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Cultural Routes Crossing Portugal: history and traditions

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Cultural routes across different regions create real opportunities to improve tourism dynamics, offering tourists more valuable experiences bringing benefits to the entire tourism value chain and to all tourism-related sectors (Perdomo, 2015). This study analyses the potential of a cultural and tourist product based on two routes in the Centre of Portugal, one following the path laid out by the 3rd French Invasion and another following the Historical National Road N°2. The main goal is to investigate the attractiveness and market potential for the two routes specifically in the domestic market. Based on the results of a questionnaire applied to 622 domestic tourists, it became clear that these two routes are very attractive tourism products. This study provides valuable information about tourists' purchase intention and about the amount of time and money, they are willing to spend to take each of the proposed routes.

Key Words: Cultural routes; Military Route; Heritage Road; Centre of Portugal, Cultural tourism

Introduction

The tourism industry is growing rapidly. However, attention has drifted away from a purely quantitative growth to a qualitative change in tourism demand. In fact, tourists, especially cultural ones, are changing: they travel more, they have higher budgets and prefer more holistic, spiritual and creative forms of tourism (Richards, 2011). This tourist segment requires more personalised and authentic products, especially products related to the tangible and intangible heritage of the destinations visited, so they can collect more vivid experiences (Phipps, 2007).

Socio-cultural shifts are a key factor that will play an important role in changing travel patterns and tourist choices. The search for rewarding experiences encourages tourist to move away from mass tourism and look for personalised journeys. In this context, the concept of route tourism develops as a growing trend

that aims to connect different attractions, while promoting local tourism and heritage conservation and encouraging tourists to move around the territory (Hardy, 2003; Hyde & Lawson, 2003).

The tourist products related to cultural routes, cultural cities and 'cultural must-do's', connected with popular culture, arts, the search for authenticity of the destinations and the local cultures, are the central elements that form the basis of the new World Cultural Tourism Scenario (UNWTO, 2015). Cultural routes represent an innovative field that will support the conservation of cultural heritage complexity, transforming them into manifestations and comprehensive ways of understanding cultural heritage from a wider dimension that combines tangible and intangible elements, emphasising the key human factor (Martorell Carreno, 2002). Cultural routes also bring huge benefits to those destinations that can offer alternative tourist products, supporting local economy

and cultural institutions (Richards, 2007). According to this perspective, the centre of Portugal offers several possibilities for the creation of different types of cultural tourist routes that, by their significance, can become decisive elements that will come to play a crucial role in the preservation of cultural heritage and in territorial development and cohesion.

The main goal of this work is to analyse the attractiveness and market potential for two cultural tourist routes in the centre of Portugal:

- i) a historical-military route, the Route of the French Invasions and
- ii) a heritage road route, the route that follows National Road N°2.

The first is based on the military and historical heritage linked to Napoleon's invasions and may be seen as part of a larger project entitled 'Destination, Napoleon' that brings together 60 European cities in 13 different countries. The second proposal is based on Portuguese identity and traditions. National Road N°2 is the longest road in Portugal. It crosses Portugal from north to south and so it constitutes a route for all those who seek to get in touch with experiences provided by the Portuguese territories and traditions that are further away from the coastline.^[1]

In the next section, the theoretical background supporting the study is presented, specifically the importance of cultural routes and the main aspects of the two cultural routes proposed for the Centre of Portugal, considered in this study are accordingly introduced. In the next sections, the methodology is discussed followed by the analysis of results. The paper concludes with a discussion of results and respective implications for science and management, also presenting the study's limitations and future research directions.

Literature Review

Culture is a key tourism asset that inspires millions of tourists to visit new destinations (UNWTO, 2015). In fact, among all types of tourism, cultural tourism has emerged as one of the five most important tourism market segments with a 10% to 15% annual growth due mainly to social, cultural and demographic

changes, leading to the emergence of new market niches. WTO predicts that, by 2020, cultural tourism will be an increasingly important tourist product, suggesting that there is a great growth potential for tourism products based on cultural values (Niemczyk, 2014). In fact, in recent decades, culture has been regarded as one of the main reasons for tourists to take their vacations and trips. The European Commission's report on the 'Preferences of Europeans towards Tourism' in 2015 (European Commission, 2016), states that European citizens' main reasons to travel are, right after sun / beach and visiting friends / relatives / family, the country's culture and city trips.

The market segment of cultural tourism will continue to develop following the complexity of the cultural tourists' consumption patterns (Pulido-Fernández & Sánchez-Rivero, 2010). Cultural tourists have characteristics, consumption patterns and tourist experiences, needs and expectations that are different from those exhibited by other tourists (Pulido-Fernández & Sánchez-Rivero, 2010; Van der Ark & Richards, 2006).

Many destinations with a significant cultural heritage find their potential for development in this constantly growing market. Since ancient times, large architectural constructions and cultural diversity have been attracting travellers and have acted as a catalyst to attract new visitors (Richards, 1996). Since then the tourism industry has been creating products specifically for this segment – cultural tourists – in which culture, heritage and Arts are a strong contribution and can transform places into appealing travel destinations able to attract tourists who are looking for a rewarding and enriching experience (Zeppel & Hall, 1992).

Cultural tourist routes

Connecting people and promoting sustainable development through cultural routes was a highlighted topic during the 2015 UNWTO / UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture in Cambodia, (UNWTO, 2015). A Cultural Route is a path (by land, water, both or any other kind) that is physically determined and characterised by having its own specific and historical dynamics and some kind of functionality. Those routes witnesses interactive movements of people, multidimensional, continuous and reciprocal exchanges of goods, ideas, knowledge and values, within the regions of a country, or between countries, during significant periods of time, and that allows the exchange and crossing of cultures over

1. While neither of the examined routes are ostensibly related to religious tourism or pilgrimage, they both connect with religious sites, and the learnings from this research project apply directly to all routes in Portugal, and thus, could be applied to the various pilgrimage routes.

space and time and therefore has reflexes on both tangible and intangible heritage (UNESCO, 2018).

This recognition began with the creation of the ICOMOS International Committee on Cultural Routes (CIIC-ICOMOS), in 1994. The goal of ICOMOS is to establish the theoretical scope of these types of cultural goods, as well as the measures that are necessary to ensure their proper conservation and management. The work carried out by this Committee led to the recognition that cultural routes encourage community participation in cultural activities and raise awareness for the common cultural heritage. Anchored in cultural and social principles, cultural routes represent a resource for innovation, creativity and for the creation of small businesses, which will allow the development of cultural tourism products and services (Council of Europe, 2014). Despite the conceptual unanimity, the World Tourism Organization (2015) suggests a typology of cultural routes. This categorisation proposal intends to define cultural routes as a tourist product that should be as simple and functional as possible. According to the World Tourism Organization (2015), tourist cultural routes can be classified according to the following parameters:

- i) Design and Structure,
- ii) Theme,
- iii) Territory,
- iv) Historic origin or current reconfiguration and
- v) Visitor infrastructure (UNWTO, 2015b).

The typology of the routes may also differ according to the amount and to the nationality of their visitors, because there are regional attractions that are interesting to domestic tourist but do not attract foreign visitors (Meyer, 2004). That way, cultural routes help preserve what is regarded as unique and authentic, preserving local ethnography and indigenous traditions and being a means of promotion and economic development (Božić & Tomić, 2016)

Tourist routes in the Centre of Portugal

The Centre Region of Portugal is characterised by its contrasts and great diversity, mainly due to its natural and landscape richness and to the existence of a vast historical and cultural heritage. The preservation and revitalisation of these territories, as well as the inherent traditions and ethnography of each region, are considered critical. In this context, the organisation of theme routes has been acting as a means of promoting the destinations of the country's central region promoting its main regional attractions.

There are 19 tourist routes in this region grouped according to the following themes – **Nature, Gastronomy, Wines, and Historical and Cultural Heritage** (Entidade Regional de Turismo do Centro de Portugal, 2017):

The **Nature Routes** identified in the central region of Portugal are:

- i) the bird watching route in the regions of Aveiro, Estarreja and Albergaria-a-Velha;
- ii) the four rivers and lagoons route in the Serra da Estrela that covers the municipalities of Coa, Almeida, Pinhel and Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo and the Mondego and Zêzere rivers;
- iii) The gardens route in Viseu, Coimbra, Caldas da Rainha, Castelo Branco, Tomar and Bombarral;
- iv) the fishing route in Esmoriz, the S. Jacinto Dunes Natural Park, the Barra fort, Ilhavo, Murtosa, Ponte da Varela and Cortegaça; and
- v) the 'Vale dos Glaciares' route covering the Zêzere Glacier Valley in Manteigas, Vale de Alforja in Covilhã and the Vale da Loriga in Seia.

The **Gastronomy** theme is present in the following routes

- i) the Cod Route, in Ilhavo and
- ii) the Cherry Route in Fundão.

As far as **Wine** is concerned, there are two main routes:

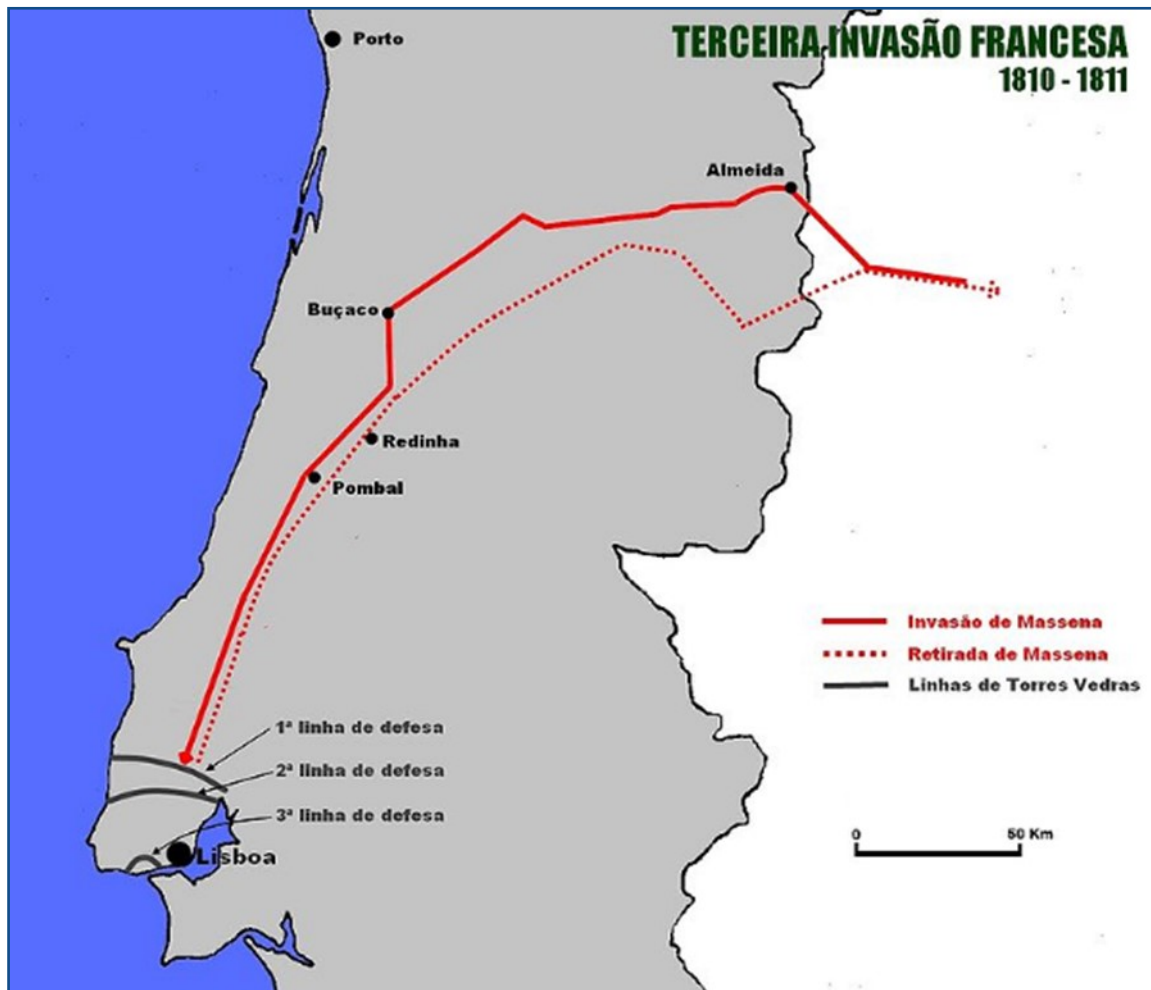
- i) the Dão Wine Route that is divided into four itineraries:
 - a) The lands of Viseu, Silgueiros and Canas de Senhorim; itinerary
 - b) the lands of Azurara and Castendo; itinerary
 - c) The lands of Besteiros; itinerary
 - d) The lands of Alva and itinerary
 - e) the lands of Serra do Estrela; and
- ii) the route of the West Vineyards and Wines that includes 25 wineries between Óbidos and Caldas da Rainha.

The routes which attract the most public attention, because of the relevance of the product they offer and because of the specific characteristics of the region itself, are those that are closely related to the **Historical and Cultural Heritage**. There are 9 different routes covering this theme in the Centre of Portugal:

- i) The **World Heritage Route** follows the World Heritage Sites recognized by UNESCO

- a) the University of Coimbra, a historical benchmark for higher education standards and that also represents the students' determination to fight repression of any kind as seen in the Coimbra students' uprising against the 'Estado Novo' (since 2013);
 - b) the Convent of Christ and Castle of Tomar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site classified in 1983 and regarded as a milestone of the Knight Templars' presence in the Iberian Peninsula;
 - c) The monastery of Santa Maria da Vitória, commonly known as the Monastery of Batalha, one of the largest patrimonial landmarks in the country and in the whole Iberian Peninsula. It is a place of enormous national symbolism, stories and legends (recognized in 1983).
- ii) The **Route of the Historic Castles and Villages of Serra da Estrela** explores the heritage, the ethnographic and gastronomic variety of the Beira Interior. It includes the villages of Belmonte, Almeida, Fundo, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Meda, Linhares da Beira, Celorico da Beira, Pinhel and Trancoso.
- iii) The **Route of Western Baroque** focuses mainly on a visit, of historical and architectural interest, to buildings where the luxury and meticulousness of the decoration are characteristics of their Baroque style, depicting a phase of Portuguese richness and boast, especially during the 18th century. The route begins in the city of Nazaré and follows to Alcobaça, a town where is possible to admire the baroque elements of the Monastery and of the Convent of Coz. In Caldas da Rainha the references are the church of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo and the majestic Five Spouts Fountain. In Óbidos, is possible to visit São Pedro Church, Senhor Jesus da Pedra Sanctuary and Nossa Senhora da Piedade Chapel, located in Porta da Vila. Moving towards the coast, and arriving to Peniche there are three Baroque Style churches: S. Pedro Church, Nossa Senhora da Ajuda and Conceição Church, in Atouguia da Baleia. The route extends from Cadaval to Torres Vedras.
- iv) The **Route of the Gothic** focuses on visiting destinations with a strong presence of this architectural style. The most famous and most impressive site is the Monastery of Alcobaça, the largest Gothic church in Portugal. Also should be stressed the importance of the tombs of D. Pedro and D. Inês. Other examples of Gothic style in the Centre Region are the chapel of S. Martinho de Óbidos, the Mother Church of S. Leonardo in Atouguia da Baleia. In Lourinhã, there is the Church of Santa Maria do Castelo, classified as a National Monument in 1922. In Torres Vedras, the Chafariz dos Canos, a monumental fountain with gothic elements is worth visiting.
- v) The **Route of Wool** seeks to revitalise traditions and promote the customs of the shepherds and of the merchants from the Serra de Estrela region. On this route, you will find the Museum of Wool where people will find detailed information about the locality, maps and historical facts.
- vi) The **Route of the old Jewish Quarters of the Serra da Estrela**, a route designed with the intention of showing and preserving Jewish heritage in Portugal, through the localities of Celorico da Beira, Covilhã, Fundão, Gouveia, Guarda, Linhares da Beira, Manteigas, Penamacor, Pinhel and Trancoso and Belmonte. The town of Belmonte is the most representative example of such heritage and hosts, since 2005, the Jewish Museum.
- vii) The **Route of Ceramics** includes Aveiro and Ovar and highlights the unique patterns and characteristics of the Portuguese Azulejos (Portuguese Tiles). The Church of Válega is an example of this typical ceramic product. Ilhavo is the town that hosts the Vista Alegre Factory which is famous worldwide for its porcelain treasures. The route ends in Caldas da Rainha in the Bordallo Pinheiro Artistic Faience Factory, founded in 1884 and still remains a world-class brand in the creation of decorative ceramic bodies.
- viii) The **Route of the Mills** facilitated the recovery of 26 windmills and 6 watermills along a route that includes the localities of Peniche, Cadaval (Serra de Montejunto), Lourinhã, Torres Vedras, Sobral de Monte Agraço, Arruda dos Vinhos and Alenquer. This route includes visits to the mills that are still working, to handicraft shops, museums, rural tourism accommodation and to places where electric power is produced.
- ix) Whether it is because of the revival of old buildings or to promote regional attractions, urban art has been gaining strength over the last few years. The **Route of Urban Art** includes the best examples of that artistic manifestation: the Mural of Figueira da Foz, the intervention in old buildings carried out in Viseu, the Woolfest in Covilhã, a festival that honours the wool manufacture tradition with the organisation of urban art events and, finally, the town of Fundão, where urban art is based on Portuguese traditional lace.

Fig 1 – Route of the French Invasions



Source: Mourão, 2011

Historical and Cultural Route: the French Invasions

The French invasions enable the creation of a cultural and tourist product that allows visitors to discover a unique heritage in the history of Europe that is closely related to the territorial expansion carried out by Napoleon Bonaparte, whose pretensions of conquest led him to Egypt, Russia and to other European states and kingdoms such as Portugal. Currently the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities supports 'Destination Napoleon' (European Federation of Napoleonic Cities, 2019). More than 60 cities in 13 countries, from Portugal to Russia, are striving to grant their Napoleonic historical heritage the importance it deserves in an effort to give them a European dimension. (European Institute of Cultural routes, 2018). In Portugal, the proposed route intends to create a cultural and tourist product that will allow visitors to discover a unique heritage in the history of Europe, following Napoleon Bonaparte's journey during the 3rd

French invasion of Portugal (Almeida-Bussaco-Linhas de Torres) (see Fig.1).

The 3rd French invasion entered Almeida, a Portuguese border town in 1810. Almeida's stronghold, regarded as one of the most monumental in the country, was a serious obstacle to the progression of the French troops, since its structure enable it to withstand a prolonged siege (Conceição, 2002). The Portuguese and English army relied on its defensive capacity and on human and material reinforcement to face the invaders, but an explosion in the main arsenal on August 26th 1810 led to the Portuguese surrender (Buttery & Cabral, 2008). In spite of this outcome, this place is currently regarded as a symbol of resistance and of national identity and considered one of the most important Portuguese military fortification included in the Portuguese Tentative List for UNESCO heritage since 2017 as Bulwarked Fortifications of the 'Raia' (Border) (UNESCO, 2019) (see Fig.2).

Fig. 2—Fortification of Almeida, Military Museum of Bussaco and Fortification of Linhas de Torres

Source: TVIonline, 2016, Lifeccoler, 2019, TVIonline, 2019

The progression of the French armies led them through Viseu and went on until they reached Bussaco, where, on September 26th and 27th, they had once more to face the Portuguese and English army. This time the Portuguese and their allies won the battle. Created to preserve the memory of this battle, the Military Museum and the Mata do Bussaco, both appear on the list of cultural heritage sites to be classified by UNESCO. These are points of great military, natural and historical interest and allow a unique tourist and cultural experience (European Federation of Napoleonic Cities, 2019) (see Fig.2).

The Linhas de Torres, a set of fortifications that covers a large area between the Tagus River and the Atlantic Ocean, stopped the French armies from reaching Lisbon (Oman, 2004). These military monuments are part and support an intermunicipal network of interpretation centres, connected by paths covered with observatories that will help tourists enjoy their breathtaking landscape. For its importance for National Identity and Memory this set of fortifications are classified as Portuguese National Monuments (TVIonline, 2019) (see Fig.2).

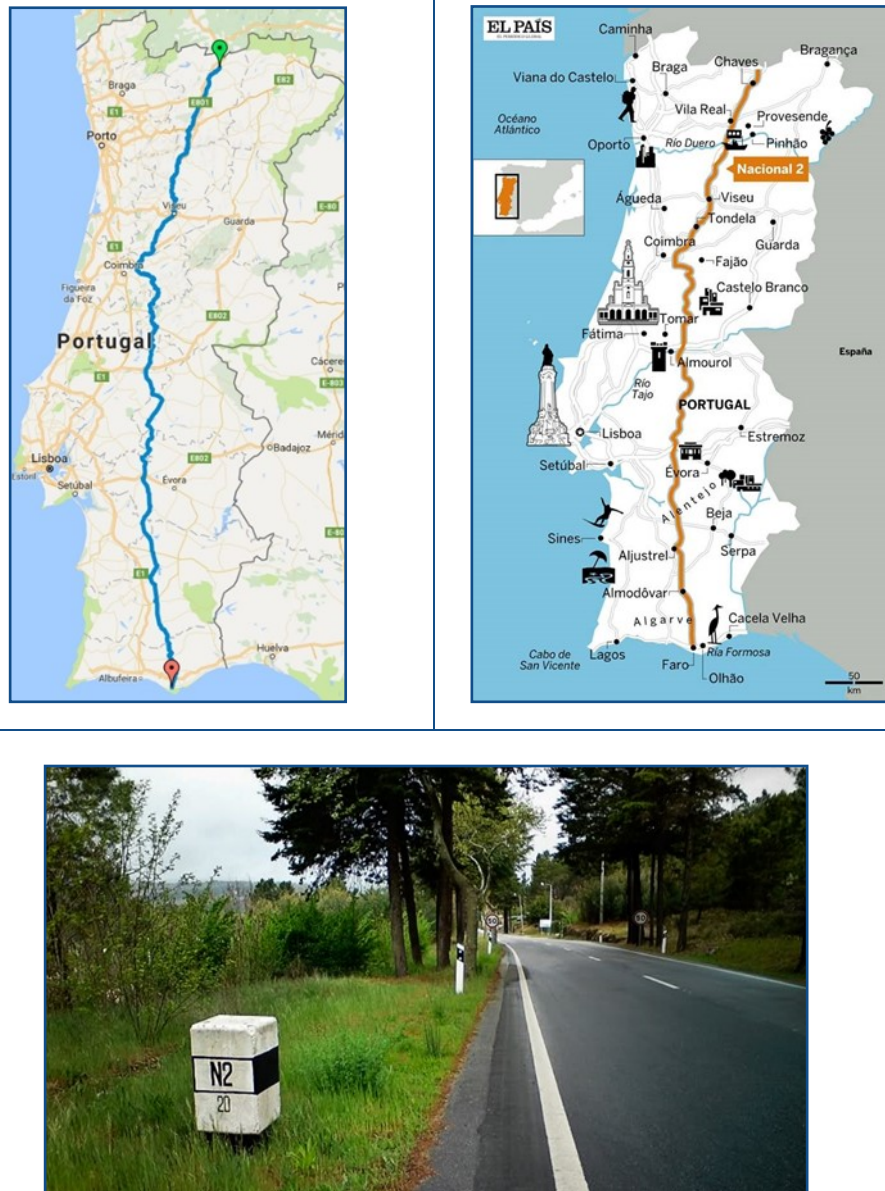
This route, in its European dimension, has great potential and is quite well known, particularly among the French tourists who represent a very important segment in the national tourist context. Therefore, its creation and development allows tourists to establish a relationship between the most significant sites and the historical events to which they are related, as well as with the events that are currently developed to honour these events (European Federation of Napoleonic Cities, 2019).

The route of the 3rd French invasion allows the country to offer a product that delivers a historical and cultural experience, since it includes historical recreations of battles and other relevant events, museums, monuments and operational military infrastructures. It also offers the chance to taste the different types of gastronomy related to a certain historic event and to interact with the community and the territory.

The Route of National Road N°2

National Road N°2 (EN2) is the longest road in the country. It starts in Chaves (km 0) and ends at km 738.5 in Faro (originally, the road had a total length of 739.260 km). This road crosses 11 districts, 8 provinces, 4 mountains, 11 rivers and 32 counties from the far North to the far South of the Portuguese territory. It was built on top of the old Royal Road and transformed into the ‘backbone’ of automobile traffic in Portugal, a project that was keenly developed by the Estado Novo (Bastos, 2017) (see Fig.3).

This route has an enormous potential to show the diversity and identity of different territories. Each one of the municipalities along the route has distinctive aspects, monuments, natural landscapes, hot springs, gastronomy, wines and cultural heritages, some of which are classified by UNESCO, that provide an authentic tourist experience in territories that remain quite unknown to most tourists. National Road 2 was considered by the specialist tourism magazine *Froommer's* and the newspaper *El País* as one of the ‘must-go’ destinations in 2019. The American magazine explains that EN2, along its route presents rough and poorly visited landscapes, UNESCO World Heritage sites, ‘wild mountains, elegant thermal cities, untouched lakes and a chain of historic towns and photogenic villages’ (Lusa, 2018).

Figure 3 – Route of National Road N°2

Source: Google Maps, 2018, Barrio, 2018 in El País, Lusa, 2018

This project can be supported by the Association of Municipalities of EN2, whose main objective is to transform this cultural route into a safe, comfortable and reliable route and into a tourist path that can provide a strong contact with local communities (Fonseca, 2016).

This project offers different products designed and directed to different types of tourists. Those who prefer to follow the complete itinerary can choose to go on thematic routes related to the material and immaterial heritage, gastronomy and wines, history and legends,

religious festivities, customs and local activities, thermal or sporting activities; on the other hand, if tourists prefer enjoying one region only, they can have a more engaging and holistic local experience (Barrio, 2018).

The involvement of the community in the development and implementation of this route is essential for the tourist experience to be successful. The existence of the Association of Municipalities of EN2 can facilitate connection with community and ensure the authentic experience of this itinerary, while making it a safe, comfortable and reliable route (Fonseca, 2016).

Methodology

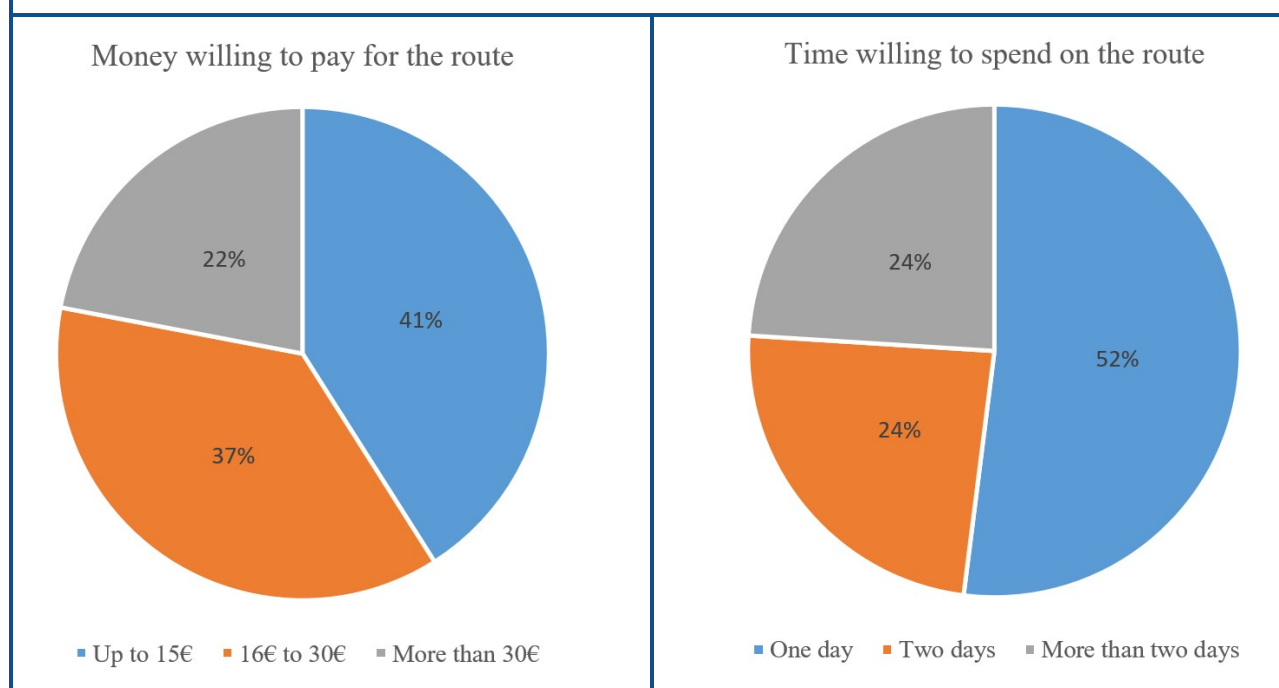
The empirical collection for this paper was made through a questionnaire to domestic tourists throughout the Portuguese territory between March 21st and April 5th, 2018. 622 of the 626 questionnaires gathered were considered valid. Measurement scales were developed to establish the interest of domestic tourists in different types of activities related to the Route of the French Invasions and the Route of the National Road N°2, in particular aspects such as purchase intention and, the amount of money and time respondents would be willing to invest to participate in each of the routes. Scales adapted from Marketing and Tourism literature were used to develop the measuring instrument, (particularly the work of Tarkiainen and Sundqvist, 2005) to analyse future behaviour intentions.

As for the activities to be included in the two tourist routes, tourism and cultural management experts well informed about the tourist, cultural and patrimonial reality of the central region of Portugal were interviewed.

Sample Profile

622 individuals from the districts of Aveiro, Beja, Guarda, Viseu, Castelo Branco, Lisbon, Leiria, Braga, Bragança, Porto, Santarem, Vila Real and Covilhã were interviewed. 239 of the participants were male and 353 were female. A very significant part of the sample is quite young: 40.5% of the respondents are under 25 years old, 15.8% are between 26 and 35 years old, 12.5% are between 36 and 45, 17.8% are between 46 and 55, 9.5% between 56 and 65 years and 3.9% are over 65. In short, about 60% of the respondents are under 45 years of age.

| Table 1 – Sample Profile – Demographics | | |
|---|--|-------|
| Demographics | | % |
| Gender | Female | 61.5% |
| | Male | 38.5% |
| Age | Under 25 years old | 40.5% |
| | 26-35 years old | 15.8% |
| | 36-45 years old | 12.5% |
| | 46-55 years old | 17.8% |
| | 56-65 years old | 9.5% |
| | Over 65 years old | 3.9% |
| Marital Status | Single | 51.9% |
| | Married couple without children | 6.9% |
| | Married couple with at least 1 minor child | 18.5% |
| | Married couples with a dependent child | 8.2% |
| | Widowed or divorced | 6.6% |
| Education | Higher Education | 45.3% |
| | High School Education | 37.1% |
| | Middle School Education | 10.5% |
| | Elementary School Education | 7.1% |
| Occupation | Students | 36.5% |
| | Middle and senior managers | 14.0% |
| | Commercial/office workers | 12.2% |
| | Blue-collar workers | 10.3% |
| | Entrepreneurs | 9.6% |
| | Self-employed professionals | 7.7% |
| | Retired people | 5.3% |
| | Housekeepers/unemployed | 4.3% |
| Monthly Income | Up to 1000 Euros | 72.0% |
| | 1001 to 2000 Euros | 22.6% |
| | 2001 to 3000 Euros | 4.0% |
| | Above 3001 Euros | 1.5% |
| Source: Authors | | |

Figure 1: Money and time willing to spend on the Route of the French Invasions

Source: The authors

As for their marital status, 51.9% of the respondents are single, 6.9% are childless married couples, 18.5% are married couples with at least one minor child, 7.9% are couples with a dependent child, 8.2% are couples with independent children and 6.6% are widowed or divorced people.

The analysis of the respondents' academic qualifications shows that a large portion of the participants have graduated from a higher education institution (45.3%), 37.1% graduated from high school (12 years in Portugal), 10.5% finished middle school and only 7.1% left school after graduating from elementary school.

As for occupation, the largest group of respondents are students (36.5%). Middle and senior management jobs are the next most represented group (14%) followed by shop attendants / office workers (12.2%), blue-collar workers (10.3%), entrepreneurs (9.6%), self-employed professionals (7.7%), retired people (5.3%), and housekeepers / unemployed (4.3%).

In relation to income, 72% of the sample earn up to 1000 Euros per month, 22.6% between 1001 and 2000 Euros, 4% between 2001 and 3000 Euros and only 1.5% of the sample have a monthly income above 3001 Euros (See Table 1).

Data Analysis

An exploratory data analysis was conducted in a first phase and a bivariate descriptive analysis was carried out to assess, in global terms, the respondents' interest in following both proposed routes: the Route of the French Invasions and Route of National Road N° 2. A cluster analysis was then carried out. In this procedure, the K-means method was used to create segments of tourists according to their degree of interest to participate in the different types of activities that will be part of the two tourist routes.

After identifying the segments, the profiles of the individuals' forming each cluster were designed, regarding their socio-demographic characteristics. After measuring each segment's degree of interest in performing the activities, two clusters where the consumers' interest in carrying out the activities of the routes was higher were selected. In this phase, the analysis only considered the individuals whose answers had been 'interested' (4) and 'very interested' (5) in taking part in the activities provided by each Route.

Based on the previous results and on the cluster of individuals who had showed greater interest, activities were identified the that should be part of the suggested routes.

Table 2: Activities preferred by tourists in the Route of the French invasions

| Activities | % |
|---|-------|
| To visit monuments connected with Portuguese history. | 73.3% |
| To visit and learn about UNESCO heritage sites. | 71.0% |
| To taste local gastronomy related to historical events. | 70.0% |
| To walk the pathways connecting monuments. | 65.8% |
| To take part in <i>storytelling</i> activities to learn about legends and folk stories. | 61.2% |
| To watch historical recreations related to battles and other events. | 57.0% |
| To visit military monuments (fortresses, forts...). | 57.0% |
| To visit museums and military interpretation centres. | 53.3% |
| To visit military infrastructures still fully functional. | 44.4% |

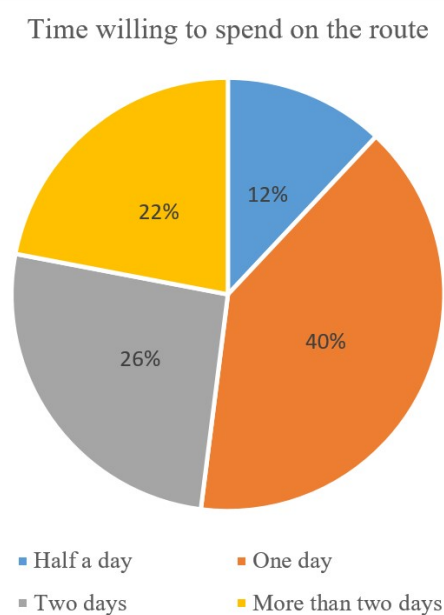
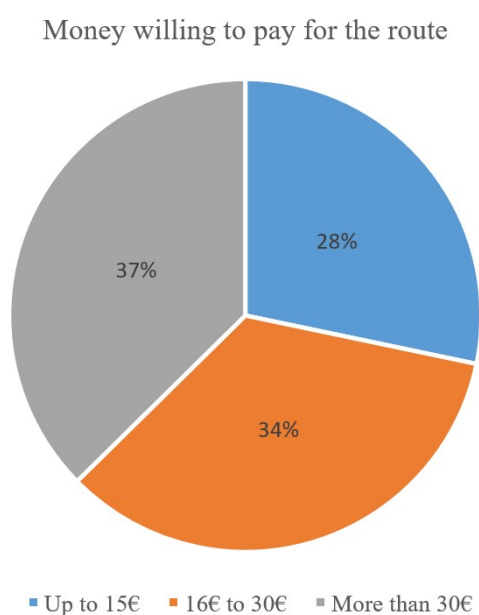
Source: The authors

Results and Discussion

Route of the French invasions

To assess interest in the Route of the French Invasions, the analysis conducted only took into account the respondents that had previously showed a high or very high interest. 496 of the total respondents met these requirements. About 80% of the sample expressed high interest in completing the Route of the French Invasions. Respondents said they would likely participate in this route and that they intend to do so in

the near future in the company of family and friends. As for the price they would be willing to pay for this route, about 41% of them would spend up to €15; a further 37% would be willing to spend between €16 and €30 and the remaining 22% of the participants state that they would pay more than €30. 52% of the respondents would like to spend a full day completing the Route of the French Invasions, 24% would prefer to complete it in two days and 24% would do the route in more than two days (See Figure 1).

Graph 2: Money and time willing to spend on the Route of the National Road 2

Source: The authors

Table 3: Activities preferred by tourists in the Route of National Road 2

| Activities | % |
|---|-------|
| To experience the typical gastronomy of the region. | 78.9% |
| To visit cultural and historical landscapes. | 77.6% |
| To take part in health and wellness activities. | 75.7% |
| To discover water routes. | 75.4% |
| To visit the monuments related to Portuguese history. | 73.3% |
| To visit the UNESCO heritage sites. | 71.0% |
| To take part in <i>storytelling</i> activities to learn about legends and folk stories. | 70.0% |
| To participate in routes to discover and experience traditional aromas and flavors. | 66.7% |
| To participate in cultural and festive events. | 63.1% |
| To participate and experience local customs. | 62.5% |
| To know local crafts and artisanal production. | 61.9% |
| To participate in wine tastings. | 58.4% |
| To participate in wine routes. | 56.4% |
| To practice nautical sports. | 52.9% |
| To participate in religious celebrations. | 46.2% |
| To take part in agricultural activities | 43.2% |
| Source: The authors | |

When analysing the interest expressed by tourists in taking part in the different activities offered on this route, it was observed that more than 70% of them were very interested in the following activities:

- i) visiting the UNESCO heritage sites,
- ii) visiting the monuments related to Portuguese history and
- iii) experiencing the gastronomy related to historical events.

More than 50% of the respondents showed a very high interest in taking part in other activities such as

- i) walking the pathways that connect the monuments,
- ii) participating in *storytelling* activities to learn about legends and local stories and folklore,
- iii) watching historical recreations of battles and other events,
- iv) visiting military monuments, and
- v) visiting museums and military interpretation centres.

Tourists showed little interest in taking part in visits to military infrastructures that were still fully functional. In this case, less than 50% of the sample revealed interest in completing the activity (See Table 2).

National Road Route N°2

As far as the Route of National Road N°2 is concerned, about 70% of respondents stated that they were very interested in participating in this cultural route. The majority of these respondents said that they would likely participate in this route and that they wanted to do it in the near future in the company of family and friends. There were more participants interested in taking part in this cultural route who claimed to be interested in doing so within a short period of time than for the previous one. As for the price, tourists replied that to take part in the Route of National Road N°2, they would be willing to spend more money than the amount required to follow the Route of the French Invasions: 37% would more than to €30 to complete this route, 34% would pay between €16 and €30 and 28% would spend no more than €15. As for the ideal amount of time to complete the route, about 40% would like to spend a whole day to complete it, 26% would rather spend two days and 22% would spend more than two days. Only 12% would spend half a day to cover the whole route (See Figure 2).

When asked about the activities that should be included in the Route of EN2, the respondents considered some as very interesting. More than 70% considered:

- i) experiencing typical gastronomy,
- ii) visiting cultural and historical landscapes,
- iii) taking part in health and wellness activities,
- iv) discovering water routes,
- v) visiting the monuments related to Portuguese history,
- vi) visiting the UNESCO heritage sites, and
- vii) participating in storytelling activities to learn about local legends and folk tales activities that they would participate in.

Between 50% and 70% of the tourists also showed interest in taking part in participating in the following activities:

- i) routes to discover and experience traditional aromas and flavours,
- ii) cultural and festive events,
- iii) experiencing local customs,
- iv) getting to know local crafts and the way artisanal production is carried out,

- v) wine tastings,
- vi) wine routes, and
- vi) practicing nautical sports.

The activities in which tourists were least interested were:

- i) participating in religious celebrations and
- ii) taking part in agricultural activities (See Table 3).

Cluster analysis

A Cluster analysis was carried out based on the respondents' interest in taking part in the different activities suggested for these two tourist routes. Consequently, three segments were obtained: cluster 1 – composed of 49.5% of respondents who are only mildly interested in participating in the activities that were offered; cluster 2 includes the tourists who are more interested in practicing the suggested tourist activities (23.1% of the respondents); cluster 3 comprises the individuals who show little interest in participating in the activities that are to be integrated in the routes.

Table 4: Individuals showing high interest in taking part in the activities offered by the routes (Cluster 2)

| Activities | Cluster 2 |
|--|-----------|
| To visit museums and military interpretation centres. | 78.4% |
| To watch historical recreations related to battles and other events. | 88.1% |
| To visit military monuments (fortresses, forts...) | 87.5% |
| To taste local gastronomy related to historical events. | 95.8% |
| To visit military facilities still fully operational. | 63% |
| To walk the pathways connecting monuments | 97.2% |
| To visit historical and cultural landscapes | 97.2% |
| To try health and wellness activities (hot springs, spas, treatments...) | 90.2% |
| To take part in water routes (rivers, fluvial beaches, dams, waterfalls...) | 90.9% |
| To participate in festive and cultural events (popular festivals, folk celebrations, popular music...) | 89.5% |
| To get in touch with local crafts and to learn about craft production | 92.3% |
| To try the typical and regional gastronomy | 96.5% |
| To take part in wine tasting activities | 80.5% |
| To participate in routes of aromas and flavors. | 89.5% |
| To take part in wine routes | 78.4% |
| To participate in religious celebrations (festivities, processions, pilgrimages...) | 68.6% |
| To practice water sports | 72.8% |
| To visit and learn about UNESCO heritage sites | 95.8% |
| To participate in agriculture activities | 74.9% |
| To participate and try local customs | 93.1% |
| To visit monuments connected with Portuguese history | 99.3% |
| To take part <i>storytelling</i> activities to learn about legends and folk stories | 91.6% |

Source: The authors

As far as gender is concerned, the respondents are homogeneously allocated to the different segments, except for cluster 2 where women have a greater prevalence. As for age, segments 1 and 3 present similar distributions; once again cluster 2 doesn't share these similarities, since it is formed by older individuals. As for the respondents' marital status, cluster 1 and 3 present a similar distribution, in cluster 2 there is a minor presence of single people and a greater number of couples with at least one underage child. As far as the participants' level of education is concerned, Segment 3 presents a lower level of qualifications, while in cluster 1 and 3 the respondents' academic qualifications were significantly higher. As for the participants' professional occupation, cluster 2 exhibits the smallest prevalence of students and includes more middle management workers and senior executives than any of the others; the other professional groups were homogeneously allocated to the 3 segments. When it comes to income, cluster 2 encompasses individuals with higher monthly income. Finally, we identified the percentage of respondents who were very interested in taking part in the different activities and that belonged to cluster 2 (Table 4).

It is clear that respondents who belong to cluster 2 are very interested in participating in most of the activities offered. However, some of those activities seem to be of little interest, namely the visits to military infrastructures that are still operational, the participation in religious celebrations and the practice of nautical sports. In spite of this lower preference, the interest demonstrated by responders is, in all cases, above 60%.

In conclusion, according to the results of this study, it is clearly possible to build a more consolidated proposal for each of the tourist routes. The Route of the French Invasions should include the following activities: Visits to museums, monuments and military interpretation centres, participation in historical recreations, experiencing local gastronomy related to historical events, following the existing pathways that connect different monuments, participation in storytelling activities, visits to UNESCO heritage sites and visits to monuments related to the History of Portugal. Tourists are willing to pay up to €30 for this route and they prefer to spend a whole day to complete it.

It is also possible, according to the results, to build a tourist route following National Road N°2. This route should provide the tourists with a wide range of

activities. The following are the tourists' favourite choices: i) Cultural and Ethnographic activities: participating in cultural and festive events, getting to know local crafts and local customs, visiting cultural and historical landscapes; ii) Wine-gastronomy activities: wine tastings and wine routes, aroma and flavour routes, typical and regional gastronomy routes; iii) Water-related activities: health and wellness and water routes; iv) Activities related to history and heritage: visiting UNESCO heritage sites and monuments related to Portuguese history and participating in storytelling activities to learn about local legends and folk tales. Tourists interested in taking this route are willing to pay over €30 for it and would prefer their participation to last one or two full days.

Conclusions and Implications

Cultural routes are not just physical trips, they are also narratives. In fact, the cultural routes tell stories about the places they pass through and connect, stories about the people who inhabit those territories and those who travel through them (Richards, 2011). The development of tourist routes has gained particular relevance in recent years as it responds to the challenge of overcoming seasonality of the tourist market by attracting people all year round and throughout the territory, while addressing the new market trends emerging from tourists looking for enriching experiences. On the other hand, it contributes to maintain the population in areas of lower population density, allowing a greater flexibility, discovery, learning and interaction with the people and with local traditions (UNWTO, 2015).

This work aimed to identify products directed to cultural tourists, by developing authentic products, where the material and immaterial heritage of the Região Centro of Portugal is emphasised. Evidence showed that it is possible to develop two tourist routes for that destination: the Route of the French Invasions and the Route of National Road N°2. In those routes, it is possible to include a series of experiences that intend to go beyond mass tourism and that include personalised journeys that will promote local tourism and the preservation of the heritage, taking the tourists through cultural paths that connect the different places of this territory. In accordance with the classification proposed by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2015), the two routes would be classified according to the criteria of structure, territory and historical origin.

The fact that about 70% to 80% of the respondents have claimed to be interested and very interested in following these two routes shows that culture can be a key factor in the development of tourist destination attractiveness, thus confirming the results of the study conducted by the World Tourism Organization. This kind of tourism will become even more attractive, if the two-digit annual growth trend predicted by the same organization (UWNTO, 2015) is confirmed for the coming years. Since it represents a new market niche, the cultural routes product must receive the full attention of this region's tourist development strategies since, as it had been showed before, it is one of the main factors that will influence the tourists' choices regarding the destination they will choose to spend their vacations and trips.

The development of these routes will enable many destinations located in the centre of Portugal to showcase their heritage to the world. This wider exposure will bring new potential for development within a strong and expanding market. That way, it will be possible to find products that will meet the expectations of new market segments where culture, heritage and arts converge to transform the places of the region into appealing travel destinations that are ready to attract new travellers who seek rewarding and enriching tourist experiences, just like Zeppel and Hall (1992) suggested.

The tourist development of the territory based on the Route of the French Invasions and on the Route of National Road N°2 will foster a close connection between residents and travellers, by taking advantage of a sustainable development of the territories, as suggested at the 2015 UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture in Cambodia.

The proposed routes will provide tourists and residents with a better perception about the different contrasts that exist within the territories that are part of the tourism region of the centre of Portugal, in particular those which have to do with its natural and landscape richness and with its historical and cultural heritage.

The development of these new tourist products will allow the local population to pass existing traditions and local ethnography on to the next generations. Therefore, these new products will become factors of promotion and attractiveness of this tourist destination and at the same time will play an important role in its cohesion and identity. The cultural routes suggested for the central region of Portugal will have their own and historical dynamics. They will allow tourists to relive

the stories of these territories and will enable the exposure of the region's material and immaterial heritage to each and every person who decides to take part in the activities offered by those routes.

Although they are based on history, the suggested cultural routes turn to innovation and creativity and will allow the creation of small businesses that will prevent the local population from leaving the territory and will therefore help the development of these territories by following what was suggested by the Council of Europe in 2014 (Council of Europe, 2014).

The results of this study are important for destination managers and organisations that want to gain competitive advantage in the cultural tourism market. It will be possible for them to build marketing strategies that deal specifically with market segmentation, communication, distribution and product design and make them more suited to this demanding but equally lucrative market.

This study presents good perspectives for the promotion and for the territorial and social cohesion of the centre of the country, favouring the creation of employment and wealth, and thus contributing to the valorization of the interior of Portugal, achieving the goals of the national strategies.

The success of these proposals will always depend on the commitment that exists between culture and tourism stakeholders at all levels, a kind of commitment that will allow them to address transversal and common responsibilities in areas such as management, community involvement, innovation and technology and corporate and social responsibility.

Limitations and Further Research

There are some limitations that should be considered in this study. We are faced with a study that has not been deeply developed in theoretical terms, particularly when it comes to tourist behaviour. The introduction of other constructs that influence those behaviours / motivations, their level of involvement and satisfaction, for example, would also have to be tested.

A second limitation is related to empirical work. A wider sample including international tourists could have possibly led to a better empirical contrast of the results and given us the chance to divide the sample and analyse the differences between the behaviour of foreign and national tourists. The kind of questionnaire that was used has generated another limitation: the

measurement instrument may have created a variance that might have overvalued the dimensions of the constructs. This could have been particularly risky if the respondents were aware of the importance and interest of the work conducted. However, the tourists were not fully informed about the specific purpose of the study, and all the items in the dimensions that were part of the different constructs were separated and mixed with other less relevant items. That way, the respondents were unable to detect which items were really relevant and what kind of influence they had on the other constructs.

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