



**Association for Tourism
and Leisure Education**

**Landscape and tourism:
The dualistic relationship**

ATLAS Reflections 2011

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Contents

Introduction	5
<i>Melanie Smith</i>	
Inspirational landscapes and the role of hospitality	7
<i>Edward H. Huijbens</i>	
Tourism and landscape in Post-Soviet space: Perceptual mapping approach	19
<i>Andris Klepers</i>	
www.myplacetobe.eu	25
An innovative tool for understanding the dualistic relationship of landscape and tourism	
<i>Martin Goossen</i>	
ATLAS members	37
ATLAS events	43
An overview	43
ATLAS annual conference 2011	45
ATLAS SIG meeting Tourism and Embodiment: The state of the art	46
ATLAS 8th Business Tourism Conference: Sustainable Business Tourism	47
ATLAS annual conference 2012	48
ATLAS regional groups	51
ATLAS Africa	51
ATLAS Europe	54
ATLAS Asia-Pacific	54
ATLAS Americas	54
ATLAS Special Interest Groups	55
Cultural Tourism Research Group	55
Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group	56
Business Tourism Research Group	57
Spa and Wellness Research Group	58
Tourism Geographies Research Group	60
Events Research Group	63
Tourism and Embodiment Research Group	64
Independent Travel Research Group	66
Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Research Group	66
Volunteer Tourism Research Group	66
Sports Tourism Research Group	66
Capital City Tourism Research Group	66
ATLAS new publications	67

Introduction

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Dear colleagues,

This has been my sixth year as co-ordinator of ATLAS and I have very much enjoyed my second term of office! It has been quite a challenging year for ATLAS as it has for many people and organisations worldwide. The global recession has meant there is less funding for conference and events, and many members are having to be selective about what they attend and what activities they choose to become involved in.

Despite this, ATLAS has managed to have a relatively dynamic year, with the largest ATLAS Africa conference ever. In fact, ATLAS Africa is incredibly active as you will see from the Regional Report contained here in Reflections. Many thanks to John Akama and other Board members for this, especially Rene van der Duim. We also had a highly successful conference in Cyprus, and several very active SIGs this year. The Cultural Tourism and Events SIGs are very dynamic thanks to Greg Richards. Rob Davidson continues to make the Business Tourism SIG a great success, as does Julie Wilson with the Tourism Geographies SIG. Kevin Fields is also doing a good job of keeping the Gastronomy group going. We accept that the SIG activities go in cycles, and many of the other SIGs are more quietly developing new publications and research ideas or planning events (e.g. Spa and Wellness, Religious Tourism, Capital City Tourism, Volunteer Tourism and Independent Travel Research Group). We also have the new Tourism and Embodiment SIG, which is an exciting development. Good luck to Hazel Andrews with this.

Thanks as always to the Regional Co-ordinators John, Anya, Florence and Malcolm who are working hard in Africa, Europe and Asia, Executive Board Members, SIG Co-ordinators, and of course, our administrators Leontine, Jantien and Linda. We have started discussing ways in which we can streamline and focus ATLAS activities in the future in order to provide maximum benefits for members and preserve the long-term health of the organisation.

We are very much looking forward to this year's conference in Latvia on the subject of *Landscape and Tourism*. You will find a selection of the Keynote speeches and other fascinating papers in this edition of Reflections.

ATLAS has a wide range of other publications which are available to all members for very reasonable prices. Please check out our list on the website and see the end of Reflections for some updated information about new publications.

My final thanks must go to you, the members of ATLAS. The organisation is only as good as its members and we are very grateful and appreciative of the fact that we

have so many active and helpful individuals and institutions within ATLAS. We hope you all have a good year!

With very best wishes,

Melanie Smith
Co-ordinator of ATLAS

Inspirational landscapes and the role of hospitality

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Abstract

The keynote aims to come to terms with landscapes as inspirational, and how tourism, with emphasis on hospitality, can possibly deliver this inspiration. The point of departure is a recent marketing campaign launched by the Icelandic tourism authorities in response to the eruption in Eyjafjallajökull. The campaign is called Inspired by Iceland and features video commentaries and online chat forums where celebrities of varying degrees share their experience of Iceland. What is argued is that the landscape depicted and shown has no intrinsic value, it does not gain any level of authenticity through varying informed readings of it, it does not subject itself to the 'correct' managerial or planning schemes. Through presenting post-structural theorising the keynote argues that landscape is irreducible to its terms, it is within each of us, yet ours – a whole that is never the sum of its parts. It is through this capacity a landscape can be shared and can possibly be the substance of tourism marketing and promotion. Recognising the tourist as potentially inspired by landscape commands the attitude of respect that is argued as a necessary precondition to any ethical notions of hospitality.

Dear conference participants and fellow scholars of tourism

First and foremost I would like to thank the organisers for inviting me here as a keynote speaker at this opening session of the conference. At the same time I have to offer my sincerest apologies as I will have to leave right after my presentation and carry on to Rovaniemi where the 20th Nordic Symposium of Tourism and Hospitality Research is starting this evening. I am simply obliged to be there, not least since I was the host of this event last year. So, as much as I would like to take part in the extremely interesting days ahead, talking about my favourite topic; landscapes, with the associated notions of spaces and places, I will have to leave, but thank the organisers again for having me, regardless of this.

So, I hope I can live up to the expectations we all have to opening keynotes! In order to situate myself with the themes of this conference I will focus on what we see here at the top of the opening slide: The landscape vista offered to us when we reach the rim of the inland highland plateaux of Iceland from the North. I will not talk about this view in terms of planning or sustainability, not in terms of generating economic value – or any other value for that matter. I will not talk about technical solutions, although the jeeps depicted have always fascinated me and I have written about these¹. What I will talk about is advances in researching landscapes, and most particularly about what the landscape does in terms of providing an invitation. What I would like to do in

¹ Huijbens, E. and Benediktson, K. 2007: Practising Highland Heterotopias: The transformative power of automotive travel in the Icelandic highlands. In *Mobilities*. 2(1): 143-165.

the coming few minutes, is come to terms with landscapes as inspirational, and how tourism, with emphasis on hospitality, can possibly deliver this inspiration.

My point of departure is a recent marketing campaign launched by the Icelandic tourism authorities in response to the eruption in Eyjafjallajökull. The campaign is called Inspired by Iceland and features video commentaries and online chat forums where celebrities of varying degrees share their experience of Iceland, but the promo piece distributed world-wide was this one:

SLIDE 1

Without question the video represents a beautifully crafted piece of media, winning the International Congress and Convention Association's marketing prize in autumn 2010. However questions have been raised about the representativeness of both the Icelandic landscape and culture depicted. Questions have also been raised on the rationale for the project launch in the first place, but evidently it was to convey the message that Iceland was a safe destination to visit in the wake of the infamous Eyjafjallajökull eruption in South Iceland². These concerns notwithstanding, they are not my focus here, but the marketing tactic of sharing through social media and naturally that which is being shared; the Icelandic landscape predominantly as could be seen from the video.

SLIDE 2

In order to approach the topic of my talk some groundwork needs to be done, or landscaping if you like. When asking what is landscape a range of definitions can be drawn upon. Landscapes can be read as texts and thus symbolic or in some way expressed through literature or art, they can have a range of meanings, values and experiences attached to them or lived through them, they can provoke sensory reactions, be perceived as something authentic or simply reside in one's mind - in the sense that the landscape is truly in the eye of the beholder. But what seems to dominate our approach to landscapes; "is that they are irredeemably centred on the sense of sight" quoting from the introduction of a recent book edited by colleagues at the University of Iceland³. As a reaction to this some scholars of phenomenological bent have gone as far as wholly uprooting the scenic aspect of landscapes, focusing merely on people's sensory immersion in the landscape and how we possibly embody them⁴. This seems to me both extreme and counter-productive, especially in terms of tourism.

Tourism for me by necessity needs to hold on to the scenic and the visual aspect of landscape. Katrín Lund and Karl Benediktsson, my Icelandic book editing colleagues, make an effort to hold on to the scenic, arguing that landscapes are to be understood through the metaphor of conversations. Quoting them, they argue: "the metaphor of conversation can assist in finding a variety of new directions in the complex terrain of landscape studies by bringing attention to the mutuality of human-landscape encounters. Landscape is not comprehended as a predetermined, culturally contrived

² Lund, K.A. & Benediktsson, K. 2011: Inhabiting a risky Earth. In *Anthropology Today*. 27(1): 6-9, see also: Benediktsson, K., Lund, K.A. & Huijbens, E. 2011: Inspired by eruptions? Eyjafjallajökull and Icelandic tourism. In *Mobilities*. 6(1): 77-84.

³ Benediktsson, K. and Lund, K.A. 2010: *Conversations with Landscape*. Surrey: Ashgate.

⁴ Wylie, J. 2007: *Landscape*. London: Routledge.

and passive “text”, but as a conversational partner that is certainly more than human” ... Drawing on Hans-Georg Gadamer they also introduce the concept of the horizon, and again I quote; “with its implication of movement and constantly shifting positions, takes landscape away from the often romantic and rather static association with place. It brings forth the importance of the visual as a part of a more encompassing sensuous engagement of humans with landscape”.

SLIDE 3

So holding on to the visual, yet allowing for other sensory appreciations of landscapes provokes a fusing of the horizons for Lund and Benediktsson. Indeed an appreciation of the scenic is important. The visual experience of landscape is thus meaningful even going so far as to state that the mere glancing at it as the tourist body is moved through the landscape involves a sensuous experience as Jonas Larsen at Roskilde in Denmark would argue⁵.

But to many this scenic appreciation of the landscape is passive, a distanced practice rehearsing the age old mind/body dichotomy haunting humankind all-through the period of Enlightenment. The main issue people tend to raise with the visual is that it somehow is based on an understanding of our existence as being outside the realm of the natural. Nature and the natural world, according to this understanding, form a substrate of existence whilst the human spirit, soul or understanding can easily soar beyond all bounds of the physical. Often cited as the founder of this fundamental dichotomy, ushering in modernity, is the philosopher Descartes, who proved our existence with reference to our capacity to think; or more profoundly to doubt. Emerging from this understanding is people’s role as mastering the landscape, sculpting nature to man’s needs and designing it for the inhabitation of ‘man’ as Clarence Glacken meticulously documents⁶.

But what Lund and Benediktsson along with Larsen and others argue is that although seemingly passive, the visual appreciation of landscapes entails an interaction. Kenneth Olwig and Michael Jones argue in a similar way for fusing the diametrical opposites of mind and body gleaned from the landscape literature, but they do so in an explicit attempt to politicise the landscape⁷. They argue:

The political landscape focuses on the action of people as political beings who neither stand alone as individual spectators of a spatially distant scene nor, alternatively, submerge themselves as individual existential insiders in a world of unreflected concrete experience of the authentic phenomena of the lived world ... (p. xiii)

In this sense the dualistic relationship cited in the conference theme’s subtitle builds on an understanding of spaces and places as produced through dialectical oscillations, informed by their ideas practiced *in situ*. In the geographical literature the Frenchman Henri Lefebvre is mostly accredited for giving us the conceptual tools to

⁵ Larsen, J. 2001: Tourism Mobilities and the Travel Glance: Experiences of Being on the Move. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*. 1(2): 80-98.

⁶ Glacken, C.J. 1967: *Traces on the Rhodian Shore. Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century*. Berkley: University of California Press.

⁷ Jones, M. And Olwig, K.R. 2008: *Nordic Landscapes. Region and Belonging on the Northern Edge of Europe*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

grapple with this⁸. His notion of the production of space was the culmination of his previous engagement with the transition of human population from the rural to the urban. He saw the urban, as conceived in modern times, as the epitome of calculated rationality through geometric patterning and rationalised planning, what he termed “abstractions of space”. His example was that of a new town in France called Moux, a town deliberately built and designed only to house the workers of a nearby sulphur mine. Here the urban landscape was being created from abstracted logic and calculated rationality, certainly a production of space, but for Lefebvre the matter was not so simple as to conceive of this landscape as merely a kind of material production of abstracted ideals. For him there were more spaces that got created, all informed by a host of different conceptions and ideals, implicit or explicit, of what a space could or should be. Hence production needs to be grasped as both material process and a mental process as well, as the move to abstraction and conceiving space as mental construct is always grounded in the concrete social relations latent in space and reproduces these. What is of relevance when we aim to politicise the landscape is that for Lefebvre, space itself is born out of the contradictions within the relations of production at the same time it profoundly shapes the apparatus of production. By accentuating the differences that the abstraction attempts to usurp and negate, Lefebvre tells us that “space is at once *work* and *product* – a materialisation of ‘social being’”. Stuart Elden, an avid reader of Lefebvre explains⁹;

There is not the material production of objects and the mental production of ideas. Instead, our mental interaction with the world, our ordering, generalizing, abstracting, and so on produces the world that we encounter, as much as the physical objects we create. This does not simply mean that we produce reality, but that we produce how we perceive reality (p. 44).

Making space part and parcel of multiple social and material relations, Lefebvre made his conceptual break with the tradition of his era. His emphasis was on how space is produced by and through the production and reproduction of social and material relations, thus avoiding fetishizing space through masking it as an objective ‘thing’ in itself, an inert container, or to be considered in isolation. For Lefebvre, space is and I quote “always now and formerly, a present space, given as an immediate whole, complete with its associations and connections in their actuality”.

Note the words here, ‘given as an immediate whole’. How could we see then the landscape as an immediate whole? The Icelandic philosopher Páll Skúlason describes this when he experienced it at a well-known destination in the Icelandic highland interior¹⁰.

SLIDE 4

When I came to Askja I entered an independent world, Askja world, one clearly demarcated whole spanning all and filling the mind to the extent one feels like having sensed all that is real in both past, present and future. Beyond the horizon is the unknown eternal, the great, silent void. When you know such a world one has

⁸ Lefebvre, H. 1991: *The Production of Space*. London: Blackwell.

⁹ Elden, S. 2004: *Understanding Henri Lefebvre. Theory and the Possible*. London: Continuum.

¹⁰ Skúlason, P. 2005: *Mediations at the Edge of Askja*. Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press.

reached the end of the road. Having touched reality itself. The mind opens to perfect beauty and one sees finally what life is about. - Sometimes I play with a rock I received from the lake at Askja. It reminds me of this connection with reality, this touch, this whole that is Askja itself, spanning all that is, was, and can be. Or almost.

SLIDE 5

This is a birds-eye view of Askja, Páll was on the ground in the caldera itself, surround by the jagged edges that represent the rim of the caldera. Looking the other way and focusing on the sky Woodford describes her experience of nature, watching the aurora borealis whilst travelling in N. Norway¹¹;

SLIDE 6

Breathtaking and beautiful the vivid tongues of blue-green light traversed the night sky, their numinous presence a manifestation of the mysterious and mystical. In those icebound places I felt the absolute essence of nature laid bare.

Experiencing 'all that is real in both past, present and future', 'laying bare the essence of nature' for me goes to show how the experience of landscapes molds human ideas which in turn molds landscapes as the classic dialectical framing would argue. But there is more here. The phenomenologist would go as far as immersing our subjectivity in the landscape, I however would like to hold on to the subject, but at the same time not, through making sense of seeing. This leads me to a reiteration of the Enlightenment project and as a consequence the theme of this conference.

SLIDE 7

Concurrent the emerging themes of the Enlightenment with its mind/body dualisms and dialectical attempts to grapple with this, was a different take on what the Enlightenment project entailed and thus human relations with nature and the landscape.

In the early 18th Century the German philosopher Leibniz demonstrates a fundamentally different outlook on the world and our involvement in it. Making sense of seeing building on Leibniz represents what John Law calls a baroque sensibility¹², whilst the Enlightenment project can be roughly sketched as a romantic holism. This baroque sensibility is described by Clarence Glacken, with reference to Leibniz stating that to him;

... the world of senses is alive. The plenitude of nature entrances him. He desires to do more than to contemplate God's work; he wishes to use them, to transform them for human welfare.

Whilst for the proponents of Enlightenment, man became separate from nature, those adhering to the 'monadology' of Leibniz, nature was very much part and parcel of man, able to influence human being and welfare. Thus the Cartesian dichotomy

¹¹ Woodford, A. 2009: Objects from the multiverse. *Ceramics: Art and Perception*. 75: 21-26.

¹² Law, J. 2004: And if the local were small and non-coherent? Method, complexity and the baroque. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 22: 13-26.

never ruled supreme as Bruno Latour later explains when he argues we have never really been modern¹³.

The plenitude of nature is entrancing, and the world of senses is alive. This indeed opens the door to the immersive phenomenological speculations I have already ruled counter-productive for tourism. But if we want to make sense of seeing - further probing along this way is necessary. Landscapes could thus be termed hybrids drawing on Sarah Whatmore¹⁴ in an effort to "...confront these volatile exteriorizations [of landscapes] as places of our own making, configured in relation to the interiorized sites of knowledge, imagination and desire".

This confrontation is not about landscapes as social constructions but deals with it more in terms of being where social construction might occur. What myself and Martin Gren have called e.g. earthly tourism¹⁵ when coming to terms with Bruno Latour's possibility to allow for people to become the "Earthlings"¹⁶:

SLIDE 8

Who are you really, Earthlings, to believe that you are the ones adding relations by the sheer symbolic order of your mind, by the projective power of your brain, by the sheer intensity of your social schemes, to a world entirely devoid of meaning, of relations, of connections?! Where have you lived until now? Oh I know, you have lived on this strange modernist utterly archaic globe; and suddenly (under crisis) you realize that all along you have been inhabiting the Earth (p. 8).

Becoming one with the Earth is for Latour allowed for under the terms of crisis which for him entail the environmental issues of global warming and climate change. But the above quotations hint at a more fundamental conception of human's being with the landscape. They can roughly be framed as post-positivist humanistic thought drawing on phenomenology.

When experiencing nature through what at first might seem as passive gazing might therefore entail a realisation of nature's plenitude; its infinite multiplicity but yet wholeness. But the 'almost' in the end of the quote from the philosopher Páll Skúlason quote hints to me at the ways in which we relate to our surroundings, not from the birds-eye view of the aerial photograph, nor pure sensory immersion of that which was, is and will come to pass. Being there then is what matters, most profoundly to those who visit. As Gilles Deleuze argues when explaining how we perceive the sea¹⁷:

SLIDE 9

¹³ Latour, B. 1993: *We have never been Modern*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

¹⁴ Whatmore, S. 2002: *Hybrid Geographies natures, cultures, spaces*. London: Sage.

¹⁵ Gren, M. and Huijbens, E. forthcoming: Earth to Tourism! In *Annals of Tourism Research*. 39(1): in print.

¹⁶ Latour, B. 2007: A Plea for Earthly Sciences. A keynote lecture for the annual meeting of the British Sociological Association, East London, April 2007. Available at <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/articles/article/102-BSA-GB.pdf> (accessed 19 April 2010)

¹⁷ Deleuze, G. 1994: *Difference and Repetition*. London: Continuum.

... our perception of the noise of the sea, which confusedly includes the whole and clearly expresses only certain relations or certain points by virtue of our bodies and a threshold of consciousness which they determine (p. 315).

We must think of nature through the principle of the diverse and its production. Indeed Sarah Whatmore already proposed we confront landscapes as configured in relation to ourselves but not to arrive at an end state or defined way of being. For Deleuze in his book the *Logic of Sense*, this means that each term becomes the means of going all the way to the end of another, by following the entire distance. As a consequence and quoting from Deleuze, “divergence is no longer a principle of exclusion and disjunction no longer a means of separation. Impossibility is now a means of communication.” Simply not being consistent is how landscapes relate to us.

Nature, and for our intents and purposes here landscapes as well, are for Deleuze to be understood in the conjunctive rather than attributive expressing itself through ‘and’ not ‘is’¹⁸:

... she is made of plenitude and void, beings and nonbeings, with each one of the two posing itself as unlimited while limiting the other... Nature is indeed a sum, but not a whole... Nature to be precise, is power (p. 304).

People clearly experience scenic landscapes in vastly different terms and thus it is necessary to consider a person’s interaction with that landscape at each time and place. Indeed this is not that new. E.g. environmental psychology has for some time recognised the healing powers of being in a natural setting or extensive views¹⁹. Thus with nature emerging as power in the conjunctive, landscapes seem to have the capacity to reach out to us.

Having made sense of the landscape in terms of its power to relate to us when we visit and see a certain place there and then, I would like to move to the other half of the landscape relation, that which is the visiting guest. What intrigues me and prompts me to probe further into the dualistic relationship is how landscape in the conjunctive unfolds in terms of hospitality.

SLIDE 10

In order to do so I would like to return to the very anthropocentric notion of conversations, i.e. allowing more for the articulation of people’s desires and wishes and how these might structure landscape encounters. Allowing for this articulation requires me to delve into the notion of hospitality. Here I would like to draw on how Emmanuel Levinas²⁰ and Jacques Derrida²¹ articulate a hospitality that

¹⁸ Deleuze, G. 1990: *The Logic of Sense*. London: Continuum.

¹⁹ Kaplan, S. 1995: The Restorative Benefits of Nature: Towards an integrative framework. In *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 15:169-182.

²⁰ Levinas, E. 1979: *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

²¹ Derrida, J. 2000: *Of Hospitality: Anne Durrourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*. London: Routledge.

unconditionally opens the door of the home. Quoting from a recent article by Siby K. George²², this unconditional welcoming of the other means that;

The other person, the stranger is inassimilable, irreducible to any concept or possession; he/she is infinitely other than the same, the self, and this 'difference' calls into question the self's egoistic spontaneity in the primal ethical encounter with the other. It is in communication, language and conversation that the 'I' coexists with the other without infringing her alterity, and this cohabitation and sharing of the world is ethical in the sense that it 'puts the spontaneous freedom within us into question' (p. 34)

So much like the landscape, the unconditionally welcomed guest is inassimilable and irreducible or 'impossible' as Deleuze has informed us before. Using then the landscape as an invitation to be inspired and subsequently visit a country or a place - as the promotion video we just saw does, necessitates an understanding of people's relations to landscape under the terms of hospitality 'that puts the spontaneous freedom within us into question'.

Being hospitable?

Jacques Derrida is quoted in his conversation with Anne Dufourmantelle entitled *Of Hospitality*, requesting a further analysis of ethics based on narratives that problematise binaries such as citizen/foreigner, master/stranger, and friend/enemy. His ruminations draw on an engagement with the work of Emmanuel Levinas who is quoted saying in his book *Totality and Infinity* that "subjectivity is formed in a radically passive relation of hospitality towards the Other". According to Clive Barnett, a geographer at the Open University in Milton Keynes, Levinas develops an account of subjectivity as always already responsible to and for the Other, prior to any calculation or reflection by a self conscious subject²³. The subject is, as he puts it, always One-for-the-Other. In this way hospitality is not about having certain ends in mind, but about generating beginnings.

SLIDE 11

The question Clive however raises is:

... how the ethics of hospitality (the scene for the unconditional obligation to welcome the Other without question) is related to the politics of hospitality (the realm in which hospitality is conditionally extended as a right to certain categories of person, implying an apparatus of laws, states, and borders) (p. 11).

It would thus seem that,

The problem is not that we can never live up to absolute, unconditional hospitality because we can never welcome everyone, because we must set limits to our hospitality. Obeying the law of conditions is not simply a concession to our finitude, to our limited capacities and resources, or else simply a concession to political expediency. It is recognition that hospitality, 'real' hospitality, consists in welcoming

²² George, S.K. 2009: Hospitality as Openness to the Other: Levinas, Derrida and the Indian Hospitality Ethos. In: *Journal of Human Values*. 15(1): 29-47

²³ Barnett, C. 2005: Ways of relating: hospitality and the acknowledgement of otherness. In *Progress in Human Geography*. 29(1): 5-21.

particular guests and not just anybody, particular guests and, as a result, not others (p.13).

These politics of hospitality unfold through the assessments we make, analysis and decision based on our aspirations, hopes, dreams, faith, longings in every moment, every encounter. So making sense of seeing the landscape in this way is attentive to and through the relations that are constituted during a visit. Sarah Whatmore, whom I have already quoted on seeing landscapes as hybrid, would see hospitality thus as an;

SLIDE 12

... ethical praxis [that] likewise emerges in the performance of multiple lived worlds, weaving threads of meaning and matter through the assemblage of mutually constituting subjects and patterns of association that compromise the distinction between the 'human' and the 'non-human.' (p. 159)

Weaving threads of subjectivity, conceived as about generating beginnings, through landscapes conceived of as power in the conjunctive, heeds in many ways the call made by David Fennell, in a recent publication edited by John Tribe on the *Philosophical Issues in Tourism*²⁴. He concludes his chapter by stating;

... that if we continue to place ourselves as tourists and service providers as the only locus of concern in tourism interactions, then we can do little to actualise an ethic of responsibility in tourism for the larger whole (p. 224).

Basing hospitality on ethics sensible to the emergent relationality of the visit and the scenic experience in practice invokes "vitalist" notions, in the sense of being a-signifying and non-textual, sympathetic to the unconditional welcoming of others. Thus, Whatmore tells us that agency is not reduced "to the impartial and universal enactment of instrumental reason, or "enlightened self-interest"" but is difference-in-relation constituted in the context of the practical and lived.

Doreen Massey explains how this type of ethical concern emerging from difference in relation demands an attitude of 'respect.'²⁵ The reduction of the landscape to 'a spatially distant scene or, alternatively, to submerge oneself as individual existential insiders in a world of unreflected concrete experience of the authentic phenomena of the lived world', to me seems one-sided, narrow and instrumental. It does not allow for the power of landscape nor the ways in which we can relate to it. Moreover, conceiving of hospitality as difference-in-relation constituted in the context of the practical and lived implies that subjectivity is not always and everywhere organised through modalities of exclusion, hostility, or anxiety. The idea of respect and thus acknowledgement takes us beyond choosing between a false universalism of the unconditional welcome or an indifferent relativism of regressive delimitations of uncountable others. It does so by placing the emphasis upon the constitutive receptivity of selves or communities to otherness.

²⁴ Fennell, D. 2009: Ethics and Tourism. In Tribe, J. (ed), *Philosophical Issues in Tourism*. Bristol: Channel View Publications, pp. 211-226.

²⁵ Massey, D. 2005: *For Space*. London: Sage.

Sharing landscapes

What we see now on the whole is a person, a visiting tourist who comes to Iceland, inspired by the landscapes depicted in the promotion video. What I have strived to offer is an understanding of this person through notions of hospitality conditioned upon respect for alterity and an understanding of landscape as a scene which has the power to relate to us and affect us. Seeing both us and the landscape as open relational entities which in each moment of reckoning are weaved together leads me to postulate that our inspirations by landscapes stem from the relating itself. Quoting colleagues at Durham University in England, Ben Anderson and Paul Harrison from the introduction of their recently published book²⁶;

SLIDE 13

Relations are in the middle, and exist as such. This exteriority of relations is not a principle, it is a vital protest against principles ... If one takes this exteriority of relations as a conducting wire or as a line, one sees a very strange world unfold, fragment by fragment: a Harlequin's jacket or patchwork, made up of solid parts and voids, blocs and ruptures, attractions and divisions, nuances and bluntnesses, conjunctions and separations, alternations and interweavings, additions which never reach a total and subtractions whose remainder is never fixed ... (p. 15).

So to sum up where we have reached and what I have hopefully managed to contribute to this conference:

The landscape to me is never a conceivable whole that can be read through the lens of semiotics nor a purely embodied experience. The landscape is indeed a scene, which has the power to attract people far and wide as is doubtless the intention of the video I showed in the beginning. The particular method of disseminating the landscape, through sharing via social media is, as any other landscape experience, allowing for certain 'attractions and divisions, nuances and bluntnesses, conjunctions and separations, alternations and interweavings', which undoubtedly make the landscape malleable to any and all political agendas, marketing usage and/or immersive experiences.

SLIDE 14

The landscape thus has no intrinsic value, it does not gain any level of authenticity through varyingly informed readings of it, it does not subject itself to the 'correct' managerial or planning schemes. Due to the irreducibility of the landscape to its terms, it is within each of us, yet ours – a whole that is never the sum of its parts. It is through this capacity a landscape can be shared and can possibly be the substance of tourism marketing and promotion as we saw in the video. Recognising the tourist on the other hand as potentially inspired by this landscape commands the attitude of respect that I argue is a necessary precondition to any ethical notions of hospitality.

²⁶ Anderson, B. and Harrison, P. 2010: *Taking Place: Non-Representational Theory and Geography*. Surrey: Ashgate.

Note from ATLAS

The SLIDES mentioned in this article were shown during the keynote presentation of Edward Huijbens during the ATLAS annual conference which took place in Valmiera, Latvia in September 2011. Our apologies for not having included the slides.

Tourism and landscape in Post-Soviet space: Perceptual mapping approach

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Introduction

Europe has experienced rapid social transformations during the 20th century presenting a range of threats to the continuing presence of what might be described as the traditional European cultural and historical rural landscape (Nikodemus et al, 2005). Though landscape diversity, quality and in some degree uniqueness have always been ultimate ingredients for places to be designated as tourist places, or, according to Knudsen, Soper and Metro-Roland (2008), landscape is a synonym for tourist places. Intensification of agriculture or overgrowth of agricultural lands, urbanization, development of infrastructure and standardization of building materials and designs, disappearance of biodiversity are some of the main factors that have an impact on the landscape. Tourism development also causes transformations, though to different degrees in different places.

Latvia's landscapes at the same time have passed through radical changes which were basically driven by three overall land reforms during the last hundred years due to the changes of political power, the post-Soviet period being the latest one. Each new political wave discarded the development directions of the predecessors, and land use became an object of subsequent reorganization towards individualization or collectivization mainstreams. Wide changes in land use patterns have brought forth transformation of landscapes in rural regions. Simultaneous transformation of urban landscapes has happened widely. After the Soviet period, as an example, a symbolic meaning of space and 'core attraction' – the symbolic centre of the capital city Riga – has moved from the place around the statue of Lenin to the surroundings of the Freedom Monument, and similar processes have been experienced in other cities and places in post-Soviet states.

Linking tourism landscape perceptions with space, the research of the author offers an insight into the spatial analyses of the tourism places using perceptual mapping methods as a basis. The research has been challenged by a strong tradition of determinist approach in identifying tourism regions conducted by Russian scholars during the Soviet era (Preobrazensky & Krivoshejev, 1980; Mironenko & Tverdohlebov, 1981) leaving behind a great influence to the spatial planning of tourism in the Latvian territory (e.g. Trushins & Buka 1986-1990). In such a context a solvable problematic question is linked with identification of a spatial unit – a tourist destination based on the perception of a visitor not on strictly administrative borders as it is one of important aspects determining market.

Use of perceptual mapping for tourism research

Use of perceptual mapping was initiated in the travel business in the 1970s linking it with solving of questions of perceptual regionalization of tourism regions (Gunn & Worms 1973; 1979). Continuation of use of this method was developed further at site level and landscape searching for a link between perception of different symbols in urban landscape] (Hirtle & Jonides, 1985) or for planning of development of more spacious tourist sites intensively researching perceptions of tourists and its links with the environment (Fridgen, 1984). Exactly Fridgen (1987) started the use of cognitive maps to determine perceived tourism region, improving use of perceptual mapping. General research regarding site perception (Stevens & Coupe 1978), spatial perception and mind mapping were carried out in same time linking the issue with intensive research in psychology (Kitchin, 1993, 1998) as well as generalized use of methods for identifying tourism regions (Smith 1995). Important are also research of site marketing and its links with site perception and image (Gartner & Hunt, 1987).

To analyze and to interpret results of perception method there was the GIS spatial visualization used more and more (Bahaire & Elliot-White, 1999; Farsari & Prastacos, 2004; Kauppila & Rusanen, 2009), still not reaching technical novelties in cartography to improve collecting data of this method. Though as it summarized by the tourism geographers Hall and Page (2009) – spatial tourism processes of local level are still not researched enough (Hall & Page, 2009), especially in the context of growing site competition.

The case studies: Practical use of perceptual mapping

There were totally 8 case study territories selected in Latvia for using the perceptual mapping method strictly determining the sample of respondents to be questioned and collecting data by the sampling survey method. In continuation of the article there are two tourist destinations of local level with different landscape and space analyzed deeper:

1. Polygonal inland tourist destination within administrative borders with a potentially clear tourism centre but with dispersed tourist attractions and typically different landscapes.
2. Linear tourist destination without certain borders with potentially multiple tourist centres, tourist attractions concentrated along shore and more similar landscapes

There were two combined methods used for mind mapping within this research:

1. perceptual regionalization as the form of experience mapping to identify borders of single destination and tourism centres;
2. cognitive mapping identifying other (competing) tourism centres and their zones linked closely with image of site and personal perceptions. In both cases the “average” perception of visitors was researched and mapped.

According to the abovementioned criteria two territories chosen are the Ķemeri National Park and the seaside of Vidzeme. Subsequently the mind mapping method was used in both sites 2009 and 2010 interviewing visitors (n=182) and for comparison locals (n=151), especially paying attention to the place of interview (during a trip or a recreational experience) and to precise selection of the representative sample.

Results of the research indicate the validity of the cognitive mapping for getting a feedback of information from visitors and locals about relative locations of tourism in their spatial environment. Searching for common identities of different spaces proceeded to the identifying of approximate boundaries of contiguous tourism destinations that often coincide with homogenous landscape structures.

In the case of linear spatial structure in seashore respondents of both groups were able to formulate their perception of shore zone and what they would call the seaside of Vidzeme (using also different names for the same territory). Marked borders of the destination were more like drawing lines between border points S/N direction (Capital City/Estonia) and marking of the tourism centres and creating precise hierarchy of them finally. Even if landscape seaside territory is pretty homogenous and in fact there is no actual border control between Estonia and Latvia state borders are still predominating as the limit of the tourist destination, even if there are several cooperation projects carried out between our countries.

In the case of polygonal structure the question was asked whether respondents are able to identify this destination on the map. Versions appearing were mainly depicting the territory as circle or linking borders with existing road network. The destination was also linked with nearby situated larger resort cities and main associations. Through a summary it was possible to come to consensus when depicting the perception of the destination proving certain perceptions and associations regarding the Kõmeri National Park. In perception of locals it was depicted narrower than actual administrative borders of the Park, but visitors see it more broadly linking it with certain activities around.

Exactly differences between perception of segments (locals, one day travellers, domestic tourists, foreign tourists, special interests etc) proved another direction of use of this method. It is possible to link it precisely with marketing activities in exact target markets and with site marketing. The method also serves as feedback to measure efficiency of marketing communication. Results obtained this way can form arguments based on a market situation to create cooperation between nearby municipalities (or vice versa) in developing tourism.

This is not the only practically usable method to define destinations as it is based on one chance in defining them. To define a functional tourism destination of local scale it is suggested to use the mind mapping along with other approved methods like tracing tourist routes, identifying the sequence of visiting tourist attractions and research of cooperation networks in potential tourist destinations.

Acquired data about tourism spatial representations, combined with data of tourism evidence (visitor numbers in tourist attractions and logic of tourist flows) were analyzed with GIS. As a result there is a critical view about the spatial structure of tourism demonstrating its dynamic character and dependency on the social activities.

The identification of destination zones can be a useful part of feasibility research, though the process itself is not the most important. Presence or absence of any vendor of tourism services in a functional region does not guarantee certain success in attracting visitors. Planning, designing, financing, promotion, management and local networking are all important in ambitions toward success. It is also disputable from the point of view of place marketing to merge the average opinion of the visitors

some way ignoring individualized approach to market in situation of growing experience economy impact.

Another drawback is time consuming process of processing hand-made maps. Though evaluating advantages of the method in understanding of spatial aspects of tourism and perception of travellers it can be used definitely for further researches. Digitalization of mind mapping in process of interviewing as well as further speed of data processing with using of certain GIS programmes would allow to get new progress in this method of research and finally better understanding of spatial processes of tourism.

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www.myplacetobe.eu

An innovative tool for understanding the dualistic relationship of landscape and tourism

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Abstract

Especially in rural areas tourism is often seen as a new opportunity for economic development. Policymakers are searching for instruments to measure potential and actual values of regions for tourism development. These instruments must indicate the various regions' strong and weak points. Landscape can be an important unique selling point in rural areas. But data about the landscape value are missing. Getting more knowledge of landscape preferences of citizens is essential to describe the experience value of rural areas at an European level. To invest in certain regions it is for the tourism industry important to know if there are similarities among the citizens about landscape preferences. The beta-version of the website www.myplacetobe.eu is a toolbox to gather this information using geographical data . This innovative participatory approach gives people destination recommendations in Europe based upon their preferences, meanwhile saving the preferences.

Keywords: Destination Recommendation System (DRS), preferences, GIS, data

Introduction

Tourism is a sector that provides significant potential for economic growth and development. It is recognized by many policy makers. In the planning process of upgrading regions, especially rural areas, stimulating tourism development is a challenge. Many European rural areas suffer with decline of regional income, loss of inhabitants and degradation of the natural and agricultural values. It is believed that tourism consumption has a positive effect on the regional economy and employment and can play a role in maintaining the identity of areas. Environment and landscape are important attraction factors for tourism, especially nature-based tourism. Tourists' expectations of the environment are to a certain extent different: some tourists look for cultural landscapes and a traditional, living countryside, whereas others hope to be able to find nature in a pure and original condition (ETC, 2006). Thus, regional planning should include tourists' landscape preferences.

The Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) of the European Union affirms the need to support policy-making by scientifically sound approaches for Impact Assessment. In the regional planning process a more sustainable approach is needed based upon economic incentives and upon a common understanding of the importance of the identity, landscape and natural beauty, as part of the regional economic development of the destination. For many decades, the traditional European natural areas and landscapes have been amongst the most popular tourist destinations. Because of mass tourism sometimes these destinations are over exploited. Europe has much more beautiful landscapes to offer but a lot of tourists

don't know these destinations. Do we have to promote these unknown places or protect them, or doing both in a sustainable way. But first at all, developers, managers and policy makers need to know what kind of natural areas and landscapes tourists prefer. Have Chinese tourists different landscape preferences than Italian tourists? How big is the market share of certain landscape types and natural areas? Do people living in cities have different landscape preferences than people living in rural areas?

The use of knowledge from consumers is getting more important in the regional planning process. Until today, in the interaction between professional actors in the planning process, there is a severe lack of information regarding subjective choices, preferences and consumer attitudes when it comes to landscape assessment. The knowledge about the importance of natural values is often derived from ecologists and the landscape values are often measured by experts and not by consumers. The significant value of landscape and nature is recently studied in *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)*. Tourism and recreational values offered by ecosystems have been recognized as one of the main cultural services that nature provides to humankind (Marton-Lefevre & Borges, 2011). A recent study (Bidoglio & Braat, 2012) trying to map these cultural recreational services for Europe shows the difficulty of measuring the benefits. What is missing is a systematic and robust knowledge about which ecosystem tourists prefer. This is rather essential in a policy of stimulating tourism development.

In tourism the natural environment is a main factor in determining a region's attractiveness as a holiday destination (Breman et al, 2009, Viner and Agnew, 1999; Lohmann and Kaim, 1999; Jansen, 1994). Of all economic sectors, the tourism industry is the only one that offers natural surroundings as a key component of its product (Mieczkowski, 1995).

This paper describes the project ESCAPE (Electronic Information System for landSCAPE preferences) which tries to contribute in the diminishment of this knowledge gap of landscape preferences and tries to connect policy, science and practice in an innovative approach.

The practice: Modern tourist

Theories of travel motivation can be used to get more knowledge about the values of landscapes and nature for tourists. Certain travel motivation theories explain people's tourism behaviour by their felt inner needs. Internal motivations steer them towards a holiday; and external forces like images of destinations pull them towards specific locations (Leiper, 1990; Cha et al., 1995). Because choosing a destination involves a mix of thinking and feeling, both cognitive and affective factors play significant roles, according to San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque (2008). These authors propose that a distinction should be made between locals and international tourists. Locals tend to be drawn by the promise of a particular atmosphere and the natural environment, while international tourists tend to experience a more complex combination of motivations. Also, the more distant the destination is, the more the tourist wants to know beforehand. San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque conclude that international tourists are attracted more by dissemination of hard facts and knowledge than by 'feel good' publicity campaigns. The farther away a destination is culturally perceived to be, the more knowledgeable the travel agency must be in its

approach. Its communications must correspond with people's desire to know what they might experience, explore and learn, for their campaigns to succeed.

There is a different in type of knowledge tourists search for. Zins and Grabler (2006) developed a typology of six styles that guide tourist decision-making:

- Highly predefined travelers. This group of travelers (14%) specify many attributes in advance. Natural resources are important to this group. They first choose a destination, then accommodation and price and then the further details. They want to plan their total holiday beforehand.
- Accommodation-oriented travelers. For this group (9%) the accommodation is highly important. They prefer a list of attributes of recommended destinations for comparison. Their idea is to spend their holiday in a certain geographic area rather than in a specific town.
- Recommendation-oriented travelers. This group (14%) does not define many requirements throughout the recommendation process. They 'look at what is on offer'. They want to 'feel' the destinations using pictures, videos and other media.
- Geographical-oriented travelers. This group (22%) prefers searching by map and wants detailed geographical information about the area. They like package tours.
- Price-oriented travelers. For this group (15%) price is the most important feature. They are searching for benefits and special offers. It is not so important where they travel or spend their holiday.
- Activity-oriented travelers. This group (26%) is searching for destinations and activities. A particular country destination is used as a cue for specific natural resources. This group seeks geographical information and uses this information in comparing different offers.

The styles show that landscape and nature is not important for every tourist. This is an important result for rural areas in which landscape or nature is the only or one of the unique selling points. But these styles are rather static like the traditional consumer classification of gender, age, income and educational level. Marketers are trying to segment people according to their values and motives. But these motives are in constant flux (Goossen, 2009). One day a tourist wants to do something active and another day he wants to relax. Modern tourists want to have it all, at the same time and sometimes at the same spot. Over the course of a year a city break might be followed by an complete organized all-inclusive vacation in Turkey, with the next holiday being non organized a wilderness safari in Africa. Or going for a week to Lisbon and during that week spend a day walking in the natural surroundings. The consequence is that a tourist could be a geographical-oriented traveler one day and a price-oriented traveler another day.

Not only do destination choices frequently shift but preferences change as well. Diversity has become a new key word in tourism planning (Goossen et al, 2009). This complex situation has made market research, planning, monitoring and marketing extremely difficult, but also underlines the importance of information and information technology that can be used to support both the supply and the demand side (Buhalis, 1997). For the tourism industry it is difficult to define needs and preferences according to the ever-changing tourist. Modern tourists are capable enough to define their own needs and preferences. Tourists are changing from a passive consumer, lead by the industry with offered package deal, to a conscious self-supporting tourist shopping in an on-line tourist supermarket searching for services, products and deals

which fits with his or hers own defined standard of quality. The tourism industry must develop into this tourism supermarket, offering all kinds of services.

The theory: Destination Recommendation System

Tourists are in search and they want to know what they will encounter and have a good feeling about the destination. The Internet can be helpful here. Anyone with a computer and access to the World Wide Web has the ability to search, access and sort through enormous amounts of tourism information. The Internet is a central channel for communications and transactions in the tourism industry today. The European Union found websites and Internet usage to be far more widespread in the tourism sector than in the economy as a whole (Bovagnet, 2005). In the travel accommodations sector, 82% of enterprises had a website or homepage, and 93% were connected to the Internet. The Internet is used at the pre-sale stage (to provide and obtain information) and for online bookings (e.g. of hotel rooms). The Internet and tourism are closely related; both are on the rise. Worldwide tourism grew by 4.5% in 2010 (Tourism-review, 2010). In the 27 states of the European Union, 70% of households had access to the internet in the first quarter of 2010, compared with 49% in the first quarter of 2006. The share of households with broadband internet connections doubled, to reach 61% in 2010 compared with 30% in 2006 (Eurostat, 2010). According to Ruiz (2002), a new type of tourist behaviour is currently changing the industry from one that is consumer-oriented to one that is consumer-driven.

This ability to access information is fundamentally changing the tourism industry in terms of how people use information sources. People are shifting to the Internet as their first place to search, supplanting word of mouth as their initial means of gathering information. Research by the Netherlands Board of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC, 2006) shows that 69% of foreign tourists use the Internet in making their decision to travel to the Netherlands together with offline information sources. A similar relationship between the Internet and other sources was found in a study by Lee et al. (2007).

Tourists have no complete knowledge where their favourite natural environments could be found. People mostly ask friends and relatives, but the information they obtain in this way may not always be relevant. Or they might read an article in a magazine or newspaper; or notice a campaign from a local or national tourist board. Or they might see a (sponsored) program on television. But they seldom know whether this information is objective. That is one of the reasons review websites like Tripadvisor or Zoover are very popular. Tourist filter these subjective reviews for elements which they find important. If there are a lot of positive reviews, then it must be good. There is something wrong if there are a lot of negative reviews. Decisions are sometimes made upon these reviews.

The potential of the Internet, which can be used to create more interactive and vivid search experiences, has not yet been fully exploited by tourism marketing websites (Hwang et al., 2006). Dutch consumers decide first the destination (45%) for a holiday, followed by budget (32%). This result is coming from a research among 64.000 people who answered the "question of the day" on the website of the Dutch commercial bank ING (ING, 2010). Consumers spend on average 7 to 10 hours on the internet to find their holiday destination; 16% spend even more than 20 hours (Telegraaf, 2010). According to 66% of the Dutch population, it takes too much time

finding the right holiday on internet (Multiscope, 2010). There seems to be a great need for decision support in the form of recommendation systems. 'Recommendation systems' are defined as software tools that make recommendations based on learned information about the user's preference function (Häubl and Trifts, 2000). Among the many aspects of a trip, choosing a destination represents one of the core decisions to be made. Destination choice can be defined as a process of choosing one destination among a number of alternatives for the purpose of fulfilling the travel-related needs at hand (Hwang et al., 2006). But it is impossible to know all destinations or alternatives beforehand or to make reasoned choices without sufficient information about the alternatives. A variety of travel-related recommendation systems are currently available, like Tripadvisor, Expedia, Visiteurope, Zoover and visiteuropeancities.com. Yet most of these systems serve tourists after they have decided what their destination (like a country) will be (Fesenmaier et al., 2006).

Most destination recommendation systems are semantic. Website visitors have to fill in keywords and the system searches its database for as many matches as possible. If a corresponding keyword is not found, the user receives no results, which can be rather irritating. Or the system might come back with too many results, which is also irritating.

But visitors do not always use a recommendation system with the intention to travel directly. Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998) created an information needs model with five basic needs: functional, hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign. These needs recognize that not everyone who collects information actually intends to travel. Rather, search motivations can also be described as leisure and recreation-based. Visitors using websites in an ongoing search which, according to Bloch et al. (1986), oriented both to future use of the information obtained as well as to satisfaction with the search activity itself. Visitors also use it for entertainment or to get inspired for future trips.

The project ESCAPE to bridge practice and theory

Institute Alterra, part of Wageningen University and Researchcentre in the Netherlands started the project ESCAPE (Electronic Information System for landSCAPE preferences). Central in the project is the question how to create an useful European information system on landscape preferences, which give tourists destination recommendations to get inspired and gives policy makers data about landscape preferences. Central of ESCAPE is the database with among others, individual preferences of landscapes. This database can be used to analyze a part of the social-economic effects of policy impacts on landscapes in regions. With ESCAPE it is possible to compute the impact of changing or develop landscapes, for instance the impact on tourism of several agricultural scenario's or the impact of tourism on Natura2000 areas. A website focused on Europe will be set up as a toolbox to fill this database. ESCAPE is designed to move from pure expert-based assessment to true bottom-up preference assessments as a real participatory approach. ESCAPE will deliver knowledge about consumer preferences which can be used in the regional planning process and impact assessments.

The project ESCAPE has just been started. There is a demo-version of the website www.myplacetobe.eu. Theoretical knowledge is put into this practical tool, bridging

theory and practice. The innovative approach in research methods applied in this project can be encapsulated as 'give first, then ask and save'. That is, this website gives Internet users the opportunity to compile their own landscape preferences, choose their own climate preferences, type of holiday and holiday season. Using Geographical Information System (GIS) data, the users' preferences are then compared with the actual supply. That comparison leads to a unique personalized map showing where a person's own preferred landscapes occur in Europe: 'my place to be', for a holiday or a daytrip for recreational activities. All on-demand. In the meantime, all preferences entered by the user are saved in the database.

Several findings from the literature and the prior Dutch version influenced construction of the website. One is that website visitors consider both the outcome of the technology and the process by which the technology operates (Davis et al., 1989). The outcome aspect is captured in a dimension such as 'usefulness', that is, the user's preferred destinations are shown. The process by which the technology operates tends to be evaluated in two dimensions: ease of use (or lack of effort) and enjoyment (or fun to use) involved in working with the technology (Dabholkar, 1996). A website has to be well-ordered, easy to use, succinct in the amount of text to read and intelligible. Internet users do not want to wait, so the outcome or results have to be delivered quickly. To have a successful tool (that means a lot of visitors to get a lot of data) the TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) approach of Davies et al. (1989) together with the Hedonic Information System of Van der Heijden (2004) are used.

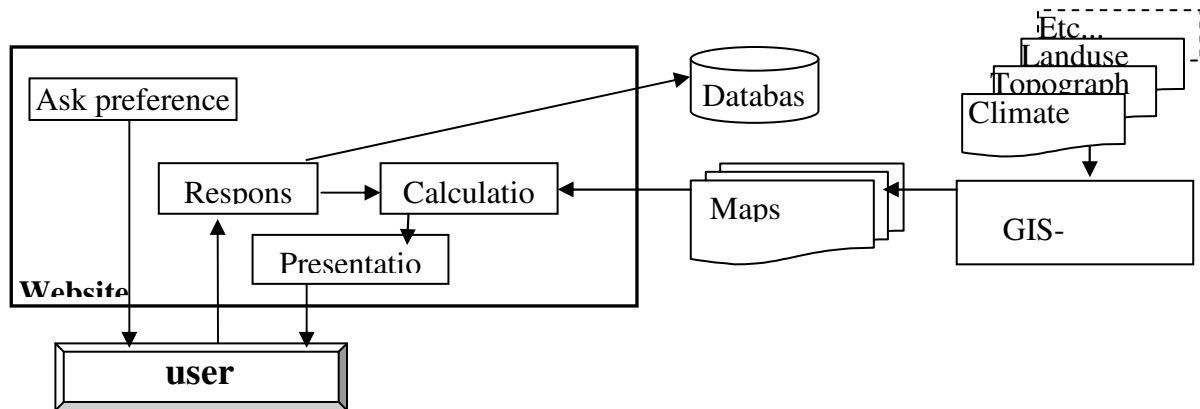
The technique of project ESCAPE as a DRS

Figure 1 shows a schematic presentation of the DRS. The database and GIS-model work outside of the website. A GIS is defined as an information system used to input, store, retrieve, manipulate, analyse and output geographically referenced data or geo-spatial data, in order to support decision-making for planning and management of land use, natural resources, environment, transportation, urban facilities and other administrative records. Using GIS data has the advantage above semantic destination recommendation systems, that the outcome is more trustful. Of course the GIS-data has to be up to date and complete. The information in a semantic destination recommendation system mostly comes from the tourism industry themselves. As a website visitor you don't know if that information is trustworthy.

The building blocks of the GIS model exist in separate spatial databases. Website visitors choose among several features. The website takes the visitors through three easy-to-use steps. Step 1 invites visitors to choose their holiday period and matching climate preferences and to imagine a landscape that they find attractive and then to choose what features that landscape in their potential destination would have, and in what proportions. Step 2 enables the website visitor to choose features of landscape in the surroundings of their potential destination and in what distance proportions for making daytrips for example. Finally, for research purposes, step 3 solicits information about visitors' gender, age, country, postal code, preferred recreational activities and the attractiveness of the landscape in the visitors' home environment. According to the users' preferences, a map of Europe, unique for each visitor, is then drawn. It takes about 0.75 seconds to generate a map. This personalized map shows areas where the visitor will find their ideal landscape and also those areas they should rather avoid. It also gives their five top destinations in Europe. Sometimes the map produces exciting and novel choices that are beyond visitors' expectations. This

is in line with the hedonic aspects of a recommendation system. The website assists tourists in their decision-making not only by reducing their search efforts but also by improving the quality of their decisions because the recommended destinations fits with their preferences.

Figure 1: Schematic presentation of the Destination Recommendation System



Visitors can also zoom in on the map. The map overlays Google Maps. With Google Maps there is the possibility to see pictures and videos of their desired destinations. It is possible to look around in 3D with street view. With the use of a routeplanner, the visitor can drive directly to the desired destination. The visitor can send their personalized map also to others with Twitter and Facebook. The personalized map can be downloaded into Google Earth, creating possibilities to gather more information about the destinations. There are possibilities to link to other tourism websites in the future.

Two elements are key in this application: (i) the features and (ii) the existence of geographical data on these features. Not all of the main features like the security of the destination and price level of the destination are reflected in geographical data. Because there are no geographical databases in Europe or incomplete geographical database (for some countries) of these features.

The data had to be edited to achieve a consistent format. The geographical data was reclassified to a single resolution of 5 km by 5 km. This encompasses an area of some 25 km², large enough for a walk or cycle tour. For every grid cell a value for the features is known. Most of the landscape data are coming from the European Environmental Agency. Other features are coming from climate institutes. Also open source data from Open Street Map are used.

The next step is to compute the score of each feature (in percentages) in the area of 25 km². A spatial database was constructed per feature for every five percentage points (including 0%) of the score of an area. This leads in theory to a maximum of 21 separate spatial databases for every feature.

This year the final user-interface will be built and the system will be tested. On the basis of the testing results some improvements will be made. After the testing of the

improvements the phase of implementation and promotion of the website will begin. By then, the database with individual preferences and maps (the core of the project) will be loaded. Hopefully the website will inspire visitors to escape from daily life and find their place to be.

Experience with the Dutch version

The project is based upon a Dutch version called www.daarmoetikzijn.nl. This website is the national component of [myplacetobe](http://myplacetobe.com). In theory it is possible to make such an application for every (European) country using more detailed national GIS-data. The Dutch website www.daarmoetikzijn.nl was built in 2006 and exits of more detailed features because of the availability of GIS-data (Goossen et al, 2009). The experience with this website is implemented in the European version. The Dutch website was from the beginning a great success in the Netherlands. The website received more than 250.000 visitors. The website reached the seventh place in the Dutch Internet top 100 and got a lot of publicity. The database with landscape preferences is still growing every day and has been used for several studies in the Netherlands.

In the Dutch website it is possible for the visitor to fill in their email if they want to participate in future research. A total of 625 respondents participated in a study (Kooiman et al, 2008) to their tourism behaviour after they received their map with recommended destinations. Almost 30% actually visited the recommended destination and 11% for the first time. About 95% of those respondents said that the landscape in that destination fulfilled their expectation. 54% of the respondents booked a hotel in their recommended destination for at least one overnight stay. About 75% of the respondents did not visit the recommended destinations but they said they are planning to do so in the future. Of these respondents 20% actually did search for more information about the recommended destinations. These results in the Netherlands show that the website has a positive effect on tourism.

Recommendations for science, practice and policy

Normally social science is getting information about landscape preferences using expensive questionnaires. That is the traditional method. This innovative participatory approach does not use questionnaires. The website users have their own goal to visit the website and are not being asked by the scientist and therefore their answers or preferences are more trustful. This approach is rather new in science and has to be evaluated in terms of type of visitors, their motives in visiting the websites, socio-economic features, representative survey etc. The limitation of this method is that the respondents are not being asked to participate. The researcher has to wait until they visit the website. Promotion efforts and making a lot of publicity are the only methods the researcher can use to get the website known and used. A promotion plan is essential, including the use of social media.

The expectation is that each year more than 100.000 potential tourists of the European landscape receive their individual destination recommendations. For the destination searching visitor the website can inspire to discover new destinations they never heard from. People from Western Europe get to know the beauty of the landscape in Eastern Europe and vice versa.

By making use of a wide range of additional geo-referenced data sets corresponding with targeted policy or research questions, the data on individual preferences can become an essential information source for the analysis of critical environmental or socio-economic queries. It gives knowledge about consumer preferences which is available and useful for actors in their negotiation and choices. The results will help maintain the identity, landscape and natural beauty of European destinations and could be developed into an attractive tool to promote Europe as a prime tourism destination.

The project ESCAPE can play a substantial role in policy studies for example about climate change. In recent years, the reality of climate change has spurred interest in the relationships between climate conditions and tourism. A range of studies using climate suitability indices, predominantly based on expert judgment, projected significant shifts in the geographical and temporal distribution of climate attractiveness patterns. These studies also revealed a dearth of empirical knowledge about the climatic preferences of tourists, and the climatic suitability of tourism destinations (Moreno, 2010). With the data about climate preferences from the website a study can be made to compare climate change to the preferences of climate indicators.

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and Technology

ATLAS Events

An overview

ATLAS Winter University
Portorose, Slovenia
February 7-17, 2010

SIG Volunteer Tourism meeting
Travel Philanthropy, Volunteer and Charity Tourism
Crete & Santorini, Greece
April 22-25, 2010

Backpacker Research Group meeting
Independent Travel in Uncertain Times: An expert conference
Hermanus, Western Cape, South Africa
September 2-4, 2010

Tourism Geographies Group meeting
European Regional Perspectives on Tourism Geographies –
Contrasting Research Approaches and Linguistic Traditions
Tarragona, Spain
October 14, 2010

The Doctoral Colloquium & Poster Session
Limassol, Cyprus
November 2, 2010

ATLAS annual conference 2010
Mass tourism vs. niche tourism
Limassol, Cyprus
November 3 - 5, 2010

Business Tourism meeting
Advances in Business Tourism Education and Research
Estoril, Portugal
November 14-17, 2010

Tourism Geographies Group meeting
The Changing World of Coastal, Island and Tropical Tourism
Martinique, French West Indies
January 27-29, 2011

ATLAS Events Special Interest Group Inaugural Expert Meeting
The Social Dimension of Events
Breda, the Netherlands
May 19-20, 2011

ATLAS Africa conference 2011
Sustainable tourism and environmental education: A natural link
Kampala, Uganda
June 6-8, 2011

Religious and Pilgrimage SIG meeting
Enhancing the Religious Tourism Experience
New Norcia, Perth, Western Australia
July 3-8, 2011

The Doctoral Colloquium & Poster Session
Valmiera, Latvia
September 20, 2011

ATLAS annual conference 2011
Landscape and tourism: The dualistic relationship
Valmiera, Latvia
September 21-23, 2011

ATLAS SIG meeting Tourism and Embodiment
Tourism and embodiment: The state of the art
Liverpool, United Kingdom
November 7-8, 2011

ATLAS 8th Business Tourism Conference
Sustainable Business Tourism - Why? How? To what extent?
Copenhagen, Denmark
December 4-6, 2011

ATLAS annual conference 2011
Re-creating the Global City: Tourism, Leisure and Mega-Events in the Transformation
of 21st Century Cities
London, United Kingdom
2012

ATLAS annual conference 2011

Landscape and tourism: The dualistic relationship

Valmiera, Latvia

September 21-23, 2011

Conference Themes

A sparsely inhabited paradise landscape is an unreachable dream to urbanised society. Yet a modern person when finding it cannot fully enjoy it. An exploited and abandoned landscape left short of man's care. Somewhere too densely populated territories, somewhere else incredibly scarcely inhabited. Landscape diversity as a unique local and national value which cannot be globally unified. Tourism as a rarely realised opportunity to solve many of these contradictions.

The conference will focus on four main themes

I. Landscape and Tourism: Sustainability and Planning Aspects

- Cultural, industrial, nature and urban landscapes in tourism
- Planning of tourism and landscape interaction

II. Landscape and Tourism: Generating Economic Value

- Interaction of tourism and landscape in mutual value generation.
- Landscape in tourism product development and marketing.
- Landscape in destination marketing.
- Landscape in meetings and incentives.
- Landscape and innovation in tourism products and transformative value.
- Landscape: facilitating clustering initiatives and economic growth.
- Assessing economic value of landscapes: approaches and methods.

III. Landscape and Tourism: Use of Information Technology

- IT application in forecasting traveller capacity and landscape sustainability.
- IT application in risk management: tourism flows and landscape degradation.
- IT application in tourism product development, marketing, production.

IV. Landscape and Tourism: Advances in Research and Education

Valmiera is the largest city in Vidzeme region. Population in Valmiera: 27 514. Valmiera is situated in the very centre of the Baltics, in the Eastern part of Northern Europe; 100 km from the capital city of Latvia -Riga, 120 km from Tartu, Estonia, 300 km from Helsinki, Finland, 390 kilometres from St. Petersburg, Russia and 470 km from Stockholm, Sweden. Through Valmiera meanders the picturesque River Gauja separating the city into two. Valmiera is developing as a business and administrative centre by investing in the development of culture, arts and sports. City motto is: Valmiera think and create. The dominating economic branches in Valmiera are the food industry (milk, meat, and grain), fibreglass production, metalworking, wood processing and furniture producing. The contributing factors for the development are educational institutions and, of course, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences founded in 1996. Now Vidzeme University of Applied Science offers studies to over 1400 students in bachelor and master's levels.

ATLAS SIG meeting Tourism and Embodiment

Tourism and embodiment: The state of the art

Liverpool, United Kingdom

November 7-8, 2011

Keynotes

Professor Tim Edensor, Manchester Metropolitan University
Dr Kevin Meethan, University of Plymouth.

We invite contributions from across the broad interdisciplinary field of tourism studies addressing the themes of:

- Tourism and embodiment
- Performance and performativity in Tourism
- Tourism and affect

Please visit the ATLAS homepage for more informatio at www.atlas-euro.org.

Rationale The interrelations between tourism, tourist practices and embodiment have grown in significance in terms of their contribution to the field of tourism studies to the extent that they can no longer be viewed as a critique of the discipline but as central to it. Embodiment is a significant and ever developing area of study that has become more prominent with the emergence of critical literatures of tourism studies, anthropology, sociology and other disciplines. Notions of an experience economy and the engagement of the senses in heritage and other touristic interpretation and encounters indicate the potential importance of informed discussion about embodiment to the tourism and leisure industries. The idea of embodiment encompasses a number of key areas of both scholarly activity and touristic practice, some with significant heritage in the social sciences and humanities. These include, but are not limited to, performance, the social body, gender, identities and experience. Tourism and embodiment also embraces, draws upon and contributes to current and emerging theoretical critique in tourism studies at the same time as being distinct within such a critique and having a more specific focus than for example critical approaches or mobilities paradigms.

Aims The main aim of the SIG would be to provide an umbrella for networking on an international scale for those interested in this area of tourism studies either in terms of current work and knowledge or for those interested in developing their work in these areas.

Objectives

- To foster international collaboration between scholars, researchers and practitioners concerning tourism and embodiment.
- To develop a focus on this area of study within ATLAS and the academic tourism environment.
- To exchange ideas and encourage scholarly activity in this area of tourism research.
- To co-ordinate and publish edited collections of material generated by the group.
- To encourage the exchange of best practice relating to learning and teaching about issues of embodiment within tourism studies.

ATLAS 8th Business Tourism Conference

Sustainable Business Tourism - Why? How? To what extent? Strategy and Implementation with Focus on Experiences from Practice, Education and Research

Copenhagen, Denmark

December 4-6, 2011

Why?

Sustainability including the economic, the social, and the environmental dimensions, is becoming more and more important for people and companies. For the last decade companies have discovered that being oriented towards sustainability can be an important parameter for image and thereby also for the bottom line. However, it is important that it is done in the right way if it shall be successful. The core element of the conference is dealing with this issue.

The recent United Nations Climate Change conference (COP15) in Copenhagen underlines the importance of the environment in our world today and stresses that actions have to be taken to preserve the environment so future generations will be able to enjoy it as well.

Many new and green initiatives have been undertaken to make the environment an important area of focus for business tourism, but there is still much to do as this field is rather unexplored. Strategy and implementation in tourism and especially in business tourism are areas that have to be researched to a much higher degree.

How?

The conference welcomes papers that have to do with strategy and implementation for how to deal with the greening process in theory, practice, and papers that can put light on experiences from already initiated investments and processes within this field. It is clear that also more education and research are needed, why papers on education and achievement of green skills within business tourism are welcome. New research on sustainable tourism in relation to business is also welcome.

To what extent?

It is of special interest to look at investigations of the extent to which green investments and green procedures have a positive pay-off concerning investments and running costs of achieving green business tourism. Furthermore, it is interesting to study concrete cases in relation to hotels and their offerings of sustainable business tourism products to customers. Also, transportation issues can be included.

ATLAS annual conference 2012
Re-creating the Global City: Tourism, Leisure and Mega-Events in the Transformation of 21st Century Cities
London, United Kingdom
September 2012

The hosting of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games in Stratford, East London, on the doorstep of the University of East London, offers a timely opportunity to reflect back upon earlier studies linking tourism and revitalisation of urban spaces, as well as to encourage critical reflection upon the complex relationship between mega-events such as (but not exclusively) the Olympics, sports, tourism and wider questions of urban regeneration, economic development. It will also invite reflections on the role of sustainability and social justice in the context of recreating the global city for the cultural and creative industries, and tourism, given the emphasis of the London Games on both the sporting legacy as well as sustainability. Once it has been built the Olympic Park will be one of the largest urban parks in Europe, whilst the London 2012 Games themselves, it is argued, will provide a much-needed stimulus for economic development, centred on the construction of new housing, transport improvements and world-class sporting and leisure facilities in what is one of the most deprived and neglected areas of East London. However, the task of evaluating the long-term effects of hosting a sporting mega-event such as the Olympics, as well as the long-term effect on tourism, heritage and the cultural industries, and indeed, urban regeneration, remains a complex and ideologically-contested endeavour.

Cities worldwide have increasingly become the focus for major sporting and mega-events whilst tourism is now a central economic and cultural anchor of the urban political economy in both the capitalist heartlands as well as new mega-cities in emergent states. The notion of the city and urban spaces as tourism products, subject to a range of branding and re-imaging strategies, has long been the focus of leisure and tourism studies since the early days of neoliberalism. However, contemporary urban tourism strategies and the London 2012 Games in particular are taking place in the context of the most severe crisis in the world economy, if not capitalism itself, since the 1930s. In addition, the spectres of both global terrorism and urban social unrest has seen cities increasingly subject to new political-economic regimes structured around discourses of security and austerity, issues which are not as unrelated as they might appear.

The character of such global, cosmopolitan cities and the very nature of urban life and the political economy of 21st century cities has thus changed considerably since the initial phases of tourism and urban regeneration began during the 1970s and 1980s, presenting scholars and policy-makers with a range of new challenges and issues to be explored. Whilst the regeneration and development of former industrial areas and deprived inner cities through tourism, leisure, and heritage projects, often linked to speculative property strategies, is a well established practice in the [former] industrial heartlands of North America and Europe, the scope and scale of such interventions in the urban economy has both intensified and widened as globalisation and neo-liberal politics have continued to restructure cities around the a new cultural and creative economic nexus. Moreover, the cities of the global 'south' and the new

'emergent economies', have also witnessed precipitous population growth, urban development, and economic change, in the context of rapid globalisation and trade liberalisation. This conference thus also invites analysis of the implications for tourism and in particular the dynamics of tourism and urban development beyond the advanced capitalist centres, worldwide.

The staging of the 2012 Games in East London intersects with a wide range of perennial concerns within leisure, tourism and heritage research. Contributions are therefore invited which will explore many different facets of 21st century leisure, tourism, heritage, creative industries, mega-cultural/sporting events, urban planning, economic regeneration and sustainability.

Workshop Themes

- **Political Economy of Tourism, Sport & Mega Events**
 - Tourism, leisure and mega-events 'after the crash'
 - Globalisation, neoliberalism and the urban creative economy
 - The *Disneyization* & Macdonalidization of urban leisure and tourism spaces
 - Policy-making and the politics of urban planning for tourism and mega-events
- **The Olympics and Tourism:**
 - Evaluating the impact(s) and legacy of the Olympic Games/mega-events
 - Tourism and the Olympic Games
 - Politics, international relations and the Olympic Games
 - Risk and security and mega-events/Olympic Games
 - The Olympic Games/mega-events & sustainability
- **Mega-Events, Tourism and Creativity**
 - Heritage, music and the creative industries and the re-shaping of the 21st century city
 - Urban design and re-modelling the urban environment for mega-events
 - Cultural planning for mega-events and urban festivals
- **Social Justice, Citizenship, Tourism & Mega-Events**
 - Mega-events, citizenship and community-based planning
 - Urban tourism, mega-events and social exclusion
 - Social tourism and the city: working class and ethnic minority leisure/sports
 - The social and cultural implications of mega-events and urban tourism/social change/gentrification
- **Managing Mega-Events and the Economics of the 'New' Urban Tourism**
 - Transport and managing mobility for mega-events and urban tourism
 - Human resources/employee relations in the new urban-creative industries
 - Entrepreneurship, SMTEs in the new urban economy
 - Innovation and strategic management for mega-events/tourism

- **Marketing, Place-Making and the Visitor Economy**
 - Mega-events and the representation of place
 - Mega-events and tourism marketing/destination branding
 - The urban visitor experience in cosmopolitan/multicultural cities
 - Cultural heritage and urban tourism

- **Sustainability and the Built Environment**
 - Revitalising derelict urban public spaces through tourism, heritage and mega-events
 - Health, wellbeing and urban regeneration
 - The greening of mega-events and urban tourism
 - Mega-events and/as sustainable tourism

ATLAS regional groups

ATLAS Africa

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Introduction

Currently, ATLAS Africa has a membership of over 40 institutions spread all over the world. However, due to geographic proximity, most of the ATLAS Africa membership is drawn from various African countries, especially, Eastern, Southern and Central Africa. ATLAS Africa has over the years achieved several accomplishments in the promotion of research initiatives in the field of tourism and leisure studies, curricula development, sharing of information through conference, symposia and workshops, students and staff exchange.

The following is a report on ATLAS Africa. The report is sub-divided into three sections, namely: Kampala 2011 Conference, Projects and forthcoming conference.

Kampala Conference

The bi-annual ATLAS–Africa conference was held in the Picturesque Capital City of Uganda, Kampala from 6th to 8th June, 2011. The theme of the conference was, “Sustainable Tourism and Environmental Education: A natural link”.

This conference turned out to be one of the most successful conference ever organized by ATLAS Africa with about 140 delegates in attendance. The delegates were drawn from different regions of the world including North America, Europe, China, South Asia and Australia with the majority of delegates coming from Africa. Moi University, Kent State and Makerere University had the largest number of delegates with each of this institution represented by over 10 individuals.

The conference was officially opened by Dr. Andrew Seguya, the Executive Director of Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), a quasi-governmental national organization mandated to manage wildlife parks and reserves in Uganda. The Director noted that the conference was being held at the appropriate time when UWA is initiating innovative wildlife conservation and management policies and plans that are aimed at establishing partnerships amongst diverse stakeholders in the public, private sector and local communities.

A very interesting feature of the Kampala 2011 ATLAS Africa conference was the number of postgraduate students from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania whose various researches covered pertinent issues on sustainable tourism, biodiversity

conservation and local community participation. The students presented their unique research findings in panel presentations. In the overall, the researches were in concurrence that for biodiversity conservation to succeed, it should be based on local people's cultural values and socio-economic interests. For instance, it was noted that in many parts of Africa, local people started conservation initiative when they linked it to their existing cultural and/or spiritual values.

However, on the negative side, it was noted that although people from academic and government institutions are usually well represented in most ATLAS Africa conferences, there is poor representation of people from the private sector and local community representatives.

It was agreed that in future ATLAS Africa conferences, concerted effort should be made to attract people from these sectors.

The conference was officially closed by the Executive Director of Uganda Tourist Board, Mr. Cuthbert Baguma who emphasized the role played by the tourism industry in Uganda's economy. Mr. Baguma particularly praised Makerere University for producing quality graduates in the field of tourism, wildlife management and hospitality management who are currently working in various capacities in the Ugandan tourism industry and conservation organizations.

As is the tradition of ATLAS Africa, at the end of the conference, delegates were taken in pre-arranged tours to Jinja and Entebe in Eastern Uganda. Here, the delegates had a life-time opportunity to participate in various recreational and sight-seeing activities in the serene environment such as boat-riding and water-rafting along the River Nile, and sampling the diverse cultural attractions of Eastern Uganda.

ATLAS Africa Projects

The membership of ATLAS Africa has been involved in a number of research related projects. One of the projects is the Delphe project which is funded by the British Council. The project involved research collaboration involving several Universities drawn from Africa and Europe. These institutions included the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Makerere University in Uganda, Moi University in Kenya, Sheffield Hallam University in the UK and Wageningen University in the Netherlands. The main goal of the Delphe project was to develop capacity in research on Pro-poor Tourism initiatives in East Africa, information sharing and influencing tourism policy in Eastern Africa and the world at large.

Most of the research initiatives have been centred on the famous Bwindi National Park in Western Uganda focusing on the relation between tourism, nature conservation, and poverty alleviation in areas adjacent to the park. One of the field trips also focused on Laikipia in Kenya. Also, most of the research work is being undertaken by PhD students drawn from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

Furthermore, the Delphe project was closely linked to joint activities of the Universities, the public and private sector organizations in Eastern Africa with an aim of developing a sustainable platform for continuous dialogue, educational and professional development. Through these initiative issues of employability and entrepreneurship for the tourism industry in East Africa were addressed.

Another project that has been undertaken by the ATLAS Africa membership is the ACP-EU Education (EDULINK) supported project. The project involved seven African and three European Universities. In addition, to the Universities that were participating in the Delphe project; the other Universities included Pretoria (South Africa), Gaborone (Botswana), Windhoek (Namibia) and Oulu (Finland). This African-European Academic Alliance for Sustainable Tourism Development, Environmental Sustainability and Poverty Reduction (3A-STEP) project aimed at increasing competitiveness and excellence of Southern and Eastern Africa Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in research and education as relates to sustainable tourism development, environmental sustainability and poverty reduction.

The 3A-STEP project established a research network consisting of 20 researchers drawn from 10 Universities and a team of 12 postgraduate students. Both Delphe and 3a-STEP projects have been concluded in July 2011. In the overall, these projects have strengthened research and educational capacities in Africa.

Forthcoming ATLAS Africa Conference

One of the key roles of ATLAS Africa and indeed the whole network of ATLAS is to promote education and research in tourism and leisure related studies through the holding of conferences, symposia and workshops. Towards that end, ATLAS Africa has over the years held 7 successful conferences in different African countries. Apart from this year's conference in Kampala, Uganda, ATLAS Africa has also held conferences in Mombasa in Kenya, Arusha in Tanzania, Pretoria in South Africa and Kampala. The proceeding of these well attended conferences have been published in several volumes under various titles.

In the meeting of the ATLAS Africa Board during this year's ATLAS conference several options were put forth as avenues for the next ATLAS Africa conference. These options including, Accra (Ghana), Kigali (Rwanda), Lagos (Nigeria) and the Gambia. It was agreed that the next ATLAS Africa conference will be organized in close cooperation with the Rwanda Tourism University College (RTUC) and held in 2013 in Kigali, Rwanda. Already the ATLAS Africa Board in collaboration with the ATLAS Secretariat have started looking for sponsors for the conference. In this regard, we hereby request members of the ATLAS fraternity willing to assist us in getting possible sponsorship for the Kigali conference to contact us via Email: info@atlas-euro.org.

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No reports available

ATLAS Special Interest Groups

Cultural Tourism Research Group

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The ATLAS Cultural Tourism Project has now been running for 20 years, and it is still generating key insights into the development of the cultural tourism market worldwide. The main activities of the project have focussed on the collection of data on the motivations and behaviour of cultural tourists in destinations and cultural sites around the world. To date, almost 50,000 visitor surveys have been contributed to the ATLAS database.

In 2010 and 2011 ATLAS members continued to monitor a range of sites, mainly in Europe. Data were collected from the city of Sibiu (Romania) as part of a long-term monitoring project looking at culture-led regeneration in the city. A report was recently released covering the 10 year project, which was also launched by Professor Ilie Rotariu, the Rector of Lucian Blaga University and the Major of Sibiu. The report is now available to download (see below). Other areas in which data has been collected recently include The Netherlands, Poland, Latvia, Serbia Hungary. The basic questionnaires for the ATLAS research can be downloaded from www.tram-research.com/atlas, where survey instructions and templates can also be found. The site also includes links to a wide range of ATLAS research publications.

Over the next few months Karolina Buczkowska of the University School of Physical Education in Poznan, Poland will be helping to prepare a review of the first 20 years of ATLAS research. This will include not just an analysis of major trends from the ATLAS data, but also a review of more qualitative developments in the field. This year the ATLAS data also helped to contribute to the Council of Europe review of the European Cultural Routes, the results of which they will publish shortly.

Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group

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Our SIG has been rather quiet of late – people busy with more pressing matters – but we hope to be active in the very near future and will hopefully be announcing details of our next meeting shortly. For the time being I'll share what I can, but have to warn you that some details might be subject to change.

If things go as planned we'll be having a SIG meeting in Ponte de Lima, Portugal, at the end of March 2012. We'll be piggy-backing another event taking place there and the organisers (via Carlos Fernandes) have offered to cover the local transfer costs, accommodation, and all meals, for 15 delegates. Two places will be taken up by Carlos, as local organiser, and myself as coordinator, so there will be space for 13 other delegates. You would be responsible for your own airfare and conference fee.

The theme will very much centre upon connections between food and place, and its relevance to tourism. When the call for papers is ready there will be more specific details but if you have any current or planned research focussing upon the connections between food identity and place identity, or gastronomic heritage, taking into account their connections to tourism, that is likely to be relevant. The conference title will be 'From Terroir to Tourism'.

Ponte de Lima is a particularly suitable destination for our theme as a range of restaurants in the town are famous in relation to a particular dish of the region - Arroz de Sarrabulho. If you are interested in knowing more go to:

http://lnu.se/polopoly_fs/1.30114!A%20Nuno%20vas%20Baptista%20de%20Vieira%20e%20Brito%20and%20G%20Candeias%20and%20E%20Oliveira%20and%20I%20M%20Alfonso%20and%20A%20P%20Vale.pdf

Apologies for the long URL!

As soon as details are finalised I will announce them, and send out the call for papers.

Business Tourism Research Group

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This year, members of the Business Tourism SIG have kept in touch through our LinkedIn Group network for Business Tourism Educators and Researchers, which currently has 231 members.

The highlight of the past 12 months was our ATLAS Business Tourism SIG conference which was held from 14 – 17 November 2010 in the beautiful resort of Estoril, Portugal. For the first time, extensive use was made of the social media for the marketing of this event, and as a result, we had a recording-breaking attendance of almost 50 attendees, mainly lecturers and researchers specializing in business tourism, but also business tourism practitioners, consultants and students. Attendees came principally from European educational institutions, but we also had delegates from Australia and Africa.

The staff of the Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hospitality Studies were our hosts, and they organized the social programme as well as the educational element of the conference. Both were excellent. The event began with a sightseeing tour of the Estoril coast and a networking welcome reception at the Casa de Santa Maria, a museum and art gallery. The conference kicked off with a keynote presentation from Jonathan Cohen and Steen Jakobsen, two of the people with responsibility for marketing Copenhagen as a business tourism destination; they spoke about the Copenhagen Sustainable Meetings Protocol, using the United Nations' COP15 conference in Copenhagen as a case-study, to demonstrate the ease and strategic value of combining sustainability and meetings management. Over the two days of the conference, a total of 13 papers were presented on the theme of business tourism, and these were accompanied by much lively debate.

One of the highlights of the conference was the gala dinner, sponsored by the local municipality and held in the sumptuous surroundings of a former palace. Various local politicians joined us for the occasion. Another was our tour of the award-winning Estoril Conference Centre the following day. The manager of this venue explained how it had been constructed according to strict sustainable principles and how its operations are managed in such a way as to have minimum negative impact upon the environment.

This year's ATLAS Business Tourism SIG conference, the 8th since our group was created, will be held in Copenhagen, from 4 – 6 December, and organised by the Centre for Tourism and Culture Management at Copenhagen Business School. The Call for Papers has already been made, and details are available on the ATLAS website. The conference social program will include a reception with the Lord Mayor of Copenhagen at the City Hall, and a visit to the Tivoli Gardens for the farewell dinner.

Spa and Wellness Research Group

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This is my last report as Co-ordinator of the Spa and Wellness SIG, as the new Co-ordinator will be Roos Gerritsma from INHOLLAND Hogeschool (Roos.Gerritsma@INHOLLAND.nl). However, I plan to remain in the group and to become involved in as many of the activities as I can. Thank you very much to Roos for agreeing to chair the group. She has been a keen member from the beginning and is very active in teaching and research in this field, and is especially knowledgeable about holistic and lifestyle-based wellness activities.

Most of our work this year has been virtual, as we have unfortunately been unable to meet up despite the best efforts of the members. Anja Tuohino from the University of Eastern Finland in Savollinna planned a very attractive SIG meeting for June 2011, but economic recession and lack of funding prevented most members from attending, therefore we had to cancel the meeting. However, Veronika Joukes is organising an international conference entitled 'From *Villes Thermales* to Sustainable Health and Wellness Destinations' from 13-15 October 2011 in Chaves, North Portugal, during which there will be a SIG meeting.

Although there has been no publication this year, members of the SIG who attended the Budapest TTRA conference in September 2010 were asked to submit expressions of interest for a new publication. Publishers recently seem to be less interested in edited volumes of case studies, therefore it is now likely to take the form of a second edition of Smith, M. K. & Puczkó, L. (2009) *Health and Wellness Tourism*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, for which many new case studies will be needed. The proposal will be submitted to the same publisher in autumn 2011.

A report was produced by the Nordic Wellbeing group in April 2011 supported by the Nordic Innovation Centre (NICe) (written by Anne-Mette Hjalager, Henna Konu, Edward Hujbens, Peter Björk, Arvid Flagestad, Sara Nordin and Anja Tuohino). Some members of the SIG took part in a Delphi research which provided some of the data for this report. The report is titled *Innovating and re-branding Nordic wellbeing tourism*. Nordic Wellbeing is a concept which was first coined by Julie Lindahl in Sweden (<http://www.nordicwellbeing.com/web>) to describe the elements which make the Nordic region such a 'healthy' place to live. This research focuses on the five Nordic countries and the resources, developments and images which are associated with or characteristic of Nordic wellbeing. These include nature, landscape, fresh air, clean water, healthy diet, locally produced food, outdoor recreation, as well as architecture, design, and technology. (For the full report see: http://www.nordicinnovation.org/Global/_Publications/Reports/2011/2011_NordicWellbeingTourism_report.pdf).

Recently a new Thalassotherapy sub-research group was established by Melanie Smith, which currently has twelve members from eight countries. The main aims of this group are as follows:

1. To analyse the development and regeneration of seaside from 'hedonism' (4 S's) to health tourism (especially from an economic perspective).
2. To explore which elements constitute the 'essence' or 'spirit' of Thalassotherapy (e.g. air, water, ocean, physical activities), including the practical implications of the therapy.
3. To assess the role that Thalassotherapy can/could play in the sustainable (re) development of seaside destinations.
4. To define critical success factors for a Thalasso seaside resort (including the sharing of good practice, networking, quality control, benchmarking, etc).
5. To evaluate where and under which circumstances Thalasso can work best, even in non-seaside areas.
6. 6) To examine the marketing of Thalasso treatments, especially in connection to other (regional) competences

In order to achieve these aims, we hope to undertake desk-based research, a global Delphi study, and some destination and site-based questionnaires. Funding may need to be secured for some of these activities, especially the latter.

ATLAS and the SIG will also become partners of the Wellness Tourism Worldwide (WTW) network (see <http://www.wellnesstourismworldwide.com>). We plan to contribute to online debates, join interesting research projects, and attend meetings where possible. SIG members already contributed to WTW's 4WR project – *Wellness: for Whom, Where and What*, which focused on the likely future trends in health and wellness tourism globally and in different regions of the world. (Phase One of the report can be found at the following address:

http://www.wellnesstourismworldwide.com/uploads/7/2/1/6/7216110/wtw_4wr_phase_one_web.pdf).

Pärnu College (University of Tartu) in Estonia where some members of the SIG have been invited lecturers and conference speakers is now in the second year of its success Masters Programme in *Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management* (see <http://wellnesseducation.pc.ut.ee>). This is the first Masters of its kind in Europe, so congratulations to them!

Please let us know if you are also running any interesting or new programmes in Spa, Health, Medical or Wellness Tourism, and do contact us if you would like to join the SIG, the Thalassotherapy group or have any ideas for research, curriculum development or hosting an event.

Tourism Geographies: Space, place and lifestyle mobilities

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Activities and events

The activities of the Tourism Geographies SIG have been largely focused on events since the group's inception in 2008 and this looks set to continue through the remainder of 2011 and into 2012.

IGU Cologne 2012

The TG SIG is co-organiser of a joint session of the IGU conference in Cologne, Germany with Jarkko Saarinen, chair of the IGU Commission of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change, entitled 'Tourism Mobilities and Urban Space'.

Abstract: Since the de-industrialisation of many urban areas in Western societies, tourism has become a tool for regenerating urban environments through the creation of urban tourism production and consumption spaces. Tourism is also increasingly used in place promotion and competition in urban contexts. Recently, tourism-related urban transformations (e.g. regeneration and gentrification) have been influenced by a wider set of tourism mobilities, creating a multitude of changes in urban settings and new ways of producing and consuming urban tourism and related activities. This session aims to address how current urban transformations and an emergent 'mobilities turn' can be spatialised in urban tourism geographies. Presenters may also address a need to develop new kinds of approaches, methodologies and theories in urban tourism studies. This session is co-sponsored by ATLAS Tourism Geographies Special Interest Research Group.

http://www.igu2012.org/frontend/index.php?page_id=378&ses_id=7f3a110453675adc81b6a893b4acbadf

Seattle 2011

In April 2011 the TG SIG collaborated with the Recreation, Tourism and Sport Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) to offer two joint sponsored sessions at the AAG 2011 Annual Conference in Seattle, WA. The two joint sessions were:

1. 'Cosmopolitan urban tourism: Gentrification and Heritage perspectives'
2. 'Contemporary tourism mobilities: The geographies of lifestyle migration'

The sessions were very well attended with eleven papers between them and some interesting discussions.

Please see the AAG conference website for details of this event: <http://www.aag.org>

Martinique 2011

The Tourism Geographies SIG collaborated in the organisation of the international conference on "*The Changing World of Coastal, Island and Tropical Tourism*", which was held in Martinique, French West Indies from 27 - 29 January 2011. For further information please visit the conference website at <http://www.geog.nau.edu/igust/fwi/>

Catalonia 2010

Following the first meeting in Bristol in Spring 2008, the second international seminar of the ATLAS Tourism Geographies SIG was hosted at the Rovira i Virgili University (Catalonia) on 14th October 2010. The one-day event is entitled *European Regional Perspectives on Tourism Geographies – Contrasting Research Approaches and Linguistic Traditions* and was held in collaboration with the Association of Spanish Geographers (AGE) (Working Group in Geography of Tourism Leisure and Recreation – Grupo 10) and the International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on the Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change.

Speakers included: Yolanda Pérez (Rovira i Virgili University), Diego López Olivares (Association of Spanish Geographers), C. Michael Hall (University of Canterbury, NZ), Remy Knafou (Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne), Carine Fournier (Université de Brest, France), Alessia Mariotti and Fiorella Dallari (Università de Bologna, Italy), Tim Gale (UWE Bristol, UK), Myriam Jansen-Verbeke (Catholic University Leuven, Belgium), Salvador Anton Clavé (Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Catalonia), Cianga Nicolae (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania) and Nicolai Scherle (Catholic University of Eichstätt, Germany).

For further information on this seminar, please visit the seminar website:
http://www.urv.cat/dgeo/gratet/seminaris/en_seminari_2.html.

A SIG members meeting was held during the day with 10 participants and the agenda included the future coordination of the SIG and the possibility of holding an event within the ATLAS 2012 London conference.

An edited publication with Emerald Insight is in development, due to be published in 2012 and edited by Julie Wilson and Salvador Anton Clavé.

ATLAS Tourism Geographies SIG appointed to the editorial board of the journal *Tourism Geographies*

The TG SIG has been appointed to the editorial board of the journal 'Tourism Geographies' edited by Alan Lew. The SIG coordinator will take the role of a 'Consulting Editor' for the journal and it is hoped that this will raise the profile / reputation of the SIG internationally.

In April 2011 JW attended an editorial board meeting of the journal representing the ATLAS TG SIG. If any members have any questions about the meeting please get in touch with JW.

Future development of the SIG

As of August 2011, the current coordinators have now passed three years in the role. As such, it is intended that a new coordinator(s) be appointed during 2011 from within the SIG membership. SIG members that are interested in taking on this role should contact the current SIG organiser at the address below.

Having organised and collaborated on five international events in the first few years, it is hoped that the SIG will now be able to develop some collaborative research activity between group members and look at joint publication opportunities.

In the end the SIG will not hold a meeting at the ATLAS 2011 conference in Latvia but there is a possibility of hosting a meeting within the 2012 London ATLAS conference.

For further information about the ATLAS Tourism Geographies SIG or to join the group please contact us (details below). We would be delighted to hear from any ATLAS members with an interest in the geographical / spatial / mobilities aspects of tourism or indeed from those who would like to be involved in this SIG in some way.

Events Research Group

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The ATLAS Events Special Interest Group was founded in 2010 and an initial informal meeting was held at the ATLAS Annual Conference in Cyprus in November. There was considerable enthusiasm expressed for developing a range of activities related to events research and education among the participants. The initial aims of the SIG were drawn up as follows:

- To develop and support transnational research on events
- To stage expert meetings and other information exchange activities related to events
- To produce publications of interest to Group members and to the wider academic and practitioner communities.

The first step in developing these activities was to convene an expert meeting on the Social Dimension of Events, which was held at NHTV Breda, the Netherlands on May 19th and 20th, 2011. The meeting was attended by a total of 21 delegates from five countries. A total of 11 papers were presented and there was considerable discussion of issues relating to research on the social dimension of events, particularly on issues of definition, measurement and implementation.

Following discussions among those present, a number of steps were also outlined for the further development of the group. One of the major areas of discussion was the potential for developing future research on the social dimension of events. Initial work in this area is anticipated to include the definition and measurement of social capital relating to events, The development of research instruments to monitor the social dimension of events and the development of a research database. In carrying forward the research it was also suggested that a number key areas should form the core of the research programme. These include:

- The use of events as a policy tool
- Events as a laboratory for innovation and creativity
- The role of events as spaces and nodes
- The event bidding process
- The anticipated outputs from these activities include publications, the development of a modular questionnaire for event research and the development of comparative case studies. Initial discussions about a volume on the social dimension of events for Routledge have already taken place with the series editors.

It is hoped that a second SIG meeting will be organised in Salento, Italy in the autumn of 2011.

Tourism and Embodiment Research Group

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We are pleased to announce the launch of a new ATLAS SIG namely Tourism and Embodiment (TESIG). The rationale, aim and objectives are detailed at the end of this message. In order to formally launch the SIG we are planning an event here in Liverpool for 7/8th November 2011: A one and half day symposium on the theme of "Tourism and Embodiment : The state of the art"

Keynotes

Prof Tim Edensor, Manchester Metropolitan University
Dr Kevin Meethan, University of Plymouth.

We invite contributions from across the broad interdisciplinary field of tourism studies addressing the themes of:

1. Tourism and embodiment
2. Performance and performativity in Tourism
3. Tourism and affect

Please visit the ATLAS homepage for more information at www.atlas-euro.org.

Rationale

The interrelations between tourism, tourist practices and embodiment have grown in significance in terms of their contribution to the field of tourism studies to the extent that they can no longer be viewed as a critique of the discipline but as central to it. Embodiment is a significant and ever developing area of study that has become more prominent with the emergence of critical literatures of tourism studies, anthropology, sociology and other disciplines. Notions of an experience economy and the engagement of the senses in heritage and other touristic interpretation and encounters indicate the potential importance of informed discussion about embodiment to the tourism and leisure industries. The idea of embodiment encompasses a number of key areas of both scholarly activity and touristic practice, some with significant heritage in the social sciences and humanities. These include, but are not limited to, performance, the social body, gender, identities and experience. Tourism and embodiment also embraces, draws upon and contributes to current and emerging theoretical critique in tourism studies at the same time as being distinct within such a critique and having a more specific focus than for example critical approaches or mobilities paradigms.

Aims

The main aim of the SIG would be to provide an umbrella for networking on an international scale for those interested in this area of tourism studies either in terms of current work and knowledge or for those interested in developing their work in these areas.

Objectives

- To foster international collaboration between scholars, researchers and practitioners concerning tourism and embodiment.
- To develop a focus on this area of study within ATLAS and the academic tourism environment.
- To exchange ideas and encourage scholarly activity in this area of tourism research.
- To co-ordinate and publish edited collections of material generated by the group.
- To encourage the exchange of best practice relating to learning and teaching about issues of embodiment within tourism studies.

No reports are available from the following SIGs:

Independent Travel Research Group

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Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Research Group

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Volunteer Tourism Research Group

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ATLAS new publications

Palmer R and Richards G. (2007, 2009, 2011)
European Cultural Capital Report. Part 1, 2 and 3.
Arnhem: ATLAS, Part 1: 70 pp. Part 2: 83 pp. Part: 92 pp.

Richards G. and Rotariu I. (eds) (2007, 2010, 2011)
– Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007. Sibiu: 63 pp. ISBN: 978-973-739-525-2.
– The impacts of the 2007 European Capital of Culture in Sibiu. Sibiu: 84 pp. ISBN: 978-973-739-954-0.
– Ten years of Cultural Development in Sibiu: The European Cultural Capital and Beyond. Sibiu: 86 pp. ISBN: 978-606-12-0104-2.

Duim R. van der, Zellmer K., Kloek M. and Saarinnen J. (eds) (2007, 2008, 2010)
Thematic proceedings of ATLAS Africa conferences
Volume 1: Tourism and Nature in Africa (160 pp.)
Volume 2: Local communities and participation in African tourism (117 pp.)
Volume 3: Aspect of tourism in Kenya (117 pp.)
Volume 4: Tourism, nature conservation and wealth creation in Africa (74 pp.)
Volume 5: New avenues for tourism and wealth creation in Africa (118 pp.)
Volume 6: Tourism for development: Environmental sustainability, poverty reduction and empowering communities (138 pp.)
Volume 7: Tourism, tourists and sustainability development in Africa (118 pp.)

Edwards J. and Vaughan R. (eds) (2010) *Destinations revisited. Proceedings of the ATLAS conference, Viana do Castelo, Portugal, 2007. Part 1,2,3 and 4.*
Part 1: Visitors
Part 2: Attractions
Part 3: Cultures and cities
Part 4: Destination management and Marketing

Smith M. and Onderwater L. (eds) (2010) *Mass tourism vs. niche tourism. Reflections 2010.* Arnhem: ATLAS, 115 pp ISBN: 978-90-75775-40-2.

Smith M. and Onderwater L. (eds) (2011) *Landscape and tourism: The dualistic relationship. Reflections 2011.* Arnhem: ATLAS, 63 pp ISBN: 978-90-75775-52-5.

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