TOURISM REPRESENTATIONS, IMAGINARIES, AND ENCOUNTERS ON THE MALTESE ISLANDS

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ONTARIO

AUGUST 2021

ABSTRACT

This research explores the ethnosexual tourism of women to the Maltese islands by considering the politics of tourism representations and tourism imaginaries about the Maltese islands, and their effects on touristic experiences and encounters in Malta. It examines

the link between the historical and contemporary discourses surrounding the Maltese islands and their role in shaping how the space and its inhabitants are engaged with, physically and socially, tourist women from Northern Europe. This dissertation aims to highlight the role and influences of tourist geographical imaginaries on spaces, places, touristic practices. Utilizing a postcolonial perspective that explores Orientalism and Exoticism in tourism representations, this dissertation contributes to tourism scholarship by examining the interconnected nature of history, discourse, and the politics of representation, and their impact on contemporary travel and touristic practices. In arguing that the ethnosexual encounters that occur amongst tourist women and Maltese men must be understood as firmly situated within the historical, political and postcolonial contexts from which they arise, this research uses ethnographic and interview data to reveal that the language and imageries used to promote and describe the Maltese islands, depends on an Orientalist and exoticized discourse, which is strongly reminiscent of the representations of the Maltese islands that permeated colonial era discourse about the region. The women who participated in this study, imagined, and experienced the Maltese islands using two distinct categories, the "changed" and the "unchanged", the modern and the ancient, and the advancing and the decaying. The narratives of the tourist women involved in this study demonstrated a desire by tourists to experience a spatiotemporal displacement. Driven by (colonial) nostalgia, and the liminoid desires to shed the constraints of modernity, these women desired a space outside of modernity, and participation in ethnosexual relationships with men who embodied their sense of the "unchanged" satisfied that desire.

DEDICATION

‘Malta tal-Maltin’

“Lil poplu Malti li meta l'inglisi chienu salvaggi chien gia' 'msieheb mac-civiltà ta Ruma il chittieb joffri”

Antonio Dalli (1896:3)

To my children

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

.

Writing this dissertation was hard. There were times when finishing this dissertation seemed an unlikely prospect and other times when it felt impossible and, indeed, it would have been if not for the encouragement, reassurance, support and faith of my supervisory committee, my family, and my friends.

I'm deeply indebted to Dr. Rina Cohen, for supporting me and encouraging me through it all, for allowing me the freedom to write the dissertation that I wanted, and for reminding me that with wings I am able to fly, but with roots I know where I come from.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Meg Luxton, any improvement in my writing (however miniscule) are entirely due to your unrelenting advice, leadership and support. You challenged me to be better and I think it paid off.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Matt Tegelberg, had my friend not scoured York's faculty directory and found you, I know I would not have completed this dissertation. Thank you for the conversations, the guidance, the support and for agreeing to be on my committee despite your best intentions.

To Kyla, for scouring York's faculty directory and finding Dr. Tegelberg, for the endless of hours of talking through things with me, for your support, encouragement and for everything, Thank you!

Mom, there is simply too much to thank you for, from talking things through with me, to babysitting, to always believing in me, but most of all thank you for teaching me that I can do hard things.

Wesley, Isaiah and Elijah, you guys didn't help at all but you make my life worth living, and for that I thank God everyday.

Albert, for encouraging me when I was ready to give up, Thank You!

To Ziga Guza and Ziju Charle, Ziju Indrine and Zija Rose, Ziju Joe and Zija Lola, Kenneth, Natasha, Josette and Stephan, the Malta I love (and was so inspired to write about) would not exist without you all. Thank You for being my part of my home.

"The ache for home lives in all of us. The place where we can go as we are and not be questioned." (Maya Angelou)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

DEDICATION iii

ACKNOWLEGMENT iv

TABLE OF CONTENTS v

LIST OF TABLES viii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ix

INTRODUCTION 1

Research Goals

Malta: The Tourism Setting

Evolution of Tourism to the Maltese Islands

Relevant Theoretical Framework

Dissertation Organization

CHAPTER ONE: 14

Women's Sexual Travel: 'Sex tourism' and 'Sex and Tourism'

Women's Travel

Ethnosexual Tourism

Research Contributions

Conclusion

CHAPTER TWO: 31

Postcolonial Theory and Tourism: Orientalism, Exoticism and Malta's Colonial Encounter

Situating Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism and Tourism Studies: Exoticism

Orientalism

Exoticism

Exoticism and Tourism

Malta's Place in Postcolonial Studies

Conclusion

CHAPTER THREE: **69**

Methods and Methodology

Mixed Methods Research

How I studied women's ethnosexual travel and their opinions of Malta

How I studied Malta's destination image

How I studied travel texts

Travel Brochures

Guidebooks

Blogs

Conclusion

CHAPTER FOUR: **91**

Creating Tourism and Shaping Expectations

History of Malta's Tourism Policy

Tourism Texts

Travel Brochures

Guidebooks

Travel Blogs

Discussion

Representational Loop

Conclusion: How the Maltese Islands are Represented

CHAPTER FIVE: **137**

Sun, Sand, and…Legendary History: Malta's Tourist Imaginary

Tourist Imaginaries

Malta's Destination Image

Conclusion: How the Maltese Islands are Touristically Imagined

CHAPTER SIX: **164**

Tourist Tales: Wanderlust and Wanderlove

Exotic Otherness: Exotic Features and 'Magic' Lovers

Temporal Otherness: Old-school Lovers and Un-Modern Men

Maltese Men: Un-Modern Men

The Seduction of Space

Conclusion: How the Maltese Islands are Experienced by Tourists

CHAPTER SEVEN: **200**

The Postcolonial Encounter: Project Contributions

Recommendations for further research

REFERENCES **214**

Appendix A: Interview Participants, Demographic Characteristics **250**

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Dominant Themes in MTA Brochures

Table 2: Dominant Themes in the Guidebooks

Table 3: Dominant themes in travel blogs

Table 4: Tourist image of Malta based on three trait queries

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1: Map of the Mediterranean Basin

Introduction

The Story of the Woman on the Beach

It was the Summer of 2014 when I met the woman on the beach. She was a British woman in her late twenties who was explaining to me, in incredible detail, her relationship with Rodney the Maltese man she intended to marry later that summer.

Reclined on her beach chair, working an absurd amount of tanning lotion into her fair skin and sipping a Cisk lager, the beautiful blond woman detailed how she met her fiancé, what she found attractive about him, about other Maltese men, and what she 'loved' about the Maltese islands.

She told the story as if it was "your typical girl meets boy story", but in this case, the girl was captivated by the promise of an "exotic yet affordable" vacation and traveled from South West England to Malta where she met the "boy", an "exotic boy, who was so "different" than any of the boys available to her back home in Bristol that she ended her long-term relationship and returned to Malta to marry Rodney and remain permanently.

Sitting on a beach in Mellieha, working desperately on her tan, she spoke frankly about her lover's "exotic nature", about his "traditional-ness" and the colour of his skin. She told me about her first visit to Malta, when she first met Rodney, and how she felt like she had "stepped back in time". She told me about her impression of the islands before she arrived, and she told me about their sex life.

My Story

It was the Summer of 2014 when I met the woman on the beach and, while I did not know it yet, her story would go on to inspire my doctoral research project.

It was just days after I had defended my MA thesis which explored "female sex tourism" in Jamaica and I was back home in Malta, where I would spend the summer before returning to Canada to pursue my Ph.D. I sat on the hot, dry sand, half captivated by this woman's story and half so irrationally irritated that I feared that my face would betray me and cause her to stop talking.

She spoke about how she imagined Malta, how she imagined the Maltese people, and how she experienced the Maltese islands and people, and as a Maltese woman interested in sex and tourism her story fascinated me. I sat in the shadow of her rented umbrella and wondered, was this a common thing? Did British women on vacation often develop relationships with Maltese men? Was this sex tourism? Was it a coincidence that both Rodney and Malta were described as '"old-fashioned"? Did she really believe that she was the first tourist woman he had met?

As she described him, he was shorter than she typically preferred but he was "exotic" looking, he was "striking", he was different looking, he was dark… but not too dark, he had dark curly hair and bright hazel eyes. "Like you!" she proclaimed as she lowered her sunglasses to the bridge of her nose as if to get a good look at my face. And there it was, I was triggered. Everything she said sounded like it should have been a compliment, to Rodney and then to me,

but all I heard was the same 'othering', the same "what are you?" that had characterized all my out of Malta experiences up until today, except this time she was in my homeland.

The story told by the woman on the beach was my first introduction to the topic that both tickled my intellectual fancy and irked my Maltese soul, the ethnosexual tourism of tourist women to the Maltese islands, and the Orientalisation and exoticisation of the Maltese islands and people.

This dissertation seeks to examine the role and impact of colonial discourses, and tourist geographical imaginaries on spaces, places, touristic practices, and specifically on ethnosexual encounters. To do so, I build upon the existing scholarship, and expand the discussion of women's ethnosexual tourism, and extend the focus on the ethnosexual tourism of tourist women away from the "touristic hot spots" typically considered[1] by the existing scholarship on the Maltese islands. The research contributes to the existing body of knowledge within the field of tourism studies by looking particularly at Malta's colonial era and contemporary representations from a postcolonial perspective.

Research Goals

The overall purpose of this project is to use sociological methods to examine the politics of tourism representations and tourism imaginaries about the Maltese islands and their effects on touristic experiences and encounters in Malta. With the understanding that tourism is something people do in spatial encounters (Crouch 2005), this dissertation examines the historical and contemporary discourses surrounding the Maltese islands and their role in shaping how space and its inhabitants are engaged with physically and socially, specifically as it relates to the sexual and affective relationships that Northern European tourist women develop with Maltese men.

The following five questions guide this study:

[1] Notably the Caribbean islands, Central and South America and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.

1. How were the Maltese islands represented during colonial times?

2. How are the Maltese islands represented today?

3. How are the Maltese islands touristically imagined?[2]

4. How are the Maltese islands experienced by tourists?

5. How these representations contribute to the ethnosexual relationships that develop between tourist women and Maltese men?

Malta: The Tourism Setting

For the purposes of this research project, the Maltese islands provide a unique and understudied postcolonial space to investigate the ethnosexual tourism of tourist women. Located 80 kilometers south of Italy, 284 kilometres east of Tunisia and 333 kilometres north of Libya, lies the island archipelago of Malta, Gozo and Comino. Covering just 312 square kilometers in the Mediterranean Sea, the Maltese islands, with a population of 450,000 are one of the world's smallest and most densely populated countries.

While the "island lure" has always enticed tourists, prior to its independence from Britain, Malta was historically described as an unfit travel destination for Northern Europeans due to the high cost of travel to the islands, its distance from England, and a "hostile" local population (Balogh and Seers: 1955).

Despite a multitude of colonial era assessments which predicted that it was unreasonable to expect tourism "of sufficient magnitude to add materially to Malta's national income" (Woods

[2] Tourism imaginaries are held in the imagination of tourists, and as Salazar notes (2011) are therefore both intangible and immeasurable. While the study of tourist imaginaries has come to occupy a central place in tourism studies in general, and in place specific, destination research more specifically, it is important to note that this study cannot claim to access the imaginaries of tourists, but rather can only access what tourists *said* their imaginaries were.

1945: 2, as cited in Brincat 2009: 38)[3], contemporary tourism to the Maltese islands continues to break new ground. The Maltese islands, having developed from "a poor, insular backwater" in the late 1950s "into a thriving, modern tourism destination" (Boissevain 1996: vvi), attract tourists in numbers far in excess of its population and welcome over 2.6 million tourists a year (MTA 2018).

With the travel and tourism industry expanding faster than in any of its competitor countries in the Mediterranean Basin[4], like for many other small island tourist jurisdictions, tourism generates considerable employment and income for the Maltese islands. Prior to the coronavirus pandemic of 2020, Malta's economy was highly dependent on the tourism industry. Tourism contributes over 25 percent of Malta's GDP and according to the Central Bank of Malta, jobs in hotels, travel agencies, airlines and the jobs that are indirectly supported by the tourism industry make up 28 percent of the total employment of the islands with the tourism industry being one of the largest employers on the island. This, of course, makes tourism a robust income and job-generating industry. According to the *Nation Statistics Office of Malta*, the direct contribution of travel and tourism to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Malta was EUR 1,278.5million or 14.1 percent of total GDP in 2016, and 27.1 percent of the country's GDP by 2019.

[3] As illustrated by Brincat (2009) for additional colonial era appraisals of Malta as a tourism destination see also Interim Report on the Financial and Economic Structure of the Maltese Islands 1950 (the Schuster Report) and Report of the Economic Commission, 1957 (the Schuster and Scott Report).

[4] Also known as the Mediterranean region or Mediterranea, the Mediterranean Basin covers portions of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and is bordered by 21 countries, with only the island countries of Malta and Cyprus directly in the sea.

Evolution of Tourism to the Maltese Islands

The growth of Malta's tourism sector has followed a pattern typical to other areas of the Mediterranean (Lockheart 1997)[5] [6]. Following the grant of self-government establishing a diarchical system of governance that split the control of the Maltese islands between the Maltese government and the British Imperial Government, the Maltese government began its official efforts of promoting tourism to the islands in 1921(Knepper 2009). Intrigued by the economic potential of the growing number of passengers arriving in Malta by cruising steamers, the Maltese government established a Tourist Bureau in 1924 and began a publicity campaign to attract tourists who were fascinated by Malta's "wondrous history and Romantic associations" (Knepper 2009: 216). In 1924, 6 cruising steamers carried 1530 passengers to Malta's shores, and while this number continued to increase (with 6 ships bringing 1530 passengers to Malta in 1924 and 26 ships bringing 14,714 passengers in 1932 (Knepper 2009: 216) before the late 1950s tourism to the Maltese islands was yet an emergent activity that remained largely confined to British Service families.

[5] A pattern Malta has in common with other Mediterranean resort areas, characterized by development from a very low base in the 1950s followed by a period characterised by an increase in tourist arrivals from the mid 1960s with the introduction of package holidays and jet aircraft and then a period of rapid infrastructure development between the mid-1960s and early 1980s (Lockheart 1997).

[6] As Oglethorpe (1984) notes, Malta's experience with tourism are comparable to models of tourism growth such as the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model proposed by Butler (1980). According to Butler's model, peripheral tourist industries, like Malta, move through stages of tourism development, starting with periods of 'discovery', 'local control' and 'institutionalism" (Oglethorpe 1984).

In the late 1950s, tourist arrivals to the Maltese islands numbered 19,700 (Lockhart and Ashton 1991). It was during this period that the government of Malta introduced its first "*Development Plan*" (1959-64) which described tourism as "an indispensable part of the general plan for the diversification of the economy" (Office of the Prime Minister 1959, as cited by Oglethorpe 1984). The *Development Plan* stated that the "climactic, scenic and historical assets of Malta must be exploited by mounting a concentrated and swift drive to build up the tourist industry" (Spiteri 1968: 16). Following the introduction of the *Development Plan*, based on the contribution of 29 million Maltese Pounds by the British government (Briguglio 1988), the Maltese government began a program of investments that focussed on promotion and advertising and the improvement of beach access (Lockhart and Ashton 1991). Most significantly new hotel infrastructure projects became eligible for financial assistance from Britain under the Aids to Industry Act (*Development Plan* 1959-1964), which sought to ease Malta's transition from a fortress colony to a sovereign micro-state (Pomfret1986: 68). Following the introduction of the *Aids to Industry Act*, a total of eleven new hotels were opened in Malta and Gozo between the years of 1959 and 1964, nearly doubling the existing hotel bed capacity of the islands (Lockhart 1997).

The postwar history of Malta, like many other small islands, "has been marked by two favourable development factors: the march of decolonization and the spread of international tourism" (McElroy 2003: 231). Following the grant of Independence from Britain in 1964, the right centre Nationalist administration attempted to modernise its development policies and placed a renewed emphasis on the expansion of Malta's tourism sector as it aimed to compensate for the extensive job losses associated with the closure of British military bases with the creation of new tourism related employment opportunities (Scott and Selwyn 2010: Lockhart 1997). The

Second Development Plan (1964-9), exhibited a genuine commitment to the development and expansion of tourism to the islands, and prioritized the need for increased and improved hotel accommodations (Oglethorpe 1984). Tourist arrivals numbered 38,400 in 1964 (Lockhart 1997).

Like the rapid touristic development and growth that occurred in other Mediterranean resort areas, tourist arrivals to Malta began to increase from the mid-1960s (Lockhart and Ashton 1991). This increase in arrivals occurred for several reasons including the establishment of a £50 (sterling) limit on expenditure by British citizens outside of the sterling zone by the British Government, the launch of a Maltese government program aimed at encouraging the construction of larger and improved hotel accommodations, a sustained advertising campaign encouraging travel to the islands, the introduction of the "package holiday", the invention of the jet air craft, and the significant participation of British tour operators (Oglethorpe 1984; Markwick 1999: 230). Between 1960 and 1969 arrivals to Malta increased eight-fold (Lockhart and Ashton 1991: 23). By the ten-year period between 1960 and 1970 annual tourist arrivals increased from 28,000 to 296,000 (Scott and Selwyn 2010: 95). In 1972 British tourists accounted for 50 percent of all tourist arrivals to the Maltese islands, despite the severity of the recession circumstances distressing the British economy (Bull and Weed 1999). The "tourist boom" of this period, based mainly on the UK source market (Marwick 1999), both established tourism as Malta's fastest growing industry and resulted in a loss of indigenous control of the island's tourism sector, with a significant share of the Maltese economy being relinquished to an overseas interest (Lockhart 1997; Oglethorpe 1984).

Although thriving 'boom' conditions continued throughout the 1960s, the early 1970s saw a small decline in annual tourist arrivals to the Maltese islands due to a decrease in arrivals from Britain. The lower numbers of visitors from the U.K was due to both the strained relations

between the Maltese and British governments (Lockhart and Ashton 1991) and the sharp rise in fuel prices that followed the 1967 Arab-Israeli "Six Day War" (Lockhart 1997). Tourism recovered throughout the 1970s with a massive increase in tourist arrivals, with international arrivals reaching 730,000 by 1980 (Marwick 1999: 230). Like many warm water islands of the pleasure periphery[7], Malta's tourism economy has been historically focused on "Sun, Sea and Sand" tourism. Located geographically within the Mediterranean Regional Coast belt (Efe et al. 2011) and sharing a latitude with Crete and Cyprus (Markwick 2008), the islands of Malta boasts the highest annual sea temperature in Europe. With a Mediterranean climate, characterized by temperate winters and subtropical summers, and with one of the most optimal arrangement of hours of daylight in the Mediterranean and over 3000 hours of sunshine per year, Malta's climate features have been important factors in the luring of Northern Europeans to the Maltese islands (Dodds and Kelman 2008). Accordingly, the "Sun and Sea" attributes were particularly attractive to the "holidaymakers" in this period (Marwick 1999). However, the Maltese islands were recognized as a destination known for low-cost holidays, with "low-cost holidays becoming one

[7] Turner and Ash (1975) refer to as the 'pleasure periphery' as the "sun belt to which urban tourists are attracted" and where inequitable core-periphery relationships exist. This 'pleasure periphery' "has a number of dimensions but is best conceived geographically as the "tourist belt" which surrounds the great industrialised zones of the world. Normally, it lies some two to four hours flying distance from the big urban centres, sometimes to the west and east, but generally toward the equator and the sun" (Pearce 1995: 10 as cited by Dodds 2017: 47). Pointing to the economically marginal or less developed status of many warm water islands, like Malta, Dodds (2017) argues that "these 'warm water' destinations have historically focused on sun, sea and sand tourism for development purposes and many destinations are dependent on this type of mass tourism for a large proportion of their GDP" (Dodds 2017: 48). While Turner and Ash's concept of the 'pleasure periphery' might be a generalized oversimplification (in that while island economies range from least- developed to middle-income countries several islands display GDP and per capita GNP levels indicative of well-developed economies) the islands of the Mediterranean can be considered part of the pleasure periphery (Pons 2016: 166). With peripherality defined relative to the whole of Europe, Malta is a semi-periphery country remaining on the socio-economic and political margins of Europe (Chaperon and Theuma 2015).

of the hallmarks of Maltese tourism" (Lockhart 1997: 146). Coupled with the "lower-grade" hotel options on the islands, the self-catering tourism sector had a poor overall image (Lockhart 1997). As Oglethorpe (1984) notes by 1980, twice the number of Maltese people living on the Maltese islands arrived as tourists to the islands. British tourists in this period made-up 76 percent of the total annual tourist arrivals, while Italian tourists, "the second most important market, amounted to under 5 percent of total tourists" (Oglethorpe 1984: 152).

The 1981 to 1985 period was marked by a rapid downturn in arrivals to Malta (Lockhart and Ashton 1991). The decline in tourist arrivals was in large part a result of the collapse of the British market in the first half of the 1980s, which dropped the proportion of British visitors to the Maltese islands down to below 50 percent (Lockhart 1997: 147). However, the intensification of Malta's public image as one which favoured political and cultural contacts with Libya over Northern and Western Europe (Lockhart 1997), and the intense competition created by the increase in popularity of holidays in other Mediterranean countries, particularly Spain, played a significant role in the downturn (Lockhart 1997, Lockhart and Ashton 1991).

Tourist arrivals to the islands flourished again after 1985, following the successful efforts of the National Tourism Organization, which sought to increase Malta's share of Mediterranean tourism by promoting the Maltese islands as a tourism destination to a larger share of European countries, while simultaneously trying to reverse the decline of the British market (Lockhart and Ashton 1991: 25). Similarly, the infrastructural improvements made by the Nationalist administration which included the construction of a reverse-osmosis water purification plant, major road construction expected to ease congestion in Malta's urban hubs and the building of a new international airport terminal had a positive effect on tourist arrivals during this period (Lockhart 1997: 147).

By 1992 the annual number of tourist arrivals numbered one million, more than three times the native population of the islands (Scott and Selwyn 2010: 95). Tourism figures have increased steadily since the 1990s. By 2012 annual tourist arrivals had reached 1.4 million (Baldacchino 2016: 57). In 2016 Malta welcomed 1,988,447 tourists a year, and by the end of 2018, the Maltese islands were host to 2.6 million international tourists. While Malta annually hosts visitors from all over the world, Malta still depends heavily on the UK market for tourist arrivals, with almost 30 percent, or 649,624 inbound tourists to the islands having hailed from the United Kingdom in 2019. According to Cassar and Avellino (2020) the "statistics …reveal the sustained presence of UK visitors to Malta. The British seem to continue to want to go to Malta, and the Maltese continue to do their best to welcome them. And the trend has not subsided" (243).

Relevant Theoretical Frameworks

As a discipline, sociology offers various theoretical tools for understanding the ethnosexual relationships of tourist women to Malta. Previous scholarship on the phenomenon, as it occurs in other areas of the global South, have utilized feminist, postcolonial and critical race theoretical frameworks to understand the sexual behaviour of women on tour, with a particularly significant body of literature utilizing a postcolonial theoretical approach that considers matters of colonialism, race and ethnicity, inequality, and global structures and their role and impact on female sex or romance tourism. Despite this, the ethnosexual tourism of the tourist women to the Maltese islands, a postcolony, has received no academic attention to date. Using postcolonial theories to examine the interconnected nature of history, discourse, and the politics of representation, their impact on contemporary travel and touristic practices, and ethnosexual encounters, this dissertation investigates the representations, imaginaries, and seductions of place

and space. This critical scholarly undertaking will enhance understandings of the nuances and complexities involved in the ethnosexual tourism of tourist women to the Maltese islands.

Dissertation Organization

This introductory chapter provides the purpose and goals of this study and begins to introduce the setting for this research project on the Maltese islands. Second, it engages with the broader literature about women's ethnosexual travel and postcolonialism to establish a theoretical framework. In Chapter One, Women's Sexual Travel: "Sex tourism" or Sex and Tourism, a brief introduction into the history of women's travel and travel writings is followed by a discussion of the major conceptual frameworks for understanding the sexual and romantic encounters of women on tour. This chapter introduces the overall aim of this dissertation, the assessment of how the seduction of space and touristic and geographic imaginaries contribute to the ethnosexual relationships that develop between Northern European tourist women and Maltese men.

Chapter Two, entitled Postcolonial Theory and Tourism: Orientalism, Exoticism and Malta's Colonial Encounter, concentrates on the theoretical orientation of this project and provides the theoretical foundations for this dissertation by exploring postcolonialism and its relevance for both tourism studies and the study of ethnosexual tourism. In sketching a brief history of Malta's encounter with British colonialism and the discourse that surrounded this encounter, this chapter aims to both assert Malta's place in postcolonial studies and to begin the investigation into the colonial era representations that characterized the Maltese islands and answer the first research question posed in this introductory chapter; namely, how were the Maltese islands represented during colonial times?

Chapter Three, Methods and Methodology, concentrates on the mixed-methods research design and data collection methods used to examine both the interpretations and representations of the Maltese islands and people and how these imagined geographies shape the ethnosexual experiences, understandings, and consequent narratives of tourist women to the Maltese islands.

Chapter Four, entitled Creating Tourism and Shaping Expectations, argues that tourism representations have both historically and contemporarily been important sources for the creation of tourism imaginaries and destination images, and ultimately in influencing destination choices. It also focuses on contemporary representations of the Maltese islands and the Maltese people found in contemporary Western travel writings, including a sample of brochures, travel guidebooks, and digital travel blogs, and seeks to answer the second research question, How are the Maltese islands represented today? By comparing a selection of contemporary promotion and marketing materials of the Maltese islands to colonial era travel writings, this chapter attempts to connect contemporary travel writings about the Maltese islands to a much broader historically situated Orientalist and exoticized discourse about the islands and its inhabitants. This chapter demonstrates how contemporary images and representations of the Maltese islands remain markedly similar to the discursive representations that circulated during the British occupation of Malta and Gozo.

Chapter Five, Sun, Sand, and…Legendary History: Malta's Tourist Imaginary, examines how the Maltese islands and Maltese people are touristically imagined. Using both content analysis and ethnographic methods, this chapter seeks to understand both the imaginaries and the 'destination image' of the Maltese islands and what drew tourists to visit the islands. Ultimately, it seeks to answer the third research question that guided this project, specifically, how are the Maltese islands touristically imagined?

Chapter Six, titled Tourist Tales: Wanderlust and Wanderlove, answers the remaining two research questions: How are the Maltese islands experienced by tourists? and, how have the above-mentioned representations contributed to the ethnosexual relationships that develop between tourist women and Maltese men? By exploring the ethnosexual encounters of tourist woman to the Maltese islands, this chapter explores how these relationships are connected to colonial and contemporary representations of both the Maltese islands and people, and examines the dominant representations of Maltese men as "exotic", "traditional" and un-modern "others" who personify the "exotic" and "unchanged" nature of the Maltese islands.

Chapter Seven, the concluding chapter of this dissertation, entitled The Postcolonial Encounter: Project Contributions, both summarizes the material presented in this study and discusses the contributions of this research project, specifically the use of a postcolonial framework and a broader investigation into representations, imaginaries and the seductions of place and space for understanding some of the nuances and complexities involved in the ethnosexual tourism of tourist women to the Maltese islands. Finally, it presents ideas for future research, arising out of the limitations of this study.

Chapter One

Women's Sexual Travel: "Sex Tourism" and "Sex and Tourism"

"[W]e go to the exotic other to lose everything, including ourselves – everything that is but the privilege which enabled us to go in the first place."

(Dollimore, 1991: 342)

After a brief introduction to the history of women's travel and travel writings, this chapter will examine the various scholarly positions on women's ethnosexual tourism. While this dissertation is not concerned with "sex" (or even "romance" tourism), but rather with the role of representations and imaginaries about the Maltese islands in the sexual and affective encounters of tourist women and men local to the Maltese islands, this chapter provides a foundation for the dissertation through discussion of the major conceptual frameworks for understanding the sexual and romantic encounters of women on tour. Specifically, by introducing the concept of "ethnosexual adventurers" (Nagel 2003) and the complex power dynamics analyzed by postcolonial and feminist scholars, this chapter discusses key perspectives regarding the ethnosexual relationships and encounters that occur between tourist women and "local" men. Following a rather new turn in tourism studies, scholarship on the "geographies of desire" (Jarrin and Pitts 2020), this chapter introduces the overall aim of this dissertation: an assessment of how the seduction of space, along with touristic and geographic images and imaginaries, contribute to the ethnosexual relationships that develop between Northern European tourist women and Maltese men.

Women's Travel

Historical accounts of travel, tourism, exploration, and adventure typically center on the experiences of men, with travel being treated as a primarily masculine venture. Despite the

androcentrism evident in the study of the history of travel and tourism, and while before the mid-twentieth century, leisure travel was the exclusive privilege of men and considered wildly inappropriate for women as "historically, women have had to face gender-related obstacles in their journey to pursue leisure experiences" (Seow and Brown 2018: 1188). Despite this, many women defied the societal conventions of their time and traveled. While women have traveled both extensively and independently throughout history, female pilgrims to Jerusalem and the Holy Land are the earlies known female travellers (Seow and Brown 2018; Cohen 1979). While the existing literature is predominantly based on Western women's experiences, and little is known about early female travellers from other parts of the world[8], the Victorian period in England records the first known instances of numerous middle-class women travelling out into the wider world, and the emergence of the so-called "Victorian Lady Travellers"[9] (Stanford 2017). Women in the United States of America quickly followed suit, traveling not merely for economic and social obligations, but for "the privileged experience of tourism" (Steadman 2007: 24). French women, while traveling less than both their American and British counterparts, were still an important part of the developing nineteenth-century tourism industry, traveling predominantly to health resorts and on pilgrimage (Monicat 1994). While the travel and tourism of the early eighteenth and ninetieth-century was primarily accessible to wealthy, white, Western men and, by extension, their wives and daughters, with "only a minority of women … able to afford the privilege, funds and the social status to travel" (Seow and Brown 2018: 1188),

[8] Ezer's unpublished dissertation *Three Turkish women travelers (1913–1930): From the represented to the representing* offers a rare exploration of the travel writings of three Turkish women who travelled in Europe and America and documented their travels for an English-speaking audience

[9] These women were mostly the middleclass wives or daughters of missionaries, soldiers, and colonial officials (Birkett 1989).

Western women did increasingly gained access to tourism as technological innovation and invention in travel, including the advancement of steamships and railroads, became available in the early 1820s (Steadman 2007). By the mid-1860s, chaperoned, prepackaged tours such as those provided by Thomas Cook thrived and increasingly catered to women clients who would otherwise have been forced to travel "without escort or protection" (Steadman 2007: 24). By the 1880s, millions of British and American women promptly, and without hesitation, took their opportunity to travel abroad (Robinson-Tomsett 2016). By 1889, travel had increased tremendously in popularity amongst women, so much so that the first guidebooks (of sorts), with a female audience in mind, was published[10].

Until recently, a largely neglected area of research, women's travel writings including dairies, memoirs, journals, letters, poems, ships' logs and other narratives of adventure and worldwide exploration, provide an abundance of information with which to understand the historical experiences of female travelers[11]. While the historical travel writings of the female travelers of history do not disclose intimate details of the love, romance, or sex that female travellers indulged in during their travels[12], it should come as no surprise that sometimes women who

[10] 'Hints for Lady Travellers at Home and Abroad,' (1889) provided women "practical advice" including the carrying one's own bath and bath towels, a dressing bag, own's own tea and coffee, a lamp, umbrella, a medicine chest, a flask, a compass, and a good toilet-water.

[11] With the development and expansion of feminist studies, women's travel writing has become a major field of research, with books and articles on women's travel and travel writing proliferating since the early 2000's (Ezer 2010: Thompson 2017).

[12] Possibly due to the narrative stance of "the decorum of indecorum" that early female travelers relied on to demonstrate that they remained within the bonds of "appropriate feminine behaviour" and the fact that disclosing such personal information would have been unseemly for a women of the time. (Siegel 2004: 3)

traveled became involved in sexual and romantic relationships while abroad (Siegel 2004). Lady Mary Wortley Montague (1689-1762), for example, as Bauer (2014) indicates, is remembered for the letters she penned during her travels to the Ottoman Empire in the years 1716-18 where she wrote extensively of her various romances while abroad. Similarly, Bauer (2014) notes that Margaret Fountaine (1862-1940), an accomplished natural history illustrator and world traveller, describes in detail her collecting of butterflies and foreign lovers in *Love among the Butterflies: The Travels and Adventures of a Victorian Lady*. Lady Jane Digby (1807 -1881), a world traveller, is remembered for her succession of lovers and husbands (Lovell 1995), including King Ludwig of Bavaria, his son King Otto of Greece, and the Bedouin S Sheik Medjuel el Mezrab, a man young enough to be her son (Bauer 2013, Lovell 1995).

The ethnosexual relationships of white European women and the 'other' men of different cultures and countries inspired a wide range of art forms created to tell the life stories of early women who left their homes and engaged in romantic and sexual liaisons with the men they met on their travels (Bauer 2014: 22). For example, by the early seventeenth-century, the Moor had become in Spain the symbol of romance and heroism as depicted in the many versions of plays featuring *Moros y Christianos* (Moors and Christians). These *Moros y Cristianos* performances "recapitulated the battles of the reconquista in pageantry and dance with a strong emphasis on costume, mock violence, and sexuality" (Stevens 2007: 18) and often featured the tales of the Spanish aristocrat women who fell for Moorish heroes and lovers. As Bauer notes (2014 22), in June 1721, Louis François de la Drevetière Delisle's *Arlequin Sauvage* (Savage Harlequin) capitalized on the timely and popular theme of the love between "exotic" men and white European women by depicting the life of a fictional French maid who succumbs to the temptations of "Indian love" and follows her lover, a man described as originating from "some

barbarous country", back to his dessert home (Ogden, McDermott, and Sarlós 1990: 224). Similarly, the 1764 play La Jeune Indienne by Chamfort, appropriates the trope of the "noble savage" and presents the "civilized savage" as the perfect romantic and sexual partner for a lady of the times (Castillo 2006).

Ethnosexual Tourism

Sex has been identified as one of the oldest travel motivations (Pritchard 2004). In fact, according to Spencer and Bean (2017) "the pursuit of sex has consistently been one of the key reasons why people travel around the world" (13). Today, much like in the past, the search for romantic or sexual, or ethnosexual, encounters have become a significant component of ethnic tourism in many parts of the world and has created a great number of internationally acclaimed ethnosexual tourism destinations (Jinba 2013).

Joane Nagel, in her 2000 article, "States of Arousal/ Fantasy Islands: Race, Sex, and Romance in the Global Economy of Desire" coins the term 'ethnosexual' as "the intersection and interaction between ethnicity and sexuality" (159) and the ways:

> in which each defines and depends on the other for its meaning and power. The territories that lie at the intersections of two or more ethnic, racial, or national boundaries are "ethnosexual frontiers" - erotic locations and exotic destinations that are surveilled and supervised, patrolled and policed, regulated and restricted, but are constantly penetrated by individuals forging sexual links with ethnic 'others' across ethnic boundaries (159).

For Nagel, these territories, or ethnosexual frontiers, are essentially locales where peoples from different ethnic backgrounds meet and interact, like in international tourism. Ethnosexual frontiers then "are constituted not only by ethnic identity variations, but also by sexual identity variations, as well as the interactions between ethnic and sexual identities" (Hedges 2016: 6). Nagel defines ethnosexuality as "emerging from the intersections between race and sexuality and

encompassing the ways in which [race and sexuality] define and depend on the other for [their] meaning and power" (Nagel 2003: 10).

Nagel (2003: 14-19), informed by a social constructionist approach, identifies five 'types' of people as participants within ethnosexual frontiers; locals, ethnosexual settlers, ethnosexual sojourners, ethnosexual adventurers, and invaders. According to Nagel, locals are those who belong to the dominant ethnic group within the territory or the ethnosexual frontier (Nagel 2003: 14). Ethnosexual settlers, according to Nagel, are those who establish long-term relationships and connections, establish families, and/or become incorporated into the fabric of the other community. Ignoring the possibility that interracial and interethnic couples and families may reside in a community that is "home" to neither partner, Nagel argues that "ethnosexual settlers 'go native' and 'adopt locals' customs, [attempting] to pass as "locals"' (Nagel 2003: 15, as cited by Baudinette 2016: 471). Unlike the settlers, ethnosexual sojourners typically have no intention of remaining permanently in the space but rather enter romantic or sexual relationships over a brief stay before invariably returning to their home communities (Baudinette 2016: 471). Despite the lack of desire to remain in the ethnosexual frontier, "sojourners typically seek to enter into meaningful sexual and romantic relationships" (Baudinette 2016: 471). For Nagel, beyond the relationships that are developed by ethnosexual settlers and sojourners, some of this sexual contact that occurs in ethnosexual frontiers is done by ethnosexual invaders "who launch sexual assaults across ethnic boundaries, inside alien ethnic territory, seducing, raping, and sexually enslaving ethnic 'others' as a means of sexual domination and colonization" (2003: 160). Most closely fitting descriptions and definitions of sex or romance tourists, Nagel identifies ethnosexual adventurers as those who "undertake expeditions across ethnic divides for recreational, casual, or "exotic" sexual encounters that are especially ephemeral" but who

ultimately return to their "sexual home bases after each excursion" (Nagel 2003: 160). Employing Nagel's (2003) theorizing, Meszaros (2020) concludes that "many white women who engage in sexual tourism in the Caribbean and Africa act as "ethno-sexual adventurers" who engage in liminal sex acts while abroad" (2020: 268).

As long as "adventurers" have been traveling they have been participating in ethnosexual encounters (McKercher and Bauer 2003). While women have both traveled alone and entered ethnosexual relationships abroad for centuries, the advent of "female sex tourism" is credited to, or blamed on, the convergences of mass global tourism, sexual liberation, and the feminist activity of the late 1970s (Jacobs 2012). Although the scholarly inquiry into male sex tourism began in earnest in the late 1970s[13], studies of the phenomenon of women traveling to purchase, or otherwise attain love, romance, or sex did not begin until the early 1990s. Gender has been extensively discussed in the tourism literature since the mid-1990s, and issues of sexuality and gender in tourism studies have gained wide readership (Seow & Brown 2018)[14].

[13] While sociological inquiry did begin in the early 1970's within tourism studies, this scholarly inquiry was hindered by the reticence of scholars to engage in any detailed analysis of sex tourism (Carr 2016). While Fanon warned against the poor countries of the world becoming the "brothels of Europe" (Fanon 1966: 1251), as early as 1966, scholarly inquiry into sex tourism did not begin in earnest until the late 1970's. In fact, Eric Cohen in 1982 observed that despite the "wealth of illustrations of tourism-related prostitution" that it remained "remarkable, though, that a relationship so often casually observed, which provoked so much indignation and exhortation, has generated little interest in serious, unbiased and systematic sociological or anthropological research (404)"

[14] As Seow & Brown (2018) note, recent scholarship within tourism studies has seen the emergence of studies examining the experiences of women in the tourism industry "as producers and gendered hosts", (see Gibson 200, Swain 1995, Sinclair 2005) with particular attention on women in the tourism and hospitality industry "as gendered employees" (see Duffy, Lauren N., et al. 2015, Gentry 2007, Cave and Kilic 2010) and as sex workers in sex tourism (see Rivers-Moore 2012, Bauer 2014, O'Connell Davidson and Taylor 1999, Fernandez 1999).

Research on the ethnosexual encounters and sexual sojourns of tourist women began in the early 1990s. This early research positioned women's sexual tourism within the context of male sex tourism, as either "like" or "unlike" male sex tourism. With the understanding that the sex tourism of men occurs along a spectrum "with straightforward commercial transactions on one end and more ambiguous[15], open-ended relationships on the other, some of which may lead, in time, to legitimate relationships" (Gezinski, et al. 2016: 786) [16], the research on the sexual tourism of women similarly indicated an ambiguous spectrum whereby tourist women "entangle desire for love, romance, sex and companionship" (Weichselbaumer 2012: 1221). Despite this ambiguity, some scholars, in analysing the economic, social, and racial inequalities that often underpin the sexual relationships of tourist women, considered the sexual behaviour of female tourists who engage in sexual relationships with local men as behaviour that should be included within the category of 'sex tourism' (Kempadoo 1999, 2001, 2004, Taylor 2001, Taylor 2006). For these scholars, there exists a "'double-standard' applied to male and female tourists' sexual behaviour" (Taylor 2006: 42) that does not account for the unequal distribution of power between the tourist women and local men , or the ways that "sex work as an activity…is shaped [by] and given meaning by broader gendered, racialized, and economic patterns and relations"

[15] The ambiguity of tourist-local relationships has been highlighted in several works. For example, in Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements, Williams (2013) uses the term 'ambiguous entanglements' to move beyond definitions of sex tourism and sex work and describe the range of sexual and romantic encounters that happen between tourist men and women local to Bahia, Brazil. Similarly, 'Coping with ambiguous relationships: sex, tourism, and transformation in Cuba' by Simoni (2014) examines the relationships between foreign tourists and Cuban locals that he describes as "ridden with ambiguities with regard to their instrumental and commoditized dimensions" (166).

[16] Kempadoo (2009: 4) similarly notes the range of practices that are contained within the sex/romance tourism umbrella and notes "a range of practices from brief sex on the sand" encounters, to steady, longer-term partnerships".

(Nixon 2015; Kempadoo 2001: 40). Others, however, have argued that the sexual behaviour of vacationing women is a considerably different phenomenon from the male version of the same activity. These scholars, in underscoring the differences between the behaviour of men and women who engage in sexual relationships while abroad, emphasize the romantic, emotional, and intimate components of the relationships between foreign tourists and local men, and have defined their practice as 'romance tourism', a term coined by Pruitt and LaFont (1995), rather than sex tourism (see Pruitt and LaFont 1995, Meisch 1995, Jeffreys 2003, Van Wijk 2006, and Dahles and Bras 1999). From this perspective, the encounters that occur between North American women and "local men" are defined by an "emotional involvement not usually present in traditional sex tourism" and are constituted through discourses centring on romance, courtship, love, and relationships and not on the exchange of sex for money or gifts (Pruitt and LaFont 1995: 423)

Some contemporary scholars continue to rely on the same sex versus romance tourism dichotomy (see James and Lean 2019; Stončikaitė 2020; Omondi and Ryan 2020; Zhang and Xu 2019; Kingston and Redman 2020; Li and Qiao 2020) and "research into female sex tourism is still a contested area" (Sanders-McDonagh 2016: 28). However, the past twenty years have seen the literature on sex and tourism expand beyond the traditional conceptualisations that attempted to answer the question of whether the sexual and romantic travel of women was the same as, or different than that of men[17].

[17] Despite the fact that the scholarship on sex tourism has, to a great extent, focused on heterosexual male and female tourists, a growing body of literature addresses the sex tourism of members of the LGBTQ community (see Murray 2007 Pritchard, Morgan, and Sedgley 2000; 2002; Mendoza 2013; Padilla 2003; 2007, Mitchell 2010; 2011, Mao et al. 2018)

Moving away from the tendency to position women's sexual tourism within the context of male sex tourism, the use of feminist, postcolonial, postcolonial feminist, and critical race theoretical[18] frameworks have been employed to understand the sexual behaviour of women on tour. This has resulted in a particularly significant body of literature centering on issues of gender, sex, and sexuality, as they relate to sex tourism in the Caribbean islands and other "beach destinations" and "touristic hot spots" including Central and South America and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa (see Kempadoo 1999, 2001, 2004, Phillips 2008, Williams 2013; Frohlick 2007; Rivers-Moore 2016; Romero-Daza; Kibicho 2016). As such, the interlocking issues of race, economic class, and gender have been extensively considered by the existing scholarship. Accordingly, the often stark racial and economic inequalities that often define the relationships of white, Western, economically advantaged women and "poor, uneducated, black and brown men" (Weichselbaumer 2012: 1220) have been significantly highlighted[19]. This theorizing has resulted in profound contributions to the study of women's ethnosexual tourism and to our understanding of racialized and sexualized 'other' masculinities, the role that various forms of racism and 'othering' play in sex tourism, and to the roles that racism and marginalization play in propelling and sustaining local involvement in the tourist-oriented sex trade.

[18] "Whiteness studies" have also been used to understand female sex tourism. For example, in *Whiteness, women and sex tourism,* Chambers (2018: 5) argues that "whiteness underpins female sex tourism and perpetuates racial inequalities" and that "the structural privilege associated with whiteness enables female sex tourists to disrupt traditional gendered constructions during the liminal postcolonial tourism encounter".

[19] As Richards and Reid (2015) note the relationships between tourists and local men are most often interracial, with most female tourists who engage in ethnosexual relationships being classified as white women while the local men enter into relationships with being classified as men of colour (Richards and Reid 2015).

Postcolonialism, as a theoretical framework which examines, in part, how contemporary economic and social relations echo colonial patterns of trade and exchange (Jones and Weinhardt 2015) has also been used to understand the sexual and romantic tourism of tourist women to the Caribbean, parts of South America and Africa. This has resulted in postcolonial critiques that understand (female) sex tourism as "…a new kind of colonial exploitation" (Klein 2015: 169). According to Momsen, (1994, as cited by Jacobs 2012) "…when this takes place in a developing country, tourism has all the elements of domination, exploitation and manipulation characteristic of colonialism" (1994: 129). With researchers having arrived at a "general consensus that tourism plays a large part in the othering and neo-colonizing of people" (Phillips 2008: 202), sex tourism in the Caribbean (and perhaps even the whole of the Caribbean tourism industry) and in other post colonies can be understood as a form of neocolonialism whereby the enduring legacies of European and American colonialisms underpin sex tourism (Nixon 2015). By engaging with the postcolonial concept of the "contact zone", the "colonial frontier" (Pratt 2009 in Klein 2015) or "ethnosexual contact zones" (Farrer 2011) to refer to "the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 2007: 207), the postcolonial critique of sex tourism (and tourism) in the postcolony draws attention to the "highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (Pratt 2007: 4). By highlighting how the histories and legacies of colonialism and slavery support and reinforce these asymmetrical relationships, postcolonial theorists have examined both the economic, pollical and social inequality that exists between the tourist women and their "local" lovers, as well as the more "pluralistic perspective that includes the sociocultural aspects of incentives" (Phillips 2008: 206-207 as cited in Klein 2015: 318),

such as the proximity to whiteness and access to the "power that whiteness brings" (Phillips 2008: 207).

The postcolonial examination of the sex tourism of Western women and "local" men highlights the link between sex tourism and various forms of exoticism and racism[20]. For Richards and Reid (2015), the prime motivation for ethnosexual relations while on tour is "sexual fantasy", or "specifically sexual fantasy derived from racist mythology or stereotyping of the 'exotic other" (420). In this sense, female tourists are seen as being attracted to "other" men by racist sexual stereotypes that include fantasies where the exotic "other" is "more passionate, more emotional, more natural, and sexually tempting" (Qian & Wei 2012: 109). With studies of sex and tourism indicating that for populations of the Global North, both the men and women of the postcolonial world and global South are perceived as "hot, wild, and oversexed" (O'Connell and Taylor: 62). From this perspective, and steaming from the notion of "the desire for difference" in tourism, women enter into relationships with racialized men to feel as though they can "tame" a man believed to be raw, visceral, highly sexed "other" with a primitive masculinity (Taylor 2000: 46). These fantasies often arise out of associations between ethnicity and race which are rooted in colonial racist discourses (Brennan 2004) whereby racism supports and reinforces white Westerners' desires for "exotic" sexual experiences. This desire more appropriately referred to as "post-colonial fantasy" is fueled by "First World desires to consume the dark skinned 'native'

[20] In fact, it is often argued that various forms of racism are pivotal to sex tourism and romance tourism. While the relationship between racism and sex tourism is too complex to analyse in this research, the works of both Taylor (2010) and Williams (2013) offer detailed considerations of sexualized racism. The works of Kempadoo (2000) and Kempadoo and Doezema (2018) also explore the racialized dimensions of sexuality under slavery. See also, Schaper et al. (2020) who use the term "exotic" to point to the intersection between processes of sexualization and exoticization.

bodies of the developing world…" (Brennan 2004: 34). The contemporary Western associations between ethnicity, culture, race, and sexuality have evolved from colonial notions of race, gender, and sexuality in which white Europeans were set in opposition to the darker "natives" they colonized. The supposed distinction between the sexuality of the white colonizer and the colonized "other" rested on racist dichotomy that " distinguished between desire and reason, native instinct and white self-discipline, native lust and white civility, native sensuality and white morality, subversive unproductive sexuality and productive patriotic sex" (Stoler 1995: 180 as cited by Varga 2013: 53).

These associations made between race, ethnicity and sexuality inadvertently justify the tourist woman's desire to experience the exotic 'other'. From this lens, the postcolonial world is a space that is constructed as "different", as a "sexcape"[21] (Brennan 2004) where "sexual mores are different, people are naturally promiscuous, and sex is more natural" (Taylor 2006: 760)[22].

[21] According to the characteristics outlined by Brennan and summarized by Ekoluoma (2017), sexcapes can be characterized by (i) the international travel from the developed to the developing world, (ii) the participation in a paid sexual relationship, and (iii) the "erotic and economic" (2004: 16) inequalities between the buyers/tourists and the sellers/ sex workers, which are based predominantly on citizenship, social and economic class, gender and ethnic background.

[22] Conscious of the significance of the economic impact of travel and tourism to local economies, countries around the world expend considerable amounts of money on tourism advertising to attract tourists (Sirakaya and Sonmez 2000). Ethnicity, culture and "otherness" have increasingly been used to promote tourism and attract tourists (Jamison 1999). Accordingly, "tourist destinations" and the people within them are frequently rendered "other" by the tourism industry. For works that develop the concepts of gendered tourism landscapes and the interrelationship of exoticism and tourism promotion see Filho (2005), Pruth (2008), Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento (2010), Munshi (2006).

Building on the work of postcolonial (and postcolonial feminists) scholars, and expanding on notions of the "contact zone" an emergent body of literature[23], coming out of the disciplines of tourism studies and cultural geography, explores "global geographies of desire" that inform the contact, connections, and relationships that develop between 'locals' and tourists[24]. Drawing on

[23] A relatively new, yet underdeveloped field of inquiry posits that the ethnosexual relationships that tourist women form while abroad may be tied to a quest for touristic intimacy. Building on emerging interdisciplinary research on humanitarianism, embodied encounters and emotion in tourism (Gibson 2001; Crouch 2000, 2002; Coleman and Crang 2002; Robson and Picard 2006), and arguing against the narrow definitions ascribed to relationships that cross boundaries of race, ethnicity, and class and that involve the blending of money and sex, the notion of "touristic intimacy" which points to intimacy as a motivator for travel. Harrison (2003: 51) uses the concept of "touristic intimacy" to describe the way travel enthusiasts seek intimacy "as a particular kind of sociability that is often eroticized and intensified through worldliness and a displacement from home rather than at home, which historically in the West has been the locale for intimacy". While Harrison's research centres the connections that tourists make with other tourists or travelers, Harrison also considers tourists' expectations for meeting and connecting with people local to their tourism destination and "their desire to engage, however briefly and incidentally, with residents of the visited destination" (Simoni 2014: 3). Drawing her inspiration from Harrison (2003), Frohlick (2007) uses the concept of touristic intimacy to argue that "touristic intimacy is …part of a larger quest for connection that tourists seek in crossing international borders and is also the moral discourse that serves to justify international travel as a means through which cross-cultural understandings are gained" (152, as cited by Simoni 2014: 3). Inspired by both Harrison and the early work of Ann Stoler (1989),], Frohlick uses the concept of touristic intimacy to extend analyses of women's sexual tourism "into a wide domain of physical and emotional closeness and erotic desire for alterity…., as well as to highlight the corporeal, quotidian aspects of people's lives that are enmeshed through ethnosexual touristic relations" (153). Touristic intimacy is, according to Frohlick (2007), a "kind of sociability" in which tourists "connect with and essentially become part of the body/landscape of the Other" through their encounters with local peoples (2007:152). For Frohlick, eroticism extends "beyond sex acts or desires for sex acts" and are "enmeshed in fantasy, everyday practices, and social relations" (152). From this perspective, the possibility for participation in intimate experiences is at the heart of the ethnosexual tourism of women. Touristic intimacy, or the embodied experiences that "arouse a sense of closeness and a story about a shared experience" (Conran 2011: 1459), therefore refers to "people's drive to reach out and find intimacy across the us–them divide" (Simoni 2015: 35).

[24] While the majority of scholarship on sex tourism is centered on understanding the relationships that develop between Western tourists and non-Western locals, there is a small body of literature that examines the sexual and romantic relationships that develop between non-Western tourists and locals (see Yamaga 2007a; 2007b)

the perceived seductiveness of certain touristic places, "geographies of desire", is a term used by Jarrin and Pitts (2020) to refer to the highly hierarchical exoticizing that is "co-produced by historically constructed, shared imaginaries" that underpin transnational sexual and romantic connections (2002: 1500). Understanding many tourist/local sexual encounters as a '"seduction of place", place seductions understands spaces not as fixed or static geographic locations, "but as symbolic, mutable, and culturally constructed mixtures of representation and form.…that mean different things to different people at different times and represent, reinforce, idealize, and naturalize relations of gender and sexuality" (Pritchard 2004: 318). These seductive spaces "must be situated subjectivities and emplaced experiences, inviting encounters with touristed landscapes, scenes where people seek particular aspects of attraction, desire, and possibilities for liminal experience"[25] (Cartier and Lew 2005: 19). In this sense, these spaces present to visitors the lure of potential, as spaces become inscribed with significance, meaning, and promise (Crouch 2005). Treating seduction as "a form of knowledge, as awareness or promise of the potential for experience" which culminates in a desire (Cartier and Lew 2005: 5), the seduction of place "represents a range of experiences and goals acted out by diverse groups in locales subject to tourism" (225).

Research Contributions

Moving away from the tendency to position women's sexual tourism within the context of male sex tourism, as either "like" or "unlike" male sex tourism, has resulted in significant contributions to the study of tourist sexual behavior in the Global South. It has also advanced our

[25] The concept of "landscapes of longing" and eroticized landscapes, conceptually very similar to "geographies of desire", is used by Jacobs (2012) to analyze the relationships that develop between tourist women to the Sini and Egyptian men.

understanding of women's ethnosexual tourism, and of perceptions about men's and women's vacation sexual activity, especially within the context of "sexcapes" (Brennan 2004).

The aim of this dissertation is to provide a richer and more nuanced interpretation of the ethnosexual encounters of tourist women to the Maltese islands, a tourist destination far from a 'sexcape' (Brennan 2004) that has received almost no scholarly attention when it comes to the ethnosexual relationships that are developed between locals and tourists to the islands. To do so, this research draws on Nagel's (2003) conceptualization of "ethnosexuality", a theory that centres on the "racialized and sexualised discourses" (2003: 5) that emerge in those "erotic locations and exotic destinations … that are constantly penetrated by individuals forging sexual links with ethnic Others across ethnic borders" (2003: 14), and builds upon this existing scholarship, specifically postcolonial analysis of ethnosexual tourism and conceptions of global geographies of desire.

With an understanding that the seductiveness of touristed landscapes is, at least partly, based on its images and imaginaries, this research explores the crossroads of contemporary issues in studies of travel and tourism and the ethnosexual relationships of tourist women. Specifically, this research will aim to access both the ways in which the Maltese islands and its people are represented in tourism promotional material and to explore the ethnosexual relationships that develop between tourist women and Maltese men.

To date, within tourism studies, there has been only a very limited assessment of how tourism representations and imaginings affect and impact ethnosexual relationships. With the notable exception of Jacobs (2016), the role of tourist imaginaries and the relationship between sex, tourism, place, space, time and temporality has been largely overlooked. But as she aptly notes "the search to find – and sleep with – a 'hypersexual', racial other is not that straightforward, nor

is it the only search" (Jacobs 2012: xi). Accordingly, this research posits that the encounters of tourist women to the Maltese islands are situated within and around broader sociocultural contexts, geographies, and histories, images, imaginaries, seductions and desires including the desire to engage with an earlier state or idealized past, and desires grounded in the intertwined senses of spatial distance and temporal displacement.

Conclusion

This chapter provides the foundation for this dissertation. It has offered a discussion of the key perspectives regarding the ethnosexual relationships between tourist women and local men. The relationship between tourism and sex is well recorded, but nonetheless, complexities remain regarding our understanding of how touristic practices are embodied practices embedded in geographic imaginaries, geographies of temporality, and the seductive nature of particular places and spaces, particularly in parts of the world that have not received significant scholarly attention. Extending the discussion of women's ethnosexual tourism this chapter sought to briefly introduce the field of inquiry that will examine the ethnosexual relationships of tourist women and their relationship to colonial and contemporary tourism representations and imaginaries.

Chapter Two

Postcolonial Theory and Tourism: Orientalism, Exoticism and Malta's Colonial Encounter

"So, postcolonialism is not the end of colonisation. It is after a certain kind of colonialism, after a certain moment of high imperialism and colonial occupation, in the wake of it, in the shadow of it, inflected by it, it is what it is because something else has happened before, but it is also something new"

(Stuart Hall as quoted in Olson 1999).

With postcolonial theory increasingly influencing tourism studies, this chapter critically explores postcolonialism and its relevance for studies of tourism by examining the ways that contemporary tourism practices are both embedded in and reinforcing of, postcolonial relationships. Following a discussion on the postcolonial analytical framework and its origins, this chapter offers an overview of the intersections of postcolonialism with studies of travel and tourism, focusing on the concepts of Orientalism and "exoticism". By examining representations of the Maltese islands during colonial times and by focusing on the postcolonial analysis of tourism representations and the colonial roots underpinning notions of difference and exoticism this chapter endeavours to foreground this project's aim of understanding both how the Maltese islands were represented during colonial times and how female tourist's ethnosexual relationships in Malta are historically situated and discursively constructed.

This chapter argues that postcolonialism offers an especially apt and fruitful theoretical paradigm from which to critique the durable presence of (neo)colonial representations and interpretations of the Maltese islands and people found within contemporary tourism imagery and discursive processes. Informed by a critical reading of Said's thesis on colonial discourse analysis, this chapter emphasizes the power relations that exist within contemporary discourses of travel and tourism. It argues, furthermore, that in order to understand the tourism representations and

imaginaries of today, we must also understand the colonial history of the Maltese islands and the ways in which the two are interlinked.

In sketching a brief history of Malta's encounter with British colonialism, this chapter seeks to present the means to understand how postcolonial thought may be employed in order "to identify and disrupt structures and ramifications of colonialism communicated in and through touristic understandings, practices, and representations of responsibility" (Grimwood, Yudina, Muldoon, and Qiu 2015: 24). With the similarities between tourism and "colonial ways of 'knowing' and engaging with the Other" being oft-noted within tourism studies (Muldoon 2018: 185), this chapter posits that certain 'types' of travel and tourism to the Maltese islands can be understood as a form of Orientalist engagement. The chapter argues that the Maltese islands as a destination for ethnosexual tourism of tourist women, or an "ethnosexual contact zone" (Farrer 2011) can be explained, in part, by utilizing the concept of Orientalism. Further, it proposes that the works of Said and Bhabha be taken together to provide a conceptually comprehensive Orientalism that lends itself easily to a postcolonial analysis of tourism imagery and representations.

Situating Postcolonialism

The concept of postcolonialism (or often post-colonialism[26]), which became a major intellectual trend in the 1990s and informed much cultural theorising of the period, is increasingly influencing academic inquiry in tourism studies[27]. Indeed, there has been a proliferation of

[26] The hyphenated "post-colonial" typically indicates an attention to historical periodization, in that the hyphen is used as decisive temporal marker (Allen 1998). For the purposes of this research the run-together "postcolonial" will be used to suggest the questioning of the implied chronological separation between colonization and its repercussions and by-products.

[27] According to Mbembe (2006), one of Said's most significant contributions "was to show, in opposition to the Marxist doxa of the period, that the colonial project was not reducible to a

tourism research that has adopted postcolonial perspectives" (see Aitchison 2001; Akama, Maingi, and Camargo 2011; Amoamo 2007; d'Hautesrre 2011; Caton and Santos 2008; Echtner and Prasad 2003; Hall and Tucker 2004; Pastran 2014; Wearing and Wearing 2006; Winter 2007)

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simple military-economic system, but was underpinned by a discursive infrastructure, a symbolic economy, a whole apparatus of knowledge the violence of which was as much epistemic as it was physical" (125). According to Chibber (as cited by Birch 2013) postcolonial theory has for the most part replaced Marxism as the prevailing perspective employed by scholars engaged in the critical examination of the relationships between the West and non-West, including those inherent in travel and tourism, with the "dependency school …. having lost favour among current scholars of social science and Third World politics" (Kapoor 2002: 647). With the use and application of postcolonial theory on the rise, Marxists scholars accuse postcolonial theories of overlooking "significant aspects of the condition it seeks to theorize" and "failing to identify capitalism as the primary structure responsible for Europe's supremacy" (Chandra 2012: 199). For example, Marxist scholar, Vivek Chibber provides a materialist critique of postcolonial studies that is regarded as "the most comprehensive challenge to this postcolonial turn to date" (2014) and argues that postcolonial theories, especially those of the "subalternist school", actually advance essentializing visions of culture, portraying certain cultures, particularly those of non-Western societies as both fixed and static. According to Chibber (2014: 284), "The core thesis of postcolonial studies is that a deep structural chasm separates East and West, so much so that it undermines any framework claiming universal applicability". For Chibber "the lasting contribution of postcolonial theory . . . will be its revival of cultural essentialism and its acting as an endorsement of orientalism, rather than being an antidote to it" (2014). In his book *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (2014) devoted almost entirely to rigorously critiquing the views of three Subaltern Studies scholars, Guha, Chakrabarty, and Chatterjee, Chibber argues that postcolonial "theories have obscured the global reach and relevance of capitalism, class and the universalist Enlightenment projects of emancipation" and have denied people's "universal aspirations" and "universal interests". From this perspective, "postcolonial theorists, are charged with denying the universal validity of emancipatory norms such as justice, democracy and human rights, which are presumably underpinned by common universal interests shared by all human beings irrespective of culture, race, gender, sexuality, religion, or other differences" (Dhawan 2018: 10). For a detailed examination of the engagements between Marxism and Postcolonial theory see Sinha and Varma (2017). For additional criticisms of postcolonial theory and the defence of Marxism see Ahmed (1992) and Parry (2004).

Originally employed by historians at the end of World War II, the concept of the postcolonial, was initially used solely for historical periodization and was used in a strictly temporal sense with a clear linear and chronological meaning. It was used to refer to the post-independence period, and to distinguish between the periods before and after independence ("post" as in "after") (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2013). However, beginning in the late 1970s the term began being used by literary critics and scholars in the social sciences and humanities to discuss the numerous and enduring cultural effects of colonization. Broadly speaking, while the prefix 'post' remains contentious amongst critics for its temporal and theoretical interpretations (Amoamo 2007), postcolonial theory "formulates its critiques around the social histories, cultural differences, and political discriminations that are practiced and normalized by the legacy of colonial and imperial machineries" (Pastran 2014: 45). According to McClintock (1992: 85), postcolonial theory seeks "to challenge the grand march of western historicism with its entourage of binaries (self-other, metropolis- colony, center-periphery)". Dealing with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies, Hall & Tucker (2004: 2) argue that:

> Postcolonialism represents both a reflexive body of Western thought that seeks to reconsider and interrogate the terms by which the duality of colonizer and colonized, with its accompanying structures of knowledge and power, has been established as well as the state of being 'post' or 'after' the condition of being a colony.

In other words, postcolonial theory, offers both an assessment of, and critique of Western constructions of knowledge and power, while underscoring the significance of the history and "legacies of colonialism and the enduring structures of oppression that perpetuate colonial relationships in contemporary postcolonies" (Pastran 2014: 46). The term postcolonialism is, therefore, used to both describe the conditions ranging from formal decolonization to "a theoretical politics concerned with dismantling the enduring legacies of colonialism" (Smith 2016: 16). Postcolonialism, as a theoretical paradigm developed out of the foundational belief

that European colonialism was, and remains as, "one of the most compelling and pervasive influences on the West's interpretations of and interactions with people from non-Western cultures" (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 666). Postcolonial theory "emerged both as a meeting point and battleground for a variety of disciplines and theories" (Gandhi 1998: 3) and is consequently regarded as "a very diffuse body of ideas" (Chibber 2014). Despite being a complex interdisciplinary body of thought with no consensus, amongst scholars of postcolonialism, regarding the appropriate focus, scope, consequence and significance of postcolonial studies, "postcolonial theory typically involves a political analysis of the cultural history of colonialism, and investigates its contemporary effects in Western and tricontinental cultures, making connections between that past and the politics of the present" (Young 2016: 8). Generally speaking, the object of postcolonial studies then is to both understand, appreciate and challenge the consequences of nineteenth and twentieth-century European colonization and imperialism (Thompson 2011). Therefore, while the concept of postcolonialism is both contested and diverse, this study refers to the postcolonial in two ways; firstly as an historical condition marked by formal decolonization, the dismantlement of colonial control and rule and the physical withdrawal of colonial authority, and the making apparent and challenging both the material and discursive legacies of colonialism. Postcolonial theory, while having developed through several stages that correspond to stages of national or regional consciousness (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2003), emerged as a general field of study with the publication of Edward Said's ground-breaking work 'Orientalism' (1978)[28], which launched an "audacious attack on Western

[28] While Said's Orientalism was exceptionally successful and established a new field of academic inquiry it was certainly not the first piece to mount criticism of Western scholarship or Western "knowledge" of the Orient. For example, as Prakash (1995) notes, the Egyptian scholar Abd-al-

representations of the Orient" [29](Parkash 1995: 199). Said's Orientalism, understood today as a "canonical event" (Gandhi 2019: 65), represents the first phase of postcolonial theory and is regarded as the catalyst text that "effectively founded postcolonial studies as an academic discipline" (Young 2016: 383). According to the celebrated postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak, "the study of colonial discourse, directly released by work such as Said's, has . . . blossomed into a garden where the marginal can speak and be spoken, even spoken for. It is an important part of the discipline now" (Spivak 1993: 56). Acknowledged as one of the greatest critics and cultural theorists (Burney 2012), Said (1978) sought to address the depictions, portrayals and representations of other people, cultures, religions, societies, histories; the relationship between power and knowledge.

Postcolonialism and Tourism Studies

Rahman al-Jabarti's 1798 chronicle of the *French Occupation of Egypt* make clear that Napoleon's invasion of Egypt was as much an epistemological as a military conquest.

[29] Scholars of "de-colonization" and "de-coloniality" have argued that despite the "work" to identify the lasting legacies of Western imperial dominance done by postcolonialism, postcolonial scholars "… have nevertheless privileged Western epistemologies, such as postmodernism and post-structuralism, as central theoretical frameworks" (Chamber and Buzinde 2015: 5) Quoting Argentinian scholar Walter Mignolo (2007), Chamber and Buzinde note that "postcolonial theory has not undergone an epistemological de-linking from Western ways of thinking" (5). For Mignolo (2007), this "delinking" would lead to a "de-colonial epistemic shift and bring to the foreground other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently, other economy, other politics, other ethics" (453). Similarly, Grosfoguel (2007), in expressing concern with the decolonization of knowledge, argues that epistemic perspectives from "racial ethnic subaltern locations have a lot to contribute to a radical decolonial critical theory" (212) and suggests "…that a decolonial epistemic perspective requires a broader canon of thought than simply the Western… that a truly universal decolonial perspective cannot be based on an abstract universal … but would have to be the result of the critical dialogue between diverse critical epistemic/ethical/political projects towards a pluriversal as opposed to a universal world…[and] that decolonization of knowledge would require to take seriously the epistemic perspective/cosmologies/insights of critical thinkers from the Global South thinking from and with subalternized racial/ethnic/sexual spaces and bodies" (212). For more on the epistemic decolonial turn, see Maldonado-Torres (2011), Maldonado-Torres and Cavooris (2017) and de Sousa Santos (2015).

With “tourism's entanglement with colonial power … deeply rooted and complex” (Grimwood, Stinson, and King 2019: 79), postcolonialism, as a theoretical orientation, is progressively influencing tourism studies (Hall and Tucker 2004). The postcolonial critique of tourism is concerned primarily with the maintenance, continuation, and perpetuation of colonial era practices, influences, and power in the contemporary postcolony through tourism (Akama, Maingi, and Camargo 2011). Accordingly, a growing number of postcolonial scholars have turned their attention towards considering the legacies of colonialism that are characteristic of modern tourism practices and have argued that tourism is implicated in a neocolonial ethos (Osagie and Buzinde 2011). For example, Hall and Tucker (2004), contend that “contemporary tourism practice is both deeply embedded in and reinforcing of postcolonial relationships’ (since) ‘the economic structures, cultural representations and exploitative relationships previously based in colonialism are far from over’ (2004: 185).

In arguing that the relations of contemporary global tourism echo the global relations of domination and subordination that characterized the European colonial period, postcolonial scholars concerned with the study of tourism examine these ‘echoes.’ They do so, namely, by examining the economic structures of global tourism and contemporary tourism discourses, representations and imagery (Tucker 2019). Within tourism studies, postcolonial theory is used to understand the ways in which tourism has developed in the global South and the “unequal and often exploitative relationship between Western and other cultures and cosmologies in tourism” (Chambers and Buzinde 2015: 2). Framed in a neo-Marxist context, this facet of postcolonial theory describes tourism as resembling a neo-colonial plantation economy, with tourism referred to as a "new kind of sugar" (Finney and Watson 1975). As Tucker (2019) notes, the “neo-colonial core-periphery relationships persist in the global structuring and economy of tourism in

that, for example, tourism developments in many of the formerly colonized nations are owned by foreign, often former colonizer, interests" (90). This economic connection between tourism and neo-colonialism has been examined by Craik (1994), Echtner and Prasad (2003), Weaver (1998), Bianchi (2002), Butler (2002), Scheyvens (2008), and others, who have argued that (neo)colonial core-periphery relationships persist in the global structuring and economy of tourism. They argue, further, that many of the unequal and exploitative economic and cultural relationships that were previously based in colonialism have endured in the post-colonial period through tourism. In stressing the similarities between the plantation agricultural system and mass tourism this facet of postcolonial theory understands tourism as a form of neocolonialism that perpetuates historic, colonialist and imperialist patterns that keep countries in economically and socially submissive positions. From this perspective, contemporary tourism, particularly mass tourism, is a "an expression of colonialism in the sense that it promotes the dynamic of domination/subjugation and recreates the master-slave relationship between the tourist and the host society" (Walsh 2020: 20). The core, which "represents the economic center, where demand and supply originate" (Walsh 2020:14), in this view, deliberately keeps the periphery subordinated and vulnerable (Kelly 2018).

In the case of the Maltese islands, Cassar and Avellino (2020) contend that Malta can be understood as suffering from "a colonial withdrawal syndrome." They underscore Smith's contention that:

> […] the shadow of colonial influence and responsibility cast so far beyond Malta's achievement of independent status signifies the degree to which vestiges of imperialism persisted after empire. This existed as much in the minds of Britain's former colonial opponents as in the imperial metropole itself. […] Indeed, the experience of decolonisation in Malta suggests that dependence and independence frequently coexisted, often uncomfortably, at the end of empire (Smith 2008: 47).

According to Smith (2008:33) any "study of Malta … supports Stephen Ashton's observation that "Historians of the British empire have long debated the question of when empire began. Equally open to interpretation are questions of when it ended or whether it continued in a different form". While the Maltese islands, to this day, display a pattern of structural underdevelopment and "sustained [economic] backwardness" (Galizia 2016:11) resulting from colonial exploitation and dependency, this facet of postcolonial theory, as it relates to tourism studies, is beyond the scope of this current project.

As Cassar and Avellino (2020) argue, despite the political independence of the Maltese islands "one has to acknowledge that the British presence continues to be somewhat prominent in the archipelago. Rather than related to military or political encroachments – directly linked to the realities of a colonial status or a postcolonial residue – this presence is today associated with Malta's tourism industry" (243) According to Ashcroft et al. (1989 as cited by Amoamo 2008:51), "one of the main features of imperial oppression is control over language and text". From this perspective, power is no longer understood solely as it relates to physical or political force, but rather power is understood as taking the form of representation (Feighery 2012). Accordingly, an important field of study utilizing postcolonial theories explores "(post)colonialism as a literary/textual phenomenon" (Wijesing

he 2020). Thus, while recognising the (neo)colonial dimensions of Malta's political and economic situation, this dissertation is concerned primarily with the postcolonial analysis of cultural representations, contemporary tourism writings and representations, and Orientalist discourses that underpin tourism "knowledge" about the region.

Orientalism

The origins of contemporary Orientalist critique can be traced back to Said (1978) who uses the term critically to describe the West's common, contemptuous, and stereotypical depictions and portrayals of "the Orient". Inspired by modern and post-modern philosophical traditions (Macfie 2014), Said cites numerous examples of orientalism as they appeared in European (or Western) works of scholarships, poetry, philosophy, theory, and history by building an analysis of Western novels, travel, and anthropological writing, opera, Western philosophers of history and media to link Western imperialism with Western culture[30] (Kapoor 2002). Despite being accused of being "ahistorical and inconsistent" and jumbling "together… professional scholars of the region who possessed a mastery of its languages and culture and who had often lived there for some time with mere travellers, novelists, and diplomats who ... seldom had the sort of mastery of philology characteristic of the academics" (Cole 1995: 508, as cited by Allawzi & Khamis 2015: 14), Said insists that this linkage produces what he terms 'Orientalism', or the "systematic body of theory and practice that constructs or represents the Orient" (Kapoor 2002:652).

Orientalism, then, is the style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinctions made between "the Orient" and, most of the time, "the Occident" (Hall and Tucker 2004), and assists in the creation of stereotypical images, imaginaries, ideological suppositions, and fantasies. As Kapoor (2002) notes, while Said did differentiate British and French imperial Orientalism, (ignoring German orientalism) and colonial era from postcolonial Western

[30] It should be noted that both post-colonial and feminist critics on Orientalist writings and art have accused Edward Said of neglecting to mention the work of Western women who contributed to imperial culture as writers, artists and commentators, within his study on Orientalist discourse, see Ramli (2011) and Lewis (2013). Moreover, Said is accused of neglecting the multiple ways in which gender and sexuality informed colonial and imperial processes and legacies, see Stoler (1997) for one example of an explorations of the ways that gendered inequalities were indispensable to colonial racism and imperial authority.

orientalism, Said ultimately maintains that there is an overwhelming continuity in the way West and East are represented and essentialized with Europe, or the West is seen as essentially rational, developed, humane, without natural suspicion, superior, authentic, active, liberal creative and masculine, while the Orient (the East, the "other") represented and seen as essentially irrational, aberrant, backwards, crude, despotic, inferior, inauthentic, passive, mystical, feminine and sexually corrupt (Said 1985: 45). For Said, while this system of dichotomies does not always understand and portray the East in such an ostensibly negative way, with the so-called positive images of the East as spiritual, enduring, and stable being well-worn, Said contends that these "positives" are both exaggerated and "overvalued" and produced by the very same system of stereotypes (Moore-Gilbert 1997).

Drawing on Foucault's theories on discourse, Said attempts to reveal how representations of the Orient are laden with a "will to power", a will "to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different ... world" (Said 1979: l2). According to Foucault, who was described by Said as "the central figure in the most noteworthy flowering of oppositional intellectual life in the twentieth-century West" (Said in Radford 1992: 416), discourse can be referred to as "the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation; thus I shall be able to speak of clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history, psychiatric discourse" (Foucault 2013: 121). According to Grimwood, Yudina, Muldoon, and Qiu (2015) the term discourse "describes a sequence of shared assumptions and rules that circulate through various texts—e.g., media, policy, travel blogs, souvenirs, academic literature, bodies, and so forth—to govern knowledge claims and discipline social and spatial relationships" (24). In other words, discourse can be defined as a "group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about a particular topic at a particular historical moment…

(Hall 2001: 73). For Foucault, discourse is about the creation of knowledge through language, and can perhaps best be described as "a body of ideas, concepts, and beliefs that have become established as knowledge, or as an accepted way of looking at the world" (Doberty 2007: 193). Similarly, Stuart Hall (1992) defines discourse as a group of statements that offer a language for thinking and talking about a topic (Hall 1992: 201).

As Hall (1997: 42) notes, Foucault was interested in issues of representation, accordingly, in Foucault's usage, discourse is not merely a linguistic concept but one about language *and* practice (Hall 2001: 74), and can be seen "as a complex network of relationships between individuals, texts, ideas, and institutions, with each 'node' impacting, to varying degrees, on other nodes, and on the dynamics of the discourse as a whole" (Olsson 2010: 65).

According to Foucault, discourse "exists both in written and oral forms and in the social practices of everyday life" (Weedon 1987: 112) and refers to:

> ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern (as cited by Weedon 1987: 108).

In Foucault's view, discourses are never, and in fact can never be, static or innocent but are instead intrinsically linked to power in that they are responsible for the production of the meaning(s) of objects and practices. For Foucault, power and knowledge are produced through the relationships between people, institutions, and texts which produce systems of meaning, expertise, and authority (Olsson 2010:67). Accordingly, it is in discourse, and through discourse, that power and knowledge are joined together. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault contends that:

> Statements are not, like the air we breathe, an infinite transparency; but things that are transmitted and preved, that have value, and which one tries to appropriate; ... things that are duplicated not only by copy or translation, but by exegesis, commentary, and the internal proliferation of meaning (Foucault 2013: 120).

This understanding of discourse is illustrated by Jäger (2010) who, in understanding discourses as *sui generis* material realities, regards discourse "as the flow of knowledge – and/or all societal knowledge stored – throughout all time, which determines individual and collective doing and/or formative action that shapes society, thus exercising power" (2010: 3). Similarly, Link (1983) defines discourse as: "... an institutionally consolidated concept of speech inasmuch as it determines and consolidates action and thus already exercises power" (Link 1983: 60). For Foucault then, the fundamental power of a discourse lies in its ability to define how the physical world is both conceptualized and categorized¸ in that "if a discourse community holds a given statement to be true, this acceptance imbues it with a certain power in the context of that discourse" (Olsson 2010: 67).

With discourse referring to "the particular language which specialized knowledge has to conform in order to be regarded as true" (Young 1995: 2), Foucault contends that what comes to be regarded as "truth" is established by the discursive practices of a particular discipline. Meaning that, for Foucault, there are no objective truths, just self-serving "truths" that are advanced and promoted by systems of power. According to Foucault:

> There is a battle for truth, or at least around truth, it being understood again that by truth I do not mean the ensemble of truths which are to be discovered and accepted but rather the ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true (Foucault, as cited in Rainbow 1984: 418).

Following Foucault's paradigmatic model on the intrinsic connection between power and knowledge, Said, argues that Orientalism is not a body of objective knowledge but is rather a

discursive construction that determines the ways in which the West and East are understood and interacted with (Young 1995). As Williams and Chrisman (1993: 5) suggest, Said's approach "inaugurated" the field of study which has come to be known as colonial discourse analysis. According to Said, colonialism and European imperialism were not just projects of direct physical power and control, but were rather also complex and multifaceted processes intended to control the discursive representations of the Orient, or non-West, and its people through the creation of particular forms of knowledge about the non-West (Nichols 2010). According to Seed (1991: 183), the analysis of colonial discourse has, therefore "undertaken to redirect contemporary critical reflections on colonialism (and its aftermath) toward the language used by the conquerors, imperial administrators, travellers, and missionaries. For it was through language – the rhetoric, figures of speech, and discursive formations – that Europeans have understood and governed themselves and the peoples they subjected overseas".

Regarding Orientalist colonial discourse, as Dalby summarized it "Orientalism gave the West the power to say what was significant about [the Other], classify him among others of his breed, put him in his place" (1980: 489). This domination of representational authority not only denied non-Western people of their own representational authority but also produced a system of "knowledge" about the non-Western "other" that the non-West was neither invited to nor allowed to contribute to. This "knowledge" also confirmed the "necessity" of colonial governance by creating and propagating the image of "a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could possibly know themselves" (Said 1978: 35). As summarized by Nichols (2010), Orientalism served to pervert the images and "truths" about "them", justified the physical occupation and colonization of "their" lands, and

contributed to the production of the “Orient” as a new object of study for the West (Nichols 2010: 119-120).

Orientalism as a discourse then, for Said, was not only intimately connected with the expansion of European colonialism but also serves Western hegemony. Prasad (2003) summarizes these dual consequences of Orientalism as a discourse as:

> Orientalism operates in the service of the West’s hegemony over the East primarily by producing the East discursively as the West’s inferior “Other,” a maneuver that constructs and strengthens the West’s selfimage as a superior civilization. By distinguishing and essentializing the identities of East and West through a dichotomizing system of representations typically embodied in the regime of stereotypes, the construction of difference between Western and Eastern parts of the world can be accomplished. Yet, in constructing and accentuating differences, circularity is achieved in this representational act: the West produces and creates the cultural constructs of the East/Other and in so doing helps to perpetuate them. (129)

Accordingly, the "system of ideas that ... remain[ed] unchanged as teachable wisdom" (1978: 6) must be analyzed as a politically and ideologically driven discourse. Thus, in advancing what has become known as ‘colonial discourse’ Said contends:

> Taking the late eighteenth-century as a very roughly defined starting point, Orientalism can be discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient- dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it, in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. ...that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment era (1978: 3)

Arguing that the economic domination and the physical and political occupation of the Orient was connected to the discourse about the Orient, one of Said’s primary contributions is his insistence on the fundamental relationship between knowledge and power, specifically the relationship between “knowledge and empire” (Guhin and Wyrtzen 2013). In extending Foucault’s power/knowledge nexus, Said unfolds the connections between the discourse of

Orientalism and the political and economic domination of the Orient by Europe by focusing not just on how the West represented the Orient, but on how the West's representations of the Oriental Other were interlocked with its 'will to power' (1978).

Expanding the definition of Orientalism to include "a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient" (1978: 3), Said's analysis identifies how the essentializing and dichotomizing discourse of Orientalism "justified colonialism in advance as well as subsequently facilitating its operation" (Young 2016: 380). Pointing to the relationship between Orientalism and colonial expansion, Said emphasizes how Orientalism as a "discourse of power" enabled a "particular set of social, economic, and political relations between Europe and its colonies" (Mani & Frankenberg, 1985: 177). In emphasizing the link between Orientalism and imperialism Mani and Frankenberg (1985) argue:

> This complicity between Orientalism and imperialism has made the former particularly powerful. On the one hand, Orientalism has informed and shaped the colonial enterprise. On the other hand, this attachment to institutional power has enabled its remarkable, continued and widespread persistence (177-178).

While most reviews of his work evaluate Said's contributions to understanding the production of knowledge about the Orient separately from his insistence on the relationship between knowledge and power, however, central to Said's understanding of Orientalism is the power of the discourse to inform and shape the colonial enterprise. For Said, the Western 'style' of thinking about, writing about, and describing the Orient is inextricable from the "Western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1978: 3). For Said then, the production and dissemination of Orientalist 'knowledge' was an indispensable element of colonialism in that it was not without a material and embodied dimension. Orientalism as a

discourse was used to both encourage and justify Europe's colonial era exploration, exploitation and "civilization" of the 'East' (Yegenoglu 1998).

Said's (1978) Foucauldian conception of Orientalism as the discursive construction of knowledge and power underscores his contention that the discursive construction of the East is only possible because of the asymmetrical relationship between Occident and Orient, in that while the Orient was subject to Western "discovery", exploration, evaluation, study and scrutiny, the West received no such treatment from the East because colonization was by no means an equal exchange (Smith 2016) but was rather a "relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Said 1978:5). Said accordingly insists that the Orient, as much as the Occident, "is not an inert fact of nature" (4), but rather came to exist through the Orientalism, whereby the Orient became an ideological representation with no corresponding reality. Although largely accepted by the West as "truth", the discursive representations of the Orient are nothing more than an conceptual fantasy that bore no relationship to the actual culture that it supposedly understood and described (Young 2007). Put otherwise, "there can be no 'real' Orient because the 'Orient' itself was an Orientalist construction" (Young 2016:389).

Even though it is difficult to overrate the impact of Said's text Orientalism (1978) in helping to shape the disciplinary subfield of postcolonialism (Moore-Gilber 1997), unsurprisingly, it also invited a proliferation of critical responses. For example, as Lockman (2004) notes, Syrian philosopher Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, amongst others, argued that Said was guilty of Occidentalism, or reverse essentialism, essentializing 'the West' in the same manner that Said criticizes imperial powers and their scholars of essentializing 'the East', in the "process reifying the very East/West dichotomy that he had set out to deconstruct" (Lockman 2004:195). Commentators also criticized Said extensively for employing an overly deterministic and univocal notion of

discourse (Young 2006). Taking Said's contention that the "Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought and action" (Said 1978: 3) as evidence that "Orientalism is theoretically naïve", a number of contemporary critics have taken up reassessment of Orientalism to argue against Said's one-sided account of the colonial encounter and contend "that cultural stereotypes are considerably more ambivalent and dynamic" (Gandhi 2019:77). Gandhi (2019) summarizes this criticism in arguing that Said's Orientalism is a "limited text…primarily because it fails to accommodate the possibility of difference within Oriental discourse" (79). While Said later, in 'Orientalism Reconsidered' (1993), acknowledges this point of contention[31], for his critics, Said's concept of Orientalism tends to "be overly unifying and monolithic, in that it depicts colonial discourse as all-powerful and the colonial subject as its mere effect" (Kapoor 2002:650). It is partly as a response to Said's understanding of the monocultural production of a binary opposition that Homi Bhabha made his crucial and necessary intervention[32].

Arguing that in Said's account "there is always ... the suggestion that colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the coloniser" (1983:200), Bhabha challenges the vision of his predecessor by criticizing the binary understanding of colonizer-colonized and emphasizes the mutual power inherent in the relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. In underlining the discursive instability in Said's 'Orientalism' Bhabha's theory of colonial discourse contends that such discourse need not be homogenous to be hegemonic. For Bhabha, who relies heavily on poststructuralism, any analysis of colonial relations should attempt to

[31] Said recants his belief in monolithic colonial power in arguing that, "never was it the case that the imperial encounter pitted an active Western intruder against a supine or inert non-Western native; there was *always* some form of active resistance and, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the *resistance* finally won out" (Said 1993: xii).

[32] Said's propensity to over generalize Orientalism as an unbroken monolithic and monocultural discourse is noted by several other critics besides Bhabha (see for example Macfie 2014; Clifford 1980; Prakash 1995)

move beyond the system of binary oppositions that Said's Orientalism (1979) presents. Bhabha offers an understanding of colonial discourse as a "negotiation rather than negation" (Bhabha 1994: 37).

Suggesting a radical departure from Said's conception of colonial discourse, Bhabha interprets regimes of colonial and imperial stereotypical discourses as inherently unstable. Bhabha examines several mechanisms that from his perspective threaten colonial domination, including fetishism, paranoia, sly civility, paranoia, and mimicry, and draws extensively on Lacanian psychoanalysis, specifically on his notion of the unconscious "lack". In doing so, Bhabha argues that while colonial stereotypes about the colonized are intended to be accepted as 'fixed' and 'natural' they must be continuously and incessantly reconfirmed by repetition by the colonizer (Kapoor 2002). As Kapoor (2002) notes, for Bhabha, this need for repetition suggests that the "already known' is not nearly as securely established as Said would have us believe and that "such repetition, such 'double inscription, …., betrays the slipperiness and ambivalence of colonial discourse and authority (2002: 651), pointing to a 'lack' in the colonizer's psyche. This 'lack', for Bhabha, is the psychical process by which the colonizer distinguishes himself from what he hates and fears, the colonized 'other', while simultaneously both requiring and desiring the 'other' in order to be recognized as master (Kapoor 2003: 564).

Shifting the focus of analysis from the material confrontation between colonizer and colonized, to the textual ambivalences and contradictions of colonial discourses and writings, Bhabha reveals a pattern of conflict in colonial discourse. For example, the colonial subject can be:

> simultaneously beyond comprehension (as in stereotypes about 'the inscrutable Oriental' or 'the mysterious East) and yet completely knowable as the object of the all-seeing colonial gaze (Moore-Gilbert 1997).

> both savage (cannibal) and yet the most obedient and dignified of servants (the bearer of food); he is the embodiment of rampant sexuality and yet innocent as a child; he is mystical, primitive, simple-minded and yet the most worldly and accomplished liar and manipulator of social forces (Bhabha 1994: 82).

Both the need to endlessly reconfirm colonial stereotypes through repetition and the consistent patterns of conflict in colonial discourse reveal the instability and fundamental lack in colonial power (Kappoor 2003: 563).

Bhabha's psychoanalytically informed reworking of Said's notion of the Orientalist stereotype emphasizes its essentially ambivalent nature. For Bhabha, Orientalism "is on the one hand, a topic of learning, discovery, practice; and on the other, it's the site of dreams, images, fantasies, myths, obsessions, and requirements....however, this site is continually under threat from diachronic forms of history and narrative, signs of instability" (Bhabha 1994: i).

In illustrating this discursive instability by describing the ways in which colonial discourse is "split in its enunciation" (Kappoor 2002: 651), Bhabha applies the term "hybridity"[33] to what he understands as an inherently ambivalent process. Bhabha argues that "in the very practice of domination the language of the master becomes hybrid" (1994:33; as cited by Kappoor 2003: 563).

Celebrating it as a symptom of resistance by the colonized, Bhabha argues that hybridity, associated with mimicry and sly civility, is a site of agency. For Bhabha, hybridity occurs within the "third space", a space between the dominant and subaltern were "supplementary discourses

[33] While the term hybridity now occupies a central and celebrated place in both postcolonial discourse and in theories of diaspora¸ it's critics (see Young 1995) have argued that the term hybridity draws from the gloomy traditions of natural science and remains imbued with the legacy of nineteenth-century eugenics and scientific-racism (Young 1995).

intervene to preserve their peculiarities between the dominant and subaltern" (Kapoor 2002:652-3). Bhabha, "aware of the dangers of fixity and fetishism of identities within binary colonial thinking" (Meredith 1998: 2) positions hybridity as an antidote to essentialism and contends that "a new hybrid identity or subject-position emerges from the interweaving of elements of the coloniser and colonised that challenges the validity and authenticity of any essentialist cultural identity" (Meredith 1998: 2). This hybridized mutation of culture and identity "replaces the established pattern with a 'mutual and mutable' (Bhabha 1994) representation of cultural difference that is positioned in between the coloniser and colonised" (Meredith 1998: 2). Highlighting the diasporic and hybrid character of cultures (Poddar 2008), Bhabha stresses that "this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (1994: 4).

The works of both Said and Bhabha seek to reveal in what ways Western epistemologies and ontologies have governed our understandings of colonial and postcolonial societies. While Said's works provided the foundation for the understanding of the relationship between colonial projects and discourse, Bhabha's reworking allows for a more nuanced examination of how hybridity affects colonial and imperial discourse. By removing fixity as required for creation, maintenance and perpetuation of the Orientalist stereotype and replacing it with an ambivalence the Other acquires the potential to destabilize and subvert a discourse (Santaolalla 2000).

Taken together, the works of Said and Bhabha provide a conceptually broader more encompassing Orientalism that lends itself easily to a postcolonial analysis of tourism and touristic encounters.

Exoticism

Defined by Said as a kind of "aesthetic substitution which replaces the impress of power with the blandishments of curiosity" (Said 1993: 159), exoticism as a particular mode of aesthetic perception (Huggan 2002), "romanticises the racial, ethnic or cultural Other while simultaneous oppression and exploitation occur with it" (Kempadoo 2000). Exoticism, understood as a driving force of contemporary travel and tourism in that many tourists either imagine or seek it in former colonies (d'Hauteserre 2004), "renders people, objects and places strange (exotic) even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures Otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery" (Huggan 2002: 15). "Exoticism[34]", according to French travel writer and naval doctor Victor Segalen's early attempts to (re) define the term[35], is the "experience of faraway places and of radical cultural difference, it is both an attraction and a repulsion, a shock provoked by the Other or 'le Divers'". The Other thus becomes a "source of fear and fascination, an emblem of difference demonized and romanticized" (Segalen 2002: 1). As Kempadoo argues (2004: 35) "exoticism valorized peoples and cultures that were different and re-mote, concomitantly imposing a status of inferiority upon them".

Commenting on the terms almost universally pejorative overtones, Argentinean political theorist Savigliano (1995) defines exoticism as:

[34] According White's (2004) exploration of the literary history relating to exoticism, the word "exotic" appears for the first time in 1552 when François Rabelais, French Renaissance writer and scholar used the adjective *exoctique* to describe merchandise imported from Africa approximately three-hundred years before the word *exoctique* changed into the adjective and noun *exotisme*.

[35] For Segalen's attempts to define "true Exoticism" see *Essai sur l'exotisme: Une esthétique du divers* (1904). Written bwteen 1904 and 1918, at the height of European imperialism, the posthumously published book explores critiques of ethnocentrism, colonialism, and exoticism and to develops a theory of exoticism that is formulated around his notion of *Le Divers* and the essence of the encounter between different cultures.

> a way of establishing order in an unknown world through fantasy; a daydream guided by pleasurable self-reassurance and expansionism. It is the seemingly harmless side of exploitation, cloaked as it is in playfulness and delirium. Exoticism is a practice of representation through which identities are frivolously allocated. It is also a will to power over the unknown, an act of indiscriminately combining fragments, crumbs of knowledge and fantasy in disrespectful, sweeping gestures justified by harmless banality (Savigliano 1995: 189)

The exotic, then, is by no means "a docile category relating to something safely 'out there'. It is a dangerous double-edged sword in the politics of Othering" capable of conjuring up fascination and terror alike (Olijnyk Longley 2000: 28). As Kempadoo (2004: 36) notes:

> Exoticism in its various expressions brought legitimacy to Western rule and is distinguished from other European racisms by fostering the illusion of an admiration for, delight in, and attraction to the Other, while positioning the Other as inferior and suitable for domination.

Exoticism is most often associated with the process of "Othering", or the rendering of non-European cultures as fundamentally and indispuably "different" from European cultures, for colonial ends (Poddar 2008). Exoticism is therefore regarded as both an ideology and a practice of early colonial and imperialist projects. With the concept of "exoticism" being deeply entrenched in European colonialism, common use of the term dates to the European explorations of the seventeenth-century (Napoli 2012). While the fascination for what is foreign or alien can not be said to belong only to the West, as according to postcolonial scholar Santaolalla (2000) "all civilizations have shared the simultaneous fear and fascination for what comes from beyond their limits" (2000: 9), the West's supremacy and the legacy and impact of European colonialism have historically granted the West the advantage of defining and constructing its Others as 'the' Other" (Santaolalla 2000: 9). Rose (1995: 116) explains the construction of the Other or Othering as a process that involves "defining where you belong through a contrast with other places, or who you are through a contrast with other people", thus, exoticism was used both to

delineate the other side of the norms of a Christian, civilized, rational Europe and also in certain cases even to distinguish the subhuman or the supernatural (Mason 1991).

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries European fantasies of the exotic grew most luxuriant (Porter and Rousseau 1990). Exoticism, as an ideological approach to the non-Western world was connected with the rationalization and justification for European projects of colonial control and domination (Kempadoo 2000). Huggan (2002), argues that "among others, exoticism has proved over time to be a highly effective instrument of imperial power", thus "the exotic splendour of newly colonised lands may disguise the brutal circumstances of their gain" (Huggan 2002:14).

As Kempadoo (2004: 35) notes Rousseau and Porter (1990) write:

> The invention of the "exotic" evidently satisfied needs amongst a European and, later, an Atlantic, civilization which, as it progressively explored and dominated the entire globe with its guns and sails, increasingly assumed the right to define human values and conduct in their highest expression. Other cultures, other creeds, were not merely different, not even merely lower, but positively - even objectively - strange. It was not merely the remoteness of geographical distance in a world where miles counted for much, but the ineluctable sense that all their mental processes and logical deductions were equally as alien. Labeling the anthropological Other as exotic legitimated treating the peoples of the "third world" as fit to be despised - destroyed even, or at least doomed, like the Tasmanian aborigines, to extinction - while concurrently also constituting them as projections of Western fantasies (1990: 6).

Because the exotic is a label that is always attributed to someone or somewhere else, Western discourses of exoticism "like orientalism, [are] a way of seeing which sustains the myth of the cultural centrality, and therefore, the superiority of the viewer" (Longley 2000: 23). The construction of the exotic is, therefore, a mechanism by which power is exercised through the production and reinforcement of knowledge about the Other, this, consequently, places exoticism within a similar framework as Orientalism (Santaolalla 2000, Kempadoo 2000, d'Hauteserre

2004). Exoticism, like Orientalism, describes how colonial era representations of non-Western places, peoples and cultures work to construct the "those cultures as inferior and monolithic, reinforcing a perceived core/periphery hierarchy" (Poddar 2008: 175).

Some theorists (Mason 1991, Poddar 2008) argue that Orientalism diverges radically from exoticism because Orientalism is almost inevitably identified with a Saidian interpretation of Orientalism, which claims a one-way, or monodirectional (geographically tied) system of power relations, whereas exoticism offers a more adaptable understanding of Otherness in that if offers "a more polyvalent and polydirectional model of cross-cultural contact" (Santaolalla 2000, Olijnyk Longley 2000¸ Kuehn 2013). While using the terms Orientalism and exoticism synonymously may obscure the semantic flexibility inherent in the term exoticism, the reworking of Said's concept of Orientalism by Bhabha allows for a more flexible and polysemic reading of the colonial dynamics of power. As reworked by Bhabha, Orientalism is a conceptually broader more encompassing concept that is not at all radically divergent from exoticism. As such, my study treats exoticism and Orientalism as "close relatives" (Kuehn 2013:4) that pursue(d) similar goals of Western *mis*representation of the Other.

As Kempadoo (2004: 35) argues:

> The Orient was captured as the epitome of the exotic: a strange and unfamiliar world both fascinating and terrifying; inviting to the curious explorer, yet threatening to all standards of civilization upheld in Europe; seductive in its paradise-like, unblemished "virgin" state, yet bestial in its perceived barbaric moments.

Thus, following Kempadoo (2004), for the purposes of this dissertation any Orientalist distortion, exoticization, or romanticizing of the Orient or postcolonial world by the West will be treated as part of the same exoticist discursive episteme.

Exoticism and Tourism

With tourism frequently dubbed the business of "difference" and "the other", par excellence, (Chambers and Buzinde 2015: 4) exoticism itself is deeply entrenched in tourism and touristic experiences. The central exploitable element in tourism is exoticism (Yang 2008). Tourism depends on exoticism to fulfill the desires of the traveller in that tourist travel "to see and experience something they cannot duplicate at home. This can be a different climate, landscape, flora and fauna, or different cultures, past and present" (van den Berghe 1980: 377).

As Craik recognised in 1994 (as noted by Hall and Tucker 2004):

> Tourism has an intimate relationship to postcolonialism in that ex-colonies have increased in popularity as favoured destinations (sites) for tourists (the Pacific Rim; Asia; Africa; South America); while the detritus of postcolonialism have been transformed into tourist sights (including exotic peoples and customs; artefacts; arts and crafts; indigenous and colonial lifestyles, heritage, and histories (2004: 2).

From this perspective, especially as it relates to the phenomenon of ethnic tourism[36], the tourist is driven to seek experiences that cannot be duplicated at home. Further, the tourist aspires to "make contact with a different reality, manifest in undomesticated nature, in relics from the past, particularly an alien past, or in the behavior of culturally distinctive strangers" (Van den Berghe and Charles 1984: 346). With the commonalities between tourism and colonial ways of knowing being well-established (Muldoon and Mair 2016: 466), postcolonial theory understands Orientalism and exoticism as enduring Western approaches or "textual attitudes" that include dreams, geographic imaginaries, vocabularies, and discourse about the Other (Kempadoo 2000).

[36] According to Yang (2008; 2011), ethnic tourism is motivated by the search for "exotic cultural experiences, including visiting ethnic villages, minority homes and ethnic theme parks, being involved in ethnic events and festivals, watching traditional dances or ceremonies, or merely shopping for ethnic handicrafts and souvenirs" (Yang 2011: 561).Ethnic tourism, accordingly, is succinctly defined as a "form of tourism in which the cultural exoticism of the host population and its products, such as clothing, music and dance, are the main attractions for the tourist" (Hiwasaki 2000: 395)

In tourism and its related industries, these discourses powerfully establish and strengthen images of destinations and their tourism sites (Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento 2010). Rendering a tourist "destination" or a host population exotic rests on a "Eurocentric" vocabulary that Stam and Shohat appropriately denote as "the discursive residue or precipitate of colonialism" (1994:15). The discursive exoticism of contemporary tourism is reinforced by a series of enduring colonial binaries which at once privilege Western agency, modernity and mobility over supposedly non-Western passivity, tradition and custom.

With tourism continuing to play a large part in the Othering, exoticizing, and orientalising of people, tourism, and by extension, ethnosexual tourism, must be understood as firmly situated within, and predicated on, the historical and post and neo-colonial contexts in which they take place. Extending the postcolonial analysis to the examination of female ethnosexual tourism to the Maltese islands can expose the various legacies of colonialism that become apparent in the practice and structures of ethnosexual tourism.

Malta's Place in Postcolonial Studies

Within the field of postcolonial studies, the Maltese Islands – one of Britain's two European Mediterranean colonies (the other being the Republic of Cypress) – are understudied. The geographical position of the islands, on the margins of Europe, the minuscule size of the islands, and the very limited number of native Maltese postcolonial scholars have resulted in Malta being overlooked in mainstream postcolonial criticism. Despite being a neglected site of postcolonial inquiry, that Malta should be included rests on the significance of its historical experiences with colonialism and the profound and legacy of colonialism in the region.

Though Malta, like most other islands, has "tended to slip the net of postcolonial theorizing" appearing as "negligible purely strategic imperial sites" (Edmond and Smith 2003: 5), as a "prototype of the colonial experience" (McCusker and Soares 2011: xii) no other type of territory has been so affected by the colonial endeavor as islands (Baldacchino and Role 2010).

As the most "extreme manifestations of the colonial project" (McCusker and Soares 2011: xii), islands, especially the smaller ones, like the micro-state of Malta, were the first territories to endure the colonial ravages of Western European conquest during the 15th to early 19th centuries.

Illustration 1: Map of the Mediterranean Basin (source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection)

The physical location of the Maltese islands, at the cusp of both Europe and Africa, has had a tremendous impact on the island's experiences with colonialism. "The geographical position of Malta – in the centre of the Mediterranean – with its excellent harbour has given it an importance which is out of proportion to its size" (Harding 1994: 205). This "importance", a strategic

location between southern Europe and North Africa has resulted in the Maltese islands experiencing over 4000 years of invasion and settlement from a succession of dynasties including the Phoenician, Roman, Arab, Norman, Shavian, Angelina, Aragonese, Castilian, the Knights of the Hospitaller, and the French. Despite the foreign domination undergone since ancient times, the direct rule and British occupation of Malta is regarded as the first "proper" colonization that Malta experienced (Cassia 1993) in that it was the first time the islands were occupied by a "capitalism driven enterprise where one country or group of people forcefully acquires the land and economic resources belonging to another country or group of people…" (Chatterjee 2018: 200). Moreover, as will be discussed below, while the previous rule of the Maltese islands by invaders always entailed subjugation of the Maltese people, the British colonization of the Maltese islands was different from earlier forms of conquest and domination in a racist/orientalist ideology and discourse surrounded the British colonial enterprise (Kebede 2001). As Kebede (2001) argues "the colonial enterprise had the particularity of destroying the cultural legacy of the native peoples in the name of the racial superiority of the conquering civilization" (540). According to Mignolo (2007), writing on the 'coloniality of power' based in part on the "'racial' social classification of the world population under Eurocentered world power" (171), this colonial invention of 'race' was absolutely pivotal to European colonialism in that "unlike in any other previous experience of colonialism, the old ideas of superiority of the dominant, and the inferiority of dominated under European colonialism were mutated in a relationship of biologically and structurally superior and inferior" (171). So, while Malta's long history of sieges and colonialism before the British are understood as based in war, defeat and domination, the direct rule and British occupation of Malta used new social categories of race

and racial inferiority to justify the political, economic, social and cultural domination of the islands.

Malta, the southern-most of the southern European[37] nation-states, not only experienced its first "proper" colonization but suffered a "triple heritage" of early, long and "intense" colonial rule at the hands of the British empire, where "the coloniser used various forms of constraint – moral, military and political – to control and suppress the Maltese" (Cassar and Avellino 2020: 252). First occupied by Britain in 1800 during the Napoleonic Wars, Malta was declared a British colony by the Treaty of Amiens in 1814, making Malta one of the first territories to be colonized

[37] As Gerber (2000) notes Maltese/ European relations have been "ambivalent" at least since Malta's independence from the British in 1964 (230). According to Geber, Malta, "after centuries of having served as a fortress-colony of Christian/European powers… turned away from Western Europe and the United Kingdom in the 1970s. The Partit Laburista, or Malta Labour Party, government under Dom Mintoff strengthened links with the Arab world instead, in particular with Libya. The Malta Labour Party wanted to overcome Malta's colonial past by becoming a respected independent and neutral island in the Mediterranean" (230). The Maltese Partit Nazzjonalista, or the Maltese Nationalist Party led by Dr. Eddie Fenech Adami won an absolute majority of votes in 1981 and in 1987 and both times ran on a platform that they would reverse Mintoff's anti-European policies and seek full EU membership. From the perspective of the Partit Nazzjonalista the way to overcome Malta's colonial past was not to turn away from Europe but to become a sovereign, valued and equal nation within Europe (Borg and Inguanez 1993). In 1996, the Malta Labour Party was re-elected and immediately withdrew the EU application citing concerns that EU membership would ultimately compromise Malta's neutrality and economic viability (Harwood 2017). Following the surprise fall of the Labour government in 1998, the Nationalist party immediately restarted Malta's application to join the EU, and Malta was, following years of negotiations, invited to join the EU in 2004. Following a Maltese referendum which saw a high turnout (91 percent of eligible voters) and lowest support for joining of any of the nine countries that held referendums on joining the EU in 2003, with only 53 percent voting 'yes' to the question do you agree that Malta should become a member of the European Union) (Stajano 2008: 78), Malta officially became a Member State of the European Union, along with Cyprus and eight other Central and Eastern European countries. As Harwood indicates "before joining the EU in 2004 Malta registered the starkest level of Euroscepticism amongst applicant states with a major party opposed to EU membership and a marked antipathy amongst half the population" (2017: 182).

during Britain's "imperial century" (Hyam 2012)[38]. Located in the channel joining the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean, the Maltese islands are alleged to lie in the geographical centre of the sea" (Mitchell 2001) and were colonized, as a "fortress colony", for military and strategic control of their oft-cited "strategic location" (linking the UK with Gibraltar, Suez, Aden, the Empire of India, Singapore, and Hong Kong (Frendo 1998). Unlike other British colonies, the Maltese Islands did not serve as sites for agricultural or mineral exploitation, or even as areas for settlement, but rather sought as strategic bases with it's greatest assets being its position within British imperial trade routes and its spacious natural deep-water harbours (Walz 2006). As Zammit (1981:1971) notes, Britain's interest in Malta was solely as a fortress in imperial defence, he quotes British statesman and leading imperialist Joseph Chamberlain who in 1902 stated in the House of Commons that:

> We hold Malta, solely and entirely as a fortress essential to our position in the Mediterranean. Not as an ordinary colony but as a fortress ..... In a fortress anything like open agitation against the Government is a thing that cannot be tolerated on the face of it.

The colonial government showed "but little regard for the population […] being wholly absorbed in one sole idea, namely, the interests of the Fortress and the Naval Station" (Walz 2006: 32). Arguing that the majority of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth saw the "very bad" social conditions of the Maltese people, Zammit (1981: 200) notes that the conditions of the Maltese "population was very bad…. often verging on starvation". Zammit (1981: 200)

[38] Despite Malta's "important" and "strategic" location, and proximity to mainland Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, Great Britain was actually very slow in recognising Malta's strategic value. As Zammit (1981: 197) notes even Lord Nelson, British flag officer in the Royal Navy, who was ultimately instrumental in establishing British dominion over the Maltese islands wrote in 1799: "To say the truth, the possession of Malta by England would be a useless and enormous expense: yet any expense should be incurred rather than let it remain in the hands of the French".

further observes that because Malta's "strategic location" was its primary value, there existed a relative lack in investments in social welfare services by the colonial administration. Additionally, policies of the time "did not aim at securing the best interests of the Maltese, but [rather] of Britain in the fortress of Malta" (Zammit 1981:200). According to Zammit (1981: 200) because the British were not at all concerned with how these policies impacted and affected the Maltese people, but were rather only concerned with "maintaining a secure strategic base in the Mediterranean" were responsible for the dismal conditions of the Maltese people. Zammit (1981: 200) points to the report prepared by the 1836 Royal Commission which declared that "the islanders are in a most miserable condition. Due to official policy, the educated among them are a handful. The nobles, formerly the backbone of Malta, are starving. The rest of the population fares even worse" (as quoted by Zammit 1981). In 1837 the commissioners of inquiry to Lord Glenelg similarly noted that "so great are the poverty and distress of the bulk of the population, and so deeply rooted are the causes from which those evils proceed, that the Government of Malta for many years to come, will surely be a task of extraordinary difficulty"[39] (National Archives UK, Colonial Office papers, CO158/113, the commissioners of inquiry to Lord Glenelg, 14 January 1837). The Maltese population suffered the colonial burden intimately and thoroughly in that the colonial government disregarded the needs of the Maltese civilian population. Beyond being "responsible for the subordination and underdevelopment of the islands' economy" (Waltz 2006: 32), the British colonial government are accused of having deliberately kept the Maltese "poor and ignorant to serve their own interests" (Mitchell 2002: 9).

[39] In fact, as Smith (2008) notes as late as 1955, Sir Herbert Brittain of the Treasury argued that Malta could "never be given Commonwealth status, because of defence considerations" (as quoted by Smith 2008:33)

After over 150 years of British rule, Malta's independence was granted in 1964[40]. Independence was not achieved because of a Maltese fight for independence like the majority of former British colonies[41]. Rather independence was granted as a result of the Metropolitan Government's cuts in funding to the colony because of the decreasing strategic importance of the islands and the declaration by telegram by Sir. G Grantham that "Malta is no longer to be regarded as of any real importance as a Navy, Army and Air Force Base" (Grantham 1964 accessed through BDEEP[42]).

[40] British and NATO forces however retained a presence in Malta and continued to use the island's military facilities until March 31st, 1979

[41] While anti-colonial attitudes and opposition had been present on the Maltese islands well before Malta was even officially declared a British colony in 1814 (according to Baldacchino (2002) since at least the Middle Ages), independence was granted by Britain and not won, in that there was very little, if any, struggle for political independence (Baldacchino 2002). Despite this, acts of resistance and rebellion by "Maltese agitators" were active during the early decades of British rule. While British colonial administrators found little difficulty in suppressing 'political agitators" (Zammit 1981: 195) "everyday acts of resistance" were commonly adopted by the average Maltese. For example, in 'From the Pulse of Social Routine to the Subversion of Normality: The Multiple Use of Bell Tolling in Two Colonial Sites: The Ionian Islands and Malta 1800-1870's' Chircop (2010) examines how church bells and tolling were used by the Maltese to convey and foster dissent and accompany acts of resistance by utilizing "intense, unregulated, frenzied church bell tolling" to "generate a sense of irritation, restlessness, and anxiety in many British functionaries and residents, their families and companions" who considered such constant bell tolling a 'ferocious and barbarous practice' and an "intolerable mental torture" (Chircop 2010: 12).

Beyond "everyday acts of resistance" the spontaneous "bread riots" of June 1919, celebrated today as the national holiday of "Sette Giugno", represented the first national call for self-government, reflecting the dire economic consequences immediately following the end of the first world war in colonial Malta are credited with paving the way to the first self-governing constitution in 1921.

[42] British Documents on the End of Empire (BDEEP) is an online platform providing access to full-text, downloadable copies of previously unpublished materials from the official archives of the British Public Record Office.

Metaphorically located in the "nerve-centre between the Occident and Orient, and a port of call between the Christian and the Muslim worlds", the Maltese islands "occupied a position of ambivalence in the British colonial imagination" (Walz 2006: 3). Despite this ambivalence, colonialism in Malta has been characterized as "inherently depreciative and … co-substantially racist" towards the Maltese subject population (Chircop 2015: 15) with "a substantial part of British colonial narrative [being] replete with prejudiced and racist preconceptions which helped in the construction of the … Maltese 'inferior other' (Chircop 2010: 19). Noting the "paternalistic civilizing discourse" that both justified and indeed necessitated the over 150 years of British rule, Chircop (2015) describes the prevailing colonial discourse regarding "the Maltese native' as both "childlike, ignorant and… mentally underdeveloped" (16) and "a shady corrupt, laid back and undisciplined 'half-Arabic, with an added dose of superstition brought on by Catholicism" (21).

This negative stereotype of the simple-minded racially "bastardised" half- Arabic "Maltese native" permeated the colonial discourse and literature. For example, in the Royal Commission Report of 1812, the Commissioners reported that the "Maltese temperament was incompatible with an ordered system of representative government" (As noted by Zammit 1981: 198). Sir George Lewis, British statesman and man of letters who in 1836 accompanied Royal Commissioner to Malta John Austin, who spent two years recording the condition of the island and creating a new code of laws and wrote:

> The people are an Arab race, descended from the Saracens who obtained possession of the island. Their physiognomy bears a striking resemblance to the Jewish. They are a gloomy people; they never seem to laugh, or sing, or dance; their amusements, if such they can be called, are of a religious cast, such as processions on saints' days. They are exceedingly ignorant; and not unnaturally, as there has been no education for the poor, very little for the rich, and no free press (Seddall 1870: 230).

Similarly, Sarah Austin, wife of John Austin, who also accompanied her husband to Malta wrote in her recommendations to the Counsellor of State:

> The poor Maltese, a kind of bastard Arab, are far behind us in civilization, yet they are in advance of Africa…they are ignorant and childlike and in need of care and attention (Ross 1988: 153).

As Said writes "neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations which include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with that domination" (Said 1993: 8). Just as Said notes that Orientalism as a discourse empowered a specific set of economic, political and social relationships between Europe and its colonies, this "sort of civilizing missionary" discourse on Malta came to inform the Colonial State's 1870's "Anglicisation" project (Chircop 2015: 16).

The paternalistic state-driven Anglicisation project, "aimed at the colonisation of the mind" (Chircop 2015: 18) heralded in a new phase of British colonial rule in Malta and introduced colonial intervention in the social and cultural spheres of Maltese existence (Chircop 2015). Because, as noted by Cassar (2003), "the British could not understand why they should feel strangers within their 'own' property… and it was difficult for an Englishman to communicate through his language with those who were supposed to be a subject people" (98), the "Anglicisation" project was meant to establish British cultural supremacy in Malta. This "process of modernisation and Anglicisation" was "calculated to deepen and further extend colonial influence" on Maltese society and aimed to shape "uncultivated Maltese natives" into 'civilized British subjects' as the British claimed that there was not a people "so singularly unsuited to govern themselves" as the Maltese (Chircop 2015: 19; Sant Cassia 1993: 365).

According to Sant [43]Cassia (1993), one of the few indigenous Maltese anthropologists, the function of British colonialism was "akin to that of a gardener, to transform 'nature' into 'culture', 'barbarism' into 'civilization'" (364).

The British aimed to reform the Maltese language and religion, two aspects that had long been held to be the crux of Maltese identity (Cassar 2003; Chircop 2015; Chircop 2017) and "as the repository of all that was Maltese" (Sciriha 1995: 7) as they "realised that their hold over a fortress colony could never be complete and secure until they had merged the Islands' culture into their own" (Cassar 2003: 99). Despite being ultimately unsuccessful[44] in merging the "Islands' culture into their own" (Cassar 2003) the relationship between the Maltese 'natives' and the British colonial rulers revolved around hegemonic imperial discourse that created

[43] As Zammit (1981: 202) reports, the Maltese language provided a "safe outlet" and a "defence against foreign intrusions" as the Maltese population of the time was very well aware that it was an "excellent medium for grumbling against the foreign colonizers unable to speak it".

[44] Despite Britain's efforts at Anglicization, their primary objective of maintaining colonial control of 'their' fortress colony which required "keeping the population quiet with every means possible" (Chircop 2015). To achieve this, the British practiced a"'colonial realpolitik' where they offered certain, limited participation in decision making to the class of Maltese social elite, the "*Latinita"* and "*Italianates*", and the increasingly powerful members of the Roman Catholic Church who threatened civil unrest if efforts to Anglicize the state and Protestanize the church continued (Chircop 2015; Mitchell 2012). Accordingly, in spite of the Protestant interference that was planned the British Colonial administration guaranteed the Catholic Church and the small class of politically versed Maltese aristocracy, made up of lawyers, medics and priests that "Catholicism would remain intact as the prevalent religion of the Maltese, and that traditional rituals and customs would remain untouched" provided there was no local interference in their military and strategic aims (Chircop 2015: 20). In exchange for the tacit allegiance of the Catholic Church and the assurance that they would not incite violence or preach revolution, colonial authorities discouraged and deterred foreign proselytizing activities on Maltese soil, criminalized any depreciative signs or mocking of Catholic beliefs or rituals, and respected the hierarchy and the religious customs, beliefs, and practices of the Maltese people (Frendo 1998; Chircop 2015).

"conceptual oppositions between 'educated' and ' sheer ignorant', 'dirty' and 'clean', 'rude' and 'polite' and ultimately 'high' and 'low'[45] (Mitchell 2012: 97).

Characterized by a "modernist mentality and reformist aspirations" (Chircop 2004: 44), outright negative and Orientalist assessments of the Maltese people, depicted as culturally retarded, politically corrupt, and economically backward, were well circulated up until the end of the nineteenth-century (Smith 2006: 80). As one example (see Chapter four for more examples and a more detailed exploration of Orientalist discourse in colonial era literature), Narcisse Faucon (1893) wrote:

> The Maltese and their Island have a semi-barbaric allure. They are ignorant, crude, and argumentative, but they clean up quickly. Regarding their faith they are as insolent as the Arabs (as quoted in Smith 2006: 82).

Even as late as the conclusion of the Second World War, when, according to Chircop (2015) the Maltese "came to be liked and respected" and "collectively praised as 'war heroes' by the British for having defended the Islands from the Nazi-Fascist onslaught" (2015: 19) racially prejudiced anti-Maltese attitudes enabled the constant discrimination against the Maltese for "being too dark to be eligible for the same treatment as the British" (Affeldt 2014: 239).

Just as perceptions of the Maltese as Other, characterised by the 'absolute difference' of the Maltese from the British permeate colonial era discourse, Paul Sant Cassia (1993) and other (see Cutajar 1987; Debono 2017) argue that "Northern Europeans maintained their cultural hegemony

[45] While the Maltese were excluded "from all but the lowest offices" (Zammit 1981: 199), the incorporation of Maltese elites into the power structures of the Colonial State changed colonial discourse in Malta to some extent, in that the prevailing colonial discourse came to take on what Chircop (2015) terms a "class-racist imprint" with the 'lower' class labouring and illiterate majority being defined and treated as "low and barbaric" and "culturally, socially, and intellectually inferior" to the "educated and 'polite' elites" (2015: 18)

and superiority over the Maltese islands and legitimated the colonial enterprise" by implicitly and explicitly painting the Maltese as non- European, "oriental", "exotic" and "simple folk". Analyzing historian Nicholas de Piro's (1988) unrivaled anthology of paintings about the Maltese islands, *The International Dictionary of Artists who painted Malta*, Sant Cassia conducts an "excavation of ideologies, of dominant images of the island and its people" (1993: 354) as illustrated by the over 1200 artists featured in de Piro's anthology. In analysing the differences in perceptions between foreign artists and Maltese artists, Sant Cassia argues that paintings by foreign artists are rarely "'photographic representations' of how life 'really was'" but rather social objects that represent the dominant concerns of the age (1993: 362). Sant Cassia concludes that the overall impression gathered from the numerous British artists featured in the volumes is that Malta was represented as a "pretty colony, 'western' in its urban architecture but 'oriental' in its customs, people, and clothes" (363). Dominic Cutajar (1987), who suggests that travellers and artists were enticed to Malta as far back as the fifteenth-century due to the lure of the "Golden Orient" likewise argues that a "host of indications suggest that Malta itself – with its archaic but picturesque social and political establishment - was felt to form part of that area of exotic interest actually lying farther east" and notes that paintings of Malta during the pre-colonial and colonial era feature an "embedded whiff of Levantine exoticism" (1987: 102). With highly stylized images of the Maltese people as "picturesque peasants" and "quaintly exotic', Sant Cassia contends that these colonial era artistic representations of Malta and of the Maltese people emphasised and exaggerated the differences and distance between the colonizer and colonized, encouraged, and furthered colonial ambitions, and provided legitimacy for colonial interventions (Kothari and Wilkinson 2010). Pointing to the resilience of certain colonial categories and their circulation in contemporary society, Sant Cassia argues the "exotic" and

Orientalist representations illustrated as the "quintessence" of the Maltese islands in nineteenth-century paintings is "indeed the image of Malta that is peddled in contemporary tourist literature (1993: 367).

Conclusion

This chapter provides the theoretical foundations for this dissertation through its exploration of postcolonialism and its relevance for tourism studies. By examining the ways that contemporary tourism practices are both embedded in and reinforcing of postcolonial relationships, this chapter argues that postcolonialism offers an appropriate framework for understanding the 'exoticism' that many tourists seek in former colonies (d'Hauteserre, 2004) especially as it relates to the phenomenon of ethnosexual tourism to the Maltese islands, a postcolony.

The postcolonial critique of tourism, concerned primarily with the maintenance and perpetuation of colonial practices, influences, and power in the postcolony through tourism (Akama, Maingi, and Camargo 2011), suggests that the contemporary representations of postcolonial places cannot be separated from either the colonial era discourse or the contemporary socio-cultural and politico-economic milieu in which they emerge.

Concerned primarily with the postcolonial analysis of contemporary tourism writings and representations and Orientalist / Exoticist discourses, this chapter addresses the question: "how were the Maltese islands represented during colonial times?" Further, it contextualizes the subsequent discussion of the ways in which contemporary tourism representations echo colonial era representations. In exploring the colonial representations and interpretations of the Maltese islands and people, this research found that the Maltese people were characterized as "other" and by their, "absolute difference". This chapter exemplified this othering process by exploring many

of the negative stereotypes of the "simple-minded" racially "bastardised" half- Arabic "Maltese native" (Chircop 2015) that permeated the colonial discourse and literature.

Jacobs (1996) contends that "the structures of power that gave rise to empire live on in a more disorganised fashion" (1996: 15). And much like Jacobs' argument that the relations of power and difference established through nineteenth-century British imperialism remain, it is not difficult to find lingering traces of Orientalism and exoticism in contemporary representations of Malta, a country that is both postcolonial (in that it has achieved political independence) and neocolonial (in the sense that it remains economically and culturally dependent on other European powers) (Loomba 2007: 7).

In the field of postcolonial studies, travel writings, or travel narratives of the colonial period are aligned with other textual practices associated with colonial expansion (Edwards and Graulund 2010). Like cartography, demographic reports, botany, ethnography, and journalism, travel writings of the colonial era disseminated discourses of difference, of Orientalism and exoticism, that are inescapably complicit in colonialism, racism, and sexism and were ultimately used to justify, support, and promote the exercise of imperial power and the politics of colonial expansion (Edwards and Graulund 2010).

As will be discussed in Chapter Four, tourist narratives and travel writings, from colonial times to the present, have functioned to produce "geopolitical myths" and 'imagined geographies' about destinations (d'Hauteserre 2004: 238). Tourism images and "texts are characterized by established representations of toured places, people, and culture that reflect broader societal ideologies about race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and power" (Caton and Santos 2009: 191). By exploring historically rooted ideas found within contemporary tourism texts, this research will situate the Maltese islands within the broader framework of postcolonial studies.

Chapter Three

Methods and Methodology

"Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects. In 'action' is included all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it"

(Weber 1947:88)

Based on this study's research objectives, of exploring the ways that colonial and contemporary representations of Malta shape tourist imaginaries and tourism encounters, this study employs an analysis of participants' destination images of Malta as well as a content analysis of historical and contemporary tourism texts. This chapter details the research methodology, including how data were collected and analysed. It also discusses the research design and data collection methods used to explore the relationship between Malta's destination image, tourism representations, and the interpretations of the islands and people by a selection of female tourists to the islands. Following a brief introduction into why mixed methods research was utilized in this study, this chapter explores this project's guiding research questions, the data collection strategies, methods of analysis, and how each method was chosen.

Mixed Methods Research

The purpose of this research is two-fold. The first part of this study was designed to access Malta's destination image, how the Maltese islands are described, represented, and imagined. The second part was designed to understand how tourist imaginaries contribute to how the tourist women I interviewed interact with Maltese men and the Maltese islands.

The research questions for this study were:

i. How were the Maltese islands represented during colonial times?

ii. How are the Maltese islands represented today?

iii. How are the Maltese islands touristically imagined?

iv. How are the Maltese islands experienced by tourists?

v. How have these representations contributed to the ethnosexual relationships that develop between tourist women and Maltese men?

In order to address these questions, a mixed methods approach (also called mixed research and blended research (Thomas 2003) was used. In general, mixed methods research, a prevailing methodology in the social sciences today, represents research that allows for the *mixing* and inclusion of "issues and strategies surrounding methods of data collection (e.g., questionnaires, interviews, observations), methods of research (e.g., experiments, ethnography), and related philosophical issues (e.g., ontology, epistemology, axiology)" (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner 2007:119) in a single study.

Mixed methods research typically relies on collecting, analysing, and amalgamating both quantitative and qualitative data into one study (Palinkas et al, 2011). Accordingly, this study utilized a "family of methods" (O'reilly 2012: 11) which combines ethnography, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and conversations with the content analysis of brochures, guidebooks, and travel blogs dedicated to communicating travel information about the Maltese islands.

Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) identify five specific reasons that a researcher should consider using mixed methods: 'triangulation', or the "use of more than one method while studying the same research question in order to offset or counteract biases" and enhance the credibility of a study; 'development', which "seeks to use the results from one method to help develop or inform the other method"; 'initiation', which "seeks the discovery of paradox and contradiction"; 'expansion', which "aims to extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using

different methods for different inquiry components; and 'complementarity' (1989: 259). Complementarity, or "the elaboration or clarification of the results from one method with the findings from the other method", the reason a mixed methods approach was chosen for this present study, allows a researcher to garner a fuller understanding of a research phenomenon by measuring "overlapping, but also different facets of a phenomenon" (Greene, Caracelli, and Graham 1989: 258). Accordingly, information garnered by content analysis, regarding how the Maltese islands are framed, described, imagined, and represented were integrated with data generated from the ethnographic research methods.

How I studied women's ethnosexual travel and their opinions of Malta

This study aimed to explore the relationships that develop between the Northern European, English-speaking tourist women to the Maltese islands who become romantically or sexually involved with Maltese men and to understand these tourist women's impressions of Malta and Maltese men. This research was focused on the ethnosexual tourism of female tourists to Malta. Thus, it aimed to collect in-depth, rich, and nuanced qualitative data to explore the women's descriptions of their interactions with local men on the Maltese islands, and to examine the experiences, views, and attitudes held by these tourist women towards Maltese men. The priority in this study was given to qualitative ethnographic fieldwork.

While the term ethnography is variable and contested and accordingly difficult to define, ethnography "is based on the apparently simple idea that in order to understand what people are up to, it is best to observe them by interacting with them intimately over an extended period" (Holden 2004: 172). Ethnographic methods, considered by many to be one of the best ways to learn, in detail, about a diverse range of complex social phenomena (O'reilly 2012) are designed to understand "cultural practices, human beliefs and behaviours, and sociocultural

changes" (Adams, 2012: 339). Ethnographic research, described by Van Maanen (2006) as decoding one culture while recoding it for another, is particularly apt for both tourism related research and for 'sex tourism' related research (see Adams, 2012; Salazar 2011; Sørensen 2003; Badone 2010; Ness 2003; Padilla 2007; Frohlick and Harrison 2008). Additionally, as Adams (2012) notes this methodology is considered particularly valuable "for offering insights into how people conceptualize themselves vis-a-vis others" (Adams 2012: 343), which is a central component of this research project.

As Adams (2012) notes, ethnographic research is far from being a "single thing" and encompasses the research methods of unstructured and structured interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, photographic and video documentation, however "foremost among the techniques that comprise the ethnographic method is that of participant observation" (Adams 2012: 339).

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), ethnography, and specifically participant observation, which they regard as the "most basic form of social research" (2), usually involves:

> the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artefacts - in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry (2007: 3)

Accordingly, participant observation, regarded as the cornerstone of ethnographic methods (Adams, 2012: 340), was the central methodology and foundation of this ethnographic research. However, as Bernard (1988 as cited by Ritchie and Burns 2005: 64) argues, participant observation should not be regarded as one single method but rather as a "strategy that facilitates data collection". And while direct observation is an indispensable component of ethnography, so

are casual conversations, in-depth informal unstructured interviews, and even structured interviews (Ritchie and Burns 2005: 63). This work utilized direct observation, casual conversations, and in-depth informal semi-structured interviews.

Participant observation "seeks to uncover, make accessible, and reveal both the meanings people use to make sense of their everyday lives" (Ritchie and Burns 2005: 65) and what people do. As such, it has been chosen as the most appropriate method for this research as it is concerned both with interactions and subjective meanings from the insider perspective of tourist women to Malta. The rationale for the choice of participant observation was further inspired by a wide range of studies that had effectively used these method in a tourism context (see Ness 2003; Jacobs 2016).

Participant observation involves attempts "to understand and interpret the meanings and experiences of a group" (Ritchie and Burns 2005: 65), a task which social scientists suggest is only truly possible through participation in relevant activities with the individuals under study (Ritchie and Burns 2005). A crucial element of ethnographic research is participation in the lives of the people being studied. According to Musante and DeWalt:

> Participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines…. (2010:1).

Likewise, LeCompte and Schensul, who argue the ethnographer's role is to discover "*what* people actually do and the reasons they give for doing it" (1999:1), note that the three particular staples of ethnography are that the research occurs in "natural" or "uncontrolled" settings, that researchers build trust and develop a rapport with participants through participation and intimate involvement, and that the researcher is committed to producing a picture of cultures and social groups from the perspective of the study participants.

Frohlick and Harrison (2008), writing specifically about ethnographic research that involves tourists, note:

> Fundamentally, ethnography is about social relations, and thus our complex entanglements in dialectic relationships with tourists enable us to comprehend tourist experiences and subjectivities through participation in touristic settings well beyond what we might gain from merely observing, if only looking at tourists were even a possibility as ethnographers (2008:10).

Following Frohlick and Harrison (2008), to fulfil my role as a participant as observer, and to facilitate the collection of data from the tourist women to Malta in "natural" or "uncontrolled" settings, I participated in a wide range of touristic activities, including trips to many of Malta's "tourist" beaches, day-long tourist excursions that are packaged and sold to tourists, day-long stints on Malta's 'hop-on-hop-off' tour buses and outings to many of Malta and Gozo's restaurants and resorts.

The process of participant observation requires the researcher to involve themselves in a particular social setting and directly observe "him/herself, …others, and the setting (Mackellar 2013: 57). Gold (1969: 219) developed a basic typology of roles for participant observation in the field— the complete participant, the participant as observer, the observer as participant, and the complete observer. For this current research, I adopted the role of participant as observer which entails full participation with the group under study, but is distinguished from the other field roles by its partially overt rather than covert nature of participation. The participant as observer role differs significantly from the other roles in that "both field worker and informant are aware that theirs is a field relationship" (Gold,1969: 220), meaning that my role as a researcher was not withheld from participants, particularly during the interview stages of the research.

The observations I conducted for this project began on my first day in Malta and continued throughout the three-month period that I spent in Malta and Gozo, between June and September 2018. As a Maltese woman who spent much of her life on the island, I was both familiar with the islands as well as with most of the popular tourist attractions and touristic "hot spots".

Posing the question "how does one do ethnographic research with a group that lacks any 'habitus of collectivity'?", Frohlick and Harrison (2008) note the challenges of doing research in highly mobile fields of study and the perceived difficulty in researching and gaining access to tourists. They point out:

> Tourists number in the millions; never all gather in one place; generally, do not stay anywhere for extended periods; have varied national identities, socioeconomic class positions, ages, genders, sexualities, racial and ethnic identifications, professions and work lives. Additionally, each has a unique personal history, and a life outside of the time they spend as a tourist. No matter how they define themselves, or understand their own motivations for travel, or how they might be categorized by others – traveller, tourist, wanderer, cottager, adventurer, eco- or cultural, romance/sex tourist, student or even 'not-a tourist'; or how their travels might be described – long haul, cruise, independent, guided, episodic, seasonal, frivolous, rest and relaxation, they are a complex, dispersed and highly mobile population (2008: 5).

Despite this caution, I experienced no difficulty either accessing tourist women, nor establishing rapport or relationships with them. Utilizing my pre-existing networks and contacts in Malta, including a close friendship with a beach chair and umbrella vendor at one of the island's most popular tourist beaches, and a familial relationship with a hostess at a popular resort in Malta's northern tip, facilitated easy access to tourist women. I easily made contact with tourist women and became somewhat of a "confidant" to some who seemed enthusiastic and eager to tell their stories.

Part of this, I believe, [also noted by Frohlick (2007) in her work with female sex tourists to Costa Rica] stemmed from the fact that many of the tourist women who participated in this

research had traveled to Malta alone or with large groups of people with whom they had not developed close relationships. As such, many of the tourist women found themselves isolated during their liminoid time as tourists and found company in me as an English-speaking woman roughly their age.

Another part of this, I believe, stemmed from the willingness of the female participants to share their experiences, particularly their romantic experiences, "woman to woman". While I remained cognizant of the involvedness of the interview process, particularly as it relates to the social dynamics of power between and amongst women, and of Phoenix's (1994) critique of Oakley's (1981) "*Interviewing women: a contradiction in terms*?" and Phoenix's argument that "notions about feminist interviewing as a 'cozy enterprise' based on shared gender understandings ignore differences between women in terms of race, class, status, sexual orientation, politics, age and so forth" (1994:50), the women who participated in this research appeared eager and willing to speak to me and share their opinions and experiences. According to Finch (1993), one of the reasons why women are more likely to enthusiastically speak to and share with a female researcher lies in the expectation that as a woman, the researcher shares their gendered social experiences.

Finch asserts that:

> Women are more used than men to accepting intrusions through questioning into the more private parts of their lives... through their experience of motherhood they are subject to questioning from doctors, midwives and health visitors; and also from people such as housing visitors… who deal principally with women as the people with imputed responsibility for home and household. As subjects of research, therefore, women are less likely than men to find questions about their life unusual and therefore inadmissible (1993: 76).

Finch further concludes that "when the interviewer is also a woman both parties share a subordinate structural position by virtue of their gender. This creates the possibility that a particular kind of identification will develop" (Finch 1993).

As Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2003) note "participant observation involves not only gaining access to and immersing oneself in new social worlds but also producing written accounts and descriptions that bring versions of these worlds to others" (2003: 358). Even though some ethnographers argue that field notes should be considered secondary to full immersion into a culture or social setting and "that if too much time is devoted to writing detailed notes then the deeper, intuitive experience of being within a culture will be lost" (Mulhall 2003: 311), field notes remain widely recommended by ethnographic researchers as an essential component of qualitative research. (Phillippi and Lauderdale 2018). As Maharaj (2016:114) argues "taking field notes to document the participants' verbal and nonverbal behaviours and the setting and context in which these behaviours take place, as well as the researcher's own thoughts, feelings, impressions, and insights, can provide a rich source of data for investigating the meaning of participants' words and actions in their context" (Maharaj 2016).

While transforming my thoughts, feelings and observations into written text represented a significant undertaking for me as a beginner researcher, I used the method of field notation suggested by Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018) and unobtrusively took small, keyword-based notes during events and observations, or as close as possible in time to when events were observed to ensure my memory was fresh.

Writing up the data produced by participant observation is done through a process that Geertz declares the foremost tool for the ethnographer, the 'thick description' (as cited by Ritchie and Palmer 2005: 65). Despite some variation in usage, the term ''thick description'' typically refers

to the "social scientist's work of making sense of and describing social actions and activities within their unique context" (Cromdal et al., 2008: 930).

The main component of a "thick description" is the researcher's interpretation of what is/was being observed (Ponterotto 2006). According to Denzin (2001, cited by Ponterotto 2006:540) thick description:

> … does more than record what a person is doing. It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard. (2001: 83)

Using Ponterotto's (2006) proposal regarding how "thick description" might be manifested in ethnographies and interviews and Mulhall's (2003) personal schema as a guide, the following types of information was captured in my fieldnotes:

Setting. I included both the location of the interview or observation and type of setting. For example, one of my many meetings with Adrianna, a key study participant discussed in Chapter 5, was noted in my fieldwork journal as taking place in Mdina, outside the Fontanella Tea Room restaurant.

Participants. According to Ponterotto (2006) "thick description of one's sample would entail describing fully the participants of the study without compromising anonymity" (546). Following Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018) suggestion to "describe the overall appearance and demeanor of participants, noting any baseline nonverbal behaviors" (385) I included in my notes how participants behaved, interacted, dressed, moved and recorded any demographic information that was either observed or conveyed by the research participant. Research focusing on stigmatized activities, such as sex tourism,

involve some element of risks and therefore necessitate the protection of both the research participants and the researchers (Johnson, 2012). To minimize the risk of identification, all participants in my study have been randomly assigned pseudonyms, some details, including locations and personal identifiable traits, have been altered to protect anonymity.

Interview or Observation. I included as much information as possible about what the participants said or did as well as their response to the interview, recording any important nonverbal behaviors that would not have been caught on recording.

A personal/reflective diary. To facilitate critical reflection, I also included both some personal thoughts about the interview or period of observation or the study participant.

As Maharaj (2016) notes, engaging in critical reflection after each interview or period of observation encourages the researcher to assess their own performance as an ethnographer, and their own biases, and feelings. Accordingly, the writing of comprehensive field notes was not done until I had left the study site completely.

In addition to participant observation, I conducted a total of thirty-two (32) face-to face, semi structured, qualitative interviews with Northern and Western European, English-speaking women, ranging in age from twenty to late forties, with the average age of participants being mid-twenties.[46]

Using some prepared questions and probes, a flexible agenda or list of themes to focus the interview, whilst still allowing for the exploration of new themes and ideas that emerge as a

[46] See Appendix A for all relevant demographic characteristics of study interviewees.

result of the interviewee's response, semi structured interviews are designed to understand people's perspectives and allow for the examination of areas most relevant to each interviewee[47].

By using open-ended questions, with participants encouraged to expand on their own experiences (Patton 2013, the interviews in this study functioned as a means to obtain firsthand "knowledge and opinions ... [and] important insights" on a particular subject (Hancock and Algozzine 2016: 44). For Polit and Beck (2004 as cited by Dangerfield 2012) interviews are a method of data collection "in which one person, an interviewer asks questions of another person, a respondent, [and] are conducted either face-to-face or by telephone" (Polit and Hungler, 1999). In this study, as noted, all interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis, between me, the researcher, and the tourist women I interviewed. According to Appleton (1995), collecting data through an interview methodology has many advantages including, as Dangerfield notes "control over the interview process [which] lies with the interviewer who can put the interviewee at ease by the use of effective interpersonal skills and the willingness to reword questions as necessary" (2012: 79). In this particular study, this control over the interview process granted by the chosen methodology allowed me not only the ability to develop connections and rapport with study participants but also to navigate language differences by reworking, reframing, and rewording questions to garner considered and thorough responses.

Both my field notes and my interviews produced a large amount of rich data. According to Musante and DeWalt, the fundamental techniques related to the analysis of field notes and interview transcripts are "reading, thinking, and writing; and rereading, rethinking, and rewriting" (2010: 179). Accordingly, my observational field notes were first written in a

[47] see Appendix B for survey instruments used during the interview.

notebook. They were later rewritten on my personal computer on a digital notebook program, Microsoft OneNote, that allowed me to organize them by subject and date. Likewise, the interviews I conducted were recorded on a secure recording application on my personal cell phone and then transcribed verbatim. I then listened to each recording a number of times, transcribed each recording myself, and then read each transcript several times in order to familiarize myself with the data. With the objective of analysing this qualitative data being to determine the themes, relationships, beliefs and assumptions that shape respondents' views (Walden 2015), the raw data, field notes, and interview transcripts, were then coded and categorized by the themes and sub-themes I identified during the rereading, rewriting and relistening stages and stored in a computer program that allowed for each code to be given a 'tab' on its application.

This study employs an analysis of each participant's destination image of Malta as well as content analysis of historical and contemporary tourism texts. These methods are employed in keeping with the research objectives of this dissertation; namely, to build on emerging tourism studies scholarship by examining the ways that the reproduction of colonial representations of Malta in contemporary tourism narratives about Malta shapes tourist imaginaries and tourism encounters.

How I studied Malta's destination image

The conceptual framework developed for destination image assessment by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) has influenced a great number of works designed to access tourists' destination image to date. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) recommended a "multidimensional definitional and measurement approach to destination image and described destination image as being comprised of three dimensions: attribute-holistic, functional-psychological, and common-unique" (as cited

by Hahm 2004:14). Echtner and Ritchie (1991) advocate for the use both structured and unstructured methods to assess the breadth and depth of the destination images held. They recommend a qualitative approach to reveal the holistic and psychological dimensions of destination images that are not effectively gathered by quantitative methods and a quantitative approach, involving the use of multi-category scales or Likert scales, for data concerning common characteristics and destination attributes. A review of recent literature in the field confirms that the majority of destination image studies or assessments are statistically based.

Despite the fact that most destination image studies have used attribute lists and a number of other scales to measure a perceived image, a pilot study[48] I designed to access Malta's destination image revealed that potential tourists to Malta frequently had very limited knowledge about the destination, specifically regarding the vacation site attributes. While Echtner and Ritchie (1993) contend that a combination of structured and unstructured methodologies is essential for studies on destination images, they also note that the use of open-ended destination image questions offer the possibility for holistic destination characteristics and descriptions to emerge. They ultimately conclude that "it was found that the open-ended questions were

[48] I conducted a pilot test prior to the main survey, using the conceptual framework developed for destination image by Echtner and Ritchie (1991). Twenty (20) individuals who participated in online discussion groups on travel and tourism were asked to rate 22 items, measuring five dimensions of destination image, specifically natural environment, amenities, attractions, accessibility and social environment on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*) with a "don't know" option available for each image item. While elements of Malta's perceived natural environment, specifically its perceived Scenic beauty, Climate, and Beaches received generally high rankings, the majority of amenity, attraction (which included a list of tourist attractions and places of interest derived from https://www.visitmalta.com/ attraction lists), accessibility and social environment elements were ranked "don't know" by participants, indicating very limited knowledge about the Maltese islands as a tourism destination.

successful in drawing out the holistic and unique components of destination image" (1993: 9). Tapachai and Waryszak's (2000) test of holistic approaches to destination image assessment instead of the "piecemeal-based approach" suggested by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) concluded that measuring destination image as a "holistic concept" as opposed to based on a predetermined lists of attributes is an effective way to proceed. Accordingly, this study utilized the unstructured 'free elicitation' method advanced by Reilly (1990) to access Malta's holistic destination image.

Free elicitation as a methodological tool can provide useful data regarding the importance or availability of some of the thoughts people have about a topic (Carlston 2014). This method uses open-ended questions and allows respondents to describe their impressions of the destination freely and without necessitating knowledge of any destination specific measurable attributes. Destination qualities, attributes, or sites were not predetermined and respondents were allowed to more freely describe their impressions of the destination, allowing for the richness of the image items salient to the individual to be captured. As Reilly (1990) explains:

> Here, the purpose is not so much to reveal hidden or unconscious motivational states but rather to allow the respondents to describe the target stimulus in terms that are salient to the respondents, rather than responding to the researcher's pre-determined image dimensions (1990:22).

The population for this portion of the study was Canadian, American, British, and German citizens interested in travel and tourism. To access this population, online discussion groups on travel and tourism were used. A total of seven (7) online public Facebook discussion groups were contacted and messages were posted publicly to their subscribers. The difference between the images formed by firsthand experiences versus those formed by secondary sources are noted by Echtner and Ritchie (1991), who recommend researchers separate them "by either controlling for or monitoring those individuals that have visited the destination" (1991: 4). Accordingly

participants were only asked to participate if they had never visited Malta or Gozo. A total of seven (7) responses were not included in the data set because the respondent indicated that they had in fact visited the Maltese Islands. Nine (9) responses were not included because they contained strong anti-Maltese or racist statements. Two (2) responses were excluded from the data set because the respondent somehow provided their impression of the Maltese dog breed. A total of eighteen (18) responses were therefore excluded. Data was collected from a total of one hundred and eighty-five (185) respondents.

With the understanding that a holistic destination image is greater than the sum of its component parts, this study sought to address the "overall" or holistic destination image of Malta, or the "composite of various products (attractions) and attributes woven into a total impression" (MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997: 538). Accordingly, respondents were presented two open-ended questions, adapted from Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) research on destination images, that were designed to identify the holistic perception of all components of Malta's destination image. The final set of questions used to measure the holistic components of Malta's destination image were the following:

1. What three words would you use to describe Malta as a vacation destination?
2. What images come to mind when you think of Malta as a vacation destination?

Both questions were intended to allow respondents to think freely and without the restrictiveness of a predetermined set of attributes about the Maltese islands and to describe their general or overall impressions of them.

Content analysis is a commonly used qualitative research technique and is perhaps the fastest-growing method in the social sciences (Ritchie, Burns, and Palmer, 2005) , and is applied widely

in tourism studies (Hadinejad et. Al. 2019). Content analysis is an overall term for a number of different approaches used for textual analysis. Qualitative content analysis, as a methodology has a long history of use in both communication studies and in research concerning travel and tourism (Pritchard and Morgan, 2000). McNeill (1990: 112, as cited by Li 2017) defines content analysis as "a method of analysing the contents of documents or other non-statistical material in such a way that it is possible to make statistical comparisons between them". The research that uses qualitative content analysis "focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text" (Hannam and Knox 2005). Partly bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative methodologies, "qualitative content analysis moves beyond arguments of statistical significance to uncover categories, themes, and patterns of social realities" (Caton and Santos 2009: 197).

Hannam and Knox (2005), contend that successfully content analysis necessarily includes the counting, identification of issues, and interpretation of the content that is assumed to be important or significant. Content analysis involves the use of a sample which is both representative but small enough to allow for substantive analysis (Caton and Santos, 2009). As Weber (1990) notes "qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely to classify large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings". For this analysis, qualitative content analysis was defined following the definition of Hsieh and Shannon (2005: 1278), as a research method that allows for the understanding of text data through the "systematic classification and categorisation" and identification of themes or patterns. Following Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) model for inductive "conventional content analysis", I avoided using preconceived categories or coding schemas. Instead I allowed the categories and names for categories to emerge from the

data (Kondracki and Wellman, 2002). In this study, the content of the travel texts was manually coded and analyzed for common themes by me as a sole researcher. With the basic assumption that there is a relationship between the frequency of incidence of a specific theme and its importance or significance (Caton and Santos 2009), after data analysis, which included the reading and highlighting of text and the development of an fitting coding schema, message elements were counted to determine "…explicit themes, relative emphasis on various topics, and the amount of space or time devoted to certain topics" (Kondracki, Wellman, & Amundson, 224).

Accordingly, respondents' replies to the question "What three words would you use to describe Malta as a vacation destination?" was analysed for its content. Synonymous traits were combined reducing the list to 18 distinct traits that are summarized in Table 1 in chapter 4.

How I studied travel texts

Tourism scholars have noted the widely influential role that travel texts play in the social construction of space and its inhabitants, with distinctive national and cultural identities of destinations in part being constructed from the representations of tourism texts. This portion of the study aimed to assess tourist images of Malta as a tourism destination. The assessment of Malta's destination image was conducted through both the review of the relevant destination image literature and the results of the content analysis of relevant travel texts. This study attempted to identify the dominant representations of the Maltese islands by analyzing the contents of a variety of travel texts and information sources including brochures, guidebooks, and travel blogs. The use of content analysis as a methodology is regarded as one of the most accepted approaches to researching written travel texts (Lew, 1991). O'Leary and Deegan (2005:

250) claim that utilizing content analysis to study travel and tourism texts can reveal a great deal about the images projected by and about a tourism destination.

Utilizing the same method of content analysis that was used in the previous section for accessing destination image, a content analysis of word-based data was used to determine the dominant elements used in the tourism text representations of the Maltese islands.

Again, this portion of the research utilized an indicative approach, where the message elements were examined without preconceived notions or categories. After dominant themes emerged and were identified, the classification of categories or codes was guided by a postcolonial theoretical framework as well as by previous related empirical studies, especially those of Echtner and Prasad (2003).

Travel Brochures

Brochures, as "formal information sources", play an important role on the image formation of a destination image (Beerli and Marten 2004; Jenkins 2003), and play a particularly important part in the formation of an "induced destination image" (Sirakaya and Sonmez 2000). Travel brochures, as a subset of 'destination' related print and literature in general, play a significant role in the imagining and re-imagining of places and people and are regarded as fundamental in the shaping of historical and contemporary beliefs and attitudes towards places, cultures, peoples, and societies (Lew, Hill and Williams 2008).

Malta, like many nation states, through the medium of national tourist offices, dedicates substantial expenditure to promoting itself as a destination for foreign tourists. Recognising "the importance of brochures in the destination-image formation and in the holiday destination choice" (Francesconi 2011: 342), the Maltese Tourism Authority, aiming to promote and

advance Malta as a tourism destination, in 2010, issued a series of English language tourism brochures that they suggest exemplify the core values of diversity, heritage, and hospitality.

This research investigates the tourist image of Malta presented by the Maltese Tourism Authority, through a content analysis of a sample of their brochures.

As of April 2018, a total of eleven (11) downloadable digitalized English language brochures were available online directly from the Maltese Tourism Authority's website. The sample for this analysis was the eleven (11) brochures available at the time of writing and includes the brochures titled *The Maltese islands, Between the sun and the sea, Meet the Maltese, The ideal location for a well-deserved break, 7000 years of civilisation, A treasure trove of heritage and culture, A journey of discovery, It's all happening here, Gozo ...the magic of Calypso's Isle, A vibrant nightlife and An ideal setting for learning English*

A content analysis was performed on the brochure's word-based data with results summarized in Chapter Four Table 2: Dominant Themes in MTA Brochures

Guidebooks

Like brochures, travel guidebooks play an important role in the tourism industry. Guidebooks, as important sources of information for travellers have been described as mediators, translators, interpreters and "communicators of place and people" (Quinlan 2005: 2).

Understanding the importance and significance of guidebooks in the tourism process, this research used content analysis on several of the most commonly used English language commercial guidebooks that had an edition dedicated to the Maltese islands. Given the impact, significance and commercial success (Tegelberg 2010: 493) as the largest travel guidebook publisher in the world, the content analysis of travel guides began with *Lonely Planet Malta.*

However, because the *Lonely Planet* guidebook is relatively short at 183 pages long (for comparison the most recent edition of *Lonely Planet India* is 1248 pages, *Lonely Planet Italy* 992 pages, *Lonely Planet Rome* 320 pages, and *Lonely Planet Toronto* 256 pages) and because of the majority of the 'verbal components' noted came out of the guidebook's "Welcome to Malta and Gozo" or "At a Glance" sections, four additional guidebooks were analyzed. Like the *Lonely Planet Malta,* the guidebooks *Malta: Where To Go, What To See - A Malta Travel Guide, In Love With Malta: The Hidden Treasures, Greater Than a Tourist – Malta: 50 Travel Tips from a Local (*in this case the 'local' was a writer who had resided in Malta for three months), and *A Complete Guide to Malta* the majority of each book was maps, and lists of local restaurants, hotels, etc. Accordingly, the content analysis was limited to the books' introductions, 'Why Go?' sections, and any other section that was not designed as a detailed list of accommodations or attractions.

Blogs

According to Le and Wang (2011: 3), the Internet has quickly become one of the most useful and effective ways for travelers to seek out travel-related information, with travel blogs in particular becoming an increasingly significant way for travelers and tourists to exchange information (Wenger 2008). Given this rise in the popularity of travel blogs, textual data for content analysis was collected from popular travel blog sites, which include online posts about Malta and Gozo and its visitors' beliefs and evaluations.

Taking into account that the goal of this study is not, and indeed cannot be, a comprehensive analysis of all blog posts on the Maltese islands, only recent blog posts from the most requested sites were analyzed. As of April 2018 thirty-two (32) travel blogs about a blogger's trip to Malta

were featured on the 50 most visited travel blog sites (based on Google Analytics reflecting each site's visitor statistics over the most recent January to April quarter).

Conclusion

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017: 1) the methodological choices for a study "should be driven by epistemological considerations, the nature of the research problem, and the study objectives". Accordingly the research methods that were chosen for this study, namely content analysis and various ethnographic methods including both participant observation and interviews, were utilized to begin to answer the questions posed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation.

This research aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of female ethnosexual tourism on the Maltese islands, based partly on the ethnographic research I conducted. While the interviews utilized for this study were not scientifically random, and findings are not generalizable to all female tourists to the Maltese islands, or even to all female tourists to the Maltese islands who engage in sexual or romantic relationships with Maltese men, the interviews and data collected through participant observation provide an overview of the "types" of relationships that tourist women develop and the meanings they ascribe to their quest for or involvement in these ethnosexual relationships with Maltese men.

By identifying both the colonial and contemporary image representations of the Maltese islands through content analysis of tourism texts, this research aims to situate the sexual or romantic relationships developed by tourist women to the Maltese islands within the context of the particular global, colonial, historical, political and social contexts from which they arise.

Chapter Four

Creating Tourism and Shaping Expectations

"Representations, whether textual, verbal, or pictorial, are powerful elements through which the world is understood and imaginaries are shaped"

(Buzinde, Santos, and Smith 2006: 323).

With the popularity of the Maltese Islands established as a tourist destination, this chapter begins by tracing the evolution of Malta's tourism policies and its tourism marketing and management. This chapter also initiates a broader investigation into contemporary representations of Malta and the Maltese people. Understanding tourism representations and discourses as "social practices, which constitutes and conditions in its representation of power structures" (Simmons 2004, as quoted by Cassar and Avellino 2020), this chapter begins to answer the question: "How are the Maltese islands represented today?" Using a sample of contemporary Western travel writings including brochures, travel guidebooks, and digital travel blogs, the chapter draws on the previous chapter's findings regarding the outright negative and Orientalist assessments of the Maltese people, their language, and their religion that circulated up until the end of the nineteenth century (Smith 2006: 80). Further, it argues that the language and imageries used to promote and describe the Maltese islands depend on an Orientalist and "exoticized" discourse; one that both echoes and recycles historical accounts and colonial imaginaries of early European explorers and colonizers, and reproduces the asymmetrical relationship between Malta and its former colonizers.

History of Malta's Tourism Policy

According to the National Statistics Office of Malta, the Maltese Islands are contemporarily a mass tourist destination that welcomes over 2.6 million tourists annually. However, because tourism development planning before the 1980s primarily aimed at increasing the volume of tourists, , the Maltese islands experienced rapid and relatively unintentional growth that corresponded with "poor product development" and a host of problems. These problems included the degradation of the natural environment, infrastructural collapses, over-dependence on the United Kingdom as the primary tourist source market (Ebejer 2009) and seasonal instabilities with severe under-employment during Malta's winter months (Markwick 1999). Dodds (2007), Lockhart (1997) and Markwick (1999) all note that Malta's tourism policies changed radically in the late 1980s following the state's decision to move Malta's economy forward with increases in the tourism related sectors. In 1988, following the regeneration strategies implemented by many tourist receiving countries in the Mediterranean, the Malta Tourism Development Plan recommended "diversification, a lengthening of its main season, the opening of new, wider markets, and the development of niche-marketing" (Marwick 1999: 228). The development of cultural tourism was one strategy suggested in Malta's Tourism Development Plan to aid in the diversification of tourists to Malta. Yet, according to Horwath and Horwath, the reframing of Malta as a site for cultural tourism, by British consultants appointed by the Maltese government, was unfeasible because the potential market segment interested in cultural tourism was too small in comparison to the potential segment interested in mass-tourism (John 2015).

The advice of the Malta Tourism Development Plan was then for Malta to leverage its existing "sun and sea" appeal, while placing increased emphasis on heritage and cultural elements by promoting combined cultural and "sun and sea" holidays (Foxell and de Trafford 2010: 158). The Development Plan further recommended that Malta seek to counter its international reputation for offering a low-quality tourism product, recommending that Malta's marketing and communication strategy focus on niche tourism products, promoting the history of the Knights of Malta, and concentrating on the development of tourist accessible cultural activities like the festas (Foxell and de Trafford 2010).

Despite the initial efforts aimed at rejuvenation, increased competitiveness, and increases to the quality of touristic offerings, Malta's image until the year 2000 was:

> …that of a sun destination that differed very little from other Mediterranean resorts; with a warm climate, island setting with friendly and hospitable people, strong historical links, language familiarity with main source market (UK), low standard of overall accommodation and catering, largely aimed at lower socio-economic groupings, low quality of service/training (Pollacco 2003: 74 as quoted in Ebejer 2018).

In 2002, the Maltese Tourism Authority (MTA) engaged in a process it summarised as "the repositioning of Malta as a different type of destination," where "every visit would be a unique experience." This entailed developing a strategy for tourism that encompassed mainstream tourism and identified niche tourism (MTA 2002: 6). With heritage tourism becoming an indispensable aspect of the tourism industry, particularly in postcolonial countries (Vitorio 2019), Malta sought, once again, to remodel itself as a "cultural heritage" tourist destination. This repositioning prompted the renewed upkeep and improvement of Malta and Gozo's noteworthy heritage sites in order to improve their interpretation, tourist accessibility, and promotion (Foxell and de Trafford 2010).

In 2005, the Maltese Tourism Authority embarked on a branding exercise in hopes of marketing the Maltese islands more effectively. They began the process of re-branding the islands by adopting a single logo to stand out for the Maltese Islands. In addition to the logo, this branding campaign highlighted three core values that "give Brand Malta a qualitative and quantitative edge over other destinations" (MTA 2005). Heritage, Hospitality, and Diversity were named as these core values. Heritage, according to the MTA (2005), referred to Malta's distinct heritage based on a long historical tradition. Hospitality referred to the "natural" hospitality of the Maltese people who "showed uncommon kindness" (and hospitality) to St. Paul after his shipwreck on the islands. Diversity referred simultaneously to Malta's cultural diversity and the diversity in activities and leisure opportunities available to tourists.

With diversity, heritage, and hospitality as "core values" that could apply to a number of other countries, the MTA opted to attempt to shape the destination image of Malta through a series of promotional campaigns, including brochures and other tourism texts. These texts were designed to influence the tourist imaginary of potential tourists and Malta's overall destination image. The MTA then deliberately planned and implemented a "shift from 'blue', sea-side resort based tourism to 'grey', heritage based tourism" and Malta, as Ashworth and Tunbridge (2005) note, was no longer advertised as the "sun drenched leisure island with 200 kilometres of coastline" and "clear and transparent waters" but rather became "7000 years of history", "an enigma of prehistory" and an "island of mystery" (Ashworth and Tunbridge 2005: 45). The success of this national rebranding campaign is noted by the MTA. Indeed, the 2017 MTA Market Profile Survey indicates that only 15.7 percent chose Malta and Gozo as their travel destination solely for the traditional, "plain vanilla" (Ashworth and Tunbridge 2005:45) "sun and sea" factors,

while the largest share of tourists, 42.9 percent decided on the Maltese Islands as their travel destination because of their "culture and heritage."

Tourism Texts

Tourism texts, or travel writings, the primary focus of this chapter, are by definition "texts concerned with journeys and written by authors who are themselves frequent, if not continuous and compulsive travellers" (Philip 1993: 241). While today such literature is increasingly produced and circulated online, travel writings can be found within a wide variety of sources ranging from popular media, such as travelogues, novels, poems, travel blogs, travel videos, to a range of materials produced by destination marketers, such as official destination websites, brochures and travel guidebooks (Tivers and Rakic 2016). In fact, a good deal of the marketing of places to tourists is done using travel literature (Lew 1991).

Thetextual representations of places in travel brochures, guidebooks, and travel blogs play a significant role in the imagining and re-imagining of places and people. Moreover, these promotional narratives have long assisted in the shaping of attitudes, both historically and contemporarily, towards places, cultures, peoples, and societies (Lew, Hall and Williams 2008). Williamson (1978) has argued that destination advertisements and other travel writings "operate through ideology and are instrumental in the reproduction of society's structures, continually using and reusing particular myths and values" (as cited by Pritchard 2001). Destination related literature, much like the input of other tourists, locals, and professional guides, plays an indispensable role in the "touristic process"by facilitating and mediating the relationship between the tourist and the place. These texts act as mediators in the relationship between tourist and destination, and between host and guest. Tourism texts offer potential tourists a "cognitive

framework" (Bhattacharya 1997: 372) for understanding a destination, its cultures and local residents.

Scholarly research on tourism texts offers an understanding of travel brochures, guidebooks, and travel blogs as "dynamic texts" (McGregor 2000) and mediators in "touristic worldmaking" (see Feighery 2006; Hollinshead 2007). The act of worldmaking involves various, complex, and dynamic representations that "produce" places, cultures, individuals, and heritages. Hollinshead et al. (2009) argue that tourism texts do not just "axiomatically reproduce some given realm of being (be it a projected 'people,' a promoted 'place' or a propelled 'past'), but commonly make, de-make or re-make those very populations, destinations and heritages" (428).

Drawing on Goodman's (1978) account of symbolic "worldmaking", Hollinshead et al. (2009) extend the concept to tourism, defining it as:

> …the creative—and often 'false' or 'faux' imaginative processes and projective promotional activities—which management agencies and other mediating bodies engage in to purposely (or otherwise unconsciously) privilege particular dominant/favoured representations of people/places/pasts within a given or assumed region, area, or 'world,' over and above other actual or potential representations of those subjects (Hollinshead et al. 2009: 430–31).

As representations in tourism texts, worldmaking activities can be understood as those "mediating acts by and through which a particular vision of the world is favoured and exercised" (Hollinshead et al. 2009: 434). From this perspective, tourism texts are far from neutral, unbiased or static indicators of places, people or cultures, but are rather "manufacturing/remanufacturing forces" (Hollinshead et al. 2009: 431) and "dynamic agents that are continually influencing, modifying and reifying the meanings, beliefs and ways of seeing" (McGregor 2000: 28). Goss, likewise, suggests that advertisements and travel writings "tell us more about the culture that produced them [advertisements] than that which they attempt to sell" (1993: 672).

Given that what attracts tourists to certain destinations can be gleaned from an examination of travel texts and advertisements, travel writings are understood as both "structures of meaning and structures of power" (Lichrou, O'Malley, and Patterson 2008: 35) imbued with the "ability to assign meaning to a place is an act of power which has real effects on the people living in it" (Human 1999: 83, as cited by Lichrou, O'Malley, and Patterson 2008: 35). As a literary genre, travel blogs and travel writing encompass a complex multifaceted mixture of memoirs, autobiographies and "eye-witness" accounts. According to Bishop (1989), it is "a sub-species of memoir, a form of romance…, [an] art of collage [of] newspaper clippings, public notices, letters, official documents, diary extracts, essays on current affairs…[and] it is not concerned only with the discovery of places but also with their creation" (1989: 3) because "no matter how much effort is devoted to being as true as possible to the empirical material, frequently the travel account masks a totally fictional and imagined journey" (1989: 4). For Bishop, "…above all, travel accounts are involved in the production of imaginative knowledges. They are an important aspect of a culture's myth-making" (1989: 3).

Destinations, settings, landscapes and cultures can acquire distinct attributes for tourists through various forms of representations, including destination advertising (Iwashita 2004). While not ultimately responsible for determining a tourists' eventual destination image or how tourists imagine a destination, tourism texts are important because they mediate the "discovery" of destinations by organizing and giving meaning to these social places. Travel and tourism writings function to create "oral, written and visual narratives that both advertise and accompany the tour as well as give the tourist's journey meaning" (Cooper 1994: 148). While images and expectations are created about any destination featured in travel writing, there are a growing number of scholars concerned with Western representations and depictions of the "other" and

"other" locations. In the field of postcolonial studies, travel writings of all kinds have been analysed and critiqued. From a postcolonial perspective, travel writings or travel narratives of the colonial period are associated with other textual practises connected with colonial expansion. Travel writings, or what Spurr terms "the rhetoric of empire" (1993), are accused of disseminating a discourse of difference that was once used to justify colonial projects (Edwards and Graulund 2010: 1). Some have argued that the practice of travel writing and reading works of travel writing was "inextricably intertwined with the creation and maintenance of European imperialism" (Ivison, 2003: 200). Ivison (as cited by Edwards and Graulund 2010) reasons that:

> Travel and travel writing are determined by and determine gender, racial identity, economic status and a host of other interrelated markers of status and privilege. The genre of travel writing …was the cultural by-product of imperialism, often written by those actively involved in the expansion or maintenance of empire (explorers, soldiers, administrators, missionaries, journalists, and dependent upon the support of the institutions of imperialism in order to facilitate the writer's travels (200-201).

With postcolonial theory increasingly influencing tourism studies, Orientalism, as conceived of by Said, has "become the single most influential paradigm in studies of travel writing" (Melman 2002: 105). As elaborated in Chapter Three, Edward Said's Orientalism is usually seen as the ground-breaking text for postcolonial studies. Said (1978) traces and links the linguistic and discursive styles in writings about the Orient by the West, during the European era of exploration, to contemporary writings about the Orient by the West. According to Said, at the heart of all Western representations of the East lies Orientalism, "a style of thought based upon the ontological and epistemological distinctions made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said 1978: 69).He argues (Said, 1978), in turn, that it is these representations that have assisted in the formation of unrealities in the form of stereotypical images, ideological suppositions, and fantasies.

Said and other postcolonial scholars (notably Pratt, Bandyopadhyay, Bhabha, Kabbani and Spivak) have problematized Western depictions of the "Third World" or previously colonized regions, arguing that these representations perpetuate the dominance of Western ideologies upon the "Rest", leading to the creation of "us" and "them" (Nazariadli 2018). For these scholars, just as travel writing as a genre played a significant and integral role in the nineteenth to the twentieth-century European imperial project, contemporary travel writings serve to reinforce the very colonial rule that was once in place.

Postcolonial scholars contend that tourism advertising, tourist narratives, postcard, and photographic imagery[49] have "strategically functioned to produce geopolitical myths and "imagined geographies' about destinations and people" (d'Hauteserre 2004: 238). Williamson (1978, as cited by Pritchard 2001) has argued that advertisements and other travel writings "operate through ideology and are instrumental in the reproduction of society's structures – continually using and reusing particular myths and values."

Critical perspectives of postcolonial theory emphasize how travel brochures, as a subset of "destination" related print and travel literature in general, play a substantial role in the imagining

[49] For a detailed, yet dated, exploration of how non-Western people are depicted and represented in photography See. Lutz and Collins (1993) "Reading National Geographic", which examines 600 *National Geographic* Magazine photos to begin to assess "the historical and cultural context that gives the photograph and its elements their meaning and significance" (1993:5). Arguing that *National Geographic* Magazine is an influential producer of images of cultural difference for middleclass Americans, the authors eventually conclude that the magazine offers manipulated, edited and carefully selected photographs that portray third-world peoples as "exotic," "idealized," "naturalized," and "sexualized" (89). See also, Beaudreau's (2002) "The changing faces of Canada: images of Canada in National Geographic" which builds on the work of Lutz and Collins (1993) to examine the changing nature of 1960s and 1990s photographic representations of Canada within the *National Geographic Canada* magazine publication.

and re-imagining of places and people and have long helped in shaping attitudes towards places, cultures, peoples, and societies (Lew, Hall, and Williams 2008). From this perspective, Western[50] travel writings have never been, can never be, and ultimately will never be an "innocent" enterprise (Tang 2010). Representations of the "third world," in travel writing and of countries and people constructed as "others" through the legacies of colonial discourse, remain troublingly tied to a set of nostalgic colonial images about certain tourist destinations. Urry's (1990) widely influential *Tourist Gaze* found, in communion with Said's work, that the constructions of the "other" in tourists' gazes are based fundamentally on colonial myths. Similarly, Simondson (1995: 23) argues that travel texts, and the "imagery contained within them, are examples of the traces left by power, and can be considered visual evidence of the points of contact between superior and inferior social groups who exist in social relationships." Contemporary touristic discourses and representations, from this perspective, are both rooted in colonial ideologies and continue to perpetuate colonial discourses that serve to uphold the ingrained power structures in the postcolonial present, long after political independence and the legal withdrawal of the colonial powers.

Morgan and Pritchard (1998) argue that "... images of the Third World ... tend to reflect a western, white, male, colonial perspective", whereby "... a dynamic First World contrasts itself with a static, timeless and unchanging Third World" (Morgan and Pritchard 1998: 169, 242). Similarly, the works of Echtner and Prasad's (2003) and Echtner (2002) demonstrate the connection between colonial era descriptions and the marketing and writing of "other"

[50] The terms "East" and "West" have extensive and contentious historical and geographical meanings and uses, initially defined as geographical terms to distinguish the Occident (from the Latin word *occidens*, "sunset, West"), from the Orient (from the Latin word *oriens*, "rise, East"). Throughout this dissertation, the "West" is used to refer to the various regions, nations and states of the majority of Europe, Australasia, and the Americas.

destinations. Building on Urry's work, Echtner and Prasad (2003) develop a classification of three of the most common colonial myths that are replicated in present-day tourism marketing. According to their analysis three "(un)myths" underlie the Western tourist gaze on the third world. These involve the myth of the "unrestrained," the myth of the "uncivilized," and the myth of the "unchanged." The first myth of the unrestrained, argue Echtner and Prasad (2003), is primarily used in travel writings regarding tropical island destinations like Cuba, Fiji, and Jamaica. to The myth functions to present these destinations as thriving natural heavens, where sensuous and exotic locals await the arrival of tourists and are fully available to cater to the needs and wants of indulgent Western tourists. Represented as paradises "these are places where nature is pristine and never harsh, where the people are friendly and never unwilling to cater to every tourist need, and where the resorts offer amenities to satisfy every sensual desire, whether active or passive" (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 672). Arguing that in these destinations "the exotic is amplified, usually in the direction of Eden", Britton (1979) recognizes several "buzzwords" used to advertise and describe these destinations, including "sensuous," "untouched," "unspoiled," and, of course, "paradise" (321). Taking a critical stance on the themes of paradise, Britton argues that "the tourism industry continues to portray these places as "…'paradise,' 'unspoiled,' 'sensuous,' or other distortions, presumably to compensate for the obvious poverty beyond the hotel or sightseeing bus" (Britton 1979:318). According to Echtner and Prasad (2003), the myth of the unrestrained is underpinned by a number of colonial binaries that discursively demarcated the colonizer from the colonized, "…including advancing/stagnant, industrialized/undeveloped, disciplined/unrestrained, and master/servant" (675).

Echtner and Prasad (2003) note that the second myth of the uncivilized is used in travel writings and advertisements for Central American and sub-Saharan African destinations. These

destinations are represented as prime for discovery where "the tourist undertakes an expedition into an almost primordial place, where civilization is largely absent and nature is savage" (675). They are also commonly represented as "beyond the furthest frontiers of civilization (untouched and untamed)…the landscapes portrayed supposedly savage, covered with inhospitable and bizarre vegetation that harbours rare, often dangerous animals" (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 675). Likewise, the locals living in these areas are matched to the myth of their land and "distinguished by their tribal features and unpredictable dispositions" and represented as untouched, untamed and primitive (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 675). Much like Echtner and Prasad's argument that representations of Central America and sub-Saharan Africa "echo a highly nostalgic version of the era of colonial exploration," Bonsu (2009) argues that Western travel writings about Africa "exist within tropes and scripts drawn from colonial images of the continent" and are defined and represented by the "colonial tropes of savagery, exotica and benevolence" (21).

The third myth of the unchanged, corresponding largely to Said's notion of Orientalism, is used to fix certain "Third World" destinations in the past and not in the present (Echtner and Prasad 2003). Ever present in the "Oriental country cluster" this myth of the unchanged splits the world into distinct categories: the changed and the unchanged; the modern and the ancient; and the advancing and the decaying. The "unchanged" destination is represented as surrounded by opulence, lavishness, mysticism, extravagance and strangeness. In these destinations, tourists can journey "backward in time to a world of ancient civilizations" (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 669). Arguing that "relic people" and "relic places" comprise the primary features of the myth of the unchanged, Echtner and Prasad (2003) posit that the myth of the unchanged:

> …systematically portrays the destinations as firmly entrenched in a time ripe for a journey of discovery. Through both the verbal and visual representations, the tourist expects to find legendary lands—to uncover their mystical secrets, to marvel at their exotic people, and to wonder at their opulence (669).

According to Atayi (2020), “the myth of the unchanged represents destinations that are locked in the past. They don’t change. They are advertised as if nothing has changed since the colonial era” (42). For Echtner and Prasad (2003), modern day tourists are encouraged to travel to these ‘unchanged’ destinations to relive the “journeys and experiences of colonial explorers, traders, treasure hunters, archeologists, etc” (669). According to Echtner and Prasad (2003) in these “destinations the tourist, once through a city gateway, journeys backward in time to a world of ancient civilizations. The built attractions of relics and ruins in these fabled places are the primary focus for the tourism gaze” (669).

The myth of the unchanged is related to what Picard and Robinson (2016) term the “third touristic option” of “going colonial”, where tourists can enjoy the privileges of the present and of the past simultaneously. The notion of going colonial is also conceptually related to Fabian’s (1983) concept of “allochronism”. Arguing that the emergence of the Other in anthropological knowledge is at once a historical, political, and temporal act (1983:8), Fabian offers his critique of “allochronic” discourse or the dominant discourse of “framing history that places the ‘other’ in a time different from the present of the writing subject” (1983: 31). Naming allochronism an “illness” (1983: 150), Fabian contends that the West “has always made a concerted effort to construct relations with its ‘other’ by means of temporal devices” (1983:16). This exposes “an overall tendency to create in discourse a temporal distance between the observer and the observed—as between the West and the rest” (Rosa 2019).

Drawing on Fabian (1983), Agnew (1996) similarly points to the dominant spatiotemporalization of the world and argues that space is overgeneralised into similar blocks that have “ideal-type temporal characteristics.” In arguing that converting time into space is a fundamental characteristic of European geological discourse, Agnew claims that:

> ‘Blocks’ of space have been labeled with the essential attributes of different time periods relative to the idealized historical experience of one of the blocks. Hence, territories are named as ‘primitive’ vs, ‘advanced’ or ‘backward’ vs. ‘modern (1996: 27).

The critiques of Fabian, Picard and Robinson, Echtner and Prasad and Agnew on the pervasiveness of the expression of time into space provide a means for understanding how the temporalities of place mediate tourism representations and practices.

Chronopolitics, or “the politics of time” (Norum and Mostafanezhad 2016:157), presents a means of understanding the multiple and diverse representations of the different temporalities that permeate discussion of travel and tourism. However, this debate has only recently begun to emerge within tourism scholarship. This has been a key development given that the temporalities of place are pertinent to the framings and geographical imagination associated with any postcolonial tourist destination are (Norum and Mostafanezhad 2016: 157).[51] As Rojek and Urry (1997: 15) argue “some places attract visitors because they are almost timeless, they have (it seems) not been ravaged by time, or at least not by instantaneous or clock times. They represent ‘glacial time’—a feeling that the place has endured and will persist as a distinctive entity even though the world around may change.”

[51] Although the politics of time is regarded as an emergent line of inquiry in the study of tourism practices, with issues of temporality finding rec ent purchase in a small number of texts across disciplines (see Bærenholdt 2017; Dickinson 2014) in some, sense tourism is something that has been regarded as inherently temporary. For example, pointing to Smith’s (1977: 1) definition of tourism as “an activity of temporary leisure (sometimes contrasted with ‘work’), a sensation of place away (from home), and an activity the purpose of which is to experience change”, Kaaristo and Järv (2012) note that, the very first anthropological definitions of tourism highlight its temporal aspect. Additionally, the sacred journey as described by Graburn (1995?), a fundamental contribution to the study of travel and tourism, points to tourism being both inherently temporary and temporal.

Malta, like many nation states, through the medium of its national tourist offices, dedicates substantial expenditure to promoting themselves as a destination for foreign tourists. Recognising the importance of travel brochures in the formation of destination-image and possible holiday destination choice (Francesconi 2011), the Maltese Tourism Authority aimed to promote and advance Malta as a tourism destination by issuing a series of English language tourism brochures that they suggest exemplify the core values of diversity, heritage, and hospitality.

Travel Brochures

The travel and tourism industry use multiple methods, texts, techniques, and media to promote a diverse array of products. This tourism marketing and advertising plays a substantial role in influencing images of destinations and affecting the expectations of tourists (Echtner 2002). Travel brochures, a distinctive advertising medium, are a standard tool for promotion and communication within the tourism and hospitality industry (Getz and Sailor 1993: 112). Travel brochures are classified as "communicative acts" (Van Leeuwen 2004) and play a significant and substantial role in the formation of an induced destination image (Sirakaya and Sonmez 2000). Brochures, as a form of tourism promotional are designed to communicate with existing or potential customers (Molina and Esteban 2006), and like all other forms of travel literature play an important role in the shaping of expectations and images of places and people. Because ofthe relative cost and market effectiveness, wide distribution and strategic efficiency of the travel brochure, it has been described as representing "tourism advertising par excellence" (Dann 1993: 893). While the growing widespread availability of the Internet has influenced traditional printed texts, many brochures, guides, and catalogues have "migrated" to the web. This has resulted in a widening in the accessibility of the digital tourism brochure, which can now be easily consulted,

shared, and downloaded online. Accordingly, the travel brochure in general and the digital versions in particular remain one of the most familiar, widespread, important and widely utilized tourism promotional texts (Francesconi 2014).

As a kind of advertising, travel brochures endeavour to encourage potential travellers into purchasing the tourism products or services being promoted by the brochure: be it a destination, site, amenity or service. In order to encourage and persuade, brochures utilize influential visual and verbal codes and discursive strategies aimed at persuasion (Francesconi 2011). Therefore, the language and images used in travel brochures are decidedly selective (Ip 2008). Consequently, travel brochures are not always considered the most reliable, especially given that they are known to only represent the "positive" or appealing sides of a potential touristic experiences, while "negative" or otherwise undesirable aspects are overlooked (Ip 2008). This argument implies that the framing of a tourist destination is central in the creation of a travel brochure. According to Entman (1993: 52), framing is "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the items." Framing essentially involves selection, emphasis, and salience, or deciding on the pieces of information that will be highlighted to be made more noticeable, memorable, or meaningful to the target audience (Entman 1993). Weightman (1987) argues that travel brochures, through their highly selective image and language use, "attempt to mystify the mundane; amplify the exotic; minimize the misery; rationalize the disquietude; and romanticize the strange" (1987: 229). The role of the travel brochure is thus not just to provide potential tourists with a greater understanding of the destination, but also the "information, knowledge, and desire to purchase the travel product" (Jenkins 2003:312). Performing the common function of mediating foreign

destinations to readers, or acting as "middleman" (sic) or "culture broker" (Adams 1984), the brochure "directs expectations, influences perceptions, and thereby provides a preconceived landscape for the tourist to "discover" (Weightman 1987: 230). Despite the clear biased and promotional nature of travel brochures, several scholars believe that the professionally framed and strategically manipulated language and images of travel brochures become "a self-fulfilling prophecy" as "the directed landscape becomes the real landscape" (Weightman 1987: 230). As Boorstin (1992:123) has remarked, "people do indeed travel to see what they already know." Likewise, Pritchard and Morgan's (2001:168) assertion that "the advertisement ...becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy" speaks to the central argument of this chapter, that travel brochures, like all tourism texts, should not be understood as neutral channels for the communication of tourism information or destination "facts," but rather as evolving cultural products that shape and create meaning, images and imaginaries.

The word-based and photographic material used in national brochures is, as Dilley argues, the "closest thing to an official tourist image of each country: whatever image the tourist may have, whatever image some third-party company may wish to promote, this is how the countries themselves wish to be seen" (Dilley 1986:64). Thus, the national and cultural identity of a destination is, in part, constructed from the representations of officially sponsored tourism texts. Consequently "the way in which a country is projected as a tourist destination has implications for the ways in which tourists define both it and its inhabitants" (Pritchard and Morgan 1996: 349). Arguing that state sponsored tourism promotion "is inherently ideological in character," Light (2001: 1055) explains:

> Tourism promotion is a fundamental way in which a country can project and affirm its national identity and self-image (Lanfant, 1995, p. 32). In presenting 'itself' in the way that it wants to be seen by Others, a country can make a statement to those Others of 'who we are' and 'how we want you to see us'. Tourism is, in effect, a

> way of reaching out to these Others…. Through the development of a particular 'brand' through which to attract tourists, a country will seek to stress its own particular character and uniqueness and portray itself in a way that flatters and reinforces national identity (1055).

There is, therefore, an important political element to the production of official tourism promotional materials (Light 2001). Namely, that "the promotion of tourism is hardly benign… as a form of representation, tourism promotions operates within dynamic networks of values, meanings, power relations, histories, and ideologies, often serving to reinforce prevailing social structures and desires" (Grimwood, Muldoon and Stevens 2019: 233). This means that the images and texts that a state uses to present a country to potential tourists are highly influential in creating an identity for that country (Light 2001).

To begin to understand how the Maltese islands are contemporarily represented, this research investigated the tourist image of Malta through a content analysis of the word-based data[52] in a sample of eleven (11) downloadable digitalized English language brochures available online through the Maltese Tourism Authority's website. As illustrated in Table 2 the dominant themes contained in the state sponsored promotional material were: Malta's "legendary history", "unchanged nature", a "mythic" element, descriptions of Malta or Maltese people as a "Mediterranean cocktail," and message elements regarding the sea/beaches or Malta's climate.

Table 1: Dominant Themes in MTA Brochures

[52] One limitation of this study is the neglect of interpretations of the "visual text" or photographic elements of the travel brochures. Described as being composed of mainly "visual text" (Francesconi 2011), with no single page being deprived of a visual, the MTA brochures contain over 50 different pictures. While being outside the capacity of this current research, for an analysis of the "visual text" see Francesconi's 2001 study which examines the "contact, size of frame, social distance, perspective and modality" of the "visual texts" used in the 2009 *Malta, Gozo and Comino* brochures issued by MTA.

Rank	Textual Component	Number of Occurrences
1	Legendary History	37
2	Unchanged	20
3	Mythic Element	15
4	Mediterranean Cocktail	15
5	Sun and Sea	11

Given the previously discussed attempt to shift Malta's destination image away from that of a sun and sea destination, by far the most dominant element featured in the MTA promotional literature is Malta's "legendary history." This category includes "factual" message elements regarding the history of the Maltese islands, such as "7000 years of history are literally etched into stone in Malta," "A short trip to a long history" and "Malta boasts the highest concentrations of historic and cultural heritage per km2 in the world."

In addition to the promotion of Malta and Gozo using "factual" message elements regarding its history, the brochures also included numerous "experiential" message elements that were tied to Malta's "legendary history." The category of "unchanged" included all references to how one might, or ought to, feel in the presence of such a "legendary history." For example "the sense of timelessness which pervades the Maltese islands make it an ideal getaway"; "A tour of our Island will reinforce the first impression you got…, namely that life here seems to have stood still for generations"; "A visit to this tranquil haven is guaranteed to leave you with incredible memories of a land where time appears to have stood still…"; and "A stroll through our towns and villages is bound to give you that particular "lost in times feeling." Malta's "cosmopolitan" seafront was mentioned in the "It's all happening here" section of one brochure. As a result of the promotion of Malta's "unchanged" nature there are many aspects of change, modernity, and advancement that have occurred in Malta have been neglected by contemporary travel texts. For example, there is absolutely no reference to Malta's "smart city", a state-of-the-art information technology

and media city in Kalkara, Malta that was modeled after Dubai's Internet City. There is no reference to Malta's two waterparks, or to the PLAYMOBIL FunPark amusement park nor to Malta's lively nightlife scene.

The third most dominant theme in the promotional literature was that of Malta's, and specifically Gozo's, "mythic" elements. This category included any reference to a mythical quality of the islands and any references to Calypso (a nymph in Greek mythology who lived on the island of Ogygia), identifications of Gozo as Ogygia, or any references to the islands as Calypso's Isle. For example, "No visit would be complete without a walk through Calypso's fabled cave"; "the magic of Calypso's Isle"; "the Maltese islands are positively mythic"; "our islands are steeped in myth"; and "…visitors will willingly surrender themselves to Calypso's charms as they gaze over. "

The Maltese islands and people were frequently represented as a "Mediterranean cocktail" in the state sponsored travel literature. Borrowing this term from the *Lonely Planet* guidebook that unproblematically asserts that "Malta is home to a beguiling mix of cultures that has stewed together over generations." Included in this category is any message element that referred to Malta, or the Maltese people, as a "mix of cultures." For example: "The Maltese people are an eclectic mix of Mediterranean cultures" and "Even the people reflect thus a melting pot of cultures in the myriad of complexions to be seen."

The final dominant theme in the English language brochures is the promotion of the "Sun and the Sea." This category included any reference to the climate of Malta, the sun, sea, or beaches. For example: "Blessed with a mild climate and set in crystal clear waters"; "The sun and the sea are the essence of the Maltese islands"; and "The sea is a vital source of life for the Maltese". With official nation state sponsored brochures and other state sponsored tourism promotion being one

way that a country can project a desired image to the international community, analysis of the MTA produced brochures reveals that notions of a historical and unchanged country with mythical associations and populated by an "eclectic mix" of people underpins state-sponsored tourism campaigns.

Guidebooks

Like brochures, travel guidebooks are a common but under researched component of much travel and tourism. Travel guidebooks, related to the literary genre of the travel journal, use a mixture of different forms of text, images, charts and maps in both their evaluation and promotion of a destination. Guidebooks are commonly identified by their two key features "their characteristic target audience – readers who are not inhabitants of the place described in the book, and their overarching goal of utility, that is, their role as a means of orientation and in guiding travellers to tourist destinations" (Mazor-Tregerman et al. 2017: 82).

Though guidebooks were once considered "a debasement of an earlier and more sophisticated travel literature of the Enlightenment" (Koshar 1998: 324), today hundreds of thousands of travellers use guidebooks each year to discover places they would like to travel to and to learn about the places they visit. Recognising guidebooks as one of the most significant sources of information for tourists, Otness (1980) remarked that "there are guidebooks to virtually every place on the face of the earth, and guidebooks directed at every imaginable category of traveler" (Otness 1980: 14). Similarly, Bhattacharyya (1997) argues that "the guidebook is a crucial part of the touristic process because it mediates the relationship between tourist and destination, as well as the relationship between host and guest" (372).

The advent of the Internet in general and social media in particular has challenged the role and influence of traditional, print travel guidebooks. However, studies regarding the use and significance of the travel guidebook continue to demonstrate the influential role that this type of tourism text plays both in motivating travel and in shaping decisions before and during a trip (Mazor-Tregerman et al. 2017; Nelson 2017).

While regarded as promotional texts (Tegelberg 2010:494) guidebooks typically endeavour to offer a more comprehensive, "factual" and unbiased or neutral assessment of places than state sponsored travel brochures. Lew (1991) suggests that guidebooks are regarded by users as more dependable or reliable than other travel literature in that the assumption is that they do not echo state sponsored promotional texts but instead aim to provide independently researched information on destinations. Bhattacharyya (1997) draws several parallels between the function of guidebooks and Cohen's (1985) framework of analysis, which identifies four different dimensions of the social role of the tour guide. Bhattacharyya (1997) also notes astutely that guidebooks function as surrogate tour guides. Guidebooks are designed to make independent travel easier by offering information on a destination's culture, lodgings, transportation options, popular sites, attractions and 'hot spots', cuisine and language (Quinlan 2005) and, like tour guides, perform the instrumental leadership function of "leading the way" (Cohen 1985: 11). Guidebooks provide an outline (and sometimes an itinerary) for experiencing a destination and present what Lloyd (1982) terms "propositional assertions" (as quoted in Lew 1992) of what a destination is *really* like as well as what is worth seeing and doing. Performing the "communicative mediation" role of the surrogate tour guide, the "guidebook acts as a culture broker presenting the sights of the area to the tourist" (Bhattacharyya 1997: 374). By emphasizing some features, sights or attractions of a destination and disregarding others, travel

guidebooks “define [for the tourist the] desirable and undesirable experiences” (Lew 1992:4). By including or omitting places and spaces, guidebooks influence what attractions, features, and destinations are emphasized. Thus, they play an important role in determining the tourist experience, including what will become known to tourists and what will remain largely unknown (McGregor 2000). As McGregor (2000) argues “guidebooks delineate a world to experience, making some foreign places open, attractive and accessible” (35). By choosing which places are considered as potential tourism attractions, guidebooks “help to shape the tourist landscape of a place by identifying and popularizing certain sites as tourist attractions” (Lew 1992:4). Because of the influential role played by guidebooks, they are an important element in understanding the interpretation of place (Quinlan 2005).

There are dozens of English language travel guidebooks available for purchase in Canada that promise to help potential tourists discover the “real” Maltese Islands. . Online retailer Amazon.ca offers a selection of at least thirty-two (32) different guidebooks dedicated to the Maltese islands. In order to examine the ways in which the Maltese islands are represented in English language guidebooks, content analysis of the text-based data was undertaken on several of the most commonly used commercial guidebooks.

Table 2: Dominant Themes in the Guidebooks

Rank	Textual Component	Number of Occurrences
1	Catholicism	31
2	Legendary History	22
3	Unchanged	19
4	Mediterranean Cocktail	18
5	History of Colonialism	11

As illustrated in Table 2, the dominant themes contained in the analysed guidebooks were Catholicism; Malta's 'legendary history'; Malta's "unchanged nature"; descriptions of Malta or Maltese people as a "Mediterranean cocktail"; and references to Malta's history of colonialism.

Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion in Malta and the most dominant theme in the analyzed guidebooks is a reference to this fact. This category includes any references to the Maltese population as being Roman Catholic. For example, the *Pocket Rough Guide* to the Maltese Islands notes that the Maltese people are "affable, close-knit, deeply religious and justifiably proud of their little island." *Lonely Planet* (2019:112) notes that "with a strong Roman Catholic heritage Maltese society remains largely conservative", that "Roman Catholicism is a major influence on Maltese culture" (Lonely Planet 2019: 4) and that "church buildings and parish activities remain at the core of village life, and the Catholic Church still exerts a strong influence" (Lonely Planet 2019:161). Similarly, *DK Eyewitness Top 10 Malta and Gozo* indicates that "Malta is staunchly Catholic." Despite the guidebook's frequent references to Malta and Gozo's 364 churches, this category does not include references to churches or Gozo's citadel unless it included a note about religiosity.

The second most dominant theme emerging from the analyzed guidebooks is Malta's "legendary history." This category, again, includes "factual" message elements regarding the history of the Maltese islands. Specific examples from the guidebooks include "Malta has long been known for package holidays but this island nation has 7,000 years of fascinating and visible history" (Bradt Travel Guides Malta and Gozo 2016:6), "Has any other tiny archipelago contributed so much to the history books? What sets Malta apart from other island destinations is the sheer number of historical sites…and ancient monuments squeezed onto its 246 sq kilometres" (Pocket Rough Guide 2018: 2), "Here you can soak up 7,000 years of intriguing history" (Marco Polo Travel

Guide to Malta and Gozo) and "Malta's ancient towns are rich in history…" (Lonely Planet 2019:17).

The third most dominant theme contained in the analyzed guidebooks is related to a 'historic feeling or the impression that Malta remains 'unchanged'. For example, according to Pocket Rough Guide (2018: 2), with "inescapable reminders of its complicated 7,000-year-old history-Malta feels like a huge open-air museum". Similarly, according to Paddy Cummins, author of the guidebook *In Love with Malta: The Hidden Treasure*, "Malta feels like a big fascinating outdoor museum…where I feel time stands still". According to the guidebook *Malta: Where to go, What to see*, "it may feel as though you have stepped back in time with quaint churches and cobbled streets". Likewise, the *Insight Guide Explore Malta* (2019:3) contends that "you will not tire of visiting Malta, where time has stood still."

The Maltese islands and people were frequently represented as a "Mediterranean cocktail" in the analyzed guidebooks. This category was again dedicated to frequent message elements that referred to Malta or the Maltese people as a "mix of cultures". Specific examples from the guidebooks include *In Love with Malta: The Hidden Treasure's* assertion that Malta is "an eclectic mix…that has been influenced by the long relationship between the islanders and their many invaders." *Greater than a Tourist* names Malta as home to a "mix of several different Mediterranean cultures" and *Lonely Planet* notes that "Malta is staunchly Roman Catholic but is also home to a beguiling mix of cultures that has stewed together over generations."

Malta's long history of colonization, mentioned but twice in the official MTA sponsored brochures, is a dominant theme in the guidebook literature. This category included any reference to Malta's history of colonization that focused specifically on colonization and not generally on Malta's history. For example, "Malta was formally recognized as a Crown Colony for the British

Empire between 1814 and 1964" (Lonely Planet 2019), "Throughout Malta's history, the small archipelago has seen its fair share of fighting and foreign rule" (Malta Under Covered 2019:8), and "The island's history is peppered with long periods of foreign domination…*location, location, location* could be aptly to Malta, and probably it was the source of a lot of their trouble. Being at the crossing roads of the Mediterranean a strategic spot in wartime placed them on the wish list of many greedy predators" (In Love with Malta: The Hidden Treasure 2016:4).

While guidebooks endeavor to produce more accurate, "factual" and unbiased or neutral assessment of places than free travel brochures, the analyzed travel guidebooks, drawing heavy emphasis on Malta's "legendary history" "unchanged nature" and the "beguiling mix of cultures," provide a very similar representation of Malta to the state sponsored brochures. Importantly, however, the guidebooks analyzed emphasize the religiosity of the Maltese people and the country's history of colonization, themes that are absent or are barely represented in the travel brochures. Because The MTA's only two references to a long history of colonial rule is framed rather positively. This is because touristic advertising is meant to attract tourists, and because the majority of contemporary tourists to Malta hail from countries that had previously colonized Malta, England specifically. While the guidebook literature uses wording like "During the violent occupation of Malta by the British …" and "A long history of colonialism and dependence," the brochures note that "Malta and Gozo attracted the attention of all the great powers that dominated the period" and boast "a close historical connection to the British Empire." Similarly in analyzing English language guidebooks about the Maltese islands, Cassar and Avellino (2020) argue that the language used:

> builds up the expectation that the tourist – the British tourist – is travelling to an elite and unique destination, and it infers that s/he should feel privileged in being able to visit the ex-colony (2020:247).

Travel Blogs

Just as the advent of the Internet had a tremendous impact on business since the mid 1990s (Wirtz, Schilke, and Ullrich 2010), the incredible growth of information technology has fundamentally reshaped the travel and tourism industry. Specifically, the way travel and tourism information is sought, consumed and distributed has been fundamentally changed with the widespread accessibility of the Internet (Xiang, Wöber, and Fesenmaier 2008), which facilitates the sharing of information directly from other consumers (Pan, MacLaurin, and Crotts 2007). The Internet has therefore become one of the most effective ways for tourists to search for and acquire information related to travel and tourism (Law and Cheung 2010).

Weblogs, or blogs, a form of "digital discourse" (Muldoon 2018: 37), are one of the fastest growing forms of media for Internet communication and publication (Singh et al. 2008). Characterized by their ease of access and global coverage (Dellarocas 2003), blogs are "virtual diaries" created by individuals and stored on the web for anyone to access" (Sharda and Ponnada 2007: 2). As online diaries, blogs are able to communicate tourists' stories, experiences, impressions, thoughts, feelings and recommendations about tourism products services with friends and the general public (Banyai and Glover 2012). These virtual diaries, which combine the use of text, images, video, audio clips, and embedded links, are the most popular online platform for tourists seeking information during the trip planning process (Xia and Yoo 2008).

Previous research has consistently demonstrated that word-of-mouth communication and recommendations play a more significant role in influencing consumer behaviors than market-generated information (Xia and Bechwati 2008). The advent of travel blogging has

fundamentally changed the traditional word-of-mouth communication, creating a "word of mouse" experience (Gelb and Sundaram 2002) where individuals can virtually and easily promote or demote travel destinations based on their own experiences (Francesconi 2014). Travel blogs have become a new mainstay in the travel and tourism industry as millions of people publish and exchange travel information (Rosenbloom 2004). Agarwal and Shaw (2017: 204) argue that travel blogs are a "significant marketing tool, particularly given the evidence of digital storytelling in tourist blogs since they offer the potential visitor an opportunity to immerse themselves in the writer's experience." While personal word-of-mouth advice remains the most influential source for pre-trip decision making, according to Alaei, Becken, and Stantic (2019) the "overall credibility of blogs and online social media compared to that of traditional word of mouth is relatively high" (176). While the impact of word-of-mouse communication on tourists' decisions remains unclear, individuals are more "likely influenced by the many (blog) sites devoted to the discussion of travel than market-generated information such as brochures and catalogues" (Litvin et al. 2008: 18). Accordingly, with the emergence of widespread Internet access, tourists are taking on more prominent and active roles as "image-formation agents" and as producers of user-generated content who publish "comments, advice, and experiences on blogs, forums, social networks, etc., and also through videos and pictures uploaded to Web 2.0 sites" (Camprubi, Guia and Comas 2014: 205).

The likely influence that travel blogs have on potential tourists stems from the perception that travel blogs are more credible sources of tourism related information than other, more traditional, tourist information sources (Schmallegger and Carson 2008). The information conveyed through travel blogs is often substantially different from that of tourism marketing, particularly state sponsored tourism marketing, in that travel blogs allow for and encourage the communication of

'honest' opinions. This includes both positive and negative experiences, attitudes, reviews, and emotions. Tourism advertising, unlike travel blogs, are understood as biased towards the promotion of only the positive attributes and features of destinations (Volo 2016). Unlike the professionally framed information, communicated by marketers that aim to promote a particular destination, "blogs are created by those who are eager to communicate with others and to volunteer 'facts', opinions, warnings, and experiences to strangers" (Gelb and Sundaram, 2002: 22 as cited by Volo 2010: 299). Travel blogs generally claim to offer authenticity and accuracy by communicating their "undistorted" and "candid" opinions as a distinct alternative to conventional and promotional travel writings (Clarke 2018). While perhaps naïve, as Muldoon and Mair (2016) note, "bloggers are generally viewed as less impacted by biases, thus providing a more 'authentic' insight into people's experiences" (466). Evidence suggests that blogs are understood generally as more reliable or honest because they are written by private people with no interest in manipulating or influencing consumers[53] (Peel and Sørensen 2016). Beyond the potential to influence consumer's travel behaviour, as with earlier published travel narratives, blogs are rich narratives that are full of descriptions and meanings (Jeuring and Peters 2013; Volo 2010). For Volo "blogs are about expressing the inner experiences of travellers and sharing them with others who have the interest and who care enough to read an account of a person's thoughts and feelings" (2010: 299).

[53] Aware of this "word of mouse" aspect and the role "opinion leaders" play in influencing opinions and buying behavior (Chan and Guillet 2011), tourism marketers and share holders have increasingly capitalized on user generated content and specifically the use of blogs by sponsoring bloggers, who in turn receive benefits from sponsoring marketers to review and promote products/destinations on their personal blogs. Thus, while blog sites are oft regarded as offering "a free and unbiased window" (Litvin et al., 2008: 464), the credibility and reliability of sponsored travel blogs has been questioned and accessed by a number of scholars including Mack, Blose, and Pan (2008) and Alaei, Becken, and Stantic (2019).

To begin to understand how the Maltese islands are represented online, this research performed a content analysis of textual data that was collected from popular travel blog sites. As illustrated in Table 3, the dominant themes contained in the analysed travel blogs were Malta's "legendary history", descriptions of Malta's climate, seas or beaches, statements that claim that Malta is a "hidden gem" or is an otherwise unknown travel destination, Malta's "unchanged nature" or its "retro charm", and comments on Malta's scenic nature.

Table 3: Dominant themes in travel blogs

Rank	Textual Component	Number of Occurrences
1	Legendary History	89
2	Sun and Sea	42
3	Hidden Gem	31
4	Unchanged	28
5	Scenery and Views	20

Malta's "legendary" history was, again, featured prominently as by far the most dominant theme in the travel blogs. This category, once more, includes "factual" message elements regarding the history of the Maltese islands. Specific examples from the travel blogs include the "Goats on the Road" claim that "the islands have some of the oldest buildings ever created – the Hypogeum, Tarxien Ruins, and the Megalithic Temples all have nearly 1000 years on Stonehenge and the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt!" Adventurous Kate's observes that "Maltese history is INSANE. Really. From the grotesque psychological warfare of Jean de Valette to the exile of Caravaggio to the fact that there are temples in Malta older than the Pyramids, Maltese history is incredible, tantalizing, and will never leave you bored."

"Sun and the Sea" was also a dominant theme of the analyzed travel blogs. This category included any reference to the climate of Malta, the sun, the sea, or beaches. Specific examples

from the travel blogs include AlbaTravels note that "Although less explored than its neighbours, Malta is definitely a destination on the rise, with an enchanting coastline, picturesque bays, stunning beaches, and warm weather" and *WeAreTravelGirls* comments that "Malta is known for having some of the best beaches in the Mediterranean, with turquoise waters and a lot of cool diving spots."

Despite the fact that over 1 million tourists visit Malta, almost every analyzed travel blog made some reference to the "fact" that is "off the beaten track," "a hidden gem" or a "relatively unknown country and tourist destination." For example, Matt Long, author of the travel blog *Land Lopers*, indicates that "more than one of my friends couldn't place Malta on a map when I asked them. This isn't an indictment against them, I don't think many people can place it," Dani Heinrich, author of travel blog *Globetrotter Girls* likewise notes that "when I told friends of mine I'd be visiting Malta and got asked questions like '*Malta? Is that a country?*' or '*Where exactly is Malta?*, I realized how little-known this little island nation actually is." Similarly, *AlbaTrave*l blog notes that Malta "is a gem sitting mostly overlooked in the midst of larger countries" and *Adventurous Kate* asserts that "most North Americans have no idea what Malta even is."

The fourth most dominant theme contained in the analyzed travel blogs is related to "historic feelings" or the impression that Malta remains "unchanged". This is what *Adventurous Kate* dubbed Malta's "retro charm." According to blogger Kate McCulley, "parts of Valletta, and other cities on the island, looked like they haven't changed since the 1950s". She further notes that "Malta is a place where you can still catch glimpses of life as it was lived decades ago." Heinrich, author of the travel blog *Globetrotter Girls*, similarly notes "towns so well preserved that it feels like you're stepping back in time when you set foot in them." Kamila Napora, author

of the travel blog *Kami and the Rest of the World*, likewise summarizes her travels to Malta and argues that "Immediately you're transformed into another world" and that "It feels like the time has stopped there: store windows look vintage, life goes slow…" The impression that the Maltese islands boasted impressive scenery or views was also a dominant theme in the analyzed travel blogs. For example, travel blog *Kami and the Rest of the World* names Malta both a "charming and picturesque place" and "…a sleepy place with beautiful views." *Nomadic Matt* notes "the landscape-wow", likewise Silke, author of the travel blog *Happiness and Things* notes Malta's "crystal-clear water and the amazing views."

Discussion

Despite some differences in dominant themes contained within the MTA sponsored texts, guidebooks, and travel blogs, the overwhelming representation of Malta as steeped in a "legendary history" can be seen in all of the contemporary tourism texts that advertise the Maltese islands. This "legendary history" combined with the impression that Malta remains "unchanged" and "traditional" is tied directly to the promotion of the islands as *feeling* timeless. These representations, produced within a dichotomy of Occident-Orient, present Malta as existing outside of the normative temporality of northern Europe's modernity. By suggesting that the Maltese islands allow for the stepping outside of, or away from, everyday time flows, these representations serve to ensure that the Maltese islands and people remain fixed in a time removed from the present and from whatever constitutes modernity. The Maltese islands are represented as timeless and static, as a surviving remnant of an earlier or "timeless" way of life (Adler 1989: 137). This is a typical manifestation of what Echtner and Prasad (2003) aptly term the "myth of the unchanged" or the distinct pattern of marketing certain "Oriental" destinations as "past versus present" (2003: 666). In this instance, the various information sources encourage

tourists to experience a different perception and pace of time while vacationing on the Maltese islands. This other "timescape", which is designated in much of the promotional literature and other travel writings as "stopped" time, resembles what Lash and Urry term "glacial time", or a "more inert, slower perception of time (Lash and Urry 1994: 241). Accordingly, references to time in promotional representations of the Maltese islands invites visitors "to feel the weight of history, of all those memories of *that* place, and to believe that it will still be there in its essence in many generations' time" (Lash and Urry 1994: 250, as quoted in Small 2016).

This museumization of Malta and Gozo can be understood as what Fabian (1983) terms "allochronism", "a technology for othering", or the belief that the Maltese islands belong to another time. Or, put differently, that these islands do not participate in the same temporality as northern Europe's modernity, but rather are reduced to a landscape of ruins and ancient relics (Hamilakis and Ifantidis 2015). Since antiquity, the now postcolonial world has been conceptualized as "a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (Said 1978: 29). This promise of time travel is interwoven into all of the analyzed representations of Malta. Malta is discursively constructed through the myth of the unchanged (Echtner and Prasad 2003) or what Said (1985: 93) refers to as "a kind of pragmatic fossilization" (as noted by Feighery 2012), as both traditional and exotic.

Much like travel writings, postcards from Malta, which alongside with photographs remained up until recently "the most widely disseminated tourist icon" (Marwick 2001: 417), reveal that the Maltese islands are constructed, imagined, and re-imagined as "authentically different", as both exotic and traditional. According to Marwick's study on the postcard imagery of Malta, "Wanderlust" or the "Search for the Authentic" is the second main pictorial theme of postcards featuring photographic imagery from Malta (2001: 426). Images of "Maltese culture", which

appeal to the tourists' desire for "real", "authentic" or "traditional" experiences of Maltese culture were among the most common images on modern Maltese postcard images (Marwick, 2001). i Featured among these postcard images were "images invariably associated with the past," as well as pictorial depictions of "old ways of life such as fishing, goat-herding, or lacemaking, and older forms of transportation used on the islands such as luzzus, karozzin, or even vintage Bedford buses" (Marwick 2001: 426). These picture postcards and their captions evoke a "timeless vision of Maltese culture", informed by colonial Orientalist discourses of civilization, modernity, and primordial difference, by "collapsing the past and the present into one" (Marwick 2001: 427).

In a more recent study of Maltese postcard imagery, Grech (2018) notes that "'authentic' and stereotypical images are used to represent 'Malteseness.'" In noting that "the country is portrayed through images that highlight its idyllic Mediterranean location, rural lifestyle or its 'glorious past'" he argues that:

> Most of these images range from the nostalgic and romantic semi-rural past, to that of the Knights of St John and their city/ies 'by and for gentlemen' around the Grand Harbour. It is the Malta made up of simple, laid back people who uphold solid values and/or of chivalrous Knights. It is the Malta of *Żepp* u *Grezz* (characters of Maltese folklore who represent stereotypical village man and his wife) clad in what is considered to be traditional Maltese dress, that are frequently used to represent 'Malteseness' (Grech 2018).

Rendering a place or a people exotic, traditional, or "unchanged" rests on a "Eurocentric" lexis that Stam and Shohat appropriately regard as, "the discursive residue or precipitate of colonialism" (1994: 15). The representation of a place or a people as unchanged is a way of seeing, thinking and speaking about non-Western countries that are reinforced by a series of enduring colonial binaries which privilege Western "agency, modernity over non-Western passivity, tradition, and rootedness." In fact, the very term "traditional" emerged during the

period of European colonization by Europeans who wanted to distinguish the "modern" colony from the "traditional" colonized indigenous populations (Argyrou 2002).

Today's tourist narratives and advertisements have "strategically functioned to produce geopolitical myths and "imagined geographies about destinations" (d'Hauteserre 2004: 238). As many writers have noted (see Eisenstadt 1973; Regnault 2016), one insufficiency of using the category of the "unchanged" or the traditional to interpret a place or its people is that it suggests a false dichotomy between tradition and modernity. As previous research has revealed, "this perspective is problematic as it implicitly precludes local agency and assumes a false dichotomy of an authentic past and a degenerate present" (Bergmeister 2015:205).

Hinging on the false binaries of "changed/unchanged, modern/ancient, and advancing/ decaying," the tourism texts analyzed contain many silences necessary for the preservation of the myth of the unchanged (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 671). With no (or very little) reference to shopping malls, amusement parks, state-of-the-art soccer stadiums, technology parks, nightclubs or any sites of "change", modernity, and "advancement", the representations "ensure that these destinations remain fixed in a time and place that is classically and pleasingly Oriental" (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 671). The representations surrounding the myths of the "unchanged" reproduce colonial discourses which emphasize the supposed binaries between the West and the Rest that make up the representational loop of Maltese travel writings.

Representational Loop

Touristic images, imaginaries, and fantasies about places and spaces are always situated within wider socio-cultural frameworks and ways of understanding (Hutnyk 1996). Sturma contends

that a "representational loop" is established "where stereotypical images with colonial biases are continually reiterated" (1999: 713). This conceptualization resembles Jenkins (2003), who finds that a tourist's choices when taking travel photographs are part of a "spiral of representation" through which iconic images of destinations are perpetuated.[54] Sturma (1999) claims that tourism is steeped in a representational loop, in which colonial narratives of other people and other places are told and retold. The dominant images, representations, and descriptions of Malta, emerging from the contemporary travel literature, echo historical accounts by early European explorers and colonizers. From a postcolonialism perspective, these tourism representations continue to be tied to a series of colonial representations about Malta. The colonial legacy of particular attitudes, representations, images, and stereotypes about Malta and the Maltese people continue to be reflected and reified as persistent reformulations in contemporary tourism writings.

Malta's "legendary history", by far the most dominant theme in the analyzed travel writings, also features prominently in colonial era travel writings concerning the islands. *A Handbook, or Guide, for Strangers Visiting Malta*, published in 1839 (MacGill 1839), is regarded as the first guidebook for the Maltese islands and makes frequent reference to Malta's "wondrous" history. Designed to "assist strangers in their rambles through these interesting Islands," the guidebook dedicates the entire first chapter to familiarize the reader with Malta's "marvelous history". According to this early guidebook:

> Malta has been held at one time or another by most of the great nations of the world. It belonged in succession to Phoenicia, Greece, Carthage, and Rome. Later it became a portion of the empire of Charles Y. of Germany. He gave the island to the knights of St. John. These retained it till 1798 when it was captured by the

[54] The hermeneutic circle of representation in tourism whereby tourists reproduce iconic images of destinations through their own photographic choices has been explored by a number of tourism scholars including Caton and Santos (2008), Urry (1990) and Galí and Donaire, (2015).

> French. After two years the English took the island from the French and have ever since retained possession of it (1839: 7).

Over 138 years later, in much the same manner, the MTA's brochures note:

> Malta and Gozo attracted the attention of all the great powers that dominated the period. To varying extents all of them, from the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Catillians, to the Knights of St. John, the French, and finally the British.

The "mythic elements" contained within the contemporary brochure literature was also born from historical writing. Homer may have referred to Malta in 762 BC (Vella 2017) in what is often referred to as the first travel narrative. However, the notion that the islands of Malta and Gozo once served as a refuge for the fabled nymph Calypso, was/is the lost city of Atlantis, or that the islands once housed a race of giants has been recycled throughout travel texts since at least 1536. In that year, Jean Quintin d'Autun wrote the first detailed description of Malta entitled *Insvlae Melitae Descriptio* and noted that the first inhabitants of the islands were a "race of giants."

In 1804, *Ancient and Modern Malta Containing a Description of Malta and Goza (*sic) *... the History of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem* similarly noted:

> The most ancient author who mentions Malta is Homer, in his Odyssey, where it is called the Isle of Hyperia, which, according to fabulous history, was originally inhabited by the Phoenicians, a race of giants.

Recycling this trope, one analyzed MTA brochure asserts that "our islands are steeped in myth, from giants to Calypso….". Another notes that "according to Greek legend, the temptress nymph Calypso lured Odysseus to Gozo, keeping him prisoner for seven years. Today it seems that visitors willingly surrender themselves to Calypso's charms…."

While not a dominant theme in the travel blogs, several mentions of the myth emerged in their analysis as well. For example, the blog site *Mr. M,* by Marko Tadic, who "tried to find out some interesting facts about this unusual island", notes that:

> The name of the temple is in Maltese, due to "belonging to the giants" because the legend in the Maltese and Gozitan folklore says that the temples were built by giants.

Alison Healy, in her blog post entitled "Take it Slow in Gozo," in like manner explains:

> Gozo has also found itself at the centre of many legends. You can visit Calypso's Cave, where, according to Homer's Odyssey, the nymph kept Odysseus trapped for seven years in a bid to get herself a husband. That's seldom a successful way to ensnare a man and Odysseus finally escaped, but not before leaving the lovesick nymph with two children, in a very small cave.

Europe's historical mythologizing of Malta has created a high degree of intertextual references to Malta's "mythic" associations. This occurs across a wide range of sources, including early explorer accounts of the Megalithic temples, ethnographic reports suggesting the ancient Maltese must have worshiped a Neolithic great goddess, journalism suggesting that Malta is, in fact, the lost civilization of Atlantis, and modern tourism texts that engage and reengage these highly influential and durable myths.

The historical and Orientalist preoccupation with the "race" of the Maltese people also pervades contemporary tourism texts, with the dominant theme that both Malta and the Maltese are a "Mediterranean cocktail"' steeped in a stereotypical image with colonial biases. The early appeal of attempting to define the "race" of the Maltese people began in the early 1530s with the French Knight Jean Quentin d'Autun's. He provides an interesting if unflattering account of the Maltese at that time and notes:

> The people have a Sicilian character with a mixture of African, they are not strong enough for nor adapted to warfare ... The women are not all ugly, but live very much as if they are uncivilized; they do not mix with other people and go out covered in a veil as if to see a woman is here the same as to violate her.

He further notes:

> They are called "Christian Arabs", and this is not inexact. Their bone structure, features, language, temperament, customs, all reveal their Arab blood (as quoted in Smith 2006: 82).

Travel writings from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries demonstrate the struggle that authors experienced in describing the indigenous Maltese population. This is captured, for example, by the following quote from William Lithgow in 1612:

> The peasant or natural inhabitants are of the African complexion, tanny and sunburnt; and their language semblable to the Barbarian speech. These rural Maltezes (sic) are extremely bent, in all their actions, either to good or evil wanting fortitude of mind, and civil discretion, they can not temper the violent humours of their passions, but as the headstrong tide, so their dispositions runne (sic), in the superfluous excesses of affections. They follow the Romane Church, though ignorant of the way (quoted in Freller 2009, 403-405).

By the early 1850s travel writers and archaeologists "found the poor, Arabic-speaking Catholic Maltese difficult to define, and often resorted to identifying them as a hybrid people, manifesting a mixed culture and appearance, and serving as a bridge between the Occident and Orient" (Smith 2006).

The pre-colonial and colonial era fascination with the "race" of the Maltese people is recycled and reified in contemporary travel texts. For example, one MTA sponsored brochure notes that "even the people reflect this melting pot of cultures in the myriad of complexions to be seen." Similarly, the analyzed travel brochures speak rather kindly of the "eclectic mix of Mediterranean cultures" found on the Maltese islands (Lonely Planet 2019: 4). This was not a dominant theme in the travel blogs, with only a few references to the "race" or ethnicity of the Maltese people. However, the representations in contemporary travel blogs continued to follow the same representational loop. For example, in discussing "the genetics of Europe's most interesting microstate" the author of *Goats on the Road* travel blog notes that the Maltese people are a "strange form of Europeanized Arabs." Likewise, the travel blog *Indulgence Divine,* which

is dedicated to discussing boutique accommodations, notes that "Malta's past rulers have all left their own mark on the island, most evident in the various architecture styles, in the racial mix."

This means of understanding the Maltese people remains tied to notions of a hybridity born during the colonial era even though, "…other than in extreme cases, ethnicity is not a relevant analytical category to the Maltese in contemporary Malta"[55] (Baldacchino 2012:195). In fact, a significant insight of early postcolonial thinkers was the insistence that "race" was invented by and through European colonialism (Go 2018). As Go (2018) notes, "it was only through the imperial encounter and systems of colonial power that race was invented, constructed, and deployed as a tool of power in the first place" (443). Mignolo likewise argues that "the racial classificatory logic" is anchored in a colonial "historical foundation [that] can be traced back to the end of the fifteenth century in Spain" (2010: 24) and that "racism… is not a question of blood or skin color but of a discursive classification entrenched in the foundation of modern/colonial

[55] The concept of "race", and identification with the "West" or the "Orient" in Malta, while not often discussed, is complicated by two commonly held understandings amongst the Maltese in Malta. Firstly, that the genetic origin of contemporary Maltese people is that of a genetic affinity with those of "Phoenician origin", including North African and Christian Lebanon. The second commonly held understanding of "race" that shapes the Maltese understanding is the widespread "foundational myth" that Malta has always existed as European/Christian nation and not an Arab/Muslim nation. Accordingly, the "race" of the Maltese people is commonly understood by the Maltese people as of Phoenician origin but not Arab. According to Gerber (2000), three "myths" establish Malta as a European and Christian community. Firstly, it is widely believed that the Maltese owe their Christian faith to Saint Paul the Apostle who, according to the Bible, was shipwrecked on "Melite" in 60 AD on his way to Rome and introduced Christianity to the inhabitants. Secondly, it is widely believed by the Maltese people that the Maltese have been uninterruptedly Christians over the past 2,000 years. According to Gerber (2000: 240) "it was construed that they had never been Muslims, not even when under direct Arab rule from 870 to 1090. Although the Maltese language is up to the present day itself basically an Arabic dialect, it is deeply engraved in the collective memory that the Arabs dominated the Maltese, the latter apparently remaining steadfast Christians as slaves of the former." Thirdly, according to Gerber (2000), the idea of a Christian and European Malta has been fuelled by the highlighting of the period between 1530 to 1798, when the islands served as a fortress against the Ottoman Empire.

(and capitalist) empires" (Mignolo 2006: 2). Because race and racialization do not disappear with political independence some scholars in the field of postcolonialism have engaged with issues of race and racialization, born during Western imperialism but "further consecrated in the era of postcoloniality" (Prasad and Qureshi 2017: 353). For these scholars, it is necessary to engage with the colonial legacy of race and racialization to understand how contemporary practices are embedded in the remnants of Western imperialism (Prasad 2014). As Quijano, who posits that one of the most central axes of colonial power was the social organization "of the world's population around the idea of race" (2000: 215), argues:

> Racism and ethnicism were initially produced in the Americas and then expanded to the rest of the colonial world as the foundation of the specific power relations between Europe and the populations of the rest of the world. After five hundred years, they still are the basic components of power relations across the world. Although colonialism became extinct as a formal political system, social power is still constituted on criteria originated in colonial relations. In other words, coloniality has not ceased to be the central character of today's social power... With the formation of the Americas a new social category was established. This is the idea of 'race'... Since then, in the intersubjective relations and in the social practices of power, there emerged, on the one hand, the idea that non-Europeans have a biological structure not only different from Europeans, but, above all, one belonging to an 'inferior' level or type. On the other hand, there emerged the idea that cultural differences are associated to such biological inequalities... These ideas have configured a deep and persistent cultural formation, a matrix of ideas, images, values, attitudes, and social practices, that does not cease to be implicated in relationships among people, even when colonial political relations have been eradicated (Quijano 2000:167-69; as cited and translated by Grosfoguel and Georas 2000).

When the present-day racial discourse found within contemporary travel texts about the Maltese islands is situated within a broader historical framework it becomes evident that the colonial era racialization of the Maltese people continues to contribute to the ongoing characterization and racialization of the Maltese people as "a hybrid people, manifesting a mixed culture and

appearance." From colonial to post-colonial times, ideas about the Maltese "race" have remained essentially the same.

Another legacy of early travel writing is the treatment and understanding of the Maltese language in contemporary travel texts. The Maltese language is one of sematic origin from the Afro-Asiatic language family. It has been spoken in Malta since at least the beginning of the fourteenth century (Mallette 2011). The first known written reference to the Maltese language appears in a will of 1436, where it is called *lingua maltensi*. Despite the language's long history and development on the islands, it was not until after Malta was granted independence from the British in 1964 that Maltese was declared the national language. Returning to Quentin d'Autun's 1530 overview of the islands, discussed in the previous chapter, the Maltese language is discussed:

> Our mysterious island of Malta is separated from Sicily by sixty miles of quite dangerous sea, in the closer direction to Africa. It once was under Phoenician rule; still now an African language is used there. Even now some of the stones inscribed with Phoenician letters remain, in their shapes and with dots added to them.… Indeed the language they speak now differs in little or nothing from the old language. The Maltese can understand the Phoenician character Hanno in Plautus, Avicenna, and many Phoenician words similar to these – although their language is such that it cannot be accurately written in Latin letters, much less pronounced by the mouths of anyone who is not of their race.

The 1801 publication *A Description of Malta, with a Sketch of Its History and that of Its Fortifications* notes that "the dialect spoken in Malta and Goza is rather a patois than a real language."

The common language of the entire Maltese population is still treated in a similar way as the first written accounts detailing the perceived incomprehensibility and "mysterious origins of the Maltese language." While not a dominant theme in the analyzed texts, most of the examined travel writings contain at least one reference to the Maltese language and its origins and

development. For example, according to Morgan and Amanda, authors of the travel blog *Two Blue Passports,* visitors to Malta "should not expect to understand the language, but most people speak English, which is one of the official languages. Maltese is a mix of Arabic, Italian, and English. The Maltese language continues as incomprehensible to everyone Arabs and Europeans alike which gives the Maltese freedom to speak their minds and air their views of the many foreigners on the islands." Another blogger, David, author of *David's Been Here,* indicates that "when spoken, Maltese sounds like Arabic with a sprinkling of English phrases. When written it looks like Italian with a blend of some peculiar symbols."

The *Lonely Planet* (182) guidebook informs its readers that:

> Malti – the native language of Malta – is a member of the Semitic language group, which also includes Arabic, Hebrew and Amharic. It is thought by some to be a direct descendent of the language spoken by the Phoenicians, but most linguist consider it to be related to the Arabic dialects of western North Africa. Malti is the only sematic language written in Latin script.

Similarly, Tina Olson (2005), who details her experiences sailing around the world on her forty-foot boat writes:

> We came to Malta during the winter season because we heard they spoke English…. But it turns out the Maltese don't generally speak English unless it is spoken to them. Otherwise, they speak the mysterious and complicated Maltese language(225).

The Maltese language is no more, or less, complicated, interesting or strange than any other language. Yet, despite over 700 years of use on the Maltese islands, the Maltese language is still explained to foreigners in much the same way, that is as an exotic corrupted patois that emerged under circumstances still largely unknown.

Another dominant theme that emerged from the examination of contemporary tourism writings that is steeped in Orientalist and colonial representations is the "reverent piety of the Maltese people." According to Smith (2000), in the imagination of early travel writers the strong

Catholicism of the Maltese – stemmingd from the advent of Christianity following the shipwreck of St. Paul, the long presence of the Order of St. John on the island, the Norman conquest of Malta from its Arab rulers, and the Christian victory against the Ottoman Empire in 1565 – placed them closer to the Orient than the Occident.

In 1804, author Pierre Marie Louis "de" Boisgelin de Kerdu, a Knight of Malta, wrote of the piety of the Maltese in *Ancient and Modern Malta Containing a Description of Malta and Goza (sic) ... the History of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem*. . He noted:

> The parish-churches in the city of Valetta, and the chapels belonging to the different convents of religious order, are daily ornamented by gifts of he Maltese, who have always been celebrated for a never-failing piety and devotion: they even continue the ancient custom of the African Christians in the time of the Romans, who used to engrave crosses with the point of a needle, in order to distinguish them from the Gentiles (Porter 1858).

Early in the nineteenth-century, the British attempted to introduce Protestant faith to its colonial subjects in Malta. Their attempts were largely unsuccessful which caused Protestant clergymen who visited Malta to take account of the religiosity of the Maltese people and report back to the metropolis (Mallia-Milanes 1988). One such clergymen, the Reverend Seddall, wrote in 1870:

> Religious fervour is one of the leading features in the character of the Maltese people, and it discovers itself ... in the building of churches and chapels; the erection of images at the comers of the streets, to be devoutly worshipped by the populace (as quoted in Mallia-Milanes 1988: 92).

Faucon (1893) likewise notes:

> The Maltese and their Island have a semi-barbaric allure. They are ignorant, crude, and argumentative, but they clean up quickly. Regarding their faith, they are as insolent as the Arabs (as quoted in Smith 2006: 82).

Today, guidebooks and travel blogs alike recycle the trope of Malta's "religious fervour." For example, the guidebook *Insight Guide to Malta* indicates that "the church plays a key role in life, both secular and political, making its view's known on all key issues." *Lonely Planet* (2019:162)

also notes that "Malta's Roman Catholic Church exerts a powerful influence, and all the important events of people's lives are celebrated in church". The travel blog *Goats on the Road,* notes that Malta is "one of the most Catholic countries in the World" and further notes that "strong Catholic faith permeates culture, ethics and day-to-day life in Malta."

The parallels between the pre-colonial and colonial era travel texts and the travel writings of today, state sponsored and otherwise, should not be dismissed as the mere repetition of history or of "facts". It is, of course, true that the Maltese islands have a long history with centuries of colonial rule, romantic era mythic associations, a unique language, and an ethnic population born of centuries of "mixing". However, these enduring representations should not be understood as merely the reiteration of "facts" but rather as "socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people's personal imaginings and are used as meaning making and world shaping devices" (Salazar 2012: 864). Being part of much larger "representational loops" (Sturma 1999: 137), the representations of Malta in contemporary travel writings are not a value-free or otherwise neutral expressions of the islands, but rather the culmination of social and historical processes. From a postcolonial perspective, the brochure, guidebook, and travel blog representations of the Maltese islands cannot be separated from the colonial discourses that once defined the region. These contemporary representations are the reworkings of historically embedded myths and colonial imaginaries that historically justified the colonial occupation of Malta and contemporarily serve to represent Malta in a permanent state of the "unchanged.".

Conclusion: How the Maltese Islands are Represented

"Representations, whether textual, verbal, or pictorial, are powerful elements through which the world is understood" and imaginaries are shaped (Buzinde, Santos, Smith 2006: 323). Grounded in the critical perspective of postcolonial theory, this chapter first attempted to answer the

question “how are the Maltese islands represented today”? and to identify and examine the image representations and dominant portrayals of the Maltese islands. This study drew upon Said’s and Bhabha’s notions of Orientalism in order to examine representations of the Maltese islands in tourism texts and employed content analysis to study a selection of the information provided by the Maltese Tourism Authority (MTA), guidebooks and online travel “blogs.”. This research revealed that the overall images projected of the Maltese islands were those of an “unchanged” island archipelago, acting as “the bridge between the East and the West”, steeped in “legendary” history and populated by a culturally unique “eclectic mix” of exotic people. As previous scholarship has detailed, this suggests that contemporary representations of Malta cannot be separated from either the colonial era discourse or the contemporary socio-cultural and politico-economic milieu in which they emerge. Current images and discursive representations of the Maltese islands are strongly reminiscent of representations of the Maltese islands that permeated colonial era discourse about the region and “are simply reiterative, reflecting and reinforcing historically embedded colonial myths” (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 668). By comparing the selection of contemporary promotion and marketing materials of the Maltese islands to some colonial era travel writings, this chapter demonstrated that travel writings about the Maltese islands are grounded in much broader historical, socio-cultural and discursive systems that understood and continue to understand Malta and its inhabitants as non-European, This is not to argue that these touristic representations and discursive formations about the Maltese islands are “false,” but rather that they are inextricably tied to the historically specific colonial and socio-political conditions in which these representations emerged and flourished. This chapter has established that colonial narratives and contemporary travel writings and other media representations have served to produce geographical or tourist imaginaries. Further, it has

demonstrated how representations help produce beliefs and expectations about what a tourist ought to encounter and experience. By accomplishing these tasks through examination into the representations of the Maltese islands, this chapter has set the stage for the following chapter's analysis of tourist imaginaries.

Chapter Five

Sun, Sand, and…Legendary History: Malta's Tourist Imaginary

"When people choose specific travel destinations, it is usually because their imaginations have already journeyed there ahead of them"

(Kahn 2003:307)

Colonial narratives, present-day travel writings, and other media representations have served to produce geographical or tourist imaginaries. With a significant body scholarship acknowledging the intersections between images, texts, films, videos, books, websites, and other media representations and the tourist imaginary (see White et al. 2019) it is widely recognized among tourism scholars that media and touristic representations of places (and people) make up many of the "formation agents" influencing the formation and shaping of tourist imaginaries (Baloglu and McCleary 1999; Mercille 2005; Gammack 2005). This chapter seeks to answer the question "How are the Maltese islands touristically imagined?" It draws on the findings of the previous chapter, which demonstrated that Malta is overwhelmingly represented by both colonial and contemporary travel literature, as an "unchanged" island archipelago, steeped in "legendary" history and populated by a culturally unique "eclectic mix" of exotic people.. Specifically, using both content analysis and ethnographic methods, this chapter seeks to understand both the imaginaries and the "destination image" of the Maltese islands and what drew tourists to visit the islands.

Tourist Imaginaries

A wide array of scholars, across many distinct disciplines, have given attention to tourist imaginaries, an important concept in transdisciplinary tourism studies (see Salazar and Graburn 2014, Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012, Leite 2014). With roots in psychoanalysis, philosophy, and social theory, tourist imaginaries are largely understood as the shared, collective ethos, and

cognitive schemas that refer to the potential of a place as a tourism destination (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012). According to Leite (2014), tourist imaginaries "are those imaginaries—conceptions, images, and imaginings of self or Other, place or people, abstract moral order or particular historical site, variously held by tourists, providers, local populations, development consultants, marketers, guides, etc.—that are not necessarily particular to tourism, but in one way or another become culturally salient in tourism settings" (264). Despite the difficulties and complexity associated with defining the concept, these socially constructed imaginaries "allow individuals and groups to imagine a place as a conceivable tourist destination; they create the desire, they render the place attractive, they help render travel plans concrete, they reduce the distance to the tourist destination, and they tame its exotic character" (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012: 4). This enables potential tourists to mentally project themselves onto the destination, allowing them to, in a way, live the experience before even traveling (Dann 1996). Imaginaries are considered "to be a mental process of assimilating multisensory information and developing conceptions about countries, regions, destinations or places" (Matos, Mendes and Pinto 2015: 137). Further, they are "complex systems of presumption-patterns of forgetfulness and attentiveness-that enter subjective experiences as the expectation that things will make sense generally" (Vogler 2002:625).

Tourism is considered part of the "image production industry," in which "identities of travel destinations and their inhabitants are endlessly (re)invented, (re)produced, (re)captured, and (re)created" (Salazar 2010: 22). Arguing that "seductive stories and imaginaries about peoples and places are so predominant that without them there probably would be little tourism at all" (2010: 4). Salazar notes that the tourist imaginary has the capacity to summarize a complicated and complex social place with a few clichés. Defining the tourist imaginary as "a shared

representation of touristic places based on images, story-telling, and most of all, powerful clichés," Regnault (2016: 113) provides the following brilliantly simple explanation of how tourist imaginaries shape our understanding of a tourist destination. She notes:

> *Imaginaries de lieux*, imaginaries of places, are what we all immediately have about any particular destination. This is what makes us think about the Eiffel Tower, wine, cheese, bread when we speak about Paris. Similarity images of Tiananmen Square, Map, and the Great Wall fill our heads when someone mentions China. Thus the sound of samba, the colors of Carnival, the figure of the Corcovado, and the wilderness of Amazonia come to mind when someone says she just returned from Brazil. And what is striking about these imaginaries we have is that they are the same as those of someone living on the opposite side of the planet (2016:113).

While perhaps overly simplistic in her argument that "we all", regardless of geographic location and personal experience, share the same tourist imaginary, Regnault's explanation encapsulates how personal imaginings interact with, and are largely influenced by representations of destinations based on stereotypes, clichés, or exaggerations about places and peoples that have become both popular and dominant in tourism discourses.

As Salazar (2013) notes, tourism imaginaries can be immobile, "some destination's tourism imaginaries are so firmly established and all-encompassing that they are difficult to escape." Scholars concerned with this "immobility" and the ways in which colonial imaginaries, or colonial era perceptions and representations of the non-Western world, have shaped contemporary touristic practices, have examined the colonial legacies that remain manifest in tourism practices and have examined the recreation and proliferation of imaginaries through which meaning is ascribed and re-ascribed to places, people, societies and cultures through these enduring representations (Kothari 2015). Previous postcolonial scholarship has done an impressive job of identifying how destinations are portrayed and the discursive legacies of colonialism evident in travel writings, advertisements, and other representations of postcolonial places, with the connection between representations of tourist destinations and colonial discourse

being highlighted by many (see Mellinger 1994; Pritchard and Morgan 2001; Echtner 2002). However, there is relatively little published research that has addressed or accessed the interlocking issues of how these post-colonies are portrayed *and* touristically imagined.

The concept of imaginaries lies in the existence of "ideas, beliefs, interpretive schemas, and imaginings that are potentially shared by large populations but, being products of the human mind, cannot be seen…" (Leite 2014:262). Accordingly, as Salazar notes, tourist imaginaries are both "intangible" and "immeasurable" and "the only way to study them is by focusing on the multiple conduits through which they pass and become visible in the form of images and discourses" (Salazar 2011: 4). While the "precise workings of imaginaries are hidden from view, the operating logic can be inferred from its visible manifestations and from what people say and do" (Salazar 2011: 4).

In the applied social sciences, business, and marketing, the most important, and best defined, parallel concept to tourist imaginary is the "destination image" (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2016). With a tourist imaginary being conceptually linked to the formation of tourist destination image, destination images can be seen as "the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, imaginaries and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place" (Lawson and Baud-Bovy 1997: 2).

It is widely recognized among tourism scholars that destination image and tourist imaginaries are a central component in the process of destination selection (see Mackay and Fesenmaier 2000; Bagaeen 2007; Clark 2016; Bigne, Sanchez and Sanchez 2001). Over the past four decades, destination image studies have proliferated making the study of destination image one of the most common concerns in the tourism research literature (Pike 2002). Additionally, the significance of the tourist destination's image is widely recognised as being a persuasive tool

within the tourism industry, since it "affects the individual's subjective perception and consequent behavior and destination choice" (Murphy-Underhill 2005: 13)

Academic interest in image or imagery has spanned several fields and disciplines since the early works of Boulding who in 1956 suggested that human behavior depends more on image than objective reality. According to Baloglu and Bringberg (1997), "image differentiates tourist destinations from each other and is an integral and influential part of the traveller's decision process" (1997:11). As early as 1977, Lapage and Cormier argued that "in many cases, it is probably the image more than the factual information that produces a tourist's decision on where to travel" (1977: 21). Similarly, Gravari-Barbas and Graburn (2012: 5) in arguing that the role of tourism imaginaries is essential, contend that "without a tourist imaginary to select among the whole range of desirable, attractive or challenging destinations, there can be no travel plans."

While there are nearly as many definitions of destination image as there are scholars devoted to its conceptualization (Hader 2017), destination image generally refers to "the impression that a person has about a place in which he or she does not reside, and this is composed of the sum of related beliefs, ideas, and impressions" (Cheng and Lu 2013: 768). Tourist destination image is a multidimensional construct that is a cognitive representation of a place in the mind of someone who is not physically in that place. With the image of a tourism destination being directly related to the expectations one has about a place before actually experiencing it (Foroudi et al. 2018), destination image can be defined as the "sum of the beliefs, feelings, conceptions, knowledge, imaginations, emotional thoughts, ideas, and impressions held by people about a place or destination" (Foroudi et al. 2018: 98).

Malta's Destination Image

The destination image or tourist imaginary of a destination is created in the minds of tourists based on a combination of internal processes and external stimuli (Baloglu and McCleary 1999). According to Mercille (2005), the "formation agents" that exert influence over the formation of a destination image can range from media representations, promotional images, popular culture representations to word-of-mouth depictions and actual personal experience of a destination. The formation of a destination image is conceptualized as comprising the cognitive image or the image formed from known attributes or facts, and affective images, or those involving attitudes, emotions, values, and feelings (Watson and Hill 1993), and overall image elements. Gunn (1972), a pioneer of destination image studies, proposed a "dimorphic theory of image," and argued that destination image formation evolves through two distinct stages: organic and induced (Gunn 1988). The organic destination image, considered particularly valuable to destinations, is formed as a result of "general exposure" and exists prior to exposure to any promotional information from tourist destinations (Iwashita 2004). The destination image, at the organic stage, is based principally upon the information one incorporates from non-touristic, non-commercial sources, such as the general media, popular culture, books, education, television documentaries, and the experiences of friends and family (Beerli and Martin 2004; Santos 1998). The organic destination image is therefore the subjective image that each individual has of a particular destination that they have not seen or heard in promotional material. Induced destination images, on the other hand, refer to an image informed by the "conscious effort of tourist promotion and marketing activities of a tourist destination" (Iwashita 2004:73) information, such as advertisements, travel posters and holiday brochures (Choi et al. 2017).

According to Salazar (2011), tourist imaginaries remain immaterial and "immeasurable" and thus "the only way to study them is by focusing on the multiple conduits through which they

pass and become visible in the form of images and discourses" (Salazar 2011: 4). While the "precise workings of imaginaries are hidden from view" (Salazar 2011: 4), destination image is, however, widely accessed and measured with hundreds of image studies existing to date. Accordingly, because part of the focus of this study was to understand the role imaginaries play in shaping touristic behaviour and encounters in Malta, a tourist destination that has received very little academic attention, both content analysis and ethnographic methods were used in order to understand the imaginaries and the "destination image" of the Maltese islands.

Use of the unstructured "free elicitation" method advanced by Reilly (1990), (see Chapter three) revealed that images and imaginaries about the Maltese islands were characterized by what Echtner and Ritchie (1993: 9) term "stereotypical mental pictures" of Malta as an "unchanged" island destination with an "exotic" local population.

As demonstrated by Table 4, online survey respondents reported their mental images of Malta as a warm weather, warm water island destination with favorable climate and weather conditions. The strongest reported images were of an "unchanged" and historic Malta, home to an "exotic" "ethnic" population.

Table 4: Tourist image of Malta based on three trait query (respondents were asked "What three words would you use to describe Malta as a vacation destination?")

Image Descriptor	Prevalence
Favorable Climate: hot, sunny, lots of sun, warm, scorching, dry, sunshine	141
Beaches: Beautiful beaches, seashore, lots of beaches, rocky beaches, sandy beaches, beautiful water, blue water, clear water, unpolluted water	67

Unchanged: Unspoilt, traditional, pure, old fashioned, out of date, behind, behind the times, traditional, old school, not modern, out of date, slow pace, slow pace of change	63
Historic: History, full of history, old, ancient, antique	34
Exotic: Exotic landscape, exotic people, ethnic	30
Island features, isolated island, distinct Island, Island Way of life, island culture	30
Architecture: Beautiful architecture, colonial architecture, ancient architecture	25
Mysterious: mystic, mystifying	25
Crossroads between east and west and north and south	18
Beige: Sand coloured land, buildings and people, light brown, honey coloured, limestone	18
Mediterranean: Very Mediterranean, like the rest of the Mediterranean	18
Unknown: Relatively unknown, not a touristic place, no one knows where it is	17
Reminiscent of North Africa: looks just like Morocco, Tunisia, architecture like North Africa, same culture as North Africa	17

Religiosity: Catholic, very catholic, lost of churches, hundreds of churches, religious festivals, festas	12
Friendly: Welcoming, hospitable, inviting people, open hearted	7
Dirty and Crowded	3
Undeveloped: poor, primitive	3

As illustrated in Table 4, the two strongest reported images of Malta provided in response to the question "What three words would you use to describe Malta as a vacation destination?" were climate and landform related. Specifically, the image that Malta evoked was "hot", "dry", and "sunny" and had several beaches. As Table 4 illustrates, beyond reported images of climate and landform elements, the strongest reported images are of an "unchanged" and historic Malta, home to an "exotic" "ethnic" population.

Data was collected from the one hundred and eighty-five (185) respondents from online public Facebook discussion groups. Content analysis revealed that respondents' replies to the question "What images come to mind when you think of Malta as a vacation destination?" produced identical themes to the three trait query, with reported images of Malta's climate, landforms, unchanged, historic and "exotic" nature being the most dominant. Respondents provided responses that ranged from one to three sentences, containing several of the dominant image descriptors. For example, one respondent summarized her overall image of Malta as:

> Not a top destination, not well known, but an exotic tourist destination like Morocco. Overall, a really sunny country with a ton of great beaches and great Mediterranean food.

Similarly, another reported their overall impression of the Maltese islands and noted their perception of the islands:

> A tiny island with a lot of ancient history, a kind of slow-paced, behind the times kind of vibe, and beautiful beaches.

Several respondents combined their overall image of Malta with their impression of Maltese people. For example, one participant reported that his overall impression of Malta was:

> A sleepy small island full of Maltese people, very loud, passionate people who are the weird kind of mix between Arabs and Catholics, and very few tourists.

Another:

> Exotic and sunny Mediterranean island that doesn't have many people living there. Great beaches and a great mix of locals who are unlike anyone else in the world ethnically, in that they are all mixed.

Similarly, interview data collected from female tourists to the Maltese islands revealed that the most common reported[56] imaginaries, images, understandings, and impressions of the Maltese islands (after climate and weather-related attributes) surround the islands' cultural and historical patrimony, its "exoticness" as a "remote" island at the periphery of Europe with distinct 'island features', its "unchanged" and "antiquated" nature and "experiential" aspects of the Maltese atmosphere, which was discursively tied to the belief in the "traditional" ways of life of residents and an appealing "island way of life."

As Theume (2004) notes, culture, history, and tourism are intrinsically interrelated, with history, culture, and its manifestations contributing to a destination's attractiveness to tourists. Study

[56] It is important to note that tourist destination image is typically understood as a "mental representation of a place which is not physically before the observer" (Fridgen 1987:102), or in other words, as Lee and Gretzel (2012:1270) note "when travellers engage in mental imagery processing, they experience the destination in their mind's eye." Accordingly, because the interview data for this project was collected from travellers currently in Malta, the specific interview questions posed asked them to explain their imaginaries, understanding, and expectations of the Maltese islands prior to their arrival. Additionally, study participants were asked what led them to consider Malta as a destination for their holiday, because as noted, it has generally been accepted amongst scholars of travel and tourism, that tourist imaginaries and destination image have an influence on touristic behaviours, including the initial choice of a destination (Chen and Tsai 2007).

respondents indicate that their knowledge of Maltese culture and history contributed to much of the images and imaginaries they held of the Maltese islands. Additionally, as Azzopardi and Nash (2016) indicate, in one of the only studies that investigate Malta's destination competitiveness, "archaeological sites, landmark buildings, historical cities, and quaint villages, traditional music, cuisine, handicrafts, and art are some of the characteristics that were indicated by the participants as generating interest and a powerful appeal among tourists" (266). Study participants considered Malta's cultural and historical legacy and associated attraction or sites to be a "big draw", a "pull factor;"[57] that is, an appealing characteristic for tourists.

One participant, Jessie, a 48-year-old travel agent from Liverpool, summarized what drew her to vacation in Malta:

> Malta is not just a "sun and sea" destination, but it does have that, but there are heaps of culture here as well. The island is full of enchanting historical areas and that really excited me.

Likewise, another participant noted that:

> I had heard that in Malta, history was not confined to the museums and specific attractions but that you could experience Malta's unique history pretty much all over the island, that pretty much the whole island was a World Heritage site. I pictured kind of a dry dessert like place with limestone architecture and medieval churches.

[57] Many discussions within tourist motivation literature have focused on "push" and "pull" factors. Traditionally, push factors are used to explain the desire for travel while the pull factors refer to the motivations for picking the actual destination choice. Push factors, which are "logically and temporally prior" to the pull factors, establish the desire to travel and are considered to be "socio-psychological motivations that predispose the individual to travel and include the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, adventure, prestige, and social interaction" (Baloglu and Uysal 1996: 32). Pull factors, which explain the actual destination choice, are considered " as those factors that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as it is perceived by the traveller", such as "beaches, recreation facilities and historic resources as well as travellers' perception and expectation such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketed image of the destination" (Baloglu and Uysal 1996: 32).

Briana, from Sydney, Australia, similarly noted that she pictured a "beautiful, charming, 'steeped in history' kind-of place."

Some participants noted that they had been drawn to Malta as a tourist destination because of their destination image of a particular Maltese (or Gozotan) city. For example, Maureen, a 41-year-old personal trainer living in Yorkshire, England, reported traveling to Malta to "experience" Mdina, a small, well-preserved walled town. According to her:

> Mdina was a must see place for me to experience in my lifetime, I've always wanted to visit…. I just had this picture in my mind of this lovely and interesting place that is a sort of time-capsule where little has changed since the sixteenth-century, with quaint walkways, little shops and museums, and churches full of history and architecture.

Other participants were drawn to Malta as a tourist destination because of their desire to visit historical sites. For example, a young woman from the Netherlands, who found her self surprised that a "minuscule island on the fringe of Europe had the most UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the world," described that she wanted to visit Malta to visit the Megalithic Temples of Malta:

> I love seeing historic monuments, and when I heard that Malta had temples that were built before the Great Pyramid of Egypt and Stonehenge, I really wanted to travel to such an awe-inspiring place.

Similarly, another participant noted that she was drawn to Malta after stumbling across the Heritage Malta Website, run by the national agency for museums, conservation practice, and cultural heritage. According to her:

> Maltese history took me back to 5000 years ago and I needed the chance to experience that for myself.

In addition to the lure of Malta's cultural and historical patrimony, its "exoticness" as a "remote" island at the periphery of Europe with distinct 'island features' was reported by participants as both a draw to the Maltese islands and how the islands were touristically imagined.

Some natural environments have been prominently featured in humanity's dreams of the perfect world: they are the forest, the valley, the seashore, and the island (Tuan 1990: 247). Malta, like many other small island destinations, has attracted hordes of visitors each year through its "island lure" or impression that the islands hold distinct "island features" (Lockhart 1997).

Baldacchino (2016) suggests that two key features of "warm water" islands, beyond an attractive climate and natural environment, draw tourists to island destinations. The first feature of island tourism is "physical separation" (Baldacchino 2016: 2), where "the insularity of geographically finite lands holds significant attractiveness for tourists." In the case of Malta, study participants reported imagining Malta as a "tiny island with enormous history", as a "rock in the middle of the Mediterranean" and "a tiny archipelago between Italy and the North African coast."

The second feature of islands that study participants imagined of Malta is described by Baldacchino (2016) as "cultural differences." Baldacchino (2016: 3) notes that island inhabitants often develop "an ethno-cultural identity that is different from that of mainlanders, in that distinct dialects, dances, meals, rituals, music, songs, customs, and other behavior patterns tend to evolve over time." The cultural difference associated with islands refers to the ways in which "a number of sociopolitical, economic, demographic, technological, and ideological trends can be more readily observed than on the mainland, or in which those trends display a noticeable divergence from the process of culture change found in continental regions with which the island in question ought to have the most in common" (Held 1993:25). This is regarded as part of the Maltese islands attractiveness to tourists. The culture of the Maltese islands has been shaped by over 4000 years of invasion and colonization, from a succession of dynasties including the Phoenician, Roman, Arab, Norman, Shavian, Angelina, Aragonese, Castilian, the Knights of the Hospitallers, the French, and the British. With Malta's history being a saga of near-perpetual

colonization, many aspects of Maltese culture such as the Maltese language, traditional cookery, music, and rituals attest to Malta's cultural eclecticism and syncretism. Malta is not, and was never part of a mainland. Thus, its cultural differences, differences that include cultural variations from the continental regions with which the Maltese islands "ought to have the most in common" (Held 1993) must be seen in the light of Malta's insularity and geographical location. It is this "uniqueness" of Maltese culture – its exotic "otherness" in comparison to other European cultures, which inspires some contemporary tourists to visit Malta (Chapman and Speake 2011:482). For example, one participant explained what she imagined Malta to be like before her arrival, she noted:

> I had this image of Malta being this exotic 'melting pot' of all these different exotic cultures. Being located in the heart of the Mediterranean I imagined that all over there would be little tastes of the many different historical situations and different cultural influences from all the people who settles on the island… I knew about village 'festas'[58], and that they were so colourful and a mix of all these different cultures that produced something really unique to the Maltese Islands.

Another explained why she thought Malta would be like "no other country in the world". According to her:

> Malta has stunning weather, great beaches, amazing culture, food, and so much history and that is so unique. Most places offer one big thing like Hawaii's got the great beaches, and Greece has the history, but Malta is a unique experience, it's a total package steeped in history.

Malta's "unchanged" and "antiquated" nature, along with "experiential" aspects of the Maltese atmosphere, also contributed to much of the images and imaginaries participants held of the Maltese islands. For these participants, while the "sun, sand, and sea" of the Maltese islands were often described as the most important assets, or pull factors, an interest in Malta's colonial

[58] The village festa has for centuries been described as one of the landmarks of Malta's cultural heritage (see Cassar 2015).

or prehistoric heritage and the desire to experience the "slowness" of an (imagined) temporally removed and culturally distinct island archipelago had a powerful impact on destination choice.

Elenore, a secondary school teacher from London, who had traveled to Malta with a "Girls who Travel Club", a London based women's travel group for "30 and 40 somethings," explained how she imagined the Maltese islands and what drove her to take this particular trip with her travel group:

> I've been to many old cities, but from what I knew about Malta is that it was not only steeped in history but also had an Eastern charm. It is everything I imagined and more! colorful boats and open-air market beautiful traditional fishing villages, like it hasn't changed a bit in decades.

Charlotte, a 33-year-old barrister from London, imagined Malta to be:

> Small and quaint, with quiet villages and traditional village life… A hidden gem in the tourist world, undisturbed by tourists that hasn't strayed far from the *original* Malta, I fantasized that it would look so simple and quaint, tangles of tight streets and beautiful stone buildings and horses and carts.

Likewise, Natalia, a 22-year-old Polish born woman now living in London, like Elenore was also an avid traveller and explained how her imaginaries of Malta were similar to other "back in time type destinations":

> When I visited Egypt, especially the Grand Museum in Cairo, I felt instantly like I had gone back in time just experiencing the majestic ancient treasure, even in visiting some parts of Israel it was the same experience. So when I was preparing for my trip to Malta, even though I didn't know much about the islands apart from what I had seen on The Crown [a Netflix original historical drama web television series about the reign of Queen Elizabeth II], I imagined the same kind of landscape but like it would be like stepping back into colonial times, full of old time charm.

Like Natalia, many participants reported imagining the Maltese islands as full of "colonial era charm." One woman reported imagining that Malta "hadn't changed since the 1940s", another said she imagined "old fashioned colonial era shopfronts, a small town feel and cobblestone streets."Another, who had traveled to Malta from England to see where her grandfather was

stationed during the Second World War, noted that she had seen recent photographs of red post-box and telephone boxes embossed with the image of the British Crown and wanted to see if the country looked as her grandfather described it.

Like Natalia, many participants reported imagining the Maltese islands as full of "colonial era charm" or being drawn to sites marking the "British Period" in Malta. Several participants also mentioned imagining Malta as "unchanged" since prehistory or since the eleventh-century rule of the Knights of Malta. Rebecca from Gloucestershire, for example, said:

> I was thinking retrograde, Knights Templar, and Game of Thrones, that is what I imagined I would find in Malta. Lots of ancient buildings and temples.

Charlotte, a 33-year-old barrister from London, imagined Malta to be:

> Small and quaint, with quiet villages and traditional village life… A hidden gem in the tourist world, undisturbed by tourists that hasn't strayed far from the *original* Malta, I fantasized that it would look so simple and quaint, tangles of tight streets and beautiful stone buildings and horses and carts.

Lucy, a 22-year-old student teacher and aspiring photographer who "fancied herself a bit of a history buff" imagined that Malta would look "medieval" and like "it hadn't changed at all since the knights ruled."

The image of a remote island destination characterized by a "slow pace of life" was discursively tied to the idea that "time had stood still" in Malta, which was considered to be a "big draw", a "pull factor,"[59] or an appealing characteristic for tourists who indicated that their perceptions of the "tempo" on or "traditionalness" of the Maltese islands. Statements like "life here moves at a slower pace", "life in Malta is mostly very slow-paced and relaxed," "it has a slow pace of life that is intoxicating for people used to the hustle and bustle of modern city life" and

"Malta has the slower tempo of life and a small-town atmosphere" were common among respondents. These responses suggest that what they perceived to be an "island way of life" was attractive because life was distinctively slower than life in their Northern European home countries. What was perceived to be an increasing speed of contemporary modern life combined with the increasing stresses associated with contemporary modern living was often juxtaposed against the perceived slower practices of time and space or "slow pace of life" of Malta and the "slowness" of the Maltese people. According to these participants, the Maltese islands were either imagined or understood as a contrasting alternative to their urban and fast-paced lifestyle, or even as an alternative to modernity.

While the tourist women who visited Malta arrived with varied and unique expectations of the Maltese islands, the majority of participants both imagined and were drawn to an island destination that they touristically imagined to be at the geographical and temporal margin of modernity. These women articulated an understanding of the increasingly fast tempo of life in Northern Europe and often spoke of their desire to "slow down" or to temporarily liberate themselves from what Howard (2012) labels the "cult of speed" as part of their motivation for traveling to Malta. For example, Addison, a 28-year-old woman from Glasgow, noted that "modernity never really had an effect on Malta" and that "the general pace of life in Malta is different, urban living is a fast-paced city life, but here is more of a traditional Mediterranean pace, a different system completely." Similarly, Madeline, a 34-year-old sales associate at a designer clothing store in London communicated her understanding that "in today's stressful lifestyle somewhere like Malta, where you can relax and unwind is necessary for sanity." Nadia, who had traveled to Malta from Orillia, Ontario on the advice of her sister, recalled seeing the pictures pf her sister's travels to Malta and imagining that "exploring Malta would feel literally

like stepping backwards in time, or like stepping into the pages of a history book." Likewise, Josie, a woman in her early thirties described her impression of Malta prior to arriving on the island:

> I pictured really a rocky, small island, with crystal clear waters and small villages… and landscapes not ruined by modern stuff.

For these participants, while the "sun, sand, and sea" of the Maltese islands were often described as the most important assets, or pull factors, an interest in Malta's colonial and prehistoric heritage and the desire to experience the "slowness" of an (imagined) temporally removed and culturally distinct island archipelago had a powerful impact on destination choice.

The Maltese islands are imagined as existing in "glacial time", as antithetical to modernity, as existing in the past not the present, and as though time "has stood still.". Study participants, who frequently invoked notions of a "slower, easier and less complicated" past as a critique of the present, reported the "need" and desire for alternative experiences of temporality. The search for a different temporal experience was considered by many to be a primary motivator. For many, travel to the Maltese islands represented their desire to feel as if they have left modernity and to engage materially with the past.

The desire to connect with the past in this way can be understood as the longing to "assert a glacial conception of time, to challenge the profoundly disruptive effects of instantaneous time by reflexive subjects" (Lash and Urry 1994: 250; as quoted in Breathnach 2006:103). That is, individuals attempt to manage their dissatisfaction or frustration with living in modernity and the "experiences of a sense of loss endemic to living in modernity" (Pickering and Keightley 2006). This is what motives travel to destinations that are established (both in their representations and depictions, as established in Chapter 4 and socially shared imaginaries) as temporally displaced

and by attempting to assert a relationship with the past in material form (Breathnach 2006). The desire to engage with an earlier state or idealized past in this way is enmeshed in notions of nostalgia that are grounded in the intertwined senses of spatial distance and temporal displacement (Norum and Mostafanezhad 2016). The nostalgia for a lost time, or a "longing for what is lacking in a changed present ... a yearning for what is now unattainable, simply because of the irreversibility of time" (Pickering and Keightley 2006: 920) was communicated by some tourist women who participated in this study. Participants emphasized a longing for the past which was, apparently pictured as far superior to the present. Participant's tendency to imbue the past – when things were "slower, easier and less complicated" – with particular value was communicated by several participants. For instance, Josie, who as noted earlier pictured Malta's landscape as not spoilt by modernity, noted that when she finally arrived in Malta, she felt like she "returned to a simple, pleasant past, with homecooked meals and happy children playing outside." Matilda, who had traveled to Malta from England to see where her grandfather was stationed during the Second World War, noted that she had been enthralled by her grandfather's stories and photographs of post-war Malta, said that she was driven to Malta to gain some historical insight on her grandfather's past and "to visit a place I've never been but felt like I missed". Similarly, a middle-aged woman who reported that she had traveled to Malta because she had a "hankering for the simpler times of the past" and that she was "obsessed with the old ways" said that she always wanted to live in colonial era Malta and that her desire to travel to Malta was in part predicated on her feeling "homesick for a different time." The longing for the past, or a yearning to experience a bygone era, as communicated by several tourist women, is one of the many dimensions of nostalgia. Nostalgia is regarded as playing an increasingly important role in the tourism industry. As an emerging phenomenon, more and more travelers,

since the beginning of the twenty first century, have sought to satiate their longing for the past through travel and tourism experiences where visitors actively seek "slices of the past" (Christou 2020).

Arguing that "a great deal of time and energy is devoted to looking backwards", Dann (2010) argues that certain types of tourism (usually ethnic reunion, heritage tourism, diaspora tourism, legacy tourism, roots tourism, various aspects of dark tourism, and genealogical tourism) are predicated on nostalgia, and emblematic of "our quest to capture the past which, in every conceivable manner, is portrayed as far superior to the chaotic present and dreaded future."[60] Dissatisfaction with the present, according to this line of thought, "leads people to indulge in nostalgia by visiting heritage sites, which present them not with representations of the "true past," but with "fantasies of a world that never was" (Hewison 1987:10).

[60] Many scholars have criticized tourism that is apparently predicated on nostalgia, as being driven by a longing to "relive a glorified or misremembered version of the past" (Caton and Santos 2007: 371) (see Fairley 2003; Bandyopadhyay 2008; Kim 2005). However, as Caton and Santos (2007) note, this critique of nostalgia implies that tourists "evaluate society in an all-or-nothing framework and denies them the capability of assessing individual features of the past and present as desirable or undesirable". From this perspective, heritage tourists are restricted to and are only capable of understanding the past as either better than the present or worse than the present (372). Moreover, in addition to being prone to extreme overgeneralization, these critiques of nostalgia "assumes tourists' assessments of the past as better than the present to automatically be the product of irrational emotional attachments, rather than logical reasoning, and to be generally misguided and without merit" while it is at least conceivable "that some aspects of the past may have been more desirable ….than the corresponding aspects of the present and that tourists who arrive at this conclusion might have done so through logical reasoning regarding perceived benefits and drawbacks" (373).

Nostalgia derives from the Greek words "νόστος (nóstos)" and "άλγος (álgos)", referring to a painful yearning to return home.[61] However, the word nostalgia has been subject to numerous definitions. Davis (1973), as cited by Caton and Santos (2007), defines nostalgia as:

> being distinctive from other subjective states oriented to the past, such as remembrance and reminiscence, because it is necessarily comparative and value-laden and because it involves the filtering of memories. Nostalgia involves juxtaposing particular constructions of the past with particular constructions of the present, such that the past is associated with positive affects, such as beauty, pleasure, joy, [and] satisfaction, while the present, by comparison, is viewed as being more bleak, grim, wretched, ugly, derivational, unfulfilling, [and] frightening, or, less dramatically, as simply less promising, engaging, and inspiring than the present or imagined future. Thus, by definition, nostalgia is a positively toned evocation of a lived past in the context of some negative feeling toward present or impending circumstance (1973: 372).

Boym (2008), who stresses the centrality of space to the concept of nostalgia, argues that nostalgia comprises two constitutive parts: restorative, meaning the nostalgia is focused on the past, and reflective, meaning that the nostalgia is focused on the loss and irrecoverableness of the past. For Boym, this twofold typology explains the "manipulations" and "seductions" of nostalgia, in that nostalgia, is not just about "displacement and loss of a cherished past but concerned a romance with one's own fantasy where fantasies of the past are defined by the exigencies of the present" (Boym 2008: xiii–xvi, as cited by Lorcin 2018).

Nostalgia, according to this definition, "only includes a particular form of memory; it constructs positivistic personal or collective recollections of the past as a buffer or cushion to the present" (Ramshaw and Gammon 2005: 232) and involves subjects that are necessarily "haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back" (Rushdie 1992: 10).

[61] The word "nostalgia" comes from two Greek roots, nostos meaning "return home" and algia "longing."

Baker and Kennedy (1994:170 as cited by Kessous 2015) define nostalgia as "a sentimental or bittersweet yearning for an experience, product, or service from the past." Using this definition Russell (2008) identifies two types of nostalgic tourists: real and historical. For Russell (2008), a *real* nostalgic tourist is a tourist "who seeks to revisit their past cultural environment and relive personal bygone experiences, such as an expatriate returning home after a long hiatus" (104). A historical nostalgic tourist, according to Russell (2008) is one "who seeks to visit an idealized cultural environment that they have not directly experienced, but rather one that has been conveyed to them through an indirect means (e.g. movies, books, stories)" (104). In the case of this research, some participants indicated that historical and colonial nostalgia predicated their travel to Malta, in that their travel to Malta was at least partly motivated or inspired by a desire to "return", or to experience colonial era Malta.[62]

Colonial nostalgia, as a type of historical nostalgia, refers to a kind of "mourning for what one has destroyed" (Rosaldo 1993: 69). Likening colonial, or imperialist nostalgia,[63] to the feeling when a "person kills somebody and then mourns the victim," Rosaldo (1993) argues that this type of nostalgia revolves around a fundamental contradiction:

[62] The desire to "return" to a colonial era Malta was typically expressed as a desire or yearning to "see" or "experience" the cultural aspects of a colonial Malta and not the political state of an occupied or colonized land.

[63] The terms "imperial nostalgia" and "colonial nostalgia" are almost always used interchangeably, however, while this research, following the scholarship on nostalgia and postcolonialism (see Blanco 2007; Walder 2010) too uses the concepts interchangeably, it is worth noting that Lorcin (2013; 2018) argues that there is distinction that should be made between imperial nostalgia and colonial nostalgia. According to Lorcin, imperial nostalgia is associated with "the loss of empire, …decline of national grandeur and the international power politics connected to economic and political hegemony" and "concerns the practices, activities, and utterances of politicians and statesmen with an eye on the world stage" (2013:104). Colonial nostalgia on the other hand is associated "with the loss of sociocultural standing or, to be more precise, the colonial lifestyle" (2013: 97).

> A person kills somebody and then mourns his or her victim. In more attenuated form, Someone deliberately alters a form of life and then regrets that things have not remained as they were prior to his of her intervention. At one more remove, people destroy their environment and then worship nature. In any of its versions, imperialist nostalgia uses a pose of "innocent yearning" both to capture people's imaginations and to conceal its complicity with often brutal domination (108).

Rosaldo argues that people "display nostalgia for the colonized culture as it was "traditionally" (that is when they first encountered it)" (1993: 69). With colonial nostalgia "bringing to mind rose-coloured reminiscence of lost empire" (Lorcin 2011:193), colonial nostalgia is "connected to reminiscences and evocations of a past lifestyle and an idealized vision of the intercultural relations within the colony that existed at that time" (Lorcin 2013:103). Tourists from the "former centre of colonial power do not seek a return to colonialism but share perhaps a longing for a lost sense of order, control, and grandeur once associated with Empire" (Marschall 2012: 328).

As Boym (2008) points out, nostalgia is a longing for a different place and time; as a product of fantasy it is a yearning for a different time as much as a faraway place:

> nostalgia appears to be a longing for a place, but it is actually a yearning for a different time—the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams. In a broader sense, nostalgia Is a rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to turn history into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition. Hence the past of nostalgia, to paraphrase William Faulkner, is not even past. It could be merely better time, or slower time—time out of time, not encumbered by appointment books (8).

Much like the ideas expressed by Josie and Matilda, the narratives of the women who participated in this study reveals both historically nostalgic and colonially nostalgic desires and motivations to travel to a cultural environment that allows them to 'travel back in time' and to escape imaginatively to experiences of "double displacement" where they are displaced spatially "which is typical of the tourist quest" and also displaced temporally "which is the dimension

proper of nostalgia" (Peleggi 2005: 261). Nostalgia, expressed primarily by participants as a resistance to modernity and valorization of 'tradition', was expressed in the use of terms like "old-world charm" and "quaint remnants of the colonial era."

The nostalgic geographic imagination of the women who participated in this study reworks time and space, to imagine a vision of the Maltese islands as not just 'unchanged' by time, but rather stuck back in time, making the islands not just away from home, but also away from time and the trappings of modernity.

Conclusion: How the Maltese Islands are Touristically Imagined

Tourist imaginaries aredefined as the "spatial imaginaries that refer to the potential of place as a tourist destination" (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012: 1).Among tourism scholars, it has generally been accepted that these tourist imaginaries and destination image influence touristic behaviours, including the initial choice of a destination (Chen and Tsai 2007). As Salazar (2012:526) concludes "people hardly journey to *terrae incognitae* anymore these days but to destinations, they already virtually "know" through the widely circulating imaginaries about them." According to Salazar (2011) "at the roots of many travels to distant destinations ….are historically laden and socioculturally constructed imaginaries" (576) in that imaginaries allow individuals and groups to envision a place as a possible tourist destination (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012).

Destination images and tourist imaginaries are shaped by both the colonial and contemporary "othering" of peoples and places (see Kanemasu 2013; Adams 2004; Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento 2010). Verbal, textual, and photographic representations of tourist destinations have been found to have a significant influence over "outsiders" images and expectations (Adams

2004). This study does not claim a causal connection between the ways that the Maltese islands are portrayed and represented in marketing materials and other travel texts and the ways the islands were touristically imagined. However, what this chapter has demonstrated empirically is that the reported destination images and imaginaries do bear a strong resemblance to both the contemporary and colonial era representations of the Maltese islands discussed in the previous chapter. While further investigation is undoubtedly necessary, tourist women to the Maltese islands appear to have incorporated historical (colonial) and contemporary portrayals of the islands into their imaginaries of Malta.

By answering the question "How are the Maltese islands touristically imagined?," this chapter revealed that the images and imaginaries about the Maltese islands were characterized by what Echtner and Ritchie (1993: 9) term "stereotypical mental pictures." More specifically, the strongest reported imaginaries revolvd around the impression that the Maltese islands are an "unchanged" and historic locale, home to an "exotic" "ethnic" population. Similarly, the ethnographic data collected revealed that the most common reported imaginaries, images, understandings, and impressions of the Maltese islands (after climate and weather-related "sun-and-sea" attributes) surround the islands' cultural and historical patrimony, its "exoticness" as a "remote" island at the periphery of Europe, its unchanged and "antiquated" nature, which was discursively tied to the belief in the "traditional" ways of life of residents and an appealing "island way of life," which was characterized by a "slow pace of life" of Malta and "slowness" of the Maltese people.

Jacobs (2012) contends that the choice of a destination depends largely on the imagination of a different social life of the place. Similarly, interview data revealed that the historically laden imaginaries of Malta as a remote island destination characterized by a "slow pace of life,"

discursively tied to the idea that “time had stood still” in Malta, was considered to be a “pull factor” or an appealing characteristic for the tourist women who participated in this study. In other words, the tourist imaginaries that envisioned the Maltese islands as an exotic island local existing outside the normative temporality of Northern Europe both rendered the islands an attractive option for travel to and created the desire to visit (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012).

Chapter Six

Tourist Tales: Wanderlust and Wanderlove

"Finally, after the pictorial seduction, people flock to places not because of their beauty but because of their promise" (Lippard 1999: 52)

As Hall and Tucker observe, "tourism both reinforces and is embedded in postcolonial relationships" (Hall and Tucker 2004: 2). This chapter employs a postcolonial framework to explore the ways in which the tourism and ethnosexual encounters of tourist women to the Maltese islands are both reinforced by and embedded within colonial and postcolonial relationships. This chapter will examine how these relationships and encounters have been foregrounded by powerful colonial and contemporary representations of the Maltese islands and people, and the role that tourist and geographical imaginaries play in touristic experiences and encounters. In attempting to answer the question "How are the Maltese islands experienced by tourists?", this chapter explores the multiple and heterogeneous deployments of the "other" as this undergirds much of the representations of Maltese men by the tourist women who participated in this study. Primarily, this chapter explores the dominant representations of Maltese men as "exotic", "traditional" and un-modern "others" who personify the "exotic" and "unchanged" nature of the Maltese islands. I argue that the ethnosexual encounters of tourist women to Malta are intricately bound to the spatio-temporal dynamics evident in the representations and imaginaries concerning the Maltese islands.

Adrianna was a 25-year-old flight attendant for British Airways' London City business class-only service. She had decided to redeem her employee travel bonus for a "fortnight in the sun" before returning to London to finish preparations for her upcoming wedding. Adrianna met

Joseph early on into her two-week holiday to Malta and like most women who participated in this study, had no intention of becoming involved in a sexual or romantic relationship while in Malta. Despite having no plan to become involved in a relationship while abroad, Adrianna had found herself in what she described as a "smitten at first sight, whirlwind holiday romance".

It was late in July and the sun was low above the horizon and Mdina, the fortified city situated on the highest hill in Malta, was busy with tourists photographing the changing colours of the sky from the eastern Bastion. The sun was setting, and this meant he was late. Again. "It's just Island time. They just have a more relaxed attitude about time and tardiness here" Adriana explained in an apparent attempt to justify the lateness of her date. She drew long and deep on her cigarette and abruptly changed the topic of our conversation away from what she perceived to be a lax attitude towards time in Malta and back to what was "so different" about Joseph, her Maltese "boyfriend", from her fiancé back in London. As we paced the narrow cobblestone walkway outside the Fontanella Tea Room, the restaurant she called "a relic of the most agreeable aspect of British colonialism" and where she had hoped to spend her last night in Malta watching the sunset with Joseph, I reminded her that I hadn't asked what differentiated Joseph from her fiancé but rather what she liked about him.

> That's just it then, isn't it?! Of course, it is! I hadn't thought of it that way until right this second, but yeah, you're right, what I like so much about him is that he is so completely different from Simon. And not just Simon, remember I meet men on a regular basis through work, and I guess Joe is kind of different from all of them, in a way…in a lot of ways, good and bad, I suppose.

I wasn't surprised at all by Adrianna's account. Throughout my time with her, much of it spent waiting for Joseph, the Maltese man that she was "absolutely chuffed with" was often compared

to both her fiancé and other men in London. Joseph had "barely finished" form five[64] and operated speed boats that ushered tourists between Malta and the island of Comino. Simon was a Chartered Banker with an MBA. Joseph was described as "tall dark and handsome", Simon as "rather fair and balding". Joseph was described as "chivalrous" and "exciting", Maltese men as "exotic" and "romantic". According to Adrianna, British men are "basic" and "ordinary" and Simon was "dependable", "secure", and "loyal". Simon was "punctual", and Joseph was not.

While notions of difference and familiarity are contradictory and not well understood (Andsager, & Drzewiecka2002), exploration and the search for difference are long established ideas in tourism, and the search for difference or 'otherness' remains a significant driving force in global tourism (Ateljevic and Doorne 2003, 2005). Taylor (1998) succinctly summarizes the literature on this driving exploration for difference and argues that "whether aiming to experience the culturally exotic, the awe or excitement of nature, or simply to 'get away from it all', the primary object pursued by most tourists is difference" (1998: 4).

Like Adrianna, many of the women who took part in this study both appealed to notions of "authentic difference" (Marwick 2001) when describing their romantic or sexual partners in Malta, and also relied on a discourse of "authentic difference" to describe the Maltese islands and their perception of alterities of time and space[65].

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[64] Used predominantly in the United Kingdom and it's former colonies, the term 'form' refers to an educational stage. In this case the fifth form refers to the fifth year of secondary school in Malta.

[65] While outside the scope of this research, the tourist pursuit of the novel, the unknown, the exotic and the "other" has also been conceptualized as a quest for authenticity (see MacCannell 1973, 1976; Duffy and Jillisa 2013; Harrison 2003). Authenticity has long been a key concept in the academic study of tourism and was first introduced by MacCannell (1973; 1976) who

Just as ‘otherness’ and ‘authentic’ difference are central to tourism in general, in that other places, other cultures, and other climates are among the dominant features that attract tourists to various global destinations (see Picard and Di Giovine 2014; Dallen, Saarinen, and Viken 2016), the women who participated in this study reveal that ‘otherness’ is among the most dominant features that attract tourist women to Maltese men.

Exotic Otherness: Exotic Features and ‘Magic’ Lovers

Cartier and Lew (2005:13) note, in their ground-breaking work on the seductiveness of touristed landscapes in the tourist imagination, that the island is the ultimate beach and that the seduction of the island landscape, is much more about myth than reality. According to them:

> if the beachscape is the ultimate seductive natural environment, then the island, the oceanic island, is that essence reduced, concentrated, in mythic form.

As noted in Chapter five, and consistent with the findings of Azzopardi and Nash (2016), participants suggested that exoticism is considered part of Malta, as the tourist destination’s appeal. Baldacchino observes that “small islands are special because their 'geographical precision' facilitates a (unique) sense of place” (2002: 35). According to participants, and

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introduced the notion of authenticity as a putative motive for tourist activity and experience, partially in response to Daniel Boorstin's (1961: 17) comments on sightseeing and tourism and his conception of "pseudo-event". MacCannell developed the concept, as a response to the supposed lack of authenticity of modern societies. According to MacCannell tourists have become “secular pilgrims” searching for the authentic: “sightseeing is a kind of collective striving for a transcendence of the modern totality, a way of attempting to overcome the discontinuity of modernity” (MacCannell 1973). MacCannell (1973) posits that Western people, feeling alienated and unsatisfied in their own society look to places that they think are more “original” or “authentic”. Accordingly, tourism, from this perspective reflects a fundamental need for people to seek out the authentic, in that, for Western tourists, the motivation for travel lies primarily in a the search for authenticity, with the primary tourist's desire “to share in the real life of the places visited, or at least to see that life as it is really lived” (1973: 594).

consistent with the contention of Chapman and Speake (), it is this "uniqueness" of Maltese culture – its exotic 'otherness' in comparison to other European cultures, which inspires contemporary tourists to visit Malta.

Defining "exoticness" as a distinct "island appeal" the exotic imagery of Malta (as held in the tourist imaginary, as noted in Chapter 5) is associated with what Azzopardi and Nash term "island features" (2016: 267). These "island features", namely the perceived insularity of the islands, and the islands' "cultural differences" or the unique ethnocultural identity of the islanders, suggest for tourists the possibility of "something decisively diverse" (Azzopardi and Nash 2016).

As Bakker (2007: 276) notes, "an exotic travel destination is a desired place and state of being in which its inhabitant, the (exotic) other, is the ambassador". Likewise Jacobs (2016) argues, in her study on the relationships that develop in the tourist resorts in the Sinai, Egypt, that the male subjects are "othered" and constructed under reference to the holiday attractions chosen by the women. For many of the female tourists who participated in an ethnosexual relationship during their time in Malta, what was "exotic" and "decisively diverse" was the Maltese men they became involved with.

The vast majority of participants simply noted the "exoticism" of their romantic or sexual partner. For example, just as Adrianna simply refers to Joseph as "exotic", the majority of women who drew on a discourse of exoticism to describe either romantic or sexual partners or even Maltese men in general, simply used the word "exotic".

For example, twenty-year-old Christina, a student from London involved in an unexpected "holiday fling" during her holiday to Malta, referred to her new friend as "exotic". Having

traveled to Malta with her parents, Christina indicated that she wasn't expecting to connect with anyone while in Malta, especially because she had begged her parents to let her stay behind in London, instead of holidaying on a "little spit of land sitting in the middle of nowhere". Christina was pleasantly surprised by the Maltese islands and her scuba instructor. According to her:

> It's crazy, this place is like a paradise and he's (her scuba instructor) so sexy, I'd say....exotic and sensual.

In another example, Megan, a twenty-four-year-old woman from Aberdeen, had entered into a number of casual sexual relationships while in Malta. She described Maltese men in general as having:

> Strong, dark, exotic features, thick, luscious hair, great bodies…

Another woman who noted that she found Maltese, and other men from the Mediterranean "smooth, sexual and smoulder-ey" noted that:

> Whereas the exotic man exudes masculinity, the Caucasian male has lost his association with his sexuality.

Consistent with previous scholarship, many women declared themselves attracted to the "striking" and "exotic" features of Maltese men, describing the colour of skin, colour, and texture of hair, hairiness of the body, and facial features using highly racialized terms that demarcate the "exotic" Maltese body as "different" from those of Northern European or Western Men. The discourse of exoticism was used primarily to discuss the "distinctiveness" of Maltese men from other men, particularly their "hybrid" looks and identity.

Tiffany, a twenty-two-year-old aspiring D.J from East London who had traveled to Malta in part for the World Music Festival, while speaking to me rather openly, summarized succinctly (if not crudely) this attraction:

> I was like, well I surely haven't seen this mix before…right…its totally lush. I mean…I was originally attracted to the region because the different hues (of people) that were produced here but what they are is pretty much Euro-Arabs, like…Latin passion, Arab faces, Italian hand movements (laughing).

Similarly, Tiffany's friend and traveling companion Lisa recalled a recent trip to a Paceville nightclub, where a man who "claimed that he was Maltese" tried to "chat her up". Lisa suspected that he was lying to her about his ethnicity because he was, according to her, "fair and blond".

> Maltese men are dark-haired, brown eyes and olive skin, this kerb crawler (sic) was just normal.

Amela, a thirty-year-old from Ulm, Germany who had traveled extensively as a travel blogger with a modest following, also noted that she found the "mix of cultures" and "mix of races" that Maltese men represented attractive. According to her "there is very little, if any, skin colour distinction between the average Maltese, Arab, or Pakistani":

> There is, for me at least, a certain exotic appeal to the people here. I did a lot of research on the history of Malta before I came so I know about the culture and the people, and I'd say that you can see traces of the mix of cultures and mix of races in everything on the island, the language, the food, and definitely in the bodies and the faces.

Even women who were not and had no intention of becoming involved with Maltese men noted this "exotic" appeal. For example, a married woman in her early forties who had traveled to Malta with her daughter and sister-in-law similarly noted:

> Dark curly hair, tan skin, but still Caucasian is like something that you don't see that often, so I guess it's because it's a unique and distinct look that makes it interesting.

Reflecting and reinforcing power relations and engaging with colonialist discourse of exoticism, the touristic exoticization of Maltese men mobilized a tourist or geographic imaginary deeply

ingrained with colonial era notions of Maltese people. Just as the Orientalist preoccupation with the "race" of the Maltese people led early 1850's travel writers and archaeologists to note that "the poor, Arabic-speaking Catholic Maltese" were "difficult to define", and often resorted to identifying them as a "hybrid people, manifesting a mixed culture and appearance, and serving as a bridge between the Occident and Orient" (Smith 2006:82).

As argued in Chapter two, exoticism, a "close relative of Orientalism", "refers to the aestheticizing perception which renders people, objects, and places strange (exotic) even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery" (Huggan 2002: 15). Exoticism is often likened with "othering", or the process of reducing and defining non-European cultures as absolutely and essentially "different" from European cultures, for colonial aims (Poddar 2008).

There is a well-documented link between sex, travel, the eroticisation of the ethnic "other", and the desire to experience the "other" (Montgomery 2008) and it is often argued that various and multiple forms of racism are pivotal to sex tourism. Tourists, from this perspective, are seen as being driven into romantic and sexual relationships with locals by racist sexual stereotypes that include fantasies where the exotic "other" is more passionate, more emotional, more natural, and sexual tempting (Pruitt and LaFont 1995). These fantasies often arise out of associations between nationality and race which are rooted in colonial racist discourses (Brennan 2004). Both Orientalism and various forms of racism support and reinforce white Western and Northern European tourists' desires for exotic sexual experiences. This desire, a "post-colonial fantasy," is fueled by the "First World desire to consume the dark skinned 'native' bodies of the developing world…" (Brennan 2004). This contemporary association between nationality, race, and sexuality has evolved from colonial notions of race, gender, and sexuality in which white

Europeans were set in opposition to the darker "natives" they colonized. These associations made between race and sexuality inadvertently justify the tourist desire to experience the exotic "other".

For many of the tourist women who participated in this study, the "exotic" looks of the Maltese men were directly related to both their sexuality and their sensuality, with the perception that Maltese men, explicitly compared to their Northern European or Western counterparts, were "more sexual" or "more sensual". The conflation of the "exotic" with the "erotic" lead many participants to note that, despite being an overwhelmingly Catholic country, that "sex was more natural here" or that Maltese men "are more passionate about sex".

As Andrea, a twenty-seven-year-old medical receptionist from England, who called the Maltese man she was engaged in a relationship with "an uninhibited lover", told me:

> British men are the absolute worst, completely shy and useless in the sack. They will charm your pants off and then run away at the sight of a woman's knickers. The Maltese are more passionate in every way. You can tell this even when they are talking …they all sound like they are yelling and arguing, so they are like, less up-tight in even talking about sex and approach their sex life with more passion and desire.

Another woman, who noted that she was intimately "acquainted with Maltese manhood" said:

> Maybe it's the hot climate or that you can tell that this is what Maltese men have on their mind, but I would call this one of the horniest feeling countries in the world.

Grace, a woman in her late twenties from Brandenburg who was currently living in Malta as a councillor for an English language school, described her perception of the "open, liberal attitudes" of the Maltese people:

> One thing positive I can say about the Maltese is that they have a natural attitude towards their bodies. They are always hugging and kissing and touching each other a lot, and this turned into them being really good at sex…… The men are romantic, confident, and passionate.

And summing up her experiences with the young Maltese men she had encountered during her stay in Malta, Maja a young Swedish woman stated:

> They are like magic at sex,…because they do it all the time.

These representations are involved in Orientalist discourses in that they not only serve to (re)create and (re)affirm the binary distinction between Maltese people and their Northern and Western counterparts but also serve to uphold colonial era connections between "race", ethnicity, and sexual behaviour.

The Orient, according to Said (1978), (as cited by Moussawi 2013: 861), "was almost a European invention and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories, landscapes, and remarkable experiences". Said (1978), throughout his textual analysis effectively demonstrates that the Orient was throughout history portrayed and imagined as a place where "diverse sexualities existed", and where Europeans "could obtain sexual experiences unobtainable in Europe" (Moussawi 2013:861).

Writing about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century accounts of travels in the Middle East, Kabbani notes:

> In the European narration of the Orient, there was a deliberate stress on those qualities that made the East different from the West, exiled it into an irretrievable state of 'otherness'. Among the many themes that emerge from the European narration of the Other, two appear most strikingly. The first is the insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality and the second that it was a realm characterised by inherent violence. (1994: 5-6)

The Maltese islands were historically described as a place where perverse sexual practices thrived. The Maltese people, and their sexuality, were exoticized and defined as falling well outside the bounds of "normal" sexual behaviour (Jenkins 2016). Maltese men were described as

"debased and degenerate types" who were "immoral, indolent, dishonest, and despicable creatures" with "disreputable vices ingrained in them from their early environment" who "brazenly flout the moral code of this country (England)" (Cardiff's Chief Constable, James Wilson in 1927, as cited in Jenkins 2016). Moreover, as colonial subjects during British rule, they were understood as "racially different to the "British" based on perceptions of their masculinity and the sexual behaviors they were deemed to facilitate and engage in" (Jenkins 2016: 930). According to Jenkins "reflecting colonial hierarchies, the Maltese were placed within a racialized framework in which they were seen to possess an "un-British" sexual nature that was inclined towards nonheteronormative sexual behaviors and exploiting both the perceived innocence of "young British girls" and the more base sexual desires that were argued to be within "black" men" (Jenkins 2016: 942).

While being described as being "magic at sex" may seem a far cry from being regarded as a "despicable creature", from a postcolonial perspective the contemporary representations of Maltese men and the "naturalness" of their sexuality, or of their sexual prowess remains troublingly tied to colonial era images about Malta and Maltese people.

Temporal Otherness: Old-School Lovers and Un-Modern Men

Sarah was a twenty-three-year-old tourist who had traveled to Malta with five other young women to celebrate their successful completion of the BSc midwifery program from the City University of London. According to Sarah, the six women had planned a ten-day vacation of "comprehensive girl time" before they returned to London and each went their separate way, with some of the women beginning their careers in London hospitals, others moving out of the London Metropolitan area, and two beginning their postgraduate programs in the upcoming fall semester. Despite their planned "comprehensive girl time", Sarah quickly found herself at odds

with her collegues and travel mates who, according to her, had no intention of spending their time together exploring the historical and cultural sites that Sarah had painstakingly researched and organized day trips to. Instead, they preferred to spend their days asleep or sunbathing and their nights "off their faces having it off with legless men from the U.K (sic)". Unhappy with the prospect of spending her days (and nights) within the gated confines of the Ramla Bay Resort in Mellieħa, Sarah who described herself as "interested in a more authentic, cultural experience" opted to "get a glimpse into more traditional life and get a chance to mingle with a friendly local" by traveling solo to the cultural and historical sites she had planned to visit. It was during one of her trips that Sarah met Darren. Like most of the women who participated in this study, who were not necessarily expecting to participate in a new romantic or sexual relationship while on holiday, Sarah had no intention of becoming involved in a sexual or romantic relationship while in Malta. Despite her lack of intention, Sarah found herself "really connecting" with the young Maltese shop worker who "practically saved her life". According to Sarah, she had fallen ill trying to reach Saint Agatha's Tower on foot from the resort. When Darren saw her "bright pink, sunburnt, vomiting and suffering from heatstroke" outside of the shop he worked at, he brought her inside to cool down, rest, and rehydrate. Describing him as "naturally chivalrous" and as "an old soul", Sarah used the story of how she met Darren as an example of how he and Maltese men belong to "another time". According to her:

> I just felt like I just went back in time, when I'm with him I feel like I've gone back in time… a different time, like they say a time 'where men were men and women were women', I feel like he just knows how to take care of a woman in a way that men in the U.K don't know how to do anymore. Men in the U.K have gender equality ingrained in them, I guess. He's (Darren) chivalrous and he's hardworking, and he's strong, he is handy, can mend cars…I mean good on him…. and that's exactly what I need in my life right now.

Sarah was not alone in finding Maltese men to be more "traditional", "old fashioned" and "manly", nor was she alone in "feeling like she had gone back in time". The idea that Maltese men belong to another time (much like the Maltese islands, as discussed in Chapter Four and Five), or that they do not participate in the same normative temporality of clock and calendar[66] as northern Europe's modernity, was well articulated by the women who participated in this study. Maltese men were described as "traditional", "old school", "old fashioned", "gentlemen", "simple", and "natural", and their attitudes and behaviours largely understood as being heavily influenced by "custom", "heritage", "traditional beliefs" and "tradition". Of the multiple deployments of traditionalism expressed by the women who participated in this study, the understandings and descriptions of the attitudes and behaviour of Maltese men carried strong connotations of "pastness".

While temporality may be largely neglected by tourism studies and theories (Bærenholdt, Haldrup, and Urry 2017), purposeful efforts aimed at stopping time, stepping outside the everyday time flows of hegemonic clock-time and experiencing what Lash and Urry (1994) term "glacial time" are regarded as crucial aspects of contemporary tourism. Lash and Urry (1994), in making a distinction between experiences of time in late modernity, refer to the experience of temporal hiatus felt in places at the margins of Western settler societies as glacial time, which is contrastingly opposed to both the "instantaneous time" of cities and to measurable "clock-time" which is seen as the "organizing principle of modernity" (Small 2016: 343).

[66] Clocks and calendars, beyond being rhetorical devices, have come to metaphorically represent the "extraordinary significance of the organization of time within modern industrial societies" (Urry 1994:135).

In the small body of literature that examines the association between place and pace, alternative experiences of temporality have been found to profoundly impact travellers' experiences with places and landscapes (see Small 2016; Dickinson and Lumsdon 2010; de la Barre 2012). Just as the conception and experiences of time can influence touristic experiences of place and space-time perspective, or the experience of time, is also "an organizing principle for relationships…" (Jones and Brown 2005: 307). The women who participated in this study, informed by the spatial and temporal narrative of the Maltese Islands, report on the conscious negation of different temporalities in their sexual, romantic, and friendly encounters with Maltese men.

The most common understanding and impressions of Maltese men reported by the tourist women who participated in this study were that Maltese men, explicitly compared to British and other Northern European men, are "traditional", "old school", or "old fashioned". Featured amongst the discourse surrounding the supposed traditionalism of Maltese men was the tacit understanding that Maltese men retained some version of masculinity that was invariably associated with the past or "old ways of life". The perceived difference of host and guest temporalities was represented primarily through the understanding that Maltese men, forgotten by time and untouched by modernity, retained skills and knowledge associated with "traditional masculinity"[67] while men from the tourist women's own cultural background had "forgotten" them. Two distinct (yet interrelated) themes arose from the women's narratives, the

[67] Common statements to this effect include the assertion that Maltese men "still know how to treat a woman", "remember how to treat a woman", "haven't forgotten how to treat women", "still behave like (real) men", and that they "still know how to…" perform actions and tasks associated with a 'traditional' or conventional masculinity' (for example, automotive repairs and maintenance, fishing, etc).

understandings of Maltese men as 'idealized'[68] (and desired) "old school lovers" and Maltese men as simple, pre-modern men.

I met Lucy early one morning at the café just outside her Valletta Airbnb. Lucy was a 22-year-old student teacher at an inner London primary school and an aspiring travel photographer, who had traveled to Malta alone as a "history buff" wanting to "soak up the old-world charm". Describing herself as "a hopeless romantic buzzed with excitement", Lucy sipped her cappuccino and eagerly recounted meeting the Maltese man who had taken her "breath away":

> I was already swooning in love with the island when I first saw him. It was just me and my Canon noodling around the streets of Valletta doing a sort of balconies and boats tour when I saw him popping from around the corner and my heart just skipped a beat. I immediately thought that he was gorgeous…he's got this dark curly hair and sun-kissed skin, and I must have stared directly at him for too long because, thank God, he came over to talk to me, and he just really swept me off my feet.

Lucy described feeling "like she had been dropped into a Medieval Fairy-tale", according to her:

> Malta is pretty much a sun-kissed tropical museum, walking the streets is like stepping back in time and just getting to experience the history and the architecture with *him*, I feel like I am reliving history with him... I love this place! It's a really romantic place and having the opportunity to experience it with a really romantic guy has made this a very special holiday for me.

Describing her Maltese "boyfriend" as "oozing charm" ,romantic" and "old-fashioned, in a good way" Lucy, like many of the tourist women who participated in this study, drew on a discourse

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[68] My usage of the terms "idealization" was heavily influenced by Theodossopoulos' (2014) usage in his case study "Scorn or Idealization? Tourism Imaginaries, Exoticization and Ambivalence in Emberá Indigenous Tourism" on the contradictory (yet coexisting) types of exoticism experienced by the Indigenous peoples of Panama and Peru.

of “traditional masculinity” connotated with pastness to differentiate her Maltese lover from the men available “back home”.

> Nice tits love… want to make me a sandwich love’, guys back in the U.K have actually said that to me! Does my head in how they think that’s how to speak to or compliment a woman? Here though, wow, entirely different situation. Maltese men are real men. They know how to chat a woman up. *They* know how to treat a woman. They are still so chivalrous, old fashioned, holding doors, holding hands…romantic really. I’m over the moon here.

Like Lucy, a number of women who participated in this study disclosed their dissatisfaction and frustration with their relationships, or lack thereof, with men at home. For these women, while men of their own Northern European cultural backgrounds (predominantly British) were described as “dominant”, “distant”, “unemotional”, “unromantic” and “confused” about their gendered roles, Maltese men were understood as possessing a traditional and anachronistic manliness. While notions of “traditional masculinity” have, and continue to be related to socially constructed masculine stereotypes and associated with the maintenance of hegemonic masculinity and characteristic of sexism and chauvinism, for the women who participated in this study, acting “traditionally” or like “real” men, was a positive quality and was most closely associated with the concept of “*Caballerismo*” (from the Spanish word caballero, meaning “gentleman”). *Caballerismo*, used typically alongside the concept of machismo to access and describe Hispanic and Latino masculinities, refers to a code of masculine chivalry and is associated with male caretaking, respectfulness, and family involvement (see Arciniega et al 2008 . Ojeda and Piña-Watson 2014). The women who participated in this study described the “traditional” masculinity of Maltese men using positive descriptors associated with *caballerismo* that included physical, mental, and emotional toughness, nurturance, protection of the family, family-oriented, engaged, respectfulness, affectionate, compassionate, wise, hard-work, responsibility, spirituality, and emotional connectedness.

For the women who participated in this study, the encounters with Maltese men appeared to satisfy their desire for romantic and sexual experiences with a "traditional" man who enacted a masculinity they felt was lacking in their relationships back home.

Madeline, a thirty-four-year-old sales associate at a designer clothing store in London shared Lucy's concerns regarding the men in London. Madeline had traveled to Malta on the advice of a co-worker of hers, who had traveled to Malta previously and suggested the islands to her after Madeline expressed dissatisfaction with men in London. According to Madeline, while British men "might seem witty or charming to foreigners" they were in fact "a lazy, unchivalrous and effeminate lot…who forgot how to behave like men and can't even chat a woman up let alone settle down". Drawing on positive male images associated with *caballerismo*, Madeline argued that Maltese men, unlike men in London:

> Embody the old-school stereotypical male traits. Because Malta has very old-school gender roles, they are strong and masculine. They are the breadwinners in their families but they are respectful of women. I had heard from friends and colleagues that the men were different here, but they aren't just different, they are better.

Noting that "ethnic men tend to stick to their own back home (in England)" and that she had always been attracted to "Mediterranean looks", Madeline reasoned that unless she was "out on the pull abroad (sic)" she would be "stuck with the least manly, least romantic blokes in existence".

Maureen, a Swiss-born 41-year-old personal trainer now living in Yorkshire, England, shared Madeline's sentiments and named British men "the worst lovers in the whole world". While she described English men as "unmanly and emotionally constipated" she described the Maltese men she had encountered as "gentleman with proper, respectful manners" and "real men", despite on average being shorter than she preferred (calling them "vertically challenged"). When I met

Maureen, it was during her third trip to Malta and while she was not currently involved with anyone, she did cite the desire to engage in a romantic or sexual relationship as "not the only reason…but one of the reasons for this holiday". She told me why she found the prospect of engaging in a relationship with a Maltese man an attractive option:

> It's nice…it's a nice feeling I mean, to be in the company of old-fashioned masculine men, like…real men, the kind of men who see what they want and make an effort to get it. I feel like Maltese men have a simpler nature to them. They have a specific mindset and know-how to be the man in a relationship, and they know how to let women be women, but with the utmost respect….. English men are fearful of rejection, so they don't even risk trying with women unless they're drunk off their faces, but Maltese men have that male's instinct. They are innately masculine.

Claudia and Karen, two British women in their late thirties, who had both entered into casual relationships with Maltese men and described their partners as "tall, tanned, gentleman" noted that "Maltese men are some of the only men out there who haven't forgotten how important it is to protect, provide, and commit". According to Karen, who called the Maltese islands "vintage beauties" and "a relaxing, serene and picturesque environment", she had been involved in romantic and sexual relationships during her travels to both Spain and Morocco, and British men had left her no choice but to travel abroad in search of romance:

> In the U.K chivalry is dead, men are pigs, and there's no hope out there. I find chivalry to be a gorgeous thing so I tend to like to travel where the men volunteer to kill a massive roach without complaint, where they are more charming and attentive.

Elenore, a secondary school teacher from London who had traveled to Malta with a 'Girls who Travel Club', a London based women's travel group for "30 and 40 somethings who are keen on traveling and making new friends" described her experiences with Maltese men as being "500

percent different" than her experiences with men in London. Echoing Maureen's complaints, Elenore too suggested that British men "had skipped the part of the dating handbook that teaches romance". Blaming the behaviour of British men to a "lad culture" that demands the avoidance of anything labelled feminine including emotions to prove that they are "well hard", Elenore explained that Maltese men "still put effort into the courtship phase" and know how to "treat women with respect". For Elenore, who described her overall touristic and romantic experiences in Malta "like stepping back in time", Malta was:

> A place where men still treat women like ladies, where they still fish with nets, where market day is still the biggest talk of the town.

For some women, like Madeline, Maureen, Claudia, and Karen, the opportunity to engage in sexual and romantic relationships with Maltese men was at least part of the reason they had traveled to Malta, whereas for other women who participated in this study, Maltese men were just a pleasant addition to their package sun and sea holiday. These women's accounts reveal that, as is well documented by the scholarship concerning 'liminality' and travel and tourism (see Ryan and Kinder 1996), holidays are distinct from everyday life. Tourism, from this perspective, can be understood as a "liminoid realm" in which norms of behaviour are briefly abandoned (Ryan and Kinder 1996). Tourism is thus understood as a "temporarily constrained, socially tolerated, period of wish fulfilment, a form of fantasy enactment that is normally denied to people" (Ryan and Kinder 1996: 507). Liminality, or this temporary dislocation of the tourist from their normal circumstances and restraints of home, is associated with the "absence of status distinctions, anonymity, and less constrained behaviour in general and sexual behaviour in particular" (Berdychevsky 2016: 929). Liminality and experiences of the liminoid (Turner 1974) allow tourists the freedom to participate in sexual behaviours that may differ greatly from their experiences of the gendered, social, and even racial constraints of home (Chon, Bauer, and Bob

2012). Accordingly, different sexual behavior, either in the choice of partners, frequency, activity, or attitude can also be explained by the liminal nature of tourism (McKercher and Bauer 2003).

This liminality was described by some women who participated in this study. For example, Megan, a twenty-four-year-old woman from Aberdeen, had entered into a number of casual sexual relationships with Maltese men during her holiday because she had found herself "spoilt for choice". According to Megan she had "never gotten so much attention in her life", and while she reasoned that as a tall, slim, and beautiful blond woman she was "the polar opposite of local women" and therefore "quite a catch for a Maltese man", she found herself going a "bit boy crazy!", according to her:

> I am never this much of a slag (sic) but it's like I'm falling in love every day! I find the boys over here are different. It's such a carefree and relaxed atmosphere here! and the boys! So many good-looking boys! Strong, dark, exotic features, thick, luscious hair, great bodies, high sex appeal and so charismatic with their hardworking 'down-home' nature.

The liminality of their tourist experiences allowed tourist women freedom from the rules and behavioural expectations of "home" which allowed them the freedom to be "swept off of their feet" and to "go with the flow". Feeling free and less responsible, or what Eiser and Ford (1995: 323) term "situational disinhibition" was understood by Charlotte as what allowed her to "let her guard down" and "fall in love". According to Charlotte, a successful barrister from London who had made a concerted effort to "see a more traditional Malta by getting away from the busy parts full of tourists and mix with the locals", she entered into a brief sexual relationship with a Maltese man she had met (perhaps ironically) from amongst her hotel staff:

> I couldn't do this at home, not only am I far too busy, but I have far too many people who could look at me and say 'she would *never* do that' (emphasis hers). And they are right, to be fair, this is totally out of character for me, but I thought to myself

> ‘eff it’ I’m on holiday. Just having occasion to slow down and unwind and really be mindful of my experiences let me just take it all in, to fall in love.

Careful to note that she was not in love with “him” (the man she had engaged in a relationship with during her holiday) she clarified with a laugh:

> Of course, it’s not him I’m in love with. I am in love with the combination, him, the crystal clear waters, the old-style architecture, the traditional way of life.

Like Charlotte, Kate a single mother in her early thirties described feeling free enough from her parenting roles and responsibilities to really “enjoy the simple pleasures that the island has to offer”.

Whether motivated into a relationship by feelings of touristic liminality or having traveled to Malta with the intentions of becoming involved in a relationship with a Maltese man, the tourist women who participated in this study clearly communicated their understanding that the dating and romantic attitude and behaviours of Maltese men belonged to a bygone era. The perceived presence of past-oriented, “traditional” temporal modalities, as communicated by the tourist women reveals that the term “traditional” is used to distinguish Maltese men from both the Northern and Western home countries of the tourist women, but also from the men who reside in them. For these women, the “traditional” is contrasted with the “modern”, and the presence or continued existence of what is understood as traditional was equated with a return to the past.

Many of the tropes identified by Said (1978) as defining Orientalism are maintained by the tourist women who participated in this study. As Echtner and Prasad (2003) note, Said indicates that “colonial discourse about the Orient inevitably suggests that these places are past their prime: [t]heir great moments were in the past; they are useful in the modern world only because the powerful and up-to-date empires have effectively brought them out of the wretchedness of their decline” (1978:35).

Relying heavily on discourses surrounding romance and love and courtship, Maltese men were described as “chivalrous” “romantic” and “gentlemanly”, with a ‘traditional masculinity’ closely resembling the masculinity of *caballerismo* - with its underlying values of respect and responsibility. While the women described the supposed traditionalism of Maltese men in a positive and complimentary way, these descriptions and representations invoke a timeless vision of Maltese people and men specifically, which is, informed by colonial Orientalist discourses of civilization, modernity, and primordial difference, by “collapsing the past and the present into one” (Marwick 2001: 427). Just as the Maltese islands are imagined and subsequently experienced and understood as timeless relics, as a place unchanged, the Maltese people are understood as existing in the same temporal hiatus that imagines the Maltese islands as unchanged.

Rendering a culture or place traditional rests on a 'Eurocentric' worldview predicated on “the discursive residue or precipitate of colonialism” (Stam and Shohat 1994:15). Accordingly, the distinctions between modern and traditional are “fundamental categories of perception, evaluation and action which, like another well-known and related pair of opposites—nature and culture—are constitutive of the world itself” (Argyrou 2002:26). The representation of a place or a people as traditional is a way of thinking and speaking about non-Western countries that is reinforced by a series of enduring colonial binaries which at once “privilege Western agency, modernity and mobility over non-Western passivity, tradition and rootedness” (Jazeel 2012). According to Argyrou, conceptualizations of tradition and modernity, are not just conceptual tools but also cultural weapons, used to distinguish the “modern” metropole from the “traditional” colony.

Maltese Men: Un-Modern Men

Just as Ben-Yehoyada (2014) notes that "the modern Mediterranean' and 'Mediterranean modernity' seem debatable if not outright oxymoronic" (107). Discourse of the 'un-modern', used in this case as both spatio-temporal and cultural categories, was used to describe tourist perceptions of Maltese people.

While the 'old fashioned' or 'traditional' romantic behaviour of Maltese men was generally attributed to religion, and Maltese traditions and customs, another common theme to emerge from conversations with tourist women was the impression that Maltese men were able to preserve much of their 'traditional' attitudes and behaviours because they remained untouched and untroubled by the modernity and 'progress' of the rest of Europe and the West. The idea that Maltese men led simpler lives and were therefore able to retain a more 'traditional' lifestyle and worldview was oft communicated by the tourist women who had developed relationships with Maltese men. The women I interviewed described the Maltese islands as a space outside of modernity and consistently described Maltese men as either non-modern or pre-modern. Positing Maltese 'backwardness' and 'traditionalism' against British and international 'modernity', Maltese men were represented as 'simple', "uncomplicated" and "quaint" with an "enduring, peasant simplicity" (Echtner and Prasad 2003).

As noted previously, while the tourist women who visited Malta arrived with varied and unique expectations of the Maltese islands, the vast majority of participants both imagined and desired an island destination at the geographical and temporal margin of modernity. Echoing colonial era narratives, Malta, along with other parts of the Mediterranean basin, have become symbols of pre or non-modernity through Orientalist geographical imaginations that construct the Mediterranean Sea as a sharp divider between the 'developed' and 'modern' Europe and the less developed and

less modern North African and the Middle East[69] (see Ayadi 2011; Ben-Yehoyada 2014; Chambers 2008).

For these women, establishing ethnosexual relationships with a man who embodied their longing for a reprieve from modernity satisfied that desire. As Adrianna, the 25-year-old flight attendant who found herself "smitten" with Joseph, the perpetually late speedboat captain, noted with a smile and a wink:

> I will let everyone back home know how to break the curse of the twenty-first-century, if you're hankering for the simpler times of the past, visit Malta, and I will let every woman back home know if *you're* hankering for the *simpler* (emphasis hers) times of the past, go to Malta.

While modernity has been defined in various ways as either a social, cultural, economic, and/or political state of being (Ben-Yehoyada 2014), Hunt (2008) offers a noteworthy view of modernity that has two related definitions. For Hunt, modernity is both "the quality or condition of being modern; modernness of character or style," and "an intellectual tendency or social perspective characterized by departure from or repudiation of traditional ideas, doctrines, and cultural values in favor of contemporary or radical values and beliefs" (2008:47). The emphasis

[69] This is not to argue that there aren't real and significant differences between the Mediterranean countries and the rest of Europe, but rather that the women who participated in the study constructed their geographical imaginations of Malta, and to a lesser extent the entire Mediterranean basin, using themes of modernity and development. There is however a substantial body of literature that understands the Mediterranean as a region 'in itself', as Europe's 'problematic fringe', a "dividing line between conflicting civilizations" (Ayadi 2011), as a border between Christian and Muslim civilizations to the north and south (see Darling 2012) and as "something of an intellectual cul de sac" as a space that is "not quite African, not quite Arab, not quite European" but as a space that "inhabits … the essentialisms evoked by each" (Birke 2009:5). From this perspective, scholars have underscored climate and geology, patterns of cultivation and settlement, and more and ways of life as evidence of "clearly circumscribed" Mediterranean (Moulakis 2005:12). In this view, the Mediterranean Sea is likened to the American Rio Grande, and is understood as separating "two entirely different economic and social systems" that are "differentiated by economic, demographic, geopolitical, and cultural divides" (King 1998: 110).

on breaking from tradition leads Hunt to conclude that if modernity exists, it is a characteristic of the present time in that it is understood as "not old-fashioned, antiquated, or obsolete" (2008:49) Similarly, Arce and Long agree (2003) that, in the most general sense, "the term 'modern' connotes a sense of belonging to the present and an awareness of a past to which people can link and at the same time distance themselves" (2003: 4).

The polarity between Europe and the Mediterranean regions reflects and reproduces the wider dichotomy between modernity and tradition (Argyrou 2002). In the tradition–modernization dichotomy "the relationship to time is different. Tradition is oriented towards a legitimate reference to the past while modernization is oriented towards the mastery of the future" (Langlois 2001: 44). According to Mitchell (2002) "this demarcation of tradition and modernity is at the centre of what Charles Piot (1999) has described as the classic Euro-American epistemology—a polarity that exists so that the traditional can be discarded as backward" (2002:2)

For the women who participated in this study, all of whom regarded their northern European home countries as modern, an awareness of the past allowed for the juxtaposition of their modernity from the non-modern "traditionalness" of the Maltese islands and the Maltese people. Drawing deeply on romantic and nostalgic understandings of the Maltese islands and the Maltese people, many women spoke of Maltese men as being "pure", "simple", "idyllic" people, who were described as participating in "old ways of life" such as fishing and fishmongery, hunting, farming, carpentry, shoemaking, traveling by karrozzin and boat[70].

[70] Piscitelli's (2016) ethnographic work regarding the sexual and romantic relationships of European women and men in northeast Brazil reveals that European women frequently describe their Brazillian male partners in a very similar way. As Piscitelli notes the men in her study are

The sense that Maltese people, and men, in particular, live "traditional lifestyles" outside of modernity, was often communicated by tourist women who pointed to what they perceived to be the relationship between Maltese men and the practices and trappings associated with modernity. A culturally sanctioned "slow" tempo of everyday life and religiosity emerged as central themes, articulated by study participants who sought to juxtapose the modernity of people "back home" from the non-modernity of the Maltese people.

Many theorists of urban modernity have suggested that the process of modernisation has accelerated the pace of life in modern industrial nations (Hubbard and Lilley 2004). As Lyon and Colquhoun (1999) note in more developed post-industrialist societies, like the U.K, linear clock time is given great importance. According to them, amid the increasingly fast tempo of life in late modernity "in personal and occupational relationships, in our evaluation of goods and services, being 'on time' or 'fast' is invariably an accolade. Being 'early' or 'quicker' is even better "(1999: 1).

According to Oh, Assaf, and Baloglu (2016: 205) people experience feelings of "disempowerment, powerlessness, and dehumanization" because a "constantly accelerating …pace of life" which is ultimately causing "time poverty, surface engagement and processing of information, loss of control, a blasé attitude…., and eventually loss of the self" (2016: 205).

Participants articulated a very similar understanding of the increasingly fast tempo of life in Northern Europe and often spoke of their desire to "slow down" or to temporarily liberate

"describedas happy, gentle, noble, and lacking malice, sensitive, shy, and even fragile " (2016:280).

themselves from what Howard (2012) labels the "cult of speed" as part of their motivation for traveling to Malta.

According to one woman, Addison, who recalled that she had traveled to Malta to "relax, slow down and really take it all in":

> Go, go, go, that's what life is like in Liverpool, always on the go. Never even have a chance to take a breath. There is no smelling the roses in the U.K.

The participants suggested that what they perceived to be an "island way of life" was attractive because life was distinctively slower than their Northern European home countries. What was perceived to be an increasing speed of contemporary modern life and the increasing stresses associated with contemporary modern living were often juxtaposed against the perceived slower practices of time and space or "slow pace of life" of Malta and "slowness" of the Maltese people. The slow pace of life in Malta was discursively tied to the idea that "time has stood still" in Malta. According to the participants, the Maltese islands represented a contrasting alternative to their urban and fast-paced lifestyle.

Addison, for example, noted that "the general pace of life in Malta is different, urban living is a fast-paced city life, but here is more of a traditional Mediterranean or Arab pace, a different system completely".

Similarly, Madeline, the thirty-four-year-old sales associate at a designer clothing store in London who had traveled to Malta "on the pull" communicated her understanding that "in today's stressful lifestyle somewhere like Malta, where you can relax and unwind is necessary for sanity".

While several works (see Dickinson 2010; Markwell, Fullagar and Wilson 2012) demonstrate how "slow travellers"[71] express both the desires and the "need" for alternative experiences of temporality, the women who participated in this study sought not just to control time, or "slow down" for a temporary relief from the demands of modernity, but to be involved with men who embodied the "slow pace of life" they perceived of the Maltese islands. The evocation of a nostalgic "golden age" characterized much of the conversations with tourist women in this regard.

As Lydia, a twenty-nine-year-old paralegal from Bavaria, Germany, told me:

> I knew Malta was an adorable tranquil island even before I set my feet on it. Life on Malta moves at a slower more leisurely pace and finding a special someone to slow down with is sincerely a life-changing experience, from siestas, to slow lovemaking, being here with someone who is an islander, with a slower nature, gives your intuition a feeling of what it would have been like to live before, gives you a chance to get away from it all.

Juxtaposing the "slower nature" of Maltese people against what she regarded as the hyper-connected iPhone, Facebook, and Twitter users of her home countries modernity, Lydia argued that:

> Maltese people can really help you relax and let go of all your worries and enjoy some peace.

Conflating the "slow life" with the "good life", one woman, who was staying in Gozo, the second most populated island in the archipelago, with a local man whom she had met on a Travel

[71] Originating in the Italian Slow Cities (CittaSlow) and the "Slow Food Movement" of the 1980s and 1990s, "slow travel" is a tourist type in its own right. Slow travel is conceptualized as the antithesis to "mass-tourism" and is guided by a desire to alleviate the "time-space pressures" that can accumulate in today's faced-paced capitalist life-world (Conway and Timms 2010). Slow travel, which offers an alternative to air and car travel, is characterized by shorter travel distances, low-carbon consumption and a greater emphasis placed on a holistic travel experience.

Malta Facebook site, shared Lydia's sentiment. According to her, living in Gozo was like living "La Dolce Vita" and living in the 'good ol' days':

> The pace of life here is much slower and the locals can really show you that living in the slow lane is not a bad option at all. Once you get rid of all the chaos, the regular busyness of life can be replaced with actually connecting with people. But, what I found is even though the whole islands have this slower pace, having a partner that has this slower pace and is living a more balanced lifestyle helps to shut down and ignore clocks.

For other women, the "slow tempo" of life in Malta steamed from the "authenticity" of Maltese people and their participation in "local" and "traditional" Maltese practices. For example, Emma, the thirty-year-old health insurance broker for Switzerland who felt like she was able to "live authentically like a local" with the help of her new male companion, considered the "four Fs – family, friends, food and festas" to be what "real Maltese people were all about". For Emma:

> Slowness is seeped into the very cloth of Maltese society and is so ingrained in these people that they can sit around all morning drinking a cappuccino, or drinking a bottle of wine, eating dinner for hours, or what have you.

For Kate, the single mother whose temporary freedom allowed her to "enjoy the simple pleasures that the island has to offer", the slower tempo of life on the Maltese islands allowed Maltese men "time to savour, their wine, their food, and their women". She noted that after years of marriage to "a compulsive workaholic" she really appreciated her new beau who she described as "completely out of touch with time".

These participants understood cultural differences as temporal distance. Like the perceived traditionalism, the assumed pre- or non-modernity of Maltese men assisted in ushering women "back in time".

Nostalgia

The experiences of the women who participated in this study highlight the importance that nostalgia plays in the idealization of Malta's "traditional" and "non-modern" men. The participants suggest that the Maltese islands have been associated with a non or pre-modernity that constitutes the islands as "other" to the North and the West. For these women, "stepping back in time" (or outside of the confines of passing time) and "slowing down time" was, as Panagakos decides of the Greek-Canadian women involved in diasporic romances with men in Greece, "the logical completion of these nostalgic longings for something that appeared to them as tangible, attainable, and desirable" (2016: 290). The experiences of these women, along with their tendency to imbue the past – when things were "slower, easier and less complicated" – with a particular value, highlight the role that nostalgia plays in these ethnosexual romances.

While the importance of nostalgia has been noted by tourism researchers who are concerned with tourist motivations (Bandyopadhyay 2012) (see Bruner 1993 Dann 1994), there is relatively little scholarship on how various forms of nostalgia propel relationships between people.

The ethnosexual experiences, understandings, and consequent narratives of tourist women to Malta are largely imbued with different forms of colonial nostalgia. Through this discourse of traditionalism, slowness, and modernity, the Maltese islands are (re)produced as "other"— not Europe, not even Southern Europe, but a distinct and isolated from the Northern and Western home courtiers of the participants.

These romanticised and nostalgic portrayals of the Maltese islands, much like the present-day travel writings and colonial images of the islands discussed in previous chapters, accords largely to what Fabian (1983) terms "allochronism" or a mode of "framing history that places the 'other' in a time different from the present of the writing subject". The temporalities of space mediate

tourism practices in that the Maltese people were characterized by their enduring traditional pre-modern simplicity, or in the words of ---"exotic remnants of another time"

The nostalgic reconstruction of Malta, reflecting long-standing essentialised interpretations of the islands, was further entrenched with conceptualisations of masculinity, traditionalism, and modernity?which reveal the role that local men can play in this spatiotemporal displacement. For these women, Maltese men, and their perceived absence of modernity represent and embody what participants described as one of the most important touristic assets to Malta, its imagined location outside both Europe and modernity.

Women from Northern Europe indicate that their travel to the Maltese islands was at least partially predicated on their desire to experience both the exoticism associated with islands and the perceived absence of modernity. As the narratives of the tourist women indicate, the personification of the Maltese islands as Maltese men leads to the conflation of places and people. Imbued with notions of exoticism, traditionalism, and (colonial) nostalgia the tourist imaginaries that predicated the women's trips to Malta were shown to have material consequences for the spaces tourists visit and the way they experience them. Put simply, the way that tourist imagined the Maltese islands (as an unchanged relic of the past) is the way that they experienced Maltese men.

The ideas of spatial and temporal "otherness" both helped shape the "exotic" and "traditional" Maltese man in stark opposition to Northern European men and allowed tourist women the opportunity to move away from simply imagining the "otherness" to experiencing it.

The Seduction of Space

Beyond seeing, understanding, and experiencing Maltese men as personifications of the exotic and temporal otherness of the Maltese men, the narratives of the tourist women reveal the role that place[72] plays in enticing and facilitating ethnosexual relationships. Just as Jacobs (2012), in her work on tourism to the Sinai, concludes that the geographical imaginaries and emotions involved with conceptions of distance, time, and desert landscapes are integral components in both the attraction to locals and the performances of masculinity by locals, the narratives of the tourist women indicate that places themselves can have romantic, erotic or seductive qualities.

According to Cartier (2005), an awareness of the seductiveness of spaces relies on an understanding that particular spaces, depending on individual subjectivities and "embodied experiences", "invite encounters… where people seek particular aspects of attraction, desire, and possibilities for liminal experience" (21). "Such spaces present to visitors the lure of potential" (2005:21), as these spaces (like bodies), becomes adorned with significance and meaning (Crouch 2005: 21).

Noting the beach, in "tropical and temperate zones, is arguably the most seductively powerful, yet accessible, natural site", Cartier (2005:27) argues that:

> If the beachscape is the ultimately seductive natural environment, then the island, the oceanic island, is that essence reduced, concentrated, in mythic form. Here seduction lies in a kind of tension, in inaccessibility, the island as refuge combined with its distance from metropolitan centers... In the tourist imagination, the island is the ultimate beach (even as the geomorphology of so many island coasts precludes substantial beach formation). The seduction of the island landscape, even more than the beachscape, is much more about myth than reality.

[72] Place, which is how the destination is anticipated and imagined, is differentiated from space, which is how the destination is engaged with physically and socially on the ground (Thurnell-Read 2012: 801))

In this case, for the women who participated in this study, the seductive nature of the Maltese islands lies in its island*ness*, as an island steeped in myth, lore, and romantic history, but also in its "otherness" and the desirability of this difference. Modernity was not only a cultural and temporal condition but also spatial, and the spatiality of the exotic and traditional Maltese islands allowed for embodied experiences with men that personified these island features.

Conclusion: How the Maltese Islands are Experienced by Tourists

The tourist women who participated in this study relied on discourses of "romance" "relationships", and "mutual affection" to describe their ethnosexual encounters with Maltese men during their holidays to the Maltese islands. While these findings conform largely with the findings of Pruitt and Lafont (1995) who coined the term romance tourism to describe the sexual behaviour of women on tour, and Nagel's (2003: 207) assertion that tourist women that engaged in ethnosexual relationships appeared more interested in "being swept away" than participating in "sex tourism", the narratives of these women also revealed the role that (colonial) nostalgia and tourist imaginaries played in their ethnosexual encounters. Seduced by imaginaries predicated on island exoticness and 'authentic' traditionalism and masculinity, the "exotic" and temporal other was produced as a clear embodiment of the Maltese islands, and as such, something to be consumed by tourist women.

To much of the developed world, islands in the tourism imaginary are both exotic and romantic idylls (Harrison 2004). Unsurprisingly, the overwhelming representation of Malta as an "unchanged" and "exotic" mythical island steeped in a legendary history presented by contemporary travel texts remains both tied to a set of nostalgic colonial images and representations about Malta and firmly situated within the tourist imaginary that renders the Maltese islands a suitable tourist destination.

Various forms of representation influence how places, spaces, landscapes and even people are perceived and understood (Iwashita 2004) and the women I spoke to, influenced by both "the myth of the unchanged" and the lure islands hold over imaginaries, imagined and experienced the Maltese islands using two distinct categories, the changed and the unchanged, the modern and the ancient, and the advancing and the decaying. Driven by (colonial) nostalgia, and the liminoid desires to shed the constraints of modernity these women desired a space outside of modernity, and participation in ethnosexual relationships with men who embodied their sense of the "unchanged" satisfied that desire.

The narratives of the tourist women involved in this study are consistent with Bachelard's contention that "imaginaries represent a way of relating to space and matter that generates meaning" (Bachelard, 1957, cited in Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012). Tourist experiences and encounters are influenced by imaginaries, and as this research concludes, the ways in which destinations are imagined can have an important impact on how places and people are perceived (Pritchard and Morgan 2000).

As Echtner and Prasad suggest "tourism is a tautology where tourists merely confirm the discourse which persuaded them to take the trip" (2003: 679). Arguing that tourism texts and representations "direct expectations, influence perceptions, and thereby provide a preconceived landscape for the tourist to "discover" Weightman (1987: 230) contends that the "directed landscape becomes the real landscape".

Just as perceptions of the Maltese as "other", characterised by the "absolute difference" of the Maltese from the British, permeated the colonial era discourse about Malta and the Maltese people, the discursive exoticism and traditionalism used to represent Malta and the Maltese people by tourist women reinforces a series of enduring colonial binaries. These binaries at once

privilege Western agency, modernity, and mobility over non-Western passivity, tradition, and rootedness. As discussed in previous chapters, the "exotic" and Orientalist representations illustrated as the "quintessence" of the Maltese islands in the nineteenth are not just "the image of Malta that is peddled in contemporary tourist literature" (Sant Casa 1993: 367) but also the way that tourists to the island experience the space, and how female tourists experience Maltese men.

This chapter, in striving to answer the question "How are the Maltese islands experienced by tourists?", revealed that tourists, and tourist women, in particular, are motivated to travel to Malta by an imaginary that envisions Malta as culturally different and temporally distant, and that they subsequently experience the Maltese islands as a "place unchanged". Much like the islands, the Maltese men who tourist women become involved with are understood as unchanged, as traditional and unmodern. Supporting Lewis' (1979: 21 as cited in Weightman 1987) contention that "advertisement . . . becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy", tourists to Malta report experiencing an exotic, and culturally and temporally distinct island environment. When tourists arrive in Malta, they have ideas and expectations of what they are going to encounter. Consistent with Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento's contention that tourists "tend to look for ways to reaffirm that image and to exclude everything else that does not fit in with it" (2010: 934), the tourist women who participated in this study reported experiencing the Maltese islands as a place unchanged. Despite many "modern" attractions, tourists commonly remarked that a trip to the Maltese islands "felt" like they had stepped back in time. As one respondent observed, "it's as if you stepped back in time and everything stayed the same as it was 500 years ago and any modern element just fades into the surroundings". The nostalgic discourse of the women who participated in this study imaginatively reworked time and space, to depict a vision

of the Maltese islands as not just "unchanged" by time, but rather stuck back in time, making the islands not just away from home, but also away from time. Through this discourse of traditionalism, slowness, and modernity, the Maltese islands are (re)produced as "other"— not Europe, not even Southern Europe, but a distinct and isolated from the Northern and Western home countries of the participants. For these women, Maltese men were understood and experienced as personifications of the exotic and temporal otherness of the Maltese islands. Just as the Maltese islands are imagined and subsequently experienced and as timeless relics, as a place unchanged, the Maltese people are understood as existing in the same temporal hiatus that renders the space unchanged. The tourist women who participated in this study reported experiencing Maltese men as "exotic remnants of another time", or as personifications of the exotic and temporal otherness of the Maltese islands.

Chapter Seven

The Postcolonial Encounter: Project Contributions

"Doing tourism is a process of seductive encounters, in which expectations, experiences and desires are continuously negotiated"

(Crouch 2005: 33)

The *encounter* lies both at the heart of tourism and might be its essential, distinguishing feature (Crouch et al., 2002). The touristic "encounter" is comprised of "both chance and planned or arranged meetings, and those which are one-off or multiple, regular or irregular, and reciprocal, collaborative, complementary or adversarial" face-to-face person-to-person relationships (King 2015: 498). Scholarship concerning the "encounter" has remained central to the scholarly study of tourism since Valene Smith's (2012) inspirational publication *Hosts and Guests.* The "encounter" is regarded as perhaps the most significant facet of the tourism experience (Gillen and Mostafanezhad 2019), and a growing wave in sociological tourism research is focused on embodiment, affect, and sensory encounters (see Gibson 2001; Crouch 2000, 2002; Coleman and Crang 2002; Robinson and Picard 2016; Cohen and Cohen 2012).

As discussed in detail in Chapter One, with the exception of a few notable yet scattered publications (Lei et al. 2011; Jacobs 2012), the vast majority of scholarship addressing women's ethnosexual tourism is focused on the connections between white tourist women and the local men of the Caribbean (see Phillips 2008, Johnson 2009; Tate 2011), Central and South America (see Williams 2013; Frohlick 2007; Romero-Daza and Freidus 2008), and Sub-Saharan Africa (see Kibicho 2016). Guided (for the most part) by (Caribbean and Latin American) feminist, postcolonial and critical race theoretical frameworks, the interlocking issues of race, class, and gender have been extensively considered by the existing scholarship. Accordingly, the often stark racial and economic inequalities that permeate the relationships of white, Western, middle, and working-class women and "poor, uneducated, black and brown men" (Weichselbaumer

2012: 1220) have been significantly highlighted. Despite the profound contributions made to the study of women's ethnosexual tourism and to our understanding of racialized and sexualized "other" masculinities, the role of tourist imaginaries and the relationship between sex, tourism, place, space, time and temporality has been largely overlooked in the field of tourism studies. This project broadened the geographical scope and expanded the focus of the extant literature away from the Caribbean, Central and South America, and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa to the Maltese islands. In doing so, the project sought not just to make theoretical sense of a "type" of travel that blurs the boundaries between tourism, sex, and romance and to garner an understanding of women's ethnosexual tourism in a tourist destination that has received very little scholarly attention, but to also uncover the role and impact of tourist geographical imaginaries on spaces, places, touristic practices and, specifically, on ethnosexual encounters. Additionally, while postcolonial theories have revealed a number of complexities as they relate to the phenomenon of ethnosexual tourism, Grimwood, Yudina, Muldoon, and Qiu (2015) note that the effects of colonialism and imperialism are varied, specific and experienced in multiple ways. Accordingly, diverse experiences with Western domination and different experiences, histories, and legacies of colonialism make any direct comparison between the Maltese islands and the ethnosexual romances that take place there and other tourism destinations relatively incompatible. As this research has demonstrated, the Maltese islands represent a unique and understudied postcolonial location for the study of ethnosexual tourism.

This study examined the politics of tourism representations and tourism imaginaries about the Maltese islands, and their effects on touristic experiences and encounters in Malta. The following five questions guided this study:

1. How were the Maltese islands represented during colonial times?

2. How are the Maltese islands represented today?

3. How are the Maltese islands touristically imagined?

4. How are the Maltese islands experienced by tourists?

5. How have these representations contributed to the ethnosexual relationships that develop between tourist women and Maltese men?

The overarching aim of this research was to identify how tourism representations and imaginaries, both colonial and contemporary, influence the ways that female tourists experience and interact with the Maltese islands and the Maltese people. The first part of the dissertation was concerned with examining the ways in which the Maltese islands and its people are represented in travel writings, tourism promotional materials and in the tourist imaginaries they influenced.

"Representations, whether textual, verbal, or pictorial, are powerful elements through which the world is understood" and imaginaries are shaped (Buzinde, Santos, Smith 2006:323). Utilizing the critical perspective of postcolonial theory and taking together the critiques of Orientalism by both Said and Bhabha as a framework, this study first attempted to identify and examine the image representations and dominant portrayals of the Maltese islands. This was done by employing content analysis and analyzing a selection of the contents of the information provided by the Maltese Tourism Authority (MTA), guidebooks, and online travel blogs. t The study concluded that the overall images projected of Maltese islands by the different information sources were that of an "unchanged" island archipelago, acting as "the bridge between the East and the West," steeped in "legendary" history and populated by a culturally unique "eclectic mix" of exotic people. While this examination was limited to manifest content analysis, which

involves investigating "the elements that are physically present and countable" (Buzinde, Santos, and Smith 2006: 715), virtually all analyzed promotional materials and travel writings about the Maltese islands contributed to the re-creation of Malta as an "Exotic" and "authentically different" Other. Imagery that has a powerful foundation in colonial era literature about the Maltese islands.

The postcolonial critique of tourism, concerned primarily with the maintenance and perpetuation of colonial practices, influences, and power in the postcolony through tourism (Akama, Maingi, and Camargo 2011), suggests that the contemporary representations of postcolonial places cannot be separated from either the colonial era discourse or the contemporary socio-cultural and politico-economic milieu in which they emerge. Seen from this perspective, the current images and discursive representations of the Maltese islands are strongly reminiscent of the representations of the Maltese islands that permeated colonial era discourse about the region and "are simply reiterative, reflecting and reinforcing historically embedded colonial myths" (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 668). Comparative content analysis of a selection of contemporary promotion and marketing materials of the Maltese islands with colonial era travel writings demonstrated that, much like touristic encounters, travel writings about the Maltese islands are grounded in much broader historical, socio-cultural and discursive systems that understand the islands and its inhabitants as non-European. By drawing on Orientalist and exoticist inspired images of places, people, and history, these touristic representations and discursive formations about the Maltese islands are inextricably tied to the historically specific colonial and socio-political conditions in which these representations emerged and flourished. This dissertation, therefore, has demonstrated that the language and imageries used to promote and describe the Maltese islands depend on an Orientalist and "exoticized" discourse which both echoes and

recycles the historical accounts and colonial imaginaries of early European explorers and colonizers, restoring the asymmetrical relationship between Malta and its former colonizers.

This research concludes that the overwhelming representation and construction of the Maltese islands as steeped in a "legendary history" can be seen in all the contemporary tourism texts advertising or discussing the islands. Furthermore, historical and content analysis of the dominant images, representations, and descriptions of the Maltese islands demonstrated that both colonial and contemporary tourism representations regarding the Maltese islands have served to fix Malta in a permanent state of the "unchanged."

This " legendary history"' combined with the impression that Malta remains "unchanged" and "traditional" is tied directly to the promotion of the islands as *feeling* timeless. With the recognition that these representations are produced within a dichotomy of Occident-Orient, the representation of Malta as existing outside of the normative temporality of northern Europe's modernity was found to be an overreaching theme throughout all of the analyzed information sources. By suggesting that the Maltese islands allow for the stepping outside of, or away from, everyday time flows, these representations serve to ensure that the Maltese islands and people remain fixed in a time removed from the present and from whatever constitutes modernity. The Maltese islands are represented as timeless and static, as a surviving remnant of an earlier or "timeless" way of life (Adler 1989:137). This is a typical manifestation of what Echtner and Prasad (2003) term the "myth of the unchanged", or the distinct pattern of marketing certain "Oriental" destinations as "past versus present" (2003: 666), where the various information sources encourage tourists to experience a different perception and pace of time while vacationing on the Maltese islands. This other "timescape", which is designated by much of the promotional literature and other travel writings as "stopped" time, is defined by what Lash and

Urry term “glacial time,” or a “more inert, slower perception of time” (Lash and Urry 1994: 241). Accordingly, references to time in the marketing and representations of the Maltese islands invite visitors “to feel the weight of history, of all those memories of *that* place, and to believe that it will still be there in its essence in many generations’ time” (Lash and Urry 1994: 250, as quoted in Small 2016).

Colonial narratives, present-day travel writings and other media representations have served to produce geographical or tourist imaginaries, an important concept in transdisciplinary tourism studies. Previous postcolonial scholarship has done an impressive job of identifying how some destinations are portrayed and of revealing the discursive legacies of colonialism evident in travel writings, advertisements, and other representations of postcolonial places. Further, the connection between representations of tourist destinations and colonial discourse have been highlighted by many (see Mellinger 1994; Pritchard and Morgan 2001; Echtner 2002).However, no research exists regarding the Maltese islands and relatively little published research has addressed or accessed how these post-colonies are touristically imagined. Salazar advises that “the only way to study them is by focusing on the multiple conduits through which they pass and become visible in the form of images and discourses” (Salazar 2011: 4). While the “precise workings of imaginaries are hidden from view, the operating logic can be inferred from its visible manifestations and from what people say and do” (Salazar 2011: 4). Accordingly, because the main focus of this study was to understand the role imaginaries play in shaping touristic behaviour and encounters in Malta, a tourist destination that has received very little academic attention, both content analysis and ethnographic methods were used in order to understand the imaginaries and the “destination image” of the Maltese islands.

By using the unstructured "free elicitation" method advanced by Reilly (1990), this research revealed that overall, images and imaginaries about the Maltese islands were characterized by what Echtner and Ritchie (1993: 9) term "stereotypical mental pictures." After images of Malta as a warm weather, warm water island destination with a favorable climate, the strongest reported images were of an "unchanged" and historic Malta, home to an "exotic" "ethnic" population. Similarly, the ethnographic data collected revealed that the most common reported imaginaries, images, understandings, and impressions of the Maltese islands (after climate and weather-related "sun-and-sea" attributes) surround the islands' cultural and historical patrimony, its "exoticness" as a "remote" island at the periphery of Europe, and its unchanged and "antiquated" nature. The latter was discursively tied to the belief in the "traditional" ways of life of residents and an appealing "island way of life," which was characterized by a "slow pace of life" in Malta and the "slowness" of the Maltese people.

Destination images and tourist imaginaries are shaped by both the colonial and contemporary "othering" of peoples and places (see Kanemasu 2013; Adams 2004; Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento 2010). Verbal, textual, and photographic representations of tourist destinations have been found to have a significant influence over "outsider" images and expectations (Adams 2004). However, this study does not claim a causal connection between the ways the islands were touristically imagined and the ways that the Maltese islands are portrayed and represented in marketing materials and other travel texts. . This study has demonstrated, empirically, that the reported destination images and imaginaries bear a strong resemblance both to contemporary and colonial era representations of the Maltese islands. While further investigation is undoubtedly necessary, tourist women to the Maltese islands appear to have incorporated historical (colonial) and contemporary portrayals of the islands into their imaginaries of Malta.

Tourist imaginaries are defined as the "spatial imaginaries that refer to the potential of place as a tourist destination" (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012: 1). Among scholars of travel and tourism, it has generally been accepted that tourist imaginaries and destination images influence touristic behaviours, including the initial choice of a destination (Chen and Tsai 2007). As Salazar (2011: 526) concludes "people hardly journey to *terrae incognitae* anymore these days, but to destinations, they already virtually "know" through the widely circulating imaginaries about them". According to Salazar (2011) "at the roots of many travels to distant destinations…are historically laden and socioculturally constructed imaginaries" (576), in that imaginaries assist individuals and groups in imagining a place as a potential tourist destination (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012).

Just as Jacobs (2016) contends that the choice of a destination depends largely on the imagination of a different social life of the place, interview data revealed that the historically laden imaginaries of Malta as a remote island destination characterized by a "slow pace of life," discursively tied to the idea that "time had stood still" in Malta. In Chapter Four, this was discussed as a "pull factor" or an appealing characteristic for the tourist women who participated in this study. The tourist imaginaries that envisioned the Maltese islands as an exotic island local existing outside the normative temporality of Northern Europe both rendered the islands an attractive option for travel to and created the desire to visit (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn 2012). For these participants, while the "sun, sand and sea" of the Maltese islands were often described as the most important assets, or pull factors, an interest in Malta's history and the desire to experience the "slowness" of an (imagined) temporally removed and culturally distinct island archipelago had a powerful impact on destination choice. The desire to engage with an earlier state or idealized past in this way is enmeshed in notions of nostalgia that are grounded in the

intertwined senses of spatial distance and temporal displacement (Norum and Mostafanezhad 2016). The nostalgia for a lost time, or a "longing for what is lacking in a changed present ... a yearning for what is now unattainable, simply because of the irreversibility of time" (Pickering and Keightley 2006: 920) was communicated by several tourist women who participated in this study. Study participants who conveyed romantic perceptions of "traditional" life in Malta also expressed nostalgia for an idealized Maltese cultural environment and local people.

The myth of the unchanged, of places "fixed in time and kept temporally, spatially and politically distinct from the rest of planetary phenomena, is a common trope in popular understandings of tourist desire" (Norum and Mostafanezhad 2016: 159). In this particular case, the experiences of the women who participated in this study revealed not only the geographical imagination associated with the Maltese islands, a tourism destination perceived to exist outside of instantaneous clock time, but also that tourist imaginaries have material consequences for both the people and the places tourists visit and the way they experience them. In this case, the experiences of the tourist women reveal a strong connection between how a destination (and its people) are imagined and how it is subsequently experienced, particularly as it relates to the ethnosexual encounters of tourist women on the Maltese islands and local Maltese men. The ethnosexual encounters of tourist women to Malta are intricately bound to the spatio-temporal dynamics evident in the representations and imaginaries concerning the Maltese islands. In other words, "tourism is a tautology where tourists merely confirm the discourse which persuaded them to take the trip" (Dann 1996: 65). Put simply, the way that tourist women imagined the Maltese islands (as an unchanged relic of the past) is the way that they experienced both the Maltese islands and Maltese men.

Postcolonialism generally understands that the travel writings and representations of the postcolonial world remain "troublingly tied to a set of nostalgic colonial images about certain tourist destinations" (Echtner and Prasad 2003:668). Similarly, this research interrogated the impact of British colonialism on the contemporary tourist's image of, and experiences with, the Maltese islands, concluding that much like travel texts and imaginaries, the relationships that developed in other parts of the postcolonial world resemble colonial images of the Maltese islands. Colonial language and representations have created particular conceptions of "truth" and "reality" (Tucker 2019) that underpin many of the ideas and imagery about difference and "otherness" on the Maltese islands.This suggests that these contemporary encounters cannot be separated from the discourse that was made popular during the colonial era. In arguing that British colonial rule has not only affected the image and imaginings of the Maltese islands and people, but also the ways that tourist women understand and interact with the islands and people, this research has demonstrated how the expectations of tourist women become a reality in Malta. The myths that once justified the colonial occupation of Malta, now shape not only representations and expectations of the islands but the actual experience of them and the Maltese people.

As many postcolonial theorists have argued, "colonialism, far from disappearing as the century goes on, too often merely modified and developed into the neo-colonialism of the post-independence period" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2013: 42). Consequently, despite the official end of colonialism, neocolonial structures and practices of power have maintained their influence over the political, socio-economic, and cultural spheres of many postcolonial places (Wijesinghe, Mura and Bouchon 2019). As Walters and Cassel (2016) summarize "although European colonial rule is over, the persistence of unequal relations with the wider economic and

political spheres between countries provides ample evidence that the "colonial" has not fully transcended. A primary assertion of postcolonial theory is that former colonial countries are still largely in a position of cultural subordination … to the Western nations of Europe and North America" (62). And as Cassar and Avellino (2020) note "the vestiges of colonialism continue to permeate contemporary Maltese realities." By situating together the contemporary ethnosexual tourism of English-speaking tourist women to the Maltese islands with the colonial era and contemporary tourism representations of the islands, this research concludes that colonial era power structures continue to direct and dominate, both discursively and in practice, many of the encounters between the Maltese people and tourists to the islands. While this domination is subtle and oftentimes invisible, a situation that Wijesinghe et al. (2019: 1265) liken to "salt in the water," the relationships that develop amongst locals and tourists to Malta remain influenced by the legacies of British colonialism.

An understanding of colonialism's legacies is central to any understanding of the relationships and encounters that develop in postcolonial settings, particularly those that involve participants hailing from different colonial and social histories. This is the only study, that I am aware of, that traces the interlocking issues of colonial and contemporary representations to tourism imaginaries and destination images of the Maltese islands. The importance of this research, accordingly, lies in the recognition that at the heart of the ethnosexual encounter is the interactions that exist between, and amongst, several things, including people, places, spaces, histories and temporalities and between expectations, seductions, and desires.

Recommendations for further research

Using a postcolonial perspective concerned with cultural representations, namely Said's (1978) and Bhabha's (1994) notions of Orientalism, this project has examined the representations and

imaginaries of the Maltese islands. Following Ashcroft (2004), who contends that Orientalism is more critical today because "the task of taking hold of self-representation has become… a matter of life and death," this dissertation has continued some of the important work done by postcolonial scholars of tourism; namely by exposing and questioning dominant discourses about certain postcolonial tourism destinations. Using the Maltese islands as a case study, this study revealed some of the dominant discourses and issues of (mis)representation as they relate to tourism to the Maltese islands. The study has argued that one significant aspect of tourism involves travel to the islands to experience the colonial era Orientalism and exoticism that once justified the colonization of the islands. However, Said's primary objective was not simply to reveal the connection between Orientalism and the ways that places and people were conceptualized and represented, but to disrupt it (Chatterjee 2018), a task that this dissertation has not attempted. With tourism scholars being "increasingly alert to multiple meanings and practices of decolonization" (Stinson, Grimwood and Caton 2020: 4), a broader study of how anti-colonial sentiment might address the task of subverting (neo)colonialism's hold on the Maltese islands, and aid in the decolonization of Malta's tourism industry could begin to fill this gap. Moreover, as noted in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, the Maltese Islands serve today as a major tourist destination for British ex-colonisers. As Cassar and Avellino (2020) note, "this relationship, which carries with it the tensions between the colonised and the ex-colonials, now transmuted into guests and hosts through tourism" (24). Building on the questions posed but not answered by Cassar and Avellino (2020), the contemporary relationships between notions of power and exploitation are underexplored. Accordingly, further research is required to understand and further analyse to what extent relationships between Maltese people and their ex-colonisers have changed since the colonial period. Furthermore, like many nations today, the

Maltese state extends significant expenditure in promoting and advancing the Maltese islands as a tourism destination by engaging in the production of tourism texts and various other media, and by establishing national branding campaigns. This research investigated Western-produced colonial and contemporary representations of the Maltese islands and people, concluding that many of the touristic representations of the Maltese islands are grounded in an Orientalist and exoticist discourse. However, a critical investigation of how the Maltese "others" represent themselves is missing from the existing scholarship. Because tourism destination marketing campaigns make deliberate attempts to develop positive attitudes towards destinations and present "images of destinations that are directed toward target markets" (Causevic and Neal 2019) the role that "self-Orientalism" plays in the way the Maltese state represents itself should be examined.

There are additional gaps in our knowledge around the ethnosexual touristic experiences of vacationers that follow from the findings of this research. Like most research focused on the ethnosexual tourism of women, this research was guided principally by the accounts of tourist women and is therefore somewhat distant from the Maltese men it reports on. Further research could usefully explore the lived experiences of Maltese men who engage in sexual and romantic relationships with tourist women. This scholarship could seek to determine the motivations for the involvement with tourist women in order to garner an understanding of men's perceptions and understandings of these ethnosexual encounters. Enloe argues that the desire to know another place is connotated, in the tourist imagination, with women "as the quintessence of the exotic ... something to be experienced"' (1989: 28). However, because this study limited its conceptualization of ethnosexual tourism as a phenomenon distinct from the sex tourism of men, it included no male study participants. With the understanding that men on vacation also engage

in sexual and romantic relationships that fall outside of the typically considered straightforward transactional sex/money exchanges, future research could benefit from understanding how geographic imaginaries, seductions of space and temporalities influence and impact the personal and noneconomic ethnosexual tourism of male tourists to the Maltese islands.

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Appendix A: Interview Participants, Demographic Characteristics

Pseudonym	Age	Country of Origin		Occupation
Jessie	48	Liverpool, England		Travel Agent
Briana	22	Sydney, Australia		Hairdresser
Maureen	41	Yorkshire, England		Personal Fitness Trainer
Elenore	33	London, England		Secondary School Teacher
Charlotte	33	London, England		Barrister
Natalia	22	London, England		Student
Rebecca	25	Gloucestershire, England		Receptionist
Lucy	22	London, England		Student Teacher/ Photographer's apprentice
Addison	28	Glasglow, Scotland		Part Time Nanny
Madeline	34	London, England		Sales Associate
Nadia	29	Orillia, Ontario		Human Resources
Josie	30	Camberley, England		NA
Matilda	28	London, England		Aspiring author
Adrianna	25	London, England		Flight Attendant
Christina	20	London, England		Student
Megan	24	Aberdeen, Scotland		Veterinary Assistant
Tiffany	22	London, England		D.J
Lisa	21	London, England		Unemployed
Amela	30	Ulm, Germany		Travel Blogger
Amanda	41	London, England		Registered Nurse
Andrea	27	City unknown, England		Medical Receptionist
Grace	Late 20's (unknown)	Brandenburg, Germany		English teacher in Malta
Sarah	23	London, England		Midwife
Claudia	35	London, England		Unknown
Karen	36	London, England		Unknown
Kate	32	Manchester, England		Early Childhood Educator
Lydia	29	Bavaria, Germany		Paralegal

Emma	30	Unknown City, Switzerland		Health insurance broker
Mellissa	26	Manchester, England		Receptionist
Diane	28	London, England		Unknown
Stephanie	29	London, England		Marketing
Elizabeth	33	City unknown, England		Chef