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Literary Heritage and Place Building for Communities: the Case of Allier, France

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ABSTRACT

Literature's geography takes an active part in the construction of a social and political space. In a postmodern context of increasing tourist offer and demand, literary tourism is often seen as a niche; an originality factor and a guaranty of authenticity by local development actors and visitors. The present article, consequently, is interested in this dialectic between places and literary heritage. This paper focuses on a participatory action research on citizen associations that promote literary heritage of the County of Allier, France. We look at how local associations build on literary heritage to produce places and representations of those places are aimed at tourist consumption.

Keywords: Literature; Tourism; Allier; Heritage; Social Innovation

La géographie de la littérature prend une part active dans la construction d'un espace social et politique. Dans un contexte postmoderne d'augmentation de l'offre et de la demande touristique, le tourisme littéraire est souvent considéré comme une niche, un facteur d'originalité et une garantie d'authenticité par les acteurs du développement local et les visiteurs. La présente communication, par conséquent, s'intéresse à cette dialectique entre les lieux et le patrimoine littéraire. Elle met l'accent sur une recherche-action portant sur les groupes associatifs qui promeuvent le patrimoine littéraire du département de l'Allier en France. Nous examinerons comment les associations locales s'appuient sur le patrimoine littéraire pour produire des lieux et des représentations des lieux dans un but de consommation touristique.

Keywords: Littérature; Tourisme; Allier; Patrimoine; Innovation Sociale

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Introduction

Literary tourism occupies a growing place in the broader sector of cultural tourism which itself is an important economic sector, particularly in France where tourism counts for 6.5% of the GDP. Between 1997 and 2007, demand for world cultural tourism has increased by 17%, and both the OECD and the World Tourism Organization calculate that the sector accounts for 40% of international tourism.

Literary tourism relates to the “travel to places famous for associations with books or authors” (Squire, 1993, p. 5). This definition has the merit of including “fictive” places – for example amusement parks – but is limited by the use of the term “book” which is not adapted to other literary forms (consider for example journalism, movie writing, etc). This is why Squire later modified her definition of literary tourism as tourism “associated with places celebrated for literary depictions and/or connections with literary figures” (1996, p. 119).

Even more inclusive is the definition later proposed by Nicola Watson (2009, p. 2) who describes literary tourism as “the interconnected practices of visiting and marking sites associated with writers and their work”. While this does not take into account temporary events, theaters, readings or autograph sessions, reading groups, or writing workshops for example, it has the merit of taking into account the performative aspect of literary tourism and implies that the praxis of literary tourism has the potential to attribute new meaning to places.

Even if scholarly attention to literary tourism is relatively recent, this should not be considered a new industry; it can be traced back at least to the seventeenth century and the “Grand Tour”, a mandatory cultural pilgrimage for young aristocrats through European prime cultural sites, from Paris to Naples, through Florence, Venice and Rome. In spatial terms, literary tourism concerns either specific points or routes and it consistently expands its power of attraction. This is especially true since the spread of experiential tourism and the adaptation of literary work to cinema (The Harry Potter saga, 2001, being the latest instance, but Interview with a vampire, 1994, or Eat, Pray, Love, 2010, have had similar attraction effect of New Orleans and Bali respectively). Recently, in a context of explosion of both the supply and demand for tourism, literary tourism became a niche, an originality and authenticity factor for this highly competitive economic sector.

Today, Europe and North America are the regions where the most literary tourists can be found (Robinson & Andersen, 2003) but this domain of cultural tourism is present and growing everywhere as shows the example of Bali, of the Heritage of Stefan Zweig in Petropolis, Brazil, or of Joseph Conrad in South Africa (Smith, 2012). Although the economic benefits of literary tourism have been demonstrated in some cases (O’Connor & Kim, 2013), the fact remains that literary tourism attractions that experience the highest success are based on a complementary tourism offer (Herbert, 2001). Best results seem to be achieved when mixed with other tourist activities: hiking and other sports industries, weddings, fishing, clothing, entertainment, etc. Other parts of the book industry might also be combined with tourist attractions: book fairs, signing sessions, rare book sellers meeting, publishers or authors lectures, and public readings.

Sometimes literary settings are also conceived as an interplay of senses through literature: one can eat Proust's famous madeleines staying at his favorite hotel, walk the steps of Joyce's characters in Dublin or listen to Victor Hugo's descriptions of Paris through an audioguide. Whatever the formula, literary tourism thus becomes a path to local development by providing access to local specificities as well as a way to preserve and circulate literary heritage *per se*.

France boasts hundreds of literary sites. The Federation of writers' houses counts no less than 361 recognized literary places or itineraries in the country. The most popular are, for example, the Jules Verne house in Amiens, the School Museum of Grand Meaulnes in Epineuil-le-Fleuriel (Cher), Victor Hugo in Villequier (Normandie), Marcel Proust in Illiers-Combray (Eure-et-Loir). This paper is concerned with a specific French department, Allier, which is unique in many regards. There, we can find a rich fabric of associations who defend the local literary heritage as well as a distinctive literary resource in terms of styles, places and eras covered. This constitutes a significant potential that would strengthen a niche in the literary tourist industry while enriching the relatively modest cultural offer of the department. A project for a writers' itinerary of Allier has gradually taken shape since 2010 and has taken the form, since June 2015, of a participatory research in social innovation funded by the Auvergne Regional Council. What follows is the description of how the literary heritage partners of Allier came together to establish a common platform to broadcast their activities, share knowledge and create a true literary route in Allier.

More specifically, my aim is to look at how the characteristics of social innovation and of local literary heritage have interacted to produce a specific place identity. I will first explore the notions of social innovation and heritage and then proceed to the choices made by the partners of the participatory research in the production of the itinerary.

1. Social innovation and heritage place building

There is something counter-intuitive in thinking of heritage through a participatory research in social innovation. By definition, social innovation seeks to provide a new answer to an unmet social need which is recognized by a collective (Tabaries, 2005). Conversely, heritage is more readily conceptualized as an object resistant to change and innovation. Perhaps it is even more so in the case of literary heritage, crystallized as it seems in its textual form. Moreover, when it comes to "great literature", the literary object, as publicly accessible as it may be, is under surveillance – albeit a well-meaning surveillance – by academic experts who limit possible interpretations and give or deny their imprimatur to past and present literary production.

The term social innovation is commonly used to refer "to innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and that are predominantly diffused through organizations whose primary purposes are social" (Mulgan, 2006, p. 146). It rests on a shared perception of an unmet social need and a desire to meet that need and therefore works toward an improvement in social conditions (Klein & al., 2016; Moulaert & al, 2013; Neumier, 2011). Values are

therefore an intrinsic part of social innovation, and motivating values can vary: increasing democratic participation, reducing poverty, improving the conditions of the disabled, creating more environmentally and socially sustainable conditions, etc. Whatever the motivations, they all share the desire to do things differently and a common trust between social actors. Social innovation also requires the creation of a learning dynamic, it requires constant monitoring and exchanges between actors in order to adjust action to conjuncture and fluctuating common goals. Social innovation is most often not the creation of an entirely new idea but rather the reorganization of existing elements, the unification of sectors or actors which were previously unrelated (Hillier & al., 2004).

My goal here is not to develop an exhaustive review of the notion of authenticity. One could for example refer to Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge (2000) but rather to situate possible imbrication points between authenticity and social innovation in place building. For our purpose, let's say authenticity can be defined on three large bases. First, it can be defined on the basis of intentions (Lemaire, 1994). In this instance, authenticity refers to a foundational point in time where the object, today thought of as heritage, was first created or put in function. This point in time might be set as a referent for authenticity. Second, it can be defined by symbolism. Here we can relate the notion to the idea of "spirit of place" or "genius loci" that is the capacity for place to evoke specific feelings (Petzet, 2008). Consequently, authenticity might relate to the capacity to evoke similar feelings or atmosphere as what has been socially accepted as original.

A third way to define authenticity could be to conceive it as a dynamic process, as a dialectics between past and present. This third conception is put forth in the Yamato declaration on Integrated Approaches for Safeguarding Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage (2006), which gave particular importance to the context in which heritage is encountered. It is also coherent with the Nara Declaration of ICOMOS (1994) and the Faro Declaration on the Council of Europe's Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue (2005) which promote greater transparency and inclusion of civil society in the process of defining the objects of heritage preservation as well as establishing the strategies put forth to do so. The view of heritage definition and management implies that heritage is a process where multiple social actors intervene. After all, "patrimonium", the latin source for "patrimoine", French for heritage, corresponds to the accumulation of goods from successive generations; not its conservation in an original state, but a continuous enrichment process. This is where social innovation and heritage meet.

Heritage is the result of a culture of persuasion (Carrithers, 2005) where scholars like Salvador Munoz-Vinas (2009) will propose to move "beyond authenticity" and consider the historical contingency of the process of heritage building. Authors such as Leyris (2007) will also mention a militant heritage ("patrimoine militant") and others such as Bondaz & al. (2012) will refer to alternative uses of heritage all showing that heritage is less an object (tangible or not) but rather an information (Négri, 2016) circulated and accepted by a sufficient number of social actors. In this light, the boundary between reality and fiction is blurred by the liberties taken with the development of tourism products.

Those liberties are inherent to postmodernity (Herbert, 1996; 2001; Marques & Cunha, 2013; Squire, 1996; Urry, 1990) and are also relevant to literary heritage. There is a constant dialogue between the writer's texts, the narrative attached to place by the author and its highlighted presence in the landscape by specific social actors (associations, museums that put on panels and organize literary activities) on the one side and the interpretations made by visitors who will in turn develop a new meaning for the texts and landscapes (Herbert, 2001).

This circular relation is of interest to Fawcett and Cormack (2001) who focussed on the study of the staging of the legacy of Anne of Green Gables in Prince Edward Island, Canada. They illustrate how the actors in charge of the development circulate a specific discourse. Fawcett and Cormack classify these discourse in modernist, rationalist or eclectic categories. Each of those relate well to the three views of authenticity presented here. The first category refers to the nostalgia for a past considered more authentic for which there would be only one possible interpretation, erudite and encyclopedic. In the second category, one or several elements are selected to highlight selected meanings (eg. in terms of national pride or ecological values). In the third case, the visitors are invited to build their own interpretation from a wide range of possible interpretations.

These interpretations can be literary, but not only so. Tourists often define their own experience by opposing it to what is felt to be experienced by other tourists, usually considered less authentic (Pearce & Moscardo, 1986; Redfoot, 1984). The interpretative freedom does not act alone, but is negotiated with a set of stereotypes (Williams, 2008): the reputation of a writer, the image of literary tourism, etc.

The same kind of negotiation is relevant to place identity (Massey, 1994). Place identity is defined by its materiality as well as a "web of meaning" (Creswell & Hoskin, 2008) perpetually shifting, constructed, negotiated, by actor in and outside of place. The emphasis put on this dynamic is coherent with the process-based approach of place identity and place branding proposed by Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) and also, we will see, with the negotiation process between the partners of the Writers' itinerary of Allier.

2. The case of Allier: a methodology for concertation

So what does happen when those actors unite to reach this shared goal of building place using literary heritage as an instrument? This research used a participatory method. This means that the academic actor was a participant in the identifying of social actors (associative or private) that have as their mission to preserve and circulate a writer's heritage in the Allier department as well as bringing them together around a table to discuss challenges and strategies for future development. In total, eleven actors were identified all with a specific writer and place.¹

This paper does not focus on the literary qualities of these writers. Suffice to mention that the styles vary greatly between Albert Bonneau who wrote cowboy adventures for young men and was also successful as a writer for Hollywood; Valéry Larbaud who

wrote poetry, novels and translated Joyce and Kafka; Emile Guillaumin who described peasant life in Allier; or Albert Londres who, as a journalist wrote from China, Argentina or North Africa. Some of those were quite known at a time but completely forgotten today (Montuses and Bonneau); some are known because their works are regularly included on school reading programmes (Alain Fournier, Charles-Louis Philippe); or because they became a symbol of quality journalism (Albert Londres); or access the pinnacle of literature (Sand, Joyce); or have often been adapted to the big screen (Fallet).

A nucleus of association (Montusès, Londres, Fallet and Philippe) were at the origin of the participatory research and contacted me in order to develop a research program in social innovation. I then proceeded to identify local actors of Allier who work on literary heritage. All agreed to participate in the project. The partners worked together to define the shape and content of a future writers trail for Allier.

The research methodology was articulated around a series of focus groups and individual interviews held between June 2015 and June 2016. Individuals from each of the association constituting the collective were interviewed in order to collect information on their own literary heritage project, their motivation as individuals, their challenges, their past and current projects and strategies. Then, once all the partners were identified, focus groups, 6 in total in the course of a year, were designed to discuss the common stakes and future strategies to be adopted by the collective. My role as a researcher was not only to collect information but, as is usual in participatory research of this kind, to be involved in the constitution of the network of partners.

All the associations are small – at most half dozen members actively involved in the activities – even if some of them have up to a couple of hundred members, sometimes scattered all around the world as in the case of Valery Larbaud, Albert Bonneau or Charles-Louis Philippe. Their financial means are scarce but, almost as a consequence since they do not have to answer to donators, they act independently of other institutions. The individuals composing each association usually have a university diploma. Overall, these characteristics are similar to what Saez (2005) has identified as the characteristics of cultural association in France except for the fact that their active members are older – always 50 years old or older.

3. The case of Allier: the common stakes

The core of the discussions was not so much to determine which features of a specific writer should be included or not in what would be classified as heritage (this was left to the judgment of each particular association) but to decide who should be counted as a partner from the start, and to share information on common challenges and strategies in order to define a concerted action. In this sense, the conception of authenticity of heritage implicit to the project is compatible with the dialectic view, and with social innovation literature, where heritage diagnostic (Vadelorge, 2006) emerges from a bottom-up process. Being included in the group implicitly gives the partners a heritage status to the eyes of the others. As such, heritage becomes a place of sociability. It is

not a value to be given by an expert, but an attribute constituted by the sheer participation in the project. This is coherent with views of social innovation as an enhancement of social capital, a change in the quality of social relations within a community or an organization (Hillier, Moulaert & Nussbaumer, 2004). Here, the change rests in the exchange of information and common definition of stakes and strategies. The issues raised by the partners greatly converge and are fourfold:

3.1 Cultural economy and political attention

The totality of the interviewed partners perceive an almost complete indifference on the part of politicians regarding the future preservation and diffusion of the heritage they defend. Nevertheless, municipal administrations do provide financial support. In some cases they fund the running costs of the facilities, for example the Charles-Louis-Philippe Museum, the Emile Guillaumin Museum and the James Joyce Centre. Still, the general French political and economic context as well as the particular financial situation of Allier does not offer numerous opportunities for public investment in the cultural sector. All the partners believe that literary heritage deserves more attention from local administration since they feel it constitutes a real potential for development.

3.2 Finding new visitors and tourists

In the context of what seems to be an ever expanding world tourism, cultural tourism is often conceived of as a way to avoid the perverse effects of tourism in general (Cousin, 2006). Cultural tourism is seen by some actors, including the partners, as insuring a “good practice”, more respectful of local customs and practices as opposed to “bad” tourism. Regardless, the economic potential of tourism development of Allier’s literary legacy must be nuanced by the fact that most literary tourists are in the age group of 50 and over, women, working in the service sector. The same trend has been observed in other literary sites (Squire, 1993; 1994a; 1994b; Herbert, 1996; 2001). This is both an opportunity and a challenge. An opportunity because there seems to be plenty of room for attracting new categories of visitors, but a challenge, because literature and literary places do not offer the spectacular experiences that characterize the contemporary tourist markets. In fact, the literary museums of Allier attract no more than a few hundred visitors each year, a few dozen in the case of the Bonneau museum.

In addition, research shows that most of the time visitors to literary places are not primarily motivated by literary reasons. Literature can still contribute to a set of secondary motivations, claims Herbert (1996), for example visitors might be interested in seeing the setting of a novel they read as children but what seems to be the most important motivation is that the fact of identifying a place as literary gives it more

authenticity to the eyes of the visitors. Herbert adds that tourists can be educated, informed of the attachment of an author to a site. Territorial marketing can in this respect play a role by assigning labels associated with literary heritage to change perceptions of authenticity.

3.3 Educational outreach programmes

A variant of the search for new visitors, the desire of the associations is to reach more schools and educators, particularly at the elementary level, in order to widen their clientele and the age groups of visitors. All partners have, at one time or another, organized activities with the education sector (readings, new editions of exhausted book illustrated by students, visits of their writer's house by school groups). However, they all report on the difficulty of turning these activities into a regular programme. The desire to appeal to younger local age groups should also be considered as a demonstration of how important for local identity the association believes their literary heritage is. All feel that knowledge of local literary history is essential in the building of local pride.

3.4 Preserving the identity

Each writer has his own style, each literary work its characteristics, each place its personality. Subsequently, when it comes to working conjunctly, some associations fear losing a part of their identity and freedom of action. Some have existed for several decades (Friends of Ernest Montusès since 1987, Friends of Valery Larbaud since 1957, Friends of Charles-Louis Philippe since 1936...) and have developed operating procedures shaped by adversity. Some have acquired economic independence as in the case of the Friends of Valery Larbaud. They fear their resources might profit the others without equivalent gains on their part. The case of the two associations preserving the legacy of Albert Londres is significant in this regard: one, *Sur les pas d'Albert Londres*, establishes its work on the ideological heritage and promotes good journalistic practices and humanism. The other, *Maison Albert Londres*, seeks to preserve the architectural heritage marking the presence of the author in Vichy by renovating his now derelict house and making it accessible to the public as an art center. Even though both partners are defending the heritage of the same writer, some of their members see each other as competitors in the incessant search for funding.

In terms of heritage, one can note that none of the stakes put forward by the partners concerns their literary work. If it relates sometimes to the writer's tangible heritage

(preserving of the remains of a house or identifying sites of passage), it is not systematic. In fact, during interviews or focus groups, some respondents even admitted not particularly liking the work of the writer for whose memory they are supposed to work. In fact, most would say that even if they can appreciate the aesthetic importance of a specific writer, their interest in them is more attributable to his importance for the local history and its potential for possible social and economic development. The case of James Joyce Friends in Saint-Gérand-le-Puy is revealing: here, the members of the association explicitly declare that Joyce's literary style constitutes more of a problem than a resource. Much of the public conceives of Joyce's work as hermetic and, hence, is less likely to be interested in its passage through the village. Their goal is to put more emphasis on his life in the village and attract younger visitors by constructing a children's activity based on Joyce's book for children, *The Cat and the Devil*, or having their own version of *Bloomsday*,² which includes music performances readings and dance.

The propensity to conceive the importance of local literary heritage not as a value in itself, but as a territorial resource instrumental to local development may find its origin in two elements. The first one is the life course of the individuals working on Allier's literary heritage. The second one is the ideological content of several of the selected writers. Some scholars have already stressed the importance of defining "who makes heritage" (Gravaris-Barbas, 2005; Landel, 2007). In that regard, it is interesting to note that the individuals who constitute the membership of the associations in the project share a militant past. Two thirds of the associations have at least one member of their personnel formerly or currently involved in politics or syndicalism. One has even been elected under the French Communist Party.

This life experience finds a coherent string in the fact that some of the most prominent Allier's writers were also outspoken politician or social commentators. Charles-Louis Philippe, Londres, Guillaumin and Montusès have tightly integrated social criticism in their written works. Montusès was an activist of the first hour of the Socialist Party in France and Guillaumin co-founded the first French peasant union as well as the *Credit Agricole*. These authors, if they are known for the literary quality of their work also embody, at least in the eyes of associations and in those of many inhabitants of Allier, a kind of militant heritage (Leyris, 2007), which draws part of its value from historical power struggle and serve as examples for present political challenges.

Heritage has consequently less to do with literary text than with the markers of the passage of the artist in place. This is conceived of as adding a unique identity to place. Such a literary attribute to place should, in the eyes of the partners, serve as much as a niche product for tourist as a factor of local pride and optimism for local residents, that has the potential, in turn, to revitalize parts of Allier.

In regards of those shared challenges, the partners have decided to orient their actions around four elements. Each one modifies place as well as the relationship between the partners.

4. The partners' strategic choices for building place

4.1 Offering more than literature

All partners recognized the importance of offering products other than the literature of their writer. This choice aims to broaden the visitor experience and to diversify the profiles of potential visitors.

In addition to the global trend that extended the number of objects, tangible or intangible, that could be incorporated in the category of heritage, the 1990s saw a trend of increasing demand for experiential tourism (Gombault & Bourgeon-Renault, 2014), that means opportunities for the tourist to actually participate in the making of the touristic product instead of being confined to the role of spectator, passive witnesses of the landscape or spectacle. This phenomenon can be conceived of as a way for the tourists to exert a minimal control in a context where the number of products offered has multiplied. Furthermore, the immersive experience becomes a proof of authenticity and allows the visitor to make a selection among all the products offered. Through immersive tourism, the visitor is hoping to experiment and ultimately be transformed by an authentic product (Camus, 2014).

According to the work of Herbert (1996, 2001), the artist is not the main reason for the pilgrimage to literary places. Among the reasons listed one can find other factors such as aesthetic qualities of place itself, its amenities, good company, reputation that was built from previous visitors or the sheer fact of wanting to be able to say we have actually been to a famous writers' home. Tourists "want to buy feelings and not products," wrote Trauer (2006, p. 183), as such, the visitors does look for links between the place s/he visits and the work or life of a writer, but s/he is free to find inspiration in other kind of experiences.

Among the partners, some have a museums or a writer's house, some offer mobile activities (the Compagnie en la is a theater company that performs a play from local author Philippe Valette on a 1.5km rural itinerary), and others offer both (Sand, Larbaud, Fallet, Guillaumin all have a specific place and an itinerary for a day and up to ten days hiking experience). By focusing more on the notion of itinerary, the associations would like to draw visitors who might be more interested in hiking or cycling, but would be receptive to the particularities that literature would confer to place. The concept of literary route that was ultimately chosen by the partners, and is intended to give a dynamic that they hope will be more attractive. Other activities considered are a movie festival in each of the museums and a bicycle race between two of the literary sites.

4.2 Create a shared calendar of events

One of the first approaches chosen by the partners for a common writer's itinerary was the sharing of activities. Each partner has to invest a lot of time in creating an activity while its infrastructure or its financial and time resources are limited. This means that

most of the time only one or two activities are organized each summer. In addition, the captive local audience of each partner is relatively limited and some have observed a gradual disinterest of the inhabitants with regard to the local writer and its museum. By delocalizing as many activities as possible between the partners, it is hoped that the writers' itinerary will become more visible to the public. This has several advantages: first of all, development costs will not increase; the activities will circulate between each site and will thus fill the blanks in a calendar that was previously mostly empty when all the partners were acting independently. Second, the local public will consequently be offered new cultural products to "consume". It is susceptible to make them visit the local museums again. By coming back they will discover not only the local writer but also a partner's writer. This, in turn, might entice them to visit a neighboring village or the whole writers' itinerary. In short, place and itinerary would become more dynamic and as the partners develop their cooperation and networking, potential donors can actually see the effect of the writers' trail on the territory and neighboring businesses. Restaurants, cafes, shops and other tourist services might also see the advantages of having links with a network that ensures greater flow of clients. Finally, this sharing of activities among all the partners will be particularly beneficial to the association that have no specific place such as the association The Friends of Ernest Montusès which does have exhibit material, but no venue to serve as host.

4.3 Create a new association

The partners have chosen to create a new association that would bring together and be responsible for the perpetuation of a writers' itinerary of Allier. Within the realm of social innovation, this new structure is important because it embodies the learning dynamic inherent to its definition. The networking and sharing of experiences that the new association allows becomes a resource in itself. It is in this spirit that the new association is also conceived by the partners as providing access to new sources of funding for regional development. Alone, neither partner could aspire to European grants nor from the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region; by amplifying the scale of their actions going from multiple municipal literary heritage actors to an Allier writers' itinerary association, this allows them to enter national and European calls for projects.

4.4 Create a common route of writers

The creation of a literary route, which brings together partners, was a proposal from the outset. The interest is cultural and geographical in nature. Spatially, this makes it possible to break the axis of the National highway that would otherwise allow travelers to cross the Allier without stopping to explore the department. Creating and promoting a Writers' itinerary of Allier would serve as an incentive for potential travelers to engage in local literary heritage, point by point through the department, while

choosing where to stop according to their own tastes in terms of experiences and literary styles: for the more urban of travelers the writers of Vichy and Moulins, for adepts of hiking, George Sand and Guillaumin, for example. Each stage of the journey also becomes an opportunity to announce the offer of activities in the area or develop non-literary elements (local restaurants, architectural attractions, thermal baths, etc). These four sets of actions relate to heritage as demand-derived, instead of being determined by experts. They are oriented at contemporary uses, not at the strict preservation of a literary heritage that would be conceived of as finite. On the contrary, the fact that heritage definition and actions are the result of concertation, literary resource becomes infinite and ubiquitous as the only limit to its scope depends on the density of cooperation between the partners. This correlates closely to the view of heritage and authenticity as a dynamic process (Ashworth, 2007) as well as to territorial application of social innovations (Moulaert & al., 2013).

Conclusion

John Agnew's seminal work (1987) on place defines it as the combined effect of three elements: location, locale and sense of place. Where location corresponds to the geographical and historical setting for action, locale is a setting for social interactions and sense of place is related to the structures of feelings associated to the site. The project of a writers' itinerary of Allier has seen a modification of all three elements. The writers' itinerary substantially expands the geographical setting of each local association as the delocalization of activities to and from the other partners fills the blanks of the seasonal calendar. The social interactions also evolve to include actors that share a common set of challenges and goals. Finally, the sense of place, it is hoped by the association, will be transformed by making Allier's literary heritage more visible in the landscape and more appreciated by the inhabitants.

The commercial success of the Allier writers' itinerary or even its long term existence is uncertain. No shared source of income has been identified yet which leaves many questions unanswered. The association with the largest economic resource is the most cautious in its approach of the project: will it not lose part of its subsidies to the profit of the other without gaining much in return? All the partners are worried they might lose some of their identity through a wider organization. Each would like "their" writer to occupy the front space. The discussion regarding the production of a flyer to be distributed to visitors through the Tourist Information Centre was in this regard telling as all the partners were vying to have the name of their writer, the pictures of their writer's home or museum and their activities occupy the most space of the leaflet.

Whatever apparent contradiction may exist within the assembly of the concepts of social innovation and heritage preservation, eleven social actors, previously all working separately on the preservation of a writer's memory were brought together under that

project. By creating an encompassing association those eleven small associations manage to share their challenges and articulate common objectives. Creating a writers' itinerary of Allier constitutes a substantial innovation in terms of learning dynamic, networking and horizontality inherent to social innovation. In that sense, what innovation brings to heritage is the ability for sites of literary heritage to connect to other sites of literary heritage. It could be argued that future definitions of literary tourism might include references not only to the act of traveling to literary settings, but also to the strategies of local actors that instrumentalize literary resources. Conversely, heritage contributes to social innovation by giving identity, anchoring it in its socio-territorial base enriching the sense of place and impulsing a new dynamic of exchanges between literary heritage associations and sites inside Allier.

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¹ They are Albert Londres and Association sur les pas d'Albert Londres and Association Maison Albert Londres in Vichy; Charles Louis Philippe and Association des Amis de Charles-Louis Philippe in Cérilly; Valery Larbaud and Association des Amis de Valery Larbaud in Vichy ; Albert Bonneau and Association des Amis d'Albert Bonneau in Moulins; James Joyce and Association James Joyce in Saint-Gerand-le-Puy; Jeanne Cressange and Association Pré-textes in Yzeure; René Fallet and Association Agir en Pays Jalignois in Jaligny-sur-Besbre; Ernest Montusès and Associations des Amis d'Ernest Montusès in Montluçon ; George Sand and Association du Sentier des Maîtres Sonneurs in Huriel; Philippe Valette and La Compagnie en la in Saint-Pourçain-sur-Sioule ; Émile Guillaumin and Association du Musée Émile Guillaumin et Association des Amis d'Émile Guillaumin in Ygrande.

² The Bloomsday is a celebration of James Joyce consisting of a partial recreation of the events contained in his major work Ulysses. It is celebrated every 16th of June in Dublin, but has also seen editions throughout the world, for example in Philadelphia, Detroit, Montreal, Paris, Szombathely and Sydney.