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The temporal evolution of tourism institutions

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ABSTRACT

A fuller understanding of tourism processes should include analysis of historical influences, legacies and the sequencing of change. The paper examines the temporal evolution of tourism institutions by employing historical institutionalist and cultural political economy approaches and a process tracing methodology. They are used to study two institutions involved in tourism and environmental management in a protected area. The assessment carefully explores the timing and sequencing of events and interconnections between processes over time. It demonstrates the value of the approaches and methodology, such as by suggesting that path dependence and path creation are not binary categories, but instead are reciprocally intertwined and co-constituting. Both material/social and ideational/discursive processes are also shown as significant for institutional temporal paths.

Introduction

Tourism involves processes that evolve through continuities and changes over time. When tourism researchers describe tourism growth, decline or crisis, for example, this involves processes that take place over varying time frames. There are also temporal trends in the socio-economic, environmental and political contexts affecting tourism, and in tourism's impacts on them. If we freeze analysis at one moment in time there is a danger that tourism research could overlook or misunderstand these processes, which could lead to ineffective policies. To help avoid such issues, tourism research should consider historical trends in its processes and also examine the approaches and methods used to understand temporal change (Brouder, 2014; Shone, Simmons, & Dalziel, 2016).

This study explores the temporal evolution of tourism institutions. These are social structures that form as human interactions become habituated or reproduced over time (Berger & Luckman, 1991). They are "the rules, norms, and practices that organize and constitute social relations" (Fioretos, Falleti, & Sheingate, 2016, p. 7), and they help people to respond to collective problems (Steinmo, 2014). The paper's case study concerns two institutions involved in policymaking: a tourism-related partnership, and a policy forum involving the general public. While these were more formal institutions, with for instance written rules, they also involved informal rules, values and practices. Such institutions involve constraints and opportunities for political preferences and actions, and for the distribution of political power. They are a vital part of tourism as an activity and industry alongside, for example, tourists, experiences, representations and technologies. Although such institutions are usually conceived as relatively stable and recurring patterns of behaviour, they also tend continually to evolve.

The paper focuses on examining longitudinal trends over time for two case study tourism institutions, using approaches and methodology from the historical institutionalist research tradition. Historical institutionalism has deep political science roots, but by the 1990s it had become a significant academic approach (Fioretos et al., 2016). Fioretos et al. (2016, p. 3) observe that it "examines how temporal processes and events influence the origin and transformation of institutions that govern political and economic

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relations". It highlights the timing and sequencing of temporal processes and events associated with institutions (Thelen, 2002). When things happen, and the order in which different processes unfold, can be extremely important in establishing the validity of particular causal claims. The approach also seeks to appreciate the significance over time of contextual embeddedness and interconnections among processes (Suddaby, Foster, & Mills, 2014).

The paper, first, considers past research approaches to temporal trends in tourism institutions. It extends this work, second, by developing an historical institutionalist approach combining historical institutionalism with cultural political economy perspectives. More generally, there is also scope for ideas from the specific research tradition of historical institutionalism to be evaluated in more sustained depth in studies of tourism institutions. The approach sees path creation and path dependence as reciprocal and co-constitutive, and it also recognises the importance of both the material/social and ideational/discursive, and of their interconnections. Use is also made of a "process tracing" methodology. Third, this approach and methodology is used to assess temporal trends for the case of two institutions involved in managing tourism and environmental tensions within a UK protected area. The first of these institutions, the Stanage Steering Group, was a partnership organisation which reported to the second institution, the Stanage Forum, which involved members of the public and with which it was closely associated.

Literature review and conceptual perspectives

Past approaches to research on temporal continuity and change in tourism institutions are considered next. This is followed by discussion of the two approaches to assessing such trends brought together in the present study: historical institutionalism and cultural political economy.

The most influential conceptual study of historical trends in tourism is Butler's (1980) destination life cycle model. It proposes that a graph of tourist numbers in a destination against time often evolves through a broadly S-shaped curve, which can be divided into different development stages. Many studies apply Butler's destination life cycle model as a framework to assist with explanations of the development trajectories of destinations (Zhong, Deng, & Xiang, 2008). This model has at times been combined with conceptual ideas about institutions. Ioannides (1992), for example, combines the model with an examination of relations between destination institutions and external tour operators (Rodríguez, Parra-López, & Yanes-Estévez, 2008), and Garay and Cànoves (2011) integrate it with regulation theory – a political economy perspective – to explain institutional interventions in destination development trends.

Some previous studies focus on examining temporal trends specifically for tourism institutions. They often draw on conceptual ideas from one of two distinct fields of academic study: either institutional studies, a broad research field that includes the more specific approach of historical institutionalism, or evolutionary economic geography (EEG). Several of these studies draw on concepts from the research tradition of institutionalism. Jamal and Getz (1995), for example, evaluate evolving institutional processes in different phases of tourism partnership working; Pavlovich (2003) examines evolving organisational networks in tourist destinations; and Wray (2009) considers institutional "issue lifecycles" affecting tourism policies.

A number of studies of the evolution of tourism institutions are informed by conceptual ideas from the EEG research literature. This literature examines the temporal and geographical evolution of economic activity, such as in industrial zones and regional economies (Martin, 2010). While most tourism studies drawing on EEG concepts focus on the evolution of destinations rather than institutions, a few do consider institutional development in destinations (Brouder & Fullerton, 2015). In one study applying EEG concepts to assess tourism institutions, Ma and Hassink (2014, p. 595) assert that "The evolution of tourism areas is a dynamic open path-dependent process by which tourism firms, products and institutions coevolve along unfolding trajectories". Halkier and Therkelsen (2013, p. 42) draw on EEG approaches to assess the evolving flexibility of institutions involved in coastal tourism. Gill and Williams (2014, p. 547; 2017; 2011) use EEG concepts to examine governance shifts in a mountain resort "from a growth-dependent model towards one grounded in principles of sustainability". Some studies of tourism institutions based on EEG approaches draw on concepts from the more specific historical institutionalist research tradition, but they can tend to be based on this tradition's coverage in the EEG literature, and there remains clear scope to examine historical institutionalist ideas in more sustained depth.

The present study of historical change in tourism institutions extends these past approaches through its in-depth, combined use of historical institutionalism and cultural political economy perspectives. These perspectives are now reviewed, including their key concepts used in the paper.

Historical institutionalism focuses on the historical processes involved in institutional creation, reproduction and change. Its historical reasoning emphasises timing and sequencing in the analysis of institutional and political processes, considering "the significance of an event or action in light of antecedent and subsequent developments" (Wadhwani & Bucheli, 2014, p. 9; Thelen, 2002). It also entails a complex understanding of time in which multiple temporal processes often operate together to influence an action at a particular moment in time. Thus, its "historical studies of institutions focus on *complex*, rather than *unitary* causality" (Suddaby et al., 2014, p. 104, emphasis in original; Fioretos et al., 2016). A hallmark of historical institutionalism is close proximity to each empirical case under investigation, but there is also scope for theorizing and knowledge accumulation across studies (Suddaby et al., 2014; Thelen, 2002). While historical institutionalist practitioners share a focus on temporal effects, they can hold differing views, such as about the degree of dynamism within institutions and the role of actors in institutional accounts.

Two prominent historical institutionalist concepts are used in the present study. The first concept, of "critical junctures", concerns periods – often rather short periods – of significant path-creating change that leave distinct historical legacies for organisations. While critical junctures involve path-creating openness, they subsequently tend to reproduce themselves, so that they mark the beginning of path-dependent processes (Collier & Collier, 1991). The second concept, of "path dependence", applies to periods when organisations experience a narrowing down of the scope for alternative actions, so that it becomes difficult to reverse the established direction for

action (Schreyögg & Sydow, 2011). Path dependence occurs because of self-reinforcing feedback, which means that deviations from an existing path are less likely (Boas, 2007; Mahoney, 2000; Pierson, 2004). Self-reinforcing feedback can occur because the organisational values and ways of working become socialised and unquestioned among the actors, for reasons such as the actors learning to deal with the system in a particular way (Gains, John, & Stoker, 2005; Pierson, 2004). It can also result from institutional actors gaining skills and knowledge from their established procedures, and from institutions gaining political authority and legitimacy (Capoccia, 2016; Schreyögg & Sydow, 2011). Path dependence can be depicted as likely to occur over relatively long periods of time.

Some consider that the critical juncture and path dependence concepts mean that historical institutionalism tends to suggest that institutional history involves short periods of path-creating upheaval followed by long periods of path dependent stability. Yet historical institutionalism has also been concerned with explaining slow, path creating changes that can become transformative (Capoccia, 2016; Sarigil, 2009; Thelen, 2004). Historical institutionalist scholars describe several potential sources of gradual path-creating institutional change which can lead to substantially new paths. Such sources of gradual change can include frictions within institutions around their related actors, ideas and policies. Other sources can include the discretion of actors around how they interpret and enforce rules, shifts in the coalitions among actors involved in institutional arrangements, and new circumstances following a political election (Capoccia, 2016; Fioretos et al., 2016; Gains et al., 2005; Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney & Thelen, 2010).

Several "modes" of gradual path-creating change for institutions have been identified (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010; Van der Heijden, 2011). A first such mode of slow institutional change, that of "replacement", involves the removal of existing organisational relations or rules, and the introduction of new alternative ones. A second such mode, that of "layering", concerns the introduction of new rules, such as new policy goals, alongside existing ones, with this steering the institutions in a new direction (Boas, 2007). Rast (2012) suggests that layering can occur when actors are dissatisfied with an existing policy or institution but lack the power to dismantle it. Incremental, path creating change for institutions can occur, thirdly, through "conversion", which entails the changed use of existing rules so that they serve new purposes not previously envisaged (Rast, 2012; Thelen, 2004).

"Redeployment" is a fourth potential mode of gradual institutional change (Schneiberg, 2007). It involves rehabilitating at a later date previous "paths not taken" that were only partially successful, or were incomplete or failed. Here previous "paths not taken" provide "institutional repertoires", or building blocks of knowledge, experience or competence, that may help to support an institution's future development (Crouch & Farrell, 2004). A fifth potential mode of slow institutional change involves "cross-path effects" (Schneiberg, 2007), whereby actors draw on "solutions already used in adjacent fields" (Crouch & Farrell, 2004, p. 24). Here actors learn from ideas in adjacent but separate institutional situations, and they combine aspects of those ideas in another institutional context, thereby potentially establishing a significantly new development path.

The present study is premised on the argument that historical institutionalist research may provide enhanced explanations when combined with social theory. Peters, Pierre and King (2005, p. 1284–5), for example, argue that with historical institutionalism, "It is not sufficient to say that patterns persist…[Any] acceptable explanation in the social sciences must be able to link cause and effect through an underlying social process, rather than through a 'black box'". Much historical institutionalist research employs social theory (Fioretos et al., 2016), and here cultural political economy is used alongside historical institutionalism. Although not developed in detail, Anton Clavé and Wilson (2017, p. 109) also propose that "a broader CPE [cultural political economy] approach…be considered alongside EEG [evolutionary economic geography] approaches", but they suggest this for studies of the evolution of tourism destinations rather than of tourism institutions. The present authors are unaware of previous studies of tourism institutions making in-depth use of a combined historical institutionalist and cultural political economy approach.

Cultural political economy sees institutions as embedded in society's social, economic, cultural and political relationships. These relationships around tourism institutions are regarded as porous and intertwined, so that they embody interconnections, including with their wider context. Thus, the varied societal processes and their interactions will co-constitute the character of a tourism institution (Castree, 2003; Harvey, 1996; Sum & Jessop, 2015). The inter-weaving of societal relations around tourism institutions are also considered to involve both interdependencies and tensions, with these likely to entail continuities and changes over time (Harvey, 1996; Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2015).

Cultural political economy also recognises that institutions structure incentives and constraints, but at the same time humans actively create and change these institutions based on their prior expectations and cognition (Hall, 2010; Steinmo, 2014). It asserts that there are structural pressures – including both opportunities and constraints – but that people interpret them based on their own perceptions and values, so that, while they are not entirely free in how they respond, their agency transforms the social structures, including institutions (Bramwell & Meyer, 2007). This indicates that institutional path creation and path dependence are not binary or separate categories; rather, they are reciprocally inter-connected, reflecting agency-structure interactions. The path-creating activities of institutions are thus regarded as reciprocally related to path dependence, with evolving and co-constituting relations between them (Garud, Kumaraswamy, & Karnøe, 2010; Hay & Wincott, 1998; Oosterlynck, 2012). Consequently, this perspective emphasises the importance for institutions of the reciprocal relationships between structural pressures of dependence and more open processes of human agency, chance occurrences and path creation (Blyth, Helgadóttir, & Kring, 2016; Capoccia, 2016).

Some studies of the temporal evolution of tourism institutions, while not framed in the specific research traditions of historical institutionalism or cultural political economy, also recognise there are reciprocal interactions between path dependence and path creation (Brouder & Eriksson, 2013; Gill & Williams, 2017; Sanz-Ibáñez & Anton Clavé, 2014). Brouder and Fullerton (2015, p. 152), for example, note how incremental path-creating changes have occurred in the established tourism development path in Niagara, Canada, and that these "new paths co-evolve with the dominant tourism paths". In a study of tourism partnerships, Bramwell and Cox (2009, p. 195) also assert that "Path dependence and path creation may be intimately connected and they may 'co-evolve'", and Pastras and Bramwell (2013, p. 396) argue that path creation and path dependence co-evolve for tourism institutions through a "dialectic of path-shaping in the context of path-dependency" (Nielsen, Jessop, & Hausner, 1995; Williams, 2013).

Cultural political economy also indicates that studies of institutions need to take seriously the cultural/ideational/discursive as well as the economic/political spheres. It recognises, therefore, the importance for institutions of the ideational and discursive processes of subjective sense-making and meaning-making (Carstensen & Schmidt, 2016; Hall, 2010; Ribera-Fumaz, 2009). The importance of ideas, images, meanings, and of the symbolic, is recognised here. In their political economy approach to institutions, therefore, Hay and Wincott (1998, p. 956) "emphasise the crucial space granted to ideas", as actors "appropriate strategically a world replete with institutions and ideas about institutions" (Carstensen & Schmidt, 2016; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). Here the present study uses the concept of "story lines", this being associated with cultural political economy's ideational and discursive realm. A story line is "a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorisations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities" (Hajer, 1995, p. 44). Story lines provide institutional actors with language and ideas that can provide a common understanding and can form a basis for coalitions around different story lines. Story lines are part of the discourse conflicts that affect the material policies of institutions (Fairclough, 2013).

Methodology

The paper's case study concerns the evolving institutional arrangements and processes for a tourism-related forum, the Stanage Forum, and a closely linked partnership organisation, the Stanage Steering Group, in the UK's Peak District National Park. This case was selected because of the researchers' interest in the evolving tourism and environmental management activities of these institutions, and due to the institutions' continuing willingness to cooperate with the research. The analysis provides a conceptually-informed explanation of causal influences and their effects on the temporal evolution of the Stanage Forum and Steering Group.

To achieve this objective a "process tracing" methodology was used as it helped with inferences about which of many potential necessary and sufficient causes were shaping the historical "path" for the two institutions (Collier, 2011; Rast, 2012). The analysis sought to "reconstruct, in a systematic and rigorous fashion, each step in the decision-making process, identify which decisions were most influential and what options were available and viable", as well as to "clarify both their impact and their connection to other important decisions" (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007, p. 354–355). The influences, sequential steps and connections associated with underlying structural processes were also considered.

The study provides an historical geography of institutional change, tracing both the history and varying spatial scales and locations of the endogenous and exogenous forces affecting events. Examining both internal and external processes also helped to uncover "left-out variables" which might otherwise not have been looked for (Bennett & Elman, 2006). To provide portability to the findings, the analysis also used the conceptual approaches explained in the literature review (Fioretos et al., 2016).

The two case study institutions were established to reduce tensions between outdoor recreation, tourism and environmental management at Stanage and North Lees Estate (shortened here to Stanage Estate). It is an upland area which is owned by the Peak District National Park Authority, and it is of outstanding landscape value and of international importance for its heather moorland and bog ecology. The Estate is popular with hill walkers, rock climbers, bird watchers and off-road vehicle drivers, with an estimated over half a million visitors in 2002 (PDNPA, 2002). There are tensions between recreation, tourism and the area's important environmental/ecological qualities, such as between rock climbing and the protection of bird-nesting habitats, especially during the bird-breeding season. There are very few tourist facilities, almost no tourist accommodation, and almost no residents within the Stanage Estate, with these found in nearby villages also in the National Park.

The Peak District Park Authority established the Stanage Forum and its associated Steering Group, asking these institutions to develop and apply a new Estate management plan. Decisions about the Estate were formally approved at the annual Forum meeting, which was open to the general public. Its associated Steering Group was a partnership organisation made up of interest group representatives, and it met more regularly than the Forum. It coordinated the drawing up and implementation of the Estate management plan, and it reported to the annual Forum. The study here assesses how the Forum and Steering Group first emerged in 2000 and then evolved over the period to 2011. The evolution of these two institutions was partly tracked through interviews held in 2007 and 2011, with these asking about developments since 2000. The four-year interval between the interviews allowed further time for several new developments to occur and potential future trajectories to emerge.

The "process tracing" assessment of evolving relationships for the two institutions drew on several sources: documents, observation, past research studies, and semi-structured interviews. First, the documents consulted included the Stanage Forum and Steering Group's management plan, reports and minutes of meetings. Second, observation took place by attending several Forum meetings and Steering Group meetings. Third, use was made of academic studies by Tim Richardson on the early work of the two organisations, studies that used interviews, internal documents and observation of meetings to examine issues of consultative democracy (Connelly, Miles, & Richardson, 2004; Connelly, Richardson, & Miles, 2006; Richardson, 2005; Richardson & Connelly, 2001; Richardson, Connelly, & Miles, 2004).

Fourth, semi-structured interviews were conducted in 2007 and also in 2011 with key actors associated with the Forum and Steering Group. The purposive sampling of interviewees was intended to secure multiple and knowledgeable voices from the main interest groups. The six interviewees in 2007, including four Steering Group members, were: two National Park staff selected as they had significant management responsibilities for Stanage, a rock climbing representative as climbing is a major recreational activity there, a resident living in a nearby village with tourist facilities that are often used by Stanage visitors, a National Park Committee member involved with the area, and a top-tier National Park staff member.

In 2011 the nine interviewees, including seven Steering Group members, were: four representatives of recreational groups active in the area, a nearby resident representative, a conservation group representative (due to the area's high environmental quality), and

three National Park staff with management responsibilities for Stanage. Four respondents were interviewed in both 2007 and 2011. The interviews lasted an average of 62 min in 2007 and 73 min in 2011. Interview questions in 2007 asked about the Forum and Steering Group's organisation and operation, influences on their activities, impacts of their activities, and the context to the Estate's governance. The questions were not directly guided by the concepts of path dependence and path creation, with those concepts only becoming important for the research when the collected interview data were examined. By contrast, the 2011 interview questions were directly guided by the concepts that emerged from reviewing historical institutionalist and cultural political economy research literature, as well as by issues arising from the 2007 interviews.

The process tracing methodology sought to "follow the path" taken by the two institutions, based on in-depth consideration of the primary sources and the conceptual ideas from the study's historical institutionalist and cultural political economy conceptual perspectives (Peck & Theodore, 2012). The process tracing specified the actors involved directly and indirectly in the Forum and Steering Group. It also identified processes and events, together with their sequencing and inter-connections, which affected the evolving "path" of the two institutions. Further, attention was directed to relevant material and social processes and also to ideational and discursive processes. Thus, consideration was given to discursive "story lines", to the reasons that actors gave for their actions and behaviour, and to how narrative constructions could have material effects (Vennesson, 2008). A critical discourse analysis approach and associated techniques were used for the collection and analysis of these "storylines" (Fairclough, 2013).

The process tracing methodology then sought to assess the sequencing of the evolving historical geography of endogenous and exogenous processes (at varying locations and spatial scales) affecting the Forum and Steering Group, including of processes originating at a geographical distance, as well as the inter-relationships between them. This geographically broadly drawn or "distended" approach sought explanation "in the interplay between trans-local relational connections and mutations, and [the] 'local' socio-institutional context across networks and multiple sites" (Pike, MacKinnon, Cumbers, Dawley, & McMaster, 2016, p. 130). Distinctions between internal and external processes have heuristic value, but they are somewhat arbitrary as they are intimately interconnected.

The researchers actively sought to confirm and disconfirm ideas and to remain open to new interpretations. The continuing dialogue between the collected information and the study's conceptual ideas on evolving institutional paths followed Miles and Huberman's (1994, p. 10) guidelines on qualitative data reduction, as a process of "selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming" information in order to develop conceptual interpretations.

	Critical juncture and formative phase, 1995-2002	Early implementation and layering phase, 2002-2007	Phase of growing uncertainty, 2008-2011
External institutional processes	More participatory governance trend	Public sector cost-cutting leads to estate manager having additional work	Global financial crisis and national election encourage further budget cuts
	Increasing adoption of Local Agenda 21		Second asset management review
	Park Authority endorses Local Agenda 21	Asset management review considers selling the estate	Discussion with third sector on taking over estate
Internal institutional processes	New estate manager	Less regular meetings	Internal consideration of options for the estate and its management
	Advisor interested in consensus-building		
	More intensive participatory approach	More information sharing and less consensus-building	Consideration of neighbouring estate's path
External institutional policies	Park Authority priority for environmental considerations	Asset management review considers selling the estate	Second asset management review considers estate's transfer to third sector
Internal institutional policies	Integration of "limits" and "free access" thinking	Implementation of established policies	Implementation of established policies

Fig. 1. Temporal phases, categories and sequences for the two connected tourism institutions.

As noted by Collier (2011), when analysing and reporting on the findings of process tracing work, it can be productive to start with a timeline that lists the sequence of events, and Fig. 1 provides this, along with an outline summary of process categories and findings for the Forum and Steering Group. Fig. 1 identifies a "periodization" of three temporal phases for the "path" found to have been taken by these institutions, and these phases are used when reporting the findings here. The first phase was a "critical juncture" and formative phase from 1995 to 2002, a phase when latterly the Forum and Steering Group were established and a management plan was devised. A second phase between 2002 and 2007 involved the management plan's early implementation and a process of institutional "layering". During the third phase between 2008 and 2011 there was growing uncertainty about the Forum and Steering Group's future. Fig. 1 also distinguishes between processes that tended to be more internal or more external to the two institutions, while recognising that these were only tendencies as they were often reciprocally interrelated. There is a further analytical distinction in Fig. 1 between institutional processes and institutional policies, although again it is important to note that they were intertwined. These temporal phases and analytical categories, and the related findings, are explored more fully next.

Critical juncture and formative phase, 1995–2002

The first phase covered the five years before the Stanage Forum and the Stanage Steering Group were set up in 2000, and the subsequent two years leading to the Forum's management plan being finalised in 2002. Based on historical institutionalist ideas, this phase can be seen as a "critical juncture" in the Stanage Estate's governance because it was a period of unexpected and substantial change, or path creation, from established institutional arrangements and practices (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007; Collier & Collier, 1991). It was "formative" because it was followed from 2002 by distinct historical legacies of path dependence (Schreyögg & Sydow, 2011). The substantially new departure was that diverse parties, rather than just the Park Authority which owned the estate, were allowed to engage in formulating and applying the Estate's policies, and also that the policies were to be determined through consensus-building techniques. Policy making was transferred from the Park Authority to the Forum and Steering Group, although the Park Authority still needed to approve the recommended policies. The Estate manager argued that the traditional approach to developing a management plan would have been for the Park Authority to write to stakeholders individually and deal with each issue in turn, rather than to ask them to contribute in a more inclusive and continuing manner. The novelty of Stanage's more intensive participatory approach helps to explain why in this phase the Park Authority officers and members were somewhat divided in their views about the Forum and Steering Group's desirability, with some nervous that the plan would contain ideas they could not endorse (Bramwell & Cox, 2009; Richardson, 2005).

There were two catalysts directly behind the major institutional change of the setting up of the Stanage Forum and Steering Group. The first was the Park Authority's appointment in 1996 of a new manager for Stanage Estate, who was asked to develop a new management plan. This new manager represented change because he sought substantial engagement in decision-making by interested parties so as to diffuse previous conflicts around the Estate's management of recreation, tourism and environmental protection. The second catalyst was the involvement of an advisor working with the Estate manager who was a recreational user of the area as well as a university academic with research interests in inclusive forms of consensus-building in environmental management. This advisor encouraged the new Estate manager to use consensus-building environmental management ideas.

The new Estate manager had some advantages in introducing a more participatory, consensus-building approach to the Stanage Forum and Steering Group. He had not previously worked at Stanage, and thus he was not perceived as necessarily holding entrenched views, although the Park Authority was regarded by some as displaying "corporate arrogance" (PDNPA, 2005, p. 8; PDNPA, 2007a). Some interviewees also commented that the new estate manager was open to new ways of working. One Steering Group member observed that "he was fresh and not overly influenced by the negative side of the conflict and by civil service work". He was also enthusiastic to reduce conflict through consensus-building approaches, and he had good social skills which enabled him to persuade stakeholders to cooperate in developing the estate's management plan. His social skills and enthusiasm became recognised, and the stakeholders began to trust him and respect his efforts to involve them in decision making. One Steering Group member commented that "he is extremely hardworking" and he can "listen to what people are saying, and draw out from their ramblings what they are really saying". Others noted how "he was always looking for some sort of compromise and listening very carefully to people. He wasn't saying 'I am the boss and this is how it is going to happen'", and also that "he was so good, so tactful, and he's drawn the best out of people".

Stanage's unexpected new institutional arrangements reflected the two path-creating catalysts outlined here, with these being partly chance occurrences and dependent on influential individuals. They also resulted from reciprocal, co-evolving and co-constituting relations between path creation and path dependence (Garud & Karnøe, 2012; Gill & Williams, 2017; Sanz-Ibáñez & Anton Clavé, 2014). The path-creating step of setting up the Forum and Steering Group in 2000, for example, was in reciprocal relationship with an established, path dependent trend in the 1990s at the UK geographical scale toward more participatory governance (Bramwell, 2011).

One strand within that governance trend was the increasing adoption in the UK of ideas around Local Agenda 21, which advocated involving diverse stakeholders in policy making directed at securing sustainable development (Barrutia & Echebarria, 2015). This path dependent trend at international and national geographical scales was also becoming evident for the Park Authority. Local Agenda 21 (LA21) ideas were included, for example, in the Park's Management Plan for 2000–2005 (PDNPA, 2000, Appendix A-3), which explained how the

> "LA21 is the process by which the people in many countries are now helping to define a vision for the 21st Century, promoting sustainable development. The process seeks to involve as many people as possible, looking at problems and opportunities and drawing up an action plan."

The Stanage Estate manager also argued that the Forum and Steering Group were influenced by Local Agenda 21 ideas about "getting people involved locally in their environment". This important political and ideational/discursive context was partly identified through the study's cultural political economy perspective (Sum & Jessop, 2015).

Fig. 1 distinguishes between the Stanage Estate's institutional arrangements and its policies, with discussion so far focusing on the first analytical strand of institutional arrangements 1995 to 2002. During this period, the Estate's policies – the second analytical strand – were also slightly modified after policy making was transferred from the regional-scale Park Authority to the more local-scale Forum and Steering Group. Connelly et al. (2004) suggest there was a minor modification in the integration between policy priorities, with policy for access for tourists' recreational activities using public transport gaining slight traction in its integration with policy for environmental limits. The policy priorities for the Estate's management were affected by ideational/discursive debates based on differing "story lines" (Hajer, 1995). As discussed earlier, story lines can provide actors with a common understanding of an issue, and story lines can also be accepted by differing coalitions of actors.

In early Forum and Steering Group meetings there was much discussion around two story lines (Connelly et al., 2004). The first concerned "environmental limits", based on the idea that the Estate had reached or even exceeded its "capacity" in terms of cars used by tourists and recreationists; and the second story line concerned the idea of "free access" and the notion of people's right to unrestricted and uncharged access to the estate, largely for recreational activities. The former story line was especially important for the National Park representatives, while the latter story line was espoused in particular by climbing community representatives (Connelly et al., 2006). With the Forum and Steering Group's aim being to reach a policy consensus, a new "bridging" story line was agreed based on the idea of integrating car parking limits, in order to reduce environmental pressure, with improved public transport to the area, in order to facilitate recreational access but with relatively less environmental pressure (Richardson et al., 2004). According to Connelly et al. (2004, p. 8), in meetings there was a "continued dominance of the free access" story line. The strength of "free access" thinking in the policies reflected the much greater representation of recreational groups on the Steering Group, as opposed to conservation and environmental protection groups. The importance of story lines here indicates the significance of the ideational/discursive as well as the material/social for an understanding of evolving institutional policies, as suggested in the study's cultural political economy perspective (Jessop, 2010; Ribera-Fumaz, 2009).

Based on the study's combination of historical institutionalist and cultural political economy perspectives, the Forum and Steering Group's policies are interpreted here as reflecting reciprocal and co-constituting relationships between path creation and path dependence (Garud et al., 2010; Hay & Wincott, 1998). Path creation occurred in the precise policy integration between access for tourists' recreational activities and for environmental protection, but there were also continuing, path dependent pressures encouraging retention of an environmental protection focus. One path dependent pressure was that the Park Authority continued to be legally required to prioritise environmental and conservation considerations when they conflicted with other priorities (PDNPA, 2005, p. 6). Here it should also be noted that the Park Authority continued to employ the Estate manager, have representatives at Forum and Steering Group meetings, pay the Forum and Steering Group's administrative costs, fund many Estate management activities, and to decide whether to endorse the Forum and Steering Group's management plan. These intimate ties between the Park Authority and the Forum and Steering Group illustrate how it can be unhelpful to place binary boundaries between internal/endogenous and external/exogenous influences in assessments of evolving institutional processes (Blyth et al., 2016).

Early implementation and layering phase, 2002–2007

The path creation and path dependence dialectic (Capoccia, 2016) for the Forum and Steering Group continued in the period 2002 to 2007, but the balance between them had shifted from path creation toward path dependence. It became more path dependent as the broad institutional arrangements and policy priorities had already been established, and the Forum and Steering Group now concentrated on early implementation tasks from the 2002 management plan. At the same time, however, there were also some incremental path creating modifications (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010; Van der Heijden, 2011) which altered the Forum and Steering Group's operation.

The incremental path creating changes between 2002 and 2007 were associated with the focus of the Forum and Steering Group meetings altering from their previous regular interactions around conflict reduction and consensus-building to a new focus on less regular interactions based on information sharing. One reason for these changes was that the 2002 management plan had deliberately focused on issues where agreements could be reached, so that during the plan's subsequent implementation there was less apparent need to discuss contentious issues or build a consensus, and instead the meetings concentrated on sharing monitoring information about progress with implementation tasks. This was relatively path dependent, based on internal organisational trends established in the earlier more path-creating phase. One Steering Group member noted how, "once the management plan was written, the Forums haven't been so important…I feel the Forum hasn't been a discussion group as much as being informed about what is happening". A National Park employee commented that fewer people attended Forum meetings in this period, suggesting that this was to "the credit of the Forum" which had reduced conflicts around the area's management. Yet the agreements reached for the management plan could also be used subsequently to stifle dissent. Thus, a conservationist steering group member commented about this period that "the feeling was that the initial thing was the main part, when they hammered out the agreements", and when people in meetings tried to broach a contentious issue that had been discussed earlier, they could be told that there was no need to debate it further as it had already been "dealt with in the past".

There was also an external political-economic influence (Harvey, 1996; Mackinnon, Cumbers, Pike, Birch, & McMaster, 2009) which meant the Forum and Steering Group meetings became less regular. This was the well-established, path dependent trend at the national scale for the UK government to seek neo-liberal reforms to reduce public sector costs (Bramwell, 2011), and in that context

in 2004 the Park Authority undertook a structural review of its activities. The review resulted in the Stanage Estate manager being given additional management responsibilities elsewhere in the Park Authority (PDNPA, 2004), and because he organised the Forum and Steering Group meetings this further encouraged their reduced frequency. A Steering Group member observed how the meetings had "sort of dwindled" from meeting regularly every three or four months to once a year. The estate manager explained that "in more recent years we met and decided that actually, well, we don't need a full Forum meeting", and there were fewer meetings "partly because I've been so busy since I set it up, because I've got a different job". The frequency of meetings was thus partly affected by neo-liberalism's increased sway in the UK's political economy at this time. Neo-liberalism concerns broad ideological beliefs about society, and its consequences for Stanage illustrate how the ideational/discursive realm is an important consideration in the evolution of institutions. It also indicates the ideological/discursive realm's reciprocal interconnections with the material/social realm of political and economic change, as suggested in a cultural political economy approach (Ribera-Fumaz, 2009; Sum & Jessop, 2015).

The incremental path-creating shifts in the Forum and Steering Group's operation from 2002 to 2007, which have been outlined, can be interpreted through the concepts of "replacement", "layering" and "conversion". These represent different modes of gradual institutional change, as suggested in historical institutionalist research (Rast, 2012; Thelen, 2004). "Replacement" involves the removal of existing organisational rules and the introduction of new alternative ones; "layering" concerns the introduction of new rules for an organisation alongside, or on top of, existing ones (Boas, 2007); and "conversion" entails the changed use of existing institutional rules so that they serve new purposes (Thelen, 2004). These three concepts are relevant to the Forum and Steering Group's modified activities between 2002 and 2006. There was "layering", for example, as the same institutional structures and agreed policies were broadly retained, but new rules were added alongside those, such as through the meetings being held less frequently, and through them becoming less concerned with confronting contentious issues and more concerned with sharing information.

During this period the Forum and Steering Group also experienced the start of another mode of gradual institutional change within the dialectic of path dependence and path creation, this being what Schneiberg (2007) calls "redeployment". This occurs when established institutional paths contain elements of "paths not taken", which can be incomplete or abandoned experiments and developments. As discussed in the literature review, at a future date these "paths not taken" can represent resources of knowledge, experience and competences to support new developments (Crouch & Farrell, 2004).

The stimulus for a "path not taken" arose once again from neo-liberal pressures evident at the national scale on UK public agencies to withdraw from activities and to reduce their expenditure (Bramwell, 2011). These political-economic pressures led the Park Authority to undertake an Asset Management Review in 2006, and the review considered breaking up and selling the Stanage Estate (PDNPA, 2007b). The Forum and Steering Group and their members responded by evaluating whether it might be possible to operate as a charitable organisation or a trust, which could protect the estate and possibly buy it from the Park Authority. Advice and information were sought and considered about this potential new path for the Forum and Steering Group. During this time period, however, it appeared to be successfully argued to the Park Authority that the Estate should not be broken up and sold. The Estate manager noted that the "threat subsided" after they had "argued that the estate should be kept together. They could do something different with the hall and farmhouse [two features on the Estate], but the rest of the Estate would stay together and the Stanage Forum would continue running". The knowledge gained from this "path not taken", however, became useful again subsequently, as will be discussed in the next Section 'Phase of growing uncertainty, 2008–2011'. The political-economic pressures behind this "path not taken" again indicate how a cultural political economy perspective can help to reveal potential sources of institutional change (Harvey, 1996; Sum & Jessop, 2015).

Phase of growing uncertainty, 2008–2011

The reciprocal interplay between path creation and path dependence (Pastras & Bramwell, 2013; Williams, 2013) altered again in a third phase from 2008 to 2011 (the end of the research period). The Forum and Steering Group's governance arrangements and policies had been relatively path creating up to 2002, while between 2002 and 2007 they had been more path dependent but with some incremental path creating modifications. In this third period, however, there were intensifying exogenous pressures at varying spatial scales creating growing uncertainty about the Forum and Steering Group's future path.

The global financial crisis of 2007–2008, a major change in the external political economy, halted the UK's national economic growth and increased demands for public sector efficiencies. The subsequent May 2010 UK election brought in a Coalition Government committed to public sector budget cuts and privatisation (HM Treasury, 2010). That year the Park Authority's budget was cut by 28.5% over the period 2010 to 2015 (PDNPA, 2010). This resulted in another review of the Park Authority's assets, which reconsidered whether the Stanage Estate should be leased or sold to other organisations. The Estate manager asserted that "the latest review…has been brought on by finances and nearly 30% cuts to our budget". By 2011 there were discussions with third sector organisations, including the National Trust and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, about taking over the estate's management. The possibility of third sector management of Stanage created much uncertainty about the Forum and Steering Group's future, as noted by a Park Authority employee:

> "Up until now we've been in a position where we can say 'well, we've agreed on this, and what sort of consensus can we have?' Now there are issues coming up where we're having to say 'this is how we will deal with it, but actually in six months' time the situation may be very different', and we're certainly losing control".

The study's cultural political economy perspective encourages in-depth consideration of the effects of such wider political economy issues when evaluating the development paths taken by institutions.

While budget cuts influenced the Park Authority's changing attitude to the estate, it may also have been affected by shifts in ideas,

attitudes and values around environmental protection. These ideational shifts at varying spatial scales again indicate the potential influence of the realm of ideas, perceptions and the discursive on institutional evolutionary paths (Hay & Wincott, 1998). The Estate manager suggested that the Park Authority's changing attitude to Stanage at this time in part reflected perceptions that there were decreasing threats to environmental protection at such places, for such reasons as the funding available for farmers to engage in conservation and a greater willingness among third sector organisations to take on the management of threatened areas. He asserted that

> "Philosophically we're seeing that there are fewer threats to places like Stanage these days…and there seems to be other organisations with similar objectives willing to take them on. That's the crucial part of it, as long as they are willing and have the capacity to take them, then why not?"

When responding to the renewed threat of the estate being leased or sold, the Forum and Steering Group drew on their earlier experience in 2006 of a "path not taken". From that prior experience they knew more about the likely issues involved, and advantages and disadvantages of the differing proposals. Based on historical institutionalist ideas, this could be interpreted as a mode of gradual institutional change through the "redeployment" of knowledge and information resources or institutional repertoires from an earlier failed path, with these building blocks then being re-combined with the new circumstances and resources (Crouch & Farrell, 2004; Schneiberg, 2007; Stark & Bruszt, 2001). There were quite fundamental potential consequences for the Forum and Steering Group if the estate were leased or sold.

When the Forum and Steering Group members considered Stanage's potential future path at this time they also engaged in what Schneiberg (2007) terms "cross-path effects". As discussed earlier, the process of learning, borrowing and adapting from paths taken by other similar but separate institutions has been described as "cross path effects" (Crouch & Farrell, 2004). Here the Forum and Steering Group considered the route recently taken by the neighbouring upland Eastern Moors estate, which was transferred from the Park Authority to the National Trust and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. With several stakeholders involved with both estates, they consequently learnt about the leasing process involved and how terms and conditions had been agreed. According to the Estate manager, many of the Stanage stakeholders had been reassured by the Eastern Moors experience, as they had "seen what they feel is a good outcome, on the whole". This influence from the neighbouring Eastern Moors was partly the result of a chance coincidence of events, but it was also influenced by broad structural trends.

Conclusion

Without a critical understanding of tourism processes and their historical continuities and changes, we might misinterpret those processes and offer inappropriate policy recommendations. Consequently, there is real value of research on tourism institutions and their activities which is based on careful and critical temporal analysis and which draws on conceptual approaches. The study has responded to the need for more research on tourism institutions which draws on the specific research tradition of historical institutionalism. It also extended past research on temporal trends in tourism institutions through its in-depth use of a combined historical institutionalist and cultural political economy approach. It examined this research perspective, and then applied it to two institutions involved in tourism and environmental management in a protected area.

Insights were gained from the application of the study's historical institutionalist and cultural political economy perspective to longitudinal trends associated with the two institutions. It was shown there is interpretive value in focusing on the timing and sequencing of events and the interconnections between processes over time. The value was also indicated of employing such historical institutionalist concepts as critical junctures, path dependence, layering, redeployment of paths not taken, and cross-path effects. This also applied to the use of a cultural political economy approach, such as through consideration of reciprocal structure-agency interactions and of both material and cultural/ideational processes, together with their interconnections. The application of both perspectives also indicated the merit of their emphasis on limits to the determinism of path dependence as well as on the importance of recognising historical contingency. Here such aspects of history as chance, the role of individuals, and the influence of people's perceptions and interpretive frames can be critical influences.

The combined use of historical institutionalist and cultural political economy perspectives suggested that path creation and path dependence for the two institutions were not binary categories, and instead they were reciprocally intertwined and co-constituting. It also helped to reveal the significance of both the material/social and also the ideational/discursive for temporal continuities and changes.

Further insights came from the application of a process tracing methodology to capture the timing of when things happened, the order or sequencing through which different processes unfolded, and the interconnections between processes, with these being key in establishing the validity of particular causal claims. Process tracing was assisted by the use of heuristic analytical devices, such as creating a time line, establishing an outline periodisation, and distinguishing between more internal and more external processes and between institutional processes and institutional policies. The associated analytical categories are somewhat arbitrary, however, due to the interconnected character of societal and historical processes, and thus they should be used flexibly.

Care must be taken before generalising from this study of just two institutions. It is interesting that the Forum and Partnership were originally intended to make policies fairly independently from the main sponsoring agency, the Park Authority, but eventually the policy context affecting this sponsoring agency came to dominate discussions about the future of both institutions. This may suggest a wider importance of considering potential external steering of tourism-related organisations by more powerful institutions, but of course this is just one case study. Yet the analytical approaches, concepts and methodology used here can facilitate comparison between studies to see whether such evolving processes over time occur in similar ways in other contexts, so that wider but still embedded generalisations are then possible.

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