



Association for Tourism  
and Leisure Education

**The transformation of tourism spaces  
ATLAS Reflections 2006**

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## Introduction

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This has been my first year as Co-ordinator of ATLAS and it has truly been an enjoyable experience. As part of my new job, I provided an ATLAS mascot (pictured above) by the name of Levente, born in April 2006, who wears his ATLAS outfit with pride!

The year has also been productive in all sorts of other ways. Members will read more details of ATLAS activities in this edition of Reflections, which provides updates on conferences, Special Interest Groups, research projects, publications, and more. I am particularly happy that the Winter University will run again in January in Sibiu, Romania. Our thanks must go to Ilie Rotariu and Greg Richards for their hard work on this event. Some members will know that Sibiu will be the European Cultural Capital in 2007 and the ATLAS Winter University will be included in the programme. For those members who are unaware, the ATLAS Winter University ran for many years. It usually took place in January in a different location and a group of dedicated ATLAS members ran a programme of lectures, workshops and social events for students from different institutions throughout Europe. The event is open to all ATLAS members and their students, and it is highly recommended as it is not only educational but great fun for staff and students alike.

Many Special Interest Group co-ordinators have been very active this year and provided not only opportunities to meet, but also interesting research projects and publications for members to contribute to. ATLAS members are fairly prolific in the production of new publications, many of which are promoted on the website. The following book will be included in the delegates' pack at the Łodz conference:

Hall, D., Smith, M. K., & Marciszewska, B. (2006) (eds) *Tourism in the New Europe: The Challenges and Opportunities of EU Enlargement*. Wallingford: CABI.

This book came about as result of a spontaneous discussion between Greg Richards, Derek Hall and myself on the sunny terrace of the Naples conference two years ago! We are delighted that it came to fruition and my thanks go to the contributing authors, but most especially to Derek who worked extremely hard on this interesting book. We are looking forward to his keynote presentation in Łodz, included here in Reflections.

Some other forthcoming publications to look out for which are a result of collaboration between members are the following:

Richards, G. (2006 – forthcoming) (ed.) *Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives*, New York: Haworth Press.

Smith, M. K. & Robinson, M. (2006 – forthcoming) (eds) *Cultural Tourism in a Changing World: Politics, Participation and (Re)presentation*, Clevedon: Channel View Publications.

Smith, M. K. (2006 – forthcoming) (ed.) *Tourism, Culture and Regeneration*. Wallingford: CABI.

You can read about the success of the ATLAS Africa conference in Mombasa in February thanks to John Akama and René van der Duim, and look forward to the ATLAS Asia-Pacific conference in Dunedine, New Zealand in December 2006. We are very grateful to the organisers of the ATLAS annual conference in Łódź for their hard work on this event. Special mention should go to Professor Stanisław Liszewski for supporting and encouraging the conference and to Robert Wilus, who has worked tirelessly on the organisation.

Sadly, for those members who do not know, one of the members of staff from Łódź University and a long standing member of ATLAS **Marin Bachvarov** passed away earlier this year. He had been ill for some time but had faced his illness with great courage. In addition to being an excellent academic and a fantastic linguist, he was a lovely, kind man and a great colleague. He will be very much missed and we will provide a tribute to him in Łódź. An example of his recent work is also included in this edition of Reflections.

Thank you again to all members for your dynamism and enthusiasm when working on ATLAS projects and events. The organisation IS you! And a special mention as always for Leontine Onderwater and Jantien Veldman, without whom there would be no ATLAS. I have enjoyed working with you all this year.

# Tourism spaces and their transformation

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Analysis of publications on tourism form allows us to make certain generalizations about tourism space. The tourism content occupying general space can be divided into three large groupings. For the purpose of this article these types were termed as follows: imaginative tourism spaces (A), “access-restricted” tourism space (B), and real tourism spaces (C).

## **Imaginative tourism spaces (A)**

A decision to go on a voluntary “journey within space” for tourism is usually preceded by external or internal stimuli, it is the creation of the perspective tourist’s mind. Our imagination is stimulated by stories, reading and visual images, as well as by certain internal imperatives based on spiritual needs, sentiment, memories, or the will to learn or experience something new. The list of factors stimulating our desire to travel is certainly much longer and is strongly individual. When grouping the motives for tourism we can identify three subspaces of imaginative tourism:

- a) Spiritual tourism space,
- b) Virtual tourism space,
- c) “Perceived” tourism space.

## **“Access-restricted” tourism spaces (B)**

Spiritually, virtually and perceptively access to tourism in the world is practically unlimited which means that we are dealing with a global tourism space. It will not seem like this, however, to an individual who is the tourism “subject” and creator of real tourism space. For such person going on journey is often connected with overcoming problems which make “tourism penetration” difficult or even impossible. We shall enumerate here only four sub-spaces of “access-restricted” tourism space, which are present for at least some inhabitants of our planet:

- a) Natural restrictions,
- b) Political restrictions,
- c) Economic restrictions,
- d) Cultural and social restrictions.

## **Real tourism spaces (C)**

The third type is that of the real spaces in which tourism phenomena occur. One of the more promising methodological approaches to defining real tourism space is the functional approach. It is assumed that tourism space is functionally distinct subspace of general geographical and social space, and the motive for this creation and development is the need for recreation, learning and new experience felt by the contemporary human. Tourism space is created by a person who uses the geographical and social environment for tourism purposes and as a consequence discovers, organizes, uses, but also destroys it.

Taking into account modern tourism trends, tourists' varied needs and interests, as well as the historical similarity of the processes accompanying the tourism "annexation" of the natural environment, the author has identified five types of real tourism spaces which emerge as a result of different phases in the "annexation" of geographical space. The types are as follows:

- a) Tourism exploration space
- b) Tourism penetration space
- c) Tourism assimilation space
- d) Tourism colonization space
- e) Tourism urbanization space

They reflect successive stages in the development of real tourism space, from the discovery made by an individual or a group leading to a tourism function beginning, to the change in function and transformation of tourism areas into permanent urbanized settlements.

## **Conclusions**

The above analyses and discussion allow the author to make general reflections. Tourism takes place in many "spaces" out of which two types are most significant. One is *imaginative tourism space*, responsible for triggering the process called tourism (journeying within space), and the other is *real tourism space* where tourism actually occurs, with all its consequences.

The second conclusion concerns the changeability of tourism in time and geographical space. This changeability has two faces. It is the transformation of old spaces into new (other) spaces or expansion of tourism phenomenon to still new areas.



# The role of public sector in developing tourism product strategies for tourism destinations

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The text of this keynote speech has been published in the Polish/English Journal TURYZM.

**Key words:** tourism product, development strategy, public sector, the quality of the package design.

## **Abstract**

Tourism product is an amalgam of goods and services purchased by tourists at their place of residence, while travelling, and at their target destination. A tourism destination is where the bulk of tourism and hospitality businesses are based, entities whose work determines perceptions of the tourism product quality. The quality of an overall offering depends on the quality of the package design and its agreement with customer expectations. In areas where tourism potential (natural and anthropogenic values) is not utilised, the prime issue is the quality of the design, and that calls for a tourism strategy development. The paper attempts to justify the thesis that the prime role in this strategy development is played by public sector entities, both at the stage of identifying tourism destinations and their products, and in the process of developing those products.



# Tourism and the transformation of European space

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This presentation reflects on relationships between tourism and transformations of European space within the context both of conceptions of that space and of the sources and implications of further transformation.

**Key words:** Europe, mobilities, culture, spatial transformation, digital natives, climate change.

*"I'm going to Prague to deliver a paper."  
"Are you some kind of newsagent?"  
(from Tom Stoppard's *Professional Foul*).*

While I did not want to focus on the contents of the ATLAS book that is included in the conference pack (Hall, Smith and Marciszewska, 2006), a useful starting point for this presentation might be the summarising key themes tabulated in the concluding chapter of that book (Box 1).

## **Box 1:** Tourism and European change: key themes for debate and research

- ❑ The importance of continuity as well as change.
- ❑ The problem of distinguishing the impacts of tourism from other change processes.
- ❑ The ongoing role and impacts of low-cost airlines.
- ❑ A continuing element of uncertainty concerning the 2004 accession (particularly relating to Cyprus).
- ❑ The uncertainty of future enlargement.
- ❑ The significance of continuing Balkan instability linked to future enlargement.
- ❑ The tourism significance of the EU's relationship with other supranational organisations such as NATO.
- ❑ The relatively miserly position attributed to tourism within the the institutions of the EU, despite its important economic and integrating role in Europe.
- ❑ The interrelationships between different mobilities – tourism, migration, cross-border petty trading and shopping, retirement and second homes – being influenced by the nature and role of transport and transport infrastructures, and the role of internal and external borders.
- ❑ Tourism and citizenship, and the nature, role and appropriateness of European identity.
- ❑ The interrelationships between tourism, education and culture (and implicitly mobility).
- ❑ The likely geographical consolidation of the EU in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions and the emphasis this will bring to the important continuing role of mass tourism.
- ❑ Climate change and the possibility of future constraints on fossil fuel-fuelled travel.

**Source:** Smith and Hall, 2006b: 310.

In drawing upon two or three of the above themes, this presentation aims to briefly reflect upon relationships between tourism and transformations of European space within the context both of conceptions of that space and of the sources and implications of further transformation. In doing this, it focuses on the impact of the conjoining of two powerful sources for transformation of the European space: low-cost (or 'budget'/ 'no-frills') airlines (LCAs) and the Internet. It addresses post-sustainability debates concerning the ethical position of tourism and travel in relation to climate change. It concludes that while major challenges and dilemmas of a global nature confront the European tourism and travel industries, opportunities for research and practical mediation for the tourism academy have never been greater nor indeed more needed, and should be sought and grasped.

This presentation also acknowledges debates currently being undertaken in Poland on the nature and role of academic tourism, the position of interdisciplinarity and of particular disciplines (such as geography), and the applied value and industry relevance on the one hand, and scientific value on the other, of tourism studies (e.g. Alejziak and Winiarski, 2005; Alejziak, 2006).

Two years ago a special issue of the *Geographical Journal* (British Royal Geographical Society) (Dodds and Siddaway, 2004) was devoted to the contemporary relevance of Halford J. Mackinder (1861-1947), a British geographer, politician and diplomat, on the centenary of his paper 'The Geographical Pivot of History' (Mackinder, 1904). In this paper he expressed the view that the Eurasian core ('Pivot Area', later to be called 'Heartland': Mackinder, 1919), inaccessible to ships of sea powers and thus capable of sheltering a great land power, might come to control the world (Parker, 1982). Slightly expanding the 'Pivot Area' and renaming it 'Heartland' in his 1919 book, Mackinder formulated a subsequently much-repeated hypothesis (de Blij, 1967: 106; Taylor, 1989: 48) that was specifically directed at the statesmen then meeting in Versailles to redraw the map of Europe:

'Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland  
Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island  
Who rules the World-Island commands the World.'

By 'World-Island' was meant Eurasia and Africa. Not anticipating the rise of aircraft and air power, with Germany dominating its west and Russia the east, Mackinder felt that effective control of the Heartland (for world dominance) could be achieved only by the alliance of two or more states. The emphasis on Eastern Europe as the strategic route to the Heartland was interpreted as requiring buffer states to be (re-)established to separate Germany and Russia (Taylor, 1989: 48).

Arguably, Mackinder's utterances had the reverse effect to that he intended: German geopolitical thinkers (such as Karl Haushofer, 1928) and strategists took seriously what he had to say, while those in his own country largely ignored him (e.g. see Kish, 1942; Hall, 1955). Further elaborated during World War II, Mackinder's hypothesis became "one of the most intensively debated geographical ideas of all time" (de Blij, 1967: 132; also Blouet, 1987). Yet Mackinder remained unimpressed by the potential importance of air power:

"Some persons today seem to dream of global air power which will 'liquidate' both fleets and armies ...(but) ... Air power depends absolutely on the efficiency of its ground organization" (Mackinder, 1943: 600).

Why is this relevant to tourism and the contemporary transformation of European space? While since superseded by global perspectives such as world-systems approaches (notably promoted by Wallerstein: 1974, 1976, 1979, 1984), Mackinder's ideas are significant (Gray, 2004) not least for the profound impacts that have been experienced in the part of Europe in which this conference is being held for much of the twentieth century:

- in a Europe devastated by World War II, the EEC – today's EU – was born out of the desire in the 1940s and 1950s to prevent any further conflict on European soil;
- the Cold War that co-existed with the first three decades of the EEC/EC/EU witnessed markedly different models of domestic and international tourism being pursued in the continent's two ideological blocs of 'East' and 'West';
- the key aim of post-communist 'transition' – EU membership and (re-)adoption of 'Western' institutional norms – would have intrigued Mackinder in his conception of the role of Central and Eastern Europe, not least for its implicit Washington Consensus-led agenda;
- arguably one of the most significant EU contributions to the transformation of European space and mobility has been, via Europe's 'freedom of the skies' legislation, the growth of low-cost airlines (LCAs), the most effective and important of which do indeed follow Mackinder's observation that air[line] power depends absolutely on the efficiency of ground organisation, albeit facilitated most effectively by the late-twentieth century phenomenon of the Internet.

#### *'Transition', tourism and European space*

Strictly defined, a 'transition' is movement between two specific points, the final point in the case of Central and Eastern Europe being integration into the world economy and Western institutions, notably the EU. The 'transition project' has thus embodied explicit political and economic objectives. 'Transition' should be viewed as an holistic process, but the social, cultural, psychological and wider environmental dimensions are often ignored or marginalised in the transition economic literature (Hall, 2004c; Hall and Roberts, 2004).

Most models of tourism development have been based on the experience of market economies, and indeed international tourism requires open borders, a strong, flexible private sector and public sector responsiveness to change requirements: such qualities were in short supply in the former state socialist societies.

An integral part of the global expansion of capitalism, as an important element and often a prime example of the growth, privatisation and 'flexibilisation' of service industries; reduction of centralisation, subsidy and bureaucratic control; emphasis upon entrepreneurial activity, not least in the encouragement of SMEs; emphasis, through comparative advantage, on niche specialisation and sector segmentation; emphasis of a sectoral shift from secondary to tertiary activities, from manufacturing to services; exposure of enterprises to national and international market forces; and market penetration and FDI of transnational corporations (Hall, 1991).

Two development outcomes can be highlighted. First, domestic core-periphery differences may be increased: development is focused in capitals and major cities e.g. Prague and Budapest, and there is a growth of hub and spoke transport systems emphasising prestige international infrastructure at the expense of domestic services. The activity of low-cost airlines, notably Ryanair, may counteract this to some extent through the use of regional, secondary and tertiary level (often former military) airports. Indeed, Ryanair's hub in Scotland, Prestwick, was (and continues to be to a limited extent) a military airfield,

perhaps most famously being the only place in Britain that Elvis Presley visited, when he touched down *en route* to the US from his national service commitment in Germany.

Second, regional core-periphery differences may be increased, between the 'proto-core' states (the Central European 2004 EU entrants: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) and those of the semi-periphery (Baltic states, south-eastern Europe) and periphery (other Balkans and former Soviet Union). The 'proto-core' countries experienced the greatest early post-communist growth in international tourism activity, although this was partly based on processes already under way before 1989. There has been a subsequent need to raise per capita income through market segmentation and niche product development. For example, although, according to Butcher (2003), the recent moralisation of tourism (such as 'volunteer tourism'), as a product of disillusionment with modern ('developed') society, is reflected in the external search for community and spirituality in the cultural and environmental 'Other', an equally important trend is tourists' search within themselves. Spa, health, wellness and holistic tourism represent one end of a range of tourism activities that now focus on the self. The 2004 EU accession of states with Habsburg heritage spa and health centres has assisted a resurgence in this sector and a regeneration of facilities across Europe (Nahrstedt, 2004).

The growth of holistic 'wellness' tourism represents an increasing desire to focus on the self rather than on the 'Other', and on 'existential' rather than 'objective' authenticity (Smith, 2003; Smith and Kelly, 2004). This might suggest a strong aspatial dimension to such demand and potential development.

This has contributed to destination and national (re-) imaging and branding, as noted in papers being presented at this conference. Indeed, there is the irony of individual destinations and regions emphasising individuality of place and place experience in their branding and image promotion at a time of apparently increasing globalisation, commonality and blandness, not least by employing one of the most potent vehicles of globalisation – the Internet – in their marketing efforts (e.g. Palmer, 2002; Boyne and Hall, 2004). While Pine and Gilmore's (1999) work on the 'experience economy' might suggest the need for new approaches to both product and attractions development and marketing (Smith and Hall, 2006a), this could be overtaken by rising younger generations of 'digital natives' sustaining an information-dominated 'attention economy' within which they may express limited spatial horizons.

In the European periphery, tourism and its economic impact in relatively unstable South-eastern Europe (much of former Yugoslavia, Albania, Moldova) and much of the former Soviet Union has stagnated or even declined. Private sector under-funding and infrastructural shortcomings have persisted. The semi-periphery, with core potential, comprises: the Baltic States, fuelled by low-cost airlines, 2004 EU accession and current Western curiosity and investment; Bulgaria and Croatia, showing mass market resurgence and foreign investment in businesses, land and property contingent upon EU accession talks (e.g. Bachvarov, 2006); and Romania and Turkey, also in pre-accession positions.

#### *The context of accession*

Anastasiadou (2006) argues that the EU's involvement in tourism has been questioned for some time given a lack of co-ordination of activity and the absence of any overarching tourism policy. Yet, ironically, due to the nature of the tourist activity, the impact of EU policies on tourism has been widespread and far-reaching (Lickorish, 1991; WTO, 1998), not least because an implicit set of policies relating to tourism has been created by the

impact of other policy areas rather than by an explicitly stated tourism policy or strategy. However, she suggests that if an EU Constitution was to be ratified, this would result in increased awareness, a better positioning of tourism interests and acknowledgement of the implications of other policies on tourism.

The WTO (2003) noted that Europe was losing its market share as the world's largest receiving region. Although this trend began before 1999, one reason for its continuation is that Euro zone countries have experienced notable price increases in recent years. As well as the relatively low value of the US dollar (and thus other currencies pegged against it), and the continued overall vigorous growth of the Pacific rim, a further factor is that a number of established European destinations are considered to have reached saturation point. The role of the accession countries in creating unique and innovative products – an argument voiced at least a decade and a half ago (Hall, 1991) - may therefore be pivotal to the continued growth of tourism in Europe (Smith and Hall, 2006b: 308).

Certainly “it is difficult to generalise about the impacts of EU accession on the countries in question. Impacts are varied and more research is required to ascertain the extent to which accession has had a *direct* impact on tourism development” (Smith and Hall, 2006b: 305).

As the tangible end-point for ‘transition’, accession to the EU has been seen to offer the potential for a number of important benefits. These include:

- ❑ increased liberalisation and competition leading to greater productivity and growth;
- ❑ employment creation and new opportunities for migrant workers;
- ❑ harmonisation of legislation;
- ❑ increased business investment opportunities;
- ❑ freedom of movement for EU citizens;
- ❑ access to EU funds;
- ❑ opportunities to join the Euro and stabilise currencies;
- ❑ ongoing liberalisation of civil aviation and the consequent growth of the low-cost airline sector;
- ❑ ease of cross-border trading;
- ❑ educational mobility, new skills development and training programmes;
- ❑ guidelines for nature and heritage conservation;
- ❑ rising standards of living and quality of life; and
- ❑ image enhancement (Smith and Hall, 2006b: 306).

Yet the negotiation of ‘framework agreements’ for the wider post-Cold War European order has both exposed contradictions in the EU’s performance, and raised questions about its capacity to shape the ‘new Europe’ in the face of conflict in South-eastern Europe, social unrest in some of its founding members, and rejection of its proposed constitution (see also Graham and Hart, 1999; Smith, 2000; Hall, 2004b, 2004c).

#### *Low-cost airlines: cause for research concern?*

Integration and European spatial restructuring has been aided by LCAs in relation to a range of traditional and relatively recent European mobilities. The market for air transport users has been substantially deepened, both domestically and internationally, reflecting relatively low fares (partly resulting from ‘stripped down’ operating costs and by web-based yield management fare pricing mechanisms: e.g. Klein and Loebbecke, 2003), use of regional airports, employment of ‘supermarket’ style marketing and promotion, and

exploitation of the rapidly achieved high level of personal access to information technology (Decker, 2004; Dobruszkes, 2005, 2006): 95 per cent of easyJet's tickets are purchased online, 75 per cent of the low-cost market in Europe is new customers (Alderighi *et al.*, 2004), and by the first quarter of 2005 LCAs carried 19 per cent of European air passengers compared to five per cent in 2000. Ryanair now carries 35 million passengers annually and has plans to double its size in the next five years (Roberts and Harrison, 2006).

But deeper market penetration has largely involved providing access to the 'low' end of the market and potential image problems for some destinations, with well publicised hen/stag party groups and weekend binges. This can present major problems for the destination branding of countries and regions seeking a positive new or rejuvenated image projection (Hall, 2003, 2004a; Endzina and Luneva, 2004). For example, a large number of tour-operators now specialise in 'stag' and 'hen' weekend packages to Latvia. Riga has been targeted as a 'hot spot' that offers "amazing nightlife, fantastic cheap local beer - and the most stunning-looking women on the Continent" (Naish, 2004). The *Riga Visitor's Guide*, freely available at Riga airport and in hotels, advertises Riga as an entertainment city and contains a cellophane-wrapped insert section devoted to nightlife, offering clear opportunities for sex tourism. During 2005 actions were taken by the state and city authorities to reduce advertising of sex-related tourism products in Riga and across Latvia. But the government of Latvia and Riga municipality need to improve legislation and its implementation in entertainment entrepreneurship to avoid Riga becoming a European sex tourism capital (Druva-Druvaskalne *et al.*, 2006; see also Jarvis and Kallas, 2006; Királ'ová, 2006).

While some of these processes may not be sustainable, they may act as the first stage basis for diversification and adding value to tourism products. Indeed, at least one report has suggested that what low-cost air travellers are saving in travel costs they are spending to upgrade the quality of their accommodation (EU Business, 2005).

The role of LCAs in facilitating labour mobility, is a matter of some debate. Earlier phases of LCAs' development and growth largely related to (expanded) leisure travel (markets) outwards from cores with increasing segment of business travel (Mason, 2000, 2001): easyJet estimates that it carries 20 per cent business travellers and 80 per cent leisure seekers. More recent developments and especially since May 2004, have facilitated significant spatial restructuring of labour and population mobility between the mainland accession states and the EU15. Although east-west labour migration in Europe is nothing new (witness the movement of Turks and Yugoslavs to West Germany in the later 1960s, 1970s and 1980s), the significant employment of relatively low-cost scheduled flights within an enlarged EU ideologically (if not always in practice) promoting the free movement of labour is an important and relatively new element in such spatial restructuring.

Coupled to the growth of such companies as Wizzair, SkyEurope and Smartwings (and the swift demise of others such as Air Polonia), it is not insignificant that Ryanair opened six destinations in Poland from London Stansted during 2005, building on the apparent success of the Wrocław service opened in 2004. Possibly indicative of the forces now stimulating European mobilities, and their social and economic consequences, a recent BBC report on east-west labour migration within the EU suggested that a third of all anaesthetists from the city had emigrated.



The growth of LCAs may also be seen to have facilitated regular travel to second homes (e.g. see Hall and Müller, 2004) and easier international student exchange mobility (Richards, 2006).

**“It is the journey – not the destination” (Hertz promotion, 2006).**

But such mobilities pose post-sustainability ethical dilemmas (e.g. Becken, 2006). Many would consider access to a motor car and to air travel to be two of the most liberating aspects of their lives. Yet, with our growing understanding of the forces behind climate change, it is clear that the negative welfare externalities of these activities affect not merely tourism destinations, but all global environments in an inextricably inter-linked way. Yet argument and counter-argument are often expressed in crude dualistic terms pitting no less than ‘personal freedom’ against ‘the planet’s survival’.

Such polarisation was encapsulated in a recent outburst by Michael O’Leary, the chief executive of Ryanair. The Bishop of London, the third most senior bishop in the Church of England, had preached in a sermon that people needed to ‘tread more lightly on the earth’ and alter their lifestyles. ‘Making selfish choices such as flying on holiday or buying a large car are a symptom of sin. Sin is not just a restricted list of moral mistakes. It is living a life turned in on itself where people ignore the consequences of their actions’ the bishop had said.

In response, O’Leary denounced media articles concerning the impact of aviation on the environment as ‘clichéd horseshit’. He claimed that aviation was only the seventh largest contributor to atmospheric pollution, providing only four per cent of global warming compared with 25 per cent being caused by animals. ‘So if we want to do something about global warming, should we be shooting the animals?’ (Clement, 2006).

Reviewing the literature on environmental impacts of leisure-related activities (e.g. Ceron and Dubois, 2003; Becken *et al.*, 2002; Gössling, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Gössling *et al.*, 2002; Høyer, 2001; Peeters, 2003), Gössling *et al.* (2005) drew three major conclusions:

- ❑ whether employing measures of energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions or area-equivalents as basis for calculations, “a substantial share” of tourism is revealed as unsustainable;
- ❑ the use of fossil fuels and related emissions of greenhouse gases is, from a global viewpoint, the most pressing tourism-related environmental problem; and
- ❑ transport contributes more than proportionally to the overall environmental impact of leisure-tourism: this is between 60 and 95 per cent at the journey level, including local transport, accommodation, and activities.

Under these circumstances, they argue, there is a need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in the transport sector. This will not be an easy task, as the tourism industry is highly averse to bearing levies designed to curb fossil energy use, opposing, for instance, the introduction of a tax on aviation fuels.

Case study analyses by Gössling *et al.* (2005) on the impacts of the tourist industry from an ecological efficiency (or eco-efficiency: Cramer, 2000) perspective, found great variations, depending upon source and destination countries, tourist cultures and environments. For example, to generate one unit of financial value in the Seychelles, concurrent emissions of carbon dioxide-equivalent are seven times larger than the world

average, while in France, some types of tourism have an eco-efficiency ratio less than one-tenth of the world average. Employing ecological footprint analysis (EFA), Gössling *et al.* (2002), found, for example, that for European tourists flying to the Seychelles, more than 97 per cent of their energy footprint was the result of air travel. This suggested that efforts to make tourist destinations more sustainable, such as through energy saving devices or with the use of renewable energy sources, could only contribute marginal savings.

This re-emphasises air travel as being the most problematic global environmental impact of tourism (Gössling *et al.*, 2002; Peeters, 2003; Dubois and Ceron, 2006; Peeters and Schouten, 2006). Per unit of energy used, air travel has the greatest impact on climate change. Even though it accounts for only 15 per cent of the leisure-related distances travelled globally, it is responsible for about 18 per cent of the energy used and 37 per cent of the contribution of leisure travel to global warming (Gössling, 2002a: 298). This is particularly problematic, because the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN-FCCC) does not cover emissions from bunker fuels such as aviation fuel sold at airports. As a result, emissions from international aviation are not under international policy control (Olsthoorn, 2001). Carlsson-Kanyama and Lindén (1999) estimated that the sustainable level of per capita energy consumption for travel was 11,000 MJ in 1996, a value that would decrease to 8,400 MJ in 2020 with a rising global population. Gössling and Mattsson (2002: 26) contended that an average journey by aircraft entails an energy use of about 4,500 MJ per capita for the flight alone.

Travel distance and mode of transport are the most important factors influencing eco-efficiency, which can be positively influenced by an extended length of stay and higher expenditures per day.

Certainly, up to 75 per cent of EU citizens never travel beyond EU borders (European Commission, 2003). Short travel distances are a pre-condition for sustainability: “Any strategy towards sustainable tourism must thus seek to reduce transport distances, and, vice versa, any tourism based air traffic needs *per se* to be seen as unsustainable” (Gössling *et al.*, 2002: 208).

Despite a recent and greatly welcome special issue of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* (e.g. Becken, 2006), the sustainable tourism and sustainable transport literatures have remained largely separate. This is partly because the tourism industry, in its promotion of the (claimed, potential) ‘sustainability’ of tourism, focuses on destination activity and largely chooses to ignore the means by which tourists actually travel to the destination from their home (e.g. see Høyer, 2001; Gössling *et al.*, 2002). Thus, with a few notable exceptions – especially the teams led by Stefan Gössling and Susanne Becken – and mostly outside of the tourism journals, ‘tourism’, within the industry’s interpretation and definition of its ‘sustainability’, appears to be a process and activity that applies almost exclusively to destinations, deliberately and simplistically abstracted from the wider spatial context of travel and its complex web of mobilities.

This approach therefore dishonestly fails to identify the wider sustainability implications of tourism activity, and notably the externalities of motor car and air travel; and thus defeats the notion and purpose of sustainability being a holistic concept by merely – and conveniently – focussing on one spatially expressed dimension of tourism activity (Hall and Brown, 2006).

But there currently appears to be a conspiracy of procrastination and denial that urgent action is needed to reduce global environmental impacts of transport and travel. For example, the conference held by the WTO on tourism and climate change (in Tunisia, April 2003) was largely concerned with the impacts of climate change on tourism, rather than the converse (Nicholls, 2004). For some politicians, the perception of likely hostile short-term responses to necessary longer-term policies appears to induce sclerosis. Thus the UK government in its 2003 white paper on energy committed itself to tackling climate change and announced a target for cutting 60 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. But in the aviation white paper later that same year the same government also promised to facilitate an expected mass increase in air passenger traffic, if necessary by providing several new runways to cope with increased demand. There is no sign of the two positions being reconciled (McCarthy *et al.*, 2005).

### **Rationing and offsetting: mitigation or conscience salving?**

Most environmental pressure groups appear to be playing along with campaigns clearly designed to avoid alarming the public too much for fear of being counter-productive (Hillman, 2005).

Carbon offsetting has become a fashionable way of atoning for having taken (long-distance) flights. “But this is a bit like having your carbon cake and eating it” (Siegle, 2005a). Many travel companies now invite contributions from customers to be invested in, for example, a forestry project in the home country whereby a sapling is planted for each passenger that participates.

Concerns with such approaches include:

- ❑ the carbon sink function of trees may be much less effective than originally assumed;
- ❑ they provide another example of unconscious global inequity: why should the tree be planted in the source country rather than in a poorer, possibly destination country, that is likely to suffer proportionately more from the deleterious effects of climate change exacerbated by profligate air travel?
- ❑ what happens if the trees die prematurely or are burned in a forest fire? But more importantly,
- ❑ carbon offsetting of this kind would appear simply to legitimise unsustainable behaviour by salving the consciences of those who can afford to delegate (abnegate?) their individual responsibilities (Siegle, 2005b).

Emissions trading schemes (ETSs) are largely untested and unproven, and the scheme introduced by the EU in 2005 specifically excludes aviation, a sector envisaged as not being embraced before 2010. ETSs began life in the US as Kyoto compliance avoidance schemes, as part of a manoeuvre to replace regulation with schemes that pose as ‘market’ solutions (Palast, 2003), and debate continues on their equity and efficiency (e.g. Manne and Stephan, 2005).

Hillman (2005) contends that the only policy that can prevent the relatively ‘safe’ concentration of carbon emissions accumulating into the atmosphere from being exceeded is the Contraction & Convergence programme. This is proposed by the Global Commons Institute, which aims to lessen emissions while working towards an equal per capita ration for the world’s population. Such carbon rationing (with a built-in transfer payments system) would have to be mandatory – reduction of carbon dioxide emissions on this scale could

not realistically be achieved on a voluntary basis. It is thus an easy target for Neo-cons and those who argue that environmentalists (and indeed all those who have an urgent concern about the nature and impacts of climate change) have a totalitarian agenda.

There is, therefore, in the short term, a need for a menu of policies, such as shifting short-haul air travel to rail, raising fuel efficiency, and fiscally regulating motor vehicle and air travel. Total external costs of air transport are currently estimated at c€55 per 1000 passenger/km. Turning these external costs into a congestion charge for the skies by adding them to ticket prices would result in €5.5 per passenger/100km. In the US such a scheme has been rejected on the grounds of exerting “unfair pressure on a struggling sector” (Skuse, 2005: 45), but the EU has reaffirmed the need for airline climate taxes as a necessary part of a climate policy drive to reduce emissions.

### **Tourism studies: where are they to go?**

Holden (2003) has argued that, although an ethical shift has taken place within tourism in recent years (e.g. WTO, 2001), the adoption by the travel and tourism industry of a truly ‘radical’ sustainability ethic would “require a conceptual leap which would challenge the perceived interests of most tourism stakeholders who presently show little desire to take such a leap” (Holden, 2003: 106).

This re-emphasises the apparent narrow view of tourism-environment relationships held by much of the tourism industry, as further reflected in the promotion of eco- and sustainable tourism that ignores the transport externalities involved in reaching the destination. Relating this back to climate change, Becken (2004) found in Australia and New Zealand that half of all tourists surveyed questioned any link between tourism and climate change. And while ‘tourism experts’ interviewed saw a changing climate as a potential threat to tourism, they could not necessarily see tourism’s fossil fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions as contributing to climate change.

Such apparent attitudes have encouraged Farrell and Twining-Ward (2004, 2005) to argue that most tourism researchers, and implicitly practitioners, having been schooled in a tradition of linear, specialised, predictable and deterministic cause-and-effect science. As such they have not been conceptually equipped to appreciate that “all natural and social systems are interdependent, nonlinear, complex adaptive systems” which are “generally unpredictable, qualitative and characterized by causes giving rise to multiple outcomes” (Farrell and Twining-Ward, 2004: 277). There is a need, they contend, for new collective thinking – an ‘epistemic community’ (Haas, 1992; Cinquegrani, 2002) – to respond to global challenges. And while the application of chaos approaches (e.g. Faulkner and Russell, 1997; McKercher, 1999; Faulkner, 2001) may be a step in the right direction, a re-conceptualisation of the structure of tourism study is required in order to confront the challenges of what Farrell and Twining-Ward refer to as the ‘sustainability transition’.

Geopolitical issues of access to travel and recreation resources will become an important focus of tension and potential conflict in the face of rapidly increasing global pressures. Although at a global level there remain obvious constraints on certain types of activities and restrictions on access in certain areas, generally there is relative freedom of movement and access around the globe, subject only to the ability to pay. But such freedoms are available largely because they are restricted to a privileged minority of the world’s inhabitants. And although current carbon rationing schemes for mitigating environmental impacts seek an equitable outcome, what will be the result when, later this century, living standards have risen sufficiently in the currently very populous LDCs of

Asia, Latin America and Africa for their citizens, justifiably, to want to join those of us who have long enjoyed the privileges of travel and become fellow global tourists?

Probable technology-induced mechanisms for relieving the pressures of terrestrial global tourism – virtual reality travel and tourism, space tourism or sub-marine tourism - would all appear to have severely constraining limitations (Brown, 1998, 2004; Hall, 2004b; Hall and Brown, 2006), being accessible to relatively small numbers of participants and offering little in terms of alternative modes or environments for global tourism.

## Conclusions

The ability to travel, to be able to reflect on your own life and culture in relation to the first-hand experience of others', is a major and significant welfare consequence of our privilege to be able to travel across the globe. Perceptions of tourism as a force for good, intercultural understanding and world peace, have viewed it, ethnocentrically, largely from that position of privilege and dominance.

But in the not so longer term, we are confronted here with the biggest trade-off of all, about which decisions to be made will need to be based upon realistic notions of global sustainability and not those often perpetrated by the tourism industry.

The very practical as well as ethical dilemmas that are confronting our conceptions of mobility within such a trade-off offer a myriad of opportunities for research and agenda setting in post-sustainability tourism studies. The tourism academy requires, more than ever before, relevant and effective conceptual and empirical work that can, in an applied, practical way, mediate between the polarities of interpretation and debate that cloud perceptions of the relationship between tourism, travel and global environmental change. Within these global settings are the European issues of culture change and place promotion within processes of integration and harmonisation, the interrelationships between leisure, labour and refugee mobilities, enmeshed within frameworks of 'transition', 'transformation', European enlargement and identity.

The 'transition' in the study of tourism still has a long way to go, but the need for relevance and excellence is becoming ever more pressing.

**Dedication:** this modest presentation is dedicated to the memory of Marin Bachvarov.

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# Thirdspace and the city: Urban transformation and tourism

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*Look into my crystal globe. Do you see a blue city? A green city? A city of women? I see a rainbow city, a multicultural city, and I rejoice and despair at what I see – the inferno and the carnival of the postmodern city.*

Sandercock (1998:3)

## Introduction

This paper focuses on the concept of the postmodern city within a 'Thirdspace' framework as developed by Soja (1996, 2000). Although his ideas have been criticised for being overly abstract, it can be argued that they provide important insights into the complexities and contradictions of global cities, many of which are popular tourism destinations. Building on the seminal work of Lefebvre (1974), one of the most eminent spatial theorists, Soja developed the concept of 'Thirdspace'. This can perhaps best be described as a kind of prism through which the world can be observed, analyzed and theorized. It is a concept, which aims to make sense of the multiplicity of spatialities that exist within the postmodern city or 'postmetropolis'. Soja (1996) describes the postmodern metropolis as a space that can no longer easily be mapped because its boundaries are fluid and there are few fixed points of reference, memory or identity. He suggests that we now need to develop 'new ways of making practical and theoretical sense of the empirically, perceived, conceptually represented, and actually lived spaces of the city' (Soja 1996: 150). His work on the concept of 'Thirdspace' has arguably revolutionized the ways in which we can reconceptualize the city and other environments, for example, tourism destinations. The latter part of the paper attempts to contextualise this concept using a case study.

## Thirdspace as a theoretical framework

Soja (1996) focuses on Firstspace, Secondspace and Thirdspace concepts, which are inter-connected, and all comprise elements of perceived, conceived and lived social space. He describes Firstspace as the way in which space is empirically and measurably configured. It can be seen as the practical, material reality of a particular space (e.g., its physical geography, its buildings, its objects, its history). It might also refer to nodes and networks of people, goods and information. 'The social production of Firstspace is treated as a historical unfolding, an evolving sequence of changing geographies that result from the dynamic relations between human beings and their constructed as well as natural environments' (Soja 1996:77). He states that Firstspace represents a limited conceptualization because it fails to explore the true complexity and inter-dependence of sociality, historicity and spatiality.

Soja (1996:79) describes Secondspace as 'entirely ideational, made up of projections into the empirical world from conceived or imagined geographies'. Secondspace is seen as the series of subjective interpretations and representations that are imposed on a space by architects, planners, policy-makers and strategists, as well as artists, writers and film-makers, etc. It may also represent the cognitive or mental maps that residents or visitors create for a place. Secondspace is, therefore, symbolic but it is also 'real' as the image or vision comes to define and order reality.

A Thirdspace concept is described by Soja (1996:81) as 'the sympathetic deconstruction and heuristic reconstitution of the Firstspace-Secondspace duality'. conceived space versus the warm animation of lived space. Thirdspace can be seen as the way in which that space is lived by all of its inhabitants, its visitors, and those who represent it. In Thirdspace, all of the previous elements come together, but emphasis is placed on experiential and perceptual aspects. It is both real and imagined, actual and virtual, individual and collective. Although, Thirdspace is not necessarily privileged as a conceptualization, it represents a departure from the traditional limitations of First and Secondspace analyses. Thirdspace is by nature multidisciplinary, therefore one might draw on a combination of geography (physical, human and cultural), political economics, as well as cultural theory, sociology, and anthropology to explain the complex trajectories of the city. Thirdspace concentrates very much on 'lived space' and the mixture of the 'real' and the 'imagined', and the meanings that are contained within it from a multiplicity of perspectives:

*Everything* comes together in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history. (Soja, 1996:56)

The following table summarises the characteristics of a Thirdspace framework insofar as it could be applied to urban tourism destinations:

**Table 1:** A thirdspace framework for conceptualising urban tourism destinations

<b>First Space Concept</b>	<b>Second Space Concept</b>	<b>Thirdspace Concept</b>
<b>Spatial practice</b> (e.g. functional use of space by locals and visitors)	<b>Representations of space</b> (e.g. mental maps of locals and visitors)	<b>Representational spaces</b> (e.g. local and visitor interactions in multiple spaces)
<b>Real or perceived space</b> (e.g. buildings, squares)	<b>Imagined or conceived space</b> (e.g. images of destinations from brochures)	<b>Lived space which is both real and imagined</b> (e.g. experience of the destination combined with the perceived image)
<b>Things in space</b> (e.g. tourism sites and attractions)	<b>Thoughts about space</b> (e.g. plans and strategies for managing and promoting sites and attractions)	<b>New conceptualisations of space</b> (e.g. fantastical architectural designs, themed environments, simulated worlds)
<b>Objective / Material</b> (e.g. material buildings and objects)	<b>Subjective / Ideational</b> (e.g. experiential programming for visitors such as heritage trails)	<b>Multiperspectival</b> (e.g. multiple interpretations in museums, multi-cultural festivals)
<b>Measureable</b> (e.g. no. of tourist arrivals, economic impacts of tourism)	<b>Discursive</b> (e.g. policy, perception or image studies)	<b>Polyvocal</b> (e.g. different communities' and visitors' experiences of tourism)
<b>Factual</b> (e.g. the city as physical entity)	<b>Symbolic</b> (e.g. the city as fantasy space)	<b>Accommodates both fact and fiction</b> (e.g. the interface between the physical reality of the city, symbolic interpretations of it, and lived experiences within it)

(After Lefebvre, 1974 & Soja, 1996)

The spatiality of human life clearly transcends disciplinary boundaries, infusing every discipline and discourse. It is possible to conceive of a multi-layering of simultaneous usage, perceptions, interpretations, and representations within Thirdspace. It allows the meeting of all peripheralised and marginalised subjects, incorporating all spatial scales. Thirdspace is perhaps an ideological and possibly idealistic perspective on spatiality, although Soja (1996) suggests that it can lead to potentially emancipatory praxis. If politics, policy and planning are informed by Thirdspace thinking, it may lead to more integrative and inclusive approaches to urban re-development. Soja (1996:63) describes Thirdspace as 'an alternative "postmodern geography" of political choice and radical openness attuned to making practical sense of the contemporary world'. It is a deconstruction, a disordering, and a reconstitution. It can be a meeting place for formerly peripheralised or marginalised 'subjects'. For example, Soja refers to the chosen marginality of the cultural theorist bell hooks and her Thirdspace of resistance. He also cites Homi Bhabha's Thirdspace of hybridity, where alternative enunciations can be constructed. Soja also draws on the work of Foucault, albeit it his lesser known and largely unfinished work on 'Heterotopologies'. Heterotopias can be both real and virtual, much like a theme park or other simulated, hyperreal environment characteristic of the postmodern era: 'real places that contain all other places, represented, contested, invented in all their simultaneities and juxtapositions, each standing clear' (cited in Soja, 1996:158). The elements within heterotopia are not necessarily compatible, but they coexist, much as they would within the postmodern city. Soja's (1996) own emphasis is largely on urban environments with his interpretive tours of Los Angeles and Amsterdam. A Thirdspace framework can arguably best be conceptualised within the framework of a city, as discussed in the following sections.

### **The Thirdspace city – or Postmetropolis**

Flusty (2004:127) describes the postmodern world city as a 'metapolis', a holographic environment whose 'totality is manifest in every constituent world city'. However, each city affords a different view of the triangulations of similar elements. For example, like Soja (1989) he refers to Los Angeles as an 'Aleph' – 'the place on earth where all places are...', but he also argues that it is not a place where all those places can be seen clearly without confusion and blending. Soja (2000) argues in *Postmetropolis* that cities can be conceptualised from a number of perspectives. However, he notes that there is much less agreement than ever before about how best to make sense of new urban worlds, both in theory and practice. Soja (2000) uses the term 'Postmetropolis' to describe the currently emerging metropolitan cityspace. It is a composite landscape, where different built forms are superimposed, one on top of the other over time. New modes of contemporary life are juxtaposed with 'deep and immutable continuities with the past' (p.147). It is heterogeneous and culturally diverse, but it can also be socially and spatially polarised, often with no identifiable core or centre (e.g. like Los Angeles, which has been described as 'Sixty Suburbs in Search of a City', p.137). It is a place where the real and the imagined commingle. Interpretations and constructed images of reality are as important as any 'real' materiality. There are worlds of fantasy and urban imagineering (e.g. Disneyland), and spaces of mass production and commodification (e.g. themed shopping malls). Soja (2000) summarises the chief characteristics of the Postmetropolis as follows:

**Table 2: Postmetropolis**

- *Cosmopolis* – the most economically, politically, and culturally heterogeneous cityspaces perhaps ever seen
- *Exopolis* – growing mega-cities with no clear boundaries or limits, which are increasingly difficult to escape from
- *Fractal* – fragmented, polarised, sometimes segregated cities, but also the scene of the new cultural politics of diversity and creative hybridity
- *Carceral* – fortified spaces with sophisticated surveillance
- *Simcity* – increasing hyperreality of everyday life restructured through new technology

These descriptions seem to correspond most closely to the contemporary development of American cities or destinations, although many ‘world’ cities and regenerated cities with new attractions and communities perhaps come close in a European context.

A narrow interpretation of the Thirdspace city or destination would suggest that it is the ideal destination for the ‘post-tourist’, who seeks an eclectic and playful experience (Shaw & Williams, 2004), or the ‘new leisure tourist’ who enjoys themed and simulated environments (Smith, 2005a). One of the most significant new destinations which would apparently correspond to a Thirdspace concept could be Dubai, which has been compared to Disney Land and Las Vegas. With its giant shopping malls and creation of various new ‘worlds’ (e.g. Adventure, Aqua, Snow, Space) as part of the Dubailand project, it has some of the most fantastical new developments of anywhere on the planet. Junemo (2004) describes how Dubai is the epitome of playfulness, a place where globalisation is not a threat, but has been embraced wholeheartedly both in urban and tourism planning.

However, Soja’s concept of the postmetropolis is more complex and contradictory. It is the exemplification of the Thirdspace concept, where ‘everything comes together’. The following table attempts to capture the key characteristics of the Thirdspace city or destination:

**Table 3: Characteristics of the Thirdspace City**

- Transdisciplinary phenomenon
- Multiple interpretations
- Multi-layered
- Multi-functional
- Co-presence of the global and the local
- New relationship between core and periphery
- Simultaneous homogeneity and heterogeneity
- Co-existence of place and placelessness
- Occupied by communities of interest or ‘imagined communities’
- Continuum of insiderness and outsiderness
- Inseparability of history and geography
- Time – Space compression

- Intertwining of past, present and future
- Balance of heritage and contemporary culture
- Public and private spaces
- Actual and virtual spaces
- Safe and sanitised, rather than sacred spaces
- Real and imagined places
- Polycentricity
- Multiple scales of hybridity
- Objective, constructed and experiential authenticities
- Dynamic, rather than static or essentialist sense of culture and place
- A 'postmodern Utopia always in the making' (Sandercock, 1998:163)

The Thirdspace city is open to multiple interpretations from a range of disciplinary perspectives. The multi-layered, '*mille feuille*' nature of urban space was described by Lefebvre (1974). It is clearly heterogeneous, multi-functional, and subject to multiple usage, even though some developments might have an homogenising effect for a time. Thirdspace is a space where established binarisms (e.g. place / placelessness, global / local, time / space, homogenisation / heterogenisation) can be re-conceptualised, re-interpreted and re-defined. For example, the composite terms 'glocalisation' is frequently used to denote the interaction of the global and the local. Smith (2005b) describes glocalisation as representing 'the consequences (both tangible and intangible) of globalization, e.g. the creation of heterogeneous or hybridised cultures, communities and identities'. Soja (2000:199) describes how 'the concept of glocalization triggers a disruptive challenge to the widespread view that globalization and localization, and their more ideological or advocative expressions as globalism and localism, are separate and opposing processes or ways of thinking'. Similarly, Ritzer (2004) and others (e.g. Auge, 1995 and Doel, 2000) argue that place and placelessness or non-place do not need to be diametrically opposed or polarised concepts, but can exist on a continuum. Although there is no apparent third term to describe this phenomenon (as yet), the point is that both co-exist and inter-relate without fixed boundaries. The notion of core and periphery binarisms are also perhaps disappearing as cities become more polycentric and regeneration transforms and gentrifies declining districts.

Harvey (1990) describes how time-space compression is a process that has so revolutionised the qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter radically the way we represent the world to ourselves. This is largely the result of increasing 'spaces of flows' (Appadurai, 1990; Castells, 1996) of new media, technology, communications, capital etc. In the postmodern world of 'time-space compression,' the idea of synchronicity has become more significant than diachrony. Walsh (1992) refers to Baudrillard's (1988) concept of the 'dead point,' the point at which history ceases to be real because we can no longer distinguish between truth and fiction. This is the realm of 'hyper-reality' (Eco, 1986) where the past is constantly simulated in a world of mass-production and hyper-consumerism. Some postmodern theorists tend to be rather nihilistic on this point, declaring the 'end of history' and more recently, the 'end of geography'. But it could equally be argued that the rejection of meta-narratives has liberated history leading to multiple interpretations and representations, and that globalisation has led to a crucial re-examination of the multi-layering, politics and power of geography. In the context of the Postmetropolis, Soja (2000) frequently uses the third term 'geohistory' to analyse the development of cities, or refers to the trialectics of spatial, social and historical factors.

The inter-face between heritage, culture and the arts is a complex and contentious one. As stated by Evans (2001) the decision whether to prioritise cultural heritage over contemporary culture is ultimately a political one. However, the preservation of heritage is increasingly viewed as being as much about the present and future as about the past (Smith, 1998). The fossilisation of heritage is being questioned. Traditionally, the culture of indigenous peoples has been fossilised in museum exhibitions or viewed with nostalgia, implying that it has vanished or disappeared, rather than being dynamic and ongoing. As stated by Dann (1996:366) 'museums emerged as warehouses of assembled artefacts rather than representations of living cultures.' However, museum exhibitions are now increasingly focusing on the 'truth' and multiple-narratives of indigenous and colonial history, as well as attempting to represent and interpret indigenous traditions and culture more accurately.

The culture and heritage of diasporic communities is equally complex. They may inhabit what Bhabha referred to as the 'Thirdspace of hybridity' (1994) or bell hooks's 'Thirdspace of resistance' (1990). Hall (1995:206) writes of the 'in-between' of different cultures that diasporic groups often inhabit. He describes 'diaspora' as an alternative framework for thinking about 'imagined communities'. A new relationship is forged between culture, identity and place. Flusty (2004:112) discusses how many critics have been cynical about the concept of hybridity, describing it as meaning 'both everything and nothing'. Sometimes it has been used to define migrant groups who are 'place-bound' and 'parochialized'. It may also be seen to have emerged from the rootlessness of postcolonial migrants (e.g. in the work of Fanon). Hybridity is of course, nothing new, as all cultures have always been hybrids of other cultural influences. The same is true of globalisation, but as suggested by Soja (2000), there has never before been such an intensification or such a widespread awareness of the phenomenon. Once again, hybridity is a Thirdspace term referring to 'the coalescence of new personal and collective identities from novel combinations of previously disparate cultural attributes, practices, and influences' (Flusty, 2004:109). It is the creation of something new, which does not need to compromise or erode what went before.

The concept of community is a complex yet fluid one. As advocated by Sudjic (1992), the Thirdspace city allows progressive and dynamic communities to flourish.

Nevertheless, conflict and segregation are rife within negotiations of urban space. Lefebvre's Mille Feuille image and Soja's Thirdspace concept tend to imply a harmonious multi-layering or happy coexistence of various elements of perceived, conceived and lived space. However, the reality is somewhat different. There are also inevitably tensions in host-guest relations in the context of tourism.

The elusiveness of belonging, and the reliance on the individual to define his or her sense of place, community, and identity might engender any number of existential crises in the Thirdspace city. Other fears might relate to safety and security. Sandercock (1998) describes how the multicultural city/region is perceived by many as more of a threat than an opportunity. Such fears may be psychological, economic, religious, or cultural, resulting in deliberate self-segregation. The notion of power, control and surveillance pervades the work of Soja (1996, 2000). The 'carceral' city is arguably one of the 'grimly imprisoning' aspects of postmodernism, where an 'ecology of fear' is endemic and 'the postmetropolitan landscape has become filled with many different kinds of protected and fortified spaces, islands of enclosure and anticipated protection against the real and imagined dangers of daily life' (Soja, 2000:299). This has been exacerbated by random and



repeated acts of terrorism, often in tourist destinations. Living with impending crises becomes not only a part of everyday life, but also an inherent part of travel.

The relevance of Relph's (1976) continuum of insiderness and outsiderness to a Thirdspace framework is perhaps worth exploring in the light of the above discussions. It is likely that the majority of citizens experience something along the insiderness / outsiderness continuum at various points in their urban existence. Their experiences are unlikely to be polarised given the ambiguous nature of the postmodern city. However, the fragmentation of communities, the erosion of public space, the segregation and gentrification of spaces of consumption, and the growing obsession with surveillance are arguably not conducive to a feeling of existential insiderness. But residents are unlikely to feel totally alienated and excluded either, given the new diversity of cultural opportunities available to them. In progressive, dynamic cities, the chances are that change will be frequent, and flexibility and adaptation will be required. The increasingly polycentric nature of cities may mean that there is no clearly definable central meeting point for interaction and exchange. Again, this is particularly true of American cities.

Former industrial cities are also rapidly being transformed into tourist destinations, and many facilities are being developed which bypass or exclude local residents. Conversely many tourists may feel more at home in global, cosmopolitan environments with familiar or recognisable features than in small, culturally-specific locales.

The realms of 'hyper-reality' where real, imagined and virtual spaces intermingle have arguably created exciting and liberating spaces of consumption (e.g. theme parks, shopping malls) for the local consumer and tourist alike. Although Ritzer (2004:16) creates a binarism or continuum of his own to describe such developments (the something / nothing continuum), he accepts that many people 'perhaps a majority [...] prefer nothing to something and [...] have good reasons for that preference'. But such developments are not necessarily devoid of substance, however standardised they might appear. They can be more like the Heterotopologies as described by Foucault, where all places are represented and juxtaposed.

It has been argued by some theorists that authenticity of place or experience is no longer a preoccupation in the postmodern world (Rojek, 1993). In hyperreal environments which contain simulacra based on fantasy and imagination the concept of authenticity is rendered meaningless (Eco, 1986). However, Thirdspace can arguably accommodate objective, constructed and experiential authenticities (as defined by Wang, 1999), as well as the 'extra-authenticity' (Boniface & Fowler, 1993) provided by hyperreal environments and virtual spaces, the 'pseudo-events' (Boorstin, 1964) and 'staged' authenticity (MacCannell, 1973) or sites of 'authentic fakery' developed for tourists (Alsayyad, 2001). Wang (1999) describes how authenticity has already become symbolic or projected onto toured objects or spectacles. The binary of 'objective' authenticity (referring to the inherent authenticity of originals) and 'constructive' authenticity (referring to the authenticity projected onto objects by consumers) has now given way to a third term of 'existential authenticity', which is invoked by personal or intersubjective feelings relating to the state of Being. The degree of existential insiderness (Relph, 1976) within the Thirdspace city will therefore bear some relation to different conceptualisations of authenticity.

Is it merely idealistic to accept or even welcome the co-existence of these complex characteristics of the Thirdspace city? It is typically postmodern to espouse eclecticism of this nature, however Soja (2000) himself recognises that this can be problematic. Sandercock (1998:163) suggests that in the 'normative cosmopolis' this 'postmodern

Utopia can never be realized, but must always be in the making'. This implies a progressive sense of development that is responsive and flexible, but it also leaves room for empty abstractions and over-theorising. As noted by Allmendinger (2001) it is one thing to theorise about such concepts, and another to become more pragmatic about their application within an urban planning or regeneration framework. Soja (2000) always seems to become somewhat abstract and esoteric (albeit poetic) in his attempt to apply his Thirdspace concept to real cities. The following case study therefore attempts to illustrate the application of a Thirdspace framework in more detail,. It is based on longitudinal data collected over a period of five years, including practitioner interviews and discussion groups, questionnaires and focus groups with local residents and visitors, and content analysis of policy documents, strategies and local newspapers.

**The Thirdspace City in practice: A case study of Greenwich, London**

The chosen case study for the research was Maritime Greenwich in South-East London. London could be described as a global, postmodern, 'Thirdspace' city with its juxtapositions of the traditional and the modern, heritage, arts and contemporary developments. Greenwich is home to a World Heritage Site, which attracts numerous global and domestic tourists. It is also the site of the infamous cultural 'flagship' and catalyst for regeneration, the Millennium Dome. In addition, Greenwich hosts a large arts festival (the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival), as well as supporting several culturally diverse community arts projects. Located within the Thames Gateway, currently the largest regeneration project in Europe, Greenwich is a prime location for cultural development, tourism promotion, and the attraction of inward investment.

The case study was analysed using a framework based on the First, Second and Thirdspace concepts (although the remainder of the paper focuses on the Thirdspace elements where First and Secondspace come together):

**Table 4:** A spatial framework for analysing the characteristics of Greenwich

<b>FIRSTSPACE</b>		
<p><b>Historical, Geographical, Socio-economic Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Spatial practice</li> <li>· 'Real' space</li> <li>· Things in space</li> <li>· Objective</li> <li>· Physical</li> <li>· Material</li> <li>· Measureable</li> <li>· Factual</li> </ul> <p><b>Practical Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Technical</li> <li>· Scientific</li> <li>· Rational</li> <li>· Functional</li> </ul>	<p><b>Theoretical &amp; Disciplinary Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Physical geography</li> <li>· Human geography</li> <li>· History</li> <li>· Economics</li> <li>· Architecture</li> <li>· Urban planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Data Sources Used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Historical books</li> <li>· Geographical maps</li> <li>· Statistical records</li> <li>· Management plans</li> </ul>	<p><b>Justification for Chosen Sources of Data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· To provide an historical context for the chosen case study</li> <li>· To locate the space geographically</li> <li>· To describe its physical 'reality'</li> <li>· To analyze its social and cultural composition</li> <li>· To assess the way in which it is mapped and planned for</li> </ul>

<p><b>Cultural &amp; Political Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Representations of space</li> <li>· Imagined or conceived space</li> <li>· Thoughts about space</li> <li>· Subjective</li> <li>· Mental</li> <li>· Ideational</li> <li>· Discursive</li> <li>· Symbolic</li> </ul> <p><b>Practical Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Artistic</li> <li>· Creative</li> <li>· Imaginative</li> <li>· Interpretive</li> </ul>	<p><b>SECONDSPACE</b></p> <p><b>Theoretical &amp; Disciplinary Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Cultural geography</li> <li>· Cultural theory</li> </ul> <p><b>Data Sources Used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· In-depth interviews with policymakers, planners, managers and strategists</li> <li>· Attendance of local cultural forums, steering groups and committees</li> <li>· Discussion groups and workshops with cultural and tourism practitioners</li> </ul>	<p><b>Justification for Chosen Sources of Data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· To provide an overview of the ways in which political and strategic decisions impact upon the chosen context</li> <li>· To analyze the representations of place that are projected through marketing/branding</li> <li>· To discuss the way in which space is shaped for culture and tourism</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sociological &amp; Anthropological Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Representational space</li> <li>· Lived space</li> <li>· New conceptualisations of space</li> <li>· Multiperspectival</li> <li>· Polyvocal</li> <li>· Spatio/ Temporal/ Social</li> <li>· Both material and metaphorical</li> <li>· Both factual and fictional</li> </ul> <p><b>Practical Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Communicative</li> <li>· Engaged</li> <li>· Empathic</li> <li>· Inclusive</li> <li>· Democratic</li> </ul>	<p><b>THIRDSPACE</b></p> <p><b>Theoretical &amp; Disciplinary Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sociology</li> <li>· Anthropology</li> <li>· Community studies</li> <li>· Cultural planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Data Sources Used</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· 287 surveys of cultural tourists in Greenwich</li> <li>· 188 questionnaire interviews with local residents and workers</li> <li>· Focus groups with local women, older residents and students</li> <li>· Survey of 100 gay residents about perceptions of 'gay friendliness'</li> <li>· Content analysis of local newspaper</li> </ul>	<p><b>Justification for Chosen Sources of Data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· To capture the attitudes and perceptions of local residents, workers, students and tourists towards cultural developments, regeneration and tourism</li> <li>· To identify key community concerns within the Borough</li> <li>· To consider tourist perceptions of Greenwich</li> </ul>

In theoretical or academic terms, Greenwich could be studied from a number of perspectives simultaneously, thus it becomes something of a trans-disciplinary or at least, a multi-disciplinary phenomenon. In the researcher's case, the strongest focus was perhaps on cultural geography and planning, but with aspects of history, sociology, architecture, cultural studies, amongst others. It is frequently used as a research case study by different Departments and researchers in the University, as well as local colleges and schools. It is difficult to separate history and geography in Greenwich, as even the World Heritage Site has a spatial boundary, and economic disparities are somehow grounded in both the history and geography of the Borough. Time-space compression

exists insofar as Greenwich has become a site of 'spaces of flows' (Appadurai, 1990; Castells, 1996). It is a major tourism destination and University, which therefore accommodates constant flows of people. Flows of capital help to fund various initiatives, many of which are global (e.g. World Heritage Site funding; international sponsorship for the Dome or Olympics). Many of the flows of ideas (e.g. relating to conservation or sustainability) are also globally influenced. There are arguably few 'hyperreal' spaces, although much of the work being done in the arts and creative industries, some museums, such as the National Maritime Museum, and the Visitor Centre, and media and technology Departments within the University transcend factual historical narratives and re-present them in new ways that are more relevant to contemporary communities. The Millennium Dome was also a short-lived attempt at creating a 'hyperreal' entertainment centre.

Soja writes of the multi-layering of space, and it can be seen that Greenwich can be viewed simultaneously as a World Heritage Site of universal value; as an international tourism destination; as the chosen venue for a national 'flagship' project (the Millennium Dome and subsequently the Olympics); the site of a major festival (the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival); as well as a place for local interactions through smaller, community-orientated arts projects and everyday leisure. The co-presence of the global and the local is constantly being negotiated, even in the battles over which high street shops should be allowed to occupy the space. As in most British town centres, there is a creeping standardisation or homogenisation of the retail experience, as well as the provision of chain hotels and tourist facilities. At the same time, however, there is differentiation through unique heritage attractions and heterogeneous cultural and arts events based on diverse ethnic populations. Local people, students and even tourists often favour homogenisation at some level because it offers familiarity, comfort and security. However, heterogenisation allows for excitement and animation, not to mention promotional opportunities for marketers.

The issue of 'authenticity' (a major preoccupation in tourism literature) hardly ever occurred in real-life discussions. For example, Festival Directors were far more interested in the concepts of community participation, consultation and ownership than in whether their festival content was perceived to be 'authentic'. This may be because many of the festivals in Greenwich are relatively new and therefore there is no need to maintain historical continuity in programming. In the context of the World Heritage Site and other heritage attractions (including museums), authenticity is often seen to be an important factor insofar as it is linked to the representation of the past as history and history as heritage. Many 'purists' might favour a relatively traditional interpretation of history (e.g. one that favours imperialist, predominantly white, masculine narratives). However, in accordance with postmodern theory, few of the cultural practitioners or curators in Greenwich seemed to share this view, and most were striving to provide multiple interpretations and narratives. These are offered through specialist exhibitions in museums and galleries, events like Black History Month, ethnic festivals, community arts projects, and support from various specialist centres (e.g. the Metro Centre for gay residents; the Womens' Centre for social and cultural interaction; or Age Exchange for the sharing of oral histories and reminiscences). Multiple scales of hybridity seem to exist in the construction of local identities, especially amongst diasporic groups. There is also perhaps evidence of a new relationship between core and periphery if one considers Greenwich's traditional role in global imperialism and trade, and its gradual transformation into a more cosmopolitan and ethnically diverse environment.

Increasingly, the area is occupied by communities of interest or 'imagined communities'. Controlled regeneration has allowed new communities to form, sometimes in mixed-use

developments (e.g. housing on Greenwich Peninsula and around Creekside in Deptford). Judging by the high number of residents from the so-called 'Bohemian Melting Pot' category (MOSAIC, 2006) the proportion of creative or artistic people is high. These communities also exist in virtual space, such as arts and creative practitioners on networks like ArtsGreenwich or through forums like Emergency Exit Arts. 64% of gay residents questioned also thought that there was something of a gay community in Greenwich, and some Black residents suggested that there was a strong collective identity around Deptford.

Greenwich is multi-functional as it accommodates not only the permanent and lifelong residents of Greenwich, but also more transient student and tourism populations. Like many composite World Heritage Sites, one of the major challenges is to manage this multi-functionality. Maintaining and conserving an attractive heritage environment that appeals to tourists is clearly sometimes at odds with more commercial, business developments, which may serve the needs of local people better (e.g. more functional shops, multiplex cinemas and leisure complexes). Nevertheless, a sense of place was surprisingly strong amongst many residents, even those who lived in more deprived areas of the Borough (e.g. the womens' focus group seemed very attached to Woolwich). Residents of Greenwich and Blackheath claimed to love their environment the best, however, most residents were very keen on the history and heritage of Greenwich, and were keen to visit attractions and sites even if they did not see themselves as being closely connected to them. Given that there was also a great enthusiasm for local festivals and events, especially of an ethnic nature, also implies that a sense of place was viewed as being dynamic and fluid, rather than static or essentialist. The balance between heritage and contemporary cultures seems to be pivotal to the success of Greenwich, not only as a place to live in, but also as a place to visit. The shift towards more scenes of animation, nightlife and events in tourism marketing demonstrates this only too clearly. Visitors clearly appreciated the increasing balance of heritage conservation and the development of a more animated evening economy. Past, present and future clearly become intertwined in both the management and marketing of Greenwich (e.g. as a World Heritage Site with a contemporary function), and in the planning for regeneration, which needs to focus on issues of sustainability for future generations. This is particularly important when planning legacies for large flagship projects like the Dome and the Olympics.

Many residents seemed to feel a sense of 'insideness' and engagement with their local environment. Negative comments often referred to more practical and functional aspects of life, which would be typical of any town. If there was a sense of 'outsideness' or alienation, it was not expressed vociferously, although comments about racism, homophobia and womens' safety were perhaps worrying. Unlike many of the American cities described by Soja, Greenwich is not seen as a particularly safe or sanitised space. In fact, women and gay residents especially found it to be a rather unsafe space, and many residents complained about the dirty environment. Equally, it was not described as 'sacred' either, but it is clear that many residents value very highly 'meditative' spaces such as the park and the riverside walkways. Placelessness was not fully explored as a concept, but generally seemed to manifest itself in criticisms directed at standardisation in the town centre or a lack of distinctive cultural features in some parts of the Borough (e.g. Thamesmead, Abbey Wood).

Debates about lack of access to public space did not really arise in the discussions as they do in academic literature. Unlike Canary Wharf, which has been highly criticised for its erosion of public, community and green space, Greenwich seems to provide multiple public spaces for recreation and leisure (e.g. local parks), and as yet, the waterfront is still

largely public, especially the Thames Path. Access problems only tend to occur at a psychological level, for example, when residents feel intimidated by the imperial atmosphere of the Royal Naval College, or out of place in corporate Canary Wharf (the site of some festival events). Attendance of some arts venues was perhaps lower than expected because residents did not feel that such spaces were for them. But they did not tend to give concrete reasons as to why they did not go to the theatre or dance centres as much as festivals, for example. However, the attempts by many arts practitioners to engage local residents in the construction of imagined places (e.g. through photography, art or festivals) has been largely successful in changing peoples' perceptions of their local area. Sometimes the exploration of virtual spaces has also been successful, especially when trying to involve computer-literate young people in educational projects, for example, the National Maritime Museum. Many of the school children seemed to enjoy the high-tech nature of the Dome and expressed their desire for a theme park.

The idea of polycentricity was not particularly true of Greenwich, as most of the cultural and tourism activities tend to be clustered in West Greenwich and around the World Heritage Site in particular. This is arguably more of a phenomenon in large American cities than in British ones, although much of the retail and leisure provision is increasingly on the periphery of cities and requires car access (true of new supermarkets and cinemas in Greenwich, for example). Residents in some of the outer-lying wards of the Borough seemed to have relatively little provision in terms of culture, and many complained about infrequency of transport there.

### **Conclusion: The future of the thirdspace city**

The case study of Greenwich attempts to demonstrate that a Thirdspace framework provides an interesting and complex model for researching urban development and tourism. Although it cannot provide many concrete recommendations for the future, it does at least encourage more progressive and democratic thinking. Sandercock's (1998) vision of Cosmopolis as a Utopia which can never be realised but is always in the making closely corresponds to Soja's somewhat idealistic notion of Postmetropolis or the Thirdspace city. A number of mechanisms can perhaps be used to bring us closer to this Utopia. Although Allmendinger (2001) is cynical about the enforcement of diversity within a postmodern planning context, this might arguably be one of the few ways of privileging previously marginalised communities, counterbalancing the growing standardisation of cities, and creating unique and memorable experiences for tourists.

Diversity should represent a scene of discourse rather than merely being a place of the tourist gaze. If the multiple cultures of the city can be fused into common purposes, then conflict and intolerance are less likely to abound. The rejection of the ideal of an homogeneous community leads to an examination of the idea of multiple publics and the possible constitution of some form of civic culture. The mobilisation of diverse histories and cultures may have to emerge from grassroots level, but political mechanisms can arguably be put in place to facilitate this. Planning can become more insurgent, more interactive and people-centred, and it can accommodate and enhance cultural difference, rather than eradicating or standardising it. It can be dynamic and open to change. Such cities become not only livable but immensely attractive to visitors. The city can still be a place of desire, a spiritual or sacred space, as encapsulated by Sandercock (1998:214) there is a need for:

....a diversity of spaces and places in the city: places loaded with visual stimulation, as well as also places of quiet contemplation, uncontaminated by commerce, where the deafening noise of the city can be kept out so that we can listen to the 'noise of stars' or the wind or water, and the voice(s) within ourselves. An essential ingredient of planning beyond the modernist paradigm is a reinstatement of inquiry about and recognition of the importance of memory, desire, and the spirit (or sacred) as vital dimensions of healthy human settlements and a sensitivity to cultural differences in the expressions of each.

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# Spas in Central-Eastern Europe between decline and revitalisation

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## 1. Introduction

The spas in Central-Eastern Europe have a long history. Their roots go back to Hellenic and Roman times. Chronologically, the curative and pilgrimage trips were the precursors of modern tourism in the whole area between the Baltic Sea in the north and the Adriatic and the Black Sea in the south. The height of health-motivated travel, primarily based around mineral springs, occurred in the late 19th and throughout the 20th century, with different peaks in particular areas of the CE region. While Carlsbad (Karlovy Vary), now in the Czech Republic, was already a large and fashionable health resort in the 18th century, spas did not play a major role in Hungary and Poland until the end of the 19th century (continuing for most of the 20th century). The Balkans, where ancient thermal baths existed, witnessed a later spa development during the 20th century interwar period and during the era of communist rule.

The spa network in Europe developed fully and reached a state of maturity between the First and Second World Wars. Yet a clear difference remained between Western and Eastern Europe (in favour of the former) regarding the number of spas, the level and scale of curative facilities and other infrastructure, as well as the origin and social composition of the guests. An important feature of the European spa was its cultural and elitist atmosphere and emphasis both on healing and entertainment. In France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland and Austria, the spa visitors consisted of both national and international elites. Curative treatment in spas was one of the basic recreational activities in Europe until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at least for the better-off social classes. The facilities were generally private, although public infrastructure gradually developed. The typical European spas did not solely offer healing, but also a multifunctional environment for recreation and entertainment. Typical elements were hotels, pensions, hospitals, sanatoria and other leisure infrastructure, situated in or around the spa's central park which played the role of a social core for the resort.

After the Second World War, spa resorts in Western Europe went into stagnation, but in communist Central-Eastern Europe the spas entered a new phase of development, with treatment mainly sponsored by the state or the trade unions in their specialised facilities. The democratisation of access to the spas was coupled with a narrow specialisation in medical treatment. A profound change occurred in the appearance of the spas. A dominating feature of their physical planning became the trade-union rest houses and sanatoria. Spas became "healing combinats" for the people, based on mineral waters, climate and other local natural resources. The rest homes and sanatoria were typically large buildings with mineral water basins and healing devices, with a residential part, dining facilities and meeting halls. Other services were almost absent.

## 2. Geographical features and attempt at typology

**Figure 1:** Spas in Central-Eastern Europe: big circles: major spas (mineral water, mud and climate), small circles: other spas



Source: research of the authors; JORDAN (1999)

Geographically the spas in CEE tend to localise in three environments (Figure 1):

- Piedmont areas and intra-mountain valleys following tectonic faults (Karlove Vary, Krynica, Sczawnica, Velingrad, Vranje, Baile Herculane, Varshets, Eger, Piestiany). The piedmont areas concentrate the majority of the mineral springs. Here the resorts often combine mineral water healing with climatic recreation and mountain sports.
- Coastal areas (Black Sea, Western Polish Baltic coast, Balaton). The majority of mud healing spas are found here. Health tourism exists in addition to or rather in combination with the overwhelming seaside recreation and (water-)sports tourism.
- Plains and lowlands (Ciechocinek, Inowroclaw, Szolnok, Amara, Baile Felix, Zalakaros, Naleczow) – relatively scarce due to the generally placid geological structures.

**Table 1:** Typology of the spas in Central-Eastern Europe

Type/ Country	Importance	Type of stay	Length of stay	% of foreign guests	Ownership	Accommodation type	Level of services
<b>I. Advanced</b>							
Czech Republic	National and international	Traditional healing, leisure	Long	Significant	Public, private	Sanatoria, old style luxury hotels and pensions	High
Slovakia	National and international	Traditional healing	Long	Significant	Public, private	Sanatoria, mixed public and private residencies	High and average
Hungary	National and international	Healing, entertainment and various attractions	Short - foreigners, average - nationals	Prevailing	Private, mixed	Bio-hotels, sanatoria, pensions, second residences	High
Slovenia	National and international	Traditional healing	Long and average	Very significant	Private, mixed	Hotels, pensions, sanatoria	High and average

<b>II. Medium level</b>							
Poland	National	Traditional healing	Long and average	Small	Public, some private	Sanatoria, state and trade union rest homes, private hotels	Average and high
Lithuania	National, former USSR	Traditional healing	Long	Small to significant	State, local gov., private	Sanatoria, rest homes and pensions	Average and high
Latvia	National, former USSR	Traditional healing	Long and average	Small to significant	State, private, local gov.	Sanatoria, trade union rest-homes, pensions	Average
Estonia	National	Traditional healing, leisure	Average and long	Small	Private, local governments	Sanatoria, health centres, pensions, hotels	Average
Croatia	National	Traditional healing	Long and average	Small	Private, trade unions and local governments	Hotels, rest homes, sanatoria, public baths	Average and high
Romania	National	Healing	Long	Small	State and mixed	Sanatoria, rest homes, public baths, huts	Average
Bulgaria	National	Traditional healing	Long and average	Small	Private, trade unions	Sanatoria, rest homes, public baths, hotels, second residences	Average
Serbia and Montenegro	National	Traditional healing	Long and average	Small	Trade unions, private	Sanatoria, public baths, rest homes, second residences	Average
<b>III. Low level</b>							
Bosnia and Herzegovina	National	Traditional healing	Long	Small	Private, local governments	Sanatoria, public baths, pensions, hotels	Average and low
Macedonia	National	Traditional healing	Long	Small	Private, local governments	Hotels, pensions, public baths	Average and low
Albania	National	Traditional healing	Long	Small	Private, state	Hotels, public baths, rest-homes and sanatoria	Low and average

Source: various publications and own findings

The analysis of the CEE spas (see Table 1) discloses two tendencies:

1. Traditional: here the leader is the Czech Republic functioning as a developed mature destination offering long curative stays for the domestic and foreign market. Innovations generally elaborate on the old model of spa development. Less advanced, though similarly concentrated on traditional medical treatment, are the spa systems in Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Baltic Republics, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia.
2. Innovative: represented by Hungary which emerged on the international market as a short-stay health and wellness destination due to an intelligent promotional strategy. The specific development of the spas in Slovenia has elements of both the old-European model represented in the CEE by the Czech Republic and the modern trends exemplified by Hungary.

In the near future Poland and Slovakia can also develop towards shorter-stay health holidays, beauty centres and entertainment in the spas, similarly to Hungary.

The interest for holidaying in the spas is rising among the ecologically conscious younger generation. At the same time the population throughout Europe is ageing, so the customers with middle and advanced ages will continue to dominate in the health resorts and the primary interest will be in healing and open-air activities based on the local natural conditions.

### **3. Transformation of the spa networks in CEE**

Following the total economic and social crisis, the spa systems of the post-communist countries experienced a stage of decline in their development cycle from 1990 onwards. A rapid deterioration of the spa networks and functions took place in the whole of Central-Eastern Europe. The reasons for the crisis of the spas are linked with the general socio-economic deterioration during the post-communist transition, as well as with the withdrawal of the state enterprises from the guaranteed social and welfare policies and, more specifically, from mass recreation and health care. In Poland in the 1990s the number of visitors in the spas decreased by a half. In Bulgaria only 20% of the rest homes run by the Association of Trade Unions still function as a recreational network. The remaining rest homes were privatised, some changed functions, others turned into hotels or were simply abandoned. The Bulgarian sanatoria network decreased between 1990 and 2000 from 184 to 30 establishments (Central Statistical Institute 2001).

Although in general the spa systems in the CEE countries are still deteriorating or stagnating, there are signs of revitalisation and modernisation of the resorts and restructuring of their functions. All of the countries in the region are in the process of creating new laws and amending existing legal frameworks, so that the health resorts can adapt to the new conditions. The situation in the whole CEE region is changing dynamically as other forms of tourism and recreation start to develop in the spas and new ideas for their rejuvenation and upgrading are spreading, inspired by the West European experience (mainly German) and by local initiatives.

Curative resorts and related forms of recreation and tourism fulfil two main functions:

1. Biological restoration (health, fitness and other activities upgrading the psycho-physical condition of the visitors), using mineral waters and muds, climate properties, diet and food, etc., in different combinations with traditional or alternative medicine. In Poland 40% of the visitors to spas receive treatment for rheumatism, 20% have respiratory problems, 12% suffer from blood vessel diseases, and 10% have nutritional problems (WOŁOWIEC, 2003).

2. Exposure to the nearby environment (parks, mountain excursions, open-air sport, health paths, cultural and entertainment, etc.). The location of the majority of health resorts in green areas near mountains, lakes and streams makes it easier to experience a diverse and active holiday. But much depends on the nature of the holiday and on the possibilities provided by new leisure facilities (indoor and outdoor swimming pools, gym and various sporting facilities, body building, aerobics, nutrition, longevity and fitness exercises, anti-stress treatment, 'antitab' - smoking cessation, and beauty salons).

In addition, the resort guests are increasingly offered excursions, visits to museums, and evening programmes etc.

In all the countries of the CEE, privatisation of the infrastructure in curative resorts is happening and significant changes to the legal framework and management of the resorts are being introduced. In Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Lithuania, a limited number of resorts (generally 5-10) will probably be excluded from the privatisation schemes. Following the German model they will be granted a status of national health resorts. In several countries these changes are subject of a special national strategy for spas.

A basic change refers to the transformation of specialised (sectoral) medical establishments, either into free-access establishments on commercial principles, or by changing the infrastructure profile. An example is Bulgaria, where some of the 184 sanatoria functioning in 1990 had been turned into rehabilitation hospitals by the year 2000.

A further effect is that these changes imply a much stronger competence for the local governments. The local authorities need to play a decisive role in all aspects of the relationships of the local community with the guests, the state authority, the investors, and the media. Typical areas where conflicts of interests might occur are the legal and environmental issues and the investment policies.

It is generally accepted that spas should be granted a distinct legal status and special attention needs to be paid to the protection of the curative assets. In all post-communist countries, the specific requirements are fixed by relevant state decisions and acts. The primary decision refers to the status of the health resort, which is based on acts approved by the government. In Bulgaria the network of national resorts embraces 41 spas, in Serbia 23, in Hungary 53, in Poland there are 30 national resorts out of 56 resorts communes.

Given their important curative and recreational effects and the respective infrastructure, the spas are bound to satisfy recreational and healing needs at regional, national and international scales (often as a mix of those functions). This is in contradiction with their present financing by local communities. In other words – the community is investing in the satisfaction of an external demand and this does not necessarily lead to better conditions for the host population (WOŁOWIEC 2003, ABRAM 2003). Here is evidence that the state cannot fully abdicate from helping spa communities, though it should not hinder their privatisation and the upgrading of services.

In all CEE countries a process of restructuring the management and marketing of the spas is underway. The variety and, in many cases, the quality of services have improved. The financial effects are rather positive, especially in the Czech Republic and Hungary, which managed to thoroughly modernise their spa industry. In Poland the number of curative



stays fell between 1999 – 2003 by 40%, due to the smaller number of patients directed to the spas by the National Health Fund. Nevertheless in 2003, a net increase of the financial performance was recorded in 17 of the 25 Polish statutory resorts.

An interesting event observed in Poland in the years after 1989 is that many Poles preferred to take treatment in the spas of Lithuania and Ukraine, where the state sanatoria continued to function at considerably lower prices. At the same time, Polish spas were relatively cheap for clients from the European Union, especially Germany. A similar phenomenon was observed in the Czech Republic and Hungary: their spas were visited by many westerners (Germans, Austrians and Swiss), while Czechs and Hungarians frequented spas in Slovakia, Poland, or Romania. Recently the price differences have tended to diminish, and in the near future visits motivated by lower prices can be expected in all the new EU member states, as well as in Romania and Bulgaria. International visitors remain a minority in all countries except Hungary and Slovenia, although some exceptions can be found in border areas where the share of foreign guests can be considerable. The percentage of foreign visits depends on the image of the given country and resort (including promotion, as in the case of the Hungarian resorts) and on the accommodation and transport accessibility.

#### **4. Spas in Poland**

Polish law recognizes two types of spas: 41 'statutory' (with a delimited protected area of natural assets) and 21 'potential', which have documented natural conditions for health and recreation, though not yet delimited and protected, or ready for their curative exploitation. Here we analyse statutory spas. Two thirds of them are in the southern mountains (Sudety, Carpathians), 15% in the Baltic Sea region, and less than 20% in the most populated central plain (including the biggest urban centres Warsaw, Poznan, Lodz, Wroclaw and Cracow).

Chronologically seen, the first spas in present-day Poland appeared in the 16th and 17th centuries. Expansion of the spas occurred in the 19th century when more than half of the present health resorts were established, but the whole 20th century brought only seven new health resorts. According to SIEJKOWSKA (2004), in the Polish resort Szczawnica all accommodation outlets in 1986 were owned by trade unions or the state and functioned as limited-access establishments. In 2000 65% of the accommodation was private, 12.6% belonged to state agencies and various other organisations, and 11.2% belonged to the local government. Only 0.8% belonged to the largest of the former owners - the National Association of Trade Unions.

Nevertheless, according to the latest proposal of the Polish Ministry of Health, ten spa resorts out of a total of twenty-three reviewed for privatisation will be granted the status of a national spa and excluded from any privatisation scheme. A further group of eight spas will be only partly and gradually privatised since their natural assets are recognised as unique national heritage. Thus, only five spas will be fully privatised in the near future, and in only one of them (Naleczow) has a respective transaction been finalised. This is an example of overestimated fears and obstacles put in the process of privatisation of the resorts, usually labelled as care for outstanding natural resources.

During the era of "pragmatic socialism" the spas underwent rapid development and their character changed dramatically as a result of the state ownership of the sanatoria and their central financing. Large state enterprises and trade unions were allowed to invest in the resorts, where they built a huge infrastructure of their own. This type of development profoundly changed the character of many Polish spas, from small and elitist with a

specific ambience to large resorts with big buildings and an infrastructure combining health and recreation, where the majority of the population could spend paid leave and holidays.

It should be noted that in all communist states the access to the sanatoria and the trade union rest homes was easy and the stays were extremely cheap. A stay in a spa was considered significant in economic terms, it was regarded as an instrument of the social care. Permission to spend leave in a resort was issued by the local branch of a specialised department of the Ministry of Health, or directly by an enterprise. Such wide accessibility caused a high usage of resort infrastructure, and cheap transport fares meant that all Polish regions were represented in each resort. In other words, the stays in the resorts were distributed centrally to all administrative regions of the country and not on the basis of geographical proximity.

Changes after 1989 meant that the state withdrew from fully supporting state sanatoria. As a result these establishments were reorganised on a commercial basis, available to those who could afford them. The situation in the sanatorial establishments belonging to the enterprises and trade unions is more complicated. Bankruptcy, restructuring and the financial difficulties of a majority of the enterprises had a big negative impact on the sanatoria. In fact, in all troubled enterprises the first expenses to be cut were those for maintaining sanatoria and rest homes, which in turn often went bankrupt. They also started to function on a strictly commercial basis; some of them were sold, and some converted for other use.

The introduction of a market economy in this sector of the health services in Poland led to a sharp reduction of sanatorial and other treatment. In the 1990s the number of visits to health resorts decreased by 50%. The reduction in the autumn was especially steep; autumn is still the preferred time for cure in the spas.

As a result of these changes the Polish spas fell into a bad financial situation, often with deteriorating services, poor maintenance of the infrastructure, and an absence of ideas for future development. A gradual degradation of the attractiveness of the resort spaces has taken place.

This is why local authorities in the spas are looking for ways to stop this deterioration and to initiate recovery. Some resorts such as Krynica, Ciechocinek and Kolobrzeg have opened for business events, shows, festivals and the like. Such mass attractions – far from the quiet traditional cure – change the character of the spas and create a new image. A number of clinics and pensions have emerged run by medical staff originally from the sanatoria. They offer a good level of service and care at prices oriented to better-off clients. Most Poles cannot afford such care, though guests from other EU countries could find the costs reasonable and attractive.

So far only one Polish resort was privatised (by a French group), another one (Szczawnica) is undergoing a reprivatisation to its former owner.

To conclude, the changes in the Polish spa system have two main directions:

- a) from a monofunctional spa to multifunctional attractions;
- b) retaining the spa character while ownership changes take place, and the upgrading of services so that they can compete for both national and foreign clients.

These changes are still in an initial stage, so it is difficult to predict which type of development will prevail, or maybe some resorts will find their own way. In any case the process merits further observation.

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## **ETAG / ETIN 2006**

### **Brief summary**

*Anya Diekmann*  
*Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*  
*adiekman@ulb.ac.be*

According to the decision taken at last year's ATLAS conference in Barcelona, ATLAS was represented in ETIN (European Tourism Industry Network) and ETAG (European Travel Action Group) meetings.

2 ETAG meetings and 1 ETIN meeting have been held in Brussels.

ETIN organised a conference on seasonality in Tourism on the 8<sup>th</sup> June in the European parliament in Brussels and is preparing a conference early next year in Brussels on Employment in Tourism (present and future). ATLAS members working on the issue would be welcome to submit a paper. (For more details, please contact [adiekman@ulb.ac.be](mailto:adiekman@ulb.ac.be))

ETAG, but also ATLAS is part of the steering committee of the European Tourism Forum to be held in Malta October 2006. Greg Richards accepted to take part as keynote speaker in the ETF in Malta.

As ETAG and ETIN are networks, broad information about all major associations, organisations and institutions dealing with tourism are available. More information can be found on the ETAG website ([www.etag-euro.org](http://www.etag-euro.org)).

The Tourism Unit is planning sessions on Tourism for all (Accessibility) and Social Tourism in Brussels in February 2007.

#### **Reports and Papers (2006)**

WTO - Position paper: Understanding of tourism standards - Explanatory notes regarding international tourism standards (available on request)

OTE – Consultation paper: Review of the Timeshare Directive (available on request)

EU - Report on the state of the European Timeshare Industry Feb 2006



# ATLAS members

## Full and Associate members September 2006

### **Albania**

Tourism Development Committee

### **Argentina**

Universidad del Salvador

### **Australia**

University of Queensland  
International College of Tourism & Hotel  
Management  
Monash University  
Victoria University  
University of Technology Sydney  
James Cook University  
Curtin University of Technology

### **Austria**

University of Innsbruck  
International Management Center Krems  
(IMC)

### **Azerbaijan**

Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences  
Western University

### **Belgium**

University of Leuven  
Université Libre de Bruxelles  
Erasmushogeschool Brussel

### **Bolivia**

Circulo de prensa turistica Bolivia

### **Bulgaria**

Higher Institution of Food Industry  
Bourgas Free University  
University of Architecture, Civil  
Engineering and Geodesy

### **Cambodia**

Royal university of Phnom Penh

### **Canada**

Sir Wilfred Grenfell College  
Mount St. Vincent University  
Carleton University Library

### **Chile**

Defensores del Bosque Chileno  
Fundacion DuocUC

### **China**

Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
Lamont School of Business Tourism &  
Hotel Mgmt.  
Tibet University  
Institute of Tourism Studies (IFT)  
Kunming University  
Macao University of Science &  
Technology  
Hainan Teachers College  
Northwest University  
Tianjin University of Commerce  
Peking University  
Canton Institute of Ethnic Studies  
Hainan HuaYe Group  
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

### **Costa Rica**

FLACSO-Sede Académica de Costa Rica

### **Croatia**

University of Zadar  
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality  
Management, Opatija  
Motovun  
Institute for Tourism

### **Cuba**

Escuela de Hoteleria y Turismo Playas  
del Este

### **Cyprus**

College of Tourism and Hotel  
Management

### **Czech Republic**

Institut of Hotel Management Prague

### **Denmark**

University of Aalborg

### **Eritrea**

Hotel Inter-Continental Asmara

**Finland**

University of Lapland  
HAMK University of Applied Sciences  
Rovaniemi Polytechnic  
South Carelia Polytechnic  
Helsinki Business Polytechnic - Porvoo  
Mikkeli Polytechnic, School of Savonlinna  
Laurea Polytechnic  
University of Joensuu  
Lahti Polytechnic

**France**

CFA Hotellerie Commerce  
Université de Savoie  
CERAM Sophia Antipolis  
Tourism Environment Consultants TEC

**Gambia**

Gambia Tourism Authority

**Germany**

University of Applied Sciences (FH)  
Stralsund  
Technische Universität Dresden,  
Lehrstuhl für Tourismuswirtschaft  
ISM International School for Management

**Ghana**

University of Cape Coast  
TEI of Larissa  
TEI of Thessaloniki  
Petreas Associates  
Trinity International Hospitality Studies  
Organisation of Tourism Education &  
Training (OTEK)  
TEI of Heraklion

**Guatemala**

Royalty, Escuela de Turismo

**Hungary**

Károly Róbert Foiskola  
Budapest Business School / BGF - KVIFK  
Heller Farkas College of Tourism  
University of Veszprém  
Xellum Ltd.

**India**

Goa University  
Culture and Environment Conservation  
Society  
India Tourism Development Corp

Gujarat Inst. of Hotel Management  
Royal Institute of Business & Hospitality  
Management  
Equations

**Indonesia**

Universitas Mardika Malang  
Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan  
Semarang  
Universitas Sahid  
Akpar Satya Widya Surabaya  
School of Tourism Economics  
Universitas Sanata Dharma  
Forall-Consult - Research and Study on  
Tourism  
Institute of Technology Bandung  
PPM Institute of Management  
Trisakti Academy of Tourism  
Winaya Mukti University  
Satya Wacana Christian University  
Institute for Indonesia Tourism Studies  
Dagjah Mada University (UGM)  
Universitas Katolik Indonesia Atma Jaya  
Indo.com  
LinTas  
Pelita Harapan Tourism Academy  
Directorate of Environmental Technology  
Sahid Tourism Academy  
San Tours and Travel  
Akademi Pariwisata Yadatepe /  
Yogyakarta  
Manajemen Parawisata Indonesia  
(Mapindo)  
Universitas Sebelas Maret  
Udayana University  
Diparda TK II Buleleg  
Tourism Academy Triatma Jaya  
Hasanuddin University

**Iran**

Iran Tourism Strategic Studies Institute

**Ireland**

Dundalk Institute of Technology  
Limerick Institute of Technology  
Tipperary Institute  
Athlone Institute of Technology  
University of Limerick  
Fáilte Ireland - National Tourism  
Development Authority  
Dublin Institute of Technology  
Institute of Technology Tralee



Cavan Monaghan Rural Development Co.  
Tourism College

### **Israel**

Jordan Valley College  
Zimet Ltd., Advertising Agency

### **Italy**

Università Bocconi Milano  
Università della Calabria  
Università degli Studi del Sannio-  
Benevento  
University of Bologna  
Free University of Bolzano  
Universita Ca' Foscari di Venezia  
University of Molise  
IRAT - Institute for Service Industry  
Research

### **Japan**

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University  
Surugadai University  
Global Development Research Center

### **Kazakhstan**

Kazakh Ablai khan University of Int.  
Relations and World Languages

### **Kenya**

Moi University  
Kenya Utalii College  
Airfreight & Related Studies Center  
Maseno University  
Kenya Disabled Development Society  
United States International University  
Africa

### **Korea**

GCT Services  
Kyonggi University

### **Latvia**

Vidzeme University College

### **Lithuania**

Klaipeda University

### **Malawi**

Soche Tours and Travel

### **Malaysia**

University of Malaysia Sabah (UMS)

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
University of Malaya

### **Malta**

ITIS Malta  
University of Malta

### **Mexico**

Universidad de las Américas Puebla

### **Mongolia**

New Civilization College  
Institute of Tourism Management  
University of the Humanities

### **Morocco**

University of Ibn Zohr

### **Mozambique**

Universidade Eduardo Mondlane

### **Namibia**

Polytechnic of Namibia

### **Nepal**

The Nepal Trust

### **Netherlands**

NHTV  
Hogeschool Drenthe  
Wageningen University  
Alterra  
INHOLLAND University  
WICE  
SNV  
University of Amsterdam  
University of Tilburg  
Hogeschool Zuyd  
Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam  
Christelijke Hogeschool Noord-Nederland  
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

### **New Zealand**

University of Otago  
Auckland University of Technology  
Waiariki Institute of Technology  
The University of Waikato  
UNITEC Institute of Technology  
Lincoln University

**Nigeria**

University of Ibadan  
Empire Travel Services Ltd.

**Norway**

University College of Sogn & Fjordane  
Lillehammer University College  
Harstad University College  
Finnmark College

**Pakistan**

Dawood College of Engenering and  
Technology  
Asif Zaidi Tours Pakistan  
Ecotourism Society Pakistan  
SMEDA (Small & Medium Enterprise  
Dev. Authority)  
Blue Sky Travels

**Palestine**

Gaza Community College

**Peru**

ESAN (Escuela de Admin. De Negocios  
para Graduados)  
Red de Turismo Sostenible (RedTurs)

**Poland**

Warsaw School of Economics  
Academy of Physical Education and  
Sport  
University of Lodz

**Portugal**

ESHTE  
Universidade de Aveiro  
Instituto Politécnico de Beja  
Escola Sup. de Tecnologia e Gestão de  
Viana do Castelo  
Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra  
Universidade de Algarve  
UTAD - Universidade de Tras-os-Montes  
e Alto Douro  
ISAI-Instituto de Assistentes e Interpretes  
Instituto Superior Politécnico Gaya

**Republic of Mali**

Adventure Discovery Mali

**Romania**

Faculty of International Business and  
Economics

Sextil Puscariu University  
Euro-Asia Foundation  
University of Lucian Blaga Sibiu  
Academy of Economic Studies  
"Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University  
Timisoara

**Russia**

Sochi State University for Tourism and  
Resort Studies  
Russia Smolensk Humanitarian  
University

**Serbia and Montenegro**

Geographical Institute "J.Cvijic" SASA  
The College of Hotel Management  
Belgrade  
College of Tourism  
Faculty of Sport and Tourism

**Slovakia**

Slovak Agricultural University  
University of Matej Bel

**Slovenia**

Turistica - College of Tourism Studies  
University of Maribor

**South Africa**

University of Pretoria  
Vista University  
University of South Africa (UNISA)  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Cape Peninsula University of Technology  
University of the Witwatersrand  
Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa  
Tshwane University of Technology  
Border Technikon  
Living Waters Foundation

**Spain**

Equity Point  
EUT Mediterrani  
Fundacion Universitaria de Las Palmas  
Universidad de Sevilla  
Universidad de Deusto  
University of Girona  
ESADE - E.U. de Turismo Sant Ignasi  
Escuela de Negocios MBA  
Universidad de Jaén  
Tourism Research and Marketing  
Universitat de Barcelona

**Sweden**

Dalarna University  
University of Kalmar  
Karlstad University  
Mid Sweden University

**Switzerland**

Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne  
IMI - International Hotel Management  
Institute  
Swiss Hotel Management School (SHMS)  
University Centre

**Tanzania**

The Professional Tourguide School  
Peace Through Tourism Promotion  
Programme

**Thailand**

Chiang Mai University  
Kasetsart University

**Turkey**

Akdeniz University  
Akdeniz University - Alanya Faculty of  
Business  
Eastern Mediterranean University  
Balikesir University  
Anadolu University  
Istanbul University  
Dokuz Eylul University  
Bilkent University

**Uganda**

Jimmy Sekasi Institute of Catering  
UCOTA  
Makerere University

**Ukraine**

Institute for Local Development of  
Chernihiv Oblast

**United Arab Emirates**

Emirates Academy of Hospitality  
Management

**United Kingdom**

University of Surrey  
Liverpool John Moores University  
Coventry University  
Oxford Brookes University

**Scottish Agricultural College (SAC)**

University of West England  
University of Brighton  
University of Plymouth  
Canterbury Christ Church University  
College  
Buckinghamshire Chilterns University  
College  
University of Hertfordshire  
University of Derby  
London Metropolitan University  
WA Consultants  
University of Lincoln  
Queen Margaret University College  
University of Sunderland  
Bournemouth University  
University of Chester  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
College of St Mark & St John  
Swansea Institute, SIHE - University of  
Wales

**University of Wales Institute Cardiff**

St. Martin's College  
University of Strathclyde  
Napier University Edinburgh  
Glasgow Caledonian University  
University of Wolverhampton  
University of Birmingham  
Khalsa College London  
University of Westminster  
University of Luton  
University of Glamorgan  
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism  
and Creative Studies  
University of Salford  
Nottingham Trent University  
University of Greenwich  
Sheffield Hallam University  
Loughborough University

**United States of America**

Haworth Press Inc.  
VIASINC  
Colorado State University  
Virginia Tech

**Zimbabwe**

National University of Science and  
Technology



## **ATLAS events**

### **ATLAS annual conference 2005 Tourism, creativity and development University of Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain 2-4 November, 2005**

#### **Report**

*Greg Richards  
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The 12<sup>th</sup> annual international conference was hosted by the Cultural Management Department of the University of Barcelona, in the magnificent setting of the Palau de las Heures. This 19<sup>th</sup> century palace built by a wealthy Catalan merchant has magnificent views overlooking Barcelona, and a magnificent terrace where delegates were able to take coffee in the early November sunshine.

Inside the building, some 116 delegates from 24 countries gathered to listen to an interesting set of keynote presentations, over 60 workshop sessions and round-table debate. There was also a full programme of ATLAS Special Interest Group meetings, with no fewer than five groups holding sessions in Barcelona.

The conference opened with a review of the development of tourism in Spain from Gerda Priestley of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, drawing on her extensive work on the development of resorts in Catalunya and elsewhere in Spain. The first day of the conference also saw keynote presentations from Graeme Evans, Director of the Cities Research Centre at London Metropolitan University and Paolo Russo from the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. Graeme's presentation examined the relationship between creativity, tourism and the city, drawing on a wide range of examples from Europe, North America and Asia. Paolo presented research (conducted with Walter Santagata and Giovanna Segre from Turin) on the use of quality labels to protect creative producers from the dumbing down effects of tourism.

On the second day of the conference Paul Cloke from the Department of Geography, University of Exeter, analysed the developing relationship between creativity and tourism in rural areas. He argued that nature can also add creativity to tourism experiences, citing the performative abilities of many animal species as an example. He also demonstrated how rural areas are also increasingly the setting for popular film and TV productions which can later generate tourism. Francesc Muñoz of the Department of Geography at the Autonomous University of Barcelona analysed how cities use signs and symbols creatively in their images, as in the case of 'Brandcelona'. Lluís Bonet of the University of Barcelona then talked about the developing relationship between cultural tourism and creativity, illustrating the high degree of convergence between these fields.

A closing round table discussion on The future of creativity in tourism brought together Aurkene Alzua-Sorzabal of Deusto University, San Sebastián, Alison Morrison, University

of Strathclyde, Lars Nyberg, Mid Sweden University and Lluís Bonet to speculate on the future relationship between these fields.

The many and varied workshop presentations provided a wide array of different approaches to tourism and creativity, ranging from the creative marketing of tourism, to the creative re-packaging of cultural tourism to the development of 'creative tourism'. These presentations, as well as some of the keynote speeches, will soon be made available through different publication channels, including two books on tourism and creativity.

Delegates were also given the opportunity to experience the development of creative tourism at first hand through the study tours after the conference. One group of delegates went to make their own cava in the Penedes wine region, while another group toured the emerging cultural districts of Poble Nou (or the 'Catalan Manchester', as it was once known). The social programme of the conference was enlivened by Paolo Russo's gourmet guide to Barcelona (he is now rumored to be negotiating a publishing deal for this) and an impromptu tour of the Arribau district organized by Roos Gerritsma. Proof enough that the 'co-production' role of consumers in their own leisure experiences is increasingly important.

The end of the conference saw John Swarbrooke step down as ATLAS Chair after three very successful years at the helm, and hand over to Melanie Smith. Melanie will have her first conference as ATLAS Chair in Lodz, and many delegates were already wondering if she would be able to match John's impeccable choice of ties for future events.

The Barcelona conference would not have been possible without the support received from the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce and Turisme de Barcelona. But most importantly, the host team at the Department of Cultural Management at the University of Barcelona – Lluís Bonet, Jordi Juan, Natalia Paricio, Aurora Tresserras and Conxita Camós. They did a great job of organising a major international conference at less than a year's notice! As usual, Leontine Onderwater and Jantien Veldman provided the administrative support which ensured the smooth running of the conference. A special mention should also go to Julie Wilson, who worked incredibly hard on the academic and logistical side of the conference during pregnancy – a fact not missed by the delegates.

## **ATLAS SIG Meeting - Backpackers Research Group 2005**

### **The global nomad - an expert meeting on backpacker tourism**

### **2: Advancing research agendas in backpacker travel**

### **Bangkok, Thailand**

### **1-3 September 2005**

## **Report**

*Greg Richards*  
*Tourism Research and Marketing, Spain*  
*greg@tram-research.com*

The second Expert Meeting organised by the ATLAS Backpacker Research Group (BRG) in Bangkok in September 2005 was entitled 'Advancing Research Agendas in Backpacker

Travel'. The aim of the meeting was to reflect on the advances made in backpacker research since the group's first publication on the 'Global Nomad' (Richards and Wilson, 2004).

The 2005 meeting attracted 31 delegates from 12 countries, almost double the attendance at the first BRG meeting in 2002. The keynote speaker for the meeting was Professor Philip Pearce, who introduced the term 'backpacker' to the tourism literature and carried out pioneering research on backpackers in Australia (Peace, 1990). His wide-ranging review of the state of backpacker studies illustrated the intersections between backpacker research and many areas of mainstream scientific enquiry, as well as setting out a clear agenda for future research.

The 27 paper presentations dealt with a wide range of themes, including understanding the notion of the backpacker, the backpacker-community nexus, market segmentation, attitudes and motivations, gender and power in backpacking, marketing and management of backpacking and the role of technology and the media. The wide range of research orientations and disciplinary foci emphasised the development of the backpacker field since the first meeting, which had been dominated by binary divide between anthropological and marketing approaches to the phenomenon. The greater diversity of approaches is a clear sign of increasing maturity in backpacker studies, with researchers beginning to step beyond basic description of activities and behaviour and looking in more detail at issues such as motivation, identity and power.

The first session on the notion of the backpacker included many areas of research which probed the limits of the original backpacker definition. These included consideration of the organised backpacker experience through 'Contiki Tours' (Jude Wilson, David Fisher and Kevin Moore) and overseas volunteering (Nadia Söderman). Darya Maoz analysed the way in which backpacking experiences can change people's lives when they return home, giving backpacking a meaning far beyond the trip itself. Petri Hottola looked at the way in which the spaces created by enclaves give backpackers the necessary control over their environment to enable them to deal with culture confusion.

The session on the backpacker-community nexus included Alison McIntosh and Yoel Mansfield's unique analysis of 'spiritual hosting' of Israeli backpackers in New Zealand by Christian hosts eager to expound their belief in the role of Jesus in preserving the identity of Jews in history. They found that many backpackers accepted the cheap accommodation and left the religious message to one side. Kate Lloyd explored the development of traveller cafes in Vietnam, illustrating the way in which entrepreneurs and the state struggle to exert influence over this market. Erik Cohen analysed the development of Pai, a rural backpacker enclave in Thailand, and the way in which development is being controlled by middle class Thais from other parts of the country rather than by local people.

The session on marketing and segmentation included an analysis of 'study backpackers' in Australia by Jeff Jarvis and Vicky Peel. They pointed out that students staying in Australia not only spend a lot of money travelling round the country, but also attract their friends and relatives to visit too. Janet Cochrane's paper on the 'backpacker plus' segment looked at how 'backpackers' are increasingly to be found in older age groups and higher income brackets, blurring the boundaries between backpacking and other types of tourism. A similar point was made by Roger Pursall in his analysis of the development from 'backpacker to flashpacker'.

The session on backpacker motivation illustrated the growing geographic range of backpacker research. Angela Benson and Christine Niggel analysed the motivations of backpackers in South Africa, where the market is growing by 21% a year. Maree Thyne, Jenny Cave and Chris Ryan then looked at the motivations of backpackers staying in youth hostels in Scotland and New Zealand. A Malaysian perspective was presented by Lee Tze Ian and Ghazali Musa, who contrasted this market with patterns of domestic tourism.

Gender and power were examined through presentations on mid-life journeys of Israeli women (Darya Maoz), which illustrated the link between backpacking and the mid-life crisis. Women's backpacking behaviour was argued to differ in that women look for romance, while men look primarily for sex. Kevin Hannam and Linda Myers also looked at transitional periods in the lives of older women as triggers for backpacking and as a means of changing identities. Irena Ateljevic and Erika Wilson extended this analysis into the area of embodiment, arguing that backpacking provides an opportunity for women to take on different roles, often within a paradoxical situation of liberation and connection.

Ken Newlands opened the session on marketing and management with a case study of working holidays in New Zealand, underlining the dramatic growth in backpacking stimulated by the availability of visas. Stroma Cole then explored the contradictions between the backpacker's search for authenticity in the remote Flores Islands and the clash between their desire to see 'authentic' poverty and the islanders' desire for economic development. Lack of understanding was also the theme of a paper on ecotourism and backpacking by Malcolm Cooper, Kieran O'Mahony and Patricia Erfurt, which illustrated the continuing gap between the 'green' ideology of backpackers and their actual behaviour. This was also a theme picked up by Clare Speed in her paper on the ethics of backpacking.

The closing session on new technology and media underlined how the growth of a global backpacker 'scene' is being facilitated by the growth of the Internet. Simon Ireland emphasised the increasing importance of peer to peer networks, which allow backpackers to pass on information about destinations while 'on the road'. Tracy Firth looked at the marketing impact of the Internet, which is forecast to account for 70% of travel bookings by 2009. Finally Andy Lyon presented a semiotic analysis of the Lonely Planet guidebooks, which illustrated not just changes in the destinations and travellers, but also the attitudes of the guide book editors.

The meeting closed with a discussion of the future priorities in backpacking research and plans for the activities of the ATLAS Backpacker Research Group. It was agreed that a 'Global Nomad 2' publication should be produced, bringing together many of the papers (Hannam et al., forthcoming). It was also agreed that the meeting should be held in Melbourne, Australia in 2007. To facilitate this, Jeff Jarvis of Monash University was elected as the new coordinator of the group, taking on the task so ably fulfilled in the past by Irena Ateljevic. More information about these and other ATLAS activities can be found on the website ([www.atlas-eur.org](http://www.atlas-eur.org)).



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Richards, G. and Wilson, J. (2004) The Global Nomad: Backpacker travel in theory and practice. Clevedon: Channel View Publications.

## **ATLAS SIG meeting Business Tourism 2005 Pathways to innovation Dublin, Ireland 5-6 December 2005**

### **Report**

*Lucy Horan  
Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland  
lucy.horan@dit.ie*

You can find the text on this meeting in the report of the ATLAS SIG Business Tourism Research Group on page 84.

## **ATLAS Africa conference 2006 Contested landscapes in tourism: culture, conservation and consumption Mombasa, Kenya 16-18 February 2006**

### **Report**

*René van der Duim  
Wageningen University, Netherlands  
rene.vanderduim@wur.nl*

From 16 to 18 February 2006 ATLAS Africa organized its 4th conference, titled 'Contested landscapes in tourism: culture, conservation and consumption'. Over 50 participants from 13 countries presented about over 24 papers during the three-day event. The conference introduced for the first time the distinction between A- and B-papers, the latter being papers which were submitted and reviewed before the conference. Eventually 4 B-papers were accepted, presented and discussed during the conference.

In 2006, ATLAS Africa in close cooperation with Wageningen University (Netherlands) will publish three Volumes including a selection of the papers –mainly case-studies -presented during the last three ATLAS Africa conferences in Arusha, Pretoria and Mombassa. The working titles of these three Volumes are:

- Aspects of Tourism in Kenya;
- Tourism and Nature Conservation in Africa;
- Participation and Communities in African Tourism.

Authors are already invited to re-submit their papers by October 2006. The volumes will be published in December 2006.

An editorial Board consisting of H. Wels (Netherlands), B. Wishitemi (Kenya) and A. Spencely (South Africa) plans to publish also a scientific book including some of the finest papers presented during the three last conferences. The publication of this book is scheduled in 2007.

The next ATLAS Africa conference will be held in 2007 in Kampala, Uganda. Please check the ATLAS website for more details.

For more information, please contact: [rene.vanderduim@wur.nl](mailto:rene.vanderduim@wur.nl)

## **ATLAS annual conference 2006**

### **The transformation of tourism spaces**

#### **Lodz, Poland**

#### **September 20-22, 2006**

ATLAS and the University of Lodz are pleased to host the ATLAS annual conference in 2006. The conference will be held in the premises of Lodz University in September 2006.

The aim of the conference is to provide an opportunity to exchange opinions and discuss the impacts of systemic and political transformation on tourism, which is taking place in different regions and countries in the beginning of the 21 century. Within the wide scope of the conference, special attention will be paid to geographical and environmental changes in global tourism. Full papers, communications and presentation of works in progress are invited in the following fields:

- Old and new tourist spaces (e.g. transformation of the 3S to a 3E model)
- Spatial consequences of new trends in global tourism
- Tourist development in Central and Eastern Europe
- Consequences for tourism of the EU eastern enlargement in 2004
- Tourism in the rural environment
- Cultural and urban tourism developments and patterns
- Tourist planning and management at local and regional level

These topics do not preclude discussion on other issues linked with the theme. We believe that the above areas of discussion can inspire participants to present their own topics and proposals. The final list of the discussion fields will take into consideration all suggestions and will be closed at the end of 2004.

**ATLAS SIG meeting - Cultural Tourism Research Group**  
**Cultural tourism: Negotiating identities**  
**Chaves, Portugal**  
**October 5-7, 2006**

Chaves has been a spa town for many centuries. Even the Romans have explored the thermal water that continues to boil up out of the ground at 73 ° C. It has a rich patrimony: in the Middle Ages the foundations of the fortified city walls were constructed, you can find different baroque churches in the city centre, the most important city quarters have recently been rearranged... Due to its location, the town has always had privileged close contact with the neighbours of Galicia.

Suggested topics for the Chaves 2006-meeting

- Tourism and (In)Tangible Cultural Heritage (souvenirs, museums, festivals and others).
- Cultural Tourism and Images (visual culture and tourism, postcards, tourist guide books and websites).
- Tourism and Travel Literature.
- Cultural Tourism, Frontiers and National Cooperation (motivations and experiences).
- Cultural tourism and (cross) cultural identities.
- Learning Foreign Languages as Part of the Itinerary of Cultural Tourists.

**ATLAS SIG Meeting - Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group**  
**Fusion cuisine and placemaking**  
**Macau, China**  
**November 8-10, 2006**

In the face of increasing globalisation and localisation, cuisines are increasingly integrating culinary traditions and gastronomic innovations from different parts of the world. These new fusion cuisines are not just random mixtures of tastes and styles, but reflect the unique blends of cultures which have emerged in different locations in different parts of the world.

Asia, with its rich history and mixture of culinary traditions is a particularly fertile area for the development of fusion cuisine. There are already a number of well-established fusion cuisines that date back hundreds of years, such as the Macanese cuisine of Macau or the Nyonya cuisine of Malaysia. Many of these cuisines originally emerged at the meeting of east and west, as local spices were added to western dishes and western ingredients were added to local foods.

This tradition of innovation is now being used to develop new styles of gastronomy that can create distinction for places in an increasingly competitive gastronomic and touristic landscape. As more people travel to sample the 'local' culture and atmosphere, food becomes an increasingly important means of emphasising difference and local identity. Gastronomy has therefore become integrated into the intangible culture of different tourist

destinations, and declared as a part of the national heritage in order to preserve traditional recipes.

Increasingly, gastronomy is also becoming a field of creativity and innovation, where world-renowned chefs such as Ferran Adrià invent new cuisines using local and global ingredients. New fusion cuisines are also being created to add interest to traditional gastronomy, as in the case of 'new Asian cuisine'.

All of these developments are important for the future of tourist destinations in the Asia-Pacific region, as discerning tourists increasingly seek new experiences along the authentic, exotic tastes of traditional gastronomy. The aim of this conference is to highlight the role of cultural fusion in creating new gastronomic and touristic opportunities for destinations in Asia and other parts of the world.

The conference will bring together experts from around the world, including members of the Tourism and Gastronomy Group of ATLAS. The major themes to be covered by the conference will include:

- Innovation with traditional cuisine
- The role of gastronomy in destination marketing
- Gastronomy and identity
- New foodways in the Asia Pacific Region

The conference will consist of general conference sessions open to students, practitioners and policy makers, as well as academic session of the ATLAS Tourism and Gastronomy Group.

## **ATLAS Asia-Pacific conference 2006**

### **Tourism after oil**

### **Dunedin, New Zealand**

### **December 4-6, 2006**

The theme of the conference stresses the need to take a long-term perspective on current and future issues with respect to tourism in the Asia-Pacific region. Although the conference will provide a specific examination of the implications of rising oil prices and the overall implications of increases in the cost of energy for tourism the conference also invites papers on:

- The future of long-distance travel
- Changing patterns of international tourism in the Asia-Pacific
- Domestic tourism in the Asia-Pacific
- Tourism development and impacts
- Tourism and the environment in local, regional and global perspective
- Tourism and security
- Special interest tourism
- Tourism and foreign investment
- Tourism and border regions
- Hospitality management in the Asia-Pacific
- New markets in the Asia-Pacific
- Pro-poor tourism in the Asia-Pacific

- Special session on tourism in capital cities
- Special session(s) on tourism, supranational organization and international trade regimes; co-hosted in conjunction with the ATLAS tourism policy network

The conference will be held in conjunction with the 2006 New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference and special rates are available for delegates who attend both conferences.

## **ATLAS annual conference 2007**

### **Destinations revisited. Perspectives on developing and managing tourist areas**

#### **Viana do Castelo, Portugal**

#### **September 5-8, 2007**

Tourist destinations worldwide are facing a growing number of challenges in developing, managing and marketing their products in a competitive and rapidly-changing environment. Not only do destinations need to appeal to new audiences, but they increasingly need to re-invent themselves to ensure repeat visitation. This conference seeks to develop new perspectives on these challenges which affect not only traditional sun, sea and sand destinations, but a growing range of different destination types, including cities, rural areas, cultural centres and leisure and entertainment complexes. The aim is to bring together tourism professionals and tourism academics to exchange ideas on issues related to developments in the theory and practice of developing and managing tourism destinations.

The 2007 ATLAS conference is also a practical exercise in repeat visitation. A decade after the first ATLAS International Conference in Portugal in 1997, ATLAS will be revisiting Viana do Castelo, providing repeaters and first-time ATLAS delegates with the opportunity to review a decade of change.

The ATLAS International Conference 2007 is being organised by ATLAS and the Tourism Laboratory of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (Portugal).

#### **Conference Themes**

Abstracts for presentations are invited on the following themes:

- Trends in destination development
- Challenges in destination management
- Destination governance
- Destination branding
- Destination marketing
- Generating repeat visitation
- Determinants of destination attractiveness and repeat visitation
- Culture, cultural events and destination revitalisation
- The emergence of new travel markets
- Changing patterns of domestic and international tourism
- Visitor consumption and its components
- Causal factors of regional marketing advantage
- Cross-cultural aspects of destination marketing
- Destination marketing education and curriculum development

**More information on all the ATLAS events  
can be found on the  
ATLAS website  
[www.atlas-euro.org](http://www.atlas-euro.org)  
or contact the ATLAS secretariat at  
[admin@atlas-euro.org](mailto:admin@atlas-euro.org).**

## ATLAS regional groups

### ATLAS Africa

*John Akama*  
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The ATLAS-Africa Secretariat is based in the Department of Tourism Management at Moi University. In recent years, the Department has witnessed major increase in student enrolment with the number of undergraduate students increasing more than threefold, in the last five years, from 120 students in 2001 to the current population of over 400 students. This phenomenon growth attests to the increasing popularity of tourism training in Kenya, with tourism graduates from Moi University getting job placements in various areas of the service sector in Kenya and other countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Over the years, Moi University has been very helpful in supporting the various activities of ATLAS-Africa. The University has provided office space for the ATLAS Africa Secretariat and has, in the recent past, supported staff to participate in the ATLAS-Africa conferences. For instance, in this year's (2006) conference in Mombasa, Moi University sponsored more than 20 members of staff to participate in the conference.

ATLAS-Africa has a membership of over 40 institutions spread over Eastern and Southern Africa. Currently, there is a move to spread the membership to Central and Western Africa, especially in francophone countries. Since its inception in 2000, ATLAS-Africa has managed to organise 4 successful conferences that were held in different countries in Africa. The conferences have attracted participants from different parts of the world, with the majority of the participants coming from Africa. The latest conference organised by ATLAS Africa was held in Mombasa, on 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, February 2006. The theme of that conference was, "contested landscapes in tourism: culture, conservation and consumption."

However, it should be noted that the number of participants in the Mombasa conference went down from over 100 participants in the Pretoria conference of 2004 to about 50 delegates. It was noted that a major contributory factor to the small number of attendants was the timing of the conference in the month of February when most academic staff, especially in European institutions, are engaged in teaching and other university work. Also, it was noted that the theme of the conference was rather restrictive.

However, notwithstanding the small number of participants, the conference presentations were of very high quality allowing for lively exchange of ideas and information. Also, apart from involvement in conference presentations, delegates were taken in a field excursion in Haller Park that is a prime tourist attraction in Kenya. After receiving a lively presentation by staff of Haller Park, the delegates were taken on a guided in the park. Also, delegates had the opportunity to experience Kenyan art performances, indigenous cuisines and dance in the congenial environment of Whitesands. Finally, after the conference a number

of delegates went on safari in Kenya's world famous inland wilderness parks such as Tsavo, Amboseli and Masai Mara.

ATLAS Africa has succeeded in creating a network among institutions of high learning in Africa that has promoted the sharing of information and capacity building in tourism and leisure studies. For instance, a number of teaching staff from East Africa universities has managed to get admission in South Africa universities to pursue PhD training and, also, there is increasing visitation of staff among sister university in Africa. Currently, staff from Makerere and Moi University is working on a joint project entitled, "community based wetland resource management for poverty alleviation through ecotourism development in the Lake Victoria region. The project is being funded by the Inter-University Council of Eastern Africa and; it entails identification of micro-scale community based ecotourism projects in the Kenyan and Ugandan side of Lake Victoria, creating awareness and capacity building in ecotourism development and wetland conservation.

ATLAS Africa is also planning to have a series of publications. Currently, Harry Wels with Bob Wishitemi and Anna Spenceley have made a selection of papers from the Mombasa, Arusha and Pretoria conference for publication in a refereed book. Also, Leontine Onderwater is co-ordinating the publication of the Mombasa 2006 conference proceedings as a series of thematic publications. These publications are expected to be out before the end of this year.



## ATLAS Europe

*Peter M Burns*  
*University of Brighton, United Kingdom*  
*P.M.Burns@bton.ac.uk*



*Peter Burns is the new Co-ordinator of ATLAS Europe. This short interview provides more information about his profile and aspirations for the regional network:*

### **Tell us a little bit about yourself (current role, research interests, etc)**

I have a really mixed background and three distinct careers but seem to have found my spiritual home in tourism. I started out as a chef and did my apprenticeship at the Mayfair hotel in London after which I joined Brian Cotterill's new brigade at Le Caprice where I was chef saucier for several years. I then moved into teaching at vocational level (my second career) and ended up as Director of the Fiji Hotel School. I lived in Fiji and around the Pacific islands for about seven years and then came back to the UK where I finished off my education by taking two MAs in one year (Anthropology of Tourism and Education), started work at the Polytechnic of North London, met Greg Richards who was just starting ATLAS, did my PhD and the rest (as they say) is history!

In terms of research, there are two sides I guess: the empirical stuff I do as a consultant which relates directly to tourism planning and development, national master plans and so on. In recent years I have become increasingly interested in the visual side of tourism and have written about national symbols and iconography and recently had published a paper that analysed 'six postcards from Arabia' drawing on semiotics and postcolonial studies. I was really pleased with it. I like the idea of looking for complex answers to seemingly simple conundrums. At present I am working with a colleague from Oxford Brookes University on analysing home movie material from the South East Film and Video Archive. We call the project 'Revealing the English Seaside' and its an attempt to draw on the work of Zygmunt Bauman and Walter Benjamin to make theoretical sense of the seaside, perhaps the idea that these fragments of the past can enable some sort of existential copresence between then and now.

**You have been a member of ATLAS for some time. Do any particular experiences stick in your mind?**

There are three anecdotes that spring immediately to mind. Unfortunately I can't tell them to you for legal reasons! Surely though, the highlight of the entertainment has to be the Mafia evening in Leeuwarden, it was just hilarious and got completely out of control - or was that just me? What this question does however, is trigger enormous feelings of loyalty and warmth to ATLAS as an organisation that is a reflection of the energy put into it by the members.

**How does it feel to be Co-ordinator of ATLAS Europe?**

I am not sure the words 'coordinate' and 'ATLAS' sit easily together! However, we will see the results of previous efforts at coordination in Lodz in September at our annual conference.

**How do you see the future of ATLAS Europe?**

Given ATLAS's global coverage, it is becoming obvious that some sort of convergence is taking place between the various factions: Africa and Asia Pacific continue to grow in strength though we need further development in the Americas. The changing nature of university roles and funding means that we are probably approaching a time when the core aims need to be reassessed and perhaps refocused. The answer to the question 'What is ATLAS for' can no longer simply be 'to network'. The internet allows us to do that, we must figure out how to extract value from the relationships and that might be through joint research bids and using ATLAS as a framework to develop funded links between regions.

**Any strong feelings about EU issues (Brit prejudices aside!)?**

I am a strong supporter of the European project and 'feel' European. I wish we in Britain would just get on and fully commit -including the euro. We need a strong and united Europe to counteract the growing economic strength of China and to respond to the US as its military power rises seemingly in proportion to its economic decline. Europe has the opportunity to show that left-of-centre politics and not simply so-called free markets can provide social justice and economic development. Perhaps we need to remind ourselves that as Martin Cruz-Smith says "Wolves eat dogs."

## ATLAS Asia-Pacific

*Michael Hall  
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The Asia-Pacific group has continued to be active with respect to meetings and conferences. Malcolm Cooper of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University has reported excellent follow-up from the ATLAS Asia-Pacific meeting held at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Beppu Japan in November 2004. This has been followed by the hosting of the ATLAS Special Interest Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group meeting on Fusion cuisine and placemaking that will be hosted by the Institute for Tourism Studies, Macau on November 8-10, 2006 at which a number of Asia-Pacific group members will also attend as well as an ATLAS Asia-Pacific regional conference meeting to be held at the University of Otago on 3-5 December 2006 with the theme of 'Tourism After Oil'.

Guest speakers for the December conference include Stefan Gössling from Lund University, Sweden, and Daniel Scott from the University of Waterloo, Canada. As at the end of August over 40 papers had been confirmed for the meeting with presenters from Australia, Germany, India, Macau, Malaysia, New Zealand, Sweden, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. Papers cover a broad range of topics in the tourism, hospitality and leisure fields with sessions planned on tourism and the environment, policy making, economic issues and impacts, marketing management, leisure experiences, hospitality management, and visitor management. In keeping with the theme of the conference two plenary sessions will be held on tourism and environmental change. The final date for abstracts is the 1 October 2006. For more information on the ATLAS Asia-Pacific Conference which will be held prior to the New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Conference please go to:

<http://www.business.otago.ac.nz/tourism/Conference2006/index.htm>

Michael Hall, University of Otago, New Zealand (Please contact via the Department of Management, University of Canterbury, Christchurch as of end of 2006)  
Malcolm Cooper, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan  
Florence Ian, Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao

**ATLAS Americas**



No report available yet.

# ATLAS Special Interest Groups

## Cultural Tourism Research Group

*Greg Richards*

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The ATLAS Cultural Tourism is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2006 with its 6<sup>th</sup> round of cultural visitor surveys and an expert meeting in Chaves, Portugal. During the past 15 years, the group has conducted over 35,000 visitor surveys at cultural attractions around the world, and built up the most comprehensive global database on cultural tourism.

Following the visitor surveys carried out in 1992, 1997, 2000, 2001 and 2004, 30 group members from 20 countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia and America are undertaking new studies in 2006. Participation in the research is facilitated by a standard questionnaire which can be downloaded in different language versions from the website ([www.tram-research.com/atlas](http://www.tram-research.com/atlas)). The 2006 questionnaire has a special focus on the visitor experience, testing out some of the dimensions put forward by Pine and Gilmore in their book 'The Experience Economy'.

The 2006 team has many new participants, including researchers from Mongolia, Latvia, Kenya and South Africa, as well as many Cultural Tourism Research addicts who are now participating in their fourth or even fifth round of surveys. Particular thanks should go to our local coordinators who help to organise networks of universities to collect data on a national basis. Carlos Fernandes has done a particularly good job in Portugal, where thousands of surveys collected over the past 10 years have helped to create a detailed picture of cultural tourism consumption across the country.

Our research partners are also very resourceful when it comes to adapting the basic surveys to their specific needs, and also in finding applications for the research which can generate funding. In the Netherlands, Wil Munsters has used the surveys as the basis for a 'Cultural Destination Experience Audit', which is proving very popular with Dutch cities. Esther Binkhorst is hoping to develop a similar tool using the surveys in her home town of Sitges (Catalunya).

The ATLAS data is rapidly establishing itself as a leading source of cultural tourism information for academics and practitioners alike. The data were used to provide information for the recent UNWTO/European Tourism Commission report on 'City Tourism and Culture', as well as the European Commission evaluation of the European Cultural Capitals programme.

Members of the group have also been active in spreading the results of the research through publications and conference presentations. On the project website you can find publications from Georg Stadlmann on Innsbruck, Austria, Xerardo Pereiro on Trás-os-Montes in Northern Portugal, Elisabeth Kastenholz, Maria João Carneiro, and Celeste Eusébio on segments of cultural tourists visiting Coimbra, Portugal, Patricia de Camargo on a crafts fair in Curitiba, Brazil, Zafer Oter and Osman Ozdogan on Ephesus in Turkey and Timo Toivonen's paper comparing omnivorousness in cultural tourism in different countries.

The group has produced a large number of publications over the years, including Cultural Tourism in Europe (1996), Cultural Attractions and European Tourism (2001), a study of the Cultural Capitals in Rotterdam and Porto (2002) and Salamanca (2003).

The next publication to appear will be the volume entitled Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives, to be published by Haworth Press later this year. This collection of the papers presented at the Expert Meeting held in Barcelona in 2003 includes contributions on the nature of cultural tourism, cultural tourist behaviour, cultural tourism in cities and in emerging areas such as South Africa.

The next meeting of the group on 'Cultural Tourism: Negotiating Identities' will be held at the Universidade de Trás-Os-Montes e Alto Douro in Chaves, Portugal on October 5-7. This meeting has already attracted a record number of abstracts, and promises to offer an exciting mixture of academic debate and cultural experiences.

One of the issues to be discussed in Chaves will be the future form of the research programme. The idea of running a continuous programme of surveys to build up an even more comprehensive and flexible database has been put forward by Timo Toivonen. There are also plans being made to collaborate with European Cities Tourism, to help city tourist offices monitor their cultural tourism demand, and to provide more logistical support for conducting the surveys.

## **Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group**

*Kevin Fields*  
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Rather a calm before the storm at the moment. There is little happening as our expert meeting draws close in Macau. A certain amount of planning has been carried out since our last meeting, in Barcelona, but any research being undertaken is by individuals, rather than any joint initiatives by the group.

The number of submitted abstracts for Macau is less than hoped for, possibly because our members' focus is currently on the forthcoming annual ATLAS conference, rather than the gastronomy meeting, which is two months later.

It is also possible that European members are slightly discouraged by the perceived geographic remoteness of Macau. If that is the case, I can assure you that this globe of ours is shrinking and remoteness is nowadays just a perception, not a reality. Access to Macau is better than it has ever been and the cost of flights is not the barrier it may have once been.

Additionally, those who attend are likely to enjoy gastronomic experiences (from an academic viewpoint, of course) only previously enjoyed by the most seasoned of travellers. Whetting your appetite yet? It should truly be a marvellous event and expand the food horizons of our gastronomes considerably!

Right, I'll get off my soap box now. Just trying to give extra encouragement to the fence-sitters who haven't yet committed themselves to attend. To those who have already committed – I look forward to seeing you all in Macau in November.

## **Policy Research Group**

*Michael Hall*  
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The Policy Research Group is awaiting the circulation of the report from the Aalborg meeting by Dr. Peter Kvistgaard, Tourism Research Unit, Aalborg University, Denmark. A number of policy papers will be presented at the ATLAS Asia-Pacific meeting to be held at the University of Otago, New Zealand in December 2006. It is intended that a policy meeting will be held in late 2007/early 2008 together with an accompanying project.

## **Backpackers Research Group**

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*Wageningen University, the Netherlands*  
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No report available yet.

## **Tourism SMEs Research Group**

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This year saw the successful completion of a research-based book that started life as an ATLAS project. Several colleagues across Europe have contributed to a book, the details of which are as follows: Thomas and Augustyn (In press) *Tourism in the New Europe: Perspectives on SME Policies and Practices*. Oxford: Pergamon.

A special issue of the *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation* (guest edited by Guy Lincoln and Rhodri Thomas) is also in the final stages of production. SIG members played an important part in that project also. The special issue will appear in 2007.

Plans for the forthcoming year are still being made. The lifestyles project did not really generate sufficient commitment to warrant organising a one-day event in Eastern Europe as was originally intended. Nevertheless, the lifestyles work continues (see web site for details).

For the SIG to thrive, we need members to initiate projects. Please contact the Convenors.

## **Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Research Group**

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*Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril, Portugal*  
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### *1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Group*

The Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Special Interest Group was launched by ATLAS and hosted by the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (Portugal) with the sponsorship of the Tourism Board of Leiria-Fátima. One of the aims was to increase the relatively little research that has been done in the relationship between cultural tourism, spiritual tourism, and religious tourism.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Expert Meeting was held at one of the world's most renowned religious and pilgrimage sites—Fátima, Portugal. Papers on issues relating to the conference theme were presented and proceedings were published and are available through ATLAS.

### *2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Group*

At the meeting of the ATLAS Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Special Interest Group in Naples, a number of ideas were put forward for future research in activities of the group. The discussion was wide ranging and not only extended the ideas put forward by the different contributors but also included new thoughts and suggestions.

### *Compile a religious tourism and pilgrimage bibliography*

A suggested activity was to begin compiling a religious tourism and pilgrimage bibliography among group members. An initial list of sources was sent to all group members in order to contribute with new references. The Laboratory of Tourism at the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, Portugal, would compile the list.

This bibliography should summarize studies on religious tourism and pilgrimage in all languages, and cover such topics as planning and development, marketing, sustainable development, economic and other effects of tourism.

### *Researching alternative uses for religious buildings*

John Winton from the Churches Tourism Network Wales presented a paper at the Barcelona 2004 Cultural Tourism Conference on "Researching Alternative Uses for Religious Buildings". Since then John Winton has been active in the group and has agreed to cooperate with this group if it decides to use the methodology on which he based his



study to conduct similar research elsewhere. The approach is similar to initiatives being taken in Italy and presented by Clara Petrillo at the initial meeting in Fátima.

### *Synergy with the ATLAS Cultural Tourism Special Interest Group*

In 2004, the ATLAS Cultural Tourism Special Interest Group conducted visitor interviews at a range of different cultural sites and attractions around the world, including religious ones. It was proposed to work closely with this group and possibly analyse the data to maintain an overview of the relationship between tourism, culture and religious space for (1) understanding the demand for religious space, (2) character profiles of the populations choosing to visit religious space and (3) the motivations for visitors / tourists to seek out these spaces.

The questionnaire has questions applicable to religious tourism and pilgrimage contexts, including if respondents visited or planned to visit certain cultural attractions or cultural events in this area. One of the options was religious sites.

The questionnaire is available on the web: [www.geocities.com/atlasproject2004](http://www.geocities.com/atlasproject2004)

### *3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Group*

The experience at the Naples meeting showed that the group had a fair amount to discuss and that a brief meeting during the ATLAS conference is not really enough to do it all. It was suggested that the next meeting not be held in 2005 but rather in 2006. This would give members time to conduct the case study research. The meeting should probably be much like the format of the initial meeting in Fatima—12 to 15 participants meeting for two days with presentations and enough time devoted to discussion.

However, several members of the group suggested that a meeting should take place during the ATLAS Conference in Barcelona. As a result, ATLAS Secretariat was contacted to include the meeting on the conference programme. The meeting was scheduled parallel to workshop sessions, and during it a new coordinator was elected (it was also decided that the coordination of this group would be on a rotating basis). During this meeting Christos Petreas from Greece suggested to have the next expert's meeting (the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the group) in his country, in Kalambaka, by the end April, beginning May 2006; unfortunately, due to a reorganization of the Greek government/ Ministry of Tourism (during Springs 2006), it didn't take place.

Meanwhile other contacts were made, and there are strong possibilities to have the meeting, either in France, or in Portugal. Also John Winton showed some interest in having the meeting in Wales.

### *Dissertations and Publications*

Razaq Raj is editing a book titled "Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Mangement", and many chapters are contributions from the Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Special Interest Group members.

Vitor Ambrósio handed in his PhD dissertation "Religious Tourism – The Development of Sanctuary Towns" and hopes to discuss it in October.

### *Discussion list*

The ATLAS Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Special Interest Group discussion list is active (religious@atlas-euro.org). Only subscribers of this list can send and receive messages send to this address.

## **Tourism and Socio Cultural Identities Research Group**

*Peter M Burns*  
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Tourism and Socio Cultural Identities Research Group published an edited collection of essays on the topic that arose from a conference held at the Centre for Tourism Policy Studies (Brighton) in 2004. The book, 'Tourism and Social Identities: Global Frameworks and Local Realities' (publisher, Elsevier: Advances in Tourism Research Series) edited by Peter Burns and Marina Novelli explores many of the issues of direct concern to the group. Here follows an edited version of the introductory remarks to the book that helps set the context. Please note that the references are listed in the book).

### *Social identity*

At first glance, the notion of 'social identity' could be an easy concept to understand. Leaving aside for the moment the idea that our movements in and out of various groups that have various labels attached to them might be quite fluid (Bauman 2005), according to will and situations, it can mean simply that we belong to a group from which we draw a sense of 'who we are': our identity. The corollary is that we also derive this identity by comparisons with those not in our group, but who belong to other groups: the so-called 'out-groups' interrogated by Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1986) in their work on inter-group discrimination. Tajfel and Turner were interested in a range of interconnected aspects of behavioural psychology that centred on how individuals identified with social groupings, how loyalty to that group is expressed by aggression to out-groups and so on. In a sense, the system can be summarised as 'us' versus 'them' or 'self' versus 'Other' (Said 1978) and in more recent times Roger Scruton's 'The West and the Rest' (2002). Underpinning Tajfel and Turner's work is that of 'social comparison' (Festinger 1954) in which we judge our sense of worthwhileness (positive self-perception) by comparing ourselves against others and how we see others as part of the disruptive pressures characteristic of life in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Examples to illustrate these points can come from almost any direction: the suburbs of Baghdad, Basque regions Europe, Kurdish regions spread over five countries, the deconstructed former Yugoslavia and so on.

These identity hotspots draw us through the paradoxes of social identity vs. national identity and into ethnocentrism, a concept that frames the debate about ethnicity, inter-ethnic relations, and similar social issues. The most common use of the term is as a descriptor for 'thinking your own group's ways as being superior to others' and 'judging other groups as inferior to your own'. The difficulty of course is that ethnocentrism seems to be a common trait, almost nature, amongst most peoples of the world. It does not take much imagination to see the Greeks or Southern Italians smiling at a British academic's obsession with timekeeping at a conference. Or that same British academic feeling completely out of character when being invited out for an evening meal at 10pm when

custom 'at home' dictates going to bed with a nice cup of cocoa at that late hour! These are light-hearted feelings of difference and discomfort. But of course things can become more serious when groups believe that they are morally or intellectually superior: therein lies the roots of racism and inter-group violence characterised by the ritualistic game-playing over places next to the pool in Spanish, Greek and Turkish resorts between British and German tourists, or on a more serious note, racism and power can morph into sexual exploitation as noted in the on-line magazine, *The New West Indian*:

"Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and Cuba, like other economically underdeveloped holiday destinations, are marketed as culturally different places and all tourists are encouraged to view this 'difference' as a part of what they have a right to consume on their holiday. The construction of difference takes place around ideas such as 'natural' vs. 'civilised', leisure vs. work and exotic vs. mundane, rich vs. poor, sexual vs. repressive, powerful vs. powerless." (Anon 2001):

The binary differentiations might seem less than elegant to poststructuralists but nonetheless capture one aspect of identity, power and tourism in a very forceful way. It can be seen then that part of tourism's supply-side will include localised culture and people: in other words social identity becomes a commodity. This commodification invokes a controversy about people and their culture providing the backdrop for leisured relaxation and recreation (Burns and Holden, 1995). Paradoxically, on the consumption side, customer reaction against the McDonaldization of services (cf. Ritzer, 1993) whereby packaged destinations and their social identities are reduced to marketing benefits for consumers is emerging via a postmodern cynicism against the ubiquitous 'friendly natives' of tourism promotion and where 'everything somehow appears predestined' (Adorno cited in Bauman 2005:141).

### *Conclusion*

The matters raised above, in-groups and out-groups, social identity, nationalism, ethnocentrism, postmodernism, culture etc. have great resonance for tourism studies on both sides of the 'host' – 'guest' equation (or with increased mobility perhaps we should call it a continuum). That tourism is a profoundly important economic sector for most countries and regions of the world is widely accepted even if some of the detail remains controversial (how readily we accept UNWTO and WTTC data that tourism is the world's largest industry, or that it accounts for ten per cent of the global job market!). However, as tourism matures as a subject, the theories underpinning it necessarily need to be more sophisticated; tourism cannot be simply 'read' as a business proposition with a series of impacts. Wider questions of power and identity need to be articulated, investigated and answered. The making and consuming of tourism takes place within a complex social milieu, with competing actors drawing into the 'product' peoples' history, culture and lifestyles. Culture and people thus become part of the tourism product. The implications are not fully understood, though the literature ranges the arguments along a continuum with culture on the one hand being described as vulnerable and fixed, waiting to be 'impacted' by tourism (from earlier, more naïve times, see Greenwood 1977, Farrel 1974, Turner and Ash, 1975 and more recently Boissevain 1996, Wyllie 2000), while on the other hand it has been seen as vibrant and perfectly well capable of dealing with whatever changes globalization and modernity are likely to throw at it (Wood, 1993, Franklin 2004).

Social identity has captured the imagination of mainstream sociologists for some decades and they generally hold that individuals conceptualise self and Other at the level of both the individual and wider society. Given that a) mobility is central to tourism and b) social

identity in the form of culture is an essential part of many tourism products, the present collection of essays will help problematise tourism by casting light on the relationships between how identity is configured in a variety of circumstances and how such configurations are framed by Orientalism, post-colonialism and commercialism. The consequences of these multiple configurations are significant ranging from outright hostility towards tourism to using it as a way to reinvent or at least reinvigorate declining cultural values and components –especially in a globalising world. Our position is that a social identity perspective on tourism helps provide a platform for a more nuanced understanding of nationalism, self vs. Other, and tourism in a fragmenting yet paradoxically homogenising world.

## **Business Tourism Research Group**

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The second annual meeting of the ATLAS Business Tourism Special Interest Group (SIG) was held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2005 at the School of Hospitality Management and Tourism, of the Dublin Institute of Technology. It was truly a European gathering with colleagues from Finland, Germany, Scotland, Italy, Poland, England, Spain and Ireland attending. What great support!

The Faculty Director, Dr. Michael Mulvey opened proceedings by welcoming everyone to Dublin. There were three presentations in the afternoon from industry speakers which proved very interesting in terms of Ireland's development as a business tourism destination and the product on offer. Rob finished off the first session with a look into the future through a presentation of his findings from the 2005 EIBTM report ([www.eibtm.com/research](http://www.eibtm.com/research)).

Supper in the college was a great opportunity for people to mingle and chat while enjoying the culinary delights on offer.

Tuesday was a busy day with a number of very interesting and informative papers being delivered in the morning and again in the afternoon. This was preceded by a meeting of the SIG members. At that meeting, a number of initiatives were discussed and agreed upon, notably action points which would improve information-sharing between the members of the ATLAS Business Tourism SIG, who are predominantly university professors teaching and researching business tourism in their institutions. It was agreed that:

- Members would collaborate in producing a definitive list of business tourism textbooks currently published in their respective countries.
- Members would create an inventory of business tourism-related courses at the higher education level in their respective countries

- The next Business Tourism SIG conference will be held in Mannheim, Germany, on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2006; and the 2007 conference will be held in Lahti, Finland.

Having worked so hard over the two days it was felt that a night out was necessary and so a bus collected delegates from outside the college and drove to Taylor's Three Rock just outside the city, at the foot of the Dublin Mountains. There followed a night of Irish "craic" (an Irish word meaning great fun). Dinner was followed by a performance of traditional Irish music, song and dance. Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely.

But all good things must come to an end and so everyone said their good nights and promised to make next year's meeting in Germany.

## **Tourism and Disaster Research Group**

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### *New SIG launched*

At the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century, the tourism industry has been rocked by a series of events that forced it to completely change its perspective on crises and disasters. 9/11, SARS, tourism-targeted terrorist attacks in Bali, Jakarta, Amman and Sharm-el-Sheik, the Southeast Asia tsunami, the hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma in the US are only some of the events of the last six years that apart from their horrific death and destruction toll, they have had a dramatic impact on international travel and tourism. The World Tourism Organization and the International Hotel and Restaurant Association have taken a series of initiatives aiming at increasing industry crisis and disaster preparedness. Seen from a broader perspective, the majority of the proposed measures are quite effective with regards to destination image recovery and are of a more reactive nature.

The question raised here is "how can academia help?" Disaster management research is a well-developed field in social sciences and business management (particularly with regards to IT) and has had a significant contribution in national and local level disaster and emergency planning. Nevertheless, as researchers in this field are usually concerned with local businesses and communities in general, they tend to ignore the particular characteristics that are unique to tourism industry and its markets. Tourism-specific research has covered a number of areas from impact to recovery but there is a shared feeling among the researchers for a more co-ordinated attempt for a research agenda that will reinforce the multi-disciplinary knowledge and associated expertise that is required for the industry to respond to crises and disasters and to meet the needs of its stakeholders and markets in addressing vulnerability and disaster response. The set up of a "Tourism and Disasters" Special Interest Group under the wings of ATLAS was deemed an appropriate move towards this direction.

As the terms 'crisis' and 'disaster' are quite broad and may include an endless list of gruesome events the SIG will particularly focus on three areas: natural disasters, terrorism and epidemics. Whilst the shaping of the research agenda is one of the core aims of the SIG, during the discussion about its formation a number of ideas have emerged and will be

the basis for further debate and refinement: While the formulation of a theory-informed agenda for the study of the interface of tourism and disaster ought to be one of the main purposes of the proposed program, a preliminary agenda of such issues can be sketched out: ecological and social vulnerability of a tourist area to disaster; preparedness of tourist areas for disaster; the rescue, evacuation and repatriation of tourists in the wake of disaster; victim and trauma management in the aftermath of a disaster (the issue of “trans-national death”); destination recovery (operational and image recovery) etc.

The over 20 (thus far) members of the group come from 13 different countries around the world and offer a quite diverse academic and professional background promising an exciting and constructive debate on disaster-related issues and research.

# **ATLAS Winter University 2007**

## **Tourism and culture: Unity in diversity**

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ATLAS is pleased to announce that the following Winter University intensive programme will be held in Sibiu, Romania, from January 10<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> 2007. The event will be hosted by the University of Sibiu and will form part of the official programme of the European Cultural Capital event to be held in Sibiu during 2007. Sponsorship from the European Capital of Culture will ensure a wider audience and higher profile for the Winter University, which has been touring different European countries since 1989.

The Winter University is aimed at undergraduate and masters students in the fields of tourism, leisure and culture. The programme consists of lectures, workshops and excursions, where the emphasis is placed on interactive learning in international groups. Lecturers from universities in Romania, Poland, the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Hungary will deliver the lecture programme and lead the workshops. Questions, of tourism, culture and identity will be explored through the formal programme as well as through the social programme and informal transcultural contacts between students and residents of Sibiu. Participants will also be able to take advantage of the extensive cultural programme of the Cultural Capital event.

Workshops and lectures are planned on:

The European Cultural Capital – tourism and diversity  
Cultural tourism and identity  
Cultural events, image and diversity  
Media and identity  
Urban heritage and identity  
Regional marketing, identity and diversity

The historic city of Sibiu (Hermannstad in German) is an ideal site to study questions of identity, located as it is at the boundary of different cultures in a country on the verge of joining the European Union. Sibiu can be easily reached with low cost flights to Bucharest and other Romanian airports, as well as having good train connections. More details of the city and the Cultural Capital 2007 events can be found on the website: [http://www.sibiu2007.ro/index\\_en.php](http://www.sibiu2007.ro/index_en.php)

ATLAS member universities are invited to send participants to this unique event (please note that places are limited). Registration forms and further details will be available soon via the ATLAS website ([www.atlas-euro.org](http://www.atlas-euro.org)). In the meantime, members can contact ATLAS ([info@atlas-euro.org](mailto:info@atlas-euro.org)) to express their initial interest or for more information.





## **ATLAS projects**

### **Youth Accommodation Research Project**

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ATLAS is currently collaborating with the International Student Travel Confederation (ISTC) and the Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations (FIYTO) to research the global youth accommodation market. This is a further element in the expanding youth and backpacker tourism research programme which ISTC and the ATLAS Backpacker Research Group have been collaborating on in recent years.

As the youth travel market has grown to about 140 million international trips a year, it is becoming increasingly interesting for national tourism organisations, travel companies and accommodation operators. Accor, the world's largest hotel chain, has already dipped a toe in the youth accommodation market through its participation in the Base Backpackers hostel chain. The number of commercially run hostels has increased rapidly in major tourist destinations around the world, and 'mega-hostels' with up to 1000 beds each are now common in large cities.

In spite of this growth, however, little is known about the youth accommodation market, either in terms of supply or demand. To fill this gap, ATLAS is helping ISTC and FIYTO to undertake a study of youth accommodation providers, which should generate information on issues such as supply growth, hostel occupancy and future expansion plans. As with previous studies undertaken by ATLAS and ISTC, the results will be made freely available to ATLAS members.

For more information, please contact Greg Richards.

# Cultural Capital of Europe Research Project, Sibiu 2007

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ATLAS is very experienced in surveying and analysing cultural events. This is based on a wide range of projects covering international, national and local events. In all cases, ATLAS works closely with local partners in universities, research institutions and municipalities to develop research programmes, which are suited to the individual needs of the event and its stakeholders.

In the case of a complex event such as the European Capital of Culture, the wide range of stakeholders and their multiple objectives means that the research strategy needs to be comprehensive and flexible. In our previous research of Cultural Capitals we have consulted with the different stakeholders involved to ensure that the survey techniques and research instruments employed are capable of measuring the different aspects of the event successfully. In particular, we take care to ensure that both the cultural and tourism aspects of the event are paid adequate attention.

The aspects of Cultural Capital impact that we have dealt with in previous studies include:

- Visitor impacts (profile of visitors relative to stated aims)
- Tourism impacts (number of tourists within overall visitor mix, use of tourism facilities)
- Cultural impacts (impacts of the event on cultural consumption, cultural policy, cultural production)
- Social impacts (impacts of the event on the host society)
- Economic impacts (Visitor and resident expenditure, income to cultural institutions, multiplier development)
- Image impacts (City image change as a result of the event)

In undertaking this research we have employed a range of research techniques, including:

- Visitor interviews
- Resident interviews
- Email based Internet surveys
- Depth interviews with policymakers
- Content analysis of media reports

In our view, a comprehensive research programme for a Cultural Capital should include a diversity of methods during the event (in order to analyse different audience groups) and longitudinal research before and after the event (in order to measure changes in image, cultural consumption, tourism expenditure, etc.).

These are methods that we have successfully employed in other cities, working within tightly defined budgets. We are confident we could construct a rigorous and informative research programme for Sibiu, which would also have the benefits of providing comparisons with other Cultural Capital events.

## **ATLAS new publications**

Richards G. and Richards B. (2006)  
Medical tourism: A global analysis.  
Arnhem: ATLAS. 98 pp  
ISBN: 90-75775-22-9

Smith, M.K. and Onderwater L. (ed) (2006)  
*The transformation of tourism spaces. ATLAS Reflections 2006.*  
Arnhem: ATLAS.  
ISBN: 90-75775-23-7

Hall, D., Smith, M. K., and Marciszewska, B. (2006) (eds)  
*Tourism in the New Europe: The Challenges and Opportunities of EU Enlargement.*  
Wallingford: CABI.

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