

A happy experience of a dark place: Consuming and performing the Jallianwala Bagh

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Abstract

This article adopts a phenomenological, ethnographic approach to examine place consumption and place experience through visitors' practices in situ. It focuses particularly on an examination of the embodied practices and performances of both tourists and the local community. Viewing memorial places as 'performative fields', we argue that a set of processes are simultaneously at play: while consuming the place and its representations (place consumption), visitors are also producing the meaning of the place through their embodied practices (place production) and, simultaneously, form and project a construct of their own selves (self-identity construction), within wider social narratives (social/national-identity construction). The simultaneity of these processes is empirically illustrated and supported by the findings from the qualitative research in the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial in Amritsar, India, where British colonial forces massacred more than one thousand peaceful protesters in 1919.

Keywords: Place Consumption; Place Construction; Experience; Performativity; Embodiment; India

INTRODUCTION

On 13th April 1919, the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, a city in the state of Punjab, India became the site of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, a tragic event and a turning point for India's independence movement against the legitimacy of British rule. The massacre is indeed one of the worst atrocities of British colonial forces and took place on the day of Baisakhi festival which is the harvest festival day in Punjab and the greatest festival of the Sikhs. Despite a ban of public gatherings, approximately 20,000 people gathered to protest against implementation of the Rowlatt Act, which provided the British rulers with powers to control the press and detain any person without trial. The crowd consisted of local villagers, farmers and traders from Amritsar and the countryside as well as pilgrims to the nearby Golden Temple. The protest was peaceful but turned into a bloodbath once General Dyer and his fifty troops arrived on the scene and opened fire on the unarmed crowd without prior warning. According to the Indian National Congress, approximately 1,200 people were massacred, and even more were wounded (a figure considerably different from the British figure of 379 deaths). Soon after the tragedy, Indians managed to pass resolutions and acquire the Bagh. General Dyer was removed from his appointment and returned to Britain where the House of Lords praised him for his actions. Importantly, Dyer's action was endorsed as 'correct' by his superior, Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer, Lieutenant Governor of Punjab. In March 1940, 21 years after the massacre, O'Dwyer was assassinated in London by Udham Singh who was at Jallianwala Bagh at the time of the massacre. Singh was hanged four months later but became a popular figure in India referred to as *Shaheed* (the great martyr).

After eventual independence from ruling Britain (1947), the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial was established in the form of a public garden (1951). The memorial garden is adjacent to the Golden Temple, the most sacred place in Sikhism and a major attraction in India (Photo 1). Nowadays, the Bagh offers free admission and is open every day from morning to evening. It is estimated that 50,000 people visit it daily. Due to its history, the Jallianwala Bagh is invested with several meanings. It is a site of death and human atrocity and, as such, could be considered a 'dark tourism' site. It is a site of remembrance and heritage, which would make it a site of memorial tourism. It is obviously an important site of articulation and affirmation of national identity, making it part of relevant national narratives. At the same time, it is quite simply a public park, a green area. For various reasons, it is visited by a significant number of locals, domestic tourists and international tourists alike. How do these visitors, though, consume the site and how do they produce the meanings of the memorial garden? What are the practices and performances that visitors enact at their site of visitation? Do locals and foreigners attribute similar meanings to the Bagh and do they have similar experiences there? What are the factors that determine the 'darkness' or otherwise of their experience? These are some of the questions explored in this article, which seeks to offer understandings of place consumption by examining how visitors to the Bagh think, feel and perform.

The article develops and illustrates the argument that the experience of the place is a result of the interplay between a set of processes that allow the creation, attribution and

sharing of place meanings. Visitors are actively involved in the production of the place through the (co)creation and modification of meanings attached to it. This occurs through their performances within a 'performative field' as they engage in four separate embodied practices: as they walk and wander in the site, as they sit and rest, as they photograph features of the site and as they make selfies. The experience resulting from these practices is different for distinct visitors and especially for locals and international tourists. However, we found that this is not so much due to their diverse cultural backgrounds but to a greater extent due to their personal histories, their varying degree of engagement in wider social and national narratives and their own self-construction. These are effectuated through a series of interactions between the triad of locals, tourists and the environment, helping us to go beyond a contradiction or opposition between locals and guests towards appreciating their coexistence and their mutual influence on each other. At the same time, the representation of the place influences these processes. Representations like the guided tours through the site or the various artefacts to commemorate the massacre play a role in what visitors do, where they go and how they move. Therefore, they make a significant difference in the 'darkness' of the site and the experience. Thus, this article reclaims space for representation within a performative understanding of the visitor experience. These factors and practices shape and are shaped by the 'performative field' where the place experience occurs. We use the findings of our investigation at the Jallianwala Bagh to explain, support and illustrate this argument. Participant observation, qualitative individual and group interviews with visitors and staff, field notes and photographs, allowed us to explore the ways in which the Bagh acquires contemporary meanings for its visitors and study these simultaneous processes in situ.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Contemporary thinking around place consumption suggests that place 'consumers' are not passive recipients of meanings but actively shape the meaning of the place they are consuming and co-create it with others. As (Meethan, 2001, p. 85) notes, the consumer is not "a passive recipient at the end of a commodity chain ... [but] an active agent capable of reflexively organising experiences into forms of self-identity". In order to study this active involvement of consumers in the creation of place meaning, we need to approach place consumption from the consumers' point of view, which means that we are interested in how people experience the place and what factors shape this experience. On the one hand, the experience is shaped by various representations in terms of images presented in promotional material and other forms of media (Meethan, 2001), including representations in the physical space itself. On the other hand, lived experience in the place is also crucial as it organises space into "more or less coherent narratives at a personalised level" (Meethan, 2001). Uriely (2005) notes two developments in the conceptualisation of experience: the multiplicity of experience (i.e. realising that there is no general, homogenised type of tourist experience but rather individual experiences captured in pluralised depictions) and the subjective negotiations of meaning that determine the experience (i.e. realising that tourists

do not assume meanings suggested by the tourism industry but attribute on their own subjective meanings).

To understand lived experiences at a site of visitation, it is helpful to examine the notion of performativity. There is an established 'performance turn' in tourism studies (Edensor, 2000; Haldrup & Larsen, 2010; Ponting & McDonald, 2013; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Overall, this is concerned with the co-production and co-performance of tourist spaces by tourists and generally "posits that the act of production is not separate from the act of consumption" (Ponting & McDonald, 2013, p. 417). As Rakić & Chambers (2012) argue, "at the point of experiencing or visiting a place, there is no dichotomy between construction and consumption of places and these processes are dual, active and indistinguishable" (p. 1614). Thus, visitors do not only consume the experience but actively co-produce it and co-exhibit it as they enact it and retell it (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). Performativity has been conceptualised and empirically investigated in a variety of tourist spaces including dark tourism (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010), adventure tourism (e.g. Ponting & McDonald, 2013), wilderness tourism (McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009), festival tourism settings (Giovanardi, Lucarelli, & Decosta, 2014), and heritage tourism settings (e.g. Arellano, 2004). Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) conceptualise and present five ways in which tourist performances negotiate meaning and affect at tourism destinations (in their case, 'dark' destinations). First, performing *ritual*, not in the functionalist and conservative meaning of the term but rather as transformative, as a chance for restructuration of the self. Secondly, performing *play*, that is, actions by tourists that are not within pre-configured, disciplined and scripted activities. Thirdly, performing *identity* or doings that make and project one's self, where identity is not just a 'performance' (i.e. an act) but it is 'performative' (i.e. it only exists if it is enacted). Fourthly, performing the *everyday*, meaning that while tourism offers people experiences outside their everyday lives and normal routines, it is important to think of how these differ from the experiences of people who work or live near a tourism destination. Finally, performing *embodiment*, the ways in which our bodies and senses are involved in tourism experiences.

Of course, the performative turn is not without its critics, mainly for an overly individualistic focus (Giovanardi et al., 2014) and for leaving conceptual gaps in terms of tourists' agency (Frenzel, 2017). Although the co-creation and co-performance of both tourists and residents is acknowledged as fundamentally important (Ponting and McDonald, 2013), this represents a paradoxically under-investigated area as most studies tend to focus on tourists. Furthermore, as Giovanardi et al (2014) contend, performative studies commonly refer to a "performative arena that is moulded by a reductionist, binary logic of action/reaction, in which confrontation between 'hosts' and 'guests' appears to be the norm" (p. 103). Thus, most studies fail to comment on the wider interactions and the ways in which the performances of locals and tourists shape each other beyond notions of 'conflict' or 'resistance', something to which our study intends to contribute. In fact, Giovanardi et al (2014, p.113) argue against "the binary and 'atomistic' approach that views tourism places as being created through the contraposition between the well-distinguished performative forces of 'hosts' and 'guests'". Instead, they propose not to separate the performances of such actors and to conceptualise their relationships and performances through the concept

of the 'performative field', which views the tourism place "as constantly crossed by a potential to perform that emerges from the convergence of mundane practices and actions" (p. 113). That includes non-human actors and elements such as landscape, buildings etc. that are brought together. The concept of the performative field provides a theoretical starting point for our study, which attempts to explore it and develop it further.

For a better understanding of lived experience and how it shapes place consumption, it is also important to use the notion of embodied place experience. Precisely as the above performative turn, this also goes against the seminal notion of the 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 1990), which has been criticised for overemphasising the visual. As Rakić & Chambers (2012, p. 1613) explain, the criticism against the 'tourist gaze' draws "on the phenomenological concept of embodiment to disrupt the hegemony of the gaze in order to illustrate how tourists' consumption of place is multisensory, corporeal and active". Therefore, attention is directed away from symbolic meanings inherent in the place towards embodied and collaborative enactments (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). Many agree that "places and their meanings, in addition to being socially and culturally constructed, are also both constructed and consumed through subjective embodied experiences at the point of visitation" (Rakić & Chambers, 2012, p. 1619). This was addressed later by Urry and Larsen (2011) who included performances and embodied experiences in the conceptualisation of the gaze. The process of place consumption is actively influenced by the body in embodied visitor practices, which are enacted *in situ* (Edensor, 1998). Rakić and Chambers (2012) end with the suggestion for future research to "provide further empirical evidence of the simultaneous processes of construction and consumption of other touristic places" (p. 1630) and to particularly examine "both tourists' and locals' embodied experience of these places" (p. 1630). This has been an important inspiration for this study, as local communities and their meanings of the place are an often-overlooked group (Light, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

Our study aims to come to an understanding of place consumption and place experience through visitors' practices and embodied performances *in situ*, particularly examining both tourists and the local community. The Jallianwala Bagh provides an ideal field research site as it is visited by locals and foreign travellers alike. Despite the 'dark' history of the site, it has several different meanings, as explained above. It was a purposeful choice to investigate place consumption practices in a setting of such rich meanings and examine whether these meanings are reflected in the consumption and experience of the place. It was also considered important to do this in a non-western context, in order to bring to the surface potential socio-cultural factors that affect or even shape place experiences.

We employed a phenomenological, ethnographic approach. In line with the theoretical approaches examined above, our stance is that there is no fixed/single meaning or experience, and places are co-created through the meaningful practices in and around them. Therefore, we adopt the phenomenological focus on the meanings attributed to

peoples' experiences in the context of both everyday life and 'being a tourist' (Crouch & Desforges, 2003; Pernecky & Jamal, 2010; Uriely, 2005). As Moufahim and Lichrou (2019) note, immersion in the natural setting allows experiencing the site in the same manner as the research participants and helps "gain a deep understanding of consumer behaviour in context, including the tourism experience" (Moufahim and Lichrou, 2019:325). A set of qualitative methods were used to examine both local communities and tourists comprising extensive participant observation and semi-structured group and individual interviews with visitors and staff. These methods enable interaction with the visitors and an in-depth understanding of more intangible aspects of their experience. This combination of methods has produced valuable results in several recent tourism studies, (e.g. Moufahim and Lichrou, 2019; Podoshen et al, 2018; Tie et al, 2015).

Semi-structured interviews are appropriate to produce deep and meaningful data addressing the individuals' lived and subjective experiences (Goulding, 2005). Semi-structured interviews allow flexibility (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) and give respondents enough freedom and openness to express their feelings and thoughts without being constrained by close-ended questions. The interviews with the staff and the guides were concerned with the representation and production of the place. The main objective of the visitor interviews was to explore participants' subjective and reflective insights, feelings, thoughts and understanding of the site. The focus of the interviews was not merely on what people said as we did not consider interviews as simple 'talking' that can be audio-recorded (Pink, 2009). Guided by Pink (2009), the interviews were approached as a "process through which verbal, experiential, emotional, sensory, material, social and other encounters are brought together" (p. 95). Furthermore, participants were also asked if they would like to share the photographs they made during their visit, offering them an opportunity to express their subjectivities within their own experience. These questions aimed at exploring how visitors' bodily and sensory experiences shaped their understanding of the place, and as McDowell (2010) contends, to understand actions within their specific contexts, and to explore as much as possible about why people feel or act in the ways they do.

The participants were sampled based on purposeful criteria for the interviews. Participants were male and female visitors over the age of eighteen, both Indians and foreigners, as well as staff working at the site. Given the subject of the study, visitors were also approached based on their embodied activities (e.g. photographing, selfie-taking, sitting, wandering etc.). The staff members and guides were recruited for their relevance to the study based on their position and responsibilities. Following the participants' signed consent and briefing about the aims of the research, a total of 30 interviews (24 visitors and 6 workers) were conducted in the Jallianwala Bagh memorial garden. The interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and all were audio recorded.

Given the commitment to examine visitors' practices, interviews alone were considered insufficient because interviewees often "cannot report upon what they 'do' – for 'doings' are often unconscious or unarticulated practices" (Watson and Till, 2010, p. 129). Hence, participant observation was undertaken in order to capture human interactions and meanings from an insiders' perspective (Jorgensen, 1989). Participant observation as an

ethnographic data collection strategy bodes well for grasping things that cannot possibly be recorded through interviews (Ribeiro & Foemmel, 2012; Podoshen et al, 2018). It is particularly effective to capture *in situ* experiences and a great tool to illuminate visitors' actions and reactions, their interactions with the place, with other visitors and with tourism workers (staff or tour guides). The focus of participant observation was on capturing visitors' and key workers' movements throughout the site, their verbal and performed behaviours, and the activities they engaged in. Also, the design and the physical characteristics of the site were explored through the participant observation in order to examine human and non-human interactions.

Observations and personal thoughts were recorded in extensive field notes and all interviews were transcribed manually. Following (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008), data analysis involved familiarization with the data, gaining a sense of the whole picture, coding and ordering (with the use of Nvivo11), integrating codes into themes and enfolded the literature. Thematic analysis was employed to identify emerging themes and “verify, confirm and qualify them by searching through the data and repeating the process to identify further themes and categories” (Burnard *et al.*, 2008, p. 430). This process produced the themes discussed in the following sections.

REPRESENTATION AT THE BAGH

The entry to the Bagh is a narrow passageway named ‘historical lane’. A plaque informs that ‘General Dyer conducted soldiers for firing on an innocent crowd of Indians through this passage’. This is the very first marker of the historical narrative of the place. Further, there is a pyramid-shaped stone that displays ‘people were fired at from here’ to mark where General Dyer deployed his army. For visitors with no prior knowledge of the massacre, this signage takes them by surprise and seems to persuade them to proceed further to find out what occurred at this place. Amy states:

I don't know much about what happened here. I was very shocked when I first entered. You cannot read the first plaque and then walk out. It hits you. That made me very curious to see what this is about. (Amy, France)

The next image you are confronted with is the large beautiful garden.

You know it's bigger than we thought walking through the door. I expected to see something like an old building or something tragic, but this is a beautiful garden really. (Tom, Canada)

The Bagh's decorative layout consists of grassy expanses, a selection of trees, shrubs and bushes dotted around. The Bagh thus offers two rather distinctive sights, the Jallianwala Memorial and the Jallianwala Garden. Although both are great enough to stand on their own, their combination leads to a fluidity of the site's meanings. Consequently, the aesthetic elements of the monument mitigate the weight of its tragic past. Hence, there are contradictions between the feel for the place and the feel for its history. Enzo's statement clearly echoes this distinction:

The things that happened here were horrific. But, to be honest, this area is wonderful and peaceful, it really gives a peace of mind. Very beautiful. (Enzo, France)

For some repeat visitors there are issues of interpretation of authenticity. For instance, Mandeep who is Indian but lives in Canada said:

The first time I came here was 15 years ago... They made this place newer, but I think they shouldn't have. [...] I learned that Amritsar is being remade as a smart city, so I am not sure what's going on, if there's like a whole remaking Amritsar to be more tourist-friendly or to be more modernized, maybe that comes at the price of taking away from history things that they're not so easy to swallow. (Anika, Canadian Indian)

In a similar sense, Rahul expresses disappointment:

This is just a nice park now. You know, they should have left this place as it was, but now I see everything is new, I don't feel good for this (Rahul, India)

Both statements illustrate concerns about the (re)presentation of the Bagh, exemplifying the ongoing challenge between modernization and heritage conservation.

Visible from all sides of the garden is a redbrick cenotaph, the 'Flame of Liberty'. There is no plaque around the monument to provide any interpretation to direct visitors to a reflexive contemplation. Consequently, the 'Flame of Liberty' is simply considered as a 'beautiful' and iconic subject for the camera. When asked why there is no information around the memorial monument, Deepak, the official guide to the Bagh explains:

Due to lack of fund. This is an important historical place, but why no one spends money on this?! I don't know! No one gives even a single penny. No politicians, no film star, no one. But you will see Taj Mahal or Golden Temple is maintained properly, but not here. So, people don't take this place seriously. They think it's a funny place, and I don't like that. I don't like people spending time here like a picnic. I don't have a problem with photography but having fun here is not appropriate. Jallianwala Bagh is not for picnicking, this is a memorial. But more information is needed. This is necessary to write a sign that people take their shoes off. This is not respectful they walk inside the pools to take photos all over around it. They only enjoy themselves. (Deepak, India)

For Deepak, the Jallianwala Bagh is a 'memorial site' and he finds that simply 'enjoying' and 'having fun' is inappropriate. As he suggests, visitors are only offered a limited formal narration of the massacre. A small gallery in the eastern part of the garden portrays some of the freedom fighters and their role in India's struggle for independence. However, the long texts and small font sizes on stained papers do not appear compelling to visitors. The most-viewed piece is a large painting depicting the massacre, which, although visually appealing for photographs, still does not seem to invoke emotional responses. The most striking features are the urn with the ashes of Udham Singh (the assassin of General O'Dwyer) and an official letter of apology by British descendants on behalf of their ancestors, both emphatically shown by guides to (foreign) tourists.

Visitors draw on various resources to extract and construct meanings. For instance, previous experience at other places associated with human tragedy influence the encounter with Jallianwala Bagh. Ted visited the House of Terror in Hungary last year and stated:

[There] the whole place was made to give a very strong feeling, so you got in there and every single part of it was like you're sort of walking on pins and needles and it's like you can feel, you know, the feeling of suffering and you really feel like you're where all of this happened. But if you didn't know what happened here, this is just a nice park. In fact, it's actually really pleasant here so if you didn't take the time to read the small things around, you could just easily walk around here and just say hey! it's a beautiful Saturday! (Ted, Canada)

Likewise, Gauthe, who had recently visited Berlin said:

There is a memorial in Berlin that when you see you feel really overwhelmed. That place was really sad. But here because of the garden, trees I don't have that feeling. Those soldier trees (Photo 2) are a nice way to put what happened and really a good way to change the atmosphere. (Gauthe, Mexico)

Some visitors argue that the physical presentation of the place is not fitting a place of tragedy:

The massacre is a serious and horrific event. In my opinion, those topiary soldier trees with rifles in their hands [Photo 2] seem inappropriate. (Alex, France)

I like the garden, but I don't like the soldiers [Photo 2]. I don't understand why they need to show the killers in green. I think we need to show people who were killed here in this colour, not those who came to kill them. (Diana, Russia)

The (re)presentation of the Jallianwala Bagh actively shapes visitor experience. Of course, visitors are not passive and, as will be discussed in detail below, co-create and consume the Bagh through their embodied practices. However, representations do frame these practices and become part of visitors' performances.

EMBODIED EXPERIENCE AT THE BAGH

This section identifies and exemplifies the main performances and embodied practices carried out by visitors and discusses whether and how these reflect pre-figured meanings of the place or generate new meanings and narratives. Walking and wandering around is a spatial and embodied practice that clearly helps visitors make sense of the place. Walking has the quality to shift contexts and transform landscapes. Indeed, the Bagh both shapes walking practices by visitors and is shaped through walking. At a superficial level, the design of the paths frames how people move through space. However, the choreography of individual visitors and package tourists differ significantly (also Edensor, 1998). Most package tours make a brief stop at the Bagh, usually part of a half-a-day Amritsar city tour, before going to the daily 'border closing' ceremony at the Wagah border between India and Pakistan. Upon entering the garden, tourists are given a little information on the massacre while all guides emphasise 'time is tight'. Thus, tourists only spend thirty minutes to walk certain paths toward the walls, then the well, the eternal flame and then the museum. The fieldnote below is indicative:

Abu [our guide] insisted to finish the tour quickly to save time. He took us to the walls and emphasised the number of bullet marks on the wall. He showed us the well and we continued the passageway to see the memorial monument. There was no sign around it to explain what it is about, Abu didn't know so much about it either as he said it was built recently. He was seemingly anxious about the time, he'd been frequently repeating we should leave as soon as possible if we want to go to the Border. We stopped to see the eternal flame and left the Bagh from the exit gate where there was a small exhibition where Abu showed us the ashes of the Udham Singh. After that, Abu took us to visit a craft shop which had arts and handicrafts made in the region. This was a bit frustrating as we had to rush through the Jallianwala Bagh in order to save time for an undesired shopping ... (field diary, 1/12/2017).

So, walking around the Bagh is directed in both space and time for the tourists who visit the Bagh through guided tours, arguably leading to a superficial experience of the place, devoid of reflexive contemplation. These group tourists seem performers of what Edensor (2000) describes as disciplined and directed performances: “[W]ith guides and tour managers acting as choreographers and directors, many performances are repetitive, specifiable in movement and highly constrained by time” (Edensor, 2000, p. 334). However, individual travellers and locals had more time and were rather free of such normative choreographies. It seems that independent visitors actively engage with the place to explore the features across the garden on foot and consume the site beyond notions of national identity, ‘darkness’, heritage or memory but simply as a park. For instance, Chada from Amritsar states:

It's Sunday, I work during the week, so I thought it's best to have a walk around the Jallianwala Bagh. So, we are roaming here. This area is maintained well and it's a good place to chill and relax. (Chada, India)

Apparently, walking at Bagh for local visitors is a way to escape from everyday life. Consequently, walking led to his construction of the meaning of the Bagh as ‘a good place to chill and relax’.

The Bagh also has a social function for locals and Indian tourists. The free admission, the size of the garden and limited control over the space make it a great place for gathering and socialising. Interestingly, particularly for Indian visitors, walking at Bagh to encounter foreign (Western) tourists leads to a meaningful experience. Ravi, who approached on his own the first author as a non-Indian to take a selfie, explains:

This incident is quite famous, we had studied this in our textbooks when we were young. This is also a quite popular place to walk in and meet others. We thought we will see more foreign tourists today, but unfortunately, we couldn't find anyone yet except you [laughing]. (Ravi, India)

Rana, similarly, states:

We hardly see foreign tourists here, this is what we were just saying, very few foreigners come. More people from the UK should visit and see what happened here [laughing]. (Rana, India)

It is evident that part of the meanings of the Jallianwala Bagh for Ravi and Rana are linked to the presence of other bodies (Rakić & Chambers, 2012), especially foreign tourists. Whilst walking, the Bagh shifts from a ‘famous’ heritage place to a ‘popular’ site for encountering others. Hence, through walking up and down the Bagh, visitors perceive, create and modify the meaning. This also applies to international tourists. Anika describes:

It's kind of a promenade, so I don't know if that's good or bad, I mean if people hang out in a park, that's fine! ... But if you don't know anything and you walked in here blind you may not know its historical importance. Something like you have to know what you're walking into then you can see like okay! that's the well or wall – otherwise, this is just a nice park to stroll around. (Anika, Canada)

Anika cognitively distinguishes walking into the Bagh as ‘knowing’ its historical importance from ‘hanging out’ and ‘strolling’ in the garden. This reinforces the distinction by (Matos Wunderlich, 2008) between ‘discursive walking’ and ‘conceptual walking’. As Matos Wunderlich (2008) describes, in discursive walking the journey is more important than the destination, hence, it can be performed with no destination at all (Photo 3a). Whereas conceptual walking, as she explains, is reflective and the walker critically builds awareness of the environment. Although there is evidence of conceptual walking (Photo 3b) at the Bagh, it is rather clear that its design fosters discursive walking rather than conceptual walking, by stimulating aesthetic and leisurely experiences rather than a critical engagement with the place and its history. Both these types of walking observed in the garden, are of paramount importance for the meaning of the place. They not only allow individuals to make sense of the place and their experience in a form of what de Certeau (1984) calls ‘kinesthetic appropriation’ but also blend together to create walking rhythms (Matos Wunderlich, 2008) and “their intertwined paths weave places together” (de Certeau, 1984, p. 97).

Sitting, lying down and even sleeping are other major visitor practices. The Jallianwala Bagh is the only green space within the proximity of the Golden Temple. Consequently, it provides an ideal space for those who like a rest (Photo 4). Evidently, even while sleeping, visitors are engaged in the consumption and construction of the place. Abhila who was asleep before the conversation notes:

I am 28 from Amritsar. I have a shop, and this is near to my shop, so I come to take a rest here every day after lunch. I think this is a wonderful area. Salute to the martyrs who died in the massacre [laughing]. (Abhila, India)

For him, this is a daily spot to take a break. However, he is thankful to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives and ultimately provided him with a relaxing space. It is evident that Abhila consumes the place bodily and cognitively and constructs two distinct meanings of the Jallianwala Bagh. The first as a ‘place to rest’ and the second as a ‘place to remember’. This distinction is even more prominent due to the inadequate information provision as discussed above. Hannah explains:

We came to Amritsar to visit the Golden Temple, we looked into Google Maps, a garden came up, we thought a green area is a good place to take a rest. Once we read the brief texts over there, we were shocked that we didn't know anything about it. We walked around and [...] we are really upset with what happened here. But we must admit, we really

haven't experienced the sadness for the whole place. I mean this is a beautiful monument, we have lain in the sun a bit and now we're going to explore Hall Bazaar. (Hannah, UK)

Likewise, Bryan said:

We visited the Golden Temple last night and today. When we came inside the park there was a small triangle, that said where people were shot from. This sounds horrible, but we didn't see much yet. We are just tired, wanted to lay down a bit. Then we will see the rest [laughing]. (Bryan, Germany)

While one could argue that sitting and relaxing at Bagh might disrespect the death of those who lost their lives there, some visitors think it might be the opposite. Ted explains:

You know, it's nice to preserve what happened in past, on the other hand it's nice that now it's a very well-put-together park, it's clean and maybe just the fact of people coming here to relax and enjoy, you know, is a tribute in its own way, even though maybe it's one step off of being a dedicated memorial, just the fact that people are in here enjoying with family and friends it's a really nice tribute to the event itself. (Ted, Canada)

In the same vein, when asked about tourists sitting on the grass across the Bagh, Rina replied:

I think they are enjoying themselves [laughing]. Actually, if they are relaxing over here, it doesn't matter. You know, ultimately this is a park, not just a memorial. So, if they come here to relax, this is not really disrespectful. (Rina, India)

In some cases, this cognitive process is influenced by visitors' own perceptions of memorials. Louis compares memorials in his home country to express his sense of the Bagh.

I think in the UK you wouldn't be allowed to sit or lay on the grass. There might be more restrictions and more information. Apart from that, this is public and it's open to everyone. There are similarities and differences, you know. Here, I think there could be more signs saying how to be respectful. I think it's nice that it's made into a pleasant place and people are not dwelling on the thought as much. But if people don't know anything about it, you know this is just a park, isn't it? So, if there is no sign to say like be respectful, put your phones away, don't take selfies... (Louis, UK)

Louis's mention of selfies here leads us to consider the next major visitors' practice in the garden, namely photography. In the era of 'selfie culture' and 'attention economy', perhaps unsurprisingly, the photos taken at Bagh are mainly social media driven. Rina explains:

We took photos over there, near the bullet marks. Because it was marked over there, and when I posted the photo, my friends could see what happened, and you know it makes more sense. (Rina, India)

Photographing the bullet holes (a must-capture feature of the garden) is not only a visual consumption of the place but produces a virtual social interaction. Rina went on:

It is more social networking now. You upload your photographs to show that you visited the place, even you know in the Golden Temple you just want to upload a photograph to say you were here and there and what places you visited. This is not like I have to, but you know just the sense of social networking [laughing]. (Rina, India)

For Rina, therefore, except ‘being in the place’, it is important to show others where he has been. This clearly demonstrates the simultaneous consumption and construction of places during the visit (Rakić and Chambers, 2012). Furthermore, Rina is not only consuming but also co-designs his experience by retelling it to others through Social Media, as Haldrup and Larsen (2010) claimed. When gently prompted to share where he posted his photo, he merrily showed his Instagram. The caption was only a group of hashtags including #JallianwalaBagh, #WallwithBulletMarks, #CaptureoftheMoments, #PicoftheDay, #India_gram and #likeforfollow. He got 63 Likes within four minutes, along with three comments: ‘awesome pic’, ‘great photo’ and ‘enjoy your travel’. Thus, it is highly doubtful that Rani’s social-media-driven photo encouraged any deep reflection on the Bagh’s significance amongst his followers. Interestingly, Daru said:

I took some photos near the marks of the bullets. Actually, I just wanted to feel the pain and visualise what they must have gone through (Daru, India)

While the visual nature of his experience remains dominant, the emotional aspect becomes also evident. As reasons for photographing, Daru suggested:

There are two ways around it. One you can feel sad and just visit the place and go. Or this is a historical place and you can still have photographs because people want memories. And that’s how probably the word also spreads. Because they go and post it somewhere; the other think OK we need to go to see this place. (Daru, India)

While he mentions the memories of the dead (‘feeling the pain and what they have gone through’), he consciously utilises the ‘past’ to create the present. He directly notes that the photos might be taken for consumption in social media to encourage others to visit the place. Selfies add an extra dimension to the visitors’ ‘real-time’ experience of the place (Photo 5). Photography is not merely a visual consumption of the place, but rather it is producing an image of own ‘self’, so visitors turn themselves into the object of their photos. Based on the comments of both tourists and local visitors, selfies are, again, social media driven, not concerned with remembrance of the tragic events but only engaged with the ‘self’ at the very moment.

Surprisingly, the information plaques with a brief account of the events and the house rules, are also widely photographed. Visitors apparently read the signs through the lenses of their smartphone. A visitor who took a photo without reading the board explained:

This is a too long text [laughing]. I can take a photo now and read it later. Instead, I can spend more time here. (Chada, India)

Thus, for Chada, the understanding and interpretation of the Bagh’s narratives, happens, at least partly, after the actual experience of the place. Therefore, the experience of the place is not limited to consumption while ‘being in place’, but also after the visit as well.

Social and cultural tensions are apparent within visitors’ experience:

It’s a bit odd that everyone takes selfies. I don’t actually understand why people take selfies with that wall. Because everywhere else in the world this should be like sublime, quiet and respectful. We’ve been to Auschwitz and no one was taking photos in Auschwitz, so it’s

weird seeing people sitting and sleeping everywhere, taking photos and selfies with bullets on the walls. This seems quite jolly. It seems... I don't know. (Olivia, UK)

For Olivia, taking selfies is not appropriate and Rashi agrees:

We like tourists here, we do feel happy that information is shared, people get to know what has happened. But feel sad too, because nowadays people are taking it for granted. People have forgotten what happened here. People come here and take photos. Nobody is reading properly; they're just taking selfies. This should not happen, right? When Diana died people were not taking selfies, they were paying respect there, to tribute and pray by laying roses and everything. OK, you can take pictures, but you know it's a sad place so just maintain that. (Rashi, India)

For Rashi, taking selfies means forgetting and disrespecting the dead. It is interesting that both compare directly with other sites (Auschwitz and Diana's death). Of course, at the time of Diana's death selfies were not 'trendy'. Nevertheless, Rashi's perception of appropriate behaviour in a place of tragedy does not conform with the behaviour of many of the Bagh's visitors. Rashi was one of the very few Indians who expressed this opinion, which was common amongst international visitors, something discussed further below.

(DIS-)REMEMBERING AND 'MOVING FORWARD'

Different forms of remembering manifest across visitors' embodied performances and 'sense of place' is intertwined with emotions about the past. Jashu draws on the positive and negative effects of British Rule to express his present sense of 'being' at the Bagh:

People come and visit and get inspired. Independence was not free, it is brought by fighting. This is inspiring more than upsetting. This is upsetting for tourists maybe but not for Indians. Not everything from that time is bad for us, the railways, strong buildings, universities, so we have also good things from British people. But the bad things are heavy and upsetting. Freedom is not free, we have to just live with it. Otherwise, we cannot move forward. (Jashu, India)

The Bagh for him emerges as 'inspiring' rather than 'upsetting' and his acceptance ('we have to just live with it') as a means of 'moving forward' shows that visitors make sense not only of the past, but also of the present and future. This desire to 'move forward' was typical of Indian interviewees:

Basically, by carrying on life we can appreciate their sacrifice. Because of them, we can now live free. it is important to show that we are happy and so I think they would be happy to see that the country is carrying forward and [...] their sacrifice did not get wasted. (Rana, India)

This place had lots of blood shares of our brothers and sisters. If we look at this place now we will still feel bad after many years. But past is done, we must keep going forward toward a better future. That is why we are happy today. (Abhinav, India)

Now it is a picnic spot, but it became a picnic spot because of the people who sacrificed their lives. It's an important site for Indians. Of course, we are upset about it, but we moved forward. (Ravia, India)

Killing people is always bad. This is for past and everything is done now, the fact is we cannot change anything. We must go forward. (Kavi, India)

The sense of 'moving forward' shows how visitors negotiate the past to interpret and create the present. Consequently, the Bagh does not appear as a space for mourning, but rather becomes a space for reconciliation and communication of hope and optimism. In this sense, the memorial's meanings are tied up with articulation and affirmation of national identity. Naturally, within this process of national identity construction, the Bagh experience is very different for British visitors. Olivia said:

Very sad, emotive and unnecessary. I don't really want to tell people that I am from England. Here I thought if I introduced myself as someone from England people would be a bit like [showing annoyed face] but everyone has been lovely. We never learned anything about this in school. We need to learn more about the British Empire in India in general. It's sobering. (Olivia, UK)

This is mirrored by David:

I feel like I was cheated. We should definitely learn about that. But, instead, in the UK people focus on the victories and what we've done good, rather than what we've done bad. Someone asked us where you are from and I really didn't want to tell him, because I just felt a bit ashamed, but you know it was fine, people were absolutely fine. (David, UK)

That is clear evidence for the importance of the socio-cultural background for the construction and consumption of place meaning at the site of visitation.

Additionally, the Bagh does not only evoke memories of the past in terms of its collective historical narratives, but also of personal narratives. Deborah described:

My dad is from Punjab, but I don't know him, I have never seen him. Because when my mother was pregnant, he left Germany. He was a refugee in the 80s and that's why he flew to Germany and after two years he went back, and we have never heard about him after. So, I don't know my roots and that's why I travelled to Amritsar to see this place. I didn't know about the park, I read about it yesterday on Lonely Planet. It's a bit interesting and a little confusing. But hearing peaceful demonstrators were killed here is so horrible. (Deborah, Germany)

Constantly on the verge of tears, Rashi narrates:

My parents are from Amritsar I came here after 14 years. I was born and grown up in Mumbai. My parents died, so it was my dream to come here. And now after 14 years, I am here, and it brings them in my eyes. It's my roots, as my father belongs here. I wanted to come here to feel whatever I've missed. To feel my childhood, those experiences, but it has changed a lot. [...] But when you go inside the Temple, it's a different experience for you. I entered the Temple and I literally cried. I am so attached to this place that I cried. I think it's natural for me after 14 years. (Rashi, India)

These are clearly personal rather than collective memories and illustrate that place experience is influenced by personal life histories and personal narratives that order and shape experience (Meethan, 2001, p. 85).

CONCLUSIONS

These findings allow a series of conclusions about the embodied practices of visitors, how these enable consumption and construction of the place, the role of place representations in visitor experience, as well as the view of tourism places as 'performative fields'. First, the design and representation of a memorial place have profound effects on visitor experience. For instance, building a beautiful garden as a setting for a monument related to past tragedy creates a clash between visitors' perception of the tragic event and their actual experience of the site. Understandably, a beautiful garden offers a peaceful atmosphere, but fails to offer 'aesthetic negotiation' and critical reflection (Sci, 2009). Consequently, the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial, although established to commemorate a brutal massacre, appears to be a 'relaxing space to rest' and a 'beautiful scenery'. However, we also found significant scope for 'performing play' (Bowman and Pezzullo, 2010), for visitors to have an attitude of 'play' and construct meanings beyond oppositions such as seriousness or entertainment, authenticity or lack thereof. This attitude is one of the "ways in which tourists blur such binaries by ascribing meaning to sites through play" (Bowman and Pezzullo, 2010, p. 195). Through this attitude, tourists and locals alike, attribute meanings that clearly transcend any academic attempt to define a site or experience as 'dark', 'heritage' or 'memorial'. In the visitor experience, these blend to the extent that they become redundant. Although the site does contain "intrinsically dark connotations" (Ashworth & Isaac, 2015, p. 323), the experience is not 'dark'.

Secondly, visitors themselves are actively attributing meanings to the site through their own embodied practices and, especially, the practices of walking and wandering, sitting and resting and the act of making photographs as demonstrated above (and similarly to the findings of Edensor, 1998). These practices clearly enable visitors to simultaneously consume and produce the meaning of the site and to shape their own experience *as they are having it*. A clear illustration of this blend of production and consumption into one process is the production and dissemination of representations of the place through the taking and sharing of photographs. This is partly acknowledged in Selby's (2004, p. 171) conclusion that with their photographs "consumers both experience the destination immediately, and also produce representations to be consumed when they return home." In the contemporary environment, as our findings show, we need to add that these representations are not only for own consumption later but are shared at once through social media and are thus consumed by others at the same instant as they are produced.

Thirdly, it is particularly interesting to discuss selfies in the site. Dinhopl and Gretzel (2016) approached selfie-making as a complex facilitator of the tourist gaze, whereas in our study, selfie-making is mainly practiced by locals and is part of something wider. Selfies and photographs seem to be more than acts of recording and retelling the experience and

resemble other rituals that visitors follow in order to understand places and pay respect to events and people of the past. Rituals such as leaving flowers, lighting candles or writing messages are often important parts of a visit and while “often interpreted by critics as being disrespectful, they can be profoundly significant for individual visitors” (Light, 2017, p. 287). For many of our research participants, the act of selfie-making appeared profoundly significant for their understanding of the place, their experience, for the way they projected a self-narrative and the way in which they performed their remembrance and their ‘being in place’. In this sense, selfie-making was a ritual and “ritual is performative and transformative” (Bowman and Pezzullo, 2010, p. 194). While regarded as strange or disrespectful by some international visitors, for the Indians it was natural and was even an indication of the significance of the place. The ritual of photography seemed less concerned with ‘consuming’ the place and more with ‘producing’ a projection of a collective future and of a self-image forming part of a wider behaviour of ‘moving forward’. There was no doubt that the events had been dramatic, but this did not mean that current use of the space should be limited to mourning and/or remembrance. Instead, the usefulness of the sacrifice of the victims was found in that we can now enjoy the space and move forward as a society.

Regarding performativity, our study elaborates on the multiplicity of performances at the site of visitation and provides evidence for all five ‘performance turns’ suggested by Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) as we have described above. Perhaps the one aspect that differs relates to performing the everyday. Bowman and Pezzullo (2010, p. 197) state that “[t]ours, therefore, offer tourists counter-experiences of their everyday life, in which there is, at minimum, a sense that one is doing something other than one’s normal routine”. In the Bagh, we observe a blend of the everyday and the extraordinary. We see, for instance, that locals live their everyday lives in the tourist site, they use it as a break from their busy day of working and this affects how tourists see the site. However, tourists not only see how locals use the site but they themselves use the site for the same functions of rest and calmness during their busy day of touring. Furthermore, as our findings show, locals and tourists use each other’s bodily presence (or absence) and performances to form meanings, to understand what the place is about. In other words, the Jallianwala Bagh is a place where tourists can infuse their extraordinary experience with a little sense of the everyday and *vice versa*, locals can infuse their everyday lives with a little sense of the extraordinary.

Finally, our findings confirm and reinforce the notion of the performative field (Giovanardi et al, 2014). What we have found is that the performative field ‘occurs’ and takes shape through sets of simultaneous and non-hierarchical interactions. These are human to non-human interactions (for instance, with the landscape and various material manifestations or representations of pre-configured meaning), human to human interactions (locals with tourists, tourists with other tourists, visitors to tourism workers) and interactions with mental constructs (such as national identity narratives or personal histories). The representations cannot be ignored to consider only performances as the two cannot be separated. Representations and material manifestations of historical and cultural narratives as well as immaterial representations of collective and personal stories and ideals, all frame and, to an extent, regulate the above interactions. Thus, our findings reclaim space for representation within a performative understanding of visitation sites. Based on our

findings, we conclude that embodied practices facilitate the sets of interactions happening at a site of visitation, thus giving shape to the performative field where place meanings and place experience are created. The essence of the performative field lies precisely in these interactions between people, materiality and their context. The performative field is 'performative' not because it offers a stage where tourists and locals get the chance to perform their conscious or sub-conscious enactments but because it only exists through their performances, it only takes shape and form when locals and visitors interact with each other and with their surroundings to form the performative field as they participate in it.

This leads us to conclude that a set of processes are simultaneously at play: while consuming the place and its representations (*place consumption*), visitors are also producing the meaning of the place (*place production*) and, at the same time, form and project a construct of their own selves (*self-identity construction*), within wider social narratives (*social/national- identity construction*). While these might be thought of as separate processes, the fact is that they happen simultaneously within one and the same process of *place experience*. Thus, this study contributes to a better understanding of place consumption by describing the embodied practices and performances that illustrate and reinforce the simultaneity of production and consumption through meaning-making. It also contributes to better understanding of place experience by elaborating on how it links to the processes of consumption, production and identity. Furthermore, the study contributes to better understanding of the performativity of tourism in various ways. First, by linking it to specific embodied practices of locals and tourists and explaining how these shape the experience. Secondly, by clarifying the role of material representations and pre-configured cognitions in performances (even if it is to go against and alter them). Thirdly, by discussing the various interactions that are at play, clearly going beyond host-guest opposition. Fourthly, by elaborating on the five 'performance turns' (Bowman and Pezzullo, 2010) confirming and expanding them. Finally, by clarifying that what shapes the 'performative field' (Giovanardi et al, 2014) is a combination of representations and interactions facilitated within that field. It is this combination that creates a unique place consumption experience, which can indeed be positive amongst negative or unsettling features, leading to 'happy' experiences in otherwise 'dark' places.

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