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# Guest editorial

Maarja Kaaristo and Steven Rhoden

## Travelling and travelled landscapes: imaginations, politics and mobilities of tourism

### *Introduction to the Special Issue*

"Landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them" (Ingold, 2000, p. 193). Landscapes are simultaneously representational and metaphorical as well as sensed and embodied and can be conceptualised as settings for various events (Sen and Johung, 2016), performances (Edensor, 2001) or practices (Cresswell, 2003). Following Massey (2006, p. 46), landscapes themselves can be understood as "events, as happenings, as moments that will be again dispersed"; they are constantly emerging products of multiple intertwining trajectories. Landscape is not a place, an inert backdrop for human activities, nor just a visual representation of/or "nature" (Ingold, 2000; Hicks, 2016), but a "set of relationships between places in which meaning is grounded in existential consciousness, event, history and association" (Tilley and Cameron-Daum, 2017, p. 2) occurring via practice, embodiment and engagement with various materialities (Macpherson, 2010).

We take our cue from Edensor (2017, p. 599) who points out that "it seems profoundly evident that no single account of landscape can claim to be singularly truthful, since when we are in and with the landscape, the inevitable selectivity of our attention means that we can never attend to most things". This is why we need to discuss both the landscapes of travelling and the travelling of landscapes, which this multi-disciplinary special issue sets out to do by bringing together scholarship from tourism (management) studies, human geography, socio-cultural anthropology and ethnology. We investigate the tourist landscapes that occur through both representational and non-representational (Thrift, 2007; Prince, 2019) mobilities of people, vehicles and vessels, ideas and information (Cresswell, 2006; Urry, 2007). By examining the ways in which tourism and leisure are experienced, practiced and performed, but also constitute various landscapes, we will take a closer look at mobile and embodied practices such as running and travelling on various transport modes such as ferries, cruise ships and coaches. We also discuss the ways culture and politics affect and influence the formation of touristic landscapes. Discussing the contexts of Japan, England, Portugal, Finland, Tanzania, Scotland and North America, Estonia and the USSR, Israel and Turkey, Hungary and Australia, the papers analyse how landscapes are imagined and experienced by tourists and show that it is via the interconnections of numerous narrations, identities, sensorialities and mobilities that the tourist landscapes come to being.

To be a tourist is "to look on landscapes with interest and curiosity (and to be provided with many other related services)" (Urry, 1995, p. 176), and landscapes are constructed via the tourist gaze through mixing perceived "reality" with various images and other representations (Urry and Larsen, 2011; Woodside, 2015). In this way, the tourist landscape can be understood as a representation and a cultural image, which is perceived and consumed visually (Cosgrove, 1998): "a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolising surroundings" (Daniels and Cosgrove, 1988, p. 1). Of course, vision is but one of the five senses and other sensescapes such as soundscapes, smellscapes, touchscapes and tastescapes, and their varied combinations are important when studying the tourist landscapes: "it is clear that all of the senses are involved in our appreciation of the world. We live in a multisensory world, an allscape" (Porteous, 1990, p. 196). A phenomenological take

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This special issue is partly based on the papers presented at the double session "Travelling landscapes: tourism and leisure mobilities" convened by the guest editors at the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference 2018 in Cardiff, "Geographical landscapes/changing landscapes of geography". We would like to thank all the presenters and the audience at the session for the inspiring discussions.

on the sensory and embodied does not look at the five senses as distinct biological conduits of experience, but instead understands the multi-sensory and embodied experience as “something that both surpasses and bears a relationship to the culturally constructed categories that people use to represent that experience culturally and socially” (Fors *et al.*, 2013, p. 175).

Landscapes can be considered major resources for tourism (Liberato *et al.*, 2020), but they also have a significant influence over tourists, their activities and decision-making processes (Doxiadis and Liveri, 2013). Engaging in various tourist practices – sightseeing, shopping, going on tours, visiting attractions and events, walking or running in the cities – is a way how tourists engage with their surroundings and therefore co-create the tourist landscape. However, no landscape can be just a tourist landscape because it would always feature a complex set of different actors: “locals and visitors, sojourners and residents, locals becoming visitors, sojourners becoming residents, residents ‘being tourists’, travellers denying being tourists” (Cartier, 2005, p. 18). The constantly changing travelling landscapes are constituted and co-created through these (consumption) practices and performances, as they obtain new meanings for both the guests and their hosts (Oliver, 2001, p. 273). Travelling is thus simultaneously functional and meaningful; it is cultural, social, political, embodied, narrated and imagined and the tourist landscapes – tourism landscapes (van der Duim, 2007) – become networks of urban, rural and wild vistas, human and non-human animals, tourist attractions, (built) environment and numerous other materialities.

Tourists travel in and through landscapes, and their trajectories are essential in producing the landscapes (Massey, 2006). Tourism landscapes are localisable but not necessarily fixed either in time or in space, as they can be mobile and dispersed simultaneously in many locations, times and physical configurations. This is why we need to understand mobility, socially produced motion (Sheller and Urry, 2006), which allows us to analyse the various social processes that take place between individuals and groups as well as to pay attention to the physical spaces where moving subjects encounter each other (Kaaristo and Rhoden, 2017). Looking at tourism in the framework of mobilities theory helps us to see it as an integral element of our contemporary sociocultural lifeworlds. It is also important to also pay attention to the sensory elements of these mobilities as “tourism mobilities examine the embodied nature and experience of the different modes of travel that tourists undertake, seeing these modes in part as forms of material and sociable dwelling-in-motion, places of and for various activities” (Hannam *et al.*, 2014, p. 173).

“Opening onto new forms of spatially embodied relationalities, we find ourselves implicated within a system of moving objects, shifting locations, and multiple points of views – a landscape of mobility” (Sen and Johung, 2016, p. 3). Researching tourism landscapes from the mobilities perspective means studying various practices as lived experiences, where attention ought to be paid to the corporealities, materialities and technologies of travelling (Büscher *et al.*, 2011). Mobilities research therefore includes paying attention to the various modes of transport that do not only take tourists to the destination and back and provide services within them, but they can also *be* destinations themselves. In this special issue, defining this form of travelling as transport tourism, Rhoden and Kaaristo (2020) analyse coach tours and cruises as mobile attractions and show how mobility influences and directs how the tourists gaze, experience and therefore co-create the mobile landscapes. McGrath *et al.* (2020) examine the hitherto under-researched river-crossing ferry mobilities focussing specifically on the importance of the materialities of the transport mode, which influence significantly how the tourists perceive and understand their surrounding landscapes and waterscapes. In addition to the transport modes, both mobilities and immobilities of the touring bodies also ought to be studied. The special interest landscapes of parkrun as discussed in the paper by McKendrick *et al.* (2020) or the landscapes of silence of the spiritual tourists studied by Mourtazina (2020) show us that the tourism landscapes are always co-created by the tourist with their individual set of interests and preferences.

Landscapes can be representations, depictions, images and imaginations of various places and as such “the first and most enduring medium of contact between tourist and prospective or consumed place of travel” (Terkenli, 2011, p. 229), linking the physical environment together with the ideas and values of what ought to be experienced and consumed. Therefore, the tourism landscapes are also created through discourses and narrations whereby a particular one is in the forefront, thus others are made obscure, and “places are represented in terms of what is referenced, reinforced or ignored from all the possible texts and knowledges available”, as the tourist landscape becomes a physical, materialised discourse (Kruse, 2005, p. 90). The landscape emerges and forms following the reference points provided by the intermediaries as the interests and motivations of tourists meet with those of the service providers. Quinteiro *et al.* (2020) discuss Coimbra in Portugal as a literary landscape, whereas Satama and Räikkönen (2020) show how the locals narrate Turku in Finland as a landscape of embodied homeliness. However, the tourist landscape is never “neutral” but depends on a multitude cultural and political understandings and can also change very quickly. In their paper, Shmuel and Cohen (2020) analyse how the imaginations of Turkey in Israeli media narratives transformed in a short space of 15 years from cosmopolitan, desired and culturally “authentic” destination into a landscape that is perceived as unsafe and unstable. The narratives also vary between different stakeholders and can sometimes clash. Loeng (2020) shows that Western tourists’ narrations about their encounters with street sellers in Tanzania perpetuate the negative stereotypes about some members of the local community, raising questions about who is considered a legitimate co-creator of a particular landscape and by whom. The imaginations and narrations have strong links with the notions of belonging, as the tourist landscapes can also be stages where national and group identity, nostalgia, politics and identity politics are played out and performed. The Soviet landscapes can become sites of simultaneous admiration and alienation, distancing and conformation for the tourists as shown by Rattus and Järs (2020). The questions of national identity and belonging are further complicated in case of diaspora tourism as is shown by Andits (2020) discussing Hungarian–Australians and Bowness (2020) analysing the descendants of Scottish migrants to north America travelling to the “ancestral homelands”. Furthermore, Tham (2020) discusses the questions about (ethnic) identity and belonging in his auto-ethnographic study on Asian solo male travelling mobilities in the Asian countries as a tool for self-discovery.

It is important to discuss all these different elements of tourism landscapes because, as Minca (2007, p. 433) argues, “landscape is, after all, perhaps the only geographical metaphor able to refer to both an object and its description; to recall, at once, a tract of land and its image, its representation”. Therefore, this special issue explores tourism landscapes both as imagined and experienced, representational and non-representational. What the tourists gaze, glance or engage actively with in embodied ways, is made meaningful through the social construction of their cultural or economic values which makes them an integral part of the tourist experience. Indeed, as the papers in this special issue show, the travelling and travelled landscape is “both a material thing and a conceptual framing of the world” (Vallerani, 2018, p. 3).

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