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CULTURE TOURISM OUTSIDE THE CITY CENTRE

Аннотация. *Culture tourism is generally concentrated in the city centre and most people believe that culture tourists have no business in the periphery. But if one would succeed in diverting a substantial part of culture tourism to the outskirts or the periphery, this would lead to dispersion of visitors, relief of the pressure on the city centre and increased manageability of tourism. In contrast to the important role the Constructivist architects played in the development of modern architecture, some of the buildings from that period appear to be in a rather poor condition, whereas these buildings provide good opportunities for redevelopment for the creative industry and for culture tourism. There is no doubt that the early modernist architecture of Moscow can be a popular attraction for culture tourists. More attention for this architecture in general, creates advantages in a direct economic sense, related to culture tourism, but also advantages in terms of relieving the pressure on the city centre, in terms of dispersing economic activities to the outskirts and the periphery, in terms of stimulating new functions in rather mono-functional areas. Advantages in terms of keeping variation and high architectural quality within otherwise rather low-quality areas (which the outskirts are now) and in making pleasant physical and visual environments. Even in new urban development areas, heritage can be a source of inspiration and can develop into an icon and therefore a tourist attraction. For instance by building older designs by Melnikov or and Tatlin. In short: heritage does not always have to cost a lot of money; it could even bring money, if handled well. More attention for this architecture in general, creates advantages in a direct economic sense, related to culture tourism, but also advantages in terms of relieving the pressure on the city centre, in terms of dispersing economic activities to the outskirts and the periphery, in terms of stimulating new functions in rather mono-functional areas. Advantages in terms of keeping variation and high architectural quality within otherwise rather low-quality areas (which the outskirts are now) and in making pleasant physical and visual environments. Even in new urban development areas, heritage can be a source of inspiration and can develop into an icon and therefore a tourist attraction. For instance by building older designs by Melnikov or and Tatlin. In short: heritage does not always have to cost a lot of money; it could even bring money, if handled well.*

Ключевые слова: *Culture tourism, Heritage tourism, Talin, Early modernist, Architecture, Creative Industry, Icon, Cultural, Urban planning, Melnikov*

Unexpected opportunities for the further development of culture tourism in Russia - introduction²

Most officials speak of cultural heritage in terms of costs. Heritage is often seen as a bottomless pit, where good money is thrown in and nothing comes out. Indeed, cultural heritage suffers from a negative perception. In a book about the economic factors of heritage-tourism³ is shown that it can bring profit too. Still, most people think that cultural heritage costs money. Because the money spent on restoration and maintenance of old buildings rests on one part of the City budget, while the revenues, like

tourism, the rise in property values etc., appear somewhere else. The discussion of the way these factors could be brought together is not the subject of this article, though that is an interesting question.

Cultural tourism (or culture tourism)⁴ is the subset of tourism concerned with a country or region's culture, specifically the lifestyle of the people in those geographical areas, the history of those people, their art, architecture, religion(s), and other elements that helped shape their way of life⁵.

Culture tourism is generally concentrated in the city centre and most people believe that culture tourists have no business in the periphery. In the next lines will be demonstrated, that the opposite is true: there are lots of

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² This article is partly based on a lecture in the Moscow Urban Forum in December 2013 about culture tourism.

³ Йос Куйперс: КУЛЬТУРНО-ПОЗНАВАТЕЛЬНЫЙ ТУРИЗМ; экономика успеха; Санкт-Петербург, 2013.

⁴ Каменец А.В., Кирова М.С.: ТЕХНОЛОГИИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ КУЛЬТУРНОГО ТУРИЗМА, МОСКВА, 2006.

⁵ www.wikipedia.org

opportunities for culture tourism to be explored outside the city centre.

If one looks for tourist information on the internet or in travel guides, some 90% of the information appears to concern attractions in that centre. Only a minor part of the information is about attractions outside that city centre. At the same time the concentration of tourism in the centre causes problems in various ways, like overcrowded streets, traffic problems, long waiting lines etc. In a city like Venice, the pressure of tourism has even become so high, that in summer the town is almost uninhabitable⁶.

If one would succeed in diverting a substantial part of culture tourism to the outskirts or the periphery, this would lead to dispersion of visitors, relief of the pressure on the city centre and increased manageability of tourism. In many parts of the world historic defense lines are used for these purposes.

Reuse of early modernist architecture

Moscow does not possess a historic defense line like Kaliningrad⁷, Vladivostok and St. Petersburg do, but there are certainly other opportunities to divert and stimulate tourism outside the tourist concentration area.

The writer of this article was trained as an architect and urban designer and was taught at the university about Russian Constructivists from the 1920's, like Lissitzky and Melnikov, and about the great role they played in the development of modern architecture. In contrast to this important role, some of the buildings from that period appear to be in a rather poor condition. That is a pity, because these buildings provide good opportunities for redevelopment and for culture-tourism.

There are examples elsewhere that could show how developments can take place in the future. For instance in The Netherlands, where also early modernist architects were working in the 1920's and before. There is the Rietveld-Schröder-house⁸, that was designed in 1923 by

the architect Rietveld and was one of the first modernist houses ever. In the year 2000 it was listed as a UNESCO world heritage site and since then the appreciation for this house increased immensely.

Another example is an industrial building, the so-called *White Lady*, in Eindhoven. It was built in 1928 by the Philips company as a location for the production of light bulbs⁹. Nowadays the building is being re-used as a multi-functional building for design, art, knowledge and technology. Inter alia the Dutch Design Academy is located in it.

Many other buildings in Eindhoven were recently abandoned by that same company, because the production of electronics was transferred to low-cost countries. In a Public-Private Partnership-construction, the municipality developed the former industrial area to a concentration for culture (and culture tourism) in the so-called Strijp-S project, a breeding place for the creative industry, where theatres, offices and ateliers are projected¹⁰ and where the historic buildings serve as a backbone for a new urban development with apartment-buildings, offices and other commercial buildings.

Striking is the architectural similarity of many of the historic buildings in this area to some early-modernist buildings in Moscow¹¹.

Opportunities for the creative industry

One of the possibilities of reusing old industrial areas is developing them as incubators for the creative industry. It is known that the creative industry in itself, in general, provides only a limited contribution to the overall economy. But as a determining factor for industrial innovation and development, the creative industry is crucial. In a direct sense, the creative industry accounts for only about 2 to 3 percent of the production. Indirectly, it involves tens of percents (compare the direct costs of an architectural design with the total cost of construction,

⁶ Roberto Suro: Venice moves to limit entrance of tourists, New York Times, may 08, 1987.

⁷ Eremeev Veniamin: Koenigsberg + Kaliningrad = 750; The monuments of defensive architecture, Kaliningrad, 2006.

⁸ Rietveld Schröderhuis (Rietveld Schröder House). World Heritage Centre. UNESCO.

⁹ www.dewittedame.nl

¹⁰ www.strijp-s.nl

¹¹ Though the distance between Eindhoven and Moscow is 2150 km and the architects almost certainly had no contact.



Figure 1. Modernist building in the Strijp-S-area Eindhoven (The Netherlands); this building was erected in the 1920's and is now a listed monument.

supply, etc.). It is also known that creativity best unfolds in an appropriate environment: an environment where like-minded, creative minds can meet, exchange ideas, where one can find events, conferences and concerts, where there is room for relaxation. And where creativity is encouraged and inspiration can be found widely. Such breeding grounds often develop on former industrial areas, which are restructured and prepared for a new task, where offices, studios and concert halls are interspersed with residential units, cafes, coffee houses, parks, squares etc. The insertion of new housing improves the possibilities for exploitation of such initiatives. The early modernist industrial buildings offer good opportunities for development as a breeding ground for the creative industry.

Early modern architecture and cultural tourism

If there are calls for the development of tourism, many people have reservations because they think that all tourism is mass tourism. There are however forms of tourism, that have less impact on the environment than mass tourism, and cultural tourism is one of those forms. Culture tourists visit places to experience the local culture, history and architecture. Often there is also an educational motive, when the visit is (also) focused on the historic experience by children. Culture tourists in general shun places frequented by mass tourists. Culture tourists differ from mass tourists in many ways. They are generally more educated and spend more money than mass tourists. They travel in small groups and visit museums, historic buildings, old neighborhoods, etc. They spend their money there, and in the better hotels and restaurants.

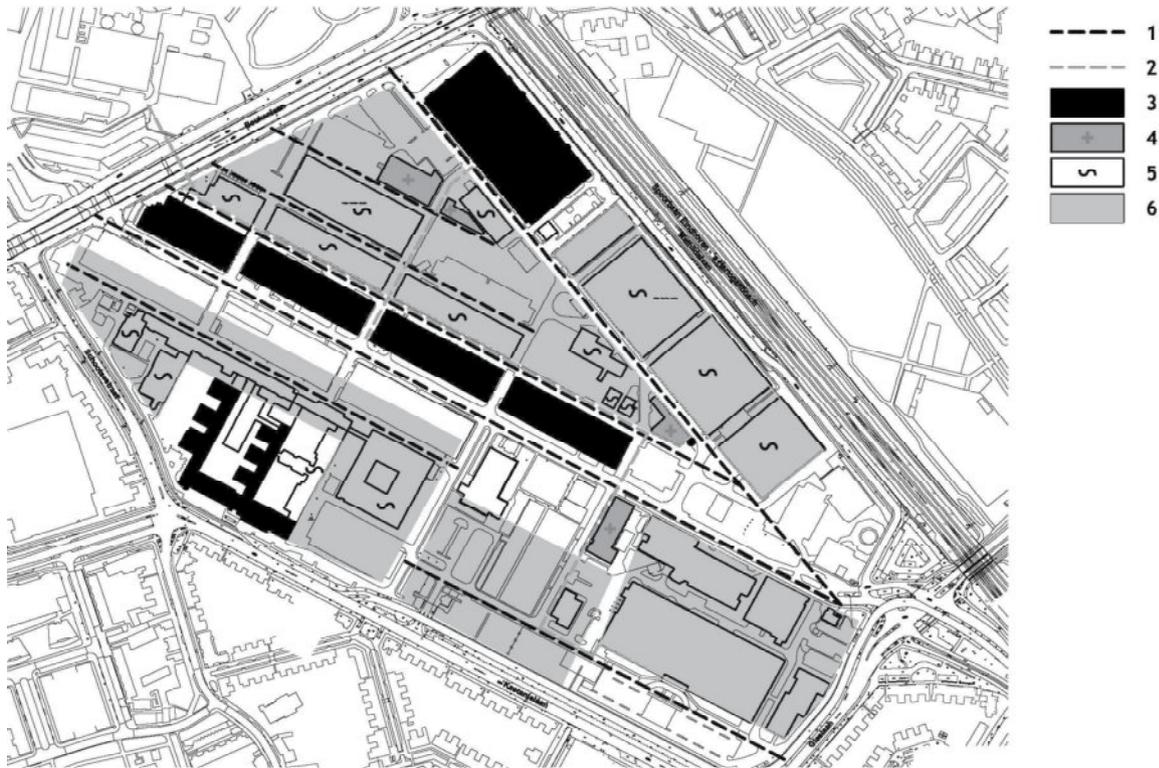


Figure 1. Urban-historic study Strijp-S (Eindhoven, The Netherlands): 1 = main historic structure; 2 = pipes; 3 = listed monuments; 4 = other characteristic buildings; 5 = other buildings; 6 = available for development and public space (Cuijpers Consultancy, 2005).

There is no doubt that the early modernist architecture of Moscow can be a popular attraction for culture tourists. During the Moscow Forum in December 2013 there was an excursion to Moscow architecture. Almost all participants were foreign experts who explicitly stated that they joined the excursion to go and visit the constructivist architecture. There are good opportunities for the economic development of early modernist architecture in Moscow into a cultural tourist attraction, provided that a good business model will be developed for this group of tourists. A business model that deals with issues such as transportation, accessibility, accommodation, restoration of buildings, improvement of the public realm, marketing and advertising, revenue modeling, etc.

More attention for early modernist architecture in general, creates advantages in a direct economic sense, related to culture tourism, but also advantages in terms

of relieving the pressure on the city centre, in terms of dispersing economic activities to the outskirts and the periphery, in terms of stimulating new functions in rather mono-functional areas. Advantages in terms of keeping variation and high architectural quality within otherwise rather low-quality areas (which the outskirts now are) and in making pleasant physical and visual environments.

Heritage as a source of inspiration for new developments

The relationship between cultural and urban planning is usually placed in the area of protection of monuments, in which heritage is more or less an obstacle for urban development. But heritage can also be a source of inspiration; it can be a source of inspiration to solve specific problems within new urban developments.

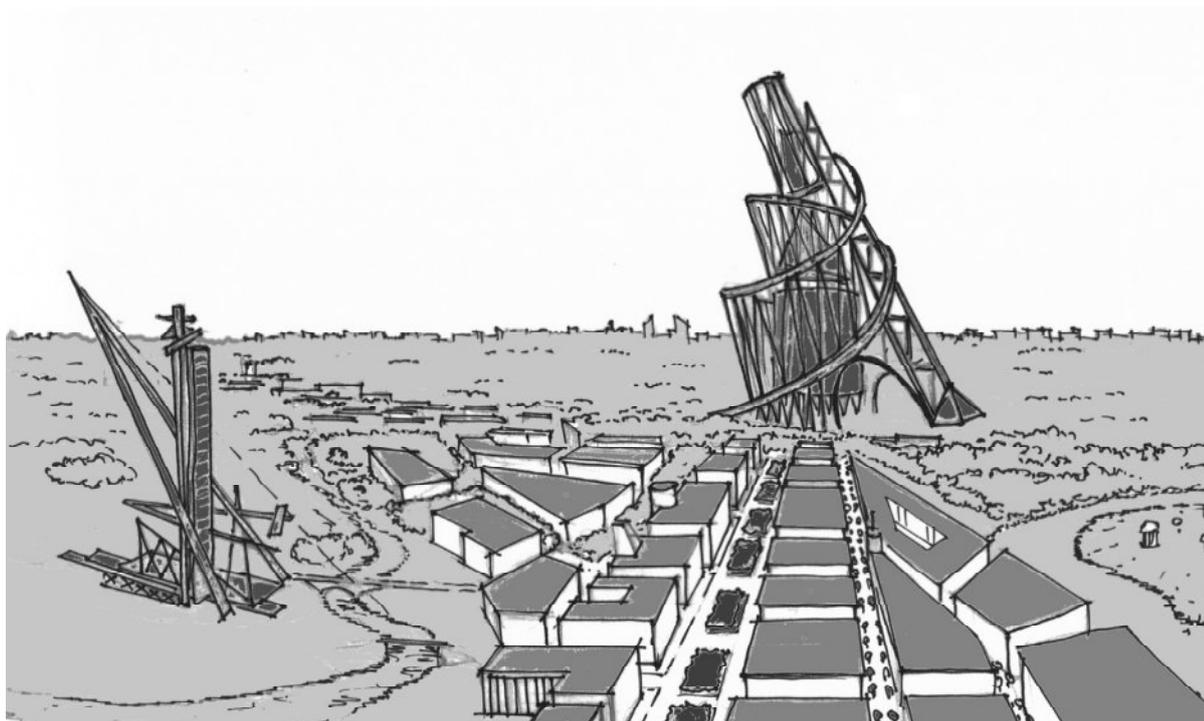


Figure 2. Sketch of constructions after the designs by Melnikov (left) and Tatlin (Background), projected in the new urban development near Moscow.

Thus, heritage-inspired buildings help shaping the urban landscape, form icons for modern times, symbols for new developments and attractions outside the city center for culture tourists and other visitors. One example is the idea to build icons based on early modernist design, within a new urban expansion.

One of the most famous examples of early-modernist Russian architecture is the Tatlin-tower. It was designed in 1919 by the Russian artist Vladimir Tatlin¹², who proposed a 400m-high Monument to the 3rd International in St. Petersburg. Once constructed, it would have stood nearly 100 m taller than the Eiffel Tower, giving physical expression to the social and artistic dynamism of the Russian Revolution. It was designed to be built from industrial materials: iron, glass and steel¹³. The tower's main form was a double helix which spiraled up to 400 m

in height, around which visitors would be transported by various mechanical devices. The main framework would contain three large structures, that would rotate at different rates of speed.

The Tatlin Tower was never built. The gigantic amount of required steel was not available in revolutionary Russia, in the context of housing shortages and political turmoil of that period¹⁴. Some experts have serious doubts about its structural practicality¹⁵. Furthermore the original design was intended for the centre of Saint-Petersburg, dwarfing all the historic buildings nearby. It would have stood soaring above the city and straddling the river Neva.

But imagine one could build a building inspired by Tatlin's design in an easily accessible place in the

¹² Vladimir Tatlin and the Russian avant-garde, John Milner, Yale University Press, New Haven 1983

¹³ Grey, Camilla (1986). *The Russian Experiment in Art*. London: Thames & Hudson

¹⁴ Lynton, Norbert: *Tatlin's Tower - Monument to Revolution*, 2008 | ISBN 0300111304

¹⁵ Hughes, L. (2010). "Art—Russia" in: W. H. McNeill, J. H. Bentley, D. Christian, R. C. Croizier, J. R. McNeill, H. Roupp, & J. P. Zinsler (Eds.), *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History* (2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 259–267). Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing, p. 266.

outskirts or in the projected New Moscow area. Modern construction methods would reduce the costs and increase practicability. On the revenue-side of the financial balance there would be direct revenues of tourists visiting the tower¹⁶, but also the rental of floor-space, because the design can accommodate hotels, conference space, office space etc. No doubt that the tower would become a symbol of modernity, an icon of modernist architecture in Russia and an icon of new development with respect for ancient values.

Most people that were confronted with this idea reacted that the costs would be enormous. But only looking at the costs creates a distorted picture: taking the potential revenues into account, would nuance the feasibility. And all the other advantages count here as well: relieving the pressure on the city centre (because many tourists visiting

Moscow would spend at least one day in or in the vicinity of the tower), dispersing economic activities to the outskirts and the periphery, and most of all the benefits of drawing permanent attention to the early modernist architecture, in which Russia was one of the precursors. The tower could grow to be an important icon of modern Russian architecture and urban design.

Conclusion

Culture tourism does not necessarily need to be limited to the historic town centers. There are lots of opportunities outside the traditional tourist concentration areas, in the outskirts and the periphery of cities. Attention for the early modernist architecture can generate opportunities in the field of economics and culture tourism.

In short: heritage does not always cost a lot of money; it could even bring money, if handled well.

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¹⁶ For comparison: The Eiffeltower in Paris receives more than 6 million visitors every year, who each pay up to € 14,50 to visit the tower.