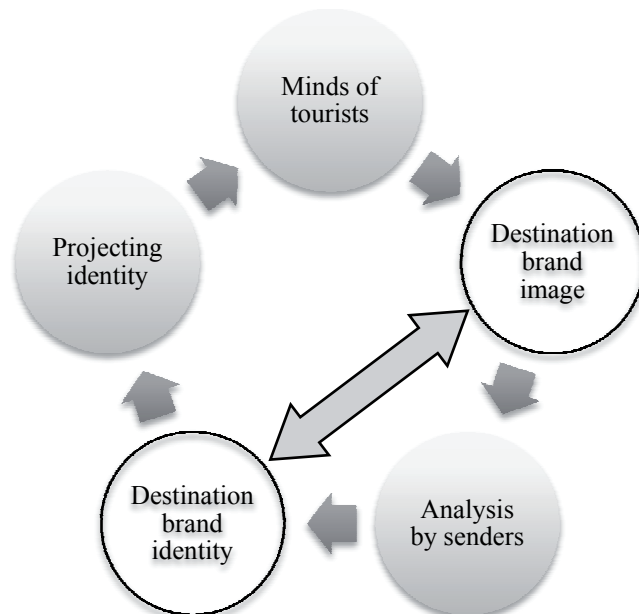


*Figure 1. The relationship between destination brand identity and destination brand image (by the author). Source: Qu et al., 2011; the author*

Destination image contributes to the formation of a destination brand and to its success on the international market in the case of a positive image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Tasci & Kozak, 2006), because destination personality along with the related notion of destination image (Hosany et al., 2006), where brand personality is more related to the affective components of brand image (Hosany et al., 2006, p. 641; Pereira et al., 2012), have positive effects on the tourist-destination relationship, which in turn affect tourist behaviour (Chen & Phou, 2013).

A tourist's destination choice is strongly influenced by functional congruence based on perceived functional, utilitarian or performance-related attributes (related to some destination's dimensions like the attractiveness of the destination's atmospherics including historic places, monuments, hotels, etc., or the attractiveness of the destination's advertising messages), but not by self-congruence based on attributes of destinations that are symbolic or express values (Ahn et al., 2013, pp. 719–720). Hence, in the context of strong competition, image and identity play an important role in differentiating between objectively similar alternatives among destinations (Baker & Cameron, 2008) through (re)constructing distinct attributes of functional congruence.

It has also been asserted that the success of destination branding is not based merely on the visitor's point of view of the brand value, but also on the crucial role played by the local people and entrepreneurs (García et al., 2012), firstly, creating the character of a place, its particular charm, together with historical buildings, services and events presenting a particular image (Kolb, 2006, p. 11), and, secondly, transforming a place into a destination through entrepreneurial marketing (Mattsson & Praesto, 2005). The local people also play a potentially crucial role as stakeholders whose constant revisiting and redefinition of the vision of a place forms a place brand (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013, p. 82). Then, because of the social constructivist notion of place identity, place identities are constructed and reconstructed by various agents in a changing social context (Huigen & Meijering, 2006, pp. 21–22).

Global competition, which the destinations are exposed to, is one of the dimensions for identifying the functions performed by the destination brands proposed by Ooi (2004) as four embedded and interrelated functions: (1) branding and influencing public perception (to shape public perceptions of the place), (2) branding and the selective packaging of the place-product (to package the place selectively and aesthetically), (3) branding and asserting place identity (to make the destination stand out in the global tourism market, so as to compete with other destinations), (4) branding and place experiences (to shape tourism experiences). These destination brand functions are of particular interest in the current research in order to understand how agents engage with such functions through experiences in socially constructed destinations.

Some destination branding models are based on either image or identity, thereby avoiding any considering of the reciprocal relationship between destination brand identity and brand image as previously discussed. These models have their own value due to their pertinent focus on various dimensions

associated with destination image or identity, which makes building more complex interrelations possible between the two notions. The two models presented here show how destination brand identity and image affect tourist experience and satisfaction.

Konecnik Ruzzier and de Chernatony (2013) propose a model of place brand identity within the supply side place branding. Their model, which has its roots in marketing, tourism and sociological theory, shows how identity is connected with the *production of an experiential promise*, and this presents the discovery of further complex relations between the central notions of the current research. According to their model, the interaction of the elements of the model (vision, mission, values, personality, benefits and distinguishing preferences), through the functional and emotional values of the place brand establishes an experiential promise that is delivered within the place identity (Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013, p. 50).

The second model, the theoretical model for destination branding by Veasna et al. (2013), implies that destination source credibility ("the believability that the destination management is willing and capable of delivering on its promises related to a specific destination", p. 512) and destination image could indeed affect tourist perceptions of destination *satisfaction* with regard to destination attachment ("a set of positive beliefs and emotional linkages of an individual to a particular tourism destination", p. 513).

The additional considerations of destination image and identity in the current subsection widen our understanding of the interrelations between the two notions, as shown in Figure 2, which further elaborates the model in Figure 1.

Compared to the model in Figure 1, stakeholders are shown with the senders in Figure 2 to differentiate destination marketing officers or other employees employed by destination marketing organizations from the large group of organizations and businesses affected by the actions undertaken within the destination branding process and to incorporate an important player in forming the destination brand. Moreover, the experiential promise as the primary phenomenon delivered within destination identity, as well as tourist satisfaction—the ultimate aim of destination branding and marketing—are integrated into the model.

To critically analyse branding dimensions, the three gap place branding model, elaborated by Govers and Go (2009), and imbued with the reciprocal relationship between brand identity and brand image, is used in the current study. Hardly present in research practice, their model is constructed on three discrepancies between the phenomena of place branding: product and identity, product and experience, and experience and image. The authors (2009, p. 245) identify the three gaps in place branding that undermine the competitive advantages of destinations: (1) unique identities are not transformed into product offerings that reflect this uniqueness, (2) product performance is often disappointing due to off brand implementation and performance in delivering place experience, (3) cultural differences, situational influences and biased word-of-mouth determine that different groups perceive place brands

differently. Within the current study the two first gaps are of particular interest to the analysis of the data with enriched opportunities for the interpretation of socioeconomic activities and the experiences of agents.
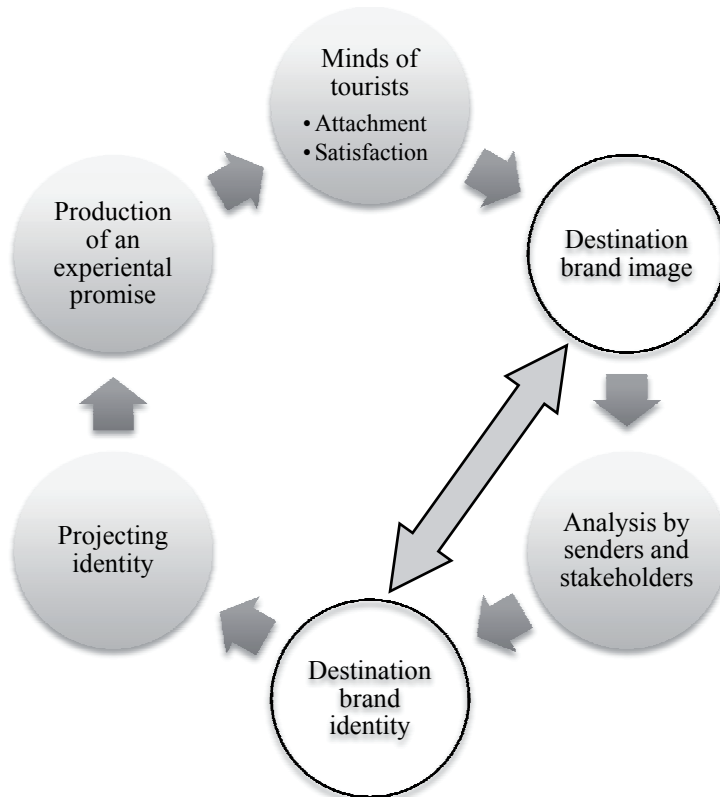


*Figure 2. The relationship between destination brand identity and destination brand image: enriched with additional approaches (by the author). Source: Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013; Qu et al., 2011; Veasna et al., 2013; the author*

As asserted above, local people and businesses are key agents determining the success of the destination in the global tourism market. They are simultaneously the clients and creators of cultural consumption at the destination, although the conceptualisation of their conduct and disposition is not deeply covered by approaches to place marketing or destination branding. This necessitates considering additional theoretical approaches across disciplines as suggested in the following sub-sections.

### 1.1.3 Production of space in the field of tourism: creating unique selling propositions

Destination branding practice is connected with the specific characteristics of a destination, its uniqueness, particularly concentrated in spatially manifested material heritage, which is then branded and promoted for potential tourists to construct a positive distinctive destination image. Thus, destination branding is intrinsically connected with the production of space, which is profoundly conceptualised in all its complexity by Lefebvre, whose importance must not be underestimated in urban studies (Gottdiener, 2000). His pioneering work "The production of space" (1974/1996), which still contributes to cutting-edge urban research (Kipfer et al., 2013), is drawn upon by a significant number of authors across disciplines covering urban studies.

Departing from the core statement that "([s]ocial) space is a (social) product" (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 26), Lefebvre develops a conceptual triad (1974/1996, p. 33, pp. 38–39) of discourses that shape the social space:

1. *Spatial practice*, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial settings characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice is related to the *perceived space* that falls between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure).
2. *Representations of space*, which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations. Representations of space correspond to the *conceived space* that is the dominant, the conceptualised space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers who identify how the space is lived and perceived.
3. *Representational spaces*, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces). Representational spaces refer to the *lived space*, the space that is directly lived through its associated images and symbols. The lived space is the dominantly and passively experienced space that overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects.

All three, interpenetrating one another and/or superimposing themselves upon one another (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 86): spatial practice (in the context of the present study, the physical environment of a destination comprising heritage buildings perceived through actions), representations of space (imaginary or the identity of a destination marketed by destination marketers based on the heritage value of the urban landscape) and representational spaces (signifying distinctive attributes of a destination comprising unique selling propositions used in representations of space, also as directly experienced space

by agents—regarded in the present study as the local people who conduct multitudinous socioeconomic activities—and tourists) contribute in different ways to the production of space (the space of the destination perceived as a pre-visit image and then experienced on site by tourists) according to their qualities and attributes (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 46). Thus, the space produced serves as a tool for thought and for action (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 26); for both as a practice and a product, architecture is performative in the sense that it involves on-going social practices through which space is continually shaped and inhabited (Lees, 2001, p. 51).

Competition in the global tourism market utilises representations of space produced upon monuments that, as Lefebvre (1974/1996, p. 222) argues, have a *horizon of meaning* defined as "a specific or indefinite multiplicity of meanings, a shifting hierarchy in which now one, now another meaning comes momentarily to the fore, by means of – and for the sake of – a particular action" (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 222). This horizon "dresses up" the buildings with signs embodying the monuments with symbols (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 223) because monumentality "always embodies and imposes a clearly intelligible message" (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 143). It is the intangible aspects, forming in the tangible world—the narratives—that make cultural heritage real to people (Swensen et al., 2013, p. 218). Intangible aspects, as embodied messages, take the form of unique attributes affecting the perceptions of tourists (representational space) and generating benefits through the tourism market.

Forming conceptual and methodological foundations on the basis of Lefebvre's trialectic model (1974/1996), O'Hara (2001) points out that perceptions reflect tourist engagement with the tourism space, and hence, these perceptions must be continually (re)created at the level of practice. If representations of space and spatial practices determine the coordinates within which social agents live their space (Mendieta, 2001, p. 206), perceptions could be forged, and therefore, regarded as the result of interactions between the space and people. The recreation of a tourism space emanates from the interaction between the social relations of production and reproduction (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 32). Consequently, with both the signifying material dimension (consisting of heritage landscapes in the context of the study) and the immaterial dimension (perceived images deriving from the heritage space), the tourism space is (re)produced through the spatial practice of tourists (because of the embodied nature of the tourist experience, as implied by Small et al., 2012, p. 949) mediated through representations of space as part of destination branding practice, which is a refining reaction to the perceived space of tourists, which embodies the destination image—all these relations of (re)production indicate the interpenetration and superimposition of dimensions of the social space.

The produced space, whose comprehension depends on specific local codes kept by the members of a particular society (Lefebvre, 1974/1996, p. 17, p. 31), could be analysed by investigating the perceptions of agents within a theory of practice conceived by Bourdieu (1972/2002) (or the theory of the mode of the

generation of practices, as Bourdieu alternatively suggests, 1972/2002, p. 72) which connects *structure and agency* in a dialectic relationship between culture, structure, and power (Hillier & Rooksby, 2002, p. 4). The agents that are continually grappling with the production and ordering of tourism spaces through the discursive practices of tourism practice as proposed by Jóhannesson and Huijbens (2010, p. 422), who draw their research upon the concepts of Lefebvre and Bourdieu, are of particular importance in the context of this study in order to understand how the distinctive tourism space of a destination is created. Discourses, seen as one set of mobilities that add to the continuous ordering of society, and thus tie in with tourism production systems, ultimately producing tourism destinations that emerge through diverse network practices (Jóhannesson & Huijbens, 2010, p. 420), could be interpreted as Lefebvre's triadic spatial model.

The ontological position of the duality of agency and structure, though not from the position of Bourdieu, has been conceived in tourism-based research by Richards (2002), who assumes that a duality exists between the structuring effect of attraction systems, and the reproduction and development of these systems through the practices of tourists (Richards, 2002, p. 1062). He exemplifies this duality of attraction systems whereby tourists *reproduce* and extend the attraction system through consumption (in that way developing these systems, particularly escaping from the confines of the attraction systems: challenging, extending, and ultimately reinforcing the systems themselves), which is in turn guided by the [narratives of the] system of attractions (Richards, 2002, pp. 1061–1062). All this informs the strong relationships between generating markers and must-see sights and tourist motivations and behaviour (Richards, 2002, p. 1062).

Considering the social structures of the economy, Bourdieu (2005, p. 5) highlights the "social rootedness of economic practices" and asserts that "the true object of a real economics of practices is nothing other [...] than the economy of the conditions of production and reproduction of the agents and institutions of economic, cultural and social production and reproduction" (p. 13). These agents and institutions with their *needs, preferences, propensities*, which are the most basic economic dispositions (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 8), are principally involved in the production and reproduction of the tourism [consumption] space, as conceived by Lefebvre (1974/1996).

Economic structures and dispositions of economic agents are conceived by Bourdieu (2005, p. 210) as social constructs, indissociable from the totality of social constructs constitutive of a social order. These structures have the tendency to reproduce themselves and this reproduction is immanent in the very structure of the *field* (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 196), which is regarded as a field of struggles where agents undertake actions, which depend on their position in the field of forces, more specifically, in the structure of the distribution of capital in all its species (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 199). More specifically,

> …a field may be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their

existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (*situs*) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.). (Bourdieu & Wasquant, 1992, p. 97)

The duality of structure and agency is typical for all kinds of agents involved in the (re)production of the tourism space that destinations possess. The actions of agents are engendered by *strategies* that depend on the particular configuration of powers that confers structure on the field (Bourdieu, 2005, pp. 199–201). On the part of the agents themselves, the strategies undertaken depend not only on the volume and structure of their capital at the moment under consideration, but on their evolution over time, more specifically, on their social trajectory and dispositions (*habitus*) (Bourdieu & Wasquant, 1992, p. 99)—systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structure (Bourdieu, 1972/2002, p. 72)—produced by structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (Bourdieu, 1972/2002, p. 72) and that engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions (Bourdieu, 1972/2002, p. 95). Bourdieu deploys the phrase 'structuring structure' to describe the ways in which the habitus shapes but is in turn shaped by social practice; therefore, the habitus is both the condition for the possibility of social practice and the site of its reproduction (Dovey, 2002. p. 268). Thus, the field of touristic production connecting local agents with different dispositions produces a variety of products—destinations—and this variety depends upon the site itself (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 9).

Among tourism-related studies, including those that scarcely use the concepts of Bourdieu (Santos, 2012; Su, 2010) or use them as a central basis (Andrews, 2009; Guttormsen & Fageraas, 2011; Voase, 2007), Andrews (2009), drawing on the notions of 'habitus' and 'field' to understand 'the tourist experience', shifts the understanding of experience from performance and representation to the moment of 'being-in-the world': tourism experiences are seen as among the more general processes of the rhythm of 'being' or 'living' in the world (Andrews, 2009, p. 18). Such 'being-in-the world' entails various sensuous tourism experiences with their fundamentally visual nature organized by the gaze (Urry, 2007, pp. 21–22). The centrality of process in tourism experiences denotes the spatiality as a process. A sense of the space, and as a result, the meaning (or, in this case, a sense of place, as in Wunderlich, 2008, p. 125), occurs through walking practices performed and manifested through collective or individual behaviour (Leach, 2002, p. 284) that, through Bourdieu, informs the interconnectedness between the representational space and spatial practice.

Departing from Lefebvre's conceptualisation of social space and Bourdieu's duality between structure and agency, it could be claimed that unique selling propositions in the field of tourism are being created through (1) the complex

social relations of production and reproduction that are spatially informed, (2) multiple dualities forming on the basis of the socioeconomic activities (re)produced by agents, and (3) through the interconnectedness between agency (agents that are connected with the (re)production of the tourism space of a destination) and structure (wider social context) mediated by the field of tourism.

## 1.2 Destination branding and heritage: producing and using a distinctive urban space with symbolic value

Heritage tourism is one of the most rapidly growing tourism niches, and interest in cultural tourism, especially at World Heritage Sites (WHSs), has been growing all over the world (Jordan & Jolliffe, 2013, p. 1). This makes cultural heritage a significant stimulus for destination choice across destinations (Ahn et al., 2013, p. 722) when the power of place and the sustaining lure of the unique fuel the tourism industry (Chang, 1999, p. 101). Therefore, destinations and attractions, the use of culture and heritage for tourism, and its consequences have become a major subject area in the research of tourism in the social sciences (Tribe & Xiao, 2011). Heritage has recently been identified as one among many important contemporary research issues in problem-oriented work appearing at the intersection of tourism and contemporary society (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). It is, however, notable that tourism-related urban and spatial issues remain theoretically and empirically relatively under-explored (Cohen & Cohen, 2012).

Marketing practice, and destination branding in particular, is targeted towards the identification of unique selling propositions to generate benefits for the economy and the local people, and such targeted activities could result in the extensive exploitation of heritage.

### 1.2.1 Heritage exploited by tourism in destination branding strategies

Heritage is attributed to a wide variety of material and immaterial dimensions. While Ashworth (1994, p. 16), for example, suggests that "the raw materials from which the heritage product is assembled are a wide and varied mixture of historical events, personalities, folk memories, mythologies, literary associations and surviving physical relics, together with the places, whether sites or towns, with which they are symbolically associated", then Orbaşli (2000, p. 45) puts a slightly greater emphasis on heritage encompassing historic buildings, their associated relics, the morphological pattern of streets and spaces, and historical associations. The present research is interested primarily in the spatial dimension of heritage that is used in the agents' conduct, their socioeconomic activities through relating to the materiality of architectural objects, buildings and streetscapes appearing as intertwined with their symbolic dimensions.

As a source and symbol of identity (Henderson, 2001, p. 234), heritage has become a resource for the tourism industry in historic towns (Orbaşli, 2000, p. 45), an important economic attraction (Edson, 2004; Marrocu & Paci, 2013), the main determinant of the individual character of places and one of the principal components of real differentiation (Ashworth, 1994, p. 19), and an asset in urban development (Hökerberg, 2013; Swensen, 2012) and city regeneration plans (Rátz et al., 2008) for improving the environment and quality of life for local inhabitants and visitors alike (Aitchison et al., 2000, p. 137). Investments in cultural heritage are often claimed to be beneficial for the local economy in terms of cultural consumption and economic and tourism development (Bowitz & Ibenholt, 2009; Daugbjerg & Fibiger, 2011) because, on the one hand, they develop the place-specific character of urban regions (Swensen, 2012, p. 387) and, on the other hand, pure marketing and promotion of those heritage assets with experiential deficiencies aimed at increasing visitor demand often do not generate the expected positive outcomes (Laing et al., 2014, p. 180, p. 190).

Heritage itself and the uses of heritage are social practices and are valued through various dimensions. Heritage has always been produced by people according to their contemporary concerns and experiences; therefore, heritage is a present-centred cultural practice and an instrument of cultural power because of its identifiable features established in the collective imagination (Edson, 2004, pp. 345–346; Harvey, 2001, p. 320, p. 336). It is a phenomenon through which the production of identity, power and authority throughout society is realised (Harvey, 2001), making heritage, with its symbolic, national, ideological, political and global meanings (Podnar, 2009), valued as a versatile medium of social, cultural and political recognition (Daugbjerg & Fibiger, 2011).

Experiences of the valuable architectural environment with its enormous socioeconomic values (Starr, 2010) is made available through tourism and heritage industries (Hannabuss, 1999) based on the symbiotic relationship between mass tourism and the widespread use of heritage imagery (Boniface & Fowler, 1993, p. xi). The relationship between heritage and tourism forms a continuum along which there are three principal focuses: coexistence, exploitation and imaginative reconstruction (Newby, 1994, p. 209). The relationship ceases to be one of coexistence and becomes exploitative when tourism begins to occupy a position of importance in the local economy (Newby, 1994, p. 212). Having become exploitative, heritage is regarded as a specific aspect of tourism supply, a commercial 'product', a purposefully created contemporary commodity to be marketed to an identified tourist demand—postmodern customers seeking leisure and tourism experiences—to satisfy contemporary consumption (Ashworth, 1988, p. 164; Ashworth, 1994, p. 16; Prentice, 1993, p. 49; Shaw & Williams, 2004, p. 121, p. 258) that all offer real economic possibilities to a wide range of cities, including historic towns (Ashworth, 1988, p. 174; Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p. 21).

Di Giovine (2009, pp. 25–26) suggests further that heritage is integral to a community's place-making strategy due to its monumental structure often fixed

in its spatiality. Due to the horizon of meaning (Lefebvre, 1974/1996) through the process of commodification (Ashworth, 1994, p. 16), the attached commercial value turns the past of historic towns into a present product (Orbaşli, 2000, p. 38) that represents particular heritage experiences that generate benefits tourists and others enjoy (Ashworth, 1994, p. 20; Prentice, 1993, p. 19). As a product of the present, the meaning of heritage transforms through the ages; therefore, identity associated with a heritage site could be regarded as a fluid construct that can be both anchored in the past and negotiated in the present (Hutson et al., 2013). This is how places are claimed to be created as "destinations" through the process of positioning, packaging and politicking in Bourdieusian terms, marking the specific field of heritage-scape production (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 43).

A *heritage-scape* is seen as a conceptual "place" populated by those people who temporarily and voluntarily interact with WHSs from a particular perspective (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 9). It is the result of the intersection between the *field of heritage production* and *the field of touristic production,* which are conceptualised as multi-layered, global social structures that social actors and heritage actants contest and negotiate to craft, make sense of and bring about encounters with specific heritage places (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 9; Ong, 2010, p. 245). Having its roots in the physical world, heritage-scape exists apart from it, primarily in the minds of people (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 101) because of the "aura" that provides the individual with an initial motivation to interact with such an object before a tangible interaction with the object itself (Di Giovine, 2009, pp. 27–28).

The importance of recognising historic cities and towns in their living reality is underlined in other works on destination branding. Orbaşli and Woodward (2009, p. 318), for example, emphasize that the historic towns along with their monuments and different historical buildings and landscapes, while retaining the physical character of past times, need to adapt to remain relevant to contemporary society, audiences and markets; a thought also highlighted in Nyseth and Sognnæs (2013) from the preservation perspective. By doing so, the physical realities of historic places support or lend credibility to the pay-offs and narratives in destination branding strategies (Hornskov, 2011, p. 108), becoming part of a development strategy for cultural tourism (Munsters, 1996) because they act as significant drivers of tourism development, particularly in the case of the presence of noteworthy heritage with its distinctive features (Lorenzini et al., 2011; Xie & Gu, 2011) supporting a sustainable city brand through on-going 'repair' maintenance and update (Trueman & Cornelius, 2008, p. 11).

Places, associated with buildings of significance, have powerful symbolic features that have a strong effect on destination image perception (Hunter & Suh, 2007). They are seen as arenas of action that are 'at once physical and historical, social and cultural' (Casey 2001, p. 683), and therefore, are intrinsically connected to the activities of the people inhabiting the space, as well as indicative of the intertwined and reciprocally evocative nature of the

construction of symbolic capital and the practice of destination branding. As Campelo et al. (2011, p. 6) put it, the destination brand is a channel to represent the cultural, social, and symbolic capital of places, and should reflect and comprise part of the place imagery, whereas as Boniface and Fowler (1993, p. xi) claim, the usage of heritage imagery is regarded as the commoditised cladding of symbols of antiquity.

Heritage cannot be positioned solely as an asset for the economic practices of exploitation (Harvey, 2001, p. 324). Being different from other sites and from each other, cultural heritage sites become very special places due to their aesthetic, historical, cultural, and social significance (Serageldin, 1999, p. 25). Within the consideration of place as a social construction (highlighted earlier in this text), place attains value and meaning for agents through the construction of personal perceptions of heritage (Bell, 2010, p. 187). Therefore, heritage is understood as a process, or a verb, related to human action and agency, and as an instrument of cultural power in whatever period one chooses to examine (Harvey, 2001, p. 327). As a form of cultural capital in terms of Bourdieu (1993), the past attains a value on account of its meanings for the present independent of economic processes, but which is redeemable as economic value through consumption (O'Brien, 1997, p. 175).

## 1.2.2 (Re)constructing symbolic capital and World Heritage Sites

World heritage is a unique aspect of contemporary globalisation and has developed and expanded tremendously over the past 50 years (Elliott, & Schmutz, 2012, p. 271). As the meanings of a heritage site rather than its objective attributes are essential for capturing visitor attitudes toward the site's designation (Poria et al., 2013, p. 273), WHSs are elevated to the 'status of global icon' (Shackley, 1998, p. 205), they have become stars among destinations (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 43), a brand, an endorsement with a widely accepted stamp of quality and authenticity (Ryan & Silvanto, 2009, pp. 292–293), priceless tourism resources (Vong & Ung, 2011), and "must-see" symbolic attractions in cultural tours and national tourist board marketing in representational forms (Fyall & Rakić, 2006). This signifies the World Heritage Convention as one of humankind's most successful examples of international cooperation (Pocock, 1997, p. 268).

Heritage architecture is inclined towards producing signs, reinforced in spatially identified social practices or socioeconomic activities, which in Lefebvre's terms become representational spaces with symbolic value (Lefebvre, 1974/1996). Further drawing on Bourdieu (1993) allows us to view the interplay between the signs and buildings of recognised aesthetic significance as constitutive of the symbolic capital attached to buildings (Michelson & Paadam, n.d.). This sign-object relationship produces the representations built upon the reception of signs used in destination branding (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). Thus, successful urban tourist sites are those

that present an ensemble of elements, symbolic and quotidian, touristic and local (Metro-Roland, 2011, p. 145).

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the notions of field and capital proposes that people acquire economic, social and cultural capital which they deploy in social arenas in order to compete for positions of distinction and status (Bourdieu & Wasquant, 1992, p. 119; Tapp & Warren, 2010, p. 200). *Symbolic capital* is added to these three fundamental species of capital because this is the form that one or another of these species takes when it is grasped through categories of perception and recognition (Bourdieu & Wasquant, 1992, p. 119). Bourdieu (2005, p. 195) contends that symbolic capital resides in the mastery of symbolic resources based on *knowledge* and *recognition*, whereas the source of the effects of symbolic capital is "material" forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1972/2002, p. 183). Therefore, the three basic species of capital and symbolic capital are associated not only with people but also with material objects that are acknowledged and recognised, as in the case of cultural products (Bourdieu, 1993) or architecture regarded as "objectivated cultural capital" by Leach (2002, p. 282). What is important is that the economic capital that cultural undertakings generally require cannot secure the specific profits produced by the field unless it is *reconverted* into symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 75); therefore, heritage as cultural capital becomes symbolic capital when narratives, images and monuments are used in the construction of an urban identity and for branding products, places and people (Guttormsen & Fageraas, 2011, pp. 449–450). Thus, the assets—tourism resources—should be converted into symbolic capital by destinations through representations of space to gain economic benefits. WHSs act as generators for the production of both cultural and symbolic capital in terms of Bourdieu's concept of capital, and they also contribute to economic forms of capital whereby the international recognition and the global status of these places activates processes of heritage that in various ways generate added value for the local communities (Guttormsen & Fageraas, 2011, p. 444, p. 450, p. 458). As Hillier and Rooksby (2002, p. 15) note, with regard to the study by Leach (2002), the cultural capital of architectural buildings lays dormant until its meanings are unlocked by the narratives of use in which they are inscribed or strategically activated (Hillier & Rooksby, 2002, p. 15).

Symbolic value, which is achieved through an excessive use of architectural symbolism, is also exploited in the case of the construction of new iconic buildings that constitutes a successful means for city branding and can be interpreted as materialised symbolic capital in the sense of Bourdieu (Steiner, 2010). It has also been asserted, in the Bourdieusian tradition, that the symbolic singularity of architectural landmarks offers an opportunity for creating a different identity to be achieved within the realm of desired individualised forms of consumption (Paadam et al., 2011). In that way, the political economy of urban development intertwines with the social construction of urban meaning and legitimacy (Kim, 2010, p. 13). As power follows from the ability to mobilise capital, and for Bourdieu, power is generated through manipulating

symbolic capital as well as economic capital (Aguilar & Sen, 2009, p. 433), the symbolic capital produces symbolic power that is exerted by socialising others into a certain representation of the environment people live in (Acuto, 2010, p. 273). Mastering symbolic power, identified by Acuto (2010, p. 273) as a means for pursuing distinction and voluntarily producing separations and social worlds that affect others' identities and freedom of action, refers to the *technology of symbolic power* (Acuto, 2010, p. 273), which in the context of the present study could be regarded as one of the means of destination branding.

As heritage-making processes are part of the field of cultural production as conceived by Bourdieu (1993) (Garcia-Fuentes, 2010), WHSs, being the result of the field of heritage production (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 9), are marketed as unique and valuable (Heldt Cassel & Pashkevich, 2013, pp. 7–8) because symbolic capital serves as "a 'credit' which, under certain conditions, and always in the long run, guarantees 'economic' profits" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 75). Therefore, the presence of noteworthy heritage—WHSs—are significant drivers of tourism development (Lorenzini et al., 2011). As Guttormsen and Fageraas (2011) claim, WHSs and landscapes are vital generators in the production of cultural capital that contributes to the making of other forms of capital (symbolic and economic capital).

The historic environment adds considerable value to the overall visitor experience (Orbaşli & Woodward, 2009, p. 330). Destinations with heritage landscape of outstanding universal value, in particular, often saliently titled as WHSs to pique the interest of potential tourists due compelling statements of the value of the site itself (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 58), are set in a competitive position, and therefore, in order to enable unique selling propositions, they are branded with certain labels and promoted around well-known symbols, such as the WHS logo (Boyd, 2008, p. 287).

The WHS brand, constitutive of the title WHS and its logo (Poria et al., 2011, p. 483), concomitantly emerges with the designation of the heritage property as a WHS (Ryan & Silvanto, 2011, p. 305) and is mobilised for marketing, promoting and branding places (Ismail & Mohd-Ali, 2011, p. 339; Marcotte & Bourdeau, 2012, p. 80; Ryan & Silvanto, 2011, p. 315). Moreover, in the case of WHSs, the brand is obvious for its outstanding value (Boyd & Timothy, 2006; Ryan & Silvanto, 2011), and compared to other attractions within the vicinity, WHSs deserve universal recognition as cultural and/or natural heritage (Boyd & Timothy, 2006) that potentially attract visitors (Buckley, 2004; Geronimi, 2006, p. 233; Jimura 2011; Su & Lin, 2014). Though some recent studies (Dewara, du Cros, & Li, 2012; Hardiman & Burgin, 2013; Poria et al., 2011; Poria et al., 2013) argue that tourists only possess a vague understanding of WHSs, and therefore, this may not be a major motivation for their visit. While it has been asserted that World Heritage status alone cannot represent a fundamental attraction for visitors, and neither can it solve socioeconomic problems at a destination, a WHS may nevertheless facilitate tourism innovation through developing new products and marketing strategies and institutional innovations concerning new forms of collaboration

and networks. Furthermore, it also helps to protect the historic fabric, while the general awareness of the WHS label substantially influences emotions and improves the level of satisfaction of visitors (Heldt Cassel & Pashkevich, 2013; Klimpke & Kammeier, 2006, pp. 156–157; Palau-Saumell et al., 2013, p. 373). Chang and Teo (2009) claim, however, that the architecturally unique buildings of heritage value rendering authenticity and the occupation of old structures tend to become per se emblems of a city's identity, and therefore, attract visitors. However, drawing on a Bourdieu-inspired interpretation, human conduct with an indication of the differentiated cultural capital or knowledgeability which endows individuals with a distinct capacity to recognise particular values (Paadam, 2003) also forms the basis for the diversified ways tourists relate to heritage. From the perspective of economic valuation, the knowledge and interpretation of the historical and cultural role of heritage largely concerns the value assigned to the maintenance of WHSs (Lourenço-Gomes et al., in press, p. 4). Despite allusions to the differentiated knowledgeability or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1972/2002) that would endow tourists with the capacity to recognise and value heritage, architecturally unique buildings, which represent heritage, tend, according to Chang and Teo (2009), to become emblems of city identity due to their authenticity and the occupation of old structures, and thereby attract visitors.

The exploitation of accumulated symbolic capital in destinations in which heritage is presented could be threatened by various forces. The extensive use of heritage landscapes could cause both positive and negative economic, sociocultural, physical and attitudinal changes around WHS inscription for local communities (Jimura, 2011), or conservation challenges in the urban WHS context (Pendlebury et al., 2009). A WHS could become threatened by the urban development of iconic modern architecture (Rodwell, 2008) or by its contemporary transformation into a site perceived by visitors as a spectacular theme park (Lewi, 2008). The latter could be seen as part of the process of the *musealisation* investigated in the urban heritage context by Nelle (2009), who identifies a set of museality patterns in tourist destinations: predominance of uses for tourists, predominance of visitors in public spaces, absence of signs of contemporary urban life (such as street signs, advertising and cars) and the presence of signs that enhance a historic image (such as buildings 'made to look historic' etc.). Nelle (2009, p. 152) claims that the labelling of historic towns as being museum like is used widely by marketing professionals to describe positive characteristics of outstanding quality in promotional tourism materials.

Despite the forces that influence destinations either positively or negatively and that result from a WHS inscription, and despite the museality incorporated into representations of the space of destinations to empower a positive image, acknowledged and recognised heritage landscapes in WHSs entail symbolic capital which is convertible into other species of capital and which is extensively used and (re)produced in marketing and branding techniques to reach tourists in the global postmodern tourism market.

### 1.2.3 Symbolic economy forming on interpretations, valuations and the adaptive reuse of heritage

A dynamic and coherent presentation of built heritage is a means for a product development strategy for cultural tourism and bringing history to life (Munsters, 1996). Using its socially constructed nature, the resources of heritage are then selected (Aitchison et al., 2000, p. 96; While & Short, 2011), interpreted (Ashworth, 1994, p. 17; Henderson, 2001, p. 234), incorporated into heritage narratives in destinations (While & Short, 2011), and then presented by means of a range of marketing techniques through various media to fulfil marketing strategies (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p. 142; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990, p. 67) meeting the contemporary needs. Undertaken to achieve effective destination marketing (Smith, 2007), selection is regarded as a simplification (Smith, 2007) or part of a rationalisation of place promotion (Gotham, 2007, p. 326) or, with the process of packaging, part of the interpretation (Ashworth, 1994, p. 17; Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p. 142). The result of interpretation, as one of the linking concepts between tourism and heritage (Nuryanti, 1996), is an assemblage of selected resources bound together through interpretation (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990, p. 67).

As being valued, and therefore, branded and promoted through marketing techniques, heritage generates benefits for users at the destination. In general, heritage is deployed for economic and cultural uses (Ashworth & Graham, 2006). With regard to the exploitation of heritage for economic purposes, Serageldin (1999, pp. 25–28) contends that heritage provides three sources of value that comprise its total economic value:

1. *Extractive (or consumptive) use value*. In historical living cities, there are direct uses of buildings for living, trading, and renting or selling spaces.
2. *Non-extractive use value* – derived from the services the site provides. There are two specific values among non-extractive use values:
   a. *Aesthetic value* requires a sensory experience separate from the material effect on the body or possessions.
   b. *Recreational value* is a result of different services which a site might provide. The extent of recreational benefits depends on the nature, quantity, and quality of these services. A historic area could have rest stops, vistas, and attractive meditation spots, in addition to shopping bazaars and, of course, monuments.
3. *Non-use value* tries to capture the enrichment derived from the continued existence of major parts of world heritage:
   a. *Existence value* – derived from the knowledge that the site exists, even if they never plan to visit it.
   b. *Option value* – obtained from maintaining the option of taking advantage of a site's use value at a later date, akin to an insurance policy.

c. *Quasi-option value* – derived from the possibility that even though a site appears unimportant now, information received later might lead us to re-evaluate it.

Symbolic capital thrives on all three values elaborated by Serageldin (1999), and on extractive use and existence values especially, and it is created when WHSs are valued through immediate spatial or mindful experience. As only people interact with heritage landscapes in their experience at the place through spatial practice, and also in their minds through the representations of space, which are effected and under the dominance of the UNESCO designation (Di Giovine, 2009), meaning is created and attached to heritage, and overall economic value is significantly increased.

Conserved heritage, producing various values for the local population and tourists, has become an important resource for the tourism industry. The visually observable historical edifices with their apparent visual appeal are aesthetically valued by destination visitors. Integrating the past and present, conserved monuments are valued as symbols of the past (O'Brien, 1997, p. 177). Aesthetic experience in urban landscapes, which might comprise the 'picturesque' within a narrow and winding medieval street pattern (Orbaşli, 2000, p. 47), is sought by and its attributes viewed through the tourist gaze (Urry, 1990, 2002), which could be manipulated and thus constructed by city branding (Hospers, 2011, p. 29). Aesthetic experience presents a direct response on the part of the perceiver to the thing being perceived, as in Beardsley (1958), and constitutes the look and feel of the city, regarded as a reflection of decisions about what should be visible due to aesthetic power (Zukin, 1995, p. 7). Connecting the aesthetic experience with the built heritage environment, O'Brien (1997) argues that functional parts of buildings becoming ornamental serve the interests of picturesque aesthetics through the conservation process that makes them accessible.

Cities try to guarantee that historical buildings are *adapted* and *reused* for modern functions, thus adaptation and adaptive reuse are targeted to keep old buildings part of the socioeconomic fabric of the city (Serageldin, 1999, p. 19), as well to sustain the identity of locals attached to the multidimensionally highly valued heritage landscape. As such, "while conserving the heritage values of the heritage buildings and giving the building a present viable use, the reuse of historic buildings can also enhance economic and social sustainability" (Yung & Chan, 2012, p. 360).

As a result of adaptive reuse, architectural objects conserved in a modern heritage context attain perceivable attributes as elucidated by O'Brien (1997). First, *the monumental past* explicated as the sole function of ruins transformed into valued and picturesque sites signifying its own past, e.g., fragments of a medieval town wall. Second, *the empty past* maintained in intact buildings, yet, self-referential as dispossessed of the past but also of modern functions, while serving the interests of offering a picturesque aesthetic, e.g., empty churches without religious functions. Third, *the simulated past* maintaining the historic fabric with the past functionality transformed into the ornamental—the

picturesque in converted buildings, e.g., medieval warehouses with modified modern functions. This typology of conserved architectural objects could be viewed as the result of the valuation of heritage by agents in their spatial practice mediated by representations of space, and this reflects the differentiated adaptive reuse confined within conservation regulations.

Targeting intentionally selected attractions in order to market the uniqueness of destinations by means of interpreting heritage, the city authorities try to foster valuable experiences in the whole heritage area through adaptive reuse to create distinctive urban heritage spaces that affect the level of visitor satisfaction and inputs into the (re)construction of symbolic capital highly valued and multidimensionally exploited in destination branding practice.

The exploitation of heritage impacts on the symbolic significance of historical sites, which generates benefits for a destination in the global tourism market. Historic towns are preserved and given new importance within the new cultural economy, whose central aspect is the mobilisation of cultural resources for economic revitalisation (Nyseth & Sognnæs, 2013, p. 69, p. 71), when, in materialistic terms, the uniqueness of fixed capital accumulated from the past in the form of monuments, art collections, performance spaces, and shopping streets is exploited (Zukin, 1995, p. 268). This accumulation of symbolic capital is underpinned by the development of the heritage process through history characterised in part by an increasing symbolic value becoming attached to actual physical remains as opposed to the actual heritage significance of the sites themselves (Harvey, 2001, p. 331). Thus, the material landscape itself has become the city's most important visual representation (Zukin, 1995, p. 16), and the preservation of architectural landmarks has become one of the "cultural" strategies of economic development for cities—strategies for the survival of the cities (Zukin, 1995, p. 271). In general, as summarised by Richards (2002, p. 1049) on MacCannell (1976), attractions are firmly placed in the (post)modern economy of signs, and the significance of attractions as markers of meaning and social consumption is far greater than their role as a site of activity.

The industries that cater to the cultural consumption of art, food, fashion, music and tourism, fuel the *symbolic economy* of postmodern cities whose specific visible ability is to produce both symbols and space (Zukin, 1995, p. 2), and whose viability depends on how culture is intertwined with capital and identity in the city's production systems (Zukin, 1995, p. 12) forming the basis for the symbolic economy. The production systems of the symbolic economy appear in terms of the *production of space*, with its synergy of capital investment and cultural meanings, and the *production of symbols*, which construct both a currency of commercial exchange and a language of social identity (Zukin, 1995, pp. 23–24), where the symbolic economy organizes the complexity of the city's character into simple but powerful, images (Zukin, 2008, p. xi). Reflecting on the study by Zukin (1995), Hetherington and Cronin (2008, p. 4) claim that the combination of the cultural symbols and myths of a place with both economic activity and urban governance constitute the symbolic economy. Because of the stronger symbiosis of image and product and more

dominant position of the symbolic economy in presenting cities (Zukin, 1995, p. 8), when the city is presented as a space accessible for worthwhile and enjoyable experiences (Hetherington, 2007, p. 645), the role of destination branding becomes more important in generating economic benefits from the symbolic economy, which forms on the linkages between the material and symbolic space. Consequently, the two notions, symbolic capital, (re)constructed upon heritage and reinforced through socioeconomic activities, and symbolic economy, appear intrinsically intertwined (see Figure 3). As Guttormsen and Fageraas (2011, p. 455) claim, a major asset in the production of the symbolic economy of WHSs is the branding of symbolic images, which by the same token advertise the identity of the place based on a culturally genuine historic authenticity.
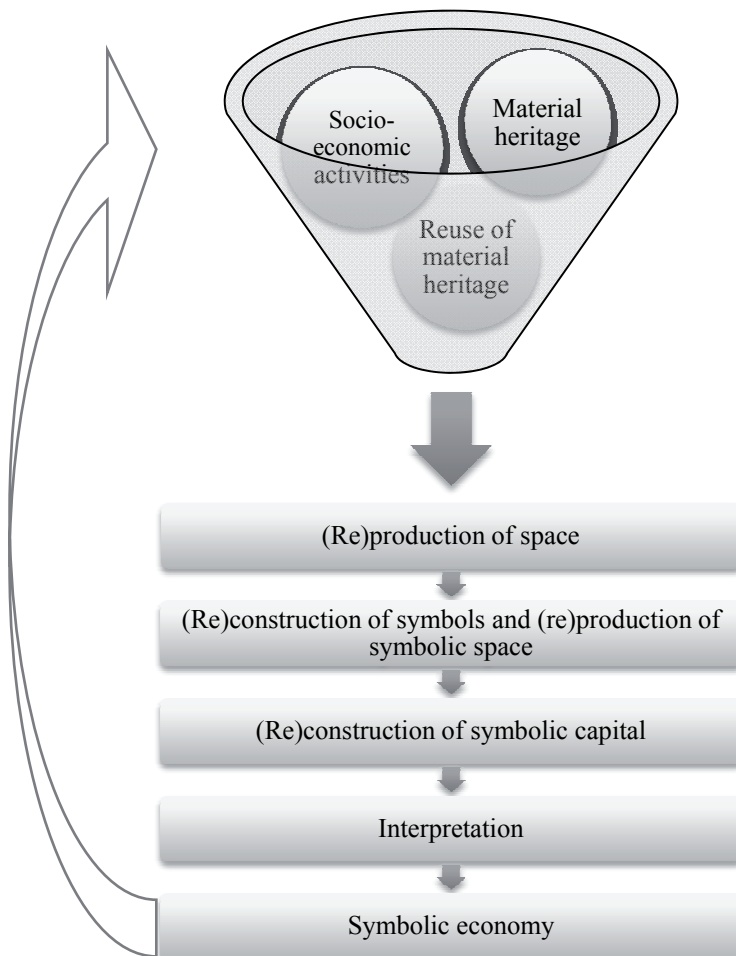


*Figure 3. The relationship between material heritage, symbolic capital and symbolic economy (by the author). Source: Bourdieu, 1993; Lefebvre, 1974/1996; Zukin, 1995; the author*

Preserving old buildings represents the scarce resource from the city's visible past (Zukin, 1995, p. 17) in the production systems of the material world of the city. Such a resource—or accumulated symbolic capital as in Bourdieu (1993)—has economic value in terms of tourist revenues and property values (Zukin, 1995, p. 17). Consequently, heritage, particularly WHSs, has been valorised as cultural capital and as a symbolic good within the symbolic economy in the postmodern society (Geronimi, 2006, p. 234). Hence, preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings form both social practices and strategies targeted towards constructing symbolic capital to improve the competitive position of the symbolic economy realised through the interpretation within destination branding practice. However, conservation, restoration and reuse could engender a negative development constituting a process of the musealisation of a historical site when these processes are accomplished with the additional use of the external space for the tourism industry, dismantling all signs of contemporary life and promoting a historic image (Nelle, 2009), even to serve the needs of the symbolic economy.

To maintain and foster the position of a destination in the global tourism market, a destination should meet requests for tailored experiences by responding to the most specific requirements of tourists and thus providing adequate products and services (Novelli et al., 2006, p. 1141). The target to upgrade the city's class position is realised in the case of an entrepreneurial strategy through a new economy and a new spatial organization (van den Berg, 2012, pp. 153–154) as the symbolic economy entails a spatial aspect, as highlighted by Zukin (1995). Moreover, as Petrow (2011, p. 7, p. 18) claims, open space design does not serve only everyday uses but also works at a symbolic level, generating symbolic capital, that provides strong images to successfully communicate the qualities of a city—images that are a product of the interplay between the built environment and its users, and that are used to contribute to a symbolic economy.

The interpretation and adaptive reuse of heritage for economic commodification and exploitation in the field of tourism and heritage (re)production are grounded in the material space conceptualised and constructed through representations of space and experienced through spatial practice. The materialistic dimension of the (re)production of space, being at the core of interactions between the symbolic significance of heritage, urban form, and the distinctive spirit of place (Khirfan, 2010, p. 315), manifests the spatial articulation of each city's spirit (Khirfan, 2010, p. 322) and, thus, demands a consideration of aspects of urban spatial design in a heritage landscape in particular.

## 1.3 Designing urban space for tourism purposes: unique 'real life' and the image of the city

To gain a competitive advantage in the global tourism market, destinations mobilise material and intangible attributes and features of urban space, thereby

(re)producing the distinctive character of a place. The nature and conceptualisations of socioeconomic activities are differently perceived in studies of urban design that delineate alternative and supplementary notions of experiencing and (re)producing urban heritage space.

The construction of symbolic value combined with spatial functionality is central in Gehl's conceptualisation of humanistic planning, which among other aspects emphasizes the availability of a view in the choice of a place (Gehl 2006, p. 259). Gehl's identification of various types of spaces according to use––spaces for walking as well as staying, standing, and sitting landscapes (primary sitting, secondary sitting), as well as multiple use (e.g., among others for seeing, hearing, talking)—is regarded as a differentiated series of supportive characteristics for public space design (Frick, 2007). As such this approach is useful for understanding the shaping of the attractiveness of heritage sites in the interplay of the symbolic value of spatially identifiable buildings and the ways that agents are made aware of them.

Gehl's (2006) emphasis on life between buildings, which via people and human activity is the greatest object of attention and interest in urban planning, as is urban attraction (Gehl, 2010, p. 25), is alternatively perceived by Orbaşli and Woodward (2009, p. 330) as the consideration of the desire to sense 'real life' in the strategies of town planners and tourism planners as well as cultural heritage managers. 'Real life' comprising everyday life and features, as well the presence of local people as markers of authenticity and elements in the attraction that cities exert for tourists is a means of differentiation among destinations (Maitland, 2010, p. 183; Rickly-Boyd & Metro-Roland, 2010; Smith, 2010, p. 81) in the global tourism market. The production of an inviting urban public space, as one of the quality dimensions of a lively city, forms on a self-reinforcing process (Gehl, 2010, p. 65) that epitomises the (re)production process of social space as in Lefebvre (1974/1996). Urban space morphology in general (Gospodini, 2001, p. 932; Orbaşli, 2000), and historic buildings, their associated relics, and historical associations in particularly (Orbaşli, 2000), have all become tourism resources for historic towns. Hence, not the architectural styles of buildings alone, but their social signification via the symbolic meaning constructed in the experience of space create a distinctive 'character' for each town.

Gehl (2006) advocates the importance of designing public spaces for people and social interaction (Francis et al., 2012, p. 402) that create *supportiveness* (regarded as spatial synergy, concerning the relationship between 'people and things' by Frick, 2007, p. 261), and constitute public culture as socially constructed on the micro-level by the many social encounters that make up the spaces in which we experience public life in cities (Zukin, 1995, p. 8). As McNeill (2011, p. 161) notes, the animation of street life and the creation of economic diversity, seen as strategies whose development was significantly influenced by Gehl, represent support for small shops and services, civic spaces oriented towards pedestrians and the reinvigoration of intra-block laneways enlivened by small bars and cafes. The *feeling of spatial quality*, which is

created by the design of space, affects the total impression (Gehl, 2006, p. 181), the well-being and behaviour of users and inhabitants (Matsuoka & Kaplan, 2008), and provokes positive interactions (Aelbrecht 2010). The feeling of spatial quality is an important factor in creating competitiveness and the reputation of places (Harmaakorpi et al., 2008) in the experience economy (Lorentzen & Hansen, 2009), and depends on the economy of space.

The importance of heritage in urban design has been underlined in some research papers that accentuate the importance of integrating urban heritage with contemporary needs both to attract people (Al Rabady, 2010; De Frantz, 2005, p. 59; Salah el-Dien Ouf, 2008, p. 414; Smith, 2010, p. 81) through "defrosting" or repurposing the use of buildings (Brumann, 2009, p. 285) and to contribute to the identity of the place through creating a distinctive urban landscape by means of the built heritage (Gospodini, 2004, p. 228). A good urban design concept in older city districts might be the creation of a *sense of place* as an imageable physical setting with a strong meaning, which creates an enjoyable overall urban experience (Salah Ouf, 2001, p. 73, p. 85).

Along with the conceptualisations of Gehl (2006), the concepts of Lynch (1960/1996) have been used in studies in various fields that are connected to the context of the present research. Pearce and Fagence (1996, p. 576) argue that Lynch's actual and potential contribution to tourism studies is both methodological (including the use of cognitive maps, ideograms, and user perspectives) and conceptual, including an emphasis on regional distinctiveness, human scale evaluation, the meaning of place and time, and the sensory qualities of well-designed environments. Having demonstrated the value of Lynch's approach for city marketing, Hospers (2010, p. 2073) claims that the concepts of Lynch (1960/1996) could be effectively used by city marketers due to the distinctiveness of forming urban space on its "imageability", which Lynch (1960/1996, p. 9) defines as "that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer". Therefore, if Gehl (2006) focuses on the identification of the [attractive] qualities of urban space in terms of urban planning, then Lynch (1960/1996) connects them directly with imageability, which could be regarded as part of the marketing field. Lynch (1960/1996, p. 11) assumes that image development, as a two-way process between the observer and observed, could be strengthened either through symbolic devices, retraining the perceiver, or reshaping one's surroundings. Hence, imageability builds upon the dual relationship between urban space attributes (as part of urban design practices) and strategic marketing decisions and practices.

The individuality and *distinctive image of the urban environment* is created through the variable combination of elements (Pearce, & Fagence, 1996, p. 581) that are interdependent and interacting (Zmudzinska-Nowak, 2003, p. 21), and are identified by Lynch (1960/1996) as the five common visual elements constituting people's image of a city which are the initial organizational units of space: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. By contrast, at the place, from the perspective of users, it is not the hard landscape but the microclimate

(planting and sunlight) and accessibility that are most treasured by the users of urban open spaces (Lo et al., 2003, p. 604).

The design of urban space is a crucial element in creating a distinctive urban space to be branded and marketed for the construction of a positive destination image. Contemporary place branding requires the use of (1) hardware, in the form of servicescapes and designscapes that are developed through architecture, design, and heritage, and (2) software, in the form of branding, marketing, and promotion (Hall, 2008, p. 233). By doing so, destination branding, heritage and design, as well socioeconomic activities become intrinsically interconnected. In terms of urban design in heritage sites, the driving forces for creating distinctiveness could be identified as adapting the built [heritage] environment to contemporary needs, including meeting the demand for pedestrianization, and, most significant, supporting a unique 'real life'—social interaction within the local urban built space—that, due to the unique variable combination of elements of material space, creates a unique sense of place, which substantially underpins the symbolic economy through destination branding in the fields of heritage and tourism production.

Adaptive reuse of heritage, design that creates a distinctive character in the field of tourism production, and especially 'real life', all heavily depend on the socioeconomic practices of agents.

## 1.4 Constitutive role of agents within the production of symbolic urban heritage space

Though tourism could affect complex changes in the physical, economic and social structures of destinations (Incirlioğlu & Çulcuoglu, 2004), its primary essence is the development and delivery of travel and visitation experiences (Ritchie et al., 2011, p. 434). The consumption and construction of places are simultaneous processes in which both tourists and locals play an active role (Rakić & Chambers, 2012). Therefore, the consumption and construction of places reveal the dual simultaneous consumer-defined and producer-defined nature of heritage as a product (Prentice, 1993, p. 222). Consequently, cities should create an appeal that is inspiring for all stakeholders: tourists, businesses, and citizens (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007). Tourists, influenced by the experiencescape (Mossberg, 2007), have become an active group of co-producers shaping the production and representation of tourism landscapes (Lugosi & Walls, 2013, p. 53; Su, 2010, p. 412). Thus tourism consumption becomes embedded in local social and economic relations and plays an important role in shaping the representation and production of heritage landscapes (Su, 2010, p. 431).

The importance of the local people in the development of the tourism industry and the destination is highlighted in several studies. Komppula (2014, p. 361) argues that municipalities have a crucial role as facilitators of the entrepreneurial environment, but the successful development of a destination significantly depends on innovative, committed, and risk-taking entrepreneurs.

With regard to sustainable tourism development, it is asserted that this process could be enhanced by WHS status if the main goals and strategies of the WHS are clearly understood and prioritized in the local community and link to other development opportunities (Kaltenborn et al., 2013, p. 99). Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000, p. 21) claim that the most numerically important local economic heritage producers are not the monuments and museums but the traders in heritage goods and services, who, as O'Brien (1997, p. 175) assumes, offer the signs of the past as a benefit—a commodity within the total product package. Concomitantly, the presence of heritage at the destination produces added value for products and local service providers, and generates higher revenue and a higher profile nationally for the destinations (Cochrane & Tapper, 2006, p. 99).

The production of a place-specific meaning upon heritage landscapes in the social context is part of the symbolic economy and of the on-going process of destination development, and the role of local people is integral to this production. Destination development is seen as an integrative, multilevel phenomenon, as it addresses the development of strategies spanning individual actor boundaries, which constitute the complexity of the issues impacting the ability of destinations to develop strategies that generate value for individual actors and the destination itself as a *co-producing network* (Haugland et al., 2011, p. 282). This co-production denotes interaction and dialogue between local tourism stakeholders (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013, p. 69) who create different "versions" of the tourist destination (thus affecting the interpretation of heritage as Ruggles, 2012, p. 6, claims) through a multiplicity of discursive, performative and sociomaterial practices at the tourist destination (Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011, p. 416) defining regional identities as specific meanings (including feelings and images) (Simon, 2006, p. 31). The co-production of the destination depends on the collaboration between policymakers, who should envisage schemes of incentives that encourage activities that exploit the place's assets in order to accrue economic outcomes, and tourism business managers, who are expected to interact with local policymakers to ensure that the territory is adequately endowed with public services and public cultural facilities (Marrocu & Paci, 2013, p. 82).

Heritage is an integral part in the social practices of actors affecting a destination economy of heritage sites. Hardiman and Burgin (2013, p. 75) suppose that we need to pay attention to local actors and actions to complement our knowledge of the cultural economy and its role in heritage preservation because, as Orbaşli (2000, p. 43) asserts, they are the major agents who rehabilitate and reuse redundant buildings, providing continuity through active use. Reuse of the heritage buildings in historic towns creates the potential for *dynamism* that makes urban areas attractive sites for tourism (Metro-Roland, 2011, p. 145), and sometimes for higher tourism expenditures (Winson-Geideman, 2007). The dual nature of dynamism is revealed in the tourist prosaic, constituted by the everyday sites of tourist practice and everyday sites of urban life (Metro-Roland, 2011, p. 139) that create the quality of the

placeness of a destination due to the balance between the local culture and local life, the historic and the contemporary (Metro-Roland, 2011, p. 142).

Individual actor boundaries are shaped by habitus and dispositions (in Bourdieusian terms) that are structured by the forces of a field (see section 1.1.3) that effect the positive outcomes for a destination and agents alike through collaboration and co-production. Co-production of meaning in the destination economy is connected with the local social context where entrepreneurship or business practices become interconnected with a destination's interests. Clifton (2011, p. 1990) claims that place branding and product branding strategies are co-evolving; that is, shaping and influencing each other between private and public sectors, physical products, tourism and inward investment initiatives. Regional identities are treated as commodities if they are used by different actors in the selling of products suitable for consumption, and therefore, are regarded as a means for adding value to products (Simon, 2006, p. 32). Applying promotional techniques, actors contribute to the production and reproduction of regional identities (Simon, 2006, p. 35) that could result in creating the reputation of a city for producing products from the local economy—'city-of-origin effect' (Hospers, 2011, p. 31).

However, to further elucidate the nature of the role of the local people in (re)producing the tourism space of a destination, it is necessary to consider the notions of the power structure and the struggles of agents in the fields of heritage and touristic (re)production; for example, exemplified in the case of the profound impact on tourist movements pertaining to hotel location (Shoval et al., 2011, p. 1594). The field of agents in the experience economy is dynamic, and the networks are often temporary, and therefore, commercial experience projects evolve and merge, making the place interesting and attractive (Lorentzen, 2009, pp. 843–844). This evolution and merging is underpinned by two key features of entrepreneurship: the ability to innovate and to take (or manage) risk (Shaw & Williams, 2004, p. 89), and by relationally and communally constituted entrepreneurial opportunity discovery (Fletcher, 2006). In addition, socioeconomic activities depend on the perpetual *transformation of tangible and intangible forms of capital* according to certain 'laws of conversion', as well on the capitalising of social capital (Haase Svendsen et al., 2010, p. 631).

Drawing on Bourdieu's work, De Clercq and Voronov (2009, p. 395) envision entrepreneurship as a profoundly socially embedded process connected to the positions of entrepreneurs within structures of power relations, where, as Karataş-Özkan (2011, p. 883) notes, three forms of capital (i.e., economic, cultural and social) become socially effective as resources and their ownership legitimised through the mediation of symbolic capital as a capital of establishing legitimacy and credibility as an entrepreneur, entrepreneurial team or new venture. Symbolic capital being an acknowledged concept in studies of entrepreneurship (as in Karataş-Özkan, 2011 and De Clercq and Voronov, 2009 above) and in studies of heritage (see section 1.2.2), however, requires further

investigation to understand how symbolic capital forms on the dynamic dual relationship between entrepreneurship (and agents in general) and heritage to contribute to the power of a destination.

Among the local people, in addition to entrepreneurs and business agents, *residents* play a critical role in the development and management of tourism generally (Garrod et al., 2012) and in forming a tourism destination brand (Choo et al., 2011). Their skills, talents and entrepreneurial drive contribute to the growth and prosperity of the city and region (Insch, 2011, p. 8). As the residents' perception of tourism impacts their satisfaction with life domains (Kim et al., 2013), the emotional and functional attachment of residents to their hometown is enhanced through their involvement in heritage tourism (Su & Wall, 2010), which could ensure the success of supporting strategies aimed at creating a destination image (do Valle et al., 2012).

Building and maintaining synergy between the government, the private sector and the people is essential for sustainability in the heritage tourism industry (Ismail & Mohd-Ali, 2011, p. 339). The government, the private sector and the residents constitute the range of agents who significantly determine how effectively symbolic representations of urban space are used to construct symbolic capital and, by doing so, to develop a distinctive destination brand identity.

## 1.5 Conceptual approach of the present study

The theoretical considerations reveal the social nature of the central concepts of the study. Destinations, destination branding, heritage, the (re)construction of symbolic capital, and the symbolic economy are considered here as social constructs, which explain the processes in the fields of tourism and heritage production, whose immediate products of unique local character—symbolic heritage spaces and a multiplicity of socioeconomic activities—are integrated within destination branding and the symbolic economy of destinations.

As elucidated in the present chapter, to obtain competitive advantage in the symbolic economy of destinations, postmodern destinations exploit the symbolic capital that is continually (re)constructed in the dual interrelationship between multitudinous socioeconomic activities and built heritage. The (re)production of unique heritage space appears as the process forming on the basis of multiple and interactive forces constitutive of a destination. Hence, heritage buildings endowed with unique symbolic value induce the (re)construction of symbolic capital, which is considered as a resource for destination branding and which enables the (re)production of a destination brand identity on the basis of interpreting and selecting the unique spatial attributes of a heritage landscape. Figure 4 presents the logical consequence of the relationship between the theoretical notions reviewed in the first chapter.

Material heritage in Figure 4 forms as a social phenomenon, which other concepts centre around. As Silva and Santos (2012, pp. 438–439) highlight, the understanding of heritage as a cultural practice necessitates viewing the social

agents and dynamics that constitute the heritage process as central in any reflection upon it because the making of heritage involves differentially located agency. The duality of structure and agency, and the agents themselves, whose socioeconomic practices ascribe social and cultural meaning to the urban heritage space that conveys a plethora of symbols in a destination heritage-based symbolic economy, permeate every part of the process depicted in Figure 4.
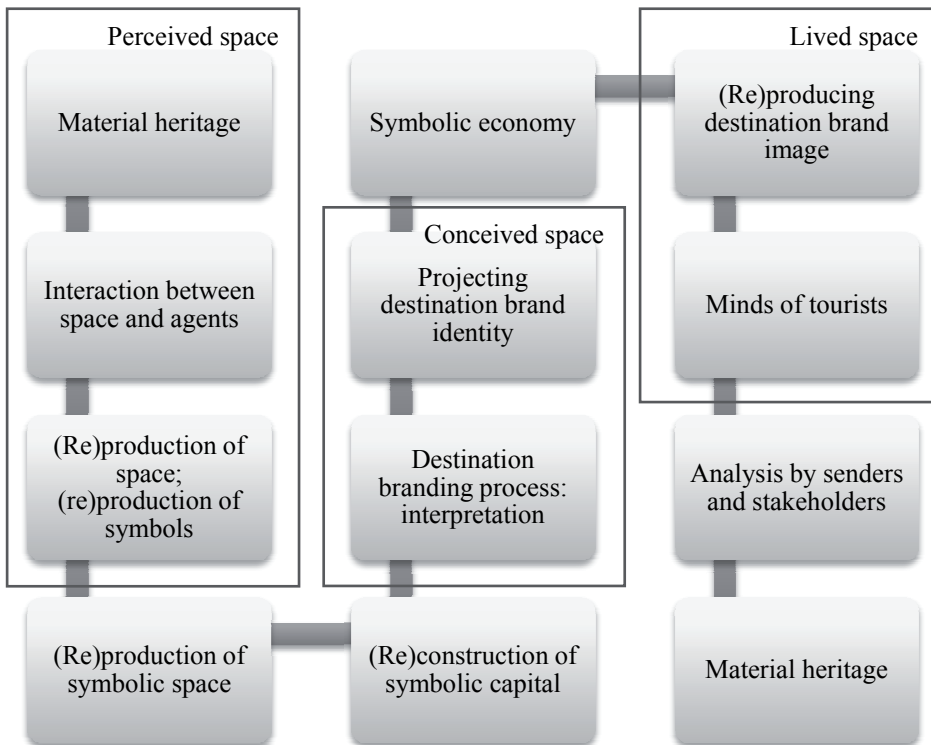


*Figure 4. The logical consequence of the relationship between the main concepts of the study (by the author)*

Despite insights from the growing literature on destination branding, however, there remain considerable areas for further study of (1) its interrelations with the construction of symbolic capital, as well as (2) with the conceptualisation of the conduct and disposition of agents, and (3) its differentiated (re)production in multi-destination settings. Furthermore, there is no binding framework that relates the two theoretical concepts (destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital) and the multiple interactions of agents who perform in the urban heritage space (of medieval character in particular) and contribute to the (re)construction of symbolic capital. Therefore, the assumptions behind the *research problems* build on the assertion that there

is a need for a coherent approach (1) towards understanding the inter-linkages forming among (a) the agents, involved in the fields of tourism and heritage production, (b) how heritage is used, (c) the production of symbolic space, and (d) destination branding, as well as (2) towards the advancement of a research approach employing multiple destinations in a comparative perspective. This study attempts to elucidate the differentiated multiple realities held by agents constituting the process of the (re)construction of symbolic capital and the subtle nature of the multi-layered dualities between destination branding and the (re)construction of symbolic capital in the urban medieval heritage space.

Drawing on multiple theoretical frameworks centring on destination branding, urban space and the production of symbolic meaning, in association with activities held in and around heritage buildings within WHSs, the study discusses heritage space as it becomes valued, interpreted and (re)used within the process of (re)constructing symbolic capital along the process of destination branding intended to communicate a destination's unique identity.

The necessity of the present study is generally enlightened by the constant development of the tourism industry and continuous competition between destinations. According to the World Tourism Organization (2013), international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) grew by 4% in 2012 surpassing 1 billion tourists globally for the first time in history. The latest Economic Impact Research by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) shows that world Travel & Tourism continues to grow in spite of continuing economic challenges (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2012). The growth of international arrivals worldwide is expected to continue in 2013 at a similar or slightly slower pace with average growth of 3.8% per year between 2010 and 2020 (World Tourism Organization, 2013). A similar projection has been made by the WTTC: annual growth forecast shall be 4% per annum over the ten years to 2022 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2012).

In Europe, the number of tourists in Central and Eastern Europe has increased more rapidly than in Western Europe for 2012 and 2011 (for 2012, 8.0% and 3.0% respectively); over all, the number of international tourists increased by 3.3% in 2012 in Europe (World Tourism Organization, 2013). The European Travel Commission (2013) summarises that European travel performance exceeded expectations throughout much of 2012 with growth reported in many established and emerging destinations.

As the constant growth of the tourism industry in the world and Europe poses a challenge to postmodern destinations in terms of how to sustain competitive advantage in a global tourism economy, and heritage is continuously interpreted differently within any one culture at any one time, as well as between cultures and through time (Ashworth & Graham, 2006, p. 4), this study specifically focuses on WHSs with medieval architectural heritage across cultures with insights into recent developments to contribute to an understanding of how these destinations could further reinforce their position as tourism destinations.

# 2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter first introduces the ontological and epistemological perspectives and their relevance for the current study. The next subchapter presents the research strategy considering the sites selected for the investigation and the methods and techniques used for data analysis, as well as why these methods have been selected for the research project. The last subchapter then moves on to the axiological considerations of the current qualitative research.

## 2.1 Ontological and epistemological perspectives, and the interdisciplinary approach of the current qualitative research

The current study considers the spatiality of socioeconomic activities as the basis for (re)constructing dimensions of destination branding, which incorporates meanings (re)constructed by agents through their experiences. Moreover, the research conceives destination branding, tourism, and heritage as social constructs. Therefore, the current study adopts constructivism as its philosophical framework, within which the duality of agency and structure, as conceived by Bourdieu (1972/2002), forms the ontological basis behind the applied social constructivist epistemological paradigm.

Constructivism (along with critical theory, postmodernism, and feminism, having a progressive qualitative outlook) pertains to a reality that is socially constructed (Hollinshead, 2004, p. 70) and to situation-specific meanings that are thought to be constructed by social actors (Schwandt, 1998, p. 221), whose lived experience is considered meaningful within a phenomenological approach presented by Schutz (1972, 1975, 1976, 1982). Within constructivism—realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions that are socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependant for their form and content on the individuals that hold them (Hollinshead, 2004, p. 76; Jennings, 2009, pp. 674–675; Robson, 2002, p. 27; Schwandt, 1998, pp. 221–222)—researchers are regarded as part of the research setting. This refers to social constructionist epistemology, which began to spread to various scholarly disciplines based on the work of Berger and Luckmann (1967/1989) (Best, 2008, pp. 42–43). Therefore, the current study using constructivism as a philosophical assumption adopts social constructivism as a epistemological category that is used when terms are described as being complex and open to different interpretations (Jennings et al., 2009, pp. 295–296).

As the aim of a constructivist inquiry is understanding and reconstructing the constructions that people initially hold (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 211), then the current qualitative research represents the perspective of interpretivism, which focuses on understanding and interpreting (Bryman, 2004, p. 13; Decrop, 2004, p. 157), as opposed to explaining predictable and controllable phenomena via causal relationships within positivism (Rakić, 2011, p. 19). Drawing on the duality of the agent-structure relationship, as in Bourdieu (1972/2002), the

ontological realist approach "attempts to seek the linkage between agency and structure by searching for explanations through separating these two entities while the social constructivist approach is interested in how this linkage is built through bringing the two apparent opposites together" (Paadam, 2003, p. 66).

The position of constructivism assumes that individual constructions are elicited and refined hermeneutically, and are compared and contracted through a dialectical interchange with the aim of generating one or a few constructions that are more informed and sophisticated (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 207; Hollinshead, 2004, p. 76). In this way, destinations are not just reflexive practices embedded in commercial contexts as perceived by Ek and Hultman (2008), but the meaning of place and 'the local' are socially constructed (Hultman & Hall, 2012). The social construction of a destination is considered in the study of Saraniemi and Kylänen (2011), who claim that a destination is "a construction that takes distinct discursive forms and practices across various spatial and temporal contexts" (p. 138).

Figure 5 concludes the discussions above and presents the outline of the epistemological, ontological, and methodological perspectives of the study.

| Philosophical frame | • Constructivism |
| Ontology | • Duality of agency and structure |
| Epistemology | • Social constructivism |
| Methodology | • Interpretative/Qualitative |
| Methods | • Document analysis<br>• Visual observation<br>• Participant observation<br>• Semi-structured interviews |
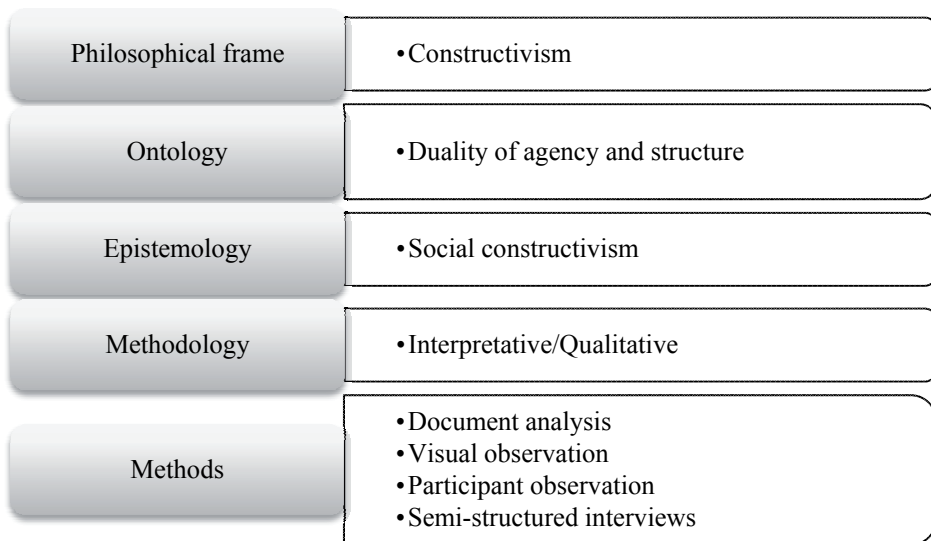
*Figure 5. Ontological, epistemological, and methodological perspectives of the current research (by the author)*

Within the field of tourism, Decrop (2004, p. 167) states that addressing the trustworthiness issue is important in helping to make qualitative and interpretative studies more rigorous by doing it via *triangulation* (that have four basic types: data, investigator, theory, and methodological)*,* as it opens the way for richer and potentially more credible interpretations (Decrop, 2004, pp. 161–162, 301). The current study utilises data, methodological (both reviewed

below), and theoretical triangulations. Janesick (1998, p. 47) adds a fifth type, *interdisciplinary triangulation,* which could potentially broaden the understanding of the content and, as Decrop (2004, p. 163) claims, is especially relevant in tourism research, and, moreover, both in the field of city branding (Dinnie, 2011, p. 7) and that of place branding (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2010, p. 235) in capturing the full complexity, multifaceted and multidimensional nature of these phenomena. Interdisciplinarity is seen as a more conscious and explicitly focused integration that creates a holistic view or common understanding of a complex issue, question or problem (Klein, 2007, pp. 37–38).

Within the field of tourism, the touristic dimensions of society, not tourism as an autonomous system, are at the core of interdisciplinary approaches (Darbellay & Stock, 2012, p. 455), and an interdisciplinary conceptual framework is used to develop an integrated knowledge base of structures and practices that constitute heritage tourism (Jamal & Kim, 2005). These touristic dimensions of society that are subjects central to tourism studies, according to Tribe and Xiao (2011), are destinations and attractions, as well the use of culture and heritage for tourism and the consequences associated with such use. Thus, the current paper concurs with the claims of Phillimore and Goodson (2004) and Darbellay and Stock (2012) on the interdisciplinary notion of the field of tourism, and therefore, the paper attempts to develop a cross-disciplinary and multi-method approach to research in this field, and more specifically, in destination branding (see Figure 6).
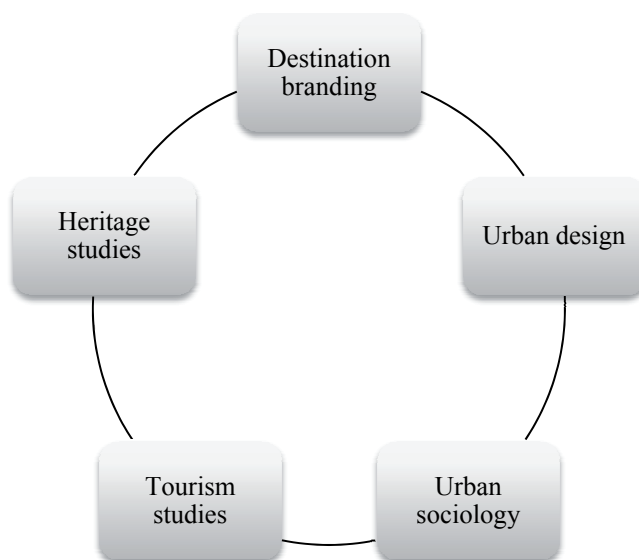


*Figure 6. Interdisciplinary triangulation of the current research
(by the author)*

The present research attempts to understand how destination branding is spatially informed and how agents from various fields within the selected towns differentially construct meanings about their activities, conducted in a medieval architectural environment, that due to its value, creates a space for (re)constructing symbolic capital. Approaching relevant issues from a social constructivist epistemology that views both the destination branding of towns and the (re)construction of symbolic capital as constituting social realities, the visual aspect of urban space and the resulting meanings are interpreted through theoretical frameworks based on various approaches to urban space heritage within different propositions across the following disciplines and fields: destination branding, tourism and heritage studies, urban design, and urban sociology supported by the wider perspective of sociology. Though there is a range of approaches that at their own level combine these disciplines and fields, the present study applies the concepts of destination branding, and the construction of symbolic capital as central with regard to destination branding, as part of the optimum spatial practices for generating and improving gains from exploiting symbolic values in various social practices.

## 2.2 Research strategy, objective, methods, and analysis

The interdisciplinary approach combining concepts from destination branding, heritage and tourism studies, Bourdieusian, and Lefebvrian sociological approaches and urban design provides a conceptual perspective for analysing socioeconomic activities, making use of medieval architecture in WHSs, among different groups of agents with various combinations of the quality of types of capital in the urban heritage space. By adopting this multiple theoretical perspective, the analysis of the (re)construction of symbolic capital and the (re)production of space used for tourism and branding purposes is seen as a methodological approach that considers various social fields containing distinct practices associated with space comprising heritage of outstanding universal value as an object of the study. Thus, from the *aim of this research* (to understand the reciprocal interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in urban heritage space), the focus of the research is on the agents: on the "supply side" within the (re)production of the tourist urban space, i.e., agents that could be regarded as "suppliers" from both the public and private sectors (i.e., tourists remain outside the scope of the research). However, while analysing the spatial qualities of the public and semi-public space in order to construct the spatial dimensions of destination branding, the behaviour of tourists becomes part of the reality for conducting the research and collecting the data for further analysis as a participant observer.

As highlighted above, the current qualitative research, aimed at reconstructing multiple realities (Riley & Love, 2000, p. 172), is interpretative by nature, as it focuses on interpreting and understanding and emphasizes relativism as has also been acknowledged elsewhere: "social constructionism is relativist, seeing knowledge as historically and culturally located" and "[a]t

different times and places there will be different and often contradictory interpretations of the same phenomena" (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 22). Hence, the current qualitative interdisciplinary research adopts a multi-destination approach, and specific contextual realities in seven European towns are taken into consideration. In qualitative tourism research projects, constructivism with its relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology is seen to be the most viable philosophical position (Rakić, 2011, p. 18).

The collection of data was performed on two levels. Within the social constructivist epistemology this research applies textual, observational and visual methods and techniques for collecting data of ethnographic character, requiring 'methodological creativity' (Mason, 2002, p. 105), in each of the seven selected study sites. The use of a visual approach, as carried out in the present research, represents a 'foot-led' ethnography of visual methods to map a sense of place yielding unique readings of the landscapes under observation (Spencer, 2011, p. 82). In the case of two of the selected towns out of seven, the research represents a comparative analysis of two cases, since semi-structured interviews allow the research to delve deeper into the subject matter.

It is contended that the core methodological considerations of combining different methods around the visual are not exceptional in light of what has also been claimed elsewhere, that they are rarely used independently of other methods (Burns & Lester, 2005; Haldrup & Larsen, 2011; Rakić & Chambers, 2011) because using alternative methods conjointly aims to achieve the desired outcomes of tourism research (Beeton, 2005, p. 37). In order to capture the in-depth nature of the phenomenon, qualitative methodologies offer the opportunity to consider meaning and complexity through detailed empirical and theoretical analysis (Manzi & Jacobs 2008, pp. 29–30), with processual and thematic aspects rather than factual and normative aspects in focus, as is also applied in marketing studies (Hultman & Hall, 2012, p. 551). Qualitative research can also be supported by collecting quantitative data, and the observational research collected quantitative data in any case. According to Decrop (2004, p. 157), in-depth interviews, participant observation and document analysis are favoured tools in the interpretivist approach. Therefore, the current study utilises these three main strategies (see Figure 7) for retrieving social data that is later described in more detail.

This multiple method approach refers to the *method triangulation* used in the current study together with *theory* and *data triangulations* (when interviews are taken from people representing different groups) intended to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of a qualitative study (triangulation is used for these purposes in tourism-related qualitative research, as Decrop, 1999, asserts), despite the fact that this can create disputes (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 164). Nevertheless, the approach of using triangulations makes the study more comprehensive and stimulates reflexivity on the part of the researcher. However, applying thick description as a procedure for assessing the quality of the research results in a detailed description of the phenomenon under study and its context.
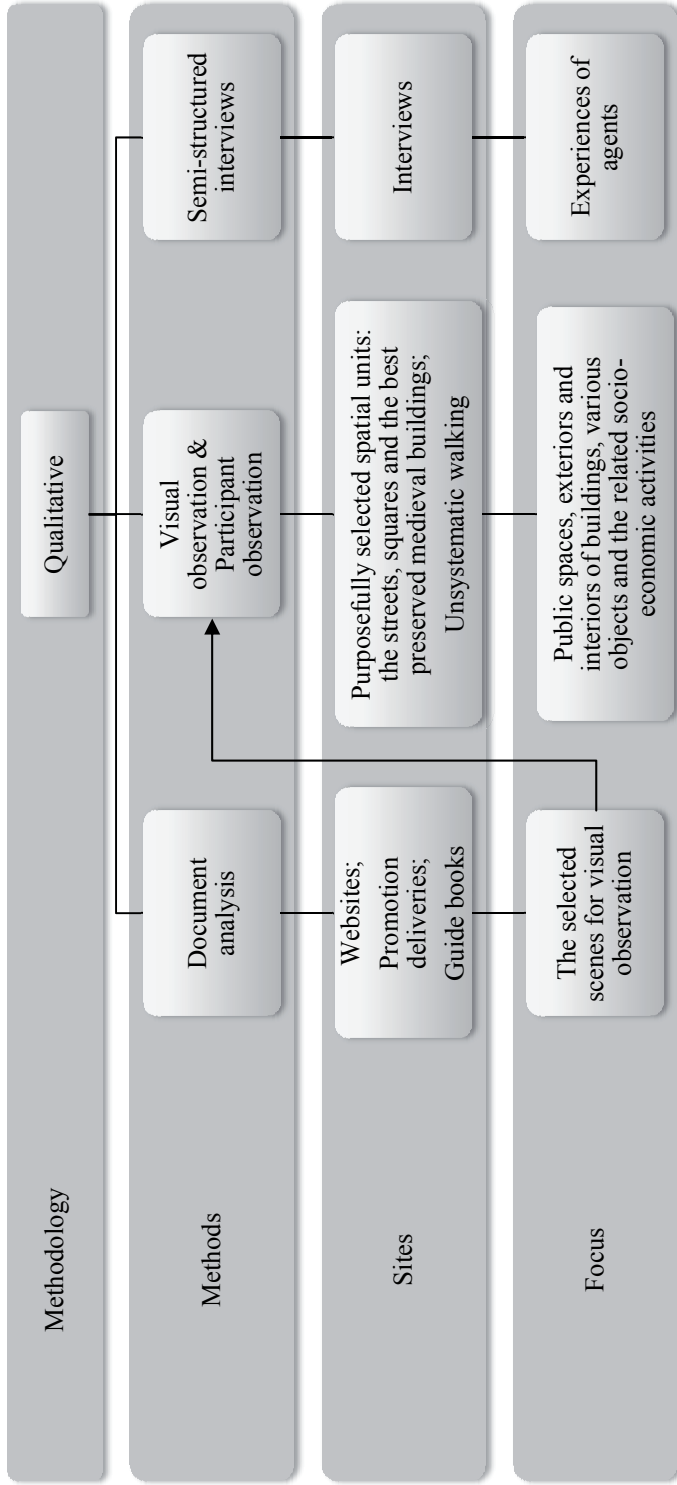
*Figure 7. Methods applied in the current research and the characteristics of the data generated (by the author)*

As the gaze of the researcher always frames and constructs what is read, there is no methodological fix to escape reflexivity when doing studies of visual material (Haldrup & Larsen, 2011). In general, reflexivity involves critical self-scrutiny on the part of researchers, who need, at all stages of the research process, to ask themselves about their role in the research (Byrne, 2002, p. 184) and a continuous questioning of the research in question. A reflexive approach counts all phases of the research: the process, the analysis and writing up the findings.

### 2.2.1 Multi-destination international research approach

As a starting point for identifying the towns for the research, Tallinn was selected as the first study site being the home town of the author. In order to determine a limited number of towns according to the capacity for one person (the author) to conduct the research, the qualities and characteristics of Tallinn were sought among other towns on the UNESCO World Heritage List as the primary criterion. Investigating the subject against the background of medieval architecture in WHSs, complete with architectural quality of outstanding universal value, contributes to research practice in the field of tourism, where the medieval architecture of the Hanseatic League has been significantly under-represented (see section 1.1.1).



*Figure 8. Seven WHSs selected for the study*
*Source: The author and © 2013 Google*

To provide a comparative aspect in the research of urban heritage space, seven Old Towns were selected as study sites due to the exceptional architectural environment they offer as significant modern tourist attractions (see Figure 8 for the geographical location of the towns, see Table 1 for the characteristics of the towns[2]): Bruges (Belgium), Lübeck (Germany), Stralsund (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia), Toruń (Poland), Visby (Sweden), and Wismar (Germany). The investigation is defined within the spatial borders of Old Towns. All seven had a tight connection to the history of *the Hanseatic League* and are included on the *UNESCO World Heritage List* for their unique *medieval* character (see Appendix 1 for information on the justification for including the historic centres of selected towns). Although Bruges had not been a member of the Hanseatic League, an office for the league was situated in the town as also in London, Bergen, and Novgorod (Ogilvie, 2011, p. 203; Wubs-Mrozewicz, 2011). Compared to the aforementioned towns, Bruges is endowed with all the expected characteristics of a medieval town, which meet the selection principle for this analysis, including the fact that its historic centre is a designated WHS. Moreover, Bruges is the only town among those with offices of the league that corresponds to the other expected characteristics: Bruges has a historic centre as a WHS (not separate monuments or groups of them as in London, Bergen, or Novgorod). Although the historical centres of Stralsund and Wismar are included on the World Heritage List as a single entity, the unique constitution of each urban heritage space in terms of the different socioeconomic activities presented by different agents allows us to analyse data from both destinations as two separate sets.

Tallinn is the only national capital among the selected Hanseatic sites, since the other destinations (except Lübeck) represent regional capitals. Other national Hanseatic capitals were not selected as they do not meet the defined criteria (e.g., the historic centre of Riga is included due to the value of its Art Nouveau architecture; the historic centre of Stockholm is not included on the UNESCO World Heritage List).

In terms of the spatial qualities of an environment where people act, it is reasonable to understand the peculiarity of the medieval space because, as Stickells (2011, p. 223) claims, architecture with its thoroughly implicated status contributes to structuring the power dynamics of the social space. Orbaşli (2000, pp. 45–46) emphasizes that historic towns are mostly valued for their special character, a physical link with the past and the continuing tradition of a lived-in environment. By contrast, Gehl (2006, p. 38, p. 41, p. 85, p. 89, p. 101) specifically highlights the qualities of medieval urban space as follows:

1. It is suited to urban outdoor activities by virtue of their spatial qualities and ample dimensioning.
2. It is characterised by the intimate knowledge of human scale as being spontaneously derived (with a more concentrated street network; with

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[2] All towns in focus appear in an alphabetical order throughout the text, including tables.

spaces where all functions are effectively located alongside and facing the streets and where the distances for pedestrian traffic and sensory experiences are as short as possible).

3. It has built-in qualities:
   a. The streets and squares arranged with concern for people moving about and staying outdoors.
   b. It is ideally arranged to function as a meeting place and public living room for its citizens, both then and now.
   c. There is a close, interwoven pattern of activities—an integration-oriented city structure.

Considering how small and large dimensions are perceived differently, Gehl (2006, p. 69) asserts that cities and spaces with modest dimensions, narrow streets, and small spaces (characteristics of the medieval urban space) are perceived as more intimate, warm, and personal; narrow units and many doors are important principles for concentrating events (Gehl, 2006, p. 93). Such spatial characteristics represent the conceptualised qualities of the medieval built environment under observation in the current study.

While today, the former Hanseatic towns under scrutiny are characterised by a number of differences concerning their locally and regionally defined political and economic status, they have maintained a position as historic attractions for the tourism market (see Table 1). While the German towns in the study, as well Toruń and Visby, rely mainly on inbound tourism, Bruges and Tallinn are the most international destinations primarily for their geographic location, infrastructure (transportation) and, therefore, accessibility compared to the other destinations in the study.

The analysis and interpretation of the results could be influenced by the different historical backgrounds these seven modern towns have, considering that four of them (Stralsund, Tallinn, Toruń, and Wismar) were part of Eastern Bloc economies for decades in the 20th century, which affected the qualities of the public space and how people construct meanings from their experience and actions. This aspect has been taken into consideration in the present analysis.

The primary concern is to examine the WHSs, which are the towns themselves (not single buildings or complexes of buildings as single units), thus general information on the selected towns and the size and description of the world heritage properties were given a preliminary examination via the Internet (http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/).

The selection of the study sites makes it possible to assess the modern position in the tourism industry of formerly powerful Hanseatic towns, and this is informed by the general approach of the research. The dissertation seeks to understand how the towns make use of their medieval architectural landscapes of outstanding, universally acknowledged value for economic purposes, exploited in destination branding strategies to compete with other destinations in the global symbolic economy.

*Table 1. The characteristics of the selected towns: total population, population of the Old Town, the number of tourists and overnight stays, the size of the area of the heritage listed properties, the number of tourists and overnight stays (2011)*

| Town | Population | Population of the Old Town *** | Area of heritage listed property (ha) | The number of tourists 2011 | The number of foreign tourists 2011 | Per cent of foreign tourists 2011 | Overnight stays 2011 | Overnight stays by foreign tourists 2011 | Per cent of foreign tourists 2011 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bruges | 116.885 (2011) | 20.000** | 410 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1.703.858 | 1.370.788 | 80.5% |
| Lübeck | 213.368 (31.12.2012) | 13.424 | 81 | 620.741 | 153.827 | 24.8% | 1.390.985 | 275.046 | 19.8% |
| Stralsund | 57.415 (2012) | 2.864 | 80 | 182.650 | 20.077 | 11.0% | 407.741 | 45.226 | 11.1% |
| Tallinn | 414.062 (2011) | 3.692 (01.06.2011) | 113 | 1.498.500 | 1.333.800 | 89.0% | 2.791.100 | 2.504.700 | 89.7% |
| Toruń | 204.921 (31.12.2011) | N/A | 48 | 194.401 | 41.164 | 21.2% | 281.634 | 69.363 | 24.6% |
| Gotland (Visby*) | 57.400 (01.01.2011) (22.500*)** | 2.600*/** | N/A* | N/A | N/A | N/A | 857.591 | 111.911 | 13.1% |
| Wismar | 44.484 (31.12.2012) | 8.289 | 88 | 96.294 | 12.469 | 13.0% | 239.189 | 23.157 | 9.7% |

*Sources: Bevölkerungsdichte am 31.12.2011 (Einwohner je km²) in der Hansestadt Wismar in der Hansestadt Wismar (Haupt- und Nebenwohnsitz). (n.d.); Bevolking - Cijfers bevolking 2010-2012 (n.d.); Bruges. World Heritage City (n.d.); Calculations by the author; Central Statistical Office (of Poland) (2012a); Central Statistical Office (of Poland) (2012b); Fakta om Gotland (n.d.); Hansestaden Visby (n.d.); Hansestadt LÜBECK (n.d.); Hansestadt Stralsund. Bevölkerung in den Stadtgebieten und Stadtteilen (n.d.); Lübecker Zahlen (n.d.); StatA MV, Statistisches Jahrbuch 2012 (n.d.); Statistics Sweden (2012); Statistisches Bundesamt (2012); Tallinna Etevõtlusameti turismiosakond (15.03.2012); Tallinna vanalinna arengukava 2012-2021. Projekt (n.d.); Tallinna Linnavalitsus (Tallinn City Government) (2012); Toerisme Vlaanderen (n.d.); World Heritage List (n.d.);*

*(\*) The data concern the town of Visby. Otherwise, the data concern Gotland County where the town is located, especially as Visby is promoted as part of a destination of Gotland (see Chapter 3.1). The reason: the data is not available in the statistical database for the town.*

*(\*\*) The current information without reference to the exact year.*

*(\*\*\*) The date for the data on the population of the Old Town is the same as it is for total population. If not, then a different date is provided.*

## 2.2.2 Observing spatiality: textual and visual data

The first part of the research, conducted in all seven selected towns, pertains to applying textual, observational and visual methods and techniques. The textual and visual data are composed of various sources as they become available for the interested foreign reader in modern *lingua franca*—guide books, brochures, maps and hand-outs on tourist routes offered in tourist information centres, as well official city tourism websites in English (which, according to Sadler, 1993, are a particular form of place promotion).

Through the narratives and images communicated by promotional material, a 'place' becomes a 'destination' (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2011, p. 4). Therefore, promotion plays a crucial role in communicating the city's image and the benefits provided by visiting the city to the targeted tourist segment (Kolb, 2006, p. 21). As contended in Di Giovine (2009, p. 59), promotional material makes reproducible representations that are employed by stakeholders. In these reproducible representations, a historical landscape or a monument to it can be presented "frontstage" as objects of a viewer's gaze (see Figure 9), or relegated to the "backstage" where it serves as the background for some other representation (Di Giovine, 2009, p. 59), and where "[t]he rhetoric [...] not only reinforces the identity and uniqueness of destinations but also reassures the people, habitus, values, and symbols of their own culture, thus preserving the ethos—"state of being" of the place" (Campelo et al., 2011, p. 11).

Images in brochures inform us about a destination at a single glance and shape how tourists behave in and look at a destination's landscape (Jokela & Raento, 2011, p. 55). The type of information disseminated and how information about a place is communicated play a vital role in the tourism image as well as tourist perceptions of a destination (de Jager 2010, p. 349). Hence, the representational power of photographs functionally transforms a place into a destination—a commodity (Hunter, 2008, p. 354). Therefore, the analysis of data derived from reproducible representations elucidates how the information builds and in what ways information in tourist products and services becomes offers for the spatial consumption of urban heritage landscapes. The data are interpreted as identifications of conceptualised representations of space (Lefebvre, 1974/1996), which transform into representational spaces through the actions of tourists.

Approximately one hundred paper deliveries (i.e., reproducible representations) in each city in the study were gathered from tourist information centres, and the number of those in English was significantly low in the case of some cities: Lübeck, Stralsund, Visby, and Wismar. The low number of paper deliveries forced the author to purchase guide books in order to gather the necessary information for research purposes.

*Figure 9. The dominant role of medieval architecture on the front pages of promotional materials or guide books from the study sites: Bruges, Lübeck, Stralsund, Tallinn, Toruń, Visby, and Wismar (photographs by the author)*

The analysis of deliverables sets the scene at ground-floor level for visual exploratory observation along the *streets*, *squares* (these two constituting civic space as defined by Carmona, 2010, p. 169: the traditional forms of urban space, open and available to all and catering for a wide variety of functions), and *the best preserved and/or famous medieval buildings* as proposed in the tourist information provided. The streets, squares and buildings highlighted in the texts appear either as spaces for sightseeing or direct offers for tourist experiences of medieval architecture. Although in the case of Visby, squares were not mentioned in the tourist sources, one of them was selected for the observational research in order to provide comparative input (in the case of Lübeck, the square is not analysed because part of it is not within a World Heritage zone and it significantly includes modern architecture). Streets that primarily carry a residential character are randomly selected in the Old Town

areas of Bruges, Lübeck, and Visby. The selected spatial units in each town are presented in Appendix 2.

Using informal approaches to observation that allow the observer considerable freedom in what information is gathered and how it is recorded (Robson, 2002, p. 313), the direct observation of functional spaces and on-site participation through note-taking and photographing made it possible to map (i.e., register and define the location in the urban space for further qualitative analysis) the public spaces, exteriors and interiors of buildings, various objects and related socioeconomic activities. The visual observation of selected spatial units (streets and squares) was additionally enlarged to include unsystematic walking in the Old Towns beyond the defined sites in order to contextualise the study within a wider scale of urban historical centres; as well as to avoid constraining the research to sites pre-stated by local tourist institutions and allow some further discovery of the interrelated processes of spatially constructed activities and destination branding as signified through socioeconomic activities in heritage sites.

As visual methods are intended to unearth the layers of the lived reality of the city (Spencer, 2011, p. 80), the visual and on-site observation applied in the current study makes it possible to collect data on different dimensions focusing on spatial qualities with regard to the urban architectural context and patterns of activities: outdoor activities and indoor activities in public as well as semi-public spaces in courtyards, the general attractiveness and that of a particular space, and finally its picturesque aesthetics. Field-notes, supported by data from photographing, resulting in researcher-created visual data as a tool for documenting field-notes, as in the research of Temelová and Novák (2011), made it possible to identify spaces for walking and places for staying, spaces for standing, as well sitting landscapes (Gehl, 2006) and assess the spatial qualities and urban practices in heritage sites.

If structured observation is a method for systematically observing the behaviour of individuals in terms of a schedule of categories (Bryman, 2004, p. 165), then the current research, with its informal approach to observation as indicated above, also employs a lighter version of structured observation. The behaviour of individuals was observed throughout the entire area of the Old Towns based on both theoretical assumptions and interpreting concurrently. The data on types of socioeconomic activities were generated throughout the process of the research, albeit taking a detached, 'pure observer' stance that is a core characteristic of structured observation (Robson, 2002, p. 325) using covert observation without revealing the researcher's identity (Gray, 2004, p. 239) as there was no need for that at this phase. In the case of some observed activities, a complete observer role was adopted so the observer concealed that he was an observer, and acted as naturally as possible (Robson, 2002, p. 316).

Altogether, 408 photographs were taken in Bruges, 395 in Lübeck, 326 in Stralsund, 328 in Tallinn, 360 in Toruń, 164 in Visby, and 216 in Wismar. The number of photographs depended on the size of the observed areas and the

density of the activities conducted. In total, the visual observation notes included 2,197 photographs.

The quantitative data on different types of activities, derived from direct observation along streets and squares, is analysed to reveal the relative importance of different types of activities in the area. The quantified data reflects the spatial intensity of activities in terms of their location, and is presented in the results as qualitative interpretations of simple comparative quantitative numbers. In total 2,369 activities were identified within 47 units of analysis in all seven cities.

The research was conducted by the author in all seven towns from July to October 2011 and in June 2012 to inform an analysis of differences to be considered in relation to varying tourist flows at the turn of the seasons in the specific climate zones of the sites under observation.

In general, the visual method is applied to elucidate the processes of (re)construction, (re)creation and (re)presentation of 'realities' (as also in Rakić and Chambers, 2009, p. 256) in contemporary Hanseatic towns from a social constructivist epistemological perspective.

## 2.2.3 Capturing multiple realities: interviewing key agents

The data derived from the visual research on the spatiality of the construction of symbolic capital are used for the further theoretical and empirical development of the analysis along with interviews as a result of data triangulation. The visual method generated data on socioeconomic activities that were visually perceived by the researcher: solely visually identifiable outcomes of agents' activities. Using semi-structured interviews, the researcher's aim is to investigate the complex social world of the agents as they play a key role in the construction of symbolic capital in the destinations: the strategies the agents employ, the position they occupy in their fields of activity, and the understanding of the rationale behind the decisions they make, which informs their performance specifically in fields of heritage and tourism productions. Hence, using interviews seeks to understand the agents' social world, which they (re)construct and which they (re)produce through their continuing activities, as within interpretivist ontology (Blaikie, 1993, p. 36). Data provided by interviews make it possible to investigate the motivational understanding of social action (why the visually identified activities are conducted in the heritage space), and, as Blaikie (1993, p. 96) claims, the human experience as a process of interpretation (how the agents perceive and relate to the medieval architecture which they use in the daily conduct of their activities). The approach adopted for this research on the construction of symbolic capital makes it possible, on the one hand, to compare the outcomes of the visual and interview methods and, on the other hand, to explore their validity in two study sites with culturally and socially distinct contexts.

The application of the interview method is informed by the understanding that it is becoming a global research method (Jennings, 2005, p. 99) and one of

the most common and powerful (Fontana & Frey, 1998, p. 47) we can use in an attempt to understand and make sense of the lives of human beings. As Jennings (2005, p. 104) claims, the use of semi-structured and in-depth interviews is associated with the phenomenological, constructivist or interpretivist paradigm, which holds an ontology "that recognises multiple perspectives in regard to the research focus, an epistemological stance that is subjective in nature and a methodology which is predicated on qualitative principles" (p. 104)—all characteristics that are reflected in the current research.

Interviews could be successfully combined with other research methods as in many previous studies. As the use of qualitative interviews in tourism research is increasing incrementally (Jennings, 2005, p. 114), the field of place or destination marketing is no exception, where semi-structured interviews alone (Maheshwari et al., 2011; Tellström et al., 2006) or in combination with other methods (Ismail & Mohd-Ali, 2011), and in-depth interviews in combination with other methods (Agyei-Mensah, 2006; Campelo et al., 2011; Chang & Teo, 2009; Connell & Rugendyke, 2010; Gilmore et al., 2007; Giovanardi, 2011; Hankinson, 2004a; Kay et al., 2009; Stern & Hall, 2010) have been applied, making it possible to gain insights into the thoughts, feelings, perceptions and behaviours of the interviewees.

To elicit information on the experiences that agents have had in urban heritage spaces, as well as their opinions and beliefs, and to provide interpretations about the meaning of those experiences, semi-structured interviews are applied, and the research results subsequently help us understand how agents are involved in constructing symbolic capital through their activities in the medieval heritage space.

Interviews were conducted in two towns out of the seven under consideration—Bruges and Tallinn—making them specific case studies where the multiple perspectives of agents in relation to various socioeconomic activities are analysed. These towns were selected due to the higher number of citizens, which presumably results in an urban morphology and variety of available services characteristic of larger towns, and due to the higher number of total tourists in absolute terms and the relative importance of foreign tourists compared to the other selected towns (see also Table 1).

The interviews took place in August 2011 in Bruges and between January 2012 and January 2013 in Tallinn. There were 36 interviews in total (19 in Bruges and 17 in Tallinn), which lasted between 31 and 111 minutes, with an average of 70 minutes (76 minutes in Bruges and 63 minutes in Tallinn), and were digitally recorded and thereafter transcribed[3]. Individual interviews with representatives of the private and public sectors as well as residents were conducted in places suitable for the interviewees, respectively at offices, in cafes or in homes.

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[3] The quoted portions from the interviews conducted in Estonian or Russian were translated into English.

With regard to the specification of the interviewees, considering the key role of owners and managers, and their systems of dispositions for making strategic decisions in their organization (Swedberg, 2011, p. 75), those in management positions were interviewed, except in the case of artists and residents. Regardless of the specific position of the interviewee as manager or director (where possible the highest position was preferred), a common designation of 'manager' is used to protect the interviewees' identities (see more on ethical considerations in section 2.3), which is a normal procedure in this type of research.

Although all the interviews were planned as individual interviews, three interviews in Bruges turned out, unintentionally, as partially paired interviews. The first case concerns the initiative of an organization with two managers, who appeared together for the first part of the interview, and after one of the managers had left, the second part of the interview proceeded with the intended individual focus. In the second case, an interviewee was joined by a close friend in the middle of the interview. A similar case concerns a resident interview where other family members—a husband and a child—joined the interview towards the end of the process. The occasions described were not controllable and the interviewees assumed flexibility on the part of the interviewer. Despite these interferences, the interviews were conducted in privacy between the interviewer and the interviewee, and the personal accounts shared on the subject matter in focus were not affected by the presence of other people. Hence the data collected could be used for analysis.

The selection of interviewees based on the supply side perspective was determined by the wide range of agent groups encompassing a well-balanced representation of activities in fields of business, culture, local-specific business in particular, local government and residence. Table 2 introduces the participants in detail indicating their field of activity and their specific position. The selection of the interviewees follows the specific characteristics of the selected study sites in the two towns (e.g., the frequency of five-star hotels, unique local products etc.).

Study participants were identified in two main ways: firstly, using an Internet search following the aim of the current study and targeting agents with activities conducted in buildings of medieval architectural construction, and, secondly, using the snowball method with further contacts recommended by the study participants. The interviewees were not asked to specify personal information regarding their age, marital status, nationality and so on, as these were deemed irrelevant from the point of view of the research focus on the interviewees' experience of the use of heritage sites in their daily conduct. The participants were selected with a focus on their professional or residential activity.

*Table 2. Interviewees by field, activity and position*

| No. in Bruges | No. in Tallinn | Field | Specification of the field | Organization | | Position of the interviewee | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Bruges | Tallinn | Bruges | Tallinn |
| 1 | 1 | Culture | Festivals and events | Cultural organization | Committee | Manager | Manager |
| 2 | - | Culture | Museum | Museum* | - | Manager | - |
| 3 | 2 | Culture | Museum | Museum* | Museum | Manager | Manager |
| 4 | 3 | Culture | Museum | Museum | Museum | Manager | Manager |
| 5 | - | Culture | Projects | Cultural organization** | - | Manager | - |
| 6 | 4 | Business | Catering | Restaurant | Restaurant | Owner and manager | Owner and manager |
| 7 | 5 | Business | Accommodation | Hotel | Hotel | Manager | Manager |
| 8 | - | Business | Accommodation + Specific | B&B | - | Owner and manager | - |
| - | 6 | Business | Accommodation | - | Hotel | - | Manager |
| 9 | 7 | Business | Art business | Art gallery | Art gallery | Owner and manager | Manager |
| 10 | 8 | Business | Retail and production | Shop | Shop | Owner and manager | Manager |
| 11 | 9 | Business | Retail and production | Bar | Cafe | Owner and manager | Manager |

*(Table 2 continues)*

*(Table 2 continued)*

| No. in Bruges | No. in Tallinn | Field | Specification of the field | Organization | | Position of the interviewee | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Bruges | Tallinn | Bruges | Tallinn |
| 12 | 10 | Business | Art | Artist's gallery | Artist's gallery | Artist | Manager |
| 13 | 11 | Business | Art | Artist's gallery | Artist's gallery | Artist | Artist |
| 14 | 12 | Local government | Tourism and marketing | Department | Department | Manager | Manager |
| 15 | 13 | Local government | Entrepreneurship and economy | Department | Department | Manager | Manager |
| 16 | 14 | Local government | Heritage protection | Department | Department | Manager | Manager |
| 17 | 15 | Residence | N/A | Resident | Resident | Resident | Resident |
| 18 | 16 | Residence | N/A | Resident | Resident | Resident | Resident |
| 19 | 17 | Residence | N/A | Resident | Resident | Resident | Resident |

*(\*) Interviewees from the same organization and management team.*
*(\*\*) One additional interviewee was involved in the research from the organization with multifarious activities that centre around one general topic, whereas in Tallinn similar functions are divided among separate organizations.*

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The interviews were performed as semi-structured in a conversational manner based on an interview guide prepared in advance. To elicit the agents' accounts of various aspects of their experience, the following three topic areas were developed: first, conceptions of strategies and cooperation (strategy of the agent in the specific spatial context; involvement in activities; perception of one's position in the context of other activities on site; cooperation with the city government; vision of their position in the field in 10/20 years), second, representations of specific experiences of acting in the field (products sold and/or services provided, resources available and financial situation; perception of consumer/visitor behaviour; general and specific concerns and problems; heritage-related challenges; development and evolution of business and organizations; spatial struggles), third, dispositions and interactions in the field of tourism (attitudes and dispositions towards tourism industries in the town; perception of branding of the destination).

## 2.2.4 Analysing qualitative data: thematic analysis

The data collected using visual observation and interviewing (comprising notes, photographs, transcriptions) were analysed using a thematic analysis.

There are different approaches to conceiving the qualitative analysis of texts. Seale (2004, p. 314) claims that a great deal of qualitative analysis is done without particular reference to specialist methodological approaches, like conversation, discourse, grounded theory or semiotic analysis, and can be termed qualitative thematic analysis that is realised by means of a coding scheme. However, King and Horrocks (2010, p. 149) suggest using thematic analysis for analysing qualitative interviews and, reflecting on the challenges of defining the term 'theme', they (2010) propose the following definition: "Themes are recurrent and distinctive features of participants' accounts, characterising particular perceptions and/or experiences, which the researcher sees as relevant to the research question" (p. 150).

Thematic analysis has been extensively used as a method of qualitative data analysis in a number of research papers for analysing both observational and interview data (Higham & Carr, 2003; Mkono, 2013), as well interviews in tourism research (Griffin & Hayllar, 2009; Janta et al., 2012; Johnston et al., 2012; Mbaiwa, 2011; Nicholas & McDowall, 2012). Therefore, the current qualitative research analysis employs the concept of 'thematic analysis' to analyse both visual and interview data to elicit information on the dimensions of spatiality and the experiences of agents.

The analysis of the pictures that serve as documentary material from direct observations and constitute the major part of the visual research data was based on interpreting the depicted information from the theoretical propositions. During the visual observation of the sites including objects in streets and squares, activities were coded and categorised, where terraces were regarded as a separate activity due to their physical distinction and direct openness to the tourist gaze. The following categories were constructed: shopping (small and

large shops to buy various consumer items and food), eating (restaurants and other places, clubs, bakeries with seating, terraces), accommodation (hotels, guest houses etc.), daily services (beauty salons, law firms, notaries, various financial offices, post offices, property agencies, parking lots, public toilets etc.), company offices, production units, public services (cultural institutions, government institutions, city parks and green areas etc.), housing (detached residences or blocks); sites under restoration, no-activity (empty space), and non-identifiable (in most cases could have been perceived as residential space). A complete list of the categories of socioeconomic activities is presented in Appendix 3.

If the application of visual observation made it possible to investigate the heritage space of the destination from the perspective of a tourist, then interviews made it possible to conceive spatial qualities in terms of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital from the perspective of the supply side—the inside perspective of local people conducting socioeconomic activities in the heritage context, the significance of their experience in the construction of meanings informing their conduct. Involving 36 interviews, this study further analyses the experiences of different target groups in the urban heritage space in two selected destinations: Bruges and Tallinn. A three-step process comprising coding, categorisation and evaluation as analytical tools in the transformation of transcribed interviews (as in the study by Tellström et al., 2006, p. 133) was applied to analyse the interview data, which was subsequently structured according to a framework of characterised experiences of agents, grouped into themes and subthemes. The author then returned to the data and considered the themes and subthemes in relation to theoretical concepts. The final phase of the theoretical integration and interpretation is seen as an important aspect of refining existing and newly emergent themes and will be specifically addressed in the concluding chapter.

## 2.3 Ethical considerations

All social research involves ethical decision-making (Ali & Kelly, 2004, p. 116). Ethical considerations in qualitative research mostly focus on issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy, and the confidentiality of data related to participant identity (Punch, 1998, p. 168). Ali and Kelly (2004, p. 119) express Punch's viewpoint more concisely by proposing that managing ethical involvement with participants involves two main areas of concern: issues of privacy and confidentiality and of gaining informed consent. From the perspective of tourism, Ryan (2005, p. 10) asserts that social science researchers are increasingly being asked to indicate the means by which the privacy of interviewees is respected.

In terms of the visual observations, the research was conducted respectfully at the data collection sites. Observations and photographs taken in the public space have been realised by the researcher from the position of a tourist, and in this way uncover the real purpose of the actions documented. In some cases,

and in spite of taking photographs and extensive note-taking, especially collecting quantified data in and around the streets and squares, the researcher's interest was only partially revealed and his intentions were sometimes ultimately interpreted by the viewers. In addition, there are couple specific ethical issues that arose. First, the exact addresses of the buildings in the streets and squares recorded during the observation are not presented due to anonymity requirements. Second, when collecting the publications in the tourist offices, the researcher's identity was explicitly revealed only if absolutely necessary; on all other occasions, acting as a tourist was perfectly justified and served the purpose of the research procedures.

Considering the small size of the communities of the Old Towns of Bruges and Tallinn, there is a high level of familiarity among the locals; therefore, the identity of the research participants is protected by a high level of anonimisation during the presentation of the research results.

The interviewees were informed (in English, Estonian or Russian, as appropriate) during the introductions and rapport building phase, when recruiting the interviewees, as well as during the secondary recruitment at the beginning of the interview about the degree of confidentiality afforded them once they participate in the research (Paadam, 2003).

In addition to ensuring the confidentiality of the participants and their contributions, the interviewees were also offered the option of receiving a copy of the final version of the research as the results of the research were also intended to benefit the participants themselves. In some cases, interest in the research results was expressed before the offer was made.

# 3. THE STUDY OF THE DUAL RELATIONSHIP OF DESTINATION BRANDING AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SYMBOLIC CAPITAL IN THE PRODUCTION OF HERITAGE SPACE

In line with the main focus of this research, the chapter first presents the results of the analysis of the direct observation comparing data from the seven towns selected, followed by a discussion of the experiences of agents, informed through socially constructed meanings in the case of two towns: Bruges and Tallinn. The first section (3.1) aims to show how the spatial dimensions of destination branding, in a dual relationship with the (re)construction of symbolic capital, produced upon the medieval urban heritage space, are made visually identifiable in the heritage space through various socioeconomic activities and other attributes of a destination. Conducting comparative research on seven destinations makes it possible to understand how heritage space with its specific architectural character is activated across different destinations. The second section (3.2) sets out to discuss how agents from various fields perceive the heritage space within which they are acting in terms of its resourcefulness and how heritage is strategically activated in the agents' experiences, and thereby is perceived as an input in the (re)creation of a destination image. The final part of this chapter (3.3) attempts to reflect on the combined analyses of data from visual observations and interviews, and consequently, to elucidate how heritage space is being continuously (re)produced through the dual relationship forming between destination branding and constructing symbolic capital within the activities of agents on site intending to build the competitiveness of a destination by meeting the needs of postmodern tourists and the tourism industry.

## 3.1 (Re)creating spatially informed symbolic heritage values in the branding strategies of destinations

The analysis of medieval heritage sites in seven towns allows us to contend that the dual nature of the relationship forming between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital builds upon the integration of historical edifices of architectural value within socioeconomic activities and the tourist experience of 'real life', which is marketed using the unique architectural environment in the context defined as the symbolic economy. The integrative exploitation of heritage in various socioeconomic activities creates the complex continually reconstructed versatile ambience of a destination through enabling the multiple use of urban space in the field of tourist production, where the diverse locally unique attributes of a destination are made available. The spatially fixed materiality of heritage buildings (at least in terms of their external appearance) becoming an integral part of the agents' experiences in the fields of heritage and tourist production connotes their permanent visual

accessibility and openness to the tourist gaze in specific historically occupied locations in heritage sites. Such visual accessibility and openness is immanent in the conceptualisation of view corridors of well preserved medieval buildings, which seduce the tourist gaze by their unique architectural value.

The unique attributes of a destination in this research comprise (1) spatial perception as constructed by destinations and experienced in spatial practices, (2) place-bound products that are locally produced, as well simultaneously produced and consumed pure high-value and place-bound experience productions, which according to Lorentzen (2009, pp. 834–835), consist of events, activities, and services, and (3) dimensions of locally specific spatial experiences of heritage space. More specifically, place-bound products are used to create place-bound shopping experiences (in the shops in the public space of a destination), and moreover, are sometimes produced and/or sold outside the heritage space of a destination, thereby attaining footloose characteristics (Lorentzen, 2009, p. 834).

Hence, the unique and symbolic attributes of a heritage destination build competitive advantage, create the special quality of heritage sites, and, being promoted and branded as constitutive of the symbolic economy, contribute to the (re)construction of symbolic capital, which is indispensable for a tourism destination to be successful.

### 3.1.1 Offering perceptions of a unique space

*‘Romantic alley-ways and luxurious shops’*
*[...] the **König-Passage** – for long-lasting shopping tours in a short distance – **ice cream parlours, fashion boutique, cafés, department stores and shoe shops**. The **Fleischhauer-, Hüx- and Wahmstraße** provide you with an exclusive **shopping flair** – besides delicious food, designer fashion, modern art, flamboyant jewellery and coffee and tea specialities, you also find clothes, art, antique dealers, books and an exclusive interior.*
*(From the brochure ‘Lübeck Cityguide’ in Lübeck; words in bold: original formatting)*

*‘Dielenhaus’*
*This medieval brick building is a gabled house that was historically restored during the 1970s. Although the reconstruction deviates somewhat from the original building, it still provides a very good impression of the external form and internal structure of a Gothic merchant’s house.*
*(From the brochure ‘European Route of Brick Gothic. Hanseatic Town of Stralsund’)*

Perceptions of the character of destinations are constructed upon invitations to experience architectural objects and offers produced by socioeconomic activities conducted in the context of a locally unique heritage space. Defined by streets, squares, and in particular, the medieval buildings, destinations are promoted in tourist promotional materials.

It is significant that destinations mobilise the cultural asset of heritage value—medieval architecture—for spatial experiences of the historical landscape per se, which represents one of the main building blocks in the

(re)construction of a destination identity. As evident from Table 3, the selected destinations tend not to create special slogans; conversely, the majority of the heritage destinations in this study operationalize the historical connection to the Hanseatic League or WHS status in logos; therefore, branding themselves as a destination with architectural heritage attributes, imparting a sense of the uniqueness of a destination for tourist experiences. Hence, the author contends that the selected destinations tend to (re)construct their destination identities based on the present use of the past (i.e., of their material heritage). Such utilisation might be supported by businesses or local government when they incorporate simplified motifs of buildings or architectural landscapes on a company or town logo, or, as observed at Visby airport, use kerb-stones shaped like medieval buildings in the design of public areas.

As claimed elsewhere, marketing techniques are utilised to use World Heritage status as a brand to promote the destination as an attractive and unique place with a distinctive and exceptional cultural heritage (Guttormsen & Fageraas, 2011, p. 454), educating and raising awareness of the unique benefits of the WHS (Gilmore et al., 2007, p. 262). The findings of the visual observation imply that the multiple modes of displaying the UNESCO brand (on posters and stickers in the public space) takes on a dual character, as it contributes to increasing the economic asset of the designated heritage space and strengthening the UNESCO brand itself by merging the symbolic value of both the UNESCO brand and medieval architecture on site. However, the *manifestation of the UNESCO brand* is not equally present in all of the observed towns (Bruges and Visby are the most efficient exploiters of the UNESCO brand compared to the other study sites).

World heritage is extensively promoted in Bruges with the recognisable Dutch word for UNESCO incorporated into the city's logo and displayed on a major selection of promotion deliveries, street signs, flags on the market square, and even on the doors of garbage collection vehicles (on Visby see Figure 10). The manifestation of the UNESCO brand on street signs and public advertisements on the border of inscribed properties (specific UNESCO signs on the border of the Old Town in Bruges and Toruń; signs towards a UNESCO-designated area in Toruń), or on-site information boards (World Heritage logo on information boards in Tallinn and Visby) implies the construction of the territorialisation of unique heritage sites, and in general, the construction of local heritage-based symbolic capital in both representational spaces and the spatial practices of tourists. Moreover, the theme of UNESCO World Heritage starts being used for cultural and educational purposes when an exhibition on World Heritage is run in Stralsund, or information on UNESCO World Heritage is provided in the museum exposition for visitors in Visby. Based on the visual and observation data, the author asserts that Visby and Bruges effectively employ the city's logo, which comprises a WHS brand, strengthening destination propositions in the globalised symbolic economy.

(a) (b)
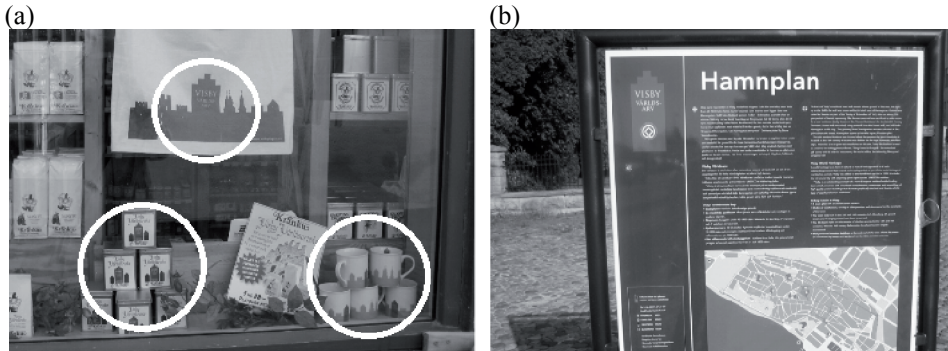


*Figure 10. The logo of the city of Visby serves as a pictorial base for merging the UNESCO brand with medieval architecture (a Swedish word "Världsarv" for WHS and also in the case of public information boards in combination with the UNESCO World Heritage Committee logo on the simplified facade of a medieval building); depicted also on (a) products in Visby and (b) information boards (albeit with scarce use in Visby promotional materials) (photographs by the author)*

In tourist promotional materials, tourists are invited to explore the streets and squares, which combine the *shopping, eating, and residential character* of modern towns of the former Hanseatic League, building on the symbolic value of their unique heritage sites that shape unique selling propositions and, as in Zukin (2012), potentially contribute to forming intangible cultural heritage. The formation of this combination of character upon the urban heritage space and the extensive promotion of the heritage landscape in tourist materials indicates that *architectural character* might prevail among other types of character. Architectural character constitutes a primary spatial quality for enticing tourists despite the powerful position of retail shopping as one of the modern city's greatest cultural attractions in the symbolic economy, as Zukin (1995, p. 188) claims, and (as according to Heldt Cassel and Pashkevich, 2013, p. 8) the efforts of WHSs to increase secondary spending on the part of visitors by focusing on dining and shopping.

*Table 3. The slogans and/or logos of the selected towns on the website and/or in the promotional materials*

| Town | Slogan | Logo (or logo-like design) | Comments on logo |
|------|--------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Bruges | No slogan (Extensive use of the logo that contains a phrase) | B R U G G E | The phrase in the logo "WORLD HERITAGE CITY" |
| Lübeck | Hanseatic City of Lübeck - World Cultural Heritage and Gate to the Baltic (Comment: Slogan found on the website) | Hansestadt LÜBECK | The phrase and two quadrangles (no background) |
| Stralsund | No slogan. Extensive use of the logo with the phrase "Hansestadt Stralsund" (Eng. Hanseatic City of Stralsund) | Hansestadt Stralsund | Solely the phrase (no background) |
| Tallinn | No slogan | Tallinn | The logo on the website; it was found only on one brochure |
| Toruń | Get Gothic (Comment: Slogan found on the website) | | N/A |
| Visby | No slogan | 1) VISBY VÄRLDS-ARV   2) DESTINATION GOTLAND | 1) The logo of Visby found in few brochures and in urban space. The black background is not part of the logo. 2) The logo of Gotland (Visby is promoted within the destination of Gotland) |
| Wismar | No slogan. Extensive use of the logo with the phrase "Hansestadt Wismar" (Eng. Hanseatic City of Wismar). | HANSESTADT wismar | A slogan "Fascinating Wismar" was found on one among a nominal number of promotional materials in English |

*Sources: the websites of the destinations, promotional materials and observational data (photographs by the author)*

The combination of shopping, eating and residential character is especially typical of streets, so that they either attain a specific character or form 'character zones', which provide a particular movement of atmospheres. For example, beginning a shopping and eating tour on Pikk Street in Tallinn (place for staying), tourists will further find themselves in quarters of mixed character (space for shopping, walking and residential functions). Some activities in streets and squares prevail over others, intensifying and accentuating their specific character while simultaneously reducing the choice of activities offered to tourists. Some categories of activities (housing, eating, and consuming public services) maintain their presence at the level of 75% or more in some streets. The observation data about shopping suggest that because of the presence of a street typology including various characters which attracts tourists, this is the changing character of streets that offer dimensions of 'real life' that potentially meet the tourists' expectations of the experience of destinations. It has to be noted that, interrelated seasons of the year and tourism seasons have an effect on the spatial consumption of urban heritage in regard to how the inside-outside spatial dialectic supports or are applicable in the socioeconomic activities on sites (e.g., some activities are temporarily closed during the low season in winter in Visby).

As widely acknowledged, heritage buildings and their unique facades, which represent the existing symbolic capital, are the centre points that attract the tourist gaze and, as such, are also used in multiple forms of destination branding. Observations of indoor and outdoor spaces of the most significantly preserved medieval buildings included recording all visually detectable activities in buildings and their surroundings for mapping spatial functionality in '*view corridors*'. However, while view corridors are defined by the visibility of at least half of the exterior of the most significantly preserved medieval buildings by the walker, their actual potential as places for staying is assessed in relation to the intensified multimode consumption of the historical heritage site, and therefore, to the construction of symbolic capital as a complex process unfolding on the reciprocity of social practices and buildings constituting the potential for social practices.

The conceptualisation of view corridors partially ensues from the extensive use of heritage facades in promotional materials by destinations and businesses (see Figure 11) (altogether 20 view corridors were constructed in all seven towns). Within the construction of view corridors, facades form seductive elements (cf. Michelson and Paadam, 2010, for the earlier versions of this analysis) that entice tourists to explore the heritage sites, especially if they are involved in producing the experiences of eating or shopping.

(a)

(b)
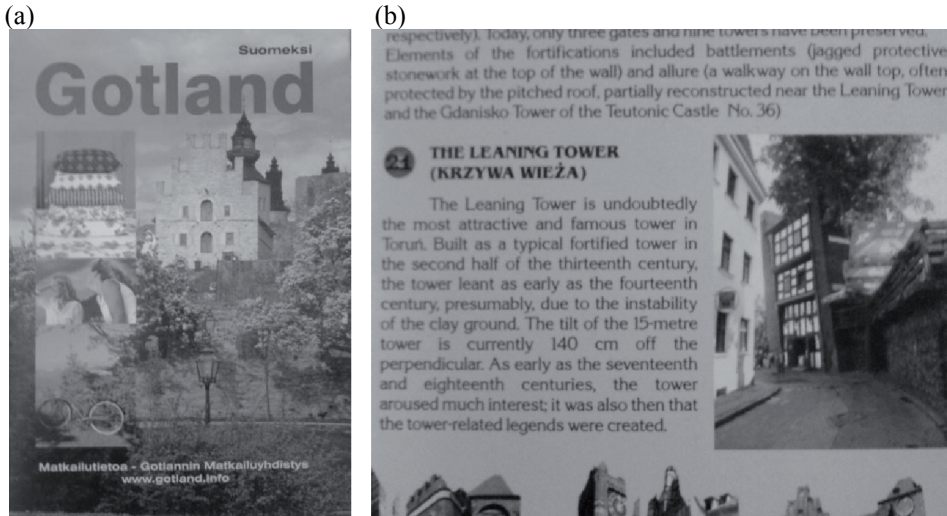


*Figure 11. Constructing the tourist gaze in the promotion of medieval heritage architecture in tourism materials: (a) half of the facade of the heritage building behind the medieval town wall in Visby, and (b) a leaning tower in Toruń (photographs by the author)*

The observational data in all selected destinations allowed the construction of view corridors of distinct character and the definition of the benefits of the presence of heritage landmarks (in Stralsund, Tallinn, Toruń, and Visby two or more view corridors were constructed through specifically promoted buildings in promotional materials). The special *morphological types* of view corridors include *single object based view corridors* (see Figure 12, a-l), *overlapping view corridors* (see Figure 13) and *split view corridors* (see Figure 12, j-l). The author argues that the higher the level of overlap, which is the opportunity to embrace views of objects of highly valued medieval character and to experience moments for staying offered by local businesses, the more powerful signs are produced to attract tourists. The split view corridors occurring as a restricted view of landmarks in the urban heritage space assume more intensive strategies for cultural or socioeconomic activities, more advanced branding strategies and more careful urban planning, though detached parts of a split view corridor might be regarded as added value to the view corridor as they enlarge its area, thereby potentially increasing tourist experiential satisfaction.
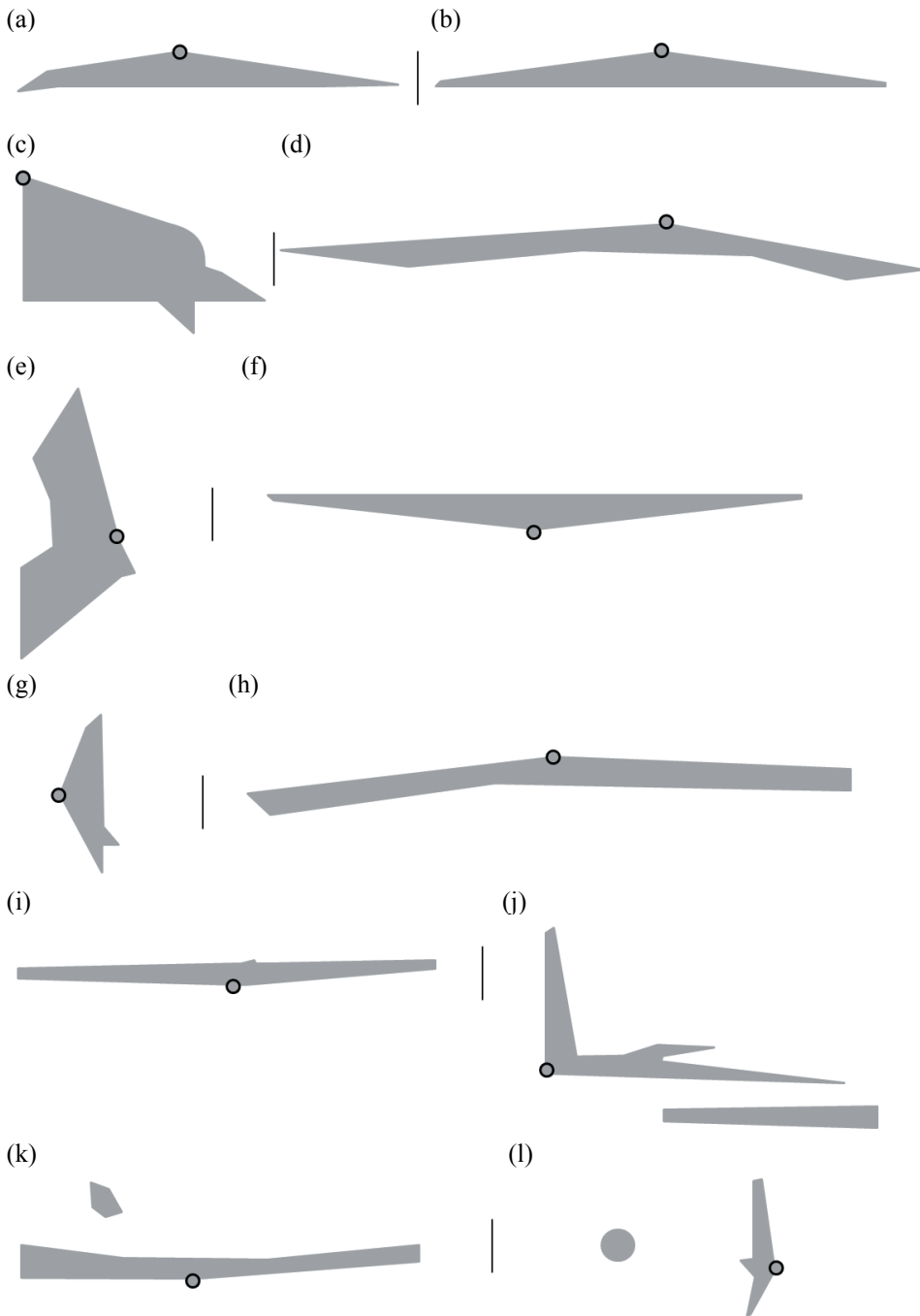
*Figure 12. Types of view corridors: (a-l) single object based view corridors and (j-l) split view corridors. The view corridors here roughly follow the exact borders of their areas and sizes and are specifically intended to demonstrate the identified typology. The most significantly preserved buildings are marked with a ring outlined in black (illustrations by the author)*

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)
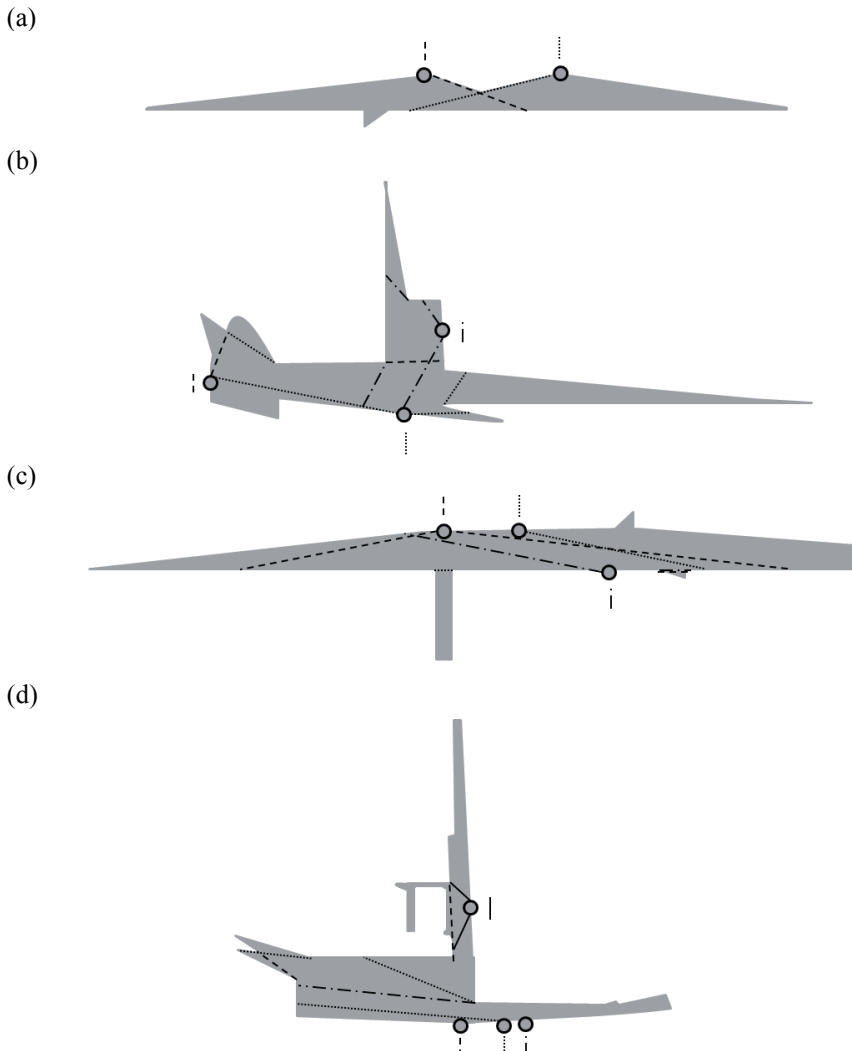
*Figure 13. Overlapping view corridors. These view corridors roughly follow the exact borders of their areas and sizes and are specifically intended to demonstrate the identified typology. The most significantly preserved buildings are marked with a ring outlined in black. A specific type of a border of a view corridor for each building is identified and presented near the ring (illustrations by the author)*

As old buildings create emotional and temporal meanings in the minds of onlookers (Andrew, 1994, p. 325), the author asserts here that the presence and visibility of historical buildings and their authentic facades are vital for inviting tourists to heritage destinations. However, the variety of the activities conducted within view corridors defines how efficiently these building are used for the tourism industry. The moment the exterior facade of the building invites a tourist appears to be crucial.

Depending on how extensively the space is used for socioeconomic activities, the characteristics of the view corridor space could attain various levels of *consuming space* and *walking space*. As the exterior of the well preserved medieval building extensively promoted in tourist materials is an object which generates special attention in terms of the tourist gaze, the use and openness of the inner space of the building might significantly influence the perception of a view corridor, thereby generating a specific character (i.e., *attributive types* of view corridors as distinct from the morphological typology; see Table 4).

*Table 4. The types of view corridors*

| Type of view corridor | Description |
|---|---|
| I Morphological types | |
| Single object based view corridor (see Figure 12, a-i) | A view corridor of a single historical building assuming more intensive socioeconomic activities inside the building or in the vicinity of it. |
| Overlapping view corridor (see Figure 13) | A view corridor constitutive of more than one single object based view corridor enabling more powerfully to experience moments for staying offered by local businesses. |
| Split view corridor (see Figure 12, j-l) | Because of a restricted view, split view corridors assume more intensive strategies for cultural or socioeconomic activities. In the case of detached parts, a split view corridor might be regarded as an added value potentially increasing tourist experiential satisfaction. |
| II Attributive types | |
| 'Closed invitation' | A view corridor for a historical building with a closed or specific function (i.e., non-tourist) in its interior (e.g., residential or office functions). |
| 'Rejecting invitation' | A view corridor for a historical building with an empty interior (i.e., with no active function). |
| 'Open invitation' | A view corridor for a historical building with extensive use of the inner space of the building and other edifices of the view corridor, i.e., view corridors with fully realised inner capacity. |
| 'Generous invitation' | A view corridor for a historical building with extensive use of the inner, outer and in-between spaces of the historical building and other edifices of the view corridor. |

'*Closed invitation*' occurs when a tourist attracted by the exterior cannot enter the interior of the building (e.g., in case of the heritage building having residential or office functions within), and therefore, long-term urban space policy could be directed towards the potential opening of the inner space of noteworthy medieval heritage buildings. Extensive use of the inner space of the building and other edifices in the view corridor reproduces '*view corridors with*

*fully realised inner capacity*' that are located as dominant elements in tourist areas, and terraces located in these corridors could be used to gain additional revenue from providing gazing while staying. The concentration of a significant number of socioeconomic activities because of the location (e.g., incorporating pedestrianized shopping streets) forms the basis for the reconstruction of a '*generous invitation*'. The notion of the '*closed invitation*' could be further developed in the case of view corridors, where being aesthetically attracted by the exterior of the building, the tourist is subsequently faced with an empty building. Such view corridors present a '*rejecting invitation*', and hence urban management policies should tend towards decreasing the number of this type of view corridors. Overlapping view corridors with 'generous invitations' were identified in Stralsund and Tallinn, implying that there is integrity which builds upon the dual relationship between the location and number of noteworthy historical buildings and the present active use of the heritage space in the specific contexts under observation. The author conceives that utilising the location of noteworthy medieval heritage objects empowers the agents to gain higher profits and secure a competitive position in attracting the tourists.

### 3.1.2 Offering unique products and services

*'Real-live Gingerbread Museum'*
*In this museum one can view shows of gingerbread baking according to ancient recipes. Under the supervision of experienced masters, participants of these shows learn about the history of the famous delicacy. They learn about ways of dough-making, spices and decorative shapes of wooden forms. Guests actively participate in the show; they form and bake gingerbread which they later take home as a souvenir from Toruń. In the museum there is a shop and a café.*
*(From the brochure 'Toruń. Tourist attractions' in Toruń)*

Product offers concern providing experiences (including goods and services) within the integrity of various characters of the heritage space (as considered in the previous section) with a salient focus on selling the tourists specific products of local character that are widely available in shops and souvenir desks (see Appendix 4). The product offers from the towns under observation appear as a significant attribute in terms of (re)constructing a distinctive destination identity, especially utilising features and presentations of local architecture in souvenirs and other objects and selling locally unique products and associated services. From information in the promotional materials, the author argues here that the provision of locally unique products appears to form on the basis of differences in the historically accumulated traditions (e.g., gingerbread in Toruń) or skills of the local people (e.g., wool products by craftspeople in Visby), and recently acquired professional skills underpinned by business success (e.g., chocolate in Bruges). As such, each destination should carefully review the potential for enhancing the symbolic values of existing products or nurturing the creation of new ones to reconfigure the souvenir market in a

destination (especially in the case of Wismar, which has no unique local product).

Both the mobilisation of the architectural attributes of destinations in socioeconomic activities to strengthen destination propositions and the (re)production of unique local products and associated experiences epitomise the dual relationship between the attributes of WHSs and the agents who utilise them in actions, thereby contributing to a destination's success through the skillful use of locally unique characteristics that strengthen the branding of the destination (see also Figure 14).



*Figure 14. A unique local product in Lübeck sustaining the experiential nature of destination consumption: marzipan (in the form of architectural edifices from the town) sold in a centrally located café, which is promoted as 'the unofficial hallmark of Lübeck' and provides 'a unique shopping experience' (in Lübeck) (photograph by the author)*

Furthermore, offering unique products becomes interrelated with the internationally valued unique architectural environment in the spatial practices of tourists through (1) the process of purchasing such products (e.g., chocolate or marzipan), (2) observing the production process in the specific places of origin, (3) observing them in shop windows that reproduce the uniqueness of the destinations, and/or (4) offering personalised consumption experiences through participation in the production of unique products that makes it possible for tourists to co-create authentic experiences of destination identity (e.g., making gingerbread in Toruń or marzipan in Tallinn). Because of the competition between the sellers of unique products, the businesses could employ a tactic of providing a unique product with special competitive

advantage within a unique architectural space (e.g., chocolateries installing stickers like 'The unique chocolate experience' and 'Belgian Royal Warrant Holder' on its windows in Bruges; 'Gingerbread of Torun – the only true one' in Toruń).

Unique product offerings that are set in authentic heritage contexts are significantly supported by the following: locally specific services that are integrated into projected images of the towns (e.g., boat tours offering views in Bruges, Lübeck, Toruń and Wismar) by exploiting the spatial qualities (see Figure 15); offering various services in the local unique medieval space, thereby potentially transforming the total experience of trivial services into unique tourist products (e.g., 'We can provide a picnic for you to enjoy in this fantastic medieval setting [of the ruined church]' in Visby); recreating unique traditions of the local people (e.g., procession Brugse Belofte in Bruges); as well as designing public space objects informed by the attributes of a destination (e.g., the sheep theme supported by street barricade blocks in the shape of sheep in Visby).

(a)                                            (b)



*Figure 15. (a) Experience the delivery of a unique product offering: discovering views with a boat tour that is suggested as a 'true experience' (in Bruges). (b) 'Beauty Spot' panorama of Toruń Old Town that is 'especially enchanting when illuminated in the night' could be enjoyed on the river tram during the daytime (photographs by the author)*

In addition to product offers, there is another difference between the towns under observation; for example, the way Visby positions itself and its products as part of Gotland ('Design and materials, Gotland style'), which might be a intentional decision on the part of a destination to brand and promote not a town but a whole island. In such cases, winner from the branding exercise becomes the wider community, and this could be a case when a destination at a higher level (i.e., the island in the case of Visby) promotes alternative attractions and destinations in the region along with alternatives to the historical core as an added value. On the other hand, the wider context of the island supports the branding initiatives of Visby as a tourism destination. Such multiple promotion

connotes the complexity of product offers that are vividly expressed in the joint-promotion of experiences of attractions on different spatial levels, including within the historical core of the town ('District museum in Toruń' or '[t]he 12 church ruins' as one of the 'Striking features' in Visby), within the larger city space or nearby destinations in the country (e.g., villages of Damme and Lissewege in the case of Bruges, Travemünde in Lübeck).

In general, product offers in the selected towns strongly mobilise the promotion of a destination identity, especially in the case of specific products that build the destination's competitive advantage and are often sold on the main squares and tourist streets. By contrast, product offers could lack local uniqueness (amber from Latvia and Lithuania and *matrioshkas* from Russia in Tallinn as a possible sign of mixed identities and markets), and this could produce a place brand strategy gap, which potentially might decrease tourist satisfaction in the long term or affect the development of tourist loyalty to a destination in specific target groups. In addition, a gap between the identities of place and product offers occurs when models of buildings do not represent local historical buildings (e.g., some of the models sold in Tallinn) that become the very icons of the 'otherness' of a visited place (Schouten, 2006, p. 192). However, local products from nearby destinations in the same country, sometimes being associated with the country's wider cultural identity, might diversify the tourist experience (e.g., the Brussels Waffle and beer theme in the souvenir market in Bruges or Estonian handicraft and applied and/or creative art in Tallinn, where part of this has become endowed with the status of the local product if produced on site). Furthermore, not all approaches incorporate the offering of unique products. For example, in Stralsund and Wismar, the typology of souvenirs draws on more general or even trivial themes (the sea), which are, nevertheless, developed into an efficient strategy when applied as a theme in the production of other attractive objects for consumption (miniature chocolate sculptures of fish, anchors, ships, boats or lighthouses in Stralsund).

An exemplary symbolic meaning-making process building upon a unique local product (lace in Bruges, see Figure 16) manifests an enhancement of a destination identity, and hence, the constitution of symbolic capital that supports destination branding strategies. This example connotes various modes of mobilising heritage space: the aestheticisation of heritage space in compliance with the destination identity, and multi-layered and differentiated processes of the (re)production of the unique local attributes of a destination. It appears that the exploitation of urban heritage space in socioeconomic activities and tourist experiential consumption might concur in order to reproduce the spatial attributes of musealisation (as suggested by Nelle, 2009).

(a)                                          (b)
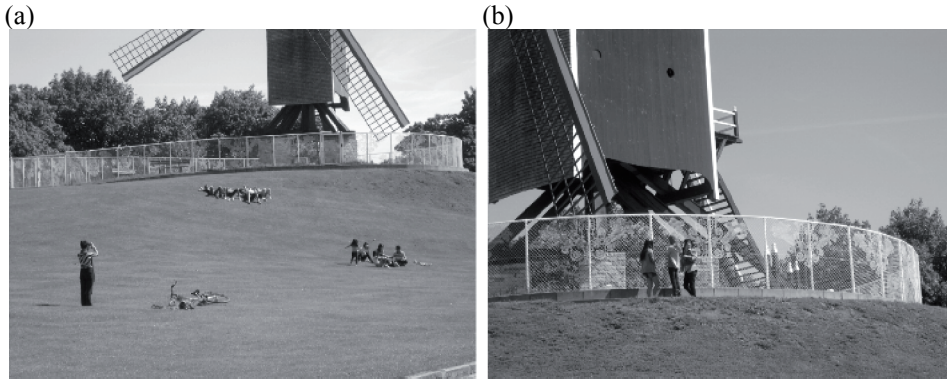


*Figure 16. An exemplary symbolic meaning-making process that connects destination identity and image with spatial practices of tourists in their walking or staying experiences in urban heritage space, thereby building the competitive advantages of a destination: redesigning a fence using white wire in a form of lace (one of the local identity symbols) surrounding the mills in Bruges (photographs by the author)*

As in the case of the production of souvenirs that play an important role in establishing and preserving the image of a destination (Schouten, 2006, p. 200), or the incorporation of representations of particular attributes of the built environment into logos as a means of capitalising on associative properties to create and communicate a sense of differentiation and uniqueness in their branding activities in an increasingly competitive environment (Warnaby & Medway, 2010, p. 205, p. 220), both commodification of heritage space with motifs of architectural landmarks and acknowledged attractions, as well as the offering of unique local products and experiences in the heritage space (as the present section has shown) build the competitive advantage of a destination in the symbolic economy through the (re)production of the attributes of differentiation and uniqueness, and the (re)construction of destination identity.

Judging by the product offers in different towns, it may be asserted that the primary way to gain and sustain competitive advantage is seen to be by utilising the existing available attributes of a destination (e.g., architecture or locations of other nearby attractions) in various possible ways in order to empower a destination identity.

As product offers are provided in the context of the heritage space, mobilised in the attributes of a destination identity, in the context of mixed spatial characters, which (re)construct the spatial perception, then various dimensions of spatial experiences were found that contribute to (re)shaping the perception of space and are considered in the following discussion.

### 3.1.3 Offering unique spatial experiences

*'No cars in the city of Visby'*
*'To help our unique city to justify its place on the world heritage list, no cars or motor vehicles are allowed in the inner city of Visby during the summer months. Taxis, buses (in special bus lanes), delivery vans and private cars belonging to city residents are the only vehicles allowed'*
*(Text on the information board near the entrance to the Old Town of Visby)*

Experiences offered to tourists in urban medieval sites may be conceptualised in the context of the spatial organization of heritage areas supported by different socioeconomic, cultural activities and apparent urban policy strategies, which are themselves spatially informed by the presence of heritage and other spatially identifiable resources (e.g., located by the water). The analysis of the observation data allows us to identify a variety of dimensions constituting the spatial experiences of tourists:

    − providing public access to protected heritage objects,
    − creating aesthetical enjoyment in various situations in the experience of heritage space outdoors and/or indoors,
    − involving heritage buildings in modern uses offering a consumer experience of products and services,
    − providing a view as a singular experience or part of a complex consumption experience of heritage space,
    − providing an experience of urban heritage space genuinely merging with water,
    − designing and ensuring quality public space and making the experience of the town explorative,
    − introducing visitors to empty space (as a special experience of heritage space).

The *openness* of heritage sites (see Figure 17) in terms of accessibility is regarded as a spatial attribute that diversifies the tourist experience. Most significantly, merging the outer and inner space of heritage buildings into a connected whole of architectural space that is accessible to the public enlarges the scale of the symbolic value of urban medieval space that attracts the tourist gaze. Continuous adaptation of historic towns to the needs of contemporary society and audiences is observed in the towns' attempts to diversify experiences in public and semi-public spaces and, in particular, convert the inner space of medieval buildings for multiple use, or construct the exteriors of modern buildings with reference to the historical context of the site.

*Figure 17. Openness comprises the transformation of the internal and/or external space of a heritage spot into free access public or private space: (a) the ground floor of a private property (a medieval historical building) open to the public (in Stralsund); (b) the stretch of the town wall open for walking via free day-long access (in Visby); (c) ruins as part of aesthetic landscapes merged with the greenery (in Visby); (d) the ruins of the Church of St. Mary near its surviving tower as part of the public space with sitting landscapes aestheticised with public art (in Wismar) (photographs by the author)*

Due to preservation and conservation works, the aesthetic spatial qualities, which are found in many historical buildings and as such are promoted in deliveries, also in tourist programmes, and enhanced by late-night lighting effects on site, continue to constitute the aesthetic experience. As has been pertinently asserted by O'Brien (1997), functional elements of buildings that were performed practical functions in the past serve aesthetic purposes for a contemporary viewer (e.g., ruins on display). Hence, heritage architecture may be considered to involve the (re)construction of the symbolic capital inherent in heritage buildings in the tourism context, as long as it is open to the public. The author argues that functional elements of heritage buildings create signs with reference to the symbolic presence of the past to shape either a pure aesthetic experience, or, depending on the context in which they are exposed to the tourist gaze, also a number of other purposes. The observation analysis allows us to suggest that these functional elements offer the potential for multiple or interchangeable uses for consumers (see Figure 18).
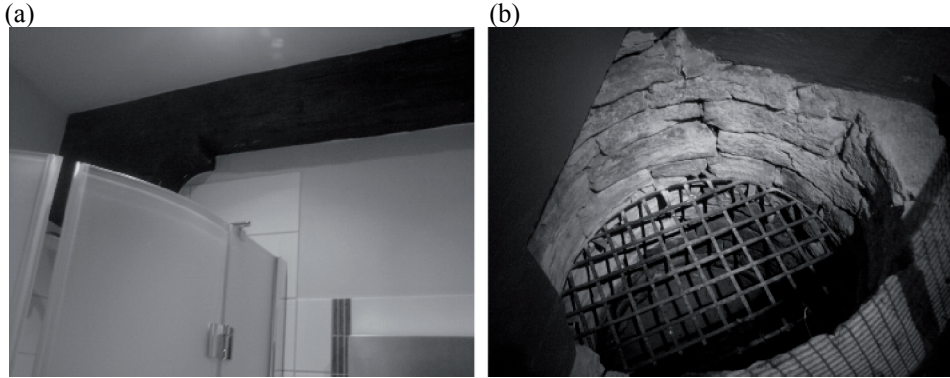
*Figure 18. Functional elements with an: (a) aesthetic purpose (wooden elements in the ceiling in a hotel room in Stralsund) or (b) educational purpose (a well in a museum building in Visby) (photographs by the author)*

The author observes that the historic edifices of heritage value that are actively *involved in various socioeconomic activities* targeting visitors (see also Figure 19) making architecture intrinsic in the experience of product or service consumption. The value of products or services provided might increase when they are made available in the interior space of heritage buildings. Attracting tourists for their authentic flavour and ambience, accessible heritage interiors are perceived as added value within the tourist experience. Moreover, when incorporated into the business conception as an advantageous design element that supplies an authentic sense of the past, the display of architecturally valuable interiors complementing an attractive exterior considerably contributes to the branding of the heritage experience and increases the extractive (and hence total economic) value of the heritage edifices used (similar considerations can be found in Warnaby, 2009).
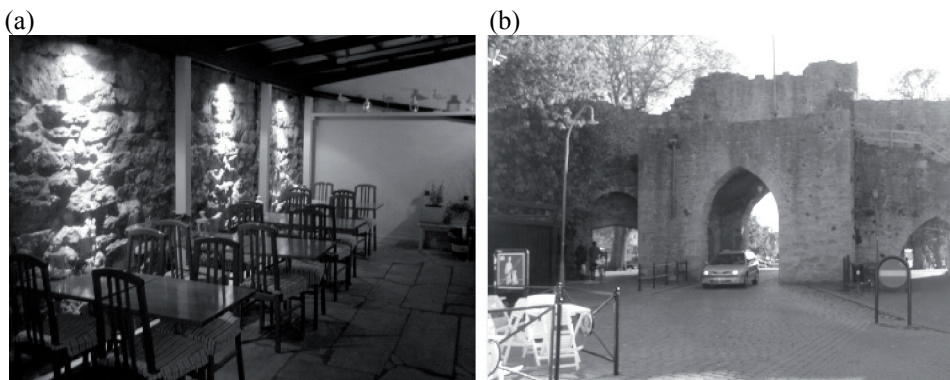


*Figure 19. Various parts of one historical edifice involved in different socioeconomic activities: a town wall in Visby as (a) a wall in the breakfast room in a hotel, or (b) part of the transportation system (photographs by the author)*

Businesses run in heritage buildings not only (re)produce the symbolic value of heritage but also gain economic capital by capitalising on the symbolic entity of the premises: they incorporate the characteristics of distinctive heritage sights within the description of the location to strengthen their competitive advantage using the symbolic qualities of an urban heritage site.

Therefore, businesses run in heritage sites strive to maximise profit by exploiting the spatially defined symbolic value of their location, incorporating opportunities of both outside-in and inside-out movement, thereby constructing a simulated past through adaptive reuse. As Orbaşli (2000, p. 56) assumes, the gradual movement from open and semi-open to closed space is significant to the extent of penetration into the urban fabric, and therefore, into cultural attractions such as cathedrals or museums, and service providers such as cafés, restaurants or shops. While interiors offer special architectural experiences, the service space extending from inside out towards terraces encloses a different perspective. As acknowledged elsewhere, terraces are part of café culture which represents one of the few remaining opportunities for public sociability (Montgomery, 1997, p. 83) and for creating interface spaces: physically demarked but publicly accessible (Carmona, 2010, p. 169). The author contends that *views* of objects and enlarged opportunities to observe, perceive and feel the authentic ambience of 'real life' on terraces, increases the value of products and services in the heritage space. On a broad scale, such increases in the value of an experience offered to visitors empowers a destination's position in the tourism market. To provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy a view on terraces is apparently a regular pattern when (seasonal variations) and where (streets, squares, waterfronts) appropriate in the urban heritage space (see also Figure 20).

(a)                      (b)



*Figure 20. (a) Businesses apply an alternative way of creating added value in the total consumption experience by providing a view for consumers, e.g., when part of the facade is (re)constructed by installing movable windows creating an illusion of a terrace with a view (in Bruges). (b) Businesses could pose a challenge to provide a highly valued specific view on a terrace by excluding active 'real life' (people using public space as a secondary sitting landscape or as walking space obscuring the views for other people sitting on a terrace in Bruges) (photographs by the author)*

As observed, providing a view not only on terraces but from other spatial perspectives like, for example, windows is applied in the design of residential quarters, hotel buildings, museums, various historical buildings and other cultural buildings (e.g., a view onto the Old Town from the open-air penguin section of the oceanarium in Stralsund), as well as special public view platforms (e.g., the Upper Town in Tallinn), though because of the specific morphological qualities any appropriate spot with such qualities could also serve as a place for a view. Moreover, the public view platforms serve as one of the major attractions of destinations becoming part of the product offering.

Both the regular interchange ability of views of the same heritage sight made available for the tourist gaze in the urban public space, sometimes regulated by the local authorities, and the functional interchange ability of a heritage sight in providing views combined with various uses diversifies tourist spatial practices and contributes to constructing more multifaceted dimensions of symbolic capital embodied in heritage. An example of the former can be seen in part of the medieval town wall in Müürivahe Street in Tallinn, which functions as an attraction open to the tourist gaze around the clock: as stalls for knitted products during the daytime and as a lit heritage object at night. An example of the latter can be seen in the Belfry in Bruges being positioned as a symbol of the town in tourist deliveries, and both a sight to be viewed in the public square and, for example, during carillon concerts.

Providing views of objects and daily life in the public space of heritage sites, offered to tourists on terraces or primary sitting landscapes (especially squares or pedestrian streets) is central in branding destinations and largely dependent on urban and cultural policies. In addition, identification and fostering the creation of secondary sitting landscapes increases the quality of the public space that potentially attracts tourists. Occasionally, the potential sitting landscapes are seen as disturbing the success of businesses (see Figure 21).

(a)                                    (b)
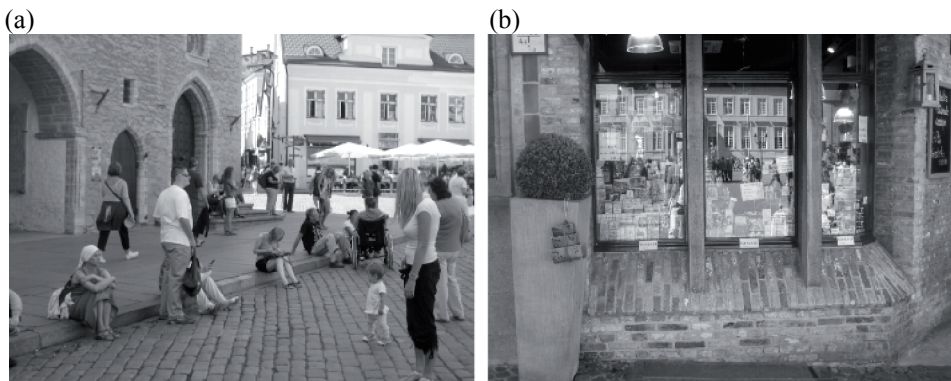


*Figure 21. (a) In addition to primary sitting landscapes, tourists occupy secondary sitting landscapes to gaze at 'real life' and the architectural environment of heritage value: tourists are sitting on the pavement in front of the Town Hall in Tallinn. (b) The potentially popular secondary sitting landscapes are protected from tourists by property owners, in order to maintain the view for consumers of products offered inside the building; the signs on windowsills: "No seat. Thanks" (photographs by the author)*

There are numerous other (particularly cultural) activities that call for tourists' attention (see also Figure 22) and offer diversified, often playful, experiences (performing and painting in streets, street marketing, fairs with local products, and festivities) of 'real life' in the symbolic space of heritage sites. The continuing recurrence of socioeconomic activities at specific places in the heritage space could potentially generate the expectation of a particular quality of space in the minds of tourists (e.g., favourable locations in the public space for street musicians).

(a)                                           (b)
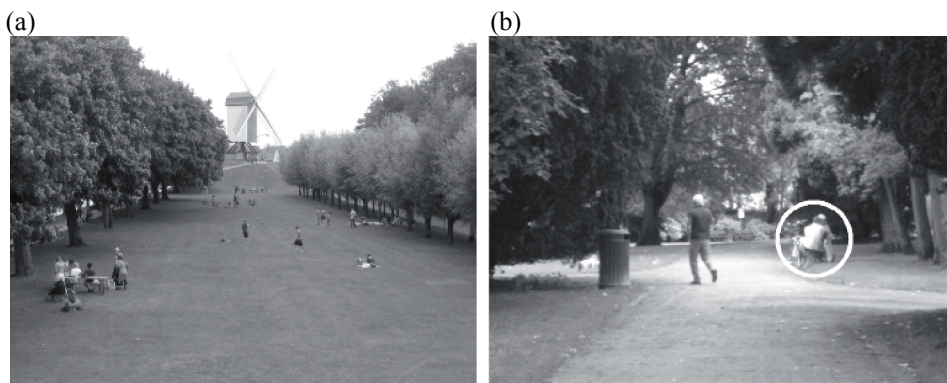


*Figure 22. Among numerous activities in heritage sites, (a) extensive green public space for different kinds of users is potentially attractive to tourists because of its 'real life' nature (surrounding the Old Town in Bruges) and (b) "place[s] to kiss" on a tourist map in Bruges constructs romantic places in a heritage site through its representation, and therefore, constructs an expectation of tourist experiences (photographs by the author)*

It is quite obvious that the city policy applied in Hanseatic Old Towns is intended to engender the perception of water as a genuine component in the complex experience of heritage space (see Figure 23). Opening the public space toward the waterfront and offering active use, facilitated by different activities in that particular spatial context is vital for promoting tourism (cf. Waitt & McGuirk, 2007) incorporated within destination branding. A location on the waterfront can be considered a natural resource for heritage towns constituting symbolic capital. However, producing specific patterns of consumption associated with waterfronts vary in terms of the historical specificities of the spatial development of the towns under observation (e.g., the canals in Bruges significantly enlarge public space that merges with the water). The connection with the sea, as expressed in socioeconomic and cultural activities (selling fresh seafood in waterfront areas) and in representations of the city's identity, shapes one of the main dimensions of destination branding.

(a)                                              (b)



*Figure 23. (a) A vivid example of how the heritage space is opened toward the water is the oceanarium in Stralsund, which is located in the waterfront area in the immediate vicinity of the listed property, the Old Town. The entrance to the oceanarium is located from the sea side that continuously reproduces modern consumption patterns in the regenerated waterfront area. (b) Buying fish burgers and fresh fish from outlets in the harbour in Wismar (as in Stralsund) represents a locally specific unique experience and reinforces the spatial mental connection with water in tourist spatial practices (photographs by the author)*

Various approaches to the involvement of water in the construction of heritage identities produce obvious differences in the destinations in this study (see Table 5). Tallinn is the only city that does not have a waterfront within easy walking distance, and so it lacks this obvious connection. With its significant potential, the waterfront area is currently under redevelopment after the profound societal transformations of the 20th century and recent freeing from a socialist regime that had closed the seafront. In this transition period, citizens and tourists are attracted to the area, primarily by various open-air cultural events or as it is introduced in the conserved buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries.

The visual observation of the towns in the study identified different characteristics of designing and maintaining *quality urban space* (in terms of urban design and specific material attributes) that supports social activities, and therefore, attractiveness for tourists. The image of quality urban space in destinations is enhanced by improving the physical attributes of the space (streets designed with even pavement in the centre of the cobbled street that, as Kärrholm (2008) assumes, sustains the area as accessible and comfortable for walking and cycling consumers; walking areas along a town wall or along both a town wall and a seashore with primary sitting landscapes; pedestrianized areas in the Old Towns, sometimes with seasonal confines) and creating attractive aesthetics (well-designed and maintained courtyards and public spaces), as well displaying modern art objects in the open public space constructing meaningful connections between the presence of history in modern times and local historical narratives (e.g., animal or creature sculptures that attract the tourist gaze in Lübeck, Toruń, and Wismar, or decorating the town walls with small

ceramic sculptures as 'Passion Scene Gallery' in Toruń). However, the evidence of design strategies and/or practices that tend to contradict the authentic nature of the destination (artificial palm trees as a design element on the terraces in Visby) could produce a place brand strategy gap.

*Table 5. The characteristics of the waterfront areas connected to the study sites*

| Activity or use | Bruges (canals) | Lübeck (river) | Stralsund (sea) | Tallinn (sea) | Toruń (river) | Visby (sea) | Wismar (sea) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Waterfront as an attraction per se | X | X | X | X | X* | X | X |
| Comprising important attractions | X | X | X | | X | X | |
| Terraces | X | X | X | | | | X |
| Pedestrianized areas along waterfronts | X | X | X | X | X* | X* | X |
| Relaxing zones (parks, green areas etc.) | X | X | X | | | X | X |
| Variety of socioeconomic activities | X | X | | | | X | |
| Few socioeconomic activities | | | X | X | X | | X |
| Sense of neglect / underdeveloped | | | | | X | | |

*Remark: (*) The predominance of an activity or use in the waterfront area*

A specific feature of public spaces that are created for children, sometimes using medieval-themed attributes, is yet another means of creating quality public space (representing user selecting spaces as by Carmona, 2010, p. 169). Medieval towns are made attractive to children using the defined space of playgrounds, often with a view of the picturesque architectural landscape. Playgrounds might contain an educational dimension when symbols representing the city's identity are used in the design (a playground as a ship in Lübeck) and are offered for play (models of buildings reproduced as ceramic items for play in a sandbox in Stralsund). Quality space for children is also produced through the agency of churches in the Old Towns, providing church-building-themed play corners (e.g., Stralsund, Visby, and Wismar).

The quality of the urban heritage space is brought into the consciousness of visitors using spatial tokens of offerings of visualised, educationally orientated and alternative means to *explore the city* (providing tourist maps of the Old Town in an unconventional way; street signs towards sights, various information boards and destination advertisements; street models of the Old Town or single buildings or copies of historical objects, e.g., a trebuchet in Visby; an exhibition of part of the disused tram tracks in the streets of Toruń; indicating the location of a former wall using stone paving) that serve to enrich the representational space for tourists at the destinations, and, as claimed by Pennington and Thomsen (2010, p. 48), augmenting a particular representation, specifically via additional textual or photographic representations.

*Figure 24. The maintenance of quality urban space (a, b) interrelates with the need to provide urban public space for 'real life' which could in specific cases undermine the aesthetic power of historical buildings: the backside of the outlets in a small market and a garbage bin with graffiti on the Market Square in Lübeck (a) in the daytime and (b) in the evening. Adaptive reuse of single objects with empty space quality (c, d) in heritage space could strengthen their aesthetical power and diversify spatial practice of tourists through intensifying density of socioeconomic activities: empty space represented by (c) an empty historical building and (d) the ruins of St. Nicholas church, which comprise a closed area with no access (in Toruń) (photographs by the author)*

However, there are negative aspects concerning the maintenance of quality space (e.g., regular morning garbage bags, walls or garbage bins with graffiti, as Nelle (2009, p. 155) contends, graffiti creates signs of neglect), urban space with no signs of 'real life' in the form of only the high walls of buildings without windows and doors (i.e., closed transparency according to Gehl, 2010, p. 78) or a long single facade that interrupts the range of activities (both cases regarded as (re)production of a phased-out urban space in terms of human dimension according to Gehl, 2010, pp. 2–3). The author contends that these negative aspects undermine the pleasurable experience of a destination, and hence, the value of the symbolic capital of heritage sites (see also Figure 24 (a) and (b)), as well creating unattractive heritage space areas compared to other areas that undermines the performance of delivering destination experiences resulting in a possible place brand performance gap. In addition, literally *empty*

buildings or plots with no activities reduce the value of heritage space creating 'negative' undefined space, as claimed by Carmona (2010, p. 169). However, these occasional spaces with (as in Serageldin, 1999; see section 1.2.3) their option value present a consumption promise and potential for rehabilitation due to the supportive context of the entire heritage site (see also Figure 24 (c) and (d)), particularly in the tourism industry, which can create uses for redundant buildings, contributing to the preservation of heritage built environment (Nasser, 2003, p. 478).

Spatially informed socioeconomic activities, as observed and reviewed in the current section, together with the heritage attributes of destinations in urban medieval sites, constitute a multidimensional integrity forming the dimensions of the reciprocal interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital: as in the case of the urban public space near the Drotten Ruins in Visby (see Figure 25), where the dimensions of creating an aesthetic experience (conserved ruins and a designed relaxing zone), designing and maintaining quality public space (space for staying: primary sitting landscape on benches; secondary sitting landscape on the grass), providing a view (towards the ruins, streets and heritage buildings in the sitting landscape), and introducing the empty space (ruins made picturesque) as the monumental past (by O'Brien, 1997) superimpose on each other to empower the locally unique heritage.



*Figure 25. Integrity of the spatial dimensions of a destination (urban public space near Drotten Ruins in Visby) (photograph by the author)*

In terms of the spatially defined characteristics of heritage sites, the current observation of the historical centres of Stralsund and Wismar, which are included as one property in the UNESCO list of WHSs, suggests the two towns be considered separate sites as identified for this study because of the differences between the two towns, firstly, in terms of the specific architectural landscape comprising unique heritage buildings, secondly, in terms of the

qualities of the urban space (a harbour area as part of World Heritage property in Wismar and as a redeveloped area comprising one of the main sights of the city—the oceanarium—in Stralsund), and, thirdly, in terms of experience-scapes (the presence of unique products—pottery and sea-themed chocolate products—in Stralsund).

On the basis of the spatial experiences offered in heritage sites within the multitudinous opportunities present in the observed towns, the author contends that the branding strategies are relatively exhaustive of the naturally available spatial qualities explicitly attached to heritage of outstanding universal value and are exploited to gain economic benefits as well as establishing the destination's position in the tourism market. However, it also is asserted that the identified spatial experiences emerge in various degrees of intense incorporation of socioeconomic activities, and destinations appear to have transformed or attempt to transform, especially, the waterfront areas (having an important status in the attraction systems of all destinations) into attractive urban space.

### 3.1.4 Short conclusion

*'Advent season in the UNESCO World Heritage'*
*[...] Along with the neighbouring areas around the picturesque town hall the vaulted*
*cellar will turn into a romantic Christmas island – the perfect setting to enjoy*
*Christmas' unique atmosphere. [...] The vaulted cellar ensures an unforgettable*
*experience for the whole family, which will put you in the right mood of Christmas.*
*(From the brochure of the Christmas market in Stralsund)*

Chapter 3.1 has examined the spatial dimensions of the dual relationship forming on the interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in the urban heritage space. With regard to local uniqueness, the author observes that the character of different urban units (streets and squares) and the defined view corridors, product offers, as well multifaceted spatial experiences constitute interactive and dynamic forces that shape the on-going socio-material processes in the urban heritage space of WHSs, thereby contributing to the accumulation of symbolic capital and producing the distinct attributes of a destination in the symbolic economy where tourist perceptions are continually being (re)constructed. Therefore, the specific character of the symbolic capital is exploited in destination branding and converted into economic capital, which is reinvested in the continuous reinvention of the symbolic capital through socioeconomic activities along with the planning of public and semi-public spaces for walking and staying.

The comparative analysis of seven towns enables us to understand how a heritage space with a specific architectural character, i.e., medieval heritage, is activated across different destinations, thereby providing a destination to revisit or strengthening potential destination branding strategies. In light of the findings from the visual observation, the author argues that heritage objects and spaces have been displayed and offered for use in a number of ways, with socioeconomic activities extensively utilising heritage buildings to offer unique

products and experiences for visitors. These socioeconomic practices in specific spatial contexts of heritage intensify the reproduction of symbolic value that is used in destination branding and constitute the following dimensions: creating the character of streets and squares, and attracting the tourist gaze by displaying noteworthy medieval heritage, offering experiences of consuming unique products in various ways, as well as specific spatial experiences. This is observed in the current study sites, where offers of unique products anchored to the unique identities of the towns integrated within the branding create significant place-specific distinctions between destinations with unique UNESCO listed medieval architecture, and hence, secure their competitive position in the region or on the international tourism market.

Drawing on these features, *different dimensions of a spatially informed destination awarded with a UNESCO World Heritage status* (see Table 6) are seen as attributes of a destination that are conceived to be either mobilised or avoided (depending on the specific type of dimension) in (re)creating destination branding strategies.

*Table 6. Different dimensions of a spatially informed destination awarded with a UNESCO World Heritage status*

| Type | Description | Example town |
|---|---|---|
| UNESCO brand manifestation | A destination links its identity specifically with the UNESCO brand, which is extensively used in the urban space | Bruges and Visby |
| Renowned products based dimension | A destination draws its identity upon the uniqueness of locally produced well-known products | Bruges, Lübeck, and Toruń |
| Focusing on architecture (or an architecture based dimension) | A destination lacks products tightly connected to its identity | All destinations |
| Incorporation into a destination at a broader level | A destination that promotes and is branded as part of a larger destination | Visby |
| Controversial dimension | A destination exposed to either or simultaneously a place brand strategy gap and a place brand performance gap (e.g., because of widely sold non-local products) | Tallinn |

These dimensions of a spatially informed destination, which emerge from the present qualitative research, could be regarded as theoretical and practical constructs of the dimensions of the types of destinations, as well providing an insight into and not as an elucidation of the theoretically simplified type(s) proposed by Andergassen et al. (2013, p. 95) in the quantitative study on the economics of a tourism destination (see section 1.1.1).

The present chapter 3.1 has shown how the dual relationship of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital is spatially informed in the urban heritage context: through (re)constructing spatial perceptions, providing product offers and specific spatial experiences—all constituting unique attributes of destinations. The author contends that inextricably interconnected heritage space and agents conducting multitudinous socioeconomic activities (thus, connoting a dual relationship) play a central role in the (re)production of the unique attributes of a heritage destination.

## 3.2 Participating in the (re)construction of the symbolic capital of a destination: conducting socioeconomic activities in the heritage space in Bruges and Tallinn

This chapter focuses on exploring the dual interdependent nature of destination branding and the process of constructing symbolic capital from the perspective of a complexity of socioeconomic activities conducted in the heritage space of tourism destinations by drawing on the analysis of representations of agents' experiences in Bruges and Tallinn. As such, this analysis uncovers the agents' inside view of their daily activities, conceived here as engagement in the (re)construction of symbolic capital, and hence, the (re)production of space attracting tourists and contributing to the image-making identified through participant observation (in section 3.1). The purpose of the current section is to elucidate how agents from various fields comprehend the discursive tourism space of heritage value within which they are acting, and how this space with its particular character is being continuously (re)produced in their experiences through various fields of socioeconomic activities. By exploring the agents' accounts, ideas, thoughts and feelings, although these may sometimes be ambivalent and contradictory, nevertheless enables us to elucidate how the medieval heritage space is maintained and (re)produced as the liveable and attractive assets of a destination through contemporary methods of reusing an urban space of heritage value.

The first subsection (3.2.1) focuses on the nature of the engagements of local people in the heritage space, i.e., agents' conduct of multifarious socioeconomic activities. The analysis highlights how groups of agents—business and cultural agents, governing agents, and residents—conceptualise their activities in the heritage space and, in particular, the meaning of the unique material heritage in terms of its resourcefulness viewed from different perspectives of conduct. The analysis is underlined with the concern of understanding the reciprocal nature of the relationship forming between the agency and material structures of the heritage space constituting the continuous (re)construction of the symbolic capital of a destination. The following subsection (3.2.2) is dedicated to an analysis of the agents' practices, which strategically activate material heritage by drawing on the agents' accounts of their experiences of conservation practice particularly of heritage buildings, functional regulations applied to the use of heritage and the (re)creation of the public space of heritage sites. The final part

(3.2.3) of the present section centres round the (re)production of a destination image (re)shaped by virtue of conducting socioeconomic activities in the heritage space and concerns of the agents in respect to the features of a destination image. The perception of the features and attributes of tourism and a destination image informs the visions of differentiated strategic directions in destinations to enhance the destination's attributes and qualities. Figure 26 graphically and concisely presents the main focuses in the analysis of the interview data across the three sections.
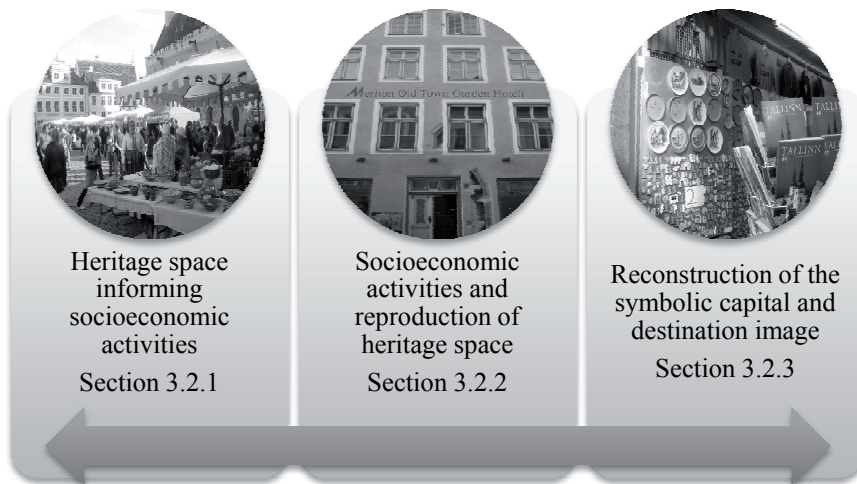


*Figure 26. The main focuses in the analysis of the interview data in section 3.2 (conceptualisation and photographs by the author)*

The three main analytical units depicted in Figure 26 represent the intrinsically interrelated dimensions of the process of the (re)production of the heritage space of WHS destinations.

## 3.2.1 Assessing the meaning and nature of engagements in the heritage space

To provide the context for presenting the analysis of the agents' accounts of the meaning and the perceived resourcefulness of heritage for their specific activities, we first briefly specify the position of the agents conducting different activities in the heritage space. In spatial terms, the agents are viewed as acting on different levels, i.e., within the destination and between destinations, defined by the nature and ways they position their activities in the market for local and/or tourist clients. All groups engaged in particular socioeconomic activities appear, in a broad sense, in the arena of competing destinations and, in a narrow sense, within the destination under observation, although distinguished by their

competitive intentions. The (1) business and cultural agents, delivering products and services, might be detected in terms of gaining and sustaining their competitive advantage within the destination or on the level of destinations; and, (2) the non-competitive intentions of residents acting in the heritage space are applied mainly within the destination, although indirectly contributing to the building of the competitive advantage of the city at the level of destinations. The third group of (3) local government agents presents a case of mixed intentions in competitive and non-competitive terms, acting in a destination to contribute in various ways to activities conducted by agents in different fields as well as to the general well-being of the citizens, and the level of competing tourist destinations with the concern of guaranteeing competitive advantage for the town. The following discussion is led using insights into the agents' perceptions of acting in the heritage sites in the Old Towns of Bruges and Tallinn.

## 3.2.1.1 Gaining and sustaining a competitive advantage – the perspective of business and cultural agents

*But... it's more than an old city; there's a lively cultural scene here; a lot is happening and not just... it's more than a nice picture.*
*(a cultural agent in Bruges)*

*In this place as it is...in the Old Town and all of it [...] the whole milieu and the nature of our [...] displayed here in the best way*
*(a cultural agent in Tallinn)*

The research data bespeak the competitive advantage of socioeconomic activities conducted in the urban heritage space is to be built on a number of symbolic elements and spatial attributes related to and drawn from heritage values as signs associated with the notions of *authenticity and uniqueness*. Authenticity pertains to *handmade production* that is considered by the business agents as a significant strategic means with substantial influence on gaining competitive advantage in the field of tourist production (e.g., in Bruges with around 60 chocolate shops, marzipan in Tallinn). Emphasizing their offer of *authentic products and services in the authentic historical heritage space*, i.e., with an explicit origin and connection to the place, the agents conceive of building competitiveness to attract tourists and generate profit. However, offering authenticity entails the provision of experiences of a lifestyle-driven place-specific identity, especially in cases when the brand name of a product has a salient connection with the place it is produced and is supported by story-telling, or where customers can observe the production process.

The entire tiny street – in itself, it feels... this is an entirely unique atmosphere, as we are working here and people can step in and see by themselves […]. [...] they can talk to the artist, which is quite exclusive, isn't it? (business agent in Tallinn)

Being personally involved in the delivery of goods and/or services on a daily basis, which is the case for small businesses, means businesses tend to rely on and relate to authentic spatial attributes with *the intimacy of the place*, the specific atmosphere where the service is provided, specifically in hotel and restaurant businesses. Intimacy builds on the personal nature of interactions between agents and customers, which is considered a business advantage because it meets the interest of a specific customer segment.

> It's not just a restaurant, it's a house, where people live and it gives a kind of intimate atmosphere to the house. (business agent in Bruges)

The authenticity and uniqueness of product offers are even more enhanced and promising for a successful business when it entails a *heritage-based narrative*, underpinned by a cross-generational family tradition and historically run in the same place, sometimes for centuries. In terms of locational considerations, a group of delineated agents running activities on the same spot as previous generations represent a historical continuity of activities (sometimes for centuries) based upon the consistency of the experience underpinned by the family history. Such historical continuities are more characteristic of the experiences of agents in Bruges. We cannot see a similar pattern for the agents interviewed in Tallinn because of the historical discontinuities from the major transformations of social systems in the 20th century. Places and buildings of particular historical attractiveness are continuously considered resourceful, and therefore, are targeted by business agents.

> There has always been commerce in this house and it has always attracted me for over 20-30 years, because of the location near the canal and because there's not a lot of places in Bruges where you can have a view that far away, from the centre of the city. So it's also a nice combination. [...] I've told the owners that I would like to buy their building. It was not for sale. [...] it is something you force a little bit to happen. [...] If you make it happen, it's nice. (business agent in Bruges)

> Then we came round the corner and she looked into the house through the window. And then... the high ceilings which we faced... she said: this space really inspires me. And that she wanted this... (business agent in Tallinn)

Such a complex approach, which draws on and promotes the *specific material and immaterial spatial attributes* of the heritage space, offering a sense of authenticity and unique experiences might be conceptualised as in the context of building competitive advantage for a particular business, as well as simultaneously the reproduction of distinctive attributes of the symbolic economy on a larger scale for the heritage space of a destination.

> Oh, we use it... it's very small, only two tables - so it's very exclusive, I call it. And we don't put any reservations on the terrace, we just let it happen, as it happens […] For me the terrace is not something extra, it's just more a kind of a service for the people who are interested in the terrace, which

means a lot of people, because it's really nice, near the canal and just a little away from everything, so it gives a nice feeling. (business agent in Bruges)

Yes, our characteristic feature is exactly that this grand medieval street [...]; and the entire history starts to play along here – it is like people even step into a different time. [...]simply unique pillars are cleaned and these windows… (business agent in Tallinn)

This is the general observation that drawing on the overwhelming seduction of heritage space, the *location of the activity* epitomises a significant dimension for the building of a competitive advantage in a destination.

Promoting by being in the best spot—this is the first thing. (business agent in Bruges)

Advantages of the location—being central... (business agent in Tallinn)

It is explicit in the interviewees' accounts that the choice made for locating the activity in a particular place is informed by immediately perceived specific features of heritage buildings as well as the larger spatial context of a heritage site, with the added value of the aesthetics of views, the overall urban infrastructure, the distance between other popular places in the destination, and the intensity of tourism in specific areas of the Old Town.

I hoped to come here for this spot, for this... well, fairy tale and a privilege to be in such a historic city, and at the same time, I imagined that instead of trying to go to the whole world with my art, I could trade the roles and... go and settle myself in a place, where the whole world comes. (business agent in Bruges)

Eh... location is superb. It's hard to think of a better location in the city. [...] we are in a much visited place, very popular place and due to this we get clients, tourists, especially in summer. This concerns the location in the Old Town – hard to think of any other place better (business agent in Tallinn)

However, in order to manage the competitive advantage in crowded tourist areas among heavy competition, location-based strategies for businesses are considered against alternative opportunities or business niches using different activities on a larger scale in heritage landscapes.

We are on the best spot in Bruges – [Old Town] really the best, because we are not close to chocolate and we are very close to the museum. So people are passing by always when they come to Bruges; they always pass by our gallery. (business agent in Bruges)

It's not, well, yes... it's at a little distance in terms of the usual Old Town route – it's perhaps not that convenient to come here, compared to Viru or Vene Streets [the business streets] where the people... Harju Street – all of them are more frequently visited than this corner here. [...] We wanted this to be more private, a little away from – a little like… well, for people who like

and know how to value this kind of food and are ready to pay for it (business agent in Tallinn)

It is obvious from the interview data that in order to meet customer expectations, *uniqueness is operationalized* at two interconnected instances: *unique products and services* and *the heritage space.* As such, the agents produce niche products that are distinct from the products of their competitors as well as act across the fields of activities conducted in the heritage space (e.g., unique products made available with related information in hotel receptions and shops, gifts for VIP guests etc.). Such a practice purports the interconnectedness of businesses in building the competitive advantage of destination and branding practices, accentuated in the local-product-based (re)production of a destination identity.

We [...] don't have television. But... the choice of books related to Bruges—Bruges history and... selection of movies and documentaries related to Bruges, art history or Middle Ages. [...] So, there is a strange combination of... well, very old, antique and all-modern comforts, but focused on the target of the visit. (business agent in Bruges)

A friend of mine owns a souvenir shop and... she's different from them—she does her handmade [products]. [...] And because she is different, she does well. So, I think that if you're different and, again, have personality; if you find out different things... (business agent in Tallinn)

To gain and maintain a competitive advantage, agents in business and culture tend to look for opportunities to *diversify* the choice of unique products, services and experiences, as well as how they are offered, in order to attract customers in the competitive tourism space of the destination (or sometimes in the country). Specific measures and strategies are reconsidered in the context of the resourcefulness of existing product offers (including also seasonal events at Easter and Christmas), and new supportive actions are sometimes adopted to enhance a competitive advantage in the heritage space of a destination.

We now also have a Bruges art route going through town, because... on an art route, there are names of about 60 artists. It was our inspiration [...]. [...] he said: when you come to Bruges, you see the old masters - the Primitives, painters; you see lace and you see chocolate and beer everywhere... and that's it. Where's the modern artist, you know? [...] he started the art route - getting artists to pay a fee and be on the map. That's sometimes... yeah, we have a group of tourists, wanting to see different artists around the town. So, that keeps us in line. (business agent in Bruges)

We have renewed [...], and now we have a queue standing behind the doors... [...]. [...] became popular and started bringing in considerable profit, simply on tickets, the services we offered. [...] So... quite good visitor numbers and a lot of tourists also in the summertime. (cultural agent in Tallinn)

The diversification of product and service offers aims at reaching various target groups that comprise international tourists as well as local people. The interviewees from business and cultural fields target *different customer groups*, demonstrating a clear understanding of the customers they are serving and providing locally unique experiences. Therefore, it is asserted that considering the needs of differentiated customer groups or acknowledging the typology of the clientele makes it possible to focus on the quality of offers and ensures gaining a competitive advantage.

The *production of quality in the experience*, or an experiential promise, is therefore yet another dimension of competitive advantage, which agents in business and cultural fields equally tend to target. It is particularly emphasized in the strategies of cultural agents that high quality in cultural production prevails over its attractive variety. This approach assumes a strategic choice to enable strengthening the symbolic power of the organization in the field of tourism as well as securing their position as applicants for funding, and hence, greater stability for their activities.

> We must not only have activities which are attractive; it must be of high quality, of course. [...] to have projects, in which you do not try to get as many visitors or participants as possible, but try to focus on the quality. (cultural agent in Bruges)

> When something is held here, this must be truly good. Quality must be guaranteed and this is very important – as an artistic whole, let it be music or whatever the field... the performers have to perceive the value of this building and try to offer something that suits the place. (cultural agent in Tallinn)

On the one hand, diversification enhances competition in the destination, on the other hand, it might create a synergic effect for the destination in the global tourism market. Therefore, it is assumed that the diversification of actions in the offer of products and services as well as events, particularly cultural activities, aiming more towards high quality, (re)produce the competitive space of a destination with potential to reposition the destination in the symbolic economy; therefore, it is in the interests of individual agents to advance their activities through diversification to facilitate profit or income, which transforms into product offers for the whole destination.

Therefore, *cooperation* among agents involved in the production of unique products is considered one of the reasonable ways to take advantage of the heritage space. The cooperation, perceived as fostering competitive advantage is, nevertheless, situation- and space-dependant, and thus, for example, businesses located in dense tourist areas, operate without any evident cooperation or need for cooperation with other agents. However, the actions in the field of culture necessitate dense cooperation between agents with different profiles, including local governments with strategic intentions to strengthen the destination's competitiveness. In Tallinn, where cultural events are organized as project-based by non-profit and cultural institutions, the local government takes

a supportive position, whereas in Bruges, a special coordinating organization is established to nurture cooperation between cultural agents and commence specific cultural projects. As such, the performance of specific objectives is perceived to be significantly more efficient because of the flexibility of decision-making achieved in organization-based regulations. The different solutions in the two towns obviously also tend to depend on financial capacity.

> I think if you have a strong cultural landscape in your city, you have many different cultural houses or tourist services and so on, there is a need for one organization to co-ordinate things and to... to do the things that the other organizations can't do due to their mission. (cultural agent in Bruges)

> Actually, I am of the opinion that the method … that NGOs, the organizations take this role…and they have an opportunity to get the support of the city for their good projects – this seems to be the right way [...]. Otherwise, our department team should grow considerably. The sea days, which our department organized this year, would be proof of this. Well, we simply have no capacity, not enough people to manage this. (local government official in Tallinn)

The local agents in both towns also operate on self-initiated cooperation to create new attractions in a destination that become noticeable in the tourist space; therefore, altering the attraction system of the destination, which sometimes concomitantly improves the quality of the entire public space of the heritage site. Such initiatives mean that being involved in cooperation, agents act based upon their capacity to perceive their role in contributing to the attractiveness of the town space.

> [...] the idea is mainly from the photo gallery, to work together. The others asked their artists they have in the gallery to paint more paintings, to work around this project. I forgot the title... "Open spaces" or something with spaces. I think it's half of the houses there - houses and shops - half of them are participating, so on every window, almost every window you see something and... this is good, this is something which is bringing this part up, this part of the city. (business agent in Bruges)

> Another thing is, a couple of years ago, 2007 or 08, all these shop owners and restaurant owners here in the street came together to buy outdoor Christmas lights; so, we put the money together, because we wanted to be seen in the darkness. We didn't want to be one of the dark suites, we wanted people to walk through the place, to [...] the restaurant, and that proved quite successful. (business agent in Tallinn)

Based on the research data, the author suggests that understanding cooperation in terms of *negotiating the heritage space* between stakeholders is important (e.g., business and cultural agents, residents and public authorities). This solves and/or ameliorates problem situations resulting from specific action taken upon the heritage space, which individual actors eventually benefit from.

[…] so I think nowadays we also have quite a good relationship with the residents around here and with the authorities as well, because, yeah, you have to listen to each other, speak to each other and discuss and see, if there are problems, how to solve them and communicate a lot. (business agent in Bruges)

Well… they seem to demand more than they contribute. But, well, we still have a very good cooperation with this department. We know one another well and discuss all things through and through. (cultural agent in Tallinn)

The resourcefulness of heritage for building competitive advantage may be considered in the context of major events of international significance, which individual businesses and cultural activities benefit from due to the capacity forming at the level of destination competitiveness, often originating from the presence of heritage. One of these events which both destinations have experienced is being nominated "European Capital of Culture"—in 2002 for Bruges and 2011 for Tallinn. The events at this level and standard not only draw attention and the consequent tourist flows to the towns but also make it possible to generate new construction, reconstruction and restoration initiatives (e.g., the concert hall in Bruges; initiating the regeneration of plans regarding the waterfront area adjacent to the Old Town in Tallinn). However, the long-term benefit from events of such scale for the development of a destination depends on the subsequent actions of the municipality and other institutions. At the time of the research, agents in Bruges, especially in the field of culture, expressed satisfaction with the subsequent developments even after a number of years since the event, thereby informing an important role for culture in securing tourism development for the town. Whereas in Tallinn, agents having contributed as well as benefitted from the event in their activities, were perplexed only a year after the event.

There is no city in Belgium and only a few cities in Europe, which spend as much on culture as Bruges. [...] So there's really a lot spent on culture and due to this, Bruges, seeing itself as a cultural city, a contemporary cultural city, is one of the best beneficiaries of 2002. […] Bruges is one of the few cultural capitals which has really benefitted from that year. (cultural agent in Bruges)

This year is in some ways difficult […] such a year of identity crisis. When one big thing is finished you have worked for, for four to five years – I mean the European Cultural Capital programme… […] then everyone asks where we should move to. No clear vision. (cultural agent in Tallinn)

All multitudinous dimensions of gaining and sustaining competitive advantage in the heritage space pertain to *experiencing continuous development* in the long term. Experiencing continuous development is revealed in how agents *adapt to new challenges or demands* (including environmental and/or logistical challenges), *transform, change or expand their activities*. This implies that while using the resourcefulness of the heritage space, inspiring various

activity-centred strategies as well as those of a more cooperative nature, the practice of agents inherently involves the (re)construction of symbolic capital consecrated in heritage and the (re)production of the heritage space with consequences for the town's future prospects as a destination in the global tourism market.

To sum up, gaining and sustaining a competitive advantage in the field of tourist production connotes a complex and discursive (re)production of a destination's uniqueness constituted by spatially and temporally contextualised socioeconomic activities. The analysis of the data on business and cultural agents allows us to broadly distinguish between the two types of agents (see Figure 27): (1) agents whose activities contribute to gaining and sustaining a competitive advantage in the destination, based upon the interconnected activities with other agents in the heritage space, and whose contribution to competition at the destination level is indirect (type 2), and (2) agents whose activities more or less directly contribute to gaining and sustaining a competitive advantage at the level of a destination, although interdependently with activities conducted by other agents in the heritage space (type 1).
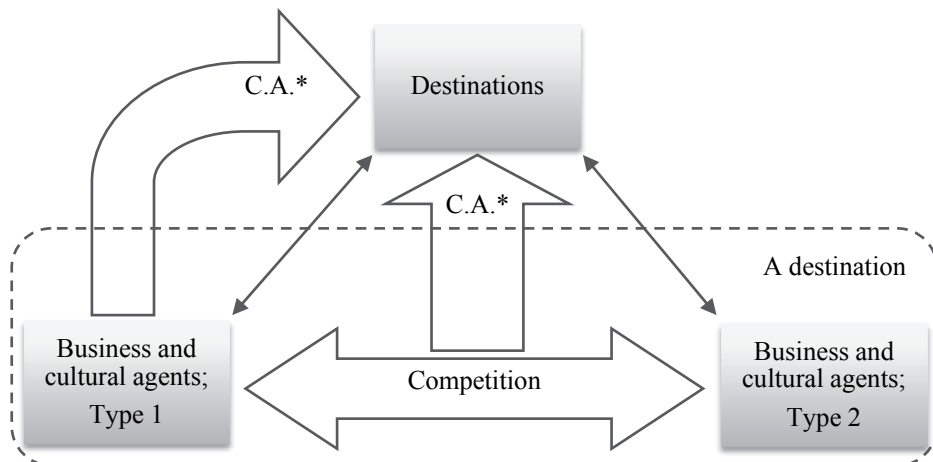


Figure 27. Gaining and sustaining competitive advantage in the heritage space of a destination (by the author)
(*) C.A. – competitive advantage

Furthermore, the typology of business and cultural agents is conditional in the sense that their activities in the heritage space of a destination appear intertwined, through how different activities, drawing on heritage value, are conducted. Therefore, all agents in competition and active in the heritage space contribute to shaping the destination's identity. Likewise, activities conducted at the level of the competition between destinations apply on the local level. Hence, there is no one-way approach to explain competitiveness (see Figure 27). Rather, gaining and sustaining competitive advantage in the heritage space

needs to be conceived in the context of the (re)production of a positive destination identity, which by continuously attracting tourists (re)creates the prerequisites for the continuity of the (re)production of socioeconomic activities conducted by business and cultural agents set in competitive positions. When the positive destination image, built on incorporated heritage values, appears as a conscious concern of agents, then their activities seem to have a more direct effect on the destination's competitiveness.

### 3.2.1.2 Conceiving of residing in a heritage space and tourist destination – the perspective of residents

*So - everybody builds his own house or does a lot of work. And everybody has a big, catholic family - they can bring in the brothers and the uncles and cousins. They all come and they work on your house. So - there's a culture of doing the work yourself and I had to learn all of that. It was fun, I enjoyed that.*
*(resident in Bruges)*

*If you have come to the Old Town, then for God's sake don't do that ... heritage conservation is one thing, but you should not put straight walls, plaster boards, oil paints, to cover up...*
*(resident in Tallinn)*

As part of the socioeconomic activities conducted in the city, *residential functions* applied within the heritage space provide potential for (re)producing the quality of the destinations within a number of dimensions. Informed by the research material, the author asserts that by *(re)using through (re)occupying historical buildings* in the destinations, the residents attain a significant role in (re)producing quality space, thereby enhancing the attributes of the space they live in. By investing in conservation and restoration, they avoid empty space developing and secure the heritage for future generations.

The interview data allow us to observe that residents are aware of the distinctive position of their properties in the public space of the destinations, especially in the heritage contexts of the Old Towns, where they form essential atmospheric contexts. Therefore, residential space cannot be observed apart from the public space despite its use for solely residential purposes or for combined use with professional activities. Assigning an active continuous use to historical buildings, the agents operationalize the historical buildings as private spaces or partially as professional spaces, thereby defining a multiplicity of functional attachments to privately-owned and inhabited heritage space. The residents living in a unique protected building regard their property to be an attraction that serves as public space when the building is opened for the public during temporarily run activities. On the one hand, such temporary partial openness of the private space of historical buildings diversifies the tourist experience at destinations, and, on the other hand, qualifies as serving the public interests of the local people. Moreover, the involvement of the residents in opening up their private space for public purposes as part of temporary cultural

projects, or more, as a spontaneous private initiative, demonstrates the residents' willingness to share their unique experience in historical buildings, which can be considered an informal contribution to destination branding enacted through communication with tourists. Hence, the author suggests that such initiatives pertaining to the residential space contribute to strengthening or (re)creating a residential identity. Therefore, the author argues that such patterns of residential behaviour, ensuing from both private and institutionalised initiatives, *contribute to* the (re)construction of destination identity and the continuous *(re)production of the public space* of a destination.

> That's again a professional use of the space, so that kind of thing... But we also have a rather uncontrolled social life, which means a lot of people coming from all over the world. [...] I feel that the house has almost the character of almost a public institution in a way, because it just... well, maybe we're just like that. We're very social. And, uh... it's a house, were people like to come. It has a good atmosphere [...]. (resident in Bruges)

> [...] I was watering the plants one day – I have two of them on this window sill; and about three flowerpots on the upper floor. I was watering and started from the top and then I saw: an older couple was just across the street, it was obvious they were tourists. [...] And then they took pictures in turn… that house and that house. The building next door was finished a year earlier than this house. And… I went downstairs with my watering can and started to water the plants here, and I saw that they were still lying on the asphalt and still taking pictures. So I went and invited them in. The man startled at first, of course, maybe I came out to tell them shoo-shoo, what are you doing here; they started to apologise and ask if it was okay that they took pictures. Of course, I cannot forbid them and I am glad that you do; this house is beautiful on the outside, but more beautiful on the inside. If you have a bit of time, then come and see that old part. We didn't go anywhere but the basement and the first floor. And… these cruise tourists have the possibility to go either with the guide or on their own, but they were the ones who came on their own. (resident in Tallinn)

Opening private residential spaces (temporarily) for the public is regarded to be the responsibility of the owners of the properties, *a return favour to the community* for the significant financial support they have been granted for the restoration of their heritage buildings by the local government, as in Bruges.

> [...] they [local people] have also paid as a community for the restoration. We pay taxes; I pay taxes. With these taxes, they can restore beautiful buildings. So, when the owners have respect for their buildings, it's a present for the other inhabitants, for the population of Bruges, that's true. That's why a lot of people in Bruges are really respecting their city—more than in other cities. (resident in Bruges)

As opposed to Bruges where residents have a [life-]long residential experience in the heritage space, the residents in Tallinn perceive the move in

the Old Town as an acknowledged action informed by adopting inconveniences ensuing from the tourism but expecting effective actions from the local government to ameliorate the problems related to everyday spatial practices (e.g., noise, parking etc.).

> We pay a fee for it anyway, the residents of the Old Town. A fee in the sense that we have come here knowing that there are many tourists. We have to consider the fact that we have Medieval Days and Old Town Days and… events that last one day, two days, three days – even here in Freedom Square. We have events in the Town Hall Square – for small children, for mothers… for Father's Day, Mother's Day, a day to honour our grandparents… Every day can be an event – and we know it; we all accept it. (resident in Tallinn)

*Valuing the heritage* is considered to be deeply connected with residents being seduced by the qualities of the medieval built environment. The agents claim that personal involvement in the designing and *restoration* of their heritage buildings, recreating the authentic atmosphere has even increased their appreciation of their residential choice. As perceived by the residents, the physical qualities, the most appreciated views and the overall character of the Old Town, as well as the practical advantages of living in the heritage space become the object of dreams and the reason to strive for and stay in a heritage site. Appreciating the unique aesthetics of the historical milieu rather than the conveniences, not always available in old buildings, (re)creates a sense of satisfaction as the residents adapt their modern needs to the heritage space.

> The atmosphere, the atmosphere. That's for me the most important thing about a house. Not comfort or... the atmosphere - it's very-very important. [...] you'll have to create a modern spirit in an old house. That's necessary. For example, these great windows in my living room is a modern element. (resident in Bruges)

> Well, the Old Town has such a, let's say, mystical romance. The location is very good, of course. [...] That... this like... let's say, this architectural heritage and the multiplicity of heritage conservation objects [...]. That this is the aura of this place or this place is suitable for people [...]. I can even say that after starting living here the state has improved. I think it will improve more, but it has stabilised [...]. (resident in Tallinn)

The highly valued heritage status, unique architecture, the historical personality of the building, the residents' personal involvement in the restoration process, and the enjoyable daily routines engender *an emotional attachment* to the house, projected onto the state of mind of its residents as they construct their identity.

> I think for me, at least, the problem is that the house is more than a house. It's been a whole sort of life vision in a way. We have lived... not in the house, but with it and it has had a lot to say in our lives. Everybody has a

vote, including the house, in everything. The house often has the dominant vote. (resident in Bruges)

We wake up, I make my coffee and then I go through this [...]. Each morning is different—either the sun shines, it rains or … and I still find places which I look at and think – hmm, does it really? Does the light really fall here like this … It is such an unspeakable feeling and … well, then my thought really just like stops. The same enjoyable limestone posts which are attached to this mantle chimney, I put my arms around it and think: here is over 600 years… well, yes, this post is definitely not 600 years old, it is definitely younger… but it may be 400 years old. (resident in Tallinn)

Although the life of the local people and their quotidian activities have become an attraction for tourists and the residents have got used to the continuous attention of tourists looking at their buildings, the dominance of the tourists in high seasons might disrupt and disturb normal community life. Tight personal interactions between the local people in the Old Towns are perceived to *(re)create* a feeling of practicing a special way of residing ("*a village*"). The residents reflect upon familiarity in community relations to be an indicator of the quality of their life; specifically in Tallinn the residents are more concerned with this issue because they recognise that a small number of inhabitants in the Old Town denotes smaller capacity to be able to influence sustaining the quality in this urban heritage space.

The only problem you have in a city like this is when too many tourists are coming. They are taking over - do you understand? You'll lose a little bit of your personality. We know, where the people of Bruges live, when we come here, I know this man and we have our local bars, where you meet the local people... but in summertime and Easter holidays and so on, the tourists are taking over. (resident in Bruges)

That this would be like our own village. This is what I actually also like about the Old Town. I know many people from this street. [...] I like this "village culture" or own culture. Ideally, there could be more of this—our own community, only the residents of the Old Town, as many as there are. There could be a bit more—yes, only the local people. (resident in Tallinn)

The intense touristification of the Old Towns in both destinations makes residents look for opportunities to escape the inconveniences of the crowd, either by using other parts of the their neighbourhood with less tourists around or leaving the town on the weekends or for the summer season and avail themselves of a second home. The most radical solution would be moving out of the Old Town, which the interviewed residents as devoted Old Town citizens do not see as an option, if not considering retirement, because of the morphological specifics of heritage buildings.

You can avoid that, you go to another side, where the tourists are not so close. [...] But if you go... when I come out of my house and I go to the left side instead of right side, it's gone, the tourists are not there. So we know our

places, where we are free from tourists. There's always one or two, but not a big crowd. (resident in Bruges)

Sometimes the silence [...] But rather... well, this is it: because I have a second home where I have the nature, the beds, a greenhouse; all that I would maybe otherwise miss is there —I go there on weekends, I will satisfy this part of my needs. I grow my tomatoes and ha-ha weed the carrots. It is like… I couldn't carry on all the time if I didn't have another home and had just the home in the Old Town. I think that it wouldn't satisfy me anymore. I need the nature very much, also. (resident in Tallinn)

*Participation in the (re)production of the* quality urban space in the Old Town is associated with *fulfilling social responsibility,* which constitutes a distinctive feature in the accounts of the residents in Tallinn. Compared to Bruges, the residents in Tallinn are concerned with the safety and quality of the urban space in their neighbourhood in the Old Town and reflect on their collective commitment to fulfil their social responsibility by interfering in matters concerning the urban development in the heritage space, approaching the local government with requests, participating in roundtables focusing on urban and heritage issues and in the activities and discussions of the non-profit association Vanalinna Selts consolidating the Old Town residents (however, perceiving the lack of political and financial resources to affect the improvement of quality residing but envisioning the future potential), and taking care of the public space in the close vicinity of their homes.

We communicated; communicated as long as we put a sign here finally; it is this mother with a child on a blue background – that this road is only for pedestrians. And make it clear to the driver of a big vehicle that you cannot drive there. (resident in Tallinn)

Compared to Bruges, the value-laden restoration of historic properties is highlighted by the residents in Tallinn, accentuating the necessity of being an observant, knowledgeable and strict property owner with regard to heritage conservation and restoration works. The agents assert that following the regulations should become a practice acknowledged at all levels of action, informing the possession of high quality cultural capital by the owners of heritage property as well as other involved institutional and professional actors as an important prerequisite warranting quality of restoration.

Well, they [heritage conservationists] act also... Here, they also make compromises, don't they? But more important is the fact that the owner shouldn't compromise. This is more important. That the one who renovates, really values this environment and does it with all his/her heart. Then there are no problems. All begins with the fact that the people who build are either not competent or don't understand or don't have such an experience… don't have such values. (resident in Tallinn)

Despite criticism of the urban spatial processes underpinning the formation of the quality of heritage space in the Old Towns, and regardless of occasionally

negative circumstances, the residents' representations of their experiences in the area notably inform their strong dispositions towards acting for the sustainability of the heritage value of individual buildings as well as the urban public space. The author argues that residents with a high knowledge of heritage are to be identified as a group of experts, partly qualified within their practice of a life-style-driven way of residing. The current analysis suggests that the residents in historic city centres in both towns, characterised by strong emotional attachment to highly valued heritage and sense of identity, are to be considered a significant contributing agency to the reproduction of the heritage space through their practice of reusing the material heritage of the Old Town (see Figure 28).
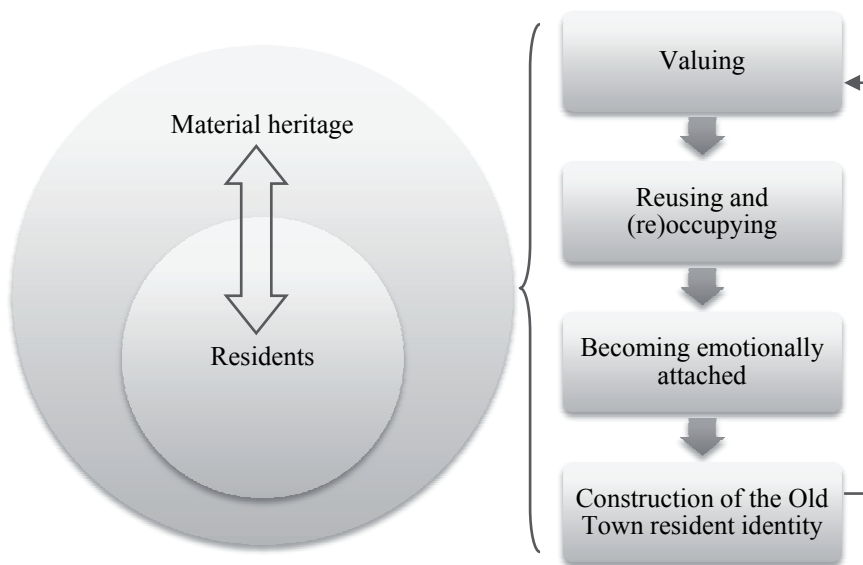


*Figure 28. Residents' agency in the heritage space of a destination (by the author)*

To conclude with regard to the phenomenon of residing in the heritage space, it might be argued that the residential function of the heritage space constitutes one of the dimensions that contributes to (re)constructing a destination brand identity and (re)producing quality heritage space through the heritage buildings activated for residential purposes by the residents with cultural capital disposing them towards making the heritage space a home and which they draw upon when constructing their identities.

### 3.2.1.3 Conceptualising and administrating activities and the use of space – the perspective of governing agents

> *It was decided that every building permit in the inner city, in the old city centre, would pass that small department, which gave a large power, big power to this department.*
> *(local government official in Bruges)*

> *How can the city benefit from the tourists? Yes, some residents are employed. But from that value added tax that goes through it, nothing comes from the profits of these enterprises... We don't have a tourism tax. Actually, what the city really gets is the joy of cleaning the city streets every morning for a new delivery, empty the trash cans at its own expense and smile.*
> *(local government official in Tallinn)*

The current section focuses on the analysis of interviews with local government officials, interpreting their perceptions and assessments with regard to opportunities, obligations and limitations in affecting the heritage space. The governance and administration of public life by the local government applies to all aspects of public life, including heritage protection, economy, tourism, and the quality of the public space. Various departments operationalize functions and activities with a supportive nature to develop and enhance the destination, thereby facilitating socioeconomic activities in the tourism industry. The common feature of the economic, tourism, and heritage protection departments in their activities is the *concern for the local people*. However, the activities of departments of various importance are also targeted towards *enhancing the destination brand identity* and *developing the destination* in tourism, hence shaping and ensuring the competitiveness of the town. A significant contribution to the continuous (re)construction of symbolic capital by the local government is pursued by *performing their [specific] tasks* (e.g., economic departments support agents starting up a company in Bruges and Tallinn and young designers to keep the streets liveable in Bruges) and *running specific temporary projects* (e.g., the heritage protection departments in Bruges and Tallinn opening the private space to the public).

Although the primary task of the local governments is to design urban policies and apply the respective strategies in the development of the quality of the urban space and public life at large, the local governments in both towns comply with the free market, and therefore, launch no interventions into the local tourism-related market, despite an obvious dubiousness about some of the developments, e.g., chocolate becoming the dominant identity and the related anxiety about the decreasing number of lace shops in Bruges, or dissatisfaction with the souvenir market being disconnected with the local identity in Tallinn. In Bruges, the popularity of chocolate in tourist spatial experiences in the destination is (re)produced by virtue of promoting local unique products in the international tourism market and reoccurring as an attribute of the destination image in the tourists' perception. Whereas the author assumes that the

(re)production of the controversial products in Tallinn builds upon a persistent demand from the tourists' side (cf. the creation of a market for replicas that devalues cultural items because of the demand for souvenirs and artefacts as in Nasser, 2003, p. 474). In terms of a souvenir market and place-bound product offers in the destination, the creation or active promotion of locally unique products is seen as the sole force that could affect the attributes of the destination identity projected by the destination in the global tourism market.

> [...] we respect the free market. Of course it is also that Bruges is also communicating—we are the chocolate city of Belgium, of Europe, of the world [...]. [...] in the communication of tourism, lace is one of the important things in the communication. (local government official in Bruges)

> [...] today's business environment of the Old Town corresponds to such an ideology of the organization of society—the minimal intervention of the public sector in these processes [...]. And... the question is rather, yes, in how to single out what is Estonian, not how to fight against something, [...] to rather cooperate with maybe the Port of Tallinn and the cruise organizers—which is the souvenir of Estonia? (local government official in Tallinn)

By contrast, with no intention of affecting business, the destinations choose strategic approaches towards supporting place-bound experience productions for the purposes of destination branding. Such practices connote various possibilities and opportunities for towns to intervene in public life for the purposes of the tourism industry and destination branding. As such, the local governments in both towns are interested in supporting and promoting creative industries, including folk art and art-orientated business activities, with cheap rental rates to encourage, for example, young professionals in the field and to sustain the production of local art and design products unique to the destination. The economic department in Bruges is concomitantly focusing on activating socioeconomic activities in the empty urban space, thereby reusing heritage buildings through the occupation of historic structures.

> So in this street, very many shops closed, but to improve the street again, we have started the Quartier Bricole. That means, we want to settle some young creative designers there, for clothing, for jewellery [...]. [...] they can have... for a year a shop with a very low price and they can sell their own creations. (local government official in Bruges)

> Um... The aid scheme of creative enterprise is now at a stage where we have made clear to ourselves what are our possibilities and where the focuses could be. [...] actually the city should offer some favourable grounds even to the entrepreneurs operating in our creative incubator. [...] But one should definitely be that there should also be opportunities for sales and for offering own products for our creative entrepreneurs that are aided by us, well, aided by one side. We will definitely talk about how the culture management … culture management … the opportunities how the young people get

experiences even via supporting some practical training or such. (local government official in Tallinn)

However, due to established regulations, for the time being, cheap rental rates of properties under municipal ownership seem to be one of the few financial forms of support granted by local government for socioeconomic activity promoting the unique local character of Tallinn (because of the meagre economic resources at their disposal) and, thus (re)producing the symbolic values essential for destination branding in the tourism market.

If there is a question—what is the role of the city—well, yes, in theory the city could help in that through the rented premises that are still today at the disposal of the city … that such rented premises would be given for some intended purpose. Well, either to introduce Estonian handicraft or design or that they are in a preferred situation. This is basically the only thing that the city could do in theory. (local government official in Tallinn)

[...] but the business environment of the Old Town... such as it is today and such as it has developed with market forces, private property inviolability and all that. [...] We have considered such things to give the city's premises via targeted narrowly targeted competitions. (local government official in Tallinn)

By contrast, the local government in Bruges wields eligibility to impose additional restrictions on functional uses of the urban heritage space. A vivid example of its regulative power is expressed in the joint-decision of stakeholders to restrain the growing number of accommodation units in the Old Town and to counteract the low occupancy of hotels. Such a decision has an effect on shaping the urban space and its functional uses, however, concomitantly contributing to the (re)creation of empty space in the Old Town.

We... what is also a battle, which we try to win, is over the functions of the city. So, for us, living and habitation is the main function, but due to tourists, we have a changing of functions in certain streets—streets, which are visited by tourists [...]. [...] That's why also with tourism, we want this concentration model. We don't want to make the other neighbourhoods too popular. (local government official in Bruges)

It's a nice place, it's a big house, there's a lot of potential and people who try to be creative and people who try to do something—people who take risks with their money, people who invest in things are always demotivated to do something with something like that. I'm sure that within 10 years, this house will be empty and it'll stay empty for maybe 10–15 years. That's not a good thing. (business agent in Bruges)

The *economic department* in Bruges performs its activity along the three strategies to develop economic activities in various spatial areas, sometimes defining the function of activities: in the tourism area, in specific streets (with a specific focus on the improvement of everyday services and the availability of

consumer products for residents), and separately in different town districts. The nature of the performance of the economic department in Tallinn (comprising the actions of consulting start-ups and small businesses, participating in international projects, marketing) is similar to the actions of the economic department in Bruges. However, the main differences between the two selected destinations pertain, firstly, to legislation, which Tallinn lacks, but which allows Bruges to affect the quality of the urban space in terms of functional uses, focusing on the needs of the local people, and, secondly, on the motivations of municipalities to nurture economic activities because of various legislative obligations (pertaining to municipalities) and tax systems[4].

> Our main objective is to help companies start here. [...] for the streets, where especially the locals live, they need some bread or fresh meat [...] (local government official in Bruges)

> [...] here we still come across our characteristic feature of Estonian state organization—or ... I cannot say that solving the issues of enterprises, dealing with the prerequisites of enterprises in a much wider form, in a much wider extent, here in Europe, Northern Europe, Scandinavia, would be directly the duty of local governments—this has not been provided by law. [...] no local government will start to do something seriously while economic activity is not happening on its territory, well either from turnover or profits... from which a part will start to come to the treasury of the local government. (local government official in Tallinn)

The strategies of the *tourism departments* in Bruges and Tallinn are targeted towards increasing the expenditures of tourists and the efficient use of tourism resources. The primary concerns are perceived to be increasing the number of overnight stays (in Bruges and Tallinn) as well as the number of tourists in the low season (in Bruges).

> During the low season—this is where we have the most added value, when economically we can mean the most. It is during the low season, during the winter, during the mid-week. (local government official in Bruges)

> Here different events have gradually been added to the low season, but the fact is that these mainly vacation months are the summer months when people travel. (local government official in Tallinn)

In addition, the municipalities in cooperation with various institutions try to balance the frequency and variety of the socioeconomic activities between the low and high seasons in tourism to exploit local tourism resources more efficiently and effectively. Such strategic actions are seen to empower the destinations with the cultural resourcefulness to attract more tourists. However,

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[4] Municipalities in Belgium could levy surcharges on various taxes (see Federal Public Service Finance, 2013) as opposed to Tallinn, whose income depends on the income tax.

the actions and positions of the local government are criticised by the local people with regard to insufficient coordination of the actions involving cooperation among departments and organizations to ameliorate the seasonal effect of tourism (in Bruges), and ineffective seasonal planning of events (in Tallinn).

The *heritage protection departments* directly affect the (re)production of the symbolic value of historical buildings and landscapes. As these departments are responsible for defining the heritage objects and areas, surveying activities conducted in heritage sites as well as for setting the regulations for the conservation and restoration of heritage, they act as public institutional agents ensuring the (re)production of the space for tourist experiences. The efficiency of these activities is reinforced by the provision of financial support to agents reusing heritage buildings. In Bruges, the financial support applies on a larger scale and accompanied with the support for starting business activity from the economic department, helps reduce the empty space in the Old Town. Whereas in Tallinn, relatively limited financial support pertains to separate architectural elements or structural parts of the heritage buildings, which is clearly insufficient for maintaining and reconstructing the symbolic value of the heritage space.

> We also have an amount for people who start a company in historic buildings here in the city. So that's... in houses, in buildings, that are now not in use and need to be refreshed, because they have had a few years without any activity. So, then we can give an amount, some money to rebuild the building or to do something about the decoration, so that the building is prepared to start up the shop. (local government official in Bruges)

> I was accused (but not officially, of course) of the fact, that we spend money on private traders. I say: 'We do not spend money on private traders, because this is the responsibility of the state, while our responsibility is to preserve the historical value of the Old Town'. After the renewal of the ceiling, none of such private traders could be able to enfold this ceiling and to take it away with him [...]. [...] there are too many houses and flats, where such 'nice things' were found and discovered, as well as renewed and demonstrated. (local government official in Tallinn)

Despite various strategies and tasks by the local governments in Bruges and Tallinn, the actions of different departments are *critically perceived* by the agents interviewed in both destinations.

The agents in both towns perceive the concern of the municipality for enhancing quality attributes of the urban space in a heritage site differently. The agents in Bruges expressed satisfaction with the quality of the urban space, and agents in Tallinn perceived deficiencies in the qualities of the urban space (e.g., quality of the streets, parking facilities, accessibility, empty unused heritage building etc.), then the agents in both destinations expressed criticisms primarily regarding the lack or insufficiency of actions by the local government, potentially facilitating, directly or indirectly, profitable business activities in

heritage space, and which the towns would benefit from both in terms of homes for the local people as well as tourist destinations.

> We don't get any support. To rent that big hall down there [...]. [...] You have to be very-very patient before they'll help you. [...] The only reason I could think of is that they're so busy with tourists, anyway. That's the only reason I could think of—they're busy with tourism, they don't need to help others. (business agent in Bruges)

> [...] I think that maintaining the last of the Mohicans, such small enterprises, which profit per cent is so low, could be favoured exactly for the image of the city. To support by favouring the activities in general, in some form, in addition to monetary, monetary advantages or benefits [...]. (business agent in Tallinn)

Another set of critical accounts pertain to how communication and support is managed. The agents in Bruges are more likely to face bureaucratic challenges (e.g., starting a business), especially concerning the coordination of work between municipal departments, complicating the procedures for their clients.

> So there's no manual, there's no connection, there's no relation between all these different kinds of departments. (business agent in Bruges)

> Well, actually yes … we have done well with the agencies; they have been very understanding with regard to the idea of our business or such... (business agent in Tallinn)

Criticisms also apply to the supply of financial resources for cultural activities, as in one case of a cultural organization in Bruges struggling to achieve long-term financial stability. Conducting their activities mainly in Bruges, highly valued as a contributor to the continuous reconstruction of the symbolic capital of the town by both the local community as well as the local authorities, the agents perceive maltreatment in the form of the low investment scheme into the activities of the organization on the part of the local government.

> They really believe in us [...]. So... from time to time, they invest in us, also financially, but for the rest, it's not that Bruges has like a structural vision of how can we facilitate civic initiatives that are interesting for the civic, public space of things here in Bruges. It just doesn't exist, he-he. And I think it's a missing link, yeah. (cultural agent in Bruges)

In Tallinn, where competing for financial resources to reach long-term financial stability could be equated with the practice of rent contracts, the critical remarks remain in the domain of rental relations that would secure stability and the advancement of socioeconomic activities. Otherwise, communications with city departments provides no problems for the interviewed business agents.

But well, we will see, if we renew the rental contract, will they remember it then, ha-ha-ha. [...] Rental contract and then … this is one main thing; that we could hang on here. (business agent in Tallinn)

To sum up, the ways local government departments in Bruges and Tallinn communicate and apply specific strategies and (re)create the conditions for socioeconomic activities is considered of great importance, as their actions, conducted within the limitations of their capacity defined by obligations and organizational, legislative and financial regulations, affect the actions of all other agents, which build upon the (re)production of the quality of life in the heritage space and the competitive advantage of a destination in the global tourism market (see Figure 29).
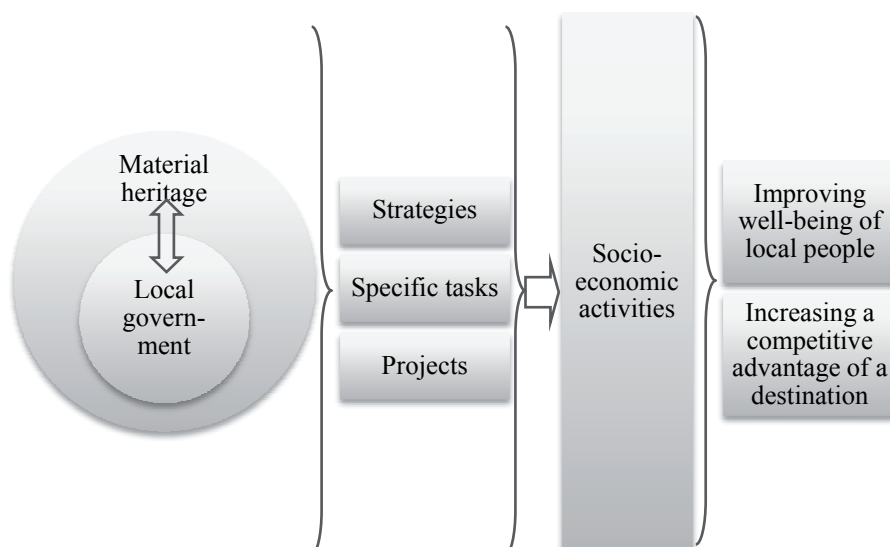


*Figure 29. Local government agency in the heritage space of a destination (by the author)*

Therefore, the nature of place-bound activities, explicated on the interrelated actions of business and cultural agents and local government task-led strategies, in particular, is to be considered crucial in enhancing the destination brand identity through the continuous reconstruction of the symbolic capital consecrated in the material heritage.

### 3.2.1.4 Short conclusion

The present section elaborated the nature of the complex and multiple engagements in the heritage space by the local people across three main groups: business and cultural agents, residents, and agents in the local government. Business and cultural agents are actively involved into competition with other

agents in the heritage space of a destination to gain and sustain a competitive advantage within the delivery of products and services at destinations, with some direct input into the (re)production of a competitive advantage of the destination. Hence, the research is informed by two types of agents and two levels of competitive participation, i.e., within and between destinations. The interviewed residents, forming the second group, are emotionally attached to valued historical buildings occupied as their homes, and they continuously participate in the (re)construction of quality heritage space through the daily reuse, care and protection of heritage. Residents' quotidian activities in the material heritage space reconstruct the symbolic capital consecrated in buildings, and as open to the tourist gaze become the destination attractions conveying an important role in the (re)production of unique spatial attributes for the destinations. Furthermore, the departments of the local government are considered a support agency for the actions of other agents in the heritage space, with (controversial) concerns for the development of the quality of the urban space in the interests of the local people as well as the competitiveness of towns in the tourism market. The author observes that the local governments attempt, with various degrees of intervention, to affect the tourism industry of the destination by supporting place-specific activities; and in the case of Bruges actively direct the functional uses of heritage space.

The uniqueness of the destination's heritage space, (re)produced concomitantly with conducting multifarious socioeconomic activities, can be seen as phenomena revealing the nature of the dual relationship building between agents' experiences and the material heritage space. The horizon of the meaning of medieval architecture is forged in the agents' experiences gained in the spatially fixed unique materiality, which is deployed for economic and cultural uses by agents. The agents potentially affect the spatial practices and representational spaces of tourists through locating activities in WHSs, thereby strategically activating heritage space as cultural capital to (re)construct symbolic capital and generating extractive, i.e., consumptive, and non-extractive use values. Therefore, socioeconomic activities reinforce the destination brand identity drawn on the uniqueness of the destinations (see Figure 30). Through the symbiosis of the production of space through socioeconomic activities and cultural symbols, the symbolic economy of the destinations is continuously (re)constructed, especially through the (re)production of the imageability (offered for the experience of tourists as well as the local people), which, in the context of the present study, is regarded as a sign of the distinction of the high quality heritage space.

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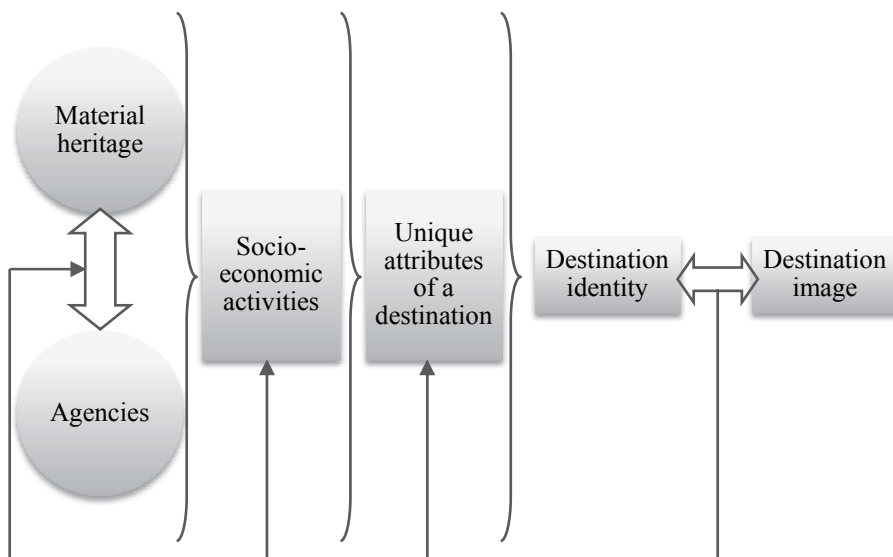
*Figure 30. Engagements in heritage space contributing to the (re)creation of a destination image (by the author)*

With regard to the differences between Bruges and Tallinn, then the two most significant distinctions pertain to the perceived strong contributing role of the cultural sector (specifically museums) to the (re)construction of the symbolic capital of a destination in Bruges, as well as to the legislative norms, which compared to Tallinn constitute a different and much stronger configuration of power affecting the regulation of the functional uses of the heritage space.

Before discussing how a destination image is (re)shaped as being informed through its interconnectedness with a destination image and (re)produced through conducting socioeconomic activities, a more profound understanding is needed of how the strategies for the (re)production of the heritage space of destinations are shaped in terms of strategically activating the material heritage in socioeconomic activities, and this is provided in the discussion in the following section.

### 3.2.2 Shaping the strategies for (re)producing heritage space

The previous section (3.2.1) considered heritage space as a valuable resource and/or the object of strategic actions from the perspectives of different types of agents. Informed by this knowledge, reusing heritage space appeared as a value-orientated activity that is imbued into socioeconomic activities conducted in urban heritage sites. This section refocuses the analysis on modes of operationalizing and integrating qualities of urban heritage space in the experience of agents in the tourism field, with a special regard to recreating

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heritage space as a sustainable resource. Thus the central focus shifts from the perspectives of the agents on the perceived meaning and value of heritage towards practices of activating material heritage. An analytical insight into the dimensions and practices of reusing heritage space enables a further understanding of the nature of (re)constructing the symbolic capital of destinations in a dual relationship of the reproduction of heritage space.

### 3.2.2.1 Protecting and restoring heritage—concern for the physical structures

*[...] as a department of historical monuments, we thought that becoming a World Heritage City was a coronation of our work; that was felt like that. Of course we didn't realise that it was only the start when we got the title of world heritage.*
*(local government official in Bruges)*

*[...] well, of course, I am proud. [...] Every single thing we found in the house have one way or other found their place [...] take the piece of limestone from the gate or doorway which is now under this smoke hood [...] well, this is to say that it feels super to live here [...] We all understand that the twenty first century is something else than the fifteenth- sixteenth century. But as you see I haven't got a single radiator in sight, every piece is hidden under the floor – which is quite complicated to achieve in a medieval building [...].*
*(resident in Tallinn)*

In the adaptation of material historical heritage for modern needs, protection and its attendant restoration assume intelligent operationalizing and integrating the qualities of the urban heritage space in socioeconomic activities. Both public authorities who promulgate and monitor legal restrictions and local people who conduct multifarious socioeconomic activities in the protected heritage sites define as well as affect the processes of the *protection and restoration of the built heritage*.

As has been discussed, the agents utilise the restored heritage in their socioeconomic activities for increasing the authenticity of the servicescape in business (see section 3.2.1.1), also for living, within which heritage is highly valued (see section 3.2.1.2). Restoration is perceived to benefit the owner and the whole community. Therefore, the author assumes that investing in heritage properties, where multitudinous socioeconomic activities are conducted, making the heritage space more accessible, especially within business and cultural actions, contributes to the retention and preservation of values targeted by the agents in the heritage space.

To restore. To restore... so I have the opportunity to do something for the city, for this house also, mm? (resident in Bruges)

Indeed, this…felt a kind of an oasis in this Old Town, yes. I think, it still is an oasis of a kind in its colourfulness and milieu [...]. (business agent in Tallinn)

The restoration of heritage buildings implies that restored heritage objects become *adapted* for new functions. The adaptation of heritage buildings is regarded as a means of the continuous (re)creation of accessible and convenient environments in heritage destinations and, thus, as a means of the (re)production of quality urban space promoted by heritage sites.

We have to live and move inside the rules protecting the heritage, certainly, but it still has to be a liveable city. The city has always evolved in history, may we now freeze it completely? (local government official in Bruges)

However, to make a compromise, this is the most difficult issue related to the protection of cultural heritage [...], but still it is impossible to conserve any historical city to a certain date. (local government official in Tallinn)

However, there remains *unused unique heritage* spatial units that are made open for the public on rare occasions (as in Bruges trying to maintain the specific place of the heritage site untouristified) or that require financial investments from the public authorities (as in the example of Tallinn regarding the investment priorities of the central government).

[...] we go with a small boat, with the scouts—go, like, here; where the tourists can't go. It's the inner canal. Then you see all the backs of these houses that you cannot see often from the street. These are very authentic—this is the real Bruges, not the Bruges of the tourists. But if we opened that for the tourists, it would change, he-he. So, I keep it exceptional, that you go once a year, maybe, only with 150–200 people, who can go on that small boat in a day [...]. (local government official in Bruges)

Everybody has expressed their interest; they say that of course, this view in the middle of the city could benefit the reputation of Tallinn as a whole, right… I can assure you that such a beautiful view as here in the middle of the city cannot be found anywhere. So in that sense I am extremely sad, because this thing has stopped... (a cultural agent in Tallinn)

Agents of different profiles, reflecting upon the role of UNESCO in the protection of world heritage, distinguish various attributes of the inscription of the properties in the World Heritage List, and thereby express an interest in preserving and restoring heritage. As perceived by the agents, the inscription is meant to attract more tourists, be continuously provided with the professional assessment of heritage protection in the destination, and to protect the listed property from the pressures of the global tourism industry, which affect the development of the destination's heritage space.

It's not subjective; it's an objective view of the development of the city - from the outside. And that's good. (resident in Bruges)

Similarly, as the UNESCO sign is attached to our Old Town, it is attached to Tallinn and this is what brings people here […]. (local government official in Tallinn)

The agents in both towns value the possession of high quality cultural capital by the owners of historical buildings (as in 3.2.1.2) who, from the perspective of the interviewed actors, transform intangible forms of cultural capital into tangible forms of material capital in the process of careful restoration. The capacity of the agents to perform restoration of high quality, sometimes enacted on the incorporated social capital (like a joint-effort of relatives in one case in Bruges), is perceived to reinforce the protection of heritage value. Therefore, the success of the restoration of each separate edifice and thus of the whole heritage landscape builds on the *possession of high cultural values as part of the cultural capital*, which contribute to the (re)production of symbolic dimensions of the built heritage of destinations.

But what I've learned, you need the right person to buy the house. If somebody buys the house who loves the house, you are very rich then, because then you can obtain everything. If it's only bought for commercial purposes and for the person, it's only a burden, then it's a very bad undertaking... (local government official in Bruges)

[...] actually the way things stand is that only a person with sufficient experience can be allowed to do the restoration work in the Old Town. I did not have that experience. If I had to do it now I would certainly behave in a much wiser manner [...] the one who operates in the Old Town needs to live there for at least ten years to understand what he/she is dealing with and how to act reasonably. (resident in Tallinn)

The agents in both destinations are concerned with the aesthetic attributes of heritage buildings, especially with the facades, which are conspicuous in the public space of heritage sites. Professionally restored facades are seen as *(re)creating the pleasure of the public heritage space* in the spatial practice of the local people and tourists. Therefore, the agents clearly perceive their role in contributing to the (re)production of quality heritage space; thereby, potentially (re)creating aesthetically pleasant tourist experiences at the destinations.

It's a great feeling for you, but also for your friends and people who see it, who walk along. They admire the facade. So they're happy with that experience and that experience [goes] with them to Estonia or to the States. And they keep it in mind... and that makes people happy. (resident in Bruges)

In case it [the heritage building] is empty [for the time being], then you should at least make sure that façade, which spoils the [scenery of] the Old Town, is taken care of. (resident in Tallinn)

The processes of restoration are monitored by the local governments to ensure the safety of the protected as well as the unprotected material heritage,

whereby the prime objective of heritage protection is seen *to serve the interests of the local community*. Departing from the research material, it could be asserted that carefully restored buildings improve the quality of heritage space, and the greater availability of heritage buildings for public use enabled through multifarious socioeconomic activities reinforces the (re)production of representational spaces associated with the Old Towns and the heritage value through the spatial practice of local people and tourists.

> [...] but our main purpose was making Bruges an agreeable city for the inhabitants. That was our main purpose in the start. Not for the tourists; that was secondary and welcome, but that was not our main objective. (local government official in Bruges)

> The most important task is to arrange the Old City, because of the heritage we inherited from the Soviet period; this is a terrible view, of course. [...] The rest of towers, for example, towers located on the Laboratorium Street, were not used for hundreds of years. During the Soviet times the first floors were used as warehouses, while the upper floors were left in a deplorable state. For the later years we opened them up for people (as I can count up) [...]. (local government official in Tallinn)

In order to encourage the local agents to restore heritage buildings along with the consequent adaptive reuse of the buildings, the local governments distribute specific grants. Therefore, the author suggested that grants contribute to the revitalisation of the historical buildings, potentially increasing the total economic value (the notion by Serageldin, 1999; see section 1.2.3). The structure and volume of *the financial support*[5] for restoring historical buildings is seen as a significant difference between Bruges and Tallinn. While the agents in Bruges expressed being aware of and satisfied with a substantial grant for restoring a historical building (partially connoting a long historical tradition of supporting restoration dating back to 1877 as in Beernaert & Desimpelaere, 2001, p. 10) and their effect on the spatial qualities of their property and town, the agents in Tallinn expressed dissatisfaction with the funding for restoration projects.

> [...] partly because the government had given subsidies for the restoration of houses. That really changed people's perception of what it was to live in these houses—if you can get government support to help you to restore them. (local government official in Bruges)

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[5] The upper limit of a financial support in Tallinn is 6,400 euros and it is intended to be used for restoring external architectural details (Restaureerimistoetuse taotlemise ja menetlemise kord); in addition, restoration aid could be received from the National Heritage Board (Muinsuskaitseamet, n.d.). The financial support for historical buildings in Bruges is much more varied and is given on three levels: the city, the Province of West-Flanders, and the Flemish Regional Government (for more details see Beernaert & Desimpelaere, 2001).

[...] since we are dealing with the district which, in principle, is the representation of Estonia, then perhaps the city or the state could consider opportunities to subsidise [restoration] by ten to twenty per cent; let alone the facade... […] Everything is much more expensive here anyway – construction is more expensive, transport into the area is so inconvenient and…the city could provide some help. But I think it must be regulated. (resident in Tallinn)

The agents in both destinations revealed a strong awareness of the need for the protection of heritage in the town, which gratifies the agents, and therefore, might also have an effect on the positive aesthetic perception of the heritage space by tourists. However, the interviewed agents in both destinations expressed concern about excessively *restrictive* rules of protection and restoration that impede creative solutions for the socioeconomic activities and the advancement of the public space, the potential development of properties, and the adaptive (re)use of historical buildings. Furthermore, the agents in Tallinn seem to perceive the restrictive rules in a more understanding manner because of the successful collaboration with the heritage protection department within restoration projects.

[...] if you look at the commercial side, it's not a good thing, when your house is classified, because in Bruges, they are very-very strict. Sometimes that's good, but sometimes, it's... it restrains you from being creative to do something with your house. I can understand the strict norms they have to apply, but sometimes they say "no" very easily, because that's the easiest way: to say no. (business agent in Bruges)

They are very strict, people of principle but... in general, I fully agree that this is how it should be. Otherwise, things get out of hand. Well, yes, I do not have bad experiences. I get along with them [the heritage protection officials] quite well. (business agent in Tallinn)

Complying with the heritage restoration norms obviously requires remarkable financial investments, and the pursuit of keeping the heritage landscape as a liveable space assumes making compromises. However, the agents in Bruges perceived the local government's restrictive approach in a negative light as it epitomises the reluctance to *reach a compromise* and forces the agents to agree with the department's standpoint or, creates the onerous task of forcing the agents to invest in additional time-consuming attempts to convince the authorities of their arguments. In Tallinn, the arduous work of reaching a compromise might concern the involvement of various agents in a restoration project, e.g., failures at commencing restoration ensuing from multiple ownership of properties, as yet another problem stemming from the recent societal change and subsequent property ownership reform from the 1990s.

[...] we did cross swords with the technical department a number of times - over big things and small things. For the rebuilding, I literally marched into

the mayor's office and said—you are going to give me this, because we've done so much for this house! Now I want something back. And he said—fine... I don't know if he was actually in the position to give it, but we got. (resident in Bruges)

[...] there was a time when we had been granted the money for the restoration of the diele. […] those layers of paint have been cleared by the door to know the original colours... but, well, problems appeared as this house has several owners. One of the owners is the city, the others are the flat owners, and their relationship… they are not capable of coordinating a collaborative project on… who is finally responsible for restoring the façade. That's why things stand as they stand. (business agent in Tallinn)

Consequently, the strictness of the restoration process and the need to make considerable financial investments when restoring heritage buildings (re)creates empty spaces that represent unused business potential and unrealised multifarious beneficial externalities for the local people. In addition to the restrictions governing restoration and the costliness of restoration works, perceived as the main impediments in (re)occupying heritage buildings in Tallinn, the limitations on possible functions and, as the author noted earlier, relatively more strict restoration practices (even despite the financial support of the economic department, see section 3.2.1.3, and heritage protection department) creates complications for agents in Bruges with regard to the purchase of heritage properties (the strict restoration norms could be referred to as the *"no"-policy,* as a number of agents in Bruges highlighted the word "no" after mentioning various refusals by the heritage protection department).

I don't see any investor trying to do something with that house, because the restrictions are so hard that you are just blocked by the city. With that house, you can't do anything. You can't make it into a hotel, because there's a stop on hotels. You can't put any bed and breakfast, because there's a stop on B&Bs. For restaurant, I think that will be with a cost overrated. (business agent in Bruges)

Certainly, the price level [is important]. To arrange one's life there, as I said, let alone the construction, it is many times more expensive than renovating an ordinary property. You have to consider the surveillance and closing of the streets and other things, which you do not have to face elsewhere. Then the research, archaeological [excavations]… all of it relates to heritage (resident in Tallinn)

A specific negatively perceived dimension of the heritage space in Bruges, turns out to be 'facadism'—a unique phenomenon compared to Tallinn, in the sense that it was not reflected upon in the interviews (which does not mean it does not exist)—which denotes ignoring the heritage protection regulations in the interior of the buildings. This stealthy practice, acknowledged as reducing the heritage value as well as the quality of the reuse of space in the perceived

space has become a reality despite the efforts and strict strategies of the heritage protection department.

> You should walk into the city and look inside, when there's a door open. Then often you'll see that the inside is all demolished! The only thing that you see is a bit of the structure of the ceiling and everything else is down. Old stones and... spider webs and... that's all you can see... (business agent in Bruges)

Within the practice of protecting heritage, which is part of the continuous development of a destination, the quality of the heritage space affected by multifarious forces are differently perceived between the two destinations in question. The local government in Bruges faces various challenges to upgrade heritage space attributes: the increasing demand for automobile-related spatial conveniences (roads, parking spaces, well-functioning auto mobility) generated by business investments, tourism (previous increase in the number of accommodation units), the low quality contemporary architecture, and the demolition of unprotected heritage buildings. The local government in Tallinn is continuously commencing various projects to restore heritage objects despite limited financial resources, posing a challenge to finally inspect all protected buildings. The practice of heritage restoration in Tallinn is distinct from the practice in Bruges also due to the relatively short period that grants have been available for investments—only a couple of decades since the change of the social system in the 1990s.

> We are growing more and more, people coming from outside bring the need for practical roads, more and more parking spaces, which is also... not a danger, but in a way a risk. (local government official in Bruges)

> [...] the first task was to find out all the facts—who is the owner of a particular property, why these buildings are left unattended, why they are ruined and why nobody is doing something about this. Well, in the very beginning it was just a terrible work—to find out all house owners, because in those times half of all such buildings were owned by the state or by the city, while the other half were already privatized or returned to previous owners in accordance with the Estonian laws. [...] These are factories, industrial plants and dwelling houses—it was a huge task. I have been doing my own business for ten years, but I still cannot say that all 100% of the cultural heritage has been inspected during that time. [...] I am trying to make at least the first round of work, because now it is the right time to make the second round as well [...]. (local government official in Tallinn)

Expressing an interest in protecting a unique heritage landscape from excessive development that transforms spatial functions, the agents concerned for cultural heritage perceive UNESCO as an institution that could professionally react to problems as they arise. The local people initiate joint approaches to UNESCO or large-scale protests at the regional level informing the application of power for struggles around the heritage space. The author

suggests that protesting to UNESCO and other institutions against heritage-related projects by the local people connotes the *fulfilment of social responsibility* by the agents (see section 3.2.1.2 on social responsibility of residents).

> [...] all the small family hotels suddenly had a demand for change, wanted to build and... that was a very big problem in the '80s. Also, the problem where we had a political answer—we had a reaction from the population, a very big reaction called "S.O.S Bruges". (local government official in Bruges)

> [...] UNESCO builds its criticism upon notifications provided by local inhabitants [...], who write letters and complain about many bad things that occur in the Old City. When people visit this place, they are surprised—I cannot say that it is just an individual human prerequisite. I have met many experts and they only shrugged their shoulders and asked me: 'Why did you call us at all?' I say: 'I did not call you'. (local government official in Tallinn)

The research data allows us to conclude that heritage protection and the restoration of high quality input into the (re)production of symbolic values occurs through owners with a high volume of cultural capital who restore heritage objects and perform the restoration according to the strict rules of legislation and strict surveillance and compliance with requirements (see Figure 31).
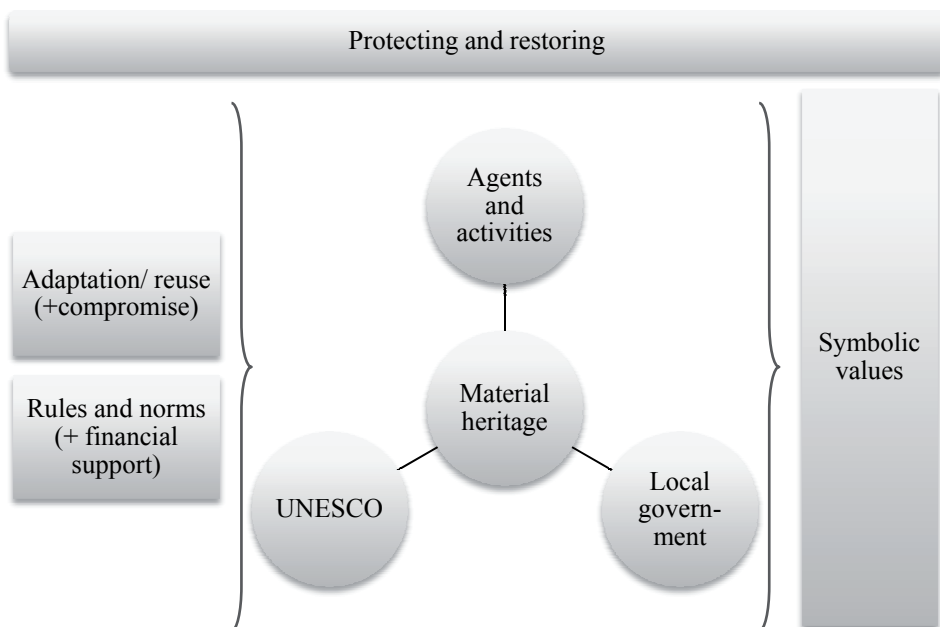


*Figure 31. Reproduction of symbolic values in the processes of protecting and restoring heritage (by the author)*

The processes of protection and restoration affect the well-being of the local people, reinforce the heritage-based identity of the agents acting in the unique heritage space, intensify the symbolic value of the properties involved in socioeconomic activities, and thus potentially (re)create satisfactory spatial experiences for tourists. Hence, carefully restored heritage space strengthens the attributes of a heritage site with symbolic values that are mobilised in the (re)production of representations of space, and therefore, of a destination brand identity in the destination branding process for the purposes of competing in the symbolic economy. The author asserts that the WHS status obliges as well disciplines the agents, but also enables them to keep the destination attractive. This means that the WHS status makes it possible to generate economic profit for the local people and to benefit the continuous (re)production of the community's identity associated with the WHS.

## 3.2.2.2 Functionally (re)interpreting the heritage space—creating liveable urban spaces

> *But the change is not always bad. It's also a start of a new beginning for the*
> *monument.*
> *(local government official in Bruges)*

> *This is the case with us – there is no Old Town as a functioning private living-*
> *business environment; there is just this making of props.*
> *(resident in Tallinn)*

The reuse of the heritage space denotes assigning multifarious functions to heritage objects that, as operationalized entities in socioeconomic activities, are transformed into spatial units with multifarious purposes for modern life (re)creating a liveable urban space. The functional reuse of the heritage space is interchangeably (re)shaped by regulative and non-regulative dimensions that constitute the (re)production of the heritage space.

The author suggests that *non-regulatory (or self-regulatory) (re)constitution and/or transformation of the use of the heritage space* pertains to global processes, which affect the destination, as well as to the entrepreneurial drive of the local people and personal active engagement of agents in socioeconomic activities. The agents perceive both positive effects from the global processes, which increase the well-being of the local people by virtue of revenues from the tourism industry, and the negative effects of global tourism, which induces the touristification and musealisation of the heritage space, decreasing the well-being of the local people (as it causes prices of properties and services to increase for residents), as well as opportunities to identify with the heritage space (as it impinges on the location of the business of local people forcing them to move from concentrated tourism areas and creates a feeling of alienation from the heritage space among the residents).

Now, it's more international. When you go to the city, you have Zara, [...]... it's now all international. Before, in the '60s, we had a lot of local people, but now, the rates are too high. They can't pay it anymore. That's a bit of a shame, but it's all over now, I think. We have to go to the border of Bruges, where people have their own shops, where they can pay the rent. They can't come to Bruges, to the centre. They're on the border of Bruges. (resident in Bruges)

[...] and, you see, there could be a little less of that strange thing here. There is far too much of this matrjoshka stuff [...]. (resident in Tallinn)

The local people expect the local government to control the functional use of heritage objects as a means to counteract the seasonal use of the heritage space. The research data indicates that under the pressure of global tourism, some areas of residential space in the Old Towns transform into holiday space. The agents suggest that the reason for the increase of holiday space pertains to the growing demand among foreigners for holiday houses and/or flats in popular destinations, making heritage buildings and flats more expensive, and therefore, less affordable for the local people, as well as (re)producing poorly liveable heritage space because of the non-presence of residents. This could denote a place brand performance gap when the tourists experience the liveable heritage space as poor and a consecutive negative effect in the long-term development of a destination.

Then you really have those kinds of streets already, where half of the houses are not really lived in, because these are holiday houses. That's not good for the day-to-day life of the town, because you get kind of half-empty streets. (cultural agent in Bruges)

Well, there could be a higher number of, yes, especially local people. There are actually quite a lot of those renting [properties]—foreigners… (resident in Tallinn)

The forces of global tourism combined with the entrepreneurial initiative of letting properties at high prices induce the touristification of the areas of the WHSs. Notwithstanding, the agents expressed satisfaction with the quotidian functions of urban heritage space that creates conveniences for the local people to conduct everyday spatial practices and retains a residential reuse of the heritage space. By contrast, the local people in Tallinn experience dissatisfaction with the quotidian functions of the heritage space. The author suggests that the everyday use of the heritage space (re)produces quality spatial practices at destinations, thereby sustaining the Old Towns of both destinations as a liveable environment that potentially creates a representational resource for constructing a destination brand identity.

Yeah! It's okay, it's perfect and there's great market work and you can buy food every... [...] Wednesday and Saturday, yeah. That's a real city—living! (resident in Bruges)

[...] close by here's a stationary shop […] a twenty four hour grocery, which is the only one in Tallinn. Such little places are essential for retailers and other tenants and they should be retained. But we can support them a little. One thing is to buy stationary and coffee cream and hope that other people also support them and they stay in business. To ensure that the Old Town is not going to change into a place [only] for selling a particular type of souvenir [...]. (business agent in Tallinn)

Within the context of global tourism, the agents become interested in the (re)production of tourism-related socioeconomic activities in WHSs to generate profit from the exploitation of the heritage resources of a destination. Income and profit generating activities, as the entrepreneurial drive of the local people, utilise heritage with all its attributes (especially medieval settings and locations in the heritage space; see section 3.2.1.1 on locating activities) to incorporate the symbolic status and values of a heritage site (as (re)produced in the symbolic economy and international tourism market) into socioeconomic activities. This would concomitantly (re)create the continuity of heritage through the continuous reuse and (re)occupation of heritage objects for purposes appreciated by local customers as well as tourists experiencing the local life. Such interrelation between agents and heritage connotes a non-regulatory (re)constitution and/or transformation of functional uses of heritage space.

The relationship between the place and the success of art is of course very important. [...] Um... there is this Chinese proverb, saying that there are three important things to start a business—the first one is the location, the second one is the location, the third one is the location. (business agent in Bruges)

If you want to come to Tallinn, really you should be staying at an Old Town hotel, because you can stay in a big international chain anywhere around the world. (business agent in Tallinn)

Emotional attachment to heritage in the Old Town and spatially informed identity-based attitudes intertwine with the rational considerations to (re)produce activities in the heritage space. The spatial association of activities with a specific location in a heritage site is perceived to (re)create both an agents' identity, which is interrelated with conducting an activity in the heritage area, and an efficient process of (re)producing income and profit generating activities, thus, contributing to the (re)construction of a destination brand identity. Hence, the interconnectedness between a specific socioeconomic activity and a destination identity might be (re)produced in the field of tourist production if the relationship makes it possible to (re)produce profit for agents from exploiting the attributes of heritage. As follows from the analysis of the research data, the dual relationship between an activity and a destination identity could augment an attraction system for a destination and potentially (re)create intangible cultural heritage (i.e., an activity acquired with a connection with a destination identity, thus involved in both representations of space and tourists' representational spaces).

[...] why are we here—it's that we really want to make part of Bruges... Bruges' culture and heritage and people—and once you move this away, [...] from Bruges, you don't have that link anymore. I mean, you... yeah, it's partly emotional, but also—there are people working here, there are... there people who work [...], people who come to visit [...], so it has still quite an impact on the daily life on a lot of people in Bruges. It has changed as a tourist spot also. (business agent in Bruges)

[...] this has been going on for years and years. A client comes to us because he knows. Even foreign tourists we are especially famous among clients from St Petersburg; they come to Tallinn and they know [...] that we have our own products which they like. (business agent in Tallinn)

As agents perceive the need for the intervention of the local government in the regulation of the functional uses of heritage space that is actively targeted by various agents for exploiting the extractive use value of heritage, then the local governments employ the measures to counter the effects resulting from global tourism and to increase the quality of the heritage space, (re)creating liveable environments (however, public authorities might encounter resistance from the local people towards the employment of regulative norms). The difference between the two selected destinations is the legislative power of the local government (see section 3.2.1.3) informing about *regulatory (re)constitution and/or transformation of the uses of the heritage* space. The legislative difference between the two destinations to affect the functional use of heritage space implies different policy strategies: the strategic approach of the local government of Bruges is detailed and carried out in tight cooperation with international organizations to maintain and improve the citizen's well-being (through an active intervention by regulating the functions and purchasing properties), whereas Tallinn does not possess any effective power (or other legislative or financial measures) to commence regulatory (re)constitution and/or transformation of the uses of the heritage space.

 [...] but then we will in all the side streets and other neighbourhoods protect the living function. [...] So, we try to fix the function, with a function plan [...] together with specialists of UNESCO and ICOMOS to make a management plan—and one of them will be again actualizing the functions; we will again look, where do we keep... try to protect 100% our living function and look, where would the commercial function be and which kind of commercial function. (local government official in Bruges)

[...] they sold their former military hospital and the city bought it—and wants to use it for a habitation function; this, which was a military hospital... (local government official in Bruges)

Practically all [opportunities] are missing… you know, neither the legislative nor fiscal regulations allow us to dictate the house owners that… His house, his business. Amsterdam is fighting too... Amsterdam is fighting with its coffee shops [...]. (local government official in Tallinn)

There is clearly a demand for some regulations for functional use to ameliorate the negative effects of socioeconomic activities on the well-being of the local people, especially residents. One of the significant concerns among the residents in Tallinn is the problem of noise that is mainly caused by people visiting clubs in the late evening and at night. The continuous presence of the problem, thus, connotes the lack of power granted to the local government to affect the functional use of the urban space.

> One citizen used to run a café up there [...] He was a freak in a bad sense... he tried, in his own way, to advertise or advocate the music of the Middle Ages. Sitting with me here.. you might think that I like that music... and actually I do. I listen to it with great pleasure. [...] But he had four pieces which he ran for three hundred and sixty five days and four years. The loudspeakers were turned outwards... you can imagine. I…[…] became twitchy, I did. (resident in Tallinn)

However, affected by the concerns of the local people, the public authority in Tallinn is taking steps to acquire greater legislative power to regulate and affect the functional uses of the urban space, thereby aiming to mitigate the negative effects of conducting specific socioeconomic activities.

> The city of Tallinn has started to apply for the right, which it lacks today— not to allow certain activities, at certain times… well… this is the question of surveillance, which has been raised by the residents of the Old Town. (local government official in Tallinn)

By contrast, the intensive intervention of the local government in restructuring spatial uses in Bruges has solved the noise problem, which had created discomfort for the residents of the Old Town of Bruges. However, the regulations might create contradictory reactions among the local people who are concerned about overregulation that could endanger the well-being of citizens in a different manner. Therefore, the author assumes that the regulations should be more flexible to find a satisfactory solution to problems raised for wider range of interested people.

> And now, for the last five years, they're looking to have a few places again in town, where young people can dance or meet each other at night. So it's like... how do you call it... at the end of the '90s the city cleaned everything; there could be no dancing anymore and then they saw that people were complaining and that a bit of the character of the city was lost [...]. (cultural agent in Bruges)

With regard to regulatory activities and norms, the agents in both selected destinations experience a contradiction between the interests of businesses in raising or maintaining revenues and the town's vision of sustaining or improving the quality of the heritage space. As the (re)production of some specific qualities of the urban heritage space (either visual attributes or pedestrianization) hinges upon regulatory norms, the agents might be interested in tailoring the regulations to the agents' needs to raise revenue or take the

changes as given (presumably, as a result of a lack of collaboration amongst stakeholders to exert power to advance business interests).

> [...] there's every year a big battle with the terrace... with the people, who have all the cafes on the market square—and every square. We still have a regime that we try to be strict, but maybe one day, we lose the battle. It's that the terraces are on from 15th March until 15th November. Then, they disappear—so then we have a clean square. This is what we call our "winter look", [...] the innkeeper at the marketplace... he wants to keep his space, for the whole year—he'll put heating in the winter and... So that's a battle, because they say—why not let us earn money, eh? [...] (local government official in Bruges)

> They're pedestrianizing basically Harju Street, which will create big problems for me - because there'll only be one access into the Old Town, which would be from the railroad station area, and that road... in the summertime [...]. (business agent in Tallinn)

Though the present section has considered the *two types* of the (re)constitution and/or transformation of the use of the heritage space separately, the author suggests that they appear as *inextricably intertwined*. The most exemplary process to elucidate the interconnectedness between the two types is the intensity of tourism activities that produce the distinctive character of specific parts within a single heritage space. The tourist space of Bruges—of the town called the Venice of the North—is more distinctly perceived compared to that of Tallinn, and this spatial area of the central part of Bruges is indubitably acknowledged by all interviewed agents in Bruges and is called the "Golden Triangle". The (re)production of the dense tourism space in Bruges makes it possible to concentrate tourism-associated socioeconomic activities in a confined spatial area, thereby maintaining the quality of the urban space and avoiding the musealisation and touristification of the rest of the Old Town. As perceived, the combination of both types might (re)produce the concentrated tourism space as in Bruges ("Golden Triangle") through the regulation of the functional use of heritage objects, (re)producing a destination identity with selected and specifically interpreted tourism material for the tourism market, and the (re)production of the tourism space in the destination through consumer tourist experiences. Thus, the example of Bruges epitomises the duality between agency and structure in the (re)production of socioeconomic activities and the tourism space.

> I don't think it's regulated by law, but I think that to have permission to start up some shops, to... if you look at the promotion of the city, the guided tours - they are all focused here. [...] So, it's more in guides and maps and brochures and communication that we focus on this one. (local government official in Bruges)

The on-going (re)production of the functions of the heritage space, which is affected by regulatory and non-regulatory forces (see Figure 32), (re)produces a

liveable town where heritage is continuously operationalized by multitudinous forms of socioeconomic activities.

The interrelations among the agents, functional use of heritage, and nature of the (re)constitution and/or transformation of the use of heritage by the agents are multifaceted and complex (see Figure 32). While agents of income and profit generating activities exploit heritage in the context of the global tourism industry (thus representing non-regulatory (re)constitution of the functional heritage space), then the local government exerts power (however, with different quantity and quality in the destinations under the observation) to improve the well-being of the citizens (as it is conceived by public authorities), sometimes as a reaction to the concerns of the local people towards both self-regulatory and regulatory types of constituting the functional uses of the heritage space.
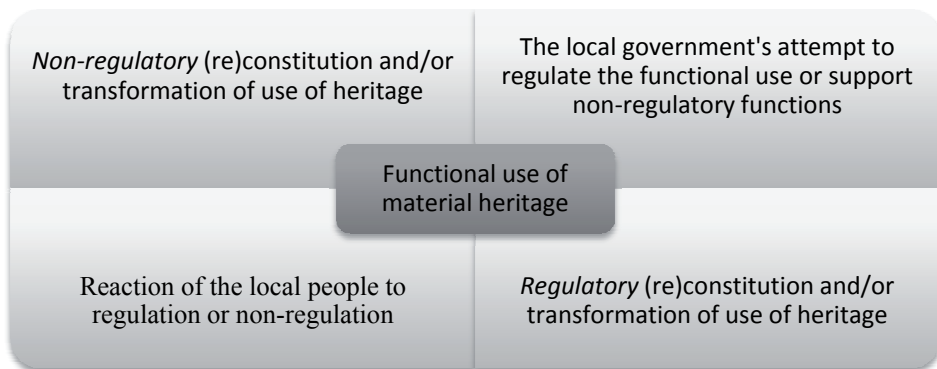


*Figure 32. Non-regulatory (or self-regulatory) and regulatory (re)constitution and/or transformation of the use of the heritage space (by the author)*

In general, the adaptive reuse of heritage properties, which is endowed with a specific current function, is considered to make it possible to sustain heritage as a continuously (re)produced socioeconomic fabric in destinations. One of the functions assigned to part of the heritage space is its public use that is acknowledged by the majority of agents, and thus the public function of heritage space deserves further discussion.

### 3.2.2.3 Providing access to heritage—(re)producing public space

> *It's... it's hugely important for everything in Bruges—the city landscape.*
> *But in an implicit way—not in an explicit way. Of course for outdoor events,*
> *this is a magnificent decor you can have.*
> *(cultural agent in Bruges)*

> *In front of the house, there should be such an open space where I could sit*
> *peacefully; where I could see an advertisement—indicating primarily what is*
> *happening in this building; and at least in summertime there should be an*
> *opportunity for sitting and having a cup of coffee...*
> *(cultural agent in Tallinn)*

Socioeconomic activities contribute to the continuous (re)production of the public, semi-public, and private space of heritage destinations. The contribution to *(re)creating and (re)producing the public space*, as an intentional activity, is not perceived as part of gaining and sustaining a competitive advantage by agents if not operationalized in business activities as part of *(re)creating the experiential servicescape* (see section 3.2.1.1). However, (re)producing the public space could be regarded as part of (re)constructing the competitive advantage of a destination by enhancing its attractiveness for [potential] tourists (cf. section 1.3).

The intentional (re)production of the public space in the experience of agents in the heritage space pertains to the temporary opening of the heritage space to the public, the transformation from private to public of the use of heritage units on a permanent basis, and lastly, purchasing private properties for the purposes of public use; therefore, the public space appears to epitomise the accessibility of heritage for all interested people: locals and tourists. The (re)production of the public space is informed by the intentions (for business agents): to enlarge opportunities for making a profit from local consumers and tourists, to promote specific activities for locals and tourists (for cultural agents), to nurture a sense of pride in achievements by sharing the enjoyment of the heritage experience, strengthening the identity on the basis of appreciative feedback (for residents), and, finally (for the local government) to meet the needs of the citizens by offering a liveable space, and to attract tourists and remain in a competitive position among other destinations.

Temporarily opening the heritage space to the public appears as *sharing the heritage space*. The intention to share the heritage space by making it public ensues from the acknowledgement of the uniqueness of the physical environment by its owners and their positive disposition towards tourists, as expressed by the agents in the interviews.

> Because, as I said, it's a place to share. Bruges is considered... considering [...] and its immediate surroundings, it's the most cinematic spot in town. I wanted, in both ways, to open it to the public and share it. (business agent in Bruges)

[...] we have a pearl. We literally have a pearl [...]. [...] Now particularly my such… maybe a bit… sadness or regret of living in such a building, which is full of history—not just history, but in a broad sense everything. Culture, attitude, clothing, architecture, customs—until I don't know, until birth and death [...]. And again exactly the same—I invited them in again. So, I am crazy about tourists and I would like to, I could talk to them all the time. (resident in Tallinn)

However, in addition to the *acquisition of (previously) private urban space* in a heritage site for public purposes by the local governments in both destinations (e.g., buying private gardens in Bruges or the area of Danish King's Garden in Tallinn), the openness of the public space could build upon the *transformation* of the space *as it becomes public* space, in its use and/or ownership, on a permanent basis. This would then increase the well-being of the local people or generate additional income, as perceived by the agents in Bruges and Tallinn, informing the evolving envisioning of the potential of unused or private space and diversifying the activities to strengthen a competitive advantage. The author suggests that such actions are ultimately targeted towards increasing the attractiveness of the heritage space of a destination and also, depending on the contextual situation, diversifying the experiencescape for tourists.

We have in the last 25 years... the city has been able to buy gardens, which were private, and opened those to the public [...]. [...] a private garden, which became also a public garden after... because the house was not in use anymore—it became an office and the city bought this garden and it's very successfully used by the neighbourhood. (local government official in Bruges)

And you can now visit the garden without going to the museum. So that's... we hope that it will become more a part of the people living in this area; that they just go there [...]. [...] So we try to integrate public space into gardens; we try to open them as much to make them attractive for people, who don't have to come to the museums, they can just walk around the museums. (cultural agent in Bruges)

It was decided to return this tower to a private owner, who owned it during the pre-war period. This person was also the owner of all this land including Taani Kuninga Aed (the Danish King's Garden) as well as the Lühike Jalg Tower with the building where Hortus Musicus is located. The decision must be adopted in order to renew all this complex of buildings—just as one of the Old City architecture pearls—Lühike Jalg Tower, the Maiden's Tower and the Danish King's Garden. [...] Finally, after 5-6 years of fighting, the city has obtained these buildings in its ownership. Now we have already created a project and the practical renovation procedure will be started during this year. This project includes new renovation works and some other plans, because people often ask us, when a new café could be opened – we are going to build this café. The Maiden's Tower is already owned by the

City Museum and these planned works will continue the complex of buildings related to Kiek in de Kök. (local government official in Tallinn)

Initially, both rooms served as office spaces; one still does [...] but the first one has been opened for public use; there is our museum shop (cultural agent in Tallinn)

Furthermore, the *intangible elements of the heritage space in the public space* constitute the process of the (re)production of the public space in the *quality area of the WHSs*, as being endowed with intrinsic value when cultural agents utilise *heritage as a central element* within cultural projects, which accentuate and intensify the aesthetic attributes of medieval heritage landscapes. Apparently, such cultural initiatives temporarily transform the use of a particular part of the urban heritage space and concomitantly create an attraction for a destination.

Of course it's a medieval city, it's very picturesque, and it's... we're trying to play with it, to get in a dialogue with it; also add elements to enhance this picturesque feeling. For instance, during winter festivals we use lot of candles, we use... basically the existing architecture to make a kind of a fairy tale atmosphere. (cultural agent in Bruges)

[...] the cultural programme in the framework of the Old Town Days... [...]. [...] this is the event with the most direct focus on the Old Town which is organized by the city (local government official in Tallinn)

As perceived by the agents, cultural events are conducted in the outdoor public space of heritage sites with a salient cultural mission. Its symbolic specificity in the context of the history of the town provides cultural experiences to a larger number of community members, thereby sustaining the heritage space as a liveable environment with events acquiring a commercial dimension for tourism.

It's a mixture of devotion, because that devotion still exists. You have the tradition, so it's folkloristic; it has always been there, our parents knew it, grandparents and you can continue for generations and generations. For the inhabitants, it's a special day and it has a commercial function. (resident in Bruges)

A lot of events what we support take place in the Old Town. They bring life to the area and enrich the whole scene here. [...]. [...] The Day of Tallinn – to a great degree... well, it is not concentrated only in the Old Town and takes place also elsewhere but traditionally the Town Hall Square tends to be the focal point and…the events which have been related to the history of the city are highlighted [...]. (local government official in Tallinn)

In addition to the intangible qualities of heritage in the public space, cultural and business activities might focus on the *quality attributes of the public space* per se in a heritage site (i.e., attributes that are applicable in any, not necessarily only the heritage context) by installing cultural artefacts in the heritage space

and commencing various projects involving a temporary intervention in the public space, thus increasing its attractiveness.

There's a work of art by [...], modern Italian sculptor. This is placed outside the museum, so... Near the Groeninge museum is the statue of [...], an American sculptor. We managed to get some art into the public space. We... when we do activities, we do them sometimes outside of the buildings - reorganize medieval markets, Merovingian markets... [...] we as museum-people have an influence on what is going on in public space as well. (cultural agent in Bruges)

We celebrated our fifteenth anniversary [...]. All people who passed by [they saw]…a row of candles along the whole street. Then there was the fire show... I think it adds a lot to the city. Tourists were so thrilled taking pictures lying down on the street. And, yes, we also had a cake 3 by 4 metres, how much does that make … twelve square metres. We have held flower parties too [...] and performances [...]. Plus the signs we've hung up [...] on both sides [of the building], remind a little of the middle-age style; they are entirely unique, commissioned from artists […] Well, all of it features the city… (cultural agent in Tallinn)

To sum up, the continuous (re)production of the public space and its qualities occur in the dual interrelationship between the material heritage and socioeconomic activities conducted by the agents in the heritage space of the WHSs (see Figure 33).
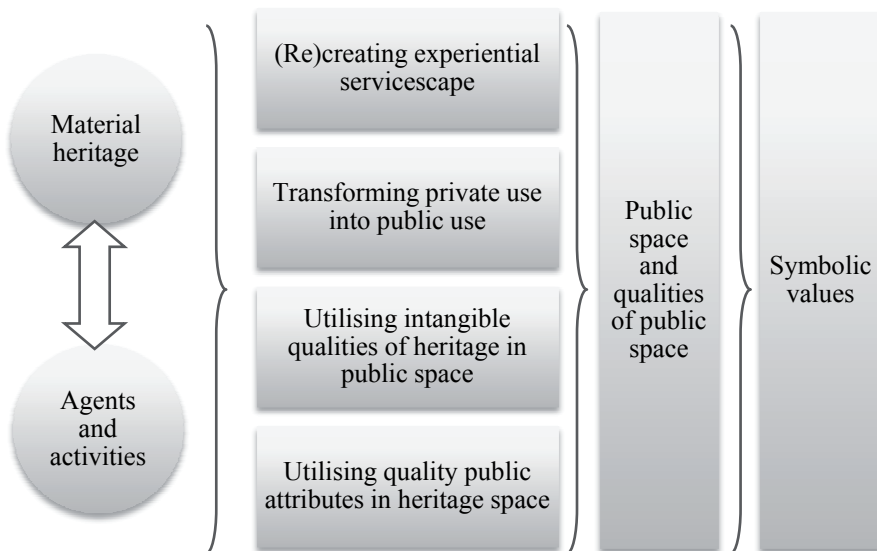


*Figure 33. (Re)producing the public heritage space in a destination (by the author)*

The rationale behind (re)producing the public space appears to be the acknowledgement of the uniqueness of the heritage objects, motivating a desire to share this experience with the community and the tourists, as well as the need to increase the well-being of the local people. Hence, the author suggests that the mobilisation of heritage and its intangible qualities in the (re)production of the public space (re)produces the symbolic values of heritage in the dual relationship between heritage and agents on the appraisal of the unique qualities of heritage.

Therefore, within the (re)creation of the public space, to a large extent intended to benefit the local communities, the agents physically expand the heritage space available for spatial practices accentuating the qualities of the medieval heritage in socioeconomic activities. The author suggests that the extended public heritage areas improve the spatial practices of the local people and tourists, potentially enrich representational spaces of the destination in the experiences of tourists and, thus, more advantageously contribute to the (re)construction of symbolic capital.

### 3.2.2.4 Short conclusion

The present subsection (3.2.2) has analysed how material heritage is strategically activated in the experiences of agents within socioeconomic activities. It appears that agents shape specific strategies with regard to heritage mobilised in their actions: protecting and restoring heritage, affecting and defining functional uses of heritage, and (re)producing the public space (see Figure 34).



*Figure 34. Shaping the strategies for (re)producing the heritage space (by the author)*

Hence, through appreciating and valuing heritage, as well as mobilising heritage objects and their intangible qualities in socioeconomic activities, agents contribute to the continuous (re)production of unique values and, because they are being utilised in promotional materials, symbolic values. The author suggests that heritage, as a social phenomenon, becomes part of socioeconomic activities when the material heritage and intangi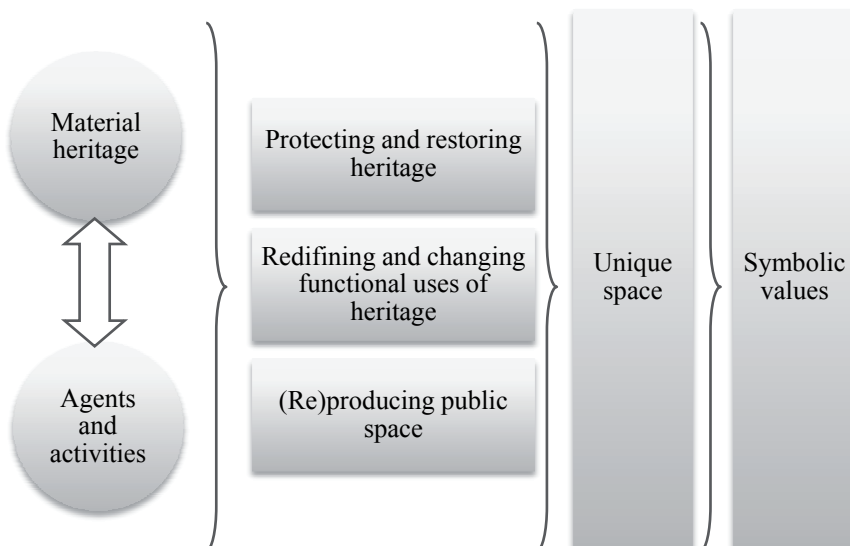ble values are strategically activated and transformed into symbolic attributes in the representational space of agents, thereby informing the interconnectedness of material and symbolic spaces in the (re)construction of symbolic capital. Because of the accumulated historical value, unique elements of heritage buildings become integrated into the spatial practices of tourists, thus potentially (re)producing representational spaces in tourist experiences.

### 3.2.3 Ensuring the continuity of the symbolic value of heritage

> *[...] people—what do they do in Bruges? It's a big open-air museum and they come to see this museum, to buy chocolate and to drink beer.*
> *(business agent in Bruges)*

> *Cheap tourism—it means that... that... these are the clients who come in on ships, who spend the night preferably in hostels, in cheap places, who have no interest in culture, who want to party.*
> *(resident in Tallinn)*

To understand the discursive processes behind the dual relationship between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital upon the interconnected actions of agents, the discussion further focuses on how agents conceive of the identity and image of a destination, informed by their experience in the heritage space. Apparently, the different agent groups approach the issue from the perspective of their specific activity, defining their position within the limitations of interest, responsibility and power, as has been previously discussed. However, despite evident cross-cultural field-specific similarities, all actions in a particular time and space, especially the actions commenced with regard to the perception of a destination identity and image, need to be considered in the context of specific societal developments, and that of the two selected destinations in order to explain the agents' dispositions.

The local government officials in Bruges and Tallinn utilise the statistics and feedback from research on tourism to revisit the vision of the destination in order to (re)construct a differentiation strategy based on the destination image perceived by the tourists. The *perceived images* of both destinations predominantly centre round unique heritage with its specific attributes (e.g., intimacy, authenticity, compactness, entirety, and small scale). Bruges tries to shift the focus from fostering the tourism market through conventional approaches to mobilising and representing local cultural identities and resources and attracting business tourists. This intention aims at branding the place-bound tourism product—culture—to a wider range of potential tourists, while

simultaneously improving the well-being of the local people by increasing the profits from the local activities. Whereas Tallinn rather (re)constructs the same destination identity, associated with the intangible qualities of the medieval heritage space, although also applying two supplementary strategic approaches. Firstly, the strategic opportunity for Tallinn is seen in the alteration of the tourist attraction system of the city in two main instances, which emanate from the perceived need to reduce the tourist pressure on the WHS and widen the tourist space of the city by opening the Old Town towards adjacent areas and incorporating the wider context of the town into a defined destination by the same token (e.g., Kadriorg park and palace, the waterfront area). Secondly, combining the attributes of heritage with the qualities of modern life in projecting a destination identity implies a concern for the underuse of other tourism resources of the destination and the excessive use of the Old Town of Tallinn. Therefore, the author assumes that the construction of the destination identity upon locally unique cultural activities in Bruges and upon the involvement of modern life in the heritage space in Tallinn (as explicated in the following quotations) informs the mobilisation of socioeconomic activities in the (re)construction of a destination identity.

> We have an economic goal, meaning: we try to attract people to stay here overnight and spend a certain amount of money. [...] Business tourism is more oriented toward mid-week [...]. So, in fact, mid-week is the time we need to promote mostly, to have more economic revenue for the tourist industry in Bruges and the surrounding area. [...] If you promote the destination, they always say—canals, but also, eh... let me see... where the English one is here? Ah. "City of the Flemish Primitives", we call it. Because we think Bruges is unique with the paintings and museums of the Flemish Primitives. We strongly feel so [...]. (local government official in Bruges)

> […] we advertise Tallinn as a ... well, briefly, Tallinn is mainly the destination of a short city vacation, where … where you can get to know the history, which is romantic, comfortable, compact—as well as contemporary and so. (local government official in Tallinn)

> Well, if we talk about the Old Town again, then… yes, for example here you could disperse it. This life has become concentrated into like precise points. Then again there are streets and sections, where… where there is complete peace and quite. Again – this dispersion subject; in recent years it has actually been done rather nicely or people have started to do it. [...] So the seaside part is created [...]. [...] Many very nice and cosy dining places have been opened in Kalamaja that… they come gradually, yes. (local government official in Tallinn)

In terms of being concerned with the perceived image of the destination that ensues from mass tourism and builds upon the material heritage and its atmospheric attributes, the local government in Bruges has commenced a process of re-branding the destination based on cultural activities to endow the

destination identity with quality attributes by attracting cultural tourists. Such a redefinition of the vision of a destination involves the successful mobilisation of cultural resources for the "European Capital of Culture" and also the powerful symbolic status of the museums, i.e., municipal organization Musea Brugge[6] and its cultural projects, and additionally is informed by the strategic choices of promoting Bruges in the last quarter of the 19th century to focus on the harbour, culture and museums, and heritage. The local government in Tallinn is concerned with finding the ways to affect the qualities of the heritage space, considering the negative effects of global tourism as the main challenges for tourism, to (re)produce the quality space of a heritage site. Hence, the *prospective vision of the image* of Tallinn as a destination is targeted towards counteracting an occurrence of a place brand performance gap with regard to qualities of spatial practice in the local people and tourists.

> So, we made a start by positioning Bruges as a cultural-tourist destination. Bruges inner city is world heritage—we're living in a cultural World Heritage City. I mean, the cultural offer in Bruges is huge. The cultural sector is doing great things. World Heritage City—that means that we try to develop not the mass tourism, not the group tourism [...]. This intimacy— this is what we tried to develop. (local government official in Bruges)

> We are a big organization, because we have 16 museums; also the most important collections in terms of quantity and quality—for instance, Flemish Primitives, which are very important; in tourism and promotion, as well. (cultural agent in Bruges)

> [...] if we talk about the Old Town here, then the biggest challenge is probably how to bring two different viewpoints together – it is clear to the residents of the Old Town of Tallinn and probably to many heritage conservationists… well, it seems that the number of tourists has started to cross the limits. [...] Another problem is probably how to regulate the entertainment facilities of the Old Town that… or that the Old Town would

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[6] Musea Brugge incorporates primary museums of the town (among them historical buildings with symbolic value, e.g., the Belfry and the Church of Our Lady). From the agents' viewpoint, the strong position of Musea Brugge as an organisation ultimately rests on the dualistic relationship between the possession of a "Flemish Primitive" art collection of world importance (perceived as a material manifestation of the significance of the town of Bruges in the development of painting in the Middle Ages, and this is internationally recognised as constituting one of the three selection criteria for the UNESCO WHSs of Bruges), as well historical buildings of significant symbolic value, and the financial capacity that makes it possible to conserve a collection of artefacts and to make them available for the public (therefore, informing the input of the local government in the (re)construction of the symbolic economy). Thus, the museums in Bruges are considered the most significant contributor to the (re)construction of a destination identity.

not have… noise and ruckus [...]. [...] The question is in finding the balance. (local government official in Tallinn)

To counteract the effects that global tourism impose on the destination's heritage and to (re)construct a destination identity, the local governments in Bruges and Tallinn initiate various actions and projects. The local governments consider the cooperation, initiated by them, among the stakeholders and/or partners as of crucial importance to effectively recreate a destination identity with the aim of affecting the image of the destination (as in Bruges within the process of re-branding) or to find ways to enhance accessibility to tourists from the target markets, thus counteracting the distant geographical location from other densely populated European areas (as in the case of Tallinn).

But... we sat together with people from the concert hall, museums... [...] we tried to have a consensus on how Bruges should be presented, with all these ingredients we feel. [...] As a result of this... so, this is not only done from a tourist point of view. Bruges is an aesthetic privilege for the cultural... [...]. As a second part of the study, this logo was chosen. (local government official in Bruges)

[...] but all other things still depend on how the destination is accessible. We still try to be in those places where Tallinn is accessible. So, we cooperate with the airport, airlines, tour operators—we try to create the respective common interest points and operate from there. (local government official in Tallinn)

The promotion of Bruges as a shopping destination within the shopping-related communication campaign in Flanders by the economic department is considered a complimentary enhancement of the destination brand identity drawing on the pursuit of the local government to promote the town as a destination with various opportunities for leisure. Thus, in the town of Bruges, which is perceived as a tourist town and a destination with a varied cultural life and high quality restaurants (e.g., Michelin starred restaurants), the promotion of shopping opportunities is seen as a means of intensifying functional congruence to affect a tourist's destination choice, thereby aiming at increasing the revenues of the local agents by attracting larger numbers of tourists mainly from Flanders. Moreover, the economic department of Bruges acknowledges the criticisms of the local people and their dissatisfaction with the absence of quality brand shops in Bruges, implying that the existing conventional destination image reconstructs the perception of a destination by the owners of quality brands, and moreover, considerable investments are needed to (re)image or enhance the destination brand identity, and therefore, image in terms of quality brand shopping opportunities.

But... practically no shopping; no shopping streets... always the same tourist image. High quality restaurants and high quality clothing shops and shoe shops and whatever you want—they are already here. We don't need to attract anymore—they are already here, but it's our role to communicate to

Flanders people: here in Bruges, OK, you have culture, good food; but also, shopping. [...] that Bruges is just touristy. People who come, they see that in reality, it is not like that. They think that people in Bruges, they don't come to shop, but they just come to sit on the horses, on the boats, to see expositions, to visit historic buildings, but not to buy something in general. They think... that is the approach of the high quality marks. [...] but we see that you have to have some... a high budget to attract those kinds of stores. (local government official in Bruges)

The local government of Tallinn cannot possibly be engaged in directing retail, or quality shopping strategies for the restricted power regulations as indicated earlier, but they have the single means of the place-bound provision of cheap rent. As is apparent from the critical comments of business agents, there seems to be a demand for extended power to be exerted by the government to regulate the functional use of the heritage space for business purposes in the Old Town. The heritage space is seen to be transforming into a touristified area nurturing global mass tourism with a low variety of products and drastically confined quality shopping opportunities. The shopping offers are located outside the Old Town, where especially shopping malls located nearby affect the non-regulatory transformation of the functional use of the heritage space, decreasing retail intensity and variety.

It's pretty boring. Besides, souvenir shops... if they really want to go shopping, they have Viru Street, but that's it. There's not much else. So... shopping in the Old Town is not very interesting. People are then being sent to Viru Keskus [shopping centre adjacent to Old Town] or Rocca al Mare [a distant suburban shopping centre], to do their shopping there. (business agent in Tallinn)

[...] but the completion of Viru Keskus was probably the last vacuum cleaner effect, which pulled also… well, there are shoe stores and such on Viru Street, also, but mostly it is boutique trading—you can also get nice and grand designer boots from Vivian Vau in Rataskaevu Street and so on... (local government official in Tallinn)

However, with regard to the prospective image of a destination, the vision of the agents from non-government fields might not match the vision of the municipalities. A different perception ensues from both the *critical* perception of the *qualities and attributes of the heritage space* of a destination by the agents in terms of the spatial practice and the *comparison of the destination with other* specific destinations or in general in terms of destination competition. Juxtaposing the qualities and attributes of a destination with those of other destinations, the agents broach the subject of the disadvantages of the place, proposing further destination identity development.

Agents compare Bruges with major destinations of Flanders and with Venice in regard to cultural activities, especially contemporary art, and qualities of tourism. Though there is a range of disadvantages perceived by the agents in Bruges (e.g., less industry enterprises than in Ghent, lack of large conference

facilities and associated accommodation units, accessibility issues), from their viewpoint further actions should develop contemporary art and enhancing the quality attributes of tourism (including quality shopping), to improve the well-being of the local people and make the town vibrant and fascinating. However, the comparison of Tallinn with other destinations pertains to the critical assessment of the effects of global tourism on a heritage site and, as such, of the governance and administration of the town by the public authorities.

From the standpoint of some agents, the qualities of a destination, which are (re)produced through mass tourism, forces wealthier tourists to neglect destinations with low quality tourism and to eschew visits in favour of less crowded destinations. However, the agents do not confine themselves to criticising the qualities and attributes of the destinations, and concomitantly propose multitudinous visions of possible solutions for transforming the town into a modern and quality destination.

> I invited those customers to talk about the marketing system [...]... as I said, it was to invite the people, to make a reception for the people in the city hall, which we did. So, it helps [...] structure to make people feel comfortable and good and to feel that they are somebody in the town, not part of these thousands. So, the city council could propose businesses to some people— that there's a facility for inviting people in groups of 20–40 people, who are invited to the city hall for a reception [...]. (business agent in Bruges)

> Maybe to change the opening hours of these night lounges… well, if the opening hours are until, I don't know, four o'clock maximum… and that they would have to decrease the level of music at some point. I cannot imagine how the people can stay in a hotel when there is such a noise and ruckus. (resident in Tallinn)

The qualities of the heritage space of a destination, partially perceived in comparison with other competitive destinations as indicated above, form the basis for the (re)construction of prospective visions of the destination images as perceived by agents and informing their actions. *A prospective vision of the destination image of Bruges* comprises the pursuit of the contemporary dimension in the destination identity and image with attributes of medieval heritage: contemporary architecture and contemporary art (however, alternatives such as elite tourism or crafts are also conceived by the agents). The agents in Bruges vacillate between different attitudes towards contemporary architecture in heritage space. Contemporary architecture is regarded as a mode of reusing the heritage space to sustain the destination with modern attributes, but the quality of the integration of contemporary architecture with heritage edifices remains a controversial phenomenon in the minds of the agents in Bruges. Moreover, the attributes of contemporary art in the prospective vision of the image of Bruges builds upon the pursuit of cultural agents to affect the promotion and branding of the destination with their activities to reposition Bruges as a destination of culture and cuisine, and therefore, to augment the diversity of the dimensions of Bruges' image and to acquire more quality

tourism, thereby expressing a concern for both local people and tourists. When the interviewed agents experience dissatisfaction with the contemporary art projects that have commenced, they propose specific ideas to enhance the development of Bruges as the destination of contemporary art (e.g., to involve world-famous artists, to commence cultural projects involving controversial contested art, and to find professionals who are capable of running contemporary art projects, thus impugning the professional abilities of those currently organizing these projects).

> One thing that is very important, not only for us as museums, but also for other cultural partners, is that we do projects, festivals and exhibitions not only for tourists but also projects, which are specifically aimed at people in and around Bruges. That's very important—to get the feeling that Bruges is a creative city, a contemporary city... and not only what we call "a Disneyland of the Middle Ages". So... we don't want to become a Disneyland of the Middle Ages. (cultural agent in Bruges)

> [...] putting Bruges and its surroundings on the map as a place where you can also eat and drink very well has also become a major asset. So that's effectively what we're trying to do with Bruges—to show, to sell Bruges as an attractive city in all respects. It's a historical city, it's a cultural city, it's a culinary city and just a nice city to be in. In that sense, we're trying to... well, won't say "beat the competition", but to... keep the strength of Bruges alive. (cultural agent in Bruges)

Contrary to Bruges, *the prospective vision of the destination image of Tallinn* as perceived by the non-government agents matches the vision of the local government in terms of focusing on the quality attributes of the heritage space. The agents in Tallinn are perturbed about losing the Old Town as a liveable urban area in favour of the self-regulatory process of musealisation for the purposes of mass tourism; therefore, the prospective vision of the destination image of Tallinn incorporates the dimensions of developing quality tourism and (re)creating the liveable environment in the Old Town. In addition, the agents are incorporating the new contemporary buildings and cultural activities in the adjacent waterfront area of Tallinn, as well as attractions of Estonia into the prospective vision of the destination image of Tallinn to conceive alternatives to the touristified area of the Old Town, thereby perceiving the underuse of the tourism resources of the rest of the country.

> Tallinn is such that once the seaside or the shoreline will be made more accessible as they've started now—with the cultural kilometre and the new museum, the maritime museum—it will become more and more leisure... a place to spend your leisure time; to go for a walk, to go on a bike ride. (business agent in Tallinn)

> [...] one could also think about such outings from the city into the greenery, because there are many, when we have driven out of the city with foreign colleagues—then well, some of them have not seen a forest. In a word… all

of this is such a wonderful world for them—that you can walk in the forest or pick cranberries in the bog and well, such things. There have been cases like this—people have said, "Can I eat this blueberry—maybe a fox has peed on it?". (cultural agent in Tallinn)

Despite some doubtful attitudes toward contemporary architecture in Bruges, there is a common feature for the prospective visions of the destination images of both towns in the form of iconic architecture. The agents regard modern buildings endowed with symbolic values as a resource for creating the power to compete in the international tourism market to attract tourists and meet their expectations with regard to spatial practices in postmodern destinations. Nevertheless, the two selected destinations have not managed to utilise modern options of mobilising the architectural landscape to improve the competitive advantage in the symbolic economy. Comparisons with towns with the most recognisable iconic architecture (e.g., Bilbao and the Guggenheim museum) implies the importance of modern architecture and the related appreciated cultural activities as a significant resource for the (re)construction of attraction systems.

Sydney opera house, Bilbao... you know, that whole thing—iconic buildings. Bruges has not managed to place an iconic building since about 1400, heh. (resident in Bruges)

Only the Old Town—which is a pity, because firstly, Tallinn has done a disservice to itself: it dropped the ball with this new architecture. It is terrible! [...] We missed it… We built very poor architectural solutions, because the city government did not care. Most results are awful. [...] Not one such building where… let's say, as the Opera House in Australia, Guggenheim Museum on Bilbao, … [...] But the people have no moment of surprise [...]. The Rotermann quarter is the only thing that can be valued—it is innovative and something has been tried. (business agent in Tallinn)

Drawing on the research material, the author asserts that the perception of a destination image and identity, and therefore, also criticisms of the qualities and attributes of the heritage space of a destination induces the personal involvement of the agents in changing and commencing actions to (re)produce quality and modern attributes in the heritage space (e.g., connecting local people with tourists within a cultural project, cuisine-based business projects, or changing the souvenir market). Reconceptualising the incorporation of unique products into the broader context of cultural activities is one thing agents from the non-government field have attempted in order to recreate the destination identity and thereby renew its image. For example, in an attempt to contribute to the shaping of the contemporary perception of Bruges' destination identity, cultural agents have initiated the promotion of lace as a unique product of longstanding tradition in different cultural projects, and that instead of chocolate, which is apparently a relatively new brand, although distinctive of the destination. The Bruges' 'lace project' bespeaks the initiative of the materialisation of the symbolic value of a unique product as an attempt to

rediscover and recreate heritage as well as to reconstruct the local identity and that of the destination (e.g., see section 3.1.2 for the example of the lace fences around the windmills).

> [...] so it's called "the Face of Lace" and there you can see how lace inspires contemporary designers, fashion designers, [...] you can see, it has a very contemporary look and feel. [...] with projects such as "Young Primitives", such as "the Face of Lace" and others, to show that these traditions are not dead, but a source of inspiration up to today. (cultural agent in Bruges)

In Tallinn, there seems to be no offer of unique products having historically established such a strong and widely known symbolic status in the overall destination identity, as is perceived by the interviewed agents. Nevertheless, there are attempts to recreate unique products of genuine historical origin as part of the business-based cultural experience of the destination. One of the recent attempts to incorporate a unique product offer of sweets into business, though on a modest scale compared to those in Bruges, is asserted to have a minor chance to achieve an emblematic status on the level of competitive destinations because of nonaggressive business strategies and inexperience. However, the alternative projects are commenced by the local government to contribute to reconfiguration of tourism market of symbolic products.

> It can be such a thing, which is brought along and introduced like this: see, this is made in Estonia, this associates with Estonia. [...] This information could be spread; we have been dealing with this gradually. It is a very big process, of course [...]. We are also worried that, if these [...] become so widespread, then we are executed; we lose clients due to this… but well, this is always a two-edged sword. (business agent in Tallinn).

> Let them [matrjoshkas and amber] be, but what is our role; our role can be to single out those shops and those galleries where our own local handicraft, design and other things can stand out among those shops. [...] currently working on a new version, we are cooperating with the Estonian Association of Designers and Estonian Design Centre. They offer places which maybe introduce the local designers, local artists, creation of craftsmen—as well as with the Association of Designers and Estonian Association of Handicraft Development where these shops and these galleries where you can buy such a product that brings out the local character are singled out. (local government official in Tallinn)

However, agents acknowledge various *obstacles* to effectively re-branding the destination. In addition to the costliness and the time-consuming nature of the process, agents perceive various institutional and motivational reasons: the absence of a strategy and of the entrepreneurial endeavour to revisit, redefine and implement a new vision of the destination, and additionally, in the case of Tallinn, the historically relatively short period of tourism-related professional experience in the field. However, the historical background of destination development could further inform the contextual obstacles to rebrand or

diversify the attributes of a destination brand. The long period of slow development in Bruges induced the poor presentation of art history in the local museums compared to Ghent, and this diminished the symbolic power of repositioning the town as a cultural destination of [contemporary] art. Similarly, the militarisation of the waterfront area in Tallinn in the 20th century impedes the rapid the regeneration of this area, which requires immense financial investments and poses urban planning challenges due to the many properties under multiple ownership. The success of actions aimed at enhancing a destination identity is perceived to be dependent on consistent professional strategic decisions on the part of stakeholders, particularly in circumstances of poor destination visions. Perceiving a logo of Bruges, signifying the town as a cultural-tourist destination, as indistinguishable and one-dimensional, the agents rather prefer to rely on their own indicative logos, which are considered to produce more unique associations with the activity and position them saliently in the global tourism market.

> On every publication, you can read that it's Bruges—the World Heritage City. If we make a publication on... with some images that can be used by the professional trade sector, we say: world heritage. It always has this world heritage label on it, because we are proud to use it. [...] So, it's not so much an advantage or disadvantages of this logo, but I think it is an advantage to communicate under the same umbrella, under the same stamp. (local government official in Bruges)

> [...] that's the problem with Estonia and Tallinn. A lot of people who are trying to sell it, don't understand what they're trying to sell, because they haven't worked in the industry. (business agent in Tallinn)

To sum up, the continuity of (re)producing symbolic values constructed on locally unique heritage interrelates with how agents act in and conceive of the context of their actions and initiatives within different socioeconomic activities, as well as how they perceive the tourist perception of the destination (see Figure 35).

While government agents as destination marketers are exclusively empowered to project a destination identity, other agents could affect the process of enhancing a destination identity by exploiting the status in the power structure (especially in case of museums in Bruges) or by commencing actions that (re)utilise the symbolic objects or values (e.g., project "the Face of Lace" by the museum). Hence, through the mode of (re)producing socioeconomic activities in the heritage space, agents continuously (re)construct or contribute to the (re)construction of a destination identity that comprises the symbolic values of the heritage, thus affecting the (re)production of the destination image.
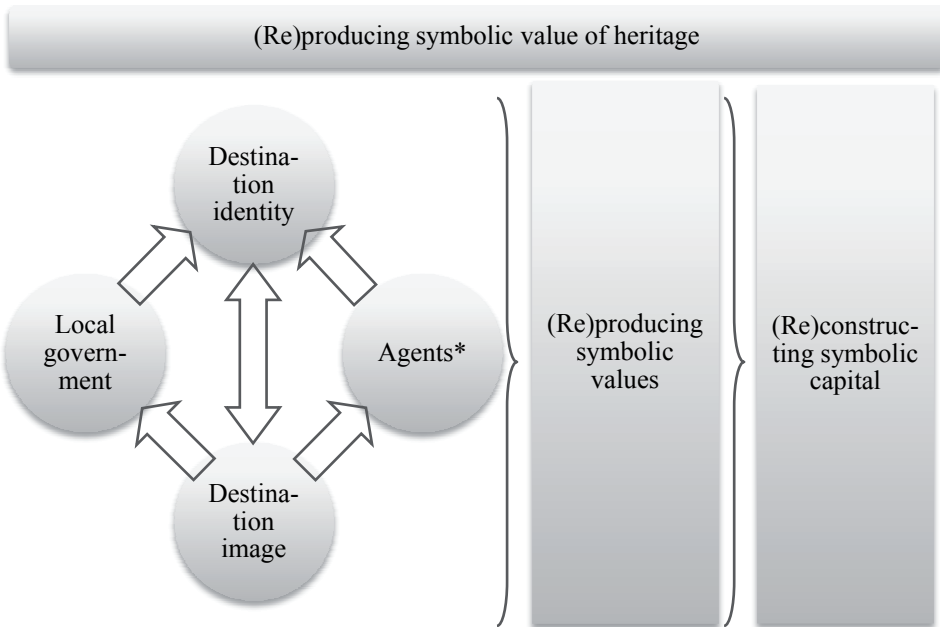
*Figure 35. Ensuring the continuity of the symbolic value of heritage (by the author)*
*(\*) Business and cultural agents.*

Therefore, the (re)production of symbolic values, i.e., uniqueness, that constitutes the symbolic capital interpenetrate two processes: the process of dual interconnectedness between a destination identity and a destination image, and the processes of the (re)production of socioeconomic activities in the heritage space, i.e., the dual relationship between heritage and activities, thereby enabling the destination to (re)produce unique representations of space to gain a competitive advantage in the global tourism market.

## 3.3 (Re)producing the heritage space

The present section aims to conceive the processes forming on the interconnectedness between the agency and the heritage space of WHSs through *combining* the analyses derived from the *observation* and *interviews*, as well as accounts of the *methods* used. While the visual data made it possible to draw the observer's perception of the visually identifiable activities in the public and semi-public space as opening to the tourist gaze, then the application of semi-structured interviews made it possible to obtain an insight beyond the visually identifiable destination attributes to understand the processes that shape the ways and nature of socioeconomic activities conducted in the heritage space of WHSs, thus (re)producing visually identifiable activities in the spatial practices of tourists.

The author asserts that the analysis of the observational and visual data (see section 3.1) elucidates the dimensions of socioeconomic practices that intensify the (re)production of the symbolic value used in destination branding in specific spatial contexts (various destinations of medieval architectural character of heritage value). However, the understanding of the engagements of agents in the heritage space through the application of the interview methodology forces us to revisit accounts drawn on the observational and visual data, thereby shifting our attention from the centrality of the perceived features of the heritage space towards the locally positioned agents' representations of their practices shaping or accentuating the attributes and features that could be visually identified or experienced by the tourist gaze: (1) offering unique spatial experiences, combined with (2) unique products and consumer experiences, (3) (re)creating the character of the streets and squares, and (4) affecting the attractive power of noteworthy medieval heritage for the tourist gaze (instead of "attracting the tourist gaze through noteworthy medieval heritage" to reassess the visually perceived attractiveness from the point of view of a phenomenon imbued and mediated in the actions of the agents). Emerging from the constitutive nature of a tourist experience, the visually identified dimensions are assumed to reflect the locally active agents participating in the (re)construction of the symbolic capital in heritage sites (as discussed in section 3.2) through their strategies, which, drawing on heritage value, continuously (re)produce the heritage space. Judging from the perspective of the observational analysis, it is nevertheless noted that as a target group for locally performed activities, the tourists may be seen to be involved in these processes of the (re)construction of heritage value and the overall (re)production of the heritage space. Hence, these visually identifiable and spatially informed dimensions of the interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital are (re)produced by the entirety of the intertwined network of various agents, specifically those conducting their socioeconomic activities and shaping strategies in the heritage space in multitudinous fields of action at different levels of building the competitive advantage of a destination.

Focusing on the (re)production of the space of a destination from the perspective of the local people, it has been conceived that engagements in and strategies towards the heritage space (re)shapes the heritage space (as constitutive of the material heritage and socioeconomic activities) whose most appealing assets and values are branded in the global tourism market to be visually perceived by the tourist gaze. Section 3.1 has shown that the socioeconomic activities, visually perceivable by tourists, and multitudinous attributes and features (including morphological specifics of the urban space and of medieval heritage), mobilised within the activities of the local people, are further (re)produced and reinforced in the spatial practices and representational spaces of tourists visiting the destination. Whereas section 3.2 has elucidated how locally unique assets and values are conceived as resourceful and are utilised to generate benefits, as they inform and become reshaped in the agents' strategies, and thus contribute to the (re)construction of symbolic capital, and

thereby the intertwined effect of the (re)construction of a destination identity and the (re)creation of a destination image. As the author has claimed also elsewhere, heritage as cultural capital is transformed into symbolic capital through narratives, images and monuments that construct the urban identity (Guttormsen & Fageraas, 2011) with activities as part of 'real life' (Orbaşli & Woodward, 2009). These activities play a significant role in creating the character of a place (García et al., 2012). The author asserts in the context of the current research that *socioeconomic activities* (comprising daily engagements and strategies) represent a mediator for the heritage, destination identity, and destination image (see Figure 36), and therefore, are considered the phenomena that destination branding is based on. This interrelationship between the above listed instances implies how destinations capitalise upon the strategies for conducting socioeconomic activities in the heritage space (e.g., cultural events with a focus on heritage) and strategies for reproducing the heritage space of a destination (e.g., restoring or defining the functional use of a heritage object).
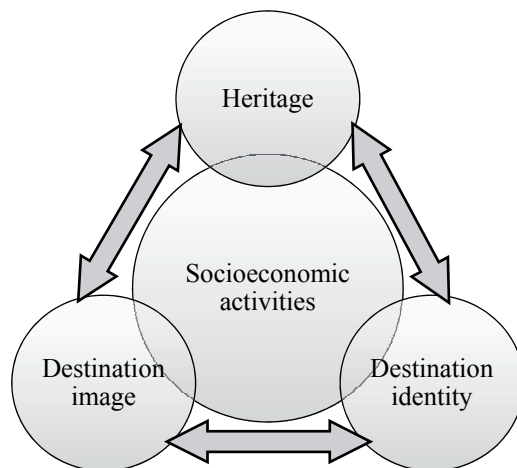


*Figure 36. The centrality of socioeconomic activities in the reproduction of heritage value (by the author)*

The agents perceive heritage as a resource so their activities can gain competitive advantage in a destination and between destinations or can (re)produce a specifically valuable residential space. Seen from the perspective of destination branding strategies, their engagements are bound to the (re)construction of symbolic capital, and this is through the reuse and (re)occupation of heritage. The agents apply various strategies to conduct their socioeconomic activities (e.g., diversifying product offers, operationalizing uniqueness, cooperating, adapting and transforming activities, (re)constituting and transforming functional uses etc.) within the set of structural regulations and opportunities in order to increase the revenue and/or profit from the

(re)production of the tourism space and/or to define the (re)construction of a destination identity (e.g., performed by agents exerting power on the decisions of the local government, or by the local government agents themselves).

By attempting to improve the well-being of the local people and satisfaction of tourists with the intention of meeting expectations with regard to the quality of spatial practices, agents tend to construct specific strategies that increase the importance of heritage as the primary element in the attraction system of a destination by defining the spatial experience either (1) through the expansion of the scale of attractions towards areas adjacent but exterior to the WHSs or the Old Towns with a limited amount of heritage space (e.g., the Kalamaja or waterfront area in Tallinn), or (2) the confinement of the boundaries of tourism areas in a large heritage space (e.g., "Golden Triangle" in Bruges concomitantly creating 'Quiet Bruges'). Moreover, the observational and visual analysis of heritage sites made it possible to identify assets and values involved in agents' practices in the heritage space, especially the qualities of the 'real life' of streets and squares, openness and access to the experience of the waterfront, manifesting the UNESCO brand in the heritage space and appealing views open to the tourist gaze. Such a mobilisation of the morphological and intangible attributes and features superimpose onto the (re)production of the material and symbolic spaces in the agents' experiences, empowering the (re)construction of symbolic capital.

Moreover, the analysis of the research data elucidates how the same spatial attributes might equally be valued by both tourists (as informed in the observational analysis) and local people (as informed in the interviews), e.g., in regard to the interchangeability of views of the same heritage sight (see section 3.1.3 for observation analysis).

[...] if you walk today and see those hordes of tourists... but... once it's 7 o'clock in the evening, the city is yours, and it's extremely beautiful. Every evening I go home, it's... I can say to myself—it's extremely beautiful. It can be very quiet and poetic [...]. (local government official in Bruges)

The same pertains to the (re)construction of the character of the streets that builds upon the concentration of specific activities and shapes the spatial practices of both local people and tourists (see section 3.1.1 for observation analysis).

The profile is not correct—it's more like a social street, very... just a bit too far from the tourist part of the city. (business agent in Bruges)

If you go to the Steenstraat here or look at the Wollestraat—OK, the Wollestraat has its character; all these shops where you can buy, eat and drink [...]. (business agent in Bruges)

[...] if they really want to go shopping, they have Viru tänav [i.e., street] [...]. (business agent in Tallinn)

Likewise, the elaboration and further consideration of the notion of "a view corridor" (see section 3.1.1) makes it possible to identify the spatial attributes

that contribute to the (re)production of spatial qualities in the practices of local people and tourists. "A view corridor" (defined as the visibility of at least half of the exterior of the most significantly preserved medieval buildings, advertised in tourist materials, to the walker) is perceived as a seductive element that potentially entices tourists to explore heritage sites, thereby exerting symbolic power that influences the spatial practices of tourists, and as a seductive element, the view corridors of the most significantly preserved medieval buildings could be seen, if we incorporate the term "path" by Lynch (1960/1996), as *the distinctive paths of landmarks*. Therefore, this new theoretical notion might serve the direct practical application for the agents in their practices and respective strategies where the notion (and its types; see section 3.1.1) is acknowledged by the agents and this appealing cultural attribute is mobilised in business activities and converted into economic profit (e.g., specifically setting terraces or starting a business in the nearest vicinity to the historical building) or in activities, which in general terms, provide quality experiences in the heritage space for the citizens as well as the tourists (actions of the local government or other agents, especially restoring the building and maintaining its occupancy). The author assumes that the conceptualisation of the notion of the "view corridor", which in the present study centres round heritage buildings, could be applied to various urban contexts and disciplines with other spatial elements in focus.

On the level of the abstraction of the dual relationship of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital, the analysis of the research data allows us to distinguish and identify four *heritage value-driven supply-side destination branding strategies*. These are mobilised by agents to shape specific strategies and attendant actions on two levels—within a destination and between destinations (as in compliance with the considerations presented in Figure 32 in section 3.2.1.1). This potentially contributes to reinforcing the symbolic position of a destination in the postmodern global tourism market and can be conceived to pertain to the (re)creation of a destination image (e.g., of Bruges and of Tallinn, as well as potentially the destinations considered in the present research or any other WHS destination). The dual relationship of agency and material heritage, upon which the strategies are built, informs a mutual interconnectedness of the identified four strategies, interpenetrating one another and superimposing themselves upon one another within the (re)production of the material and symbolic spaces of a destination and contributing to the (re)construction of the symbolic capital used by destination branding. Moreover, the heritage value-driven supply-side destination branding strategies are derived from conceiving of a destination and its heritage as social constructs and discursive phenomena of (re)producing the space (see section 1.1.1).

Strategy I "*The creation of diversification in the heritage space*" pertains rather to business and cultural agents whose activities are emerging, (re)produced and enhanced within competition, and are further reviewed, selected, interpreted and re-presented within destination branding practices.

This means that within the pursuit of diversification, a new activity or feature could force the destination to revisit the projection of a destination identity.

It has been little-by-little becoming—if it's not already—the world capital of chocolates. That's a very recent image, because one generation ago, it was not specifically typical for Bruges. Not more than any other Belgian city... Partly due to good loving of the associations of... small, independent chocolateries, doing very efficient work, fairs etc. (business agent in Bruges)

Those people are just overwhelmed by this very special feeling this old town gives—you can walk everywhere; you walk from one bar to the next, or restaurant... There's always something to do; whatever you want to do, you're there within a few minutes. And this is something people like—you don't need expensive taxis to go anywhere, you don't need trains or buses. You're there, you're in there, right in the middle of all the action. This is what people love. (business agent in Tallinn)

Strategy II "*The (re)production of locally unique symbolic values in the heritage space*" permeates the activities of business and cultural agents, as well residents and indirectly the local government, as the material heritage and its intangible attributes, as well as specific socioeconomic activities (including place-bound products and services) endowed with symbolic values, imbued in the representational space of the local people, are mobilised in the representation of the space.

But of course, within this perception, the history of Bruges, it's medieval aspect are always present—that's always a part of the identity. (cultural agent in Bruges)

[...] if there wouldn't be an Old Town, I don't think we would exist. There wouldn't be any major tourist attractions which would bring all the people here, who are coming every year. Therefore, there would be much fewer hotels and I don't think we'd be here. So, we need the Old Town. Without the Old Town, we couldn't survive. (business agent in Tallinn)

Strategy III "*The (re)production of the liveable space*" pertains to the quality of the space (e.g., the maintenance of streets and other open public spaces, parking arrangements, noise regulations etc.) that affects the spatial practices of the residents, who permanently treat the heritage space as an active area in the towns, and therefore, enable the quotidian activities of the residents unfolding as an attraction for tourists.

Good, small town... I mean, it's just a small town—you have to accept it for what it is. That's all good, absolutely. It's a very well run little town—if something is damaged, in a day, it's fixed. Graffiti is cleaned up very quickly... They seem to be breaking the streets open a lot these days. I don't know why, eeh. Putting pipes and fibre optics in, things like that, I think. I would say that at the practical level, the city is extremely well run. [...] But...

as far as the daily life goes—schools, transport, safety, cleanliness... peace and quiet, public facilities for kids, parks and so on [...]. (resident in Bruges)

There would be no spooky castles if the state and the city could ensure a reasonable living environment and conditions that people could live there normally… they would be turned into apartments immediately [in the Old Town]. The question is… All these premises are not suitable for tourism, business, but they are definitely suitable for apartments—but the prerequisite is a reasonable living environment that is tempting. Right now there is no such thing—for those who would come. For me there still is, but for newcomers there is not, because they already know that there is much noise and it is not accessible by car, that you cannot live there. (resident in Tallinn)

Strategy IV "*The identification and enhancement of the most appealing attributes*" concerns the selection and interpretation of attributes among multitudinous options by the local government to (re)construct a destination identity, meaning that the continuous analysis of the destination image and trends in the global tourism market are performed to sustain and improve the competitive advantage of a destination as well as in the interests of the local people to increase their well-being.

The significant centrality of agents in the construction of the destination identity and destination image, thereby the symbolic capital and destination branding, is epitomised in the inextricable interconnectedness (1) between social practices (and social space in which they are performed) and material space (part of the social space according to the study by Lefebvre, 1974/1996), and (2) between the social space and the agents in the field of forces constituted by the conditions of the production and reproduction of the social space, as conceptualised by Bourdieu (1972/2002) (see Figure 37).
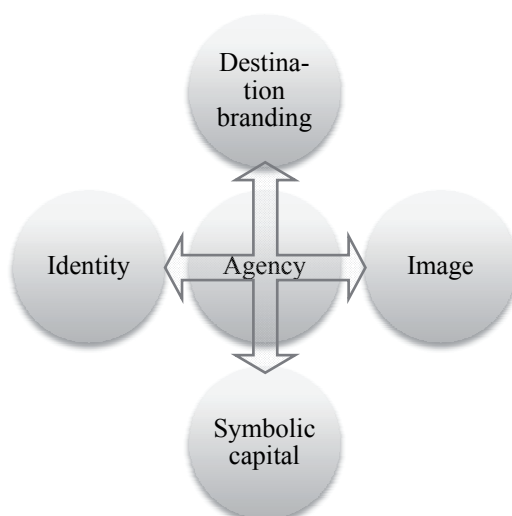


*Figure 37. The centrality of agency among the primary processes of the (re)production of the heritage space (by the author)*

The author asserts that the reconstruction of the symbolic capital upon the built heritage, with socioeconomic practices as centrally significant contributors to this process, creating unique selling propositions for a destination, are considered to infer the success of destination branding. In turn, by reaching international tourism markets, destination branding reproduces tourist-targeted social practices conducted in medieval heritage sites, and therefore, participates in the reinvention and (re)construction of the symbolic capital of the urban heritage space. Therefore, the author assumes that there evolves a *double or cross dual interrelationship* among the four interconnected processes as the main components of the (re)production of the heritage space (reproducing a destination identity, recreating a destination image, destination branding, reconstructing symbolic capital) (Michelson & Paadam, n.d.) as in Figure 38: (1) *between destination brand identity*, projected by the destinations, and *brand image*, built on tourist perceptions of the brand identity (Qu et al., 2011), and (2) *between destination branding* (as a reaction to enhance the brand image) *and the reconstruction of symbolic capital*, which draws on the destination brand identity enhanced in socioeconomic activities.
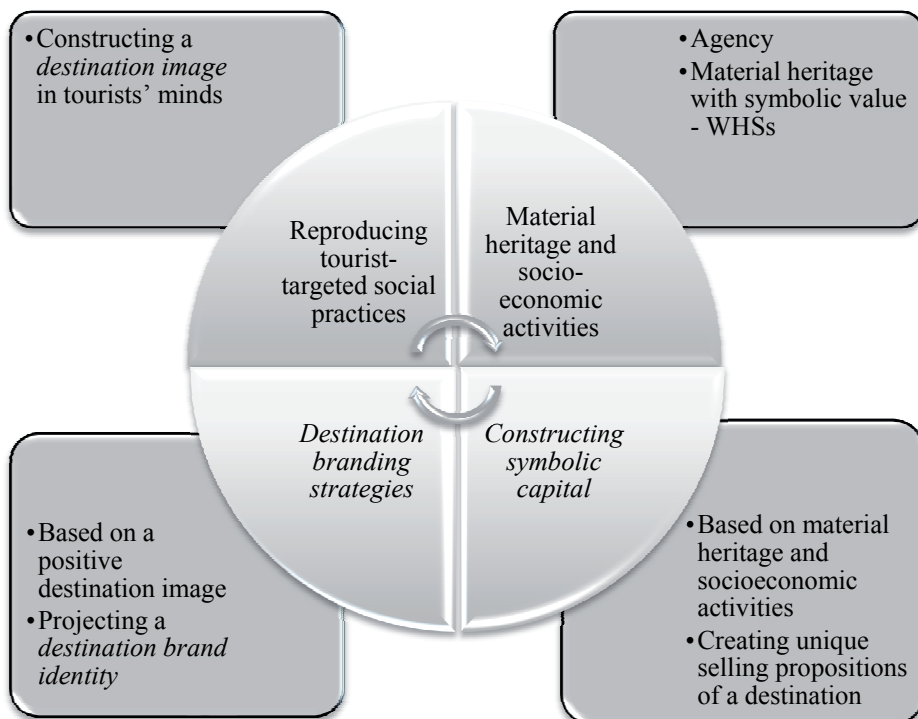


Figure 38. The (re)production of the heritage space (by the author)

The nature of the double or cross dual interrelations drawn from and forming the heritage space, with heritage as recognised cultural capital attributed with symbolic capital, which is essential in empowering the agents' activities and their opportunities for higher profits and greater well-being, is to be considered of utmost significance in the understanding of the constitution of a destination's competitiveness in the tourism market.

The identified model could be juxtaposed with Guttormsen and Fageraas's (2011, p. 455) accentuation of the interrelated symbolic economy and symbolic capital, in marketing the heritage as a symbolic product in a two-way process, in particular, with globalisation affecting local communities at WHSs producing at the same time a symbolic economy for the global market, wherein a major asset in the formation of a symbolic economy of WHSs is the branding of symbolic images, which advertise a place identity based on a culturally genuine historic authenticity. However, it is conceivable that Guttormsen and Fageraas (2011) conceptualise the local communities as people involved, in a narrow sense, in conservation practices or living in the heritage environment. Unlike the focus of their research, the double dual interrelations presented in the Figure 38 shift the focus from authenticity per se to *agency* (with its ubiquitous scale of actions), considering agency as inextricably linked with heritage, thereby adhering partly to the study by Galani-Moutafi (2013) with regard to the centrality of the social agents in the reproduction of space as well as that of Petrow's (2011, p. 18) with regard to the images that landscape architecture contributes to a symbolic economy, and that are generated by the interplay between the built environment and its users. The author asserts that the approaches of Petrow (2011) and the double dual interrelationship model (as in this study) both underline the integrity forming on the basis of the interconnectedness between agency and the material space. The distinction between the two builds on the way the current model (Figure 38) conceptualises agency, i.e., a complex phenomenon of socioeconomic activities (including the conduct of business, cultural and government agents as well as residents), not solely the users of the built environment as in Petrow's (2011) study.

Therefore, to emphasize that the model unfolding the nature of the double or cross dual interrelations drawn from and forming the heritage space, with heritage as recognised cultural capital attributed with symbolic capital, which is essential in empowering the agents activities and their opportunities for higher profits and greater well-being, is to be considered of utmost significance in the understanding of the constitution of a symbolic economy and a destination's competitiveness in the tourism market.

# 4 CONCLUSIONS

This research has been inspired by the need to understand the potential for towns to incorporate their capacity, building on symbolic power derived from valued material heritage, in the context of competition between tourism destinations of continuously diversifying offers for tourist experiences. The present study has elucidated the heritage space as an economic resource (by focusing on the (re)construction of a destination identity as well as destination image, more broadly, on the interconnectedness between destination branding and the heritage space) that is adopted in marketing and branding techniques to enhance the differentiation strategies of WHS destinations.

The analysis of the academic literature, in Chapter 1 of this thesis, has shown the importance of utilising symbolic attributes, which build upon the recognition and reuse of heritage in the construction of a destination identity to differentiate a destination in a competitive global symbolic economy. In view of the need to further advance our understanding of the interrelations of destination branding and the symbolic value of heritage, linked with the conceptualisation of agent dispositions and differentiated ways of reusing heritage in their conduct in the heritage destination in multiple settings, the primary *aim of this study* was to understand the interconnected nature between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in the reproduction of the urban heritage space in the context of building the competitive advantage of a destination in the tourism market of heritage sites. From this aim, the study has examined the visually perceivable *spatial* processes forming on the complex and multifaceted interrelationships between agency and heritage as a material and discursive phenomenon, and provided an insight into the meaning-making processes in the experiences of agents from the "supply side", i.e., from the perspective of the local people conducting different socioeconomic activities in the heritage space.

The current research, drawing on an interdisciplinary range of research fields, has attempted to contribute to the study of destinations and destination branding as socially constructed phenomena. The application of the ontological position of the *duality of agency and structure* and the *social constructivist epistemological perspective* made it possible to scrutinise the practices and strategies of agents as socially constructed processes providing insights into multiple perspectives and a motivational understanding of the (re)production of socioeconomic activities in the heritage space in the context of a destination assumed to be a construction of distinct forms and practices from the sociocultural perspective of destination branding, which, as Saraniemi and Kylänen (2011) claim, implies understanding markets in their symbolic, discursive, and process-related nature. The interdisciplinary and multi-method *qualitative approach* exploited in this research, together with the multiple-destination observational enquiry, which differs from previous investigations, sets the basis for generating a more comprehensive understanding of destination branding and the related phenomena. The current study, therefore contributes, in particular, to marketing, as well as cultural and sociological studies of urban

heritage, and specifically as this pertains to medieval Hanseatic towns, and especially the broad field of tourism.

## 4.1 Summary of main findings

This research has attempted to advance our understanding of the (re)production of the heritage space through the study of the dual relationship of destination branding and constructing symbolic capital in urban tourism destinations of heritage value.

*First research question. How is destination branding spatially informed in the heritage context?*
    The author contends, as a result of visual observation, different attributes of a destination, displayed and offered for use in a number of ways in the spatial contexts of urban units (streets and squares), attracting the tourist gaze through noteworthy medieval heritage, the product offers (as constitutive of unique place-bound products and services and associated services), and offers of spatial experiences—all forming on the heritage space—constitute multiple interactive and dynamic forces that shape the on-going socio-material processes in the heritage space of WHSs. As such, these processes are considered representative of the reconstruction of symbolic capital that draws on the recognition and valuation of heritage continuously incorporated within socioeconomic activities and producing distinct discursive forms in the symbolic economy where tourist perceptions are continually (re)constructed. It is observed that destination branding and promotional strategies are salient in offerings of products and services, as well as various modes of spatial experiences being characteristically exhaustively drawn on the resources present and available in heritage destinations, including in addition to the heritage buildings and other attributes defining the heritage space, also the location-specific natural resources.
    Within the application of visual and observations methods, the notion of "*a view corridor*" was elaborated and further considered (see section 3.1.1). The author contends that "view corridors" (defined as the visibility of at least half of the exterior of the most significantly preserved medieval buildings, advertised in tourist materials, to the walker) makes it possible to identify spatial attributes that contribute to the (re)production of spatial qualities in the practices of local people and tourists. "A view corridor" with its special *morphological* types (including single object based view corridors, overlapping view corridors and split view corridors) and *attributive* types (including 'closed invitation', 'rejecting invitation', 'open invitation', 'generous invitation'), is perceived as a seductive element that as a product that directs perception, potentially entices tourists to explore the heritage sites, thereby exerting symbolic power that influences the spatial practices of tourists. As such, this new theoretical notion might serve agents through direct practical application in their practices and respective strategies in case its resourcefulness is acknowledged by the agents and this appealing cultural attribute, as discovered during the research, is

mobilised into business activities and destination branding strategies, in particular. Making use of 'view corridors' denotes another means of converting cultural assets into economic profit or enhancing activities, which in general terms, provide quality experiences in the heritage space for citizens as well for tourists. 'View corridors' present a resource as well as potential for building competitiveness of tourist destinations.

*Second research question. How do agents from various interacting fields perceive and comprehend the resourcefulness of heritage space in terms of its value; and in what ways does the perceptive and experiential acknowledgment of heritage value apply to the actions and construction of strategies of agents?*

Focusing on complex and multiple engagements in the heritage space by local people across three main groups—business and cultural agents, residents, and agents in the local government—the study has demonstrated the significance of agents as they strategically activate the heritage space, inspired by its resourcefulness as a valuable cultural capital to be converted into symbolic capital and, further into economic capital, ultimately generating extractive as well as non-extractive use values for tourists and local people. *Business and cultural agents* are actively involved in competition with other agents in the heritage space to gain and sustain a competitive advantage within the delivery and on-going diversification of products and services. In that, location in the heritage space is of specific value for constructing and remoulding business strategies, forcing agents to consider alternative spatial resources as well as cooperation between agents. Depending on the profile and position of local agents, their direct or indirect contribution to the (re)production of a competitive advantage for the destination may be observed on two levels of competitive participation, i.e., within and between destinations. *Residents*, emotionally attached to the valued heritage, (re)occupy historical buildings as their homes and continually participate in the (re)construction of quality heritage space through the daily reuse, investments into property and care of heritage, and indirectly but firmly contribute to building the destination's competitiveness while strengthening their own identity. *Departments of the local government* appeared as a supportive agency in the actions of the other agents in the heritage space, with concern for the development of a quality urban space in the interests of the local people as well as the competitiveness of the towns in the global tourism market. It is observed that the local governments attempt, with various degrees of intervention, to affect the tourism industry of the destination by supporting place-specific activities; and in the case of Bruges, to actively direct the functional uses of the heritage space. The input from local agents' actions have to be considered within the local and national contexts of legislation and financial capacity, as well as on the scale of the historical continuities and discontinuities, by which the two destinations differ, with Tallinn in a less advantageous position, and therefore, a smaller capacity to direct the development of heritage areas.

*Third research question. How do the spatially interrelated socioeconomic activities, conducted in various fields, continuously contribute into the (re)production of heritage space in its different dimensions and conceived meanings?*

Appreciating and valuing heritage, as well mobilising heritage objects and their intangible qualities in socioeconomic activities, agents contribute to the continuous (re)production of unique and symbolic values promoted in tourism materials for (re)constructing a destination identity. The author suggests that heritage, as a socially constructed phenomenon, becomes part of socioeconomic activities when material heritage and intangible values are strategically activated and transformed into symbolic attributes in the representational space of agents. It appears that agents shape specific strategies with regard to heritage mobilised as interconnected actions of protecting and restoring heritage, defining functional uses of heritage, and (re)producing the public space as a form of access to heritage.

The research data allows us to conclude that *heritage protection and restoration* of high quality objects contributes to the (re)production of symbolic value through reusing and (re)occupying historical buildings, and especially, restoring heritage objects by owners with high quality cultural capital who perform restoration under the strict rules of legislation and strict surveillance over compliance with the requirements.

Furthermore, the liveable space appears to be (re)produced through the on-going (re)production of the *functions of the heritage space*, which is affected by regulatory and non-regulatory forces informing multifaceted and complex interrelations among the agents, the functional use of the heritage, and the nature of the (re)constitution and/or transformation of the use of heritage by the agents. The author assumes that while agents of income and profit generating activities exploit heritage in the context of the global tourism industry (thus representing the non-regulatory (re)constitution of the functional space of heritage), then the local government exerts power (albeit in varying quantities and qualities in the destinations under observation) to improve the well-being of the citizens, sometimes as a reaction to the concerns of the local people towards both self-regulatory and regulatory types of functional uses of the heritage space.

Moreover, the acknowledgement of the uniqueness of heritage objects of appreciated value in itself as the basis for identity construction and a source for making profit or income, is transferred into a motivation to share this experience with the community and tourists. As such, heritage, serving to meet the need of increasing the well-being of the local people, induces and warrants the *(re)production of the public space,* a function assigned to part of the heritage space. Therefore, the physically perceivable expansion of the public space in heritage sites, available for spatial practices and accentuated in agents' socioeconomic activities could be regarded as an advancement of the qualities of the heritage space for quotidian purposes as well as offering quality experience for tourists.

*Fourth research question. How do the agents' activities of a reproductive nature interconnect with the construction of the identity and image of a destination?*

While the local government is exclusively empowered to project a destination identity, other agents could affect the process of enhancing a destination identity by exploiting status in the power structure or by commencing actions that (re)utilise the symbolic objects or values, although their actions might be motivated by the critical perception of the quality of the urban space of a destination (also produced in comparison with other destinations) and thus by (re)constructing their prospective vision of the image of a destination. Hence, via the *mode of (re)producing socioeconomic activities* in the heritage space, agents continuously (re)construct or contribute to the (re)construction of a destination identity that comprises the symbolic value of heritage, thus affecting the (re)production of a destination image. However, the re-branding of the destination might be interfered with by various obstacles (costliness, the time-consuming nature of the process, institutional and motivational reasons, (as perceived in the case of Tallinn) the historically relatively short period of tourism-related professional experience of local officials, as well as the inconsistency (as perceived in the case of Bruges) of the stakeholders' strategic professional decisions). As such, the (re)production of symbolic value, which build upon the recognised and utilised unique attributes of a destination constituting the symbolic capital, interpenetrate two processes: the process of the dual interconnectedness between a destination identity and a destination image, and the processes of the (re)production of socioeconomic activities in the heritage space, thereby enabling the destination to (re)produce unique representations of space to gain a competitive advantage in the global tourism market.

*Fifth research question. How do agents' ways of (re)constructing symbolic capital contribute to the (re)production of the heritage space in relation to building the competitiveness of a destination?*

The author asserts in the context of the current research that socioeconomic activities (as comprising daily engagements and strategies) represent a mediator within the heritage, destination identity, and destination image. The significant centrality of agents in the construction of the destination identity and the destination image, and thereby the symbolic capital and destination branding, is epitomised in the inextricable interconnectedness both of social practices within the heritage space in which they are performed, and the material space, as well as of (as conceptualised by Bourdieu, 1972/2002) the social space and agents in the field of forces constituted by the conditions of the production and reproduction of the social space. As has been elucidated in the course of this analysis and further conceptualised on a more theoretical level, there evolves *a double or cross dual interrelationship among the four interconnected processes* as the main components of the (re)production of the heritage space (reproducing

a destination identity, recreating a destination image, destination branding, reconstructing symbolic capital): (1) between destination brand identity, projected by the destinations, and brand image, built on tourist perceptions of brand identity, and (2) between destination branding (as a reaction to enhance the brand image) and the reconstruction of the symbolic capital, which draws on the destination brand identity enhanced in the socioeconomic practices of different agents reusing the material heritage of high cultural value.

On the level of the abstraction of the dual relationship of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital, the analysis of the research data allowed us to distinguish and identify four *heritage value-driven supply-side destination branding strategies* that are constructed by agents to shape specific strategies and attendant actions on two levels, in a destination and between destinations (see section 3.3), thereby potentially contributing to reinforcing the symbolic position of a destination in the postmodern global tourism market. As conceived to pertain to the (re)creation of a destination image, the strategies, which might be run interchangeably or in parallel, are defined as follows: first strategy "creation of diversification in the heritage space", second strategy "(re)production of locally unique symbolic values in the heritage space", third strategy "(re)production of the liveable space", and fourth strategy "identification and enhancement of the most appealing attributes".

More specifically, the (re)construction of the symbolic capital upon the built heritage, with socioeconomic practices as centrally significant contributors to this process, creating the unique selling propositions of a destination, are considered as inferring the successfulness of the destination branding. In turn, by reaching international tourism markets, destination branding reproduces tourist-targeted social practices conducted in medieval heritage sites, and therefore, participates in the reinvention and (re)construction of the symbolic capital of the urban heritage space.

## 4.2 Reflection on theoretical perspectives and original contribution to the knowledge

This research, as most research conducted in the field of tourism and heritage studies, has attempted to apply an *interdisciplinary* approach, seen as a circumstance that poses a number of challenges (to construct a complex and multifaceted theoretical approach with interrelated notions, e.g., cross-disciplinary acknowledgements of the notions "representations of space" or "[attributes of a] destination identity") as well as opportunities (to conceive of the notions and phenomena from various perspectives, e.g., enriching the notion of "[the attributes of] destination identity" in tourism studies with the notion "representations of space" from Lefebvre's urban sociological legacy, or conceiving of a destination identity as a social construct as in the social constructivist tradition of sociology or other disciplines following this epistemological approach, or utilising the notions of urban design in conceiving the spatial attributes of a destination). In pursuing the line of interdisciplinary

logic it brings together ideas and theories from the disciplines and fields of destination branding, tourism and heritage studies as primary sources, as well as urban design, sociology and urban sociology, to provide a more comprehensive and theoretically informed understanding of the dual relationship between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital (the notion coined in the theory of practice by Bourdieu, 1972/2002) in the (re)production of the space of a tourism destination.

Emerging from the sociocultural approach to destination and, specifically, destination branding, seen as a socially constructed phenomenon and practice, and therefore, implying the understanding of markets in their symbolic, discursive, and process-related nature (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011), the present study attempted to gain a deep and possibly ubiquitous insight into the complex processes forming on the dual relationship between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital. In regard to the focus of this study on destination branding strategies building upon material heritage in WHS destinations, then a spatial approach to investigate the dimensions of destination branding and the (re)production of the heritage space through socioeconomic activities was considered appropriate, enhanced by Lefebvre's theory of the production and reproduction of space (1974/1996) conceiving of space as a social construct, being simultaneously a practice and a product of thoughts and actions. There was a strong inclination, when designing a theoretical and methodological approach for this research, towards understanding the actions and strategies applied by agents in the heritage space and in different fields of conduct as in a reciprocal mutually effective relationship, as defined in an ontological view of the duality of agency and structure in Bourdieu (1972/2002). This approach is seen as consistent with and enlightening for the study of the complex and multifaceted nature of the (re)production of tourism and the heritage space of destinations, with the dual nature of (individual and institutional) agents' dispositions and actions and processes of economic, cultural and social (re)production as a reference point. Furthermore, mobilised in the (re)construction of a destination identity and seen as a social construct and a process (see section 1.2.1), heritage represents the cultural capital of a destination and, being endowed with symbolic attributes and recognised in the agents' actions, is converted into symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1993; Bourdieu & Wasquant, 1992). Such convertibility connotes the capacity of material heritage of recognised value to be entailed as the symbolic capital of a destination. Furthermore, as incorporated into socioeconomic activities through these multiple conversions, the material heritage is converted into economic capital to raise economic benefits for the local people, with further implications on enhancing the competitive advantage of a destination as in the focus of this study.

Departing from the complex approach concerned with the (re)production of the symbolic heritage space in the fields of the actions of agents constituting multiple realities, and therefore, focusing on the production of symbolic meaning, in association with the activities held in and around heritage buildings

within WHSs, the study discusses heritage space as it becomes valued, interpreted and reused within the process of (re)constructing symbolic capital through the process of destination branding intended to communicate a destination's unique identity, thereby applying the concepts of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital as central with regard to destination branding as part of ultimate spatial practices for generating and improving the gains from exploiting symbolic values in various social practices. Thus, drawing on the interconnectedness among the central notions of the research of the dual nature in the context of the (re)production of the heritage space, seen as a product of actions and as a tool for actions, the study identified complex and multifaceted processes that form an elucidated process of *a double or cross dual interrelationship among the four interconnected processes* (see section 3.3 or 4.1). Conceived at a meta-theoretical level, this double interrelationship, putting the *agency* at the core of the interrelations (thereby advancing the role of agency as compared to the studies of Guttormsen and Fageraas, 2011, and Petrow, 2011), represents a binding framework that relates two theoretical concepts (destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital), the multiple interactions of agents (i.e., agency) who perform in the heritage space and contribute to the (re)construction of symbolic capital, which transforms into a dimension of the agents' socioeconomic activities, and the interconnectedness of a destination identity and destination image. Furthermore, the elaborated functions of a destination brand according to Ooi (2004) (see section 1.1.2) permeate the double interrelationship as being comprised in the socioeconomic actions. As such, the double interrelationship connotes an understanding of the complex and multifaceted processes behind destination branding, and in turn the identified double interrelationship could be regarded as part of mastering the symbolic power interconnected with the technology of symbolic power, conceived by Acuto (2010).

Furthermore, the present study proposes some original considerations, based on the conceptualisation of the analysis:

- "*View corridors*" as a specific spatial feature identified during the observational and visual research (see sections 3.1.1 and 3.3) appear in different types with distinct morphological and attributive character demanding different intensity of actions to attract tourists. With reference to Lynch (1960/1996), they can be conceptualised as distinctive paths of the landmarks. "View corridors" might be conceived as spatially informed horizons of meaning (as in Lefebvre, 1974/1996) and a spatial attribute inducing and empowering the dynamism (as in Metro-Roland, 2011) of reused heritage space.
- *Different dimensions of a spatially informed destination awarded with UNESCO World Heritage status* (e.g., UNESCO brand manifestation; renowned products based dimension) (see section 3.1.4) are seen as attributes of a destination that are conceived to be either mobilised or avoided (depending on the specific type) in (re)creating destination branding strategies. These dimensions of a spatially informed

destination could be regarded as theoretical and practical constructs of the dimensions of the types of destinations, providing deeper insight into the otherwise theoretically simplified type(s) of destinations proposed by Andergassen et al. (2013) (see section 1.1.1).

– *Four supply-side destination branding strategies* (see section 3.3) mobilised by agents to shape specific strategies and attendant actions on two levels, in a destination and between destinations, potentially contributing to reinforcing the symbolic position of a destination in the postmodern global tourism market, concomitantly facilitate the bridging of place brand gaps (conceived by Govers and Go, 2009; see section 1.1.2), and are also conceived to pertain to the (re)creation of a destination image.

Focusing on the "*supply side*" of the (re)production of the heritage space, the present research investigated the perspectives of different groups of agents: business and cultural agents, residents and local governments. Thereby presenting a more comprehensive understanding of the agents acting in the destination, than in the study by Johansson (2005) (as cited in Guttormsen and Fageraas, 2011, p. 454) which conceives the destination of Visby as consisting of artists, tourists, and local residents living in a historic environment.

With regard to the involvement of theoretical considerations from *urban design studies*, the notions and phenomena originating from the studies of Gehl (2006, 2010) and Lynch (1960/1996), including, for example, 'real life' by Orbaşli and Woodward (2009) or dynamism by Metro-Roland (2011), enabled to conceptually conceive of and analyse the spatial attributes of a destination, as opened to the tourist gaze, in the application of observational and visual methods. Moreover, the consideration of the notions of urban design studies, utilised in the present research, informs their potential for further involvement in interdisciplinary studies, especially in the case of heritage studies or destination branding and more broadly marketing. As such, in light of the present study that represents an interdisciplinary approach, it could be asserted that strategically activated symbolic capital, which generates economic capital for local people and other benefits in everyday and tourist experiences, forms on heritage mobilised in socioeconomic activities that contribute to the (re)creation of the sense of place (as in Salah Ouf, 2001) and imageability (as in Lynch, 1960/1996) (see sections 1.3). Hence, the current research proposes to expand the nature of the two notions ("sense of place" and "imageability") as phenomena associated with the imageable setting in the field of urban design to include notions endowed with the interconnectedness of the physical space and conducted activities in destination branding and business studies (already considered by Hospers, 2010, regarding imageability).

Moreover, the unused unique heritage spatial units (identified in section 3.2.2.1) that are made open for the public on rare occasions or closed as requiring financial investments from the public authorities might be further conceptualised as one of the possible attributes of three types of conserved architectural object elaborated by O'Brien (1997) in urban design studies (see

section 1.2.3). By drawing his typology on the entirety of all heritage objects, O'Brien disregards the multifarious kinds of functional uses of different internal parts of buildings that the present study considers essentially important assets forming on the basis of the heritage space.

With reflections on the theoretical considerations informed by the existing body of academic works in the field and the current research, this study hopes to have contributed to the further advancement of the *sociocultural approach* applied in the research of destinations and destination branding, more broadly, in marketing, as well as the cultural and sociological studies of heritage, and especially, the broad field of tourism.

## 4.3 Reflection on the methodology

The methodological approach adopted for this study emanates from the primary research interest in the processes of destination branding and the reconstruction of symbolic capital, which are conceived in a dual relationship in the continuous reproduction of the heritage space of a destination. With multiple dualities, among them the centrality of the interconnected heritage as a cultural and symbolic value, and the spatiality of the socioeconomic activities in focus, and perceived to be shaping the processes in a destination, the research has drawn on the ontological basis of the duality of agency-structure (as in Bourdieu, 1972/2002), which has informed the choice of a social constructivist epistemological perspective and the subsequent decision for a qualitative methodology.

By means of applying theoretical frameworks and paying scrupulous attention to the detail required in this type of research, to shape accurate observations (Schensul, Schensul, & LeCompte, 1999, p. 95), as well as allowing the categories to emerge from the research context, the adoption of visual and observational methods within a comparative research of seven selected destinations proved to be an adequate approach to explore how the heritage space of formerly powerful Hanseatic towns is activated in the tourism industry across different destinations, as potentially perceived by the tourist gaze. Furthermore, applying a qualitative methodology made it possible to select units for analysis creatively (e.g., selecting promoted streets and squares in tourist promotion materials, conducting observations in the entire area of a WHS in order not to confine the research to the selected units affected by the destinations), allowing also to be open to the possibility of being able to grasp the phenomena occurring within the observed context of the research in order to elaborate a specific spatial feature—"view corridors".

Incorporating the entire area of a WHS property in the study site in each selected destination became a strategic approach to analyse the urban space from the perspective of the interconnectedness of destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital as various morphological and specific elements are scattered around the WHS architectural landscape. In regard to "view corridors", well preserved medieval buildings became a reference point to

perceive the urban space as it comprises a view towards the facades of the edifices promoted in tourist materials, thereby allowing the researcher to understand the role that units of symbolic material heritage could play in the reproduction of symbolic capital consecrated in architecture of heritage value, i.e., "grasping symbolic within symbolic". The selection of seven towns on the basis of the defined criteria (a UNESCO WHS, medieval architectural landscape, tight historical connection with the Hanseatic League) empowered the comparative analysis, and, as such was also within the limits of the capacity of the author to conduct visual observation.

As the adoption of visual and observational methods elucidates the research data on the spatially informed dimensions of heritage sites from the perspective of a tourist, then the deeper insights into the nature of the processes behind the visually detectable phenomena requires applying additional methods and techniques of data collection. As it has been claimed in section 2.2, these methods are rarely used without combining them with other methods. The in-depth study and analysis was conducted in two destinations, Bruges and Tallinn, and applying interviewing was fundamentally important in providing sufficient data to answer the research questions. The interviews aimed to obtain an insight beyond the visually identifiable destination attributes to understand the processes that (re)shape the ways and nature of the socioeconomic activities conducted in the heritage space of WHSs by capturing the complex behaviours, experiences, attitudes and dispositions of agents within medieval urban space of outstanding value.

The two destinations were selected for conducting semi-structured interviews because of the highest relative number of foreign tourists visiting the two towns compared to other destinations in the overall selection of towns, which made it possible to grasp the effects of the global tourism market according to the interviewees' perception. Hence, informed by the tourist's view from the visual observation, the interviews provided an inside view of the agents engaged in various fields in the heritage space. Using the "supply-side" perspective, the selection of the interviewees both in Bruges and Tallinn encompassed a well-balanced representation of activities in the fields of business, culture, local government and residence. However, the incorporation of agents acting at higher governance levels, e.g., agents from institutions of government authority, could have elucidated the relations of force between local and central public authorities in regard to the wider context of the relationships in the (re)production of the heritage space.

It is asserted that the chosen methodology has made it possible to analyse the dual nature of the interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in the (re)production of the heritage space and in view of building the competitive advantage of a destination in the global tourism market and, as presented in section 4.2, to bring about theoretically informed in-depth knowledge about the processes forming the discursive and symbolic nature of heritage spaces.

**4.4 Potential implications for tourism practice**

The present study with its interdisciplinary theoretical and qualitative methodological approaches elucidated the complex nature of the (re)production of the heritage space strategically activated in destination branding for being endowed with symbolic values. The findings drawn on the analysis of the research data may have implications for those practitioners and policy makers involved in the (re)production of heritage and tourism spaces. To make the suggestions convenient to obtain for the potential user, they are introduced according to the groups identified in the present study: *business (B) and cultural (C) agents, residents (R), and local governments of the towns (G)*. The recommendations are intended to empower interested agents with knowledge to enhance the actions and strategies regarding the (re)production of heritage and tourism spaces, including destination branding strategies and destination management and planning in a destination to gain and sustain a competitive advantage in the global tourism market. The suggestions provided are based on the conducted research in seven towns (Bruges, Lübeck, Stralsund, Tallinn, Toruń, Visby, and Wismar), followed by the specific recommendations drawn on the in-depth enquiries in Bruges and Tallinn.

Based on the information obtained in the analysis of the research data the following recommendations concerning the spatial dimensions of a destination from the perspective of a tourist (thus targeting space perception and on-site experiences) and as well practices and strategies from the perspective of local agents could be considered by the seven towns under observation to empower the unique selling propositions and enhance the destination image:

1. [B,C,R,G] To enhance the utilisation of the *unique attributes* of a destination (i.e., functional, utilitarian, performance-related, especially, architecture, place-bound products and associated services, as well as locally unique services and spatial experiences) in multitudinous modes in various fields, on the grounds that each attribute *present* could serve multiple functions (e.g., ruins as an aesthetic space, place for a concert or a 'business dinner', 'conference dinner', or 'romantic dinner'), where the most significant practices for the (re)creation of unique spatial experiences could comprise providing *public access* to protected heritage objects, creating *aesthetic enjoyment* in various situations of experiencing exteriors and/or interiors of heritage space, *involving heritage* buildings in modern uses offering experiences for the consumption of products and services, providing *a view* as a singular experience or part of a complex consumption experience of the heritage space, enhancing experiences of the urban heritage space genuinely *merging with water*, designing and ensuring *quality public space* and making the experience of the town *explorative*, considering to (re)create *public objects* of urban design (e.g., street blockers, kerb-stones) informed by the destination identity and/or destination image, and

contributing to the *reuse and occupation of unused* heritage buildings (conceived as *empty space*).

2. [B,C,G] To develop and nurture *authentic products and services* in the authentic historical space of heritage value with an attribute of the *intimacy* of a place.

3. [B,C,G] To *diversify* the product offers in a broad sense to contribute to the (re)creation of a liveable space.

4. [B,C,R,G] To utilise, support (including the practice of preservation and restoration) and/or enhance the (re)creation of spatial practices that enable to effectively incorporate "*view corridors*" of noteworthy medieval buildings representing a value added to the spatial practice of tourists or local people.

5. [G] To utilise and/or enhance the use of *the UNESCO brand logo* as a sign of quality in promotional materials and in the public space to affect the destination choice and on-site perception of tourists, and the name of the Hanseatic League, where appropriate, to empower the symbolic value of the medieval heritage (in the case of Bruges to discuss with stakeholders about not being a member of the Hanseatic League, but a Kontor).

The following certain applications to enhance actions and strategies in the heritage space in any destination or specifically Bruges and Tallinn are suggested:

1. [G] To review the system of *financial support to preserve and restore* the heritage buildings as to further improve the quality of the space and facilitate reuse and to (re)occupy heritage buildings.

2. [G] To continuously promote the virtues (as constituting *high qualities of cultural capital of an agent*) of an owner of a heritage object to ensure and sustain careful restoration.

3. [Bruges: G] To make an *explanatory campaign* to the local people with regard to the practices of heritage restoration from the perspective of the local government perceived as restrictive or in cooperation with stakeholders to review the approach of the existing level of *strictness*.

4. [Tallinn: G] To review the advantages of the former status and the related efforts of the European Cultural Capital in 2011 and consider *empowering the cultural industry* for a stronger destination identity, thereby attempting to identify an alternative powerful attribute in the destination identity and image in the context of the dominance of the Old Town (perceived as the major contemporary tourism attraction of Estonia that was elucidated in the interviews, as well in the study by Jarvis and Kallas, 2008).

5. [B,C,G] To promote *adjacent areas* beside the Old Town in the destination (e.g., the district of Lissewege in Bruges, and Kadriorg and Pirita in Tallinn) and take actions for the development of adjacent resourceful areas (waterfront in Tallinn), as well *attractions in the country* (e.g., Damme in Belgium and nature in Estonia); to consider

significant *alternative* cuisine and/or contemporary art assets of a destination identity in Tallinn, as well as how to contribute to creating and/or enhancing conference facilities (to decrease the effect of low tourism and counteract low tourism season effects) and to creating iconic contemporary architecture in areas adjacent to the Old Town in both Bruges and Tallinn (e.g., the new city administration building by the waterfront).

6. [B,C,R,G] To continuously review the assets and values of a destination in the co-producing network of stakeholders in terms of increasing the number of tourist *overnight stays* and counteracting the *tourism low season*.

7. [Tallinn: B,C,R,G] To review the *legislative* responsibilities and opportunities of a municipality (through a network of stakeholders) to grant the town the power to affect the *functional uses* of the urban space, as well to amend the financial sources to obtain income from the tourism[-related] exploitation of the public space of the town.

8. [G] To nurture the opportunities (especially in terms of infrastructure and consulting) to *(re)create locally unique product offers*.

9. [B,C,R,G] To support and enhance the further (re)creation of *a sense of "village"* that with its effect on increasing the emotional attachment of residents to the heritage space might significantly contribute to (re)producing the liveable space and be attractive also for tourists in terms of the authenticity of a place; however, the most complicated aspect will be finding a balance between the two interests.

10. [B,C,R,G] To use opportunities to provide *feedback* on the actions of other agents with regard to the quality of the urban space (as a sign of the fulfilment of social responsibility).

11. [Tallinn: G] To run round-table talks with agents acting in the heritage space to counteract the *deficiencies in the qualities of the urban space* (e.g., parking, accessibility, empty unused buildings, and especially with regard to noise in the combination of possible options for obtaining more legislative power to affect the functional use of the heritage space).

12. [B,C,R,G] To expand the *public space* in physical terms on a temporary or permanent basis (e.g., opening to the public, purchasing, or transforming the use of the space) to enhance the emotional attachment of local people and concomitantly improving the spatial qualities for cultural tourists.

13. [C,G] To commence exhibitions (or any other alternative *cultural projects*) on the temporary or permanent basis to *critically assess the souvenir market* of a destination (on the topic of emerging chocolate production traditions in Bruges and history of souvenirs in Tallinn), thereby targeting tourists and [contradictory dispositions of] the local people.

14. [B,C,G] To consistently use the *logo [and a slogan] of a destination* to empower a co-producing network among the stakeholders.

Although the destination specific practical findings can be regarded as being of foremost relevance to the selected destinations in the research, the suggestions could be considered within the context of other destinations (i.e., not necessarily only those in the present study). In a broad sense, serving the *interests of the local community* (i.e., of the whole destination) should take on a mutual nature (the actions of local government, value-laden actions of business and cultural agents, concerns and initiatives of residents), thereby *counteracting the qualities of low tourism*, enabling the production of more powerful signs of the past in the heritage space through constructing the symbolic capital used in destination branding and to enhance the sustainability of the World Heritage Sites, as modern UNESCO-designated Hanseatic Old Towns, in particular.

In general, the present study has demonstrated the importance of symbolic capital in the (re)production of economic capital due to the convertibility of various species of capital (see section 1.2.2); thereby, while incorporated into the socioeconomic activities and increasing the well-being of the local people, it continuously contributes to the reproduction of the urban heritage space and hence building the competitiveness of a destination.

## 4.5 Limitations and suggestions for future research

It should be acknowledged that the interdisciplinary study examines only the local people as agents who, conducting multifarious socioeconomic activities, contribute to the (re)construction of a destination identity with a concomitant effect on the destination image in the specific context: destinations with WHS status represented by an Old Town with medieval architecture and historically tightly connected to the Hanseatic League. Thus, while the research focuses on the visually identifiable specific tourism-related attributes, features and socioeconomic activities, and on the meaning-making process of the activities of and strategies applied by the agents in the heritage space, then the perspective of tourists who significantly contribute to the (re)production of heritage and tourism spaces appears in the research as perceived in the experiences of the agents. Therefore, further studies applying the qualitative approach developed for the current research could embrace a more complex scale designed:

1. To investigate the *perceptions of tourists* in regard to assets, values and socioeconomic activities as opened to the tourist gaze and/or perceived by tourists in the spatial practices to illuminate the possibilities to further enhance a destination image, as well as to understand how the activities and strategies of agents are interrelated with spatial practices and the representational spaces of tourists (optionally and/or additionally applying phenomenological, anthropological or ethnographic methodologies).

2. To examine the consistency between intentions in regard to destination branding in the *official documents* related to tourism development and

the development of a destination and activities as well as the strategies of the local governments and agents from the non-government field to understand how to ameliorate problems that might interfere with efficient contributions to the (re)construction of a destination identity by the local people.

3. To further polish a *qualitative* investigation of the *UNESCO brand* (as there has been some research conducted on the tourists but mainly applying quantitative methodology, see section 1.2.2) to elucidate the perception and the role of the UNESCO brand in the experiences of practices and strategies of local agents and tourists.

4. To investigate the unique, cognitive and affective associations of *medieval architecture* on a wider scale in the heritage towns of the *Hanseatic League*, as connected with the development of tourism to understand its position and resourcefulness within multifaceted symbolic attributes in the present global tourism market, and therefore, how these attributes are (re)produced.

5. To conduct a *comparative context-specific study* of the unique product and experiential service productions of destinations to understand the genesis of their emergence and attendant evolution in the *traditional and modern design markets* (e.g., using phenomenological approaches or chaos theory) as part of modern interconnected business and cultural activities, i.e., in the context of *symbolic economy*.

6. To further work on a combined approach to the study of heritage destinations applying *quantitative methods* (e.g., content analysis of promotional materials) and multiple *qualitative* methods (e.g., photographic elicitation interviews or thematic analysis of the data in the websites of destinations) to be conducted in *different geographical and architectural contexts* (e.g., destinations with Old Towns with medieval architecture not on the World Heritage List or European capital cities with an Old Town as a WHS) in order to elucidate quantitative aspects for further interpretation in the qualitative research, and therefore, to complement findings and as well to elaborate various destination branding strategies and the strategies applied by the agents in different contextual environments (e.g., Hanseatic attributes in online destination branding of former members of the Hanseatic League).

Because of the *interdisciplinary* nature of the present research, it would therefore be of further interest to investigate the multilevel interconnectedness between destination branding and the production of symbolic capital on a wider scale of disciplinary approaches. Some of the options seem to be political studies to understand how decisions about the (re)production of the heritage space are taken within the specific urban policy frameworks; or urban planning to understand how its practices could inform the (re)production of symbolic value and simultaneously be enhanced to intensify the (re)production of the most appealing assets and values of a destination.

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# KOKKUVÕTE

Käesolev uurimus keskendub UNESCO maailmapärandi nimistusse kantud kultuuriobjektide näitel kultuuripärandiruumi (taas)tootmisele kui ressursile unikaalsete müügiargumentide (taas)loomiseks ja seega sihtkohtade turunduse ja brändimise eristumisstrateegiate rakendamiseks, et võimendada sümboliliste atribuutide abil konkreetse sihtkoha positsiooni kõrge konkurentsiga üleilmsel turismiturul. Uurimisprobleemi püstitus tuleneb pärandiruumi taastootmise protsesside olemuse senini üsna puudulikust kajastamisest nii sihtkoha brändimise käsitlustes (fookusega kultuuripärandi objektidega seotud erinevate kohalike tegutsejagruppide dispositsioonide ja eriti nende käitumise kontseptualiseerimisel) kui ka mitme sihtkohaga pärandiurismi uuringutes.

Antud uurimuse eesmärk on mõista sihtkoha brändimise ja sümbolilise kapitali konstrueerimise vastasmõjusuhteid linnalises pärandiruumis seostatuna sihtkoha konkurentsieeliste tugevdamisega turismiturul, kus omavahel võistlevad pärandkultuuriga sihtkohad. Seega aitab valitud lähenemine täiendada olemasolevaid teadusuuringuid, analüüsides pärandiruumi taastootmise praktikaid ning tõhusaid ja tulemuslikke meetodeid, kuidas innustada pärandi kasutamist kohalike tegutsejate tegevustes turismitööstuse erinevates kontekstides. Lähtudes vajadusest sügavamate teadmiste järele, mis puudutavad sihtkoha brändimisega lahutamatult seotud kultuuripärandi ja sotsiaalmajanduslike tegevuste toimimisprotsesse, keskendub käesolev uurimistöö järgnevatele uurimisküsimustele: (1) kuidas suhestub sihtkoha brändimine pärandkultuuri ruumiliste aspektidega? (2) kuidas erinevates valdkondades tegutsejad tajuvad ja mõistavad pärandiruumi ressursirikkust, selle väärtust, mis on omakorda sisendiks nende tegutsemisele ja strateegiate konstrueerimise viisidele? (3) kuidas toimub kogemuspõhiselt kujunenud erinevate tähenduste ja dimensioonidega pärandiruumi jätkuv (taas)tootmine omavahel ruumiliselt seotud erinevate valdkondade sotsiaalmajanduslike tegevuste raames? (4) kuidas on taastootmisliku iseloomuga tegevused seotud sihtkoha kuvandi ja identiteedi konstrueerimisega? ning (5) kuidas on pärandiruumi (taas)tootmist kujundavad tegutsejate sümbolilise kapitali (taas)konstrueerimise viisid seotud sihtkoha konkurentsivõime loomisega?

Lähtudes tegutseja ja struktuuri duaalsusel põhinevast ontoloogiast ning sotsiaalkonstruktivistliku epistemoloogia perspektiivist, rakendab antud uurimus kvalitatiivset metodoloogiat ja interdistsiplinaarset lähenemist, viies kokku teoreetilisi käsitlusi erinevatest teadusharudest ja uurimisvaldkondadest nagu sihtkoha brändimine, turismi ja kultuuripärandi uuringud, linnadisain ja linnasotsioloogia. Visuaalsete ja vaatlusmeetodite ning intervjueerimise kombineerimine osutus tõhusaks viisiks uurimisküsimustele vastamisel ja uurimiseesmärgi saavutamisel. Vaatluse läbiviimiseks valiti Brügge (Belgia), Lübeck (Saksamaa), Stralsund (Saksamaa), Tallinn (Eesti), Toruń (Poola), Visby (Rootsi) ja Wismar (Saksamaa) kui UNESCO maailmapärandi nimistusse kuuluvate unikaalset keskaegset pärandit esindavate vanalinnadega ning Hansa Liiduga tihedaid ajaloolisi sidemeid omavad linnad. Nendest valiti omakorda

Brügge ja Tallinn rakendamaks süvitsi kvalitatiivset analüüsi, mille teostamise raames intervjueeriti kohalikke erinevate valdkondade tegutsejaid.

Antud uurimus andis panuse valdkondlikku akadeemilisesse arutellu tänu uurimuspõhisele püüdele arendada edasi teoreetilisi käsitlusi, muuhulgas defineerides vaatluste tulemusena "vaatekoridori" mõistet kui olulist algfaasi turistide ligimeelitamise protsessis konkreetses turismiruumis. Kombineeritud analüüsi abil saavutatud peamiseks uurimistulemuseks on nelja omavahel seotud protsessi kui pärandruumi (taas)tootmise peamiste komponentide (sihtkoha identiteedi taastootmine, sihtkoha kuvandi taasloomine, sihtkoha brändimine, sümbolilise kapitali taaskonstrueerimine) topelt või ristuvate duaalsete seoste esiletoomine: (1) sihtkohtade poolt hinnatud ja kujundatud sihtkoha identiteedi ja turistide-poolsele sihtkoha brändi identiteedi tajumisele tugineva sihtkoha brändi kuvandi vahel ja (2) sihtkoha brändimise (kui kuvandi tõhustamiseks mõeldud reaktsiooni) ja sotsiaalmajanduslike tegevuste abil edendatud sihtkoha identiteedile tugineva sümbolilise kapitali taasloomise vahel. Nelja üksteisega tugevas vastasmõjusuhtes toimivad protsessid kujunevad pärandiruumis ja on ühtlasi pärandiruumi kujundavateks protsessideks. Kusjuures pärand on siinkohal vaadeldav sümbolilise kapitalina tunnustatud kultuurilise kapitalina, mis on olemuslikult tähtis tegutsejate suutlikustamisel nende tegevustes, võimalus suurema kasumi ning heaolu saavutamiseks ning osutub ülimalt tähtsaks mõistmaks sümbolilise majanduse ja sihtkoha konkurentsivõime olemust turismiturul. Seetõttu võiks antud uurimuse kogemust kasutada pärandile keskenduvates, aga ka turismivaldkonda laiemalt käsitlevates uuringutes teiste sihtkohtade analüüsimisel, rakendades analoogset kvalitatiivset metodoloogiat. Tulevikus tasuks edasi arendada nn mitme sihtkoha lähenemisviisi spetsiifilise olemusega sihtkohtade uurimisel, ühendades kohalike tegutsejate ja turistide perspektiivid.

**Võtmesõnad**: sihtkoha brändimine; sümbolilise kapitali konstrueerimine; pärand; agentsus; sihtkoha identiteet; sihtkoha kuvand; sihtkohtade konkurentsivõime; kvalitatiivne uuring; UNESCO maailmapärand

# ABSTRACT

The present research focuses on the (re)production of the heritage space, and specifically of properties listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHSs) as a resource for (re)creating unique selling propositions, and therefore, differentiation strategies by destinations within marketing and branding techniques to empower a destination with symbolic attributes in the ever increasingly competitive global tourism market. The research problem derives from concerns about the relative lack of knowledge in the field about the nature of the processes behind the reproduction of heritage space as reflected in destination branding with a focus on the conceptualisation of dispositions and conduct of, especially, different groups of local agents in heritage sites; as well as about multi-destination heritage tourism studies. The aim of this study is to understand the interconnectedness between destination branding and the construction of symbolic capital in urban heritage space in the context of building the competitive advantage of a destination in the tourism market of heritage sites. As such, this approach aims at contributing to the existing body of research by providing insights into the practice of the recreation of heritage with potentially efficient and effective ways of mobilising heritage in local activities in different tourism contexts. Based on the need for further in-depth knowledge on the processes behind destination branding, which is inextricably interconnected with heritage and socioeconomic activities, the current study seeks answers to the following questions: (1) how is destination branding spatially informed in the heritage space? (2) how do agents from various interacting fields perceive and comprehend the resourcefulness of heritage space in terms of its value; and in what ways does the perceptive and experiential acknowledgment of heritage value apply to the actions and construction of strategies of agents? (3) how do the spatially interrelated socioeconomic activities, conducted in various fields, continuously contribute into the (re)production of heritage space in its different dimensions and conceived meanings? (4) how do the agents' activities of a reproductive nature interconnect with the construction of the identity and image of a destination? and (5) how do agents' ways of (re)constructing symbolic capital contribute to the (re)production of the heritage space in relation to building the competitiveness of a destination?

Founded on the ontological position of the duality of agency and structure and the social constructivist epistemological perspective, the study employs an interdisciplinary approach, drawing its theoretical framework on the disciplines and fields of destination branding, tourism and heritage studies, urban design, and urban sociology, and applying a qualitative methodology. The combination of visual and observation methods and interviews appeared to be an efficient way to answer the research questions and achieve the research aim. The towns of Bruges (Belgium), Lübeck (Germany), Stralsund (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia), Toruń (Poland), Visby (Sweden), and Wismar (Germany) were selected as study sites for the observation for the unique medieval character of

their Old Towns as WHS properties and tight connection with the history of the Hanseatic League. Bruges and Tallinn were selected as sites for the in-depth qualitative analysis using interviews with local agents.

The research has contributed to the academic discussion in the field through attempts to advance theoretical considerations with the first contribution being the defining of 'view corridors' of significance in terms of the initial phase in the process of attracting tourists based on the observation of the research sites. Based on the combined analysis, the second and main contribution is considered the identification of a double or cross dual interrelationship among the four interconnected processes as the main components of the (re)production of the heritage space (reproducing a destination identity, recreating a destination image, destination branding, reconstructing symbolic capital): (1) between destination brand identity, projected by the destinations, and the brand image, built on tourist perceptions of brand identity, and (2) between destination branding (as a reaction to enhance the brand image) and the reconstruction of symbolic capital, which draws on the destination brand identity enhanced through socioeconomic activities. The inextricable interconnectedness of the four interconnected processes forms on and forms the heritage space—with heritage as recognised cultural capital attributed with symbolic capital, which is essential to empower the activities of agents and their opportunities for higher profits and greater well-being—and is considered of utmost significance in understanding the constitution of the symbolic economy and a destination's competitiveness in the tourism market. Future research on this topic with heritage in focus in the realm of tourism studies on a broader scale could involve the application of this qualitative methodology in other destinations, the further advancement of a multi-destination approach to tourist destinations of a particular character, as well as, relating the perspectives of local agents and tourists.

Appendix 1. Justification for inscription of the historic centres of selected towns

*Table. Justification for inscription of the historic centres of selected towns*

| Selected town | State party | Property | Criteria for inscription |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bruges | Belgium | Historic Centre of Brugge | Criterion (ii): The Historic Town of Brugge is testimony, over a long period, of a considerable exchange of influences on the development of architecture, particularly in brick Gothic, as well as favouring innovative artistic influences in the development of medieval painting, being the birthplace of the school of the Flemish Primitives. |
| | | | Criterion (iv): The Historic Town of Brugge is an outstanding example of an architectural ensemble, illustrating significant stages in the commercial and cultural fields in medieval Europe, of which the public, social, and religious institutions are a living testimony. |
| | | | Criterion (vi): The Town of Brugge was birthplace of the Flemish Primitives and a centre of patronage and development of painting in the Middle Ages with artists such as Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling. |
| Lübeck | Germany | Hanseatic City of Lübeck | Criterion (iv). |
| | | | Despite the damage it suffered during the Second World War, the basic structure of the old city, consisting mainly of 15th- and 16th-century patrician residences, public monuments (the famous Holstentor brick gate), churches and salt storehouses, remains unaltered. |
| | | | Criterion IV (be an outstanding example of a type of building which illustrates a significant stage in history) may be applied to the most authentic areas of a city which, more than any other, exemplifies the power and the historic role of the Hansa. |

*(Table continues)*

*(Table continued)*

| Selected town | State party | Property | Criteria for inscription |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stralsund | Germany | Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar | Criterion (ii): Wismar and Stralsund, leading centres of the Hanseatic League from the 13th to 15th centuries and major administrative and defence centres in the Swedish kingdom in the 17th and 18th centuries, contributed to the development and diffusion of brick construction techniques and building types, characteristic features of Hanseatic towns in the Baltic region, as well as the development of defence systems in the Swedish period. |
| Wismar | | | Criterion (iv): Stralsund and Wismar have crucial importance in the development of the building techniques and urban form that became typical of the Hanseatic trading towns, well documented in the major parish churches, the town hall of Stralsund, and the commercial building types, such as the Dielenhaus. |
| Tallinn | Estonia | The Historic Centre (Old Town) of Tallinn | The Committee decided to inscribe this property on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv), considering that Tallinn is an outstanding and exceptionally complete and well preserved example of a medieval northern European trading city that retains the salient features of this unique form of economic and social community to a remarkable degree. |
| Toruń | Poland | Medieval Town of Toruń | The Committee decided to inscribe this property on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv), considering that Toruń is a small historic trading city that preserves to a remarkable extent its original street pattern and outstanding early buildings, and which provides an exceptionally complete picture of the medieval way of life. |
| Visby | Sweden | The Hanseatic Town of Visby | The Committee decided to inscribe this site on the basis of criteria (iv) and (v) considering its outstanding universal value, representing a unique example of a north European medieval walled town which preserves with remarkable completeness a townscape and assemblage of high-quality ancient buildings. |

*Source: UNESCO, 1988; UNESCO, 1996; UNESCO, 1998; UNESCO, 2001; UNESCO, 2002; UNESCO, 2006.*

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# Appendix 2. The selected streets and squares for visual analysis

*Table. The selected streets and squares for visual analysis*

| Town | Street or square |
|---|---|
| Bruges | 1. Markt (Market Square) |
| | 2. Burg Square |
| | 3. Simon Stevinplein (Simon Stevin Square) |
| | 4. Eiermarkt (Egg Market) |
| | 5. Jan van Eyckplein (Jan van Eyck Square) |
| | 6. Arentshof (Arent's Court) |
| | 7. Street Steenstraat |
| | 8. Street Breidelstraat |
| | 9. Street Dijver |
| | 10. Street Sint-Jakobsstraat |
| | 11. Street Spiegelrei* |
| | 12. Street Sasplein* |
| | 13. Street Langerei* |
| | 14. Street Sint-Amandsstraat* (part of it: from Markt till the squarelike enlargement) |
| | 15. Street Zuidzandstraat* |
| | 16. Street Wollestraat* |
| | 17. Street Katelijnestraat* |
| | 18. Street Ezelstraat* |
| | 19. Street Oude Zak** |
| Lübeck | 1. Street Hüxstraße |
| | 2. Street Mengstraße, part of it till the open area of church (though not within world heritage zones, it is advised for tourists because of historical fronts) |
| | 3. Street Breite Straße (selected as part of the pedestrian area and as a street mentioned within the information on Town Hall, Market square) |
| | 4. Street Größe Altefähre** |
| Stralsund | 1. Old Market Square |
| | 2. New Market Square |
| | 3. Street Frankenstrasse |
| | 4. Street Ossenreyerstrasse |
| | 5. Apollonienmarkt (selected as part of the pedestrian area connected with Street Ossenreyerstrasse) |
| | 6. Part of Mönschstrasse (selected as part of the pedestrian area connected with Street Ossenreyerstrasse) |
| | 7. Waterfront* |

*(Table continues)*

*(Table continued)*

| Town | Street or square |
|------|------------------|
| Tallinn | 1. Town Hall Square |
| | 2. Street Pikk |
| | 3. St. Catherine's Passage |
| | 4. Masters' Courtyard* |
| | 5. Street Viru* |
| Torun | 1. Town Hall Square |
| | 2. Street Szeroka* (selected as part of the pedestrian area) |
| Visby | 1. Main square |
| | 2. Street Strandgatan |
| | 3. Street Hansgatan |
| | 4. Street Adelsgatan |
| | 5. Street Nygatan** |
| Wismar | 1. Market square |
| | 2. Street Scheuerstrasse |
| | 3. Street Lübsche Strasse* |
| | 4. Street Kraemerstrasse* |
| | 5. Waterfront* (harbour basin as part of world heritage border) |

*(\*) Additionally selected units.*
*(\*\*) Additionally selected residential streets.*

# Appendix 3. Categories of socioeconomic activities

*Table. Categories of socioeconomic activities*

| Category | Activities |
|---|---|
| Shopping | Kiosk/ mini-supermarket, (specific) shopping mall |
| | Handmade products, crafts, jewellery, watches, design |
| | Flower shop or stalls |
| | Homeware, accessories, design items |
| | Food groceries / food stores |
| | Clothes and associated, fashion, shoes |
| | Groceries or specific shops |
| | Pharmacy |
| | Bookstores |
| | Optics shops |
| | Body care, cosmetics shops |
| | Music shops |
| | Souvenir shops |
| | Lace shops |
| | Any other shop |
| Eating | Restaurants, pubs, cafés, bakeries etc., terraces |
| Accommodation | Hotels, hostels, guests houses etc. |
| Daily services | Beauty salons |
| | Law offices, notaries |
| | Various financial offices |
| | Property agencies |
| | Post offices |
| | Parking lots or garages |
| | Public toilets |
| | Other services |
| Company offices | Office / bureau |
| Production units | Production |
| Public services | Local/Non-local government institutions and services |
| | Embassy or other foreign missions, organizations |
| | Educational institutions |
| | Cultural institutions (museums, theatres etc.) |
| | Church or chapel |
| | Galleries or exhibition halls |
| | Relaxation zones / green areas |
| | Play grounds/ yards |
| Housing | Owner-occupied residential buildings (+work space) |
| Sites under restoration | Restoration of building |
| No-activity (empty space) | Empty space |
| Non-identifiable | Non-identified (including walls) |

# Appendix 4. Unique local products and associated services

*Table. Unique local products and associated services*

| Type | Specification of products / souvenirs / experience | Bruges | Lübeck | Stralsund | Tallinn | Toruń | Visby | Wismar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Product | Chocolate in the 'Capital of chocolate' and lace | x | | | | | | |
| Experience | Making chocolate preparation visible through a glass wall installed in chocolateries | x | | | | | | |
| Experience | Making lace in the Bruges lace-making centre and at the street markets | x | | | | | | |
| Experience | Opening lace making to the public in a private building | x | | | | | | |
| Product & experience | Swans near Beguinage reappearing as chocolate swans in a chocolatier | x | | | | | | |
| Product | Marzipan, Lübecker nut cake and wine Lübecker Rotspon | | x | | | | | |
| Experience | Marzipan moulding | | x | | | | | |
| Product | Pottery | | | x | | | | |
| Product | National handicrafts and marzipan | | | | x | | | |
| Experience | Marzipan making and painting | | | | x | | | |
| Product & experience | Selling medieval-themed products in specialist shops on site | | | | x | | | |
| Product | Gingerbread | | | | | x | | |
| Experience | Gingerbread making | | | | | x | | |
| Experience | Gingerbread laid on the pillow in the hotel room | | | | | x | | |
| Product | Sheep and sea themes in products and various products made of sheep wool | | | | | | x | |

# ELULOOKIRJELDUS

1. Isikuandmed
   Ees- ja perekonnanimi     Aleksandr Michelson
   Sünniaeg ja -koht     06.04.1985, Tallinn
   Kodakondsus     Eesti
   E-posti aadress     aleksandr.michelson@gmail.com

2. Hariduskäik

| Õppeasutus (nimetus lõpetamise ajal) | Lõpetamise aeg | Haridus (eriala/kraad) |
|---|---|---|
| Tallinna Tehnikaülikool | 2008 | Rahvamajandus/ magistrikraad |
| Tallinna Tehnikaülikool | 2006 | Rahvamajandus/ bakalaureusekraad (*cum laude*) |
| Tallinna Mahtra Gümnaasium | 2003 | Keskharidus (kuldmedal) |

3. Keelteoskus (alg-, kesk- või kõrgtase)

| Keel | Tase |
|---|---|
| Vene | Kõrgtase |
| Eesti | Kõrgtase |
| Inglise | Kõrgtase |
| Saksa | Algtase |
| Prantsuse | Algtase |

4. Täiendusõpe

| Õppimise aeg | Täiendusõppe läbiviija nimetus |
|---|---|
| 2013 (04.02-02.03) | Külalisuurija, programmirühm "*Geographies of Globalizations*", *AISSR – Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research*, Amsterdami Ülikool, Holland |
| 2012 (06.09-07.09) | GLTRG (*the RGS-IBG's (the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers) Geographies of Leisure and Tourism Research Group*) PhD kollokvium "*Current Issues and (Im)possible Solutions: an interdisciplinary dialogue in tourism and leisure*", Surrey Ülikool, Suurbritannia |
| 2012 (02.04-03.04) | PhD kollokvium "*Innovative Approaches to Tourism Marketing and Management Research*", Exeteri Ülikool, Suurbritannia |
| 2011 (18.07-22.07) | Kursus "*Creativity and urban policy strategies*", Barcelona Ülikool, Barcelona Ülikooli Rahvusvaheline Suveülikool 2011, Hispaania |
| 2010 (19.07-23.07) | Kursus "*Walking through Barcelona*", Barcelona Ülikool, Barcelona Ülikooli Rahvusvaheline Suveülikool 2010, Hispaania |
| 2007 (4 päeva) | Täiendkoolitus "Jätkusuutliku ettevõtluse strateegiline juhtimine", Säästva Eesti Instituut, Eesti |

5. Teenistuskäik

| Töötamise aeg | Tööandja nimetus | Ametikoht |
|---|---|---|
| 2003 – ... | Premier Restaurants Eesti AS | Personalikoordinaator |

6. Teadustegevus

**Publikatsioonid**

Michelson, A. (2012). Destination Branding and Social Interaction in the Urban Heritage Space: Comparative Spatial Approach. In R. Amoêda, S. Lira, & C. Pinheiro (Eds.), *Heritage 2012 – Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development* (pp. 955–963). Barcelos, Portugal: Green Lines Institute.

Michelson, A. (2011). Marketing Medieval Heritage - Spatial Consumption. *Acta Universitatis Bohemiae Meridionales. The Scientific Journal for Economics, Management and Trade, 14*(2), 89–94.

Michelson, A. (2011). Pedestrian Networks, Cultural Built Heritage and Destination Marketing: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives. In G. Thomas, C. Fleaurant, T. Panagopoulos, E. Chevassus, A. Zaharim, & K. Sopian (Eds.), *Recent Researches in Energy, Environment and Landscape Architecture* (pp. 31–36). Angers, France: WSEAS Press.

Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2010). The Construction of Commodity-Signs upon Medieval Heritage Architecture: Spatial Approach. In S. Juan (Ed.), *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research* (pp. 91–94). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IACSIT Press.

Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2010). Residential cultural heritage: constructing symbolic capital in the urban space. In R. Amoêda, S. Lira, & C. Pinheiro (Eds.), *Heritage 2010. Heritage and Sustainable Development* (pp. 1041–1050). Évora, Portugal: Green Lines Institute for Sustainable Development.

**Konverentsi ettekanded**: töö tulemused on esitatud üheksal rahvusvahelisel konverentsil

**Tunnustused**

2010, Jaan Poska stipendium (Tallinna linn)
2008, Jaan Poska stipendium (Tallinna linn)
2005, Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli Vilistlaskogu stipendium

7. Kaitstud lõputööd

**Magistritöö**

Aleksandr Michelson. *Keskaegsete peokultuuri traditsioonide taastamine kui Tallinna konkurentsieelis rahvusvahelisel turismiturul*. Juhendaja Kaja Lutsoja. Tallinna Tehnikaülikool, 2008.

**Bakalaureusetöö**

Aleksandr Michelson. *Jätkussutliku arengu indikaatorite süsteemi väljatöötamine Tallinna näitel*. Juhendaja Kaja Lutsoja. Tallinna Tehnikaülikool, 2006.

8. Teadustöö põhisuunad

Kultuuripärandiga, sh UNESCO maailma kultuuripärandi nimistusse kuuluvate objektidega sihtkohtade brändimine ja sihtkohtade sotsiaalkultuuriline konstrueerimine

9. Teised uurimisprojektid

Tallinna Linnavalitsuse uue hoone kavandamisest lähtuv mereäärse lähiala kujunemine ja sellega seotud kasutajagruppide hinnangud ja hoiakud. (21.11.11–10.05.12). Põhitäitja osa "Tallinna Linnavalitsuse uue hoone ja mereäärse lähiala roll linna identiteedi kujundamisel ja selle brändimine".

10. Lisainfo

| Aeg | Organisatsioon | Roll |
|---|---|---|
| 2011 – ... | Europa Nostra (*the European Federation for Heritage*) | liige |
| 2011 – ... | Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts | eluaegne liige |
| 2011 – ... | Forum UNESCO-University and Heritage (FUUH) | liige |

# CURRICULUM VITAE

1.  Personal data
    Name                      Aleksandr Michelson
    Date and place of birth      06.04.1985, Tallinn
    Citizenship               Estonian
    E-mail                    aleksandr.michelson@gmail.com

2.  Education

| Educational institution | Graduation year | Education (field of study/degree) |
|---|---|---|
| Tallinn University of Technology | 2008 | Public Economics/ Master of Arts in Social Sciences |
| Tallinn University of Technology | 2006 | Public Economics/ Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences (*cum laude*) |
| Tallinn Mahtra Gymnasium | 2003 | Secondary education (gold medal awarded) |

3.  Language competence (fluent, average, basic skills)

| Language | Level |
|---|---|
| Russian | Fluent |
| Estonian | Fluent |
| English | Fluent |
| German | Basic skills |
| French | Basic skills |

4. Special courses

| Period | Educational or other organization |
|---|---|
| 2013 (04.02-02.03) | Visiting Researcher, Programme Group 'Geographies of Globalizations', AISSR – Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands |
| 2012 (06.09-07.09) | GLTRG (the RGS-IBG's (the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers) Geographies of Leisure and Tourism Research Group) PhD Colloquium 'Current Issues and (Im)possible Solutions: an interdisciplinary dialogue in tourism and leisure', University of Surrey, UK |
| 2012 (02.04-03.04) | PhD Colloquium 'Innovative Approaches to Tourism Marketing and Management Research', University of Exeter, UK |
| 2011 (18.07-22.07) | Course 'Creativity and urban policy strategies', University of Barcelona, University of Barcelona International Summer School 2011, Spain |
| 2010 (19.07-23.07) | Course 'Walking through Barcelona', University of Barcelona, University of Barcelona International Summer School 2010, Spain |
| 2007 (4 päeva) | Training 'Strategic management of sustainable enterprise', Estonian Institute for Sustainable Development, Estonia |

5. Professional employment

| Period | Organization | Position |
|---|---|---|
| 2003 – ... | Premier Restaurants Eesti AS | Human Resources Coordinator |

6. Scientific work

**Publications**

Michelson, A. (2012). Destination Branding and Social Interaction in the Urban Heritage Space: Comparative Spatial Approach. In R. Amoêda, S. Lira, & C. Pinheiro (Eds.), *Heritage 2012 – Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development* (pp. 955–963). Barcelos, Portugal: Green Lines Institute.

Michelson, A. (2011). Marketing Medieval Heritage - Spatial Consumption. *Acta Universitatis Bohemiae Meridionales. The Scientific Journal for Economics, Management and Trade, 14*(2), 89–94.

Michelson, A. (2011). Pedestrian Networks, Cultural Built Heritage and Destination Marketing: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives. In G. Thomas, C. Fleaurant, T. Panagopoulos, E. Chevassus, A. Zaharim, & K. Sopian (Eds.), *Recent Researches in Energy, Environment and Landscape Architecture* (pp. 31–36). Angers, France: WSEAS Press.

Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2010). The Construction of Commodity-Signs upon Medieval Heritage Architecture: Spatial Approach. In S. Juan (Ed.), *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research* (pp. 91–94). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IACSIT Press.

Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2010). Residential cultural heritage: constructing symbolic capital in the urban space. In R. Amoêda, S. Lira, & C. Pinheiro (Eds.), *Heritage 2010. Heritage and Sustainable Development* (pp. 1041–1050). Évora, Portugal: Green Lines Institute for Sustainable Development.

**Conference presentations**: the study results were presented by the author in nine international scientific conferences

**Honours**

2010, Jaan Poska Scholarship (The City of Tallinn)
2008, Jaan Poska Scholarship (The City of Tallinn)
2005, Scholarship of Alumni Association of Tallinn University of Technology

7. Defended theses

**Master thesis**

Aleksandr Michelson. *Keskaegsete peokultuuri traditsioonide taastamine kui Tallinna konkurentsieelis rahvusvahelisel turismiturul* (Eng. The revitalisation of medieval traditions of festive culture as a competitive advantage of Tallinn in the international tourism market). Supervisor Kaja Lutsoja. Tallinn University of Technology, 2008.

**Bachelor thesis**

Aleksandr Michelson. *Jätkussutliku arengu indikaatorite süsteemi väljatöötamine Tallinna näitel* (Eng. The Development of a System of Sustainable Development on the Example of Tallinn). Supervisor Kaja Lutsoja. Tallinn University of Technology, 2006.

8. Main areas of scientific work/Current research topics

Destination branding of heritage cities and, specifically, tourism in UNESCO World Heritage Sites and sociocultural construction of destinations

9. Other research projects

The potential formation of the waterfront area in the vicinity of the future Tallinn City Government building on assessments and dispositions of the related actor groups. (21.11.11–10.05.12). Researcher ("The role of a new city administration building and the waterfront area in the construction of city's identity and branding").

10. Additional information

| Period | Organization | Role/Position |
|--------|--------------|---------------|
| 2011 – ... | Member of Europa Nostra (the European Federation for Heritage) | Member |
| 2011 – ... | Estonian Heritage Society | Lifelong Member |
| 2011 – ... | Forum UNESCO-University and Heritage (FUUH) | Member |

# DISSERTATIONS DEFENDED AT
# TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY ON
## *ECONOMICS*

1. **August Aarma**. Segmented Analysis of Bank Customers and Banking Information: Estonian Case. 2001.

2. **Enn Listra**. The Development and Structure of Banking Sector: Retail Banking in Estonia. 2001.

3. **Tatyana Põlajeva**. The Comparative Analysis of Market's Attractiveness. 2001.

4. **Tuuli Tammeraid**. Modeling Flow of Funds for Estonia. 2002.

5. **Ivo Karilaid**. The Choice in General Method for Investment and Performance Evaluation. 2002.

6. **Hele Hammer**. Strategic Investment Decisions: Evidence from Survey and Field Research in Estonia. 2003.

7. **Viljar Jaamu**. The Methods and Instruments for Solving the Banking Crisis and Development of the Banking Sector in Estonia. 2003.

8. **Katri Kerem**. From Adoption to Relationships: Internet Banking in Estonia. 2003.

9. **Ly Kirikal**. Productivity, the Malmquist Index and the Empirical Study of Banks in Estonia. 2005.

10. **Jaanus Raim**. The PPP Deviations between Estonia and Non-Transitional Countries. 2006.

11. **Jochen Sebastian Heubischl**. European Network Governance – Corporate Network Systematic in Germany, the United Kingdom and France: an Empirical Investigation. 2006.

12. **Enno Lend**. Transpordiühenduse ja logistikasüsteemi interaktsioon (Saaremaa ja Hiiumaa näitel). 2007.

13. **Ivar Soone**. Interrelations between Retail Service Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty: A Holistic Perspective. 2007.

14. **Aaro Hazak**. Capital Structure and Dividend Decisions under Distributed Profit Taxation. 2008.

15. **Laivi Laidroo**. Public Announcements' Relevance, Quality and Determinants on Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius Stock Exchanges. 2008.

16. **Martti Randveer**. Monetary Policy Transmission Channels, Flexibility of the Economy and Future Prospects of the Estonian Monetary System. 2009.

17. **Kaire Põder**. Structural Solutions to Social Traps: Formal and Informal Institutions. 2010.

18. **Tõnn Talpsepp**. Investor Behavior and Volatility Asymmetry. 2010.

19. **Tarmo Kadak**. Creation of a Supportive Model for Designing and Improving the Performance Management System of an Organisation. 2011.

20. **Jüri Kleesmaa**. Economic Instruments as Tools for Environmental Regulation of Electricity Production in Estonia. 2011.

21. **Oliver Parts**. The Effects of Cosmopolitanism on Estonian and Slovenian Consumer Choice Behavior of Foreign *versus* Domestic Products. 2011.

22. **Mart Nutt**. Eesti parlamendi pädevuse kujunemine ja rakendamine välissuhetes. 2011.

23. **Igor Novikov**. Credit Risk Determinants in the Banking Sectors of the Baltic States. 2011.

24. **Mike Franz Wahl**. Kapitaliühingute lõppomanike alusväärtuste ja tahte uurimine ning omanikkonna tüpoloogia konstrueerimine. 2011.

25. **Tobias Wiebelt**. Impact of Lease Capitalization on the Development of Accounting Standards: A Theoretical Research. 2012.

26. **Sirje Pädam**. Economic Perspectives on Environmental Policies: The Costs and Benefits of Environmental Regulation in Estonia. 2012.

27. **Juhan Värk**. Venemaa positiivse hõlvamise poliitika ja teiste välispoliitiliste liinide mõjud Eesti-Vene suhetele aastail 1991–2011. 2012.

28. **Mari Avarmaa**. Implications of Capital Structure and Credit Constraints for Company Performance: A Comparative Study of Local and Multinational Companies in the Baltics. 2012.

29. **Fabio Filipozzi**. The Efficiency of Interest Rate and Foreign Exchange Markets in the Euro Area and Central and Eastern Europe. 2012.

30. **Aleksei Netšunajev**. Developments and Determinants of Intra-Industry Trade in the Baltic States. 2012.

31. **Aleksandr Miina**. Critical Success Factors of Lean Thinking Implementation in Estonian Manufacturing Companies. 2012.

32. **Angelika Kallakmaa-Kapsta**. Before and After the Boom: Changes in the Estonian Housing Market. 2013.

33. **Karen Voolaid**. Measurement of Organizational Learning of Business Schools. 2013.

34. **Archil Chochia**. Models of European Integration: Georgia's Economic and Political Transition. 2013.

35. **Hannes Ling**. Developing an Assessment Measure for Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education through a Metacognitive Approach. 2013.

36. **Marina Järvis**. Assessment of the Contribution of Safety Knowledge to Sustainable Safety Management Systems in Estonian SMEs. 2013.