

Arctic Tourism Experiences



Production, Consumption and Sustainability

Edited by Young-Sook Lee, David B. Weaver and
Nina K. Prebensen



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Contributors

About the Editors

Young-Sook Lee was born and educated in South Korea where she received her first degree (BA in French Literature and Language) from the Catholic University of Korea. She studied in the UK for her English language training and then in Australia for postgraduate studies. She received her PhD in Sociology at the University of Queensland in 2003. She held an academic position at Griffith University, Australia, from 1999 to 2014. During more than 15 years' service to Griffith, she conducted research on tourism focusing on East Asian cultural philosophy, marketing for East Asian tourists and understanding East Asian tourists' behaviour. Dr Lee has contributed to major tourism journals and books. She developed courses and taught undergraduate and postgraduate students at Griffith and supervised numerous Honours, Masters and PhD students to successful completion. In 2014, Dr Lee relocated to UiT The Arctic University of Norway, assuming the position of Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Tourism & Northern Studies. With her research on understanding different cultures and lived-experiences of academic systems, she has actively joined the UiT members, building UiT as one of the hubs for Arctic tourism. In 2004, she served as an adviser for the Nordic Expert Group. The group presented a public report for sustainable growth in the Scandinavian Arctic (Norway, Sweden and Finland) for the Prime Minister's Office of Finland. She serves as a Global Panel Member of Tourism Experts for the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

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David B. Weaver received his PhD in Geography from the University of Western Ontario, Canada, in 1986 and has held academic appointments in Canada, Australia and the USA. He is currently Professor of Tourism Research at Griffith University, Australia, and has published more than 140 journal articles, book chapters and books. He maintains an active research agenda in sustainable destination and protected area management, ecotourism, small island tourism, indigenous tourism, tourism in China, geopolitical dimensions of tourism and resident perceptions of tourism. Current projects include investigating the willingness of protected area visitors to participate in site enhancement activities, and new perspectives on the core-periphery relationship in tourism. Professor Weaver has published extensively in leading journals such as *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Travel Research* and *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. His widely adopted textbooks include *Tourism Management* (5th edn with Laura Lawton, Wiley Australia) and *Ecotourism* (Wiley Australia); *Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (CABI); and *Sustainable Tourism: Theory and Practice* (Taylor & Francis). He is a Fellow of the International Academy for the Study of Tourism and has delivered numerous invited international keynote addresses on innovative tourism management topics. He has worked with organizations such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Pacific Asia Tourism Association (PATA) as an expert adviser.

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Carsten Blom Ruud served as the Dean at Buskerud University College before retiring in 2012. He lives in Jevnaker, a small city north of Oslo. As a researcher, he was in the field of pedagogy. During 2003–2004 he spent a year at the University of Alaska Fairbanks as a visiting professor, conducting research on 'Native Education'. He has been skiing and mushing in Norway for many years, and taken part in many races. In 1997, on skis with a six-dog team, he completed a cross-country ski from southern to northern Norway, a distance of approximately 1500 miles. Today, he enjoys a great deal of cross-country skiing led by a team of eight dogs, as well as other outdoor activities.

Beate Bursta is Assistant Professor at the Department of Tourism and Northern Studies, UiT The Arctic University of Norway. She obtained a Masters in Visual Cultural Studies at the University of Tromsø and has mainly focused on northern Norway for her research and film projects, which all have a connection to life in the northern periphery and/or to Sami matters. In particular, she has been interested in the issues of place and identity. She has directed several documentaries and participated in other film projects in the region, as well as creating some websites. She has also participated in the creation of an exhibition on Sea Sami history, culture and society, and a Sami costume show. In this way, she constantly mediates academic knowledge and general audiences in society through various artistic objects and productions – her field of research interest.

Carl Cater is a Senior Lecturer in tourism at Aberystwyth University, Wales, and his research centres on the experiential turn in tourism and the subsequent growth of special-interest sectors,

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Elsa De Souza is a student of the environment and has been working in Arctic tourism since 2012 with a focus on the patterns of pleasure craft tourism in the Canadian Arctic. Elsa has a BA (Hons) degree in Environmental Studies and Geography from Trent University, Canada (2008) and a Masters in Environmental Studies on nature-based recreation and tourism from Lakehead University, Canada (2015). Elsa is keeping up to date with pleasure craft tourism in the Canadian Arctic and has plans to further her career in the environmental and tourism sector.

Behind most of **Johan Edelheim's** research lies a deeply rooted aim for humanism and equality. He looks at society and events with a purpose to highlight inequality in order to bring issues to common awareness. These matters of inequality can be found in all fields of studies and a conscious use of different theoretical lenses allows him to investigate matters in novel ways. The majority of his studies focus in different ways on tourism, hospitality, leisure, education and society – quite often using different popular culture sources as the data collection sites. He prefers qualitative methods, though he sees the need for well-performed quantitative studies to inform decision makers of generalizable matters. He uses narrative, content and critical discourse analysis methodologies, as well as post-Husserlian phenomenology. In looking at publications he has produced, three distinct categories can be distinguished: (i) culturally critical tourism and hospitality studies; (ii) tourism and hospitality education studies; and (iii) clarifications of tourism and hospitality concepts.

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Isabelle Guissard originally comes from France and has a PhD in Scandinavian languages from the University Paris IV Sorbonne. Her PhD thesis was about the Sami minority in Norway, especially on the policy of assimilation implemented in the northern part of Norway (Finnmark County) between the 18th and the 20th century. Isabelle has published articles about the Sami minority of Norway. Today, she works as a senior adviser in the division of research administration internationalization at the Faculty of Sports, Tourism and Social Work at the UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Campus Alta.

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Margaret E. Johnston lives in Thunder Bay on Lake Superior. Her academic background is in Geography and Environmental Studies with an emphasis on tourism and recreation patterns. Her primary areas of interest are in the development of northern tourism and the management of the experience of risk in tourism. She is currently researching the development challenges associated with marine tourism growth in the Canadian Arctic, including appropriate management approaches such as site guidelines. Dr Johnston teaches a polar tourism course at Lakehead University, Canada, and has led student fieldwork on critical and reflective tourism in Svalbard, Fennoscandia and the Antarctic.

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Line Mathisen received her PhD in Tourism from University of Tromsø, the Arctic University, in 2014, where she also completed her undergraduate studies in marketing and economics. She was presented with the Outstanding Author Contribution in the 2014 Emerald Literati Network Awards for Excellence for the article 'Staging natural environments: A performance perspective'. Line Mathisen has been employed by the Northern Research Institute (Norut) since 2013, where she is a senior researcher currently working with projects in tourism, entrepreneurship and regional/organizational innovation. Her current research interests include nature-/culture-based tourism development, service-dominant logic in marketing, storytelling and organizational resilience and innovation.

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Per Strömberg defended his PhD thesis *Upplevelseindustrins turistmiljöer* ('Tourist Environments in the Era of the Experience Economy') in 2007 on the spatial connection and symbiotic processes between business and aesthetics through narratives in today's tourism industry. Since 2012, Strömberg has worked at the University College of Southeast Norway as an Associate Professor in Tourism Management where he teaches international students studying for a BA in Sustainable Tourism. Sustainable tourism was also the main theme of cooperation between the Russian State University of Tourism and Service and the University College of Southeast Norway in 2013–2016. The chapter with Sergey Ilkevich is the outcome of this successful cooperation.

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Urban Wråkberg is Professor of Northern Studies and leader of the research group in this multi-disciplinary field of study at the Arctic University of Norway. He has published in English, Swedish, Norwegian and Russian on the geo-economic drivers of industry and science in both polar regions, on the history and ideology of polar exploration and on the nexus between scientific and indigenous knowledge formation. This research has included fieldwork in Svalbard and East Greenland. Wråkberg's research in the Scandinavian Russian borderland of sub-Arctic Europe has mainly focused on issues of cultural heritage and the sustainability of tourism, the latter put into comparative perspective by research in the Baltic region and on Central Europe.

Preface

What is Arctic tourism? Is a visit to the Arctic different from a visit to other regional destinations? If so, how much of the Arctic experience is unique and what are the commonly shared features with other destinations? These were the initial questions that gave rise to this edited book on the production and consumption of Arctic tourism experiences.

The Arctic has for a long time been regarded as somewhere unreachable or beyond normal spheres of life to most of the world's population. It is not surprising when one considers the sheer magnitude of raw nature and its impact upon life and survival in the region. This was particularly so when travel and tourism were not as common as today, without physical, social and political infrastructures in place to normalize such travel. Tourists may not only feel like explorers: they actually become explorers in parts of the Arctic. However, other sites and areas are contemporary and people there live modern lives. In this blend of the natural and cultural life of things, tourists visit and experience different lifestyles and environments.

As the first dedicated volume on Arctic tourism, we explore the very essence of experiencing the Arctic from tourists' perspectives, and the production of such experiences from the Arctic tourism providers' perspectives. Taking the core-periphery approach to Arctic tourism, where geographical peripherality may contribute to the experiential core, we explore what may be unique when it comes to experiencing the Arctic as well as what are similarly applicable traits shared with other destinations in the world. The fact that two of the editors and most of the authors live or have lived well above the Arctic Circle gives us the advantage of multiple personal experiences of the Arctic and its power to evoke peak emotions.

Understanding the experiences is one of many elements in Arctic tourism. Would they change as the physical and political settings evolve? If so, in what way would they change? What about the ways in which the physical environments are used to produce an experience for tourists? Can the sustainable use of cultural and environmental resources ensure the continued existence of the 'Arctic' on the map, in both cultural and physical senses? Indeed, there are many questions that need to be asked and answered. Reading this book, we hope that readers will join and challenge the current debates on large-scale issues affecting the Arctic and how these might impact on the rapidly changing landscapes and seascapes of Arctic tourism.

Finally, we hope that the research communities and the industry sectors see the imperative for greater cooperation, involving all relevant stakeholders in the Arctic, including indigenous people. We believe that this will be the best way to advance our knowledge of Arctic tourism, providing innovative and sustainable practices to the Arctic tourism sectors.

Young-Sook Lee
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July 2016

1

Arctic Destinations and Attractions as Evolving Peripheral Settings for the Production and Consumption of Peak Tourism Experiences

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Background

The Arctic has attracted considerable research attention from various disciplines and this trend has intensified in recent decades. Reasons for this increased scrutiny include growing social and political foci on climate change that is felt sharply in the region (Sturm *et al.*, 2001; Ford and Smit, 2004; Hinzman *et al.*, 2005); increased debates over the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources of the Arctic (Kaltenborn, 1998; Riedlinger and Berkes, 2001); and amplified geopolitical tensions that result from the opening of the region (Heininen and Nicol, 2007; Young, 2009). The Arctic tourism experiences described and analysed in this edited book are informed by all of these ‘macro issues’. Despite this increased interest in the macro issues in the Arctic area, there is still a need for knowledge regarding the micro issues, such as how to facilitate sustainable tourism. The present book focuses on the tourist and the tourist experiences, in addition to the tourism facilitators: that is, the firm, the organizations and the stakeholders providing for tourism in the Arctic.

The aim of this book, specifically, is to better understand the production and consumption of visitor experiences in the Arctic

region as a rapidly changing tourist destination. This knowledge will contribute to a balanced triple bottom line (TBL) sustainability approach in Arctic tourism. Tracing the historic and contemporary experiences of how the Arctic has been and is currently visited and ‘consumed’, the book focuses on the paradoxical dichotomy of the Arctic where the peak tourist experience, or a multidimensional ‘experiential core’, is attained through a context of geographical peripherality. With the core–periphery dichotomy as its fundamental approach, the book discusses how and by whom such experiences are created and consumed in the Arctic region, and considers the environmental, sociocultural and economic repercussions of this production/consumption nexus.

Compared with other disciplines, concerted research into Arctic tourism is relatively recent, appearing in the mid-1990s (Maher, 2007). However, we can trace visits to the Arctic by tourist-outsiders as far back as to 1795 (see Chapter 2). In an era when tourism accounts for 9% of global GDP and 30% of all service exports (UNWTO, 2015), it is a worthwhile investment to give dedicated attention to the Arctic as a destination in order to better understand the region’s relationship with tourism in all its diverse economic, cultural, political and

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environmental dimensions. Two reasons can be given about why this edited collection focuses exclusively on the Arctic. First, and notwithstanding some excellent Arctic-focused outputs (Mason, 1997; Mason *et al.*, 2000), research and discussion of Arctic tourism mostly occurs as a dimension of a broader polar tourism construct that often gives more focus to the Antarctic (see for example Hall and Johnston, 1995; Stewart *et al.*, 2005; UNEP, 2007). Aside from the especially exotic and attractive character of that remote continent, the study of its tourism is facilitated by the gateway role of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators, which sanctions a small group of elite tour operators, imposes strict behavioural regulations in accordance with various Antarctic Treaty provisions and compiles detailed visitor statistics. Its system of international bases, moreover, fosters a culture of scientific research that can easily be applied to the growing number of tourists who visit these sites out of curiosity or adventure. The Arctic has neither its own dedicated tour operator organization, strict visitor regulations that accord to broader treaties nor accurate visitor data, all of which suggest the need for heightened tourism research in the face of rapid change in this distinctive polar tourism region.

A second reason for our exclusive Arctic focus, accordingly, is to stimulate the production of a more systematic knowledge base on Arctic tourism. The lack of such a research database is confirmed in the Social Indicators project – a project to develop a database that would serve to track social changes brought about by the expansion of Arctic tourism resulting from climate change (Fay and Karlsdóttir, 2011) where an urgent need for an Arctic tourism observation system is raised. One example of government and industry awareness for heightened research engagement is a 2015 European Union grant to the Visit Arctic Europe project. Here, industry collaboration among Finnish Lapland, Swedish Lapland and northern Norway received major funding to develop and promote nature-based tourism in the northern regions of Scandinavia. The project aims to increase sustainable tourism business and cooperation across the borders of the northern European countries (Interreg, 2015), thereby highlighting the urgent need for more systematic and continued collaboration among

tourism stakeholders, including academics. This edited book, the first Arctic-dedicated collation, is an initiative from a group of Arctic tourism researchers to understand tourism activities in the Arctic and facilitate their sustainable pursuit.

Defining Arctic Tourism

The quest for a robust knowledge base that will help to operationalize sustainable Arctic tourism requires a clear working definition of 'Arctic tourism'. Indeed, it is difficult initially to find one single definition of what constitutes the Arctic (Hall and Johnston, 1995; Maher, 2007). Various factors can be taken into consideration individually or collectively to define the Arctic, including phytogeography (e.g. the regions located above the treeline, which is in reality a zone of transition rather than an unambiguous boundary), climate (e.g. the regions where in July the long-term average isotherm is below 10°C), geomorphology (presence of permafrost) or latitude (e.g. regions north of the Arctic Circle at 66°33'N or 60°N). The definitional attempt becomes even more complicated when political criteria are added (Hall and Saarinen, 2010: 450–451). However, several Dependencies (Greenland, Svalbard) and subnational units (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Yukon, Alaska, Finnmark, Murmansk and Arkhangelsk Oblasts, Nenetsia, Yamalia, Yakutia, Chukotka) are widely recognized as being located entirely or mostly within the Arctic. We largely adhere to these geopolitical criteria but remain open to non-conforming perceptions. From the tourism perspective, we take a similarly liberal approach, embracing all types of recreational visitation as well as business and social visits, and including scientific research personnel, the military, resource workers and local residents to the extent that tourism is implicated in any of their activity. Taken altogether, we employ the following definition of Arctic tourism:

Any tourism-relevant activities that are associated with businesses, communities, organizations or other stakeholders in the Arctic region, defined to include the areas and regions as per the consideration of relevant phytogeographic, climatic, geomorphological, latitudinal and geopolitical criteria.

Travel and Tourism in the Changing Arctic

Research into Arctic tourism has identified various themes and approaches and can be placed under three main themes of sustainability, climate change and tourist experiences.

Sustainability

TBL sustainability forms the underlying philosophy in the main theme of Arctic tourism research. Unlike some other destinations where the tourism industry was developed by early explorers and a few entrepreneurial-minded local people, who capitalized on the new economic potentials in tourism, formation of the Arctic tourism industry was subject to more monitoring and regulation. This is evidenced in reports and academic research publications on Arctic tourism; for example, the first volume that discusses Arctic tourism as part of polar tourism highlights tourism impacts in polar regions (Hall and Johnston, 1995). The relevant chapters discuss lack of political sovereignty, economic benefits not transferred to indigenous peoples, negative environment impacts and some disruption of scientific research. The authors (Hall and Johnston, 1995) recognized that the state of polar tourism implied a need for a clear code of conduct or regulations. In the same vein, recognizing the increasing volume and distribution of polar tourism and hence concerns for environmental and cultural sustainability in the region, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provided 'Good Practices' as a set of recommendations to follow in order to protect wildlife, and to respect protected areas and scientific research (UNEP, 2007). Given the fragile nature and increasing vulnerability of the Arctic region, where tourism is highly dependent on nature, support for a regulatory standpoint is not surprising.

The start of more organized group-level research into Arctic tourism can be attributed to the formation of the Arctic Council in September 1996. This comprises eight member countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the USA; and six organizations with Permanent

Participant status, which represent indigenous peoples of the Arctic (Arctic Council, 2016). Working closely with, and significantly influenced by, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Arctic tourism has been investigated from the standpoint of regulating activities and resource use to prevent environmental and cultural degradation. For example, as part of a WWF project launched in Svalbard in 1996, a set of codes of conduct for Arctic and sub-Arctic tourism was developed, detailing acceptable and recommended activities as well as steps to take for sustainable tourism operations in the fragile Arctic environment (Mason, 1997; Mason *et al.*, 2000). The Arctic Council subsequently initiated the formation of the University of the Arctic (UArctic) as a cooperative network of universities, colleges, research institutes and other organizations concerned with education and research in and about the north. UArctic was officially launched in Rovaniemi, Finland, in 2001 (UArctic, 2016) and has since established the Northern Tourism Thematic Network to conduct seminars and research on northern tourism with sustainability as the underlying key principle in the network's research agenda (Pashkevich, 2014).

The culture of indigenous peoples has been researched as part of sustainable tourism in the Arctic; this too is a major point of departure from tourism in Antarctica, which has no indigenous or permanent human population. Research into Canada's western Arctic region, where the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in have their settlement areas, revealed complex relationships among community groups, government organizations and the tourism industry. The study reflects the need for careful management of the indigenous peoples' way of life when used as a tourism resource. Traditional ways of living that have strong land-based activities are both assets and hurdles to indigenous tourism development in the region, particularly with the desire for authentic tourist experience creation and provision (Notzke, 1999).

Climate change

The research approach into TBL sustainability has further accelerated recently with increased

awareness of climate change in the Arctic. The impact of climate change on society has become an equally important issue. Assumed impacts are negative overall and in severe cases result in climate change refugees (Biermann and Boas, 2010). Understanding the impacts of climate change and developing effective mitigating measures have been subjects of tourism research (Scott *et al.*, 2008; Simpson *et al.*, 2008). An especially insidious factor here is that anthropogenic climate change will have dramatic and probably negative effects on tourism, including destinations and attractions that are otherwise managed according to best practice precepts of sustainable tourism. A review of climate change-focused tourism research literature produces the themes of businesses, consumers, destinations, policies and frameworks that can all usefully inform the interrogation of climate change issues as they apply to tourism (Kaján and Saarinen, 2013). The study also highlights the relatively little attention given to community perceptions of climate change adaptation and calls for a more concerted effort to address this. The call is justified given the grave implications for this particular stakeholder group.

In the context of Arctic tourism, the overall negative impacts of climate change are to some extent balanced by possible opportunities. For example, easier access to the Canadian Arctic by cruise ships has been predicted and this is regarded as a new opportunity of high potential. However, caution is advised by Stewart *et al.* (2007), who point out that the warming effect alters the distribution and character of sea ice and may have negative implications for cruise tourism in the region. Recognizing the complex relationships among the cultural, economic and environmental realms, Dawson *et al.* (2007) recommend a systems approach as an underlying principle to develop adequate frameworks for understanding and developing appropriate mitigation measures. A recent investigation of small communities in northern Finnish Lapland further highlights the need to reconsider current laissez-faire development approaches in tourism in relation to climate change (Kaján, 2014). Based on the case studies of the Kilpisjärvi and Saariselkä communities, which are both snow-dependent and see the current pathway of development as

problematic, Kaján (2014) argues that increased collaboration between climate and social scientists is required for a comprehensive understanding of the current situation, to minimize negative impacts and to identify possible opportunities. Indeed, cooperation among academics from different disciplines and countries is required for a better assessment of climate change impacts on Arctic tourism. However, because of the multiple Arctic jurisdictions, relevant statistical data sets are incompatible (Fay and Karlsdóttir, 2011). A comprehensive database that can help monitor the changes in Arctic tourism due to climate change is in urgent need of development.

Tourist experiences in the Arctic

Arctic tourism has been associated with sentiments of adventure on the edge of the world (Weber, 2001; Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2004) and unique nature-based experiences (Dupuis and Muller, 2004). Adventure in nature is a main trait of Arctic tourism. Skiing, mountain hiking and – more recently – snow scooting (Eckerstorfer *et al.*, 2009) have been means to embody the adventurous spirit of the Arctic. Additionally, the Arctic as a destination has been increasingly perceived as something soon to vanish, and thus more valuable to pursue as a scarce resource (Lemelin *et al.*, 2010; Lemelin *et al.*, 2012). With its rapidly changing geography, flora and fauna, the Arctic has been on the list of disappearing, doomed or ‘last chance’ destinations to visit. This ‘disappearing Arctic’, attributable to global warming but also to increased development pressures, paradoxically contributes to an increasing number of tourists to the vulnerable region. It is paradoxical because the very concern for the environmental vulnerability of the Arctic creates the growing number of tourists in the region, particularly those who are supposed to be environmentally conscientious. This phenomenon subsequently evokes debate over whether such concerns for the vulnerable environment from the environmentally concerned tourists, would in effect expedite the disappearance of the Arctic. This status quo in the Arctic tourism has significant implications for the nature of tourist

experiences. For the benefit of protecting the vulnerable Arctic and to demonstrate this to the environmentally conscious tourists, tourism activities in the Arctic must have environment-protecting elements, while opening up the vulnerable region to the increasing number of tourists. What is clear in this conundrum, nonetheless, is that people are expected to continue to travel, in increasing numbers, to one of the last frontier destinations on earth, the Arctic.

Experiencing the Arctic is not limited to seizing the last chance to visit the vanishing ice flows and polar bears. Combined with the perception of a wild and mystical north, food tourism has also received attention in the circumpolar north. A study of textual and visual materials to promote Swedish Lapland demonstrates the increasingly intertwining experiences of environment and its products (ingredients for local food production) and the stories that enhance the consuming experiences. Ultimately, consuming food in this setting is more about consuming stories (de la Barre and Brouder, 2013), especially when they involve local food that is perceived as disgusting (e.g. decomposing whale blubber) and hence peripheral and adventurous. This recent trend in the promotion of food in Arctic tourism as the central entity of consumption is a reminder of the rather skewed research focus directed to Arctic tourism. While TBL sustainability has been guiding the central philosophy in Arctic tourism research, the experiences from tourists' points of view, and the relationship between these experiences and sustainability, have been relatively under-researched and misunderstood. The lack of balanced attention in Arctic tourism, particularly on tourist experiences, has been raised earlier. In a review of tourism research in polar regions, Stewart *et al.* (2005) identify two areas that require more attention: (i) tourist experiences, such as the nature of tourist experiences in the polar regions, expectations, knowledge and satisfaction; and (ii) global trends and large-scale influences such as climate change adaptation. The climate change phenomenon and the tourism industry's adaptation strategies have been gathering steady and increasing attention, as reviewed in the section above. However, for a balanced understanding of Arctic tourism that aspires to TBL sustainability, the tourist experience and its production and

consumption manifestations in the Arctic remain to be explored. This book aspires to fill this critical knowledge gap.

Outline of the Book

This evidence-based collection of chapters from leading scholars of Arctic tourism is organized into two main parts. The first part is Introduction and Issues: Tourist Experiences of the Arctic. The introductory Chapter 1 by Lee, Weaver and Prebensen is followed by a historical account of Arctic travel in Chapter 2. Here, Guissard and Lee consider the diverse experiences of three French travellers in the context of the periphery–core dynamics of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Røknes and Mathisen, in Chapter 3, give their research insights into the interplay between risk and safety in Arctic adventure tourism. They consider these elements in the context of the role of tour guide for experientially, economically and environmentally sustainable adventure tourism within the unique conditions and constraints of the Arctic. The authors of Chapter 4, Davoudi, Högström and Tronvoll, investigate the role of organizational identity in tourism in the Arctic periphery. This chapter adopts a similar approach to Chapter 3 and highlights the multiple stakeholders of networks and actors. In Chapter 5, Edelman and Lee discuss the changing experiences of museums, highlighting new museology and articulating a self-reflective element in museum viewing. The theory relates to the provision of tourist experiences in viewing the museums of the Arctic periphery that are both economically and culturally sustainable. Economic sustainability of world heritage sites and the role of tourism on these sites is the topic subsequently offered by Olsen in Chapter 6. Highlighting the need for a clear conceptualization between valorization of world heritage and its link to tourism, the chapter poses important questions about the management of world heritage sites in the context of experience-providing tourism in the Arctic.

The second part presents various chapters focusing on Creating Tourist Experiences in the Arctic. In Chapter 7 Weaver and Lawton contextualize tourists' experiences in Greenland in

terms of variable spatial and temporal peripheralities. Mathisen explores the northern lights (aurora borealis) of the Arctic in Chapter 8. This chapter examines the myths and narratives of the northern lights and considers this quintessential Arctic element within today's tourism industry-provided experiences. Subsequently, in Chapter 9, Stubberud and Ruud provide an account of two explorers following the tracks of the Iditarod trail in Alaska and consider what the tourism industry may learn from the narratives of the explorers in order to develop sustainable tourist activities before and after the Iditarod race. Huang, Tang and Weaver then give an appraisal in Chapter 10 of the Chinese tourist market in the Arctic, giving insights into the actual and potential behaviour of the world's largest and fastest growing outbound tourist segment. Continuing to discuss different perceptions of the Arctic from a tourist market perspective in Chapter 11, Komppula highlights the different emotions that Japanese tourists to Finland may have. By studying well-being tourism in Finnish Lapland, different meanings of the 'feel-good' experience are explored. Chapter 12, on the Sami festival in the remote Norwegian Arctic town of Snefjord, draws from the film *The Kilt & the Kofte*, and narrates the rebuilding of Sami identity. The author, Bursta, is Sami herself and one of the makers of the film. Bursta recounts identifying and rebuilding Saminess by connecting through a joint celebration with some Scottish traditions brought by some visitors to the Arctic. Fischer focuses on services and experience production in Chapter 13, with insights into nine family firms in the Norwegian county of Finnmark and in Finnish Lapland. The perspectives of service design and experience production, and the concept of 'coopetition', a term indicating cooperation of competitors are used in the chapter. In Chapter 14, Bertella reviews commercial whale

watching and suggests certain contextual elements that may facilitate or impede the development of whale watching as a sustainable tourism activity. Prebensen and Lyngnes investigate fishing as a sustainable tourism activity in the Arctic in Chapter 15. Focusing on fishing tourism products and experiences in the Arctic, the chapter recommends aspects to be considered for a responsible fishing tourism industry in the Arctic. Motorcycling as part of drive tourism in the Arctic is investigated by Cater in Chapter 16, based on his own experiences in the region. The chapter emphasizes safety issues in remote peripheral areas in relation to sustainable motorcycle tourism in the Arctic. Chapter 17 examines one specific adventure tourism opportunity in the Canadian Arctic: recognizing the changing conditions of Canadian marine tourism resulting from climate change. In this chapter Johnston, De Souza and Lemelin discuss the potential for Arctic marine expeditions as a new tourism product in the region. The final two chapters address issues involving the Russian Arctic, a vast region that nevertheless has received scant attention in the English language literature. First, in Chapter 18, Ilkevich and Strömberg provide an extensive review of Russian Arctic tourism experiences, challenges and opportunities, and their links to TBL sustainability and the military presence. Adopting a social science perspective, Haugseth and Wråkberg then investigate Russia–Norway Arctic borderland tourism in Chapter 19. Links between geopolitical and sociocultural sustainability are examined.

The book is concluded in Chapter 20, where the findings and themes of the diverse chapters are reviewed and synthesized, and stakeholder implications and further research directions for the advancement of a sustainable Arctic tourism are discussed by Lee, Weaver and Prebensen.

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2 Experiencing the Arctic in the Past: French Visitors to Finnmark in the Late 1700s and Early 1800s

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Introduction

This chapter traces three elite French visitors to northern Norway who travelled there long before the area began receiving attention as a tourist destination *per se*. Drawing on archival records and relevant literature, it recounts the travel experiences of the three visitors, who showed interest in the Arctic environment and its people in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The first story comes from Prince Louis Philippe's stay in northern Norway. This stay primarily had political motivations, albeit the prince was interested in science. The second story is about Léonie d'Aunet, who is thought to be the first French woman tourist in the Arctic. She travelled on *La Recherche*, a scientific research expedition vessel that was commissioned by Prince Louis Philippe. *La Recherche* travelled to northern Norwegian locations, such as North Cape and Spitzbergen. As the wife of one of the expedition members on the vessel, her motivations could most closely be related to those of leisurely and touristic visits to the Arctic today. The last example is Roland Bonaparte, a grandnephew of Napoléon Bonaparte, who travelled to northern Norway at the end of the 1880s; he was interested in taking photographs of Sami people.

Drawing on their motivations and conditions of travel evidenced in their experiences to the unknown Arctic, the aim of this chapter is to contextualize the historic visitor experience in the Arctic within a centre–periphery context. It

does this in order to engage and conceptualize the idea of ‘periphery’ in tourism. How we understand contemporary notions of periphery within tourism contexts is clarified when we recall stories of pre-tourism-era visitors to the Arctic.

Visits to the Arctic in the Past

The Arctic has always fascinated people. In the future, given the increasing rather than decreasing desire of humans to explore hard-to-reach places on earth and beyond, it is highly unlikely that this fascination with the Arctic will diminish. Similar trends are witnessed with regard to space tourism (Collins *et al.*, 1994; Crouch *et al.*, 2009). The Arctic, however, has been closely connected to many cultural interpretations of the past. To those who dream about the Arctic as a place of beautiful landscapes and unique environments, it is a natural winter wonderland. However, to others, it is an unknown land with a harsh climate where a determined fight for survival is essential. Hence, there is evidence of extreme affectations of beauty and terror within interpretations. Such paradoxical perceptions of the Arctic were more prevalent in the past largely due to limited progress and knowledge in the natural sciences, and also to the sheer lack of transportation to the area.

At the end of the 18th century, many places on earth, and certainly the Arctic, were

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essentially unknown and perceived simply as 'white areas' on the map. During the 18th and 19th centuries, over 80% of Europe's population consisted of farmers who from their birth to death stayed in the same place, cultivating fields and looking after animals. Only the wealthy and privileged, as embodied in the classic Grand Tour (Towner, 1985), could afford to travel beyond their daily boundaries of life. And even to those who were able to travel, its realities were very harsh. Indeed, it is worth mentioning here the etymology of 'travel' in the English language. Derived from the French word *travail* or 'work' (Leiper, 1983; Franklin, 2003), the very origin of the word in English is clearly not based on pleasure or relaxation. Given the etymological context, it is not surprising that travelling to unknown places at the time was not seen as 'leisure' as such but rather as 'madness', a vestige perhaps of the medieval *orbis terrarum* ('T-in-O') maps with their beastly peripheral embellishments (Woodward, 1985). Subsequently, given the high risks of death on the road, journeys could last from several months to several years and travellers did not know if they would ever come back and see their families again. While pre-modern cultural connotations of the Arctic may be open to many different interpretations, these stories, true or not, were passed on from one generation to another.

Research and scientific expedition, two of the main reasons to travel to the Arctic during the 18th and 19th centuries, constitute an interesting link between the modern era of leisure travel and the classical era of great explorations. In the classical era, those who undertook such trips were motivated by their will to discover new areas or to study new aspects of the world. Researchers and scientists travelled to northern Europe to explore fauna and flora, but sometimes only ostensibly, while in reality they focused on scouting out geopolitical opportunities for the king, emperor or tsar. The European Arctic was relatively accessible by merit of its land connections to the rest of the continent, and so attracted considerable attention. A few existing reports, written by priests, adventurers, researchers or others, were often deliberately or inadvertently misleading, thereby fostering inaccurate images of the region. Indeed, many visitors did not hesitate to add wrong information in their stories on the Arctic to

sensationalize and heighten their adventure or, perhaps, to mislead or frighten enemies.

Louis Philippe's Arctic: unknown hideaway for political asylum

Louis Philippe (1773–1850), the Duke of Orléans, travelled to northern Europe in 1795. He was 22 years old when he started his journey to northern Norway. There were several reasons: Louis Philippe had a great interest in science and this was said to be one of the main driving forces for his trip. The practical reason, however, was political. At the time he set out, the French Revolution was at its peak and many French aristocrats were captive. The 1793 beheading of Louis XVI, King of France and uncle of Louis Philippe, and of the king's wife Marie-Antoinette in 1794, showed that the political regime of that time, the 'Terror' (Encyclopædia Universalis, 1985a: 1782), had no mercy for the country's nobility. Louis Philippe's father, Philippe Égalité, a brother of the king, also died under the guillotine because of his strong connection to General Dumouriez, who was accused of trying to overthrow the newly established regime and restore the monarchy. In 1793, the French government decided to expel all members of the royal family, who were regarded as a constant threat to democracy and the newly established republic. They wanted to avoid any possible return of the royal family. That is why many members of the royal family had to leave France (Encyclopædia Universalis, 1985b: 2923). Louis Philippe started his trip to northern Norway in anonymity. Nobody could know that he was travelling because he was seen as a potential new king, should the monarchy be re-established. He chose, therefore, to travel under a false identity and took the name Muller. His travelling companion, who was the Italian Count of Montjoye, decided to take the name Froberg.

What do we know about this trip? Very little, because Prince Louis Philippe never wrote a book or kept a diary. The available sources include the thank-you letters he wrote to those who hosted him during his trip. Other sources are the books or diaries written by explorers or travellers who went to the same places as Louis

Philippe and were told about his visit. The people who met Louis Philippe and the Count of Montjoye remembered them as friendly, polite and cultured people whose interest for science and research was genuine. Skjöldebrand, who travelled to northern Norway in 1799, refers twice to the prince's visit in '*Voyage pittoresque au Cap Nord*'. Skjöldebrand reports in his diary about the price he and his travelling companions had to pay to their hosts in Kautokeino. Surprised that food was much more expensive than anywhere else in Norway, they asked the reason. The answer was that a French prince who had come to Kautokeino earlier had paid the same price (Skjöldebrand, 1805: 141). In addition, Skjöldebrand refers to Louis Philippe when he came to Alta:

We were told in Alta that the French prince we had been told about in Kautokeino was the elder son of Égalité, named Duke of Orléans . . . They had come from Scotland to Norway and, according to the information I got about their journey, they had travelled to the North Cape.

(Skjöldebrand, 1805: 169–179)

He explains further that Prince Louis Philippe wrote a letter from Copenhagen to the mayor of Alta, Sommerfeld, to thank him for his hospitality, signing with his real name. Léonie d'Aunet, who travelled to northern Norway with an expedition on *La Recherche*, cites Louis Philippe in a letter. With other members of the expedition, she went to the house of Havøysund's merchant, Mr Ullique, whose father had hosted two travellers named Muller and Froberg a few decades before. Someone had told the father of Mr Ullique a few years later that one of the visitors, whose distinction and education had deeply impressed him, was a French prince. Léonie d'Aunet also explains that Louis Philippe never forgot his hosts and sent presents to them for many years afterwards. He had asked Paul Gaimard of the research ship *La Recherche* to present a bust of himself to Mr Ullique to commemorate his 1795 trip (Knutsen, 2002: 164). The bust was presented in 1839 during a ceremony in which they drank champagne, and cannons were fired to honour the French king (d'Aunet, 1995: 151). The limited sources available to us mean that exactly which places the Duke of Orléans visited during his stay in northern Norway remain contested.

Research by Wessel (1933) reveals that the prince had indeed stayed in Måsøy. However, there were no descendants left of the family that had hosted him there. In addition, the house where he stayed had been sold and moved to Havøysund (Wessel, 1933: 10). Wessel's research further verifies that the bust of Louis Philippe remained there until it was destroyed during World War II. President de Gaulle donated a new bronze statue to replace the former one in 1959. In 2016, the statue was exhibited at North Cape Hall on the island of Magerøy in the municipality of Nordkapp, while the remnants of the old statue were kept at the museum in Honningsvåg (Stavhaug, 1990: 47–48). Several other sources also bear witness to Louis Philippe's trip to Finnmark. For example a church register of funeral dates and notes on local residents mentions, in the obituary of a certain Bastian Abrahamsen Rosenkrantz, that he hosted Louis Philippe at his house (Wessel, 1933: 25). At the time of writing, very few people in France know about Louis Philippe's trip to Norway and the details remain enticingly obscure. In Norway, the situation is slightly different since it is possible to find people who still show an interest in the trip of the last king of France to Finnmark. The map of Finnmark county in northern Norway (Fig. 2.1) indicates that the places Louis Philippe visited in 1795 were indeed extremely peripheral locations, especially at the time of his visit. Places such as North Cape are not disadvantaged by their remoteness as tourist destinations in 2016; rather, they promote their peripherality as one of the key attractions to experience. As the website for Visit North Cape (2016) says: 'Shimmering northern lights, breathtaking scenery and the northernmost frontier – welcome to the North Cape!'

This makes one wonder whether contemporary visitors to the peripheral Arctic are motivated to seek refuge, just like the French prince, as it provides some temporary disconnection from the all-time connected world filled with electronic mobile devices and the like. Temporal disconnections like these might enable peak experiences of life and existence. This line of thought is fleeting, as northern Norway has one of the best infrastructures for internet connections in Europe. Further, the country's leading telecommunications providers are quick to

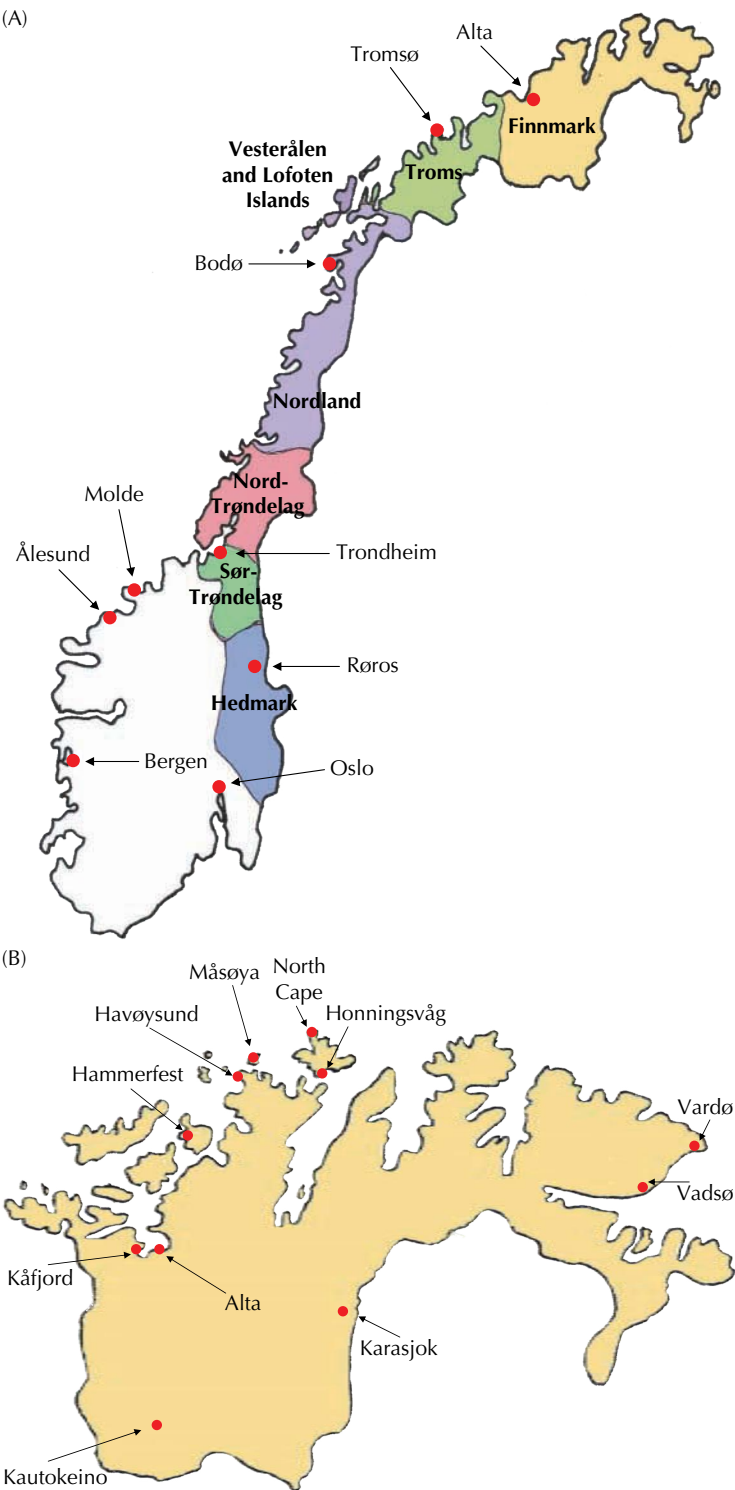


Fig. 2.1. (A) Map of Norway. (B) Map of Finnmark county.

boast that they are providing fast internet connections to those who travel to their weekend cabins in remote mountainous areas or on remote islands. Consequently, weekend cabin activities comprise real-time social media feeds, watching the latest movies via online streaming or playing online games. One cannot escape the conundrum: does peripherality enable experiential core when the connectivity requirements of the 21st century tourists are met?

Léonie d'Aunet: first French woman tourist in the Arctic?

The second narrative in this chapter has a close relation to the first. When the monarchy was re-established in 1830, Prince Louis Philippe was crowned king (*Encyclopædia Universalis*, 1985a: 1782) and had not lost his considerable interest in science and research. It was not surprising, therefore, that when the then-famous traveller Paul Gaimard requested finances for an expedition, the new king enthusiastically approved the financing of a research expedition vessel, *La Recherche*, to travel to northern Norway. Louis Philippe had not forgotten his visit to northern Europe and the Arctic, and a condition for the funding was that Gaimard should take presents to give, as appropriate, in Norway. With this condition accepted, the expedition vessel was equipped to survive the Arctic conditions.

It should be noted that the decision by the king to finance the expedition was not due purely to his friendship with and gratitude to Norway. It was also a strategic move, as he wanted to give France an international role in polar research. Rivals such as England and the Netherlands had already sent expeditions to the Arctic, and Louis Philippe wanted to affirm the global dominance of France, including the field of polar research. Nevertheless this expedition, funded by the French king, included scientists not only from France but also from Denmark and Sweden (Knutsen, 2002: 164). Gaimard believed that scientists from different countries could share their knowledge and experiences and contribute to undertaking more advanced research. It was also anticipated that the possibility of difficulties in interacting with local

residents would be reduced if some expedition members could speak those local languages. The expedition party comprised three working groups: one would travel to Alta and spend the winter 1838–1839 in studying the aurora. The second group would travel to the Spitzbergen archipelago. The third group would travel from northern Norway (Finnmark) to Finnish and Swedish Lapland and then return to Stockholm. Léonie d'Aunet was part of the second group; however, to set Arctic tourism in context, we will provide an account of the first group.

The first group, which would study the northern lights, had seven scientists (three from Sweden and four from France) and a French artist, Louis Bevalet. Wanting to find out how high in the atmosphere the aurora was appearing, they decided to establish a research station. It was the first time a research station was ever established at such a latitude in the Arctic (Knutsen, 2002: 130). The station was built at Bossekop in Alta. The site was carefully chosen to ensure that the earth did not contain iron, as the scientists were concerned about inaccurate results due to the iron content in the ground. Various instruments for measuring the aurora were carried on *La Recherche*. Data collection had to be performed regularly at the same time each day to accurately compare the results with the earlier findings of French scientists who had been travelling to Iceland. It was fastidious work which took a long time since the scientists had to write many figures in books in the dark, while Bevalet had to draw the aurora. Working conditions were hard and it was difficult to draw the northern lights outside in the cold weather with freezing fingers. Moreover, the aurora changed quickly and several drawings had to be done within a few minutes. While the scientists were very keen to perform rational scientific research, they were also interested in the myths and legends connected to the northern lights (Knutsen, 2002: 142).

The second group travelled to Spitzbergen, and this was the same group that went to Havøysund to offer the bust of King Louis Philippe to an important merchant, the son of Mr Ullique who had hosted Louis Philippe and the Count of Montjoye. The 19-year-old Léonie d'Aunet was among them, the only woman to participate in the *La Recherche* expedition. Her husband was the expedition's sculptor, and this

is the reason for her participation, as it was unusual to have women present in such national expeditions at that time. In a book that she wrote about her trip to Norway and Spitzbergen, d'Aunet states several times that some expedition members disapproved of her participation, arguing that the trip would be too harsh for a woman and wondering why a person without any special qualification should join a research expedition. That is the reason why she is said to be the first French woman to travel to these latitudes for 'touristic' purposes (D'Aunet, 1995: 152). In 1854, d'Aunet wrote a book about her trip to northern Norway entitled *Voyage d'une femme au Spitzberg* (d'Aunet, 1995). It contains nine letters that Léonie wrote to her brother during the trip. At that time, women never participated in such national expeditions in France (d'Aunet, 1995, pp. 15–16). D'Aunet writes that the trip was anything but easy and comfortable and that she had to leave her Parisian clothes behind for more practical and warmer apparel. During the trip, she cut her hair short so that she did not have to brush it in such hard living conditions, even though no distinguished woman had short hair in France at that time.

The letters written by Léonie d'Aunet also provide insights into the first female French tourist's moments of experiential core in the Arctic. Her first experiences of the midnight sun and northern lights, for example, are meticulously recorded. In the fourth letter, d'Aunet cites an event that happened on the first day of her arrival. She tells that in the evening she had time to write a letter to her mother when she suddenly felt tired. She asked her servant what time it was. His answer was that it was a quarter past midnight. She replied with surprise that this could hardly be possible since it was full daylight outside. The domestic brought the clock to her to show the time. D'Aunet then asked what time the sun would go down in these Arctic areas. He replied that the sun was not going down at all and that this would last until the end of August. Léonie d'Aunet reports then that she went outside to see the 'strange midnight sun', explaining that it was as bright as during the day. This was the first time she had really experienced the midnight sun (d'Aunet, 1995: 123). Later, in the sixth letter describing the trip to Spitzbergen, she explains that the sun left the

horizon for the first time on 18 August, marking the comeback of the winter at such latitudes (d'Aunet, 1995: 191). In relation to the northern lights experience, Léonie d'Aunet recounts that she was sleeping when someone came to wake her to see the aurora. She explains that she was 'the witness of the most magnificent shows ever seen in the world', describing the aurora as 'a strange phenomenon', leading to stupor (d'Aunet, 1995: 258–259).

The experiential core that d'Aunet displays is not confined to extraordinary and completely new things. She was also experiencing 'liminal' (Urry, 2003) moments when visiting remote Arctic places. Constantly comparing her experiences with similar experiences from home, she found similarities, for instance comparing a street in Tromsø with the famous Marseille avenue 'La Canebière' (d'Aunet, 1995: 120). This induced liminal experience further heightened her longing for her homeland. In the fourth letter she talks about her unexpected longing for home while waiting for *La Recherche* at the harbour of Hammerfest. The arrival of the vessel awakes emotions she never would have felt in France, writing of herself 'Its sight made me feel an emotion, which I did not expect. I felt deep inside of me all the fibers [feelings], which respond to the name of Fatherland' (d'Aunet, 1995: 148).

D'Aunet's letters also give information about the history of Norway, the traditions, the towns she visited, the landscapes, the population, the itinerary of the trip and her experience on board *La Recherche*. She explains that she travelled in a steamboat to Hammerfest where she first joined *La Recherche*. Once *La Recherche* had returned from Spitzbergen to Finnmark, she travelled to the village of Kaafjord. Of this place, she writes that she was surprised to see the 'beautiful houses' of the mine owners who came from England. She explains that the houses looked similar to those she had seen in France or England. Her trip continued through Lapland with horses and guides, even though the Englishmen had discouraged her from doing so, saying that the trip would be too tough and the landscapes boring. She recalls later that her decision was madness, and several times she regretted joining her husband through Lapland, instead of travelling back to France on *La Recherche* (d'Aunet, 1995: 201–203).

In 2016, the *La Recherche* expedition was still being cited as the first attempt to study the aurora in the north of Norway, such as in the book *Altas Historie* (Nielsen, 1995: 159). A few decades after the *La Recherche* expedition, during the International Polar Year of 1882–1883, Norwegian scientists went to Alta to collect data to compare with the results of *La Recherche*. The city of Alta is known as the ‘northern lights city’, where research on the phenomenon was first conducted in Norway. Bevalet’s drawings were greeted with great success in France, since they were the first depictions of the northern lights ever made. The scientists in the third group published reports about their works as well, focusing on their collections of plants and stones. Unfortunately, however, because of the large collections and numbers of books published from their works – a total of 26 volumes – their work has not had a real impact in France due to its confinement within the scientific/research community.

An expedition to the Arctic by a photographer anthropologist

The last story in this chapter considers the experiences of Roland Bonaparte (1858–1934), a grandnephew of Napoléon Bonaparte I who was the emperor of France between 1802 and 1815. Even if he never used the title, Roland Bonaparte was a prince as well as a botanist, anthropologist and photographer. This polymath’s interest in anthropology led him to the Nordic countries in 1884 at the age of 26. His interest in the Sami people and their traditions and way of life was the reason for his trip. Bonaparte was interested in taking photos of the people he met, but since he was not an explorer as such, he never participated in any expeditions far away from France, taking many of his photos during exhibitions in European capitals. His ambition was to make a detailed inventory of the world’s populations as captured in photography, as befitted the Darwinism that influenced the thinking of many intellectuals in the late 19th century. In this thinking, the indigenous people of the world were ‘second-class’ races compared to the dominating white populations; the former were destined to either

oblivion or assimilation and therefore required ‘preservation’ by camera. Anthropologists who had been travelling to peripheral regions brought some indigenous people to Europe to display them during exhibitions (Lehtola, 2015: 268–295). While Bonaparte was interested in photographing the indigenous peoples, he never made any descriptions of them or their way of life, which may explain why his work in photography has never really been accepted by his peers as a scientific contribution. It also explains why his interests moved to biology, in which he had great ambitions and a notable career some years later.

Bonaparte started the trip to Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Lapland during the summer of 1884, travelling with a small group of scientists. Among them was his secretary François Escard (1836–1909) who published six short stories about the trip. Those stories, which are a kind of diary explaining the day-by-day activities and itineraries, were published in *Revue Géographique* (Escard, 1884, 1885). Thanks to these publications we have an accurate account of the places visited. We know, for example, that they first travelled by boat along the coast of Finnmark to the Russian border and then crossed Finnmark to the villages of Kautokeino and Karesuando. Other sources available concerning that trip are the photos taken by Bonaparte, which can be accessed online (<https://digitaltmuseum.no/search?query=roland%20bonaparte>). Although he was an avid photographer, he never provided a description of the persons he photographed, or recorded the places or dates relating to the photos. As a result, we do not know where the people were living or the nature of their daily activity. Their names are missing as well. The French anthropologist Yves Delaporte has tried to sort all the photos, going to the north of Norway during the 1980s to interview the older generations and asking if they could recognize some of the families or portraits. In addition, he used church registry information to try to find when the people were born and who their ancestors or descendants were. A comparative study of the clothes the people were wearing and of the different Sami traditional dresses also gave information about the area or villages the people might come from. All these elements enabled Delaporte to give a name to many of

the portraits taken by Roland Bonaparte. However, there are still a few 'unknown' portraits. Yves Delaporte's work was published in the specialized journal *L'Ethnographie* in 1988 (Delaporte, 1988).

What do we know about the people Roland Bonaparte met? Since the group travelled along the coast, they met many Sami from that area. Clothes worn by some of the Sami he met close to the Russian border were styles with a Russian influence. That is also why we know that he met Skolt Sami people. The photos give many details about the traditional clothes and traditions in fashion. The colours, shapes and patterns give a hint about the activities of the people and the places from which they came. In some of the portraits, we can see that the style of the clothes is rather simple and plain without ornaments and that bright colours have been replaced by black or grey. The latter shows that laestadianism, a conservative Lutheran revival movement that began in Lapland in the mid-19th century (Vahl, 1866: 61), was still present in some Sami communities, influencing how people should dress. Bonaparte wrote two short articles referring to his trip to Lapland in *La Nature*, the journal of the Institute of Anthropology in Paris. By 2016, the trip of Roland Bonaparte was virtually forgotten in both France and Norway. The reason is that his research in Lapland, which was never recognized by his peers, did not have a great impact in France at the end of the 19th century. Moreover, the literature published about Roland Bonaparte's trip to Lapland is not voluminous. An article was published by Yves Delaporte in 1988 and another by the Finnish researcher Osmo Pekonen in '*Sápmi I ord och bild I*' (Pekonen, 2015). At the time of writing, in 2016, the Sami portraits of Roland Bonaparte are a part of the Arctic collection at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris.

Discussion and Conclusion

Reflecting on the experiences of the three elite French visitors to the Arctic well before the area was considered a tourist destination, we highlight several aspects of the core-periphery relationship as applied to Arctic tourism research.

The core-periphery approach to tourism has drawn considerable research interest and has proved to be useful, albeit debatable at times, in explaining certain stakeholder relationships and conflicts in relevant tourist area developments. Conventionally, the notion of periphery has negative connotations associated with isolation, disadvantaged development and being subjected to uneven power relationships during decision-making development processes (Keller, 1987; Weaver, 1998; Diagne, 2004). Yet, for all of its alleged disadvantages, in each of these three cases the periphery *succeeded in attracting individuals who embody the core doubly*; that is, travellers who were from the proximate geographical core of France, and also of the elite social core of that country. The periphery, for all of these visitors, must have been providing something *positive*.

For Louis Philippe, the Arctic was the ideal sanctuary, a geographically remote place where almost no one would notice the presence of even the French prince. Napoléon Bonaparte had his own exile on the remote Atlantic island of Saint Helena, but Philippe's place of exile seemed more like a haven that granted him blessed autonomy and the right to leave (eventually taken up) whenever it pleased him. This periphery, accordingly, while physically dangerous and unforgiving, was also a benign place of renewal and contemplation. The Arctic was the 'right' choice at the time fundamentally *because* of its spatial peripherality.

For Léonie d'Aunet, the 'periphery' took on a profound symbolic meaning, as she chose to travel to the Arctic against all the social norms of the time. Her choice to be part of the expedition party can be seen as an act of emancipation wherein code-ridden France was the prison and the Arctic the longed-for land of freedom where necessity and autonomy combined to produce a self-confident woman with shorn hair, clad in simple, practical clothes. Finally, for Bonaparte, the journey to the Arctic periphery was a small act in a grand production of imperial hubris. Occurring during the height of European colonial expansion, the capture of indigenous people and their display at grand exhibitions was a common expression of imperial heroism. What Bonaparte did, taking photos of the Sami people he met, was a form of 'capture by camera' that no less reflected the

fascination with and patronizing of the unknown and undiscovered, but doomed, 'noble savage' (Ellingson, 2000). This noble savage quality is, perhaps, only possible in remote, untouched – that is, *unspoiled* – peripherality; once paraded to audiences in the core, she or he is diminished and humiliated, serving only to demonstrate the greatness of the core by comparison with the primitive native.

Peripherality discourses are still primarily conceptualized in relation to dichotomized spatial distributions, and as an absolute quality expressed variably in ideas such as wilderness and the urban–rural divide. However, there is growing speculation that the 'periphery might be vanishing', Hall *et al.* (2013) proposing that core-versus-periphery is a matter of interpretation and more of where one stands rather than a rigidly framed concept. One of the authors (Harrison) suggests that the position of being core/centre or periphery changes with time and sociopolitical, economic and other environments of a society, as for example when the American West frontier became integrated into the national economy. Another author of the paper (Weaver), remaining philosophically on the same ground, then suggests a more integrated model that recognizes 'semi-peripheries

and semi-cores', thus providing a mediating ground for the transition from centre to periphery and vice versa. He also argues that an economic or physical periphery can be an experiential *core* because of the peak emotions and outcomes it elicits and permits. This appears to be the case for Philippe, d'Aunet and Bonaparte, each of whom reflects in their own distinctive way the blurred and contestable boundaries between core and periphery. As such their stories give us valuable grounds for challenging the 'dictatorship of the binary' in tourism, especially insofar as their experiences still resonate in the present. D'Aunet, for example, as witnessed in her correspondence with her brother, seems to be a 'conquerer', a type of contemporary tourist as described by Viken (1995) who gains symbolic status as a great traveller defying convention and experiencing peak emotions through visits to extremely remote places such as Svalbard. The periphery in this process of conquest *becomes* a core, as much for a young Chinese backpacker in 2016 as for a 19th century member of the French elite. Interrogations of contemporary Arctic travel motivations, accordingly, would profit greatly if better informed by the whispers and soft footprints of the past.

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3

Roles of Adventure Guides in Balancing Perceptions of Risk and Safety

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Introduction

Risk is usually associated with dangerous situations. However, for adventure tourists, the desire for risk is connected to the experiential values that these tourists associate with performing an activity, such as thrill, enjoyment and excitement (Cater, 2006; Buckley, 2012; Mackenzie and Kerr, 2012; Piekarz *et al.*, 2015). In particular, desirable risk is a subjective evaluation based on previous and ongoing experiences; thus, the manner in which guides interact with tourists influences possibilities for co-creation of experiences, as well as tourists' perceptions of risk. Despite the influence the perceived risk of tourists can have on the value created when performing an adventure activity (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2012; Rokenes *et al.*, 2015), little is still known about adventure tourists' experiences of risk and its influence on experience value. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to broaden existing understandings of risk and safety in guided adventure activities, by exploring the stories of tourists who have participated in guided adventure activities, and their feelings of risk. In particular, we will examine how their interactions with guides and environments influence their risk perceptions. The chapter has a customer focus and applies the concept of value co-creation to address this issue (Prebensen *et al.*, 2013b). The value of risk is linked to tourists actively performing an activity. Consequently, value is highly individualistic as it is based on the

experience, knowledge, skills and situational factors of each tourist (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2012). In such a context, a guide's effort to co-create value depends on whether the individual tourist feels safe enough to overcome perceived risks (Williams and Soutar, 2005). For instance, guides who support tourists' emotional efforts can increase feelings of coping (Prebensen and Foss, 2011), thereby assisting tourists in taking control to overcome their perceptions of risk and reap the emotional benefits of participating in adventure activities (Dickson *et al.*, 2000; Beedie, 2003). Supported by the guide, such tourists gain the capacity to more actively and positively contribute to the creation of their own experience. However, guides have to work with tourists, who hold different perceptions of risk and safety. This means that another factor that adds to the complexity of adventure tourism guiding is the heterogeneous perceptions of risk and safety held by tourists. The increasing mainstreaming of adventure activities has resulted in higher variation in what tourists think and how they cope with risk (Piekarz *et al.*, 2015). This has implications for guides as they have to simultaneously manage tourists' perceptions of risk and safety both at the individual and at the group level (Arnould *et al.*, 1998; Mackenzie and Kerr, 2013).

To gain more knowledge about the interplay between risk and safety in the adventure experiences of tourists, this chapter creates a typology of tourists to illustrate how different

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tourists can experience risk and safety, and how guides influence this interplay. The typology is based on data collected from interviews, observations and participation in guided adventure tourism activities.

Finding Balance Between Risk and Safety: The Role of the Guide

As an essential resource for value co-creation, the role of the adventure guide has been much discussed in adventure tourism (Arnould and Price, 1993; Beedie, 2003; Weiler and Black, 2015). Extant literature highlights the value of a guide based on their ability to adapt their resources to support contextual factors and tourists' resources (Weiler and Black, 2015). Tourists want guides to provide safety, and pay for guides to protect them from risk (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2012). In the context of guided adventure activities, risk is interpreted by tourists' perceptions; thus, risk is an individual assessment of possible negative experiences (e.g. social, physical and emotional) (Yang and Nair, 2014). Adventure tourists' perceptions of risk also depend on their resources (i.e. knowledge, skills and levels of experience), in addition to contextual factors such as a guide and the environment (Williams and Soutar, 2009; Piekarsz *et al.*, 2015). This means that perceptions of risk may change depending on the guide and/or the situation (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2012). The adventure guide, in terms of having local knowledge and skills, is in a position to influence tourists' perceptions of risk and safety (Rokenes *et al.*, 2015). Further, a guide's resources can influence their ability and willingness to construct, communicate and perform in ways that help tourists to overcome their perceptions of risk, and thus increase their feelings of safety (Arnould *et al.*, 1998; Mackenzie *et al.*, 2013; Mackenzie and Kerr, 2014). As intimated before, the increased range, accessibility and popularity of adventure activities means that guides more frequently have to adjust their performance to match heterogeneous perceptions of risk and safety (Arnould *et al.*, 1998; Chronis, 2015). Subsequently, a guide's emotional labour efforts are crucial, as they are directly linked to a guide's ability to address tourists' emotional

needs (Hochschild, 1979). Guides' emotional work entails both surface acting (faking feelings) and deep acting (internalizing tourists' feelings) (Sharpe, 2005; Mackenzie and Kerr, 2012). While both surface acting and deep acting can be beneficial, deep acting is suggested as a better way for guides to manage tourists' emotions (Arnould and Price, 1993; Sharpe, 2005; Mackenzie and Kerr, 2013). The benefits of deep acting are linked to reduced levels of stress, and guides feeling they have performed in accordance with their true selves, portraying a truthfulness that is considered essential for managing tourists' emotions (Gardner *et al.*, 2009; Mathisen, 2012; Mackenzie and Kerr, 2013). However, while deep acting is a favoured strategy, it can still compromise a guide's effort to manage the interplay between risk and safety when their displayed emotions fail to synchronize with those of the participating tourists (Mackenzie *et al.*, 2013).

Guides' Emotional Efforts and Value Co-creation

The concept of experience value has received considerable attention in tourism research (Prebensen and Foss, 2011; Prebensen *et al.*, 2013a,b). The benefit for guides with respect to focusing on experience value and tourists' value-creating processes is linked to perceived value as a subjective evaluation and a primary driver of behaviour, as well as the positive effect of value foci on guests' evaluations of satisfaction and loyalty (Williams and Soutar, 2009; Prebensen *et al.*, 2014). While it is suggested that tourism firms should endeavour to propose activities that enhance tourists' value creation through co-creation and increased levels of active participation, it is less clear how such collaborative forms of value co-creation can be enabled and what values are created (Echeverri and Skålén, 2011; Prebensen *et al.*, 2013a). However, value co-creation in guided adventure activities is often initiated and shaped by a guide's intrapersonal behaviour (Mathisen, 2012, 2013; Mossberg *et al.*, 2014). Further, viewing tourists as creators of their own experiences means that tourists interpret and act differently to a guide's efforts. While some tourists

may experience increased feelings of security, which can lead to enhanced enjoyment, others may be too scared to enjoy themselves (Carù and Cova, 2007; Prebensen and Foss, 2011; Kruger, 2012). The emotional work of guides can contribute to shaping tourists' sensory processes, and provide information regarding possible actions that may reduce or increase perceptions of risk. This means that a guide's emotional efforts are of crucial importance in enabling tourists to engage in emotional and physical work that ultimately can enhance tourists' value creation (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2011). Thus, tourists' perceptions of risk also highlight potential areas where a guide's efforts (or lack thereof) can limit tourist participation, and thus result in value co-destruction.

Methodological Issues

This chapter adopts a story approach to gain an inside view of how tourists, who participated in guided adventure activities, experienced risk and safety. The construction of the stories was based on data generated from interviews, observations and participation in guided activities. While the stories are based on different people whom we interviewed, story creation involves a co-creative process. In our research, individual experiences were morphed into four single stories that aim to exemplify how tourists' perceptions of risk and safety unfold. Hence, the stories are not related to specific persons but a suggested synthesis of different stories. While researchers must be careful about creating stereotypes, the interviews showed some similarities in terms of age, gender and experience that shaped the creation of the characters in the stories. The informants were men and women between the ages of 20 and 70, who had participated in different adventure activities in Norway and the USA.

The data were transcribed and the analysis started by identifying situations in which the interplay between risk and safety was a challenge. This interplay materialized through each character's communication and behaviour when perceptions of risk conflicted with their safety framework (Reissman, 1993). Further, the researchers' interpretations and analysis

reflect how they positioned themselves in the stories that they interpreted and told (Bakhtin, 1986; Czarniawska, 2004; Bruner, 2009). This position is based on the premise that researchers cannot know what interviewees think and thus have to infer the truth-value of the concept in question. The concepts of perceived risk and safety framed in the stories became a point of departure for story interpretations, constructions and re-construction (Czarniawska, 2004). Using and merging different stories increases intertextuality, which expands ways of knowing through the production of new knowledge (Bakhtin, 2010; Ingold, 2011). As ways of knowing, stories can act as prototypical cases; that is, they can carry practical and theoretical weight in similar situations/contexts (Bruner, 1991).

The choice of using stories recognizes that stories generate localized knowledge, which facilitates insight into processes of social complexity (Bruner, 1991; Herman, 2007). Further, storytelling as a means of communicating in academic research is argued to be an excellent way to disseminate knowledge, in addition to portraying the richness of experiences, which offer authentic representations of reality (Shankar and Patterson, 2001; Patterson and Brown, 2005; Brown, 2012).

Different Stories: Typologies of Adventure Tourists

We argue that how clients relate to the two dimensions of risk and safety generates a four-quadrant matrix of categorization (Fig. 3.1). Some clients are safety focused (mother hens), others want high levels of perceived risk and at

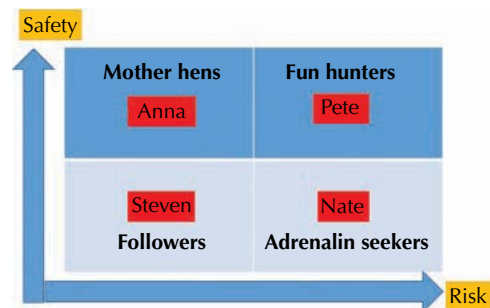


Fig. 3.1. Typologies of clients.

the same time high levels of safety (fun hunters), others prefer risky activities (adrenalin seekers) and, finally, some tourists are unconscious of safety and risk (followers). Our stories illustrate the typologies.

The mother hen: Anna

'Ok guys, let's go.' Anna is an inexperienced, 36-year-old mother of three boys. She feels a little bit nervous, and only agreed to participate in the activity because she wants to do things with her family. Her husband enjoys backcountry skiing (BC-skiing¹), which is the primary reason for participation in this activity. However, the boys also enjoy skiing, so her husband did not need to use a lot of persuasive power to make them agree. Anna tries to reassure herself, forcing herself to think that this activity is not dangerous. Anna is glad they chose a guided activity because although her family enjoys skiing they are not skilled skiers, the area is unfamiliar and they do not have up-to-date equipment. For Anna, the guides are a kind of safety assurance, they are responsible for keeping her and her family safe, and this enables her to relax more. The trip starts well; Anna enjoys skiing and gets into a steady rhythm as the trip evolves. She can even enjoy the beauty of nature. However, when the track seems to disappear into nothingness due to a steep downhill, Anna's heart starts pounding. She is afraid. One of the guides notices that she has problems and comes over to talk with her. She tells the guide that she does not feel safe enough to proceed. While she expects the guides to cater to her and her family's safety needs, she didn't expect the extra attention the guides give her. The guide talks her through her fears – explains how to position her body to avoid falling, how to use the skies to control the speed. Anna pays attention to what the guide tells her; finally, she feels reassured by the guide and she agrees to continue. She adjusts her body and prepares for the experience with the guide just behind her. It goes very slowly at first, more braking than downhill skiing really but, as Anna's confidence grows, she allows for more speed. Once down the hill, Anna feels excited, glad and released. She is so happy she did not take off her skis and that she did not fall. For a while, she

only thinks about herself and her achievement, but when they encounter a new steep hill, Anna worries about her kids and husband who are in the front of the group. Especially, she worries about the kids' safety. She is afraid they will get injured and feels anger towards the guides for leading them to yet another steep hill.

The fun hunter: Pete

'It's champagne conditions today, I really look forward to this,' Pete thinks. Pete is 42 years old and a businessman. He is a passionate skier, and has signed up for a backcountry ski tour with three of his best friends to experience something new, something fun, something he could not do on his own. Pete took the initiative for the trip, picked the activity, destination and guide. Pete is fit and wants to be pushed a little but not over his skill limits and he wants the protecting framework a guide can offer. 'This is the life,' Pete thinks, standing at the peak looking down at the slope. He completely trusts the guide's assessment of the conditions, and concentrates on having fun. Pete has a family back home and this tour is an escape from his obligations; he feels young and does not want to think much about responsibility. He just wants to have fun and to let safety be taken care of by a guide. He looks at the guide and says, 'The conditions today are excellent, not much to worry about, what you think?' While he likes to give the impression of knowing more than he actually knows and shows off to his friends and the other participants, he knows he still has a lot to learn and is determined to learn as much as he can. In addition, when the guides are sharing tricks of the trade concerning ski techniques and other things concerning BC-skiing, Pete really pays attention as he takes pride in passing on skills to tour mates back home – in particular, skills that will impress them. While the guide answers his question, Pete glances at the guides' skis and notices that they are the same brand as his own. 'Yes,' he thinks, 'they were pricey, but now I know I made the right choice'. High-end equipment is important for Pete who has a good income and can afford to buy the best brands. Normally, he likes to explore and find his own trails, but because his holiday is short he prefers

to learn from the guide to achieve an optimal experience. He can also see the long-term benefit of using a guide – what he learns on this tour can later make him better able to ski on his own. He gets lost in his thoughts about the guide and his own equipment until he hears the guide tell the group stories about the mountains. He pays attention to what the guide says, as he really likes to learn about local culture and nature. Pete is usually very outgoing, he likes to talk and he wants to establish a kind of relationship with the guide – the guide, to whom and with whom he is talking and having a discussion. However, this view of the guide as a risk assurance means that if something goes wrong, he is quick to blame the guide.

The follower: Steven

‘What has Pete hit upon today, I wonder?’ Steven is 43 years old and a friend of Pete. He likes skiing but clearly not as much as Pete. Steven has a wife and two kids; he is well educated and has a stable income. Steven and his friends have a group holiday every year. His main motivation is to hang out with them, escape from daily demands from work and family. Steven is not very fit, a few pounds overweight, and his leisure time – except for this holiday – is mainly spent on the couch. Steven likes to watch movies and he reads literature primarily related to his work as an academic. He is very interested in local culture, nature and environmental issues. When deciding where to go on this holiday, Steven did not play an active part: ‘I just hope to keep up and be the “yes man”, and stay positive with whatever the others suggest.’ Steven wants to renew their friendships, have fun, enjoy the meals and have a couple of beers in the evening. He is not very conscious about safety: ‘Actually I don’t know how dangerous this is, but I guess the others don’t want to put themselves or me in danger’. Steven always tries to minimize the physical challenges, and he has no need to show off. On the one hand, he expects the guide to take into consideration his skill and fitness level, and to be given clear signals of what he can or cannot do in relation to avoiding injuries. Steven expects the guide to teach him about the equipment and give him some help with skiing. On

the other hand, he does not like to be instructed in public because this shows that he lacks competence. He does not want to draw attention to himself, which means that he will not tell the others or the guide that he is struggling with the pace or level of difficulty. When things get too scary he tries not to lose face, by keeping it to himself and by being one of the guys.

The adrenalin seeker: Nate

‘Why can’t we do that steeper slope instead?’ Nate is a tougher version of Pete, loves to have fun, but fun is mostly related to enhanced levels of thrill, excitement and risk itself. He is very good at what he is doing, but he does not have the same level of responsibility in ordinary life. ‘I have no obligations, life should be fun and the more thrills the more fun.’ Nate often signs up for guided tours when he arrives at a new destination just to save time finding the hot stuff. When he has got the necessary knowledge from guides he goes on his own or with friends. He is outgoing and plays an active role in groups, always commenting on the guide’s instructions and suggestions, and he puts pressure on the guide to ski harder and more extremely. He loves to show off, and demonstrate his skills. Sometimes he stretches the guide’s instructions: for example, by going slightly out of designated areas for skiing, or he goes fast with big turns when the guide has recommended slow speed with small turns. A positive side of Nate is that he is very helpful towards other participants, he gives advice and instructions and he also offers to carry others’ gear if they struggle to keep up with the pace. In many ways, he tries to act like an assistant guide and to some degree distances himself from ‘ordinary’ participants.

Discussion

The typology matrix serves to illustrate that adventure guides’ efforts to influence tourists’ value-creation processes are important for the individual tourist as well as for the group. It is important to emphasize that the roles people assume depend on context, situation and role availability; thus, how participants communicate

and behave is always subject to change. For example, if Pete is participating in a tour with family instead of friends, his expectations and obligations change and he will be more safety oriented – in other words, he might act more as a mother hen. Further, there are variations within each typology. For example, one mother hen may not enjoy activities that are not totally safe, while another mother hen such as Anna may accept some risk. In addition, not all who choose to buy adventure activities are motivated by the activity itself; that is, the thrill of doing an activity that they perceive as risky. Thus, guides have to manoeuvre in highly complex landscapes of emotions that ultimately can lead to some clients experiencing value destruction. However, guides who engage in deep acting to evoke the empathy they need in order to work with client emotions are more likely to facilitate client value creation. For those adventure guides who engage in surface acting, and downplay perceptions of risk, there is the possibility that none of the clients will feel enjoyment or fun. For instance, Anna and Steven feel they cannot cope and are scared, while Pete and Nate are coping beyond their skill levels, and thus are bored.

Based on the typology, we suggest three strategies that can improve the possibility of realizing the value-creation potential for the individual in heterogeneous groups.

Individualization

Normally, guides map tourists' preferences, skills and fitness level before and during the course of a trip to form homogeneous groups before the trip or to split the group into more homogeneous groups during the trip (Rokenes *et al.*, 2015; Vold, 2015). An alternative strategy is to individualize experiences. This demands increased levels of emotional labour – in particular, deep acting – as the guides have to increase their efforts to try to identify and gain access to individual tourists' value-creation processes, to identify perceptions of risk to enable conditions that allow guides to adapt tourists' emotions to the context of the activity (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2013). For instance, a guide could go out into the mountains and establish a base camp where Anna, Pete, Steven and Nate could

choose ski lines that are in accordance with individual emotional needs. The alternative is often a tour from A to B where all have to do the same ski lines with different difficulty levels (Rokenes *et al.*, 2015).

Improve resources

One reason for tourists feeling anxiety (not safe enough) or boredom (not risky enough) is linked to their knowledge and skills. Enhanced skill levels can increase the chances for tourists to overcome their perception of risk, for example Anna feeling increased levels of coping and having more control. Likewise, teaching Pete and Nate about real risk can change their perspective on how much risk they are willing to take. If they are learning about the actual risks – for instance, how easily a skier can trigger an avalanche and that the consequence also can include other people's deaths – they may appreciate less dangerous activities. Subsequently, they may appreciate a tour designed with less risk and thrill than they expected. For Steven, who is more or less indifferent to what is going on, the guides could focus on his interest in the environment and local culture to increase his engagement in the activity. To improve Stevens's skill level is also important at a group level, as group safety depends on the efforts and skills of each member. Tourists like Nate are often considered a problem because of the pressure they may put on the other participants and the guide to do things they normally would not want to do. Here, the guides could use Nate's knowledge and skills to improve his interpersonal skills and invite him to share what he knows with the group. This means that Nate, instead of being a challenge for guides, could be a resource for enhanced value creation.

Expanding the tour goal

Real risk can result in guides having to change a tour goal, for example abandoning a BC-skiing tour when the risk situation changes. For instance, observations of an avalanche indicate dangerous conditions and the guide needs to change the tour to reduce the risk of a serious

incident. Even if the guide chooses to engage in surface acting and downplay the risk to participants, and avoided incidents, most of the participants would most likely not enjoy themselves. Anna and Steven would experience anxiety and fear while Pete may feel insecure. Therefore, guides need strategies that leave them with room to manoeuvre and perform based on changing situations. Instead of a focus on the original goal – for instance, powder skiing and excitement – the guides could work to re-establish tourists' perceptions of risk, for example from thrill to exploration, thereby highlighting the process instead of the outcome (Mathisen, 2013).

All three strategies show that it is essential to shape the tour around tourists' perceptions of risk and safety. This entails identification, interpretation and enactment of the activity in ways that enhance individual tourists' feelings of coping (Prebensen and Foss, 2011). Further, learning is a key to enhanced co-creation as learning can be individualized and incorporated in all three strategies. While learning is essential for personal development, it can also influence feelings of community, in particular when guides use tourists' skills and knowledge actively during the activity (e.g. cooking, preparing camp and more activity-specific skills). However, care should be taken as not all tourists consider participating in mundane activities, such as food preparation, as a value-fulfilment activity.

This chapter highlights that a guide's ability to engage in deep acting is especially important for all three strategies (Arnould *et al.*, 1998). A guide's ability to identify with tourists is important in proposing value and interacting in ways that open up the activity; this allows tourists to feel enhanced levels of coping and mastery, and provides them with a feeling of real influence on the creation of their own experiences (Prebensen *et al.*, 2013a).

Conclusions

While generalizations should not be made based on a few interviews, this chapter sheds light on common adventure guide challenges, and thus can be used as a point of departure for adventure firms, guides, educators and researchers. A focus on individual tourists entails creating strategies that individualize guides' value-creation proposals to match tourists' coping levels by targeting resources; that is, knowledge and skills. This benefits the whole group, as it can facilitate feelings of community. While a guide's knowledge and skills of real risk are crucial to construct safe adventure activities, tourists' perceptions of risk and safety can greatly differ from those of a guide. This highlights the importance for guides, and adventure tourism firms, to invest in the development of guide resources beyond the practical skills connected to real risk assessments. This chapter indicates that guides need to know how they can predict, understand and deal with the heterogeneity in people's understandings and relationships to risk and safety matters. However, there is a need for more research on this topic, and future research should also address the need for deeper insights into the effect of tourists' attitudes to risk and safety on value creation.

Note

¹ BC-skiing: a form of skiing where participants use alpine skis with special bindings and skins that make it possible to hike uphill. This enables free ride downhill skiing in areas outside ski resorts. Most BC-skiers search for untouched powder snow in steep terrain where there is a significant risk of snow avalanches.

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4

The Central Role of Identity in the Arctic Periphery

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Introduction

The Arctic can be viewed as the periphery in a centre–periphery service system, where the periphery is characterized by a perceived relative scarcity of resources, and its local centres serve as platforms for exchange with the central units of the system (cf. Galtung, 1971). From a systems perspective (Vargo and Lusch, 2016), Arctic tourism actors are nested in multilevel networks in which actors collaborate – that is, they cooperate and coordinate to achieve integration (Gulati *et al.*, 2012) to create value in various ways. The present study explores how collaborating actors specialize in providing different kinds of service in value-creating systems of service exchange. From this perspective, use value (representing the consumer’s experienced benefit) is taken to be the main explanatory mechanism in a system’s creation, based on the assumption that this affects consumers’ purchase behaviour and willingness to pay (Priem, 2007).

Drawing on ideas from sociology (Swedberg, 2003; Fligstein and Dauter, 2007) and institutional theory (e.g. Scott, 2014), the service system perspective emphasizes the role of social relations and social institutions as sources of change and stability in systems of exchange. In such systems, institutions and relations provide the context for value creation and value assessments, and these institutions and relations

are continually recreated as actors interact with each other through service exchanges (Giddens, 1984). The service system perspective (Vargo and Akaka, 2012; Vargo and Lusch, 2016) draws on ideas in the new institutional economics that socially embedded relations and informal institutions, such as norms, customs, meanings and traditions, as well as the institutional environment guide service-for-service exchange (Williamson, 2000), where the institutional environment specifies the formal ‘rules of the game’ – that is, the formal rules, policies and jurisdiction. To date, the service system perspective has focused mainly on how social embeddedness and the institutional environment affect resource integration in value creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2016). The service perspective is less concerned with organizational constructions needed to ‘play the game’ – that is, structures and processes that govern service exchange as a means of compensating for higher order shortcomings of the system (Williamson, 2000) – and so neglects the impact of such choices on organizational identity (Albert and Whetten, 1985). However, organizational identity is known to inform mechanisms of governance, monitoring, tacit coordination and boundary setting that affect both sense-making and sense-giving activities in firms and networks (e.g. Kogut and Zander, 1996; Price and Gioia, 2008). The present chapter addresses this governing and

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coordinating role of identity in the context of the Arctic tourism system.

Arctic Tourism: A Multilevel System of Actors and Networks

Considered as a tourism region, the Arctic is a complex exchange system that builds on a mixture of economic and symbolic values, which are transferred between tourists, entrepreneurs, local authorities, the local population and other stakeholders. Viewing Arctic tourism from a service system perspective enhances thinking about relationships, patterns and context, comprehending the interconnectedness and interdependence of Arctic tourism actors. Value creation in Arctic tourism involves a whole network of actors, not just the activities of a single actor or the interaction between a firm and a tourist.

Beyond the traditional managerial approach, the systems perspective can zoom in and out of phenomena; rather than focusing on single organizations or dyads, systems thinking encompasses central and peripheral relationships in the network (Capra and Luisi, 2014). The defining characteristic of systems thinking is a shift of perspective from the parts to the whole, implying that the systemic properties of the whole cannot be reduced to those of its parts. Accordingly, tourism actors in the Arctic cannot be fully understood in terms of their direct or indirect exchange relationships within the networks of a given destination, but must also be seen as part of a larger social system, such as the Arctic region or the tourism industry as a whole. In this wider system, firms, alliances and networks can all be seen as organizations, given that they have:

- identifiable boundaries and rules for (non-) membership, comprising
- multiple diverse members, which, to some extent
- share a mutual goal; and
- contribute collectively towards that goal (Puranam *et al.*, 2014).

Importantly, as a construct, an organization is not tied to a certain structural construction; rather, it is a system of coordinated action

among individuals and groups with differing preferences, information, interests or knowledge (March and Simon, 1993). In the Arctic tourism system, networks, dyads, firms, departments, subunits and teams within a firm may all represent organizations, with various identities at different levels in the system (cf. Dyer and Nobeoka, 2000).

From a systems perspective, Arctic tourism actors can be part of both intentional formal and informal networks such as chains, trade associations, alliances and destinations. By definition, a network exists when actors are connected to each other through a set of two or more exchange relationships (Anderson *et al.*, 1994). Depending on if the ties between actors are absent, weak or strong, the various actors in the network have differing levels of limited knowledge about each other (Granovetter, 1973). Within a network, exchange (or non-exchange) in one (direct) relationship affects or is affected by exchange (or non-exchange) in other (indirect) relationships. It follows that being a part of a network can have either positive or negative systemic effects on an actor.

As network members, actors develop network identities, representing tacit repositories of information and meaning that help them to manoeuvre within and across a system. These identities are based on actors' perceived capability to perform certain activities, and on the specific resources each actor possesses (Anderson *et al.*, 1994), communicating a certain orientation (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Montgomery, 1998; Heide and Wathne, 2006) and power (Cook *et al.*, 1983). As such, network identity represents a relational identity (Brewer and Gardner, 1996) that can be said to 'capture the perceived attractiveness (or repulsiveness) of a firm as an exchange partner due to its unique set of connected relations with other firms, links to their activities, and ties with their resources' (Anderson *et al.*, 1994: 4). A similar logic can be applied to networks per se (Dyer and Nobeoka, 2000), where a network, as part of a larger service system with multiple interconnected networks, can develop a collective identity relative other networks. Such collective identities give the Arctic tourism networks a life of their own that, if not fully independent, is at least distinct from the identities of its members. If a network can create a strong enough

collective identity and coordinating rules that are jointly accepted by its members, the network will be superior to a single hierarchy (such as a firm) as an organizational form, given its ability to create and recombine knowledge from the diverse knowledge base within the network (Huemer *et al.*, 2004). With appropriate governance, the capabilities and resources conferred by the collective identity of a network (e.g. of a region) will strengthen its capacity to attract actors and resources from other networks in the system, such as public funding, entrepreneurial skills and tourists, as compared to any single firm or destination (see e.g. Cai, 2002).

Institutions and the Attractiveness of the Arctic Tourism Identity

To enhance understanding of the role of organizational identity in Arctic tourism, we adopt King and Whetten's (2008) conceptual framework describing the relationship between the legitimacy and reputation of organizational identities, which is built on Brewer and Gardner's (1996) three-level model of collective identity and self-representation. This framework assumes that an organization (such as a destination, hotel, tour operator, travel agent or network thereof) enacts its institutional affiliation through a series of self-categorizing choices from among the available organizing options (Scott, 2014). Examples of such choices include form of ownership and governance structure, type of organization, location, products and services. Identities so rendered are grounded in institutionalized norms of appropriate behaviour, representing the performance standards of organizations that share a given social category (Rindova and Fombrun, 1999).

The identity of Arctic tourism actors relates to a set of institutions, which can be conceptualized as 'multifaceted, durable social structures, made up of symbolic elements, social activities, and material resources' (Scott, 2014), as manifested in the market through a series of narratives (Muniz *et al.*, 2015). The central and enduring aspects of identity provide stability and predictability, facilitating the development of trust on which collaboration is based (Albert and Whetten, 1985). In this way, the institutions

that define Arctic identity in this context help actors to develop a shared tacit knowledge of what Arctic tourism is (or is not), governing and coordinating human conduct in the Arctic tourism system.

At the highest level of King and Whetten's (2008) framework, self-categorizing choices lead to social or collective identity categorization, where groups are broadly construed and consist of organizations that share at least some minimum of demographic and social characteristics. At this level, normative performance standards define both the attributes an organization must share with other organizations and the minimum extent it needs to achieve those attributes to be perceived as a legitimate member of the given social category. Typically, comparisons and distinctions *between* various categories of organization are based on legitimacy – that is, to what extent the organizations achieve the minimum demands of the compared social categories/identities.

At the same time, performance standards also indicate which relational and individuating features constitute an ideal set of attributes, and the extent to which an organization needs to achieve these attributes in order to be considered unique and reputable *within* the category. More specifically, at the second level of relational identity, organizations are categorized on the basis of their achievement of interpersonal and inter-organizational relationship characteristics (such as roles and associations) in the given network. The third and lowest level refers to individuating identities or distinctive individual characteristics, including unique character traits and acquired skills and capabilities. In the present context, the resulting identity provides a basis for both evaluation and integration in the Arctic tourism system.

Identity and image as directing and self-monitoring mechanisms in the quest for authenticity

Organizational identity, then, can be said to represent an internal perception of 'who we are, what we do, and how well we do as an organisation,' shared by an organization's members (Albert and Whetten, 1985). For tourism actors,

identity helps to define important business issues, strategies and solutions in capturing market opportunities (Bredvold and Skålén, 2016). As a social coordination mechanism, identity not only informs and activates a familiar set of routines and procedures for running a business, but also determines which actions the organization's stakeholders deem acceptable or legitimate (King and Whetten, 2008).

Self-selected choices among organizing options provide organizing logics that inform the development of an organization's mission and purpose. In this regard, identity guides actors' interpretations of their own organizations and the appropriateness of different strategies and solutions for various situations (cf. Messick, 1999). Importantly, identity does not negate the influence of physical place-dependence issues in attracting tourists (e.g. Williams and Vaske, 2003). However, unlike a pure utility-based resource dependence view (addressing the extent to which actors need to activate various physical resources), reference to identity helps to explain why and how operations, commitments and involvements are shaped in certain ways (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991).

While identity serves as a directing mechanism, *image* is rooted in the experience of external stakeholders, and constitutes organizational members' beliefs about how they are perceived by actors outside the organization. As such, the issue of image can motivate actors to change or enhance various aspects of their identity in striving for legitimacy and reputation (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991). Actors are likely to compare what they consider their distinctive attributes to what they believe others consider distinctive about them. Any assessed (in-)congruity between perceived image and identity can motivate when, where and how the organization sustains or alters its commitments, involvements, indifference and resistance in various regards. In this way, the image construct serves as an important coordinating mechanism, informing organizational members about how consumers and other stakeholders experience the organization and its offerings.

Assessments of image relate to the authenticity of organizational efforts in terms of: (i) whether the organization actually offers what it says it offers to consumers; and (ii) whether what is offered is true to itself, in terms of

identity of the offering and the focal organization (e.g. destination or company) (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). From management research, the first element of this assessment relates to the predominant information-processing-based view, emphasizing awareness-building and informing present and potential consumers about the region and its offerings. The second, representational element relates to identity- or meaning-based consumer perception – that the actors and their offerings are true to the core values and meaning of their identity (see Högström *et al.* (2015) for an overview). In this sense, Arctic tourism organizations use the constructs of identity and image in their self-monitoring and evaluation of tourist and other stakeholder perceptions of authenticity (Price and Gioia, 2008). However, authenticity is relevant only to the extent that tourists prefer the experienced authentic image (cf. Cohen, 1988), relating to the more general question of tourists' desire for certain qualities and experiences rather than for authenticity *per se*.

The Role of Identity in Tourist Valuation of Arctic Tourism

There is evidence that consumer value assessments entail a hierarchy of subjective preferences, based on individual situation-specific comparisons of congruity between different objects (e.g. goods, services, events, persons, ideas or places) against the cognitive schema used by the individual in making that judgment (see e.g. Markman and Brendl, 2000). In the case of tourists travelling to the Arctic, value assessments will focus on whether the image and functional attributes experienced by those actors are congruent with their preferences, and how these compare to the attractiveness of potential alternatives (Sirgy and Su, 2000; Högström *et al.*, 2016). This focus on image, functionality and attractiveness of alternatives is comparable to the role of place dependence and place identity in predicting relational bonds or place attachment in tourism and leisure research (e.g. Kaltenborn, 1998; Bricker and Kerstetter, 2000).

Like place dependence (Williams and Vaske, 2003), functional congruity and

alternative attractiveness emphasize the importance of features and conditions that a place provides in support of specific goals or desired activities, and how it compares to other settings that may satisfy the same needs. Although attachment studies view functional aspects as independent of a place's identity, research on self-congruity suggests that self-image congruity – that is, the extent to which an object's image matches the individual's self-concept – may bias evaluation of functional aspects, as self-image congruity is positively related to the formation of a favourable attitude towards an object. Like self-congruity, the identity facet of place attachment emphasizes the individual's identification with the symbolic or meaning-based aspects of a place that invoke feelings of belongingness and aid the communication of values and policies (Cantrill, 1998; Kaltenborn, 1998). Accordingly, the perceived identity plays an important role in reducing the performance ambiguity that often afflicts tourism, given the high level of intangible and credence qualities which are common for services in the sector (Bowen and Jones, 1986). In a given exchange, this performance ambiguity makes it difficult to measure performance or to value the measured performance and so predict and evaluate what is offered. As a repository of values, information and meanings, identity is likely to reduce both the uncertainty (defined as a lack of information) and the equivocality (defined as a lack of understanding of information) (Daft and Lengel, 1986) encountered by tourists when choosing and evaluating destinations.

The Role of Identity in Integrating the Arctic Tourism System

The concepts of collective and organizational identity (Brewer and Gardner, 1996; King and Whetten, 2008) inform the present account of Arctic tourism. At the level of social identity, tourism organizations in both the Arctic and Antarctic represent polar tourism (Stewart *et al.*, 2005); at the same time, in representing the north and south polar regions, they occupy distinct categories. Nevertheless, the distinction between Arctic and Antarctic may be less obvious at this level than, for instance, the

differences between one of the two polar types and tropical tourism. Yet, the perceived differences in social identity and meaning between the Arctic and Antarctic are clear in terms of their differences in spatial, geographical, wildlife, demographic, cultural, social, and climate characteristics. It is an actor's, network's or system's achievement of the central minimum characteristics of the collective Arctic identity that qualify it as 'Arctic'. It is also apparent at this level that tourism actors choose to focus on a particular activity within the Arctic service system (e.g. hospitality, transportation, etc.).

Such decisions both distinguish actors in the Arctic from each other and make them comparable with actors elsewhere. In short, an Arctic tourism organization needs to fulfil the minimum requirement of location in the Arctic but must also achieve the central and enduring 'must-have' attributes of a specific global sectoral activity if it is to become a legitimate, relevant and reputable preferred alternative (cf. Högström *et al.*, 2016). For example, Arctic adventure tourism (see e.g. Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2004) must fulfil globally shared standards for adventure activities or tours, and Arctic cruise ship tourism (Viken, 2006; Stewart *et al.*, 2007) must meet standards in that segment if they are to be seen as legitimate alternatives by tourists seeking such experiences. To that extent, choice of activity also extends to lower levels of relational and individuating identities within the Arctic tourism system when that choice involves differentiation from other Arctic tourism actors or target market.

At these levels, organizational members' explicit and tacit knowledge – about whom to relate to, what to offer them, how to use resources and how relate to relevant others – creates uniqueness and difference across Arctic regions and cultures, as well as across individual actors within the region. For instance, to gain competitive advantage, a single actor can leverage its unique knowledge and skills to further distinguish itself from other actors in the Arctic (Grant, 1996). It might seek to create a more authentic and reputable experience by using native guides to tell the story of an area (Mason, 1997), or by organizing seal watching without disturbing the animals (Granquist and Nilsson, 2016). Leveraging such capabilities would not only differentiate the experiences as more

sustainable, it is also likely to enhance the experiences *per se* (Gilmore and Pine, 2007).

Within this multifaceted conception of identity, Arctic tourism actors face two overarching organizing challenges: cooperating and coordinating to integrate efforts within their own firms, and to function within wider networks and systems. As used in organization theory, the term *integration* signifies 'the quality of the state of collaboration that exists among departments that are required to achieve unity of efforts by the demands of the environment' (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967: 11). The first challenge – the need to achieve cooperation – is closely related to use of the various mechanisms that govern exchanges between actors. From this perspective, cooperation involves 'a joint pursuit of agreed on goals in accordance with a shared understanding about contributions and outcomes' (Gulati *et al.*, 2012: 533). In contrast, governance refers to the means of accomplishing orderly relations to mitigate conflicts and realise mutual gains (Williamson, 2000). Governance mechanisms include monitoring, incentives and sanctions, selection, identification and socialization; these can be combined in various ways to engender a perception that the division and allocation of tasks and rewards among cooperating parties is equitable, so reducing goal incongruence and aligning diverse interests (Wathne and Heide, 2000; Heide and Wathne, 2006; Gulati *et al.*, 2012). In particular, cooperation relates to internal organizational characteristics linked to identification as a member or non-member of a group and ensuing positive affect (Ingram and Yue, 2008).

Identification with similar others, implying some level of alignment of values and structural complementarity, has a positive impact on trust and cooperative performance (Heide and Wathne, 2006; Ingram and Yue, 2008). This complementarity is beneficial for the development of cooperation in that it may increase interdependence between actors and so provide incentives for cooperation (Gulati and Sytch, 2007). In this way, the identities of Arctic tourism actors can be seen as tacit repositories of information and meanings that capture a given actor's attractiveness as an exchange partner in the network. As a tacit mechanism, identities provide a context for governance,

affecting the selection of exchange partners, modes of monitoring and behaviour in networks and exchange relationships in various situations (Messick, 1999; Heide and Wathne, 2006). Additionally, it becomes a matter of joint interest to increase or sustain the attractiveness of the distinct Arctic identity shared collectively by actors in the network.

The second organizing challenge faced by actors in the Arctic tourism system is coordination, centring on how actors in an organization manage the interdependence that results from the interconnectedness of efforts and reward distribution in an exchange network (Puranam *et al.*, 2012). These complementary interconnections, which are seen as benefits that motivate cooperation (Gulati and Sytch, 2007), commonly lead to more complex division and allocation of effort, demanding more extensive coordination (Gulati *et al.*, 2012). Typically, higher levels of interdependence and uncertainty mean that timelier and more personal, frequent and accurate communication between the interdependent actors is needed to generate the predictive knowledge required for alignment of effort (Gittell, 2001). Actors in Arctic tourism networks can build this predictive knowledge by grouping interdependent actors into single structural units, or through the explicit use of coordination mechanisms with high (e.g. face-to-face or group meetings) or low (e.g. rules and routines) media richness, definable as the mechanisms' information processing capability (Daft and Lengel, 1986; Puranam *et al.*, 2012). In such circumstances, identities can contribute to scripting desired actions, as well as providing a context for sense-making and transformation of information into predictive knowledge. This scripting function of identities may reduce the need for explicit coordination mechanisms of higher bandwidth within communities of practice, e.g. networks or organizational units, which share the same identity (Bechky, 2003).

In summary, the individual organizational identities of Arctic tourism actors play a vital role in the cooperation and coordination efforts required for integration within and across the networks that constitute the Arctic tourism system (Gulati *et al.*, 2012; Puranam *et al.*, 2014). This integration is vital for leveraging capabilities, creating value and ensuring the

attractiveness of the collective Arctic identity, and for the survival of the Arctic tourism system's networks and actors. The present chapter also provides a general research agenda for

how identity can be used to study various aspects, operationalize and test several assumed relationships of value-creating systems, and tourism systems in particular.

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5

Tourists and Narration in the Arctic: The Changing Experience of Museums

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Introduction

Attractions, what they can be and their relation to narratives

Tourism without any form of tourist attractions does not make sense. Attractions are at the heart of tourism, the *raison d'être* for people to travel to different destinations and, in many cases, they are what is remembered and narrated during the journey or re-narrated after the journey. A narrow definition of attractions leads people to think of objects, specific places and iconic features in destinations. All of this is part of the truth, but a broader definition leads us to understand how feelings, stories, people, art and lived cultural features, to name just a few aspects, can also be attractions in travellers' minds (Leiper, 2005). Beyond the more common superficial motivations, many journeys to geographical peripheries might be aiming for an experiential fulfilment that is not expressed even to the traveller self, apart from the journey and the goal. Due to the geographic extremeness the tourist is striving for, there is seldom a need along the way to verbalize an experiential expectation, since the goal seems to be enough. This means that tourists arriving at geographic features such as the highest, lowest, northern-, southern-, eastern- or westernmost place or a nation; a landmass, a continent or anything, might reach a place and state of anticlimax. They arrive at an 'experiential core', such as crossing the Arctic Circle, or standing at North

Cape, but are filled with emptiness: 'Ok, now I'm here – so what?'

Attractions are always selections and enhancements of certain features. This is seen literally in, for example, Germanic languages where the very word for an attraction – for example '*Sevärdhet*' in Swedish, and '*Sehenswürdigkeit*' in German – contain within them the ingredients of what attractions are in those languages: they are entities that are 'worthy to be seen'. What it is that makes them worthy to be seen, and who it is that determines that worth, is seldom verbalized, and the words' etymological roots are seldom examined. The words are rather just used lazily to denote their mundane meaning, just like the English word 'attraction', even though there is no metaphysical attraction force in tourist attractions (Leiper, 2004). Whereas many attractions are objects or locations that might be considered objective in their own right, much research shows that a common understanding of attractions still focuses on a multitude of subjective pieces of contextual information (Brown, 1996; Arellano, 2004; Sjöholm, 2010). A place is described historically, geographically, geologically, biologically, socially, culturally or by using any other scientific, or non-scientific, frame available to enhance its extraordinary features. Edelheim (2015) explains how all attractions have a narrative structure, and shows how they therefore can be analysed using theoretical tools borrowed from narrative analysis. Museums are one form of attraction that travellers commonly

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turn to when wishing to receive a more holistic understanding of a phenomenon, a destination or a location, as they constitute a convenient kind of 'shorthand' for assembling in one location what is 'worthy of seeing' in a place.

Museums and new museology

Originally, 'museums' referred to places of study, or libraries. The collection of objects shown to a wider audience, which they are commonly perceived as nowadays, did not come about until later. The first reference to a museum collection was to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, UK, opened in 1683 (Barnhart, 1988). Kirchenblatt-Gimblett (1998) and Stam (1993) examine museum collections and suggest that the way museums are presented and the way exhibits are described all aim to underline a specific authorized discourse. The museum collection is often seen as the true and objective view of the region, and that is why there is such a strong link between regionalism/nationalism and museums (McLean and Cooke, 2003). Examples of this link can be found worldwide, from Canada (Ashley, 2005), to Namibia (Schildkrout, 1995) or China (Vickers, 2007), and the rise of national sentiment is often the main underlying rationale for the construction of 'national museums' (Díaz-Andreu, 2001). Craik reminds us, however, that local 'museums are disappointing – and often meaningless – to the tourist. They are often more relevant for local consumption to reinforce a sense of local identity and history' (1997: 115). The conservative view of museums as the one correct place portraying 'truth' is challenged by 'new museology', in which alternative interpretations that highlight the multiple conflicting versions of events are narrated by different stakeholders.

New museology is a theory that incorporates a self-reflexive view allowing for a 'view behind the stage' in terms of how collections are created, built and narrated (Stam, 1993). Museums created with a new museology ethos allow for diverse interpretations, alternative ontologies and epistemologies, created by separate groups of people to coexist without proclaiming one to be more correct than another. An important reason for new museology to become part

of museums all over the world is the increased spread of information and data on the internet. Tools are available that give an almost limitless number of sources claiming authority in presenting events, objects and cultures from their own frames, and views of interest, and these are available to travellers, as well as to local people. If museums would simply continue proclaiming one type of authoritative narrative they would gradually lose their credibility and overall power to attract people to their collections. By instead taking an active role in the critical enquiry into different alternative viewpoints, museums manage to make their collections topical and interactive, and allow their resident experts to authoritatively curate and study how selected aspects of society are understood (Kirchenblatt-Gimblett, 1998).

An interesting aspect of this democratization of museum collections is how museums in themselves, architecturally, and in terms of services provided, are starting to resemble entertainment areas connected increasingly to leisure and tourism (Edensor, 2002). A similar move is happening in the whole attractions sector, including diverse sites such as protected areas, factories or theme parks, where entertaining education, i.e. 'edutainment', is provided as an approach for interpreting the focus phenomena (Wanhill, 2008). The collections alone do not seem to be enough to attract travellers any more; restaurants, gift shops, events and other interactive features are now becoming as important, if not more important – financially, and for the image – to maintain the interest of patrons (Swarbrooke, 2002). A reverse expansion of museology into tourist attractions can also be seen, where information centres are curated by experts to offer collections, narratives and experiences that take on, at times, a pseudo-scientific discourse of 'old' museology (Svoronou and Holden, 2005; Hose, 2006). The task for travellers to know where to go, and what to experience in order to reach an understanding of the place, destination or phenomenon that constitutes the core attraction, has also changed. Information, on the one hand and as mentioned before, has become more prevalent through the internet, and this could lead to a democratization of touring regions compared to old print-media times where travel guides were acting as gatekeepers. But, on the other hand,

travellers are now inundated with data, information and marketing material, so they can seldom ascertain themselves what is of importance, and what is simply well-promoted hyperbole.

Web 2.0 and the pseudo-democratization of attraction viewing

Travel advice has evolved over the past centuries, and more rapidly in recent decades with the development of tourism into a massive global phenomenon. It has ranged from large books written by explorers and artists in old times, published months or even years after the return to their home regions, and after that read for decades, if not for centuries afterwards (Lee, 2006), to travel guidebooks and printed destination brochures, and then to today when Web 2.0 and its user-generated travel information have become ubiquitous (Kennedy-Eden and Gretzel, 2012). An argument that could be made, and often is made by stakeholders in the field, is that Web 2.0 erases the elitism of past generations' travel information. It is no longer just selected and privileged people who are allowed to inform others about their travel experiences, but it is the populace that can make its voice heard, without any hidden agenda, kickbacks or editorial censorship. This could be true in a perfect world where each person is simply looking out for 'Others', wishing them the best and agreeing on a similar set of referential standards. But reality does not naturally look like this. Just as the elite who could travel in old times and publish their accounts were different from the majority of the population of their world, so is each travelling demographic different from other demographics today, and no one is speaking for all (Pesonen, 2012). A travel blog or travel review written by a young single adult, accustomed to travelling on company expense accounts to five-star hotels, might be light years away from what a three-child parent travelling with the kids will write; and this might again be totally different from what a pensioner, who has never travelled extensively outside their home region, but now on a group trip, might write – even if all three described exactly the same attraction, exactly at the same time (Mkono and Tribe, 2016).

Websites such as Virtualtourist.com, Fodors.com, Gogobot.com and TripAdvisor.com, that are bringing travel reviews together, used to advertise themselves as reliable user-to-user sites, allowing travellers to give one another trustworthy advice unmediated by any commercial interests. However, after several court cases where the words 'trust' and 'reliability' were challenged and then found not to be substantiated, slogans have been changed to emphasize instead the size of the sites, as if volume were an indicator of quality (Ayeh *et al.*, 2013). Critique of the pseudo-democratization of travel narration avers that notions of user-to-user reliability, in opposition to printed marketing material, is in reality a thin veneer covering a capitalist enterprise that is steering travel flows away from local enterprises, and allowing for larger shares of commission to be paid to corporate third parties (Stimmler-Hall, 2016). Tourist enterprises that have not voluntarily 'opted in' to listings are now essentially being held 'hostage' by powerful websites which are taking a fee for management to respond to criticism, fair or unfair. The travel review websites are advising reviewers on how to write their reviews, and what to focus on, thus acting as covert editors. The veracity of material published is not cross-referenced with the listed entities' management before publication, and becomes rather a 'vox pop' potentially fully of errors, misguided self-promotion efforts or hidden attempts at discrediting competitors (Stimmler-Hall, 2016).

Given this context, the purpose of this chapter is twofold: to examine how museums in Arctic Norway and in Finnish Lapland narrate the Arctic, and on the other hand to consider how visitors to these museums are narrating their experiences on travel review websites. The chapter aims to uncover how the separate texts might be valuable sources in filling the potential 'experiential void' that the geographic extreme has created, thus narrating into existence an 'experiential core'.

Method

Data collection

This chapter's empirical material is a collection of online descriptions of museums in Arctic

Norway and northern Finland based on both locations’ TripAdvisor ranking and the museums’ own websites. TripAdvisor was chosen because it is a company that is advertising itself as a large travel website that has managed to become one of the first ‘hits’ a person receives when browsing websites with specific search words (TripAdvisor, 2016). The search term used in this study was ‘Top ten things to see in XXX’. TripAdvisor was also chosen because it still has – despite sufficient market size and capacity – many inherent idiosyncrasies that make an analysis of results presented on the site interesting. For example: (i) in comparison to much print media, entries on the site are in the first instance created by users without verifications of their veracity by management – thus potentially leading to double entries, incorrect categorization or even false entries (Ayeh *et al.*, 2013); (ii) the ranking on the website is a self-created system that gives users power by allowing them to rank the entities on a scale from one to five, without standard guidelines that would allow users to compare equals to equals, which creates anomalies that would make anyone familiar with a Bell-curve and normal distribution understand that only a minority of users are interacting with the system (Xiang *et al.*, 2015); and (iii) perhaps more disconcerting from the perspective of the democratization of user-generated content, companies can enhance their own standing by purchasing a ‘Business Listing’, which allows them to list their own contact details and get a ‘preferred placement’ on lists (Stimmler-Hall, 2016). Acknowledging all these concerns, the selection of TripAdvisor was still justified to see what entities would be listed, and how they are narrated implicitly and explicitly within this rich realm of human fallibility.

The data collected are about how the museums are presenting the Arctic, and its meaning, on the main pages of their online material. A separate collection of travel reviews from the same museums was also undertaken, selecting reviews that are in some sense showing how travellers are constructing their meaning of the Arctic through visits to the museums. The data collected in both cases were selected based on the criteria that they would mention the Arctic, the north, polar regions, or the Sámi/Sapmi region, the final attribute referring to the name of the region by the indigenous people

living in the north of Norway, Sweden, Finland and northwestern Russia. The material is purposefully selected, and therefore omits many other texts that do not mention these terms, thus creating also other meanings for the attractions. The limitation is done purposefully, aiming at highlighting how a specific focus might give a traveller a specific view of an attraction, a simulation of how a traveller might browse websites in a search for an experiential core – thereby essentially creating that attraction’s ‘being’. Table 5.1 presents the full list of names of the museums whose official websites and TripAdvisor comments were studied.

Analysis

The analysis that follows uses narrative attraction theory to highlight how the Arctic is jointly constructed in official and ‘unofficial’ museum texts. Narrative attraction theory takes as its premise the contention that all attractions can be analysed as narratives consisting of the same elements: a tourist, the different texts that tourist comes across, separate stories the texts are transmitting and an individual *fabula*, i.e. an abstracted form of a story that the tourist constructs in her/his mind about what the attraction ‘is’ (Edelheim, 2015: 25). The theory takes the texts (written, audio, pictures, film, music, etc.) surrounding the attraction as the data that will give an insight into how tourists construct their ‘meaning’ of the attraction. Two separate

Table 5.1. List of the names of museums studied for their official websites and TripAdvisor comments.

Museums in Finland	Museums in Norway
Arktikum	The Polar Museum
Siida	(Polarmuseet)
Pilke Science Centre	Tromsø University
Korundi House of Culture	Museum
Christmas Exhibition and	Alta Museum – World
Santa Claus Photography	Heritage Rock Art
	Centre
	Norwegian Aviation
	Museum (Norsk
	Luftfartsmuseum)
	Nordkapphallen
	(North Cape Hall)

narrative tools are used in this chapter: *narrative voice*, and *diachronic* versus *synchronic* elements of narratives. More detailed explanations beyond those provided below can be found in Edelheim (2015).

Narrative voice refers to the fact that all narratives are essentially narrated by someone, regardless of whether the narrators are absent or present when the narrative is received by the reader. Some narratives are narrated in the third person, by a narrator who does not take part in the narrative personally, while others are written in second person directed at 'you'. Examples of third-person narratives in everyday texts are news reports and most scientific arguments. Examples of second-person narratives are modern travel guidebook entries and generic management replies to tourists' reviews. Each of these forms of narration is referred to as external narration (EN). A narrative can also be narrated by a character who is part of the narrative; this often takes place in the first person and is referred to as character narration (CN), common in many fictional narratives (Bal, 1997: 22), but also in tourist contexts through blogs and travel review sites. The difference between using EN and CN is the level of intimacy the different narratives have for the reader. A narrative with an EN might seem objective, neutral and distanced from the actual plot, while a narrative with a CN seems more personal and to a certain extent subjective (Felluga, 2003). Web 2.0 sites are challenging this traditional understanding by querying the reliability of official sites based on the fact that they represent an edited and distanced marketing view, whereas subjective 'word-of-mouth' accounts are presented as unedited and personal, and therefore uncorrupted by marketing efforts.

Analysis of *diachronic* and *synchronic* elements of narratives provides opportunities to

find, for example, combinations of pictures and written text that jointly form the narrative 'whole' in tourists' minds. According to Berger 'many phenomena that we do not think of as narrative texts are, in fact, narratives – or have strong narrative components in them' (1997: 16). Almost all narratives conform to the rule that they act on several axes – a horizontal or diachronic, and multiple vertical or synchronic axes. Essentially this means that there is a temporal progression of a narrative, viewed on the diachronic axis, while character or environment descriptions happen on subsequent synchronic axes (see Fig. 5.1).

None of the synchronic descriptions leads the narrative forwards on the diachronic axis, but without them the narrative would become unidimensional and lose its ability to involve readers. Translated to tourist attractions and websites analysed, one could say that the 'old-fashioned' static websites (essentially, brochures turned into a digital format) were a collection of synchronic texts without much thought about their diachronic connections. Modern mobile-friendly websites, on the other hand, are quite often simply diachronic texts with ample basic information, but not much depth.

Results

Narrative voice on museum sites and in TripAdvisor comments

The prevailing voice on all the official sites was EN, with a majority written in an authoritative third-person (3rdP) voice, but with a strong influence of second-person (2ndP) voices. All but two museums used 3rdP for their initial presentation, with the aim of giving readers a

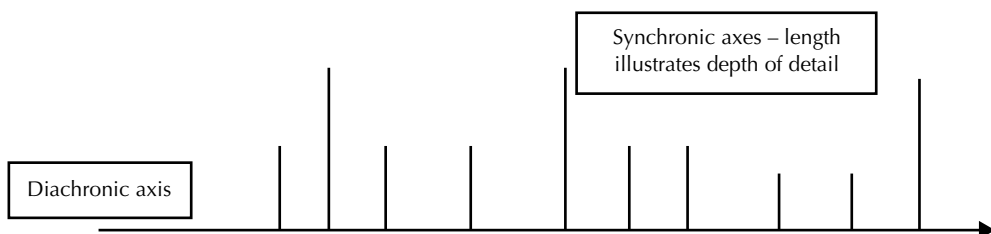


Fig. 5.1. Diachronic axis and synchronic axes.

credible feeling about the place and its expertise in the collections while simultaneously distancing themselves from the readers, essentially saying: 'we are the experts, you learn from us'. The clearest examples of this discourse come from Korundi House of Culture (2016) and Tromsø University Museum (2016), which both emphasize their connection to a 'university' and that the exhibitions are based on 'science' or 'thorough and recent research'. A comprehensive reading of the official websites shows that Arktikum (2016) has very strong texts underlining expertise, professionalism and a detailed understanding of matters that 'normal' citizens would not have. Pilke (2016) is the clearest exception to this rule, with 2ndP used from the first sentence to include the readers in the text and ask them direct questions. This is a modern way of trusting that the reader finds the entity credible in itself without having to establish an expertise based on credentials. None of the reviewed sites had its own interactive channel where Q&As could have been displayed, while several had email options or contact details but no options for overt interactivity.

The travel reviews on TripAdvisor are in most cases written as CN in the first person (1stP) voice, but interestingly there are also a few entries written in EN 3rdP, as if they were 'objectively' reporting on their experiences rather than being involved in them personally. The reason for travellers to use EN 3rdP when describing their own experiences is related to 'tourist angst' (Redfoot, 1984), wherein tourists do not want to be perceived by others as 'mere' tourists but want to establish an air of expertise about the matters in which they are participating. The whole idea behind Web 2.0 is to create interactivity and allow web users to generate content and meaning for themselves (Duffy, 2015). With this in mind it was interesting that only two of the ten museums reviewed on TripAdvisor had taken up the option for management to reply to travellers' reviews; Siida (2016) had one comment on one writing – the management response was signed with a name but represented in most regards EN 2ndP. The outstanding exception among the analysed entities was the Norwegian Aviation Museum (2016) that was frequently, almost every time, commenting on reviews. The messages were generally written in EN 2ndP, or EN 3rdP, and always

signed by the 'marketing department' rather than by any individual employee. Whether the travellers writing their initial reviews actually felt that their concerns had been acknowledged and resolved, or not, is not really the point here – it is the fact that management actually bother to reply that is of importance to other travellers, especially as the replies often give management an opportunity to clarify and further inform readers about features of their museums.

Diachronic and synchronic elements

Tourists are always indivisible (Dietvorst, 1995: 169), meaning that they can at any time only be at one place, and have to make decisions about how to spend that time in order to satisfy the wishes they set out to meet through tourism. Studying an attraction's diachronic and synchronic elements gives researchers an opportunity to determine how well attraction managers have succeeded in creating their entities to fulfil the needs and wants tourists set out satisfy. Official websites and brochures create the attraction's diachronic axis by outlining the time-space tourists are coming to: directions, maps, opening hours, services, prices, as well as a general 'storyline', or the abstract explaining what the entity is. The name of a museum or an attraction is in many cases already descriptive enough, telling tourists what they can expect to experience. For example all the sampled Norwegian museums, apart from Nordkapphallen (2016), tell the tourist generally what the entity stands for, such as Alta Museum – World Heritage Rock Art Centre (2016). The museums in Lapland have, on the other hand, used Sámi or Finnish words to give the places their names, and therefore need an explanatory addition after the name to tell travellers what they offer. The synchronic features at official sites are the detailed descriptions of exhibitions or objects that are on display, giving the story life by personalizing and enhancing the initial information.

The amount of text on the websites differs quite substantially, from a mere 340 words at Norwegian Aviation Museum (Norsk Luftfartsmuseum) to over 3500 words at Arktikum. The other museums in Lapland also have ample

text, on average over 2800 words, with only Christmas Exhibition and Santa Claus Photography (2016) having around 500 words. The Norwegian sites use more pictures and have on average around 1100 words. The amount of text on sites allows the management to give their synchronic texts more depth, though it could be argued that modern web users are perhaps simply searching for ideas of what to experience, not to learn all about the sites and what they have to offer before arriving.

Another feature that differentiates the Norwegian and Finnish museums is the focus the latter place on architecture and design. Four of the Lappish (Finnish) museums explain the design process, architectural aims, building features and even the design of the names and logos used on their websites; whereas the Norwegians concentrate on what is on offer in the buildings, with only one mentioning that the museum is made up of converted harbour buildings, and another emphasizing being constructed underground in order not to unduly disturb the site. It could be argued that the Norwegian websites are mentioning the architecture of their buildings as diachronic features, giving the narrative a space, where again the Finnish sites make the architecture into synchronic features, almost on par with – or even more important than – the features displayed inside them. This distinction can be related to how each country has constructed its national identity, with Finnish architecture and design always being closely related to the construction of the nation in modern times, whereas the Norwegian national identity construction harkens back to Vikings, trade and the sea. With most of the analysed museums representing distinct specializations, it is hardly surprising that the main synchronic features available on the official websites are focused on exhibits. Common features that appear in half of the analysed museums are aurora borealis exhibits or films, and the area's indigenous population, the Sámi.

The Arctic created on analysed sites and reviews

Only two of the official websites studied, the Norwegian Aviation Museum and the

Christmas Exhibition and Santa Claus Photography, created their narratives not in relation to their geographic location but on what is on offer thematically to visitors of their museums. The TripAdvisor comments on both sites make the connection to the Arctic more explicit, for example by pointing out the apparent past controversy in building the national aviation museum in the north of the country, or by emphasizing the location at the Arctic Circle and the disappointment in not finding anything but commercial interests there. However, most TripAdvisor comments focus on their theme, and do not seem to need to dwell on their location or culture. This can probably be taken as evidence that not all attractions in the Arctic have to be related to the Arctic explicitly – they simply are there, or taken for granted – but no one expects them to confirm the experiential core of their geographic extremity. All the other official websites are, however, creating texts that comprehensively provide tourists with stories relating to where they are, and to what makes that location special. Thus, while geographical peripherality may not be intentionally highlighted in the texts, the work of creating experiential core was evident.

The words 'Arctic', 'polar', 'northern' and 'Sámi' were searched on all the sites, and their usage was analysed using a simple qualitative content analysis. A quantitative meta-analysis shows that 'Arctic' and 'northern' were the most common features at all sites. 'Sámi' appears in a majority, and the Norwegian museums put more emphasis on the 'polar', which is probably a natural outcome given Norway's status as a coastal nation with sea access to the polar region (Polar Museum, 2016). In contrast, northern Finland, and thus Lapland, is landlocked to the south of Norway. 'Northern' features in many contexts, either as the synonym for aurora borealis – the 'northern lights', as a 'northernmost . . .' feature, or as a descriptive word for 'northern people', 'northern forests' or 'northern nature'. One section of the text in Tromsø University Museum tells about 'northern stories' and 'northern life' that can be experienced at the museum, while Nordkapphallen (North Cape Hall) focuses on the fact that it is the northernmost point of the European continental shelf, and thus houses a number of 'northernmost' features, including an ecumenical chapel

and post office. Arktikum has the most descriptive text using the word, naming one permanent exhibition 'Northern Ways', which:

presents the survival story of man and nature in the North in an open-minded way . . . themes dealt with in different exhibition halls traverse time from ancient history to the present, examining the causes and consequences of individual and public cultural developments.

Siida, situated in the far north of Lapland (all other Lappish museums are situated in Rovaniemi, in the south of the region), also uses the word 'northern' to distinguish itself as being an 'actual' northern museum. An interesting point here is the jingoistic use of 'northern' anywhere in the world; 'north' as a direction exists everywhere, and 'northern' can therefore have a range of meanings, depending on whether one refers to the *tropical* northern Australia, the *industrialized* north of Italy or any other north. As such a description within a continent, a country or a region, it feels logical and self-evident, but the moment it is analysed from the outside it loses its distinguishing feature, and outsiders cannot therefore comprehend what the locals want to distinguish by using the word.

All usages of 'Sámi' refer to the people, traditions, culture and history, as well as to how Sámi people have learned to adapt to living in the harsh climate of the Arctic. To call the whole region Sámi or Sapmi does not seem to be possible for a wider audience, as the words seem to be inscribed with the complex politics of indigenous people in (post)-colonial societies. The whole area, irrespective of modern national borders, is called Sapmi by the Sámi themselves, but non-indigenous inhabitants of the region refer to the same area by the different names given during the time of the nation-states. As with so many regions in the world housing an indigenous population, the Arctic has many issues that have not been resolved, including rights to the land, and what it should be called. Tromsø University Museum and Siida include distinctly 'insider' narratives of Sámi, whereas the other museums take a more ethnographic outsider's viewpoint. The political correctness that can be perceived in the official websites is not seen in TripAdvisor comments, where Sámi is a major feature tourists want to experience and learn more about; for example,

'A fabulous presentation on the life of the Sami people's put into perspective with the rest of the world's historic developments' but also 'Too little of sami [sic] people. Mixed feelings.'

The word 'Arctic' is used most commonly to describe virtually anything: life, people, nature, weather, seasons, light, atmosphere, resources and location, to mention some aspects. It seems clear therefore that it is used as a suitable shorthand for just about anything in the region, both on the official websites: 'exhibitions with arctic content'; 'the arctic blue winter'; 'The Arctic region is examined in light of the Arctic research of today and the future'; 'indigenous peoples of the Arctic and the reindeer-herding peoples', as well as in TripAdvisor comments: 'serves excellent arctic experience . . . good overview to the arctic nature and how certain species has adapted to the climate change – and some hasn't'; 'You don't get much opportunity in life to visit an arctic tundra like this so its [sic] a must if you're in the area'; 'all aspects of hard life, survival and exploration in the northern arctic'; 'you will learn a lot of things about the Arctic and life in these conditions'.

Conclusion

This chapter investigated a theory introduced by Stam (1993) known as new museology, which considers how museums are forced to evolve in contemporary societies where data and alternative viewpoints are commonly available and perceived as multiple and concurrent realities. The old credible and authoritative role of museums can be challenged only if certain versions of history are enhanced and minority versions of the same history are silenced, especially if those minority versions are published online and available for anyone to read. It then went on to discuss Web 2.0 and user-created content which has a further influence on how tourists learn about, experience and re-narrate attractions. Web 2.0 is commonly presented as a means of democratizing tourist information collection by providing an unmediated and unedited channel for word-of-mouth to be transmitted between tourists, but this was questioned based on a number of shortcomings in current travel review websites.

This chapter contributes to the existing tourism literature by demonstrating that today's museums in the peripheral Arctic region create what constitutes meaningful experiences in the region for visitors on virtual spaces such as their own websites and other travel sites. Based on the study findings, it becomes clear that the tourists wanted to learn about the Arctic region and its remoteness, exotic cultures, fragile nature and harsh climate. Indigenous people were emphasized, along with what makes the Arctic distinct and significant compared to other places. The tourists' texts were in some cases mimicry of official websites, but at other times full of suggestion of what they would have liked to experience but did not receive at the museums visited. The texts are in either case rich data showing how tourists are creating meaning, and (ful)filling the experiential core they set out to find on their journeys. From the museum sites studied, the creation of the core experiences in the peripheral Arctic seems to derive more from the tourists

themselves than from the museums as attractions. This may explain, at least partially, the reason why the category referred to as 'museums' on TripAdvisor that we analysed contained some attractions that were not museums in the word's common meaning, and are not even advertising themselves as such in their own material.

The management of these museums, as well as of other attractions, can learn a lot from reading the texts openly available about themselves – what is expected, and how well the intended official messages created have been received and perceived by tourists. A lesson of this chapter could also be that Web 2.0 is forcing management – not only of museums, but of all attractions in the tourism circuit – to actively take part in third-party narration about their entities. Otherwise they must accept that mistakes, faults or even clear misunderstandings are freely available for anybody to read and use as their source of information when learning about the attractions.

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6 World Heritage List = Tourism Attractiveness?

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Introduction

Heritage discourse is one that involves different fields of valorization. In some fields, old objects are valued for what they can tell us about the past, their aesthetic qualities or use value. In other fields, such as identity politics and the economy, the past is valued as a resource for new industries. One of the specific values attached to heritage is the capability of such objects and sites to attract tourists. Within global UNESCO discourse, in the White Papers of Norwegian ministries, as well as in local Norwegian debates, the argument emerges that heritage, especially World Heritage listings, will attract visitors and provide local economic benefit. However, as Robinson and Silverman (2015: 14) point out, not all heritages and heritage sites are popular and many of them 'would be hard-pressed to stimulate any significant emotional response from tourists' (Robinson, 2012: 8). This background provides the context for this chapter.

The chapter commences with a brief discussion of the discourse of the valorization of World Heritage as an economic resource. Next, two World Heritage sites in the Municipality of Alta, northern Norway, are analysed. The two sites are the rock carving fields in Hjemmeluft and one of the points at Struve's Geodetic Arch. The analysis highlights the point that the ability of the two sites to attract visitors is dependent on their location in a regional tourist attraction system (Leiper, 1990), and upon the resources spent on facilitating certain groups of tourists.

Finally, arguing that location and resources for facilitation are necessary to attract tourists, a question is posed: should public institutions, which run such sites, spend their limited resources on such a purpose? With few exceptions, tourism provides insufficient revenue for cultural institutions. The institutions depend on the meagre public funding that they receive. Concomitantly, there is a wide range of public expectations on these sites, which they are expected to fulfil. Public institutions in the field of heritage have other obligations with which to comply, based on other values found in heritage discourse. These are often contradictory expectations and are accentuated in an area like Finnmark, situated in the periphery of the Norwegian nation state, where the multi-ethnic and heterogeneous population has been labelled 'the People without a Past' (Nielsen, 1986).

World Heritage and Valorization

There has been a growing interest in World Heritage decision-making processes and the different valorizations in this global discourse (see Smith, 2012; Hafstein, 2014; Meskell, 2015). Even if neither *The Criteria for Selection* (UNESCO, 2016a) nor the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2016b) emphasized tourism and economic values, tourists are mentioned only once as a threat. Tourism is one of many values attached to World Heritage sites, although its role in world heritage might

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be considered ambiguous (Smith, 2012: 392). Still, it is easy to find expressions of great optimism among UNESCO officials when it comes to the potential for tourism. The then director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Francesco Bandarin, expressed such conviction rather boldly:

It is an inevitable destiny: the very reasons why a property is chosen for inscription on the World Heritage List are also the reasons why millions of tourists flock to those sites year after year.

(Pedersen, 2002: 3)

From 2000 to 2010 Francesco Bandarin was Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Secretary of the World Heritage Convention. From 2010 to 2014 he served as the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture. In October 2015 he was reappointed in this position for an interim period.

It seems to be an underlying premise that World Heritage status makes sites into successful attractions. At the best, this is confusion between cause and effect. Nevertheless, such ideas also lurk behind the scene in a White Paper from the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, which is in charge of heritage preservation in Norway. From time to time, even when emphasizing other values, tourism is a selling point that surfaces. After pointing out that European heritage sites are among the most important tourist destinations in the world today, the Ministry of Climate and Environment stresses the prospect of a growing demand for Norwegian heritage exemplified by stave churches, wooden buildings from the Middle Ages, fishing villages, industrial heritage, western fjords and high-quality modern architecture (Ministry of Environment, 2013: 9). In addition, the increased demand for the unique and distinct creates 'a huge potential for added value based on cultural and natural heritage' (Ministry of Environment, 2013: 41; my translation). This is particularly the case for the World Heritage as a brand which has a positive effect on tourism (Ministry of Environment, 2013: 43). Nevertheless, its use might generate challenges as well as an amplification of use of the sites (Ministry of Environment, 2013: 9). The Ministry of Trade and Industry, however, holds a different perspective. Their aim is:

to use our unique natural and cultural heritage as the basis for innovation and product development, so that we can create tourism products that command a high price in national and international markets.

(Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2012: 26)

For this ministry, heritage is a resource that private businesses as well as public institutions should utilize while public authorities are tasked with facilitating such use. The ministry even states that sites on international lists not only could, but also *should* be utilized by the tourist industry (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2012: 88).

The economic aspect and the moral obligation of utilizing one's resources are also visible at a local level. At least, the idea of heritage as a resource that can and should be utilized, is prominent when local and regional media interview politicians and other officials. In 2015, UNESCO listed Rjukan-Notodden Industrial Heritage Site. In 2014, when the application was handed in, the mayor of Notodden said that a positive answer 'can mean a significant increase in tourism for Rjukan and Notodden' (Lindgren and Hansen, 2014). About the implications of the prospective listing, the mayor of Rjukan pointed to the impact the listing had had for renowned Norwegian tourist spots such as Røros and Bryggen in Bergen. The same references to tourist destinations and World Heritage sites were also made by the mayor of Rjukan when he claimed that Notodden and Rjukan were not inferior to the Taj Mahal and Pompeii (Lindgren and Hansen, 2014). Similar expressions of optimism were frequent among other politicians and officials, as well as an argument used for the listing of sites in other regions (see for example Berg *et al.*, 2015; Flølo, 2015; Tufeland, 2015). Even if the different actors in this global field placed unequal emphasis on valorization, the economic arguments were easily picked up at local and regional levels. As Bowitz and Ibenholt (2009: 7) put it:

The survey of research on the effects of culture on a regional economy has shown that political debate has been influenced by exaggerated estimates of the economic effects of culture, including cultural heritage.

There is a widespread belief among important stakeholders that being a part of the World

Heritage Lists in and of itself will provide an opportunity for increased tourism. It is useful to analyse how many visitors actually come to such sites. Doing that in a single community with two such sites located less than 10 km from each other is an opportunity to substantiate the ideas of World Heritage being 'among tourism's main attractions', and with 'an inevitable destiny' of getting their proportion of the 'millions of tourists that flock to those sites year after year' (Pedersen, 2002: 3).

Two World Heritage Sites and How They are Situated in a Tourist Attraction System of Finnmark

Alta, located close to 70°N, is the hub of Finnmark where more than 25% of the county's approximately 76,000 inhabitants live. The area of Finnmark is 48,631 km², about 5000 km² larger than Denmark. The Rock Art of Alta, listed in 1994, is a group of petroglyphs that represents traces of a settlement dating from 4200 to 500 BC. The petroglyphs are located across a larger area but it is the site at Hjemmeluft, where the World Heritage Rock Art Centre–Alta Museum is located, that has the overwhelming majority of visitors.

In 2005, the 34 points of the Struve Geodetic Arc were listed by UNESCO as the first scientific–technological site in the world. The point located in Alta is at Lille Raipas/Unna Ráipásas, a summit approximately 8 km by car from the World Heritage Rock Art Centre – Alta Museum, and 9 km from the town centre. The last 2–3 km have to be travelled on foot.

Lille Raipas rises 286 m above sea level. On the homepage of Alta Museum, the trip to the summit is described as: 'a pleasant 45 minutes walk along a cart road/trail. Information signs in Norwegian, Sámi, English and German are found at the parking lot at the start of the trail' (Alta Museum, 2016). The view of the town and the fjord is emphasized. At the homepage of the local authorities, there is information about the local history of a copper mine, which operated from 1836 to 1869 (Alta Kommune, 2016b).

The summit of Lille Raipas is included in the municipal authority's Ten Tops Trip project

(Alta Kommune, 2016a). This project is a part of a national policy meant to stimulate physical activity and outdoor life among the local population. As a part of the Ten Tops Trip project, those who register at ten of the summits receive a T-shirt. Additionally, all who register participate in a contest for each top and could win a prize. Being a part of this project means that there are some visitor numbers available for Lille Raipas. It is a Norwegian tradition that local hiking organizations mark the trails and place books where one can write one's name at the summits. This is also the way the local authorities draw the winners, since people are supposed to write their name, phone number and/or address in the book. Of course, this system does not provide a correct number of visitors.

Nevertheless, for this chapter, non-local visitors to the site were determined by county/place acronym, name of country or place, or country code of phone numbers. Non-local visitors were defined as those whose residence was outside the municipality.¹ The figures were divided between those who indicated a residence other than Alta (in Norway and abroad), and those without any such indications. Most of the books commenced on 6 June, and therefore all visitors registered from this date until the end of September were counted. This period roughly represents the summer season for the tourist industry. A problem arose in determining an exact number for those who wrote their names. Several school classes and kindergartens were registered as class/kindergarten so-and-so. There may have been several names on one line, and many dogs were included in various ways! Therefore, the numbers provided demonstrate tendencies and proportional differences. To be able to analyse the impact of being World Heritage, numbers from Hjemmeluft, another summit, are also provided. The reason for this is to compare with a location that non-local people might reasonably visit. The walk to Hjemmelufttoppen starts at the parking area at Alta Museum and takes about 30 minutes. This trail is only marked in the usual way, with painted red marks on stones or trees, as such paths are marked in Norway. In contrast, the trail to Lille Raipas is marked in a way that makes it easily accessible to those not familiar with the Norwegian friluftsliv ('outdoor life')

tradition, and information is provided in a number of languages. A second difference is that Hjemmaelufttoppen is closer to residential areas in Alta, and a much larger part of the population is walking distance from the start of the trail than is the case for Lille Raipas. This probably has some impact on the amount of local visitors.

Table 6.1 shows the total number of visitors and the number of visitors with a non-local residence. The table indicates that a small number of visitors are non-residents: 61 and 39 in 2011, and 192 and 101 in 2015 at Lille Raipas and Hjemmaeluft, respectively. Another important point is the difference in visitors per month.

Table 6.2 shows that most people visited in June, with 3053 at Lille Raipas and 3215 at Hjemmaeluft in 2015. The overwhelming majority of these visitors were from school classes and kindergartens, and this demonstrates the success of the local cultural policy, which is more directed towards public health than the celebration of World Heritage. Even with larger proportions in the following months, tourists were still marginal compared with local visitors. Nevertheless, at Lille Raipas, non-residents constituted 14.7% of the increase in visitor numbers from 2011 to 2015, although only 5.9% at Hjemmaeluft. In general, it can be said that even if a World Heritage site like Lille Raipas attracts visitors who can be labelled as tourists, the numbers that can be documented in this case seem to be far beyond what seem to be the general expectations of the attractiveness of World Heritage. The reason is probably its location.

Even though only a pleasant 45-minute walk, the walk is probably too time consuming for most visitors with limited time to spend in town. Additionally, there is actually not much to see: except for a different view and the old mine located close by, it is similar to the other multitude of small summits that make up Norway.

The Alta Museum is situated beside the main road, E6, which traverses the country from north to south. In addition to being responsible for the petroglyphs that are listed as World Heritage, it is a local museum with all the different responsibilities attached to such organizations in Norway. Johanson and Olsen (2010) have argued that the success of the museum as a tourist attraction can be described as a result of its location in a tourist attraction system and the ability to facilitate large numbers of visitors passing-by during the summer. Leiper (1990: 374) emphasized the interdependent relationship between attractions, or what he labelled the 'tourist attraction system'. Such a system comprises a hierarchy with a primary nucleus that is influential in the tourists' decision making about where to go. Then, there are secondary nuclei that might be known prior to the trip, and tertiary nuclei discovered after arrival, but which have no significant influence on the itinerary. The main motivations of summer tourists in Finnmark are usually nature, the midnight sun and the North Cape (Lyngnes and Viken, 1997). The latter is the main attraction for many tourists, and two of three tourist road routes pass through Alta. In the winter season, the

Table 6.1. Total visitors and numbers who indicate non-local residence.

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Lille Raipas	Total	3347	3565	3589	3890	4237
	Non-resident	61	101	115	146	192
Hjemmaeluft	Total	3774	3882	3721	4018	4831
	Non-resident	39	25	45	63	101

Table 6.2. Visitors to Lille Raipas and Hjemmaeluft per month, 2015.

		June	July	August	September
Lille Raipas	Total	3053	618	416	150
	Non-resident	53	92	38	9
Hjemmaeluft	Total	3215	805	580	231
	Non-resident	31	32	33	5

main motivations, or primary attractions, are probably nature, the darkness and the northern lights. Consequently, at best, the two World Heritage sites are regarded as secondary – although probably for many tourists the sites are a tertiary nucleus in the tourist attraction system of Finnmark (Johanson and Olsen, 2010). As pointed out by Mehmetoglu and Abelsen (2005: 282) in their research on Alta Museum:

many primary attraction visitors do not necessarily display an interest in secondary attractions in the same area, and that visits to such attractions take place simply because they are on the same route to primary attractions.

The location of the museum is therefore crucial since it is located a 2–3 hour drive from most other built attractions in the area. North Cape is the main attraction for many summer tourists in the area, and most of those who come by car or bus have to pass by close to the museum. In addition, parking is easy and there is access to toilets and a cafeteria. Being located in a scenic bay makes the museum a place to stop. Actually, the museum’s location is often commented upon in reviews on TripAdvisor.² As demonstrated by previous research, the way the museum facilitates visitors during the four hectic summer months can be understood as a part of their success, because they have provided quality for tourists on their way to the main attractions of the area (Mehmetoglu and Abelsen, 2005; Johanson and Olsen, 2010: 13–14).

Nevertheless, as shown in Table 6.3, the numbers of visitors to the museum decreased in some years.³ This is particularly apparent when compared to the almost 70,000 visitors averaged in the first years of the century. The museum was visited by 62,550 people in 2007, and of this total 47,532 came in June, July and August. Of these, 23,326 were paying visitors in groups. During the 1990s, these visitors were mainly bus tourists, who amounted to a large proportion of tourists in the area. This was the case despite the number of cruise tourists, a growth market, which was on the rise. However,

the increases in cruise tourists and individual tourists did not make up for the decrease in bus tourists. In 2015, the numbers of visitors in the three summer months was 41,506. Even more important is the decrease in paying visitors in groups that in 2014 was only 14,420 but increased to 19,836 in 2015, thereby joining a general trend for Norwegian museums (Kultur-og kirkedepartementet, 2008: 104, 114). In a Norwegian context, such a decline is problematic for a museum that receives a relatively large proportion of its income from visitor revenue.

How to explain these changes? In my opinion, the decrease in visitors has nothing to do with the museum itself. The facilities and service were as usual and the rock art was and is still World Heritage-listed. Probably, the decrease can be explained by changes in the attraction system in the area. There appears to be a reduction in buses that previously generated the majority of visitors during the summer months. Another explanation might be that these buses have developed other itineraries, something that further demonstrates the vulnerability of cultural institutions when they enter into tourism. A third factor is the increase in cruise tourism in Alta (see Fig. 6.1).

For this group of tourists, the location of the museum is not that favourable since the cruise harbour is located at the opposite end of town. Even if some passengers find their way to Alta Museum, the museum has several challenges because the cruise traffic has extended the season to early and late winter. The winter cruise passengers buy more products than those who come during the summer. In 2015, there were in total 26,984 cruise guests in Alta. The local handler, North Adventure & Alta Guideservice, sold 27,973 products. Only 11,000 of the visitors came in the winter season but they bought 20,000 of these products. First, in the winter season, the museum has to compete with other attractions such as dog sledging, hunts for the northern lights, ice hotels and Sámi attractions, to become one of the attractions

Table 6.3. Visitors per year at the World Heritage Rock Art Centre – Alta Museum.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Visitors	48,048	39,403	41,102	44,991	53,354

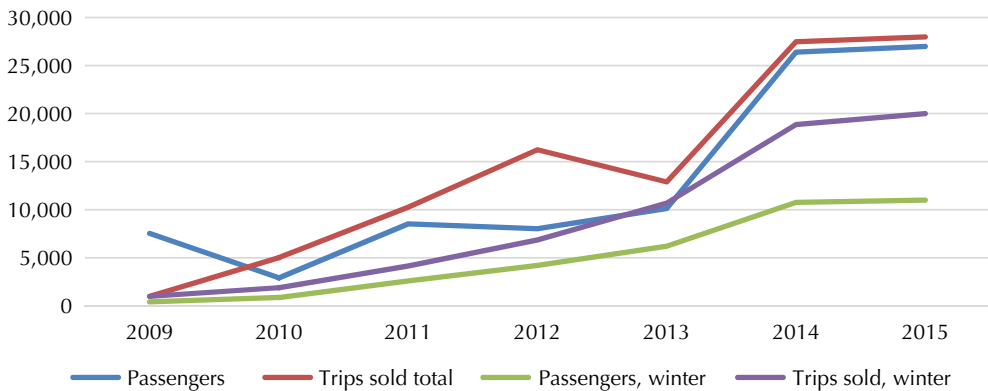


Fig. 6.1. Total cruise passengers and products sold, Alta 2009–2015.

that the tourists choose to buy. Second, the area is covered by snow when many of the cruise ships arrive and the rock carving fields are not visible. In general, even if the museum is recommended, winter guests quite often comment on TripAdvisor about the invisibility of the rock art.

Concluding Remarks on Cultural Policy and Tourism

The potential economic benefit of culture has long been debated in Norwegian cultural policy. As Bowitz and Ibenholt state, such arguments have been proffered by research that has aimed to demonstrate the economic effects of cultural events:

Many studies suggest economic effects of culture on the regional economy, both in terms of generated revenues and employment effects, which for an economist seem to be grossly exaggerated.

(Bowitz and Ibenholt, 2009: 1)

Such exaggerated expectations are also found in the global discourse in international forums where they merge with other pursued interests (Smith, 2012; Hafstein, 2014; Meskeell, 2015). As demonstrated, ideas regarding the economic value of heritage also penetrate national and local debates on heritage and put pressure on cultural institutions to fulfil such expectations.

The Rock Art was listed in 1994 and, at that time, the competition for being a part of the

list was less than today. Struve Geodetic Arc, which was listed in 2005, was the result of an initiative from other nations beyond Norway and those other countries headed the processes. Today, to be listed as World Heritage by UNESCO is a rather complicated and time-consuming process in which the first step is to be nominated by national authorities. If nominated, the process of convincing UNESCO regarding the final decision might also draw upon rather limited local resources, despite involvement of national agencies and external consultants. UNESCO also demands the involvement of different stakeholders and a bottom-up perspective in order to involve the local society, even if these processes are not always prominent in the respective communities (Hertz, 2015). Therefore, to be nominated involves potentially resource-demanding processes, both before and after sites enter the game of global politics with its shifting alliances in UNESCO (Meskeell, 2015, p. 3). Moreover, what UNESCO promises is international attention and advice, while the costs and responsibility are put on the respective nation states. Even in a wealthy state like Norway, local authorities seldom hold the opinion that the state is particularly generous in its funding of local heritage sites, listed as World Heritage or not.

Often, what one gets is an expectation of being economically profitable, an expectation that to some extent is beyond the culture institutions' ability to comply. Where institutions are located, changes in how tourists move within the area, time spent at a location,

exchange rates and changes in seasons when tourists visit, are all factors that can explain why secondary attractions in Tourist Attraction Systems have flux in the number of visitors that they receive.

For cultural institutions, there also exists a dilemma in how to react to such changes. To invest more of their resources to better facilitate tourists and thereby potentially attract more tourists and more revenue might easily restrict other important obligations in the local society. Finnmark is a multicultural area where the Norwegian state, from the middle of the 19th to the middle of the 20th century, pursued a policy directed towards assimilation of ethnic minorities like the Kvens and the indigenous Sámi. The German army burned down the area in 1944 and the amount of material culture from the pre-war period is scarce. These events have resulted in the population in this area being labelled 'the People without a past' (Nielsen, 1986). Such a label generates many challenges for a museum that also has obligations to do research and disseminate the same with targeted adaptations for various groups, and to produce relevant communication that promotes critical reflection and creative insight.

It is not necessarily the number of tourists visiting World Heritage sites that should be the measurement of success of local public

institutions. That Alta Museum attracts a stable local audience and its ability to attract new local groups are probably better measurements. Neither is it a problem that Lille Raipas, as far as my figures show, attracted only 192 non-local residents in the summer of 2015. Probably more important is that 4237 locals visited the site and that the overwhelming majority of these was young children, who were immersed in the Norwegian tradition of friluftsliv and would thereby – hopefully – contribute to the benefit of public health.

Notes

¹ Access to these books was given by the Municipality of Alta. Statistics on visitors to the rock art is kindly provided by Alta Museum – World Heritage Rock Art Centre, and statistics on cruise traffic by Henriette Eilertsen, North Adventure & Alta Guideservice.

² https://no.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g226916-d1764226-Reviews-Alta_Museum_World_Heritage_Rock_Art_Centre-Alta_Alta_Municipality_Finnmark_Northe.html#REVIEWS, accessed 19 April 2016.

³ The low numbers of visitors in 2012 can partly be explained by the fact that the cafe and museum shop were refurbished in autumn 2011. Work on a new building started in November 2011 and the exterior was finished in 2012.

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7 Degrees of Peripherality in the Production and Consumption of Leisure Tourism in Greenland

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Introduction

Even by the exotic standards of the Arctic as a region, Greenland (or Kalaallit Nunaat) stands out for its impressive idiosyncrasies. Understated by Kaae (2006: 110) as ‘an emerging destination in extreme cold water’, Greenland has the lowest population density of any of the world’s self-governing geopolitical entities, with 0.026 persons per km² or 38 km² per person. More than 80% of the Danish dependency’s land area of 2,166,000 km², constituting the world’s largest island, is covered by icecap, and no roads connect any of the 77 fjord-hugging towns and villages that accommodate the 57,000 mostly indigenous residents (Kaae, 2006). The patterns of leisure tourism production and consumption fostered by such isolation are described and analysed in this chapter. Subsequently, we propose that the attendant gradations of spatial and temporal peripherality give rise to four distinct zones of leisure tourist experience. A resultant inductive model of Greenland experiential leisure tourism space, amenable to follow-up empirical research, is presented as an innovative and useful alternative framework for pursuing the sustainable management, product development and marketing of leisure tourism in Greenland as well as in extreme peripheral contexts more generally.

Evolution of Greenland Tourism

The introduction of regular flights from Copenhagen and one-day tourist flights from Iceland in 1959 (Kaae, 2007) designates the beginning of organized (or ‘articulated’) travel in Greenland and the latter’s incipient incorporation into the contemporary global tourism system. Earlier ‘pre-articulation’ manifestations of temporary external and internal migration, including military deployments, visits by government officials, the classical explorations and the probable travel among indigenous communities for cultural, social and economic purposes (Weaver, 2010), may be regarded as forms of ‘quasi-tourism’ that adhere with greater or lesser congruence to contemporary core United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) tourism criteria. They also exemplify the ‘exploration’-type dynamics postulated by Butler (1980) in his tourism area life cycle (TALC) model. Notably, the surprisingly recent incorporation of Greenland into the tourism system no doubt owes largely to factors of extreme geographic peripherality and isolation, but it was also partially deliberate, resulting from concerted Danish government decisions to close the island to civilian outsiders after World War II and restrict military personnel to their bases. These restrictions were relaxed only after 1979, when the people of Greenland voted for self-government

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(Home Rule), and the autonomous Greenlandic Parliament subsequently expressed its support for tourism development (Smith, 1982). Earlier decisions to prevent such development, however, helped to cultivate Greenland's image as an enticing 'forbidden destination' that in the public imagination conjures prospects of exceptional once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

Early articulation

'Early articulation' dynamics from 1979 to the early 1990s were characterized by initial attempts to produce and market tourism opportunities after the relaxation of the closed door policy. Smith (1982) describes a post-1980 trickle of mainly German leisure tourists accommodated by the four major airstrips and bunker complexes constructed by the Americans during World War II. These infrastructure and facilities, which still play a critical role in Greenland's tourism landscape, illustrate an ironic and unintended 'war dividend' effect whereby the artefacts of conflict, associated with Greenland's status as a peripheral front-line staging area and first line of allied defence, were functionally adapted to reflect new post-war realities (Weaver, 2000). Other functional exigencies of tourism production that supplemented these strategic adaptations included the introduction of regularly scheduled air services from North America in 1982, and the use of promotional slogans such as a 'New Adventure in Tourism' to attract allocentric-type tourists (Smith, 1982). Coastal ferry services, intended to carry cargo and local passengers between settlements, were also increasingly used during the 1980s to transport tourists looking for opportunities to experience Greenland.

Strategic articulation

Visitation numbers from the early articulation era reflect the incipience of Greenland tourism at this time, with just 3300 inbound tourists recorded in 1987; about 5000 in 1990 (Johnston and Viken, 1997); and 5500 in 1992 (Kaae, 2006). Such numbers are comparable to those experienced in Antarctica during the same

period (Stonehouse, 2001). Yet, an important change occurred in the early 1990s when the sector was formally identified by the Home Rule government as one of three key areas for intended commercial development to reduce reliance on the dominant but unstable fishing industry (Johnston and Viken, 1997; Kaae, 2007). A critical development of what may be called the 'strategic articulation' period that followed was the establishment of Greenland Tourism in 1992 as the dedicated destination marketing organization mandated to develop, promote and coordinate the tourism sector. Concurrently, the larger settlements of Kangerlussuaq, Nuuk and Ilulissat (west coast) and Kulusuk (east coast) were targeted for upgrades to their air and sea access infrastructure as well as to accommodation. These emerged as strategically critical tourist gateways which also began to host an increasing number of idiosyncratic attractions and events. In the late 1990s these included the Drambuie World Ice Golf Championship, Hotel Igloo Village and the cross-country Ski Arctic Circle Race (Timothy and Olsen, 2001).

Inbound leisure visitation growth has increased in tandem with the advent of formal marketing initiatives and the concomitant expansion of infrastructure and attractions. By 1999, 26,410 international tourists were reported, and by 2008 this doubled to 56,223, one-half (28,891) of whom were cruise arrivals travelling along a number of well-established routes providing port facilities and visual or direct access to natural and cultural attractions. The 39 cruise ships operating in Greenland waters that year compare with just 13 ships in 2003 (Hall and Saarinen, 2010). Concurrent expansion of conventional accommodation facilities is reflected in increases to registered hotel-nights from 114,000 in 1994 to 205,000 in 1999 (Timothy and Olsen, 2001) and 234,000 in 2008 (Hall and Saarinen, 2010). Hotels, however, have consistently offered less than 40% of all accommodation. Other important providers in 2002 included private dwellings (28%), youth hostels (13%), tents (7%), sailor hostels (4%) and huts or farms (1%) (Kaae, 2002). Residents of Denmark account for a majority of visitors, and visits averaging 2 weeks in duration occur mainly in the peak summer months of July and August (Kaae,

2006). Recent surveys (Visit Greenland, 2013) indicate that individuals 55 or older comprise about one-half of all inbound leisure tourists, and two-thirds of cruise arrivals specifically.

Contemporary Production and Consumption

Notwithstanding the appreciable growth of inbound visitation since the mid-1990s, images of peripherality and exploration still dominate the destination branding of Greenland. For example, the current slogan of Visit Greenland (the island's destination marketing organization at the time of writing) exhorts potential visitors to 'Be a Pioneer' (Visit Greenland, 2016). Concurrently, a 'Big Five' set of activities that includes dog sledding, northern lights, ice/snow, whales and meeting local people is emphasized among the 32 distinct (but interrelated) activities featured on Visit Greenland's 'Things to do' website section. Positioning these activities as per Weaver (2001) within a Venn diagram featuring adventure tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism, it can be seen that almost all situate completely or partially as adventure tourism (Fig. 7.1). This is logical given the element of adventure implicit in most encounters with Greenland's natural and cultural attractions, and moreover largely conforms to Visit Greenland's contention that all Greenland tourism qualifies as adventure tourism (Visit Greenland, 2016). Notably, the area of overlap between all three, what Fennell (2015) describes as ACE (adventure, culture, ecotourism) tourism, is occupied by forms of mechanical (e.g. boat) and non-mechanical (e.g. snowshoe) mobility that provide access to natural and cultural attractions while being adventurous and attractive in their own right. Also notable is the presence of fishing and hunting; their availability, in an environment that otherwise emphasizes ecotourism, reflects the importance of these consumptive activities in the local Inuit culture.

There are no data that comprehensively describe the volume of tourist consumption for any of these 32 attractions, although the Visit Greenland (2016) website states that 'over 150' cross-country skiers participated in the 2014 Arctic Circle Race. Indicatively, a survey of 288

land-based visitors (Visit Greenland, 2013) found guided sailing (comparable to 'boat tours' in Fig. 7.1) to be the most frequently engaged activity, with 52% participation from the sample. Self-guided city sightseeing and hiking, respectively, were the next most popular at 46% and 28%. Other activities exceeding 15% participation were guided day tour dog sledding (22%), guided ice/glacier hiking (21%), casual interaction with local people (18%), guided small village visits (17%), guided city sightseeing (16%) and coastal cruising (15%). The location of this consumption, beyond attractions such as the Arctic Circle Race and Ilulissat ice-fjord, which designate a specific named site, can be approximated by examining the total number of paying accommodation guests (international and domestic) in different regions of Greenland. Of a total 18,496 guests in 2014 (Greenland, 2016), 30% (5545) were accommodated in the town of Ilulissat and another 21% (3900) in the Capital Region. As capacity in the latter is overwhelmingly dominated by the capital city of Nuuk, it follows that fully one-half of all accommodation is accounted for by just two small coastal urban centres in Greenland's south-western quadrant, which as a whole itself hosts more than 80% of all accommodation guests. In contrast, the eastern half of the country received just 2% (615) of guests. A parallel pattern of temporal concentration is indicated by the month-by-month statistics, with over 4000 of the Greenland-wide guests recorded in July and only 600 in January.

These spatial and temporal concentrations of product are associated with similarly concentrated patterns of infrastructural accessibility, with four of Greenland's five international airports located in the south-western quadrant. Kulusuk (KUS) on the east coast is the only exception, with 4481 departing passengers in 2014, or 14% of the 31,494 total air departures (Greenland, 2016). However, as most attractions require travel beyond these international gateways, Greenland tourism is facilitated by a network of 12 airports that service the larger communities, and also five heliports and 42 helispots. A parallel network of ports allows the cruise and ferry industry to access a number of settlements, but only during the summer months when adverse weather and ice conditions are absent or unlikely.

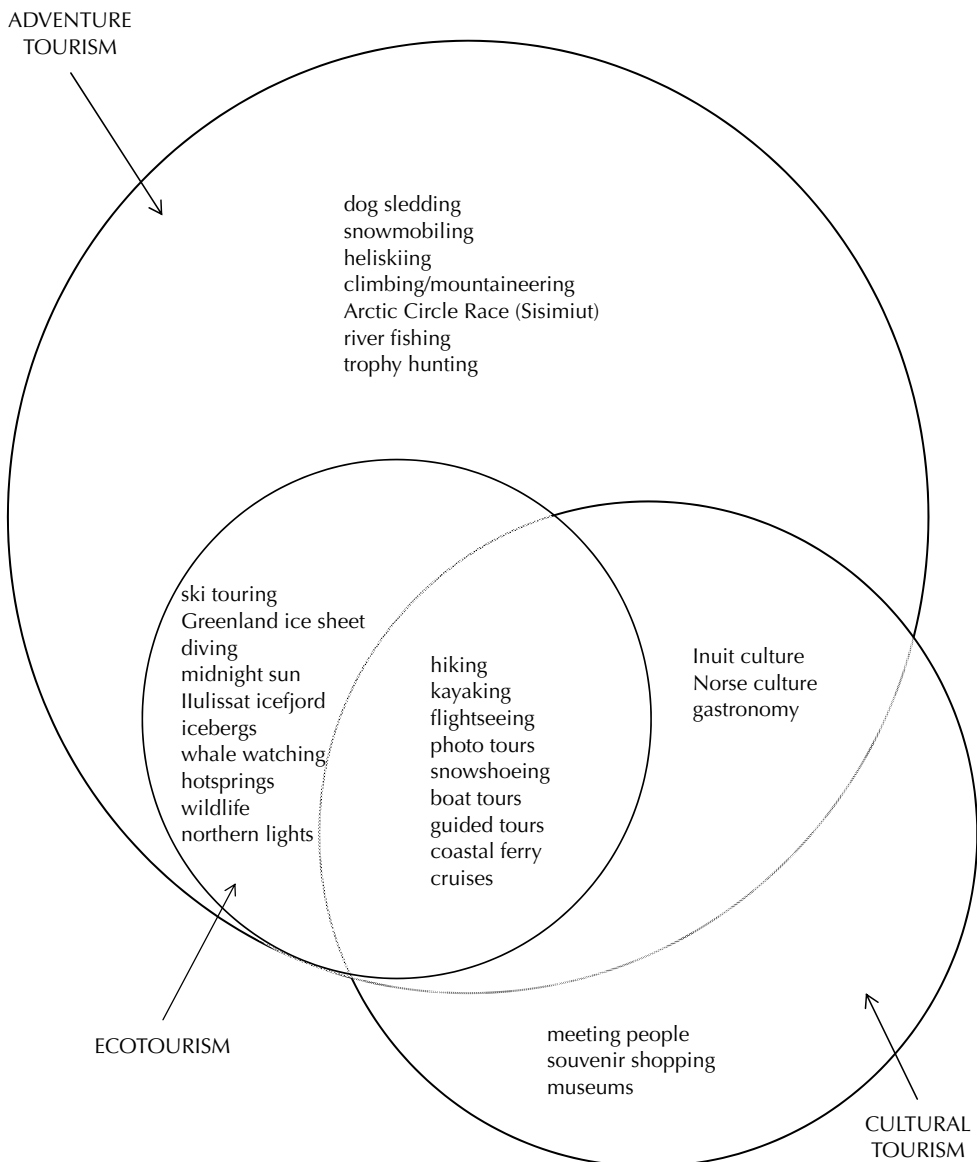


Fig. 7.1. Classification of activities officially recognized by Visit Greenland.

Perceptions and experiences

As with tourism in Greenland more generally, very little scientific knowledge is yet available – beyond the basic descriptions of visitation and attraction parameters – about the experiences that leisure tourists expect and attain in Greenland, or their motivational and perceptual

precursors (Kaae, 2006, 2007). Certainly, the promise of the extraordinary is a consistent theme in Greenland's destination marketing, embodied in the aforementioned slogan 'Be a Pioneer' and precursors such as 'Once in a lifetime', 'Experiences from a completely different world' and 'Rite of passage' that convey remoteness, exclusivity, individuality and initiation as

key allied messages (Kaae, 2006). Solicited motivations reflect these impulses, with a survey of 645 inbound visitors conducted in 2012 and 2013 (Visit Greenland, 2013) identifying the desire to experience key natural attractions as the most frequently cited motivator (29.6%), followed by association with Greenland's status as a 'Dream Destination' (15.2%) and an 'Exotic Destination' (15.2%). In fourth spot was respondents' self-identification as an 'Arctic Region Fanatic' (13.7%), while experiencing culture was cited by just 8%.

Data collected from potential visitors are also insightful. One academic survey of German consumers (Hübner, 2009) used semantic-differential scales to identify prevalent associations with Greenland. Commonly affiliated perceptions included 'endangered', 'white', 'cold', 'expensive', 'inaccessible', 'peripheral', 'dark', 'northerly', 'unique', 'lonely', 'exciting', 'free' and 'pristine'. These associations, derived mainly from television (75%) and newspapers (48%), entail cognitive (objective geographical descriptions) and affective (emotional) associations that relay implicit concurrent themes of peripherality and peak emotion attainment. Incidentally, 17% of the respondents were reasonably sure that they would visit Greenland within the next 5 years while 45% were sure they would not.

Market segmentation exercises further clarify the motivation-perception-experience nexus. Qualitative sampling of inbound visitors by Visit Greenland (Greenland, 2016) has revealed 12 distinct segments according to the applicable combination of interest focus (culture; culture and nature; nature; personal challenge) and level of engagement (total immersion; interaction; observation). Along the psychographic continuum, these segments all represent varying degrees of allocentrism, as would be expected from such a remote destination. At the extreme of total immersion are the contended 18% of visitors who as 'ethnophiles' (5%) or 'authenticity seekers' (1%) focus on culture, as 'wilderness seekers' (7%) focus on nature, or as 'extreme adventurers' (2%) and 'special interest adventurers' (3%) focus on personal challenge. The 52% in the intermediate cohort seeking interaction include 'globetrotters' (27%) who value culture and nature equally, and 'nature lovers' (16%) who focus on ecotourism. Smaller

groups of 'culture lovers' (6%) and softer 'special interest adventurers' (3%) emphasize culture and personal challenge, respectively. Finally, the 31% in the softer observation level of engagement include the culture-and-nature 'sightseers' (15%), ecotourism-oriented 'nature appreciators' (12%) and 'cultural appreciators' (4%).

Visit Greenland data that disaggregate the above market segment percentages by region offer support for the expectation that the more extreme segments will be found in the more extreme peripheries. As depicted in Fig. 7.2, the extreme adventurers, ethnophiles and wilderness seekers are strongly over-represented in East Greenland, which encompasses the eastern half of the country but hosts very little of its international air transport capacity (see above). Sightseers and globetrotters, concurrently, are considerably under-represented. In East Greenland, the total-immersion cohort as a whole accounts for about one-third of all international leisure visitors, or almost twice the national rate.

As they pertain to inbound Greenland leisure visitors, the above data reflect an incipient if conventionally framed understanding of tourist motivation, perception and segmentation by desired engagement level and attraction type. There is little concomitant understanding, however, of the experiences actually attained by these visitors, or their emotional import. This may change as the burgeoning arena of social media begins to yield a critical mass of commentary from Greenland visitors, but conventional solicitations of satisfaction provide in the interim at least an indication of the degree to which these experiences are positively or negatively perceived. A high overall visit satisfaction rate of 4.53 out of 5 was attained by Visit Greenland (2013) in a survey of 405 inbound leisure visitors, with little deviation among segments or between 'cruise' and 'land' respondents. Although the concomitant intention to return (3.17 out of 5) is not similarly robust, this may simply reflect the proclivity of many allocentric tourists to avoid repeat visits in order to experience as many exotic destinations as possible during their travel career (Weaver and Lawton, 2014). Cruise passengers (2.58) were especially unamenable to a return visit, which may additionally reflect an older age profile, almost one-half being 65 or older.

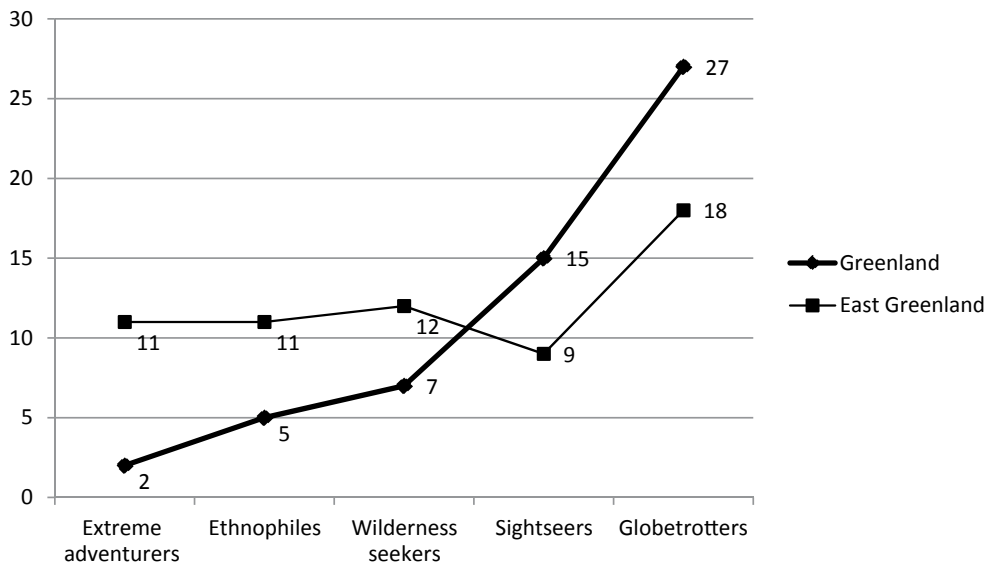


Fig. 7.2. Leisure tourist market segmentation percentages: Greenland versus East Greenland.

Discussion

To reiterate, Greenland inbound leisure tourism is a recently articulated but growing industry seasonally concentrated within a few gateway settlements and their hinterlands in the south-western quadrant of the island, as well as several well-established cruise routes. The tourism product and its attendant marketing is adventure-focused, and visitors are accordingly segmented along an allocentric continuum arraying from those seeking total immersion to those focused on interaction or observation. Satisfaction is high, but intentions to revisit are relatively low. These patterns, and particularly those indications of spatial and temporal concentration that reflect globally ubiquitous patterns of highly skewed tourism diffusion (Weaver and Lawton, 2014), demonstrate that peripherality in Greenland is a relative and complex phenomenon.

'Zone of the profane'

To model this relativity and inform further analysis and investigation, Fig. 7.3 depicts a simple matrix where the spectrum of spatial peripherality on the x-axis is arrayed against

the spectrum of temporal peripherality on the y-axis. The lower left cell represents the major international and domestic gateways during the summer months; that is, the confluence of spatially and temporally concentrated tourism production and consumption. Accounting for 85% or more of all tourism activity (the cell is proportionally scaled), this cell situates as the 'gateway periphery' of Greenland tourism.

Although the gateway periphery accounts for only a minuscule proportion of Greenland's territory, almost all inbound tourists have their initial and closing experience of the country within its settlements, and may additionally make extensive use of the latter as a base of operations during their visit. The reality of these settlements, however, may be dissonant with the induced imagery conveyed by official marketing efforts, and subsequent visitor expectations. As with many other indigenous contexts faced with remoteness and rapid cultural change, Greenland's settlements exhibit high levels of alcoholism, domestic violence, suicide, gang activity and poverty, while their unremarkable urban landscapes feature nondescript block apartments, industrial facilities, litter and graffiti (Johnston and Viken, 1997; Kaae, 2006). One blogger provides the following telling description of the settlement that hosts

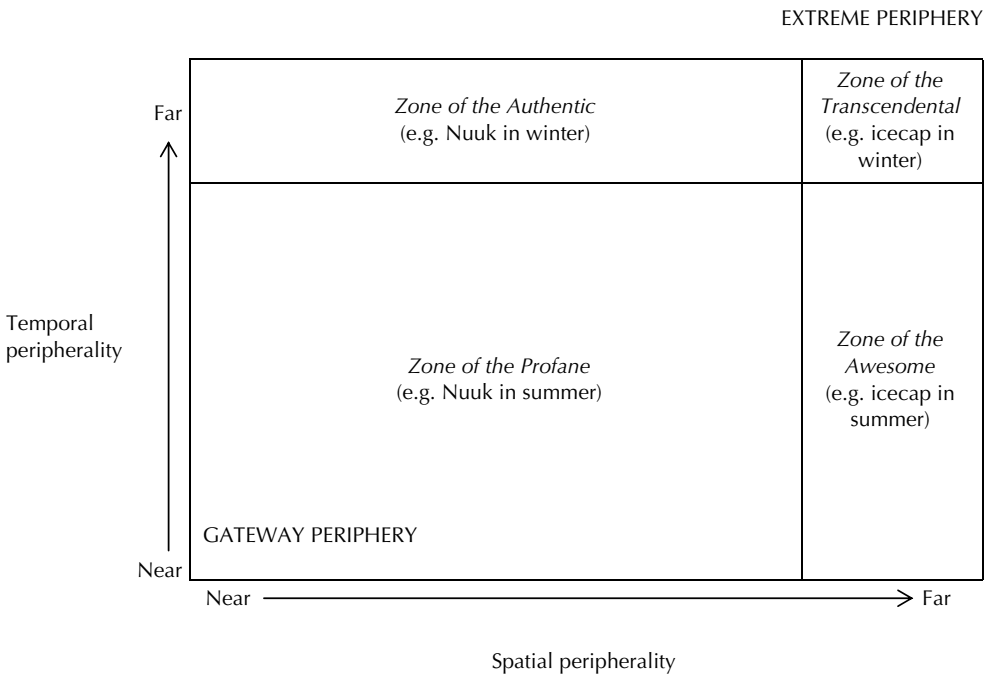


Fig. 7.3. Proposed model of peripherality and experience in Greenland leisure tourism.

Greenland’s most important international airport:

Kangerlussuaq is an ugly town, though quite interesting – it’s really just an airport, tourist centre and science centre, with some housing. It’s what surrounds it that makes it worth the expense.
(TripAdvisor, ilas65, 9 November 2015¹)

Another blogger provides advice about interactions with local dogs that could contradict the norms that a visitor might usually harbour regarding the status and treatment of such animals:

The rule was to avoid contact with the [sled] dogs and not to go too close or to touch them . . . The Greenlandic way of life is very different – it has evolved over thousands of years and it is important to leave some of our western preconceptions behind when it comes to hunting and treatment of dogs.
(TripAdvisor, EESW, 16 January 2011²)

What merits empirical investigation are the effects on overall visitor expectations and experiences of such visitor exposure to these settlements, which we describe as a ‘zone of the

profane’ to capture their utilitarian functionality and unvarnished social and cultural realities. Indicatively, 9.1% of respondents to the Visit Greenland (2013) survey specified ‘town appearance/life’ as a negative experience, notwithstanding the high overall rate of satisfaction. For visitors experiencing the worst of these settlement realities but harbouring the most romantic (or naïve) of expectations, this zone of the profane may furthermore constitute a zone of disillusion that sabotages future branding exercises through the dissemination of negative social media commentaries. A germane question therefore is to what degree the gateway exposure positively or negatively amplifies the experience of subsequent excursions to proximate or more distant natural and cultural attractions, and how these perceptions are subsequently reflected in social media-generated organic imagery.

From a sustainability perspective, implications arise from the concentrations of mostly white and Western tourists in settlements populated mainly by Inuit people and persons of mixed Inuit–Danish heritage. Some communities regularly provide ‘frontstages’ of tourism

production (MacCannell, 1976) where more or less contrived cultural performances – arguably more evidence of the profane – are made available in settings designed to resemble the backstage. Shackel (2011: 85), for example, describes a visit by camera-wielding Japanese tour groups to Kulusuk (a small settlement on the east coast):

The drum dancer in Kulsuk performed several songs for about 20 minutes . . . The act was well photographed by the tourists and it served as the ‘snap shot’ experience of Kulusuk . . . I asked a Danish worker who lived in the community . . . if she knew the words in any of the songs. She replied by saying that she believed there were a few bad words and insults about the visitors in at least one of the songs. Not knowing they were a target of an insult the tourists politely applauded and then retraced their steps back to the plane . . .

Perfunctory and diluted drum dances performed for but derogatory to that audience, in the author’s opinion, are evidence of economic necessity but also indigenous resistance and empowerment. Additional social as well as environmental implications arise from increases in the average number of passengers on Greenland-bound cruise ships from 182 in 2006 to 466 in 2011, a trend found also in Arctic Norway and Svalbard (Lasserre and Têtu, 2015). Having such numbers disembarking in a settlement of similar size for a half-day period may have similar impacts to those experienced during cruise visits in warm-water pleasure periphery destinations such as the Caribbean and South Pacific.

‘Zone of the transcendental’

The opposite situation, that which seems to approach the sacred, may pertain in the top right cell of Fig. 7.3, where extreme spatial isolation and wilderness coincide with the profound temporal isolation of the winter off-season. An example of extreme periphery context and experience is a non-mechanized trek, often by an individual, across a portion of the Greenland icecap during the perpetually dark winter. This may be demarcated as an exceptional and challenging experience well beyond the ordinary,

realized by just a few total-immersion tourists, and probably characterized by peak emotional reactions and evaluations; hence it occurs in what may be tentatively described as the ‘zone of the transcendental’. The following blog passage comments on the peak experience of two adventurers who undertook a long-distance kayak trip in ultra-remote north-eastern Greenland:

. . . as we continue to reflect on what a surreal and exquisite experience it was . . . we find ourselves left with questions: Where do we possibly go from here? How can this be beat? In terms of providing for natural beauty and an utterly unforgettable experience – Greenland has soared past so many others and might prove to be invincible.

(Dalene, 20 September 2013³)

The extremely limited demand for such experiences, combined with severe constraints to accessibility and the lack of permanent settlements, suggests that the growth prospects and sustainability implications of tourism in such extreme peripheries are limited. More germane are the implications of climate change, which are contended to be having disproportionate effects on such deceptively immutable and overwhelming landscapes (Hall and Saarinen, 2010). Of relevance here perhaps are the discourses of ‘last-chance tourism’, where awareness of attraction fragility and mortality, and the desire to be emotionally aroused by exposure to such apparently doomed sites, are significant motivators of trips to these extreme peripheries (Lemelin *et al.*, 2012).

‘Zone of the awesome’

The two disconformity or ‘mixed periphery’ cells offer additional distinct contexts for interrogating the production and consumption of leisure tourism in Greenland. In the lower right cell of Fig. 7.3, the spatial extreme periphery overlaps with the temporal near periphery, a situation that is represented by cruise tour groups in July or August to remote settlements or icecaps. The following blog reflects on such a context:

Sometimes you can sit looking at the Greenlandic landscape and you could just cry . . . The

nature is pure and raw and strong and powerful
 . . . Greenland is not beautiful despite its
 extreme conditions. It is beautiful because of
 them.

(Polarophile, 14 January 2016⁴)

The scope and accessibility of such settings is amplified spatially by generally good weather and water conditions, and temporally by the pervasiveness of daylight. Attendant experiences are mediated by the tendency to travel to such sites as part of a cruise or land-based tour group, which suggests high levels of social interaction and experience sharing. Concurrently, these tour groups are closely tied to touristic umbilical cords such as proximate cruise ships or aircraft, suggesting that participants will not be diverted and transformed by the exigencies of survival and physical hardship faced by those in the previous zone; rather, they can focus on appreciating and internalizing the grand natural attractions in what we therefore tentatively designate the 'zone of the awesome'.

'Zone of the authentic'

The upper left cell of Fig. 7.3 embraces near periphery spatial settings that coincide with extreme peripheral temporal periods. This is where the semi-urban panorama of Nuuk and other gateway settlements around Greenland transitions from partial frontstage to complete backstage, thereby possibly attracting tourists who seek 'authentic' cultural encounters. An immediate issue, indeed, is whether such tourists would bother with Nuuk or other relatively large and modern settlements, reaching out instead to smaller settlements where traditional Inuit culture is more evident. Implicated here in the Visit Greenland market segments are the total-immersion ethnophiles (5%) and authenticity seekers (1%), as well as the interaction-oriented culture lovers (6%).

There is also evidence of inadvertency on social media such as TripAdvisor, wherein other potential kinds of visitor explore the possibility of a winter visit to gateway cities and their hinterlands due to their own vacation time scheduling restrictions, or suspicions that prices will be cheaper and visitors fewer. However motivated, visits to this 'zone of the authentic' raise long-standing questions about constructs such as

authenticity, backstage and host/guest cultural contact. The search for the 'authentic' is likely to involve expectations of witnessing the traditional indigenous culture, but the local reality is residual retention of this culture embedded within a largely Western lifestyle, and accompanied by high levels of social dysfunction amplified by the added isolation and relentless darkness of the Arctic winter. As demonstrated by the earlier account of how sled dogs are commonly treated, the traditional culture itself, where preserved, may also be disconcerting and disorienting. The impacts of such visits on both the visitors and the local residents therefore need to be investigated.

Zone interaction

An important implied characteristic of the proposed matrix is movement between zones. One manifestation applies to the tourist, who normally begins the trip in the zone of the profane and then makes daytime or overnight excursions to more remote locations by way of cruise vessel, helicopter or other light aircraft, and then perhaps to even more isolated locations through self-propulsion, zodiac boat (a large rubber dinghy used in expedition cruising) or snowmobile. This resonates with Zurick's (1992) spatial model of Nepalese adventure tourism which is modelled as a hierarchy of peripheries and peripheral gateways. How the experience itself and perceptions of this experience change, as the tourist moves from gateway to extreme periphery and back, is a relevant topic of investigation. A compressed version of this hierarchy is apparent in settlement hinterlands where populated places abut 'wild' natural attractions, many gateways being gateways because of their proximity to impressive natural or cultural hinterland attractions. The toe of a very active glacier, for example, is only a few kilometres from the settlement of Ilulissat on the west coast. Aside from the increased likelihood of a larger human footprint (e.g. trails, litter, nearby noise), does this proximity reduce the emotional import of such encounters?

A second and less obvious manifestation is the movement of *places* from one zone to another through time, as for example with Nuuk moving from the zone of the profane in summer

to the zone of the authentic in winter, or the ice sheet from the zone of the awesome in summer to the zone of the transcendental in winter. While the latter scenario has much of interest in terms of shifting experiential and emotional subtleties, the former scenario has the more important sustainability implications. It suggests, for example, the need for seasonally adjusted planning and management to take into account the temporary receding of the frontstage, shifting local social dynamics and differences in visitor motivations, experiences and perceptions. More broadly, we contend that attention to the quality of the gateway should be an imperative of tourism management and planning in Greenland, so that negative perceptions and encounters do not tarnish the overall experience of natural attractions in particular that are of the highest quality.

Conclusion

Baldacchino (2006: 183) states that 'the critical exploration of extreme tourism in cold water locations has barely started', and this observation still pertained at the time of writing in 2016. This chapter attempts to stimulate further engagement by framing both the production and consumption of peripheral leisure tourism in the dual context of spatial and temporal peripherality. It proposes that experiences of the awesome and transcendental are more likely to occur in extreme peripheries that are very difficult to access and offer spectacular and still unsullied natural attractions. Gateways of the near periphery, alternatively, may foster negative experiences if their utilitarian frontstage functions are mundane and/or intersect with aesthetically displeasing landscapes of semi-urban deprivation. Negative tourist experiences

in this zone of the profane are concerning both to tourists and residents, since the near periphery accounts for most tourism activity and must be encountered by almost all visitors, regardless of ultimate destination. Conveyed through social media, resultant unfavourable commentaries may discourage potential visitors and dissuade government and industry efforts to prioritize and further develop the tourism sector. This is an important consideration given the instability of the fishing industry and the negative environmental and social implications of large-scale mining. It has been claimed by experts such as Baldacchino (2006) and Kaae (2006) that isolation, infrastructural limitations, high prices and political parochialism will conspire to promote small-scale and low-impact models of tourism in Greenland. However, patterns of periodically intensive tourism within constrained settlement frontstages, and the negative experiences they may entail, could belie such assertions. If so, then the tourism opportunities that Timothy and Olsen (2001) deem as inherent to peripheral places will not be easily realized.

Notes

¹ https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/ShowTopic-g295402-i20728-k8989435-Kangerlussuaq_in_January-Kangerlussuaq_Qeqqata_Municipality.html (accessed 13 September 2016).

² https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/ShowTopic-g609123-i15604-k4155086-Planning_my_trip_to_Ilulissat_Disko_Bay-Ilulissat_Qaasuitsup_Municipality.html (accessed 13 September 2016).

³ <http://www.hecktictravels.com/greenland-photos> (accessed 13 September 2016).

⁴ <https://2kalaallitnunaatigo.wordpress.com/2016/01/14/celebrating-the-return-of-the-sun-in-ilulissat-plus-4-things-i-relearned-about-greenland-doing-it/> (accessed 13 September 2016).

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8

Northern Lights Experiences in the Arctic Dark: Old Imaginaries and New Tourism Narratives

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Introduction

During the first decades of the third millennium, businesses offering 'northern lights tourism' activities have established themselves as some of the fastest-growing tourism businesses in northern Scandinavia (Northern Norway Tourist Board, 2016; Visit Norway, 2016). This development is evident in other Arctic and sub-Arctic areas, where the celestial phenomena of the aurora borealis frequently appear, and where destinations are relatively accessible to travelling visitors. Since 2000, due to increased solar activity and magnetic storms, there has been enhanced northern lights activity. Contemporaneously, interest in the Arctic areas and circumpolar regions has increased. The landscapes in which the northern lights are now abundantly appearing have increasingly become strategically and politically important. This is particularly so in fields such as the economy and transportation, where an ice-free Northeast Passage will open new trading possibilities. Rapid climate change and pressing questions regarding resource management and environmental concerns have in turn raised new questions within various natural sciences, as well as within geopolitics and military strategies. Moreover, the increased interest in the Arctic areas in turn manifest themselves in a variety of media expressions, TV productions and films, music, art, and literature for adults and children alike. Parallel to these developments has been an increased fascination with

the captivating histories of Arctic areas, their early explorers and their cultural and indigenous heritages and religions.

Northern lights tourism suddenly finds itself somewhere in the middle of these circumstances. A peripheral geographical area such as sub-Arctic Scandinavia has in a sense become a centre in contemporary experience production. Although tourism as a business may try to avoid some of the more controversial questions regarding politics, ownership and resources, it still has to answer to the new demands of creating meaningful and exciting experiences. Northern lights tourism is taking place in what for most tourists are new and exciting landscapes; however, the industry has to create products capable of meeting demand for sustainable products in delicate and fragile nature settings.

Like the surrounding natural environment and cultures, the central tourism product – the northern lights – is ephemeral and unstable. For the tourism industry, as expected, the primary focus is on creating spectacular and memorable experiences for visitors. Relatedly, there is one significant problem for northern lights tourism businesses – the lights are not always there to observe, despite their appearance and intensity having become more frequent than usual. Cloudy weather will hide the spectacle behind a veil, and tour guides have to wait for better weather or a sudden opening in the skies, or have to change locations by driving the tourists to an area where the prospects of clear weather may be better. This is exemplified by one tourist

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package called 'Hunting the Northern Lights', an adventure that can transport tourists over greater distances of the Arctic area than they might ever have wished. A bus ride in the dark may not be too exciting, so everything depends on the guide's capability as a narrator and entertainer. Subsequently, a number of important questions arise for tourism businesses: what kinds of narratives are there to tell about the northern lights? What would the tourists like to know more about? What would be entertaining enough to make the trip to the north an unforgettable experience?

Looking at the numerous existing northern lights tourism providers, there seem to be several alternatives for combining tourists' expectations of experiencing the northern lights with other meaningful experiences (Visit Norway, 2016). This is necessary in case the lights are not visible in the sky, as well as to enhance or broaden the primary experience of the northern lights. Presently, the most common northern lights-related activities are dog sledding, encounters with the indigenous Sámi culture and presentations of early or contemporary northern lights research, along with the widespread alternative of hunting the northern lights in buses. Other possibilities could variously combine these activities.

The scope of this chapter is, however, wider than just cataloguing combinations of northern lights and activities. In a historical and textual perspective, I want to investigate how old narratives, travelogues and Arctic imaginaries are sources of inspiration for present-day travellers as well as their hosts. Whether consciously or not, there is a kind of 'Arctic fantasyland' in the minds of the visitors, something driving their urge to travel to the north and experience the natural phenomena of the northern lights. My intent here is to pursue the elements of at least some of this Arctic imaginary, as made visible in presentations, contemporary films and older texts.

Narrating and Staging the Northern Lights Experience

What kind of activity is northern lights tourism, and how should we understand people's urge

to see and experience this natural spectacle? Discussions about how one should understand the phenomenon of tourism itself have long been an important issue in tourism research. Dean MacCannell's classic and still influential book *The Tourist. A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976) established tourism as a very significant component of contemporary social life. He proposed to understand modern, urban citizens' travelling projects in relation to other and more general issues in Western society. Experiences during travels could fill a void in the tourists' lives, a feeling of emptiness and alienation created by modern living and working conditions. Like other authors around that time (Graburn, 1977; Turner and Turner, 1978), MacCannell introduced the idea of seeing tourism as a kind of modern pilgrimage, where participation in various touristic experiences and 'sightseeing' along the road were elements in a modern ritual (MacCannell, 1976: 43). The tourists wanted to break through the invisible boundaries framing their existence in everyday life by seeking genuine and authentic experiences in unfamiliar geographies, traditional cultures or spectacular landscapes. They were seeking out-of-the-ordinary landscapes, cultures, people and experiences that could, at least temporarily, transform the monotony of their everyday life.

This view of tourists' activities also implied viewing them as deeply serious activities, even when they were taking place in joyful and hedonistic surroundings. Nelson Graburn (1977) pointed to parallels between religious rituals and secular tourism. From the routines of everyday work, holiday experiences can be elevated and exceptional, and bring forward words such as 'magic' and 'enchanted' from participants (Picard, 2011, 2015), thus linking the experiences to spiritual happenings and religious transformations of the self. Words associated with such spiritual experiences also appear frequently in the marketing material for northern lights tourism (Mathisen, 2014; see also the website at Northern Norway Tourist Board, 2016) and resonate with the quest of guests for boundary-breaking experiences. Most people who see the northern lights for the first time find themselves left in a state of awe and amazement. Prior knowledge of history, myth and research tends to enhance such feelings.

Additionally, after seeing the northern lights, tourists leave with the possibility of having words to express their feelings about the experience.

The way that companies stage and perform such tourist experiences is critical to the overall experience. This staging and performance resembles what Dean MacCannell called 'staged authenticity' (1976: 91), a reference to the ways cultural happenings as well as everyday life are presented to tourists. Later research suggests that artificial arrangements of a tourist experience do not exclude the tourist from feeling a sense of authenticity during these performances. The concept of staged authenticity is rather an acknowledgment of the fact that, in the context of a tourist experience, staging in some form or other is always taking place, and something is being performed (Edensor, 2001). Edward Bruner has called this 'the tourist border zone' (Bruner, 2005: 192), an area where local inhabitants perform for the tourists – the tourists' own imaginaries – and where both parties are more or less aware of the constructed nature of the performance.

The case of northern lights tourism is especially interesting because the most important element of this staging is the northern lights themselves, a natural phenomenon that is not artificial, and therefore experienced as authentic in and of itself. Consequently, the staging of experiences within a touristic framework relates to combinations of the northern lights with relevant narratives and other cultural elements. Because these elements most often derive from the historical past, they are best understood as elements of heritage. As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 149) writes: 'Heritage is a new mode of cultural production in the present that has a recourse to the past'. This 'production' does not necessarily mean that the narratives and cultural elements are invented or inauthentic (1998: 150), but rather that new ways of presenting what appear to be old elements of culture will create new meanings and new values in new contexts. To create an engaging performance for tourists, the combination of a natural phenomenon with older meaningful cultural elements, or heritage, produces new narratives and new experiences. In this way, the staged performances are also contingent on history, narratives and myths, which the guests

in some way or other can relate to as familiar, but still as exotic and unusual. In a historical perspective, the Arctic is filled with these kinds of narratives and imaginaries.

The staging of northern lights tourists' events, in this sense, is not arbitrary in any way, but always linked to histories, myths and meta-narratives with major cultural impacts. Narratives and imaginaries re-contextualized in tourism serve a double intention. On the one hand, they can fill experience productions with meaningful substance, even if the main attraction should be absent (Smedseng, 2014). On the other hand, these additional elements are meaningful in a much wider sense. Narratives and imaginaries connected to indigenous mythical understandings of the northern lights, their scientific exploration or the historical background of earlier travels to the Arctic all contribute to a sense of authenticity connected to the natural phenomena themselves. Moreover, at the same time, they communicate widespread meta-narratives about Arctic and sub-Arctic areas, their inhabitants and their ways of living.

A Contemporary Mediated and Narrated Tourist Experience

The new and increased marketing of the northern lights as a unique tourist experience in northern Scandinavia is often seen in relation to the success of the BBC documentary *In the Land of the Northern Lights* (BBC One, 2008). In the film, the famous British actor Joanna Lumley heads north in Norway to find the lights she remembered reading about in a picture book back in her childhood, when growing up in Malaysia. There the weather was always hot, and snow and ice were only things to be imagined. Narratives of trolls, frost, ice, snow and cold were a part of her childhood's northern fantasyland. The book to which she referred was *Ponny the Penguin* (Basser, 1948), and those lights would have been the southern lights, or aurora australiensis. The unforgettable picture in the book (drawn by Edwina Bell) shows the lone penguin under an impressive and wavering outburst of light in the sky above. The plot of the BBC film is similar to a chase for a childhood imaginary of magical and

enchanted surroundings, based on her vivid childhood imaginings of an enchanted fantasyland.

The magical journey to an existing (in terms of geography) and imaginary (in terms of fantasy, myth and narrative) north was carefully composed throughout the film, and included well-known scores from Edward Grieg's Norwegian music. A linkage to British colonialism and colonizers of former times also punctuates the film: for example, when Joanna Lumley enters a train in Norway to go to the north (the usual contemporary travelling mode would be a flight), followed by a man dressed in uniform taking care of all her suitcases (there are usually no porters in Norway). Moreover, when getting closer to the geographical zone of the Arctic Circle, Lumley changes her mode of transportation to a dog sledge, drawn by a band of Alaskan huskies. This visually parallels earlier polar explorers and reinforces the adventurous nature of her journey. After crossing the Arctic Circle, meticulously measured and exactly detailed by a modern GPS tracking device that she carries with her, Joanna Lumley exclaims, 'I'm in the Arctic now! And for the rest of my journey north, I can call myself an explorer! I am not a tourist' (*Joanna Lumley In the Land of the Northern Lights*, 2008). In this way, the crossing of the Arctic Circle takes on ritual proportions, and the border between the Arctic world and the ordinary, everyday world south of that border is filled with symbolic meanings, narratives and histories to support its status as a dramatic border crossing.

Although the rest of her journey takes her to several typical tourist destinations in the north of Norway (Eines, 2013), the image of her as an explorer lingers in her encounters with the local inhabitants she meets, albeit that the divide between tourism professionals and other representatives of the local communities she meets is somewhat blurred. This remains the case when she seeks advice from various experts in relation to opportunities for seeing the northern lights. The scientist Truls Lynne Hansen, the then leader of Tromsø Geophysical Observatory (also called the Northern Lights Observatory), explained the geophysical realities of solar winds and magnetic fields to Lumley. Additionally, he related what he described as old beliefs about the northern lights, and how

you should not wave at them or tease them in any way or they would come and catch you (*Joanna Lumley In the Land of the Northern Lights*, 2008).

When the northern lights finally show themselves to Joanna Lumley, it is, of course, the culmination of her travel into her childhood's fantasyland. Only, this time, the magical experience can be saved on a cinematographer's digital memory chip. Aided by modern, light-sensitive camera technologies, time-lapse technique photography and expert photographers, Joanna Lumley's favourite childhood picture can now be recreated, this time with herself in the position of the lone penguin. In addition, the film of herself under the magical and moving lights reached out to several countries around the world, creating a sudden boost for northern lights tourism products in Norway. People wanted to repeat Joanna Lumley's travel, and they wanted to have similar experiences. The demand for northern lights products skyrocketed, especially in the area around Tromsø, where Joanna succeeded in seeing the lights.

I have focused on this mixture of science and myth, scientific explanation and fantasy, and modern technology and traditional narratives in Joanna Lumley's film, because these elements constantly reappear in many tourism presentations of northern lights experiences offered in northern Scandinavia today. The presentations draw inspiration from ancient myths and narratives as well as from modern geophysical science, from the history of science and exploration as well as from indigenous beliefs, and from modern technology as well as from old forms of transportation.

What kind of traveller was Joanna Lumley enacting? Throughout the film, we experience her acting out combinations of different roles. She is a woman seeking one of her childhood's favourite fantasies. In this sense, she is similar to other tourists seeking northern lights experiences. All are pursuing the experience of a natural phenomenon that they have read about, seen a film about or heard about from other people who have visited the northern areas. Although, as already noted, in one sequence of the film she exclaims that she is no longer a tourist: she feels she has moved into an explorer role. This role is similar to a tourist, but also slightly different. It is a role with strong historical

roots, and there is a wide range of historical records and older travelogues that can serve as an inspiration for a role like this. Taking a closer look at some possible sources of inspiration for making narratives and enactments related to present-day northern lights tourism will enhance our understanding of narratives inspiring contemporary imaginaries of the circumpolar areas. In the next sections I aim to demonstrate how, historically, successful tourism products depended on combining inspirations from many sources to create memorable experiences associated with a product that is both ephemeral and uncertain. It is also a product that is immersed in myths and narratives, and explained by scientists and explorers. It is a product that is presently and continuously recounted in modern media presentations. An example of a much earlier British traveller to the Arctic serves to illustrate these sources of inspiration.

The Early Explorers and Their Northern Imaginaries

Historically, during their stays, visitors, researchers, travellers and tourists to the Arctic areas have often reported great and profound experiences of the northern lights. From their presentations, we read how they listened to various narratives about the phenomena from local guides. We also learn how the visitors understood, transformed and transmitted these narratives. The British traveller and baronet Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke (1791–1858) is in many ways typical of this new group of travellers, who sought adventures by going to exotic and faraway places. At the same time, they explored resources in these areas and peoples, as well as investigating any colonializing economic interests. In the early 1820s, de Capell Brooke, a Fellow of the Royal Society and one of the founders of the Raleigh Club (which formed the basis for the later Royal Geographical Society, founded in 1830), travelled to the north of Scandinavia. His travel resulted in valuable written and image documentation, which was presented and published in three books (de Capell Brooke, 1823, 1827a,b). The first part of de Capell Brooke's travel took place during summer, and even if he had not yet

observed the northern lights himself, he obtained information about them. In his book *Travels Through Sweden, Norway, and Finmark to the North Cape in the Summer of 1820* (Brooke, 1823: 385), he writes about the northern lights:

The Sun disappears to the inhabitants for more than two months in the year . . . During the long winter night, the aurora borealis, which shines with uncommon brilliancy at the North Cape, compensates for the loss of the Sun; and its light is so great, that the fishermen are enabled to carry on their ordinary occupation as well as by the usual daylight.

It is important to note the way de Capell Brooke here points to pragmatic uses of the northern lights, as working lights. The two later books deal with his winter travel in 1821, when he returned south through Finnmark and Swedish Lapland. These books have several depictions of the northern lights. In *A Winter in Lapland and Sweden* (Brooke, 1827a), the frontispiece is a lithography depicting the author in a reindeer sledge, under an impressive outburst of the northern lights, with the following caption: 'The author in his winter dress as he travelled through Lapland, with an appearance of the northern lights' (Brooke, 1827a: XV) (see Fig. 8.1). The book *Winter Sketches in Lapland* (Brooke, 1827b) is a separate picture portfolio containing 24 lithographic plates (each measuring 56×44 cm) further illustrating the travelogue. There are three different depictions of the northern lights: 'Parties of Laplanders meeting at night upon the Suopadus Jaure, with the northern lights just beginning to make their appearance' (Plate 16); 'Falling in with a Laplander's herd of reindeer, while crossing the Jerdis Javri Lake, with a singular appearance of the northern lights' (Plate 17); and 'Preparations for passing the night in a fishing hut on the borders of the Storra Grotti Javri, with the effect of the Aurora Borealis' (Plate 18).

These depictions can be understood as scientific documentations of the different forms the lights may take. However, the lithographs also show the northern lights as closely connected with the exotic indigenous Sámi culture. In this way, the contact between the indigenous Sámi inhabitants of the area and the foreign visitors becomes the central issue, where the Sámi act



Fig. 8.1. The frontispiece to Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke's book *A Winter in Lapland and Sweden* (1827a).

as the visitors' much-needed guides and helpers in an unknown geography. However, only the colonializing and learned visitor is in the privileged position where he or she will be able to realize the full extent of the values of these northern landscapes (Pratt, 1992).

A closer reading of Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke's text (1827a: 517) reveals how he is obliged to season his descriptions by using mythical parallels and images from romantic literature, to be able to catch the essence of the landscape he conquers while travelling into an increasingly imaginary north:

The flashings of the northern lights began also to play around us. A pale sheet of flame first streamed from the zenith. Its quivering fires then darted swiftly along the heavens, and increased the sublimity of the scene; while the planet of night, riding high in the firmament, cast a mild and pensive lustre. As there had been a hoar of frost, every spray glistened as if pendant with countless gems; and the gay sparkle of innumerable crystals from the surrounding illumination brought to the recollection the tales of fairy-land.

In de Capell Brooke's writing, this enchantment of the Arctic landscape, the stars of the northern sky, the Moon and the northern lights, and the totality of the northern landscape is achieved with the help of poetical language, heavily influenced by classical European ideals. In turn, his poetical descriptions (1827a: 518) appear to influence the people who are moving about in these surroundings, and even the author himself:

With our strange figures thickly encrusted with frost and rime, and hurrying silently along, we had less the appearance of men than of unearthly beings, or a band of goblins skimming the waste, to perform their midnight orgies, and 'dance with Lapland witches'.

His reference to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) and 'dance with Lapland witches' gives a mystical sense to the description of the lights and the northern landscape. However, through his literary skill and poetic ability, the author of the travelogue positions himself at a safe distance from the mythical figures he is giving life to through his writings. de Capell Brooke

portrays himself as an educated and learned author with a proper knowledge of classical literature. With his analytical and literary abilities, he is on the safe side of civilization, travelling in an environment where local inhabitants are still caught in their premodern, mythological world, and at the mercy of threatening supernatural powers. The author is contributing to the literary construction of an Arctic fantasyland, where the indigenous Sámi people, their myths and the northern lights are important ingredients.

Scientific Documentation and Colonial Imaginaries

For most Norwegians, the books and drawings from the Arctic adventures of the scientist and explorer Fridtjof Nansen (1861–1930), and later Roald Amundsen (1872–1928), were stock elements of a childhood education raising feelings of national pride. It was a way to acquire knowledge about the Arctic regions, as well as the mythical creation of national heroism (Friedman, 2010). The depiction and documentation of the northern lights has been an important endeavour with a long history associated with exploration and scientific research. The renowned French *La Recherche* expedition (1838–1840) had several artists among its participants. In particular, Louis Bévalet (1779–1850) made drawings of the northern lights with great accuracy, as can be observed in his depictions of how the lights appeared over Bossekop in Alta in 1838 (Knutson and Posti, 2002: 130). The development of photographic technologies also proved promising in relation to scientific documentation. Close to 50 years later, the northern lights researcher Sophus Tromholt (1851–1896) equipped himself with the best photographic cameras and plates available at that time (Moss and Stauning, 2012), and travelled to Bossekop. In his book *Under the Rays of the Aurora Borealis: In the Land of the Lapps and the Kuæns* (Tromholt, 1885a: 195), he wrote that most of the earlier depictions of the lights had been pure products of the artists' fantasies:

One need only open any one of the popular scientific works in which Aurora Borealis is described, to find it swarming with inaccuracies,

and presenting the most extraordinary illustrations of the same, wholly the production of the draughtman's imagination.

Nevertheless, in the end, it turned out that the photographic plates he had brought with him were not sensitive enough to light, and he did not succeed as he had hoped in taking good photographs of the northern lights. His journey also took him to another location. To be able to calculate the height of the northern lights activity in the atmosphere, something that had not been established at the time, he set up a second observatory about 100 miles further south, in the Sámi village of Kautokeino. Not being able to use the photographic plates for their original purpose, he used them to take portraits of the Sámi living in the area. Consequently, Tromholt's winter stay in Kautokeino produced the most fantastic and artistic documentation of Sámi culture from that era. Many of these photographs show extraordinary qualities, and numbers of them were published in his book (Tromholt, 1885a), in a subsequent Danish edition of the book (Tromholt, 1885b), as well as in a photographic portfolio (Tromholt, 1885c). In this way, Tromholt's study of the northern lights and of the Sámi culture connected closely, although due to some degree of coincidence. Throughout his written work, Tromholt established clear boundaries between his own relation to the northern lights, which was rational and scientific, and the local Sámi attitude to the lights, which he considered was naïve, and based on beliefs and emotions: 'The deep blue sky with myriads of stars and the flaming, mystic aurora, which are never hidden to his eye, have made the mind of the Lapp susceptible to impressions and emotions' (Tromholt, 1885a: 129).

Sophus Tromholt's photographs of the Sámi people in their exotic and colourful dresses (the English edition has colour lithographs as frontispieces in both volumes) are entirely realistic, and communicate his respect and admiration for these people. However, the photographs still circulated in an era when exotic images of primitive people and cultures contributed to a general and widespread idea of fundamental differences between civilized and primitive peoples. Picture postcards for tourists' use were beginning to circulate, contributing to the distribution of the image of the Sámi as an idealized,

exotic, nature-bound, noble savage, living far outside the world of the modern European tourist.

Contemporary documentation of the northern lights has reached new technological levels, in ways that the early travellers could hardly have imagined. Today's northern lights tourist will get a quick course in photographing the phenomena from their guides, or experienced photographers will supply the guests with online 'northern lights selfies' shortly after their visit. New, light-sensitive cameras have made the documentation of the lights easy. As some tourists experience, they can catch more of the splendid colours in the northern lights with their advanced cameras than with their own eyes. In fact, the distribution of northern lights photographs on the internet through various social media is probably an important part of the marketing success for the tourism products related to the lights (see Fig. 8.2), and modern science has sophisticated means of documenting the northern lights from below, as well as from above (from satellites). Aurora forecasts and northern lights alert apps can further inform the

tourists, via their mobile phones, about when and where chances of spotting the lights are best. Nevertheless, natural science's contrasting of its rational discoveries with the Sámi indigenous population's celestial myths and 'irrational' beliefs seems to have continued. Moreover, as we will see, there is a continuing fascination with Sámi narratives among the tourists.

Experiencing the Northern Lights with the Sámi

The imagery of the other important element of Sophus Tromholt's stay in the north, the Sámi people, has not changed as much in the northern lights presentations as it has in contemporary everyday life. Although the Sámi today might well be working in geophysics or other fields of natural science, in tourism they still uphold their old role as the somewhat naïve children of nature, caught in supernatural beliefs about the origin of these lights (Mathisen, 2010, 2014).



Fig. 8.2. Northern lights over Reine, Norway.

These same tendencies recur in contemporary tourism, albeit in new ways, through new media and with the help of new materials. Probably partly inspired by the marketing success of the Joanna Lumley documentary mentioned above (*Joanna Lumley In the Land of the Northern Lights*, 2008), the organization Innovation Norway, through its marketing company Visit Norway, has initiated plans for new, similar films. It has produced 12 short films, mainly for internet distribution, in connection with the marketing of some carefully chosen tourist destinations in Norway. All the films featured the British actor David Spinx (renowned for his role in the British TV series *EastEnders*), playing himself in all these films, but acting as the typical English tourist hunting for exciting experiences in Norway. These experiences are the basis for good stories, visualized through the films, and through David Spinx's little sketchbook, where he drew his best impressions. All the short films had the common title *Stories for Life*. One of them, *Hunting Northern Lights with the Sámi* (2016) is about the hunt for the northern lights and, as it turns out, also about the Sámi.

The film starts inside a *lávvu* (the Sámi tent), where visiting tourists and hosting guides are sitting around the *árran* (the fireplace). They are served reindeer meat, while listening to the Sámi guide Josef performing yoik (traditional Sámi singing) and telling stories about the northern lights, and Sámi beliefs associated with them:

The Northern Lights are very special to the Sámi people. Because when we were kids, we used to tease the Northern Lights. And when our grandparents realized that, they came out and shouted at us: 'Don't tease the Northern Light [sic]! Never do that! That is dangerous!' – After a while, I found out that the belief was . . . that the Northern Lights were the lights in the eyes of our ancestors dancing on the northern sky. So that's why we shouldn't tease it [sic]. They would really get angry then.

The Sámi guide then brings his guest outside the *lávvu*, and they experience the fantastic northern lights together (Figs 8.3 and 8.4). David Spinx is left almost speechless, but still maintains that he certainly 'will have some stories to tell when he returns back home'.



Fig. 8.3. Northern lights above Sámi *lávvu*.



Fig. 8.4. Northern lights in Sweden.

Experiencing the northern lights is of course the most important and memorable event. However, combining this with encountering the Sámi, their narratives, the yoik and the food, produces a more complete experience. Combinations of Sámi beliefs, myths and narratives underline the feeling of mystery, awe and wonder that most tourists seem to experience when they watch the natural phenomena of the northern lights for the first time in their lives.

However, there is also another side to this, and that is how northern lights tourism companies today use local and indigenous narratives, myths and beliefs to present their winter experiences. In many ways, this is related to the presentations already discussed. When explorers, early travellers and natural scientists all refer to the popular and indigenous beliefs in their writings, they most often do so in contrast to their rational attitude to the phenomena. In an earlier work (Mathisen, 2014), I noted that there is little evidence that the Sámi actually believed strongly in any supernatural force connected to the northern lights. Their narratives about the lights are metaphorical in much the same way as poets and the early travellers used poetic

language. Some of the narratives are tales for children (and possibly believed by some of them), which were told to keep the children from going astray in the dark (Mathisen, 2014: 76). Generally, the Sámi attitude to the northern lights seems to have been more pragmatic, for example giving light for travelling or hunting foxes during the dark season (Leem, 1767: 195). It seems that, for the local inhabitants of the northern areas, the northern lights – and the midnight sun and other northern, natural phenomena – were so common and ordinary that they did not call for any major metaphysical explanations. Still, of course, they were elements in Sámi narratives and poetical expressions (Mathisen, 2014: 75).

When Sámi poetical expressions and children's narratives reappear as belief stories or indigenous religion in contemporary tourism, this appearance is similar to other uses of heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). It is not a question of cultural continuity, but rather that these elements of heritage reappear because they can be used for entirely new purposes in contemporary contexts of experience production in tourism.

Chasing the Northern Lights, or Chasing Arctic Imaginaries?

Their means of transport meant that early visitors to the sub-Arctic and Arctic areas had to spend long periods of time there, whereas present-day travellers typically fly in and out, and spend only a couple of days in the area. In former times, travel in the areas was strenuous, dangerous and more like an expedition. Currently, travel to the Arctic usually involves a comfortable flight, is safe and more of a tourist trip. Early travellers and explorers would have had ample possibilities of experiencing the northern lights. On the other hand, contemporary tourists have to consider themselves lucky if they see the lights at all during their short visit. The types of travels and explorations people set out on were very different then from today. Nevertheless, earlier travellers produced knowledge, travelogues and images that have continued to influence later imaginaries of the Arctic, and appear to have inspired contemporary tourist marketing, as well as staging, narrations and performances in contemporary northern lights tourism.

While the northern lights are potentially always there in the sky, this proper imaginary

stage has to be set to create the kind of Arctic fantasyland many tourists have come to expect when they visit. The most important main attraction, the northern lights, is there for real, continuously documented both physically and technically. However, creating a proper stage to produce the right feelings of visiting the Arctic imaginary that visitors keep longing for is not only a question of the appearance of the lights. It is also one of contextualizing the staging of these lights in the right way, and of presenting the proper narratives to go with it. 'The way of early travellers and explorers' fulfils these imaginaries to a certain extent. The introduction of dog sledge driving through snow and ice, visiting the Sámi indigenous population in their tents and listening to their yoik and their narratives, can all serve as important and meaningful elements in these stagings. Moreover, other elements would probably be suitable in this context as well. The production of an Arctic fantasyland depends on recognizing elements of an old imaginary, created from a long history of Arctic exploration, research and travel. For the tourism industry, it is a question of recreating the most possible and plausible reproduction of the visitors' own imaginaries of an Arctic fantasyland.

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9

Exploring the Extreme Iditarod Trail in Alaska

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Introduction

Travelling to remote and novel destinations, to 'frontiers' on journeys that physically and mentally challenge people, tends to attract the explorer group of tourists (Cohen, 1972). This chapter focuses on two such people – the authors – who travelled the Iditarod trail, a dog-sled race in Alaska. Their journey, which lasted 5 weeks (24 February to 31 March 2001), was undertaken before, during and after the race and its events had concluded. The chapter explores our personal experiences by drawing on our narratives and diary entries. By using theoretical and empirical research, the chapter discusses these narratives with the aim of identifying tourism business potentials for destinations and companies.

Skiing in the trail of a dog-sled race such as the Iditarod is a rough and exceptional activity for those heading for extreme experiences. Motivation theory and literature on special interest and sensation-seeking interests were used as theoretical underpinnings. The chapter points out the potentials for business, and also provides in-depth knowledge on a specific group of tourists – extreme explorers – which is of particular relevance in understanding the attraction of the Arctic landscape.

Historical Background

Historically, the Iditarod trail was the major 'thoroughfare' through Alaska. Mail was carried

across this trail, people used it to get from place to place and supplies were transported along it. Priests, ministers and judges travelled between villages along the trail by dog sled.

The Iditarod stems back to the famous Serum Run in 1925, which brought necessary medicines by dog sled from Nenana to Nome when there was a serious outbreak of diphtheria there. Children were hit especially hard, and more serum was needed to halt the disease. It was the middle of winter, and temperatures were dropping as low as -45°C . The Bering Strait was frozen, and no boat or ship could enter Nome harbour. Planes had never been flown and tested at such low temperatures. The only option left to bring the serum quickly was to get it to Nenana by train and from there by a dog team, and this was achieved.

The serum saved many lives. Four to six children officially died of diphtheria, but the true numbers are believed to be much higher as the indigenous population did not register any deaths.

Media all over the world caught onto what was happening in Nome, and the Serum Run inspired the annual commemorative races that began in 1973. The Iditarod has now become the most popular sporting event in Alaska and has acquired educational and cultural awareness overtones. The race took the name 'Iditarod' from a small mining town that is currently one of the checkpoints of the southern route. Every other year, the race changes course from the northern route to the southern route. The rest of the trail is about the same, as it normally starts in Anchorage and ends in Nome. Large

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parts of the trail follow the mail and transport routes between villages of the Alaskan interior that were used in the 1920s.

The Iditarod race starts in Anchorage each year on the first Saturday in March. It ends when the last musher reaches Nome – a total distance of 1609 km – with the fastest teams finishing in around 9.5 days. Figure 9.1 shows the trail (southern route) through the rural wilderness of Alaska.

The authors of this chapter started the journey 1 week before the race began, since we did not take part in the competition. The trail consists of all kinds of terrain, from big swamps in the south central region to alpine tundra along the Alaska Range. The race is famous and many mushers from overseas are attracted to take part. As we were also mushing but not competing in events, we saw an opportunity to mush along the Iditarod trail. In the following sections, we discuss this type of tourism and identify the motivations and adventures that we experienced during the journey. Tourism business potentials are suggested, based on the narratives and subsequent analysis.

Tourist Motivations for Adventure Tourism Experiences

Studies of tourist motivation show that individuals choose to participate in recreational activities to satisfy multiple needs (Ryan, 2003). Two friends, going on a 5-week challenging dog-sled tour in the Alaskan wilderness, may be defined as taking part in a special interest and a serious leisure activity. Serious leisure is defined by Stebbins (1982 in Bartram, 2001: 5) as ‘the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity, that is sufficiently rewarding despite the costs, such that participants find a career in the acquisition and expression of its special skills and knowledge’. Kelly and Godbey (1992) state that ‘special interest often results in development of trust, sharing, and intimacy’. The shared social or cultural worlds of the travellers can influence the positive or negative perception of an experience (Arnould *et al.*, 1998).

Adventure tourism is a rapidly expanding tourism activity. However, participation does not come without its risks. Existing literature would suggest that the pursuit of these risks is a



Fig. 9.1. The official map of the Iditarod trail (reproduced by permission of the Iditarod Trail Committee).

central attraction of these activities (Cater, 2006). However, drawing on research conducted in the self-styled 'Adventure Capital of the World', Queenstown in New Zealand, Cater (2006) suggests that this is a simplistic view of adventurous motivation. The research shows that rather than demanding actual risks, participants engaging in commercial adventurous activities primarily seek fear and thrills. Thus, the responsibility of the commercial operator to minimize the opportunity for loss to as low a level as possible is not only an ethical one, but also ensures long-term business sustainability. Adventure recreation has its origin in traditional outdoor recreation. Activities and specific skills in outdoor settings to some extent encompass the deliberate seeking of risk and uncertainty of outcome, as is associated with adventure recreation (Weber, 2001). This means that risk takes on a central role with regard to experience satisfaction; consequently, a desire to participate may decrease if risk is absent.

Serious leisure and adventure tourism, and more particularly the dog-sled trip 'Exploring the extreme Iditarod trail in Alaska' may be categorized as sensation seeking (Zuckerman *et al.*, 1964; Zuckerman, 1979). Sensation seeking includes different dimensions, such as thrill and adventure seeking, experience seeking, boredom susceptibility and disinhibition, and tends to be more highly pursued by males (Zuckerman *et al.*, 1978; Farley, 1986; Rowland *et al.*, 1986). Sensation seeking seems to peak in late adolescence or the early 20s and decreases thereafter (Zuckerman *et al.*, 1978; Ball *et al.*, 1984), and may vary across cultures (Zuckerman *et al.*, 1978). Sensation seekers prefer high-risk activities, but they are not described as reckless (Trimpop *et al.*, 1998). Trimpop *et al.* (1998) reveal that sensation seekers are likely to plan before participating in a risky activity, thus increasing their control over the situation. As such, it can be argued that the risk is calculated (Apter, 1982) and sensation seekers are therefore able to enjoy the emotional highs associated with danger without putting themselves in truly harmful situations.

This type of tourism may also reflect a search to define, reconfirm and position 'the self' as well as to build a feeling of community (Arnould and Price, 1993). As the sensation seeking here includes nature, local communities

or connecting to human, animals and nature, extension and renewal of self-link to extraordinary experience are expected (Arnould and Price, 1993).

Method

The present research extracts narratives from the personal experiences of the two authors of this chapter. In addition to the diary written during the journey, the work also includes an article published by one of the authors in *Mushing Magazine* (Ruud, 2004) and an interview with the authors in which they share their 'travelers' tale, not scientific facts about the trail' (Maanen, 1998: 45).

This approach is also related to autoethnography, 'a style of autobiographical writing and qualitative research that explores an individual's unique experiences in relationship to social and cultural institutions' (Custer, 2014). The dog-sled race described is a uniquely real kind of tourism and may also be defined as a sensation-seeking adventure.

Because of limited theoretical insight into why and how this type of tourism is experienced, an explorative design was chosen. Real-life experiences and observations were considered appropriate for gaining rich, in-depth data.

Stories or narratives help to recreate information and produce meaning from a journey (Bammel and Bammel, 1992). In this chapter, the individual stories by the authors reflect perceptions and interpretations from their lived experiences. As the medicine trail developed into a dog-sled race through storytelling, similarly this narrative may help produce information and ideas about how to develop tourist products along the Iditarod trail.

Qualitative methodologies are concerned with gaining knowledge of the lived experience through the voices of those whose experiences are being explored (Markwell and Basche, 1998). The authors are narrating from their own lived experiences and the diary makes up a summary of the journey.

The narratives show different forms of motivation and sensation seeking. The analysis and findings are divided into the challenges of

doing the Iditarod trail, how to prepare to accomplish it, and the physical and mental experiences, along with exploring the culture of indigenous Alaskans.

The authors had considerable experience in cross-country (XC-) skiing, dog sledding and outdoor life before the trip. Carsten Blom Ruud has been a XC-skier and musher in Norway for many years. He has taken part in many races in Norway, in both pulk- and Alaska-style mushing. In the winter of 1997 he skied with a six-dog team from the south to the north of Norway, a tour covering 1500 miles. Hans Anton Stubberud has been an active XC-skier from a young age and still takes part in long-distance XC-races in Norway. He and Ruud skied with an eight-dog team following the trail of Iditarod as well as the Finnmarksløpet in Norway, a dog-sled race over 650 miles. Especially, Iditarod had educational and cultural awareness purposes.

Analysis and findings are presented in the next section and are followed by reflections of business potentials based on the narratives and exemplification on how the Iditarod trail may be attractive as a visitor destination.

The qualitative researchers analysed transcripts of interviews and notes from their participant observation sessions. Such an approach to the analysis was undertaken to understand what the participants thought, felt or did in some situation or at some point in time. In this case, qualitative data analysis seeks to describe data in ways that capture the setting or people who produced the texts on their own terms rather than in terms of predefined measures and hypotheses. For this purpose, qualitative data analysis inductively identifies important categories in the data, as well as patterns and relationships, through a process of discovery.

Analysis and Findings

The challenges of doing the Iditarod trail

The Iditarod is, for most long-distance mushers, the most prestigious and challenging race a musher can attempt. Therefore, for those already fascinated and addicted to long winter trips with a dog team it was a natural decision to choose the Iditarod trail as a new challenge.

The authors were never interested in participating in the actual race itself. We were curious about following the trail to Nome, its history and the peculiarity of the destinations, in the aftermath of the event.

People who have done long and exhausting trips together have experienced lots of agony, irritations from other members, stress and a real sense of unity. Sometimes, the friendship you have is tested to the limit. Decisions, timing and knowledge about the area are important issues in order to get along and finish the journey. In getting ready for a long excursion like this, it is of utmost importance to travel with a trustworthy person upon whom you can depend. One of the narrators said: 'A trip like this is like a short, wild marriage'.

On longer trips you can always have unexpected and severe challenges, both physically and mentally. You are living close together in a co-dependent relationship. One of the narrators (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001) described his fellow explorer like this:

We were colleagues and my companion had an incredible way of thinking rationally in extreme situations, something that came to be a great advantage during our trip. We have travelled a lot together and we had many trips in the mountains under our belts. We knew each other very well. It turns out the choice of travel partner was the best we could ever imagine.

Being out in the peripheries, where you have never been before (Fig. 9.2), influences both motivation and experience. Our early experiences from long and hard dog-sled trips helped reduce the fear of failure. Experiencing the wilderness and scenery was completely different and could not be compared with anything we had ever experienced before. This fact also counted as a motivation and drive factor. One memory in particular was 150 desolate miles on the Yukon River in strong winds and extreme cold. The experience of completing such a hard stretch resulted in a powerful sense of achievement. Subsequently, in retrospect, it also gave rise to a sense of confidence and assurance that one could cope in the harshness and wildness of nature in extreme conditions. We consider that this form of confidence is transferrable into other aspects of life.

For a trip like this, challenges are welcomed; however, the following statement points



Fig. 9.2. View from the track.

to the importance of being in physical and mental shape: 'We were also very anxious, yet excited about traveling through the enormous landscape of Alaska' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001).

Furthermore, the narrators claim the value of meeting the local people was vital: 'We knew very little about the culture in the villages we were going to visit and pass by. It turned out coming into the villages would be one of our highlights of the journey' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001).

How to Prepare to Accomplish the Iditarod

The preparations involved a lot of physical training in addition to studies about Alaska and the Iditarod trail. The year before the trip, the famous Iditarod musher Rick Swenson was a guest in the home of one of the authors in Norway, while he participated at a sled dog symposium. Inspiration and learning were key

elements before heading off for the journey: 'It was a privilege, a pleasure and an inspiration to host him. Carsten learned a lot about the trail and race. Swenson's information was important, and many times during the trip they quietly thanked him' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001).

The sled chosen for the trip was built in Norway. It was a 3-metre toboggan sled with a brake that could be used when skiing or riding the runners. The following text shows some of our preparation and our dedication to the journey (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001):

We tried out the sled in Norway before we used it on the trip in Alaska. We leased eight dogs, all Alaskan huskies, from different mushers through Mari Høe in Alaska. They were all good working dogs. An eight dog team gives enough power, easy to handle, and requires much less food than a larger team. We went for a small trip with the dogs before we started traveling. We wanted both to test the team as well as all of the equipment. Our goal was to finish the trip with all the dogs. In preparation, we also had mailed food for ourselves, and for our dog team to each post office along the trail.

Physical and Mental Experiences from the Trip

The Iditarod trip lasted for 5 weeks. Each day we had to melt 15 litres of water for the dogs and ourselves. Our daily routines consisted of booting the dogs, waxing skis, drying clothes and cooking, and there was always something to fix. We used blankets on the dogs each night, and when possible we gave them straw to lie on. We regularly looked after their paws, and had no problems with them during the trip.

We had a satellite phone with us, and every day we sent messages home, where they were posted on a web page where people could follow our trip. The use of satellite phone and website played an important role in having a continuous dialogue with an engaged audience of the project. The website was first and foremost set up to document the planning phase. However, due to the implemented 'guestbook', where audiences around the world were given the opportunity to send greetings to the expedition, a kind of two-way dialogue emerged. It is worth mentioning that the kind of technology

that supported our communication is known today as Web 2.0 and is essential in all kinds of social software (such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.), and is familiar to most people.

In 2001, however, websites were mostly designed as one-way-communication channels. That was also the plan for this project. Every night, we used the satellite phone and called in an oral report to an answering machine. In Norway, support staff transcribed this report and published it on the web page. These reports were read by audiences in Norway, Alaska and other places in the world. Some of these audiences used the guestbook to ask follow-up questions. When we arrived in villages where we could access the internet and read the guestbook, we put in a follow-up answer in our next daily report. In that way, the expedition established a two-way dialogue with our audience, although this was not our intention in the first place. This experience highlights the integral part of technology in making experiences in periphery as something like 'core', as described by Hall *et al.* (2013).

With our eight dogs pulling a 91 kg sled, we left Knik, outside Anchorage, on the afternoon of 24 February 2001. We were in a different country, another culture and we knew little about what we could expect physically and mentally. We had no idea of what was going to be ahead of us for the next 35 days. We expected that our dogs would be somewhat of a challenge from time to time. We had leased eight dogs from Alaskan mushers, all in good shape, but none had experienced a long trip like this before. Were the dogs in good enough shape? Would we have problems with injuries or loss of appetite?

We agreed that starting our trip with shorter distances over the first days was good until the dogs had accustomed themselves and were ready for our next 30-day excursion. Mushers starting the Iditarod begin with 16 dogs. If any dog is injured or becomes ill, they are left at checkpoints on the way. Most mushers end up finishing this race with fewer than ten dogs running in their team. The following quotation (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001) shows how deeply immersed we were in the journey and also how seriously we took the intention to finish the whole trip: 'As our trip went underway, the trail was "our world". All of our thoughts were about

making our day as comfortable as possible and moving forward. This was important for our bodies and minds if we were going to survive more than 30 days in the Alaskan wilderness.'

On 26 February, 2 days after the start of the trip, we wrote in our journal: 'Everything is working perfectly including the dogs, and the equipment, like our tent' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001).

This meant everything was going to plan and we had chosen the right equipment, the right dogs and the right travel partners. We had been warned about meeting some animals. Because of a very warm winter, we could expect to meet bears along the way. Many wolves are often seen on the trail, especially in areas with plenty of snow. From our tent, during the night, we could hear them howling. The feelings we experienced may reflect flow (Csikszentmihályi, 2008), particularly with regard to mastery and skills but not exclusively based on what we saw and experienced.

The following texts are extracts mostly from our journal and provide an illustration on the link to flow. The date is 11 March. We had travelled about 500 km up the Iditarod trail. In our journal, we wrote we had problems with the lead dogs. None of the other dogs in the team would run upfront. It is always a bad feeling when you don't know your dog team well. When you have leader problems, it can often turn into an insecure team and drivers. Our journal also states: 'one of the dogs, Don, got his front paw injured, broke a nail and got crippled today . . . We have to put Don on antibiotics, give him massages and ointments to prevent more future injuries' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001). We had plenty of problems with our dog team on our way north-west to Nome. If you are excited about a problem-free life, a long journey with a dog team in new surroundings may not be the best thing in which to participate.

One thing that makes a trip go well is when every person involved has designated 'jobs'. On 13 March, our journal says: 'Hans Anton does an excellent job keeping all the equipment repaired, and is the perfect "wife" on this trip. Everyday something had to be fixed. Carsten's head is in the dog team. He is working on structure, discipline and not to forget trust between driver and dogs' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001).

On 16 March we reached the Yukon River, and Carsten had a bad cold with fever. We had medicines with us, both for dogs and for people. After some doctoring he started to feel a lot better again. It is very cold on the Yukon. At -34°C , with a bad cold and sore heels, the 200 km trip along the river was quite hard, and mentally exhausting. The sled dog Don was limping, and we were discussing carrying him in the sled for a while. Hans Anton's ski boot broke, and it seemed impossible to fix, so after that he had to run or use the runners behind the sled for the rest of the trip to Nome. 'Everything is about normal for two men and eight dogs heading to Nome' (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001).

If we thought the weather had been tough then, we did not know what lay ahead of us. In our journal for 25 March, when we were about to cross over the ocean ice to Koyuk, we wrote (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001):

We started from Shaktoolik at 11am with huge headwinds. The lead dogs were not about to leave in these horrible winds, so Carsten had to be the leader on the skis. The wind got even worse, and Carsten had to take his skis off and start walking. At 4:45pm we decided we had to turn around. We were in the middle of a storm, with the wind against us with a bad visibility. We had been on the trail about 5 hours when we decided to turn around. This is one of the days we will always remember. We just ended up with small frostbite on fingertips and on our faces. It is almost impossible to not get frostbite on a trip like this, even if we covered our faces with duct tape.

After resting a day in Shaktoolik, we decided to try heading over the sea ice again to Koyuk. A full storm was still blowing, and there was no place to find safety from the wind for the dogs to rest in Shaktoolik (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001):

With a couple of snow machines helping us out at about 11am, we first had to pray with the preacher, Brian. He prayed for the both of us, and two other Eskimos that were about to help us on our way across the sea ice. Someone praying for us made a great impression on both of us forever. The people living there obviously have a lot of respect for the nature, weather and environment.

The day after we arrived in Nome, we wrote in our journal (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001):

We made it! One thousand miles on cross country skis with 8 dogs just under 35 days! We finished with the same 8 dogs we started with, something of which to be very proud. We experienced all kinds of different weather conditions, long stretches without snow, rain, storms, very cold weather and also a lot of sun. The Iditarod terrain is highly valued with everything from mountains to rivers, sea ice to snowless regions. We were very proud of the dogs. It seemed like they were very happy to be in Nome and had learned a lot on their long trip.

It is always a strange feeling when carefully planned trips like this come to an end. We have experienced it before. You would think feelings of happiness and pride would be the first on your mind, but a bad feeling that something very important has come to its end shadows it. Reflections, learning and memorizing are central aspects and an outcome of the journey.

Exploring the Culture of Indigenous Alaskans

Our first experience was the small village of Nikolai, which is also a main checkpoint during the Iditarod race every year. The houses, which were built into the ground, appeared to Carsten as charming and practical, while the school represented the 'Western world' kind of building, and looked like a strange and foreign object in the small village setting.

One of the things we heard while on our long ski trip was always to be sure that our equipment was safe and locked up, because we should not trust the indigenous population. We personally never encountered anything like that. We had the impression of feeling welcome in every village on the way. Once in a while, we felt a little awkward when having conversations with the villagers, but that came from cultural differences and misunderstandings.

Shageluk was the first village where we met with the teachers and students at their school. We could not believe the warm welcome we had from this population. They asked us to stay at the school, and we had access to their kitchen, bathrooms and internet. The next day we took part in their classroom lessons, where we talked about our long trip from Anchorage

to Nome on skis and with a dog team, and we also told the students about life in Norway.

We hardly used our tent after our experience in Shageluk. News travels fast between the villages, and we felt we were treated like kings. We were invited to stay in more schools, and even in private homes, all the way to Nome.

The conversations we had with students along the way in the different schools were so interesting. A common question that was often asked was what kind of animals we have in Norway, and if we hunted them. They would then open up and tell us about their customs and traditions connected to hunting and fishing in their area of Alaska.

In Norway, hunting and fishing are mostly hobbies and something you do not have to do to keep a household going. In comparison, in Alaska, as we learned from the students, a subsistence way of living is very common and something almost every family does.

Our journey from Anchorage to Nome turned into so much more than just another tough wilderness trip. Meeting up with indigenous Alaskans and the teachers on the way gave us much experience, and insight into their native culture and traditions. We also experienced for ourselves the problems every village has to deal with daily.

Our experiences from our long ski trip – physically, mentally and culturally – open up a wide discussion regarding tourism in Arctic regions, particularly based on ideas from the Iditarod race and related tourism development and products. This type of tourism, however, puts considerable responsibility on tour companies, destinations and guests.

Business Potentials Based on the Narratives

Tourists who have had the experience of mushing a dog team will often remember it as one of their greatest experiences in life. Being part of a team, and especially a dog team, will sometimes change your life and lifestyle. The Iditarod trail is not only a trail for mushers to get to Nome, it also opens possibilities for local people and tourists to travel between villages in an easier way when there is a trail used for

Iditarod. In winter, the only means of transportation is by snowmobile or dog teams.

We were tourists travelling on our own in the tracks of a long-distance dog-sled race. Tourists seeking such extreme experiences will encounter the tundra and a beautiful country. However, the most exotic part of the journey was meeting local people. This has extreme value for attracting other tourists. It is, however, vital to involve the villages and make sure that visitors get insights into and understanding of indigenous Alaskan culture and history. People also need to learn about the current situation of indigenous Alaskans.

From a visitor's point of view, there are several ways to use the Iditarod trail and the different villages as main target destinations. Trips can be planned so they are connected to physical, mental and cultural expectations. At the time of writing this chapter, the tourism industry uses snowmobile trips, dog team adventures and ski trips along the Iditarod trail for tourists, and the latter benefit from the trail and the landscape. Some trips are part of the Iditarod Race and some are independently operated. Other companies advertise fishing and hunting trips in remote areas. Nevertheless, the Iditarod trail has some challenges as a tourist attraction.

Remoteness, a lack of services and accessibility prevent the development of a larger tourism industry along the Iditarod route. The villages along the Iditarod route in Alaska are small, isolated and vulnerable communities. Most of the people living there are indigenous Indians and Eskimos by origin, often struggling to preserve their culture, language and identity. Primarily, the region is more suited to smaller groups of tourists interested in adventure tourism, who are able to rely on their own ability to ensure freight, accommodation and food. Such tourists have previously been referred to as sensation seekers.

Currently, dog team tours usually last from about 1 hour to a full day. To get a true understanding of the culture, history and travelling by dog team, a longer trip of about 1 week is necessary, because it develops an understanding and trust with the dogs you would not otherwise achieve. This approach could extend the potential for related tourism providers and industry.

During a longer trip, relationships between a person and a dog will develop to a different

level than if you were just out for a 1-hour dog sled ride. A 7-day trip can open up many doors in the sense of discovering nature, relationships between human and dog, and seeing the world differently. A longer trip can also connect to other happenings along the way.

Example of how the Iditarod Trail may be Attractive as a Visitor Destination

At present there is no tourism relating to indigenous culture to speak of in this part of Alaska. In Anchorage, Fairbanks and other towns around Alaska, there are museums focusing on indigenous culture. In the villages, you might see some tourist industry, mainly hunting and fishing. Some people sell arts and crafts. There is no culture around tourism. Villages are small towns that are trying to keep their traditions and culture going. 'What still remains of the traditional culture and what it really means to revitalize and modernize it?' (Darnell and Hoem, 1996: 23). It is between traditional culture and the modern Western world that we need to find a spot for tourism.

It is important for tourist-based companies to learn a good deal about indigenous Alaskan history and culture. Companies should also study their contemporary lives and the problems with which they have to deal. A good idea is to meet the elders in the different villages: they know a lot about their villages; some speak their native tongue; they know how to fish and hunt, to live a subsistence life, and all the traditions and culture around that. It is the elders that the younger generation need to respect and revere. Another way to learn about village traditions is to spend time in a village and be part of what happens there.

Most of the villages do not have hotels. Often, when people come to visit, the schools are used as places for them to stay. At the schools, you mostly have access to the kitchen, bathroom facilities, laundry and internet communication. There are great possibilities to talk to the teachers about daily life in the villages. Our experience visiting with the students was a very valuable part of what we learned. The students taught us mostly about how fishing and hunting were done in their villages.

Knowledge about indigenous Alaskan history, innovative ideas related to tourist challenges and a well-presented concept are important in developing a tourism industry in Alaska associated with the touristic possibilities along the 1609 km of the Iditarod trail.

Conclusion

The authors situate themselves in the categories of both special interest and sensation seeking. The Iditarod race is prestigious and challenging and therefore it was of special interest for the authors to experience the trail themselves, even though they did not partake in the race but travelled after it had finished. To ensure a physically and mentally positive experience, we put a lot of effort into planning and preparations. In our journal (Ruud and Stubberud, 2001) we described how to survive the 1-month journey in the wintertime wilderness, with only one travel companion. The days passed by, and we ensured that the dogs were well looked after and that both dogs and men were safe. Our narratives reflected on surviving in the wilderness when the weather was tough. We described how one of the narrators needed to go in front of the dogs in order to move forward. We built a strong *communitas* with our human partner and the dogs (Arnould and Price, 1993). We felt that we were a surviving and winning team.

Our journey from Anchorage to Nome turned into so much more than just another tough wilderness trip. Meeting up with the indigenous Alaskans and the teachers on the way gave us many experiences and insights into their culture and traditions. We also experienced in person the problems that every village had to deal with every day. A trip such as ours provides an opportunity to learn from and to build friendship with the local people; it can also help define, reconfirm and position 'the self' not only to oneself but also to others within a particular context (Arnould and Price, 1993).

The tourism industry has to work together with the different villages and their people in Alaska if it wants to integrate culture and traditions into tourism. We suggest that the tourism industry segment the market in terms of skills,

challenges and interests. As such, those heading for extreme experiences would most likely prefer different experiences from the day tourists who are searching for fun and excitement. It is vital that the tourism industry includes the local

people in this thinking and in developing a responsible and sustainable tourism industry. The question is not only what the village can offer the visitors, but also: what can the visitors offer the villages?

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10 The Arctic Tourism Experience from an Evolving Chinese Perspective

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Introduction

The growth in worldwide international tourist arrivals from 278 million in 1980 to 1133 million in 2014 (UNWTO, 2015) has been accompanied by the emergence of new visitor segments and products such as ecotourism, adventure tourism and food tourism. Moreover, *all* places can now be regarded as tourist destinations, from the deep-sea bed to the summit of the Himalayas, and from the equatorial rainforests to the high-latitude ice sheets. No more than a generation ago, the high latitudes received hardly any attention from international tourists, Snyder and Stonehouse (2007: 3) regarding them as 'virtually unknown to the general public and poorly understood until the late 19th century'. Visitor numbers to the Arctic have since increased to about 1.5 million per year (UNEP, 2007), but most people even today still regard this region as an aspirational destination, exotic and mysterious, and difficult to reach from other parts of the world. Such a view, for example, pertains to China, which has attracted considerable academic and industry attention as one of the world's main tourist-generating countries. The Chinese tourist tsunami has already hit nearby destinations such as Hong Kong and Macau with tens of millions of visitors, but as yet the Arctic is only experiencing the smallest of ripples, a situation that will doubtless change in the next two decades.

In anticipation of increased visitation, and in the spirit of ensuring that this visitation is both satisfying for the tourists and sustainable for the implicated destinations, this chapter provides some basic insight into the growing phenomenon of Chinese visitation to the Arctic. Following brief coverage of the overall context of Chinese tourism development, subsequent sections examine the magnitude of Arctic visitation, visitor profiles, motivations, preferences and experiences. Relevant planning and management implications are then considered. To identify significant trends, patterns and implications, the authors were informed by diverse secondary sources such as academic publications, documents from government and other organizations, conventional media coverage and social media analysis, as well as personal observation in China and the Arctic.

China, the Emerging Tourism Superpower

Accelerating Chinese proclivities to travel are strongly related to sustained economic growth, with GDP growth averaging over 10% per year in the 1990s and 2000s (Barnett, 2011). By the end of 2010, China replaced Japan as the world's second largest economy with a GDP value exceeding US\$5.8 trillion (BBC Business News, 2011). As recently as the 1970s, China was situated in the 'pre-industrial' phase of

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Burton’s (1995) tourist participation sequence, which is characterized by minimal participation in any kind of leisure-based tourism activity. Political and social unrest associated with the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath amplified this country-specific ‘immobility’ effect. However, just four decades later, China is comfortably situated within the ‘industrialized’ phase, its increasingly urbanized and middle class population distinguished by mass participation in domestic tourism and rapidly growing participation in short-haul international tourism (Arlt, 2016). By way of illustration, there occurred in 2013 more than 3.2 billion domestic tourist trips, while 75% of the 98 million outbound tourists generated in that year were received by just the two bordering entities of Hong Kong and Macau (CNTA, 2015).

A facilitating factor has been the willingness of successive Chinese governments to condone progressively more liberal international travel policies for mainland Chinese citizens. In what Du and Dai (2005) describe as the ‘start-up’ stage of Chinese outbound tourism between 1983 and 1996, most international travel was confined to visits with relatives. Only in 1987 were visits to North Korea approved, while day trips to Russia were allowed in 1989. In 1990, the list of approved reasons for international travel was expanded to include leisure travel, which was subsequently facilitated in 1995 by the formalization of the ‘Approved Destination Status’ (ADS) policy. This permits Chinese citizens to travel for leisure purposes on group

tours to countries with which an ADS agreement has been negotiated (Arita *et al.*, 2012). The second or ‘growth’ stage of Chinese outbound tourism was thereby enabled by 1997, and henceforth characterized by expansion in the number of countries having ADS to 146 by 2014. The parallel growth of outbound tourism to 117 million (Fig. 10.1) has allowed China to overtake Germany and the USA as the largest outbound tourist market. International expenditures have increased in tandem with this expansion, growing from US\$36.2 billion in 2008 to US\$164.9 billion in 2012.

Chinese Tourists in the Arctic

Magnitude

It is significant in the context of this study that all the countries implicated as at least partially ‘Arctic’ currently possess ADS, indicating in a bureaucratic and policy context that their high-latitude components are open to Chinese leisure tourists. Measuring the flow of these tourists, however, is complicated because only one non-subnational entity, Greenland, is considered in its entirety to be ‘Arctic’. For all other partially Arctic entities, one can only hope that comprehensive tourism data are compiled by the constituent Arctic provinces, states or territories such as Nunavut (Canada), Alaska (USA) and Finnmark (Norway). Otherwise, indicative data

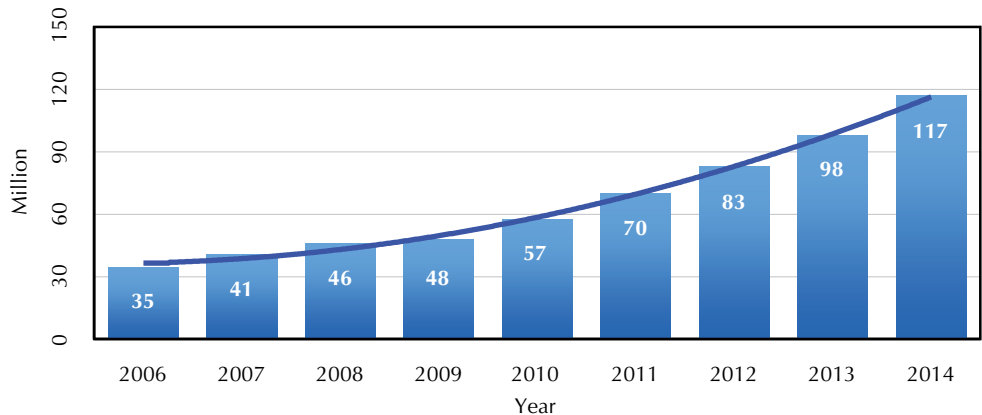


Fig. 10.1. Chinese outbound tourism 2006–2014 (millions) (CNTA, 2015).

must suffice. What is clear is that polar travel is no longer the purview of a few privileged scientists or explorers, and that Chinese tourists are making a small but growing contribution to the flow. It is worth examining their status in Antarctica, an aspirational destination physiologically similar to high Arctic destinations and similarly indicative of high-end, high-status markets and products. In 2014, China ranked third after the USA and Australia as an Antarctic inbound market, with its 3328 tourists accounting for 9% of the total (IAATO, 2014).

No such precision pertains to the Arctic. Wang and Nan (2012) allege that around 500–800 Chinese tourists visited the Arctic and Antarctic per year before 2011, most of them later joining package tours in Europe or elsewhere. In 2015, a survey of 291 ‘super luxury’ Chinese travellers, defined as those individuals who spent at least US\$30,000 on travel during the previous 12 months, revealed the most popular destinations to be Europe (47%), America (40%) and polar regions (32%). For the latter, the main purposes of travel were leisure (60%) and exploration (28%) (Hurun Report, 2015). More germane to the Arctic specifically are claims of 2000 Chinese tourists hosted in Finland by the company Arctic China, which started promoting its tours at the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 (Finland Times, 2015). In the Inari–Saariselkä area of Finnish Lapland, an iconic Arctic destination, Chinese tourist numbers increased by 70% in 2015 over 2014 (Tore, 2016). Anders Stenbakken, the director of Visit Greenland, declared that around 1000 Chinese tourists visited Greenland in 2013, staying especially in the west-coast town of Ilulissat, which provides convenient access to an iconic ice fjord (Ryggi, 2014). To attract more Chinese tourists, Visit Greenland hosted the promotional workshop ‘Chinese Arctic Travel Summit’ in 2015 (Por, 2015).

Such promotional workshops reveal the incipient state of the Chinese market for Arctic tourism, but also efforts to enhance relevant institutions, policy and networks so that much higher levels of demand can eventually be accommodated. Similar initiatives abound in the region, and include a 2015 visit by 60 Chinese tourists, tour operators and media to the Canadian Arctic town of Inuvik to inform inaugural marketing campaigns in Chinese markets

(Rieder, 2015). Fu (2012) remarks that formal Chinese polar tourism commenced around 2008 with one tour agent selling ship tickets for a European Arctic tour company. Ten-day Arctic cruise tours were listed at RMB150–200,000 (US\$21,700–28,800 at early 2016 rates). In 2012, a Wenzhou tour agent was selling for RMB196,000 (US\$28,300) a 14-day icebreaker cruise, which took participants to the North Pole. Chinese food was provided to attract more Chinese tourists (Chen, 2012). In 2015, ‘Taobao’, the most popular e-commerce website in China, cooperated with ‘Tripolers.com’, the first online brand in China providing specialized Arctic/Antarctic service, to launch Arctic cruise ticket auctions. The bidding started from RMB1 and sold for RMB100,000 (US\$15,640) (Li, 2015).

Visitor profiles

The paucity that characterizes Chinese visitation data to Arctic destinations extends to the socio-economic characteristics of those visitors, necessitating once again indicative anecdotes that collectively begin to sketch a portrait of this evolving market. One relevant source is Tongcheng network technology (Sina Weibo Travel, 2016), which in 2016 compiled a report on Chinese consumers who had booked Arctic tours on their official website. A strong majority (62.4%) was under 40 years of age, but 25.3% were 50 or older. Gender was well balanced (51.7% female), as characterized also the 40-strong group of people from the Ningbo area who had been to or registered for Arctic tourism. Mr Wang, the tour agent manager in charge of overseas travel, claimed that ‘in terms of gender structure, surprisingly in polar tourism, that is about 50-50, but, sometimes female tourists were slightly more than male tourists’ (Zhu, 2014). With respect to identifying travel arrangements, the first two authors of this chapter analysed Arctic-related articles published by Ctrip, an online travel agency which accounted for 41.4% of the online Chinese travel market prior to its merger with Qunar (China Economic Net, 2015). They found that articles about Arctic destinations were dominated by those tagged as independent tours (Table 10.1). This, however, might not reflect any particular

Table 10.1. Ctrip Arctic articles classified by focus destination and type of tour described. Data from the present research.

Region	Independent	Package tour	Total tour number ^a
Alaska	34	2	139
Iceland	44	13	200
Greenland	6	0	6
Nunavut (Canada)	0	0	0
Northern Quebec (Canada)	7	0	7
Labrador (Canada)	0	0	0
Northern Manitoba (Canada)	4	1	5
Northwest Territories (Canada)	10	1	11
Yukon Territory (Canada)	7	1	8
Murmansk (Russia)	5	0	5
Norilsk (Russia)	0	0	0
Salekhard (Russia)	0	0	0
Naryan-Mar (Russia)	0	0	0
Trondheim (Norway)	6	0	6
Tromsø (Norway)	23	1	24
Narvik (Norway)	1	0	1
Hammerfest (Norway)	0	0	0
Kiruna (Sweden)	6	0	6
Abisko (Sweden)	9	0	9
Lapland (Finland)	6	1	7
Inari (Finland)	1	0	1
Total	169	20	435

^aIncludes tours not clearly denominated as either independent or packaged

allocentric tendencies in this market segment, since independent travellers accounted for nearly 70% of all outbound Chinese tourists in 2013, inspired by the increasingly popular philosophy of ‘Shuō Zǒu Jiù Zǒu’ (once you have an intention to go for a trip, then just do it, do not hesitate) (Chun, 2013).

Motivation

Popular social media sites such as Ctrip, Qunar, Mafengwo and QYER have allowed Chinese tourists to share their travel experiences within online communities. These are ideal sites for studying subjective phenomena such as motivation and emotional reaction because they encourage individuality, anonymity and freedom of expression, and all on a potentially massive scale (Shakeela and Weaver, 2012). A limitation, however, is that information about commentators (e.g. age, gender) is either absent or deliberately misrepresented through fabricated online identities. The authors located

and investigated Arctic-related postings that had attracted at least 5000 hits, finding in this process some with more than 100,000 hits. Frequently encountered salient motivations for visiting the Arctic were escape, visiting a Dream Land, experiencing pure nature, challenging oneself and adventure. Illustrative quotations provided below from social media are either translations from Chinese, or original English language quotes edited for grammatical clarity.

Escapism, which encompasses the idea of moving away from routine and its pressures in pursuit of more authentic and novel experiences, was identified as the main driving force, and one that has been discussed in tourism and leisure discourses for decades (Cohen, 2010). Clover (2015) in her travel blog pointed out:

to be honest, for many times I had this kind of urge to push out the crowd, storm out of the house to the railway station or airport, and escape from the city you are familiar with, throw yourself at a place.

‘Rat race’ conditions in densely populated and highly polluted Chinese cities constitute a

powerful push factor when combined with increased discretionary time and income. Ganxiangganwei (2012) expresses a similar desperation and claims further that 'in the city life, we had been occupied by busy work for a long while, and forget what our heart desires . . . we shouldn't confine ourselves to the office'. Getting away from workplace pressures was for some commentators only one aspect of 'escape', which additionally entailed desired outcomes such as personal revitalization. For SisizuiMeng-paidaxing (2013):

the meaning of travel perhaps is more important as 're-creation', having a journey which allows me to be re-created so that depression can be put aside, giving me a heart to fight the tough world.

If the essence of escape is to move as far as possible from the routine of one's place of residence, then peripheral regions, by definition, provide the best places to escape to, offering as they do the greatest contrast to the restrictive usual. Arctic destinations then are ideal places for people who want to escape daily life, relax, be rejuvenated and return (as they inevitably must) full of energy and with more positive feelings about their normal life. Explaining why she visited Iceland, BKS2000 (2015) in her blog said:

Iceland, a mystery land, the holy land in our heart. We want to see the bright day in the evening, we want to see the glaciers at the horizon, we want to see the barren wildness, we want to see the place which is most unlike the Earth.

Indeed, seeking the different and novel are central components of tourists' motivation, with Stilling (2015) declaring that 'if we cannot go outside of the Earth, then go to Iceland instead, for the landscape and scenery seemed to not belong to the planet'.

The idea of visiting a Dream Land is a motivation related to but distinct from escape. As highlighted by Tuzizhang (2013):

Lapland has always been my dreamland. I spent almost a year of saving to accomplish this dream. But, I think that was worth it. In one's life, you must and should visit such a pure land.

As Minshanxue5 (2014) further points out, 'I had dreamed that I visited the beautiful Arctic

in my childhood, and this has been my dream for many years'. Where escape situates as a push factor (as in the need to flee a dysfunctional working environment), a Dream Land is a pull factor, or the ideal place to escape to. Whether engagement with this ideal place occurs as a dream physically or metaphorically, the Arctic as Dream Land may be imagined and idealized well before the motivations to escape come into effect. As in a dream, the ideal place is also rather surrealistic, expressed in such dream-like phenomena as the northern lights, ice fjords and other physical features of extreme peripheries. A final consideration about this motivation is possible linkages with the Chinese Dream, a concept proposed by President Xi in 2012 to guide deliberations about the future development of the country (Heberer, 2014). Communal and individualistic impulses are both manifest in Dream discourses, and Weaver (2015) suggests that international travel may be an important dimension for many Chinese people; hence, there is scope for examining how visits to Arctic destinations can be better mobilized as manifestations or facilitators of the Chinese Dream.

Engagement with pristine nature was explicit in many of the commentaries. Several parameters are captured by Ershiqigege's (2015) description of her Arctic wonderland:

you are legend, kind of peerless scenery . . .
you are the graceful posture in the night sky,
the endless now in the day time, the blue world
in the ice hotel, the wonderful experience on
sleigh.

Leishenfengling (2015) similarly inventories:

spectacular volcanoes and glaciers, serene
lakes, rushing waterfalls, frozen fiords, bare
rock, rough sea, midnight sun, polar night,
brilliant Aurora . . . and all these were what we
longed for.

More specifically, Jiangzhonghai 1971 (2013) was attracted to the Arctic because 'in the end of 2012, according to NASA the northern lights will shine at the brightest levels seen for 50 years', while Tianmaxingkongkanshijie (2014) explained that 'what's the feeling to see the midnight sun in the Arctic Circle? This was my cherished pursuit for many years.' Such 'celestial ecotourism' (Weaver, 2011) pervades the blogs and reflects the exceptional sky-gazing

opportunities afforded by high latitudes and unpolluted skies in extreme peripheries such as the Arctic and Antarctic. As Laoli Travell (2015) stated on his travel blog, 'why visiting Alaska this time? Two reasons, one was Aurora- the northern light, and second was to see the Arctic Ocean.' When these travel blogs are investigated further, we can find that it is common practice to post photographs of polar bears, walrus and other wildlife that reflect more conventional dimensions of ecotourism but also stand as significant motivators.

Challenge is a less prevalent motivation, and one not surprisingly expressed more commonly by younger commentators. In 2012, the young woman Sengxiao zhuaer participated in Swedish Lapland's Fjällräven Classic, a 110-km hike through classic Arctic scenery. She states that 'Sweden's annual classic hiking activity cutting through the Arctic Circle took place in August; there were 2000 people participating in this event . . . to experience the most beautiful hiking trail'. This was described as an excellent way to personally get in touch with the natural Arctic region. In the Canadian Arctic (Rieder, 2015), the leader of a Chinese tourism delegation to Inuvik emphasized the importance of challenge as a visitor motivation, saying:

Inuvik [a small town in the Northwest Territories near the Arctic Ocean] is a challenging place, the road is challenging, the weather is challenging. Tourists will want to challenge themselves, want to experience more dramatic change of cultures. It will be perfect for those people who want excitement.

With rising awareness of leisure and travel, we expect that ever greater numbers of Chinese tourists will seek physically and mentally challenging experiences that deviate from conventional patterns of passive or 'bubble' group sightseeing.

Experience

Motivations both shape and are shaped by the destination images that accrue in a person's mind before they embark on the actual trip. The blogs revealed that social media, other areas of the internet, television, books and travel agency

advertisements were all important in shaping these images and attendant expectations, as well as the trip planning process. To these can be added sites such as the Dalian Natural History Museum in northern China, where a stuffed polar bear set against a typical high Arctic backdrop was observed by the authors during a 2015 visit to attract the attention of very young Chinese visitors and their parents (Fig. 10.2). It is unlikely that they have ever visited the Arctic, but such encounters will play an important role in their formation of destination images and expectations that may culminate some day in an actual visit, or at least a level of interest that leads to further investigation of such a possibility.

About his own images Loujiayun (2015) reflected that 'previously in my impression, here (Alaska) seems to be an icy land covered by endless snow, as well as the Aurora and polar bears'. Indeed, northern lights, polar bears, midnight sun and frozen expanses are for most Chinese complementary icons of the Arctic and central elements in its imagined experience-scape. What then happens when the latter confronts the actual Arctic destination? Anticipating the midnight sun with eagerness, Ganxiangganwei (2012) reflected on the actual experience as one of disappointment:

to be honest, the midnight sun was a very terrible thing, because it messed up your original bio clock . . . we were tempted to adjust that by drawing curtains together and creating a bedtime atmosphere.

Most, however, have their high expectations met, eliciting positive emotional responses. Leishenfengling (2015), in relation to his Iceland journey, stated that:

I don't know what adjective or vocabularies can perfectly serve me to describe my experience in the past 13 days. Seemingly, 'amazing' now cannot fully express our appreciation to the magnificent and unique beauty.

Similarly, BTxin (2014) declared that:

stunning, indescribable beauty, seems like the whole world had stopped . . . It is difficult for me to express this kind of visual shock in words. Saw a double rainbow, the rime, meteor shower, burning clouds, hurricanes . . . no other natural phenomenon is comparable to the northern lights. If I had faith, I would love to



Fig. 10.2. Polar bear specimen in Dalian Natural History Museum.

believe that this is a miracle in front of my eyes, and would be willing to put my soul to this mysterious light.

Extreme peripheries such as the Arctic, accordingly, are places that generate proportionally extreme or peak experiences.

Serendipity also plays a role in shaping Chinese Arctic experiences. Loujiayun declared that he was a freelance photographer in his gap year prior to finding a new job. While travelling in Alaska, he and his backpacker friends had to have the tyre of their SUV changed. When they tried to pay, the elderly woman who owned the business would not take their money. As Loujiayun described it:

she said: 'you don't have to pay, it's friendship.' Besides, she gave us a bag of smoked salmon as a gift when we left . . . before that we all believed that there was no place more beautiful than Alaska, yet, we dissolved at the moment of this sentence. Sometimes, what is more beautiful than the scenery is the human heart.

These unexpected opportunities to engage with local people can provide compelling memories for the traveller. Indeed, it is helpful to differentiate between those reactions elicited at the actual time of the experience and those felt as reminiscences. Long after her Arctic trip, Minshanxue5 (2014) explained that:

so far, I often think of that trip to the North Pole, bit by bit; closing my eyes seems to bring me back to the icy trip, tracking muskox in the snow, seeing the northern light, and the purity of the fiord . . . the Arctic was always in my heart and stimulate me to plan my next journey . . . that will be such a big shame if you never travel in your life.

Iamicecake (2013) had similar contemplations about her trip to the Lofoten islands of Norway:

I think, in this journey, the most important thing was that I found the original mood of travel. I want to tell myself: you must travel, and travel far away not just nearby . . . our minds are too

impetuous, so after returning from a trip our body and mind feel lighter and easier.

Thus, travel involves change, and the journey does not finish once the traveller returns home; the experience of the Arctic periphery is not ephemeral, but lifelong.

Travel preference

Table 10.1 provides indicative evidence for the importance of independent travel and self-organized trips for Chinese travellers to the Arctic. The ability to pick one's own companion(s) or travel alone is important, since group composition plays a significant role in determining trip experiences and shaping subsequent reactions to those experiences. In addition to Ctrip, two of the authors examined popular travel blogs such as Qiongyouer (<http://bbs.qyer.com/>) and Mafengwo (<http://www.mafengwo.cn/>) to further investigate group compositions. To travel alone was found to be unusual, but otherwise groups ranged divergently from a single companion to a group of friends or family, or even strangers. The Qiongyouer website, in particular, allows travellers to post their itinerary or schedule (in whole or partly) online in hopes of attracting others who would like to join the trip. Motivations might be to save money, make new friends or benefit from the company of a more experienced companion. Such arrangements have been increasingly popular in China, especially among the young, and may be especially attractive in relation to peripheral destinations seen as being too risky for individual travel. Travel with family and/or friends, however, is the most prevalent dispensation.

Other useful distinctions can be made by mode of travel, which can be initially divided into land tours and cruises. Major cruise options include flying to the Russian port of Murmansk from where the icebreaker *50 Let Pobedy* (50th Anniversary of Victory) can be taken to the North Pole. This is the only ship offering this opportunity as a commercial product. Alternatively, travellers can fly to Longyearbyen, Bodø, Tromsø or other popular gateway destinations in northern Norway to join a local cruise ship tour. Land-based travel offers more options. In self-drive situations, travellers tend to rent a car

(usually an SUV or minivan) and use local small-scale accommodation; camping vans are not recommended due to the extreme weather conditions. Such trips usually last from 6 to 16 days. Many independent travellers also use public transportation when it is available in relatively developed regions such as northern Norway. Package tour groups also remain popular, especially in northern Europe. These trips normally commence and end in a more southerly gateway such as Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen or Helsinki, and include several days of an 11–16 day total trip above the Arctic Circle (Wang and Nan, 2012).

Conclusion

Burton's (1995) fourth or 'post-industrial' phase of tourism participation entails large-scale involvement of the origin region's population in all dimensions (i.e. domestic, outbound and inbound) of tourism, including long-haul travel. This is the probable destiny of China by 2030 or sooner, and the implications for the Arctic and other extreme peripheries are profound. The current trickle is simply the Phase 3 vanguard of this future wave, and the dominance of small-group independent travellers is to be expected. In many respects this vanguard is not problematic, because its participants are usually pleased to experience such peripheral destinations on the latter's own terms, motivated by expectations of hardship, adventure and challenge – consumption and production of tourist experiences are therefore often quite spontaneous and unselfconscious, although even the most intrepid of explorer-tourists is still fundamentally dependent upon global systems, such as air carriers, that facilitate transit to remote places. Yet, their subsequent sharing of these visits on social media will play an increasingly important role in shaping the Chinese consumer's imagined experience-scape of the Arctic, and in encouraging more visits by those wishing to have similar experiences.

But as the volume of Chinese Arctic visitation expands, changes in that market to the Arctic must also be expected, as predicted in the context of the tourism area life cycle by Butler (1980) and others. Signs of this change are

already evident in the more accessible parts of the Arctic. In late spring of 2015, the third author was visiting the World Heritage Rock Art Centre in Alta, Norway, a town that is accessible by good-quality hard-surface roads. To his surprise, a large bus pulled into the parking lot and disgorged a tour group of 50 or more Chinese tourists into the visitor centre. With cameras, credit cards and selfie-sticks in hand, and a Chinese tour guide using a megaphone to deliver a non-stop commentary in Mandarin, there was nothing to distinguish this group, at least superficially, from similar ones at the Forbidden City in Beijing or the Gold Coast of Australia. Yet this experience was occurring almost 70° above the equator. It seems probable that the intrepid Chinese explorer-tourists will move deeper into the periphery as 'near peripheries' of the Arctic such as Alta become accessible to conventional tourist segments.

Consumption and production of tourism, accordingly, will become increasingly orchestrated and managed in those destinations so that known expectations can be satisfied and desirable reactions to Arctic experiences elicited. Such

orchestration will be likely to need to consider the durability of the mobile 'tourism bubble' effect (Jaakson, 2004) wherein most Chinese tourists will want access to other Chinese tourists, Chinese-language mediation, Chinese food and Chinese media as they wander around the Arctic. While this should be accommodated as a normal and pragmatic response to visitor needs, adaptations should be made to increase the likelihood of realizing the peak experiences that the Arctic has to offer. For example, the bubble should be selectively permeable to allow Chinese tourists periodic and temporary exit opportunities to experience illusions of isolation, adventure and awe, after which they can move back into the comfort and security of the bubble. In effect this represents tactical movements between a mobile micro-core (the bubble) and the vast fixed periphery (the open Arctic land/seascape) that allow for the optimum experience of each during the tourist trip. If such tactics can be effectively operationalized, then Chinese visitation to the Arctic can be a benefit to those tourists and also to the environments and communities of the Arctic periphery.

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11

Tourists' Interpretations of a 'Feelgood in Lapland' Holiday – A Case Study

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Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the different meanings and components that different people respectively hold and associate with well-being tourism. As a consequence of the differing motivations, life situations and other situational factors of tourists, well-being tourism comprises several sub-segments to which the value of a well-being holiday should respectively be marketed. This chapter is informed by a study that aimed to find out what kind of interpretations customers of a hotel chain formed about a 'Feelgood in Lapland' experience. The initiative for the study came from the hotel chain. Based on the findings of the study, the hotel chain was able to develop the components of Feelgood offerings and market the experience to different target segments.

The chapter presents a case study undertaken in Finnish Lapland, which is the home of a private hotel chain with 13 hotels. The company has facilities close to wilderness areas on the fringes of national parks, and also in skiing centres. The motivation for the study was the need to develop the components of one of the product lines of the company, entitled 'Feelgood'. This product relates to well-being tourism offerings. In a Nordic context, the term 'well-being tourism' is often used instead of wellness tourism. Well-being tourism refers to a wider scale of rejuvenating and pampering services than are found in wellness tourism (Konu *et al.*, 2010), and does not necessarily include

elements associated with luxury (Konu *et al.*, 2010).

The core of the tourist product – the service concept – expresses the idea of what kind of value the customer expects to experience, and is based on the customer's needs and motives, which define what kind of experiences the tourist may expect (Komppula, 2005). A well-being holiday is often a combination and compromise of several motivations relating to relaxation, social interaction, self-development and physical exercise (e.g. Ryan, 2010). Memorable activities, the physical environment of the site, good service, social interaction and mental well-being have been mentioned as essential components of a memorable well-being tourism experience (Chen *et al.*, 2008; Chen and Prebensen, 2009). Experiencing natural waters, getting a sense of one's own well-being through nature and culture, self-development in a peaceful environment and a slow pace of life have been purported as core elements of a Nordic well-being experience product (Hjalager *et al.*, 2011).

As well-being tourists often travel with their spouses or friends, the destination choice has to fulfil the needs and expectations of the entire party (Komppula and Konu, 2012; Chen *et al.*, 2016). Komppula and Konu (2012) suggested that well-being tourists do not necessarily expect to experience anything extraordinary, indulgent or memorable during their well-being holiday. These two researchers found that more often tourists just expected to relax, enjoy the

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opportunity to escape from the daily routine and have a physically active break. Similarly, Kim *et al.* (2012) found that not all tourist experiences are, or are even expected to be, memorable experiences.

Lapland as a Context for a Feelgood Holiday

Finnish Lapland is the northernmost province in Finland. The southern part of Finnish Lapland is flat and thickly forested, while in the northern part the round-topped fells command the scenery. The only mountainous part of the country is the 'arm' of Finland, where Norway, Finland and Sweden meet at the three-border point. Most of Lapland is north of the Arctic Circle, and a largely uninhabited wilderness; thus, the environment can be simultaneously bleak and beautiful. Since the 1980s, Lapland has been marketed to international tourists as 'Santa Claus Land', but for domestic tourists, Lapland is a place to escape from daily routines, an ideal destination for recreational activities, as well as for nature and wilderness tourism (Pretes, 2006).

For Finns, Lapland as a geographical area abounds in stereotypical images, which can confer a special significance upon the Feelgood in Lapland product. From literature and songs, the Finns know about Lapland and its association with a certain mystique, magic or enchantment. In Finnish culture, references are made to 'being crazy about Lapland' or being a Lapland aficionado, meaning that many Finns wish to repeatedly return to Lapland. In place attachment literature, Yuksel *et al.* (2010) distinguish between place dependence, meaning the functional attachment based on resources and amenities necessary for desired activities, and place identity, referring to connections between the self and the particular setting. For many youngsters, Lapland is a place for hilarious after-ski experiences (functional attachment). Other Finns visit Lapland because of place identity – they search for peace and solitude. For a number of Finns, a visit to Lapland may lead to a state of psychological well-being (Yuksel *et al.*, 2010). These Finns have an emotional attachment to Lapland.

Methods and Materials

In the case study the focus was customers' own interpretations of a 'dream Feelgood wellbeing holiday in Lapland'. A narrative approach was chosen as the research method (Chase, 2005). Data were gathered by sending emails to the enterprise's Finnish customers (some 23,000) requesting them to write a story of the Lapland Feelgood holiday of their dreams. A total of 362 responses were received. The length of the responses varied from a few words to more than one page. Several of the responses were extremely long and detailed.

In narrative analysis, the end result is a new story of events and actions (Chase, 2005). Differences and commonalities in the emailed stories focused the interpretation of the stories. Nine new dream holiday stories were created based on differing expectations of experiences. The formation of the new stories incorporated appropriate direct citations from respondents in each of the respective groups.

Interpretations of the 'Feelgood in Lapland' Holiday

A significant factor constituting differences between respondents was preferences for travelling companions. This factor aligns with research by Komppula and Konu (2012) and Chen *et al.* (2016). Four groups were formed according to whether a respondent preferred to travel with a spouse, family or friends, or alone. In these four groupings, being together with significant others or having time to oneself was perceived to be an essential component of a well-being holiday, and these can be considered to be the purpose of a Feelgood holiday. In addition, five other holiday types emerged in the narrative analysis, related to other motivations.

A romantic Feelgood holiday for a couple

It started from my being able to travel with my husband, just the two of us. It would be wonderful to take one's beloved to a hotel and enjoy relaxation treatments, each other's

company and the celebrated Lapland scenery and silence. On holiday we appreciate unhurried togetherness. Some kissing and cuddling . . . Wonderful!

I often dream of an unforgettable holiday with my own darling in the midst of the snowscape of Lapland in a lovely log cabin with a crackling open fire. The cabin might have a jacuzzi or an outdoor hot tub just for us. To balance out the hectic routine just the peace and quiet would be wonderful. To sleep as long as you like in the mornings. It's nice on holiday when you can step up to a breakfast table that's already set. For the dinner there ought to be several high-class restaurants, good local fare is part of a successful holiday.

It would be nice to walk and inhale the fresh air, not be in a hurry and just enjoy being with each other. To take a sauna, take a rest, eat well and do a little dancing, with live dance music. The dream holiday should include appropriate amounts of exercise experiences, some pampering treatments and good food, time to relax and enjoy the peace of Lapland. After the holiday, one should be refreshed in love, life, body and soul to be able to rejoin the routine hurly burly.

A Feelgood holiday for the family

I enjoy being on holiday with the whole family. Togetherness at its best! A dream holiday would include something for everyone. We would like to do downhill skiing, cross-country skiing and children's sledding, make an expedition into the snowscape. It would be important to have good skiing tracks and a network of trails where one could also take the children and where one could toast sausages over an open fire. It would be nice for the children to go on a reindeer or dog sled and to meet genuine Laplanders, not to mention Santa Claus. On our trip we would welcome likeminded people wishing to travel with their children.

In general, a variety of exercise options and beautiful scenery tempt us to spend our holidays in a certain place. At its best, a holiday is primarily relaxing, taking it easy and imbibing energy from the natural beauty of Lapland. We just want to get away from it all, relax and be

together. The splendid Lapland scenery offers sensations enough.

We don't need any highflying nightlife. The accommodation should be situated close to the services, but the locality should still be peaceful and close to nature. It would also be wonderful to get to relax at a spa – a spa with different kinds of baths where the little ones could enjoy themselves, too. There could be lovely treatments for adults, massage and so on. One could also relax by taking a sauna in the cabin.

Food is an integral part of holidaymaking. On some days, we want to cook for ourselves, but we would also like to go out to eat so that Mother can get away from the kitchen stove. Local delicacies and specialties should likewise be available.

Feelgood with friends

I would like best to go on holiday with a group of friends, without any children. A joyful gang of a few people, couples with the same tastes or in a good hen party. We prefer to be accommodated close to the services, restaurants and nightclubs, all together in a cabin with our own sauna. No need to think about schedules, the keywords are 'nature in Lapland' and 'absence of haste'. Relaxing moments with good friends.

I appreciate good fitness routes and trails and facilities for a wide range of sporting activities. Stop to chat with people in the skiing cafes or in the trailside shelter, and at the same time enjoy our coffee or sausages done over the campfire. People whom we don't know but who have such similar tastes. We also always seek new sensations on each trip, for example, driving by dogsled, snow mobiles, going on snowshoes, swimming in a hole cut in the ice of a frozen lake and in the summer time panning for gold.

If the weather is bad we can visit a spa and take in some massage and beauty services. Indeed, at times one might even fancy some pampering. At the end of a sporty day we would take a sauna and cook together. Sauna is at its most enjoyable after time spent outdoors, and good food crowns the evening. I would also hope for decent steakhouses, and I need no fast food restaurants when I'm on holiday. We

would also try to find good Finnish Lapland food. In the evening, off to dance to the best musicians. Nightlife and the artistes and performers that the various restaurants put on are very important in Lapland.

Time to oneself

I go on holiday to forget work and cut loose from the daily routine. I plan nothing for my holiday, and I don't want to have any new experiences. I don't need any travelling companions as I do all the hiking trails and long skiing trips alone. I have no desire to be part of a large expedition, so I can enjoy the tranquillity of nature. I appreciate the peace, which the far north affords. That's just what a well-being holiday is – no need to look after anyone except myself! The aim is silence and being in tune with my own thoughts.

A nature destination in Lapland, freedom to be oneself. After a hearty breakfast I get into my outdoor gear. After 2 or 3 hours I find myself a decent trailside shelter where I settle in. I light a fire, get out of my rucksack the packed food and take a long lunch break photographing and listening.

The accommodation ought to be decent, peaceful, spacious and include a sauna. It need not have five stars. Hotel, cabin or self-catering. When I am on holiday I also want to enjoy good food in the evening, the Lapland specialties in the local restaurants. My dream holiday would include a massage session and after that swimming at the spa, a spell in the jacuzzi and into the sauna to relax.

Fitness and hobby holiday

I mostly get my thrills from my hobbies. I am passionate about exercise. My holiday would include lots of things to do: in summer fishing and hiking in different places, in winter skiing in wonderful scenery and perhaps a dog sled ride. I am keen on cross-country skiing so the number and condition of the tracks are of paramount importance in my choice of destination. I might also be interested in day excursions to various attractions with a packed lunch in the rucksack

and going at our own speed. Visits to spas and fitness facilities. Swimming in a hole cut in the ice on a frozen lake.

My choice of accommodation would be one that has good facilities for caring for skis and a washing machine at our disposal. The accommodation should be really close to the trails. Sauna and shower facilities are a must. In the destination, there should be a choice of places to eat. Good food made from local ingredients. From local specialties via steaks to pizza. I don't want my small amount of holiday time to be used for cooking; I want to sit down to a table that has been set for me.

Wellness holiday – luxury and holistic pampering for the mature holidaymaker

I would take my dream holiday with a good female friend or with my spouse. On this holiday, the ambience and taking care of myself are the most important things. The sensations would be in the form of the tranquillity and beauty of nature, pampering and entertainment, no haste at all.

Regarding the environment, Lapland is close to my heart due to the pacifying effect it has on me. The environment of the accommodation should be peaceful, maybe with an opportunity to spend the evening on the porch of the cabin under the stars enjoying the stillness, listening to the song of the northern lights. Luxurious peace. Accommodation with a hint of luxury, such as a king-size bed, a fireplace, sauna and bath, and perhaps our own jacuzzi, a luxuriant bathrobe and towel, a bottle of bubbly, beautiful wineglasses. Small luxuries mean a lot.

The holiday would include a great deal of light exercise and being outdoors. On the cross-country skiing track, speed and kilometres covered are not the main thing: it's about being in natural surroundings and enjoying their beauty. The magic of the Lapland fells. For relaxation – spa, massage and wonderful treatments. Breaks enjoying the crackling of a real fire in the fireplace room, quiet music in the background. An all-inclusive holiday might include delicious, healthful Lapland dishes, massage and beauty treatments, everything would already be taken care of.

Nature and hiking holiday

On my dream holiday, I would like to get to the authentic Lapland with its beautiful rugged scenery. Of course, the holiday would include being outdoors with no pressure to do anything great and enjoying nature. The activities would be walking in the natural environment and maybe berrying or fishing. Lapland enchants me whatever the season. The best that Lapland has to offer is nature: colours, light, tranquillity, timelessness and the feeling of wide open spaces.

The experience I want is getting close to nature. No noise, no rackety tourists, just peace and listening to nature, focusing on the exoticism of Lapland, such as the northern lights and time spent by the campfire. Going about in natural surroundings according to my own timetable, hiking, skiing, fishing and berrying or simply admiring the natural beauty. Led by a good guide one could hike for days, drink coffee made in a sooty coffeepot by the fell and wonder at the silence. There could also be an arranged fishing trip. Further sensations would be the fells, the wilderness, the campfire and the wildlife. Pure drinking water from a stream. Long skiing trails. Admiring the tranquillity of nature.

Accommodation should provide modern conveniences including one's own sauna and cooking facilities. Also facilities for eating out. I should like chalet accommodation by a mountain stream or at least in a lake setting as this calms the mind and creates a sense of well-being. The place might be peaceful without any neighbours too close at hand. The chalet could have its own boat. One could dip into the cold lake after the sauna. Cleanliness, tidiness, authenticity, tranquillity and having choices are important when I choose my holiday destination. An open fire in the fireplace would be a luxury. Sleeping in a tent is not for me; after a day spent outdoors I want to relax with a sauna and good food. There might also be the option to order a reasonably priced massage, pedicure and other beauty treatments in one's own chalet, and possibly also a catering service.

Wilderness holiday

I want to experience a brisk hike in the wilderness in pleasant, active company. The

experiences on the trip would be overcoming oneself, total escape from the daily routine and falling silent in the face of nature. It would be mind-blowing to spend the night in a hikers' cabin, which has been a dream. In winter, it would also be worthwhile experiencing 'igloo accommodation'. The total peace of nature. Internet, Facebook, YouTube and email far, far away. The sensations would come from authentic nature.

We would arrive at our destination and be accommodated for the night. We would eat and drink well and maybe go swimming and take a sauna. The next morning, we would head into the forest, where we would be accommodated either in a rented shack or a tent. We would hike about 7–15 km a day, after which we would eat and take care of our equipment. In the evening, we would go fishing and enjoy the wonderful tranquillity of nature. We would cook our fish and sausages at the campfire.

We would spend 5 days in the forest, after which we would return to the hotel from which we started out. We would therefore make use of the services both before and after the hike. After a hike, of course I want a sauna and good food. At the hotel, I would expect perfect food, drinks and accommodation and also all possible treatments that anyone might need. We would take full board at the hotel of a couple of days, after which we would return to the hurly burly of southern Finland totally restored.

Feelgood for Lapland aficionados

Merely getting to Lapland is almost a dream! I would stay there until I began to miss the south of Finland again. I would go about the fells and get to know Lapland. My dream includes the glow of an open fire. In my hand, a cup of something hot, the view from the window the majesty of Lapland with the aurora borealis clear in the sky. Inside warm, outside cold. Lighting and candles to create ambience in the accommodation. Stomach replete with the delicacies of Lapland. My skin fresh from being washed after the sauna. No hurry to go anywhere, no hurry coming from anywhere. Time stands still, I'm charging my battery. The schedule is a loose one.

It is expected that a Lapland holiday will include the exotic and the fantastic, for example, the aurora borealis, baptism into Lapland, the life of the reindeer herders and – the dream of many – to witness the reindeer roundup. Silence, evenings full of feeling with the sound of the guitar and the Lapland yoik, a traditional Sami form of song. If only I could witness the daily life of a Lappish man or woman from morning to evening. That way one would learn a lot about the culture of Lapland! Getting to know the ancient hunting culture and habits of Lapland.

Let's get rid of excessive money grabbing and commercialism! The workers in the destination should be the indigenous inhabitants of Lapland and the clothes they work in should recall Lapland. It is always nice to chat and yarn unofficially about the history of the village. The best experiences would be from authentic indigenous Laplanders and their tales and stories.

We love the food in Lapland and enjoy it throughout our holiday. Our friends are amazed at how crazy we are about Lapland; they don't understand it. We have told them that they should see for themselves. Nothing beats Lapland. After a good holiday, one has the strength to get through the whole year – and then to the next holiday.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that customers may expect different things from an experience offering within the same brand name. The interpretations of the Feelgood in Lapland experience differed according to the respondents' motivations for a well-being holiday, preferred travel companion and place attachment to Lapland. Hence, the stories could be seen as representations of expectations of different sub-segments of well-being tourism in this particular environment.

Stories one (a romantic Feelgood holiday for a couple), two (a Feelgood holiday for the family) and three (Feelgood with friends) stressed the importance of being together with significant others, meaning that the togetherness type of social value proposed by Kompula and Gartner (2013) served as a motivating factor for the well-being holiday. Hence, for

people who associate with stories one to three, the service concept of a Feelgood in Lapland product should be linked to facilitating opportunities for being together and doing activities with significant others in addition to relaxation and getting away from it all. For those dreaming of a Feelgood holiday with their spouse, Lapland seemed to be 'a home full of feelings and intimacy, albeit different in nature from the conventional home' (Trauer and Ryan, 2005: 482).

Those travelling with friends emphasized shared experiences through trying out new activities typical of Lapland, thereby rendering the holiday unforgettable. Hence, in addition to togetherness, novelty value was represented particularly in terms of expectations of the activities. For families, good opportunities for sports, fitness and hobbies were appreciated in Lapland, which was seen also in stories number five (Fitness and hobby holiday) and seven (Nature and hiking holiday). In these stories, Lapland was represented as a place of guaranteed snow, excellent slopes and cross-country skiing tracks and hundreds of kilometres of hiking trails, meaning that their place attachment with Lapland is functional, reflecting the importance of necessary resources for desired activities (Yuksel *et al.*, 2010).

In contrast to togetherness, some of the respondents specifically desired time to themselves, being in tune with one's own thoughts, meaning that the value of the Feelgood in Lapland product is generated by escapism, in certain cases by spiritual experiences and self-improvement, the quest for which has been found to be a motivator for certain types of well-being tourists (see for example Lehto *et al.*, 2006). The representatives of story four (Time to oneself) wished to escape all alone, but the counterparts of story eight (Wilderness holiday) wished to achieve these same feelings safely in a group. For both, Lapland represents wilderness, silence, fresh air, wonderful sceneries, escape and physical activities in nature. All these experiences are also in the dreams of travellers represented in story seven (Nature and hiking holiday), but they prefer to make day trips from a holiday resort and sleep in a warm and soft bed; whereas a person dreaming of a wilderness holiday (story eight) prefers to spend several consecutive days in the wilderness, sleeping in a tent or even under the blue sky.

Hedonistic experiences typical of well-being holidays seem to be an essential part of a Feelgood holiday. This is evidenced by references to sauna, spa, pampering, massage and other treatments. These references were mentioned in all the stories as expected inclusions in a Feelgood holiday. Even the wilderness holiday would end with a few days relaxing in a spa environment. Sauna after outdoor exercise is an indispensable part of a Feelgood holiday, preferably in one's own accommodation unit. Story number six was labelled as a wellness holiday, wherein holistic pampering and small luxuries had a major role in the story. Luxury was mentioned in several other stories as well, referring to a jacuzzi and a fireplace as well as personalized service. Accommodation in a log cabin might refer to the special feature of Lapland as a destination.

In the story of the dream Feelgood holiday of a Lapland aficionado (story number nine), the specific emotional bond with Lapland was the key motivation to travel. Visiting Lapland would lead to a state of well-being resulting from access to the environment, food and especially culture, as has been suggested in the place attachment literature (Yuksel *et al.*, 2010). The special features of Lapland have a major role in several other stories as well, when describing the dream holiday: northern lights, snowscape, reindeer, wilderness, the magic of Lapland fells. The story of a wellness holiday refers to the pacifying effect of Lapland, and an opportunity to meet 'genuine Laplanders' was mentioned in the family holiday story. Authenticity was mentioned several times in the stories, referring to the untouched wilderness and the natural beauty of Lapland. Indigenous Laplanders or Sami culture were in minor roles when authenticity was referred to. Similarly, the much promoted and famous 'staged' experiences of Lapland – Santa Claus or the so-called 'traditional' Lappish ceremonies – were not represented in any other than the family holiday story.

Common to all stories was appreciation of the beautiful landscapes of Lapland as well as nature-based activities; some of them, such as reindeer sled rides, being connected to Lapland only. Also, dreams of enjoying open fires in one form or another were common for all the stories, referring to a peaceful and cosy atmosphere. Local food was also mentioned as a part of a

Feelgood holiday in all the stories. These might be common attributes of the Feelgood in Lapland product, but for the sub-segments, the segment-specific attributes should be the focus in target marketing.

Conclusions and Implications

Lapland seems to have a special character as a destination for most of the respondents of the study that informed this chapter, but the character is not uniform, and differs almost totally in content and atmosphere. Three different representations of Lapland can be distinguished in the stories: as a place for escape, as a place for romance and as a place for activities.

The story of a Lapland aficionado stresses the exoticism and fantasy associated with the natural attributes of Lapland. In contrast, the magical evenings by the glowing embers and the light of the aurora borealis in the Feelgood story of friends together stresses the other aspect of Lapland: the lively socializing of the skiing centres and even uproarious nightlife. Both of these stories present Lapland as a romantic place, but in a different way. For the former, Lapland at its best represents some kind of spiritual intimacy (Trauer and Ryan, 2005), a place where tourists share their values and beliefs with the local people. The uninhabited wilderness represents for them a place for existential authenticity, moments of self-discovery and communal belonging (Steiner and Reisinger, 2006). For the latter, Lapland offers a perfect place for intimacy for personal reasons, such as sharing a place with a loved one (Trauer and Ryan, 2005). For those with romantic images of Lapland, the place attachment might refer to emotional and affective bonds with the place (Yuksel *et al.*, 2010).

The third character represented in the stories presents Lapland as tourist centres throbbing with life and activity. In its purest form, it is presented in the stories of a Feelgood holiday for the family, Fitness and hobby holiday and Feelgood with friends, as well as in the Wellness holiday. In the first two stories, the place attachment with Lapland is functional, and one might suggest that any other place with the same opportunities for sports and hobbies would satisfy the

needs of the tourists. For the latter two, the place attachment is also functional, but for a different reason. For them, Lapland is a place of romance, but not with significant others. Some resorts in Lapland also have an image of a lively nightlife, parties, new relationships and social life (Kompula and Laukkanen, 2016).

The findings of the study highlight the importance of the travel companion as a determinant of expectations towards the well-being holiday. As has been noted by Chen *et al.* (2016), the travel companion has an impact on the choice of destination as well as on subsequent activities in the destination. Hence, it must be noted that an individual person may belong to several different segments during a year depending on the travel companion accompanying each trip, and also during his or her life depending on, for example, age or family life stage.

It has often been argued that tourists seek extraordinary and memorable sensations when travelling. In the study, respondents did not always explicitly expect anything special or extraordinary in terms of activities or conditions when describing their expectations of the Feelgood experience. Families with children and those focusing on fitness and hobbies especially emphasized the functional value of facilities, rather than emotional aspects of the place or the travel companion. However, they did use expressions such as 'unforgettable' and 'appealing to all the senses', justifying the claim that for most Finns, Lapland is a place for diverse experiences, and for many, is experienced as such.

The stories presented in the study served as the idea-generation stage of the service

development process of the Feelgood in Lapland offerings in the hotel chain. In the next phase of the process, the personnel of the hotel chain chose four stories for further concept development. After a rough resource and business analysis, two stories were selected as the basis for the final service development phase – a virtual testing – meaning that selected respondents from the customer database of the hotel chain were invited to comment on the descriptions of the proposed offerings using an electronic questionnaire. As a result, two new packaged offerings were introduced, Ski & Fun and Together with Friends. The findings of the entire service development project shows that the hotel chain derived diverse benefits by involving customers in the service development, but also several challenges occurred during the process (Konu and Komppula, 2016). Nevertheless, the major strength and outcome of the whole process, and particularly the narrative stories, was an increased understanding of the variety of meanings among diverse customer segments that the Feelgood brand may receive. This understanding, as well as direct quotations from the original stories, has been used in the marketing communication of the hotel chain after the project.

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12

Negotiating Sami Place and Identity: Do Scottish Traditions Help Sami to be More Sami?

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Introduction

Imagine a quiet village in northernmost Norway. Imagine it lively here. Boats in the harbour, loaded with fish from the fjord. The air mixed with heavy smells of fish hung up to dry. Children playing around the scattered houses. Women walking between kitchens and barns, taking care of sheep and households. The boarding school filled with children from smaller nearby villages. A hundred years ago, it was lively here. A hundred years ago, nearly everyone had mastered the Sami language; today, hardly anyone. The school did a good job with the children, turning them into proper Norwegians.

Finally, when the road was built connecting this place by land to the rest of the world, the village became even busier. Twice a day, the ferry unloaded and reloaded cars and people who were passing through. After a while, the ferry's arrival became the liveliest moment in the village. Why? Because people had started moving out, not only from this village, but also from all the little surrounding villages. The boarding school closed down. Nevertheless, there were still enough children in the fjord to keep it going, for a few more years. During the vital years, many institutions were established here connecting the village to the emerging Norwegian welfare state: a fish delivery station, a food store, a post office, a bank. Year by year these institutions disappeared, one by one. The village became quiet. And finally the school was closed – for good.

An artist couple, Hanne Einarsen and Trond Nilsen, had been living in Bergen, south Norway, for many years. They started to long to go northwards, to the people and landscapes where they grew up. They had been searching for a new place to live for a long time when finally they found the old school in that quiet village called Snefjord. They left Bergen and moved in. Trond, the blacksmith, with all his machinery and metal stuff. Hanne, the fine artist, with her paint, brushes and canvases. Both with plans for the school's future, with arts and cultural work as basic elements.

Snefjord is still a quiet village. However, since Hanne and Trond moved in, another picture of Snefjord is being created, specifically, a place where spectacular things are going on. Once a year, the school area goes through a transformation. Suddenly, bagpipes compete with the wind, and huge men in kilts throw cabers and hammers under the midnight sun during the (by now) annual festival: the Snefjord Highland Gathering (SHG).

This chapter is based on field- and film work undertaken since 2010. The film can be accessed via <https://vimeo.com/173607746>. Initially, the point of departure was the Snefjord Highland Gathering, a festival organized over 5 days for the 5th time in July 2010. My filmmaker colleague, Kristin Nicolaysen, and I had read about the event in the newspapers. Huge, strong men in kilts throwing timber and rocks to the sound of bagpipes – in the midst of a tiny, nearly deserted Sami village in Finnmark, the

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northernmost county in Norway. We were not the only ones who had noticed the somehow strange event. We heard others talking about it, with a smile, and the first time the festival was organized 800 people attended! This was a huge number considering the remote location and the fact that fewer than 40 people live here.

The artist couple who organized the event made us curious. Who were they? Why were they doing this, and – maybe most of all – from where did the Scottish agenda come? Why did a couple with Sea Sami ancestors bring the idea to a tiny, coastal Sami village? In the peripheries of Norway, many abandoned schools have been taken over by people who transform them into locations for art, culture or tourism. In other words, there is perhaps nothing unique in the overall idea, but within this particular landscape the mixture of fine art and muscles, and quite different cultural expressions, awoke our interest.

Highland Gatherings (HGs) have their origins in Scotland, and have been spread all over the world by Scots bringing their traditions to their new homes (Brewster *et al.*, 2009). In Snefjord, the innovative artist couple has embraced Scottish cultural heritage and made a hybrid of Scottish and local cultural heritage – a heritage that today also includes what are recognized as the traditions of the indigenous people of the region, the Sami. This creates an extraordinary mixture of cultural expressions, ‘a folkloristic experiment’, to use Trond’s own words.

We have explored the field over quite a few years and during different phases. We have undertaken field- and film work during the festival using participant observation with and without our camera, and informal interviews and talks with different people: the organizers, the volunteers, the athletes and the audience. In addition, we visited Snefjord in the winter to experience a quiet period when there was more time for calm reflections and at a distance in time and mood from the festival. In 2011, during the festival, we presented a work-in-progress of the film. We participated at the Nordic Anthropological Film Association’s film festival and conference with Hanne and Trond with a later version of work-in-progress, and with another work-in-progress at the Borealis conference in Alta the following year. We also had the

pleasure of being invited to the celebrations of both Hanne’s and Trond’s 50th birthdays. Kristin is now working on a filmic portrait of Hanne and her artistic work. The final film has been screened on many different occasions, with and without our participation. It received an award at the 2013 Barents Film and TV festival in Murmansk, Russia. During what was being promoted as ‘the scientific festival’, *Forskningsdagene* (Research Days), Kristin and I went on a 4-day tour in 2014 to screen it at different locations in the county of Finnmark. The practice of ‘reporting back’ (Smith, 1999: 15) when doing research in an indigenous context and being in dialogue and close cooperation with the people involved in the research (Smith, 1999) has led our approach to the field, the people and the research. In this respect the language of film makes a great contribution as it reaches people at many different levels, both in dialogues during film production and in dissemination of the research – the final film. However, I consider the process of knowledge creation as ongoing and this chapter is the latest contribution to the process.

During the main fieldwork in 2010, besides filming, I was the executive partner from Finnmark University College (now UiT The Arctic University of Norway) for the Sea Sami exhibition and the Kofte Show (Álttá Sámi Giellaguovddáš, 2016). These were the two other festival activities to which I will return. I have a personal connection to Snefjord as my grandmother was born there and many people there are remote relatives of mine. In the 1960s, the boarding school was home to three of my older siblings (and, in another era, my parents too). I grew up in the larger neighbouring village and municipality centre, Havøysund, and have been passing through Snefjord all my life. As I am Sami myself, with a close relationship to the area, my position might be described as being an ‘insider’ (Smith, 1999: 10). However, I am no longer an inhabitant of the area but keep returning as a researcher, film worker, family member or ‘tourist’ spending my leisure time there. This makes my position somehow unclear, as I am also an ‘outsider’ who is no longer participating in everyday life. Whether I am an ‘insider’ or an ‘outsider’ depends on the shifting contexts in which I move in and out. In other words, my ‘local’ or ‘indigenous’ belonging

does not necessarily make me an 'insider'. I have to make situational negotiations regarding to which communities I belong.

Approach to Research Questions and Political Context

I will use this opportunity to look into the relationship between a place and expectations, and negotiations of what and who belongs or not to this particular spot in the world. In doing this, I will discuss the festival's role in identity creation for the people involved. What kinds of communities (Cohen, 1985; Anderson, 1991) are created? And how do the festival participants cope with newcomers to the different social and cultural landscapes?

The point of departure is Snefjord, a place connected with certain expectations, and in a somehow 'dissolving' state. The place is in a fragile situation where people are moving out, 'everything' is closing down and most people with a sense of belonging here are not permanent residents. Today, Snefjord's population has decreased to around 40 inhabitants. In addition, there are people with leisure houses or cottages, around 50 reindeer herders with summer houses (that includes their families who are only partly there in the school holiday) and a handful of commuting immigrant workers at the king crab delivery station – in other words, inhabitants who are not living here all year around. Looking at censuses, we know that until around 1900 Snefjord's population was close to 100% Sami (Graff, 2004: 22–25). In the 1950s and 1960s, the social anthropologist Robert Paine conducted studies on the Sea Sami in the area (Paine, 1957, 1965), and descendants of this population live in Snefjord today.

In the last 30–40 years there have been public debates about the development of Sami society due both to identity questions and to indigenous rights (i.e. land and water) (Thuen, 1995; Kramvig, 2006; Stordahl, 2006; Olsen, 2010). This is something that the Scandinavian indigenous peoples have in common with other indigenous people all over the world (Thuen, 1995: 219). The building of a dam in the Alta River has often been described as a turning

point for these processes (Brantenberg, 1985). The plan to build the dam led to huge demonstrations from Sami people, environmentalists and others. It was not possible to stop the dam being built, but the processes that were put in motion were followed by a massive development within Sami society. The Sami Parliament opened in 1989 and was a result of this; other important institutions were also created. Alongside these a growing interest and consciousness of people's Sami heredity in the north were stimulated (Olsen, 2010). These are ongoing processes and Sea Sami communities, which were at first less visible, have become included into a larger picture of 'the Sami' as a unit. At the same time, the differences or diversities of Sami people and Sami ways are somehow acknowledged, the Sea Sami for example being recognized as unique and having their own cultural expressions and needs. I will not go into this in depth, but to know about these decolonizing processes is important in understanding the festival's place in a larger context.

The Sami is Becoming Visible

In an era where decolonizing processes are going on, there seems to be an underlying moral obligation or premise, at least in public discourses of Sami and Norwegian society, to emphasize the Sami culture, to make visible the culture that used to be threatened, weakened and oppressed. Would not it be better then, to arrange a *Sami* festival?

At a seemingly growing number of festivals, Sami culture and history are made visible through a focus on a diversity of arts and cultural expressions, history and public debates. Some of them have become important institutions in the festival landscape (e.g. the Riddu Riddufestival in Manndalen, approximately a 2-hour drive from Tromsø). This is also part of the decolonizing processes going on in Sápmi (the Sami name for 'Samiland', which has colonial connotations). In this sense using the concept is part of the decolonizing processes. In a geographical sense Sápmi is a transnational concept describing the area where the Sami people traditionally lived before national borders were made. This area stretches over the

northern parts of Norway, Finland, Sweden and Russia. Socially and culturally speaking, Sápmi describes the community of Sami people, whether they inhabit the traditional areas or anywhere else. This provides context for the argument that the artist couple should focus on the local and the Sami culture. There is a focus on the local and the Sami in Snefjord as well but, at first sight, the local and Sami connection is overshadowed by the far more spectacular HG. The spectacular is found in the bagpipes, the kilts, the huge bodies, as well as in the impressive sports events; but most of all in that it is happening right here, in the small, quiet village, that hardly anyone had heard about and where only 40 people live.

In the local community, the importance of visibility is not so strong – in other words, it is a question of position whether this moral obligation is felt.

As many areas and environments connected to Sami culture and society have an aura of conflict and ‘politics’ (in this context, rights to land and water and fair use of the natural resources), it seems that in Snefjord neither the Scottish nor the Sami culture will fit in easily. Both seem to provoke a feeling of uneasiness. They make people stop to think for a moment because of their oddness or ‘out of place-ness’. The festival is, therefore, in one sense out of place, both considered as a Scottish event and as a Sami event.

In a globalized world, we continuously participate in arenas or are surrounded by objects and impulses that originate from elsewhere, but there is something about the hybrid world at SHG that makes it appear stranger than other phenomena.

I will give a description of the artist couple, the HGs in general and SHG in particular, before I come back to the effects of the somehow strange Scottish presence in the local or Sami community.

strongman competitions, where athletes from different parts of the world compete in events such as tossing the caber, weight over the bar, Braemar stone, Scottish light and heavy hammer, weight for distance and Atlas stone (Brewster *et al.*, 2009); and in Snefjord the special local event, No. 13 (discussed in detail later in this chapter). The athletes are not necessarily Scots, or even Scottish descendants. The games have become more or less professional, internationally acknowledged sports games. Only the so-called ‘heavy events’ are performed in Snefjord, whereas ‘light events’ such as uphill running, wrestling and biking are common elsewhere (Brewster *et al.*, 2009).

Besides the sports event of the Highland Games, there is an arts and culture component in the programme. In 2010, an exhibition of coastal Sami history and culture, and traditional Sami costumes in particular, was set up. The exhibition was organized by Alta Sami Language Center, an institution whose main goal is to strengthen Sami language and culture, in cooperation with Finnmark University College (now UiT The Arctic University of Norway). This was indeed an exceptional exhibition because normally a Sami *fine artist* is present. In addition, as usual, Hanne herself had a sales exhibition of her own artwork. There were two puppet theatres; one of them strongly inspired by some of Hanne’s pictures – that in their turn were inspired by Sami symbols, stories and mythology. The local people sold handicrafts and food, such as knitted clothes, Sami leatherwork and reindeer meat. A Sami costume show, where Sami costumes from different areas in the region were displayed on local models, followed the exhibition. There were short courses in drawing, first aid assistance, whisky tasting and shadow theatre. In the evenings, there were parties where people met: the local people and their relatives on holiday in Snefjord, and other tourists, volunteers, athletes and artists.

Snefjord Highland Gathering 2010

Hanne and Trond run the cultural industry company Circus Snefjord 889, and SHG is one of their year’s main activities. Most central in the HGs are the Highland Games, the spectacular

Highland Gathering – History

HGs in Scotland as they appear today can be traced back to the mid-18th century. Their origins are probably much earlier and associated with markets or gatherings where men from

different clans competed to be the king's messengers or bodyguards. The gatherings were also related to military activity, and the exercises probably prepared the young clansmen for combat (Brewster *et al.*, 2009). Presumably, the games originally started among farmers; and the equipment used in the competitions comprised objects available to them, such as hammers, rocks and timber logs. This equipment is still used today. In the 18th century there was a period of 35 years when the union with England prohibited such strong Scottish national or cultural expressions. During that time, wearing the kilt was forbidden (Skåden, 2008; Brewster *et al.*, 2009), but HGs were later revitalized.

Some HGs have been taking place in Scotland for 200–300 years. Scots and Scottish descendants in other parts of the world are in charge of HGs in, for example, Canada, the USA, Germany and New Zealand. In different HGs all over the world, the particular locality's specific cultural traditions or expressions will be the focus, so that each HG will have a different repertoire of activities besides the games (Brewster *et al.*, 2009).

Highland Gathering and Highland Games in Snefjord

Hanne and Trond have taken the initiative to become approved and registered in Scotland as an association, 'The Association of Clan MacKenzie Norway' (a clan demands heritage 'by blood' so the only other option is to create an association). They have chosen their own tartan and emblem and the association's 'spiritual centre' is in Snefjord, as they put it on their website (Circus Snefjord, 2016). It is possible for all supporters and participants of the festival to become members.

Two central aspects of a traditional HG will not be found in Snefjord: no dancing in competition and no bagpipe contest. However, the bagpipe band 'Snefjord Pipeband 2010' comprising three Germans and one Scot (actually, one of the two Scots present at the 2010 festival) brought the sound of Scotland all the way to Snefjord.

The connotations to Scottish culture, traditions and heritage are strong, but SHG is also a

sports competition where Scottish identity is not mandatory for participation. In 2010, seven athletes came from Norway, Switzerland, Canada, Germany and Iceland. Trond selected the strongmen, based on both sportsmanship and social skills. Will they fit in, in Snefjord? In other words, it is important to create a social environment that works in the small SHG community. SHG was a hobby for all of the 2010 athletes, and the winner was the youngest athlete, Audunn Jonsson from Iceland. The normal work of the 2010 athletes ranged from farmer, social worker and teacher to priest and building entrepreneur. The Children's Highland Games is held at the same time as the senior games, and in 2010 consisted of two events: Braemar stone and archery. The Association of Clan MacKenzie Norway has a junior club (mainly Hanne and Trond's nieces and nephews). Hanne has the main responsibility for the Children's Highland Games whereas Trond primarily deals with the senior games.

As I mentioned, descendants of Scottish people normally arrange the HGs outside Scotland, and they do so all over the world. The peculiarity of Snefjord is that there are no such connections by heredity. The link is actually only to be found in Trond's great passion for Scotland. He expresses a strong belonging to the Scottish people, land and culture:

I could have been in Scotland far more often. Coming to Scotland is like coming home. That is really weird . . . Travel to Scotland or travel around here . . . it is the same landscape . . . and the same people . . . in character and mood, both are talking loud . . . making noise. They are very similar.

Both people and landscape feel familiar to Trond, and he finds a resonance in his interests and passions in Scottish cultural traditions such as whisky, golf and blacksmith works, such as the knife that accompanies the kilt. Hanne, on the other hand, has been introduced to Scottish cultural traditions by Trond. In her view, this is exciting and rewarding, but her passion is anchored in the Sami cultural expressions of history, arts and craftwork. As she stated:

When we started The Snefjord Highland Gathering I said to Trond that I would include the Sami matters in our festival . . . I am feeling a great sorrow . . . [Hanne is referring to her

and her family's loss of Sami identity] . . . I feel that there is a void to fill. My Sami costume is helping me to fill that void, but I believe getting to know the language will be helpful, too.

The difference between them is visible when they dress up for the festival and other ceremonial events: while Trond has several kilts and loves to use them whenever possible, Hanne has a Sami costume (in Norwegian: *Kofte*, in Sami: *Gakti*) that she is proud to wear. This influenced the title of the film *The Kilt and the Kofte* (*Kofta & Kilen*) (Bursta and Nicolaysen, 2014).

From Forgotten Periphery to Sami Identity-building Experience Centre?

The festival, with all its noise, colour and activities and the strange (but fun) combination of local and globalized cultural expressions brings new vitality to the village, even though it somehow feels 'out of place' for many observers. The Scottish culture has no history here, 'everybody' can agree upon that, and so negotiations need to be done so that these elements of the festival will fit in.

The quiet of the village during the rest of the year is in itself probably one aspect in the negotiations and one of the reasons for the participants to embrace the festival. Something is happening and a new liveliness is experienced during the short summer days of SHG, perhaps bringing new hope of a continuous vitality. As Bjerkli (1995) says, this is a common feature of such events in small peripheral communities.

I have claimed that the Scottish and the Sami (and the 'local', however different people categorize it in ethnic terms) cultural heritages need to be adapted to one another. I will now take a closer look at how such adaptations actually happen. On the one hand, the festival *organizers* are engaging in adaptation when they familiarize and adjust the local to the general patterns of Gatherings. On the other, other festival *participants* – that is, the audience – are searching for commonality between the Scottish and the Sami.

The Scottish influence, with loud bagpipes and big bodies in colourful kilts, is so spectacular that at first sight it overshadows the more

quiet Sami presence. But could it be that the kilt has actually prepared the way for the kofte to blossom? Here, the kilt and the kofte must be understood as metaphors or metonyms of their respective cultural expressions and belongings during the event.

The Sami culture has a continuous presence in Snefjord, first and foremost through the reindeer herders' settlement here. What is different with SHG is that it is not only the reindeer herders' culture – in many peoples' minds connected to inland Finnmark – that is celebrated during the festival. The Sea Sami culture is in focus as well, and that is actually more challenging. From the outside, it might seem natural and right that the Sami culture is included, but an insider would know that the Sea Sami culture is disputed, still to a certain degree stigmatized and not everyone connected with Snefjord would agree that it belongs there. Other Sami groups might not necessarily acknowledge the local culture as Sea Sami, either.

As is normal in most festivals, during the event, some volunteers wear the festival's T-shirt with their own kilts to show their role in the event. In particular, the children have been eager to dress up in the kilt. In 2010, a Kofte Show was included in the programme. The volunteers modelled the diverse kofte traditions that can be traced to different areas of Sápmi, and many children took part. Only a few had worn a kofte before. The show was popular and they all had enthusiastic feedback from the other participants (athletes, general audience and family members). Afterwards, some of the children begged their parents to allow them their own kofte. In 2011 the children showed up in their own newly made kofte. During the Kofte Show, the children had the opportunity to try Sami cultural heritage – to take it on, carry it on, to wear the Sami identity so to speak. In Norwegian, we do not say that we *wear* the kofte, we *carry* it (with pride). A new appreciation of Sea Sami culture was probably created through the beautiful kofte tradition that was exposed at the show. People started talking about the kofte and Sami history and culture in general – in a proud and positive way. Sami issues had formerly been connected mainly to questions of rights to land and water and fair use of the natural resources, issues that are filled with conflict and challenges and to a certain degree divide the

community between Sami or not, or Sami supporters or not. And so, sometimes, the playful attitude that the festival phenomenon makes possible creates room for testing things out (Gustafsson, 2000). Perhaps Trond's 'folkloristic experiment', the SHG, can be seen as a kind of laboratory where putting things (that is, different cultural elements) together sometimes creates surprising outcomes.

This kind of negotiation to make the festival fit in and avoid the feeling of strangeness can be traced all the way through the festival programme. For instance, one of the events during the games is scheduled for Friday night at 11.30 p.m. and is named The Midnight Games, after the midnight sun, of course, a phenomenon that is special to this area. Between 200,000 and 300,000 tourists visit the region to experience the midnight sun during the summer season, with the North Cape taking the lead in attracting them. At midnight, the games are well under way and make SHG unique in the world of HG. At the same time, The Midnight Games connect the strange event – the SHG – to the local landscape, making it fit better and making the local people proud of their 'specialties'.

During the main games, the event named No. 13 is held on the Saturday following the Midnight Games and can probably fit into this understanding, too. Hanne and Trond cooperate with *Redningsselskapet*, a non-governmental organization (NGO) working for safety on the sea. In 2010, the ticket for SHG was Nkr20, (approximately €2 at 2016 exchange rates), and this income went directly to *Redningsselskapet*. The cooperation with *Redningsselskapet* became even more important when The Association of Clan MacKenzie Norway lost a member in a tragic way in 2009. Ella Mathisen, only 23 years old, was member no. 13 and died at sea. She was in many aspects an unusual young woman: a fisherwoman with a strong wish to live in Snefjord, a place many youngsters could not wait to leave. Trond told us that even though they tried to convince her not to take No. 13 as her membership number, she insisted, 'This is my number'. SHG have now honoured the memory of Ella by naming one of the events after her. A huge Masi quartzite stone weighing 188.7kg was formerly called the Snefjord Stone, or the Monster Stone by the athletes: it is

now named No. 13. The story behind this change is related to the first time SHG was organized after Ella's sudden death. One of the athletes lifted up the huge stone, which was so heavy that four 'normal' men were needed to lift it from the ground. The athlete carried it a few metres, then stopped and shouted 'For number 13!' before he moved on and set a new record in Event 13. This was a strong and moving experience for all the participants. The painful loss of a young member in an already small community needs to be dealt with by the community members, and this gesture was meant as a way of honouring her memory. It recognized an event by which the whole community was strongly affected, merging the local pain into the games, and so it lives on as a reminder of local fishery culture and the risks under which generations have been living.

There are other negotiations too: the tartan looks like the Sami shawl. The Scots have the same mentality and soul as the Norwegians (drinking as much, joking as much, laughing as much). A new community and commonality have been negotiated and built, where there is room for the strangeness of bringing in the Scottish heritage. To make room for this stranger and to keep it, it was necessary to emphasize similarities, to make it less strange: we all come from the same place, we are all descendants of the Vikings. The landscape of the Highlands of Scotland is similar to the landscape in Snefjord; bare and open.

The negotiation and rebuilding of community where the Sea Sami culture is given space is also taking place, and being made possible through the playground of the festival. Since the place already has a Sami history it is not a question of adapting odd elements to the local, but rather of finding out what it is possible to include without causing conflicts and division between communities. The Kofte Show turned out to be successful in this sense. The Sami arts exhibitions are probably not 'dangerous', either. Many local people will most likely view them as something for those with a particular interest and knowledge or competence, even though they will appreciate the experience. In an interview with Hanne and Trond, they emphasize the important task they feel they have in bringing out the knowledge of Sami arts, culture and history. 'Ever since we started in 2006, all our

exhibitions have had a Sami connection', says Hanne. And Trond continues: 'It was a goal'. In the same interview, they stress the importance of doing so freed from the influence of 'Sami politics'. Trond: 'I support the idea that we shall promote the Sami matters as much as we possibly can, but without politics'. And with reference to the Kofte Show he says: 'that is not politics . . . that is about taking care of our history and mediating our history'. In other words, they are conscious about the risks of bringing in 'Sami stuff', but are trying to balance it well so that conflicts are avoided and the community can be built. Although somewhat provocative, their position as artists and relative newcomers without family and relatives here probably gave them options that many local people would not have.

The presence of Scottish culture here in the north is strange, odd, but may be easy to accept since it has little emotional danger connected to it. This contrasts with Sami issues: the painful public debates over the last 30–40 years have mainly been focused on the Sami right to land and water. These debates have provoked more personal reflections, too. Questions of emotional, existential processes and processes of identity and belonging have been set in motion. Knowledge of your own family's history has become important and brought to light. For some of the northerners, these processes have led to a rejection of their Sami family history. It has been too difficult to balance the new historical knowledge with their contemporary life and identity, to suddenly become Sami. The increased knowledge and understanding of their own history, and that of their family, have encouraged others to embrace the attention and visibility of Sami history in apparently Norwegian environments. Recognition of the injustice shown to their ancestors, who lost opportunities to live on their own cultural premises, with their own cultural expressions and their own language, provide a context for this. Hanne and Trond could be said to give two different responses to the new knowledge or the new discourses connected to a Sami family history. Hanne is embracing the Sami history and the Sami cultural heritage. Trond is not rejecting it, but is not comfortable with the strong political connections that he feels are apparent in the retrieval of a Sami identity:

From here (taking care of and mediating the Sami history) to wear a kofte myself, that is a long leap for me . . . I will not wear the kofte, not yet at least. That is how far I have reached by now . . . Because it will become a political statement, because you are what you look like. That is how it is. If I wear the kofte and take a walk in the village, everyone will know my sympathies and what I want to show the world.

Could it be right to interpret Trond's passion for the Scottish culture as a solution to the identity dilemmas he has been experiencing in the ongoing discourses? Trond is expressing quite a strong uneasiness or ambiguity towards his own participation in Sami cultural heritage 'building', whereas he apparently embraces that of Scotland quite easily. He feels pride, dignity and pleasure in wearing the kilt. When worn in north Norway, the kilt is not imbued with political connotations as the kofte potentially is, especially when used in areas or families where the tradition is not continuous. It is perhaps possible to reject Trond and his kilt preference on the basis that he is an eccentric artist with a kilt fetish, but my impression is that is not right. I think there is important knowledge to be found in Trond's preference for the kilt that has value in understanding the shapes of reaction/response patterns in local north Norwegian communities. In other words, will the challenges of taking part in expressions of Sami cultural heritage be visible in many different ways? A preference for other cultural expressions can be one possible way.

Concluding Thoughts

The organization of the festival is based on the pattern of organizations of Gatherings elsewhere in the world. Part of the pattern or design is to adapt the festival to the actual place where it is organized, and to emphasize what is considered as the place's uniqueness and local cultural expressions. In Snefjord this means that your immediate impression is of a strange hybrid of old Scottish cultural heritage in a remote coastal Sami area. At first sight, the arrangement has little to do with local culture, and the quite spectacular image of the festival is based on the contrasts between expectations of what might occur here, and the Gathering with its conspicuous

bodies and outfits, and music that is stereotypically connected to a totally different area. The organization challenges images of 'what belongs where', and this provokes reflection on the relationship between cultural expressions and places.

Our lived realities do mean that we are part of global processes. Even though we know this and are aware of it, some of these 'global meetings' still astonish us more than others do. Even when globalization is taken into account, many would still agree that this is an odd juxtaposition: the Sami place and the Scottish festival. Negotiations are necessary for what it is possible to do, how you can act and who you can be, so to speak. It is useful to see the festival as a kind of playroom where such negotiations take place. You can play at being a Scot for a week, dress up in the kilt and celebrate Scottish traditions, with no further obligations. The festival has opened another door as well: you can play that you are Sami, and dress up in the Sami traditional costume, the kofte. This kind of play has turned out for some of the participants to have another, deeper implication. What started as a kind of carnival, a play, has become the ground for new identity negotiations and creations. Taking on the Sami identity through the kofte starts conversations about Sami issues, and the knowledge of their Sami family history is increased.

In Scotland the Gatherings are conducted in a traditional way, where the local people organize, participate and support the Gatherings with cultural pride and a feeling of belonging to the events (Dimmock and Tiyce, 2001; UNESCO, 2007; Brewster *et al.*, 2009). But what happens when an HG takes place without the deeper, local connection to the past and Scottish descendants? The Snefjord case shows that the pattern of this organization makes possible a strong local influence, because local cultural expressions make up an important part of how HGs are organized all over the world. In this sense, the Gatherings are truly fit for a globalized world. In addition, those involved, such as organizers, volunteers, artists and athletes, do 'mental adaptation work' to create a room for the Scottish within the Sami/Norwegian culture. The result of this work is bringing forward similarities between Sápmi and Scotland, rather than emphasizing differences.

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13

Emergence of Experience Production Systems for Mass Tourism Participation in Peripheral Regions: Evidence from Arctic Scandinavia

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Introduction

In autumn 2015, a cross-border network of small tourism firms from Finnish and Swedish Lapland and north Norway (Arctic Scandinavia), was established by tourism organization managers from the participating countries. The aim of this 'enterprise-driven project' is to 'make North Scandinavia a homogenous tourism destination' (VAE, 2015). Some of the enterprises or similar ones are located geographically in-between larger mass tourism operations. With the project vision as background, the following chapter investigates how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in a peripheral region meet the opportunity to benefit from this adjacent mass market potential. Questions are posed about how they cope with market changes, global trends in consumer behaviour, and local limitations and competition in the context of a geographically peripheral destination; and how individual adaptation and innovation influence the attractiveness of the region as a whole. The starting point of this non-representative qualitative study of nine family firms in the Norwegian county of Finnmark, and in Finnish Lapland, is their service and experience production. The analysis is framed by the concept of destination as relational process, basic elements of complexity theory, the

perspectives of service design and experience production and the concept of coopetition, a term indicating cooperation of competitors.

The geographic area of investigation covers sparsely settled eastern parts of the Norwegian county of Finnmark and the north of Finnish Lapland. Finnish winter resorts with convenient airline access constitute its southern boundary. In the north, the European North Cape draws up to a quarter of a million bus and cruise tourists each summer. Norwegian sea-ports are accessed daily by the Hurtigruten liner (<https://www.hurtigruten.co.uk/pages/about-hurtigruten/>) and, additionally, by an increasing number of international cruise ships, which also operate during the winter. Geographically in-between, a few small tourism enterprises have traditionally been offering accommodation for seasonal fishermen, hunters and stopover tourists, mostly during summer. Commonly run as sideline or lifestyle businesses by public employees, fishermen, reindeer herders and craftspeople, many firms have started to benefit from the advent of mass tourism in the region, with some extending their operation into the winter season (Jæger and Viken, 2014).

Adapting to a changing global business environment (Stelter, 2013), entrepreneurs in peripheral regions face particular challenges such as insufficient infrastructure, and different

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business cultures and legislations across national borders (Gelter, 2013), as well as lack of business competence (Espiritu and Skaansar, 2013). Branding a whole region towards specialized experience segments remains complicated (Espiritu and Skaansar, 2013), given that tourism and marketing organizations have just recently started to experience a paradigm shift from destination- to customer segment-based marketing. Another emerging trend, to short-term trips, requires tailored products for specific customer segments (Stelter, 2013). Family firms often have the potential to offer specialized products based on their unique lifestyles (e.g. reindeer herders), their experience as bird watchers or in relation to the physical attraction of places such as mountain cabins and seashore fishing sites. Changing customer needs due to aging population and globalization, however, and especially the paradigm shift from feature-centred to customer segment-centred experience innovation (Gelter, 2010; Ritchie *et al.*, 2011; Stelter, 2013) require firms to be more sensitive to guest expectations. Additionally, the increasing attention mass tourism is paying towards ethics-based aspects of sustainability (Weaver, 2014) forces small firms to continuously rethink their core offerings and business models. Opportunities for small tourism firms, accordingly, seem promising but challenging. Peak body organizations such as Visit Norway (<https://www.visitnorway.com/info/about-visit-norway/>) confirm the need to focus on specialized experience products such as cycling, hiking, skiing, bird watching, fishing and dog sledding. Espiritu and Skaansar (2013) highlight the demand for more individual treatment of the mass tourist, and for relaxing in small Arctic villages. Cross-border cooperation with Finnish, Swedish and also Russian partners has much potential, in particular for targeting the still-growing Asian market demand to see the northern lights. Recently, land excursions have also become increasingly important in cruise operations (Sletvold, 2014), stimulating year-round tourism in this area.

Given this context, the chapter explores SME managers' self-perception of their learning from critical incidents in customer contacts, from local and external market events caused by global and regional challenges and trends and from interaction with other market

participants. The aim is to understand how individual efforts in service design and experience production create neighbourhood synergies, and whether and how these synergies have the potential to influence the relationship of these firms and the region as a whole to surrounding coastal and airborne-based mass tourism. More generally, what do the findings tell us about the production of successful SME tourist experiences in the periphery? The following section reviews aspects of entrepreneurial learning and coopetition, the principles of complexity theory and insights into experience modelling and service design. Subsequently, the research method is outlined, the interviewed companies described and the data results discussed.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial learning and path creation

The driving force of the study is Saarinen's (2014) concept of a destination as a relational process that adheres to the interests of tourists, entrepreneurs and local identities rather than to arbitrary administrative boundaries. The destination is regarded as 'distinguished from a surrounding environment and other destinations', a 'subject where universal and global processes and trends all come together' (Saarinen, 2014: 49). Distinguished from a path-dependency view of the concept, where progress is preconditioned by existing structures and resources (Saarinen, 2014), the path-creation view is stressed; that is, the active role of local people in co-creating the course of development, in order to understand their 'responses to internal and external processes, structures and changes' (Saarinen, 2014: 55). Family-owned firms, the target of the study, are empowered to co-create development due to their ownership of resources. Reorganizing these resources and competencies, building trust in new or renewed partnerships and focusing on new customer segments all require vital dynamic capabilities (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Teece, 2007). With particular regard to service design, Vargo and Lusch (2008) highlight two of a firm's capabilities: (i) the absorptive capability to assimilate information from outside the company,

including from competitors; and (ii) the collaborative capability. They facilitate a learning process stimulated by 'non-routine events' or learning triggers, a process that 'emerges from reactive or proactive response to opportunities and problems' (Cope, 2003: 430). According to Cope (2003), non-routine events can cause improvement in products, restructuring of organization and strategies and even change in the entrepreneur's self-concept, management style and willingness to form alliances. Here, the concept of non-routine events as learning triggers is mainly applied to the entrepreneur's perception of business environment changes and of host-guest or service encounters.

The potential of SMEs to transform culture, history and physical realities of place into tourist attractions (Ryan *et al.*, 2012) requires adaptive systems that are 'constantly revising and rearranging their building blocks as they gain experience' (Waldrop, 1993). It is that adaptive and innovative potential that determines the path-creative role of firms in developing a region (Saarinen, 2014). Small changes can considerably influence a whole service environment (Russel and Faulkner, 2004). In effect, it means that tourism operates in an inherently complex and chaotic manner (McKercher, 1999; Baggio and Sainaghi, 2011). Although firms might not have control of one another, their intended changes produce benefits as well as negative feedback (Nooteboom, 2007), leading to the above-mentioned unstable, temporary and intertwined character of firm cooperation and competition (Kylänen and Rusko, 2011). Coopetition (Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1998) – that is, the simultaneous cooperation with competitors – is defined by Dagnino (2011: 32) as 'interfirm strategy which consents the competing firms involved to manage a partially convergent interest and goal structure'. Mutual benefits of coopetition can be a more effective resource use and quality improvement (Walley, 2007), risk sharing, strengthening both partners' competitive performance (Ritala, 2012), and increased learning capacity and knowledge sharing (Cheng *et al.*, 2008).

Especially when customers could benefit from redesigning two different products into a more useful complementary one, neither pure competition nor an alliance strategy are effective, as these two opposite approaches would

have to be applied simultaneously (Ritala, 2012). Regarding trust, and importantly for communities of local actors as discussed in this chapter, a behavioural perspective on coopetition is given by Bengtsson and Kock (1999). Competing competitors, they argue, try to avoid interaction, while cooperating competitors try to maintain it. Co-location of production and consumption of a tourism product indicates that competitors, who jointly contribute to the product, continuously evaluate their relationship, and visibility of interactions makes them more controllable. Kylänen and Mariani (2014) identified temporary patterns of coopetition, where either competition or cooperation is dominating or balanced in the long or the short term. Coopetition in tourism can simply be seasonal or event-related, and is often unintentional based on geographical proximity and personal familiarity (Rusko *et al.*, 2013).

Due to these dynamic correlations between firms, long-term outcomes of coopetition-based networking are difficult to predetermine. To evaluate the findings on regional path creation, and in particular the impact of firm internal and external events on networking and outcomes of competition, cooperation and coopetition, the application of three features of a chaotic system (Russel and Faulkner, 2004) are especially useful: (i) the capacity of self-organization (i.e. reconfiguration as result of a change); (ii) the so-called butterfly effect wherein small changes can cause disproportionate outcomes; and (iii) bifurcation (i.e. where new branches emerge when a system reaches its capacity limit).

Experience design and service systems

Service design is an approach to 'cope with the functionality and complexity of services . . . placing the client at the heart' of service-inherent processes (Siller and Zehrer, 2012: 7). Service design is an appropriate tool to determine why and how firms can adapt to changing consumer needs and become engaged in experience production. The concept is based on Vargo and Lusch (2008: 89) who define service as an 'application of competencies through deeds, processes and performances for the benefit of another entity (i.e. the tourist) or the

entity itself' (i.e. the firm). Introducing service-dominant logic, the authors (Vargo and Lusch 2004; 2008: 89) shifted focus from tangible product content to the benefit of a service. Service-dominant logic highlights the co-creation of an offering in collaboration with the customer (Segelström and Holmlid, 2012). It is not the value-in-exchange realised in a purchase transaction as in goods-dominant logic, but the value-in-use (Vargo and Lusch, 2008), or what the customer seeks. Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue that the economic value of goods ranks lowest. Firms would achieve competitive advantage through high levels of customer involvement, shifting focus from performance or 'staging' to 'co-creation' or 'self-direction' that transforms customer into guest (Gelter 2010, 2013).

In this chapter, customer experience is seen from a management or design perspective, and defined as the 'internal and subjective response customers have to any contact (direct or indirect) with a company' (Meyer and Schwager, 2007). This incorporates all elements of a company's offering (Zomerdijs and Voss, 2010) the customer will encounter; tangible and standardized goods, customized and intangible service benefits, and memorable experience sensations (Gelter, 2010). The value added through experience production is based on the application of the firm's resources to a customer's need (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). It is the producer's responsibility to incorporate all human and organizational (Teixeira *et al.*, 2012), as well as place-specific characteristics of the moments of customer interaction with the designed service. These moments or 'touchpoints' are the observable and manageable features of a service and experience. They allow recognition of benefit-disturbing moments that prevent customers from fulfilling a need or enjoying a situation. Touchpoints reveal the jobs that customers expect a product or a service to perform (Christensen *et al.*, 2007). That is what a customer values, rather than the service itself (Bettencourt and Brown, 2013). Bettencourt *et al.* (2013) propose a job-centric approach to service design where 'touchpoints' are the starting line of innovation; through customer observation and conversation, customers' needs are analysed as part of a larger context and, on the firm level and in cooperation with the customer,

allow alignment with the firm's capabilities. A similar hands-on perspective on service innovation is the concept of service design thinking, where customer observations, contextual interviews, continuous touchpoint evaluation and staff involvement are vital principles (Stickdorn, 2013).

The ability to learn from external sources and the collaborative capability (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000) prove critical, as all participants in the value-creation process and all internal and external collaborative processes (Dimanche *et al.*, 2012) are sources of firm innovation (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). Following the path-creation view on the development of a tourism area or destination (Saarinen, 2014), communication with customers and cooperation of competitors who contribute to service and experience production are main themes of the analysis.

Research design

To investigate firms' adaptation to mass tourism opportunities in the periphery, an interpretive qualitative approach is chosen to privilege the actors' perspective. Nine companies were selected, seven from the north-eastern part of Norway and two from Finnish Lapland. All firms are family owned or founded by friends, and intend to benefit from the increasing potential of mass tourism in the region, though initially on a small scale. Most were established during the last two decades. Their tourism business is based on long traditions as owners of mountain- or seaside cabins, reindeer herders, fishermen or craftswomen. Supported by local natural attractions, the main early offering was housing. Over the past decade, however, families have tended to incorporate their personal and cultural resources as hosts and guides of activities. The number of seasonal hired employees ranges from only a few to more than 50. Relative to their former or still main professions, all owner-managers are highly educated.

Data were collected using in-depth, semi-structured interviews lasting from 60 to 90 min. These were supplemented by information from company websites and other secondary sources. To support the primary data, two additional interviews were conducted, with a representative of an academic research project and a

regional tourism organization. Interviews were partly informed by the critical incidents technique (Cope, 2003) with regard to customer encounters, product innovation, competition and market change. Significant quotations are provided in relation to processes of change such as learning, innovation, capabilities and external business relations.

Findings: Learning from Critical Incidents

Rather than presenting a comparative analysis of all nine cases, general tendencies will be outlined as indicated within the following fields: adaptations to customer needs in experience product design, adaptations to regionally relevant market dynamics and path creation towards the exploitation of opportunities from mass tourism.

Adaptation in service design

The interviews indicate that most entrepreneurs in the region do innovation and enhancement of service and experience attractiveness incrementally, provoked by daily customer observation rather than by following longer-term management strategies or radical new business visions. With regard to firms' direct adaptation to customer needs, three major findings can be summarized:

1. Practical improvements of experience products are triggered by observation of slight indications of customer dissatisfactions in daily encounters; or through copying innovations, which neighbouring companies with a similar service profile had already implemented successfully. While improvements are often simple (as illustrated below) and require a minimum of resource rearrangement, they nevertheless prove critical for supporting customers to do a required 'job'. It is argued that this ability of tourism entrepreneurs has characteristics of service design thinking, though as entrepreneurial mindset and related to "intangible" or "soft facts" (Schmiedgen *et al.*, 2016) and tacit knowledge rather than as a consciously applied technique.

2. Because the innovating firm needs support from suppliers to implement a service improvement, even inconsiderable service changes inevitably affect and modify the relationship between neighbouring firms. The dynamic of network relations, rearranging and establishing cooperation with competitors within the same market segment, is daily practice in small tourism firms.

3. A wide variety of critical incidents trigger entrepreneurial learning. They range from customer expression of displeasure due to physical features of an activity, to doubting the cultural authenticity of an event. Firms mostly do not envision the new offerings prior to such incidents. Hence, the entire innovation, including new partnership building, is in most cases an unplanned process.

One Sami family (respondent code R1; all respondents are similarly coded) offers international bus tourist groups the opportunity to meet in traditional reindeer herder surroundings. The firm started rethinking their product when they learned that tourists questioned its authenticity and ethics. 'Many tourists know that indigenous people are exploited, and they do not want to participate in that' (R1). The 'job' the company could help tourists to do may be defined as 'attaining the conviction that we meet authentic Sami people' (R1). Hosts started to teach tourists traditional ways of food preparation, and during the get-together sessions they openly broached the issue of 'how to sell the authentic without destroying it' (R1). 'Tourists find always their reference points to what they experience at home' (R1). The family stimulated guests to tell their own stories from home and all attendees co-created an event of bridging traditional everyday life stories from different cultures.

An even simpler learning trigger is that stopover tourists often dislike packing and unpacking luggage. In a cosy cabin setting in the mountains hosts solved the problem by recommending nearby attractions offered by competitors, and tourists subsequently stayed with them for two or even more days to avoid further packing and unpacking. The impact on the neighbourhood network is considerable. 'We now see ourselves as part of a series of experiences . . . Giving away plenty of information to

satisfy our guests, we feel ourselves being guides' (R4). Over several summer seasons the small family firm has aggregated a pool of recurring customers from Central Europe, now enjoying offerings such as canoeing and river fishing. Asian winter tourists often 'do not feel very well out in the nature' (R8), an entrepreneur from Finnish Lapland observed. The 'getting out of the cold' problem could be solved; for example, the firm now cooperates with local craftswomen to teach tourists to make their own souvenirs from local raw materials. Again, one particular trigger led to cooperation with partly competing experience providers.

Customer observation is one tool of service enhancement; another is to copy and learn from competing firms. 'Product development', one entrepreneur highlights, 'is the business of individual companies. Then, the others will copy the new product; but that's ok, because we all want to satisfy the customers' (R8). Another confirms: 'Tourists experience a wide spectrum of people's real life in our area. We always have to invent new things, which are a little bit different from what neighbours offer' (R9). Copying a competitor's modified product is a stimulus for permanently improving the overall performance of a local community of firms, rather than a symptom of stagnation. In the short term it enhances an individual company's competitive advantage, and in the longer term the communities' competitive advantage as a niche for mass operators will increase. Rather than being stimulated by general information about business and consumer trends, incremental service innovation in the small firms in question is based on tacit service design knowledge as applied in touchpoint evaluation, and on successively copying from recently achieved improvements of competitors. Applying cooperative capabilities, the modification of firm networks has to be considered as direct effects of modifying a firm's experience products.

Adaptation to market dynamics

Beyond reacting to customer needs in day-to-day experience production, the development of a firm is stimulated by local and international market dynamics and opportunities. Either

firms react to a specific demand from mass tourism, to qualitative new requests from the cruise industry and large resorts in Finland, or they proactively explore and exploit regional cross-border and international market niches. A few companies use external funding sources to test joint-marketing opportunities. Other motivations to innovate the firm's business model revealed by the study are challenging relationships with large operators, the appearance of regional competition stimulated by new consumer trends and finally the fast-growing number of service providers in places with an already higher density of similar experience products.

A Norwegian company offering exotic winter accommodation and additional outdoor tours for individual tourists and groups can serve as an example of active opportunity exploitation that substantially influenced the community of local competitors. Retrospectively, the owner manager explained: 'It is hard to stay small and do all things yourself. You have to grow' (R6). The company turned its attention towards the customer potential from Finnish winter resorts. The learning trigger for a radical change of the main customer segment was Asian tourists' concerns about not being able to experience the Barents Sea during their stay in Finland. The entrepreneur illustrates the result of offering them the additional value of a short-term peak experience with King Crab fishing: 'Finnish (operators) are forced into marriage with us . . . we build a niche attraction for their main customers' (R6). He, on the other hand, must now cooperate with other local firms. 'It is important that there are many actors who have the same product to offer, it is crucial for development of the destination as a whole' (R6).

Three local companies grouped together to share resources in joint marketing. They take advantage of their different international contacts and build relational cooperation with large operators rather than solely acting as individual, dependent suppliers. 'We three have a little bit different interests . . . We make joint packages, and have now more time and more money' (R9). Another firm seized the opportunity to participate in a joint research project with a university and large tour operators, and strengthened its adaptation resources through academic networking. Opportunities for cross-border

tourism cooperation occur, often from personally well-known suppliers who contribute with innovative business ideas. From such contacts, a special relationship was initiated by a Norwegian family starting more than a decade ago with housing. Based on strong ties with Finland, the firm more recently created a unique winter experience for Finnish ice swimmers, though in seawater. 'I started with opening my home, resigned from my job, attended entrepreneurship courses . . . and learned from my international guests' (R5). Asked how the company cooperates with similar firms in the region, the owner replied, 'I teach them how to establish a business. We support each other with ideas' (R5).

Ambiguous relationships with larger operators or booking channels are a second identified motivation of change. At least two of the interviewed managers decided to exit or modify respective cooperation. Owners of some cabins and fishing facilities cancelled their contract with a large booking company because of greatly increased operator fees. 'We must get back market power from global companies. They are relentless – you will get more customers, but less freedom . . . and you are missing contact to the market' (R2). Alternatively, individual companies formed a relationship with international agents specialized in activity segments: 'Contact with agents led to mutual value creation; the product was adapted to customer needs and expectations. We are building trust and understanding instead of being anonymised as part of a global player system' (R2). Other actors in the community also benefited. Besides respondent R2, five more of the firms interviewed expressed similar experiences and established contacts for relational marketing and product development over the past decade.

Another case of self-organizing behaviour and business model adaptation is a result of regional competition. In a radius of several hundred kilometres, small municipalities in Norway built riding halls to meet a demand from local residents. This undermined a previously unique, albeit seasonally limited riding school business that was established by the owner of a former coaching inn among the mountains some decades ago.

After a period of suffering from this competition, the business now profits from an increased

customer base. Besides becoming a demanded 'wilderness destination' for riding hall users they now host year-round learning camps that have also proved attractive for national and international tourists. Sharing a growing base of riding hall customers, one of the owners said: 'We are quite happy with that kind of competitors. Their customers come and learn from us basics' (R3). Since the company also lost housing guests to main resorts in Finland over the last decade, they also secured employees of oil and gas companies as new weekend recreation segments. New consumer trends and competition with mass resorts stimulated new synergies with competitors, quality enhancement of the original product and new tourism offerings.

The increasing number of local experience providers led one firm to rethink its business model. The case will serve to illustrate system bifurcation; that is, new and alternative branches emerging when its limits are pushed too far. In a small community, the number of competing experience providers continuously increased to a degree that one of the local firms felt forced to rethink its business model. When recognizing a mismatch between internal resources and activity portfolio, the company cancelled the contract with a large national operator and focused on its core competence: 'Through competition, realising that not everybody can do everything, we found successfully our niche. Suddenly, after finishing the contract with X, we had the capacity for doing things which are worthwhile' (R7). Now, the firm acts as agent and local network node, coordinating entrepreneurs and marketing across national borders in the area. In contrast to Kylänen and Mariani (2014), who highlight the importance of 'public or semi-public organisations' to guarantee complex services, this case exemplifies a private enterprise, reborn from failed competition, that takes over the 'responsibility' for complex service coordination in the community. A comparable example of self-organization and multiplier effects resulted when a traditional building was reopened as a hotel in the middle of the forest. The investment amount did not warrant sufficient guest activities, so the owner engaged a nearby community of families working in traditional industries. As she expressed it: 'I do not invest in activities. We are arranging joint offers with many actors contributing. We cooperate in

any sense, including quality management with these partners' (R9).

Apart from service innovation, and rather than being the results of long-term strategies, new and re-structured networks are stimulated by firms' individual adaptation to market changes. Major trends emerging from those adaptations are joint local quality management and trust, increased attractiveness and differentiation of place-related service, local identity-based relational cooperation with agents and sharing firms' internal and external resources.

Coopetition as feature of service systems

The study identified different patterns of inter-firm relationships that emerge to guarantee a functioning system of services around an innovative idea from a particular actor. Cooperation ranges from small marketing and neighbourhood networks, cross-local and national border-crossing supplier networks, relational cooperation with international agents, research and innovation projects with universities, and proactively established global market relationships. The service quality of these networks is critical for enhancing the attractiveness of the region. Common to the emergent structures is that they reshape within-firm resources, as well as relationships with competing companies, which belong to resources external to the firm (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). Respective cooperative behaviour was expressed in many interviews. Although the sparsely settled region provides room for many actors, R1 states that: 'We are too few; we must do joint efforts to bring guests to X'. The intention to design complementary experience packages is mirrored in another quotation: 'We are not competitors . . . all of us have to contribute with something unique' (R4), and can also serve as an example of coopetition based on familiarity and proximity.

The dynamic and temporary character of cooperation with competitors and the importance of continuous evaluation of a relationship becomes transparent in statements like 'Yes, we have cooperation partners; although I should say, we do not cooperate, rather interact or col-lude' (R6) and 'The best way to perform best is

cooperation . . . You have always keeping your eyes open and talk' (R8). The following expressions highlight the issue of convergent interests of competitors (Dagnino, 2011) and how cooperation helps to assimilate external resources: 'External actors become internal parts of our business . . . It doesn't matter who is stopping the guest; when they fall down, all the coins are rolling around' (R8). Visibility of business interaction in a community of competitors in small places proves another critical stimulus of coopetition: 'We talk together, what's to be done . . . it's important for quality management of partners involved. There is no cooperation with companies who violate ethical rules or quality standards' (R8). Moreover, coopetition proves a vital factor for improving a firm's performance: 'In cooperation with other providers, we step by step reduced our own product focus towards what's our real competence' (R7); and 'we must develop slightly different products; otherwise, we would compete on price and lose against the big resorts' (R9).

Coopetition in the investigated context is an evolutionary and organic feature of social interaction systems, rather than a paradox. Coopetition is the consequence of competition-driven service improvement or innovation, a common and dynamic mode of interaction; a kind of service-intrinsic dynamics based on a firm's resources and capabilities and directed in line with its actual goals.

Moreover, owners' perceptions of being self-made entrepreneurs illustrate the complex and unpredictable character of a process that no monitoring or steering organization is managing: 'We do things ourselves; we are geographically isolated. We don't rely on governmental support so much' (R6); 'When it comes to sell a new product, you must place-related learn everything from scratch' (R7); 'Things actually happen automatically, there is no strategic choice behind it. We are thinking of niches, and just specialise ourselves' (R3).

Conclusions

The study findings indicate that individual firms contribute significantly to developing the attractiveness of the investigated region, building on its

high-quality natural and cultural resources. A core stimulus of this transformation is the improvement of service and experience design, regardless of its level. Adaptation in service and experience design proves to be both the means and the end of the process, given inherent challenges such as isolation and scale that often characterize peripheral settings. The application of firms' absorptive and cooperative capabilities can be triggered by global and regional market challenges, and by either simple or (as in the case of an indigenous firm) highly complicated needs in experience design. Companies rearrange their original resources and structures in new directions. Coopetition, the simultaneous cooperation and competition with local and regional competitors, is one of the critical characteristics of their business behaviour that turns entrepreneurial amendments and effects into a dynamically emergent and self-organizing system. Crucially, minimal changes can considerably influence a local environment. However, they are often unpredictable for other units in the market, and partners and competitors have to cope with implications. Moreover, the tendency to bifurcation within an established business community has been identified, wherein competition-driven specialization of individual actors leads to higher levels of local organization.

Seen through the complexity lenses of self-organization, of the potential for input–output disproportions and of bifurcation, the findings reveal several facets of path creation related to the exploitation of a mass tourism potential in the periphery:

- 1.** Firms geographically more remote from tourist concentrations build cross-local networks of experience producers that enable the design of flexible activity packages. These complexes offer market potential to international agents who are oriented towards activity segments. A similar effect is obtained by a small joint-marketing project of neighboured firms, which represent each other in international travel workshops.
- 2.** One result from rethinking firm dependence on large operators and booking companies is an increasing number of experience products based on local culture and owner identities, which in peripheries tend to be interesting and charismatic.

- 3.** An example of many companies' quality awareness concerning the overall reputation of the region is the willingness to participate in research projects with universities that aim to improve service.

- 4.** Companies closer to either Norwegian sea-ports or Finnish winter resorts proactively seek access to global operators and profit from mobility trends such as short-term trips from the European market. Company-initiated Finnish–Norwegian entrance facilitation for the Asian tourist market proves to be an important factor in local destination-building across borders.

- 5.** The emergence of business-driven coordination of local service offerings for growing mass tourism also exemplifies path creation by local actors that can considerably contribute to the attractiveness of the region. Confirming previous research, this study indicates that in service industries coopetition is firm-immanent behaviour. Although often operational, reactive and sometimes even unconscious rather than implemented as a long-term strategy, emerging cooperative service systems of small competitors serve as a fundamental resource for developing the region in tandem with the surrounding mass tourism sector.

As complement to customer segment-directed marketing of the region, and based on the entrepreneurial learning perspective, I argue that tourism development policies have to focus on hands-on support in service design and on the facilitation of network building. Although the emergence of networks remains mostly uncontrollable due to their origin from individual company endeavours, some of the more complex interactions (e.g. between local business communities and international agents, self-sustaining local business coordination and cross-border provider networks) are vital prerequisites for the attractiveness of the region. The validity of this study is limited primarily by the small number of case interviews.

The validity of this study is limited, hence, only tendencies of a regional adaptation process could be outlined. However, the findings open the way for further investigation into path-creative regional tourism development. Potential objects of research are the emergence of local micro-clusters in sparsely settled regions as attractors for under-served mass tourism

segments, the impact of the top-down-initiated enterprise network mentioned at the beginning of the chapter and the process-innate challenges of balancing sustainability of tourism quality in an Arctic 'hinterland' that is beginning to benefit from mass tourism.

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14 Factors of Peripherality: Whale Watching in Northern Norway

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Introduction

This chapter reflects on the dialectic between the concepts of periphery and core; specifically, the paradox of tourists searching for core experiences in peripheral places (Hall, 2015; Weaver, 2015). Using a case study of wildlife tourism, the chapter investigates how periphery-related dimensions of a destination shape premises for core wildlife experiences.

When initially applied to tourism contexts, the notion of periphery was used to refer to rural areas around European urban centres. More recently, periphery has also been used to refer to remote areas (Stonehouse and Snyder, 2010; Müller, 2015). Such areas are often characterized by the fragility of natural and social environments and the possibility of hosting wilderness experiences (Krakover and Gradus, 2002; Lemelin and Wiersma, 2007; Müller and Jansson, 2007).

Tourism in peripheral areas can be viewed as an opportunity and also as a threat (Brown and Hall, 2000; Hall and Boyd, 2005). A related pertinent question is how peripheries are consumed by tourists and sold by the tourism industry (Hall *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, what factors influence the processes of tourism consumption and development in a direction that respects the fragility of specific environments?

The case study that informs this chapter focuses on the contextual factors of peripheries that can influence wilderness tourism centred on wildlife encounters. Peripheral areas often host wild animals, and charismatic species tend to become icons of specific destinations and,

subsequently, have a particularly important role in a tourism context (Tremblay, 2002; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). The case study investigates how various dimensions of peripheral destinations, in particular the geographic, socio-economic and cultural dimensions, shape the premises for wildlife core experiences. It asks to what extent such dimensions contribute to the development of wildlife tourism in a way that considers the fragility of the environment while simultaneously engaging tourists both emotionally and cognitively.

Theoretical Background

Core wildlife experiences

Wilderness experiences are potential sources of well-being, understood as happiness and personal growth. They can trigger and reinforce a sense of responsibility by humans towards nature (Kaplan, 1995; Filep, 2012; Welchman, 2012). In wildlife tourism some animal encounters, such as those with cetaceans, have been found to be particularly important in relation to the possibility of experiencing a sense of connectedness towards animals and nature (DeMares, 2000; Bentrupperbaumer, 2005; Curtin, 2009).

Consequently, wildlife tourism experiences in this chapter are qualified as potential core experiences, meaning that they are transformative experiences where hedonic and eudaemonic aspects meet. Wildlife tourists can

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become and be passionate ambassadors for the natural environment, with beneficial effects in relation to the specific context where tourism occurs and also in other contexts, and over time (Ham and Weiler, 2002; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).

It can be argued that the realization of these potentials depends on the way wildlife tourism is managed. In the case of peripheral areas, certain challenges arise with regard to geographical characteristics as well as to institutional conditions (Müller, 2015).

Tourism management

Tourism management is often discussed using the concept of sustainability and stakeholder theory (Rodger *et al.*, 2009; Hörisch *et al.*, 2014). These ways of framing tourism management are viewed sceptically by some scholars who believe the frames offer little with regard to the finding of practical solutions (Moscardo, 2008; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010; Budeanu *et al.*, 2016).

To address such scepticism, the concept of responsibility is incorporated into the sustainability framework (Goodwin, 2011; Chettiparamb and Kokkranikal, 2012). Mihalic (2016) discusses the issue of presenting sustainable tourism as an intermediate phase between the development of an agenda based on the awareness of the problems caused by *laissez-faire* tourism, and an action phase, where practical solutions are applied. Such a process involves a number of steps. Progress depends on the collective advancement of involved stakeholders, albeit they can be at different phases, as well as motivated by different goals and values.

The process of advancing through different stages towards sustainability and responsibility does not happen in a vacuum. This chapter focuses on destination's periphery-related factors and investigates how such factors facilitate or impede advancement. This is done by investigating a case study of whale watching, a form of wildlife tourism broadly discussed in the literature. There have been several recent scholarly contributions that apply a critical and constructive approach to the main aspects of

whale watching (Higham *et al.*, 2014), which are presented in the following section.

Recent developments in whale watching

Whale watching used to be viewed as a better alternative to whaling despite its potentially negative effects (Neves, 2010; Cunningham *et al.*, 2012). Recently, the critical question concerning the advantages of such a form of tourism for whales and the marine environment has been raised (Orams *et al.*, 2014; Wearing *et al.*, 2014). As a result, several scholars highlight the necessity to shift the whale watching industry towards more responsible business models and subsequent relevant institutional changes.

Communication used by many operators in their promotions has been critically reviewed. It was found that operator communication tended to create expectations that were unrealistic or in contrast with practices that respect animal welfare (Hoyt and Parsons, 2014). Suggested sustainable practices include a more responsible way to communicate towards the public, especially in the pre-visit phase. Moreover, whale watching practices that can be qualified as sustainable utilize high-quality and engaging interpretation programmes and measurement of post-visit effects (Finkler, 2014; Johnson and McInnis, 2014).

Another area of whale watching operations upon which critics focus is the homogeneity of products and the tendency to use low prices. This can lead to negative effects in the form of poor experiences for the tourists and little or no revenue for the companies and the industry as a whole (Ziegler *et al.*, 2012).

In the case of an area where whale watching is a new phenomenon, the practices adopted by the first operators are crucially important for the future development of the sector (Lawrence and Phillips, 2004). In any case, local standards and behaviours are important and can have positive effects when developed in accordance with international and national policy frameworks (Lundquist, 2014).

Collaboration among whale watching operators with the scientific community, local planning and management tourism agencies and the local community is an important

element (Silva, 2013; McIntosh *et al.*, 2014). Codes of conduct can play a crucial role, especially in those cases where there is a lack of regulation, although the international experience is not particularly positive in relation to the positive effects of such voluntary codes on sustainability (Garrod and Fennell, 2004). Alternative or additional management approaches to voluntary codes of conduct can be adopted, which may include licence systems and area-time closures (Tyne *et al.*, 2014).

Method

The empirical part of this case study concerns whale watching in northern Norway, with a focus on the recent booming of such activity in the Troms region. Since 2011, several pods of whales have been regularly observed swimming along these coasts. This has led to quite a heated debate concerning whale watching, more specifically the performance of such activity in relation to its economic potentials and its challenges in terms of human safety and animal welfare.

Secondary data about whale watching were collected. In order to gain a better understanding about the way the presence of the whales and whale watchers was discussed at the local level, whale-related articles from the newspaper *ITromsø* were collected online. Data collection of articles occurred during the 2015–2016 season, specifically between 22 October 2015 (the day when the whales were first observed in the season 2015–2016) to 31 December 2015, and comprised six articles. The analysis focused on the identification of the main themes, derived from the titles and the content of the text. The researcher also became a member of the Facebook page ‘Hvaler i Nord’ (Whales in the North), a public group joined by more than 2000 people and focused on whale watching experiences in northern Norway. Additional data in the form of online promotional material and brochures were collected in order to identify the whale watching companies operating in the period 2011–2015.

Several sources of primary data were used. Some data were obtained through an in-depth interview with a representative of the local destination management organization (DMO)

(VisitTromsø). Additional data were collected through a telephone interview with the person responsible for a workshop organized by the local university (UiT The Arctic University of Norway) and a research institute (FRAM – High North Research Centre for Climate and the Environment – Niva) as part of an Arctic tourism research project.

Some data concerning the local debate derived from the database of another research project about the human dimension of whale watching (Bertella, 2016, unpublished). Being relevant to the present study, four in-depth interviews with local people who had performed private whale watching tours in the area surrounding Tromsø were included.

Additional data were collected through participant observation. To better understand the local debate, the researcher participated in an event – The Researchers’ Night – organized in Tromsø by FRAM. Here, the two presentations arranged concerned the presence and exploitation of whales.

The researcher also participated in two whale watching seminars organized by the Tromsø DMO in January and November 2015. Here, the researcher presented some theoretical and practical aspects and challenges of whale watching, and observed the issues presented by the other lecturers, and discussions during the seminars. The first seminar was attended by 17 people belonging to 13 different organizations (two local DMOs, ten tourism and hospitality companies, one university sport kayak club). An online survey was sent to these participants to further investigate one issue that emerged as particularly important during the seminar: the increasing number of commercial and private boats and the lack of specific regulation. Nine operators answered the survey and two were also available for telephone interviews. Participation in the second seminar included 42 individuals from 19 different organizations (one university, one Tromsø DMO, 17 tourism and hospitality companies).

Several informal conversations occurred with four lecturers whom the researcher met during the seminars. Two were marine biologists and had working experience in tourism, one was a whale watching guide for the biggest whale watching company in Norway and the other was a guide on boat expeditions.

E-mail contact was made with the people who had been or were working for the whale watching associations in Japan and Iceland. These two countries, like Norway, have objected to the IWC (International Whaling Commission) moratorium on commercial whaling. The aim of these contacts was to gain some insights about the coexistence of whale watching and whaling. They resulted in one e-mail exchange with the Japanese association, and two e-mail exchanges and an interview with two representatives of the Icelandic association.

Findings and Discussion

Commercial whale watching in northern Norway

Whales have long been observed in the marine area in front of the northern Norwegian region of Nordland. Here, commercial whale watching has occurred since the end of the 1980s. The biggest Norwegian whale watching company, Andenes Whale Safari, is located in this region, in the village of Andenes. Established in 1988, it has grown considerably since then, following a profile where entertainment, education and – to a certain degree – research are included.

Also in the Nordland region, since 1990 the Tysfjord tourist centre has organized whale watching boat tours and 'snorkelling with whales' activities. Since 2007, the animals have not been observed as often as in the past, but since 2013, this trend seems to have reversed. In recent years, a few other organizations located in Nordland have arranged whale watching activities, including boat tours and snorkelling.

Whale watching in northern Norway coexists with two human activities that are potentially harmful for the animals, at the individual and the species level: whaling and underwater seismic investigations (Higham and Lusseau, 2008; Higham *et al.*, 2014). Norway hunts minke whales under an objection to the IWC moratorium on commercial whaling. The position of the tourism sector with regard to whaling is neither clear nor univocal. The above-mentioned Andenes Whale Safari adopts a neutral position. Only one company, Ocean

Sounds, recently re-established as an NGO, has an explicit anti-whaling position.

At the time of writing this chapter, most oil and gas exploitation activities are concentrated in the southern part of the northern Norwegian region. Here, only a minority of the local whale/wildlife watching companies have actively participated in the debate concerning the potential negative effects and economic benefits (Bertella and Vester, 2015).

Norway differs from other countries in having no regional or national whale watching association. According to the information given by the Icelandic and Japanese associations, such organizations are useful fora where the operators can discuss common challenges, as well as decide and implement common actions.

Another element that is present in some countries where whale watching occurs and is lacking in northern Norway is regulation (Tyne *et al.*, 2014). In the absence of regulation, the NGO Ocean Sounds has developed some short guidelines. These have been presented at all seminars organized since 2014, and also disseminated by some whale watching operators and some private individuals through the Facebook page 'Hvaler i Nord'. In 2016, one whale watching operator took the initiative to prepare a laminated version of the guidelines poster and has distributed it around the local harbours.

The emergence of whale watching in the Troms region

Since 2011, the marine area of the Troms region, including the one very close to the town of Tromsø, has hosted pods of various species of whales, such as humpback, minke, fin, sperm and orca. Such phenomena have led to the emergence of whale watching activities. This emergence has to be considered temporary due to the migratory character of whales, which tend to follow the herrings. In the Troms region, whale watching activities are undertaken on the land and on the water, and operated by private recreationists and commercial tourism operators.

In the context of commercial whale watching, land-based whale watching is included more or less explicitly in several of the tours offered by the local companies. Privately, it is

performed by some residents. Apart from problems concerning the limited number of parking places along some of the roads close to good whale spotting places, land-based whale watching seems to be unproblematic and it is seldom mentioned in debates concerning the presence of the whales.

The case of boat whale watching is more complex. The promotional brochure shows that the number of companies has increased considerably over the years: from five companies in the season 2013–2014, to nine in 2014–2015 and 13 in 2015–2016. Based on the 2015–2016 promotional brochures, it can be noted that, in the vast majority of cases, the tours are promoted as comfortable whale watching expeditions which culminate in a close whale encounter. Expressions used in these promotions are ‘comfortable and safe boat’, ‘solid and stable vessel’, ‘comfort for those not used to being in a boat in Arctic conditions’, ‘ultimate experience – virtually together with the whales’, ‘big experiences’, ‘close encounters with whales’ and ‘close-up encounters’. In a few cases, brochures highlight that the tours are organized with respect to the animals. For example, one company (VisitTromsø 2016: 8) specifies:

[We are] committed to maintaining a healthy, sustainable relationship with the whales. Our behaviour and respect for the animals is highly valued by our guests and inspires confidence among the whales, which often interact with silent yachts and accept us as part of their natural habitat.

Another company describes the tour as a possibility to connect with the whales and live a unique experience that ‘brings you closer to your cosmic origins’. Some companies indicate the possibility that whales might not be visible, and highlight the presence of other attractions, first of all, the landscape.

Additional services offered by some companies are transport from and to the town centre, rent of photographic tools, lunch and, in one case, time in a hot tub. The types of boats used include rigid inflatable boats (RIBs), fishing vessels, catamarans and yachts. The visual materials used by the operators, as well as by the Tromsø DMO, show close-up pictures of the animals, pictures of the boats and the landscape.

The price level seems to be homogeneous, with around NKr1200 (approximately €130) for tours that last around 5 hours. Longer tours that include at least one night offer the opportunity to see the northern lights. All the tours include the presence of one or more guides and, in some cases, the guides are described as knowledgeable about the whales’ biology and behaviour as well as the local natural and (in a few cases) cultural environment. The data from the interviews and the survey show that most of the guides are experienced outdoor guides, with some having earlier whale watching working experiences, and that at least one company occasionally hosts researchers.

As emerged from the interviews and during the seminars, not all the companies offering whale watching are listed in the Tromsø DMO brochures. Many accommodation companies, not listed as whale watching operators in the brochure, can rent out boats or arrange tours for their guests. Data show that there is a widespread concern about the safety aspect of using such boats, as well as about the presence of non-local operators, and the behaviour of private boats. Private boats can be numerous, especially during weekends. As reported by the local newspaper (Vik, 2015), it is not uncommon for a pod of whales to be surrounded by 10–15 boats, both commercial and private (Fig. 14.1).

Data from the local press demonstrate that the presence of whales and the emergence of whale watching fits into two main themes: (i) the great potential for tourists and recreationists in terms of extraordinary experience; and, as mentioned above, (ii) the concern about the number of boats engaging in whale watching. The same themes were observed on the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1523681671204541/>), often supplemented with close shots of whales and, in some cases, pictures of boats or kayaks close to the whales.

Concerns about the possible disturbance the boats can cause to the animals, and possible accidents involving people, were also mentioned during interviews with private whale watchers. Among these, those who performed land-based whale watching seemed to be particularly concerned about the speed of some boats and the distance between some kayaks



Fig. 14.1. Picture taken in Kaldfjord (Tromsø) in November 2015. Source: Ocean Sounds e. V.

and the animals. Those who had observed the whales from a boat and, in one case, while snorkelling, commented that although they did not like the idea of disturbing the animals, they might also have been too close in some cases, as their actions were guided by a strong desire to view and also to interact visually with the whales.

The accessible Arctic–urban periphery

Tromsø is a relatively large and developed town. Historically, the town was an important centre for polar explorations, fishing and hunting. More recently, other economic activities have developed, related to researchers and research groups of the university and other scientific institutes as well as the oil and gas industry. These factors have contributed to turning Tromsø into a modern centre. The surrounding area can be described as a relatively rich and well-off periphery (Müller, 2015).

Within this context, tourism has developed based on quite a unique variety of experiences that can be offered to tourists: from wilderness experiences to urban ones; from adventurous expeditions to comfortable tours. Furthermore, because of its international airport, the area is relatively easily accessible by tourists. With respect to whale watching, these factors have

contributed to the development of a kind of mass tourism.

The competent periphery

As mentioned above, Tromsø hosts a university and other research institutes. The data show that, since the booming of whale watching, scientific research groups have engaged in related debates. Such engagement can be particularly observed in their participation in the three meetings arranged in 2014–2015. Two were organized by the Tromsø DMO and directed exclusively to tourism operators; and one was organized by local researchers and divided into two sections, one open to all interested parties and the other in the form of a workshop for operators. The academics involved were from social and natural sciences. The vast majority were associated with local research institutes and their research interests covered cetaceans and the human dimension of whale watching.

During these meetings, several talks were given about: whale biology and ecology, whale watching tourism, regional development and human safety at sea. All the meetings included other input from people with more practically oriented experience of whale watching (guides, photographers, managers of whale watching organizations and other tourism companies).

According to the person responsible for the Arctic tourism research project, the role of academics is to provide the local community with relevant knowledge-related resources, and initiate discussions through which people can reflect and decide how they want whale watching to develop in the future. This perspective seems to be in line with the Tromsø DMO's perspective. The interview with the DMO representative shows quite a marked concern about the importance of translating the discussions into action.

Other events targeting the general public and concerning the whales were also arranged in Tromsø. At one of these – The Researchers' Night – two presentations concerned whales: the first was focused on the recent presence of the animals in the nearby area, and the second on the ecological sustainability of whaling. After the presentations, the evening continued with a buffet. In the conclusion of the opening speech it was noted that 'tonight we will learn about all these things and what is on our dinner tables'.

The data suggest that Andenes Whale Safari tends to be perceived by several whale watching companies in Troms as an example of good practice from which it is possible to learn. The data from the survey and the interviews indicates that the vast majority of whale watching operators know this company from their experiences as either former employees or tourists.

The 'far north' periphery as the 'far west'

The whale watching companies are not organized in any association and it seems that at the moment there is no plan to establish one. Experiences from Japan and Iceland suggest that possible processes relative to the establishment of whale watching associations would require time and particularly engaged initiative-takers.

Several of the tourism providers who participated in the meetings arranged by the DMO were extremely concerned about the way whale watching was developing. Major concerns included a lack of regulation, the increasing number of companies and the irresponsible behaviour of some boat operators. There was also strong agreement on these points among the academics and the DMO representatives.

Irresponsible behaviour in relation to human and animal safety had been observed by many, and reported in the local newspapers as well as on the Facebook page 'Hvaler i Nord'. At one seminar, a participant said: 'We all have seen things that should not happen out in the sea . . . and we know sometimes who these "pirates" are'.

The lack of regulation seems to have the consequence of making the operators feel relatively alone. The same participant continued: 'It's up to us, each one of us, to go to these people and try to make them reflect and be reasonable'.

Not very differently, an interview respondent indicated the lack of action by local politicians, saying:

They talk so much about tourism, and count how many international tourists visit Tromsø and so on, but what do they do to help us operators to become better? They are interested in selling Tromsø . . . this I understand . . . but they are not doing so much to develop a high quality tourism. I'm talking about infrastructures, also simple things, and also the exercise of some control, to get rid of unprofessional operators.

When the introduction of some sorts of licence and sanction systems was proposed, a few operators seemed positive, while others seemed to disagree or were quite resigned. One participant commented: 'We don't need new and more rules, it's enough to apply the ones we have, and some common sense'.

Another respondent indicated that rules and laws, especially when imposed by non-local actors, would not be followed, 'because things do not work like this here in Northern Norway'.

The terms 'Klondike' and 'Far West' were often used to describe the present situation, perceived by many as chaotic and characterized by an uncontrolled exploitation of the whales as tourist resources. Some also compared the growth of whale watching to the recent emergence of northern lights tourism. A respondent said:

It's happening exactly the same that we have seen with northern lights tourism. Few operators at the beginning and then an explosion! More and more people in the

business . . . with some only interested in gaining some extra money in the short-run . . . waiting for the next trend and next explosion.

A possible change is discussed in relation to the development of a local code of conduct. This seems to be viewed as positive progress by some operators as well as some academics. Others consider it only a partial solution. Moreover, some view it as unnecessary due to the existence of several codes of conduct that could be used, and of the guidelines developed by the NGO, presented at the meetings and already relatively well known.

At the time of writing this chapter the researcher and two of the lecturers from the last meeting arranged by the Tromsø DMO have started elaborating a proposal for a voluntary code of conduct that could complement the current guidelines and, at the same time, initiate an action plan for future development.

Conclusions

This case study focused on whale watching by investigating the case of an affluent peripheral destination and how contextual factors facilitate or impede advancement along a developmental path towards sustainability and responsibility.

From a geographical point of view, although located in the Arctic, the investigated destination is relatively easily accessed. This aspect, together with the broad spectrum of experiences that the destination offers, can be viewed as a contribution to potential core experiences. This is reinforced by the presence of quite an active DMO and several engaged entrepreneurs. Such factors are relevant to tourism in general and were observed in the case of whale watching, where the presence of a local research milieu can be viewed as a facilitator along the path to sustainability and responsibility.

Despite these elements, it seems that the way whale watching is developing threatens the fragility of the environment. The data, however, suggest that the actors involved are not ignoring this; in particular, there is awareness in the local DMO and the local research groups, as well as

some tourism entrepreneurs. It can be argued that the whale watching development is in the awareness phase: problems due to laissez-faire tourism are clearly emerging but neither a sustainability agenda nor an action plan have been developed yet (Mihalic, 2016).

Several elements seem to delay the advance towards sustainability and responsibility. One concerns the temporary aspect of the phenomenon, derived from the cyclic behaviour of the herrings on which the whales feed. This can be assumed to negatively influence the possible long-term planning necessary for responsible and sustainable whale watching.

Other impeding elements concern the institutional and cultural context. The dominant cultural context seems to be characterized by the view of the marine environment and the animals as resources. This can be a barrier to approaches based on human responsibility towards individual animals. Moreover, according to several tourism operators, the exploitation of such resources seems to be performed in a myopic and uncontrolled way.

Although there are some factors indicating certain differentiation and a sort of market segmentation among the companies, the whale watching companies appear to be relatively homogenous and targeting generalist tourists. This factor, together with the easy access to the destination and the whale spotting marine areas, can lead to a destructive form of mass tourism with negative consequences in terms of the sector's sustainability (Ziegler *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, the increase in the number of companies, together with the presence of private boats, can lead to negative effects on the animals both at the individual and the species level (Higham *et al.*, 2014).

Finally, the investigated destination has quite a marginal position in the global context due to the lack of regulation and the absence of any whale watching association or of accepted and implemented codes of conduct. These factors can be viewed as institutional weaknesses (Müller, 2015). In terms of core tourism experiences, such factors can limit the potential of whale watching as an enjoyable and respectful way to approach the natural environment.

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15 Responsible Fishing Tourism in the Arctic

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Introduction

Fishing tourism is an industry in which its actors – that is, firms, destinations and customers – benefit from utilizing nature-based resources. This practice can be performed in a responsible or an irresponsible way. As the tourist is the vital actor performing fishing activities in a natural environment, a central route to ensure a more responsible tourism industry is to help and teach the tourist to act in a responsible way. Williams and Ponsford (2009) claim that more collective and vision-oriented approaches to tourism industry planning are needed to address broader and more pervasive environmental and sustainability challenges.

This chapter highlights different types of fishing tourism in the Arctic and discusses how the industry can become responsible through its customers. The chapter ends by presenting a practical tool, the business canvas model (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2009), and demonstrates how it can be used with different tourist segments in fishing tourism to achieve a more responsible approach when targeting and guiding customers.

Responsible tourism is described by Spenceley (2005) as tourism that provides better holiday experiences for guests, and good business opportunities which result in a better quality of life through increased socio-economic benefits and improved natural resource management. These authors state that, to become

responsible, companies should develop competitive advantages. They should also assess, monitor and disclose impacts of tourism development; ensure involvement of communities and the establishment of meaningful economic linkages; encourage natural, economic, social and cultural diversity; and promote the sustainable use of local resources.

The present work is based on extant theory of responsibility as part of the sustainability concept in tourism contexts, and analyses online information on fish tourist activities promoted by different countries, particularly the way in which Arctic countries promote fish tourist activities to attract fish tourist segments. The information is then structured by type of offer, how the experiences are packaged and which type of tourists these offers typically attract. The data are then studied within the framework of a business canvas model. Based on this analysis, different ways in which the fishing tourism industry can be more responsible through motivation and learning tactics are suggested.

The chapter supports actors in the tourism industry with a business model perspective and a way to analyse its customers and to develop responsible strategies and tools. Innovation and value creation in areas with limited resources, in vulnerable parts of the natural environment, need to be monitored and organized to ensure sustainable development. In this chapter, we focus on ecological and economic responsibility.

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Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism is closely related to sustainable tourism, which incorporates the ability to maintain natural capital while achieving economic and social development (WCED, 1987). The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2012) defines sustainable tourism as 'Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities'. The responsible tourism construct relates strongly to the sustainable tourism construct as they both aim to diminish negative social, economic and environmental impacts, while exploiting the positive effects of tourism development (Frey and George, 2010). Research shows that sustainable organizations are effective at engaging with external stakeholders and employees; they have cultures based on innovation and trust; and they have a track record of implementing large-scale change (Eccles *et al.*, 2012). The present work will use both sustainability and responsibility concepts from a managerial perspective: how to become sustainable through developing and promoting responsible actions and actors.

In line with consumer behaviour research into responsible consumerism, this chapter adopts the definition of responsible tourism as 'The consumption that has less negative impact or more positive impact on the environment, the society, the self, and the other-beings' (Ulusoy, 2016: 285).

Remarkably, almost no research has been undertaken to identify responsible tourists among the general population of tourists. Instead, most research focuses on tourists with a low environmental footprint: that is, ecological tourists (for a review see Dolnicar *et al.*, 2008). Tourists are not a homogeneous group. They are different in terms of values, attitudes and behaviour, and in level of responsibility. They are therefore expected to react differently to promotions and regulations. Even within the supposedly homogeneous backpacker segment, differences in travel motivation occur; for example, between those who want to mingle with local people and those who want to mingle with like-minded fellow travellers (Ateljevic and Doorne, 2005). In a similar way, Swarbrooke (1999) shows how tourists differ in terms of

'greenness', from 'not at all green' to 'totally green'. The first group may read what the brochures say about green issues and sustainable tourism, while the latter do not take holidays away from home at all so they do not harm the environment in any way. We can, of course, discuss if the 'totally green' individual is a tourist. However, this way of acknowledging different levels of green or responsible focus among tourists illustrates an important dimension in understanding the heterogeneity among tourists.

Fishing tourism represents a growing part of the tourism industry worldwide (Mason *et al.*, 2000; Stewart *et al.*, 2007; Førland *et al.*, 2012), and this indicates the great importance of monitoring the activity to ensure sustainable growth. Sustainable resource management includes the process of developing new ideas, behaviour, products and processes that contribute either to a reduction in environmental burdens, or to ecologically specified sustainability targets (Rennings, 2000). Central to this is choosing the right customers, and developing and promoting experiences in which the tourist can and will behave in a way that supports a sustainable industry.

Value Co-creation in Tourist Encounters

New perspectives in marketing and management reveal the customer as a core resource provider in consumption practices. Service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lush, 2004) and value-in-use (Grönroos, 2008) describe customers as resource integrators by virtue of their skills and competencies. In tourism, customers enjoy several services and activities, such as fishing, revealing the imperative of acknowledging skills and knowledge in tourism (Prebensen and Lyngnes, 2011; Prebensen *et al.*, 2014), using resources and producing valuable experience through their knowledge and interests. In line with Grönroos (2008), the value of fishing emerges in the customers' sphere during fishing. Value is created and co-created through interactions more often by service providers and customers (Vargo and Lush, 2004). Additionally, we take the view that value co-creation can result from interactions between different customers and between one customer with

nature, culture or a certain activity, such as fishing.

In tourism, the customers are always present and always partake in creating value for themselves in the moment of an experience. The degree of such participation, and interest in it, may vary. Holbrook (1999: 5) claims that experience value is an 'interactive, relativistic preference experience'. Bradley and Sparks (2012) follow Holbrook in perceiving that firms and destinations need to acknowledge the variety of needs and interest among different customers, and choose the right customer segment to attract.

Some nature-based activities require certain skills to achieve the full benefit from the activities. Csíkszentmihályi (2008) describes a precondition of what he calls a flow experience (the feeling of loss of time, which occurs when the personal skills and the challenge of an activity are in balance). The relationship between skills and challenges will influence the experience and thus its value. If the challenges are low and the skills demanded by the activity high, or vice versa, it might lead to boredom or anxiety. Balance between challenges and skills may lead to flow or extraordinary experiences, where enhanced skills and greater challenges may lead to more complex and enjoyable experiences (Csíkszentmihályi, 2008).

Skills can be acquired through knowledge communicated to tourists as instructions, information sharing and storytelling, and also through co-creation and active physical and mental involvement in the activity (Nordbø and Prebensen, 2015). Knowledge of fish tourist activities can include how to handle fishing gear and equipment, using a boat, where to find good places to fish, what equipment to use, how to prepare the catch and make it a meal, and insights into how to act responsibly with regard to fish resources and the surrounding natural environment.

Fishing as Product and Experience

Fishing is a popular activity with visitors to the Arctic. Tourist fishing may be done for various reasons (motivations) and in numerous different ways. The possibility of catching big fish (trophy fish) or many fish while staying in the

area is often a vital motive. However, as well as the fishing activity itself, there are additional or supportive motivations that may be important, such as clean and cold water, and spectacular and 'untouched' nature. Cold, fresh water is of great importance for fish quality (Parry, 1998), and is also important to most fish tourists. Access to fishing resources, unspoiled nature and food safety, as well as increased accessibility by various forms of transportation, influence fish tourists in travelling to the Arctic to engage in their interest.

Basic elements in fish tourism products, in addition to the fishing activity itself, include accommodation, food, boat and fishing equipment. Other nature-based tourism studies emphasize the importance of a guide, who takes care of security and the tourists' safety, mediates knowledge and involves the tourists (Lyngnes and Prebensen, 2014; Mossberg *et al.*, 2014) or offers activities for adding value to the experience. Addition of a guide may or may not be included in the fishing trip, based on the tourists' needs, wants, knowledge and interest. However, guiding and other 'extra services' included in the offer may represent a potential for the tourism industry to take a more responsible position. A guide will have an opportunity to inform the tourist on how to behave in a responsible way, and will usually try to enhance the experience by sharing information on interesting natural scenes and fishing spots. In a review of what constitutes sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism, Dolnicar *et al.* (2008) found that a natural location was the single most frequently included definitional feature, with almost two-thirds of all articles reviewed using this as a characteristic. Based on this, it is expected that implementing activities focused on enjoying and learning about nature, and in particular about fish and fishing, would help the fish tourism industry to be responsible, as rational appeals alone are less effective in motivating a consumer to be responsible (Kystmagasinet, 2010; Ulusoy, 2016).

Fishing tourism in the Arctic

Fishing tourism is organized and regulated differently in the various countries and regions of

the Arctic. Some Arctic countries offer fishing trips where the tourists pay for a licence that allows them to fish. The price of the licence relates to the place and time where the fishing activity is carried out. The tourist may also rent a small boat or buy a tour guided by a licensed person. In some Arctic countries, the 'fish and release' concept is common, meaning that tourists can capture as many fish as they want, but have to release them back into the water afterwards. Some countries allow tourists a maximum quota of fish to be exported back home. Norway, for instance, has an export limitation of 15 kg (free of charge), in addition to one trophy fish per tourist. Fishing licences are not required for fishing in some countries, such as Norway (Northern Norway Tourist Board, 2016). Some firms in Iceland handle caught fish, including transport to the tourists' home country (Kystmagasinet, 2010; Fishing Iceland, 2016).

The size of the village or city that offers fish tours differs within and between the Arctic countries. Infrastructure and geography also vary among the countries. The Arctic coastline of Norway includes thousands of islands and hundreds of small fishing villages, where tourists may choose from many types of fishing activities and tours. The Arctic parts of Russia, Canada and Alaska have different topographies from Norway, with fewer islands and fjords but with huge lakes and rivers. It is also likely that different types of offers in the marketplace will attract different market segments.

As all Arctic countries use the internet as a communication tool to attract tourists, a search for 'fish tourism' reveals that the countries vary in types and diversity of offers. Norway typically includes a wider assortment (Visit Norway, 2016); other countries seem to focus their offerings on fewer options for the customer (Kola Travel, 2016). A number of firms and destination marketing companies in the countries marketing fish tourism do so directly on their own internet pages, or through national internet pages (e.g. Visit Norway, 2016). Most of the countries have websites with specific information on rules and regulations, for example types of fishing tools and equipment allowed, types and minimum size of fish to catch, fish per day or kilograms for export, and licences and

security initiatives from destinations or nations (e.g. Norwegian Maritime Authority, 2016). This information aims to ensure responsible tourism, but tourists need to be active in the search for such information.

Information about different offers is given below.

Alaska

Tour operators such as Travel Alaska (2016) offer excursions including boat charters with a captain, lodging and transportation. They offer guiding and information benefits for tourists with good opportunities for fishing, high standards of accommodation and boats, and the offer is often 'all-inclusive', meaning that the tourist pays one price for the whole package.

Canada

Tourists are offered fishing in several regions (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2016). Examples of firms offering fishing show high standards regarding resorts, lodges and fishing guides. Information provided includes pictures of big fish representing well-known species (e.g. Tukto Lodge, 2016). Charter packages are a central part of the offer, which are marketed online as all-inclusive including guiding and licences. The internet presentations emphasize good catches and big fish (Island Outfitters, 2016).

Russia

Russia promotes different types of fishing trips. Most are related to freshwater fishing in rivers and lakes (Kola Travel, 2016). The limited number of offers that exist seem to be well organized.

Norway

Internet pages for Norwegian fishing trips range from self-organized tours to offers from firms of different packages including accommodation, boat, fishing equipment, fish cleaning and cold storage. Firms offering different packages seem to be the most popular among tourists. Guides and information are sometimes included or can be bought as extra services. Several firms

market themselves through tour operators (e.g. Norway Nature Travel, 2016). In winter, from February to April, there are opportunities to take part in the Lofoten seasonal fishery either by joining a fishing boat (professional fishing) or an organized trip, with captain and guide (Lofoten, 2016). Internet-based marketing seems to focus on large catches of fish and big fish, as well as the opportunity to choose between open sea or calm water between islands and in fjords (Lofoten, 2016).

In all countries, the firms and their offers are mostly located in rural areas with natural scenery and options to participate in or organize hiking, skiing or other nature-based activities. In Norway, the tourist can choose among different types of accommodation such as cabins, older *rorbu* (anglers' cottages), modern apartments or hotels. In Alaska, hotels, lodges and camps, and in Russia, hotels and guest-houses, are the most common accommodation offered.

Fishing tourist motivation segments

Fish tourists vary in terms of motivation, attitudes and behaviour, and different studies have attempted to categorize fishing tourists based on these variables. The studies show that these tourists vary widely about why and how they fish. One perspective is to distinguish between family anglers; a family on holiday which takes part in a variety of activities, including fishing; and anglers more specifically concerned with the fishing activity itself (Prebensen and Lyngnes, 2011). Among those with a strong focus on the fishing activity will be fishers motivated by subsistence, as well as sports anglers including trophy fishers and catch-and-release anglers (Prebensen and Lyngnes, 2011). This chapter focuses on and analyses the following segments (see also Table 15.1):

- 1. The family angler: fishing is one activity among others.

Table 15.1. Business canvas model of three fishing tourism segments.

Customer type	Needs	How it is sold	Value chain role	Profit model	What is sold
1. The family angler: fishing is one activity among others	Social, fun, catching some fish, apartment type of accommodation, family meals, other activities, learning about area, culture and nature	Packages with options: activities, pick up at airport, or renting a holiday house	Communicating, creating interest through the variety of activities, booking	Medium/high price for packages, fee for extras enhancing value for family	Value for family (social, fun and more activities than fishing)
2. The subsistence angler: focuses on catching a lot of fish	Fishing, learning in depth about how to catch many, taking care of the fish (freezing), easy living (boat, cottage, fishing equipment), value for money, utility	Online, holiday house, boats	Communicating, creating interest through volume, booking	Low price, fee for extras	Value for money, good catch, big fish
3. The sports angler: focuses on 'the art of fishing'	Fishing, nature, learning in depth about fishing as sport, social, easy living (boat, cottage, fishing equipment), potential for add-ons	Online, magazines, special interest: fishing clubs	Communicating, creating interest through knowledge, booking	Medium/high dependent on extras	Value for fish experience (special interest)

2. The subsistence angler: focuses on catching a lot of fish.
3. The sports angler: focuses on 'the art of fishing'.

Business canvas model researchers (e.g. Boons and Lüdeke-Freund, 2013) claim that sustainable innovation studies tend to neglect the way in which firms need to combine a value proposition, the organization of the upstream and downstream value chain, and a financial model, to bring sustainable innovations to the market. Osterwalder (2004) developed the business canvas model, which can be described as a strategic management tool for developing new or verifying existing business models. The 'canvas' is a visual chart with elements describing the value proposition, infrastructure, customers and finances of a firm's products. It supports company activities by demonstrating potential trade-offs. Conceptually, a business model comprises all parts of a company's approach to develop profitable products and services, and delivering them to its target customers.

The business canvas model includes two basic foci: (i) onstage (what the customer sees); and (ii) backstage (hidden to the customer). The most common feature of all fish tourists is that they enjoy the core activity of fishing. Even so, they may vary in terms of how they play out the experience, for example by adopting different roles. Fish tourists may buy a pre-packed tour including all equipment, transport and accommodation as well as being guided and learning how to fish. Others may decide to look for good fishing spots online, drive their own car, bring their own food and drink, and sleep in a tent. In the latter example, fish tourists are more onstage than backstage, while in the first example they would recognize that others produce some of the experience beforehand and in other places.

The business canvas model is used in different fishing tourism segments to show different business potentials for firms and destinations (see Table 15.1). By analysing the negative and positive impacts the different segments will have on a company's revenue, destination and nature (the fish, etc.), the actors should reach a consensus on which segment(s) to target, dependent on the degree of sustainability and responsibility.

How to ensure a responsible tourist – informing, involving and entertaining (edutain) the three segments

In order to ensure responsible fish tourists supporting a sustainable tourist industry, firms and destinations need to implement a strategy that includes learning as well as enjoyable experiences when targeting their core customer segments (Ulusoy, 2016). The following themes seem to be important here:

- Knowledge of different aspects of nature and its fragility is vital for nature-based tourists (Dolnicar *et al.*, 2008; Lyngnes and Prebensen, 2014).
- Security and safety in performing the activity (Mossberg *et al.*, 2014), and ensuring that customer skills balance the challenges (Csíkszentmihályi, 2008) are central.

Firms and destinations may develop programmes based on their strategy and communicate them to their tourists to ensure sustainable fish tourism experiences.

Key to achieving this in small companies is to create enjoyable experiences linked to information and knowledge sharing. This would also give the company opportunities to increase income. As some fishing tourists – for instance, families on tour – are expected to be motivated to take part in pursuits in addition to fishing, offering sustainable activities such as hiking and biking could help fulfil the needs of various segments.

Segment 1: the family angler

The family angler segment is motivated to join in various activities in addition to fishing, and may need to learn some skills to enjoy the fishing more. Guides (who are often the hosts in companies with few staff and limited resources) may teach, involve and co-create the fishing activity with the tourist. This may include the whole process, from use of the boat, finding a good fishing spot, fishing and handling the catch, or just one component of the process. Mastering the activity in a safe manner is vital for the experience. In the family segment, it is also of great importance to balance skills and challenges in a way that both children and adults can enjoy the activity. This programme should also include more safety information.

It is important to include a learning component about resources and how negative environmental impacts can be reduced. Such programmes aim to involve and inform customers and to increase the opportunities for tourists to act in a responsible way (Lyngnes and Prebensen, 2014).

Segment 2: the subsistence angler

Most subsistence anglers have high-quality fishing skills. However, there are some examples for this segment that show that the challenges can be greater than the skills. Safety may be a problem, often caused by different traditions for handling a boat, particularly in rough weather. In Norway, anglers may rent a boat and fish on their own, and accidents including deaths have happened, perhaps because of the lack of adequate knowledge and skills in handling the boat and safety equipment. Responsible behaviour, including safety issues, should always be emphasized. Communication, knowledge sharing and storytelling may increase skills in line with the challenges. By focusing on involving the customer in these learning activities – that is, co-creation – experience value for this segment may be boosted.

Deeper insight into the issues of fish as limited resources can be important for this segment. Information on how to take care of the whole fish (not only the fillet) could also be provided; and rules and regulations, including quota limits, should be shared. To motivate this segment to engage in responsible behaviour, regulations should be followed, along with promotion of other potential tourist activities such as cooking courses on how to use the whole fish.

Iceland offers a variety of salt- and fresh-water fishing that is regulated and well organized and has a limitation of 20 kg of fish for export. The Icelandic government offers tourists the opportunity to sell the whole catch to fishing companies and to buy back the 20 kg of prepared fish fillets, and as such ensure a better use of the whole fish. This is made possible through Icelandic laws and regulations (Kystmagasinet, 2010). Knowledge and skills about handling the boat, the resources (and their limitations) and how to use the resources are essential in ensuring a responsible industry. Another

way to ensure responsible tourist behaviour is to pay the tourists for their catch and further to include rules, such as those on waste handling. It is vital for firms to present their offer in a way that is attractive and sustainable for different tourists.

Segment 3: the sports angler

Based on theory relating to special interest (e.g. Trauer, 2006), the sports angler segment often has extensive knowledge of fishing. The importance of a good guide or local expert increases the core experience through extra services based on the special interest. This segment would even enjoy a tour that included a deeper understanding of limited resources and environmental impacts associated with fishing activities. Storytelling and other activities could be implemented. By allowing this segment to consider itself 'the knowledgeable' or 'the expert', it could even be motivated to take a stand on communicating important responsibility issues.

For all segments, the firms, destinations and countries should cooperate to implement a strategy where the tourists are involved in enjoyable and interesting activities. Organizing for knowledge sharing about vital aspects of fishing activities may increase the experience value and responsible behaviour for the different segments of fish tourists.

Conclusion

This chapter was based on experiential consumption theory, special interest and responsible behaviour, in addition to information collected on internet pages. It analysed fishing tourism offers from different Arctic countries and suggested three main fish tourist segments that tourism companies and destinations are recommended to target. By employing a tool such as the business canvas model, the chapter showed how the different segments vary in terms of customer type and subsequent needs. If firms and destinations combine this information with the different experiences, value chain role, profit model and what is actually sold, they can produce goal-directed marketing, develop products and ensure the right value chain and

profit model in line with responsible and sustainable thinking.

In those countries offering tourism fishing without a fee or licence, a form of licence (such as the potential to charge per kilogram of fish) could be used for developing programmes and motivating strategies for co-creating memorable experiences with responsible tourists. Implementing activities such as hiking, cooking courses and bicycling in addition to fishing will

benefit all actors at the destination, as well as the fish tourists.

As Dolnicar *et al.* (2008) and Prebensen and Lyngnes (2011) show, nature-based tourists are eager to learn and to enjoy novel experiences. By informing and motivating tourists to take part in activities that are more responsible and to learn why this is an imperative in developing a sustainable industry in the long term, all stakeholders will benefit.

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16 Long Way Up: Powered Two-wheeled Journeys in Northern Peripheries

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Introduction

The opening of the continental Arctic for tourism has been largely facilitated by the extensive road building programmes of the 20th century. While primarily aimed at the economic development and resource exploitation of these peripheral regions, the visitor economy has followed the branches of this network, and in many Arctic areas tourism is now a significant driver of development. The flexibility afforded by drive tourism in places that have traditionally been relatively inaccessible by public transport has particularly favoured the development of this sector. Drive tourism in general has received some scrutiny (for example Prideaux and Carson, 2011) as part of 'the recognition that growing numbers of people desire a free and independent travel experience' (Shih, 2006: 1029). Further, this freedom means that drive tourism is influential in the regional dispersal of tourism and is therefore particularly important for peripheral destinations. A specific subsector that has seen notable growth is that of motorcycle tourists, who have found a powerful attraction in the open and dramatic spaces of the continental Arctic.

Motorcycling may be seen as both a peripheral and a core activity. It is doubly peripheral in having a distinct and well-documented subculture (Pinch and Reimer, 2012) with, in addition, clear liminal aspects related to the affiliated need to escape – hence the particular attraction of peripheral journeys. Yet it is also core in terms of

a significant growing mainstream, the embodied nature of experiences and the trend of destinations increasingly fulfilling the various needs of motorcyclists, most of whom originate from more populous areas. This chapter examines the experiential facets of the sector by looking at the characteristics of this activity in Arctic regions, with a focus on northern Norway. While these regions have been historically peripheral, they are now accessible to all manner of drive tourists and therefore perhaps deserve the label of 'near periphery'. Indeed, commentators on the Arctic Highway of Norway (the main trunk route in the region, designated the E6) have noted that 'no other continuous highway so penetrates the Arctic and reaches so near to the pole' (Douglas, 1972: 11). The arbitrary 'end' of this route (for there are multiple branches and termini along its length) is found at North Cape (itself on a branch route, the E69), which constitutes the final destination of many motorcycling tourists undertaking this journey. Insights are provided from a research visit in June 2015 following the seminar where many of the chapters in this book were developed. In addition to observations of motorcycle tourists and tourism businesses, discussions were held with riders, tourism officers and destination organization managers in the region. To this is added significant internet coverage of both individual and organized trips to North Cape by motorcycle, to provide a range of findings regarding motorcycle tourism behaviour, motivations and management issues.

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Motorcycling as Core

While motorcycles are clearly a method of transport, their use in supporting leisure activity has a long history (Healey, 2011). Motorcycle numbers have increased in recent years as a reflection of this popularity. For example, the number of motorcycles currently licensed in the UK – 1.4 million – is more than double the numbers licensed in the mid-1990s, while cars have proportionally seen a much smaller increase over the same period. There has also been a shift to larger capacity motorcycles and an increase in the average age of motorcyclists, with half of all active motorcyclists now aged 40 or over (DfT, 2009). The causes of this ageing trend are complex but include nostalgia for motorcycle travel and increased disposable incomes for older age cohorts, and the barriers of increases in licence costs and insurance premiums for younger riders. The aging demographics of this group have meant that, increasingly, motorcycles are used for leisure purposes rather than commuting. Motorcycling differs from the major forms of powered vehicular tourism in that the driving of the vehicle is a major part of the attraction. While many other forms of travel value the journey as much as the destination, touring by motorcycle is an immersive experience, the intensity of which is shared perhaps only by certain forms of off-road (Carson and Taylor, 2008) or classic/sports car motoring, as well as some forms of non-powered transport.

There are, subsequently, discernible links between the motorcycling sector and the adventure tourism sector. Both, for example, share an attraction of perceived risk. Visit Wales defines the adventure activity sector as ‘activities that are focused upon engaging with the natural environment in a physically and mentally challenging manner, where skill acquisition and an element of risk management are central to the experience’ (Visit Wales, 2011). On-road motorcycling’s engagement with the natural environment is based largely on the scenic qualities of the landscape through which the participant travels, and a much higher feeling of immersion in that landscape which comes from the lack of a rigid frame around one’s body. For a motorcyclist, the engagement with

the environment is skills-based, has a high degree of physical and mental challenge and relies on constant risk assessment. This leads to a feeling of ‘flow’ identified by a number of authors as being important in active tourism pursuits (see for example Cater, 2006a; Buckley, 2012). In this sense, then, motorcyclists are adventure seekers, and it may be appropriate for marketing organizations to cross-target this sector.

The motorcycle tourism sector is economically significant. In the UK the Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA) estimated that motorcycle-related tourism expenditure in the UK is around £569 million, supporting approximately 13,250 tourism jobs (MCIA, 2010). Many peripheral locations around the world benefit disproportionately from the influx of these visitors. For example the author estimated that, despite being a much smaller economy, the direct contribution of motorcycle tourism to Wales was over £70 million in 2011 (Cater, 2012). Several factors serve to increase the impact of motorcycle tourists in relation to other road-based visitors: (i) motorcyclists are less able to carry all of the goods and services that they might need on the motorcycle, and will therefore purchase more at the destination itself or along the way; and (ii) travelling by motorcycle is a physically demanding activity and therefore requires more frequent stops, which is also required because of smaller fuel tanks.

Despite their popularity, there has also been a long-standing association of motorcycles with a subculture that is alternative to the mainstream. The lack of interest in the motorcycle tourism sector may be due to a perceived image of rebellious bikers, which is at odds with their current demographic. Rather, today motorcycling is a growing leisure sector targeted at affluent, well-educated and older individuals. Much like aesthetes of centuries before, motorcyclists often seek out the sublime natural landscapes of peripheral regions. As Botterill *et al.* note, peripheral areas are ‘often noted for the beauty of their landscapes and seascapes, which may be expressed in a very dramatic way’ (2000: 10). Furthermore, coastal and mountain areas are endowed with the sinuous roads that motorcyclists favour over featureless and tiring highways.

Types of Motorcycle Tourism

In an early project to promote motorcycle tourism to the region, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (2006) identified four major groups of tourists travelling by motorcycle: independent travellers; clubs that organize tours and rallies; specialist motorcycle tour operators; and bikers attending events. The latter are significant, with an event such as the Isle of Man TT races being one of the major attractions to that destination, drawing upwards of 60,000 visitors (compared with a resident population of 85,000) and contributing over £50 million to the island's economy. There is a typology of bikers which may be broadly demarcated as sports bikers (newer and faster bikes), cruisers (more comfortable touring bikes), classic bikers (vintage and heritage models) and trail bikers (off-road motorcyclists). In recent years there has been significant growth in the so-called 'adventure sport' market. This calls for bikes similar in style to off-road motorcycles but predominantly designed for, and capable of, on-road use. Often they will have features similar to machines traditionally included in the touring category; for example fairings, luggage carrying capacity and increased comfort (MCIA, 2010).

There have been efforts by stakeholders in peripheral destinations to harness the potential of the motorcycle tourism market. The Motorcycle Scotland project has aimed to promote the rural region of Dumfries & Galloway as a motorcycle-touring destination, and received £23,000 of European Union LEADER (rural development support) funding. The vehicle for this project is the development and marketing of a route-based website at www.motorcyclescotland.com. This lists biker-friendly businesses in southern Scotland and aims to increase the value of motorcycle tourism to the region, targeting UK and international bikers. There is also advice on green biking and links to carbon offsetting schemes. The project also aims to: (i) increase the benefits to motorcyclists through discounts and signposting of biker facilities; (ii) make the website sustainable and raise additional income for its further development, including implementation of an e-newsletter; (iii) attract both UK and international visitors by

targeting ferry companies, motorcycle clubs and specialist travel agents; and (iv) increase the number of motorcycle tourists staying overnight at biker-friendly accommodation and spending money in the region (Motorcycle Scotland, 2009).

The long-distance motorcycle market

Although long-distance motorcycle trips are not new (Hall, 2013), they have certainly become more visible. In 2004 the documentary *Long Way Round* with actors Ewan McGregor and Charlie Borman popularized the extreme long-distance motorcycle tour (Elixir Films, 2004). The documentary followed the exploits of the pair as they attempted to ride west to east around the northern hemisphere from London to New York across the Eurasian and North American land mass. Much of the ride took place in remote areas of Siberia, and along the infamous 'road of bones' built by Stalin. Although hard to prove directly, the series was probably responsible for increasing numbers of adventure motorcyclists generally, as well as huge sales growth for BMW, the manufacturer of the bikes used in the trip. In the UK, BMW sold over 10,000 of the model used in the programme between 2004 and 2014, and the bike continues to be one of the most popular in the country.

In a recent survey undertaken in Wales, almost half of all leisure motorcyclists had undertaken an overseas trip by motorcycle (Cater, 2012). Examples of popular long-distance trips include those to the Arctic Circle in Alaska, often as an endpoint of a Pan-American Highway trip; or crossing Australia, particularly the open desert of the Nullarbor Plain. There are a growing number of dedicated tour operators catering to this increased demand, for example GlobeBusters (www.globebusters.com), which was founded in 2002 by Kevin and Julia Sanders when they set a new world record for circumnavigating the world by motorcycle in just 19.5 days. This was followed in 2003 by a second world record for riding from Alaska across North, Central and South America to the south of Argentina in 35

days. This 'Trans Americas' route was then repeated in 2005 as their first motorcycle tour, taking a 'more leisurely' 19 weeks. A successful business has since been built around organizing and delivering tours to many destinations across the world, including Africa, Asia and the Americas. It has achieved significant growth and has a current turnover of £500,000. It employs three full-time staff at its base in South Wales and another six freelance and support riders and staff to help deliver the tours as required. Globe-Busters delivers a range of tours involving different locations and durations, from 10 days to 20 weeks, and typically accommodates groups of between 8 and 18 riders. These substantial trips are usually booked 1–2 years in advance, can cost up to £20,000 per rider and current levels of demand project significant future growth. Initial expectations that these are likely to be 'once in a lifetime' trips appear to have underestimated demand, as repeat business is strong and over a quarter of customers have already toured with the company.

Tourism at the North Cape

A popular long-distance motorcycle destination in Europe is the North Cape (or Nordkapp) of Norway, the highest latitude of the continent (Fig. 16.1). Strictly speaking the site celebrated as North Cape is neither the furthest north (there is a small promontory slightly further east known as Knivskjelodden), nor part of the mainland (it is part of the island Magerøya in Finnmark province). However, being situated on a spectacular 300-metre cliff looking out over the Barents Sea, combined with easy access to the site, has meant that North Cape has been a popular tourist destination since the 1870s, with Thomas Cook pioneering tours there as long ago as 1875. Consequently the site has also attracted a significant amount of academic interest (for example Jacobsen, 1997, 2000, 2015). Indeed, North Cape is perhaps in contrast to most Arctic tourism sites, where tourism numbers are relatively low, as here 'road access has enabled hundreds of thousands of



Fig. 16.1. Motorcyclist with BMW GS at the North Cape/Nordkapp (photo courtesy of Miquel Silvestre).

tourists to access the end of the world' (Lemelin and Johnston, 2008: 32), creating at times a semblance of 'mass tourism'.

Numbers of motorcycling tourists are dwarfed by the numerous cruise ship visitors. These dock in Honningsvåg as part of a tour of northern Norway, and are transported by tour buses to North Cape itself, often for the peak midnight period. Viewing the midnight sun above the horizon is a highlight of a visit in the summer months, as it is visible as a complete disc between 14th May and 30th July (Douglas, 1972). A significant number of camper vans and drive tourists also visit the site, although tourism there is still highly seasonal. The focus is on the 2–3-month summer period for, as noted by Botterill *et al.*, 'weather restrictions are often a feature of European peripheral areas' (2000: 11). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the weather at North Cape is remarkably mild for its location, owing to the influence of the North Atlantic Drift, or Gulf Stream. Being above 71° north, the site is equivalent to central Greenland or the North Slope of Alaska, yet does not have the temperature extremes of these locations, remaining free of sea ice year round. This relatively high degree of seasonality means that the fishing industry is still the most significant economic sector in the province, but there has also been recent growth in winter tourism to the region, associated in particular with viewing the northern lights (*aurora borealis*). Winter visits to the site are facilitated by scheduled convoys leaving Honningsvåg, led by snow ploughs.

Tourism to northern Norway has developed significantly in recent decades, moving on from a situation of 'unrealised potential' described by observers in the 1970s (Douglas, 1972). Today a large multi-level visitor centre at North Cape built in 1988 has a cinema, restaurants and souvenir shops, and hosts over 200,000 visitors annually. The development of the site has long been a contentious issue, with visitors as far back as the 1970s in awe of the landscape being 'less impressed by the commercialism of the North Cape Hall' (Douglas, 1972: 189). These sentiments have continued, particularly for motor-based tourists, with a third of foreign motorists at the turn of the century considering North Cape to be too commercialized (Jacobsen, 2000). Other commentators have noted the attempts by management to

harness the drama of the site, 'unveiling' the midnight sun from behind curtains to music in the glass-fronted hall (Jensen, personal communication, 2011). The authenticity of the site as an unblemished natural phenomenon is made more problematic by a display commemorating the large numbers of Thai visitors following the visit of Thailand's King Chulalongkorn in 1907. Indeed, Jacobsen has noted that there is an over-reliance on the site as a 'monumental and romantic destination' rather than as a 'representation of the northern edge of the European world and a place one should see, [which] is the main potential for bringing new motorists to the Cape' (2000: 88).

Peripheral Motorcyclist Motivations and Behaviour

Although the majority of motorcyclists visiting North Cape are travelling independently, there are several specialist tour operators that do cater for this market. These tours generally last around 2 weeks, starting and finishing in Oslo, although some one-way tours are also available. North Cape is used in the marketing of these trips as the ultimate goal, and the site features strongly in the promotional imagery. There is some variation in the services and pricing of these tours, often depending on whether the client wishes to hire a motorcycle. Examples include £2000 for a 16-day tour on the customer's own motorcycle (www.worldmotorcycletours.co.uk), €5000 including motorcycle hire (www.edelweissbike.com) or US\$10,000 including hire and only one way (www.ayresadventures.com). Many of these firms offer North Cape trips alongside other long-distance journeys, although it is perhaps notable that the relative ease of access does limit the opportunities for these companies to offer viable packages to a market that is usually more independent.

North Cape motorcyclists whom the author spoke to expressed a range of different motivations for visiting the site. Perhaps surprisingly, visitors had a wide variety of experience, with this being either the first major long-distance trip or one of many. Age and experience did not necessarily correspond, as I met two 'born

again' bikers in their 60s who had not previously completed a long-distance trip. Although the site is remote, the relative ease of access compared to other long-distance destinations does attract relative novices. Nevertheless, motorcyclists do still approach the trip as an adventurous one, with the manager of the Honningsvåg tourism office suggesting that this sector approached its trip as an expedition, with a significant amount of prior planning involved (personal communication, June 2015).

As North Cape is often 'the end of their pilgrimage' (Jacobsen, 2015: 130), there is a perceived demarcation of the site as the end of the road and end of a continent, with motorcyclists wanting to 'go to the end of the world – as I've never been there before' (Swiss motorcyclist, personal communication, June 2015). In common with other tourists they visited North Cape because they wanted to experience the end of the earth that the site represents, an imaginary described well in Hererro and Roseman's recent volume highlighting the attraction of places known literally or figuratively as 'Finis-terre' (2015). However, it is not only the goal of North Cape that features in the motivations of motorcyclists, with the journey being equally significant. Two-wheeled visitors felt that long-distance motorcycling gave them a deep 'impression of nature' as well as being able to 'have fun with driving', echoing the immersive nature of the experience alluded to above.

A very dynamic weather situation at North Cape does create challenges for visitors, particularly if they do not intend spending a significant amount of time at the site, and may preclude the expected view of the midnight sun, as this motorcyclist (Rideinwild, 2014) described:

I've seen a very thick fog in front of me. That was really disappointing. I've arrived to the entry toll b[oth], where you need to pay to enter the Nordkapp area (go for a cheaper ticket, still quite expensive by international standards) – and just as I passed the toll booths the fog cleared and it was sunny again – I could see the Nordkapp right in front of me! Its amazing feeling as I parked my bike and walked to the famous globe, had a walk around – the views are great, but it's more the feeling of achievement that was sooo great!

Motorcyclists visiting North Cape tend to follow a route that will take in the fjords of the western coast of Norway on either the outward or return journey, and use a quicker (albeit less scenic) route through Finland or Sweden for the other leg. There is a wide variety of age ranges: on the day I visited I spoke to a pair of German men in their 60s on a 5-week trip on classic motorcycles; a Swiss couple in their 40s taking a 2-week trip on new BMW GS motorcycles; and a student travelling alone. Indeed, the dominance of the BMW GS series as the motorbike of choice described above was noted by the manager of the Honningsvåg tourism office, and indeed the place is promoted by BMW (Fig. 16.2). Generally the motorcyclists expressed high levels of satisfaction with their trip, although there were some complaints about the availability and service provided by restaurants in the region, particularly in Sweden, where there were both limited numbers of outlets and tendencies to close too early. Nevertheless the condition of the roads was felt to be very good. Motorcyclists may require specialist mechanical help on such a lengthy journey and specialist service centres in the Norwegian towns of Alta and Laksalev can provide these facilities.

Motorcyclists use a variety of accommodation, with observation and discussion illustrating that camping, hiring of huts and staying in hotels are all popular. Jacobsen (2015) estimates that there are 16 enterprises offering tourist accommodation in the area, although none specifically target motorcyclists. Other regions have developed 'bikers welcome' schemes to encourage the development of motorcycle-friendly accommodation, and this could be developed in Finnmark. Many motorcyclists would like to camp at North Cape itself, given its importance as the final destination of the journey. Although the authorities do tolerate some informal camping, there are currently no facilities for overnight visitors. Another practice I observed was the desire to take the motorbike itself to the North Cape sculpture, a large globe located in the main pedestrian area of the complex at the top of the cliff (Fig. 16.3). While this is difficult because of the large crowds, it again illustrates the strong bonds that motorcyclists have with their vehicle, with the visit being an achievement of both person and machine, each being figuratively an extension of the other.



Fig. 16.2. BMW advertisement using North Cape (photo courtesy of BMW Motorrad Italia/Garrigosa Studio).

Motorcycle Safety and Sustainability

One particular issue on the roads of northern Norway is encountering the numerous herds of reindeer in the region. Advice given to motorists is to note if the herd has split on either side of the road: this is a more dangerous situation as the herd will attempt to come together when a vehicle approaches. The generally desolate character of the region and lack of vehicles relative to the home regions of the tourists may compound this problem, as noted by a motorcyclist (Jones, 2007):

But even on these desolate roads I managed to nearly hit a suicidal reindeer which bolted from nearby trees straight into my path. I cleared it by about an inch.

While motorcyclists expect to be faced with the wild weather characteristic of the Arctic, they are perhaps not fully prepared for the ferocity or variability of the climate, a point emphasized in informal discussions with the manager of the Honningsvåg tourism office. Visiting North Cape by motorcycle is not really

feasible before the middle of May, but even then conditions can pose a challenge. This may prove a problem for motorcyclists wanting to experience some degree of solitude and avoid the peak summer season in July. In May 2015, a lone motorcyclist had to be rescued after an accident on the main road when there was still too much snow. Indeed, motorcyclists' descriptions of their experiences (Hawksley, 1996) highlight the challenging nature of the riding, the trip to North Cape being:

one of the most frightening I can remember in 27 years of riding! Twenty degrees of lean in the wrong direction around most bends and each time we came from the lee of a mountain the wind would hit from a different direction. To make matters worse, within ten miles the cloud dropped and not only could we not point the bikes in the right direction but we couldn't see in which direction they needed pointing!

Of course the challenge of riding in the conditions experienced in these peripheral areas is to some degree part of the attraction, and undeniably part of the narrative capital



Fig. 16.3. Motorcyclists at the North Cape Globe Sculpture (photo courtesy of Helen Strong).

gained by engaging in the experience. Nevertheless, the local tourism and transport departments are aware of the threats to motorcyclists in particular and are keen to provide advice to 'respect the weather' and to 'keep upright'. However, authorities need to take particular care in the advice provided to visitors from more southerly countries, especially regarding road conditions. For example, I discovered that a road marked as a scenic trunk route on a tourist map was in poor condition and blocked by snow in June. There is thus the opportunity to provide some motorcycle-specific advice on driving hazards and road conditions and routes, such as that provided on the Wales by Bike website (www.walesbybike.co.uk).

Continued popularity of the North Cape site with motorcyclists may pose a challenge to future sustainability of the attraction. Jacobsen (2015) documents how, since the road to North Cape was finally completed in 1956, the goal had been promoted by guidebooks and

increasingly became a 'race to the cape', with surrounding areas much less visited. As one motorcycle visitor noted (Jones, 2007):

Then on the seventh day we rode the long stretch to the North Cape. This was the coldest part of the trip, with gale-force winds from the Arctic Ocean. But soon we were there. At 71 degrees latitude we were at the most northerly point in Europe, which felt great. But we didn't stay too long because we still had over 2500 miles to ride on our return journey.

In fact North Cape, like many other pilgrimage destinations, has always suffered from a bucket list mentality. One of the earliest visitors, the priest Francesco Negri in 1664, claimed that 'having made it here, my curiosity is satisfied' (cited in Jacobsen, 2015). This highlights one of the enduring problems of peripheral pilgrimages, which are often associated with a wilderness goal. Stonehouse and Crosbie (1995) illustrate how tourist motivations to visit the Antarctic Peninsula and to tread

'where no human has done so before' are inherently unsustainable. Alternatively, there is opportunity for destination management organizations to develop peripheral tourism with an eye towards encouraging visitors to experience the unique features of the landscape and people of the north along the journey, as well as at the end goal. Indeed, Cater (2012) has noted the very significant social motivations of motorcycle tourists, who favour being able to stop at locations along the way with other motorcyclists to experience both the places and peoples they are riding through as well as sharing their adventures with each other.

Conclusion

An undeniably high degree of place-making from both motorcycle and other visitors has created the site at North Cape. As Maher has noted, the Arctic has been inundated by a plethora of media interest in recent years (2015). A significant number of online blog posts and travel narratives from motorcyclists and tour operators, some of which have been used in this chapter, reinforce the myth of North Cape as a journey to conquer. Cater (2006b) has shown how the growth of adventure tourism in New Zealand similarly benefited from its identity as both *near* (to western standards of safety) and *far* (being a location also at the end of the world). The danger is that other meanings of peripheral areas become lost, for:

the growth of tourism in locations that have historically been considered geographically remote plays a major role in the consolidation and transformation of often long-standing and

powerful cultural imaginaries about 'the edges of the world'.

(Herrero and Roseman, 2015: 1)

These are but further examples of the manner in which tourism distorts traditional models of core and periphery (Saarinen, 2015), bringing some places in the periphery into its control, but neglecting others.

It is widely recognized that Arctic regions are facing 'rapid environmental and social changes' (Grimwood, 2015: 380), and that this poses problems for the management of tourism activities in particular. As Maher notes, the Arctic is a region of 'delicate supply, yet growing demand' (2015: 34), and the growth of motorcycle tourism is but one expression of this. Despite its ongoing popularity, drive tourism seems to have fallen out of favour with research and destination organizations as a result of a poor image relating to the current unsustainability of the transport form. Motor-based tourism in general is unpopular in promotion terms because of concerns with use of fossil fuel. However, since most motorcycles use less fuel than the average car, there is potential here to promote motorcycle tourism as a more sustainable form of drive tourism. In addition to the safety issues described above, more difficult challenges may be faced in maintaining the *finis terre* environment that all tourists to North Cape seek. This may also offer the solution, however, for motorcyclists, motorists and other visitors are all drawn to this site not only for its geographical significance but also its inviolable and ongoing attraction simply as a 'bleak, wind battered promontory' (Jacobsen, 2000: 74). Undeniably the contemporary motorcyclist visitor, mostly middle aged and not so wild any more, is able to regain some wildness from this periphery.

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17 Experiences of Marine Adventurers in the Canadian Arctic

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Introduction

Marine tourism in the Canadian Arctic is changing in important ways, partly because of changing environmental conditions. Summer ice coverage has declined considerably, resulting in greater accessibility for ships, but tourism vessels have been the greatest beneficiaries (Pizzolato *et al.*, 2014). With improved physical access, global attention on climate change in the Arctic has enhanced motivational access through increased awareness of the region as a destination. With marine tourism growing, so too has the interest of governing agencies and other stakeholders trying to exploit new opportunities and more effectively managing the costs of tourism-related change. Marine tourism development in the Canadian Arctic has developed slowly, focusing on land-based activities and air accessibility due to distances and lack of roads. It has been limited because the extent of ice has prevented vessels without ice-reinforced hulls from travelling very far. The voyage of the expedition cruise ship *M/S Lindblad Explorer* in 1984 through the Northwest Passage was a first for a cruise tourism vessel (Marsh and Staple, 1995). In the 1980s tourism began to be viewed as a means of economic development for small communities, particularly in what is now Nunavut Territory, as other economic activities were being curtailed (Robbins, 2007). But despite development initiatives and community enthusiasm, tourism growth and investment did not

meet expectations (Robbins, 2007). Tourism in much of Arctic Canada has not competed successfully with resource extraction for infrastructure and development support. However, renewed interest in marine tourism has been evident since the early 2000s, especially in Nunavut where most Arctic marine tourism activity is taking place and where there is still tremendous potential to capitalize on favourable conditions.

Nunavut Tourism was created in the mid-1990s as an industry membership organization responsible for marketing, product development and tourism training, with planning, licensing and enforcement the responsibility of the territorial government (Robbins, 2007). Strategic planning for tourism in Nunavut in the 2000s emphasized its suitability for communities, particularly in relation to supporting Inuit culture and as a stable alternative to resource extraction, which would diversify the economy (Viken *et al.*, 2014). In 2014 the first official tourism sector strategy was established by the government, following community consultations, survey research and a collaborative stakeholder process (Viken *et al.*, 2014). The territory now hosts about 30,000 tourists annually (both pleasure and business visitors), with most arriving by air (Nunavut Tourism, 2011). Much of the strategic plan responds to identified regional problems such as insufficient tourism-specific infrastructure and inadequate training; however, of particular relevance to this chapter is

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the component of the strategy dealing with marine tourism. Recognizing the recent changes and development potential, and also requirements to regulate tourism activities, the strategy identifies the need for a Cruise Ship and Yacht Management Plan to help communities assess the potential benefits, and prepare products and services to serve this emerging market. Johnston *et al.* (2016) group concerns over pleasure craft growth into the four categories of: (i) visitor behaviour; (ii) services, facilities and infrastructure; (iii) control; and (iv) planning and development. To respond to the identified deficits in management preparedness for pleasure craft development, they recommended the prioritization of research on the sector and effective regulations to support its management within the context of a strategic approach to planning such development. Following much work, the territory now has a management plan to support and control marine tourism. It might not fulfil all the recommendations suggested by Johnston *et al.* (2016), but it is nonetheless a significant step forward.

Cruise ship itineraries have increased since 2006 (Dawson *et al.*, 2014) and pleasure craft are now the fastest-growing category, especially since 2010 (Johnston *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, Stewart and Dawson (2011) note a westward shift in ship activity, reflecting enhanced accessibility of the Northwest Passage. Pleasure craft concentrations have likewise shifted further west and north, and average length of visit has increased (Johnston *et al.*, 2015). Vessel-days have become more concentrated in the eastern part of the Northwest Passage, northern Baffin Bay and the northern and western parts of the Canadian Arctic (Johnston *et al.*, 2015). These spatial shifts reinforce the influence of changes in accessibility on the growing pursuit of marine-based adventure tourism in the Canadian Arctic. The pleasure craft category as used in the regulation of vessels, including recording their presence in the Canadian Arctic, contains sail boats, motor yachts, row boats and other small non-commercial tourist vessels. These small craft allow adventurers and the wealthy to visit 'new' destinations through self-directed and self-reliant travel. This chapter examines the motivations, experiences and reflections of pleasure craft travellers, who in this context are viewed as independent expeditioners or adventurers at the

frontier of tourism exploration. This research uses their travel blogs to understand how the experience itself contributes to adventure and uncertainty and how they manage the 'adventure' beyond motivation – the uncertainty, the need for self-reliance, and dealing with incidents. Emphasized here is the draw of the peripheral and remote, and the experiences – positive and negative – of peripherality.

Methods

Travel blogs are increasingly popular online narratives which contain valuable information for researchers about destinations and tourism experiences (e.g. Herring *et al.*, 2004; Schmallegger and Carson, 2008; Wakeford and Cohen, 2008; Poynter, 2010; Banyai, 2012; Roura, 2012). Public availability makes them an important data source, including for polar yacht cruises, as 'many [cruisers] establish their own websites and blogs and encourage friends, family, and others to follow their expeditions' (Orams, 2010: 19). The few and dispersed marine adventurers, otherwise, are difficult to access as subjects of research. Blogs are 'reliable and trustworthy because their authors are tourists who describe their personal experiences' and because 'the freedom of expression on the blog websites enables tourists to provide more honest, richer data about their perception of the factors that affect their satisfaction' (Wang *et al.*, 2014: 124). Nonetheless, a disadvantage is that they contain only the information that authors choose to record and thus embody the individual's biases. Bryman and Teevan (2005) emphasize the importance of assessing credibility in document analysis. Though vessel blogs may omit relevant information about the trip, credibility is likely because most blogs can be seen as 'representative of the "real" thought and feelings of consumers' and are often regarded as personal online diaries, thereby providing valuable insights into travel experiences (Carson, 2008: 112).

An existing inventory of pleasure craft vessels for 1990–2013 (Johnston *et al.*, 2016) was used to systematically search the internet for accessible blogs. Sixty were recorded, but 21 non-English language blogs were removed to

avoid inadvertent internet translation errors (Table 17.1).

This blog set does not necessarily represent all the experiences of pleasure craft tourists in Arctic Canada for the period, but rather represents only those available in this format at the time the blogs were collected. Moreover, given the abundant text, not all 39 blogs could be analysed in depth. For example, several blogs contained entries over a 2-year period with copious information on planning, as well as the actual travel and later voyages to other regions. To manage the analysis, ten key characteristics were identified so that a representative sample of content could be taken of the 39 blogs over two roughly equal periods to limit bias related to

change over time (Table 17.2). The ten characteristics were recorded for each blog, resulting in 12 that were analysed in depth.

All selected blog material was reviewed by design, links, photos, videos and trip information (e.g. preparation, vessel type). The blogs were coded manually using an initial coding sheet reflecting the study purpose, and existing literature. To ensure a comprehensive approach as per Banwart (2002), a trial blog was used to test the method and, throughout analysis, emerging codes were added regularly and blogs were crosschecked repeatedly to ensure consistency. The code sheet used in Banwart (2002) maintained categories from prior research but new categories were added as warranted and 'certain categories were refined to identify the presence/absence of variables in addition to the overall dominant presence' (Banwart, 2002: 119). Manual coding is widely used (e.g. Young and Foot, 2005; Dimitrova and Neznanski, 2006; Pfeil *et al.*, 2006) and was selected for this research because of the large variations in content and presentation in the blogs.

The code sheet used in this study recorded for 799 attributes in 30 categories. Content categories included vessel description, crew details, voyage reasons, preparation, route details, sites visited and key words such as 'safety' and 'danger'. Content analysis was used to determine presence of specified words and concepts using indicators and definitions. This research is based upon a structured systematic approach using frequencies of occurrence to ascertain the experiences of the investigated pleasure craft

Table 17.1. Number of vessels with blogs per year from 2001–2013.

Year	Blogs	Vessels
2001	1	6
2002	0	3
2003	3	9
2004	0	6
2005	3	10
2006	0	6
2007	1	9
2008	3	7
2009	4	13
2010	3	14
2011	5	25
2012	6	26
2013	10	34
Total	39	168

Table 17.2. Characteristics of total blog population (n = 39) and of sample blog population (n = 12).

	2001–2010		2011–2013	
	Total	Sample	Total	Sample
Year of voyage	18	6	22	7 ^a
Multiple voyages	4	2	5	2
Not in government records	2	0	1	1
Type of vessel: sailboat	12	4	9	4
Research motivation	6	2	6	2
Adventure motivation	5	2	13	4
1–5 persons on board	11	4	13	4
6+ persons on board	4	2	6	2
Blog length: 1–24 months	11	4	10	4
Blog length: 24+ months	6	2	11	3

^a One blog contained several years of voyage so represents both time periods

travellers. Considerable variations were evident in the level of detail, technical information included, use of photographs and videos, and overall blog focus or intention. Furthermore, some blogs clearly were written by multiple authors with different writing styles and levels of interest in recording information; we maintained the vessel and website author references to ensure consistent association, but could not do the same with individual contributors who did not necessarily name themselves. Nonetheless, the blogs all emphasize route information and daily challenges, and are less focused on wildlife and landscape. This is expected given the nature of the travel and its focus on self-reliance, problem-solving and independence (cf. Roura, 2012).

Experiences

Though the word 'adventure' was used only in four of the twelve blogs as a specific trip reason, it became clear from analysis that actual adventure – defined broadly – was a key motivation. Adventure was entwined with other motivations such as achievement, competition, discovery and research, and bringing awareness to a cause. For travellers aboard *Teleport* (Bray and Taunton, 2007) this was described as follows:

To get through in one season (even for larger, faster yachts) is a race, and considering as we're up there for the experience, and both being photographers we want to be able to have the time to stop, explore and take photos etc. rather than having to go-go-go all the time. This'll make for a much more exciting adventure and experience on all levels!

Aboard the *Arctic Joule*, the bloggers note that 'there is obviously an element of adventure but for all four of us, there is an enormous amount of meticulous planning that has to be done to just get to the start line' (Mainstream Last First, 2013), suggesting that planning and uncertainty avoidance was foremost in their minds. Another individual aboard the *Arctic Joule* (Mainstream Last First, 2013) wrote:

I decided to undertake this expedition because by doing it myself and my teammates can make a strong statement in the battle against climate change. Doing it is very important to me. It's far

easier for me to explain this to my girls, that I acted on my passions, than to lament to them that I didn't act on my passions because of them . . . What we're trying to do this summer has never been done before. We are hoping to row, without sail or motor in approximately 75 days, through the maze of islands and ice sheets of the Canadian archipelago that once represented a closed door for mariners attempting to navigate a sea route over the Americas in a single season.

Adventure is described in the experience – through preparation and equipment, daily challenges and decisions about proceeding – and this is where uncertainty becomes more obvious, with reference made to adventure and challenge as part of the experience. Sometimes the challenge relates to remoteness in that necessities are unavailable; sometimes to the environment itself as weather conditions impede progress or constitute danger; sometimes to equipment being used or proving insufficient. All blogs to varying degrees made reference to preparation, including equipment, provisions, route and weather research, and safety precautions. Seven blogs described the modifications performed on their vessels and seven blogs reported on crew experiences, with some indicating that a reliance on technology precluded the need for extensive training. For example, a blogger on *Le Vagabond* stated: 'as for training our knowledge in navigation, not much needed usually thanks to GPS and electronic charts' (Association Nord-Est and Brossier, 2001–2011). The blog for *Northabout* noted that:

this project brings together a wealth of sailing and expedition organizational experience. People who have achieved success in wild and remote corners of the world including Antarctica, Everest's North Ridge, sailing in north polar ice and to Greenland by Galway Hooker.

(Northabout, n.d.)

A realistic view of preparation and uncertainty is provided on the blog for *Arctic Joule* (Mainstream Last First, 2013):

So the scene is set for what will be one of the most difficult things I have ever done in my life. It's not necessarily the physical challenge that makes this so difficult but more the cloud of uncertainty that Mother Nature will cast over us on this expedition. We can prepare and train all

we like but ultimately she will decide if we make it across the North West Passage or not.

All bloggers took preparation and safety extremely seriously, but did not all provide copious information about all their actions. This is why it is notable when particular aspects are mentioned, as this indicates their importance in the experience relative to many other elements viewed as normal, inconsequential or expected in the Arctic.

Given evidence of intense planning and preparation, it is notable when support services are described. It might be expected that the Canadian Government, playing a major role in the management of vessels in the Arctic through both support and regulation, would figure prominently in the blogs. This was mostly the case, with reference in particular to the Canadian Coast Guard, Canadian Ice Service and Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Services mentioned included ice-breaking and search-and-rescue. All mentions of the Canadian Coast Guard were complimentary, for example aiding and checking on vessels, updating crew on ice conditions and inviting crews to their ships for dinners and showers. Only two vessel blogs, in opposing ways, mentioned the reporting service NORDREG, the Northern Canada Vessel Traffic Services Zone Regulations, which also provides access to information and support. The blog for *Tokimata* (Garden *et al.*, 2012–2013) indicated that:

After some radio calls to the Coastguard it transpired that despite our advanced e-mails to NORDREG (the agency monitoring boat traffic in the NW Passage) no-one knew we were coming and therefore there was no customs or immigration in Tuk.

The blog for *Young Larry* (Dermot's NW Passage Voyage on Board *Young Larry*, 2010) noted:

Young Larry was on a lookout list that they receive at their daily morning briefing from the Canadian coordinating body, NORDREG. Nice to know that people are looking out for you. We do also update NORDREG with our passage plans so they would know if we are overdue.

Surprisingly, a non-affiliated individual in the region was mentioned multiple times in numerous blogs: Peter Semotiuk, a Cambridge Bay resident, who sailed through the Northwest

Passage in 1988, voluntarily runs a daily radio schedule for yachts transiting the passage. 'He is a real hero to many who have attempted the passage, whether or not they finally succeeded in getting through, acting as a primary point of contact and information' (Barry and Russell, 2011: 6). This sentiment is reinforced in the blog for *Bagan* (Theobald, 2009):

Over the past year I've been in touch with Peter Semotiuk regarding ice and planning and one of the very first things I did was arrange to meet up with him . . . To have finally been face to face with the man who supplied us with information and cheered us on during those two days was a meeting I'll never forget.

The blog for *Young Larry* (Dermot's NW Passage Voyage on Board *Young Larry*, 2010) confirmed the value of the information:

Our plan was to wait a bit for the latest ice reports to show Navy Board Inlet more definitely clearing. We also got a helpful email from Peter Semotiuk (who is the acknowledged expert on NW Passage ice conditions) saying that it wasn't yet definite that we could make it through and on balance possibly to wait a little.

Most blogs also reported the usefulness of information or resources obtained from fellow travellers. This included informal discussions about sea conditions in the blog for *Baloumn Gwen* with sailors from *Silent Sound* who were 'great, interesting & passionned [sic] by the adventure to attempt the Northwest Passage as we do' (Arctic Calling, 2009). The blog for *Teleport* notes the transfer of information guides for Alaska and Greenland with other pleasure craft travellers at a coincidental meeting in Tuktoyaktuk (Bray and Taunton, 2007).

Adventure Themes

Various keywords mentioned help to develop a sense of the adventure experience. These divide into four themes, the first of which is 'ice'. All but one vessel mentioned ice at least once and most discussed it repeatedly. Most blogs expressed surprise over the quick movement of Arctic ice, with wind direction shifts causing subsequent shifts in ice movement, thereby making or breaking the chance of passing through an area. There were many recorded incidents of

getting caught in ice fields after strong winds. This is captured in the blog for *Teleport* (Bray and Taunton, 2007):

I blinked groggily out the window and saw to my shock a bergy-bit no less than 20 meters from us! I exploded out of bed and into the cockpit, and the scene that surrounded us literally made me gape in horror. We were surrounded by bergy bits and growlers, hundreds of them, in the middle of a thick belt of ice, some rather large bits only meters from us as we bobbed around, slowly sailing in circles around them actually as the tiller had somehow slipped from where I'd cleated it.

The second theme is 'weather/climate'. All blogs contained keywords related to climate, with fog and winds the most frequent, reported in 11 blogs. These conditions were probably mentioned frequently because of the importance of fog and winds in visibility, the navigability of sea ice and safe passage. The blog for *Arctic Joule* (Mainstream Last First, 2013) elaborates:

It's Frank and my shift and we head out into a drizzly morning shrouded in arctic fog. Our visibility is a mere 50 meters and we travel solely by the aid of GPS and compass. It's an eerie sensation moving forward, seeing nothing in a milky blankness until the contorted form of a decaying chunk of ice glides past, a weary foot soldier returning home from some far off battle.

The third theme is 'navigation', mentioned by all blogs. 'GPS' and 'radar' were mentioned in ten blogs. Radar is considered highly desirable for Arctic waters and GPS systems have improved polar navigation significantly (Barry and Russell, 2011). Nevertheless, major difficulties still attend these technologies in their Arctic use, as described in the blog for *Jonathan III* (Van de Weg, n.d.):

Radar and C-map give different positions. Where am I? In a grey world we can only see the brown breakers forcefully running on the shallows. Also right ahead where it should be 6m deep. Full reverse when the forward looking sounder goes down to 2.5m. The swells break against the stern. According to C-map we should now hit the bottom but there is the spit, the depth increases so full to port now. Radar and chart-plotter are still arguing, so much for electronic navigation . . .

Further issues were described in the blog for *Teleport* (Bray and Taunton, 2007):

The electronic charts on our GPS chart plotter were way off – rocketing from one green barrel to the next, I watched anxiously as our supposed track on the screen cut right over shoals and even directly through the middle of small islands . . . We swapped to the other side of the island for better shelter (interestingly our GPS chart plotter showing that we a) anchored in the middle of the island, and b) had to sail an extra couple of miles as the island was in fact about a mile longer than shown – not the world's most accurate charts around here, despite them being this year's electronic issue).

Ten blogs reported problems with ice charts and seven with weather reports. Particular concerns with the Canadian charts are exemplified by the comment in the blog for the vessel *Tokimata* (Garden *et al.*, 2012–2013):

Although we have the detailed Canadian paper charts for this area, and electronic charts on our chart plotter, the area up the west side of King William Island is completely uncharted – just a big white space on the chart. So we had to keep a constant eye on the depth sounder, but it remained deep quite close into shore and we could anchor in 4m of water only 200 metres from the beach.

Every winter the large-scale movement of ice reshapes the seabed. Assumptions are sometimes incorrectly made that rocks and other natural features have all been charted and do not move. Inaccurate and incomplete charts greatly endanger pleasure craft vessels, as indicated in the blog for *Jonathan III* (Van de Weg, n.d.):

I am at the mast to shake out the last reef when a hard pounding sound vibrates through the boat. At first I have no idea what I did wrong, looking up the mast I hear shouting from the cockpit: '2 meter on the depth-sounder'. I turn on the engine full throttle, Mirek turns the wheel all the way over and Eirik is already pumping up the centreboard. We tack and feel immensely relieved when the bottom disappears from sight again. Pfff . . . Another good reason for a centreboard boat, you are not immediately stuck on a rock in the middle of nowhere. The rock is charted at 20m depth. Charts in the Arctic . . .

The fourth theme, 'incidents/safety', unites 18 affiliated keywords such as 'caution', 'close encounter', 'concern', 'damage' and 'danger'. All blogs reflected this theme, with 'stuck' and

'danger' being the most common. The blog for *Le Vagabond* (Association Nord-Est and Brossier, 2001–2011) demonstrates this experience:

5 miles away from King Point, where Amundsen's Gjoa spent her third wintering, a strong North wind suddenly packed the ice. Stuck again. Compression was high, so much so that Vagabond was pushed up, thanks to her hull's shape . . . Our position was not very comfortable, and during 2 days, we tried to get used to live in a 15° tilted environment. This time the pack ice was silent, no breathing, no moving, everything stuck with the powerful ice pressure.

This experience is also reported in the blog for *Young Larry* (Dermot's NW Passage Voyage on Board *Young Larry*, 2010):

I was off watch and trying to sleep in my berth in the fo'scle [sic] (for the non-nautical amongst you, that is the front pointy end) when I was disturbed by the always unpleasant sound of ice scrunching on the hull together with the engine going forward and astern. When I got up on deck it was clear we were well and truly stuck.

Safety is foremost in bloggers' minds as they pursue their goals. Use of the word 'danger' reflected the desire to remove or avoid potential hazards, rather than engage in any additionally challenging activities. This is evident in the blog for *Arctic Joule* (Mainstream Last First, 2013), which ultimately failed to cross the Northwest Passage:

The planned crossings have not been possible because of the ice coverage and the danger of ending up in a soup of massive icebergs. To avoid this we have had to stay much closer to the shore and skirt around the bays like one would in a smaller craft. The difficulty with this is that the ocean rowing boat is much more susceptible to wind. So the danger is that we are blown away from the shore out to the ice that lurks off shore. This is absolutely not an option as the boat would be destroyed and we would be in serious danger.

The blogs provide useful information about incidents, close calls, safety and danger. Clearly, not all incidents are reported to authorities; undoubtedly the daily challenges of ice conditions, weather, navigation and other events allow pleasure craft travellers to experience difficulty and solve problems using their own

resourcefulness and relying on their own preparation.

Conclusion

This chapter contributes to a greater understanding of adventure in the motivation and experience of pleasure craft travellers in peripheral regions, and enhances the growing literature on travel blogs more generally (e.g. Mack *et al.*, 2008; Schmallegger and Carson, 2008; Akehurst, 2009; Banyai and Glover, 2012), and how travellers use this medium to share experiences, convey feelings and reinforce identities (e.g. Carson, 2008; Bosangit *et al.*, 2009; Paris, 2011; Roura, 2012). Researching information that is freely available on the internet is not without challenges, since locating blogs and then making sense of prolific material, including technical terms and jargon, can be daunting (Carson, 2008; Banyai and Glover, 2012). While some blogs are succinct, others cover long time periods, include tremendous detail and are comprehensive rather than focused on the specific interest of a study. They also contain numerous images that are themselves central to the narrative. In this research, two of the 12 blogs analysed (*Teleport* and *Arctic Joule*) contained 37 videos of varying length.

Nonetheless, the analysis highlights how adventure, as a core motivation for visiting the Arctic periphery, is presented and reinforced through discussion of the experience of pleasure craft tourism, particularly the mastery of the tasks at hand and the often harsh sailing conditions. This research sheds lights on a group of travellers who are elusive and largely ignored. As adventure tourists, they are focused more on the activity – the challenge of an Arctic marine expedition – than on scenery and wildlife or interactions with local people (c.f. Lemelin and Wiersma, 2007; Lemelin and Dickson, 2012; Maher, 2012; Chanteloup, 2013; see also Roura, 2012). This confirms that travel opportunities made possible by the 'opening' of the Canadian Arctic to marine travel can be differentiated in important ways and that these independent expeditioners occupy a small but important group within the region's visitation spectrum. Further investigation is warranted to

determine the extent to which the attendant experiences qualify as 'iconic adventure' (Buckley, 2007), 'last-chance tourism' (Lemelin *et al.*, 2012) or even 'first chance tourism' (Johnston *et al.*, 2012), and are enhanced by peripherality, both real and perceived.

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18 Arctic Tourism in Russia: Attractions, Experiences, Challenges and Potentials

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Introduction

For a westerner, Arctic tourism in Russia is generally associated with atomic icebreaker vessels, pristine natural landscapes in vast peripheral areas with extreme conditions that are suitable for hunting and fishing, indigenous communities isolated from modern centres and, finally, in the far north, post-Soviet nostalgia related to abandoned military establishments. Of course, this represents only part of the picture of Russian Arctic tourism and is not dissimilar to other parts of the Arctic involved in tourism. However, there are many more nuances of tourism in the Russian Arctic that remain under-utilized or under-recognized. The Russian Arctic is one of the last great wildernesses on Earth and geographically encompasses the largest part of the Arctic within one country. Given that the Russian Arctic is still not yet fully discovered, a range of potential destinations and attractions exist that could be utilized for tourism development.

That being said, tourism development of the Russian Arctic is both ambiguous and problematic, leaving its potentials promising but unfulfilled. Russian authorities have taken measures to promote tourism in the Russian Arctic while at the same time the region has become more geopolitically interesting for Russia in terms of exploitation of natural resources, the recent ice-free Northern Sea Route and its military-strategic position. In addition, until

recently national parks and nature reserves have emphasized conservation above use, and this emphasis has been applied to the tourism industry. Subsequently, there are diverse interests that may collide with each other (Pashkevich and Stjernström, 2014).

In overview, tourism in the Russian Arctic is impaired by paradoxes as well as ambiguity. When discussing the correlation between geographical peripheries and experiential core in tourism, what are deemed challenges for tourism in the Russian Arctic could also be deemed its strengths and unique selling points. However, despite the high quality of the common-pool resources, tourism is still only in its early stages of development and most destinations are not well prepared for mass tourism.

Against this background, this chapter focuses on the specificities of Arctic tourism in the geographical peripheries of Russia, and highlights both potentials and challenges for tourism development in the Arctic islands and mainland territories. The description of Russian Arctic tourism is structured in accordance with the triple bottom line. Our goal is to put forward Russian Arctic tourism as something distinctly different although analogous in comparison with other parts of the Arctic. As Viken (2013) argues, the main body of literature on Arctic tourism has a slightly Anglo-American academic dominance that maintains problematic conceptualizations of the Arctic and marginalization of other perceptions. Therefore, this is an

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opportunity to supplement the image of tourism in the Russian Arctic by gathering extant research on this field, both internationally and in Russia.

Specificity of Arctic Tourism in Russia

Tourism in the Russian Arctic

The total area of the Arctic region of the world is about 25 million km², of which about 10 million km² are land and about 15 million km² are represented by water surfaces. Admittedly, of these, 3.8 and 6.8 million km², respectively, or around 40% in both cases, belong to Russia. Arguably, this large scale of territories suggests not only the greatest variety of natural and cultural Arctic environments in a single country, but also the possibilities for new discoveries. For example, Russian helicopter pilots and the geographers on board still discover small islands (up to 150–200 m long) in the Laptev Sea, not to mention in more distant areas of the Arctic Ocean (TASS, 2015). From a tourism perspective, some tourists then have the potential to become geographical discoverers.

The historical, cultural, natural and climatic specifics of each region of Russia's Arctic suggest the feasibility of different types of tourism. Depending on the region, there are favourable conditions for the development of sports and adventure tourism, reindeer safaris, dog sledding and skiing, as well as cultural, gastronomic, hunting and fishing, spear fishing, snowmobile tourism and other tourist activities. A promising area is ecotourism in national parks and reserves; specifically, observation of animals in their natural habitats.

Arctic tourism in Russia is represented by two distinct segments – *continental* (mainland) and *marine* (island). The continental (mainland) segment includes visiting Russian mainland territories, such as Murmansk Region, Republic of Karelia, Arkhangelsk Region, Republic of Komi, Nenets Autonomous District, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District, Taimyr Autonomous District, Evenki Autonomous District, Krasnoyarsk Territory, Republic of Yakutia, Magadan Region and Chukotka Autonomous District. The cost of a continental tour typically

varies from €1000 to several multiples of this, although short tours with modest accommodation for several days may cost as little as several hundred euros for local people and residents of neighbouring regions. The above-mentioned mainland regions are more or less inhabited lands with basic roads, hunting houses, deserted settlements, military and scientific bases. However, settlements of indigenous peoples can be located many dozens if not hundreds of kilometres away from each other.

Uniqueness of attractions and tourist experiences in Russian marine (island) Arctic

The marine (island) segment includes visiting Arctic islands, primarily Svalbard, Franz Josef Land, Novaya Zemlya and Severnaya Zemlya archipelagos, as well as Vaigach, Wrangel Islands and the North Pole. Tour prices in this segment usually start from €5000 to €6000 and up to €25,000 in the case of visiting the North Pole on atomic icebreakers such as *Yamal* or *50 Let Pobedy*, or by helicopter, sometimes with a few kilometres on skis after landing. A lower price exception exists for visa-free visits by Russian tourists to Spitsbergen (Svalbard). Here the price of a tour is typically around €3000 because of the relatively high degree of transport, infrastructure and accommodation development at this international destination.

On the islands and marine Arctic areas of Barents, Kara, Laptev, East-Siberian and Chukchi Sea, with the exception of Svalbard, there are no permanent residents, except for the dozens of workers in specially protected nature areas, and some military personnel. There is inadequate or practically no infrastructure. Because of the inaccessibility and high cost of marine (island) Arctic tourism, it is an exclusive type of tourism. To illustrate this, a comparison is made between the Russian Arctic archipelagos and Svalbard. Annually, about 80,000 tourists visit Svalbard, whereas about 800 tourists visit the archipelagos of Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya. The numbers are different despite the destinations being of comparable size, geographical location and tourist potential (Byzova and Smirennikova, 2012).

The following highlights how rarely trips are undertaken in this region. From 1977 to 2015, vessels from different countries visited the

North Pole around 100 times, of which around 75 were tourist cruises on Soviet or Russian icebreakers. At the same time, about 90% of tourists visiting the marine (island) territories of the Russian Arctic were international tourists. The number of tourists to the 'Russian Arctic' was heavily influenced in 2015 by the news that the *Atomflot* company, a subsidiary of the Russian state atomic corporation Rosatom, announced it would cease operating commercial tourist tours in the Arctic region on the nuclear-powered icebreakers. In 2016, the organization planned to switch the icebreakers from tourism to cargo purposes. This announcement led to a higher demand for the tours in 2015, and a record number of more than 1220 tourists from 41 countries visited the national park. The tourists were 277 Chinese, 195 Germans, 133 Swiss, 82 Americans, 76 Austrian, 70 Russian, 69 French and 68 Australian nationals (National Park Russian Arctic, 2016).

With respect to the domestic Russian tourist market, Russian tourists are poorly informed about the Russian Arctic. Their understanding of this unique region is often built on stereotypes of extreme cold, lack of flora and fauna (except polar bears) and of the Arctic being interesting only for scientists. Wealthy people, residents of large cities, and people of middle and older age groups represent the few tourists who are interested in the Arctic. These tourists tend to have already visited places, such as India, Bali, the African savannah and the Brazilian jungle. They are interested to see and learn something new about places where tourists will always be only guests.

The main specificity of marine Arctic tourism in Russia is that there is no local population on the islands. Airports exist, but they are not able to take most flights, and there is virtually no infrastructure. This is, however, the main advantage of the Russian marine Arctic for tourists. There are objects associated with discoveries of the Arctic, and nature, which have been preserved in their pristine states. Unique polar bears, bowhead whales, Atlantic walruses – these animals have been targets for hunting in other parts of the Arctic, and have been annihilated, but in Russia they are preserved in their natural environments, because these environments are very difficult to access even for fishing vessels.

Expedition cruises to the Arctic are made on icebreakers and ice-class ships. Some of the most popular routes are expeditionary trips to Svalbard and Franz Josef Land, where one can see walruses, seals and whales, and visit the picturesque bays with bird colonies and polar bears. In addition to landings in the wilderness, expedition cruises include historical and scientific programmes, which are conducted by experienced scientists and explorers. Scientific tourism involves expeditions to the most interesting and unexplored corners of the Arctic, and includes participation in research with leading experts in a particular field of science.

Science-related tourism is a substantial part of and factor in travelling to the most distant parts of the Russian Arctic. In many aspects of Arctic research, Russia possesses unique approaches and technologies. Russia is the first and the only country to use *drifting* polar stations in order to study the Arctic. These stations have only stopped their operations on two occasions: during the Second World War and from 1991 to 2003.

*Uniqueness of attractions and
tourist experiences in Russian continental
(mainland) Arctic*

In the Russian continental Arctic, cultural tourism is becoming more popular, and has developed with the participation of indigenous peoples living their traditional life, which has hardly changed over the centuries. Routes and tours were designed that included homestays with indigenous peoples, familiarity with their ways of life, preparation of national dishes, participation in the installation of *chums* (tents used by the nomadic Yamal-Nenets reindeer herders in western Siberia), in rites and in national holidays.

In Chukotka Autonomous District and the Sakha (Yakutia) Republic, tourist routes with husky and reindeer sleds have been developed, and are in high demand by many tourists. Fishing tourism is very promising, because for centuries this region has been considered as an excellent and unique fishing area. For example, in the Yamal Peninsula there are 60,000 rivers, streams and lakes, which are home to about 70% of white fish species. Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District is also an attractive region for

hunting and fishing tourism. Here, there are 50 species of mammals, 29 species of fish and over 180 species of birds. Vast facilities for hunting grounds are offered in Chukotka Autonomous District, which is home to animals such as sable, ermine, fox, mink, elk, wild reindeer, brown bear, lynx, wolf and others. About 40 species of fish are to be found in the waters of Chukotka, half of which have commercial value.

In recent years sports tourism has also been developing actively, and in the near future Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District could become the biggest ski centre in the Russian Arctic. In Yamal, a unique base for active winter holidays was created; specifically the skiing complex 'October', located near Labytnangi, as well as another complex in the village of Polar. There is a ski slope on Mount Black, 25 km from the village of Harp, which is called the 'Black Pearl' of the Polar Urals. The uniqueness of these locations is that outdoor activities can be practised here all year round, even in summer. Russia's only Museum of Permafrost is located in Igarka, in the permafrost, at a depth of 7–10 m. The Igark cave was excavated by hand in the late 1930s. Here visitors can see the frozen ground, various types of natural ice and ice crystals.

The above is a limited and selective overview of some of the attractions that the Russian Arctic offers in its mainland (continental) component. The sites and routes are not expected to become destinations for considerable numbers of tourists in the foreseeable future; they will remain deep peripheries. In the next section, we focus on two Russian Arctic regions which receive tens of thousands of visitors annually. It is important to note that although these regions are in a position to attract hundreds of thousands of tourists, this requires cooperation between governmental investment and infrastructure policy, and business entities.

Case Studies: Naryan-Mar (Nenets Autonomous District) and Salekhard (Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District)

These two tourist clusters of mass tourism ('mass' on the scale of Arctic tourism) are of particular interest for several reasons, and may

emerge as the key points of growth in terms of mass tourism in Russia's Arctic:

- 1.** They are the most economically prosperous regions of Russia's Arctic. Their gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is comparable to that of Norway and that seems to be the crucial factor why these two regions have been the only exceptions to population decline in the Russian Arctic over the last 15 years. They have positive economic and demographic dynamics, and healthy budgets: budgetary expenditures per capita are 5–6 times higher than national expenditure. In 2013, Russian and international investments were more than 10 times and more than 20 times higher per capita, respectively, than the national average. Hence, these regions have a good chance of continuing to be among those few regions that may avoid depression. Parts of both private and state (including budgetary) investments can be directed at tourist infrastructure development, and this process has already begun.

- 2.** The advantages listed above mean that the regions will have stable or potentially growing flows of business visitors, who inevitably may become more curious of other types of tourism. Subsequently, during their initial business trips, these visitors may spend 1–2 days engaging in other types of tourism.

- 3.** These regions are located in reasonable proximity to the European part of Russia and subsequently to potential European visitors. There are regular flights from Moscow, St Petersburg, Rostov, Ekaterineburg and several other Russian cities; from Kiev to Novy Urengoy (a huge oil and gas drilling site); and also to Salekhard and Naryan-Mar. The typical prices for return flights start from ₧12,000, the average being around ₧20,000. In addition, these regional centres have already provided some facilities which are simple and inexpensive, for around ₧3500 per night.

- 4.** Although Naryan-Mar and Salekhard have not yet been established as centres for significant mass tourist flows, they already have: (i) positive dynamics of growth in visitors of the order of 15–20% for the last few years; (ii) tour operators with sufficient product and commercial expertise; and (iii) cooperative regional authorities, who have engaged in regional and municipal tourist development programmes.

Naryan-Mar (Nenets Autonomous District)

Recent important developments in the region include the opening on 1 January 2016 of the Centre for Arctic Tourism. This provides hospitality services and promotes tourism in the region in both domestic and inbound international tourism markets. Among its initial plans are the development of inexpensive cultural tour routes in the spring and summer, and the organization of press tours for federal and regional journalists (RATA, 2016). The region is also one of the pioneering locations in Russia to embark on creating a consistent territorial brand (Bormotov, 2011).

Until recently, the region offered only active expeditionary trips lasting up to 5–10 days. These trips were designed for well-trained and experienced tourists, because they involved rafting. To attract regular tourists flows, interesting programmes are now available to visitors of any level of fitness. For 3 days, tourists can visit the tourist attractions of Naryan-Mar, and the camp of reindeer herders, where they can become acquainted with the traditions and lifestyle of the nomads, and fly by helicopter to Pustozersk. Pustozersk was the first Russian city in the Arctic, founded in 1499. Finally, tourists can engage in rafting and fishing and have the opportunity to try the local cuisine – venison, stroganina (sliced deer meat) and pickles.

Unique selling points of existing and prospective tourism products in Naryan-Mar include:

- Many places of interest, which in the future are likely to become travel brands, such as Vaigach Island, which is regarded as sacred to the Nenets people and has sanctuaries, burial grounds, campsites, idols and altars; the settlement of Amderma; and the city of Pustozersk, which is (among other things) related to the famous Archpriest Avvakum, who was a very influential Russian Orthodox Old Believers' spiritual leader.
- The 'Big Gates' and 'Stone Town' canyons on the Belaya River, which are extremely attractive for ecotourism/adventure tourism such as rafting; snowmobile excursions; and fishing tourism on the Belaya River.
- The Pym-Va-Shor thermal springs, the only hot springs within the Russian Arctic

Circle provide an opportunity to bathe in a pool made by geologists.

- Traditional ways of life of nomads, who live in authentic chums as they did centuries ago.
- Large deer herds of 1000–2000 animals.
- Vast and untouched cranberry, cloudberry, great bilberry and red bilberry meadows.
- The Pechora river delta, where the valuable fish species navaga and salmon spawn. The lakes are inhabited by summer salmon, omul and umber, and the coastal waters are home to smelt and Arctic cod.
- Sliced deer meat, and other dishes of the national Nenets cuisine – broth, pancakes made with blood and flour, fish and herbal tea.
- Industrial tourism visits to oil rigs with an opportunity of observing oil extracting processes.

Salekhard (Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District)

Neighbouring Naryan-Mar is Salekhard, another key Arctic destination. As already noted, these two regional destinations comprise the most attractive part of the mainland (continental) of the Russian Arctic for tourism. They also share many similarities in terms of relatively high price competitiveness of tourist products. However, each has its own tourist specialities.

Unique selling points of existing and prospective tourist products in Salekhard include:

- The Arctic reindeer culture, preserved in a pristine condition in Yamalin, has the largest Russian domestic herds with more than 600,000 animals (Ivanov, 2015).
- The river basins, with the world's greatest numbers of white fish (about 70% of Russian stocks). Small boats and helicopters are mostly used to take tourists out for organized fishing; visitors can also make an interesting tour through the labyrinth of permafrost ice caves in New Port.
- Trophy hunting on the Yamal Peninsula and surrounding waters: brown bear, moose, polar wolf, weasel, wolverine, fox, sable, capercaillie, grouse, beluga whale and ringed seal are all found here.

- An unusual extreme tour is 'In the footsteps of the mammoth', a tour to the bend of the river Yuribey where the now famous mammoth Lyuba was found in 2007. Tourists can only get there by helicopter or by a few days of reindeer sledding across the Yamal tundra.
- The 'October' ski resort, 2km from the town of Labytnangi, has a 630m ski track with a 110m height difference and an average slope of 16°. There is a ski tow and a 100m 'baby lift' for children. A ski field is also being built in Salekhard at the Angalsky Foreland.
- The 1030m ski slope on Black Mountain, 25km from Harp, sometimes called the 'black pearl' of the Polar Urals. The route can be used all year, including in the summer.
- The mountain rivers of the Polar Urals – Synya, Tanju, Voikar, Shchuchya, Kara and Sob – are ideal places for relaxation, fishing, and for both risk-free and adventure rafting.
- Visiting the only railway bridge in the Polar Circle, in Yuribeya. The bridge is supported by 110 pillars, drilled 70m into the permafrost.

Challenges and Potentials

Environmental aspects

One of the key environmental threats in terms of mass tourism is that Arctic vegetation is extremely vulnerable and recovers very slowly. Many hunters, especially in the remote areas, use caterpillar tractors. This often leads to damage or even destruction of the permafrost layer, the formation of gullies, and, finally, to destruction of the landscape.

Excursions on icebreakers to colonies of birds living on the coastal cliffs are harmless, but the opposite is the case when helicopters are used, because they create considerable disturbance for nesting and young birds. Chasing many species, but specifically walruses and polar bears, can be both dangerous and distressful for those animals. Nevertheless, this remains an entertainment for which tourists pay

good money. Insufficient environmental knowledge on the part of excursion organizers, and to a greater extent their desire to satisfy the wishes of tourists, contribute to environmental threats.

At present, these and similar problems are not very acute. But as mainland (continental) and island (marine) Arctic tourism in Russia gain momentum, and may increase still further, environmental protection may become a crucial issue.

Special attention should be paid to the environmental education of Russian domestic visitors to the Arctic, whether as work or as leisure travellers. Unfortunately, there are still relatively widespread practices that illustrate environmental ignorance, as well as occasional cruel, outrageous incidents when inappropriate people visit the Arctic. In December 2015, the Russian public and environmentalists were deeply shocked by an episode at a construction site on Wrangel Island, where the Rusalyans company works on military defence infrastructure projects. An employee of the company threw a demolition pack at a polar bear from a safe distance, and the bear's jaw and head were seriously injured (allegedly, fatally). Although such cases are always related to individual cruelty, there is a lack of real nature-protection policy implementation, wherein employees are trained to appreciate environmental safety. Ironically, Rusalyans had earlier established and donated to the charitable foundation 'The Polar Bear' (<http://www.rusaliens.com/index.php?id=46>). The charity aims to stabilize the population of that species and minimize the negative impact of factors that lead to the reduction and destruction of natural habitats, as well as to create a culture of harmonious relations between humans and polar bears. Visitors, as well as employees of any company working in the region, should be adequately trained in human safety issues. In January 2016 a construction worker was killed in Franz Josef Land by a polar bear. Polar bears feed on protein foods, and consider humans as prey.

Economic aspects

At present, less than 5% of Russia's population lives in the Arctic regions of Russia, and around

13% of Russia's gross domestic product is produced there (Table 18.1). Some operations and taxes are attributed to Moscow, and their benefit is calculated as Moscow's gross regional product rather than that of the Arctic regions. The Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is quite heterogeneous in terms of economic development. Because of the mass production of oil and gas, as well as some minerals, the European and Siberian areas are well developed, but the economy of the Far Eastern Arctic and sub-Arctic is largely associated with reindeer herding and hunting, and coastal area economies are based on fishing.

The statistics are from 2013, the last year of the so-called super-cycle of high commodities prices. Data for 2014 and 2015 are yet to be published; but in 2016, with the exchange rate around ₪70:US\$1 and a sharp contraction in the Russian economy, the numbers relating to Russia in the table could safely be halved. This means that only two regions of the Federation – the Nenets Autonomous District and Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District – continue economically viable. From an international perspective these regions sustain relatively high living standards for local people, and so present

lucrative opportunities for employment and investment. Socio-economic depression in the other Arctic regions might be inevitable. This does not necessarily imply bad prospects for tourism, but inevitably undermines plans for infrastructure improvements, which in turn will have a huge bearing on affordability of mass tourist products.

The good news is that with an exchange rate of around ₪70:US\$1, Russia's price competitiveness could get much stronger. This is especially relevant for many mainland Arctic destinations, where for international visitors the average price for a 10-day tour fell from around US\$2500–3000 to US\$1500 dollars. The hypothesis here is that many segments of European adventure tourists could be quite price sensitive, and the current tour prices may now reflect their price affordability.

As an important transport system for Russian Arctic tourism, icebreakers are not only expensive, but there are not enough of them, particularly if tourist traffic continues to grow quickly. However, the national park, the 'Russian Arctic' and other local destinations are seeking cheaper ways to deliver tourists to the archipelago – where they usually engage with

Table 18.1. Gross regional product of Russian Arctic regions in 2013, compared to national average and closest countries in terms of gross domestic product per capita. Sources: Federal State Statistics Service (2015), World Bank (2015), Bank of Russia (2016).

Russian Arctic regions	GRP (₪) per capita (in thousands). (Russian Federal State Statistics Service, 2015)	GRP per capita (in thousands). US\$ in 2013 (US\$1 = ₪31.85 applied). (Bank of Russia, 2016)	Closest countries in terms of national average GDP per capita (in thousands). (World Bank, 2015)
Nenets Autonomous District	4003	126	Luxembourg (114), Norway (103)
Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District	2541	80	Switzerland (85), Australia (68)
Moscow ^a	966	30	Spain (29), Puerto Rico (29)
Chukotka Autonomous District	927	29	Cyprus (28), Republic of Korea (26)
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	596	19	Estonia (19), Slovak Republic (18)
Republic of Komi	560	18	Uruguay (17), Chile (16)
Saint Petersburg ^a	491	15	Latvia (15)
KrasnoyarskiyKrai Region	441	14	Hungary (14)
Murmansk Region	396	12	Brazil (12)
Arkhangelsk Region	295	9	Mexico (10), Romania (10)
Republic of Karelia	277	9	Colombia (8), Turkmenistan (8)
National average ^b		14	Poland (14)

^a Not Arctic: for comparison only; ^b for comparison only.

GDP, gross domestic product; GRP, gross regional product; ₪, Russian roubles.

sites of natural interest for several hours – rather than use icebreakers. At present, helicopters or zodiacs (rubber boats) are used to bring tourists to the shore. These are the only modes of transportation in many areas, and the only way of leaving the icebreakers. In its development of the Arctic shelf, rich in natural resources, the federal government is ready to revive the Arctic airfield network, which was abandoned after Soviet times. This could also promote tourism development.

Murmansk is of particular importance for marine Arctic tourism, but it is vital for future development to pass the law regarding the right to visa-free reception of international tourists from cruise ships for at least 72 hours.

The Northern Sea Route's transportation and logistic potential is far from being reached. Among positive developments is the current project of building a new series of atomic icebreakers, which started in 2013 and is planned to be finished in 2020. The three icebreakers to be launched in 2017 (*Arktika*), 2019 (*Sibir*) and 2020 will be far more powerful than the previous generation of this type of vessel. For instance, *Arktika*'s two-factor power plant is planned to be 175 MW (Russia Today, 2016). Although their main purpose will be to facilitate the cargo flow along the Northern Sea Route (with quite limited opportunities for direct use in tourism because of huge opportunity costs), these unique vessels may become a huge tourist attraction in their own right, and contribute to tourism development in multiple ways. They will also assist in the creation of a whole system of transport and communication infrastructure linking Europe with Asia from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean (Selin and Bashmakova, 2010).

Socio-cultural aspects

At present, 40 indigenous minorities populate Russian mainland Arctic regions, totalling 244,000 individuals. There are several major problems relating to the inclusion of indigenous minorities in Arctic tourism development:

1. Indigenous populations are mostly supportive of cultural and ethnographic tourist complexes, but quite often they oppose direct

intrusions into their lives, and contemplate big tourists flows as an additional threat (Kirichuk and Silin, 2013).

2. The government should provide training programmes in business organization for local people; they are ready to make their own souvenirs, but these are not always of interest to tourists for several reasons. The main range of souvenirs was formed in the 1970s and, in many ways, they do not fit into the interior and aesthetic preferences of modern tourists. Independently, indigenous peoples cannot deal in professional ways with designing and developing souvenir brands, so they need support in branding tourist products, elaboration of local myths according to fairy tales, songs and parables, as well as development and promotion of territorial myths. After being made artificially sedentary in the 20th century, many nations and tribes of the Russian North started losing rapidly the most vibrant parts of their cultural authenticity, and this is a tremendous loss for tourism development prospects (Koptseva and Kirko, 2014).

3. Third, alcohol is a special concern in all respects, including tourism development, since indigenous peoples have an acute genetic vulnerability to alcohol, manifested in rapid formation of alcohol dependence. All incoming tourists need to be educated about this.¹

4. Protected areas (reserves) limit the traditional land use of indigenous peoples. The transformation of protected areas into national parks would also lead to greater tourism development. Presently, unemployment for local people is twice as high as the national average, because their traditional industries are in decline.

There are many other wider social and community issues, going far beyond the issues associated with indigenous people. In many Russian Arctic regions, indigenous people constitute several per cent of the total population, with the majority (up to 90%) being of Russian and Ukrainian origin.

Growing military presence

In 2010, Russia began increasing its military presence in its Arctic regions, even in the most



Fig. 18.1. Map of the Russian Arctic. Source: Creative Commons (Modified by Per Strömberg and Sergey Ilkevich, 2016).

remote areas. By the end of 2015, 437 military objects were constructed and six military bases equipped (Vzglyad, 2015). An indication of construction activities can be seen in the volume of transportation of construction materials there, which almost tripled in 2015 and reached 106,000t, most for defence purposes. In 2015 impressive examples of army equipment and vehicles, designed to function in Arctic conditions, were also publicized.

Interestingly, the military activity – despite possible negative consequences such as deepening international tensions in the region – could have had an overall positive effect on tourism development in the region:

1. Many military facilities and infrastructure objects could be dual purpose, serving not only for military services and logistics, but also for tourists – and not necessarily only for Russian domestic tourists. A considerable amount of infrastructure could, to some extent, be opened for international visitors: the militarization of the region could serve as a catalyst for an overall improvement in tourist infrastructure.
2. Military facilities could be an additional attraction, at least to some visitors. This does not necessarily imply an acute feeling of being at the centre of geopolitical rivalry and theoretically possible military collisions, but rather just an additional factor that makes the place very special and extraordinary.
3. Service staff can occasionally rescue tourists, which is of vital importance given that there is no lifeguard infrastructure nor availability of public budgets allocated for improving civil rescue activities in the region, at least in the foreseeable future.
4. There has been a sharp deterioration in human capital in the region. One of the proxies that can be used for highlighting this is the share of high-tech innovative products, works and services in overall economic activity. In 2014, the situation for the whole Russian Federation was far from positive, with the share of these being just 1.31%. However, in the Russian Arctic region, it was only 0.17% (Federal State Statistics Service, 2016).

The military presence implies not only basic infrastructure, but also bases for rocket launches. There are ample opportunities for research and innovations with a dual purpose

(Nekipelov and Makosko, 2011). If there are more innovative entrepreneurs and production in the region, there will be more opportunities for indirect and collateral improvement for the tourism industry.

These, and several other possibilities and potentials, can be considered as largely positive for tourism development if sustainable compromises are found between military planners and environmentalists. For now, the overall news is rather negative as in 2012–2015 many military facilities were deployed in so-called specially protected nature areas (national parks and nature reserves). This was not only a formal violation of Russian nature protection legislation, but in some cases there could be a real and even imminent threat for some species that are vital for tourist perceptions of the Arctic. For instance, environmentalists are very concerned about military facilities in Wrangel Island, which is a unique maternity base for polar bears.

Conclusions

As shown in this broad sketch of tourism in the Russian Arctic, there is both an ambiguity in the initiatives of the Russian authorities (Pashkevich and Stjernström, 2014), and a range of paradoxes that affects the creation of what Ash and Turner (1975; cited in Müller and Jansson, 2006) call the 'pleasure periphery'. The most striking correlation between geographical periphery and experiential core is that their weaknesses might also be their very strengths – like two sides of the same coin (see Table 18.2).

In the case of the Russian Arctic, this correlation is even more accentuated; that is, adventure tourism becomes even more adventurous than other destinations in the Arctic. Risky travelling becomes a part of the experiential concept. The challenges of the Russian Arctic are added values as well as unique selling points. Lack of services promotes authenticity and the far distances and extreme weather conditions encourage unorthodox and experiential ways of travelling. Expensive means of travelling create exclusive small-scale tourism. Industrial activities, such as exploitation of oil and gas or military installations, may be destructive to the environment but also serve to facilitate tourism or become attractions in themselves.

Table 18.2. The correlation between geographical periphery and experiential core in view of both challenges and opportunities. Partly based on information in Pashkevich (2013) and Pashkevich and Stjernström (2014).

	Geographical periphery	Experiential core
Challenge	<p>Extreme weather conditions: long winters and intensive snow cover</p> <p>Long distances to tourist destinations</p> <p>Security restrictions (close to military bases)</p> <p>Logistic problems: lack of or non-existing communication; lack of infrastructure; expensive transportation</p> <p>Lack of services and receiving capacity</p> <p>Absence of authorities: ad-hoc or lacking regional tourism planning</p> <p>Small-scale tourism: limited number of tourists to distant remote areas may be an economic challenge</p> <p>Economic leakage through incoming agents</p> <p>Geopolitical priority and concerns above tourism</p>	<p>Safety: Adventurous activities, which might be risky and even dangerous; expensive and long-distance rescue</p> <p>Non-restricted and non-sustainable exploitation of natural and cultural resources affects tourist experiences</p> <p>Low level of expertise in hospitality</p> <p>Standardization of ethnic products (services, activities and souvenirs)</p>
Opportunity	<p>Pristine natural landscapes</p> <p>Solitude (self-chosen)</p> <p>Pioneering tourism into untouched areas (first-arrival tourism)</p> <p>Co-using industrial, scientific and military infrastructure and transportation</p> <p>Climate change and ice-free transportation in summer</p>	<p>Extreme and extraordinary experiences of liminality</p> <p>High potential for augmented authenticities of culture- and nature-based tourism; 'back region'-tourism</p> <p>Unorthodox and experiential ways of travelling (atomic icebreaker vessels; helicopters; Trans-Siberian railway; dog sledding; snowmobile)</p> <p>Exclusivity of small-scale tourism</p>

One advantage is that the vast area of the Russian Arctic allows segmentation and combinations of both inclusive mass tourism and exclusive small-scale adventure tourism. This combined tourism segmentation is becoming more difficult in Arctic destinations such as Iceland, where exclusive small-scale tourism has to compete with its mass-touristic counterpart, and vice versa. In any case, a condition of success is that Russian authorities continue to facilitate tourism and avoid ambiguities in terms of institutional objectives.

In conclusion, the experiential core of Russian Arctic tourism takes place in the very

authentic geographical periphery, and that experiential core is likely to be one of the most vibrant cases of liminality to study in terms of both conceptualization and detailed field research for at least several decades to come.

Note

¹ <http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/sostoyanie-i-tendentsii-formirovaniya-zdorovya-korennogo-naseleniya-severa-i-sibiri>; http://journal.iea.ras.ru/archive/2000s/2009/Borinskaya_et_al_%202009_3.pdf.

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19 Tourism Experiences in Post-Soviet Arctic Borderlands*

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Introduction

The Euroarctic today has a rich and complex cultural heritage (Elenius *et al.*, 2015) that is often overlooked in favour of its impressive natural attractions. Euroarctic tourism, accordingly, would gain from more knowledge about northern nomadizing peoples, acculturation processes, waves of immigration, geopolitical trends and periods of economic boom and bust. These phenomena, which reveal a layered and convoluted cultural heritage imbued with flexible meanings for different observers, will be explored here in the context of guided tours conducted in Russia's Murmansk region. In recent times the sparsely populated tundra and borderlands of the Euroarctic have transitioned from an almost completely closed, Cold War border zone between NATO member Norway and the Soviet Union (Tjelmeland, 2012) to a zone of geopolitical reconciliation. More specifically, the establishment of the so-called Barents Euroarctic Region in 1993 converted the Euroarctic into a testing ground for high-profile EU-inspired neighbourhood building, including an ongoing twin-city partnership between the adjacent mining towns of Kirkenes (Norway) and Nikel (Russia) (Haugseth, 2014a, b). A low-cost border zone visa has been introduced exclusively to local Russian and Norwegian citizens; and Norwegian visits to Nikel, mainly for shopping, are growing steadily albeit from low levels. The Norwegian coastal express ship *Hurtigruten*, turned recently into an international

winter tourism success, calls daily at Kirkenes harbour but as yet has no cross-border tours on offer. Those international and Scandinavian tourists who go to the trouble of getting a visa to spend a day or two in Russia are either attracted by prospects of a multifaceted post-Soviet experience or are impressed by approaching the industrial wasteland around the run-down Soviet metallurgical complex of Nikel – since the 1990s in invisible oligarch hands.

There are also post-Soviet tourism sites in north-eastern Norway. Daily boat tours on the Pasvik River near Kirkenes have been designed for the non-visa 3-hour timeslot visitors from *Hurtigruten*. Participants can look at Russian territory across the border or visit a lodge with an open-air podium where tourists so inclined can re-enact Cold War surveillance routines, or take pictures. More serious memorializations are staged each year on the anniversary of the liberation by the Red Army of Kirkenes from Nazi German occupation in October 1944. This takes place at the war memorial to the Red Army in Kirkenes. This statue of a Red Army soldier (of Norwegian design and make) is situated over a bomb shelter built during the Nazi occupation (Aas, 2012). Inside the shelter tourists are offered video shows and told stories of the Soviet bombings and the near erasure of the town by the retreating Wehrmacht. Compared with ceremonies designed from history writings on Soviet/Russian military exploits on the soil of other nations, this anniversary has always been uncomplicated and seen locally only as positive,

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largely because the Soviet troops withdrew from Norwegian territory not long after the end of the war (Viken, 2007; Gorter *et al.*, 2015).

The different values ascribed to the material and partly reconstructed memorializations of the Soviet Union are significant to cultural tourism in the Euroarctic. The post-Soviet fascination with the sub-Arctic borderland of Norway–Russia is not unique, the Western fascination with Soviet heritage and its post-Soviet appropriation for various political uses being for a long time an important driver of tourism on the Arctic islands of Svalbard (Andreassen *et al.*, 2010). In contemporary Russia a reactivation of ideology and new pride in Soviet heritage is taking place. What were only seen as decaying structures, made obsolete by the painful but necessary transition to the international market economy, and mourned only by elderly people as vain memories of a lost era, are now more often regarded as valued heritage with positive post-Soviet connotations.

This chapter will investigate obscure heritage sites in the Euroarctic borderland and so contribute to a better conception of their tourism value. These sites are located on the Russian side of the Russia–Norway Arctic borderland, at Nikel and Pechenga. The exchange of meanings during post-Soviet tours in this borderland has come to include a new critique of Scandinavia and EU Europe. Not least – according to state-dominated media in Russia – its suffering through the economic shock-therapy of the 1990s was never compensated for by the fruits of the market economy. It all seemed a global conspiracy contrived by the West and NATO to deprive Russia of its historic role as world leader, rightfully earned by its unparalleled sacrifice in World War II. It was only thanks to the Kremlin's lucid leadership that consumer prices were kept down and living standards conserved in the necessary return to military strength and vigilance. Against this bombastic revisionism, accepted by most but not all Russians, a shift in the meaning of local cultural and industrial heritage has occurred.

Approach

Path-dependence, geo-economics and social politics are major determinants of quality of life

and sustainability of human interaction with Arctic nature. Yet, contemporary public understanding of the Arctic is almost exclusively defined by expertise in natural science. Bringing social and cultural phenomena into play acknowledges the extent to which perceptions and interpretations of the Arctic are flexible and dependent on the individual observer and with whom they are speaking or speaking about. In the north one encounters individuals from different resident groups, professionals typically with non-northern backgrounds, and of course diverse international and domestic tourists (cf. Graham *et al.*, 2000). Motives to go north also vary widely, from finding work to making investments, seeking silence or amusement; from fishing in the streams or at sea to observing rare birds, racing snowmobiles or discovering new meanings in traditional knowledge.

Flexibilities and omissions are built into narratives produced during tours in the land/city/borderscape; not only do these narratives reflect the landscape, but the land/borderscape is itself created by the same narratives (Brambilla, 2015). Accordingly, we suggest adding ethical sustainability to the concerns of tourism operators to augment the nature-fixated sustainability concept used in ecotourism and elsewhere to minimize the industry's ecological footprint. All cultural communication has to be informed by the representation of human identities, trades or professions of significance in their region of business, to attain local social tenability and ethical sustainability. Tourism operators and heritage managers need awareness and ability to analyse and convey the cultural stratigraphy and palimpsests of their tourism resort or region, especially in borderlands. This more often than not applies to any traveller's entry into unfamiliar cultures and environments (McKercher and Du Cros, 2002; Huyssen, 2003; Gillman, 2010).

We need therefore to apply a methodology that acknowledges a cultural stratigraphy of narratives disappearing and reappearing in the cultural web of a place. Different storytellers will tell different stories but, as discussed further, the same guide may also tell different stories to different visitors. Tourists may themselves bring alternative knowledge and identity of heritage to a site far north, as was the case in the early 1990s when war veterans other than those of

the Red Army were allowed for the first time to visit battlefields in the vicinity and to (re)construct cemeteries in Pechenga (Wråkberg, 2007). Post-Soviet places in general come into being through site experiences and discourses. The war memorial in Kirkenes, the nickel matte smelter and city museum of Nikel, and the aesthetically expressive heroic mine museum further south in Kirovsk, all convey historical and cultural images of the Soviet period. Yet, what makes the term 'post-Soviet' necessary is the extent to which this entails more than historical objects or layers. European heritage is now more often seen as contested, and discussed as a flexible product of variably motivated interpretations. These are considered below in the context of such contested Soviet and post-Soviet era attractions in the Russian Arctic borderlands.

It is fruitful and relevant to engage this contested heritage by the methodological approach used in contemporary Central European research on collective memory (Tamm, 2013). One distinction it makes is to either deny the possibility to 'access' history as such or, epistemologically less radically, to distinguish whatever we may understand by 'history as it really was' from all the variously balanced or biased narratives of the past. Sadly, for some there is no master story of the past about ownership and identities, only contestable socially constructed narratives. We should thus refer to 'history writings' and not to 'history'. Hermeneutic openness to alternative knowledge broadens awareness and is necessary to move closer to scholarly 'truth' and an ethically sustainable narrative of the northern tourism experience. This inconclusiveness, we argue, will add to the fascination of tourism in the (sub)Arctic regions and counter coercive claims on hegemony by reference to local and global master narratives alike. Central to the studies of held beliefs is collective memory. Here enter politics of memory: politics of representation, the invention or revival of tradition, memorialization, production of identity, framing pasts, urban contested spaces, historical policy, memory studies, sense of place, symbolic appropriation and collective memory, as well as lacunas, omissions and silences.

This chapter derives from continuous monitoring of tourism in East Finnmark – made possible by both authors' long-term residence in

Kirkenes. Materials, narratives and issues have been accrued during several journeys to the adjoining Arctic borderlands with Finland and Russia. In the case of Russia this has involved notes and recordings made during short journeys as part of local tourist operator programmes, including city walks in Nikel and Murmansk, visits to the Nikel museum and the Kirovsk mining museum in Apatity and to Saint Triphon's monastery in Pechenga. The resultant qualitative analysis and interpretations derive from these participant observations as well as from recorded semi-structured interviews conducted with municipal officials, tourism operators and museum guides and managers in Murmansk Oblast. The latter are anonymized for this chapter. The field notes and the translated and transcribed materials are in the custody of Peter Haugseth and Urban Wråkberg. The discourse analysis of tour guide narratives and the interpretations made here of sites, monuments, spaces and borderscapes aims to capture 'tourism in action' – tourism as experienced in the field.

Touring Nikel and Continuing South Across the Khibiny to Kirovsk

Kirkenes and Nikel, recently made twin towns in EU-inspired policy making, are very similar mono-economic company towns established in the 1920s and 1930s, respectively. They are 'twins separated at birth', the citizens of which are now meeting, intrigued by their different experiences of growing up outside and inside of the USSR. Now both belonging to the global economy, the iron mine of Kirkenes went bankrupt and was closed in 2015. The mines and metallurgical smelter in Nikel and Zapolyarny in the municipality of Pechenga still survive under the management of the Norilsk Nikel enterprise, though warnings of closure are frequent. Local discourses among citizens of Kirkenes and Nikel can fruitfully be related to the different understandings of their recent history and contemporary circumstances as held by residents and communicated through various narratives to visitors.

With respect to the subtitle of this book, what is happening when a tourist 'consumes' a

guided city walk in Nikel or Murmansk? Who has designed this experience product? One finding is that this 'product' is not fixed but created by choosing from a set of possible features, narratives and anecdotes of the borderscape during encounters between guide and tourist. Not all visitors 'know it all' before arrival from studying trip advisories and promotional material on the internet. Some do just that and would be less prone to follow a guided tour, but others go willingly with a guide and ask questions more freely as the tour proceeds and often engage in comparing experiences from their different homes. Guides in Nikel, Kirovsk, Apatity and Murmansk tend to reconstruct their products in real-time by adjusting their narratives to the liking of their customers, thereby embarking on very different exchanges of standard questions and answers. This explains how museum exhibits can attract consistent expressions of interest and liking from audiences as diverse as local school children, retired Russians and Western tourists.

The main square in Nikel, with its dated but well-kept House of Culture and Lenin statue, needs only a mention to shift into a positive comparison with its once splendid counterpart in Kirkenes, which was devastated by fire in 2005 and has remained a burnt-out shell with no plans for demolition or restoration. This Nikel building thus moves instantly from being a meaningless sign of past Soviet ambitions to a striking symbol of living and practised culture. A World War II Red Army field cooking cart, recovered from a swamp on the tundra, restored and exhibited in the Nikel City museum, is at first yet another object of Soviet war nostalgia. However, for contemporary Norwegians it serves to debunk national stereotypes after the story is told about how in the aftermath of the liberation of north-eastern Norway, while the rest of the country remained under Nazi occupation and was unable to support its northern citizens, starving residents followed the smell of food from these field kitchens and were saved from hunger by soldiers giving them food (Haugseth unpublished interview VN550143, 2014).

In the aesthetically full-blown Soviet Kirovsk mining museum, with its mural paintings of muscular socialist labourers, heroic engineers and pioneering geologists discovering

and extracting the mineral riches of the surrounding Khibiny Mountains, it is possible to regard the installations as an intact Soviet exhibition turned into a historical object. In response to the standard Western question of how many miners and scientists in the 1930s were political dissidents sentenced to forced labour, the guide will always (and rightly) emphasize that not all were there against their will: many were enthusiastic socialists and confident communists, some even from Sweden or elsewhere in northern Scandinavia. From this discourse the pride and joy of building these towns emanates along with the revelation that all Gulag camps on the Kola Peninsula were closed after Stalin's death. Motivations to work in far north Russia were since the 1960s sustained by a system of privilege and fringe benefits that far outweighed the relative differences in pay to miners in sub-Arctic Scandinavia (Wråkberg, photos and notes from Apatity, May 2011, unpublished; Wråkberg, 2013).

Movement from Soviet reminiscences to reactivated post-Soviet political symbolism recur in these narratives and conversations. One Russian discussion in Kirovsk/Apatity considers whether the locally based (and now privately owned) international phosphate fertilizer-producing company *Apatit JSC* will continue to act as a socially responsible successor to its Soviet predecessor in times of recession. It sold its renovated grand hotel in Kirovsk and may stop its refurbishment plan for run-down local housing in a town plagued by persistent population decline (cf. Kinossian, 2013; Larissa Riabova, Apatity, 2015, personal communication).

Questions to guides about housing and conditions of lending, buying and renovating serve to expose the similarities of life challenges between citizens in neoliberal Scandinavia and post-transition Russia (Wråkberg, photos and notes from guided walks of Murmansk: June and July 2008, July 2011, unpublished). To most Western visitors these similarities are unexpected and constitute an anomaly, which 'shouldn't exist'. It is argued that this represents a myth-buster, demonstrating that while national average incomes and degrees of inequality may differ between Russia and the West, the challenges and threats of collapsing real estate bubbles and local labour markets

loom large above all societies dependent on the raw material and fuel-producing industries of the circumpolar sub-Arctic. Further visitor interest in housing details, such as the contrast between fancy interior redecorations and stark exteriors, leads to discussions about the transition economy and neoliberalism in Scandinavia, and the paradoxical sharing of nostalgic pasts where the state was allowed to tax its citizens, even out the differences and make all seemingly alike and secure. For the present, not only political repression, but also the magnitude of systematic theft in the old Soviet industry and persistent corruption seem gone from memory.

Like the gloomy badlands surrounding the nearby metallurgical town of Monchegorsk, where vegetation is absent due to smelter emissions, the environmentally unfriendly nickel matte plant in Nikel embodies an evil that some tourists like to mythologize by comparing it to something Mordor-like out of Tolkien's dark tales (cf. Sharpley and Stone, 2009). Visits here are unlike visits to the lesser-known but true conveyor of death in this sub-Arctic borderland, the radioactive 'house number 5' in Andreyev Bay, 50km further east. The old USSR Navy premises at Andreyev Bay include decaying buildings originally set up to store nuclear waste (mainly spent fuel piles) from Soviet strategic submarines. Because of neglect in the early post-Soviet period the facility developed severe leakage problems. Joint Russian and international work stabilized the site and there are plans to rid it of its radioactive materials. Neither potential terrorists nor curious tourists are allowed anywhere near this site (Vasiliev, 2009). At Nikel, because there is no risk to a short-term visitor observing the metallurgical plant from the outside, it is possible for anyone so inclined to document its sulfur dioxide-emitting smoke stacks, and their own boldness in approaching the site, before friends and followers in narratives, by moral observations and photography published on Facebook and Instagram. Calmly taking selfies against an outrageous background is attractive because it casts the observer as connoisseur of the extreme and a traveller worth listening to. A well-marketed series of such events may suffice to brand oneself as a blogger extraordinaire and life coach to others, which has commercial value and is a major driver of contemporary travelling advisory internet communication (Wråkberg,

photos from stops at Nikel 2006–2010, unpublished; van Nuenen, 2015).

Nevertheless, it is beyond most Western visitors to Nikel – tourists and researchers alike – to grasp the typical flexible Russian view of the Soviet smelter as something that both nurtures local people and makes their life possible on the tundra even though it destroys nature. The borderland visitor fascinated by 'the dark' is typically from far away. Engaging less in gathering information from tourist guides by listening to their stories, they are not comfortable with the label 'tourist' in the first place. To analyse the post-Soviet in dark tourism would call for a broad, contextual macro-economic understanding of Russia's transition, and self-reflection and insights into the quite different attitudes to land use typical of people in small, densely populated states in Europe and those held by most people in territorially vast Russia (Bolotova, 2004; Haugseth unpublished interview VN550143, 2014).

The Holy Saint Triphon of Pechenga

This section is based on Haugseth (unpublished interview VN550197, 2015); Wråkberg, photos and notes from Pechenga: March 2014, April 2015, unpublished. Like the metallurgical plant in Nikel, the resurrected monastery of Saint Triphon of Pechenga, located among military barracks and army personnel housing in the garrison town of Pechenga near the main road between Nikel and Murmansk, has a widely flexible meaning as tourist attraction. Unlike the church of Nikel, which has long languished in a state of reconstruction due to dependency on small donations, the grand Pechenga monastery, with its many tall and stately traditional Russian timber buildings, has recently been effectively reconstructed with ample funding from the headquarters of the Russian Orthodox Church and a major donation from the Norilsk Nikel company, the owner of the nickel plants in Nikel and nearby Zapolyarny (Grønvik, 2015).

The new but traditionally designed Pechenga monastery arises from traditions and idiosyncrasies of state–church–society relations in contemporary Russia. Symbolic and geopolitical meanings of its reconstruction are not

obvious to anyone unfamiliar with Russian Orthodox Church history and its close relation to the shifting imperial visions and realities of the central state. The suppression of religion under communism produced a lacuna in the Soviet heritage after the collapse of 1989 that soon found its way into a post-Soviet enthusiasm for old Russian religious–political synergies that initially helped to fill the ideological vacuum that followed the Soviet ethos of state-building. Such religious dynamics are utterly absent on the Scandinavian side of the borderland where even modest measures to maintain the meagre post-war church infrastructure are always reported in local newspapers as lacking funds.

To most Western observers the rebuilt monastery is charming and unexpected, resembling an outdoor museum that features local culture for the tourism market. A similar site featuring traditional Russian wooden architecture is found at the Maly Karely outdoor museum near Arkhangelsk, but St Triphon's is something different. The failure of local cross-border visitors to accurately interpret a reconstruction of heritage on this scale has to do with it having no counterpart in the regional experience of the north-Scandinavian observer, for whom this religious border is just one of Europe's many phantom boundaries (Jańczak, 2014). The issue of geographical scale is relevant. An exponential shift in scale from the innocent local to the larger geopolitical border-space of the vast Russian periphery reveals the church's ancient identification with Russia's outposts and national borders. Resurrecting the Pechenga monastery at Russia's north-westernmost point emphasizes the church's willingness to guard against religious and cultural 'others' and invigorate Russia's Arctic interests in an era of increased global competition over energy and mineral assets. The Orthodox Church has traditionally played a central spiritual role in Russia's historic mission to resurrect itself into a Third Rome, transcending the failed empires of Byzantium and Rome. Reconstructing religious buildings in its borderlands vitalizes these geopolitical traditions of religious support for, and confluence with, central state power. Such forces are strong enough today to attract major funding to remote and seldom-visited places like Pechenga (Sidorov, 2006; Mandelstam Blazer, 2010).

To the inquisitive tourist such a grand narrative adds to rather than detracts from the site's picturesque appearance – given that the picturesque is an aesthetic category with explanatory potential far beyond its pejorative use in dismissing 'inauthentic' mass-tourist attractions that connoisseur travellers help us identify (cf. Copley and Garside, 1994). In the research for this chapter visits were made to the resurrected monastery in Pechenga, with and without local guides, in the format of standard tourist spatial interventions. We will describe encounters with workers and one brother of the monastery, and offer our subsequent interpretation of material elements and discourses. The basic contest over what the site is, why it was resurrected and how its appropriation may/should be achieved by the tourism industry, was mirrored in a conflict over photography. Uncertainties in narratives presented on the origin of displayed icons, and an exchange of words on the background and mission of one of the monks of the monastery provide further indications of the diverse meanings necessary to consider in explaining the material and spatial structures found in the monastery today.

Conflicts are likely to arise whenever any foreign visitor enters the monastery with camera in hand. This has to do with lack of proper religious behaviour and the ensuing disputed legitimacy of the visit, given the paradox of the open and inviting premises of the monastery. What appears, to a cross-border visitor, to be an onsite souvenir shop is a misconception and another sign of accumulating alienation. Any Western visitor might reasonably expect to buy some of the mass-produced religious items on sale, such as miniature icons and amulets, but these are in fact intended for sale to church members as religious objects. In the monastery shop we recorded a discussion about the inappropriateness of photography, which challenged the accompanying tourist guide as much as the naïve visitors. This relates to the misapprehension of the site as touristic, given its above-mentioned broader meaning and context. The issue also links to contemporary tourists' expectations that they should be allowed to take photographs in this sanctuary as they would anywhere from Saint Peter's in the Vatican to nearby Oscar II's Chapel, in a neighbouring Norwegian village. The latter building

happens to mark the easternmost point in the sphere of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway. Why are 'Russians' – a generalized category here taken from the discourse of the guide to the visit in question – supposedly uncomfortable with being photographed by mistake or otherwise included without consent in tourists' snapshots? Among the convoluted explanations offered, the most convincing was no better than the contention that most local people in Pechenga would not like to be portrayed as poorly dressed as they (according to the guide) think they are in everyday life. Arguably this need to discipline the tourists and their commercial guide concerns the contested meaning of this religious place in relation to foreign visitors. A secondary explanation is the absence of a local business culture, exemplified by the clerk in the monastery's shop who did not want to be humiliated by catering to any foreigner's interest for anything apart from buying things in the shop. This indicates that the market idea of economic exchange for the common good has not been internalized as it has in the West, as reflected in an effective failure to understand and observe the minimum code of conduct towards tourists in the interest of furthering the common macroeconomic good of this industry.

Also interesting are the narratives presented to visitors regarding the origin of the re-inaugurated icons in the monastery church. After listening, the visitor remains in doubt about the extent to which these were somehow miraculously saved during Soviet times, then restored or created anew by religious artists. Their geographical origins are also ambiguous. One story tells how some Christians who, while driving their car across the tundra one winter some years after the fall of the USSR, became stuck in the snow. They walked a short distance into the forest in search of a suitable flat-shaped slab of wood to push under one of the wheels to provide traction. The Christians were happy to find an unusually straight, seemingly man-made piece of wood and used it successfully for this purpose. By coincidence one of them looked afterwards at the plank, the surface of which was abraded, and discerned an image of Christ. The item was an icon that somebody apparently had rescued by disguising and hiding it near the road. It was restored and included in

the Pechenga monastery's church. Clearly the story functions as a parable on the value of faith in hard times and God's providence. This modern legend of how religious items and faith itself were hidden to survive the militant atheist activism of the USSR is part of the paraphernalia of things and stories that has been used to build a bridge of legitimacy across the post-Soviet religious lacuna, from the pre-revolutionary church to its modern successor. The ideological authority of the present church, and in particular the resurrected monastery in Pechenga, is strengthened by the historic continuity of the church and its display of 'authentic' antiques and locally preserved items.

Other stories of the Pechenga icons and additional questioning, however, perhaps detract from this appearance of continuity in disclosing that some had been provided from a central Russian Orthodox repository of religious objects, while others were modern reproductions of traditional art. This aligns with the reality that the new monastery of Pechenga is ultimately a product of central decision making and of capital transferred from a locally active but in essence national enterprise to the resurrected local monastery, reflecting political dispositions and the building of goodwill among major leaders at the centres of power in Moscow. Finally, we mention a brief conversation that occurred on the initiative of the guide in the cloister courtyard with a preoccupied but slightly bemused brother of the monastery. This man, who despite his cowl and beard looked and talked like a businessman, revealed himself to be precisely that, being from a major Russian city. As part of an influential and very large church he was allegedly seeking seclusion for soul-searching and worship at one of its Arctic borderland outposts. This sets the proper scale and again demonstrates the typical direction of forces effecting major change in the Arctic periphery from the capital of the nation to its northern frontier.

Conclusions

How do new tourism products, attractions and contested sites emerge in the Arctic periphery? Local entrepreneurs may think of new ideas and

test them as add-ons during tours made for other reasons (e.g. angling of salmon and char in the many small rivers of this area, shopping and entertainment trips to Murmansk). Larger travel industry experts and consultants may get involved in developing tourism sites and routes based on market research, while natural scientists may base recommendations on outcomes of environmental monitoring exercises that assume a fragile ecology. Artists and writers travel the borderland and open other people's eyes to its oddities and fascinations as they subjectively interpret them. In this chapter we, as university-based social scientists, have discussed some new and old sites occurring as stops in an Arctic context, which are still not visited very often and frequently poorly understood due to biases and simplifications. It has been characteristic of tourism, as for much else of civil activity in the European and Russian sectors of the Arctic, that little business occurred before the end of the Cold War and the opening of economic relations with Russia. Enthusiasm for cross-border enterprise is now alive on a local and individual basis. Arctic cruising tourism remains expensive and exclusive, but relatively low-cost tourist access to the exotic north is possible via infrastructure already present that serves its forestry, mining and growing off-shore industries. This dependence on infrastructure for other purposes leads the tourists into unexpected confrontations with environmentally unfriendly heavy industry, the products of which most city dwellers, like it or not, are reliant upon for their comfortable lives. Traces are everywhere in the Euroarctic of the boom-and-bust cycles in its primary industries. Along with its frontier mining camps, ghost towns and deserted fishing villages, they might intrigue its travellers and spawn questions about life and sustainability in the Arctic in the past, present and future.

When moving beyond their basecamp or the town near the arrival airport, northern tourists often get to experience older patterns of Arctic travel, moving in small groups and visiting offbeat destinations where the guide plays an important role as provider of both security and information on all matters of interest during the journey. Boating up the Pasvik border river, touring Pechenga or driving south past the

Khibiny Mountains to Kirovsk and Apatity, the tourist becomes aware of identity politics in post-Soviet times and begins to understand contemporary 'realism (present) – nostalgia (Soviet)' outlooks. This relationship is mirrored in the key symbols and larger pictures communicated in the narratives and history writings of local informants. Our research in this space shows that pragmatism still reigns in the borderland. Tourism operators and museum guides alike routinely perform historiographic contradictions by mind-reading the prejudices of their guests and catering to their preferences; they can either usher them into the Western self-reassuring dark experience of Soviet totalitarianism or, in the case of Russian domestic groups or school children, resort to self-celebrating Soviet nostalgia. In a third inventive tour de force, Russian guides appeal stepwise to the common failure of Western guests and their guides to find succour in the Brave New World of neoliberal Europe. Herein they casually find individual similarities in the struggle to make ends meet and find a decent place to live in Scandinavia and Russia, then contrast the present to embellished narratives of a Soviet utopia where everyone was needed and included in the good working- and family-life of its heroic Arctic labourers. Stripped of its geopolitical intimidation, this past communist dreamland and its contemporary stately ruins become fascinating and even appealing not just to Russians but also non-Russian northern tourists – notably Scandinavians, with their similar political traditions of state industry and centralism.

It is argued that growing awareness of the contested and flexible meaning of heritage can be communicated in tourism and is superior to simplification, embellishment or prejudice as a builder of fascinating experiences. Earlier EU–Russian joint endeavours to reconstruct the social, cultural and built heritage in and around such complex sites as the Russian Kaliningrad enclave (formerly East Prussian Königsberg and a part of pre-World War II Germany) provide evidence on how to develop an ecologically and politically sustainable tourism destination (Browning and Joenniemi, 2003; Belova and Kropinova, 2015). We emphasize the need to consider tourism sustainability from an ethical perspective. There are ethical standards that

should be found and applied to attain human sustainability in exploiting the post-Soviet fascination, for example, through tourism. Without such consideration, presentations and encounters during 'tourism in action' may offend innocent people, transgress democratic values or create conflict. It is well to be reminded that

there are few if any absolutes in national traits that have not been constructed in biased history writing and conveyed accordingly in interpretation-propaganda, that further the interests of elites far distant, in socio-economic and geographical senses, from those trying to live well and sustainably in the Arctic.

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20 Arctic Tourism Experiences: Opportunities, Challenges and Future Research Directions for a Changing Periphery

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Introduction

Macro-level issues such as climate change and heightened efforts for sustainable future life have focused attention on the Arctic. It is not uncommon to be presented with comparable before-and-now photos of some Arctic scenes to demonstrate fast-melting ice and snow in the region and the subsequent effects such as rising sea level (Hodell *et al.*, 1991), changing flora and fauna (Chapin *et al.*, 2012), and subsidence and other changes associated with rapidly melting permafrost (Romanovsky and Osterkamp, 1997). In tandem with these macro-level climatological and geophysical trends, the Arctic has also been increasingly in the limelight as a tourist destination (Pashkevich, 2014). Much of the attention given to the Arctic in tourism studies, indeed, can be attributed to the omnipresent effects of climate change, which is felt imminently and acutely in the region. However, the bigger and more ominous matter of global climate change and sustainable future life seem to occupy most research and business efforts, so that parallel efforts to understand their implications for Arctic tourism are still rather limited.

Within this portentous context, this edited book serves as the first comprehensive attempt to understand Arctic tourism experiences from

the perspectives of both tourists and providers. Our focus on experience in this volume is based on two considerations:

1. We view tourism fundamentally as an experience for tourists (e.g. Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987; Cohen 1988; Mazursky, 1989; Prentice *et al.*, 1998; Wang, 1999; Li, 2000; Suvantola, 2002) firmly embedded into modern life (Franklin, 2003), providing opportunities for businesses and destinations. The act of travel is desired and sought, and accordingly created and provided within economic transactional settings that now form the biggest single industry sector (UNWTO, 2015). This in turn provides and shapes our tastes, cultural pursuits and/or good options to invest (e.g. in airline companies, hotel companies, new tourism infrastructure).

2. Approaching tourism as an industry that is part of an experience-based economy (Cohen, 1988), we see that current knowledge of Arctic tourism has scope for improvement. This is particularly true when it comes to understanding the core subject of 'experience', or the dynamic interface between the tourist and the attraction. It is indeed important to have a good understanding of the dynamic interactions between the tourist and the attraction, because they

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become the basis for satisfaction, fond (or not so fond) memories, and/ or word-of-mouth recommendations (more often than not through social media) and future revisits.

Current knowledge expansion of tourism experiences highlights the co-creating aspect of experiences wherein tourists and service providers both contribute to creating experiences; hence it is critical to incorporate both sides of the consumption–production equation within the regional context of rapid physical and cultural transition.

An important mediator of the production–consumption nexus is the status of the Arctic as an extreme global periphery, being exceeded in this only by its much less accessible antipodal Antarctic counterpart. It appears from the various contributions in this text and other sources that most recreational tourists (as opposed to family and business visitors) are attracted to the Arctic by anticipation, among other things, of the isolated, the magnificent, the dangerous, the empty, the incredible, the overwhelming and the pure, which in turn leads to expectations of peak emotions such as awe, humility and bliss, and perhaps even spiritual transformation. It is for this reason that we position the attendant paradox of the Arctic as simultaneous geographic *periphery* and experiential *core* as an important and innovative context for interrogating the consumption and production of tourism experiences in the region (and by extension in Antarctica). Moreover, here we must consider how this paradox is influenced by large-scale factors such as climate differences in the Arctic, climate change and increased exploitation of local natural resources. While reducing the sense of peripheral isolation in some of the Arctic regions, the infrastructure of resource exploitation creates opportunities for the arrival of new and more conventional tourist markets. These can, in turn, use this infrastructure as a gateway to what remains of the ‘untouched’ Arctic. Massive geophysical change can, ironically, undermine the magnificent and the awesome (and thus give rise to ‘last-chance tourism’), but can also embody its own awful splendour through such events as icefield collapse and giant sinkholes caused by melting permafrost. More mundane are the day-to-day negotiations of producers and consumers of

Arctic tourist experiences to achieve balance between the desire for a sense of risk and isolation on the one hand, and for comfort and safety on the other, especially as the intimations and presumptions of ‘mass tourism’ become more prevalent.

Experiencing the Arctic: extreme nature, myth and perceptions

Visitors have experienced the Arctic for a long time. However, the records of such visits have been limited, compared to those for the Antarctic. What we can observe is that the actual history of interacting with the Arctic is longer than in the Antarctic, but the tourism sector organizations and relevant data sets are less formally identifiable in the Arctic (UNEP, 2007). Differences between nations in the Arctic do exist. The Arctic parts of Scandinavia, for instance, do have systematic data from the 1950s and 60s, while others lack this type of historical data. Differences in climate conditions impact on the accessibility to the different regions as well. We can be sure that, with its harsh climate and lack of accessibility to many areas, travelling to the Arctic has been expectedly treacherous for a long time. The earliest chronicled experiences of Arctic travel not connected to the great explorations date back to the late 1790s, as detailed by Guissard and Lee in their accounts of three elite French visitors to northern Norway (Chapter 2). Such timelines are almost contemporary when contrasted with the earlier ‘great travel’ records, such as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by Homer in the period 760–710 BC (Beye, 1976), the oldest Western literature that illustrates travel experiences during the Trojan War and Odysseus’ (also known as Ulysses in Roman myths) return to his home in Ithaca. The classic travel literature gives us a good idea of the motivation, transport methods and interactions between visitors and residents in the ancient time of travel, against which encounters with the Arctic can be investigated.

Given the time difference between these earliest travel accounts and to the Arctic more than two centuries ago, there is no denying that the Arctic might be one of the last places on earth to be visited for the first time by humanity.

This appears almost contradictory since the Arctic, as a destination, is now apparently a diminishing one (Lemelin *et al.*, 2013). Our paradox places the very action of experiencing the Arctic as one that is a unique or extreme activity to pursue. Modern infrastructure has made travel to the Arctic less precarious and more conventional, but even today the expectations of the awesome hark back to an earlier era of travel as an adventure in risk and uncertainty.

Indeed, the idea of encountering extreme and unique nature and interacting with it is one of the main themes portrayed in all the contributions to this collection. In the context of Greenland, Weaver and Lawton (Chapter 7) demonstrate that the periphery is not a homogeneous space, but rather an amalgam of 'near' and 'far' peripheries that attract different markets and offer different (and sometimes conflicting) experiences, yet interact in many ways. They concurrently introduce the element of temporal peripherality, so that encountering the spatial periphery in the 'far' climatic depths of winter conveys the promise of a far more intensive experience of Arctic consumption.

The role of mitigating risk during adventurous experiences in the extreme conditions of the Arctic by Røknes and Mathisen (Chapter 3) and the role played by Arctic tourism service providers' identity by Davoudi, Högström and Tronvoll (Chapter 4) demonstrate the multi-layered actors, networks and stakeholders in Arctic tourism. Within the multiple networks and actors in the Arctic tourism sector, experiencing the unique and unforgiving nature of the Arctic in northern Europe and in Alaska was recounted in different ways by Røknes and Mathisen (Chapter 3) and Stubberud and Ruud (Chapter 9). In particular, Røkenes and Mathisen study the interplay between tourists' search for risk and safety in adventure experiences, a factor that attains greater importance as more conventional and risk-averse (and risk-naïve?) markets penetrate the region. The chapter provides knowledge of how the guides may influence this interplay to ensure valuable experiences. Stubberud and Ruud, embodying and becoming part of Alaskan nature and culture throughout the Iditarod trail, showed that being with the local people and gaining from their rich knowledge base is an economically sustainable pathway to take. The Stubberud and Ruud chapter

emphasizes that the tourism industry has to work with the different villages and their people in Alaska and throughout the Arctic to integrate culture and traditions into tourism.

The unique natural environment of the Arctic is further accentuated by northern lights (aurora borealis) experiences, as recounted by Mathisen in Chapter 8. Here, experiencing the celestial phenomenon, deeply intertwined in the myth of the region, has become one of the indispensable symbols of the Arctic tourism product. The myths and traditions of the regions from which the northern lights are seen might be the last factors preventing the Arctic from becoming 'just one more modern place'. This is because no matter how modern and technologically advanced and connected with the rest of the mundane world the Arctic becomes, the unique celestial experiences of the lights will always remain inaccessible, guarding the region's mystique from far away.

Various perceptions of the Arctic were presented in Chapters 5, 10 and 11. In Chapter 5, Edelheim and Lee discussed the self-reflective element in museum settings featuring selected northern Finnish and northern Norwegian cultures. Evidently, what is displayed and explained in museums today has less power to direct visitors' perception of the place and objects than the authoritative museum management approaches of the past. 'New museology', accordingly, can be interpreted as a gentle declaration that contemporary museum managers need to identify a sustainable way of engaging and interacting with the visitors that allows all their diverse voices to be heard, and which also incorporates an element of experience co-creation. Increasingly, these diverse voices belong to East Asians and other non-traditional visitor markets. Huang, Tang and Weaver provided a perspective from actual and aspirational Chinese visitors to the Arctic in Chapter 10. Sustainable triple bottom line (TBL) approaches to create satisfying Arctic experiences for this fast-growing tourist market require a more dedicated effort in research and developments in practice. Concerted attention needs to be paid, for example, to the provision of culturally familiar food and tour guide standards, as well as to debunking various stereotypes and myths about the Arctic based on often fantastic or misleading *ex situ* representations of the region. Komppula

engages with another important Asian market, examining in Chapter 11 the perceptions of Japanese tourists visiting the Lapland region of northern Finland. The interpretations of the 'Feelgood in Lapland' experience differentiated according to the respondents' motivations for a wellbeing holiday, preferred travel companion and place attachment to Lapland. Subsequently, what constitutes 'feeling good' and 'well-being experiences' in the Japanese market clearly demonstrates multiple perceptions of the Arctic and attendant needs to differentiate these markets accordingly.

Creating Experiences for Sustainable Arctic Tourism: Culture and Nature in the Changing Environment and Politics of the Arctic

Creating and offering sustainable Arctic experiences to tourists can only be made possible by achieving a fine-tuned balance of cultural and natural resource use within economically and politically sustainable frameworks. Indeed, several chapters highlighted the intricate relationships among the cultural and natural assets of the Arctic, and adaptation to changing environmental conditions as well as to dynamic political power shifts.

Chapter 12 by Bursta and Chapter 6 by Olsen demonstrated the cultural richness of the Arctic and its utility in relation to sustainable tourism. The Sami film *The Kilt & the Kofte*, discussed by Bursta, illustrated the importance of retaining *Saminess* in the Arctic. The opening scene in the film gives a clear indication of the remoteness and the state of being detached from the rest of the world in the Sami village of Sneffjord. The feelings of detachment and emptiness also portray the diminishing Sami cultural elements. The study invokes the notion of static versus evolving tradition and identity, and the apparent openness of the Arctic as periphery to new and innovative inputs that might be less efficacious in more conventional settings.

In Chapter 6 Olsen considers the discourse on the valorization of World Heritage as an economic resource. Olsen compared two World Heritage Sites in the municipality of Alta, northern Norway, in terms of visitations before and

after joining the World Heritage list. To promote economically sustainable operations, many cultural institutions face the dilemma of having to consider investing more resources to improve visitor facilities, which may attract more tourists and subsequently more revenue. This dilemma leads to some doubt whether they (the institutions) will be able to fulfil other, more important, social obligations in their local societies. Olsen shows that becoming part of the World Heritage list is not necessarily synonymous with enhanced attraction value or economic sustainability for individual sites in remote areas.

While cultures were contextualized as the resources base for Arctic tourism, the cultural base also appears to play an important role in devising and implementing regulations for utilizing natural resources in a sustainable way, as well as in framing what 'sustainability' means in the first instance. For example, wild berry picking is a deeply embedded lifestyle in Finland and a quintessential element of Nordic lifestyle philosophies. The Nordic philosophy here refers to the belief that, regardless of land ownership, it is 'every man's right' to have open access to all forests for benign usage such as picking wild berries and mushrooms, and camping in simple tents (Pouta *et al.*, 2006). While this Nordic philosophy towards the use of natural resources has pertained with little conflict for long time, recent years have witnessed migrant workers and/ or visitors joining in this Scandinavian culture-specific activity and causing some debates and concerns about the appropriate use of natural resources. These concerns are made clear particularly when the gatherings from the forests are turned into commodities for economic transaction. These cases illustrate the complex, intertwined relationship of sustainability among nature, culture and economics that implicates all kinds of tourism activity in the region.

The sustainable use of natural resources was the topic of chapters by Cater (Chapter 16), Bertella (Chapter 14), and Prebensen and Lyngnes (Chapter 15). The contributions dealt with different types of natural resources: peripheral nature and ruggedness for motorcycle tourists; whales for commercial whale watching experiences; and fish for recreational fishing tourism – but all identify the lack of consistent regulatory environments to mediate and better

ensure the creation of environmentally and socioculturally sustainable Arctic tourism experiences. In Chapter 16, Cater told of motorcycle tourists who had to be 'rescued' by local contacts because of the extreme conditions of the remote Arctic area. This incident subsequently highlighted the need to provide more regulated information for a safer adventure experience in the region.

Consideration of water-based resources by Bertella in Chapter 14 examined the issue of providing and implementing tourism regulations for more effective management of these assets. Industry-level experiences and government-level resources management sometimes conflict, yet might be the symbiotic dual foundations for a viable division and provision of the regulations. The chapter highlighted the shared, unique factors that constitute peripherality in whale watching experiences. The current lack of regulation in the provision of the experiences might contribute to relatively limited experiences by the tourists, which prevent the attainment of peak and memorable emotions. Indeed, tourism might be one of the most dynamic and complex sectors when it comes to devising and implementing regulations that are cross-sectorial and relevant to cross-border associates, owing to the diversity of international stakeholders (see Semone *et al.*, 2011 for comparative examples from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam).

Continuing with water-based resources, in Chapter 15 Prebensen and Lyngnes focused on how to ensure a more responsible fishing tourism industry through developing their business models. By employing the business canvas model, they showed how different segments vary in terms of customer type and need. By combining this information about the different experiences, the value chain role, profit model and what is actually sold, the firms and the destination can produce goal-directed marketing, develop products and ensure the right value chain and profit model in line with responsible and sustainable thinking. The chapter supports Dolnicar *et al.* (2008) who suggest that nature-based tourists are eager to learn and to enjoy novel experiences. By informing and motivating the tourists to take part in activities that are more responsible and to learn why this is imperative to develop a sustainable industry in the long term, all stakeholders will benefit.

Chapter 17 by Johnston, De Souza and Lemelin illustrated how the Canadian Arctic is being seriously affected by climate change, thus highlighting imminent impacts that place the Arctic as a priority region for urgent attention in sustainable use of resources. In the Canadian Arctic the idea of parts of the Arctic simply vanishing, as ice melts, is now being considered. This 'vanishing Arctic' notion, however, is simultaneously coupled with possible new opportunities for cruise tourism, made possible by new accessibility to the Arctic. This use of a new natural landscape in the Arctic, however, does not appear to be a simple matter because, as cautioned by Stewart *et al.* (2007), the changing geographies of the melting ice seem to have created quite a different new landscape due to uneven distribution of the sea ice as well as different characteristics of the sea ice due to the melting process. This uncertainty is well reflected in the travel blogs that Johnston and colleagues cite to capture the experiences of marine adventurers.

Political dimension in the context of TBL is discussed in the two chapters involving the Russian Arctic. TBL, as the fundamental basis for sustainable human life, has been receiving some scrutiny on its level of comprehensiveness. This is because TBL recognizes the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability but misses the political dimension. Subsequently, the idea of a 'quadruple bottom line' (QBL) has been proposed though not yet accepted widely, in part because of varying views on what this fourth dimension should entail. In the context of non-profit housing organizations in the USA, a hybrid between non-profit and profit-seeking organizations (in the form of economic and political collaboration) was identified as the basis for the QBL approach (Bratt, 2012). The political dimension was also identified as the fourth element in several studies of corporate social responsibility (Bendell and Kearins, 2005). Returning to the present collection, political aspects as the fourth component of the QBL were a main theme in the two chapters on Russian Arctic tourism. Chapter 18 by Ilkevich and Strömberg described the current state of Russian Arctic tourism and emphasized the changing political position of the state as the fundamental base for the viability of tourism

activities in the Russian Arctic. Russia has about 40% of the total area of the Arctic region. This is by far the biggest portion belonging to one country. The region represents a wealth of natural and cultural resources, all of which can potentially be used for Russian tourism.

With increasing political attention on developing both domestic and international tourism in Russia, a dedicated developmental focus on experiential tourism would bring quite a different outlook to the country's tourism products. This is because the perception and utilization of nature and culture, guided and regulated by the idiosyncratic political setting of Russia, is quite different from what pertains in other Arctic nations. Haugseth and Wråkberg (Chapter 19) similarly gave a specific account of the political dimensions and multiple realities influencing tourism activity in the Russian–Norwegian Arctic frontier. Here, tension is sometimes ignited when Western visitor interpretations of and behaviour at apparent tourist attractions and facilities (e.g. an Orthodox Church souvenir shop) conflict with Russian perceptions of important cultural values, fed by a new local pride in Soviet Arctic heritage and pioneering.

Drawing on Stickdorn and Zehrer (2009), Fischer (Chapter 13) argued that innovation and service design was one of the most important strategies in obtaining sustainable Arctic tourism products. Embodying adaptation in service design that is most suited to the origin of the experiences as well as adaptation to market dynamics, 'coopetition' was described as a characteristic feature of sustainable Arctic tourism service systems owing to the need for adaptation and resilience to meet the inherent challenges of operating successful businesses in the periphery.

Future Research into Arctic Tourism

Our collection of chapters provides seminal knowledge about the production and consumption of sustainable tourism experiences in the rapidly changing Arctic periphery. Each chapter, in its own unique way, provides a foundation

for future research that will substantively enhance our knowledge in this area and better enable sustainable outcomes for all stakeholders. As the chapters are mostly based on specific geographical places ranging from small villages to countries, one avenue of subsequent engagement is to see how the lessons from those specific places resonate in other Arctic locations and with other visitor sources. For example, what kinds of historical experiences are provided by early German and English – as opposed to French – visitors to the Arctic, and what kinds of geopolitical and intercultural dynamics attend the embryonic development of cross-border tourism between Russia and Alaska? For the researcher, the challenge is to identify areas of generalization without ignoring the specific circumstances of each location.

We also emphasize the need for sound data as a foundation for sound policy, planning and management. In some cases, the rigorous scientific collection of information is warranted, as for example in assessing the effects of tourism activity on vulnerable Arctic plants, rocks and animals. In other cases, the need for more quantitative data is calling for validated scales and measurements.

Studies that are in-depth in nature as well as simple testing of models to generalize results need to be conducted on tourists, tourism experience providers and local residents. However, though not without limitations, the burgeoning narratives of social media offer a rich tableau of felt individual experiences for the researcher's analytic attention.

Finally, we reiterate that in no context does tourism exist in isolation from other sectors and forces. The observation that a particular lodge or park operates in admirable concert with sustainability best practice is meaningless if it operates next to unregulated uranium mining. It is, therefore, essential that all our deliberations take into account how tourism is influenced by – and influences – these other stakeholders in the Arctic's natural and cultural resources. With such knowledge, the tourism sector can determine how to best cooperate and interact with these other sectors so that sustainable outcomes can be achieved for all.

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Arctic Tourism Experiences

Production, Consumption and Sustainability

Edited by Young-Sook Lee, David B. Weaver and Nina K. Prebensen

Geographic peripherality poses challenges of access and service quality, while sometimes being accompanied by economic dependency and relatively low power. These may be compensated for, and even counteracted, by the availability of attractions that offer peak emotional and spiritual experiences for visitors. Residents both indigenous and non-indigenous, moreover, exhibit resilience and imagination in the face of isolation and harsh environmental conditions, giving rise to actual and potential models of tourism innovation in such aspects as product, marketing, management, transportation and intermediation (e.g. tour guides, travel agencies).

The first part of this book investigates the depth and dimensions of tourist experiences in the Arctic from the tourist perspective. Chapters examine the essence of diverse peak experiences and delve into the factors that give rise to these experiences. The second part, 'Creating Tourist Experiences', considers the links between these core experiences and the tourism industry that seeks to sustain itself by facilitating such satisfying outcomes.

The book provides essential information for academics and students studying Arctic tourism as well as practitioners and representatives of government and NGOs.

Key Features:

- The first book to focus solely on Arctic tourism.
- A unique focus on the interplay between the production and consumption of Arctic tourism experiences.
- Innovatively juxtaposes the dilemmas of peripherality and the compensatory opportunities of 'experientialism'.

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