Franz Schafranski †

The use of cultural heritage as a resource for developing tourism in the border areas of the Greater Region and the Upper Rhine region

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THE USE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A RESOURCE FOR DEVELOPING TOURISM IN THE BORDER AREAS OF THE GREATER REGION AND THE UPPER RHINE REGION

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Abstract
Cultural tourism is one of the most quickly growing tourism segments. Cultural heritage is an important resource for developing cultural tourism. In rural areas, tourism plays an important role in safeguarding employment, income and supply structures, but in contrast to the situation in urban regions, resources for developing cultural tourism are scarcely used. As the border regions are largely rural in character, the question arises as to the role cultural tourism and cultural heritage currently play there. This paper investigates the use of cultural heritage in the tourism sector in the border areas of the Greater Region and the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine and uses this as a basis for proposals concerning the further utilisation of cultural heritage as a resource for developing tourism.

Keywords
Cultural heritage – cultural tourism – strategy development – inventories – network creation – touristic value – new information and communication technologies

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1   Introduction

Under UNESCO's 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, the protection and preservation of cultural heritage has become more important in recent decades, including in spatial development. The World Heritage Convention focuses on cultural heritage sites such as monuments, ensembles and sites, including cultural landscapes, which are of exceptional importance and are to be preserved as part of the world heritage of all humankind.[1]

Since the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, 1,031 sites around the world have been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. In Germany alone, there are currently (March 2017) 41 World Heritage Sites (German UNESCO Commission 2017). The interest in recognising cultural heritage sites as a World Heritage Site seems unbroken. One reason is certainly that obtaining World Heritage status is expected to not only improve the protection of cultural heritage, but also to have economic effects, in particular on the promotion of tourism.[2]

World Heritage Sites are a considerable tourist attraction, especially for international visitors. According to the German National Tourist Board (GNTB), the UNESCO World Heritage designation is an international quality seal in the cultural tourism segment. Given the outstanding significance of World Heritage sites for tourism and for positioning Germany as an attractive cultural travel destination, the German National Tourist Board, together with the German UNESCO Commission and the German UNESCO World Heritage Sites Association *(UNESCO Welterbestätten Deutschland e.V.)* even devoted an entire themed year to the World Heritage sites under the motto 'UNESCO World Heritage – Sustainable Cultural and Nature Tourism' in 2014 (GNTB 2015).

Yet World Heritage sites represent only a small part of the rich cultural heritage of Germany and Europe. The inventories of elements that have been compiled for the creation of cultural landscape registers give an impression of the diversity of cultural heritage in Germany (see e.g. Schmidt/Meyer/Schottke et al. 2006; Wöbse 1994).

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1   With the Convention for the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage of 20 April 2006, UNESCO extended the protection and preservation of World Heritage Sites to include intangible cultural heritage (cultural and social practices, techniques, knowledge and oral traditions, e.g. folk dances, fairy tales, legends, customs, culinary customs).

2   The inclusion of cultural heritage sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List is always based on values. The decision is taken based on various selection criteria (outstanding universal significance, uniqueness, authenticity, integrity, representative nature, etc.). These selection criteria are objective criteria in appearance only. Tauschek (2013) rightly describes the definition of cultural heritage underlying the selection as normative and essentialising; in his opinion, this also applies at national and local levels. What UNESCO holds to be the interest of the entire world corresponds to the public interest at national and local levels. A determination of what constitutes cultural heritage or not, based on the selection criteria, is only possible through a negotiation process among the parties involved. Tauschek contrasts the normative and essentialising definitions to definitions based on a cultural studies approach, according to which cultural heritage is a 'broad and slippery term' and a theoretical construct. It is not necessary to go into the conceptualisation of cultural heritage in cultural studies any further here; it can simply be stated in this context that the process of identifying and selecting cultural heritage sites should be comprehensible and transparent, and the values which form the basis for the decision should be disclosed.

Depending on the perspective (global level, European level, national and regional level), alternative or additional features of cultural heritage may be emphasised. From a touristic point of view, not all cultural heritage sites listed in the above-mentioned inventories of elements are equally suitable to serve as focal points for tourism and the associated marketing. However, the overviews form a basis for a systematic survey of potential sites which are culturally relevant.

As cultural tourism is considered to be one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism markets (Council of European Union 2011), the question arises as to how cultural heritage as a whole can be better exploited as a resource to develop tourism. This is all the more important in rural regions, where awareness of the importance of cultural heritage as a development resource and of the opportunities offered by the promotion of cultural tourism appears to be rudimentary (Drda-Kühn 2015). According to research by the German National Tourist Board, cities benefit more from culture-oriented travel than do rural areas (GNTB 2015). The initiatives 'Altenkirchen Cultural Tourism Network' (Drda-Kühn/Wiegand 2009; Seuser 2015), 'KIRA – Cultural Tourism for Heilbronn-Franken' (Kultur und Arbeit e.V. 2016) and 'HISTCAPE' (Directorate-General Cultural Heritage of Rhineland-Palatinate 2014) are striving to change this trend.

The largely rural character of border regions gives cause to examine the role and significance of cultural tourism and cultural heritage in current cross-border cooperation. To this end, this paper addresses the exploitation of cultural heritage in the cross-border development of tourism in the border regions of the Greater Region and Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine.[3] The aim is to illustrate the status quo of the exploitation of cultural heritage as a resource for the development of tourism and to provide recommended actions on this basis. This paper explores the following issues in particular:

> Which European programmes and activities set up a framework for the exploitation of cultural heritage as a development resource?

> What importance is attached to cultural heritage and cultural tourism in the programmes and strategies for the development of border regions?

> What are the institutional prerequisites for the development of cultural tourism?

> How is cultural heritage marketed by the tourism industry?

> How can cultural heritage be used even more effectively as a resource for the development of tourism?

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3   The cultural and creative sector, which can make a significant contribution to promoting cultural tourism through its activities, remains outside the scope of this paper in full knowledge of the fact that the boundaries between the development of cultural heritage for tourism purposes and the cultural and creative sector are fluid.

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2 European programmes and activities addressing the use of cultural heritage as a development resource

At the European level, a number of programmes and activities address the protection, conservation and use of cultural heritage as a development resource. These include the EU's European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) of 1999 (BBR [Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning] 2001), the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society of 2005 (Council of Europe 2005) and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 (European Union 2011). Like the ESDP, the Territorial Agenda of the European Union emphasises the importance of cultural heritage as a development resource and supports a careful, cautious approach to cultural heritage. The Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 states in Chapter II on 'Challenges and potentials for territorial development: Driving forces and their territorial aspects' under No. 23: 'Natural and cultural heritage are parts of territorial capital and identity. Ecological values, environmental quality and cultural assets are crucial to well-being and to economic prospects and offer unique development opportunities' (European Union 2011: 7).

The European Commission presented a report in 2014 outlining and explaining the European Union's many programmes and activities related to cultural heritage (European Commission 2014). For example, in point 7.1 on 'Tourism, enterprise and industry' of the report, the following activities are listed:

> Statement by the European Commission on 'Europe, the world's no. 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe'

> Agreement between the European Union and the Council of Europe on the joint management of the development of European cultural routes

> Testing new approaches to support sustainable tourism in rural areas and to provide access to cultural heritage through the European Mobile and Mobility Industries Alliance and the European Creative Industries Alliance.

The report aims to contribute to the development of a strategic approach to the preservation and promotion of Europe's heritage. It provides a wide range of information on the European Union's policies, legislation, programmes and funding opportunities, which are important for the development of cultural heritage. It also seeks to offer a response to the conclusions of the Council of the European Union on Education, Youth, Culture and Sport on 'Cultural Heritage as a Strategic Resource for a Sustainable Europe' (Council of the European Union 2014).

The conclusions of the Council of the European Union on Education, Youth, Culture and Sport recognise, among other things, that cultural heritage

> plays an important role in creating and enhancing social capital because it has the capacity to offer possibilities to develop skills, knowledge, creativity and innovation;

> has an important economic impact because, among other things, it constitutes a powerful driving force of inclusive local and regional development and creates considerable externalities, in particular through the enhancement of sustainable cultural tourism;

> plays a specific role in achieving the EU's Europe 2020 Strategy goals because it has social and economic impact and contributes to environmental sustainability;

> cuts across several public policies, such as those related to regional development, social cohesion, agriculture, environment, tourism, education, the digital agenda, research and innovation.

The Council calls on the EU member states and the European Commission to contribute to the preservation and promotion of Europe's cultural heritage. In summary, this shows that, from the point of view of European policy and institutions, cultural heritage is an important resource for the development of Europe and should be used accordingly, including in cross-border cooperation.

The following analyses explore whether and to what extent cultural heritage is used as a resource for developing tourism in the Greater Region and in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine (TMO) in the areas close to the border. To render the results comparable, the analyses of the border regions were carried out on the basis of the same work steps. Firstly, the existing policy programmes and strategies in the border regions were analysed with regard to their statements on cultural tourism and cultural heritage to flesh out the political importance attached to these aspects in the sense of an existing framework for objectives and action. In the second step, the institutions responsible for developing cross-border tourism were identified. The third step was to analyse the websites of those institutions with a view to determining whether and how cultural heritage is marketed for tourism.[4]

3   Cultural heritage and cultural tourism in cross-border cooperation in the Greater Region

a   Programmes and strategies

The following programmes and strategies address issues relating to the development of the Greater Region which are relevant to the use of cultural heritage as a development resource:

> The Charter for Cultural Cooperation in the Saar-Lor-Lux-Trier/Western Palatinate Region (1998)

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4   In the case of the Greater Region, this concerns the website of the project office of the INTERREG IV A project on developing a transnational marketing strategy for tourism in the Greater Region *(Aufbau eines transnationalen Marketingkonzepts für den Tourismus in der Großregion)* and, in the case of the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine, the website of the project office for the INTERREG IV A project on the Upper Rhine Valley.

> Recommendations of the Interregional Parliamentary Council (IPC) on the development of tourism from 2003 (Interregional Parliamentary Council 2003)

> Vision for the future in 2020, prepared by the Zukunftsbild 2020 Political Commission 2003 *(Zukunftsbild 2020 Political Commission 2003)*

The Charter for Cultural Cooperation aims to intensify cultural dialogue and cross-border cooperation in all areas of cultural life. Cultural exchanges in the Greater Region should be promoted with particular attention to regional or national cultural diversity. The development of cultural initiatives and the agreement of future projects should, where possible, take into account factors contributing to economic and tourist benefits for the region as a whole and for enterprises engaged in the cultural sector in particular. These objectives are to be achieved by

> developing and linking cultural databases for the creation of a cross-border information system, and

> developing cross-border cultural hiking trails to familiarise visitors with an appreciation of the common historical heritage, in particular the industrial heritage in the Greater Region.

As part of its recommendations on the development of tourism in the Greater Region, the Interregional Parliamentary Council welcomes the expansion of tourism as a location factor for the Greater Region. The Council considers the coordinated, target-group-specific marketing of potential tourism focal points to be an important cultural and economic stimulus for the future of the Greater Region. The relevant tourism administrations are invited to take the steps proposed in the 2003 tourism study to interlink the tourism products of the sub-regions in overarching marketing strategies and to jointly market the focal points identified as promising (including culture and enjoyment, and tangible world history (bringing cultural heritage to life)) in a target group-oriented manner. It also recommends setting up a central agency for tourism marketing.

The *Zukunftsbild 2020* strategy postulates the vision of a cultural community of diversity in the heart of Europe for 2020. The Greater Region is to grow together into a common cultural area, and cultural tourism is to play a role in enhancing the image of the Greater Region in this regard.

b   Institutional prerequisites

In April 2008, the Ministers of Culture of the Greater Region established the *Espace Culturel Grande Région* association, which is based in Luxembourg. The association aims to:

> facilitate dialogue on the regional approaches to cross-border cooperation;

> highlight the wealth, diversity and specific characteristics of culture and cultural heritage;

> present the Greater Region as a new, unique and cohesive cultural area *(Espace Culturel Grande Région 2017)*.

The purview of this association includes the development of common strategies for cultural policy in the Greater Region, the development of common action areas between the fields of culture, education and related areas of work, the stimulation and monitoring of cross-border cultural projects, and the formation and professionalisation of competence networks.

At their third conference in December 2010, the Ministers of Culture of the Greater Region decided to financially secure the work of the association in order to guarantee its continued existence and ability to act. The aim is to enable the association to fulfil its tasks, which include making use of all relevant regional, national and European funding opportunities for its work.

Cultural heritage and its touristic value play a rather minor role in the completed and ongoing cross-border projects to promote culture in the Greater Region. Nevertheless, the projects presented on the website are to a considerable extent important for the tourism marketing of the Greater Region. Yet, the marketing of the cultural highlights in the sense of promoting cultural tourism is clearly not one of the tasks of the association.

The marketing of tourism of the Greater Region started with the INTERREG IV A project 'Building a transnational marketing strategy for tourism in the Greater Region' with tourism organisations from Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland (*Tourismus Zentrale Saarland GmbH* 2017). The project is based on the idea of developing a joint tourism marketing strategy for the Greater Region as a destination as part of the *Zukunftsbild 2020* perspective of the Summit Commission, which identifies the 'need for the joint marketing of tourism', among other things. The objectives of the project include engaging in common strategic tourism marketing for the Greater Region, the development of innovative communication measures, for example with modern information and communication technologies, the exploitation of endogenous potential and existing offerings, and the creation of regional effects (additional creation of value), especially in the tertiary sector.

c   Tourism marketing of cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is marketed in various publications (e.g. supplements in major daily newspapers on the topic of city breaks, brochures on various cultural themes such as 'Architecture and modern art', 'Parks, gardens, castles and palaces', 'Europe in the Greater Region', 'Industrial culture', 'Music') as well as on the website of the project office. The website highlights suggestions for cultural trips in the Greater Region, which are organised by theme with the corresponding cultural heritage sites (see Table 1).

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The cultural heritage sites listed in Table 1 are briefly described on the *Tourism in the Greater Region* website and in each case links are provided for more detailed information. In the 'Service' category, brochures can also be viewed or ordered via the website on cultural attractions in the Greater Region (e.g. 'Parks, gardens, castles and palaces', 'Culture', 'Experience the Greater Region', 'Industrial culture'). As an additional service, links are provided to the 'Plurio' cultural portal and the 'Fortress Cities in the Greater Region' network.

Themes for cultural trips	Number and nature of the cultural heritage sites presented
Romans and Celts	18 cultural heritage sites, including the Roman Villa Borg archaeological park and the Roman road network
Castles, palaces, fortresses	50 cultural heritage sites, including Fels Castle near Fiels, Verdun, Maginot Line, Château de Lunéville, Hambach Castle, Battle of Waterloo
Industrial culture	18 cultural heritage sites, including Parc du Haut-Fourneau U4, Meurin Roman mine, the industrial park and railway station at Fond-de-Gras
UNESCO World Heritage	16 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and 13 other sites, including Völklingen ironworks, Roman monuments, boat lifts on the Canal du Centre
Religion & spirituality	21 cultural heritage sites, including Notre Dame Cathedral in Tournai, Maria Laach Benedictine Abbey, the Jewish Museum in Rashi House
Local customs & festivals	9 sites and events, including Mainz Carnival Museum, Saar Spectacle, Christmas markets in the Greater Region
Museums	34 museums, including Saar Historical Museum, Historical Museum on the River – Hildegard von Bingen, 'Cultur Boulevard' Ardennes, Grand Curtius
Art	17 sites, including IKOB – Museum for Contemporary Art, Centre Pompidou-Metz, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck
Music & theatre	10 sites and events, including Chateau de Haroué – the Open Air Opera, Saarland State Theatre, Luxembourg Philharmonic
Architectural monuments	6 cultural heritage sites, including Place Royale architecture in Saarbrücken, Porta Nigra in Trier, the Imperial Quarter of Metz, Liege-Guillemins Central Station
Nature, science & technology	20 cultural heritage sites, including lava domes and lava cellars in Mendig, La Pendule clock museum in Blieskastel, Musée Tudor in Rosport
Tradition	14 cultural heritage sites, including Maison Garnier Thiébaut, Raeren Pottery Museum, Villeroy & Boch adventure centre

Table 1: Tourism marketing of cultural heritage sites in the Greater Region / Source: The author, based on the Tourism in the Greater Region website (Tourismus Zentrale Saarland GmbH 2017)[5]

5   Tourism in the Greater Region website: http://www.tourismus-grossregion.eu/ (14 March 2017).

d   Other cultural heritage sites and cultural features relevant for the tourism marketing of the Greater Region

The cultural heritage of the Greater Region is unquestionably rich and varied. The website for tourism marketing of the Greater Region lists many cultural heritage sites, which are deemed important by the participants for the development of cultural tourism throughout the entire region. With the exception of the cultural landscapes included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, the tourism marketing of the Greater Region has largely ignored cultural landscapes.

Cultural landscapes, especially historical cultural landscapes, are an important aspect of cultural heritage and are thus of exceptional importance from a tourist point of view. Wöbse aptly describes the impact of experiencing cultural land-scapes as follows: 'Historical cultural landscapes bear witness to the way previous generations treated nature and the landscape and convey a picture of the state of science and technology at that time. They permit conclusions to be drawn about the way our ancestors related to and interacted with nature and express their lifestyle, needs and opportunities. They provide vivid examples of culture and history, convey impressions of former lifestyles, former human environments, and to the extent that they continue to be tangible, are an important aspect of our contemporary experi-ence of home' (Wöbse 1994: 8 et seq.). According to the German National Tourist Board, landscape and culture are among the most important quality criteria for Germany as a tourist destination (GNTB 2015: 70).

In order to promote cultural tourism in the Greater Region, historical cultural landscapes are of particular importance. It therefore stands to reason that cultural landscapes would also be highlighted in the cross-border development of tourism (Leibenath/Darbi 2007; Resin/Peters 2008). The Federal State Development Programme of Rhineland-Palatinate (LEP IV) identifies 17 historical cultural land-scapes of national importance, of which the following are close to the border: Bitburger Gutland/Ferschweiler Plateau, Moselle Valley, Saar Valley, Upper Nahe Valley, Haardrand, Upper Rhine Valley (Ministry of the Interior and Sport 2008: 182 et seq.).

In addition to historical cultural landscapes, nature parks in Germany have also thus far been omitted from the marketing. Nature parks are particularly suitable for recreation because of their scenic qualities. The objectives of nature parks include the development of sustainable tourism and the protection and preservation of cultural landscapes with their biotopes and biodiversity. Figure 1 shows the nature parks in the Greater Region, some of which are cross-border.

The marketing of cultural heritage sites in the Greater Region (see Table 1) also omits the *Gärten ohne Grenzen* (Gardens without Borders) network, which is promising from the perspective of cultural tourism, and the cultural routes designated by the Council of Europe.
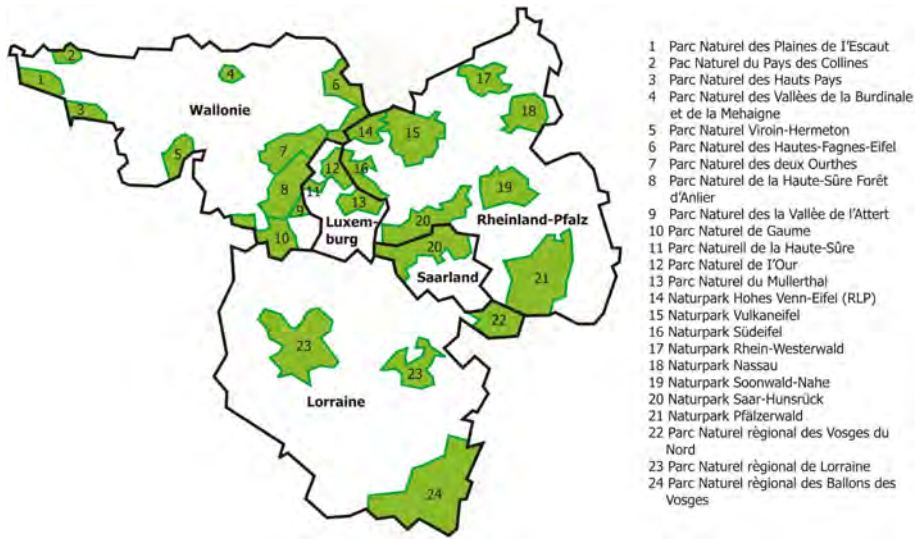
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*Fig. 1: Nature parks in the Greater Region (as of 2017) / Source: The author, based on the website of the
steering committee of the geographic information system for the Greater Region (GIS-GR)[6] and of the
Mullerthal[7] and Vulkaneifel nature parks[8]*

The Gardens without Borders network consists of 23 gardens from different eras and
with different themes in Germany, France and Luxembourg. The aim is to revive the
garden tradition of eastern France, Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate. It evolved from
the cross-border cooperation between the Saarland, the Moselle *Département* and
Luxembourg. Project funding from the European Union made it possible to revive
existing gardens and create new gardens. Many gardens are located near cultural
heritage sites or have strong cultural and historical links (e.g. Roman gardens,
Baroque gardens) (*Saarschleifenland Tourismus GmbH/Moiselle Tourisme* 2017).

The cultural routes of the Council of Europe that pass through the Greater Region are
the Way of St. James, the circular trails of Wenceslas and Vauban (Route of the
Fortified Towns of the Greater Region), the Mozart Ways, the St. Martin of Tours
route, the Via Regia, the Iter Vitis Route and the European Route of Ceramics (Council
of Europe 2016).

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6   *GIS-GR* Steering Committee website:
    http://www.gis-gr.eu/portal/themen-und-karten/umwelt/naturparke.html (31 March 2017).

7   Mullerpark nature park website:
    https://www.naturpark-mellerdall.lu/en/the-nature-parc/ (8 April 2021).

8   Vulkaneifel nature park website:
    https://www.geopark-vulkaneifel.de/en/ (8 April 2021).

4   Cultural heritage and cultural tourism in cross-border cooperation in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine

a   Programmes and strategies

Of particular importance for the development of the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine are:

> the founding declaration on the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine of 2010 and

> the Strategy 2020 for the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine.

The founding declaration, which launched the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine, postulates that the Upper Rhine must expand its strengths, fully exploit all the potential of its territory and also support the development of new cooperation dynamics. Platforms and networks are to be established, the existing potentials are to be fully exploited and the available resources are to be pooled (Ministry of the Interior and Sport in Rhineland-Palatinate 2017).

The development strategy of the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine rests on the four pillars of science, the economy, civil society and politics. The relevant publications on the development strategy include statements on culture, but not on cultural tourism (Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine 2013; Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine, undated). The involvement of civil society in the development of the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine is to be achieved through:

> the (re)discovery of the common identity of the region's inhabitants with reference to the common historical, cultural and linguistic heritage of the region

> the promotion of culture as a unifying link which supports the dynamics of the Upper Rhine.[9]

It can be concluded that cultural tourism and cultural heritage do not play as important a role in these programmes and strategies as they do in the Greater Region. They are not explicitly thematised. However, the objective stated in the founding declaration of making full use of the existing potential can be interpreted as meaning that cultural heritage should also be used as a resource for developing tourism in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine.

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9   Trinational Metropolitan Region website: Strategy.
    http://www.rmtmo.eu/de/zivilgesellschaft/strategie.html (31 March 2017).

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b   Institutional prerequisites

The joint development of tourism in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper
Rhine is pursued through the Upper Rhine Valley project supported by the European
Union within the framework of INTERREG IV A Upper Rhine. The objective of the
project is to market the Upper Rhine as a tourist destination abroad; it also addresses
education and training as well as innovation within the region. The project office is
based in Freiburg at the offices of Wirtschaft Touristik und Messe GmbH & Co. KG.

The motto of the Upper Rhine Valley is: 'Three countries – one destination: Experienc-
ing Europe'.[10] Under this motto, regional, institutional and tourism organisations and
facilities from the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine market the
region jointly on an international level (target markets: USA, Canada, Brazil, Russia,
China, India, Japan and South Korea). They all have a common goal: to increase
awareness of and enhance the attractiveness of the region. Through joint actions,
they strive to exploit synergies and to link marketing measures across countries.

In addition to the Upper Rhine Valley, there are two regional cross-border tourism
cooperation areas:

> Regio TriRhena (trinational cultural, economic and living environment along the
  southern Upper Rhine between South Baden, Upper Alsace and northwestern
  Switzerland)

> Touristik-Gemeinschaft Baden-Elsass-Pfalz e.V.

The website of the Regio TriRhena[11] does not provide any information about the joint
tourism marketing activities desired in the area, only links to the participating tourism
organisations.

The tourism association of the Baden-Alsace-Palatinate region, Touristik-Gemeinschaft
Baden-Elsass-Pfalz e.V., was founded in 1990. The members of the tourism associa-
tions are cities and municipalities, tourist information offices, accommodation estab-
lishments and some companies in the three sub-regions. As a partner of the EURO-
DISTRICT, the association is responsible for the development and marketing of
tourism in the PAMINA area. Its website[12] provides information the association's
objectives, activities and offerings. Potentials and attractions from a cultural history
perspective are not evident.

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10 Upper Rhine Valley website:
    http://www.upperrhinevalley.com/de (31 March 2017).

11 Regio TriRhena website:
    http://www.regiotrirhena.org/ (31 March 2017).

12 Touristik-Gemeinschaft Baden-Elsass-Pfalz e.V. website:
    http://www.vis-a-vis-pamina.eu/spip.php?article576 (31 March 2017).

c   Tourism marketing of cultural heritage

In the Upper Rhine Valley project, 33 partners from the three countries cooperate with the main objective of raising awareness of the area as a tourist destination in eight defined long-distance markets. As a geographically uniform space with a shared culture that has grown and shaped the area historically, the following themes were chosen for the cooperation: 'Wine and dine', 'Art and culture', 'Cities and architecture', 'Traditions and events' as well as 'Nature and leisure'. The themes were emphasised through various means, e.g. a sales guide for tour operators (overview of attractions in the entire region for each theme), the *Art Valley* website (overview of museums/collections of contemporary art, highlights, dining, accommodation, suggestions for cross-border itineraries), a brochure on excursions (suggestions for cross-border trips/adventure excursions) and a commemorative flyer on the theme of 'World War I –100 years' (information on memorials) (Communication from the project office of 17 November 2014).

The Upper Rhine Valley website lists and markets the cultural heritage sites in the context of the themes listed in Table 2:

Themes for cultural trips	Number and nature of the cultural heritage sites presented
Adventure experience	5 cultural heritage sites: Strasbourg Cathedral, European City Breisach on the Rhine, Ribeauvillé, the Roman ship Lusoria Rhenana, Speyer Cathedral
Art & culture > Castles & palaces category > Museums & galleries category > Music & theatre category	4 cultural heritage sites: Fleckenstein Castle, Trifels Castle, Château du Haut-Kœnigsbourg, the medieval castle of Yburg 18 cultural heritage sites, including the Roman settlement of Augusta Raurica near Basel, Augustinermuseum, Ecomusée d'Alsace Cultural heritage site: Royal Palace International Music Hall
Palaces & castles	24 cultural sites, including Lichtenberg Castle, Reichenstein Castle, Hambach Castle
Cycling tours against a cultural backdrop	Themes for cycling tours include 'Romanticism and wine' 'Medieval treasures', 'Churches, kings & traditions'

Table 2: Tourism marketing of cultural heritage sites in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine / Source: The author, based on the Upper Rhine Valley website[13]

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13 Upper Rhine Valley website:
    http://www.upperrhinevalley.com/de (31 March 2017).

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d   Other cultural heritage sites and cultural features relevant to the tourism marketing of the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine

Just like the Greater Region, the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine is unquestionably blessed with a rich cultural heritage. No systematic survey of its cultural heritage appears to have been performed here either, meaning that the cultural heritage sites listed on the website clearly reflect the personal knowledge of those involved.

There is no mention of important European cultural routes, historical cultural landscapes or cultural landscapes that are particularly suitable for recreational purposes (e.g. nature parks) with their diversity of cultural heritage.

The cultural routes of the Council of Europe, which pass through the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine, are the Way of St. James, the Schickhardt Route, the European Mozart Ways, the Iter Vitis Route, the European Route of Historic Thermal Cities (Council of Europe 2016). The cross-border Roman cultural route is also worth mentioning in this regard.[14] Figure 2 shows the nature parks, which are perforce part of the cultural tourism potential of a region, in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine.

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14 Southern Palatinate Tourism Office website:
    https://www.suedpfalz-tourismus.de/en/topnavigation/home.html?no_cache=1 (8 April 2021).
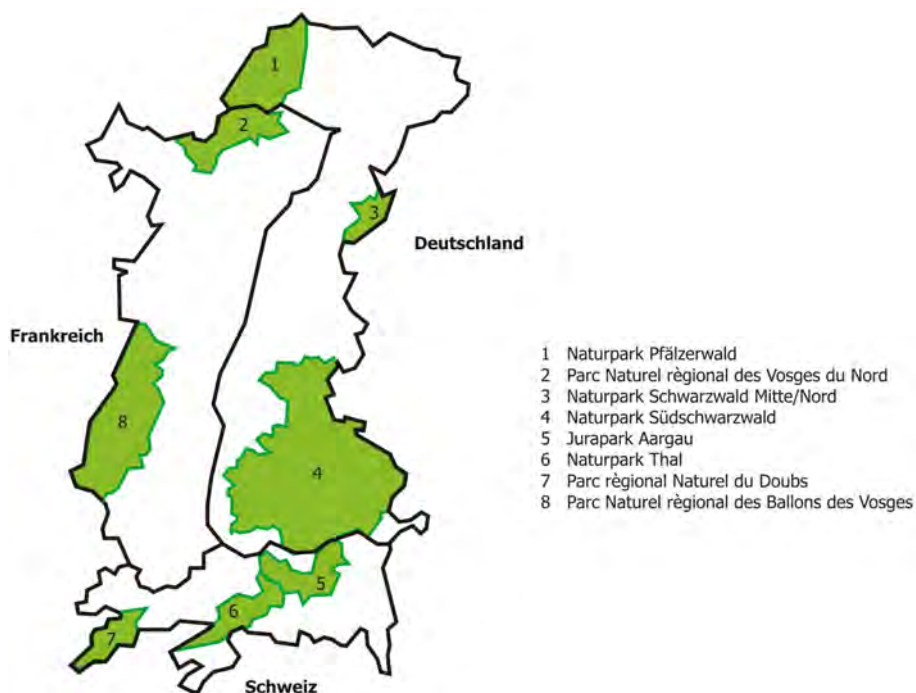
Fig. 2: Nature parks in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine (as of 2014) / Source: The author, based on the websites of the nature parks[15]

15 Pfälzerwald nature park website:
    http://www.pfaelzerwald.de/ (31 March 2017).
    Vosges du Nord regional natural park website:
    http://www.parc-vosges-nord.fr/ (31 March 2017).
    Central/Northern Black Forest nature park website:
    https://www.naturparkschwarzwald.de/ (31 March 2017).
    Southern Black Forest nature park website:
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5   Summary of the results of the analysis and recommended actions

a   Discussion of the results of the analysis

European programmes and activities that set a framework for the exploitation of cultural heritage as a development resource

In line with its programmatic statements, the European Union considers cultural heritage to be an important resource for European development and thus also for the development of border regions. The EU considers cultural heritage to be relevant not only in terms of tourism: it attaches so much importance to the planned management of cultural heritage that it calls on member states to preserve their cultural heritage and to take due account of it in their spatially-relevant activities. A number of European funding programmes are available to exploit cultural heritage as a resource for the development of tourism in cross-border cooperation.

The significance of cultural heritage and cultural tourism in the programmes and strategies of the border regions

The Greater Region, to a greater extent than the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine, addresses issues of cultural heritage management and the development of cultural tourism in its programmes and strategies. It attaches much greater importance to cultural heritage and cultural tourism. The comprehensive engagement with issues relating to the protection and use of cultural heritage postulated by the European Union should be the benchmark for both border regions.

Institutional prerequisites for the development of cultural tourism

The development of cross-border tourism has been institutionally organised in both border regions through INTERREG projects. It is to be hoped that the two tourism organisations will receive sustained support so that cross-border cultural tourism can continue to be developed more extensively, thereby also making use of and sustainably safeguarding cultural heritage.

Tourism marketing of cultural heritage

Cultural tourism plays a role in the tourism marketing strategies of both border regions. However, only a rudimentary consideration of cultural heritage is discernible at best. This is apparent from the fact that clearly relevant cultural heritage sites, which include the historical cultural landscapes, have generally not yet been taken into account. The potential of cultural heritage sites is not being used in a recognisable, comprehensive and goal-oriented way. The marketing concepts include cultural heritage sites that have been registered and contributed by the cooperation partners in a way that is not apparent to third parties. This type of approach makes sense if there are no comprehensive inventories, so that at least the cultural heritage sites known to the partners can be taken into account in the marketing concept. However, a more deliberate approach would be more effective to exploit cultural heritage more comprehensively. The following recommended actions may offer some starting points.

b   Recommended actions for enhanced exploitation of cultural heritage as a tourist development resource

Registration of cultural heritage
The first, fundamental step of a planned approach is to identify the existing cultural heritage. Cultural heritage can only be valued and exploited for tourism if the parties involved know about it in the first place.

Among the best-known methods for systematically recording cultural landscape elements are the methods for creating inventories of cultural landscape elements in North Rhine-Westphalia (Knöchel 2011), Thuringia (Schmidt/Meyer/Schottke et al. 2006) and Rhineland-Palatinate (Boos/Müller/Würriehausen 2012).

The creation of a comprehensive inventory of cultural heritage for the purposes of these processes will probably not be achieved in the near future, either in the Greater Region or in the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine. From a tourism perspective, however, such a comprehensive inventory of cultural heritage is not necessary either, as not every example of cultural heritage is commercially viable; thus, depending on the level of action, those cultural heritage sites that are relevant for tourism purposes must be selected. However, in order to systematically register the sites that are relevant for cultural tourism, the procedures should be in line with the inventories of elements (cf. the introduction).

Exploiting cultural heritage for tourism purposes
The relatively minor overall significance of cultural tourism in rural areas compared to cities suggests that many cultural heritage sites in rural areas have not yet been developed for tourism, or only to a limited extent. The exploitation of the Upper Germanic-Rhaetic Limes in Rhineland-Palatinate, to which the author contributed, will be briefly outlined below as an example how a cultural heritage site can be developed.

Building on a visualisation concept and tourism strategy, the Federal State of Rhineland-Palatinate has developed and implemented numerous measures together with municipalities, business development companies, associations and volunteers in order to exploit the state's world heritage. These included measures to communicate information (e.g. setting up information boards, information panels and a museum), marking the Limes (e.g. setting up stone markers, erecting windows, carrying out clearing measures, putting up signage on road crossings) and recreating the Limes (e.g. replica of palisades, authentic replica of a small fort) (Schafranski/Thomas 2010).

Further measures to exploit the Limes were carried out between 2011 and 2013 within the framework of the EU project LIMES (Large-Scale Innovative and Mobile European Services for Culture Tourism in Rural Areas) together with partners from Bulgaria, Austria and Germany. In particular, new communication and information technologies were also used (Schafranski 2014). examples of which include:

> the digital reconstruction of elements of the Limes, e.g. watchtowers;

> the development of suggestions for creative trips on the Limes (e.g. focusing on art & crafts, Roman life, hiking on the Limes, e-bike tours on the Limes);

> the creation of digital museum guides, which can be used to provide detailed information about the individual elements of specific attractions on the Limes by a QR code;

> the creation of a multilingual LIMES mobile app with various functions (Figure 3)

Fig. 3: The LIMES mobile app / Source: Schafranski 2014

With the digital museum guide, information can be presented more clearly, updated faster and conveyed more cost-effectively than by using conventional communication channels (e.g. brochures, panels).

The Europe-wide LIMES mobile app provides vivid information about the Roman Limes and over 100 selected cultural heritage sites on the Limes. It contains numerous suggestions on guided tours, events, museums and active and creative getaways, gives a quick overview of eating & drinking and accommodation options and enables a better experience of the Limes as cultural heritage through numerous digital reconstructions.

Similar activities (e.g. digital reconstruction of destroyed cultural heritage sites or parts of heritage sites, creation of digital heritage site guides and a multilingual app) are also conceivable in the Greater Region or the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine.

Promoting networks and cooperation to develop cultural heritage tourism

The successful exploitation of cultural heritage sites for tourism in the border areas requires that the various actors from the culture and tourism sectors, businesses, administrations and tourism-savvy institutions network and cooperate across borders, as cultural tourism products and activities are usually offered in the form of a bundle of services provided by a number of different service providers. The benefits of networking and cooperation include merging limited resources, pooling skills, mutual assistance, improving quality, creating added value, promoting innovation and expanding the target groups (Buschmann 2013). Networks can be created, at least in rudimentary terms, in the greater regions. Nevertheless, the extent to which existing networks can be developed in the form of 'continuous learning systems' (Drda-Kühn/ Wiegand 2009) and cooperation can be promoted in order to develop cultural heritage tourism should be examined. The model projects 'KIRA – Cultural Tourism for Heilbronn-Franken' and 'Altenkirchen Cultural Tourism Network', can provide valuable suggestions for the creation of networks, even though they do not concern border areas.

Elaboration of a strategy for the development of cultural heritage for tourism

The development of the cultural heritage for tourism purposes can be seen as part of (cultural) tourism as well as of the creative sector and cultural sector. Therefore, a strategy for exploiting cultural heritage, which is absolutely necessary for a planned approach, should be integrated. The strategy should also include objectives and measures to promote cross-border networking and cooperation, as well as the use of innovative technologies and social networks. The *Zukunftsbild* 2020 concept for the Greater Region offers an example for how a strategy of this nature could be conceived for the border regions.[16] After a relatively specific description of the desired, envisaged outcome (e.g. the Greater Region as a cultural area), the current potentials and approaches are identified and used to elaborate an agenda for achieving the long-term objectives.

Professional use of new information technologies

An ever increasing number of people have mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets, which they use during their holidays. Today's smartphones can inform travellers about the tourist attractions in the border region, provide vivid information about those sights, bring hidden treasures to life and much more. This is why mobile services such as apps and QR codes are playing an increasingly important role in tourism. Adapting to this phenomenon includes the development of websites for mobile devices, the digital reconstruction of cultural sites, free WiFi access at culturally interesting points and charging facilities for mobile devices (Drda-Kühn 2015).

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16 Although the 2003 Tourism Study for the Greater Region also deals with cultural heritage, it should not be seen as a strategy for the planned exploitation of cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural tourism.

6   Conclusions

Cultural heritage and cultural tourism open up opportunities for the development of the rural border areas of the Greater Region and the Upper Rhine regions. The studies carried out by European programmes and publications on the exploitation of cultural heritage have shown that initiatives to use cultural heritage as a development resource are expressly desired and can be promoted by the European institutions. In the border regions studied here, there are certainly approaches (albeit in different forms) to exploiting cultural heritage for the development of cultural tourism in the border areas. However, actual strategies and concrete concepts for this are obviously lacking. Without systematic action which builds on an evaluation of the existing approaches, the opportunities for the development of tourism in the border areas of the Greater Region and the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine associated with the use of cultural heritage sites will continue to be limited.

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The author

Dr. Franz Schafranski († *2020) was a Project Manager at the Rhineland-Palatinate
Development Agency (Entwicklungsagentur Rheinland-Pfalz e.V.) in Kaiserslautern/
Mainz. From 2008 to 2011 he was responsible for developing tourism to the World
Heritage site of the Upper Germanic-Rhaetic Limes in Rhineland-Palatinate. From 2011
to 2013 he was the Coordinator of the LIMES (Large Scale Innovative and Mobile
European Services for Culture Tourism in Rural Areas) project supported by the
European Commission.*