Young Cultural Diplomacy
A Quarterly Journal

Theme: “Global Trends in Creative Economies: Entrepreneurship, Culture and Tourism as Drivers of Sustainable Economic Growth and Youth Empowerment”

(December 2013)
Introduction

“Young Cultural Diplomacy” is a program undertaken by the Organization for Youth Education and Development. The intention of the program is to put forward perspectives of youth on cultural diplomacy - the way they view and understand it, while at the same time to explore how cultural diplomacy can be used in order to support the development of youth worldwide.

The main activities of the program include research, publications and conferences. One of the components of the program is this quarterly journal, where we assemble a collection of articles and interviews contributed by young practitioners of cultural diplomacy who analyze cultural diplomacy and offer innovative perspectives of how it can be utilized, implemented and practiced to support the youth.

The December 2013 issue of our quarterly journal is focused on the theme:

“Global Trends in Creative Economies: Entrepreneurship, Culture and Tourism as Drivers of Sustainable Economic Growth and Youth Empowerment”

Topics addressed in this issue include:

- UNESCO’s Creative City Network
- Open Source – An alternative Trend in the Software Economy
- Creative Economy & Independent Music Industry
- New Media Economy
- Breaking boundaries through cultural tourism
- Agritourism: Cultural and Economical Dimensions
- The Role of Culture in Women Entrepreneurship
- The Conducive Impact of Film Location on Local Tourism

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UNESCO's Creative City Network
By Ariane Jacobs

Since 2004, UNESCO has included 41 member cities in its Creative City Network, divided into 7 areas of creative industries: Literature, Cinema, Music, Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Media Arts and Gastronomy.

This project's intention was to create a network of cities, working together towards a common mission for cultural diversity and sustainable urban development. The aims also include the establishment of, and accessibility to, "cultural goods and services" at a local level, as well as the promotion of creativity and creative expression, particularly among vulnerable groups, women and young people.2

The chosen cities are both “Creative hubs”, promoting global socio-economic and cultural development, and “Socio-cultural clusters”, connecting different communities and furthermore developing international cooperation and joint partnerships (mainly in the areas of creative economy and tourism).3

Urban life is integral to the project as cities provide people from an array of backgrounds the opportunity to meet one another and to share their cultures and experiences. Increasing urbanization, rural exodus and international migration are the main reasons why many major cities are hubs for culture.4

David Cross, the Mayor of Santa Fe (Creative City of Design, Crafts and Folk Art) states that more than 20% of the city’s work force is engaged in cultural industries. Indeed, the climate in these cultural centers is conducive to the development of creative industries; it encourages entrepreneurship and makes it easier for people to start businesses.

Jeonju (Creative City of Gastronomy) has gained international acclaim thanks to its accreditation to the UNESCO Network. Ever since it has been designated as Creative City of Gastronomy, Jeonju has received much media attention, which has given the city a reputation it can be proud of. Jeonju even expects it will have positive repercussions on its economy and tourism amongst other things.

One could wonder, can everyone benefit of these favorable conditions or do only privileged parts of society have access to these opportunities? Ossama Adibel Meguid, Director of the Nubian Museum in Aswan (Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art) confirms that being part of the UNESCO Network was a true opportunity for the citizens of the city. Being part of the Network boosts the reputation of the member cities, increasing their credibility in the public eye and heightening citizens beliefs in both their creative projects and in themselves.

It is easier for member cities to create international partnerships, which is a great asset to the development of any business or cultural project. For instance in February 2011, Edinburgh City of Literature and Glasgow City of Music created a “cross art” forum called Let’s Get Lyrical. Edinburgh already held several citywide reading campaigns beforehand, and saw an opportunity to broaden their cultural impact by creating a joint campaign with their fellow Creative City Network member Glasgow. Let’s Get Lyrical, a forum that celebrated the power of song lyrics, held over eighty events and allowed everyone to get involved.

In September 2012, Jeonju, was invited to the Food Festival in Popayán (the first city to be accredited as the Creative City of Gastronomy). Later on that year, Honorary President Alberto Gonzalez of Popayán’s Gastronomic Corporation was invited to the Jeonju Bibimbap Festival. These two events provided South Korea and Colombia opportunities to engage in cultural exchange and to learn about each other’s cuisines and highlighted how it is possible to create a dialogue between two cities with different cultures but with a common goal: to promote creativity and cultural diversity. These two cities are now working on a global UNESCO music day.

Applications to become a member of the Network are open until March 2014, it is still an expanding project, and its impact is steadily growing across the world. The positive effects of the project are undeniable, nonetheless, the current secluded aspect of the Network might be a threat to other cities that would also need UNESCO’s help.

Ariane Jacobs

4 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hksEsY4wys
6 http://www.theguardian.com/edinburgh/2010/dec/15/edinburgh-lyrical-reading-campaign
Open Source – An Alternative Trend in the Software Economy

By Bence Ruff

At first glance, software development may not seem to be the impetus of the growing global economy, but over recent years the influence of software development industries has grown, shaping our current global economy.

Open-source software, or OSS, is computer software with its source code available to all. Its license states that the copyright holder provides the rights to modify, study and distribute the software to anyone for any purpose. It is probably the best example of open-source development. Often compared to user-generated content or open-content movements, OSS is mainly an unconventional occupation or hobby, but the motivation of the public to improve the software to meet their precise taste. Helping people by improving software or even doing it for fun might sound like an unconventional occupation or hobby, but the motivation of the public to improve existing programs is high.

Many organizations and projects utilise the open source concept such as, the Open Source Initiative, which was founded in 1998 and is dedicated to promoting open-source software as well as: the Free Software Foundation, the Apache Software Foundation, the Debian project, the Eclipse Foundation and the Mozilla Foundation. SourceForge, a web-based source code repository, acts as a centralized location for software developers, which controls and manages free and open-source software development. It hosts over 324,000 projects with over 3.4 million developers. Google – one of the century’s most influential IT companies – also houses more than 250,000 projects, including chromium, web toolkit and most importantly: Android. Google has managed this by releasing Google-created code, providing vital infrastructure, supporting open source organizations, handling internal open source compliance and by running student outreach programs such as Google Summer of Code and Google Code-in.

One of the defining texts regarding the development model is ‘The Cathedral and the Bazaar’, written by open-source evangelist Eric S. Raymond in 1997. He compares the traditional methodologies of software development to the building of a cathedral: “carefully crafted by individuals or small bands of mages working in splendid isolation”, while introducing an alternative, the bazaar style development, correlating open source to “a great babbling bazaar of differing agendas and approaches.”

OSS encourages collaboration and innovation. Since the source code is accessible to all, anyone can take the initiative to solve problems, make improvements or simply learn more about it. Not being tied to the creating company allows it to develop via its user community, regardless of the success or failure of a company. While offering many possibilities, it also carries difficulties with it: there can be unexpected costs for implementation, administration and support.

If done right it can be an alternative to corporation software. In the long run, it could achieve a better quality of software as the most promising projects are able to receive better funding (donations etc.) and gain more attention, getting more support and feedback from developers. It also gives everyone a possibility to write and share their programs, promoting creativity and cooperation by allowing people to change the software to meet their precise taste. Helping people by improving software or even doing it for fun might sound like an unconventional occupation or hobby, but the motivation of the public to improve existing programs is high.

Young Cultural Diplomacy

“Cultural Diplomacy as a Tool for fostering Youth Education and Development”

(September 2013)
Creative Economy & Independent Music Industry

By Maria Bomba

Following the say, which states that ideas could change the world, the concept of creative and cultural industries emphasizes the role of information, knowledge and human creativity in building economic growth. It introduces a different perception of traditional economic approach, when industries and material productions were considered as the most important source of profit.

Conversely, the innovative approach of creative economy centralizes small scale, including initiatives that foster local economies through art, culture, new media, fashion or crafts. According to the UN Report “Creative economy key to inclusive development in the post-2015 development agenda”, creative and cultural industries are important engines for development because they generate jobs and new sources of income. Moreover, those initiatives encourage local participation and empower specific social groups that can be involved in those new forms of economic activity. Therefore, creativity and innovation develop into profitable economic activity within modern economic frame.

Independent music industry is a great example of creative economy. Independent music labels are self-sponsored, in most cases small and local initiatives that attempt to act outside of major label giants such as Warner, Sony or Universal Music Groups. Small labels mainly promote original, non-mainstream music that would not have had a chance to be shared outside of the usual scheme imposed by the three record giants. In addition to that, independent music industry has certain characteristics that differentiate it from traditional companies. Due to their size and flexible structure, small labels are devoid of traditional management hierarchy or division of labor. Individuals creating, recording, and promoting independent music are often involved in multiple activities from technical to marketing support. Moreover, it seems that independent music industry avoids external intervention of government and acts in order to promote individual talents and concepts of music. Therefore, individuals who do not aim to act within traditional economic structures gain a great opportunity to generate economic profit by working on their own ideas and passion.

Due to the technological development and open access to inexpensive digital technologies, the recording process became easier and cheaper than it ever was. This situation is beneficial for artists and local labels as they can produce and release music on a small scale. Moreover, thanks to a very recent cultural shift that comprehends vintage and quality goods, vinyl sales have been increasing in the past few years. Hence, regardless of global internet access and free but often illegal sources of music, independent labels keep finding customers for their analog and digital products. The creative industry of independent music thus generates a source of income for artists, small labels managers, publishers, studios, and venue organizers.

A recently published report of the Canadian Independent Music Association showed that independent music industry creates jobs and produces an important income to the national economy. In 2011 the independent music industry generated $303 million in GDP impact in Canada. Moreover, having recognized the economic and symbolic importance of indie music, British authorities decided to promote alternative music productions as their export product. The British government has launched the Music Export Growth Scheme to promote independent music companies overseas. Independent music organizations, artists and labels since 2013 have a chance to apply for government’s grants to promote their products on a large scale. However this situation brings up a question: does independent music remain independent if subsidied from public funds?

Maria Bomba
New Media Economy
The Impact of Social Media for Economic Development
By Zuzanna Michalak

Social media is considered as a driving force changing the scene of everything we do – from the way we communicate with friends and family, how brands, celebrities and politicians catch the public’s attention, to the way business and journalism operate. Millions of people in the whole world use social media what allows to overcome distance as well as the geographical and socioeconomic constraints.

The term social media stands for highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. Examples for social media platforms comprise blogs (Wordpress, Blogger), microblogging (Twitter), collaborative wiki-projects (Wikipedia), forums (Microsoft MSDN), professional network sites (LinkedIn) and social networks (Facebook, Google+) (Kaplan/Haenlein, 2010). While these platforms are dominated by the use of text, other applications are dedicated to other forms of communication, like photos (Flickr, Dropbox, Picasa), video (YouTube, Vimeo), or music (last.fm, stereomood). Social media has expanded also into virtual worlds (Second Life, The Sims) and online gaming (Farmville). Lately, a new area of applications in social media is connected with the usage of mobile data and quick adjustment of smartphones (Foursquare, WhatsApp, Viber) (Piller/Vossen/Ihl, 2012).

The majority of previously mentioned platforms have been used not only by individuals for private communication but also (or after all) by small and large companies to improve their image and to cooperate in a new way with their clients and business partners. For these companies the profit does not come from the social platforms itself (which is the source of revenue for the platform provider) but from the usage of a particular social platform and from the information that is created and shared on this platform.

Apart from influencing individual companies, social media also impacts on the entire business and economy. Social media is regarded as a mechanisms which greatly change the dominant position of previously established market structures (as in the case of the traditional market industries). This process occurs by creating new markets (e.g. mobile applications) and by effecting competitive behavior on the market (e.g. by empowerment of customers, rating platforms, word of mouth information).

Since social media is a new phenomena and its influence on the global economy has not reached the top yet, it is also not expected to be the key to the economic boom in a short time. But it could certainly help diminish the consequences of the world’s financial crisis and may be useful in creating new technological innovations. In the longer term, as the economy, society and culture adopt to the full potential of social media, the large scale growth in productivity might be expected (Fischer, 2009).

Social media in the form of collaboration seems to be especially meaningful for the economic development. It is believed that social media platforms would give the possibility to open the knowledge flow in organizations, to lower the costs of software through open source collaborations, to find relevant information more quickly, and to make organizations more aware, active, agile and responsive to customers’ expectations. However these are mainly cultural changes which usually take place slowly (Fischer, 2009).

On the other hand social media is having harmful impact on major established industries. Traditional advertising channels are becoming less and less effective as the public is more networked and aware of its needs. Rating sites and consumer orientated websites are becoming the standard. As they rely on the subjective assessments expressed by independent consumers they seem to be more trustworthy than traditional advertising which is considered as manipulative.

The advantages of social media are mostly vivid when we compare it with the traditional media, like newspapers and television. Using the first of them allows to get the attention of the global audience, while the second has usually only local extent. Secondly, social media is considerably cheaper than traditional and is available almost for everybody. Social media has certainly changed customers’ behavior. They became more aware of their choices, the access to information is much easier what has also influence on the decision-making process. Moreover, social media impacts innovation, as customers can now influence the production by themselves.

Although there are lot of doubts regarding the real influence of social media on economic development (Shah, 2012) it cannot be denied that in the modern economy social media is one of the driving forces. It’s not only because it has transformed the whole concept of online marketing, but it also has been providing millions of job opportunities both online and offline.

Zuzanna Michalak
Breaking Boundaries through Cultural Tourism
How Young Entrepreneurs from Bulgaria Promote Tourism

By Antoniya Markova

Europe is the world’s first tourist destination, with the highest density and diversity of tourist attractions. It is therefore inevitable for world leaders to recognize the patent importance of travel and tourism as a booster for economic growth and employment. As a result, the tourist industry has become a key sector of European economy, generating over 10% of the EU’s GDP and employing circa 9 million citizens in 1.8 million businesses. Tourism is also an important instrument for promoting Europe’s image in the world by its cultural exchanges, linguistic diversity and creativity. EU policy aims to promote tourism to maintain Europe’s position as most popular destination, and maximize the industry’s contribution to growth and employment.

It is estimated that cultural tourism accounts for around 40% of all European tourism. With the opening of the borders between EU’s member states, tourists are increasingly looking to exchange cultural values, meeting different people and getting to know other cultures. Transnational cultural tourism products contribute to present Europe as a “unique tourism destination”. Therefore, the European Commission is implementing a number of activities to support transnational tourism products based on specific themes, which still have great potential for growth.

One of the European Union’s initiatives in terms of promoting culture is the: “European Capital of Culture”. The project highlights the richness and diversity of European cultures and languages. A 2004 study conducted for the European Commission demonstrated that the choice of European Capital of Culture served as a catalyst for the cultural development and the transformation of the city. Bulgarian candidates for European capital of culture for 2019 are Veliko Tarnovo, Varna, Sofia, and Plovdiv. By nominating 4 cities, Bulgaria intends to showcase its cultural life and cultural development and bring popularity to smaller and unknown cities. The candidacy of Sofia is also supported by the project “Culture and Entrepreneurship - 11 good practices from Sofia”. This initiative aims to endorse creative entrepreneurs in the capital, by making them noticeable to a wider audience in the cultural sector.

Bulgaria is steadily following the trend of other European countries by promoting its national brand through tourism. Even though tourism plays a big role in the country’s economy, almost 7 years after Bulgaria’s adhesion to the EU, the country is still relatively unknown to the foreign public. For this reasons Bulgaria emphasizes on national branding and promotion of Bulgarian products. Young graduates from Bulgaria enter the employment market with few or non-relevant professional experiences and often find themselves unable to work in their field of studies. On the other hand some young creative Bulgarians have found a way to enjoy their work by promoting their country. The two case studies that we will discuss in this paper are “Free Sofia Tour” and “Like Bulgaria”. These are innovative projects, aimed to promote Bulgaria through tourism. “Like, Bulgaria” is an independent social project, whose goal is to promote Bulgaria’s culture, history, attractions, nature, sports, and non-material cultural heritage. Photos of Bulgarian landscapes, singers, monuments, combined with interesting facts about the country and the smart logo are the way the creator Nikolay Tonkov employed to gather vast amounts of supporters worldwide. Social media was widely used to promote this project. The project is in English, but what is striking is the way the name of Bulgaria is written, instead of the letter “I” in Bulgaria, the author uses “1”. Although he lived abroad for over 20 years Nikolay Tonkov never lost his connection to Bulgaria. What he notices is that Bulgarians usually lack self-confidence. He wants to change that by making them proud of the country they come from, by promoting the beauty of Bulgaria. The goal is to expand the project as much as possible for it to become a notorious sign of Bulgaria and for the logo to be recognizable everywhere.

The other project, “Free Sofia Tour” is a rather different one. Usually city tours are quite dear but very popular in several parts of Europe, who provide free walking city tours. “Free Sofia tour” was introduced to foreign and Bulgarian tourists in October 2010. It was created by Kristian Mitov, a young Bulgarian, who studied in Germany. Coming back to Sofia, he felt the need to work in an interesting environment, surrounded by young and creative people. Thanks to the passion and knowledge of
the young team of the “Free Sofia Tour”, they have welcomed over 27 000 people from over 125 countries in the past 3 years. Due to increasing demand, they are now launching themed tours; one of these being the Culture Tour of Sofia. Nowadays there are also free tours in Varna and in Plovdiv, popularizing other Bulgarian cities. “Free Sofia Tour” is also a plus for employment: together with the guides in Plovdiv and Varna, there are around 30 employees. “Free Sofia Tour” is so prominent, that they even offer internships to people who want to get involved. Tourism policies everywhere in Europe will need to adapt to these trends and develop a quality offer promoting local cultures and traditions by paying attention to sustainable aspects: preservation of the heritage, landscape and local culture. The two projects “Like. Bulgaria” and “Free Sofia Tour” are examples of how hard work, inspiration and enjoying what you do create job opportunities for youth and make a difference in the tourism of a country.

Antoniya Markova

Taking in nature and embarking on travels is a popular global pastime. Some travel to discover cultures and people, some travel in order to take great pictures, while others travel just to get away from the routine and their everyday life. A novel industry is springing up around these pastimes which combines all these attractions in an educative way; so-called Agricultural Tourism, or Agritourism. Agritourism is a new form of tourism that is showing remarkable growth in many parts of the world. People from different cultures bond over it and are even willing to go work voluntarily in a farm or a ranch. In an increasingly urbanized world many, if not most, young people don’t understand how plants grow, how animals should be treated or how a farm is maintained. The situation is even starker when children learn about animals through zoos, or through books or television. This ‘dis-connect’ between people and nature has been attributed to the growing popularity of Agritourism, as there is an increased desire for people to spend their leisure time in a natural environment.

The preservation of heritage and traditions of specific procedures in producing products is of gaining significance in the collective public psyche. For many, being a farmer has often been considered a derogatory profession. Therefore, one of the goals of Agritourism is to show people that agriculture could be an interesting activity as well as an important one.

As previously mentioned, Agritourism is the amalgamation of two large industries, agriculture and tourism. Agritourism could economically boost a country by generating foreign exchange and attracting development capital. Agritourism contributes to a variety of economic sectors, but it is also a labor-intensive industry that has the capacity to create jobs. Thanks to Agritourism employment can be created, increasing the country’s GDP. Moreover, even though tourism could sometimes be environmentally harmful, Agritourism promotes respect and care of nature. Tew and Barbieri’s (2012, p.215,216) research further established that Agritourism has enabled family farms to remain in business,
assisted in preserving American heritage, maximized the farm resources and even contributed to the economic situation of the local communities. Agritourism created a supplementary income for the farm family during times of economic distress. In addition to the economic benefits accrued by the agricultural industry, tourists also benefit. Firstly, there is the opportunity to participate in the process of food production, which is very interesting given the fact that nowadays people are not informed on this matter. Tourists can also learn more rural life, habits and traditions and of course as an Agritourist one would have the opportunity of being in direct contact with domestic animals and the countryside, which is usually not part one’s everyday live due to urbanization. Agritourism means participating in farming activities by exploring local culture and nature, enjoying the landscape and agrobiodiversity, observing organic and conventional agricultural practices, sampling fruits and vegetables and in general just taking part in every day rural life. There is a variety of places all over the world, where one can travel to and take part in an Agritouristic activity. If one were to choose Europe, one would most probably end up in a farm in Italy, since Agritourism is quite common there. However there is always the choice of going to Africa, Asia and both North and South America. Finally we should bear in mind that as Tew and Barbieri (2012:222) indicated, the economic role of Agritourism should not be limited to direct revenue from visitors, but also include benefits such as increased awareness and market share of the farm products and services.

Naya Nousa

“Naya Nousa “The collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” Geert Hofstede (1991)

Hofstede defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (1991). Throughout history, and according to the norms of particular cultures, the roles of men and women in society have always been significantly different. However, as time as shown, the nature of these roles is not immutable and they are gradually changing in Western countries. People are increasingly emphasizing factors that have previously been omitted from the study of economic development, for example culture. The cultural dimension of women’s role in society is perceived differently according to every country’s traditions. Indeed, one should consider women’s status in society according to cultural definitions in order to understand whether or not social and cultural factors can define female entrepreneurship. Max Weber first emphasized the influence of culture on entrepreneurship at the beginning of the twentieth century (Weber, 1976). Cross-national differences in levels of entrepreneurial activity have been observed and explained by a wide range of economic, technological, cultural, and institutional factors.

Entrepreneurship is an economic activity and economy is a domain of social sciences. Sociological theories argue that social structures (workplace, family, and organized social life) affect women’s access to entrepreneurial opportunities and may influence their “performance” (Aldrich 1989). Differences in value systems and cultural orientations have been argued to affect entrepreneurship especially when it comes to women.

The Role of Culture in Women Entrepreneurship

By Maria Papargeorgiou

The traditional conception of family roles may restrict women to certain industrial sectors, as well as affect their motivations and goals in their business ventures. Moreover, social status does not only affect a woman’s capacity to start a business but also which kind of industry she would operate in. For example, many
Muslim countries have consciously excluded women from several aspects of social life for religious reasons; it is therefore very difficult for women to take entrepreneurial initiatives. In South Asia, women are almost invisible to formal financial institutions, as they receive less than 10 per cent of commercial credits.

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, there are 126 million women operating new businesses and another 98 million at the head of already established ones. Nonetheless, there is still a great equality gap. Panama, Thailand, Ghana, Ecuador, Nigeria, Mexico and Uganda are the only countries where women take part in business at equal rates to men; whereas in some countries like Pakistan, they barely take part in any business at all. In the EU, though the proportion of women entrepreneurs is quite small in many member states, cultural traits seem to affect their initiatives.

More specific approaches like individualism or collectivism affect not only the formation but also the operation of businesses. The educational opportunities as well as the gender involvement in social activities can determine why certain countries provide more opportunities for women entrepreneurs than others.

With the issues we brought up and today’s globalization, how could women fairly compete with men in business enterprises? Could a common framework or specific cultural traits characterizing them in a society be used for their benefit? Either way, different kinds of measures need to be taken and new models need to be created in order to encourage and help women during the first stages of implementing their entrepreneur projects. Cultural traits can provide a starting point as well as an imaginative vehicle in engaging with all business sectors.

Maria Papageorgiou

During the last few years the global tourism industry, and its related “special-interest” tours, have seen a rapid expansion. The growth of the market has resulted in strong competition among those working in the industry trying to attract more tourists. In such a competitive market firms are desperate to innovate, and one such innovation is the so-called “film-induced” or “movie-induced” tourism. According to authors such as Rewtrakunphaiboon (2011), Hudson and Ritchie (2006), many tourists nowadays prefer visiting the location of a movie or a TV series over choosing more usual and more common destinations.

The impact of films on a local tourist industry is easily observable. Films are able to provide long-term fame and popularity to a destination by giving audiences a sense of information and knowledge about a country, its nature and its culture. In effect, films can act as an effective tourist advertisement as an unintended consequence of their main aim to entertain. Indeed they are all the more effective as an advertising tool precisely because they are not overtly designed for that purpose. Along with the natural and cultural advertisement that a film can offer, films make viewers associate locations with the actors, the events and the storylines of a movie and act as a strong draw (Iwashita, 2006).

According to Hudson and Ritchie (2006, p. 387), film tourism can easily be considered, at least to some extent, similar to the traditional cultural tourism and the visiting to cultural and historical or artistic heritage. Film tourists research symbols and visual icons that remind them particular parts of their favorite movies. Tourists are in fact really interested in retracing their favorite actors’ challenge (Roesch, 2009).

A prominent example of this effect is the Lord of the Rings saga (Rewtrakunphaiboon, 2011). New Zealand’s government has been able to set up an entire industry surrounding the shooting of the movies. New Zealand has thus been able to have an increment of + 40% of tourism, from 1.7 million before the production of the saga, to 2.4 million in 2006. This growth of tourism is undoubtedly related to the success of The
Lord of the Ring’s première, which attracted more than 120,000 people in Wellington and, more importantly, the media attention on the country which created massive and free advertising.

Naturally the biggest effect occurs when natural locales are used for shooting. For example, the Lord of the Rings featured the natural of geography of New Zealand often and in a largely unaltered form. A CGI heavy film on the other hand, would have less draw to potential tourists.

When this effect is present, whole regions can benefits both from the increasing of tourism and for the boost of new jobs created by the collaboration with the film production. In fact, many people had found jobs in the sector of this “adventurous” tourism that imply hikes, bike journeys and helicopter routes in the famous “Middle-earth” of New Zealand.

The shooting of the movies has brought significant popularity and benefits to the country as a whole. The importance of the film to New Zealand’s economy was made all the more evident when there was suggestion the follow up trilogy of “the Hobbit” would be filmed in Eastern Europe. The New Zealand Government offered significant incentives to the film studio, lobbying them intensely and to keep production within its borders. The government offered a 15% tax reduction and a 25 million tax rebate to the filmmaker. Despite the initial loss of 1.5 billion of New Zealand Dollars, the investment has since been completely recouped by the incomes and proceeds resulting from the movie and related activities. Among these, the agreement on hosting the première of the movie in Wellington and the presence of advertisements of holidays in New Zealand inside the DVD version of the film.

To conclude, film tourism can be considered a good example and a valid alternative to the classical way of advertising a country. The best example can be found in New Zealand with the effect that the Lord of the Ring trilogy has had on the increase in tourism. New Zealand saw a new opportunity for a renewed spike in tourism with the filming of the Hobbit. This example could stimulate other countries to use movies to attract tourists and investments.

Davide Salvaneschi
Young Cultural Diplomacy

"Global Trends in Creative Economies: Entrepreneurship, Culture and Tourism as Drivers of Sustainable Economic Growth and Youth Empowerment"

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