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Well-Being and Quality of Life in Tourism

The Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research (ATLAS) was established in 1991 to develop transnational educational initiatives in tourism and leisure. ATLAS provides a forum to promote staff and student exchange, transnational research and to facilitate curriculum and professional development. ATLAS currently has members in about 60 countries. More information about ATLAS can be found at http://www.atlas-euro.org/.

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ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review
Volume 2016 – 3
Health, Wellness and Spa Tourism in the Balkans

Content

Preface

Last year, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of ATLAS, we presented the first 3 Volumes of our new periodical, ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review. With the launch of ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review we expect to have adequately addressed the many inquiries we received in the last few years about publication opportunities and to have added a new service to our members.

This first volume of 2017 on Health, Wellness and Spa Tourism in the Balkans focusing on local communities as a cardinal point of sustainable development in tourism in the sense of well-being and quality of life. It includes papers from the 2014 Budapest conference and is edited by Harald A. Friedl, Manuela Tooma and Kai Illing.

We would like to give a special thanks to Harald for taking the lead in this process.

René van der Duim
ATLAS chair

Introduction
Health, Wellness and Spa Tourism in the Balkans

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2017 has been declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the "International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development" in order to emphasize the potential of tourism to advance the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to the UNWTO, this initiative aims to support the transition "in policies, business practices and consumer behavior towards a more sustainable tourism sector". Once this transformation has been achieved, (sustainable) tourism will contribute to five of the 17 SDGs which are:

- inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG 8),
- social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction (SDG 8 and 1),
- resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change (SDG 13-15),
- mutual understanding, peace and security (SDG 16) and
- cultural values, diversity and heritage (SDG ?) (UNWTO, 2017).

On the first glance, this seems to be an interesting and valuable initiative, but after a second view, it raises many questions as there are some details in this declaration which seems to be – on closer examination – quite strange. For example, while four of those goals are main elements of the 17 SDGs declared by the United Nations General Assembly (2015, p.14), one will search unsuccessfully for the promotion of "cultural values, diversity and heritage". There is simply no such SDG! Certainly, one could argue that cultural values, diversity and heritage are vital attractions for tourists and so, in consequence, crucial for a flourishing tourism industry. The problem about this argument is its turnaround of the intention of both the SDGs and the declaration of the "International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development". Should they not help to make the world flourishing instead of making the tourism industry flourishing on the expense of the world?

This raises the very old and still current question about what "sustainable tourism" exactly means, after all. The term has been defined by Swarbrooke broadly as "tourism which is economically viable but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism will depend, notably the physical environment and the social fabric of the host community" (1999, 13). In contrast, Butler (1999) emphasized the ethical aspects of the ideology of sustainability by advocating the term "sustainable development in tourism" which critically puts the tourism-centric approach, focusing on the needs of the industry instead of those of hosts and guests, into question.

According to the concept of "language game" of the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, meaning is always related to the specific life form of those who are using a term (1968). In order to bring light into the discussion about the term

"sustainability" in the context of "tourism", Saarinen (2006) analyzed prevalent discourses about this topic. He finally could identify three main traditions of using the term "sustainability" which all represent different aspects and elements of the idea of sustainability on a local scale: 1. The "resource-based tradition" reflects the limits of nature and culture which have to be protected against irreversible changes caused by the exploiting tourism industry. 2. In the "activity-based tradition", the present and future importance of these resources is acknowledge as an essential economic capital for the industry's present and future development by capitalizing those resources in a balanced, non-consuming way. 3. Finally, in the "community-based tradition", sustainability is understood in the context of the wider involvement and empowerment of various actors, especially host communities, by taking into account their specific development needs in a local context.

The world has been changed profoundly since Saarinen's analysis, eleven years ago. Especially the dissemination of the mobile internet has challenged the culture of individual perception, collective communication and political interaction, in particular those of the "Millenials" (Karakas, Manisaligil & Sarigollu, 2015). Those socio-cultural dynamics have strong consequences for the ways of how to develop institutions, business companies and regions. There are strong signs that the unilateral top-down-approach refusing inclusive participation of affected stakeholders is losing both legitimacy and enforceability. The fundamental question is if we still can talk about sustainable tourism at all as long as a tourism policy is primarily connected with the needs of a certain industry instead of with the needs of concerned people? And how can we talk about sustainable tourism for development, as the UNWTO does, without addressing explicitly the SDG number three, ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages? Some go even further with their critics claiming a bottom-up interpretation of "well-being" and "development" as a condition to achieve long-term improvements in the livability of local communities (Buzinde, Kalavar & Melubo 2014).

This issue of the *ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review* is meant, in some way, to pick up this critics by focusing on local communities as a cardinal point of sustainable development in tourism in the sense of well-being and quality of life for all stakeholders. **Alan Clarke** and **Ágnes Raffay** from the University of Pannonia investigated new ways to evaluate the impacts of religious heritage tourism on touristic experience and the quality of life of the stakeholders involved both as hosts and guests. They identified specific values involved in this kind of tourism different to simple economic values, but nevertheless perceived as vital for the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities involved. To integrate those non-economic sources of economic value are advocated as important opportunities for developing integration and wellbeing rather than segregation, conflict and decline.

Ferdi Klaver reflected the impacts of the booming section of volunteer tourism to well-being for its stakeholders by deconstructing the most common arguments for this kind of tourism, the chances for intercultural learning within volunteer tourists and development aid to the host community. Klaver unmasks the common discourses about impacts on host communities, which are predominantly in development countries, as paternalistic tending to protect local stakeholders

against impacts which are judged as negative from a western perspective and without consulting the stakeholders. Therefore, Klaver advocates the strong inclusion of the perspectives of the host community during the monitoring and evaluation of volunteer tourist programs.

In the last paper, **Melanie Smith** and **László Puczkó** from the Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences are giving a systematic overview about the various ways in which tourism can contribute to quality of life and wellbeing of tourists and, to some extent, to local stakeholder. In their conclusion they are advocating the challenging development of tourism products which are both attractive and inspiring for customers in order to develop lifestyles with are healthier for oneself and also for the social and ecological environment.

Taken together, the contributions to this issue are delivering important arguments for a stronger consideration of both tourists AND locals perspectives in the research about sustainable tourism for development in the meaning of long-term wellbeing and quality of life of people and the planet we are depending on.

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Finding Ourselves:
Revaluing religion, spirituality and tourism

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It is central to the themes of this collection that tourism can be a powerful force for the improvement of the quality of life for both the tourist and the locals. This was one of the concerns which underpinned a two year SEE funded research project, RECULTIVATUR, which we have recently completed and which has sought ways to maximise the benefits of religious heritage tourism for both tourists and host communities. It also fits well with the questions that we have begun to raise in parallel work we have been doing on community festivals and events (Jepson and Clarke, 2015). In this chapter we want to focus on the best practice messages embodied in this research for evaluation and look at ways in which the sympathetic and sustainable development of religious tourism and cultural festivals can add value to the touristic experience and the quality of life of the stakeholders involved both as hosts and guests. This moves beyond economics and outlines alternatives definitions of and therefore source of value to the participants. We do not suggest that the spiritual return from the investment in religious heritage cannot be measured in economic terms as we recognise that these financial calculations are central to the sustainable continuance of the religious heritage sites. However we do not accept that economistic calculations can capture the value inherent in the religious and spiritual experiences we have been researching. The evaluation of these experiences and the management of the sites and events require a holistic approach that is sensitive to both the tangible and the intangible involved in the visitors' experiences and the everyday lives of the local communities.

Recultivator

The project was tasked to elaborate a tool for decision-makers and stakeholders that will be known as the SEE Religious Tourism Model (http://www.recultivatur.eu/) that provides step by step guidance to:

- identify the religious cultural potential of their area, analyzing, assessing and capitalizing previous experiences;
- identify synergies with other projects;
- address the relevant stakeholders;
- develop ideas in order to use the religious cultural assets to develop the region;
- be able to better manage these assets;
- find funding opportunities in order to realise their proposals;
- create sustainable solutions.

We offer these outlines to further the discussions we have had within RECULTIVATUR about the impacts of tourism beyond the initial concerns with the quantifiable assessments of direct expenditure and indirect economic impacts

(Clarke, 2013). Whilst recognising the refinements which have been made with computed general equilibrium, cost benefit analysis and ex post econometric analysis, we believe that the impacts of tourism and events have to be considered within a wider framework of analysis, recognising a different range of values. We have studied closely the works of Dwyer et al (2005, 2006) and understand the focus on the economy and the calculation of economic benefits. We have also considered the tool kits put forward for the evaluation of tourism and events, ranging from Crompton et al (2001) to Jackson et al (2005) and would like to offer a different perspective on this quantification of tourism and events by considering tourism and events in the context of the community in which these events take place.

We found that the RECULTIVATUR project worked through a comparison of religious tourism developments in the partner's countries to reveal the nature of the value in religious heritage tourism. It was important for us to question any simplistic notion of value as economic or financial return on the investments in the religious tourism developments. The heritages we were dealing with were central to the very identity of the communities they were located in and relevant to. These intangible values are a vital part of the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities. These intangible elements are more difficult to capture in quantitative measurements.

Community Festivals and Events

We propose a qualification of the approach to extend the concerns for costs and benefits to be identified in a way which moves beyond the directly quantifiable to include the social and community benefits, which allows us to study the tangible and the intangible interactions within the communities in which they take place in a qualitative way. The context for this is set within the discursive constructions of power within community festivals and events. Our previous research (Jepson and Clarke, 2013; Clarke and Jepson 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012 and Clarke, Jepson and Wiltshier 2008) has explored the creation and management of community festivals in regards how decisions are taken and how these impact on the wider production and consumption of festival events. Previous research and definitions of community festivals and events have tended to exclude the conditions that frame their production and therefore limit the consideration of the impacts of these events (Jepson and Clarke, 2013; 2015).

Researching cultural festivals reveals the existence of a multitude of stakeholder relationships, given meaning through different cultures. The factor which holds our analyses together is that the stakeholders are all influenced by power, which in turn impacts on how a festival is constructed, delivered, and consumed. Church and Coles (2007) identify that power does not simply exist, but has to be created and this is done through the relationships between the stakeholders. In the case of a community festival or a religious heritage site, this can be thought of as the 'social production of power' which also includes the spatial dimensions within the notion of 'sites of power' (Westwood, 2002, p. 135). The focus in the current phase of our research focuses on how power is manifested and constructed in community festivals and events (Law, 2004). This paper takes an ethnographic approach (Corbin Dwyer, and Buckle, 2009; Holloway, Brown, and Shipway, 2010; Van Maanen, 2011; Vaughan, 2004).

We propose a qualification of the approach to extend the concerns for costs and benefits to be identified in a way which moves beyond the directly quantifiable to include the social and community benefits, which allows us to study the tangible and the intangible interactions within the communities in which they take place in a qualitative way. We want to be able to find ourselves in our research and our experience, not just track where our money goes to.

The analysis elaborates and explores the ways in which the construction and presentation of religious tourism are shaped by the different presentations of power within and surrounding the religious tourism development and festival organisation. The framework for the analysis (Lewis, 2003) is set within the context of a Foucauldian paradigm (Foucault, 1988; Wright, 2002). However, the discourses being deployed in the context of the religious and spiritual moments within an attraction, monument and/or festival are shown to draw on and deploy theoretical concepts from Weber (Hamilton, 1993), Gramsci (1976), Gray (1985) and Clegg (1989). It is important to note that in the project, we were not dealing with only one religion but were concerned to highlight the implications for the spiritual value in any religious activity.

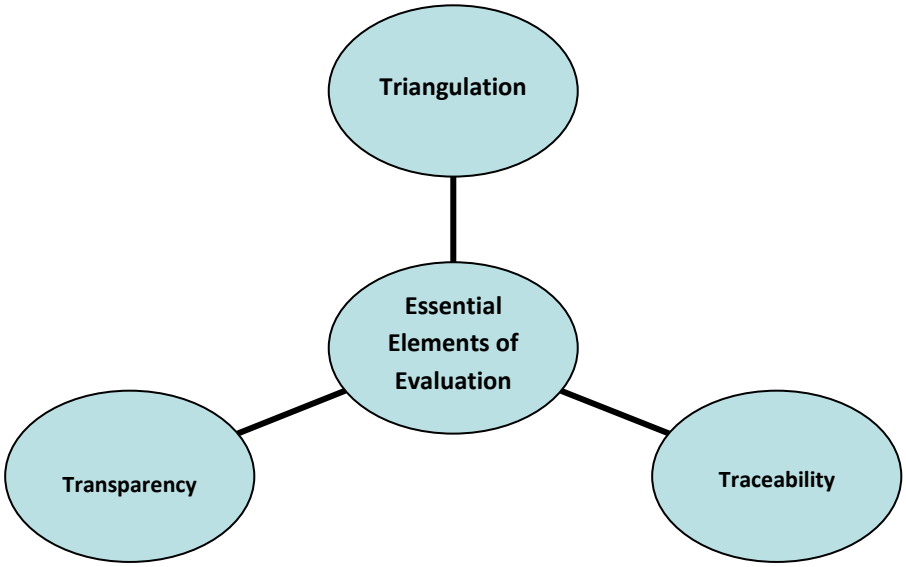
Our attempt to find a way of qualifying the accounts of the parameters of the impacts of events suggests that community factors should be considered as highly significant in the holistic evaluation of the religious and the spiritual. Our findings suggest that power is manifest in a variety of forms and that there are several seats of dissension and protest as well as consensus. There are evidences of formal and informal approaches to power within the organisation of the festival. Our analysis suggests that the power relationships are mediated through claims to and resistances to the discourses of professionalism, managerialism, volunteerism and enthusiasm, but these managerial elements are shaped by a perspective which also values the input of religiousity and spirituality. We did not see ourselves as primarily economic agents in this research, although we did advise managements and communities about the sources of funding to promote religious heritage. The project' primary focus was on the sustainability of the religious developments and therefore directly concerned with the value of those developments to the visitors and the local communities. We were therefore considering the impacts of the developments and in some cases the lack of development on the quality of life of those on both the supply and demand sides of the situations. The discourses of religiousity and spirituality often took the centre stage and local developers had to work hard to find an acceptable way of expressing the values of the developments within the managerial forms of the bid documentation and management plans for the sites which were often required.

The reports arising from the project suggest that religious heritage sites, just as are community festivals, are complex sites of power relations (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland, 2006) and involve contested benefits. There are multiple stakeholders, constructing complex and challenging relationships within and around the festival sharing (or not sharing) in the benefits that flow from the development, implementation and consumption of the events. There were scenes of both reinforcement and resistance which we explored to highlight the discursive constructions of the development situations. Our analyses offer a dynamic reading of the discourses in play and their claims and counter claims to

legitimacy within the religious heritage and festival organisation experience (Tsolidis, 2008). The developments are shaped by the articulation of different discourses, creating different bases for value within the developments and their managements (Clarke,2013).

We see value here transcending the sense of economic value but recognise the importance of the financial dimensions. The quality of life for religious tourists and their host communities, be these religious or secular communities (and mostly they will be both), draws not only on the economic but the intangible spiritual and cultural value added by the visit. The use of ethnographies highlights multiple sets of data relevant to the communities. We have continued to work with the the Three Ts model developed in our earlier studies.

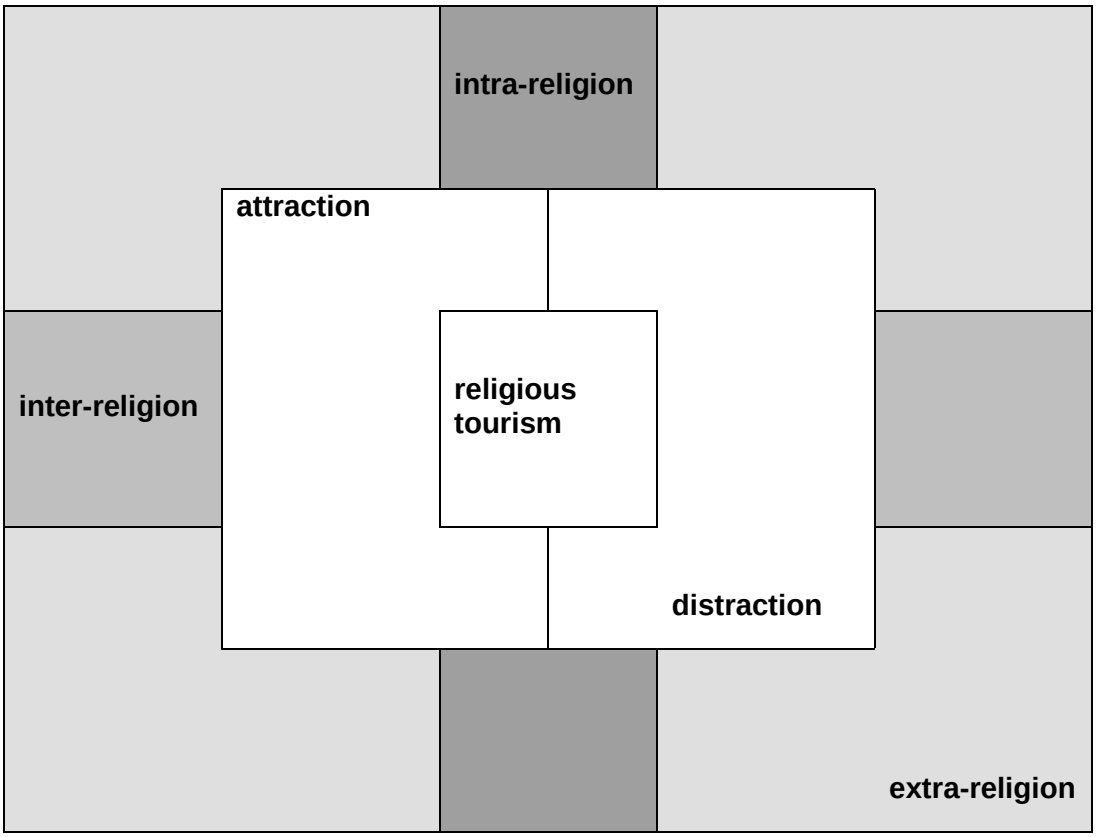
Figure 1: The three Ts of evaluation (adapted from Clarke et al 2009: 436)



Triangulation required our accounts to be based on more than one source, so we could map the discourses in play from a variety of points within the development. A statement by a religious leader was strong but the same statement supported by others was much stronger. Similarly in some cases the 'official' account provided by a senior religious figure did not match with those from other members of the development team and these discrepancies had to be accounted for. Here transparency helped as we could clearly see who was saying what and when. Moreover traceability ensured that statements and ideas are attributable to stakeholders who own them. Therefore the three Ts that were developed to ensure rigorous evaluation also underpin our research into the development statements themselves.

Our argument in this chapter is to elaborate the differences between simple capitalistic values and cultural values in tourism development. This will help optimise the value of tourism development in a non-conflictual way not only in religious communities but also throughout tourism communities and host communities. Focussing on the core values of religious heritage, we argue that these core practices enshrined in the pursuit of religious heritage and/or spirituality can be seen to be enhanced by linkages to elements from the tourism system, even those these service developments are premised on a different notion of value. Since not all elements of the tourism system constitute an additional benefit, it is possible to propose a model whereby religious tourism is surrounded by the notion of attraction, derived from the concept familiar to tourism researchers, with amenities, attractions, and accommodation included (see Figure 2), but also introducing the notion of distraction, defined as those parts of the wider tourism system that do not address directly the core concerns of the religious heritage. We have heard many accounts of how the commercialisation of the site, through adding a shop and/or a café, has raised the economic value produced via the site but has compromised and devalued the religious value to be gained from a visit.

Figure 2: A model for the future development of religious tourism (developed from Clarke, 2013).



The particular issues of the sustainable re-creation of experience and commercialisation of contexts had to be articulated. It was argued by many of our respondents that the religious value cluster was highly sustainable as it had endured centuries of change. Therefore, it followed, that the values would look after themselves no matter what the developers did. RECULTIVATUR articulated a different model, where the dangers of commercialisation and commodification were brought to the fore and the dangers of selling the heritage short were confronted in order to reveal the need to defend those non-economic sources of value that reside in the religious heritage and spirituality. Quality of life was seen to be determined not only by levels of income (and expenditure) but also by the levels of calmness and serenity. Religious heritage and spirituality could be seen to be outperforming its economic counterparts as the developments were evaluated within a holistic framework. Where we were looking for ourselves was not in the cash registers or bank accounts of the developers but in the spirit of their endeavours.

The religious organisations require access to capital to preserve and maintain the religions' heritages and even the entrepreneurs working in the area of spiritual retreats identified finance as a crucial issue. We found that much could be done by operating within the religious heritage to help individuals to find themselves through experiences valued in terms of religiousity and spirituality rather than economics. The quality of life of the tourists/visitors and the local communities were enhanced through the sense of integrity found within the best examples of development. It could be seen to be ebbing away where developments had been advanced with no sympathy to the local value systems. We are, therefore, convinced that we will find ourselves at home in those projects which have been designed, implemented and managed in a holistic and sensitive way that recognised the values of religiousity and spirituality. We will find ourselves through open evaluation not through econometrics as the experiences we are considering are not necessarily subject to economic rationality. We may be difficult to pin down and to measure but our presence is valuable and our experiences have meanings. They are therefore a necessary part of the accounts of these experiences and locate the organisers, the local communities as well as ourselves. There are opportunities for developing integration rather than segregation—for bringing the sense of the religious and the spiritual into the experience domains of other types of tourism—of course, as long as the core values of our religious heritages are observed and protected.

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Impact and Well-being in Volunteer Tourism. Reflection on scientific Presumptions

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to reflect on two presumptions regarding the two most important goals in volunteer tourism: intercultural learning within volunteer tourists and development aid to the host community. These presumptions raise uncertainties whether volunteer tourism is a path to well-being for its stakeholders.

Design/methodology/approach – Research on volunteer tourism and related subjects have been reviewed. Moreover, philosophical notions of Appiah's cosmopolitanism, John Stuart Mill's well-being and Foucault's *épistémè* are dovetailed with the reflections.

Findings – The most reserved conclusion is that there is no decisive reason to assume that volunteer tourism is not a path to well-being for its stakeholders, but there is also no reason that it is. The boldest conclusion is that there are many imaginable opportunities for volunteer tourism to become a path to well-being.

Research limitations/implications – Two research limitations are that it is a review and not all articles on volunteer tourism have been read. The implications revolve around inviting concepts of other research areas such as cultural and social psychology, anthropology and development studies into the field of volunteer tourism.

Originality/value – This paper uses the aforementioned, but yet unused philosophical notions to examine two fundamental presumptions in volunteer tourism research.

Introduction

A 2008 study by Tourism Research and Marketing estimated that approximately 1.6 million people participated in volunteer tourism projects annually. The expenses have been between 832 million and 1.3 billion pounds. The number of volunteer tourists is rising and is now estimated at 10 million annually (McGehee, 2014).

Volunteer tourism was originally initiated by non-profit NGOs. These filled in the gap of a growing demand from developing countries for a more meaningful holiday in developed countries instead of the traditional experience of a holiday (e.g. Guttentag, 2009; Keese, 2011; Mostafanezhad, 2013; Perold et al., 2012). The purpose of non-profit NGO projects has become multi-faceted: not only giving development aid, but as well the building of international understanding and intercultural learning (Palacios, 2010: 864).

Much of the research in volunteer tourism initially took an advocacy stance, defining the phenomenon and promoting it is an ideal activity with few negative impacts. The advocacy platform has shifted to a more cautionary platform, outlining the potential pitfalls and negative impacts of volunteer tourism (Wearing & McGehee, 2013: 122). Namely, volunteer tourism has developed further and, concurrently, has become complicated. Organizations with multiple purposes nowadays offer volunteer tourism programs: NGOs, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, social enterprises, academic institutions and religious organizations (Sherradan, Lough & McBride, 2008; Taplin, Dredge & Scherrer, 2014).

This broader palette of organizations has led to critique. Some, predominantly commercialized, programs are said to have become too much "volunteer tourist-driven" instead of the original "community demand-driven". Critics argue this is due to the payments of volunteer tourists, with the assumed result that the needs of volunteer tourists are the priority. In other words, the increase of (more commercialized) volunteer organizations seems to have shifted the purpose too much from development aid to the host community into building international understanding and intercultural learning within the volunteer tourists (Lough, 2011; Lough & McBride, 2014; Palacios, 2010; Wearing & McGehee, 2013).

There are doubts whether or not development aid goals can be achieved by the primarily young and unskilled volunteer tourists. What is more, there are also uncertainties whether building of international understanding and intercultural learning are even attainable (Palacios, 2010; Simpson, 2004; Sherradan, Lough & McBride, 2008). Particularly short-term projects of less than ten weeks are open to debate, while it is these particular projects that are in increasing demand (Hammersley, 2014; Raymond & Hall, 2008). The assumption is that the shorter the time spent by the volunteer tourists, the less help is offered, which in turn leads to less interaction with the host community and fewer (intercultural) insights.

In his book *Cosmopolitanism*, *ethics in a world of strangers* Appiah explains that if one is to say that "people cannot learn from one another what is right to think and feel and do, then conversation between people will be pointless. Relativism of that sort is not a way to encourage conversation; it is just a reason to fall silent" (Appiah, 2006: 31). One of the scenarios of what the future of volunteer tourism will be like, can become reality: "getting told that programs make no impact at all dampens the popularity of volunteer tourism as an appropriate course of action in the journey toward global equality" (Ong et al., 2014: 687).

The goal of this position paper is to contribute to the question what the impact and utility is of volunteer tourism: is volunteer tourism indeed a path to well-being for its stakeholders? A path implies a process, meaning that a difference or impact is ought to be made. That is why this paper will reflect on the assumptions that volunteer tourism does not have an impact. It deconstructs the most silencing arguments regarding the most important goals in volunteer tourism: intercultural learning within volunteer tourists and development aid for the well-being of the host community (Palacios, 2010).

The first part of this paper will reflect on the assumptions as to why intercultural learning within volunteer tourists would not be possible. Next, John Stuart Mill's definition of well-being be introduced; it is used to reflect on the assumptions why volunteer tourism would not contribute to development aid goals and by this means would not contribute to the well-being of the host community. Finally, suggestions for future research are provided in order to contribute to scientific platform agenda of volunteer tourism (Wearing & McGehee, 2013: 122). These suggestions abide by the implications of the current manifesting Foucaultian *épistémè*.

Part 1 - Intercultural learning within the volunteer tourists

'No impact on intercultural learning within volunteer tourists because of neocolonialism'

The core presumption of the following authors is that intercultural learning within volunteer tourists is hindered, because some types of volunteer tourism programs represent a form of neoliberalism and stimulate neocolonialism. The unequal power relation between developing countries and developed countries is not weakened in this way, but, on the contrary, further strengthened.

Some show that the sending organizations, even prior to arrival, influence the attitude of volunteer tourists towards the host community through the use of framing. This is accomplished by providing a simplistic representation of the host community as Them, who are chronically in need and can only be helped externally by Us. This help, despite age, experience and skills, is primarily built on Our good, enthusiastic intentions and vigor (Raymond & Hall, 2008; Simpson, 2004). Due to this, cultural stereotypes are reproduced. In other words: elements of Bourdieu's habitus are reproduced, "an embodied disposition that is the outcome of being embedded in a particular context" (Snee, 2013: 146).

An embodied disposition like this is difficult to change, which may entail that during the programs a hierarchical and unequal relation comes into being between the volunteer tourists and the host community. Volunteer tourists are then free to do whatever they like (Sin & Minca, 2013). This becomes even more problematic in combination with aid dependency, because the host community does not dare to set boundaries anymore: "how to bite off the hand that feeds you" (Sin, 2010: 986)? In addition, the host community may forget their very own boundaries, because the hierarchal and unequal relation has become an embodied disposition for them too. The volunteer tourists not only think that they know and can do better in this way, but the host community as well (Perold et al., 2012). This makes them an accomplice to the preservation of an unjust, hierarchical and unequal relation.

This reproduction of Us and Them goes even further, because upon their return the volunteer tourists play a crucial role in the construction and representation of Them to other members of Us back home (Hammersley, 2014). This and more has tempted Mostafanezhad (2013) to state that volunteer tourism contributes to the expansion of neoliberalism, because its logic is penetrating even deeper, namely into our everyday lives and interactions.

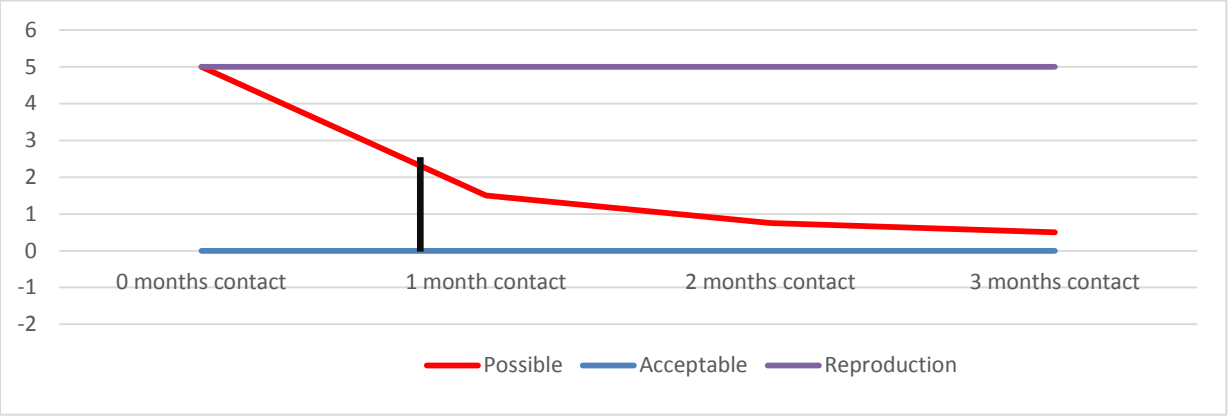
Reflection on the neocolonialist Us and Them thinking

First of all, as a side note, it has to be remarked that if we fully accept the reasoning of cultural reproduction, then it might be in fact sustainable for the organizations. According to the linear extension of the reasoning, the new volunteer tourists will be infinitely attracted to the constant confirmation of 'Them in need' and 'Us who can help'. However, there are more important stakeholders to look at: the host community and the volunteer tourists.

Next, what stands out in every of aforementioned research is that the same methodological structure is applied: a western, neocolonialist rationale is the point of departure and functions as the hypothetical truth. This truth is then tested at stakeholders in the actual world of volunteer tourism, namely at the people of the volunteer organization, host community or at the volunteer tourists. Resulting, the presumed ratio gets confirmed in different situations by different stakeholders.

However, in fact, these results are based on a single measurement at one stakeholder in one actual situation. How then can you know, for every individual, that a volunteering experience completely reproduces the very same Us and Them? Could it also be possible that the volunteer tourists had an even more persistent neocolonialist Us and Them before the volunteering experience?

Figure 1: Neocolonialist Us and Them within volunteer tourists



These questions are illustrated in figure 1. The y-axis ascribes imaginary values to the neocolonialist Us and Them within volunteer tourists. The value 0 symbolizes a made-up acceptable, equal level of Us and Them. The value 5 symbolizes the presumed reproducing, unequal, neocolonialist Us and Them within volunteer tourists, which impedes their intercultural learning.

The black line in figure 1 illustrates the methodological structure of the aforementioned research at a randomly moment. Granted, it can be concluded that the measured Us and Them is not at the acceptable, equal level (blue line). Apparently, the neocolonialist Us and Them does not melt like snow in the sun, as predicted and probably hoped. However, based on the used methodological

structure, it cannot be concluded that a pure reproducing effect of the neocolonialist thinking has taken place (yellow line), because a reduction is also possible (red line).

A better methodological structure to measure an individual process is using either 1) a within-subject design, which measures and compares a variable at an individual before and after an experience, or 2) a between-subject design, which measures and compares a variable between two groups (Gleitman, Reisberg & Gross, 2007: 21). The only research in volunteer tourism that uses a between-subject design is the 2011 research of Lough.

In this research, Lough compares the extent of intercultural learning within volunteer tourists who participated in either short-term or long-term programs. Although long-term programs have bigger and more effects, both short-term and long-term programs increase the intercultural competences of the volunteer tourists. This aligns with the conclusion of the impressive 2006 meta-analysis of Pettigrew and Tropp that intergroup contact *an sich* reduces the prejudices towards another group, which, in turn, may increase the intercultural competence.

By conclusion, as long as there is intergroup contact between the host community and volunteer tourists, every volunteer tourism program may lead at least to this mild form of intercultural learning. This is in accordance with Bourdieu's habitus, as quoted above by Snee (2013). It appears to be a viscous concept; it moves very slowly, but it moves indeed. The red line in figure 1 is probably closer to the truth than the presumed yellow line: slow reduction instead of full-scale reproduction.

Part 2 - Impact on development aid and well-being of the host community

'Low or negative impact volunteer tourists on the host community'

Volunteer tourism is seen as a variant of tourism, despite the point that volunteer tourists may not actually perceive themselves as tourists, but as volunteers (Mostafanezhad, 2014). Namely, the impact of volunteer tourists is compared with long-term goals of development aid and its structural support of the host community, regarding sharing knowledge, skills and technology (Sherradan, Lough & McBride, 2008).

Projects have a low impact in the host communities when the young volunteer tourists do not have enough knowledge, reflection capacity (Simpson, 2004), appropriate skills and qualifications (Raymond & Hall, 2008; Wilson, 2015), volunteering and international experience, time to get involved with the locals, or altruistic intentions (Palacios, 2010: 863). "Especially in humanitarian aid projects, less-skilled volunteer tourists, in comparison to older and trained ones, may have fewer advantages, and in fact may be a liability" (Sherradan, Lough & McBride, 2008: 399).

The impact can also be negative, because volunteer tourists might have more objectives related to the Self than to development aid (Guttentag, 2009; Sin, 2009). For example, young volunteer tourists can be dissolute and show

inappropriate behavior in villages due to the alcohol or sex with local men, resulting in disturbed relationships with their women (Sin & Minca, 2013).
Sometimes negative impacts can also be the result of the volunteer tourists' good intentions. Sin (2010: 990) describes a case how volunteer tourists had donated solar panels to the school of their project. This caused friction, because the chief of the local village felt that his authority was undermined, because another person than him owned the solar panels. Another example is the "demonstration effect": casual displays of wealth by visitors in areas with low levels of income can accentuate cultural as well as economic differences between a visitor and a resident, leading to jealousy or aspirations, particularly in younger members of the resident community, which may be impossible to achieve (Guttentag, 2009: 547).

The question rises what the effect is of the infiniteness, which is implied by the right to travel as a human right. People may go where they want, but this could mean that human rights of others are forgotten (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2013). Moreover, what if volunteer tourism does not have any impact on the development of the host community, but only on intercultural learning within volunteer tourists? Should alternatives for increasing intercultural learning be considered, such as stimulating contact of people at school with people from other cultural backgrounds (Soria & Troisi, 2014)? Is volunteer tourism a path to sustainable well-being or should other paths be considered?

Reflection: aligning well-being and impact

The question to which this part boils down to is how ethics can be applied in a world of strangers (Appiah, 2006)? What are the parameters along which it can be decided whether the impact of one on another is positive or negative?

First of all, it is vital to question the alleged negative impacts on the host community due to the demonstration effect (Guttentag, 2009). It implies that if someone is simply 'out there', that it might cause problems. This does not appear to be a pragmatic point of departure, because how can this person change his Being? Furthermore, it does not correspond with the more positively described "novelty effect": because the volunteer tourists are different and interesting, people from the host community attend more often in different NGO projects and programs (Zahra & McGehee, 2013: 34). Being a volunteer tourist leads in this case to an increased chance of impact on the host community. Still, despite the apparent paradox of these two effects, both contribute to the understanding as to how volunteer tourists can impact the sustainable well-being of the host community. The reason why will be explained now.

In their 2008 review Sherradan, Lough and McBride call for more research including the perspectives of the host community. Nevertheless, only few researches have explicitly incorporated perspectives from the host community (Guttentag, 2009; Klaver, 2015; Sin, 2010; Sin & Minca, 2013; Zahra & McGehee, 2013) or from host organizations (Benson & Blackman, 2011; Klaver, 2015; Lupoli & Morse, 2015; Perold et al., 2012; Taplin, Dredge & Scherrer, 2013; Wilson, 2015). This is too little to disqualify the impact of all forms of volunteer tourism. I argue that, essentially, research that includes perspectives of

the host community can determine what the impact of volunteer tourism on the host community is.

One of the most influential works on the development of cosmopolitanism is the 1859 *On Liberty* of John Stuart Mill (Appiah, 2006). Mill explains in this book that free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being:

> *Mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good. (…) He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him [and in faculties like perception, judgement, discriminate feeling, mental activity and even moral preference], has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation'* (Mill, 2008: 65-67).

In other words: how can be known what the values are of others if only own values are used to judge on others? At best, filling in that volunteer tourists of developing countries have low or negative impact on people from developing countries, without consulting the latter, resembles a paternalistic form of pity. Pity means that one person wants to compensate the assumed lack of skills of another person. Anderson (1999) adds to Mill's argument and states that this type of assumed pity is incompatible with respecting the dignity of others, because the individual freedom to make own choices is undermined. Is it not allowed for the host community to determine on their own whether or not young, so-called unskilled volunteer tourists have impact on them?

Applying Mill's definition of well-being means the following for the different stakeholders:

- Volunteer tourists cannot determine on their own if and how they impacted the host community (Hammersley, 2014; Simpson, 2004).
- Organizations cannot determine on their own what their impact is or the impact of volunteer tourists without consulting the host community. They may also be inclined to this, by the use of "hidden facts" and deceit, for personal economic gains (Benson, 2015; Klaver, 2015: 196).
- Researchers cannot determine on their own that volunteer tourists have none, low or negative impact on the host community, without verifying this in the host community.

To conclude: to determine the impact of volunteer tourism, and possibly even enlarge the well-being of the host community, it is crucial to treat the host community equally and to consult them on these issues.

Part 3 - The scientific agenda in volunteer tourism

Scientific development of volunteer tourism

This third part will elaborate on the scientific agenda in volunteer tourism. First, it will be described how volunteer tourism has developed itself as a research area. Insights from the current manifesting Foucaultian *épistémè* will be intertwined with a discerned development of volunteer tourism. The reason why Foucault is

used, is because, besides understanding the current path in volunteer tourism, it also allows to pave the scientific road ahead. The next section will provide suggestions that abide by the Foucaultian implications of the volunteer tourism's development. However, before that to happen: where are we in volunteer tourism?

To start with, in their 2013 review Wearing and McGehee explained how much of the research in volunteer tourism initially took an advocacy, later a cautionary and now an adaptancy stance. The first stance defined and promoted volunteer tourism as an ideal activity with few negative impacts; the second mapped potential pitfalls and negative impacts; the third and last pursues best practices, by exploring ways to minimalize negative and maximize positive impacts.

By using Foucault's 1966 *The Order of Things* and the current manifesting western *épistémè*, these stances can be understood, *mutatis mutandis*, as logical maneuvers, as these are phases in the development of volunteer tourism as a newly established and own research area. This *épistémè* explains how the human being in the western culture has taken the form of both the object of thinking and object of knowing (Foucault, 2012: 406).

At first, the research that took the advocacy stance presented the Other as an object of Our thinking: They are equal to Us, which means the same treatment as We give to Us, and thus should They be helped accordingly. Research in the cautionary stance called for more research that would include host community perspectives, which expresses the doubt whether or not volunteer tourism had impact. With this, it questioned non-prominently if our current *épistémè*, which considers the human being (both Us and Them) as the object of thinking and the object of knowing, corresponded with the way research in volunteer tourism at the time was positioning the Other as a human being, namely only as the object of Our thinking. In other words: They (host community, in need of development aid) and Us (volunteer tourists, in need of intercultural learning) were the object of thinking, but only We were the object of knowing (what the impact of volunteer tourism is).

This train of thought will unfold itself to a more refined integration towards the process of human equality by accepting 'They in developing countries' as fellow-human beings of the 'western Us'. In the field of development and volunteer tourism, They will not only be the object of Our thinking, but the object of Our knowing too. That is why I argue that, essentially, research that includes perspectives of the host community can determine what the impact of volunteer tourism on the host community is. Seen from the *épistémè* perspective, Appiah's cosmopolitanism and Mill's well-being are simply means, though insurmountable, to embark the next phase of volunteer tourism.

Suggesting the scientific agenda

One way to continue doing research in volunteer tourism is to understand under which conditions the reflective capacity of volunteer tourists can be improved (Hammersley, 2014; Lough, 2011; Lough & McBride, 2014; McGehee, 2014; Simpson, 2004; Snee, 2013; Zahra & McGehee, 2013). Indeed, reflection on behavior could stimulate intercultural learning within volunteer tourists and it

could probably increase their contribution in the programs. It would allow us to understand more about Us in relation to Them.

In part 1 it is suggested to do research with a different methodological structure, namely the within-subject and between-subject design. Additionally, defining intercultural learning makes it even more challenging to do research on it. What is intercultural learning exactly? Culture and value (ex)change (Sin, 2009) are ambiguous concepts that should be used cautiously (Klaver, 2015). Which definition of culture and value is referred to? And subsequently: how does learning works on an individual level?

Culture is an umbrella term (Heine, 2012). That is why research in volunteer tourism on intercultural learning would arguably thrive by doing structural research to small components of 'culture', like more tangible, social psychological concepts, such as intergroup prejudices (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

To take one of the many possible cases in point: what is the difference between the reduction of intergroup prejudices between one and two weeks contact, between one and three weeks contact, between two and four weeks contact, et cetera? Of course, long-term programs may cause deeper and more acceptable forms of Us and Them and cultural awareness (Lough, 2011; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Sherradan, Lough & McBride, 2008). But what if a major reduction takes place in the first three weeks? The increasing demand for short-term programs by volunteer tourists may then not be a concerning development (Harmmersley, 2014; Simpson, 2004), but should be encouraged. The collective accumulation of slightly smaller intercultural and individual changes, but along with a larger amount of volunteer tourists in short-term programs may establish more in the project towards human equality than the larger intercultural and individual changes, but along with a significant smaller amount of volunteer tourists in long-term projects.

However, I refuse to only put intercultural learning on the agenda, with the conditional presumption that volunteer tourism cannot have impact on development aid goals. Mill's definition of well-being discloses the opportunity to determine the impact of volunteer tourists on development aid goals by the host community. They are not only the object of thinking, but as well the object of knowing.

This argument does not come from nowhere entirely, since there have been signals that point towards the same direction. For example, "host organizations need to recognize their own power and agency in this relationship [with the sending organizations], and need to be more demanding what they want out of the relationship" (Perold et al., 2012: 194). But how to recognize their own power and agency in order to be consulted?

Probably two of the major challenges of consulting the host organization and community are culture and aid dependency (Klaver, 2015; Sin, 2010). The host community might have a different culture that hinders them to speak ill (Klaver, 2015). Also, the host community might be obstructed to tell everything, because it might affect their aid (Sin, 2010). In the 2005 review of Reimann it is explained

that aid dependency is one of the major critiques on NGOs. Thus, it is now also associated with this specific NGO-variant: the volunteer organization.

One of the possibilities to overcome this culture and aid dependency is to give the host community a profounder voice during the monitoring and evaluation of volunteer tourist programs (McGehee, 2014). Taplin, Dredge and Scherrer (2014) spearheaded this discussion. For example, it is noted how “monitoring and evaluation can promote dialogue between a range of stakeholders about how volunteer tourism programs can be improved and determine if a program has achieved the desired goals” (Taplin, Dredge & Scherrer, 2014: 891). It functions as a means to develop the programs, and to the legitimization of the programs as well, because the goals and impacts are molded by the host community. Once again, the Other becomes both the object of thinking and knowing.

To conclude this perspective, one possible point on the scientific agenda of volunteer tourism research is that monitoring and evaluation is mainly a task for the volunteer tourism organizations, and research can contribute by executing selective and comparative samples in order to verify if the host community is indeed considered equally.

Then, there are two reasons to consider intertwining knowledge from other research areas such as cultural anthropology and development studies with volunteer tourism. Firstly, I outlined only a single possibility to overcome obstacles like aid dependency and cultural differences, but they are undoubtedly acquainted with a wide array of options. Secondly, it might offer up-to-date development aid goals to which volunteer tourism can have a structural input.

To take one of the many cases in point, Krishna (2010) has conducted an inspiring research on poverty, by interviewing 35.000 households from different parts in India, Kenia, Uganda, Peru and the USA. One of the main conclusions is that poverty not only stems from a lack of poverty alleviation possibilities, like a lack of economic diversification or a lack of social mobility due to cultural hierarchical structures, et cetera. Poverty, according to Krishna, stems also from a lack of poverty prevention. A crucial safety net is a well-functioning healthcare system.

What if development aid organizations, after reading Krishna’s findings, decide to invest (more) in supporting well-functioning healthcare systems in developing countries? Could volunteer tourists support here too? Granted, it cannot be expected of volunteer tourists as temporary helpers to invent a new healthcare system. Still, when organized properly, they might be able to support the unfolded structure by the development aid organizations by, under the supervision of local medical personnel, doing relatively easy tasks like cleaning sheets, sterilizing needles or managing pure drinking water.

This brings volunteer tourism back to how it originally started: relating to the non-profit NGOs. This came about by using Feyerabend’s (2008) concept of contra-induction, derived from his 1975 *Against Method*: is the current state of affairs in volunteer tourism something that should be accepted or is it possible, through the means of another method, to explore other fulfillments of what volunteer tourism could be? To elaborate on the example of Krishna: is there a way to boost

medical volunteer tourism? In addition, what other opportunities are imaginable for volunteer tourism? In the current *épistémè,* the possibilities of volunteer tourism are seemingly limitless and a scientific cross-pollination, for example with cultural psychology, anthropology and development studies, is both predictable and advisable.

Conclusion

The goal of this position paper is to contribute to the question what the impact and utility is of volunteer tourism: is volunteer tourism indeed a path to well-being for its stakeholders? Two presumptions in the research of volunteer tourism have been examined, since these doubt strongly if volunteer tourism is actually making an impact on two of its main goals: intercultural learning within volunteer tourists and development aid to the host community.

It is concluded that the presumptions regarding these goals should be researched more and cannot be maintained in its current state as the foundation of the research in volunteer tourism. The most reserved conclusion of this paper is that there is currently no reason to assume that volunteer tourism is *not* a path to well-being for its stakeholders, but there is also no reason to assume that it is.

The boldest conclusion of this paper is that volunteer tourism can be a path to well-being, because, paradoxically, short-term programs with young, 'unskilled' and neocolonialist-biased volunteer tourists are increasing and there is too little research that includes the perspectives of the host community to determine if volunteer tourists make impact on development aid goals.

Overall, there is a lot to be discovered in the relatively new field of volunteer tourism. This paper attempted to add insights on some of the possible opportunities. It is definitely fascinating to ask the same question again, in 2020 for example: has volunteer tourism become a path to well-being for its stakeholders?

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Tourism, Wellbeing and Quality of Life

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Introduction

This chapter focuses on the role of tourism in wellbeing and quality of life. This subject can, of course, be analysed from two perspectives: that of tourists and that of communities living in tourist destinations. Fairly extensive research has been undertaken on the impacts of tourism on local residents and communities, but as argued by Lipovčan, Brajša-Žganec and Poljanec-Borić (2014) the actual wellbeing of local residents in tourist destinations has not been researched extensively. Uysal, Perdue and Sirgy (2012) and their contributing authors go some way towards filling this gap, as well as considering the wellbeing of tourists. Some attempts have been made to research both phenomena in the same destinations (e.g. Puczkó and Smith, 2010), however it had to be concluded that, a) each destination and community is very different and, b) it is hard if not impossible to compare the perceptions of permanent residents with the transient experiences of tourists. On the other hand, Lipovčan, Brajša-Žganec and Poljanec-Borić's (2014) research showed that residents of destinations with a higher evaluated quality of tourist offer were happier and more satisfied with their lives in general.

This chapter focuses more on the contribution of tourism to the tourists' sense of wellbeing and quality of life. There are several key questions regarding the tourist perspective: do all forms of tourism contribute to wellbeing and what role does tourism play in quality of life? Can individual trips change life in the long term or is it simply the act of travelling (regularly) which contributes to quality of life? Another key question is how far do different forms of tourism contribute to wellbeing and quality of life? The implications for sustainable tourism development are also considered, as it is argued that wellbeing and sustainability are inextricably linked.

Definitions of Wellbeing and Quality of Life

Wellbeing can be conceptualised and measured in a number of different ways. There are numerous academic and research-based studies which have attempted to define and measure wellbeing and differentiate it from quality of life, life satisfaction, happiness and other indicators of a good life. Theofilou (2013) suggests that most recent studies have failed to make a clear distinction between quality of life and wellbeing, and it is true that the boundaries can be quite blurred. Helliwell and Putnam (2004) suggest that one important distinction between life satisfaction and happiness is that measures of happiness tend to reflect relatively short-term, situation-dependent expressions of mood, whereas measures of life-satisfaction tend to reflect longer-term and more stable situations. Most wellbeing studies identify a number of different domains or

arenas which form part of the concept of wellbeing. For example, Halleröd and Seldén (2013) suggest the following: physical health, material and economic resources, social relations, psychosocial issues (e.g. depression, anxiety) and destructive lifestyles. More specific domains would include employment, income, education, and housing. Many quality of life studies tend to include even broader categories such as political stability, political freedom and gender equality as well as environment (e.g. Nussbaum and Sen, 1993; The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2005).

There has been a broad agreement for many years that wellbeing cannot be measured simply in terms of economic indicators such as GDP. Research has generally proved the notion of diminishing marginal returns, i.e. as countries get richer they do not necessarily get happier, although more extensive longitudinal research is needed to prove this more definitively (Knight and Rosa, 2011). Other authors note that environmental 'overshoot' has not increased wellbeing either (Pretty, 2013). The Happy Planet Index (New Economics Foundation, 2012) shows that even where life is relatively long and supposedly happy, the high carbon footprint of the societies concerned means that the sustainability of the planet and thus the long term wellbeing and quality of life of its citizens is by no means guaranteed. Many recent studies emphasise the importance of environmental quality and ecosystem services for human wellbeing (e.g. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005; Happy Planet Index (NEF, 2012); Knight and Rosa, 2011). Ericson, Kjonstad and Barstad (2014) suggest that wellbeing, empathy, compassion and non-material values lead to sustainable behaviour. They insist that the trade-off between well-being and environment need not mean huge sacrifices. Pretty (2013) advocates that opportunities need to be created for 'divergent ways of living' e.g. Slow Cities, Slow Food, Transition Towns, Downsizing or Voluntary Simplicity and green consumerism. Some studies have suggested that downsizing does not necessarily lead to more sustainable behaviour (Kennedy, Krahn & Krogman (2013), however, it is hoped that tourists may become more aware of sustainability issues if they are mindful downshifters or green consumers in their everyday lives.

In the context of tourism, a major question might be how much tourism contributes to tourists' life satisfaction, but it is more likely to refer to satisfaction with particular services or experiences (e.g. consumer satisfaction). Some research has been undertaken on the relationship between tourism and quality of life. It is generally agreed within quality of life literature that the following three domains are the most important: health, standard of living and wellbeing (e.g. Cummins,1997). Several authors have identified relevant domains with which to work. For example, the domains identified by Rahman et al. (2005) are some of the most comprehensive. These include health, work and productivity, material wellbeing, feeling part of one's local community, personal safety, quality of environment, emotional wellbeing, and relationship with family and friends. Smith and Puczkó (2012) applied Rahman's Quality of Life domains to tourism and they also added spiritual wellbeing and social wellbeing to this list. They argue that tourism can contribute to most of the domains, but in particular health, work and productivity, emotional and spiritual wellbeing and relationship with family and friends. Tourists may also feel part of a temporary community when they are travelling, and may pay more attention to the environment, especially if they are

ecotourists or travelling in beautiful or fragile locations. This may lead to more sustainable forms of behaviour.

The following table (Table 1) provides a brief summary of some of the main theories relating to wellbeing and happiness

Table 1: A Summary of Wellbeing and Happiness Theories

Health is one dimension that is always included in definitions of wellbeing as well as quality of life.	Eurofound Quality of Life Survey, 2013; Gallup Wellbeing Index, 2013; Gross National Happiness Index, 2010; Halleröd and Seldén, 2013; Human Development Index, 2014; King, Reno and Novo, 2014; OECD Better Life Index, 2013; Villamagna and Giesecke, 2014)
Quality of life and wellbeing are used synonymously in many studies.	Theofilou (2013)
Measures of happiness tend to reflect relatively short-term, situation-dependent expressions of mood, whereas measures of life-satisfaction tend to reflect longer-term and more stable situations.	Helliwell and Putnam (2004)
The word 'happiness' is defined or interpreted differently in different countries, cultures or languages.	Lu (2001)
Conceptualizations of wellbeing originate from two different philosophical traditions—the hedonic and the eudaimonic approach. The former is associated mainly with happiness, whereas the latter includes self-actualisation and fulfilling one's potential.	Ryan and Deci (2001)
The optimum notion of happiness or living life well should include both the hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives.	Helliwell and Putnam (2004)
An hedonic approach is particularly influential in subjective wellbeing (SWB) studies.	Boniwell and Henry (2007)
Subjective evaluation is at the core of wellbeing.	Veenhoven (2002)
The essential elements of wellbeing are pleasure, engagement and meaning, relationships and accomplishment	Seligman (2002); Seligman, (2011)
'Flourishing' includes purpose in life, positive relationships, engagement, competence, self-esteem, optimism, and contribution towards the wellbeing of others.	Diener et al. (2010); Huppert and So (2013)
Social consumption in highly developed economies does not increase wellbeing ('Easterlin paradox' and theory of 'diminishing returns')	Easterlin (1974); Knight and Rosa (2011)

The Role of Tourism in Tourists' Wellbeing

In recent years, there has been a growth in the academic literature analysing the relationship between tourism, wellness, wellbeing, health, happiness and quality of life (e.g. Puczkó and Smith, 2010; Corvo, 2011; Nawijn, 2011; Filep, 2012; Uysal, Perdue and Sirgy, 2012). Some conclusions have been drawn from this research, for example, that individual trips can create greater pre-trip than post-trip happiness (Narwijn, 2010; Corvo, 2011), that vacationers' happiness does not increase long-term wellbeing (Nawijn, 2011), and it has been suggested that future research should focus on tourism and 'authentic happiness' rather than Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) (Filep, 2014).

Certain forms of tourism are designed especially to improve health. In some cases, tourism is funded by governments or employers as a way of preserving or enhancing workers' health. The work of McCabe and Johnson (2013) analyses the ways in which social tourism impacts on the subjective wellbeing of participants. For example, this was the traditional function of seaside holidays for workers from industrial cities. Some trips have a primary focus on health, for example, going to medical spas or having surgery as part of medical tourism abroad. In Central and Eastern Europe and many former Soviet States, the governments fund health tourism, which mainly consists of spending several days or weeks in a medical spa or sanatorium with healing thermal waters and other therapies. Some companies may offer their employees incentive trips to spas or some form of 'occupational wellbeing'. This can include massage, personal training, nutrition, meditation and psychotherapy as well as medical assessments. Some forms of tourism are partly designed to work on tourists' emotional wellbeing, such as retreat holidays. Some retreats may help to develop body, mind, spirit union, such as yoga retreats (Luskin, 2004; Lea, 2008; Ponder and Holladay, 2013) Some forms of travel can help to restore meaning to peoples' lives, such as pilgrimage. Cohen (1996) suggests that the quest for a 'spiritual centre' is an inherent part of tourism, especially when people feel socially alienated. Spiritual tourism can include pilgrimage, visits to spiritual buildings or landscapes, even yoga and meditation. However, many forms of travel may prove to have a spiritual benefit because of contacts with inspiring landscapes, people and cultures. Singh and Singh (2009:137) suggest that journeys may help travellers gain a heightened sense of being and of self, as well as experiencing healing wellbeing and recovery. It is also common that travellers return from spiritual quests with a greater sensibility towards others.

Some tourists may take this a stage further and choose to engage in forms of tourism which actively benefit others. This may be local residents in a destination through volunteer tourism, for example, or charity treks which raise money for disadvantaged people back home or elsewhere. Devereux and Carnegie (2006) suggest that charity treks and other forms of voluntary tourism can also create a sense of community and social responsibility which is core to wellbeing (NEF, 2004). Dina Glouberman (2002), describes how her desire to establish the well-known holistic holiday company *Skyros* was partly based on her own yearning for community. Such retreat holidays bring together like-minded people who form temporary communities, a relationship may also continue virtually after tourists go home. Some forms of tourism create contact with local communities (e.g.

indigenous or tribal tourism, village tourism, agrotourism, homestays, etc), thus enhancing social and cultural wellbeing.

Smith et al. (2010:18) suggest that travel can help middle-aged tourists “who perhaps reach a mid-life crisis and can give their life some new perspective and meaning”. Richards and Wilson (2004) refer to backpacking as being a form of nomadic experience which is a response to the alienation of modern society. Hannam and Ateljevic (2007) comment on how middle-aged women can find new freedom and express their identities through backpacking. Gay tourism can give gay, lesbian and bisexual tourists the chance to express their true selves in the company of like-minded people who may be harder to find and connect with in their own society. As stated by Smith et al. (2010: 155) “Many GLBT (Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Tourists) need the ‘escape’ of vacations to be the ‘self’ or the ‘other’ they cannot usually manifest due to family, work, and religious restrictions”.

Research suggests that nature-based experiences can improve health and wellbeing (e.g. Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Ulrich, 1984; Kaplan, 1995; Louv, 2005, 2012). Sirgy and Cornwell (2001) as well as Rahman et al. (2005) emphasise the domain of environmental quality and aesthetics in quality of life. This is important for tourists who are naturally drawn to beautiful environments, landscapes and buildings. De Botton (2003) describes how travellers are attracted to ‘sublime’ landscapes that benefit their soul by making them feel small, yet part of an infinite and universal cycle.

Spiritual wellbeing can be partly enhanced through contact with nature, especially awe-inspiring locations. This notion goes beyond conventional notions of ’the picturesque’ and sentimental or romanticised simplifications of nature (Todd, 2009). Kaur Kler (2009) discusses theories of environmental psychology which explain tourists’ preferences for nature and restorative environments. Research shows that viewing natural scenes can improve mental wellbeing, increase alertness, and reduce stress (e.g. Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989).The New Economics Foundation (2008) suggest that "The more you relate to nature, the more positive your emotions and the greater your life satisfaction. Louv (2005) takes this argument a stage further and argues that lack of contact with nature can be highly detrimental to health resulting in a condition called Nature Deficit Disorder (NDD). He said that NDD is not a medical condition; but a description of the human costs of alienation from (lack of contact/connection) with nature. The symptoms include attention problems, obesity, anxiety, and depression. It can be partly caused by too much time spent indoors with TV, computers and mobile phones. In his book The Nature Principle he states that "reconnection to the natural world is fundamental to human wellbeing” (Ibid., 2012:82). A return to the simplicity and restorative power of nature is a recurrent motif in both everyday life and tourism today.

Tourism, Wellbeing and Sustainability

Most Western people live in permanent settlements and aspire to a materialistic lifestyle which is not very good for them or the planet. Capitalism encourages accumulation, profit maximization and prosperity is measured in economic terms. The environment is seen as a resource which is unlimited and is there to be

exploited for maximum profit. Weil (2013) suggests that the human body was not designed for the modern post-industrial environment and that lives in the developed world have mainly gone from hard but generally content to easy but often depressed compared to more 'primitive' ancestors. Early travellers and colonizers assumed that their way of life was superior to those of the indigenous peoples that they visited, thus they were forced to adapt to Western ways often to the detriment of their traditions, their family structures, their traditions and their general wellbeing. However, now there is perhaps more of a recognition that something useful can be learnt from indigenous people who live more simply, self-sufficiently and sustainably than most people in developed countries. Although many tribal groups struggle to stay alive and die young, many also live close to nature with strong communal bonds, qualities of life which have been largely lost in modern urban lives.

Sustainable tourism is considered to be an approach to tourism where economic and social benefits are maximised but negative environmental and cultural impacts are minimised. Ecotourism has an even more specific remit in that it aims to educate tourists about nature. Many forms of ecotourism involve local communities and indigenous people as they are resident in the jungles, deserts, rainforests or other fragile eco-systems visited by the tourists. Ecotourism should be managed in a sustainable way so that environmental wellbeing is maximised for destinations, local people and wildlife alike. Tourists should gain the health, wellbeing and spiritual benefits of being in nature, as well as perhaps learning something about local communities and their cultures.

Smith and Puczkó (2012) suggest that different forms of tourism are likely to have different impacts on wellbeing. For example, business trips may enhance work and productivity. Going to conferences improves a sense of social wellbeing in addition to providing new professional contacts. Sun, sea and sand tourism is one of the most traditional and best-loved forms of tourism. Although there is a temptation for many tourists in this sector to engage in hedonistic activities like drinking and partying which can be detrimental to their health. There are also ample opportunities to rest offered by sun-bathing, increasing fitness through swimming and beach sports, the Vitamin D benefits of the sun and social opportunities to meet others. Research is also starting to show that 'blue spaces' (i.e. those by water) may be the healthiest environments to live and holiday in.

However, it is perhaps nature-based tourism that can have some of the most important benefits to human health, with the exception of spas and medical tourism. Smith and Puczkó (2009: 252) discuss the role of nature in health and wellness tourism:

> Nature plays a significant role in health and wellness in many countries, especially those which have a sea coast.....Mountains are another feature which have always attracted health visitors, especially the Alps in Europe. Jungles and national parks (e.g. in Central and South America, Africa) make ideal locations for adventure and ecospas... To a lesser (but increasing extent) deserts (e.g. in the Middle East or North Africa) are being used as locations for yoga and meditation holidays.

Going to the countryside, staying on farms or re-connecting with nature may help to overcome what Richard Louv (2005) described as 'Nature-Deficit Disorder' (NDD). Increasing numbers of tourists live in big cities and have relatively little contact with green spaces in their everyday lives. Holiday time may be one of the few occasions when they can enjoy nature. According to Howard Clinebell (1996) the idea of 'ecotherapy' refers to healing and growth nurtured by healthy interaction with the earth. Ecotherapy uses a range of practices in order to help people connect with nature and ultimately their 'inner' nature' (Ecotherapy.org.uk, 2013). People living or visiting green areas or areas by water ('blue-green areas') tend to be more physically active (e.g. walking, cycling, swimming). The combination of increased exercise, fresh air, sunshine, open spaces, wildlife and views can be just some of the advantages.

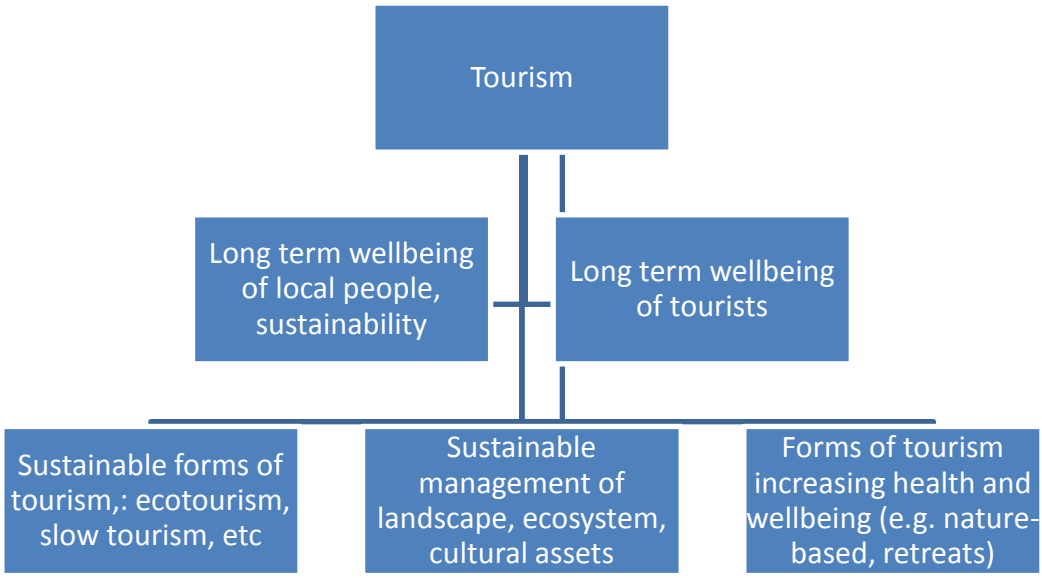
Spirituality can also be an important element of nature-based experiences. Being close to nature can help people to (re) connect with themselves and the universe. Meditating under a tree (e.g. like Buddha when he became enlightened) or even tree-hugging can open up the spirit. Being in nature can make people slow down, be less conscious of time, and become more mindful. Huijbens (2013) writes of 'therapeutic landscapes' which have a "reputation for achieving physical, mental, and spiritual healing". This includes interaction with nature and oneself. Overall, as stated by Maller et al. (2006):

> Natural areas can be seen as one of our most vital health resources. In the context of the growing worldwide mental illness burden of disease, contact with nature may offer an affordable, accessible and equitable choice in tackling the imminent epidemic, within both preventative and restorative public health strategies.

Smith and Kelly's (2006) research showed that the location of holistic retreats is important in terms of the type of landscape rather than specific countries or regions. For example, most retreats tend to be in quiet, beautiful locations such as a small village, by the sea or a lake, near a forest or wood. Retreat Finder (2013) includes a category for so-called Eco Retreats which are described as "Environmentally sustainable retreats and retreat centers employing a wide variety of tactics to help the planet including: solar power, rain barrels, organic farming, recycling, and much more!" The Retreat Company (2013) lists over eighty Eco Retreats around the world, which shows the growing importance of sustainability in the holistic sector as well as in spas.

Slow tourism has also been growing in popularity. Slow tourism ideally respects local cultures and history, protects the environment and is socially responsible. Slow tourists want to enjoy a more authentic experience of living in a place, rather than just holidaying there. Although some forms of slow tourism take place in so-called 'slow cities', many of the typical slow tourism experiences tend to take place in peaceful natural environments.

Figure 1: The Relationship between Tourism, Wellbeing and Sustainability



Managing tourism sustainably to maximise wellbeing and quality of life

As stated earlier, it does not make too much sense to measure the wellbeing and quality of life of tourists and residents in the same places as the nature of their experiences are so different. Tourists stay a short time and often never return, whereas some local residents are permanently based in the location and may never travel elsewhere. Not surprisingly though, places which have a good quality of life, attractive architecture, modern infrastructure, an effective public transport system, a clean environment, etc. are likely to be appealing to both local residents and tourists alike and their mutual sense of wellbeing should be high (for example, Puczkó and Smith's (2010) research supported this).

Ideally, tourism development should enhance the local environment and economic conditions for local people to the extent that their quality of life improves. The problem has traditionally been that tourism developers prioritise economic benefits without much thought for the environment or local culture(s). Even when standard of living appears to have increased because of job creation, higher GDP and income levels, this does not necessarily mean that local residents' sense of wellbeing or subjective quality of life has improved. Social structures may have broken down, there may be generational or gender conflicts, traditional practices may have been discontinued and subsequently lost, the natural environment or heritage may have become degraded. The long-term impacts of tourism have often been over-shadowed by shorter term economic gains. Fortunately, the need for sustainable approaches to tourism development have been recognised and it is now well-known that creating a balance between economic benefits and environmental and socio-cultural impacts is essential. This does not mean that every destination or developer follows these rules or that it is a simple process, but global blueprints of good practice have been developed

and international pressure on governments and developers is higher than it has ever been.

Tourists will have a good experience of a destination where local people are happy and quality of life is high, but sometimes visiting local people in a destination which is perceived to be poorer than home and seeing their relative levels of joy can make a person realise how lucky they are and that there is not an automatic correlation between wealth and happiness.

The following table provides an overview and summary of the impacts of different forms of tourism on the lives of both tourists and residents with some recommendations for optimum wellbeing and quality of life enhancement.

Table 2: Optimising wellbeing in the context of tourism

Types of Tourism	**Impact on Tourists**	**Impact on Local People**	**Conditions Required to Create Optimum Wellbeing / QoL**
Sun, sea sand	• Rest and relaxation • Increased fitness from swimming and beach sports • Social activities • Vitamin D from the sun	• Job creation • Improved infrastructure • Beach services and facilities	• Jobs for local people should ideally not only be seasonal • Access must be allowed to most public beachesfor local people • Environmental sustainability is paramount • Hedonistic activities (e.g. drinking, partying) should be controlled • Safe sunbathing and water safety should be promoted
Cultural	• Education • Intellectual stimulation • Interaction with local communities	• Cross-cultural exchange with tourists • Revival of traditions • Increased pride in culture	• Numbers of tourists should be kept small • Community participation and some control of tourism is essential
Rural, nature-based	• Health benefits of being in nature (e.g. stress reduction) • Education about nature and wildlife	• Job creation may stop outmigration from rural areas • Opportunities for entrepreneurship (e.g. farm tourism) • Support for agriculture which supplies the tourism industry	• Local people should be trained to work in tourism and manage tourism businesses • Numbers of tourists should be limited in natural and conservation areas • Visitor education and codes of conduct are needed

Business	• Incentive trips can increase motivation and productivity • Professional contacts are made through socialising	• Opportunities for job creation for local people • Improved local and national business connections • Sponsorship of local developments by large businesses	• Ensure that some economic benefits from business tourism go to the destination • Create some local jobs • Encourage business sponsorship
Religious, spiritual	• Reinforcing one's faith (if religious) • Connecting to oneself and the universe (if spiritual) • Finding (new) meaning in life	• Communing with like-minded people • Conservation or regeneration of religious sites and landscapes	• Local sacred spaces must be respected and only visited if communities allow it • Some traditions and rituals should be kept private • Conflict management may be needed between different religious groups
Ecotourism	• Experiencing unique eco-systems • Learning about the environment, wildlife and conservation	• Income from tourism can contribute to environmental protection and conservation • Environmental education for local people	• Must be small-scale • Local people should be actively involved • Tourists need to be educated before and during their visit
Health and wellness	• Recovery and recuperation • Education about health and lifestyle • Long-term self-development	• Local job creation in spas, wellness hotels and retreats • Drawing on local healing traditions (e.g. those of indigenous peoples)	• Use sustainable approaches to managing spas, hotels and retreats • Involve local people and products • Educate tourists in how to improve their health and lifestyle in the long-term

Conclusions

This chapter has given some insights into the various ways in which tourism can contribute to quality of life and wellbeing of tourists, and to a lesser extent, local people. Previous research has suggested that it is the act of travelling fairly regularly which contributes to longer term quality of life and individual trips more often (only) increase temporary levels of happiness or wellbeing. If a person travels regularly and also enjoys the anticipation and post-trip satisfaction, a more permanent sense of wellbeing may be created (Puczkó and Smith, 2010). However, there are far too many other factors in a persons' life which influence quality of life, many of which are objective and beyond the control of the individual. A short stay may not be enough to guarantee long-term wellbeing or quality of life. Sometimes returning to everyday life can be a great anti-climax and disappointment, especially when a person does not travel regularly and places too much emphasis on a holiday as a way of easing long-term stress or depression.

Having said this, certain forms of health, wellness or wellbeing tourism may be able to change the way that people approach their lifestyle and even modes of thinking. Trips to spas and retreats often include programmes which encourage positive thinking about all aspects of life, which could incorporate many of the domains mentioned earlier such as work and family and friends. Certain forms of workshop can help to improve work-life balance, stress management and conflict resolution. Such skills can be taken back home and implemented in everyday life. Health can be improved on holiday because of activities which improve fitness (e.g. sports), spiritual connections (e.g. yoga, meditation) or nutrition. Tourists may take home the enthusiasm for a new hobby which improves their life, whether it is Tai Chi, tennis or cooking healthier food. It also seems to be the case that happier people who are more mindful tend to engage in more sustainable behaviour (Ericson, Kjonstad and Barstad, 2014).

Many forms of tourism have traditionally offered people a 'flight' option which is focused on escapism from everyday life, even for a few days. Few forms of tourism typically included a 'fight' mechanism, which helped tourists to deal with the problems back home which they were so keen to escape. Sun, sea and sand tourism was the classic example which was mainly based on rest, relaxation and hedonism, all good for temporary wellbeing, but not effective in combatting long-term difficulties or problems. The other end of the spectrum may be retreat tourism, where tourists actively seek self-development, balance and enhanced health. For example, Voigt, Howat and Brown (2011) suggest that in the context of wellness tourism, more hedonic wellbeing experiences might take place in a beauty spa whereas more eudaimonic experiences can be gained from spiritual retreats. Of course, many tourists would not choose a form of tourism which is hard work or requires exceptional effort as this would not be relaxing. The challenge for destination and tourism developers generally is to develop forms of tourism which are appealing and relaxing, while subtly educating tourists in healthier lifestyles, more respect for the environment and others, and an enhanced sense of self on their return home. There are many forms of nature-based tourism which may be able to do this, especially where tourists learn from local and indigenous people who live simply and self-sufficiently. A combination of sustainability and sensitivity towards both tourists and locals is needed as the long-term wellbeing and quality of life of people and the planet may depend on it!

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What is ATLAS

March 2017

The Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research (ATLAS) was established in 1991 to develop transnational educational initiatives in tourism and leisure.

ATLAS provides a forum to promote staff and student exchange, transnational research and to facilitate curriculum and professional development. It currently has 202 members in 62 countries worldwide.

What are the objectives of ATLAS?

- To promote the teaching of tourism, leisure and related subjects.
- To encourage academic exchange between member institutions.
- To promote links between professional bodies in tourism, leisure and associated subjects and to liaise on educational issues, curriculum development and professional recognition of courses.
- To promote transnational research which helps to underpin the development of appropriate curricula for transnational education.

What does ATLAS do?

ATLAS promotes links between member institutions through regular meetings, publications and information exchange. The main activities of ATLAS currently are:

- Organising conferences on issues in tourism and leisure education and research. International conferences have been held in London, United Kingdom (September 2012) and in Malta (November 2013), Budapest, Hungary (October 2014), Lisbon (October 2015). The annual conference in 2016 will be organised in Canterbury, UK. Regional conferences are also held in Africa, South America and the Asia-Pacific region.
- Information services and publications, including the ATLAS website and members' portal, the annual ATLAS Reflections, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Running international courses, such as the ATLAS Winter University in Europe and the Summer Course in Asia.
- Organisation of and participation in transnational research projects, for example on cultural tourism, sustainable tourism, and information technology.
- Research publications and reports.

What are the benefits of the ATLAS membership?

- Regular mailings of information, updates on ATLAS conferences, meetings, projects, publications and other activities.
- Access to the members' portal on Internet with exclusive access code.
- Participation in the ATLAS information lists for everyone within ATLAS member institutions, as well as for the different Special Interest Groups.

- The annual ATLAS international conference, which provides an opportunity to network with other members.
- Conferences organised by regional sections.
- ATLAS members can participate in a wide range of projects run by ATLAS in the areas of tourism and leisure education and research.
- Members have access to research information gathered through ATLAS
- International projects.
- ATLAS members are listed on the ATLAS website, giving teachers and students easy access to information about member institutions via Internet.
- Distribution of information about member events, programmes, projects and products via the ATLAS mailing list and ATLAS website.
- ATLAS members are entitled to substantial discounts on ATLAS conference fees and selected ATLAS publications.
- Contacts and lobbying through ATLAS links with other international organisations.
- Opportunity for students to take part in an established academic and research network.

ATLAS Special Interest Groups
Members of ATLAS can form and join Special Interest Groups related to specific education and research topics or for specific geographical areas. Special Interest Groups run research programmes and can organise special events and publications related to their area of interest. The current Special Interest Groups are:

- Cultural Tourism Research Group
- Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group
- Business Tourism Research Group
- Capital City Tourism Research Group
- Volunteer Tourism Research Group
- Events Research Group

ATLAS Regional Sections
ATLAS is also represented at regional and local level by sections such as ATLAS Europe, ATLAS Asia-Pacific, ATLAS Africa and ATLAS Latin Americas. The regional sections of ATLAS have developed their own programme of activities and publications to respond more closely to the specific needs of members located in these regions and those with related research interests. Membership of ATLAS regional sections and Special Interest Groups of ATLAS is open to all ATLAS members at no extra costs.

The ATLAS publication series
As a networking organisation, one of the main tasks of ATLAS is to disseminate information on developments in tourism and leisure as widely as possible. The ATLAS publication series contains volumes of selected papers from ATLAS conferences and reports from ATLAS research projects. All publications can be found and ordered in the online ATLAS bookshop at: shop.atlas-euro.org.

Join ATLAS
ATLAS membership is open to bona-fide educational institutions and professional bodies with educational, research or professional interests in tourism, leisure and related areas. If your institution is interested, complete the application form on the ATLAS homepage at www.atlas-euro.org.

How much does the ATLAS membership cost?
Since 2016 the annual institutional membership fee for ATLAS is € 325. For organisations located in countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and South America the fee is € 200 per year.

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