
Narratives of an 'Unsuspected Isle':

Interpreting Durrell-induced Tourism in Corfu in British and Greek Online Tourism Discourses



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Abstract

This research examines tourism representations that are based on two popular narratives: the novel series *The Corfu Trilogy* by British author Gerald Durrell and the screen adaptation *The Durrells*. Landscaping as a process is the focus of this study; the two narratives engage in representations of both the natural and cultural landscape of Corfu, while British and Greek tourism discourses appropriate these representations to promote Durrell tourism in the island. After an investigation of the dominant themes in the two narratives, British and Greek online tourism discourses are being analysed on the basis of the identified themes. The research focuses on critical discourse analysis of both official and unofficial websites and webpages that promote Durrell tourism and argues that there are significant variations in the process of landscaping between British and Greek tourism discourses. The historical, cultural and political tensions that are identified reveal the contestation of mutual heritage in Corfu and highlight the island's cultural marginality. While the focus of this study is the dialogue between British and Greek tourism discourses, British discourse reveals the longing for a stoic approach to travel, while Gerald Durrell seems to embody the ideal traveller who perfectly balances between hedonism and stoicism. Finally, the same framework used for the analysis could be applied to analyse more tourism representations inspired by popular narratives that involve cross-cultural participants.

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I. SETTING THE BACKGROUND

1. The Durells in Corfu

The present research is concerned with two narratives which illuminate the complexity of Corfu as a cultural landscape. The first one, *The Corfu Trilogy*, is an autobiographical novel series written by the British author Gerald Durrell. He and his family arrived in Corfu, Greece in 1935 and lived there until 1939¹. *The Corfu Trilogy* is a sequence of three books: *My Family and Other Animals*, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* and *The Garden of the Gods*. Gerald narrates the family's adventures and their adjustment to the new life in Corfu from the perspective of his young self. As Richard Pine observed, the novels are characterized by engagement with the people and culture of Corfu and not of mere observation (Pine, 2). Importantly, an implicit relationship between the Durells and tourism in Corfu developed; Gerald Durrell's novels have been attributed with stimulating the tourism development in the island².

Despite the screen adaptations of *My Family and Other Animals* in 1987 and in 2005, it was the British adaptation of the trilogy in 2016³, which was filmed in Corfu, that brought about a wider and contemporary recognition of the family's story in Corfu. The series, categorized as biography, comedy and drama, has generally received positive reviews (8.0, IMDB) and is said to “revive the dying ritual of family viewing”⁴, while many British tourists travel to visit the novel and screen locations, which points towards the explicit relationship between the Durrell family and tourism in the island. Interestingly, British tourists constitute the largest number of tourist arrivals in Corfu⁵. Therefore, considering the complex Anglo-Greek relations, it is very

¹ The family included the mother, Louisa, Lawrence, Leslie, Margo, and Gerald.

² www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/greece/corfu/articles/In-search-of-Durrells-Corfu/

³ The series has four seasons. The final episode was aired on 14th of May 2019 (www.imdb.com/title/tt9089714/?ref=tttep_ep6).

⁴ www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2018/feb/25/durrells-itv-revive-species-british-family-viewing-peak-time

⁵ More specifically, in 2017 British were the most frequent visitors in Corfu, followed by Germans and Polish.

(www.tourismchronicles.com/%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%BA%CE%BB

interesting to see how these two cultural narratives influence the image of Corfu and sometimes come to define the island itself. Throughout this study, I will be using the term ‘Durell narratives’ to refer to both the trilogy and the TV series.

But what exactly does the concept of ‘narrative’ entail? The term can indicate different concepts, such as metaphor, genre, and discourse (Daiute & Lightfoot, 14), place-images and place-myths (Shields, 61). In 1972, Barthes introduced the concept of myth as a ‘mode of signification’ (109), a way of telling a story about a culture and giving certain meanings to it. Barthes task in *Mythologies* was to unravel the ideological nature of these myths as semiotic systems of communication. In other words, our social lives, and consecutively tourism, are constructed by and based on narratives as myths that are largely connected with identity formation, ideology construction, and representation (Jaworski & Pritchard, 5). Landscapes, therefore, are spaces through which “power, identity, meaning and behaviour are constructed, negotiated and renegotiated according to socio-cultural dynamics” (Aitchison & Reeves, 51). For this reason, in the present thesis, *landscape* is considered as a verb and not a noun, as “it is not an object to be seen or a text to be read, but as a process by which social and subjective identities are formed” (Mitchell, 1). Thus, the cultural landscape of Corfu is modified, classified and interpreted by humans⁶.

Both British and Greek tourism operators use the novels and the series to promote tourism in Corfu, and mediate between tourists, their decision and their perception about Corfu. In other words, tourism employs “its own media [...] including pamphlets, guidebooks, maps, travelogues, and increasingly, websites and travel blogs” (Long & Robinson, 104) to promote tourism inspired by the two narratives. Consecutively, the relationship between tourism and the Durell narratives is unravelled, presenting us with three layers of hierarchical semiotic systems of myth (see below).

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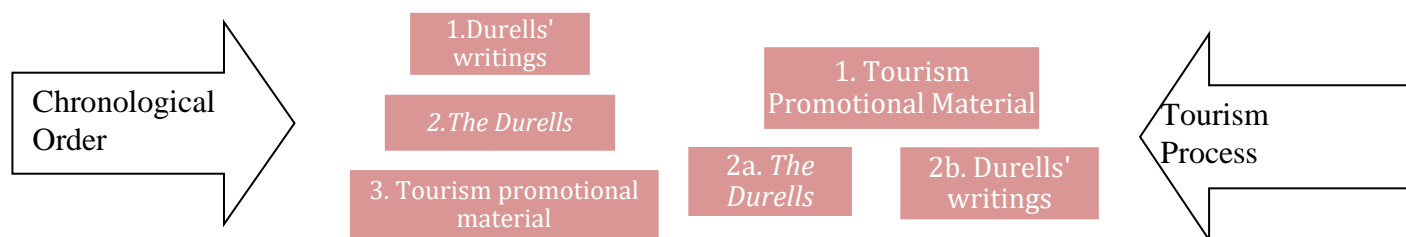
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⁶ O’Hare, cited in Kaya.



Chronologically, Gerald Durell's trilogy takes precedence over the series and the tourism promotional material. With the release of his novels, many British people were inspired to visit Corfu. In 2016, the British series was released and a whole new audience had the chance to familiarize with Corfu and the Durell family⁷. The tourism media's reproduction of these narratives constitutes a whole new form of narration. However, the tourism process works in reverse; it is promotional material that draws from themes of previous narratives (e.g. *The Corfu Trilogy* / *The Durells*) to promote Corfu as a destination. Therefore, place marketing⁸ both reflects and reinforces the process of landscaping and the meanings associated with it.

2. Existing Research

Our contemporary society is abundant in narratives produced in the form of popular culture. Popular culture exerts the most powerful influence on the images and identities of tourism places through its representations (Iwashita, 75). Urry specifically argues in his 2002 version of *The Tourist Gaze* that television and literature “reinforce the tourist gaze” (Urry, 3). This mediatized gaze dates back to the eighteenth century: Urry explored the tourist popularity of the English Lake district due to the ‘Lake poets’ (Robinson, 5)⁹. The literary projections of travellers were later on facilitated by Romanticism, with Lord Byron and his close relationship to Greece being a characteristic example. However,

⁷ Through the show the story of the family became known to non-British audiences as well.

⁸ Not destination marketing, because place marketing incorporates the local perspective as well (Zenker et al., 16)

⁹ At the same time, the notion of celebrity in literature helped the creation of the first tourism ‘trails’, starting from the traditional Grand Tour of young European men (Robinson, 5).

in the eighteenth century, tourism inspired by literary figures was a practice of ‘high’ culture. Nowadays, due to the widespread access to popular culture through the internet, visiting a place because it is featured in a novel, a film or series is not considered ‘high’ culture, but can be considered ‘niche’ tourism¹⁰.

Popular culture influences the way of viewing a place. Tourism researchers have analysed the meanings of contemporary literary tourism as well as the motivations and experiences of literary tourists (Hoppen et al. 2014; Brown, 2015; Baleiro & Quinteiro, 2018). There is also a growing interest in the mythologies that film-induced tourism creates, with many studies focusing on the experience of tourists in places that appear on screen (Riley et al., 1998; Beeton, 2005; Hahm & Yang, 2011), or places that appear in films “whose story was not originally intended for the screen but has rather been translated into the medium of film”¹¹, fitting under the category of adaptation-induced tourism (Lee, 2012; Pennacchia, 2015).

At the same time, many studies have been occupied with the meanings of different representations in tourism, examining these in relation to gender (Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Aitcheson, 1991; Noy, 2008), national identity and political interests (Pritchard, 1998; Pritchard & Morgan, 1999; Knudsen et al., 2014). None of them has focused, however, on tourism representations in relation to the above variables influenced by popular culture, like novels and TV series. Moreover, many of these studies focus on highly contested spaces, e.g. Jerusalem (Noy, 2012), while Davidson has stressed the reluctance on the part of tourism academic theory to examine the participation of popular culture in the mythologies that inspire tourists to visit less studied tourist places (Davidson, 41). This illustrates the lack of attention towards places like Corfu. The case of a small island in the Ionian sea, is not exactly a case of polarizing representations; it is, however, a unique case that is worth examining, in order to shed light to even more subtle power structures in tourism, like the role that national subjectivity plays in the process of landscaping of Corfu.

More specifically, the focus on representations induced by popular culture has mostly been on specific locations, especially within the UK (e.g. Robinson & Andersen, 2003). Little to no attention has been paid to small islands like Corfu in Greece¹². Nevertheless, according

¹⁰ As it refers to a specific tourism product; visiting locations from the novels or the series or the Durells’ villas.

¹¹ Pennacchia, 261

¹² O’Neil has examined the relation of popular culture and tourism in the Greek island of Cephallonia after the success of Louis de Bernieres’ 1994 novel *Captain Corelli’s Mandolin*.

to Farinelli, islands have generally been considered as passive spaces in the history of modern Europe (21). However, the concentration of waves of tourists on islands of the Mediterranean like Corfu automatically renders them culturally complex spaces. In addition, the fact that the island is central in the narration of *The Corfu Trilogy* and its screen adaptation, in combination with the island's multifaceted identities and rich history, which play an important role in the formation of nation-building processes (Farinelli, 21), makes Peil's definition of *islescape* strongly relevant to this thesis. Islescape is "taken to express a fusion of physical conceptions of landscape with the activities and meanings attached to them on the specific island location through time" (Peil, 7).

An essential requirement in understanding the complexity of Corfu as an islescape is examining its turbulent history. The island falls within the definition of *marginal places*, in the sense that it is characterized by both topographical and cultural marginality (Shields, 4). Firstly, Corfu is located in the borderline of Greece with Albania and Italy and has changed hands among various nations. The island has always been a liminal space, dangling in between cultures and people of various ethnic backgrounds. In 375 BC it joined the Athenian alliance, while two years later it was besieged by a Spartan force. During the Hellenistic period, it was attacked by several sides. Throughout the course of its history, it has been a land of contestation among Greeks, Romans, Venetians, Sicilians, Ottomans and British. Venetians ruled the island for almost four centuries and left a huge cultural impact on the island. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Corfu did not cease to be besieged by troops of various origins (e.g. French, Russians). It was finally declared an independent Greek state at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In 1815, though, Corfu fell under British rule which continued for half a century. Some years later, the British helped the Greek War of Independence against the Ottoman Empire and demonstrated an interest in the values and culture of Greece, with the cultural movement of Philhellenism¹³. Gerald and his brother Lawrence, an acclaimed novelist and travel writer, are often viewed as modern philhellenists, even though Lawrence himself indirectly opposed Cyprus' union with Greece in his novel *Bitter Lemons*, revealing an ambivalent attitude of the British towards Greece (Mas, 242). Traces of the complex relationship between the United

However, the focus was not in representations but in the impact of popular culture in the destination.

¹³ A compound word from Greek; philos (φίλος=friend, lover) + hellenism (ελληνισμός) (www.etymonline.com/word/philhellene).

Kingdom and Greece can be even witnessed today, with the Parthenon marbles being exhibited in the British Museum arousing a controversial debate over the ownership of cultural heritage.

3. Research Question

As Männson has acknowledged, “it is known that tourism and popular culture are linked, but the phenomenon has primarily been studied from a single-medium perspective such as film tourism or literary tourism” (Männson, 14). In the present study’s case, the representation of Corfu is multi-layered, as it is shown in the schematic depiction above. Thus, considering the complexity of tourism representations, I will try to incorporate both narratives in my research and examine the appropriation of these representations (Durrell’s novels and the series) by English and Greek promotional activities that followed them. Ultimately, the innovation of this case study lies in two aspects: first, on tourism representations of a marginal island, and second, on the multimediality¹⁴ that informs these representations, which highlights Corfu a distinct tourism space.

All these lead to the aim of this study, which is the investigation of the relationships between identity, representation, and discourse. It can be summarized in the following research question: **How do British and Greek online tourism discourses appropriate elements from *The Corfu Trilogy* and *The Durrells* to promote Durrell tourism in Corfu?**

This main question unfolds into the following sub-questions:

1. What are the dominant themes in *The Corfu Trilogy*?
2. What are the dominant themes in *The Durrells*?
3. How are these themes appropriated by British and Greek online tourism discourses?

The expected result of this study is that themes from the two cultural narratives are appropriated differently by British and Greek tourism discourses, revealing significant variations in the landscaping of Corfu. Additionally, it is necessary to clarify that for the purposes of this study I will be referring to this kind of ‘niche’ tourism as Durrell-induced tourism, which encompasses both the novels and the series.

¹⁴ By ‘multimediality’ I mean the integration of both the novels and the TV series in tourism promotion.

4. Methodology and Theoretical Concepts

The present thesis relies on critical discourse analysis as proposed by Fairclough (2003), in order to comprehend the complexity of tourism as a cultural process. In the second chapter, I explore themes and motifs present in *The Corfu Trilogy* and *The Durrells* TV series. As the research aims to investigate the ways in which themes from the two Durrell narratives are used by tourism discourses, it is necessary to identify these themes in advance. More specifically, I conduct literary discourse analysis to examine the process of landscaping of Corfu and interpret the meanings behind the characters' voices, considering the "reciprocal envelopment of text and context" (Maingueneau, 1). For the analysis of the series, I considered the inclusion of other communicative forms, like the visual, as originally critical discourse analysis is only concerned with verbal and textual forms of communication. For both cases, the analysis focuses on using a 'tourism lens' and theory in order to better comprehend the themes appropriated by tourism discourse. In the third chapter, I analyse British and Greek online promotional material in relation to these themes, in order to identify recurrent patterns in tourism promotion.

Discourse analysis is employed in this study since it is ideal for those who "ground their research in conflict" (Dann, 23) and the expected results of this study are that there are conflicting discourses regarding representations of Corfu. In addition, discourse holds power in articulating the past; it decides which truths and whose past, present and future dominates (Hollinshead, 125) while national identities, here British and Greek, as communities of ideology (Jaworski & Pritchard, 6), are increasingly constructed through promotional texts (Hallett and Kaplan-Weinger, 8). Therefore, particular attention is paid to semiotics, since MacCannell explained that semiotics is a meta-language for discussing hidden ideologies (3). Furthermore, nowhere is a semiotic perspective more appropriate than "in the analysis of tourism advertising with its culture coded covert connotations, in the study of tourism imagery, and in the treatment of tourism communication as a discourse of myth" (Dann, 6).

Promotional materials constitute powerful markers in the tourism industry. Applying Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality (1981), it is eventually the markers, the signs, rather than the experience itself, that tourists consume, and this confirms the important role of tourism promotion. The main reason for choosing online promotional material and not other media channels is because in our contemporary transmedia age internet plays a more significant role in the process of landscaping than traditional media:

We surf like tourists and the web is set up in a tourist way. We “visit” websites. We wander around the sites as the mood takes us, leisurely or erratically; sites provide us with “maps” and when we arrive anywhere we are given “itineraries”, “menus”, “gateways”, “access”. It is a language of movement, “back”, “forward”, “go”, “stop” and so on. (Franklin, 8)

Considering the above, I will critically reflect on the content of tourism websites, paying attention to a more interpretive approach. In so doing, I will not only ‘read’ the narratives of these texts, but also consider them in a wider system of texts as signs. This will help to identify the “narration of national culture” (Hall, cited in Hallet and Kaplan, 6) as well as the narration of the culture of the *other*¹⁵. In other words, these texts’ intertextuality and dialogical character with society will be taken into account. Next, as intertextuality is inevitably linked with assumptions I will also pay attention to what is ‘not said’ (Fairclough, 40).

The promotional material examined includes websites and webpages which actively engage in promoting Durell tourism in Corfu by offering suggestions, guided tours, trip fares or related services. Therefore, my analysis is not only based on official tourism websites, but also commercial travel articles on online newspapers and magazines because they contribute to a more holistic overview of tourism representations. In this sense, I am aware that online promotional material appears in different styles and forms; however, the websites are comparable, as they all use common themes from the two Durell narratives to promote Durell tourism and thus contribute to the landscaping of Corfu.

In total, nineteen travel webpages and one website with several webpages have been collected, which can be divided into three types: those of travel agencies, travel articles on online newspapers and magazines, one travel blog, and the official website of Lawrence Durell’s former home – the White House. I collected the websites by typing ‘Durells’ locations’ or alternatively, ‘visit Durells’ Corfu’, until I reached saturation¹⁶ and I used Google Chrome as my search engine on both my laptop and other domains on the university campus. The timeframe was chosen carefully so it encompasses the newly released series. In addition, I did not focus on the authors of the website individually, but I considered them collectively, as representatives of British and Greek tourism discourses. Before proceeding to the next chapters,

¹⁵ The *other* is defined as a member of an out-group, whose identity is considered lacking and who may be subject to discrimination by the in-group (Staszak, 1).

¹⁶ As suggested by Guest et al. (60).

a discussion of important theories in the field of tourism that are useful for this study is required.

The tourist gaze as introduced by Urry is a central concept to this study. In his book *The Tourist Gaze* (1990) he argues “we look at the environment...we gaze at what we encounter...and the gaze is socially constructed” (Urry, 1). It is the tourist gaze that guides the process of landscaping, including representations of scenery, local people and of the self in the two Durrell narratives. Additionally, just like the two Durrell narratives, the promotional material both influences and reinforces the tourist gaze through ‘transmedia storytelling’ (Jenkins, 20)¹⁷. Finally, the gaze of the hosts in Corfu is also important in analysing the literary and screen representations, as well as tourism discourses. It refers to the host looking at the host-tourist encounter with interest and curiosity (Mouffakir, xi). While the tourist gaze is practiced by the Durrells and expressed through British tourism discourse, the host gaze can be traced in the locals’ voices in the novels and the series, as well as in Greek tourism discourse. Both gazes are dynamic, depending on who is the host and who is the tourist (Mouffakir, xi). As it will be revealed, the two gazes are not fixed and that is why for this study it is important to consider the fluidity of identities of those participating in the tourism process.

Another important concept inextricably linked to the aim of this study is that of Orientalism, as defined by Edward Said. Even though with Orientalism Said makes an explicit distinction between West and East, with East being the Arab people and culture, various scholars have used the term to describe relationships between any two countries or ethnic groups whose relationship is characterized by the myth of superiority of the one over the other. The theory serves as a criticism on the West, which has constructed the myth of the Orient, based on strangeness, difference, and exoticism, and has claimed dominance over it, something that has its roots to imperialist tendencies. Orientalism is then a whole discourse that reflects the power relations that permeate the world. Thus, the process of *othering*, through which “you define where you belong through a contrast with other places, or who you are through a contrast with other people” (Rose, 116)¹⁸, is closely related to Orientalism and is a very relevant concept in examining power relations in tourism. Moreover, heritage tourism that takes place in a cross-cultural environment and context like Corfu, can result in conflicts based on difference between two groups, as well as “over the meaning of the past” (Fischer, 126).

¹⁷ It refers to when the same story or variation of the story is displayed on a large number of media platforms concurrently; it is named ‘transmedia storytelling’ (Jenkins, 20).

¹⁸ It refers to transforming differences into otherness so as to create an in-group and an-out group (Staszak, 1).

That is exactly why national identity becomes relevant as a vital component of this study. Wodak et al. remarked that national identity “is constructed and conveyed in discourse, predominantly in narratives of national culture” (22). In this sense, national identity is not fixed but “the product of discourse” (22). Hallett and Kaplan-Weinger (2010) have already discussed the construction of national identity through official tourism websites. Moreover, Hall thinks that there is a common understanding of certain concepts among people, and this is what he calls *conceptual maps*. He argues that through sharing a roughly similar conceptual map, “we are able to build up a shared culture of meanings and thus construct a social world which we inhabit together” (Hall, 18). Therefore, it is expected that Greek and British discourses will prove to convey different conceptual maps.

Considering all the above, the exploration of what is seemingly mundane representations of tourism promotion inspired by popular culture needs to expand to unofficial travel webpages as they play an important role in national identity construction; this is what this thesis will attempt to incorporate. Strangely enough, “although it is believed that discrete national cultures exist, a sophisticated account of how popular culture is manifest and expressed as national has not been attempted” (Edensor, 2). Finally, given the past history of Corfu and the active presence of British influence on the island’s culture, it is important to study British and Greek online discourses, because it is in these seemingly innocent representations, that differentiation in landscaping can be scrutinized. To conclude, it is important to note that some of the theoretical concepts that are central to this study will be discussed during the discourse analysis, as they facilitate the explanation of some of the findings.

II. Narratives of an ‘Unsuspected Isle’¹⁹

As discussed in the previous chapter, discourses play an important role in the process of landscaping that Mitchell introduced. This chapter analyses the literary (*The Corfu Trilogy*) and screen (*The Durrells*) discourses, in order to provide a sufficient and well-informed answer to the research question²⁰. The aim of this chapter is to identify the prevailing themes that constitute the landscaping of Corfu, paying attention to motifs and issues that the main voices in the narratives raise. This will set the basis for analysing British and Greek tourism discourses which reflect these themes.

1. *The Corfu Trilogy* as a liminal genre

Placing *The Corfu Trilogy* within a certain context in the literary tradition is important in order to identify and comprehend its main themes. Gerald Durrell’s novels demonstrate elements that can be recognized in more than one genre: autobiography, memoir and travel writing. *The Corfu Trilogy* mediates in-between these three, while it also demonstrates elements of a coming-of-age story²¹.

Firstly, as Roy Pascal has stressed “autobiography is a review of life from a particular moment in time” (Pascal, 3). Indeed, Gerald completed and published the first novel many years after he and his family left Corfu at the outbreak of World War II²². At the same time, Pascal argues that truth does not always apply to autobiographies (61). A sense of unreality permeates the trilogy, while its truth is even disputed by family members; Louisa has confessed

¹⁹ Durrell *My Family and Other Animals*, 13

²⁰ The research question refers to how are the themes of the two Durrell narratives used by tourism discourse. Consecutively, it is necessary to identify these themes in advance, before proceeding in their appropriation by tourism discourse.

²¹ Among the sources that refer to the novels as autobiographical is the following: www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/5819177/the-durrells-family-real-story-gerald-durrell-wildlife-trust/.

²² The family stayed in Corfu for five years, from 1935 to 1939, until the outbreak of the war forced them to leave. However, the novels are not concerned with the turbulent political situation in Europe, as there is no mention of the imminent war.

that “the awful thing about Gerald’s book is that I’m beginning to believe it is all true”²³.

Secondly, Pascal further argues that the autobiographical novels should be distinguished from the so-called memoirs since in memoirs the centre of interest lies in the lives of others and not in the protagonist (Pascal, 134). Thus, an examination of the *Corfu Trilogy* in relation to Pascal’s distinction can lead to a dead-end. Almost every chapter in the novels follows a certain structure: the first half is devoted to the writer’s expeditions, while the second half can be summarized into dialogues among the family members regarding their adventures in Corfu. Therefore, the novels can be placed between these two genres, exactly on the line that Pascal crossed with autobiographies and memoirs.

Travel books are not autobiographical [...]. A travel book, at its purest, is addressed to those who do not plan to follow the traveller at all, but who require the exotic anomalies, wonders, and scandals of the literary form *romance* which their own place and time cannot entirely supply. (Fussell, 203)

Thirdly, according to Paul Fussell, travel writing must be distinguished from autobiography. On further consideration, though, the trilogy demonstrates characteristics of travel writing despite being autobiographical. It encompasses the themes mentioned by Fussell; it is indeed about *exotic anomalies*, *wonders* and *romantic* views which the author’s place, England, fails to provide. This last argument implies that the notion of ‘home’ is central in travel narratives (Holland & Huggan, 5), something that can be identified in the novels. The author narrates the story to a primarily British audience, who can acknowledge the lack of these elements back at home. The fact that the novels were initially published by British (Rupert-Hart Davis), and Scottish (Collins) publishing houses, suggests that home, in this case the United Kingdom as the ‘West’, is the frame of reference in the novels.

A key observation regarding the self and the other in travel writing is made by Debbie Lisle and can be applied in interpreting Gerald’s representations of Corfu. She identified a variation of the orientalist point of view in contemporary travel writing:

It is not that difficult to see how superior Western subjects employing a colonial vision construct inferior ‘others’ in order to justify the continuation of hierarchical global

²³ www.dailymail.co.uk/home/event/article-4363736/The-dark-Gerald-Durrell-s-family-saga.html

relations. Likewise, it is not that difficult to see how a self-proclaimed international community employing a cosmopolitan vision articulates universal standards of civilization by which they judge all cultures. But what is difficult to see is the extent to which these competing productions of difference both fuse together and fall apart in contemporary travel writing. (Lisle, 3)

The Corfu Trilogy can be seen as an example of this fusion of the colonial vision and the cosmopolitan vision. Gerald Durrell employs a vision that automatically assumes power over the other as he shapes a perception of Corfu and the locals through the act of writing. The power of this vision is concealed by an underlying sense of irony that does not only address Corfu and the Corfiots, but also the self. On the other hand, Gerald and his family gaze at Corfu by “embracing the emancipatory possibilities created by an interconnected ‘global village’ ” (Lisle, 4); the family is presented as living harmoniously in a global community with people of various ethnic backgrounds²⁴. Ironically, they accept their own living standards as a ‘global’ criterion for comparing Corfu to the rest of the world. Moreover, the history of Corfu as a British protectorate further suggests the adoption of a colonial vision. Thus, the orientalist and colonial vision are embedded within the cosmopolitan vision.

In a lecture in 2010, Richard Pine argued that “Gerald achieves a level of intimacy with Corfu and Corfiots that was perhaps more accessible for one so young, who saw both the landscape and its fauna with more innocent eyes” (8). One thing he neglected, however, is that the books were perfected -if not entirely written- many years later. The proof to this is offered by the author himself: “Theodore was one of the most remarkable people I had ever met (and thirty-three years later I am still of the same opinion)”²⁵. This time gap indicates that there is certainly a change, not necessarily in the point of view, but in the meanings embedded in the representations of Corfu, as the author had grown more mature and conscious of his literary choices by the time of the trilogy’s publication. In this sense, the trilogy is not a narrative told through the eyes of an innocent child.

Finally, the trilogy can be read as a coming-of-age story. In literary terms, ‘coming of age’ signifies the personal growth of the central character²⁶. The trilogy follows the writer’s

²⁴ In the novels, the come in contact with Greeks, British, Indians, Germans and Turks. With the series, Italians are added to the list.

²⁵ Durrell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives*, 18

²⁶ www.literacle.com/literary-themes-coming-of-age/

gradual progress as a naturalist²⁷, as well as a writer. At the same time, the island as a “singular geographic situation” (Weale, 82), “is conducive to its inhabitants knowing its edges and all that is held within the bounds of the island as intimately as their house, their bodies, or their psyches” (Brinkow, 133). Indeed, Gerry seems to have discovered all the natural secrets of the island by the end of the novel and simultaneously to have discovered himself. This demonstrates that Corfu is central to the formation of the writer’s identity. Therefore, the protagonist’s professional and emotional growth invites the readers to reflect upon themselves, the world that surrounds them and the role the setting plays in their own personal growth.

The main conclusion to be drawn is that *The Corfu Trilogy* contains essential characteristics of all the genres mentioned above. It belongs to the genre of travel writing, as the writer, a metaphor for the tourist, records his experiences in Corfu for mainly a British audience; of autobiography, as Gerald narrates in the first person his experiences and impressions, as well as of memoir, since the ‘I’ is not always as prominent as the ‘we’; and of coming of age, as it follows the protagonist’s overall growth.

Having in mind the above I will proceed to discussing what I have identified as the main themes in the novels and the recent screen adaptation. In the following section, critical discourse analysis is employed, paying attention to interchange of the colonial or orientalist vision and the cosmopolitan vision.

Interestingly, the trilogy can be read as a parallel text to Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it has been argued that Prospero’s island in *The Tempest* is Corfu, even though this cannot be reaffirmed²⁸. Lawrence Durrell even engages in a debate about this in his book *Prospero’s Cell*. Secondly, Prospero’s books are symbolical of his magical control over the island, and metaphorically speaking, Gerald’s writing has the magical power to capture every single movement and action on the island and transform it into words. Caliban in *The Tempest* explains that Prospero is powerless without his books, while it is magic that functions as the driving force in the play. This summarizes the essence of *The Corfu Trilogy* as conveyed by British tourism discourse and as it will be shown in the third chapter; it is suggested that without the novels, the spirit of the island would not have been successfully conveyed, and tourism activity in Corfu would not have boomed. Finally, there are various common themes

²⁷ The fascination for nature starts as a hobby in the first novel and evolves into a serious occupation by the end of the third novel.

²⁸ www.shakespearegeek.com/2010/07/corfu-claim.html

between *Corfu Trilogy* and *The Tempest* which will be explored further in the analysis.

2. Dominant Themes in *The Corfu Trilogy*

A. Idealization of Corfu

Although it is not made explicit, it can be inferred from the novels that the tourist gaze is adopted by Gerald, whose vision is directed to “‘features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday experience’” (Urry, 3). In essence, what characterizes Gerald’s elaborate and romantic descriptions of Corfu is exoticism and fantasy. Gerald delivers the atmosphere of Corfu by focusing on its unreal properties, while looking at the dearest moments of the past allows for a melancholic nostalgia which underpins the idyllic life he recounts.

More specifically, Gerald’s vision embodies Urry’s definition of the tourist gaze: “the powerful subject possesses the gaze while the powerless other is completely defined by its status as the object of the gaze” (MacCannell, 29). Thus, the British author is a powerful subject that communicates the image of Corfu to a British audience. Even though the author’s gaze might be filtered through a cosmopolitan point of view, the island, including the locals, stands for the voiceless other.

‘The Magic of the Island Settled Over us’: Magic

The magical aspects of Corfu are evident already on the boat to Corfu. The rest of the countries were almost impossible for the author to recall because Corfu absorbed all of the family’s interest: “we passed the invisible dividing line and entered the bright, looking glass world of Greece”²⁹. It is interesting that the author imagines a line that separates the island from the rest of the world, creating the mental image of a magical bubble around Corfu which allows the reader to picture it as a fantastic place. The choice of the phrase “‘looking-glass’” has a double meaning; it indicates that Corfu is literally sun-shining, but also that the author views the island from afar, through a looking-glass window. This window functions as a barrier between him and the island and prevents him from immersing into the world he describes. This barrier confirms the existing distance between the self and the other, the orientalist and the

²⁹ Durrell, *My Family and Other Animals* 11

Orient (Said, 87).

For the most part, the idealization of Corfu can be summarized in the literary tropes of metaphor and personification, as well as in the use of unrealistic representations. The author's almost poetic prose suggests that earth-bound elements and situations are not representative of the island's beauty³⁰. Spatial elements like the sea are often perceived as living creatures: "the sea lay as breathless"³¹, while spring is personified; "spring in Corfu never seemed to be half-hearted"³². In this case, personifications signify that nature is an agent, questioning the argument that the island stands for the passive, voiceless other. However, the fact that it is the author who gives voice to the island through the act of writing is exactly what places the island in the position of the object, and him of the subject. At the same time, Gerald conveys the magic of Corfu by engaging in a hedonistic discourse and celebrating the senses³³. Despite the use of other senses³⁴, though, the author's emphasis on what he sees is evident throughout the trilogy, something that validates Urry's assumption that the tourist gaze is primarily visual (Urry, 12).

Gerald is also attracted to the mysterious side of the island, and he describes it as a mystery to be solved: "the brilliant, friendly island, full of secrets"³⁵. This anticipation fills

³⁰Therefore, it seems that he in need of more unrealistic literary devices, in order to do justice to the island and his own divine experience. In the third novel, the author abandons the employment of realistic colours, because they cannot accurately capture the sea: "it seemed to stain the still sea a deeper and more unreal colour" (Durrell, *The Garden of the Gods* 47). The fantasy world of Corfu is transmitted to the reader through dialogue as well. When Theodore, Gerry's instructor, narrates one of his incredible stories about Corfu, the Durrells accuse him of making it up: "No, no [...]. If it were anywhere else in the world I would have to, but here in Corfu they...er... anticipate art, as it were". Living in Corfu is presented as an aesthetic experience, inextricably tied with art (Durrell, *The Garden of the Gods* 47).

³¹ Durrell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 209

³² Durrell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 187

³³ Hedonism is a Hellenistic system of philosophy which argues that pleasure is the most important pursuit. It presupposes an individualist stance

(https://www.philosophybasics.com/branch_hedonism.html).

³⁴ Metaphors of natural elements activate all senses; "the magnolia tree loomed vast... its branches full of white blooms, like a hundred miniature reflections of the moon"³⁴, "olive groves to the sea, blue and smooth as a flower petal" (Durrell, *The Garden of the Gods* 46).

³⁵ Durrell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 240

him with curiosity for what awaits to be discovered: “I was not all sure what sort of creature was swimming around in the dark”³⁶. The magical atmosphere is also reflected in the characters’ everyday life: “In those halcyon days we spent in Corfu, it could be said that every day was a special day, specially coloured, specially arranged, so that it differed completely from the other three-hundred and sixty four and was memorable because of this”³⁷. The choice of the phrase ‘halcyon days’ is of particular interest. The phrase has its origin in an ancient Greek legend and refers to only fourteen days in December during which the sea remains calm thanks to the halcyon’s brooding of eggs. Gerald makes use of this legend to illustrate how nature ensured that passing of time was an exceptional experience.

Moreover, resembling romantic writers, the author often draws a relationship between natural elements and the female, which consolidates the male identity of the tourist gaze. The moon is seen as a female entity: “enormous, wine-red, edged *herself*”³⁸ while spring is reflected in the “dark, liquid eyes of the peasant girls”³⁹. The author’s exclusive ability to expose the natural secrets and the unrealistic dimensions of the island resembles Prospero’s magical power over the island and indicates the power of his vision.

‘Each day had a Tranquility, a Timelessness about it’: Timelessness

Timelessness is an element with which Gerald is deeply preoccupied; this can be seen in the author’s direct references to “endless, meticulous curves of the sea for an instant” (12). Here, the contrast between the endless waves and their instant movement indicates the writer’s ability to grasp and frame this movement by giving it an infinite duration.

The absurd passage of time in Corfu is an important aspect of timelessness: “the dark skin of night would peel off and there would be a fresh day waiting for us, glossy and colourful as a child’s transfer and with the same tinge of unreality”⁴⁰. In this extract, Gerald adopts a cyclical perception of time, which has been argued to be unrealistic, whereas linear time is more

³⁶ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 179

³⁷ Durell, *The Garden of the Gods* 120

³⁸ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 169

³⁹ Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 82

⁴⁰ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 39

rational and rooted in experience (Bloch, 8). Gerry and his family are part of a cycle that is based on the repetition of events and habits. Paradoxically, these are never dull and always carry an element of surprise. Following a cyclical perception of time, Gerry experiences rebirth every day⁴¹.

The adjective “ancient” is repeated many times to describe the natural landscape of Corfu, initially pointing to the author’s appreciation of the island’s natural history⁴². However, the notion of flora and fauna being ancient is quite problematic, since almost all landscapes trace back to ancient times. This leads to the thought that the author probably uses the word with a different meaning; ancient is a landscape that is untouched by civilization and urbanization. Consecutively, the author seems attracted to a pastoral landscape and appears interested in the island’s development in a long-term period. In this way, he marks his identity as different from that of a tourist. He wants the reader to perceive him as a conscious and sophisticated traveller.

B. The Traveller and the Ethnographer

Although the author resembles the tourist, attributing to him one single identity would not be objective. Therefore, it is important to consider his deliberate efforts to be perceived differently, as a traveller and even an ethnographer. To begin with, it has been argued that the distinction between tourist and traveller is the “journey of the self” (Galani-Moutafi, 205). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Gerald’s enthusiastically describes his discoveries and how he grew to trust himself and his knowledge about the natural world⁴³. At the same time, Gerald gives the reader an impression of deep immersion in the Corfiot culture, which allows the writer to “appear as an interpreter and representative of the society he/she has studied” (Clifford, 139-140), as an ethnographer. However, a clear distinction between these identities is not possible, as it is mainly a matter of self-definition. Therefore, the author’s gaze is powerful either as a tourist, traveller or ethnographer, as it is based on difference and a sense of otherness,

⁴¹ Time passes differently in Corfu: the days are much longer, and it seems that clocks are of no use: “the height and the heat of the sun would tell us that it was lunch time” (Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 81).

⁴² Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 113, 149/ *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 148, 147

⁴³ See page 13-14

which is one of the things visitors seek in a new place (Timothy, 103).

In addition, the author's point of view gradually transforms from that of the visitor to that of a local. He moves from the 'you', to the 'I', to conclude with a more collective point of view, that of the 'we'. The final lines of the first novel clearly address the reader: "an enchantment luring *you* into the mysterious, moonlight countryside"⁴⁴. The author urges the readers to experience the magic of the island, but he excludes himself with the use of "you". This suggests that he still views himself as an external actor, a traveller who addresses other travellers and motivates them to visit Corfu. In the rest of the trilogy, however, 'you' is not as prominent as the 'I', which signifies the author's uncertain identity in Corfu; he is wavering between identifying as an external actor and a local. It is only in the second novel that the author breaks the barrier between himself and Corfu and he finally blends with the Corfiots; the frequent references to christening⁴⁵, despite the fact that the Durell family is not orthodox, communicate the author's desire for integration. After the family's short trip to England, the author attempts to abandon the tourist gaze and to identify as a local:

We all felt we had arrived, that we had been accepted by the island. We were now, under the quiet, bland eye of the moon⁴⁶, christened Corfiots.⁴⁷

Deliberately opting for a collective gaze shows an appreciation towards the rest of the family members and the consideration of Corfu as the family's home.

'Hoping That the sunshine of Greece Would Cure us': Wholeness

I had ceased listening. My whole being was flooded with excitement. We were going back to Corfu. We were leaving the gritty, soulless absurdity of London. We were going

⁴⁴ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 368

⁴⁵ Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 149, 174

⁴⁶ The 'eye of the moon' suggests that the island is looking back at the protagonist, as a reaction to his own gaze. In this way, it is the author who gives voice to the island, assuming his power.

⁴⁷ Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 26-27

back to the enchanted olive groves and blue sea, to the warmth and laughter of our friends, to the long, golden, gentle days.⁴⁸

Notably, a counter-narrative is embedded within the main narrative of Corfu, since it is impossible to define something without juxtaposing it to a different, often antithetical entity. The idealized image of Corfu is enhanced by debunking and constantly comparing England to Corfu. Going back to London is a ‘‘shattering experience’’⁴⁹, because of the persisting feeling that something is constantly missing there. Corfu represents a whole entity, offering absolute fulfillment to its inhabitants. London stands for loneliness, isolation and even depression, whereas Corfu is synonymous to a magical order and sociability⁵⁰. The island closely resembles a utopia, a world that cannot be realized (from the Greek *ou* = without & *topos* = place), while London is an urban dystopia where disorder and alienation prevail⁵¹.

Corfu even appears to be ‘‘a cure of the mental and physical inertia which so long a sojourn in England had brought upon’’⁵². Lawrence’s words suggest that unlike England, Corfu is the ideal place for being mentally active: ‘‘I can’t be expected to produce deathless prose in an atmosphere of gloom and eucalyptus’’ (9). Corfu is represented as a place where one can be productive and creative.

Corfu’s magical effect extends to reconciling people with their own sexuality, which is connected to a more ‘humane’ and complete version of themselves, according to Gerald:

⁴⁸ Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 146

⁴⁹ Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 127

⁵⁰ The social character of the life in Corfu is stressed by the ‘warmth and laughter of our friends’.

⁵¹ Corfu is contrasted with many other European countries as well. On the way to Corfu, the family passed from several other countries, which the author shortly negates in one sentence: ‘‘France rain washed and sorrowful, Switzerland like a Christmas cake, Italy exuberant, noisy and smelly, were passed, leaving only confused memories’’ (Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 11).

⁵² Durell, *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* 9

With the summer came Peter to tutor me, a tall, handsome young man, fresh from Oxford with decided ideas on education which I found rather trying to begin with. But gradually the atmosphere of the island worked its way insidious under his skin, and he relaxed and became quite human.⁵³

Peter came from Oxford and he needed some time until the island cast its spell on him; he abandoned his original educational ideas and purposes, let himself unrestrained and became 'quite human'. This is probably mentioned here intentionally, as later in the novel Peter engaged in a romantic relationship with Gerald's sister, Margo. In this case, 'quite human' means to yield to sexual temptation, which implies that one's sexuality is repressed in England and can only be expressed and fully explored in Corfu⁵⁴. With Peter's transformation, the author implies that the island offers the opportunity to pursue pleasure and adopt a hedonistic lifestyle by indulging in the senses⁵⁵.

'They Would Expect me to Answer a lot of Tedious Questions': Superior Travellers

Gerald Durrell does not limit the narration to describing Corfu itself but moves on to describe the character of the Corfiots, their culture and traditions, exposing the reader to an ethnography of Corfu. As Krupat mentioned though, there are no "truth claims in a discipline like ethnography" (Krupat, 52). For this reason, an exploration of Gerald's attempt to 'frame' the other and define the self is worth examining, as it gives interesting insights about the interaction between British visitors and Greek hosts.

Having to face different living standards in Corfu, the Durrells express their irritation from the very beginning. The living conditions are characterized as 'insanitary' by Louisa

⁵³ Durrell, *My Family and Other Animals* 69

⁵⁴ On the contrary, England manifests a repressed sexuality and a passive lifestyle. Similarly, the island of *The Tempest* is also presented under the same light, as a space of sexual freedom (Caliban's rape).

⁵⁵ The earliest example of Hedonism is probably the philosophy of the Cyrenaics, an early Socratic school founded by Aristippus. Arristipus considered physical pleasure as the supreme good (www.philosophybasics.com/branch_hedonism.html).

Durell⁵⁶, while the first impression of Corfiots is negative: “the taxi drivers, perceiving our innocent appearance, scrambled from inside their cars and flocked around us like vultures”⁵⁷. The locals are repeatedly described as “peasants”, conservative and extremely attached to religion while the reliability of the local authorities is often questioned⁵⁸. This rhetoric of primitiveness and tradition⁵⁹ constructs the Durells’ as demanding visitors. In this way, the family’s desire to manifest their superiority in terms of values and way of living is expressed. However, their unmet expectations are concealed by a playful tone and the admittance of the generosity and hospitality of the locals.

Nevertheless, locals are exalted and admired by Gerald. Gerald’s mentor, Theodore Stephanides, is praised throughout the novels for inspiring the author to become a naturalist. At the same time, Spiros Halikiopoulos, who helped the family settle in the island, functions as an important character. Spiros is described as the Durell’s dearest friend and he is always in the service of the family, whereas there is no reference to his own background or family⁶⁰. Gerald gives the reader the impression that he works for them voluntarily. He is even held responsible for the younger members’ misconduct: “I do feel that you shouldn’t have let them drink so much”, says Louisa⁶¹. However, his friendship is unconditional: “there seemed to be no one that he did not know and nothing that he could not obtain or get done for you”⁶². Interestingly, Gerald employs a simile to convey the appreciation for Spiros’ devotion to the family: “like a great, brown, ugly angel he watched over us as tenderly as though we were slightly weak-

⁵⁶ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 18

⁵⁷ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 22

⁵⁸ “There probably aren’t any health authorities here, and even if there were, I doubt if they’d tell me” (Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 20) / “they don’t have the death penalty here for anything except bandits. You get three years for murder and five years if you’re caught dynamiting fish” (Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 240).

⁵⁹ Corfiots are mostly shown as conservative people who spend a considerable and yet unusual amount of time in religious customs (Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 19) and gossip (Durell, *The Garden of the Gods* 3).

⁶⁰ Spiros was the family’s driver. He was married, but his family life is never really revealed in the novels. He appears to intervene in times when the family unity is threatened (e.g. when Leslie appears in court).

⁶¹ Durell, *The Garden of the Gods* 59

⁶² Durell, *The Garden of the Gods* 10

minded children’’⁶³. Despite being described as angelic, the image of a brown angel contrasts with the white complexion and light that accompanies the typical depictions of angels and draws an uncanny picture of Spiros. In other words, the metaphor casts him as the other who fundamentally differs from the family.

Considering the points made, the author’s statements carry the vision of an outsider looking at the new and different. However, subtle irony mediates between the powerful colonial vision and the seemingly pure interest of a cosmopolitan writer that filters these representations. Indeed, it is not entirely clear whether comments like the following are critical of the Corfiots or they’re just mere observations: “As was usual in Corfu, when I crisis was reached, everyone blamed everyone else’’⁶⁴.

Furthermore, Gerald constructs his own identity as well as that of the whole family by juxtaposing it to the local’s identity. Despite the family’s fast settling in Corfu, it seems that they are never really recognized as locals. According to the author, most of the locals view the Durells as a wealthy and aristocratic family: “by then I was used to the curious peasant idea that all English people were lords, and I admitted that that’s who I was’’⁶⁵. The author’s statements are characterized by self-irony that “affords a useful strategy of self-protection” (Holland and Huggan, 7). In this sense, Gerald constructs his identity as a wealthy visitor and lets the locals be deceived by what he believes is inaccurate. In addition, Gerry does not reveal that he lives in Corfu and embraces the identity of the ‘foreigner’ that the locals give him⁶⁶. It seems that despite Gerry’s desire to blend in with the Corfiots, he adopts the host’s perception of him.

The author comments disparagingly on the “peasant idea” of the host population that overestimates his family’s financial status. Notably, the stereotypical perception of the family often proves tedious for the protagonist:

Christaki and his family would probably be about, but in return for food they would expect me to answer a lot of tedious questions: Was England bigger than Corfu? How

⁶³ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 30

⁶⁴ Durell, *The Garden of the Gods* 140

⁶⁵ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 45

⁶⁶ An unknown man during Gerry’s excursion in Liapades offered Gerry his bread saying: “it’s not right for the good name of Corfu that foreigners should starve” (Durell, *The Garden of the Gods* 164).

many people lived there? Were they all lords? What was train like? Did trees grow in England?⁶⁷

In this extract, Gerald portrays Corfiots as ignorant of England and the rest of the world, and in this way manages to contrast the Corfiot identity to his own identity as British by constructing himself as more educated and knowledgeable than the locals. An important aspect that should be not overlooked, is the way the hosts' gaze is expressed in this passage. In exchange for information about England, Christaki's family offers Gerry food, in what can be seen as a hospitable way of gazing back at the Durells as tourists (Canziani & Francioni, 28). However, in most cases, the host's voice is articulated in the form of an internalized tourist gaze, as the hosts view themselves from the perspective of the visitor. Spiros adopts a hostile attitude towards other Corfiots: "thems bastards thinks they owns the islands"⁶⁸, while Theodore ironically mimics Spiro's English accent: "yes doctors, peoples are scarce when I drive through the village"⁶⁹. Despite constantly seeking a place in the Corfiot society, it is evident that Gerald and his family resembled tourists more than locals. The family's role as that of an outsider rather than a part of the local community is reflected in Gerald Durell's representations as well as in the host gaze towards the family as foreigners. However, Gerald Durell's vision is not trapped in determinism, and it is close to MacCannell's approach because "it turns back onto the gazing subject an ethical responsibility for the construction of its own existence" (MacCannell, 36). Gerald Durell discovered the island and his identity through the tourist gaze and it was this act of gazing that determined his professional career as a naturalist. Consecutively, *The Corfu Trilogy*, might not have been intended for tourists, but it eventually functioned as a travel narrative: it encouraged a considerable number of British tourists to visit Corfu.

2. Dominant Themes in *The Durells*

The literary material was adapted for the screen to address a post-modern audience. The British series *The Durells* constitutes, as I indicated in the introduction, the second layer of myth involved in the tourism process. Since its premiere in spring 2016, *The Durells* is being

⁶⁷ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 74

⁶⁸ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 30

⁶⁹ Durell, *My Family and Other Animals* 363

broadcast on ITV in the United Kingdom⁷⁰. The series' widespread popularity reached its peak when it averaged seven million viewers in 2016⁷¹ and it was nominated for the British Academy Television Award for Best Drama Series in 2017. In this section, I will examine how the themes I exemplified in *The Corfu Trilogy* intersect with the narrative of the three first seasons of the series, by paying attention to their possible modification. Prior to that, some general remarks regarding the changes in the point of view and the plot will be discussed.

Protagonist

A significant departure from the original texts surrounds the personality of Louisa, whose voice is central as the protagonist of the series. Interestingly, Gerald's voice appears equal to the voices of the other family members⁷². The viewer is exposed to the insecurities of the mother concerning the financial and emotional challenges of raising four children, in what seems to be an attempt to create more complex characters than in the novels.

Narrative Plot

The series questions the ideal type of life that Gerald pictured, by slightly touching upon darker aspects of the family's reality that he conceals; the mother's drinking problems and their financial struggles⁷³. In addition, sexual liberation is strongly present and not simply implied like in the novels, as even Louisa is involved in romantic relationships in Corfu, subverting the stereotypical archetype of the all-controlling mother. Moreover, unlike the impression the reader gets from the novels, Spiros' services to the family are not voluntary, as it is made obvious that he works for the Durells for a living⁷⁴.

Furthermore, the family appears to be more united than in the novels; the family always

⁷⁰ It has also aired in the United States, as well as in New Zealand and Canada.

⁷¹ www.theguardian.com/books/2017/apr/12/the-durrells-of-corfu-by-michael-haag-review

⁷² The mother's voice as the narrator is evident from the voiceover, when she writes a letter to aunt Hermione and gives a short overview of her children's current life (season 3, episode 1, 00:01-00:50).

⁷³ The family's financial problems extend to Corfu, but most of the family members experiment with a variety of professions throughout the series to deal with this situation, but their efforts are impeded by the locals' perception of them as rich (season 2, episode 1, 20:00-20:06).

⁷⁴ This is proved by Spiros being also in the services of another, Italian family.

reunites after turbulent encounters and the feeling of family unity is stressed. Therefore, the ‘we’ seems to be in a more prominent position and not equally powerful to the ‘I’ of the mother. Unity is stressed when Larry decides to sacrifice his love life for the family and decides not to join his girlfriend in England. He rejects her invitation by explaining that “‘they’re my family and I love them’”⁷⁵. Consequently, it seems that what keeps Larry in Corfu is primarily family ties, with Corfu itself being of second consideration.

The Tourist Gaze

The Durells are represented as tourists already from the graphic depiction in the opening credits; they appear as cartoon figures carrying their suitcases, resembling temporary visitors in Corfu (*figure 1*). The remaining part of this chapter will pay attention to the family’s perceptions and views about the island, as well as to their interaction with locals, which will shed light to the various aspects of the tourist and the host gaze.



Figure 1, the Durells carry their suitcases to the White House

Corfu still reflects the magic that Gerald Durrell delivers; cinematography remains faithful to Gerald’s vision, as the warm colours seem to stand for an accurate visualization of his descriptions. The warmth of the sun, the dazzling nature, and the blue colours are not far from Gerald’s exotic scenery (*figures 2,3,4*). The only difference lies in the theme song and the

⁷⁵ season 1, episode 6,34:20-34:30

colourful graphics of the opening credits which create an impression of Corfu being the same as in the 1930s and generate nostalgia, not time-wise, but mostly space-wise, as the camera sweeps across panoramas of an unspoilt landscape, luring the viewers into the “escapist fantasy of running away to Corfu”⁷⁶. Moreover, the depiction of the Durrells as cartoons in the opening credits gives the impression that the series deals with unrealistic characters, settings, and situations and suggests that the story is entirely fictional.



Figure 2: The Durrells enjoying the warmth of the sun on their way to Corfu.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/apr/07/the-durrells-review-corfu-brits-keeley-hawes-final-series

⁷⁷ episode 1 season 1, screenshot by the author



*Figure 3: Louisa writes a letter to aunt Hermione, concluding with “it is wonderful here”.*⁷⁸



*Figure 4: The front view of the White House.*⁷⁹

⁷⁸ season 3 episode 1, screenshot by the author

⁷⁹ season 3 episode 2, screenshot by the author



Figure 5: Louisa smiles at her children, with the town of Corfu at the background.⁸⁰

‘Back in the Real World’: Wholeness

Imitating the thematology of *The Corfu Trilogy*, the series presents Corfu as a whole entity, a utopia that can provide one with all the necessary qualities for growing personally and professionally. The opening scene at the seaside of Bournemouth is accompanied by the sound of winds and high tides, constructing a dark and gloomy impression of England. Desperately, Louisa acknowledges that “none of you seem happy”⁸¹, while it is only on the ship to Corfu that she smiles for the first time, which finally suggests her self-fulfillment (figure 4).

Just like in the *Corfu Trilogy* The element of creativity and productivity is also present, but it is further enhanced by the visual material. Larry is always attached to his typewriter, while the opening credits depict a notebook full of notes and drawings that assist the representation of Corfu as a place of creativity (figure 6). An insight into the contrast between England and Corfu is given by Larry himself, who keeps notes of the advantages of each place; even though England represents for him the “Intellectual Heartland”, he immediately questions his own statement by including “is it?” in a parenthesis (figure 7).

⁸⁰ season 1 episode 1, screenshot by the author

⁸¹ Season 1, episode 1, 04:04-04:07



Figure 6: Part of the opening credits is a notebook that symbolizes both Gerry's notebook for listing animals and recording their behaviour, as well as Larry's novels

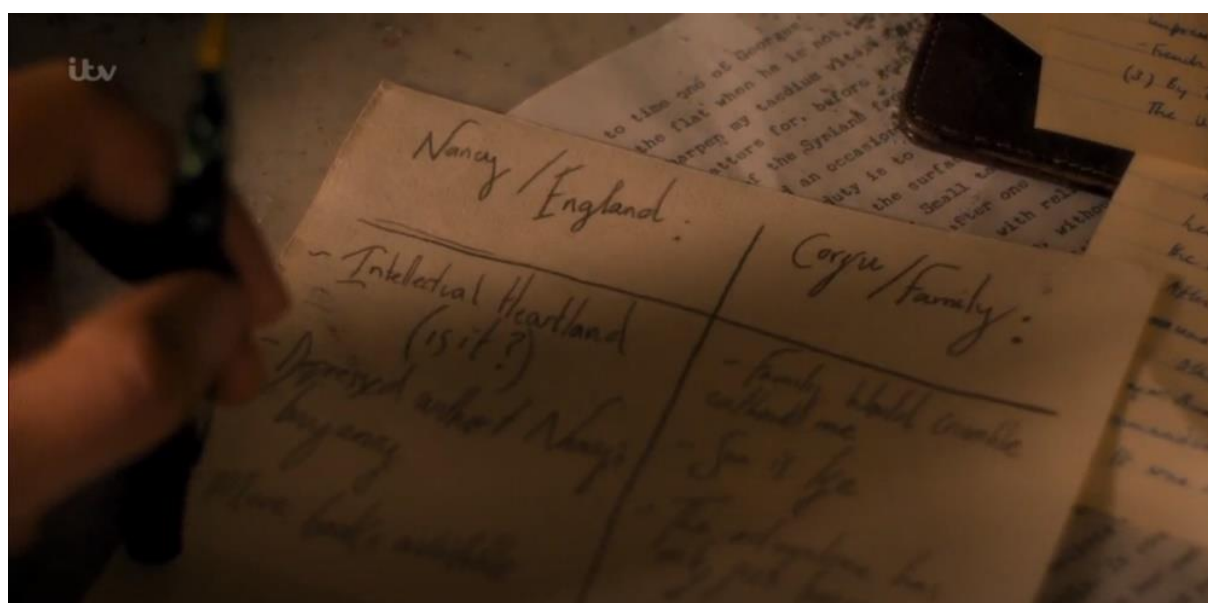


Figure 7: Larry compares England to Corfu in order to make the right decision, season 1, episode 6, screenshot by the author

However, a substantial difference with the novels is expressed when Louisa questions the island's quality to offer self-fulfillment and help one grow⁸². Louisa is concerned with Gerry's lack of formal education and her concerns about him intensify when he befriends a convict. Hugh, her British partner, reminds her that Greece will always be chaotic⁸³, as opposed to England that stands for order, which creates an antithesis with the magical order that Gerald describes. In a conversation with Lawrence, Louisa desperately exclaims: "back in the real world, this is how people are". Larry strongly objects this claim by asserting that "this is real; every day here is more real than anywhere else"⁸⁴. Louisa also adds that "sooner or later we will have to go back and resume our lives", insinuating that their time in Corfu is not 'real life' but a vacation, a temporary excuse to avoid their problems. According to Louisa, Corfu is not the right place for one to develop practical skills and reasonable judgment, as it is an escape from 'real life' responsibilities. This debate on what Corfu stands for clearly negotiates the idea of a 'whole Corfu' as the ideal place for growing up.

"I Know This is Greece but you're Gonna Have to Speak English": Language

The continuous juxtaposition of British to Greeks and vice versa is a recurrent motif in the series that is not strongly present in the novels, delivered in a rather comic tone that creates suspense. An interesting terrain where the two groups seem to compete with each other is that of language, something that is not emphasized to the same extent in *The Corfu Trilogy*. Nevertheless, Spiros maintains the peculiar accent he has in the novels, while Leslie complains about Greeks' insufficient knowledge of English: "I know this is Greece but you're gonna have to speak English"⁸⁵. In this sense, visitors appear arrogant in imposing their own language on the hosts.

On further consideration, the issue of language and communication assigns specific roles to the Durells as tourists and the Corfiots as hosts in this relationship. The colonial gaze of the tourist resonates with an exchange between Louisa and the housekeeper, Lucaretzia:

⁸² season 1, episode 5, 20:25-20:50

⁸³ season 2, episode 6, 07:16-07:20

⁸⁴ Season 1, episode 4, 20:24-20:50

⁸⁵ Season 1, episode 4, 2:30-2:40

“we’re not foreign, Lugaretzia - you are foreign”⁸⁶. In this way, Louisa reminds the other of its difference and assumes a superior position, as the meaning of the word “foreign” is “associated with the construction of boundaries and it is mobilized for purposes of exclusion” (Galani-Moutafi, 210). In another episode, Larry’s mocks the fireman, who claims that he does not need to learn English⁸⁷. Even though irony in the series is directed towards the British for insisting to speak their own language, the Durrells seem to “characterize the Orient as alien and to incorporate it schematically on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are for Europe” (Said, 71). Here, the audience might not be entirely Europe but is mainly the United Kingdom⁸⁸. In overall, through language, the Durrells are playing with the notions of the familiar and the alien, while the colonial vision is concealed behind the façade of self-irony.

“I speak English, but why Should I?”: Dialogical Gazes

This observation about language made above provides an opportunity to examine the different aspects of the host gaze, as it appears multi-faceted in the series. Corfiots as the hosts reject the scenario of the dominance of the English language with a passive-aggressive tone. In what seems to be a reaction to Leslie, a local Corfiot says: “I speak English, but why should I?”⁸⁹. Lucaretzia resists the gaze by favouring Leslie: “he is the only one speaks to me in our language”⁹⁰. By appreciating Leslie’s efforts to connect with her, she gazes back at the family, judging them for their unwillingness to learn her language, an issue that often becomes a barrier in the communication between tourists and hosts. It is this interaction between the two that sets the foundation for the dialogical character of British and Greek tourism discourses.

The dialogue between the tourist and the host gaze is made explicit through a particular interaction between the British inhabitants of Corfu and the locals. In one of the episodes, Louisa’s British partner proposes that British residents of Corfu should compete against the locals in a cricket match. The fact that the British choose to play a familiar sport which was

⁸⁶ www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/apr/07/the-durrells-review-corfu-brits-keeley-hawes-final-series

⁸⁷ “As you’re a man with a modern international outlook”, says Larry (season 3, episode 5, 04:20-04:25).

⁸⁸ It is also interesting that the series is generally available in English-speaking countries.

⁸⁹ season 3, episode 5, 03:55-04:25

⁹⁰ season 1, episode 4, 34:13-34:22

established during the British rule in Corfu solidifies the colonial gaze. The British seem extra confident because they “invented the sport” as Leslie asserts⁹¹. Finally, the screenwriter’s choice to let the Greeks win the game can be seen as a symbol of compromise between the two groups.

Spiros provides an interesting insight into the host gaze. In a conversation with Louisa before the match, he refers to himself and the Greeks as people who “say what we have in mind; we’re different”⁹². In this way, Spiros internalizes the tourist gaze, in the sense that he acknowledges the existence of fundamental differences between him and British people, but he also gives the impression that he is proud of the difference that marks his Greek identity. In addition, he proudly tells Hugh that Corfu is the only place in Greece where cricket is played⁹³, a result of the British Empire’s instrumental spreading of the game internationally⁹⁴. This statement can be read as an effort to impress the host and provide for them a sense of familiarity. It can also be interpreted as pride for the Corfiot identity which is seen as exceptional compared to that of other Ionian islands or Greek identity in general. In this way, the difference from the rest of Greece lies in the heritage that the British left and the appreciation of it. Besides, it is generally known that the resistant movement against the British rule was initiated by residents of other islands, like Cephalonia and Zakynthos, and not by Corfiotes. It is also considered that Corfu was the centre of attention for the British during their rule, and the big number of British allocated seats in the parliament can validate this⁹⁵. All the above solidify the argument that there is a unique connection between Corfu and the British.

The boundaries between visitors and the host are often blurry. Louisa’s support to the Greek team raises questions about whether this is a result of her integration in the Greek society

⁹¹ season 2, episode 5, 11:09-10:11

⁹² season 2, episode 5, 03:38-03:50

⁹³ season 2, episode 5, 08:04-08:07

⁹⁴ The Hellenic Cricket Foundation that is based in Corfu mentions that cricket first appeared in Corfu in 1823, with a game between officers of the British Navy and the Garrison (www.icc-cricket.com/about/members/europe/associate/101). Another article refers to cricket as ‘Britain’s gift to the Greeks’ (www.historytoday.com/archive/britains-gift-greeks).

⁹⁵ www.corfu-museum.gr/index.php/el/173-2016-03-29-08-44-26/
<http://www.noki.gr/%CF%84%CE%BF-%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%B6%CE%BF%CF%83%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8C-%CE%BA%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B1/>

or of her feelings for Spiros. In defense of the locals, she asks her Italian neighbor to not call anyone on the island “peasant”, which contrasts with the repeated use of the word in *The Corfu Trilogy*⁹⁶. This incident shows a desire to connect with the locals, as she also tries to persuade others about the common qualities that British and Greek people share⁹⁷. In addition, cross-dressing and role-play disrupt the boundaries between the Durells and the locals; Louisa is forced to dress up plainly and look “poor” in order to find clients for the food she sells, perpetuating a stereotypical image of the host as poor. At the same time, Larry and Leslie grow a mustache in an effort to assimilate.

Ultimately, the series suggests that Lawrence’s books were the driving force that brought the first British tourists to Corfu. “Travel journalism is bearing an unexpected heavy fruit [...] They loved what I wrote about Corfu and they want to enjoy it as much as we have”, says Larry in the last scene⁹⁸. Considering that these tourists choose to stay at the Durells’ house, who are people of their own nationality, points to the desire of tourists for familiarity⁹⁹. Most importantly, it is suggested that the Durell family both produces and receives tourism, as they plan to open a boarding house to host their British guests. Thus, the series confirms the idea that tourism in Corfu is inextricably linked to the Durells.

3. Conclusion

All the above confirm Mitchell’s claim that the landscape is an agent of on-going power dynamics. British representations of Corfu in literature and screen follow the myth of the “unrestrained” and that of the “tropical paradise”, accompanied by a hedonistic discourse to describe the island¹⁰⁰. At the same time, the moments lived in Corfu are presented as sacred and timeless, while the island remains unspoiled and pristine. In both adaptations, the island ignites inspiration and is contrasted to the unstimulating and passive England. However, in the series, Corfu is seen as threatening and an unrealistic escape route from reality. Therefore, it seems

⁹⁶ Season 3, episode 5, 39:17-39:21

⁹⁷ Season 2, episode 5, 07:38-07:46

⁹⁸ season 3, episode 8, 04:20- 04:55

⁹⁹ Dann argues that not all tourists can stand the shock of a foreign culture. Some of the seek familiarity and situations of home (12).

¹⁰⁰ The myth of the “unrestrained” is connected to the myth of “tropical paradise”, according to Tucker and Akama (511).

that unlike the novels, the series exposes the island's flaws. Moreover, the adjective used by Gerald ("peasants") to describe the locals is rejected as a derogative term by Louisa, in what seems to be an attempt to demonstrate the Durells' attempt for integration.

Eventually, it is the family's gaze that impedes a full immersion in the society and culture of Corfu. In both cases, the colonial vision competes with the cosmopolitan vision; the visitor shows interest in the host, but this interest is not entirely pure. The Durells strive to find familiarity (e.g. cricket) while they simultaneously force the host back at the position of the exotic other. In this way, the colonial gaze as superior persists behind the façade of a cosmopolitan outlook to the world and self-irony. At the same time, while Gerald Durell uses the term 'Corfiots' for the locals, the series emphasizes the Greek identity, so the host comes to represent whole Greece. The power of the tourist gaze in defining the host is evident in both cases, with the exception that the series favors a resistance on the part of the host gaze, enriching the dialogue between visitors and hosts. The two gazes actively compete in the series, by generating subtle tensions between British and Greek characters which provide the background for the tourism discourse analysis that follows.

Finally, it is necessary to stress that in the case of the series, the voice behind the locals and the Durells is the result of collective work of producers and actors, as opposed to the first narrative that is told exclusively by Gerald. This could explain the fact that the series is characterized by polyphony and dialogue between the two gazes.

III. BRITISH AND GREEK TOURISM DISCOURSES: COMPETING NARRATIVES?

1. The Durell Narratives as Mutual Cultural Heritage

In the second chapter I investigated the process of landscaping of Corfu by the British author Gerald Durell and the British screen adaptation. For understanding the tourism discourse that followed the trilogy and the series, it is important to position these in a broader social, cultural and historical context. To begin with, the role of the British as the subject in these representations, as well as the role of Corfu and the locals as the object, cannot be neglected. Considering the historical framework that was provided in the first chapter, this raises questions about the involvement of actors of British ethnicity in the process of landscaping; how does this affect the general image of Corfu? How are tourism discourses shaped by this process?

Complementarily, a contextualization of the novels and the series indicates that the Durells signify both British and Greek cultural capital. Here I consider necessary to clarify the definition of cultural capital that I have adopted for this study: “a stock of values, arts, crafts, cultural knowledge, performance and access to heritage resources” (McGehee et al., 487). The two Durell narratives as common cultural knowledge comprise a symbolical form of cultural capital for the two groups (Zukin, 28) for different reasons.

On the one hand, the novels soon became bestsellers in the United Kingdom¹⁰¹. Therefore, the suggestion that the Durells and Corfu itself carry a significant meaning for the British seems valid, while the recent series established an additional link between the British and Corfu¹⁰². When the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust¹⁰³ was founded in 1963, readers followed their favourite author’s footsteps in realizing his dream about preserving the natural heritage and saving species from extinction. The novelist, the family, the novels, the series, the Wildlife Conservation Trust, even the establishment of an unconscious link with *The Tempest*, all grew into becoming part of British cultural capital. However, the fact that the author was constantly changing place of residence (India, England, Corfu) during his childhood years can

¹⁰¹ www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/my-family-and-other-animals-60th-anniversary-gerald-durrells-book-is-a-triumph-of-conscious-craft-a6782496.html

¹⁰² Lawrence’s works also add to this argument, as he praised and encouraged visitation to Corfu with his literature.

¹⁰³ Today it is called Durell Wildlife Conservation Trust.

question the extent to which his novels should be considered strictly part of the British heritage. Eventually, The Durell family and the two narratives served as a strong branding tool and it is not accidental that British are among the island's most frequent visitors, as they have “favourable strong, and unique brand associations in memory” (Keller, 2).

On the other hand, the Durell family was part of the life in Corfu and even developed close relationships with some of the locals. The family even befriended prominent figures, like the notorious judge and members of the elite, like the countess. The installation of the Corfu Heritage Plaques to commemorate Durell brothers is indicative of the Durells' prominent position in Corfu's heritage¹⁰⁴, while the founding of the Durell Library of Corfu with the aim to “promulgate and facilitate the study of the works and lives of Lawrence Durell and Gerald Durell and their families and associates”¹⁰⁵ shows the locals' deliberate choice to celebrate the authors as part of Corfu's collective memory. These initiatives can be interpreted as efforts to express gratitude for the centrality of Corfu in the two brothers' works and maybe the role these played in the development of the island as a popular tourism destination (Pine, 2).

Significantly, the symbolical capital of the Durell narratives was seen as an opportunity that could yield economic benefits for both the British and Greek tourism industry. However, this does not imply that Gerald was solely responsible for the tourism breakthrough, as various Greek stakeholders saw the international interest in Corfu as a great opportunity for investing their capital. However, the rapid growth of tourism was a disappointment for Gerald:

I fell in love with a ravishing creature who was mature and beautiful [...] Going back to her recently was like paying a visit to the most beautiful woman in the world suffering from an acute and probably terminal case of leprosy – commonly called tourism... The people of Corfu were blessed with a magnificent, magical heritage, an island of staggering beauty, probably one of the most beautiful islands in the whole of the Mediterranean. What they have done with it is vandalism beyond belief.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ www.corfuheritagefoundation.org/chairman/

¹⁰⁵ www.durrelllibrarycorfu.org/

¹⁰⁶ Durell, cited on Pine, 6

I would like to focus on the intrinsic irony that this statement entails¹⁰⁷. Gerald expressed his frustration for the touristic development, but he rejected his own contribution to this change. Moreover, laying the responsibility on them ('they'), meaning the locals, raises questions which remain unanswered: To what extent are his or even his brother's novels responsible for mass tourism in Corfu? Was he aware of his own role in the emergence of Corfu as a popular destination? Was he right that it was local initiatives that altered the natural aesthetics of Corfu?

Finally, Blake's conceptualization of cultural heritage as a vehicle for the expression and even construction of a nation or group's cultural identity is closely related to the aim and scope of this research (Blake, 84). That is exactly why investigating how shared heritage is appropriated by British and Greek websites is particularly promising; the Durell narratives serve as a vehicle for promoting tourism in Corfu and help in the construction of the British and Greek identities. As it will be shown, tourism discourses are not reflective of a fixed national identity, but of obscure social and cultural relationships that construct rather than define the two identities. These interdependent identities are constructed in relation to each other, but also against each other, always on the basis of the Durells as mutual tangible (Durell family, Durell-sites) and intangible (literature & series) heritage.

2. Methodology and description of the online material

As it was demonstrated in the previous chapter, Gerald attributed certain qualities to Corfu through "the relating of an account to an audience" (Dann, 5). Consecutively, many of the themes present in the novels were appropriated by the producers of the *The Durells*.

On a third level, the Durells as shared heritage is appropriated by both British and Greek operators, local stakeholders and travel agencies in order to promote Durell-induced tourism. Firstly, tourism promotional material guides tourists to "act in certain ways, on the basis of the projections, expectations, and memories derived from a multiplicity but ultimately linked repertoire of available social, public and cultural narratives" (Somers and Gibson, 38-39). Therefore, I will discuss how the fundamental thematic lines that were identified are used to guide tourist's experiences. Moreover, the websites encourage interaction between text and tourist and thus function as constructors of identity (Dann, 4). Having said this, some additional

¹⁰⁷ An interesting issue that this extract also introduces is viewing the island as a female entity, as a 'she'.

questions can be formulated regarding the websites: what common elements can be identified in British and Greek discourses? What are some substantial differences? How are the gazes of tourists and hosts articulated?

All the above can be answered by employing critical discourse analysis and focusing on the ways in which the themes present in *The Corfu Trilogy* are reproduced, appropriated or subverted. For the analysis, I have selected four Greek (three webpages and one website with multiple webpages) and sixteen British webpages that promote tourism to Corfu from 2016 to the present. The small number of Greek sources available already suggests the dominant role of the British in the tourism narrative. More specifically, I will study British and Greek discourses thematically, by continuously juxtaposing them, in order to illustrate possible similarities and differences. In every single theme, the discussion involves observations concerning Greek tourism discourse, and then British¹⁰⁸, while sometimes my observations seem to focus more on British discourse as I have come across interesting issues that are not present in Greek discourse.

Moreover, the boundaries are blurry, and I do not assume that there is only ‘one’ British tourism discourse or ‘one’ Greek discourse. As it will be shown, the people behind what seems to be Greek tourism discourse can be British. In overall, the context of this tourism process requires to interpret the roles of British and Greek websites as expressive of the tourist and the host gaze respectively. However, these roles are not fixed, and there lies the complexity of representations in tourism discourses.

The issue of language

At this point, I would like to justify the inevitable choice of analysing texts in the English language. A vital observation that already puts into evidence competing narratives is the lack of promotional material in relation to the Durells in the Greek language. At the same time, only one Greek website and three webpages were found to use the Durell narratives to attract tourists until the specific research had ceased, and they are all used in the analysis. However, they offer a variety of material for the examination, as one of them is composed of a considerable number of sub-sections and webpages. Strikingly, The sources selected are not available in Greek. The webpages of the White House and Corfu Tourist Services are available only in English and

¹⁰⁸ Sometimes also the reverse order is possible; first Greek, then British discourse.

Russian¹⁰⁹, while Corfu City Pass offers information about the Durells only in English. Similarly, even though the website of the Corfu Delfino Blu Hotel is available in English, Greek, German and French, once you click on other languages for the article about the Durells, the following notification appears: “Sorry, this article is only available in American English”¹¹⁰. However, other content on the specific website is offered in both English and Greek.

This situation both reflects and reinforces the tourism demand; on the one hand, it reveals that Greek tourists are not the primary target audience, while on the other they are in a way excluded from that niche-type of tourism. At the same time, the exclusivity of the English language creates a tourism product that mainly addresses British tourists. However, it is worth commenting on the choice of American English and Russian, which suggests that the Durells appeal to tourists of other nationalities as well. In overall, the lack of primary sources in Greek sets the tone for the emerging power dynamics that the comparative analysis of British and Greek perspectives will provide.

This observation resembles the on-going debate about language that was identified in the series. The major difference lies in the fact that it is not the British that demand or impose their language to locals but is a deliberate option of the Greek operator as the host. The webpage seems to renounce the Durells as Greek heritage and in this sense, there is no reason why the promotional material should be offered in Greek.

Tourists as Children

The themes discussed in this chapter are indicative of the treatment of tourists as children, as according to Mayo and Jarvis many of the primary motivations for travel reside in the child Ego state (136). However, there are additional reasons that explain why tourists are encouraged to identify with children in the case of Durell-induced tourism; many of the tourists associate the novels with their childhood, as they became familiar with the trilogy in their early

¹⁰⁹ A British article cites a local entrepreneur who says that “Russian people like English literature and most of them know about Lawrence and Gerald Durrell” (www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/travel/article/3001518/durrells-corfu-popular-tv-show-revives-greek-islands)

¹¹⁰ This is my translation. The original text is; Συγγνώμη, αυτή η εγγραφή είναι διαθέσιμη μόνο στα “Αγγλικά Αμερικής” (www.delfinoblu.gr/el/blog/best-places-in-corfu-the-durrells/?mode=list).

years¹¹¹. Furthermore, the story is narrated from a child's perspective, therefore those readers who might travel to Corfu are already familiar with Gerry's seemingly innocent point of view. In addition, treating tourists as children aims to exercise control over the tourists and maximize profit (Britton, cited in Dann 131). Finally, the emphasis on the social aspect of tourism either in the context of highlighting the family ties among the Durells or by encouraging communication with the locals stands for Mead's theory of socialization (1934), which describes a child's growing process and transition from the 'I' to the 'Self'. In other words, addressing the inner child of tourists signals a discovery of the self through one's "significant others" (Dann, 129).

3. Critical Discourse Analysis of British and Greek Online Material

A basic difference that is vital to mention from the beginning refers to the way Greek and British sources refer to the Durells and Corfu, which reflects competing hierarchical relationships. On the Greek website of the White House, Corfu appears in emphatic position: "they found their paradise here on Corfu, made friends with the locals, found inspiration, dedication and a splendid life surrounded by the nature and hospitality of Corfu. And they told the world about it"¹¹². This suggests that Corfu is the agent in the tourism process and that it was because of the place that the family's experience on the island was exceptional.

On the other hand, it is as if Corfu never really existed before *The Corfu Trilogy* or the series on British webpages. The series appear as the "serious" reason that motivates one to visit the destination: "The Durrells is back on our screens on Sunday nights, and it's giving us a serious case of wanderlust"¹¹³. Similarly, another page mentions: "ITV's hit drama *The Durells* is back on our screens, making us long for sunny skies"¹¹⁴. Ultimately, there is a different, counter-clockwise representation of the Durells that constructs the image of the island and consequently of the self; in Greek discourse they function as a propeller, almost as an excuse for visiting the island. In British tourism discourse, the Durells are presented as the main

¹¹¹ During my research, I conducted a pilot study; some participants informed me that they read *The Corfu Trilogy* at school.

¹¹² thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/

¹¹³ www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durrells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111

¹¹⁴ www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/showbiz-tv/where-the-durrells-filmed-stay--12914879

reason for visiting Corfu. Likewise, the Durells function as an authority for the British visitor, while promoting Corfu appears as the main purpose of Greek tourism stakeholders.

Before proceeding to the analysis, it is important to mention that I have considered the websites as an interaction between the tourist and the host, examining them in the broader context of the ‘mutual gaze’. This mutual gaze contributes to the tourist-host encounter and each gaze has a consequential effect on the other (Maoz, 221). In other words, the focus lies on the dialogue between the gazes.

a. The Otherness Perspective

In this section, I will shed light to general attitudes and representations which present the island and its locals as others, by mentioning some common elements at first and then moving on discussing first Greek and the British material. As expected, the “verbal cliché” (Dann, 194) that is present in *The Corfu Trilogy* appears in both British and Greek tourism discourses. The beauty of Corfu is repeatedly exalted with references to Corfu as “idyllic”¹¹⁵, “breathtaking”¹¹⁶, “picturesque”, which imitate the orientalist vision towards the island that was identified in the Durells narratives by presenting a magical “present -day paradise” (Tucker and Akama, 511) and an “escape” from mundane reality¹¹⁷. The adoption of these representations by Greek tourism discourse can be seen as a role performance of the hosts, who embrace the exotic qualities of the place they inhabit to fit the expectations of the visitors and make profit¹¹⁸.

The use of the adjective “picturesque” by three different British websites to describe the views and the villas where the Durells lived, reveals the apparent visual aspect of tourism and

¹¹⁵ British sources: www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3531192/Corfu-s-real-star-Follow-footsteps-Durrells-enchanted-Greek-island.html , www.jamesvillas.co.uk/blog/durrells-corfu-james-villa-magazine , www.thesun.co.uk/travel/5547890/enjoy-a-villa-holiday-on-corfu-and-see-what-enchanted-famous-family/

Greek sources: thewhitehouse.gr/

¹¹⁶ www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durrells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111, thewhitehouse.gr/the-white-house-an-awarded-tv-location-you-can-visit-in-real-life/

¹¹⁷ www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durrells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111

¹¹⁸ Francioni and Canziani discuss the host’s role to ‘ ‘deliver culture as it would food and beverage’ ’ (25).

the desire to frame the object of the tourist gaze¹¹⁹. More specifically, the etymology of the word refers to a view that is worth capturing and framing in a picture¹²⁰, highlighting the central role camera plays in objectifying and othering, as well as in constructing and reinforcing binary oppositions of the primitive and the modern (Pattison, 96). Moreover, British discourse employs similar tropes with Gerald, like personification, which renders Corfu the protagonist in the tourism process: “a seductive and sun-drenched Corfu”¹²¹. However, the adjectives highlight the otherness of the destination and create a contrast with the agency that the island is given, as it becomes the object of framing: “exoticized, mystified, and seductive”¹²².

British and Greek discourse adopt unexpected, almost reversed roles concerning the representation of hosts in the tourism narrative. In fact, out of the four Greek websites only one refers extensively to the character of Spiros, while Theo is not mentioned at all. Interestingly, the official website of the White House in Corfu does not mention the character of Spiros under the section “hospitality”, as it would be expected. In fact, the hospitality of Corfiots is neglected and is replaced by the hospitality of the Durells, which is not discussed in the two Durell narratives: “the Durells were rich by Corfu standards, and always generous. The peasant children who came to the house returned home laden with gifts of food and sweets. To the locals, the English family was ‘gold from Heaven’ ”¹²³. In this sense, hosts look back at the Durells with admiration and seem to have embraced their otherness by neglecting the locals’ role in the original experience of the family. Furthermore, the reference to the hospitality of the Durells instead that of the locals diverges from Gerald’s frequent references to the Corfiot generosity.

“They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented”¹²⁴ is the quote that exactly describes the ethnographic approach that British discourse adopts. Unlike Greek discourse, the

¹¹⁹ www.brightwaterholidays.com/tours/garden-tours/discover-corfu-with-lee-durrell/,
www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/,
www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111

¹²⁰ <https://www.etymonline.com/word/picturesque>

¹²¹ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3531192/Corfu-s-real-star-Follow-footsteps-Durells-enchanting-Greek-island.html accessed 20/1/2019

¹²² Said, 1-4.

¹²³ corfucitypass.com/durells-corfu/

¹²⁴ Said, 8.

hospitable character of the Corfiots is often mentioned in British discourse. It is important to examine, though, the context in which statements of hospitality are being made. Some characteristic examples are: “...its peasant society farming olive groves and honey...”/ “despite Greece’s current economic woes, you’ll find this same sense of generosity toward strangers is still alive as an old lady in traditional black dress shepherds you into her kitchen for some baklava”¹²⁵/ “as the Durells found, the Corfiots are the most friendly and generous people, especially the country folk; they work hard on their land and many still follow traditional lives”¹²⁶.

The examples above illustrate the presence of an orientalist discourse but also construct the British people behind these representations as superior to the locals. Firstly, Corfiots are seen as “peasants”, something that takes one back to the use of the same word by Gerald. This choice strikingly contrasts with Louisa’s frustrated reaction to the characterization of locals as peasants in the series¹²⁷ and therefore suggests that this portrayal of hosts is going a step backwards, as outdated and orientalist. Secondly, referring to the generosity in its most traditional, stoic form, by juxtaposing it to the current financial situation of the country, allows for a double interpretation; it reduces Corfiots to a poor financial state but simultaneously praises them for their intact character. Thirdly, the way locals are portrayed as stagnant and almost passive since the Durells’ time, allows for their eternal definition by the Durells (“as the Durells found”), making it impossible for the hosts to escape that definition. Likewise, Corfiots are presented as hardworking and loyal to traditional values, perpetuating the myth of the uncivilized native as primitive but also noble (Tucker and Akama, 511). This representation distances the other from the one who represents, while on the other hand it also draws a sympathetic picture of it.

However, a self-critical and melancholic tone is also embedded within these descriptions. British discourse almost nostalgically contemplates on the stoicism that characterizes Corfiots, as if it something that the British have abandoned¹²⁸. In this sense, the Corfiots are attributed with qualities that the British are lacking, constructing an idealized picture of the locals who follow the Hellenistic rationale of the ancient Stoics and have concentrated on virtue; focusing

¹²⁵ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

¹²⁶ travelwithjules.co.uk/holidays/the-durells-life-in-corfu/

¹²⁷ See page 34

¹²⁸ The Stoic emotional ideal was a combination of spiritual calm (ataraxia) and resignation (apatheia) that were to be cultivated in order to achieve happiness (eudaimonia) (Hill, 15).

on work, simplicity, essence, and treating each other fairly. On further consideration, by defining the Corfiot identity, the British construct their own identity as deprived of these virtues, corrupted by civilization and indulged in the senses.

Complementarily, an interesting depiction of Spiros is offered by a travel article in *The Independent* which uses the same simile Gerald used:

...the family is swept up in a protective embrace by a “great brown ugly angel”, Spiros Amerikanos; larger than life, loyal to a fault, this garrulous bear becomes the Durrells’ guide, translator, protector and friend.¹²⁹

The specific simile casts Spiros as the *abject other*, as defined by Julia Kristeva. On the one hand, Spiros is being celebrated due to his devotion, guidance and protection, showing that one is drawn to the abject and “finds joy in it” (Kristeva, 9). On the other hand, he is represented as repulsive and ugly, confirming that one is also repelled by it (Kristeva, 3). Furthermore, the ironic comparison to an animal constructs Spiros as primitive and wild, while it also suggests that he might have been a burden to the Durrell family. Even more strikingly, the article refers to Spiros being “loyal to a fault”, which raises questions about the intended meaning behind this statement. Is this a reference to an untold story about Spiros and the family, or does it refer to his close relationship with Louisa? Why does the website opt for creating an aura of mystery without answering the readers’ possible query? In any case, Spiros’ flaws are exposed in only one sentence, altering and almost parodying the representation of him in the novels.

Visual Representation

Finally, visual depictions provide interesting insights about the way Corfu is being perceived and portrayed. Greek websites clearly present the island as a place of sociability, except from Lawrence’s house, which is presented as intact since he was living there (*figures 8 & 9*). However, while most of Greek sources include photos of pictures of tourists and of human presence in general, British pages incline towards photos of an ‘uncivilized’ Corfu that is “frequently unpopulated as a means of symbolic distancing from the urban civilization of the daily life” (Hummon, 195). Just like Gerald wished to escape the dark and fast rhythms of life

¹²⁹ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

in London, they choose to portray an island devoid of civilization and glimpses of modern life (figures 7,8, 9, 10,11 &12). Photos of the Corfu castle and Danilla village¹³⁰ appear totally unpopulated and therefore ancient and primal, visualizing what Gerald described as “‘ancient nature’”.

Moreover, photos abound in religious allusions; the cross at the top of the castle (*figure 11*), even the photograph’s composition in *figure 16*, which resembles that of an altar or even Christ’s crib, remind one comments about the locals’ devotion to tradition and religion in *The Corfu Trilogy*¹³¹. Opting for this religious interpretation highlights the Durell’s assimilation in the culture and religion of Corfu, while the surrounding of the family by animals suggests a stoic attitude according to which fulfillment comes by living in accordance with the natural environment¹³². Thus, British discourse mediates between the depiction of Corfu as a deserted paradise and the desire to portray the Durells as being part of the landscape. This wavering between having an identity within the group as locals and choosing to identify as different does not only involve the Durells, but extends to the British people who produce or share these photos as travellers to Corfu.

¹³⁰ Danilla village is a replica village that has been used for the shooting purposes of *The Durells* series.

¹³¹ See page 22

¹³² From a Stoic’s perspective, the natural world is a spectacle worthy of admiration.



Figures 8 & 9 ¹³³

¹³³ <https://thewhitehouse.gr/white-house-villa/>



*Figure 10*¹³⁴



*Figure 11*¹³⁵

¹³⁴ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3531192/Corfu-s-real-star-Follow-footsteps-Durrells-enchanting-Greek-island.html

¹³⁵ [www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3531192/Corfu-s-real-star-Follow footstep-Durrells-enchanting-Greek-island.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3531192/Corfu-s-real-star-Follow-footsteps-Durrells-enchanting-Greek-island.html)



Figures 12 & 13 ¹³⁶

¹³⁶ www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/showbiz-tv/where-the-durrells-filmed-stay--12914879



Figure 14 ¹³⁷



Figure 15 ¹³⁸

¹³⁷ travelwithjules.co.uk/holidays/the-durrells-life-in-corfu/

¹³⁸ www.hellopeagreen.com/2018/07/visiting-the-danilia-village-in-corfu-home-of-the-durrells.html



Figure 16 ¹³⁹



Figure 17. ¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/showbiz-tv/where-the-durrells-filmed-stay--12914879

¹⁴⁰ www.thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/

b. The Timelessness Perspective

The representation of Corfu as timeless that was briefly discussed at the end of the previous section is the subject matter of this section. Hoppen et. al. claimed that the desire to be ‘forever young’ is one of the driving forces of tourists who visit literary places -and series locations, I would add - (45). Therefore, part of the argument in favour of an authentic experience is to preserve an illusion of timelessness, by reassuring that Corfu is as pristine as Gerry found it when he first arrived. Henceforth, I will examine the conceptualization of time as ‘frozen’ first on Greek and then on British websites and webpages.

Arguably, Greek tourism discourse reflects a substantial effort to preserve this sense of timelessness. The website of the White House in Kalami struggles to ignore any changes that occurred within 80 years ¹⁴¹(“little has changed”), while *Delfino Blu*’s article highlights in bold the verb “stopped” in the phrase “time seems to have stopped in Danilia village...”, trying to convey this sense of timelessness that Gerald insisted on transmitting to the readers. The White House website goes as far as to state that “it continues to maintain its sense of primal peace and beauty. ...the location is stunning and the exterior of the White House has lost none of its original character”¹⁴². Interestingly, the website reassures the readers that the tourists who visit the White House confirm that there has been no substantial change since the Durrell’s time: “They love that little has changed about this special place”^{143 144}. This can be interpreted as a strategy of attracting more tourists or as an “earnest interest in preserving a way of life considered threatened or virtually lost, as an aversion of authenticity concerned with the uncorrupted or essential” (Fawcett and Cormack, 689).

Similarly, a British website refers to the walking trails of Corfu as “ancient”, adopting the exact metaphor Gerald used in the novel. Besides, a British magazine not only favours a timeless perspective, but even adopts the cyclical perception of time that was identified in the analysis of *The Corfu Trilogy*. It addressed potential tourists by stating that they might “get to live the same, carefree day over again tomorrow” and that “the scene can be taken as a snapshot

¹⁴¹ The family left Corfu in 1939.

¹⁴² thewhitehouse.gr/the-bay/

¹⁴³ thewhitehouse.gr/white-house-villa/

¹⁴⁴ This clearly contrasts with statements made by British tourists who filled in a relative questionnaire about their experience as Durrell tourists, and who actively criticized the island’s rapid change.

and placed at any point in time’’¹⁴⁵. Time is perceived as a repeated sequence and is conceptualized in that way in order to serve the purpose of spending one’s time in Corfu exactly as the British author did.

On the other hand, other British travel webpages adopt a more critical attitude towards the idea of timelessness, in the sense that they focus on reminiscing an ideal past as opposed to the ideal present. More specifically, some British sources doubt the fact that the island has remained intact since the Durells’ time. Two British travel articles disapprovingly refer to the island’s transformation:

So is there anything of his Greek paradise left? Those sun-drenched, sea-lapped scenes made me keen to look afresh at the place. Are there pockets of this island that still have Hellenistic charm? The secret, it turns out, is to head to the north-east corner. This is real Durrell country and the part of the island brought most vividly to life in the books. And it is, for the most part, picturesque and unspoilt.¹⁴⁶

But can you still find elements of *My Family and Other Animals* on the island today, or are his narrations simply nostalgia-tinted embellishments of a lost youth? Unlike Gerald’s first glimpse of Corfu, yours will not be the Old Town with its “green shutters folded, like the wings of a thousand moths, the bay smouldering butterfly-blue”, but rather an ugly airport and a forgettable ride through the suburbs. And instead of a coastline studded by the endless hoplite spears of cypress trees, much of the eye-line where the Durrells lived has been replaced by over-development.

However, head north to Archaravi, a seemingly forgettable town facing nearby Albania, to find a remnant of the family’s Corfu.¹⁴⁷

This constant longing for the past demonstrates an anxiety on the part of the authors of these articles for finding Corfu at the same state that Gerald described it, ancient and unspoiled¹⁴⁸. Surprisingly, the first extract suggests that this nostalgia for Gerald’s pastoral Corfu coincides

¹⁴⁵ www.jamesvillas.co.uk/blog/durrells-corfu-james-villa-magazine

¹⁴⁶ www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durrells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/

¹⁴⁷ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

¹⁴⁸ See page 18 for an interpretation of the adjective used by Gerald.

with an admiration for the Hellenistic past; it shows again a preoccupation with a stoic approach to travel, in accordance with nature and away from civilization. At the same time, it is remarkable that there is no longing for the times when the island was a British protectorate. However, the etymology of the word ‘nostalgia’, a concept that characterizes the passages above, points towards the intricate relationship between British people and the island; it refers to missing one’s home¹⁴⁹. Therefore, Corfu is constructed as the home of the writers of the passages cited above. Is then maybe the feeling of nostalgia expressed by these British writers justified by the idea that it is their own homeland they are longing for?

Ultimately, by engaging in the quest for an ideal and timeless Corfu, Greek and British discourses share a common quality. They illustrate exactly what Linda Hutcheon has described as the main characteristic of postmodernity: “postmodernity recalls the past, but always with the kind of ironic double vision that acknowledges the final impossibility of indulging in nostalgia” (Hutcheon, 205).

c. The Wholeness Perspective

The purpose of this subchapter is to review Greek and British tourism discourses in relation to the theme of wholeness that is present in the two Durrell narratives. Interestingly, none of the websites juxtapose home to Corfu. However, a debate on what Corfu itself represents arises, offering interesting and conflicting views.

In both Greek and British tourism discourses Corfu is often presented as an island of endless possibilities, among which is “a cure to inertia”, imitating representations from *The Corfu Trilogy*. This interpretation is adopted by a Greek website but can be discerned in British discourse as well. The official website of the White House almost brags about the island’s magical abilities to transform a tourist into a writer:

Find your writing inspiration at the former residence of British authors Gerald and Lawrence Durrell. If you are not a writer yet, you will become a writer here.
The White House welcomes you for both long- and short-term stays in the quiet

¹⁴⁹ Nostalgia: from Greek *algos* "pain, grief, distress" (see -algia) + *nostos* “homecoming”(www.etymonline.com/search?q=nostalgia).

winter month when the island is almost as unspoiled as it was in the days of the Durrells¹⁵⁰

It's just that the view of this family on Corfu still today is of brilliant inspiration to discover the island with different eyes and ideas.¹⁵¹

According to this, the island and the residence of the Durrells is able to 'open the eyes' of the visitor to new exciting ideas and concepts¹⁵². At the same time, the original story is being subverted to please Gerald's fans, as only Lawrence and Nancy used to live in the White House. Apart from the Greek website, an article in a British magazine mentions that the island "quenches the thirst" for inspiration.

Ironically, the same website negotiates the island's ability to satisfy tourists' quest for inspiration as it refers to time slowing down into a "lazy afternoon" which "develops a tangible meaning" and conveys the "attitude of the island"¹⁵³. It is not only the British websites that diverge from the original narrative of creativity, though. On a Greek hotel's blog holidays in Corfu are described as "lazy days by the beach"¹⁵⁴. It is evident that the element of productivity that was identified in the previous chapter is absent and tourism is constructed around periods of 'doing nothing' and leisure. From this, it can be inferred that tourism discourses have been adapted to the idea that "so many travel brochures, ad campaigns, glossy magazines, and television programmes lead us to believe; that tourism is all about ultimate relaxation and the promise of a pleasurable interlude away from the daily grind" (Tonnaer, 116).

Interestingly, these representations can be linked to the negative impact Corfu has on one's personality according to Louisa in the series, who blames the island for insufficiently preparing her family for 'real life'. A combination of the island's slow rhythm and relative comments in British articles about holidays in Corfu being a "daydream"¹⁵⁵, as well as the island being a "wonderful playground" and the family's "escape"¹⁵⁶ matches the negative connotation of a

¹⁵⁰ thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/winter-stays-at-the-durrells/

¹⁵¹ www.thewhitehouse.gr/

¹⁵² www.jamesvillas.co.uk/blog/durrells-corfu-james-villa-magazine

¹⁵³ <https://www.jamesvillas.co.uk/blog/durrells-corfu-james-villa-magazine>

¹⁵⁴ www.delfinoblu.gr/el/blog/best-places-in-corfu-the-durrells/?mode=list

¹⁵⁵ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

¹⁵⁶ www.holidayhypermarket.co.uk/hype/take-holiday-itvs-durrells/

spirit of irresponsibility that Corfu seems to induce. A similar attitude was adopted by an old contributor to *Telegraph Travel*, who reflected on the island's ineptitude to reflect reality, by quoting the words of Gerald's colleague: "It must have been magical growing up in Corfu at that time. But, looking back, it probably wasn't the best preparation for real life"¹⁵⁷. This last quote and the year of publication of the article (1999) raise further questions about whether tourism discourses are informed by the two popular narratives or it is tourism discourses that inform the Durrell narratives, here the series. In overall, British discourse seems to adopt a more critical stance regarding wholeness, doubting the possibility to live an experience that reflects real life on the island.

All the above raise several questions; what kind of destination is Corfu? Is it for relaxation, entertainment, concentration? Does it facilitate avoidance of responsibilities or commitment to them? This polarization of attitudes, for instance, on the one hand, draws an image of Corfu as the ideal destination for business travellers, while on the other hand, it negotiates it. Could Corfu be somewhere in between? This further raises questions about whether these representations are strategic for attracting tourists or are underlying, conscious or unconscious behaviours that undermine the quality of the time spent on the island. Also, what leads the content creators of the White House website to the bold statement that one will become a writer just by visiting it? Certainly, on a first level, these competing narratives of Corfu reflect a different appropriation of themes. On a second level, it seems that they also reflect the power of tourism to perpetuate structures of superiority, by representing a cultural landscape as passive. At the same time, the managers of the Greek website of the White House as hosts try to resist this representation by favouring Gerald's representations of an inspirational Corfu in order to preserve the cultural and pragmatic aspects of the island.

d. The Identification Perspective

The present sub-chapter aims to examine the efforts of Greek and British websites and webpages to attract tourists through the identification strategy. Following Urry's claims that tourists are in quest of authentic experiences, Greek and British online material draws upon the novels' main characters as a way of reviving and 'reliving' what the Durrells

¹⁵⁷ www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/greece/corfu/articles/In-search-of-Durrells-Corfu/

experienced. Furthermore, they even encourage the reader or potential tourist to identify with those who have become part of the cultural mythologies of places (Andersen and Robinson, viii). To do so, they call upon tourists' childhood fantasies and dreams. This identification does not only draw a relationship between potential tourists and the Durells but also between the writers of travel articles and the Durells.

In Greek discourse, there is a systematic effort to bring the tourist closer to the Durells through identification. A number of attempts to excite the imagination of readers in order to embrace their inner child and be guided by the images they have put in place of reality (Dann, 119) are being introduced. Timelessness is evoked with the echoing laughter of the characters: "Here you can some days still hear the laughter of Nancy and Lawrence Durrell enjoying their morning bath in the deep blue sea"¹⁵⁸. The senses are also activated providing opportunities to identify with Gerry and experience Corfu through him: "alongside this phenomenon you'll be able to listen to the soundtrack of a chorus of frogs, channeling the experience of Gerald as a boy, enthusiastically discovering the abundance of wildlife"¹⁵⁹. The Durell trail offered for the visitors of the White House stresses the possibilities to imitate the Durells' activities, incorporating the taste of local products in the experience: "The walk will end like all the activities of the Durrells ended those days... with some local sweets"¹⁶⁰. This particular example is remarkable, as it is one of the few attempts to promote local products on the occasion of Durell-induced tourism¹⁶¹.

British discourse, on the other hand, goes beyond the plain strategies of encouraging tourists to identify with the Durells and strives to achieve a deeper kind of identification. To begin with, identification is an aspect of the 'Durrell Week', an annual event in Corfu organized and managed by British people. The organizers not only appropriate the novels' content but take advantage of the fact that *The Corfu Trilogy* is a coming of age novel and the determinant role of Corfu in Gerry's quest of self-discovery. It seems that the writers of the articles and the curators of British travel websites are aware of fundamental themes in the novel, as they invite the potential tourist to not only see or feel like Gerald, but also to grow like him and achieve self-actualization, promising a life-changing experience: "We

¹⁵⁸ thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/

¹⁵⁹ www.jamesvillas.co.uk/blog/durrells-corfu-james-villa-magazine

¹⁶⁰ thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/the-durrell-hike/

¹⁶¹ The website of the White House also refers to some local dishes being loved by the Durells (thewhitehouse.gr/greek-cuisine/).

hope that there will still the extraordinary varieties of creatures sharing the land of the planet with you to enchant you and enrich your lives”. Henceforth, the potential tourists have the chance to “enrich” their lives and achieve personal growth by becoming familiar with the natural environment ¹⁶² ¹⁶³. Again, the idea of enriching one’s life through contact with nature resonates with the stoic perception of pursuing freedom in life.

Apart from inviting tourists to identify with young Gerry as an explorer, tourism discourse closely imitates Durrell’s literary discourse, using almost the same vocabulary:

[...] participants will be able to experience aspects of the life Gerald led here, as described in his Corfu Trilogy. The magic of fireflies, the deafening chorus of the frogs, the nightly calling of the scope owls, acres of olive groves with glittering turquoise waters and breathtaking views reaching out over the sea to the distant mountains of Albania. ¹⁶⁴

In My Family and Other Animals, it’s where Lawrence, Nancy and their bohemian friends swam naked. Lawrence lived with his artist wife Nancy and wrote his ode to Corfu, Prospero’s Cell [...] Our house had three [cats] who were more than keen on a slice of *octopus stifado* when it was offered, which was pretty much always. The Durrells would doubtless have done the same. ¹⁶⁵

However, the author of the second extract cited above, in an effort to create associations between the real locations and the story’s characters, constructs a myth around certain figures,

¹⁶² The tours during the ‘Durrell Week’ are not simply tourist walks, but opportunities to listen to people who will focus on “the plant life of the area and give instruction in their origins and properties (geraldldurrellscorfu.org/the-week/).

¹⁶³ A relative safety warning by the curators of the website seems to be based on an experience Gerry and Margo had when they were walking for hours and only had one refreshment with them, while rain also poured in their return: “It is imperative that you bring sturdy footwear and a light knapsack with shower proof clothing, just in case. Due to remote location, this day you will require a packed lunch and refreshments” (geraldldurrellscorfu.org/the-week/).

¹⁶⁴ geraldldurrellscorfu.org/the-week/

¹⁶⁵ www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durrells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/

since wrong information is being conveyed; Nancy, Lawrence's wife is not mentioned in *My Family and Other Animals*, but for the sake of pleasing Lawrence's fans as well, the article distorts both narratives, as the books never mention Nancy and the series does not include such a scene. Finally, readers are called into social action through the construction of the Durells' character as giving and kind-hearted people through a seemingly mundane interaction. Tourists are encouraged to feed the cats, just like the Durells would do, who appear to set as a positive example to be imitated. On second thought, the Durells are constructed as the ultimate authority upon which tourists can rely their experiences.

The above extract demonstrates an effort to achieve a different level of identification; the authors of travel articles seem to embody the role of Gerald Durrell in the books. They present themselves as experts and assume an exclusive ability to reveal the island's hidden gems, by identifying with Gerald who had discovered all the edges of the island. For example, the author of the extract mentioned above seems determined to disclose the island's secrets in a confessional tone¹⁶⁶. An identification with Gerald is also evident with the use of second person invocation, which reminds us of Gerald's appeal to the reader with 'you' that was discussed in the previous chapter: "If you want to live just as The Durrells did, you can"¹⁶⁷.

A careful examination of these passages shows that they both have the same structure; at first, doubts concerning the island are expressed, but then the authors offer a solution to the tourist, which can be summarized in their advice to follow paths 'off the beaten track' that they as experts have mastered already. Assuming an 'expert' position is facilitated by the use of the imperative in guiding tourists around the island's hidden spots: "renew your love affair"¹⁶⁸. Thus, the British connect to Gerald and construct themselves as knowledgeable guides who have unlocked the secrets of the island, highlighting their capabilities to introduce the mysteries of Corfu to tourists, something that serves as a smooth transition to the next sub-chapter. Finally, the skilful use of themes present in the cultural narratives suggests that British stakeholders generally appear more prepared in this tourism niche than Greek.

¹⁶⁶ Another example is offered on the passages that are cited in section c.

¹⁶⁷ www.walesonline.co.uk/lifestyle/tv/durrells-filmed-can-visit-it-12959294/

¹⁶⁸ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3567172/Six-things-Corfu-renew-love-affair-gem-Ionian-including-cricket-Mediterranean-ports-villas-rented-Durrells.html

e. The Familiarity Perspective

In this section, the appeal to the tourist's quest of familiarity will be explored, which was identified as prominent in the series. Predictably, it is British websites and webpages that are able to stir this sense of familiarity most successfully. Prentice distinguished seven interrelated types of familiarity: informational, which refers to information used, proximate, which refers to national identity, and educational, which is about previous formal and informal education (942)¹⁶⁹. British discourse relies on these three types to address British tourists; tourists can connect to the Durells as familiar figures and part of their heritage (informational), trust their authority as representatives of the British people on the island (proximate), and relate to them as part of their education (both formal and informal, as the books are being taught at school). Complementarily, as it was explained above, the Durells' gaze is assumed to be the most reliable in the tourism experience.

On a first level, familiarity is achieved by likening the Durells to tourists themselves: "when Gerald Durrell and his family moved to Corfu in 1935, tourists were a rarity and were generally regarded with bemusement by the local community"¹⁷⁰. According to this, the Durells were among the first international tourists in the island, and that is why they attracted the attention of the local population and are worthy of admiration. On a second level, it is evoked by calling upon one's sense of home. Family and home are vital components of one's sense of familiarity, and it has been claimed to influence destination image and the decision-making process of tourists (Yang et al., 176). British discourse relies on the quest for places that are marked 'safe' by the Durells, while the fact that the Durells lived or walked there helps in establishing an aura of 'home' for the tourist. Arguably, there are plenty of references to the

¹⁶⁹ In this sense, information and formal education are interrelated; tourists are offered information which might have encountered during their education. This information has been provided by a tourist's answer to my questionnaire. S/he argued that they read *The Corfu Trilogy* at school.

¹⁷⁰ uk.news.yahoo.com/the-durrells-corfu-visit-the-naturalists-greek-143369733504.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9jb25zZW50LnIhaG9vLmNvbS9jb25zZW50&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABycJ4xrqIbx4A_4SLi9be9iNgRqGCQk_fvLbXh71P8nXYrBvU5OU_ZYBVB6Eb14DKLfGlyfTLo4MGqkYFF4VTmxP646oUolnMCNCxn4g3EFn_mSbTCDeZ1Ya3yxMdIn73h2XPmU6GFV7Mfg7J-DdMMfIjDyzD3AqAJZ3zrWvSax

Durrell family and the notion of home that enhance the intimacy between tourists and the destination: “the beautiful building on the north-east coast of Corfu that was once their family home”¹⁷¹, “follow in the famous family's footsteps”¹⁷², “lose yourself in a landscape that the family and their animals called home”¹⁷³. Even the cast of the series is presented as temporarily using the hotel as their home, imitating the Durrells: “still, it's no wonder the cast chose this five-star hotel to be their temporary home”¹⁷⁴.

The above references have a double implication: firstly, they demonstrate that the landscape of Corfu is familiar, due to the Durrells' stay, and secondly, that there lies a sense of ownership of physical space by the British, justified by the idea that it stands for ‘home’. The connection between the British and Corfu is further enhanced by mentioning that Corfu is “the birthplace of a British prince: another celebrated island home is Mon Repos, the birthplace of Prince Philip and now the Museum of Paleopolis, with finds from the ancient city that stood on this spot”¹⁷⁵.

Despite the fact that British webpages emphasize the familiar and the well-known, the notion of home is also recalled by the Greek website of the White House: “at the shop, you can also get a stamp for your favourite Durrell book that says that you were here – at their former home”¹⁷⁶. On the other hand, on the website of Corfu Tourist Services, Corfu as the Durrells' home is of secondary importance, while the focus lies on the local who helped the Durrells turn the island into their home: “He was one of the first people the Durrell family met on the island”¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷¹ www.brightwaterholidays.com/tours/garden-tours/discover-corfu-with-lee-durrell/.

¹⁷² www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durrells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111

¹⁷³ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

¹⁷⁴ www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durrells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111

¹⁷⁵ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3567172/Six-things-Corfu-renew-love-affair-gem-Ionian-including-cricket-Mediterranean-ports-villas-rented-Durrells.html

¹⁷⁶ thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/visit-the-home-of-the-durrells/

¹⁷⁷ www.corfutouristservices.gr/durrells-and-corfu-tourist-services/

Visual Representation

Although a significant number of photographs feature an uninhabited landscape in British websites, almost all visual material of British and Greek sources designates Corfu as a Durell-space, eliciting sentiments of familiarity. Most of them depict the Durells, impersonated by the actors of *The Durells* (figures 5 & 6). In this way the relationship between the Durells and the island is stressed and suggests the existence of a strong link between the two, almost presenting the Durells and Corfu as inseparable entities. Moreover, this visual choice aims to trigger a sentiment of togetherness and belonging; the tourist is lured to visit Corfu as a way of joining a family feast, that of the Durells. Thus, these representations depict Corfu as an ideal place for socializing and interacting. Interestingly, this interaction is encouraged on the basis of forming a connection with the British family, and not with the locals. Ultimately, comparing these photos to those of an unspoilt nature that were identified earlier establishes a clear disparity; on the one hand, the longing for an uninhabited paradise is expressed, and on the other, the desire to be part of the social circle of the Durells.

f. The Ownership Perspective

Following the discussion on familiarity, a constantly repeated motif that is closely related to it emerges; that of ownership. Ownership over the island as space or even over the tourism narrative itself is expressed by both British and Greek discourses and can be identified by creating both direct and indirect associations with the Durell narratives. Therefore, I will discuss this issue in relation to British and Greek discourse perspectives.

On British webpages, the issue of ownership over the island as a physical space is evident in a seemingly innocent but frank way. To begin with, there are references to “Margo’s bay”¹⁷⁸ and “real Durell country”¹⁷⁹, which indicate that Corfu as a geographical space is defined and consecutively owned by the Durells. Moreover, the websites emphasize the relation between the British and the heritage that Gerald Durell left with his “pioneering work for the

¹⁷⁸ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3531192/Corfu-s-real-star-Follow-footsteps-Durells-enchanted-Greek-island.html

¹⁷⁹ www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/,

Gerald Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust’’¹⁸⁰. The Gerald Durrell Week that takes place once a year is another indication of the issue of ownership, as the opening line of the website welcomes visitors to “Gerald Durrell’s Corfu’’¹⁸¹. Additionally, the choice of “experts in the flora and fauna of the island relevant to the work of Gerald Durrell during his time spent in Corfu’’ indicates that the experts are probably locals who are familiar with the natural habitat of Corfu. However, a closer look at the profile of these experts reveals their British nationality, which in combination with the exclusive availability of the website in English, verifies that the the ‘Durrell Week’ is being managed by and organized for British tourists.

Another important debate that is better concealed refers to who ‘owns’ the past or to whom Corfu owns its rich cultural character. More specifically, a British travel agency opts for a broader narration of history by listing all the nations that have settled in the island over the centuries:

With a perfect, fertile climate, Corfu has been treasured and fought over by many warring nations, including the Venetians, Saracens, French and British, finally achieving union with an independent Greece in 1864. The heritage left by all these uninvited guests, together with the fascinating archaeological remains of earlier civilizations means that the island today is a unique blend of ancient myth, classical architecture and a vibrant culture as well as being the ‘emerald isle’ of the Ionian.¹⁸²

This extract is initially surprising since Corfu was once a British protectorate and one would assume that the reference to it would be bold or uninviting for tourists. However, the website does not simply refer to it, but comments on the reasons why the island was contested; the reason behind the shifting occupations is the island’s otherness, its unusual fertility, something that Gerald praised in his novels. Interestingly, the term used to describe the island’s conquerors is “uninvited guests’’. The phrase licenses and almost endorses colonial practices, by concealing the ‘dark side’ of colonial history and imposing a cosmopolitan character to the island as the best remnant of these events. Finally, the reference to colonizers as “guests’’ gives an impression of benevolent intentions on the part of colonizers. At the same time, this phrase

¹⁸⁰ www.brightwaterholidays.com/tours/garden-tours/discover-corfu-with-lee-durrell/

¹⁸¹ geraldurrellscorfu.org/

¹⁸² travelwithjules.co.uk/holidays/the-durrells-life-in-corfu

draws a connection between these “guests” and contemporary tourists, almost justifying colonial practices.

But the Durrells weren’t the first British people to fall for the charms of the island. Long before their arrival, Britain and Corfu had a rich, intertwined history dating back to 1814, when the British formed a ‘protectorate’ of the island, with a Lord Commissioner stationed alongside military garrisons to protect its interests. Evidence of this period can still be seen today in architectural remnants as well as fusion culture, particularly on Sundays when cricket is still played on the green opposite the esplanade in Corfu Town.¹⁸³

In the specific extract, British occupation is compared to the relocation of the Durells and is claimed to be based on the same reasons that forced the family to leave their home, which can be summarized in simply being charmed by the island. This statement not only ignores but also justifies British imperialism, by suggesting that the British protectorate was established for the island’s greater interest, which is clearly refuted by Corfiot hosts on a travel agency’s page: “Thomas Maitland arrived on the Corfu in 16th of February 1816 and became the first Commissioner. He was high-handed, very nationalist with the only purpose to serve the interests of Great Britain, having a contempt attitude to the Greek population”¹⁸⁴.

Furthermore, British discourse draws associations between the Durells and the island by utilizing the extensive reference to cricket in the series as well the British literary heritage of *The Tempest*. A sense of familiarity is ensured: “a familiar sound echoes off the Venetian mansions and French colonnades – the thwack of leather on willow, with the occasional strangled ‘Owzat!’”¹⁸⁵. In fact, British discourse further constructs an idealized image of the British occupation: “It still hosts cricket matches in the central green, a quaint legacy of British rule”¹⁸⁶. According to the Cambridge dictionary, “quaint” can refer to the attractiveness of

¹⁸³ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3567172/Six-things-Corfu-renew-love-affair-gem-Ionian-including-cricket-Mediterranean-ports-villas-rented-Durrells.html

¹⁸⁴ www.kalamicorfu.com/en/about-corfu-island/corfu-island-history/british-corfu.html

¹⁸⁵ www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-3567172/Six-things-Corfu-renew-love-affair-gem-Ionian-including-cricket-Mediterranean-ports-villas-rented-Durrells.html

¹⁸⁶ www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durrells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/

something due to it being unusual and old¹⁸⁷; such a linguistic choice can be interpreted under an Orientalist framework as the desire to favour the imperialist tendencies of the British for Corfu. It can be read as an attempt to justify colonization through a familiarization with the geographical space which grants the British the power to portray Corfiots as a copy of their culture. At the same time, it is suggested that Corfu is the island that inspired Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, even though this has not been proven to be the case: "Shakespeare probably used the island as the model for the magical kingdom in *The Tempest*"¹⁸⁸.

Alternatively, an implicit link exists between the British and the tourism narrative itself. The British and Corfu are seen as inseparable entities by highlighting the tradition of the British tourist presence in Corfu: "because Corfu has long been a favourite with Brits for the summer holidays, you can find some great packages including all-inclusive deals"¹⁸⁹. British, in this sense, are constructed as having a legitimate right to benefit from tourism deals and offers. This raises a question about where is this advantage based on; on the Durells being British heritage or on Corfu itself being part of British heritage? In this sense, the idea of privilege goes as far as to be reconfigured as control over the island as British property.

Traces of ownership over the tourism narrative and the tourism development of Corfu, can be found in both Greek and British discourses. However, there is a slight difference in the way this ownership is framed. British material mentions that it was the success of Gerald's books that "put Corfu on the map"¹⁹⁰. Surprisingly, the same expression is used by three more webpages, including the article by a Greek operator. However, the Greek website quotes that "the hit ITV series has put on the map some of the secret villages of Corfu"¹⁹¹, implying that it is only the secret villages that gained more visibility due to the series and not the whole island. Choosing to attribute only part of the island's success to the Durell narratives indicates a reluctance to admit the role of the Durells and consecutively the British in the tourism development.

¹⁸⁷ dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/essential-british-english/quaint

¹⁸⁸ travelwithjules.co.uk/holidays/the-durrells-life-in-corfu/

¹⁸⁹ www.mirror.co.uk/travel/europe/durrells-corfu-filming-locations-12199111

¹⁹⁰ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html ,
www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durrells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/

¹⁹¹ www.delfinoblu.gr/blog/best-places-in-corfu-the-durrells/?mode=list

In Greek tourism discourse the issue of ownership is made less explicit. In the website of the White House, the architectural heritage and legacy of the Venetians is mentioned¹⁹², but certain historical developments like the British rule or the German occupation are omitted. Another webpage mentions the influence of Venetians and French while the British are mentioned separately in the text: “the British occupation has left its mark in Corfu. One of the signs of the British influence can be found in Spianada square and it’s no other than...a cricket pitch. Many cricket matches take place in this pitch, as Corfiots love the British sport, so chances are you’ll come across one”¹⁹³. This generates an interesting question; is this separate reference an effort to please the British tourist? Or is it a way to demonstrate pride for the rich Venetian and French heritage, while questioning the British, whose heritage is ironically reduced to “no other than a cricket pitch”? Finally, the modern history of the island is highlighted, by focusing on international influence (“cosmopolitan character”¹⁹⁴) and less on the Greek character of Corfu. Moreover, unlike British discourse, there is no reference to the Hellenistic past.

At the same time, the website of the White house refers to the producers and cast of *The Durrells* series as “dedicated to the beauty and the people of Corfu”¹⁹⁵, which resembles Spiros’ dedication to the family as described in the novels, highlighting a striking reversal of roles. In this sense, it is as if the success of both the series and tourism in Corfu is attributed to and owned by locals.

The Greek website of Corfu Tourist Services further utilizes the character of Spiros Amerikanos and claims Greek ownership over the tourism narrative, offering interesting insights regarding the conceptualization of the host gaze. It includes a section called “The Durrells and us”, which is initially misleading, as it suggests an emphasis on the Durrells and their role in the history of tourism in Corfu. A closer look into the text puts this assumption into question, as it attributes the tourism development to the Greek friends of the family, mainly Spiros and his son.

The following extract sheds light to the mystery of Spiros’ personal life, by offering the reader and potential tourist with his short biography. What was left unsaid in the novels and

¹⁹² thewhitehouse.gr/the-white-house-an-awarded-tv-location-you-can-visit-in-real-life

¹⁹³ www.delfinoblu.gr/blog/best-places-in-corfu-the-durrells/?mode=list

¹⁹⁴ thewhitehouse.gr/the-white-house-an-awarded-tv-location-you-can-visit-in-real-life

¹⁹⁵ thewhitehouse.gr/the-durrells/

changed in the series (Spiros is expected to develop a romantic relationship with Louisa Durell in the last season), is finally revealed:

Spiros was a benevolent, pragmatic and genial man, known for his great sense of humour and his battered Dodge taxi, with the latter being a very familiar sight in the streets of Corfu Town and Kanoni. He was one of the first people the Durrell family met on the island and from the very beginning, he became their fierce protector and their personal guide, showing them around the island. His command of the English language was scarce at that time and proved to be invaluable in helping to ease the Durrells into the rhythm of the Corfiot lifestyle. But it was his hospitality, abundant kindness and selfless devotion to Louisa Durrell and her family that proved to have played a large part of the reason why their stay became so successful. In turn, through the family's published reminiscences, the island, with its wonders and spirit, has become internationally celebrated.¹⁹⁶

Spiros' qualities are being listed in this long extract, in what seems to be the first time that aspects of his life are mentioned, including tourism, literary and screen discourses. Later in the text, Spiros social circle is exhibited and admired by mentioning the innumerable friends he made next to the Durells and the famous acquaintances of his son Michalis¹⁹⁷, which implies that it is him who functioned as the link who connected all these characters. In addition, Spiros is given the role of the tour guide, of the person who knows the secrets of the island. Moreover, the reference to Spiros' "scarce" command of the language which nevertheless proved to be useful for the Durells, contradicts Gerald's mockery of his poor British accent, as seen in the previous chapter. On a final note, it is interesting how he is constructed as superior to the Durells who are presented as owing their works to him ("in turn"). In this case, the host gaze functions as a reaction against the dominant tourist gaze.

However, this case illuminates a paradoxical situation. On the one hand, it demonstrates the desire of the hosts to defend themselves by emphasizing the role of Spiro in a story that is narrated from the Durells' point of view, resisting the British monopoly over the narrative. It embodies the hosts' reaction against the tourist gaze that was introduced by the two Durell

¹⁹⁶ www.corfutouristservices.gr/durrells-and-corfu-tourist-services/

¹⁹⁷ Their acquaintances included Mary Stewart and Henry Miller.

narratives. Through this text, the gaze is conceptualized as a practice of identity formation, which as Ankor and Wearing stressed, “is much more than a tool of observation; it is fundamental to concepts of being and existence” (188). Indeed, the gaze of the local Corfiot here resists and negotiates the influences inherent to tourism spaces, by embracing the role of the powerful agent (Pattison, 94). On the other hand, the fact that Spiros’ son founded Corfu Tourist Services is intrinsically ironic: it implies that indeed the role of the Durells in the development of tourism is vital and that without their presence, friendships and acquaintances, Corfu Tourist Services would not exist, as tourism would not have boomed. Therefore, despite the resistant gaze of the host, one could argue that the locals have compromised and constructed their own identity through the powerful vision of the Durells.

Photography highlights the central role of the camera in composing the host gaze. Corfu Tourist Services claims Corfiot ownership over the space of Corfu by choosing to feature a photo of Spiros driving his car with the Durells at the back (*figure 18*) and then an identity-type of a photo of Spiros himself (*figure 19*). Eventually, a section with the title “Who were the Durells?” emerges towards the end of the page, with a short video of Gerald and Spiros’ son enjoying live music in a Greek tavern (*figure 20*). The tone of this title implies that the Durells are generally unknown, which is ironic considering that the website addresses an English-speaking audience. In this way, the host appears as superior to the Durells, which indicates the desire of the host gaze to control the tourism narrative and subvert the power dynamics.

Complementarily, the particular website indicates a sense of pride of the host. Corfu Tourist Services does not only praise Spiros for his protagonistic role in the tourism narrative and the skills that “eased” the Durells into the life in Corfu, but also exalt the “rhythm of the Corfiot lifestyle” itself.



Figure 18



Spiros, Michalis & The Durrells

Spiros was a benevolent, pragmatic and genial man, known for his great sense of humor and his battered Dodge taxi, with the latter being a very familiar sight in the streets of Corfu Town and Kanoni. He was one of the first people the Durrell family met on the island and from the very beginning he became their fierce protector and their personal guide, showing them around the island. As Gerald Durrell quotes "Spiros had entered our lives on our arrival in Corfu as a taxi driver and within hours had transformed himself to our guide, mentor and friend" (Marrying Off Mother, 1991).

His command of the English language was scarce at that time and proved to be invaluable in helping to ease the Durrells into the rhythm of the Corfiot lifestyle. But it was his hospitality, abundant kindness and selfless devotion to Louisa Durrell and her family that proved to have played a large part of the reason why their stay became so successful. In turn, through the family's published reminiscences, the island, with its wonders and spirit, has become internationally celebrated.

Figure 19

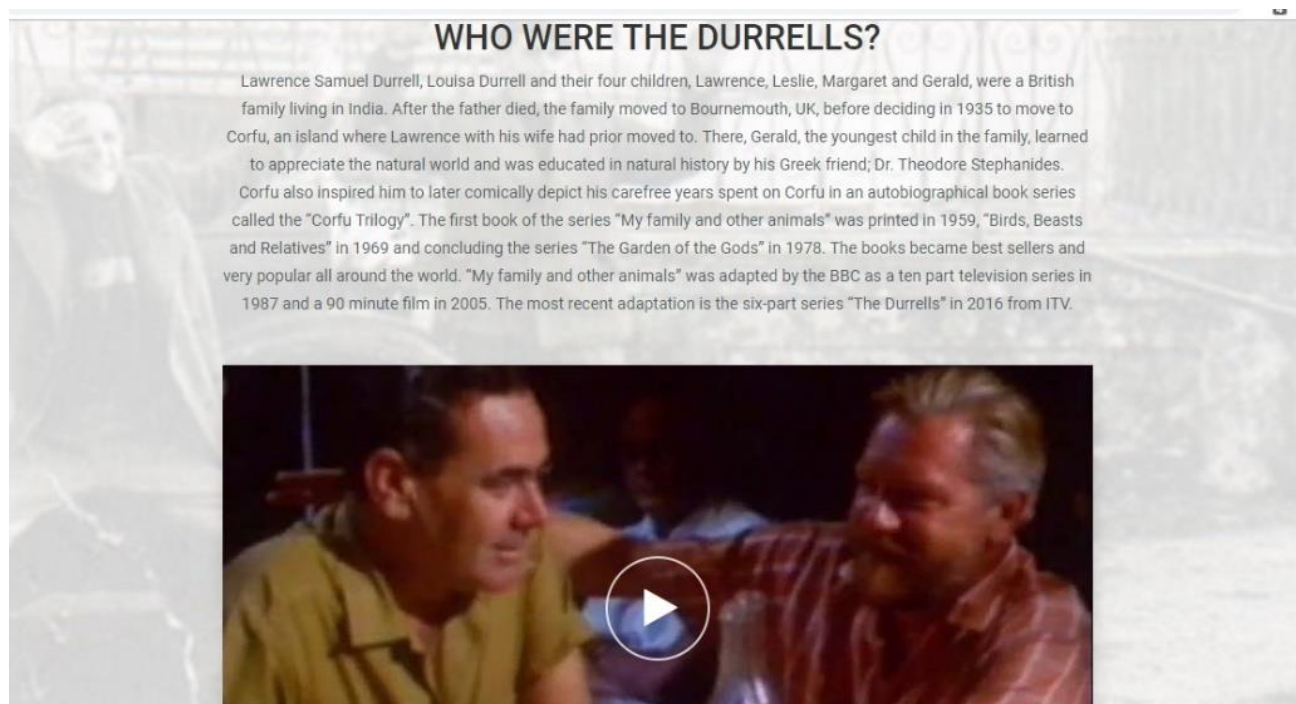


Figure 20

g. The Superior Traveller's Perspective

This sub-chapter focus on the self-construction of the British as travellers through tourism discourse, as well as on the way they position themselves in the tourism narrative. First of all, a reference to the negative impact of the trilogy and the series as a “a double-dodged sword”¹⁹⁸ constructs the writer of the particular article as a conscious traveller. Another website mentions that the Durrells presence on the island “had a sting in its tail”¹⁹⁹. In this way, the authors of the travel articles as travellers criticize the shortcomings of the two Durrell narratives and construct themselves as sensitive to the island’s overdevelopment.

¹⁹⁸ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html.

¹⁹⁹ www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durrells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/

Ben Dowell had written off the Ionian island but the ITV drama inspired him to give it another try – it didn't disappoint. I had not been to Corfu since I was 19 and ended up in a place called The Pink Palace, a ramshackle hotel for backpackers. Drinking, wet t-shirt competitions and the kind of fun which did not pay too much heed to classical civilization was the order of the day.

No, Corfu is not for me, I used to think. It's one of those Greek islands that has been spoiled by hedonistic travellers and swamped by concrete. In fact, I had only been back to Greece once since Pink Palace-gate, and that was to a family hotel in Cephalonia that did not live up to my expectations or the brochure.

But the Durrells made me think twice.²⁰⁰

The author of this extract adopts a critical anti-tourist point of view and criticizes Corfu for the low quality of tourist facilities. More specifically, there is a deliberate effort to construct himself as a superior traveller, a theme that was identified in the novels as well. Firstly, the text implies that it is the hedonistic travellers who have spoiled the island, removing the blame from Gerald or the two Durrell narratives to the tourist. An almost identical attitude is adopted by other pages as well, while one of them even 'names' the travellers who have spoiled Corfu as British²⁰¹. In this sense, the comments could serve as self-criticism and disapproval of a hedonistic approach to travel that the author recognizes as characteristic of British travellers.

Secondly, "ramsackle" serves as a derogative characterization for the island's tourism infrastructure. Similarly, a British webpage ironically comments on the lack of a lavatory in the Durrells' apartment, imitating the initial complaints that the Durrells expressed at the beginning of the first novel²⁰². The author of another article contends: "despite the fact that there are now blemishes in the form of resorts such as Kavos and Sidari, the island is still sufficiently wild"²⁰³. In this way, the author critically reflects on the island's current state, and pinpoints its flaws,

²⁰⁰ www.radiotimes.com/travel/2018-03-25/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-durrells-and-discover-corfus-unspoilt-north-east-coast/

²⁰¹ www.jamesvillas.co.uk/blog/durrells-corfu-james-villa-magazine & www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

²⁰² www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

²⁰³ www.independent.co.uk/travel/the-durrells-in-corfu-a6958066.html

constructing himself as someone with high expectations, like the Durells when they first arrived.

On further consideration, the writer of the extract above does not necessarily assume the role of the traveller, but the role of the host. Normally, the barrier between the host and the tourist is based on people being exposed to different cultural standards, and it is because of that that friction is created (Reisinger, 62). Here, the tourists he scorns might be British, as it is often suggested by British discourse and can be verified by the frequent locals' complaints against British tourists for their excessive behaviour²⁰⁴. In this sense, the author assumes the role of the host who is protective over the island as his home.

The writer distances himself from what he considers to be the typical traveller in Corfu, the 'hedonistic' traveller, and argues for a dynamic of superiority. It is remarkable, however, that the author does not refer to these travellers as tourists, as it would be expected. By calling them travellers, the author differentiates himself as a different type of traveller and emphasizes his exceptional identity. According to him, while other travellers are hedonistic, he strives to be the opposite; a stoic traveller. The ironic representation of these travellers as "drinking, wet t-shirt competitions and the kind of fun which does not pay heed to classical civilization" refers to his disapproval of those who are not concerned with matters of existence and self-realization, as Gerald did. In this sense, the author identifies with Gerald whom he considers a stoic traveller. Interestingly, both hedonism and stoicism, stem from Hellenistic school of thoughts. In this way, the traveller rejects the identity of a hedonistic traveller and identifies as a stoic, appropriating concepts of ancient Greek philosophy.

According to the writer, the behaviour of the hedonistic traveller has no relation to the kind of lifestyle Gerald Durell led in the island. However, he neglects the hedonistic discourse that Gerald uses to convey the very becoming of the self. Ironically, the writer embraces Durell-induced tourism to oppose the behaviour of the hedonistic traveller with the phrase "the Durells made me think twice", without acknowledging the central role of hedonism in Durell's narration. Interestingly, philhellenists did not unanimously support any of these two ideals. However, Byron has been described as a hedonist²⁰⁵, while Gerald, who can be seen as a modern philhellenist, can be also attributed with the same qualities.

²⁰⁴ An example is the following article; www.travelstyle.gr/kerkura-tourismos-ntrophs-eikones-aisxous/. Its title translates to "Corfu: The locals are furious with the 'tourism of shame'".

²⁰⁵ hamiltoncs.org/lit335/uncategorized/byron-as-a-hedonist/

Furhtermore, Jakobsen suggests that this anti-tourism discourse may be connected to hierarchies within tourism, a constant struggle to place oneself at an upper hierarchical level (287). In this sense, anti-tourism can also be understood as part of a strategy to build cultural capital (Jakobsen, 287). Following these arguments, it can be inferred that the traveller perceives himself as an educated and sophisticated one, similarly to the way Gerald constructed his own identity by debunking the locals' poor geographical knowledge²⁰⁶.

Nonetheless, it is not only cultural capital that the traveller claims for himself. By characterizing the hostel a "ramsackle", the traveller claims a large economic capital. This creates an interesting connection with the self-construction of Gerry as an "English lord"²⁰⁷ in encounters with locals. Moreover, pursuing an exclusive touristic experience and choosing to stay in Villa Sotiris and promote Simpson Travel, a tour operator that offers luxury holidays, indicates that the traveller distances himself from typical tourists and claims to be an elitist.

Additionally, a number of pages advertise Corfu Imperial, a Greek hotel that has bought the replica village, Danilla, where the series is filmed and operates tours for its guests²⁰⁸. The fact that the village is only accessible to guests upon request automatically excludes locals from visiting the village, marking the segregation of locals from tourists through the construction of a tourism enclave that aims to only accommodate visitors²⁰⁹. At the same time, the fact that it is mostly luxury holidays that are being encouraged in British pages strongly deviates from the economic struggles of the family that viewers are presented with in the series as well as the stoic ideal that British travellers yearn.

²⁰⁶ See the interaction with Christaki's family, page 23-24.

²⁰⁷ See page 23

²⁰⁸ Many webpages mention that only guests of Grecotel have access to the village. However, a blog claims that one can book their tour of the village in advance, without necessarily being guests fo Grecotel (<https://effrosyniwrites.com/2018/07/27/how-to-visit-danilia-village-in-corfu/>). In any case, the village is not accessible to the public and consecitively to the locals, who need to pay in order to visit it.

²⁰⁹ The village, five miles from the Old Town of Corfu, is free to visit but only for guests at Grecotel hotels and resorts (www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/showbiz-tv/where-the-durrells-filmed-stay--12914879)

h. The Female Perspective

The final subchapter is concerned with female representation by British and Greek tourism discourses. So far, Durrell tourism discourses negotiate issues of ownership among male figures, while the self-identified stoic traveller is impersonated by men. As it was observed in the previous chapter, different points of view were adopted in the novels and the ITV series regarding the female figure²¹⁰. Ultimately, the substantial change in the way Louisa Durrell is portrayed is probably related to the demand for female visibility in contemporary popular culture. This change raises questions not only about Louisa's representation in tourism discourse but about female representation in general, as the tourism narrative seems to honour and pay tribute to male figures, namely Gerald, Lawrence and Spiros.

The British website of Brightwater Holidays Agency neglects the male figures that the tourism narrative is based on. Keeley Hawes, the actress who plays the “British widow who moved her family to Corfu”, has a prominent position and is characterized as one of the “biggest stars of the show”, while she is also linked to the island itself, something that helps conceptualize Corfu as a feminine space: “aside from Keeley Hawes, who plays a British widow who moved her family to Corfu in 1935, one of the biggest stars of the show is the island itself”²¹¹. This can be a case of duplicity: while the male authority is questioned, “the romantic construction of nature as feminized allows for the enactment and validation of masculinity in tourism” (Noy, 51). At the same time, it reminds one of Gerald's representation of natural elements as feminized.

However, it can be argued that the use of active voice for the verb “move” signals the pivotal role of the mother figure in decision-making and highlights her exclusive responsibility for the family's relocation to Corfu. Consecutively, the mother figure is indirectly presented as having played a vital role in Corfu's tourism narrative; without her, the Durrells would not have moved and written about the island. Moreover, a considerable number of British agencies offer

²¹⁰ For example, while in *The Corfu Trilogy* Louisa Durrell is a patient, characterless and almost voiceless mother, *The Durrells* gives voice to Louisa's struggles in the process of raising four kids, causing the viewer's admiration for her being able to cope with possible challenges. What is interesting about the series is an obscure subversion of the traditional mother figure, as Louisa Durrell does not comply with the stereotypical image of a perfect mother and her sexuality is not a taboo.

²¹¹ www.brightwaterholidays.com/tours/garden-tours/discover-corfu-with-lee-durrell/

guided tours of Corfu by Lee Durrell, the life-long companion of Gerald and co-author in many of his works. She is often portrayed as a role model and the legitimate tour guide of Corfu²¹². However, this raises questions considering the intentions behind this development; is the inclusion of Lee Durrell an effort to highlight the invisible power of the female in the tourism narrative? Or does her presence aim to ensure a feeling of familiarity and comfort for the British tourist?

At the same time, the existence of two tours guided by Lee Durrell and organized by women – one of them also addresses women (Women and Home) – signifies the continuous increase of female participation in the tourism sector driven by a growth in the developing countries (Pritchard, 9). Ultimately, an evolution in the representation of women throughout the three British discourses can be eventually identified; from the absence of a dominant female voice in *The Corfu Trilogy*, to a female protagonist in the series, and finally to the emphasis of women's contribution to the tourism narrative.

Nevertheless, on Greek websites, there is no reference to the indirect role of Louisa in Corfu's tourism development nor to collaborations between Lee Durrell and local partners. The reason behind this lack of female representation is not clear. However, it could be explained by the fact that Louisa or Lee are seen as 'additional characters', in the sense that Greeks do not consider them as part of their heritage²¹³ and consecutively important enough to be included in the tourism narrative.

Female representations in tourism discourse reflect exactly what Leslie outlined about travel writing as a form of global politics: "they reproduce discourses of difference that hold our prevailing understandings of our world in place" (Lisle, 2008). More specifically, female roles reflect British and Greek social structures; it seems that entrepreneurship and female initiatives are not encouraged by the Greek tourism market as much as by the British. For instance, on the website of Corfu Tourist Services, the role of Spiros' son in founding and managing the agency is outlined, even though the first picture on the "About Us" section is that of two women, whose identity remains unknown (*figure 20*). This echoes observations made that women in Greece are squeezed out of directorships and remain in lower-level occupations with fewer opportunities for upward mobility²¹⁴. Thus, it can be inferred that

²¹² www.womanandhome.com/travel/the-durrells-holiday-with-lee-durrell-68908/, www.brightwaterholidays.com/tours/garden-tours/discover-corfu-with-lee-durrell/

²¹³ As opposed to Gerald Durrell, his works and the series as his legacy to the island

²¹⁴ news.gtp.gr/2016/03/07/can-women-greek-tourism-make-it-happen/

female participation in the tourism narrative is generally neglected by Greek tourism discourse, as women are usually hidden behind males in prominent positions²¹⁵. This is also linked to the fact that the conditions for women participation in tourism in Greek rural areas is considerably different from the urban areas. More specifically, the appearance of entrepreneurship was delayed in the Greek countryside compared with Greek urban areas and rural regions in other countries (Iakovidou et al. 2007).

Another factor that may explain this is that businesses like the Corfu Tourist Services function in the nature of family enterprises, given that they rely on work by family members. Nowadays, the Chalikiopoulos family still manages the business, while Spiros' grandson is at a leading position. This suggests that there is a “circle of enduring family tradition”, just like the website itself refers to it²¹⁶, which acknowledges tourism as an opportunity of making revenue by maintain the enterprise as a male-dominated space. This can be explained by the low social capital of women in rural areas as opposed to the large social capital of men like Spiros or his son which is highlighted on the website (Bock & Derkzen, cited in Gidarakou et al., 137). Finally, one more element that validates the male dominance in the tourism narrative is the photo that depicts Spiros with Gerald and Lawrence, while Louisa and Margo Durrell are missing (*figure 22*).



Figure 21

²¹⁵ “Women have been perceived as helpmates, wives and mothers, and as generally subservient to the dominant economic work of men” (Koutsou et al., 191).

²¹⁶ www.corfutouristservices.gr/about-corfu-tourist-services/



Figure 22

4. Conclusion

The present chapter was an attempt to analyse the British and Greek tourism discourses that encourage Durrell tourism, based upon the observation that dominant themes from the Durrell narratives are reflected in tourism discourses. The same primary material was sometimes used in an almost identical way by British and Greek tourism discourse. However, considering that marketing, especially cross-culturally, is a challenging endeavor (Cross & Litvin, 189), there were many deviations between British and Greek discourses, as some themes were treated differently. The differences investigated offer a number of insightful conclusions regarding the process of landscaping.

It is important to note that the constantly emerging discourses do not necessitate the existence of one, overarching theme of contrast, as the content of each website and webpage depends on the writer's personal interpretation or the stakeholder's agenda. However, the island is often promoted in a narrative of wonder, exoticism and adventure by both British and Greek tourism discourses²¹⁷. In addition, the analysis illustrated that different groups -British and Greek- can engage with a space of mutual heritage on different levels.

²¹⁷ The dividing line between the novels and the series is often blurred, and the two narratives blend.

The overall image of Corfu conveyed by British tourism discourse resonates with colonial depictions of a utopia where “the noble savage is closer to nature than civilization” (Neumann, 18). British discourse is abundant with representations of a kind and wild other, as it was shown in the case of Spiros. Moreover, the timeless and ancient imagery is constantly negotiated while the ability to experience the island in a way that emulates realistic situations is questioned. In addition, the long-term stay of the Durells and the notion of ‘home’ is constantly evoked in order to generate a feeling of familiarity. Consecutively, familiarity is refashioned into issues of ownership and appropriation of both the space and the tourism narrative. Furthermore, creating relationship between contemporary tourists and the Durells is attempted, while British writers of travel articles identify with Gerald Durell himself. This identification further serves as a vehicle for constructing the identity of the British as exceptional travellers, while it also appears as an opportunity to reflect on the flaws of the common traveller as a hedonist, whose identity is often British.

Interestingly, in order to meet the needs of commercial tourism, a British travel webpage does not only manipulate the original story but moves on to the construction of heritage, by claiming that Nancy and Lawrence were part of the novel’s narration. According to Hall and Akama, such a situation typically aims to meet the visitor’s conceptions of the other (12). Therefore, it is noteworthy that in the particular situation what applies is the reverse; the aim is to meet the visitor’s perceptions of themselves, as Lawrence is considered a part of the British heritage. In these ways, “the right to cultural heritage is not seen as an absolute or a God-given right, but as something dependent on and relative to particular practical contexts” (Hodder, 873). Thus, those who initially stand for tourists assume the role of hosts and vice versa.

Conversely, Greek tourism discourse often embraces the qualities attributed to Corfu by external forces and reproduces them, illuminating aspects of an internalized tourist gaze. The Greek characters of Spiros or Theodore are rarely mentioned, while hospitality is only seen as a trait of the Durells’ personality. There are even competing discourses within Greek websites; the island is sometimes seen as a “lazy” destination, others as a creative space, almost transformational for one’s personality. At the same time, the curators of the website of the White House refer to the house as the residence of both Gerald and Lawrence, whereas in reality only Lawrence and Nancy lived there. This alteration through the construction of heritage can be seen as an effort of Corfiots to fit their role as hosts and to satisfy the expectations of British tourists, who would like to imagine the two brothers united under the same roof.

On the contrary, Greek discourse often diverges from stereotypical representations by functioning as an armour against those that are already established by the Durells’ gaze, in an

effort to articulate the voice of locals which is not heard in British discourse. The exaggerated emphasis on Corfu as a place of productivity by a Greek website can be read as an attempt to dissipate the large groups of party tourists, who notably, are perceived as coming from the United Kingdom and are stereotypically perceived as disrespectful by the hosts²¹⁸. At the same time, the webpage devoted to the character of Spiros and his son, which introduces the Durells only in the end, offers a better understanding of a resistant host gaze. On a first level, it illustrates a desire to highlight the locals' contribution to the Durells' experience on the island, while on a second level it expresses the locals' wish to own and control the tourism narrative.

According to Creighton, “national identities are far from static and are being reinvented, written and rewritten through the presentation of heritage” (351). British discourse reflects progressive values as it rejects the marginalization of the female figure, by optimizing the role of women in the tourism narrative and questioning the male authority in travel narratives as well as in the tourism industry itself. On the other hand, Greek discourse reveals the existence of a hegemonic image of masculinity by emphasizing the family tradition that was initiated by Spiros and his son.

Taken together, these results suggest that there is a constant and dialogical shift in the power dynamics that surround this niche-type of tourism, which is subject to change in the near future. Apparently, despite sharing similar representations, British and Greek tourism discourses antagonize each other and compete for dominating the tourism narrative, revealing that tourism representations are far from innocent.

²¹⁸ A Greek newspaper mentions that “Kavos in Corfu is kicking out British tourists” ([/www.protothema.gr/travelling/article/704498/diohnei-tous-nearous-agglous-kai-o-kavos-tis-kerkuras/](http://www.protothema.gr/travelling/article/704498/diohnei-tous-nearous-agglous-kai-o-kavos-tis-kerkuras/)).

IV. CONCLUSION: BALANCING OUT HEDONISM AND STOICISM

This research has tried to investigate the ways British and Greek tourism discourses appropriate elements from *The Corfu Trilogy* and its screen adaptation. Critical analysis of the online promotional material showed a deviation of the identified themes across discourses and revealed the position of those who promote tourism images. The competing discourses often inform a dialogue between the tourist and the host gaze, exposing subtle power relations that mark the two Durell narratives as contested heritage. Interestingly, when referring to contested heritage, one often brings in mind cases of ongoing political conflict and tension, but this is not the case here, as the right to mutual heritage seems to be initially accepted and respected. In this final chapter, the main findings of the research will be discussed, including a personal reflection on limitations, challenges and future suggestions for research.

Various tensions in the representations of Corfu and the locals revealed differences regarding the conceptual maps of the British as travellers and the Greeks as hosts. Namely, it was noted that otherness is being conveyed by British discourse and is being accepted, negotiated or resisted by Greek discourse. Secondly, Greek discourse conveys a timeless image of Corfu which is often questioned by British discourse. Thirdly, it was observed that the capacity of Corfu to offer fulfillment is being moderated by British discourse. Next to that, it was shown that Greek discourse encourages tourists to identify with the Durells while British discourse extends this identification strategy by establishing a special link with Gerald, as well as calls upon familiar sentiments of home to attract tourists. Consecutively, British discourse expresses ownership over the tourism narrative and Corfu itself through familiarity, while Greek discourse suggests that Corfiots 'own' the space and the tourism narrative as legitimate heirs to what they consider to be an achievement of Spiros. Additionally, through British discourse the British are constructed as exceptional travellers in spirit and in material wealth. Finally, it was observed that both discourses are reflective of gender roles in the particular tourism narrative as well as in the tourism industry of the United Kingdom and Greece. All the above revealed a set of competing discourses that actively reflect but mostly shape national identities.

It was argued that tourism discourses that encourage Durell-induced tourism rely on treating tourists as children. It seems that the most frequent verb in the examined promotional material is to 'discover', which suggests that the process of discovery is dominant in the tourism experience. In this context, it is through this spirit of discovery that British discourse disassembles issues of colonization. In other words, issues like colonization and the political involvement of

the British in Corfu are disguised as childlike naivety. Constantly bringing forth cricket whose origin traces back to the British occupation in a playful tone, reaffirms both literally and metaphorically Mathews' claim that tourism can be read as a new colonial practice in which "metropolitan capitalistic countries try to dominate the foreign tourism market especially in those areas where their own citizens travel more frequently" (79). The exclusive management of tourism activities like the 'Gerald Durrell Week' by British actors consolidates this argument. Ultimately, even though the Durrell narratives do not represent a dissonant form of heritage, they make contradictions apparent as "certain periods or interpretations of the past are prioritized over others" (Creighton, 339). Conversely, locals' efforts to define and own the tourism narrative, as well as the prioritization of the Venetian heritage over the British in Greek discourse, anticipate aspects of territoriality²¹⁹. According to Muffakir, "all types of territory – physical, social and psychic seem to be endangered by foreign visitors" (213). Therefore, I believe that it is cultural and not physical territory that is being negotiated in this case. Even unconsciously, Corfu Tourist Services seems to be preoccupied with cultural dislocation. Thus, it is this anxiety that guides the need to control the tourism narrative.

One of the most important findings of the critical discourse analysis is the emergence of a British anti-tourism discourse. Harsh criticism against the hedonistic traveller, who is often identified as British, is transmitted through expressions of disapproval. By othering the hedonistic traveller, the writers of British pages construct themselves as the opposite; stoic travellers. This attitude, the admiration for the local population as leading an ideal stoic lifestyle despite the economic hardships, as well as the challenging pursuit of a timeless, ancient and 'Hellenistic' version of Corfu, express the need to follow a stoic ideal in travel. The Stoic philosophers stressed that the attainment of happiness is merely a matter of ceasing to desire things we need not desire²²⁰. Thus, the authors criticize those travellers who stand at the opposite side of the spectrum, that of the hedonistic philosophers. While stoicism is about modesty, reasonable judgment, gratitude, loving nature and embracing simplicity, hedonism concentrates on momentary pleasure to achieve happiness, that is often synonymous to greed.

On the one hand, through tourism discourse, the British admire the stoic lifestyle of locals, while on the other hand, they negotiate it, doubting the island's ability to provide the tourist with order and reason. In this sense, British travellers are constantly tormented by their

²¹⁹ The behavioural pattern consisting of the occupation and defence of territory (Mouffakir, 213).

²²⁰ <https://academyofideas.com/2014/03/stoicism-vs-epicureanism/>

craving for a stoic approach to travel and maybe even a need to let themselves free from materialism. Therefore, it can be concluded that British discourse conveys the tendency to avoid hedonistic aspects of tourism and to concentrate on simplicity. Interestingly, the longing for controlling the desires can be related to British national identity, as even the publication of the internationally recognized poster ‘Keep Calm and Carry On’ has been associated with “‘a belief in British stoicism and the ‘stiff upper lip’ ”²²¹. Susannah Walker remarks that the poster is seen “‘not only as a distillation of a crucial moment in Britishness but also as an inspiring message from the past to the present in a time of crisis’” (45). In this sense, discourse suggests that the longing for a stoic approach to travel could signal a crisis of British identity, as being demoralized by hedonistic values. At the same time, the focus on stoicism is in accordance with new trends in the tourism industry; stoicism in travel can be translated into the emerging issues of ecotourism and sustainability²²².

On the other hand, it was suggested that British discourse supports a luxury way of travelling; complaints about the lack of tourism facilities and promotion of expensive hotels abound in British discourse. In addition, all descriptions of Corfu encourage pleasure-seeking, inspired by Gerald’s hedonistic discourse. Therefore, it seems that discourse wavers between the two antithetical ideals, the stoic and the hedonistic, while the Durells, especially Gerald, ensure a healthy balance between the two. The Durells represent the ideal image of the British tourist and set the balance between the locals’ stoic lifestyle and that of the hedonistic tourists.

On further consideration, Seneca as an important representative of the stoic philosophy has made some important observations concerning traveling: “‘what you are running from is with you. You need to correct your flaws, unload your burdens, and keep your desires within a healthy limit’”²²³. In this context, what Louisa expresses when she worries about Corfu’s incapacity to reflect the ‘real world’ in the series, stems from a self-insufficiency and an uncontrollable urge for pleasing the senses in Corfu. In fact, what she longs for is a radical change in worldview and to reconcile with past weaknesses.

Additionally, the language boundaries set important limitations in comparing

²²¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/jun/25/wartime-poster-secret-auction>

²²² Not that they did not exist before, but the ‘return to nature’ and responsible travel have been recognized as current trends in tourism (http://www.itb-berlin.de/media/itb/itb_dl_all/itb_presse_all).

²²³ <https://modernstoicism.com/a-stoic-approach-to-travel-and-tourism-by-william-o-stephens/>

discourses, as the examination of travel pages in Greek could have enriched the dialogue between discourses. However, the lack of online promotional material in Greek allows for significant realizations. Firstly, it is particularly telling of Greek tourists' disassociation from the Durells as heritage. This can be explained by the fact that the series was broadcasted in Greece only recently (by a private TV channel), while the novels are not very popular. Another explanation could be that the two narratives are considered cultural heritage of Corfu rather than Greece. Secondly, it further intensifies a situation of cultural displacement, as the lack of domestic tourism demand resonates with the creation of a tourism product owned by as well as addressing the British. Moreover, the fact that Danilla village is accessible only to guests who book their tour in advance, distances the local population from connecting with the Durells' legacy and could explain the relatively small number of local stakeholders promoting Durell-induced tourism. Finally, one of the scarce articles about the TV series in Greek reaffirms the suggestion that the family represents contested heritage, rooted in a broader socio-political context. Its title expresses a desire for the reversal of imperialism roles: "When Greeks conquer British TV reception apparatuses!"²²⁴.

Certain restrictions concerning the methodology resulted in leaving important aspects of the process of landscaping out. Firstly, a literary and screen discourse analysis was conducted for the novels and the series respectively, while the screen adaptation was not approached as a modality of translation of the novels²²⁵. For example, an interesting understanding of the two could be attained by combining insights from adaptation and translation studies. Secondly, the Greek websites collected for the analysis were inevitably fewer than the British, which resulted in focusing mostly on British discourse. Moreover, the research relied on discourse analysis of websites and webpages, while it did not include interviews, on-site observation, social media analysis or other data collection like analysis of the discourse produced by Durell-events and landmarks. Additionally, the complex condition of the Durell narratives as both British and Greek heritage had to be framed, therefore tourism discourse produced by other countries, like Russia and the United States, that are familiar with the Durells, was not examined. Also, the

²²⁴ www.cnn.gr/style/psyxagogia/story/33674/the-durrells-otan-oi-ellines-kataktoun-toys-vretanikoys-dektes

²²⁵ Perdikaki, Katerina. "Film Adaptation as Translation: An Analysis of Adaptation Shifts in Silver Linings Playbook." *Anafora*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2017.

analysis was made without focusing on possible cultural distinctions between Corfu and the rest of Greece or the Ionian islands, and Corfiot identity was associated with Greek identity. Additionally, the political and ideological background of those producing tourism representations was not taken into account.

However, a pilot study was conducted with the intention to approach British and Greek tourists visiting ‘Durrell locations’ in Corfu, aiming to answer whether Greek and British tourists appropriate the themes from the Durrell narratives differently as well. Due to an insufficient number of participants, the results were not taken into consideration for this research. Despite this, twenty-one questionnaires were filled, fourteen by British tourists, and one Greek, but I also received responses from participants of other nationalities, as they could expand the scope of the research; two Americans, one Hungarian, one Italian, one Dutch and one New Zealander. Having the time, the chance and the opportunity to complete this study could have provided very interesting inputs, as in the responses of the British I identified the same sentence structure that is present in British tourism discourse. Many British respondents doubted the unadulterated nature of Corfu and disapprovingly commented on mass tourism, but then acknowledged that the island still has some places worthy of visiting. However, a British tourist appeared self-critical and admitted that as a tourist, he has been benefited by the overdevelopment of the island.

Additionally, discourse analysis can be seen as subjective. Therefore, I am aware of my own ‘Greek background’ and that it was that which contributed, together with my interest in literature and representations in tourism, to writing the present thesis. However, I tried not to let personal biases intervene in the course of discussing the literary, screen and tourism discourses. Moreover, the research revealed that mutual heritage can receive different interpretations. As it was shown in the analysis, these interpretations are subjective and are based on who delivers them, in this case, the writers of each website or webpage. For this reason, I refrained from providing definite suggestions or solutions to the issues that the thesis raises. However, I did seek to locate the representations of tourism as part of a wider set of contexts that are culturally and historically embedded in constantly changing discourses.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study enrich our understanding of how an islescape of unpredictable contestation is represented in tourism. Even though Corfu does not share similarities with other marginal islands in the Mediterranean, like Cyprus, which is characterized by ongoing political tensions, the analysis revealed a case of contested heritage that would be unsuspected otherwise. Furthermore, the research paves the way for examining tourism representations based on mutual literary, or screen heritage, or simply representations

that are based on popular narratives and involve participants cross-culturally, by paying attention to representations of marginal islands, as they are informed by a variety of political and historical contexts, resulting in complex imageries. Moreover, the framework that was applied and the titles used in the third chapter -the various perspectives- appear as a gradual evolution of exposing several layers of meaning in tourism discourses²²⁶. In other words, every perspective reasonably connects to and derives from a deeper understanding of the previous one. I aspire that the same framework can be used to interpret and analyse future studies about representations in tourism that refer to geographically and culturally marginal places like Corfu.

The research generates many questions that can prove interesting for further research. First of all, why are certain ‘dark’ aspects of the Durells’ life, like alcoholism, neglected by tourism discourses? How is the process of landscaping defined by other discourses, like American or Russian? How are tourism discourses informed by the Durell-locations in Corfu? What is the role of tourists in the process of landscaping? How do *The Corfu Trilogy* and the series *interpellate* tourists with different ethnic and cultural background, namely British and Greek, into certain sets of assumptions?²²⁷ How do tourists themselves appropriate themes from the Durell narratives? How did tourism narratives change over the course of years? In what sense and to what extent did the novels influence tourism in Corfu? What was the role of the locals in generating a Durell tourism market?

Considering that tourism is culturally creative and will continue to engage in the landscaping of Corfu, it is expected that related tourism discourses are subject to change in the near future. Importantly, the Durell narratives set a paradigm shift in this process, signaling that literary and screen tourism can be evocative of cultural and political residues as well as of current dilemmas in tourism.

That is why I believe that the geographical and cultural marginality of Corfu is conveyed through Durell-induced tourism. This niche type of tourism serves as a reminder for a more substantial and purposeful way of traveling, a need to follow one’s passions, but to reject a

²²⁶ For example, the ‘Otherness Perspective’ logically leads to the ‘Timelessness Perspective’, and this to the ‘Identification Perspective’, while the ‘Familiarity Perspective’ logically succeeds it. Then the ‘Ownership Perspective’ derives from the ‘Familiarity Perspective’ and so on.

²²⁷ The idea of interpellation occurs when a person connects with a media text. According to David Gauntlett, texts interpellate us into a certain set of assumptions, “‘seducing readers into a particular worldview’” (Gauntlett, 27).

solely hedonistic mode of travel by respecting and appreciating nature, learning from the locals and achieving a deeper level of connection with the surroundings through educating one's self rather than escaping it. This accurately describes Gerald's attitude; wandering around the island and indulging in his senses, mainly vision, sound, and smell, while being on a quest of finding himself. With the Durells as a compass, tourism discourses suggest that Corfu provides the setting for combining two modes of travel that would be impossible to meet otherwise.

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