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The role of government in tourism and the influence of public policy on tourism development has long been of interest to scholars (Richter, 1983, 1989). Compared to other areas of sectoral public policy the field remains relatively under-theorised overall, or at least poorly connected to some of the extant public policy and political science literatures (Jenkins et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the political capacity for individual mobility across borders (Coles & Hall, 2008), and the role of tourism as a significant mechanism of economic development for many countries and regions means that the capacities of the state with respect to tourism is a significant research area in public administration research.

Although the policy dimensions of tourism are not a major focus of tourism research (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013), there has nevertheless been sustained study of public administration and public policy in tourism from various perspectives and approaches (Church, 2004; Hall & Jenkins, 2004; Airey & Chong, 2010; Halkier, 2010; Dredge & Jenkins 2012; Kennell & Chaperon, 2013), together with the provision of descriptive accounts of national and regional tourism administrations and policies (Pearce 1992; Henderson, 2003; Ivars Baidal, 2004; Pforr, 2006; Frew & Hay, 2011). Much of such writing has mirrored broader changes in the public policy sciences and new perspectives on the role and structure of state administrations (Jenkins et al., 2014), including a focus reducing the role of the state (Devine & Devine, 2011). This has meant that since the 1990s there has been a gradual shift in approach in the tourism policy and administration literature especially with respect to adoption of governance and network concepts, albeit sometimes unproblematically.

Such changes in academic discourse and focus undoubtedly reflect broader philosophical and political movements in the political economy of Western society and changes in political philosophy with respect to the role of government and the nature of government intervention (Dredge & Jenkins, 2011; Hall, 2011b). These shifts have had a substantial effect on theories and understandings of public administration including with respect to the rise of concepts such as new public management (NPM) (Hood, 1995) and digital or e-governance (Dunleavy et al., 2006; Haque, 2007; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2011). However, the change in the discourse of the role of the state and its agencies at various scales has not necessarily been reflected in a deeper understanding of political theory and public policy analysis and their connectedness to the study of tourism related public administration (Jenkins et al., 2014) and the public interest (Dredge, 2010), although themes such as civic engagement and democratic access to decision-making, undoubtedly resonate in the community-based tourism planning tradition (Hall, 2008; Bramwell, 2014; Zapata, 2014).

The nature of the state's involvement in tourism has also changed as the boundaries between state, citizens, and society have become increasingly blurred (Pforr, 2005) and public tourism bodies have sought to focus on economic re-

turns (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Deskins & Seevers, 2011; Kouri, 2012; Mark & Sung, 2012). The breakdown of traditional boundaries between citizens, society, and government has created more corporatist and pluralist policy structures (Coles et al., 2012), which have important implications for the process, content, directions, and effectiveness of tourism public policy and its explicitly political dimensions (Kerr et al., 2001; Kerr, 2003; Altinay & Bowen, 2006; Church & Coles, 2007), the role of interest groups (Lovelock, 2005; Anastasiadou, 2008), the projectification of politics and policy making through project management (Sjöblom et al., 2013; Lundin & Söderholm, 1995; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm 2002; Clegg & Courpasson, 2004) and the unintended consequences of policy, public sector reforms and organizational change (Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008; Zapata Campos & Zapata, 2014) which are all too rarely considered in tourism research.

Similarly, and despite the historical community-based tourism planning tradition, the potential of new insights from literatures on governance experiments (Hoffman, 2011), the role of niches and grassroots innovations in socio-technical regimes (Geels et al., 2011), the notion of ‘urban laboratories’ (Evans, 2011) or interactive governance (Torfing et al., 2012) have not been explored yet for a better understanding of public management and tourism in a post NPM era.

One of the curiosities of research on public administration is that in many languages there is no substantial difference between the terms used to describe politics and policy (Hall & Jenkins, 1995). This has meant that in much research, including in tourism studies, the terms politics, public policy and public administration are often used interchangeably. However, in the Anglo-American and northern European public administration traditions there has long been an avowed division between politics and policy and politics and public administration, i.e. that politicians engage in politics and that the public service implements policies in a non-party political rational fashion. Yet, as Jenkins et al. (2014) argue, all planning and policy is political in the sense that there is a contest between interests with respect to power and values and the determination of certain output and outcomes in the policy-making process. Nevertheless, a focus on public administration does provide a framework with which to examine the institutional, organisational and managerial dimensions of government in tourism together with the implementation of tourism policies (Hall, 2009a; Whitford & Ruhanen, 2010; Liu et al., 2012; Wang & Ap, 2013).

This introduction aims to briefly review some of the main literature on tourism and public administration before going on to note some of the substantial issues facing tourism and public policy both in the Nordic and wider context.

Key themes in Tourism and Public Administration Research

As noted above, interest in public administration and governance in tourism has been a reflection of broader ideological and philosophical in the policy sciences with respect to the role of the state in contemporary society (Hall, 2011b). Governance is the act of governing (Pierre & Peeters, 2000, 2005; Kooiman, 2003)

and has become an increasingly used concept in the tourism public policy and planning literature (Derco, 2013; Sharpley & Ussi, 2014), albeit usually without substantial reference to relevant policy literature. Nevertheless, concepts of governance have assumed importance as researchers have sought to understand how the state can best act to mediate contemporary tourism related social, economic, political and environmental policy problems, particularly at a time when the role of the state has itself changed given the dominance of neo-liberal policy discourse in many developed countries (Bramwell, 2011; Hall, 2011a, 2011b) and at different scales (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010).

Hall (2011b) suggested that the overarching concept in governance in public policy terms is the relationship between state intervention/public authority and societal autonomy or self-regulation. In tourism the notion of governance has been explored to varying degrees on topics ranging from innovation (Svensson, 2005), sustainable tourism (Dinica, 2009; Bramwell, 2010, 2011; Bramwell & Lane, 2011), conservation management (Duffy, 2006), events (Dredge & Whitford, 2011), and the development and promotion of place-specific tourism (Hultman & Hall, 2012), through to government intervention to change tourism related behaviours (Hall, 2013a, 2014).

Of the different modes of governance (Pierre & Peeters, 2005; Hall 2011b), networks along with cognate concepts such as clusters and public-private partnerships have assumed a major focus in tourism research since the 1990s (Hall 1999, 2011b; Bramwell & Lane 2000; Dredge & Jenkins, 2003, 2011; Dredge, 2006; Wray, 2009; Baggio, 2011; Robertson, 2011; Zahra, 2011; Zapata & Hall, 2012; Zapata Campos, 2014). Interest in networks and the role of public-private partnerships in tourism has also reflected the changes in theory and practice of governance and shifts in the nature of government intervention in Western states. However, much of the writing on networks in tourism has tended to treat them as an inherent good without considering their broader implications with respect to citizenship and the public interest (Baggio, 2011). This has meant that the ideological dimensions of network approaches and governance have often been underplayed (Bramwell, 2011), as are issues of implementation (Hall, 2009a; Krutwaysho & Bramwell, 2010), and the potential of networks to become closed policy systems (Hall, 1999; Dredge & Jenkins, 2011). Within the context of policy learning Hall (2013) has also suggested that there is an overfocus in tourism on networking as an inherent good, without adequate consideration of the values of networks and their actions. Similarly, an uncritical focus on the tourism development potential of public-private partnerships in areas such as urban regeneration, place marketing, events, and attractions as a magic solution in much of the tourism literature (e.g. Heeley, 2011), has often meant that some of the broader debates about the implications of such partnerships for communities and democratic decision-making has often gone unrecognised (Jenkins & Stolk, 2003; González, 2011; Zapata & Hall, 2012; Jordan et al., 2013).

An interest in networks and well as community-based approaches to intervention are also of significance in tourism public administration. One of the most longstanding themes or traditions usually identified in the tourism planning liter-

ature (Hall, 2008) is the focus on community-based tourism (Murphy, 1985; Murphy & Murphy, 2004). Although the approach has been critically assessed and has often been regarded as failing to live up to its promise either because of limited theorisation or understanding of political realities (Blackstock, 2005; Jordan et al., 2013), it has nevertheless proven to be highly influential with respect to a number of strands of tourism research especially public participation in tourism related public decision-making (Marzuki et al., 2012; Bramwell, 2014; Zapata, 2014). These include the theme of community participation in destination decision-making as one of the central tenets of sustainable tourism (Bramwell, 2010, 2014), as well as its importance in tourism in with respect to specific tourism policy arenas including poverty-reduction (Saarinen et al., 2013; Rogerson, 2014), local economic development, and the environment.

The role of tourism in local economic development and poverty reduction in less developed countries has been extensively explored since 2000 (Rogerson, 2006, 2014; Hall, 2007a; Harrison & Schipani, 2007; Meyer, 2007, 2009; Scheyvens, 2007, 2011; Harrison, 2009; Spenceley & Meyer, 2012; Zapata et al., 2011; Truong & Hall, 2013). Although the notion of pro-poor tourism has been extensively critiqued (Schilcher, 2007; Spenceley & Meyer, 2012; Truong et al., 2014), with substantial doubts raised about its overall contribution, the search for employment and economic development opportunities will mean that it will remain a significant tourism policy area in developing countries for the foreseeable future (Scheyvens, 2011; Rogerson, 2014).

In developed countries the focus on economic development and destination competitiveness has often been approached via the lens of innovation (Svensson, 2005; Hall & Williams, 2008; Hjalager, 2010; Williams, 2014) or other accounts such as Florida's 'creative class' (Florida, 2002) whereby cities strive to position themselves as bustling creative hotspots for those active in the creative economy (Rehn & Rippin, 2014). The national and local state is recognised as having an important role in tourism innovation via its public policy settings (Hall, 2009b; Halkier et al., 2013; Mei et al., 2013), especially in relation to regional and industry innovation systems (Weidenfeld, 2013). Nevertheless, as Weidenfeld and Hall (2014) point out much more research is required on tourism innovation systems especially with respect to the relative importance of place embedded qualities versus external networks and relationships. Such questions remain extremely significant in relation to questions of where and how government should invest in tourism and the overall nature of state intervention in the sector in the pursuit of policy goals, especially as tourism has been described as a low-road means to regional competitiveness (Malecki, 2004; Hall, 2007b).

Tourism's relationship to environmental change has long been a focus of research on decision-making and administration (Eagles, 2009; Wilkinson et al. 2011). Historically, this has focussed more on the development of national parks systems and management practices and the use of tourism as a justification for conservation practices (Eagles et al., 2010; Frost & Hall, 2009), although increasing attention has been given to the role of new management measures given the changing role of the state and the desire of many jurisdictions to generate

revenue from protected areas (Bramwell & Cox, 2009; Darcy & Wearing, 2009; Dredge & Thomas, 2009; Wilson et al., 2009; Kaltenborn et al., 2011; Schwartz et al., 2012). However, as many environmental issues have become transnational policy arenas, and complex meta-problems impossible to solve without multi-side interventions, so research interests have also shifted. This has meant interest in such topics as the implementation of international agreements and conventions (Hall, 2010c, 2011d); the administration of tourism in polar regions (Stewart et al., 2005; Hall & Saarinen, 2010; Viken, 2011); and climate change (Becken & Clapcott, 2011; Zeppell, 2012).

Beyond the Marketisation of Tourism Public Administration?

Because of the commercial relationships that are integral to destination and place promotion and branding tourism has been one of the areas of government activity that was at the forefront of “new public management” with its emphasis on efficiency (with the result of greater outsourcing), markets and monitoring and evaluation in the public sector (Hood, 1991, 1995; Hood & Peters, 2004). Tourism was one of the first policy areas in which greater emphasis was put on public-private partnerships and, in many countries, the corporatisation of government agencies (Brunsson, 1994) so as to enable them to focus on marketing and promotion (Kerr, 2003; Wettenhall, 2003; Hall, 2008a; Shone & Memon, 2008; Mordue, 2008). Another implication was that state cultural and recreational services, as well as protected areas, had to ‘pay their way’ in order to provide a return on the public investment (Belfiore, 2004). The concepts of NPM were warmly welcomed by the tourism industry as in many jurisdiction it meant not only increased commercial access to state assets but also greater influence over development and marketing agendas (Hall & Jenkins 1995).

The potential of commercial interests to dominate public interests in tourism policy settings was recognised in some criticisms of the uncritical embrace of collaboration and public-private partnership in tourism policy (Hall, 1999; Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Dredge, 2006; Zapata & Hall, 2012). Nevertheless, many governments, the tourism industry, lead organisations such as the UN World Tourism Organisation, as well as tourism researchers, advocated for NPM values in the organisation of tourism, especially given an increased focus on destination and regional competitiveness (Hall, 2007b). This has also meant that in many jurisdictions governments have defined their metagoverning role in tourism very narrowly in accordance with the NPM paradigm, which has often meant very limited policy resources but substantial funding of marketing initiatives (Sørensen, 2006).

Yet in the current decade there is growing recognition that the role of the state remains as important as ever in tourism, perhaps even more so given responses to recent economic and financial crises as well as natural disasters (Hall, 2010b). Here again, research on tourism public policy is reflecting broader shifts in thinking on the role and nature of public management (Dunleavy et al., 2006; Osborne, 2010; Osborne & Kinder, 2011; Jenkins & Hall, 2014). In addition,

there is growing recognition of the embeddedness and positionality of tourism researchers in tourism public policy (Hall, 2011c; Thomas, 2011) as well as the circulation and translation of policies between jurisdictions, what has been developed in the Scandinavian school of organization studies through the ‘travel of ideas’ metaphor’ (Czarniawska-Joerges & Joerges, 1996; Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón, 1996, 2005; Sahlin-Andersson, 1996), and being aptly described as policy mobilities (McCann and Ward, 2012) or policy tourism (González, 2011).

A number of these issues can be identified in the Nordic context (Hall et al., 2009) and in the papers contained in this special number. Bohlin et al. for example chart the shifts in Swedish tourism public policy from 1930 to 2010 noting the changing role of the state towards a NPM model. Garnes highlights public-private partnerships and issues of power and legitimacy in Norwegian tourist organizations while Huijbens et al. also look at network and relational concerns in the context of Icelandic government policy with respect to clusters in the tourism industry. Finally, Thulemark and Hauge highlight one of the key spatial features of Scandinavian tourism, which is the significance of regional tourism development and innovation in rural and peripheral regions through Florida’s concept of the creative class.

One of the challenges facing the editors of this special issue is the Nordic region’s distinguishing characteristics for its public administration, and more specifically for tourism management, which have given rise to a wide variety of public policies and governance structures. Despite of this, several similarities come to mind the significance of peripheral and rural regions; social demands for democracy, equity, transparency and interactive governance (Torfing et al., 2012); environmental concerns and, more managerially, the potential influence of Scandinavian schools of organizational institutionalism and services marketing and management, all themes that are not yet sufficiently explored in the tourism scholarship on public administration. Yet these factors alone are not unique. Similarly, the search for an appropriate balance between commercial and public interest as the welfare state is restructured or, at least, rethought, is an issue facing many social democratic nations. Arguably, tourism administration and policy in the region has been substantially influenced by policy tourism with the import of ideas with respect to innovation, especially the experience economy, as well as place promotion and greater emphasis on tourism marketing than policy capacities in public agencies. Whether Nordic public administration is sufficiently embedded in place to make it unique is therefore something of a moot point. However, if it is not unique then it would be something ironic that a sector which supposedly aims to promote the distinctive identities and features of different destinations is grounded in an unexceptional and undifferentiated administrative setting.

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