MATKAILUTUTKIMUS
Turism forskning – Finnish Journal of Tourism Research
Suomen matkailututkimuksen seura 15:2/2019

# 'Knowing-with' in the era of the Anthropocene

VERTAISARVIOITU
KOLLEGIALT GRANSKAD
PEER-REVIEWED
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Matkailututkimus 15:2/2019

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## Finnish Journal of Tourism Research 15:2/2019

# ‘Knowing-with’ in the era of Anthropocene

At the beginning of June 2018, while preparations were being made to welcome the delegates of the TEFI10 conference to Pyhä-Luosto national park, the Guardian (Carrington, 2018) published breaking news: according to a recent assessment, the human race – just 0.01% of all life – was eradicating all other living things (Bar-On, Phillips, & Milo, 2018). One and a half years have passed since the conference and that staggering news, and discussions related to humans’ devastating power are all around us. At the same time, the research endeavours conducted since the conference have revealed not only concerns, but also important glimpses of hope and optimism.

The chosen themes of the TEFI10 conference did not settle with the idea of merely minimising tourism’s impacts. Instead, our new, up-to-date task as tourism educators and researchers is to develop knowledge that is based on more sensitive entanglements between the Earth’s systems and humanity. In line with this task, we now call attention to how we can seek to know-with objects, things, humans, landscapes, animals, elements, and theories, both through our research activities and in our pedagogical efforts. Our hope is to slow down to reflect on and discuss the roles of tourism research and education in the current era in which human actions are causing irreversible changes to the Earth’s systems – in the era of the Anthropocene (Gren & Huijbens, 2014). While recognising and fearing for the exponential environmental impacts embedded in the tourism industry, the idea of knowing-with encourages us to explore the possibilities of togetherness enabled by tourism mobilities. Tourism permits, on one hand, encounters with human and more-than-human others, whose ways of knowing can be radically different from us. On the other hand, tourism settings also make it possible to recognise similarities and to question stereotypical images about ‘the other’. Hence, instead of focusing on tourism as the ‘world’s largest industry’, or as one of the biggest villains in the Anthropocene, the idea of knowing-with can help us to draw attention to encounters, togetherness, and epistemological entanglements that become possible within the tourism framework.

Knowing-with is about togetherness, about being in relations with multiple others. While this can be used to refer to knowledge collectives formed by tourism scholars, the fruitfulness of the notion of knowing-with lies in the way in which it helps us to recognise our entanglements with a wider range of creatures (Ren, Jóhannesson, & van der Duim, 2018). The era of the Anthropocene has challenged us to acknowledge both the limitations of human-centred ways of

knowing and the illusion of recognising only humans as 'masters of knowledge' (Caton, 2018; Ulmer, 2017). The recent new-materialist approach especially underlines the importance of recognising and respecting how we are living, entangling, and knowing with more-than-human actors (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Barad, 2003; Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 2015). The new-materialist turn has drawn attention to the previously marginalised or objectified voices that have essential knowledge about the ongoing environmental catastrophe. In other words, we are challenged to radically enlarge our idea of who and what has knowledge – who and what we can know-with. This means also questioning the linear idea of academic research in which raw material is being collected 'over there' in field settings and then developed into knowledge 'in here' by our desks.

While advocating for creative forms of knowing-with, it is important to keep in mind how the desire to recognise otherness and other ways of knowing, and to give voice to those at the margin, always comes with challenges. For instance, as typical in the era of the Anthropocene, human intentions to 'listen' to other creatures tend to be driven by instrumentalism, in which knowledge is extracted from others for one's own purposes (Caton, 2018, pp. 196–197). Another challenge is the risk of paternalising or romanticising those human and more-than-human others whose voices have previously not been heard (see also Jóhannesson, this issue). This can lead to new forms of silencing, as postcolonial critiques argue, in which 'the other' is not able to 'speak' but is always being represented, for instance, by researchers (Spivak, 1988; see also Chambers & Buzinde, 2016). Instead of giving up on our intentions to know with those who might be more 'difficult' to hear or know-with, it is critical to reflect upon these challenges. We can ask, for instance, what kinds of possibilities and limitations we have when we care for others and wish to re-tell their stories. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012, p. 10), the author of *Decolonizing Methodologies*, argues that researchers should also have answers to questions like 'Whose research is it and whose interest does it serve?' 'Who has designed the questions and framed their scope?' and 'How will the results be disseminated and who will benefit from it?' These questions serve their purpose when we are taking epistemic responsibility (Grimwood, Stinson, & King, 2019, p. 2) and searching for more holistic approaches to wellbeing in the Anthropocene (see also Lowan-Trudeau, 2018).

The special issue at hand is based on the aforementioned TEFI10 conference, organised on June 3–6, 2018, at Pyhä-Luosto national park in Finnish Lapland. It is a joint issue organised together with the *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism* (JTTT); the second part will be published in 2020 in JTTT. This issue consists of six research notes and a student's greeting from the conference. The research notes are longer than those usually published in the Finnish Journal of Tourism Research, and all of them have been subjected to an open peer review process by two reviewers. In this way, we wish to create an invitation to reflect, be inspired, and engage with new initiatives of knowing-with. Even though the issue does not address tourism education per se, the theme of knowing-with is also relevant for education – and for the ways we wish to share our knowledge. As Carina Ren and Gunnar Thór Jóhannesson (2018, p. 25) argue, the ideas of making-with and knowing-with help us to challenge tourism as something holistic, coherent, and entirely knowable. In this issue, we understand knowing-with as a relational approach in which knowledge is constantly on the move, escaping essentialism. This means that, instead of aiming

to fully know, pre-plan, categorise, or organise something or someone, knowing-with becomes possible through embracing plurality, messiness (Veijola, Germann Molz, Pyyhtinen, Höckert, & Grit, 2014), unfinishedness (Germann Molz, 2014), not-knowing (Grimwood, Stinson, & King, 2019), unlearning, negotiating (Höckert, 2018), and improvising (Rantala, 2019).

In the first research note, Gunnar Thór Jóhannesson writes that 'tourism is not a singular entity; it is a collaborative achievement, accomplished through heterogeneous relations. It is "becoming with many"' (Haraway, 2008, p. 4). The idea of knowing-with in the Anthropocene challenges the disciplinary boundaries, and, as Jóhannesson suggests, we must be able to disrupt and move beyond the traditional division between social and natural sciences. He argues for 'knowledge practices that rather than seeking to organising the dynamic forces of the Earth once and for all, look for more messy collaborative ways of knowing with nature' (Haraway, 2008, p. 4).

In the second research note, Tarja Salmela and Anu Valtonen reply to the editors' call to re- flect on how we can aim to know-with objects, things, humans, landscapes, animals, elements, and theories through our research activities. They propose *walking-with multiple others* as a potential way to know-with and elaborate an epistemological reflection on how to carry out knowing-with in the context of tourism research. The paper by Jordana Milne, Outi Rantala, and Bryan Grimwood continues the methodological discussion by focusing on how to conduct research with children – how to know-with children. Similar to the previous research note, it takes us to the forest landscape of northern Finland and focuses on ways of walking-with in nature. The research note important- ly points out how it is not just children who participate in worldmaking during family nature walks. The walks also influence adults' worldviews, which is essential in the era in which we are living; these walks can help adults to slow down and to connect – to know-with.

In his research paper, Mikko Äijälä directs our attention towards non-human others, with the example of sled dogs. Äijälä underlines how animals are not passive participants, but hold power to shape tourism practices and spaces. It is therefore valuable that Äijälä names both theoretical and methodological approaches to be applied in future research endeavours. In a similar vein to Jóhannesson's remark about the need to move beyond disciplinary borders, many of the research notes show how difficult it is to limit discussions merely to tourism contexts. In their research notes, Seija Tuulentie and Jessica Faustini Aquino bring up examples from community development contexts by discussing how environmental knowing can actualise with immigrants and youth in northern communities. The special issue is concluded by Pia-Maria Hokkanen's reflections as a student member of the TEFI10 conference organising team. Her experiences from forest meditations, lunch tables, and poetic spaces tell of the possibilities and challenges of creating multiple connections with our surroundings and about the important glimpses of hope and optimism among us.

At Rovaniemi and Tärnaby, 10 December 2019
Outi Rantala, Emily Höckert, and Heli Ilola

## Acknowledgements

The editing work of the special issue has been supported by a state subsidy for organising international conferences granted by the Federation for Finnish Learned Societies, by a research project, *Envisioning Proximity Tourism with New Materialism*, funded by the Academy of Finland (no. 24493), and by *Culturally Sensitive Tourism in the Arctic* (ARCTISEN) project, funded by the Northern periphery and Arctic (2014-2020).

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# Looking down, staying with and moving along: Towards collaborative ways of knowing with nature in the Anthropocene

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## Introduction

This research note is about collaborative ways of knowing with nature in the Anthropocene. I am interested in exploring some of the ways we can use to think about our relations to nature and how we might enact those in our efforts of knowledge creation. The notion of the Anthropocene underlines that society and nature are closely entwined contrary to what the traditional separation between social and natural sciences tends to portray. I will argue that it is crucial for us to move beyond the common divide between the two in order to create response-able knowledge through our research and education. We need to appreciate that the social is not only about human-to-human relations but human-to-more than human relations. It is emergent through multiple webs of relations, where humans and more-than humans co-mingle, co-create and collaborate. The concept of co-creation is indeed one of the buzz words in university policy at the moment and is as such shaping the realities of education and research. But has it any meaning in relation to the Anthropocene? What might it mean to be part of the earth and thus to engage in collaborative ways of creating knowledge with nature? To be honest, I do not have any affirmative answer but here I will discuss three tropes or actions that I think can be useful to render collaborative ways of knowing with nature meaningful, namely: looking down, staying with and moving along.

Gunnar Thór Jóhannesson

## Co-creation in the Anthropocene

*If travel is searching*
*And home what's been found*
*I'm not stopping*
*I'm going hunting*
*I'm the hunter*
*I'll bring back the goods*
*But I don't know when*
*I thought I could organise freedom*
*How Scandinavian of me.*
(Björk Guðmundsdóttir (Björk), 1997. Hunter.)

This is the first half of the lyrics of one of my favourite songs, Hunter, by Björk. We all relate differently to music and poetry and in the case of this song, what sparked my interest in it were the last two lines: "I thought I could organise freedom, how Scandinavian of me". I remember I listened a lot to this song during a period when working on my PhD. I was writing about Actor-Network Theory and tourism and how tourism realities emerge through heterogeneous ordering. They are co-created by many different actors, human and more than human (Jóhannesson, 2007). However, as many ANT-inspired studies have shown, ordering is quite precarious work. There is always something 'out of order' so to say and it takes a lot of effort to keep a particular order up and running (Latour, 2002; van der Duim, Ren, & Jóhannesson, 2012). Cracks may open any time and sometimes quite suddenly and dramatically as in the case of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano eruption in 2010 that seriously affected air transport in Europe (Lund & Benediktsson, 2011). What happened? Ash particles met jet engines in high altitude with serious implications for various ordering of mobilities. This was not a good encounter for tourism at all. The song, for me at least, highlights that no order is perfect and we as humans – even if we are Scandinavians – are never in total control of things. Nature is an unruly force that cannot be contained within any model; order and dis-order are co-created through relations.

This is, probably, not the first example of co-creation that comes to mind. It is more common to relate co-creation to the ways in which producers and consumers of a particular product, experience or service jointly produce it, partly or in whole (e.g. Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Value co-creation is also increasingly becoming prominent in the daily business of academia. Often that means in practice that we need to prove the value of our work for communities and businesses "outside" academia. It can be stated that the idea of co-creation is a part of a larger societal discourse tightly related to neo-liberal market and governance practice (Berg & Seeber, 2016). It relates to a reconfigured relationship between the public and private sector emphasizing competitiveness, individualization and economic reason but also, and that is very important, more relational, complex and collaborative ways of engaging with and assessing values and effects. Most researchers would be happy to collaborate and engage in co-creation, but the problem for many is that co-creation is often quantified and measured and used as a management tool to discipline and shape academia with very material effects. Co-creation is not an innocent

idea, it is power-laden and political tool highlighting the importance of relational practice for establishing societal order (van der Duim, Jóhannesson, & Ren, 2018). With that in mind I would like to move on to think about two kinds of relations that matter for us. On the one hand, our relation to nature and, on the other hand, the relations through which we create knowledge.

It has been argued many times before that from the time of the Enlightenment and what Latour (1993) calls the modern episteme nature and culture or humans and environment have been framed as separate entities. Gísli Pálsson (1996) described three modes of relations between humans and the environment more than 20 years ago, namely, orientalism, paternalism and communalism. Starting with the first two, they are both based on a clear separation between nature and society. While orientalism frames humans as the masters of nature and the earth as a passive subject of their desires, paternalism sees humans more as stewards and keepers of the earth and her treasures. Much of the discourse on conservation is based on the idea of nature being a manageable entity if we only have the good or correct knowledge of it. It does not necessarily see humanity as part of nature. A case in point is that often nature is ranked in ways which render some areas or locations seeming more natural than others. Untouched wilderness is seen in this optic as the purest form of nature as it has little or no human influence.

The third mode of human-environment relations Pálsson mentions is communalism. It is different as it does not see nature and society as easily distinctive fields and at the same time it is uncertain that humans have the ability to fully grasp the implications of their activities. This mode situates humans with the earth. It is no longer a passive stage for humans to play out their socially constructed realities but an active force or agent that humans live with. The dichotomy between nature and culture is thereby not given in the order of things but rather created and accomplished through various relations. It is, in other words, a matter of concern but not a matter fact (Latour, 1993, 2004).

This is what the concept of the Anthropocene highlights. It undermines the very constitution of modern sciences that has been based on the idea of separation between nature and society and in many ways contributed to the divide between nature and society. The Anthropocene brings forth that geologies are part of our daily lives, we are entangled in various relations to nature and the earth in very basic terms. In order to describe this entanglement Pálsson and Swanson (2016) propose the concept of geosociality, which, they argue, opens up for ways to include rocks, stones or just minerals in general in the definition of the social. They argue that it is crucial to explore the multiple layers of relations that braid "biographies and earth systems" (p. 167). That is, the multiple ways in which we are in the earth and the earth is in us, in order to render the Anthropocene meaningful. This has various implications for tourism research and education. We have to be able to relate the emergent realities of the Anthropocene and anchor them in our knowledge practices – we have to be able to respond to more messy and uncertain realities than before.

Let us move to knowledge practices and the relations through which we create knowledge. We can usefully think about three common modes of knowledge creation as three modes of relating to nature. As Gísli Pálsson (1996) notes, in the context of anthropology cultural others were often grouped together with nature – both could be investigated and analysed from a distance.

This is the classical stance of anthropology as Malinowski (1984) framed it. For him the role of the ethnographer was to provide holistic accounts of tribal cultures and ways of life, to convey this knowledge from the field and represent it in the most accurate way as possible in other places, most often at home within academia. The world according to this view is an object of science and the scientist could order and report the natural and social environment with his or her tools and methods. The rise of post-modernism in the 1980s was indeed a counterpoint towards the positivist ideal but it also disconnected research from the lifeworld and at times reduced lived experiences to textual representation (Pálsson, 1995). Both seemed to deny the possibility of constructing or composing reality that was simultaneously material, cultural and discursive (see e.g. Latour, 2005, 2017).

The question is when we know that scientific facts are constructed, when we know that there is no clear boundary of a field but rather we are always part and parcel of that field, how are we able to construct good – or robust (and critical) knowledge? According to Tim Ingold (2013) it is not enough to collect data for documentary purposes like hard facts and statistics which has been the main project of much of social science. He argues that good research should be about "studying with and learning from; it is carried forward in a process of life, and effects transformations within that process" (Ingold, 2013, p. 3). Ingold (2013, p. 5) argues that "participant observation is a way of knowing *from the inside*" (emphasis in original). It is an ontological practice and in turn, if we engage in fieldwork and learn from it, it is because we are part of the field.

We, as tourism researchers living the Anthropocene, need to learn to know it from the inside. Or maybe it is better to think of it in terms of topology, where there is no inside or outside (Blok, 2010). Question is therefore not how we may stand outside or inside of the Anthropocene or everyday life for that matter for once and for all but how we might interfere with, move back and forth locations and position ourselves in the midst of multiplicity of geosocial relations to make tourism research matter.

## Looking down – staying with – moving along

Here I would like to propose three ways to engage in collaborative ways of knowing with nature in the Anthropocene, namely: Looking down, staying with and moving along.

The first one refers to the importance of being down to earth. Even though the Anthropocene has highlighted our co-existence with earth, it does so on a particular scale, usually on a planetary or global scale. The Anthropocene is in this sense BIG. Without denouncing the importance of thinking big, it is important to pay attention to other scales or layers as well. As Pálsson and Swanson (2016) remark, the universalism, the Anthropocene implies, has the risk of masking off any difference and sustaining a distinction between global earth systems and local human differences and activities. We need, in other words, to situate the globality of the Anthropocene. In tourism research and education the challenge is to relate our situated knowledge practices to the long and varied relations of the Anthropocene. To link what may seem distant and absent to what is close and present. For the example of an effort to accomplish that I draw on a study of the history of tourism development in Lanzarote (Jóhannesson, Ren, & van der Duim, 2016).

In the early 1960s the island authorities in Lanzarote were focusing on tourism development. They invested in infrastructure such as an airport and an installation for the purification of water and the conditions for a limited number of hotels and apartments, as well as seven Centres for Art, Culture and Tourism. In the latter, the artist César Manrique worked along the relations between nature and society in novel ways and created tourism attractions that were difficult to situate either within a pure sphere of nature or culture. This was, for instance, a restaurant and concert-hall situated in a part of a cave, and a museum where volcanic lava flows into the art exhibition. The idea was based on what later was described as the Manrique model – a philosophy of limited growth, respect for local architecture and tourist attractions, in which tourism, nature and culture were architectonically integrated. As time went by, this philosophy came under stress in Lanzarote and elsewhere with the increase in mass tourism, changes in the international aviation system and changes in local government.

While it is possible to describe a case like this in common terms of fragile local place under pressure from global forces of capitalism, it is important to by-pass the divide between big and small, local and global, human and more-than-human and rather follow the links and relations through which tourism in Lanzarote develops. For instance, tourism in Lanzarote is sustained by the earth's potentialities (volcanic landscape and lava). Simultaneously it undeniably contributes to the condition we today term the Anthropocene as all other forms of tourism. It is important to recast tourism as concrete and specific practice and a becoming topological ordering of space. Rather than treat global tourism mobilities or global climate change as hovering above clearly defined places, we need to be able to trace the relations through which these phenomena are accomplished through situated practices. It is important to link tourism to other activities on the ground and take care to attend to how those relations matter differently to particular entities (human and more than human) in particular locales. By looking down we are able to situate tourism and bring forth the geosocial relations the Anthropocene manifests.

Second, we should stay with the trouble (Haraway, 2016). Tourism is not a singular entity; it is a collaborative achievement accomplished through heterogenous relations. It is "becoming with many" (Haraway, 2008, p. 4). However, tourism is still usually defined as a clearly defined sector or an industry, which means that there are countless 'others' that fall out of the assemblage of tourism proper. This includes the earth (Huijbens & Gren, 2016). Haraway proposes the concept in the context of the emergent reality of the Anthropocene, which highlights that we require each other in unexpected collaborations and combinations (Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018). Staying with the trouble also urges us to think of future possibilities in terms of "both-and" rather than "either or". To quote Haraway again:

> *[T]o address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe […]. Staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful and endemic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meaning* (Haraway, 2016, p. 2).

Staying with the trouble forges a middle ground between bi-polar responses to the state of alert of the Anthropocene: resignation and a turn to technofixes (Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018). In the same vein the challenges and problems of tourism development cannot be solved or dealt with

through quick and complete solutions. Tourism as a social force is a process of becoming that we as researchers participate in making. We should focus on finding ways to respond to emergent realities and give voice to the others of tourism.

This leads to the third suggestion – to move along and, in this occasion, with nature. A common understanding of tourism policy making is that it is a human practice played out on a passive stage of nature. In a destination like Iceland nature is the main resource of tourism and the sector is waking up to the fact that it needs to be protected and managed. When tracing the history of tourism policy making in Iceland couple of years ago, I noticed that there were two incidents that stood out as turning points for getting tourism to be recognised as an important sector that needed attention, support and regulation from the authorities. On the one hand, it was cod, the most important export product of the Icelandic fisheries, and, on the other, a volcano eruption (Jóhannesson, 2012, 2015). In 1993 the cod fisheries collapsed which was a huge blow for the economy. The general director of the Icelandic Tourist Board at the time linked the figure of the tourist to the cod arguing that one tourist would bring the same earnings of foreign currency to the national economy as one ton of cod. When asked about the incident he recalled:

> *…all of a sudden…one afternoon this just became the hot stuff in the debate. All of a sudden this was put in a context that people understood. […] […] this was the only way to get people to realize [the economic significance of tourism]. To try to connect it to something … because people understood cod.*

The link to the absent cod was a turning point in securing tourism a presence in discourse on economic development and policy making (Jóhannesson, 2015). Much later, in 2010 a serious work was underway within the ministry of tourism in cooperation with the Icelandic Tourist Board and numerous other, mainly public, stakeholders in revising the tourism policy document at the time. The policy work was taken out of the confines of the ministry and opened up for other actors. This was a notable change meant to improve collaboration across sectors, but it was clear it was hampered by internal tensions and competition (public-private and within the public sector). However, in April 2010 Eyjafjallajökull erupted. As ash particles encountered jet engines in high altitude the order of European air space crumbled. The meeting of ash particles and jet engines is indeed a perfect example of a geo-social relational encounter that had wide ranging repercussions. Icelandic tourism authorities were concerned that this event would have devastating implications for tourism, which at the time was desperately needed as the economy was slowly recovering from financial crisis (Jóhannesson & Huijbens, 2010). This event pushed public and private actors to collaborate more intensively and together they financed a huge marketing scheme for tourism, *Inspired by Iceland*. The minister of tourism at the time noted that the event had prompted a culture-change. It created a feeling of solidarity and a fertile ground for more collaboration (Jóhannesson, 2012).

These two very short anecdotes bring us back to the problematic idea of organising freedom. No order is total or durable in finite terms and this is apparent if the agency of the earth is acknowledged, that is, if we recognise and appreciate the dynamics of a world "continually on the boil" (Ingold, 2008, p. 14). And this is what "moving along" urges us to do. We cannot stay put and analyse the world from afar. We are in the midst of things and if we are going to respond to the lively realities of tourism we have to move along.

Our descriptions should then not try to freeze the world by merely describing it but embrace the process of life and open up our perception to what is going on there so that we, in turn, can respond to it (Ingold, 2013). We have the responsibility to carve out critical connections not by staying distant trying to unmask the real condition of the world but to stay proximate, moving along the relations through which the tourism realities emerge. Critical proximity implies staying empirically close to the subject matter, opening up 'matters of fact' (Jóhannesson, Lund, & Ren, 2018). As such it demands care: which is "everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair 'our world' so that we can live in it as well as possible" (de la Bellacasa, 2011, p. 93). The notion of care should not be taken as paternal stewardship. Rather it refers to work that seeks improvement and efforts which "are ongoing, adaptive, tinkering and open ended" (Heuts & Mol, 2013, p. 130).

> *Importantly, the notion of care does not promise full control or offer a perfect solution. Rather, it outlines means to bring together what seem as separate worlds of research through composition and engagement with tourism imponderables* (Jóhannesson, Lund, & Ren, 2018, p. 47).

At times it may mean to take on the role of distant observer, at other times to become a close co-worker. In relation to nature attending to the Anthropocene is about linking together biographies of humans and more-than-humans, thus reconfiguring how we think and enact tourism.

## Concluding remarks

The concept of the Anthropocene manifest changes in how we think about and understand the relations between nature and society. However, in order to make it meaningful, for instance in the context of tourism research and education, it needs to be brought down to earth. To paraphrase Pálsson and Swanson (2016) we need bold theories rather than big theories to describe what is happening on the ground and thus situate the Anthropocene. We as researchers and educators need to be bold enough to look down, stay with the trouble and move along to improvise liveable futures.

As the examples of cod and volcano bring forth, tourism takes place through topological relations which underlines that there is no final level ordering of the usual building blocks of society or nature but rather "movement – as the ordering of continuity – composes the forms of social and cultural life themselves" (Lury, Parisi, & Terranova, 2012, p. 6). Therefore, we cannot escape the fate and responsibility to move along with the earth – not to organize our freedom once and for all but to compose our daily existence the best we can – with others.

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# Towards collective ways of knowing in the Anthropocene: Walking-with multiple others

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## Introduction

(Photo: Authors)

> *"I sat down one spring day to write about walking and stood up again, because a desk is no place to think on the large scale."* Rebecca Solnit in *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (2000, chapter 1)

In this research note*, we leave our desks to take part in the creation of new imaginaries of our ways of knowing in the era of the Anthropocene – an era during which humans have profoundly influenced the wellbeing of the Earth. Being faithful to the special issue's question, *"How can we, in the era of the Anthropocene, aim to know-with objects, things, animals, elements and theories both in our pedagogical efforts and through our research activities?"*, we present insights from an ongoing field research with the earthly creatures inhabiting the Pyhä-Luosto National Park in Finnish Lapland. We read our empirical materials through Karen Barad's framework of agential realist ontology (Barad, 2003, 2007), which is structured upon the notion of *intra-action*, a "neologism [that] signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies" (Barad, 2007, p. 33). Moreover, we set Baradian heritage in close dialogue with the practice of *walking*, as a way of engaging in and with a more-than-human world (Springgay & Truman, 2018). Walking has an extensive history as a research methodology in the social sciences and humanities. It has been a form

of ethnography (Ingold & Vergunst, 2008/2016; Vergunst, 2011), a walking interview method (Stals, Smyth, & Ijsselsteijn, 2014), a "talking whilst walking" bodily research practice (Anderson, 2004) and a strategy for decolonising research (Sundberg, 2014). The walking methodology can be considered particularly suitable for relational, material and situated research (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 14). It brings our attention also to place and place-making, place representing a crucial concept in walking research (p. 4). In addition to Pyhä-Luosto being a popular tourist attraction, it is a place meaningful to our research, both for us as authors and for the more-than-human collective who inhabits the forests and hills in and around the national park. We acknowledge our walking in this meaningful place as "a way of becoming responsive to place" (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 4). This drives us to envision embodied ways of knowing-with in the "age of humans" and to re-evaluate our own place within this collective.

With our ongoing research, we take part in the further theorising of "tourism knowledge collectives" (Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018), which refers to a dynamic group of actors and practices "shaped for and together with those living off and with tourism" (p. 24). We strive to show how the more-than-human collectives (cf. Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018, p. 25) inhabiting the forests and hills of national parks and attracting tourists near and far are inherent actors in forming tourism knowledge. In so doing, we take on the challenge of finding ways to know-with earthly creatures other than those of our own species in order to move forward from anthropocentric epistemologies towards more collaborative ones (Ren, Jóhannesson, & van der Duim, 2018), thus encouraging ethically sound tourism development (Huijbens & Jóhannesson, 2019). We also point to the importance of the "mattering of matter" in our understanding of tourism research during the current era in which, according to Barad (2003), "Language matters. Discourse matters. Culture matters. There is an important sense in which the only thing that does not seem to matter anymore is matter" (p. 801). Barad (2003, p. 801) poses an important question, asking "How did language come to be more trustworthy than matter?". With our research, we feel the necessity of engaging our own bodies in our effort to find ways to know-with in the era of the Anthropocene instead of theorising from a distance (see also van Dooren, Kirksey, & Münster, 2016, p. 15; Haraway, 1997, p. 36).

In this research note, we are focusing "care-fully" on the question of knowing-with. We commit to an ethico-onto-epistemological (Barad, 2007) reading of our ongoing research in Pyhä-Luosto National Park and its surroundings, where we set out to explore ways of being and knowing in and with the world in a situated place and time, paying close attention to the ethics manifesting in these processes. In more practical terms, we explore the ways we can actually know-with, posing a question: how can we become attentive to (van Dooren et al., 2016) and "response-able-with" (cf. Barad, 2003, 2007; Haraway, 2016) more-than-human collectives through our research practices? With "response-able-with", we refer to simultaneously acknowledging our place as only one species in the complexity of our earthly collectives and acknowledge the "accountability and responsibility for all relationalities that we (not only we – humans) engage in and are part of" (Radomska, 2010, p. 109). Our earlier contribution to the topic of walking focused on walking-with rocks with care (Rantala, Valtonen, & Salmela, forthcoming). Now it is time for other earthly creatures to become part of our research. To accomplish these aims,

we develop an extended notion of walking-with multiple others to demonstrate how "sensitive reading and care-fullness", "singing-with the forest" and "walking-with the trail" can become potential ways to answer to the question, "How can we aim to know-with?".

## Towards collective ways of knowing in the era of the Anthropocene

Recent contributions in the field of tourism studies have pointed to the importance of a co-creation of tourism knowledge that goes further than merely a consideration of humans as knowledge producers (e.g. Cloke & Perkins, 2005; Gren & Hujbens, 2016; Jóhannesson, 2015; Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018; Ren, Jóhannesson, & van der Duim, 2018). Ren and Jóhannesson (2018) use Donna Haraway's (2008, 2016) notion of "becoming-with many" to help them "think beyond the 'usual suspects' in tourism research and to explore other possible human and non-human actors as potential contributors to the collaborative shaping of tourism knowledge" (Ren and Jóhannesson, 2018, p. 25). Both located in the scholarly field of Science and Technology Studies, Haraway's notions of "becoming-with each other or not at all" (Haraway, 2016, p. 4) and "making kin" (Haraway, 2015) connect with Karen Barad's (2003, 2007) framework of agential realist ontology, which we use as our main inspiration for post-anthropocentric theorising in this paper. In agential realist ontology, the notion of intra-action, according to Barad, forms the key element:

> "The neologism 'intra-action' signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies. That is, in contrast to the usual 'interaction,' which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction, the notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action. It is important to note that the 'distinct' agencies are only distinct in a relational, not an absolute, sense, that is, *agencies are only distinct in relation to their mutual entanglement; they don't exist as individual elements*." (Barad, 2007, p. 33, original emphasis).

Also crucial to Barad's agential realist account is that "agency is cut loose from its traditional humanist orbit" (Barad, 2003, p. 826). This means that agency "[i]s not aligned with human intentionality or subjectivity. Nor does it merely entail resignification or other specific kinds of moves within a social geometry of antihumanism" (p. 826). According to our reading of Barad, this means that it is the relations between humans, nonhumans and matter that *matter* – not the existence of individual and separate subjects and objects. This line of thinking necessitates the de-centralisation of the human and the moving away from, or integral refusal of (Radomska, 2010, p. 102), anthropocentrism. It contains a passage towards posthumanist accounts of life and mattering (Barad, 2007), towards "posthuman collective(s)" (Radomska, 2010, p. 94). Banishing the illusion of human exceptionalism is also characteristic to scholarly work utilising the concept of the more-than-human (Springgay & Truman, 2017). For our research, the most crucial point provided by the notion of the more-than-human is the relational existence of all matter. This consideration calls us to move towards post-anthropocentric accounts of tourism, and, on a wider scale, epistemologies guiding our research practices[1] .

1 See also van Dooren et al., 2016, pp. 12–13, for the aim of multispecies studies to "refigure the human".

Springgay and Truman's (2018) book project, *Walking methodologies in a more-than-human world*, connects the account of the more-than-human with the embodied, sensuous and affective practice of walking. Walking as a scholarly method and embodied practice enables visioning a processual and embodied form of knowing-together that happens through an attentive, sensorial way of being-in the world (cf. van Dooren et al., 2016). Springgay and Truman note how walking scholars acknowledge "the ways that walking connects bodies, environment, and the sensory surrounds of place" (2018, p. 4). Walking, however, is plural. Springgay and Truman note that their project on walking methodologies "provoke[es] a *critical* mode of walking-with that engenders solidarity, accountability, and response-ability 'in the presence of others'" (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 15, emphasis added). We consider this mode of walking as walking-with that goes beyond a consideration of walking as an individual act. There, walking becomes much more than a mechanical process of taking one step after another, and instead requires an awareness of our unavoidable co-existence with multiple others. We suggest that it is only by giving up on the practice of marching – a "footwork of colonial occupation" (Ingold & Vergunst, 2016/2008, p. 13) – that we are able to approach the possibility of knowing-with others. This type of approach to walking is ethically charged, as pointed out by Springgay and Truman:

> "Walking-with demands that we forgo universal claims about how humans and nonhumans experience walking and consider more-than-human ethics and politics of the material intra-actions of walking research." (2018, p. 11)

In Baradian thinking, ethics is fundamentally embedded in this relationality, making ethics "about taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are a part" (Barad, 2007, p. 384). This involves a shift from "being responsible for" to having "a response-ability-with" (Barad, 2003, 2007; Haraway, 2016; see also Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 7). Ethics and the practice of response-ability-with requires, we argue, slowness. To be slow is, according to Springgay and Truman, to "ask critical questions" and to "create openings where different kinds of awareness and practices can unfold" (p. 15). In a natural setting, the unfolding of different kinds of awareness does not happen via efficiency-oriented running on the paths of national parks. If "slowness is a process of unlearning and unsettling what has come before", we must slow our speed to a walk, and of walking too, to be able to know-with "in the presence of others" (Springgay & Truman, 2018 p. 15).

To ask critical questions also involves, crucially, an understanding of the limits of our capability of knowing and, inevitably and consequently, the de-centralisation of the human (Springgay & Truman, 2017). The realisation of our limits creates, in turn, space for imagination and wonder, which ought to flourish also in academic research. To envision, to create new stories, demands imagination. The cherishing of imagining is in line with the idea of intra-action: we, and our complex Earth in its entirety, come into existence through processes we are not always able to actually see or grasp.[2] When walking-with, a process characterised by responsiveness, we are able to dwell in the complexity and richness of the more-than-human collectives that are there, walking-with us. This dwelling needs more silent efforts than loud ones (cf. Veijola,

2 For example, our very own bodies are constitutive of particles that have indeed existed before our own corporeal existence (Barad, 2003).

Höckert, Carlin, Light, & Säynäjäkangas, 2019), together with care-full movements – perhaps of a very tiny scale (Höckert, 2019).

We will next move on to present our research diary notes from our study and discuss them through the theoretical framework presented. This year in early May 2019, we – four members of our research group (ILA) – spent a week at our university cottage, Keropirtti, located close to the Pyhä-Luosto National Park. We were to try out some of the research methods inspired by the posthumanist and more-than-human methodological literature that we had engaged ourselves with for approximately two years' time in different contexts and projects. That week was a long-awaited period of time for us to make space for new ideas concerning how we could learn to know-with, walk-with and learn from our earthly colleagues. We agreed on first reading some pieces of inspirational methodological work, touching upon new materialism, queer theories and more-than-human methods to back up our work (Irni, 2013; Leppänen & Tiainen, 2016). Based on our readings, we were inspired first by the ways in which new materialisms, with their consideration of active matter, work as a force, putting concepts and "objects" of inquiry into motion and emphasising the process of the becoming of matter (Leppänen & Tiainen, 2016). Second, we were inspired by the potential of using sensitive reading in our empirical work – to take Irni's (2013) concept of sensitive reading to the actual, tangible encounters with non-human subjects – by reading with care and without an effort or aim to create gaps and differences within the Earth we inhabit with multiple others. After the week at Pyhä-Luosto, we started to analyse our experiences in light of our wider theoretical framework, resulting in the creation of three different themes through which to approach the question of "how to know-with". These themes, which are to be elaborated upon next with short excerpts from our field diaries, are: "sensitive reading and care-fullness", "singing-with the forest" and "walking-with the trail".

## Sensitive reading and care-fullness

> "Thinking with care is a vital requisite of collective thinking in interdependent worlds." (Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018, p. 28)

*We started our empirical exploration by heading on a short hiking trip with our group, and the family of two kids (aged 6 and 8) of one of our group members. We chose to head towards Soutaja (Rower) – a fell 370 meters of height situated close t the natural park. The partner of one of our group members led our way through the forest without a readily made path. Even when walking together, we all took the freedom to choose our own pace, one catching up with the other, and one lagging a bit behind. In late wintertime, the forest already greeted the spring. Seeing the kids play while walking, picking up stones, climbing the trees, making sounds, we let our minds wonder and be open to what we were seeing and experiencing. When being and walking there, it appeared too selective to just focus on what we had decided beforehand. Experimenting with a sensitive reading in a more-than-human sphere helped and invited us to open up to the particularities of a wide variety of earthly creatures. We took photographs of different locations, paused at the encounters with different creatures that crossed our way (or in whose way we were crossing), read signs in the snow where somebody had walked before us, and listened to what went on around us. We just could not be selective. That which was there and wanted our attention, got our attention.*

What does this first-hand experience of walking in the snowy forest of Pyhä-Luosto with our theoretical "luggage" tell us about the possibilities of knowing-with and of becoming attentive to the complexity of a more-than-human collective inhabiting the place? And what can we learn about ethics as being "about taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are a part" (Barad, 2007, p. 384) from this experience? Walking in the snowy forest invited us to experience the place through our own feet in a different vein than the common, touristic way of looking at the landscape. Our engagement with the forest during winter differed from that of summertime, when we would have possibly had a readily made path – even a small one – to lead us. In the wintery forest, with every step we started to give up our usual reliance on a readily-made route that would provide hints and suggestions about where to turn our gaze and what to see. The change of orientation can be considered our first turn towards a post-anthropocentric viewpoint during our journey – an adventure without a structured "goal" or route. We started to pay attention to matters that are usually disregarded. Small – perhaps even tiny – things got our attention. We started to read signs in the snow where somebody had walked before us, seeing marks of the past that connect history to the present, intra-actively making place together (Barad, 2007). We also started to wonder about all the creatures we neither heard nor saw, reminding us of the limits of our own humanity and our general "criterion… of evaluation or verification" (van Dooren et al., 2016, p. 16). This invited us to "[learn] new modes of taking account of and with enigmatic others who cannot be – or perhaps do not want to be – represented or even rendered knowable or sensible within any available mode of understanding" (van Dooren et al., 2016, p. 16) and opened up space for imaginative play (Merewether, 2019). Sounds of the forest, seemingly silent at first, mixed with those of our child and adult travel companions. A mesh of movement took place.

Step by step, we started to engage our own sensing bodies in the more-than-human collective of the forest and to realise our own presence in it. We became more open to the ways care was practiced and expressed in the forest – with the encouragement of our theoretical luggage – and how it was possibly conceived as being disturbed, for example by the children walking with us. The kids were, from time to time, tearing and breaking the branches from trees on our route, and the youngest of them was also playing an imaginative game of shooting by using a tree branch as his weapon. We seemed obliged to rethink our considerations of care, how practicing care is always processual and never strictly defined (cf. Barad, 2007). Our walking was altogether strongly guided by the presence of children and the "messiness" of research. This returns us back to Ingold and Vergunst's (2016/2008) notion of only by giving up on the practice of marching – a "footwork of colonial occupation" (p. 13) that we are able to approach the possibility of knowing-with others. The two children also reminded us that being in nature does not mean we have to watch every step we take (see also Milne, Rantala, & Grimwood in this issue; Blaise, Hamm, & Iorio, 2017; Merewether, 2019; Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015). Yet, they also reminded us of the ethical struggles we might have when walking in nature with other humans who share different considerations of the "norms" or "principals" of care.

Questions stemming from our shared walking with children became triggers for wondering: "What happened to that tree?" "Wow, look at that rock! We should climb on top of it." Barad

states that attentiveness is "the ongoing practice of being open and alive to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly" (Barad, 2007, p. x). In this type of thinking, every encounter, every crossing of paths, becomes a new beginning with a history. In these moments and encounters, and in their witnessing, lies a possibility to see how "human life is connected to and dependent on other species and the land" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 636). Moreover, they carry an ethical obligation: they are moments of "making kin" (Haraway, 2015), "a mutual requirement of unexpected and caring collaboration" (Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018, p. 27). This collaboration extends from being practiced with children to being practiced (on this occasion) with rocks and trees: what if we actually started to think about what would it mean to think like a rock, or like a tree (see also Rantala, Salmela, Valtonen, & Höckert, 2018)? This type of thinking gently pushes us towards being response-able-with. Radomska (2010, p. 109) quotes Barad:

> "Intra-acting responsibly as part of the world means taking account of the entangled phenomena that are intrinsic to the world's vitality and being responsive to the possibilities that might help us and it flourish. Meeting each moment, being alive to the possibilities of becoming, is an ethical call, an invitation that is written into the very matter of all being and becoming." (Barad, 2007, p. 369)

## Singing-with the forest

*The idea of singing in the forest came without notice. When walking in the forest covered by snow, one of us started to talk about the work of a company called SoundByNature. Inspired by the topic, we started chatting about the societal imprints that we carry about where is it appropriate to start singing and why we do not sing that much anymore compared to when we were kids. Then, the first author gathered courage to just to start singing. She loves to sing in general, but singing in the forest with her friends and colleagues present was something different. She remembered an old chant that she had sung all the time when she was part of a folkdance group, and already back then she had found the melody and lyrics sad yet beautiful.*

*"Yksi, kaksi, kolme, neljä… Anna iloisen olla… Koska suru tulee, anna hänen mennä… Paarmat ne laulaa, neljä hiirtä hyppelee… Kissi lyöpi trummun päälle ja koko maailma pauhaa…" ["One, two, three, four… Let the joyful be… When sadness comes, let her go… Horseflies fly, four mice are jumping… The cat hits the drum and the whole world thunders."]*

*She went on singing, her group members ahead and behind her, walking in a queue with moderate speed. She felt like she was traveling to her childhood again – the forest, the trees, the air around her, surrounding her, started to look different. She felt small. Somehow, time stopped. A timely and affective relation to the forest changed. So did her relation to her friends and colleagues: she felt that she is probably now seen in a different light – but not in ways she would know in advance. It was a moment hard to explain, and still is. Who was she singing to, in the end? And who was listening? We ended up recording a second set of her singing. Then the person who was earlier behind her in the queue went to the front. When she then heard the song again, she started crying. Something happened in the affective flux including the forest, the singing, the melodic vocals, the words of a chant, the singer, and her friends walking with her. A moment of relatedness, piercing bodies that walked-with.*

Singing came to play an unexpected, important role while we travelled through the snowy forest. This is perhaps because singing has the power to make us present. Like mantras said out loud when meditating, the vibrating sound stemming from our bodies made us present – including all of us, not only the singer. Singing in the forest while walking made us become more aware of our presence in what we were exploring in our research. Singing-in the forest became singing-with the forest. Perhaps the world-changing power of sound and sound-making in nature lies in its capability to change our perception of agency. Through an embodied production of sound – which, from the viewpoint of physics, is invisible vibration in the air that turns into nerve impulses for our brains to then interpret (https://tieku.fi/fysiikka/aani-on-ilman-varahtelyja) – we are able to re-consider agency. Sound gets interpreted in the body that is attuned to the sound-making of the other (or to the sound-making of oneself) through the ears, and then the brain. Thus, sound-making is never an individual act, and it does not restrict itself to one subject but instead always entails a practice of receiving, listening and interpreting. Sound-making, and singing as part of it, is intra-action through which agencies emerge (Barad, 2003, pp. 826–827; Barad, 2007, p. 33).

The receiving, listening and interpreting of sound does not require a relation between subjects of the same species or bodily form. When we consider the notion of the more-than-human collective in this setting, we are able to see how sound-making in a place inhabited by multiple others, entangled with the use of language (lyrics), makes agency a dynamic, more-than-human process instead of being "aligned with human intentionality or subjectivity" (Barad, 2003, p. 826). Singing when walking can be considered singing to earthly creatures, as well as a responsive act to *hearing out* these creatures when they sing each in their own way. Most importantly, singing becomes collaborative when our voices connect with multiple others. Birds, little rustles, old trees creaking – all of these are the sounds of bodies living in the shared space. When we sing, we bring ourselves closer to the bodies of others, instead of detaching or furthering ourselves from that which we are part of. If there is an echo, we have only an idea of the response our bodies have to our own voices, but remain unaware of their response to the bodies of others. The breaking of silence with our voices also involves, we suggest, a particular dimension of care. The song that was sung in the forest by the first author, the melody stemming from her body, did not propose a violent act towards the beautiful silence in the forest. Instead, it was an engagement with the forest, with the creatures inhabiting it. It was the sound of respect and gratitude for being able and allowed to walk there.

To become present through singing can also be explored through rhythmicity (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 5). Singing can happen in moments where chronological time meets vertical time (Helin, 2019). This means that while we sing, time can "stop": there is a pause in our conception of the surrounding world, but this pause happens only within movement. When singing in the forest, we all kept on walking, and the life surrounding us kept moving. In this shared but not synchronised movement, it also matters what rhythms we produce, and what songs we sing. The first author was singing about mice, cats and the Earth, without exact deliberation about which song she should choose. It was a song from her youth. The song travelled in history and chose her, in that current situation, place and time. So too does the song of the forest have its

own story, its own history. Without this history, this moment of singing-with the forest would not have happened. Intra-action must then take into account stories of the past and of the future through its embeddedness in ethics: while ethics is "about taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are a part" (Barad, 2007, p. 384), our songs sang in the past and the songs to be sung in the future become of importance.

## Walking-with the trail

> *The next day, three of us went for a short hike. We took the trail heading to a lean-to where we were supposed to make fire, grill some food and enjoy coffee. We walked slowly through the age-old forests, the pines, candle spruces and deadwoods surrounded the trail. While walking, we paused to admire the beauty of deadwoods. "How different they are after all", we thought. One, majestic, strong, reaching its branches towards the blue sunny sky; another, humbler, leaning towards the grounds; two deadwoods searching for support from each other. We came close to the deadwoods, hugged them with our arms, pet their trunks smoothly with our hands and fingers, and admired the beautiful small patterns on their surfaces. We also noticed how these seemingly dead creatures were full of life – hundreds of tiny insects, names of which we do not know, scuttled rapidly up and down the trunks, which were full of holes supposedly made by woodpeckers. We put our ears on the trunks and listened to the small voices coming from inside.*

An attentiveness to the particularities of the earthly companions we came across on our way was not only built via consciously spreading our awareness away our awareness away from the activity and actions of our own bodies and minds to something simply external to our own existence. In contrast, we became attentive through corporeal methods of knowing (see Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 39), our bodies mediating our capability to know-with. This means our bodies became a crucial part of the recognition of other bodies in their various forms. There is an inevitability and inescapability of our humanness and human embodiedness when dwelling in more-than-human worlds. Anna Tsing encourages us to think of our humanness as "an opening for getting involved in multi species worlds" (2013, p. 34). This opening involves participation and recreation (p. 34), taking us further, from "identifying" passive objects (cf. Barad, 2007) towards common world making. This happens through, according to Tsing (2013), learning about the non-human and "ourselves in action, through common activities" (p. 34). To this we may add: through both learning and living with them. Consequently, this means, in Tsing's words, "Our own human involvement in multispecies worlds is thus a place to begin" (2013, p. 34).

In the time spent walking the trail, we had no-one to guide us on our way; instead, we followed a familiar trail to the lean-to, at that time marked by traces of others that had walked there before us. In the national park of Pyhä-Luosto, one should not leave a track, and the signs of the trail reserved for walking are clearly communicated (and require a high level of ignorance to not be noticed). During winter, these communicative elements illustrating where humans are allowed to walk – and where they are not – become more blurred, as there are winter trails that are not always clearly available to be seen. Yet, some particular areas in the Pyhä-Luosto nature park, like the Isokuru gorge, are restricted areas year round, and visitors are advised to stay on the marked summer trail at all times to guarantee their safety from the avalanche danger during

winter and to protect the "unique nature in the gorge" (https://luosto.fi/en/business/pyha-luosto-kansallispuisto). In general, a national park is not a place to *flâneur*, to wander, in Henry Thoreau's sense. Walking in a national park is tied as such to dominant sustainability discourses (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 17). Springgay and Truman note how "[n]ature hikes, long walks, and ecotourism rely on human impact, control, and subsequent care" (2018, p. 17).

In this type of walking, we are perhaps stuck in an understanding of ethics and care as something that requires being responsible for instead of being response-able-with (Barad, 2007, p. 384; Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 7). While this type of notion of care leads to the maintenance of the separation between nature and culture – we "enjoy" and "consume" landscapes – partly through the fostering of trail systems (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 17), we must acknowledge the drivers of natural park management upon which the idea of being responsible for is built. For example, Siikamäki, Kangas, Paasivaara and Schoderus (2015) emphasise in their research the importance of careful planning and national park management to protect biodiversity in the area, which means, for example, the avoidance of "locations of threatened species and species vulnerable to disturbance" when planning hiking trails (p. 2532). Here, care for biodiversity exceeds, we argue, the "dominant sustainability discourses and practices where landscape is enjoyed and consumed" (Springgay & Truman, 2018, p. 17). We should perhaps pause to think whether national park management actually practices one way of being response-able-with: paying close attention to changes in the nature, listening to the inhabitants of many species living in the national park and managing the national park together with multiple others.

Moreover, the moments spent walking on the winter trail did enable us to become sensitised to the detailed particularities of multiple others. While our route and steps were guided by human-mediated instructions, our walking bodies came close to the bodies of others. Walking the trail became walking-with, enabling us to draw attention to how different creatures live their lives with particular rhythms. Entangled agencies were mutually constituted (Barad, 2007, p. 33): pausing the rhythms of the more-than-human collectives affected our rhythms as well, and we began to attune our bodies to the (rhythmic) bodies of others. We did not interact as and with "separate" agencies, but our rhythmic and embodied relation expressed a phenomenon, which Barad describes as "the ontological inseparability/entanglement of intra-acting 'agencies'" and "the primary ontological unit" (Barad, 2007, p. 139). We slowed our pace, paused – then continued our walk, never again the same as we were before.

Walking-with the trail opened our senses to different forms of caring than the one present in nature park management practices. We saw the deadwood – possibly "dead" for 100 years – providing shelter, home and nutrition for a number of different living creatures. Its seemingly still presence attracts today's visitors who often live in hectic surroundings – but how much do they know? What happened in these moments was us being drawn "into worlds of many interacting species" – our senses, little by little, noticed different forms of ongoing, more-than-human sociality (Tsing, 2013, p. 39). Walking, pausing, continuing, kneeling down, touching, hugging… our bodily practices were not independent of the world our bodies were located in. They were fundamentally something-with. Attentiveness equipped with curiosity also fed empathy. Through empathetic and care-full walking-with, we are forming the grounds for an ethical re-

lation to creatures with which we share our habitat, and the paths and places, full of stories, in and on which we dwell. A commitment to "knowledge and curiosity about the other" (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011, p. 98) is linked with care (Michael, 2016, p. 132; Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018, p. 28). Through walking-with, we became able to notice those care-full practices that take place ongoingly in nature without our human impact. Tsing (2013) reminds us that humans are not necessarily part of the social lives of non-human creatures, such as plants and fungi. Thus, in line with Barad's theoretical heritage of agential realist ontology, we must remain open to both those processes of world making that we are indirectly, or more directly, part of – and those that exist without the presence and part-taking of humans. In both cases, walking would never be walking without the presence of significant others. We never dwell in the world alone.

## Concluding remarks

In this research note, we have taken part in the creation of new imaginaries of our ways of knowing in the era of the Anthropocene. We have reflected on one particular question in this special issue: "*How can we, in the era of the Anthropocene, aim to know with objects, things, animals, elements and theories both in our pedagogical efforts and through our research activities?*" Writing our paper from the framework of agential realist ontology (Barad, 2003, 2007), we have considered entanglement with multiple others as a prerequisite for our existence and used this starting point as grounds for our theorising. This has led us to (aim to) de-centralise the human in our research practices, while simultaneously being part of the motivation behind more-than-human inquiries (Springgay & Truman, 2017).

With our research, we demonstrate the value of Baradian heritage – her framework of agential realist ontology – to post-anthropocentric tourism research motivated to imagine, and make into reality, more collaborative ways of knowing in the "era of the man" (cf. Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018; Ren, Jóhannesson, & van der Duim, 2018). Furthermore, we suggest that the complex question of how to know-*with* ought to be approached from a standpoint that is not afraid of trouble (Haraway, 2016). We can relate to Anna Tsing (2013) in her question, "How can we study social worlds of beings that can't talk to us?" (p. 31), and work towards exploring how. The question of *how* to communicate, learn from and know-with crosses disciplinary boundaries and – as this special issue addresses – has implications also for the future of tourism research.

We propose "walking-with multiple others" as one potential way to know-with, and find our place within, more-than-human collectives. Walking-with invites attentiveness (van Dooren et al., 2016), which we consider crucial in the fostering and discovery of our embodied relationalities with multiple others. We suggest that walking-with can emerge through different methods of practicing attentiveness in nature. Through our ongoing empirical fieldwork in Pyhä-Luosto's nature park, we suggest "sensitive reading and care-fullness", "singing-with the forest" and "walking-with the trail" as such methods. These dimensions of walking can be read as meaningful and situated ways to approach the question of "how to know-with".

Instead of taking big leaps, we propose the value of taking tiny and slow steps (Höckert, 2019; Springgay & Truman, 2018) to "care-fully" move forward and further away from the al-

lure of human exceptionalism – and, moreover, to take these lessons into our research practice. We must also strive to make these ethico-onto-epistemologies (Barad, 2007) of life based on relationalities and collective ways of knowing *realisable* and *theorisable*. Only by confronting this far-from-easy task are we able to move towards a world where we acknowledge, and practice, a collective knowing-with. In this paper, we have tried not to let our own humanness hold us back in envisioning collective epistemologies through research. We end our research note with a poem written by the first author when walking-with the trails of Pyhä-Luosto and coming across a valley of dead trees:

*A valley of dead trees*

Death, living, life, care, finiteness, infiniteness
Co-constituting one another
In this valley of dead trees
Where my sight cuts short
Where my eyes lack the capacity
Where my hands do not reach
But where my soul is present
Valley of dead trees
Valley with gentle forms of life.

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* Our contribution is part of a larger research project: our recently launched study in the national park of Pyhä-Luosto, Finnish Lapland, is a four-year project on *Envisioning Proximity Tourism with New Materialism* (www.ilarctic.com) funded by Academy of Finland (no. 24493), conducted at the University of Lapland, Finland, Multidimensional Tourism Institute and the Faculty of Social Sciences. In it, we set out to develop a conceptual, empirical and methodological approach for a context-based study of the Anthropocene. Theoretically, we employ feminist new materialisms (Barad, 2003, 2007; Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 2008) to help us in this effort. Methodologically, we utilize and develop more-than-human methodologies (Brown & Banks, 2015; Haanpää, Salmela, García-Rosell, & Äijälä, 2019; Lorimer, 2010; Ulmer, 2017), which can be characterized as an expanding methodological movement nourished by posthumanist or post-anthropocentric thought (see also Zylinska, 2015). This methodological 'terra firma' helps us to explore the possibilities of knowing-with, as well as learning-from, more-than-human collectives in the north, and to apply this knowledge in visioning alternative tourism futures (see also Ren & Jóhannesson, 2018; Ren, Jóhannesson, & van der Duim, 2018).

# Children as tour guides

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Despite recent calls to include children in tourism research, the trend of overlooking children's perspectives and experiences remains pervasive (Gram, O'Donohoe, Schänzel, Marchant, & Kastarinen, 2019; Poria & Timothy, 2014). This is a lost opportunity, especially in today's anthropocentric context, as children can offer insightful perspectives on human-nature relationships, and possible lessons for cultivating responsible human connections to, and co-existence with, non-human nature (Merewether, 2019). This research note emphasizes the importance of 'knowing with' children. Based on preliminary findings from a study that looked at nature-based proximity tourism and family nature walk experiences using sensory ethnographic methodologies, we show the value of considering children as tour guides. More specifically, we adopt a relational approach to engaging children's experiences in the world to illuminate under-explored and under-appreciated modes of knowing with non-human nature. Furthermore, we encourage future research that considers children not as a 'state of becoming' or as 'the future', but as influential actors within the present of tourism research (Carpenter, 2015; Leonard, 2019).

## Hearing children's voices in tourism studies

The dated phrase "children must be seen and not heard" unfortunately still applies to much of the tourism literature today. Children's voices and experiences of tourism are often silenced, and the few studies that do include children in tourism look at knowing about them as opposed to knowing with them (Leonard, 2019; Poria & Timothy, 2014). Studies that do include children often focus on the perspective of an adult, such as in family tourism experiences (Durko & Petrick, 2013; Kennedy-Eden & Gretzel, 2016; Lehto, Lin, Chen, & Choi, 2012; Schänzel & Yeoman, 2015), volunteer and orphanage tourism (Carpenter, 2015; Guiney, 2017), or adults recalling memories of tourist experiences as children (Omelan, Huk-Wieliczuk, & Podstawski, 2015; Small, 2008). While many studies highlight the important role children play in family tourism decision-making (Canosa & Graham, 2016; Wang, 2018; Wu, Wall, Zu, & Ying, 2019), there is a tendency to not fully value children as the narrators of their own perspectives, stories, and experiences. Poria and Timothy (2014) discuss many challenges to doing tourism research with children, including:

the required skill set and expertise to successfully conduct research involving children as participants; the strict ethical considerations when involving children in research; and the general lack of knowledge among tourism scholars in children behaviorial theories.

Learning about the stages of children's cognitive development and well-established bodies of knowledge, such as the sociology of childhood and children's studies, can help facilitate the inclusion of children in tourism (Canosa & Graham, 2016; Poria & Timothy, 2014). Indeed, a multi-disciplinary approach can help researchers understand the meanings and impacts of tourism experiences at different ages, as well as guide methodological decision-making (Canosa & Graham, 2016). Nature-based tourism involving children, in particular, can also benefit from such a multi-disciplinary approach given its close association with areas such as nature-based education, children geographies, and leisure studies.

Specific concepts such as Gibson's (1979) 'affordance', and Gurholt and Sanderund's (2016) 'curious play' are examples from this broader literature that can inform nature-based tourism research with children. Gibson's concept of affordance refers to the possibilities and restrictions emerging from the environment, and it has been applied in studies examining children's nature relationships (see Laaksoharju & Rappe, 2017; Niklasson & Sandberg, 2010). Recently, affordances have been discussed as a relational approach to studying the context of children's outdoor recreation. Following Rautio (2013), relational approaches can work to acknowledge children as active beings, and highlight the dynamic, sensory interaction between children and their surroundings. The relational approach enables focus on the simultaneous emergence of the perceiver, the perception of the affordance, and the affordance itself (Ingold, 2000, p. 168; Rantala & Puhakka, 2019).

Curious play is a theoretical framework that "gives primacy to the role of curiosity as a motivating factor for children's free play" (Gurholt & Sanderund, 2016, p. 326). It emphasizes the ways that children can be motivated to learn with the non-human world exploring their physical limits and possibilities through their interactions with the physical and cultural landscape (Gurholt & Sanderund, 2016). This theory highlights the ways that children's desire for knowledge about their realities drives the curious ways that they can potentially interact with the world. These are examples of concepts that tourism research can draw on for a multi-disciplinary understanding of the ways children interact with nature. Furthermore, these conceptualisations orient us towards interpreting how children co-create nature-play experiences with non-human materials. Specifically, they alert us to the sensory, embodied ways that children and their surroundings emerge in the interaction, which we illustrate below using empirical insights drawn from our study of nature-based proximity tourism and family nature walk experiences.

## Children-led walking tours

Our discussion draws next on preliminary analyses of a sensory ethnographic study that explored nature-based proximity tourism experiences of families in Rovaniemi, Finland during the autumn of 2019. Proximity tourism is a mode of tourism that challenges people to reconceptualise the way they understand and experience tourism. Proximity tourism involves people

adopting the tourist lens in spaces local to their primary place of residence; embracing a different point of view from the everyday, and approaching experiences with a sense of wonder and curiosity (Diaz-Soria, 2017; Jeuring & Diaz-Soria, 2017; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Our study engaged proximity tourism as an approach to interacting with local nature environments, one that might enable enhanced environmental and financial sustainability in tourism. Proximity tourism eliminates the need for long distance air travel, which we know contributes much of carbon emissions associated with tourism (Boley, 2015; Eijgelaar, Nawijn, Barten, Okuhn, & Dijkstra, 2016; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Proximity tourism also requires less financial and time commitment for families as they can return to their place of residence following their excursions or may potentially arrange accommodations near by, similar to a 'staycation' (Bloom, Nawijn, Geurts, Kinnunen, & Korpela, 2016). Nature-based proximity tourism can help to enhance family's sense of place in local nature environments through direct interactions with these spaces. It can also encourage slower forms of travel, where families are invited to explore local nature with a sense of curiosity (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2018). Nature-based proximity tourism can be distinguished from other forms of nature-based recreation or outdoor education as participants deliberately choose to take on a tourist lens in proximate spaces (Diaz-Soria, 2017) through personal choice or facilitation by tour guides.

In the study, we used sensory ethnography to engage participating families in an exploration of local recreational areas and green space environments. According to Pink (2011), sensory ethnography represents a reorientation to ethnography vis-à-vis the senses. Specifically, Pink defines sensory ethnography as "an approach to doing ethnography that takes account of sensory experience, sensory perception, and sensory categories that we use when we talk about our experiences and our everyday life" (Pink, 2011, 00:25-00:55). Five English speaking families with children from the ages of two to seventeen were recruited for participation in the study using purposeful and snowball sampling (Table 1). Adult occupations consist of university professors, psychologists, muscicians, and tradesmen.

These families joined Jordana on separate occasions for a one to two hour nature walk experience that included a facilitated sensory scavenger hunt, free playtime, and semi-structured family focus groups following the walk. Jordana's plan was to guide families as they explored their chosen spaces during the walks and invite them to engage their senses in diverse and intentional ways. She attempted to do this by using a scavenger hunt that directed families to focus on finding things in nature using one or two senses at a time and a diverse array of materials (e.g., photography for sight; clay for creating texture stamps; or collecting berries for taste). Families were also observed during shared free time around a fire. This discussion draws on a preliminary reading of the data, focusing specifically on field notes taken during each walk and reflections written post walk. Data collection also consisted of photographs taken by Jordana and participants, audio recordings during each focus group, and video that was recorded during the sensory scavenger hunt using a GoPro camera.

Table 1. Family demographics.

| FAMILY | NAME | AGE GROUP | LOCATION OF RESIDENCE | LOCATION OF WALK |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Family 1** | Reko<br>Aina<br>Piia | 41-50<br>41-50<br>7-8 | Rovaniemi, Finland | Virikkolampi trail, Rovaniemi |
| **Family 2** | Danny<br>Aada<br>Lenny<br>Benny | 31-40<br>31-40<br>2-3<br>2-3 | Queensland, Australia* | Ounasvaara hill, Rovaniemi |
| **Family 3** | Lilli<br>Adam<br>Henna<br>Nea | 41-50<br>31-40<br>7-8<br>7-8 | Rovaniemi, Finland | Mortin männikkö, Rovaniemi |
| **Family 4** | Anna<br>Hannu<br>Saara<br>Tuula<br>Leevi | 51-60<br>40-50<br>13-14<br>14-15<br>15-24 | Rovaniemi, Finland | Virikkolampi trail, Rovaniemi |
| **Family 5** | Heidi<br>Venla<br>Veera | Blank<br>9-10<br>13-14 | Rovaniemi, Finland | Ounasvaara hill, Rovaniemi |

* Mom Aada is from Rovaniemi and finishing up higher education in Rovaniemi

As sensory walks commenced, however, we soon became aware of the certain tendencies of many children and how they encountered and engaged with the environment; many of the children were the ones guiding explorations and observations. Children led adults towards multiple important 'attractions' during the nature walks, stopping to guide them towards various unexpected ways of interacting with non-human materials. Children moved through the landscape often uninhibited by behavioral norms and expectations for moving through space in a linear, point A to point B, fashion prompting adults to do the same (Ingold, 2008). Children engaged in sensory exploration that relied less on visual. Moreover, they spent time within the in-between spaces, engaging in multi-species imaginative play. Because of these initial observations, we began to identify children as the tour guides of the nature-based proximity tourism activities we were investigating. Children as tour guides not only seemed complementary to how families experience familiar places with curiosity and wonder, but it also revealed how children facilitate knowing with non-human nature. By weaving non-human nature into the stories of their lives, many children brought awareness to "the diversity of ways in which we are nature already" (Rautio, 2013, p. 394). We next present four vignettes that we call 'stops' on the child led guided tour, based on a preliminary arrangement and analytical reading of the data. These stops combine the experiences of the five separate nature walks into one 'tour' to help illustrate the ways in which we learned with children.

## Stop 1: Rock & berry island

The first 'stop' on the tour involved the children guiding Jordana and families towards a different way of moving through the hills and forests. Within minutes of the first walk, eight-year-old Piia instructed mom, dad, and Jordana to hop from rock to rock or root and to see who could go the longest without stepping on the dirt path. During the second walk, two-year-old Benny and three-year-old Lenny led Jordana and parents on a berry-focused tour, guiding the group towards a stop/start rhythm as they looked for berries to eat, getting up close to the forest floor away from the trail. The forest inspired children's curiosity and provided opportunities for exploratory experiences through the many loose parts and sensory stimuli afforded to them (Zamani, 2016). Children moved on and off trails, they crawled and climbed on top of rocks, hid behind trees, and moved through the forest in playful and curious way (Beery & Jørgensen, 2018; Waite, 2010).

Children encouraged adults to move with them in these ways, and this way helped to break through expectations of how an adult is typically expected to take part in a nature walk or hike. Through various ways (i.e., signage, trail maintenance) people's interaction and movement through nature is regulated by park managers, creating affordances, guiding people towards certain paths, and encouraging or discouraging certain behavior (Lekies & Whitworth, 2011). Hannam and Witte (2018) highlight how walking often has physical, cultural, or political restrictions, with social expectations on how walking, or hiking, should be performed. An adult may face strange looks or glances from fellow hikers for hiding under a tree or using a log as a balance beam, but these behavioral expectations are lessened when perceived as taking care of or playing with children. Rautio (2013), referencing Bennett (2010), states that in order to relate to our material surroundings in new ways, a little foolishness or silliness can go a long way; "a genuinely new way of thinking necessarily appears nonsense for it presents a break from the common sense, the norm" (Rautio, 2013, p. 401). We propose that it is precisely this break from the norm that can help move tourism towards a new conceptualization of human-nature relationships.

## Stop 2: Lapland's famous puffy mushroom

Whether it was two-year-old Benny putting her nose directly on rocks, pinecones, and leaves, or seven-year-old Henna giggling as she poked a mushroom that puffed out dust, the children in the study were constantly guiding the group towards sensory exploration and play. This is consistent with much of the literature on the ways children interact with nature (Beery, 2013; Beery & Jørgensen, 2018). Children explore up close within nature and are more sensuous, with their reliance on vision less dominant than adults (Bartos, 2013). Children had the opportunity to develop a sense of place through these sensuous, embodied interactions with the landscapes and it allowed them to learn about biodiversity and conservation. Sensory interaction led to discussions about what berries or mushrooms are edible, respectful behavior eating around a fire, and the importance of carrying out all garbage (Beery, 2013; Beery & Jørgensen, 2018). As adults rely heavily on visual cues in nature to experience wonder or delight, other senses often become supplementary or in addition to the visual (Allen-Collinson & Leledaki, 2015). In our walks the

embodied experiences of the children enrolled the whole family into encountering nature in sensory ways.

During family three's walk, mom and thirteen year old Veera often stayed on the trail and pointed at things they saw, or verbalized elements they were drawn to during the walk. It was ten year old Venla and Jordana that would veer off the trail to touch, smell, or take photos of these items, while Veera and mom had a tendency to watch from the trail. Veera had to leave the walk early, but towards the end of the walk mom chose to join Venla as she began her rock smashing routine. The rocky trail afforded Venla the opportunity to break rocks against each other revealing the geological patterns within. Although concerned for the groups safety and flying shards of rock, mom Heidi joined Venla in examining the patterns, sparkle, and texture swirling around the inside of the rocks. Many children in the study led adults closely towards the forest floor, the bark of trees, and the center of rocks, exploring with senses other than sight.

## Stop 3: The in-between spaces

What constitutes an 'attraction' or a destination may be very different for children and adults. In Finland, many trails have a 'laavu', a wooden shelter with a fireplace and wood that is maintained by the city. During our hikes, these shelters served as many of the destinations for the adults, but children often had different plans. Benny and Lenny would have stayed playing on the little boulders all day if dad had not pulled them off, and Venla was much more interested in smashing rocks to reveal the patterns within than she was with getting back home. Children encouraged families to focus less on getting to a specific lookout or destination and to explore the nature spaces in between.

Graham (2017) discusses the importance of wandering as a way of encountering the spaces in-between departure point and destination. Drawing on Ingold's (2011) concept of wayfaring, Graham illuminates how movement is much more fundamental to human life than is the reaching of an end point. It is between a departure point and an end point or along lines of movement where an individual's lifeworld is established (Graham, 2017). This conceptualization echoes how many of the children's wandering between adult planned end points in this study influenced the adults to move through nature as opposed to across it, building relationships across the meshwork of human and non-human actors (Graham, 2017; Ingold, 2011). The children often persuaded parents against their will to abandon timelines, forget about being cold, or to play in and explore nature spaces. They influenced Jordana and the families to worry less about getting to the final fire pit or lookout point, and to explore things in the proximal environment such as a boulder or a berry, that may have been ignored without children's presence.

## Stop 4: Restaurant a la rock

During Piia's tour with her family, she made sure that everyone on the tour got fed, humans and non-humans alike. When Piia's mother asked for her 'cookers tax' or a piece of the freshly made bannock she had just handed her daughter, Piia graciously shared her treat. Piia also made sure to give a piece to the rocks around the firepit because 'they helped cook too.' This interaction

highlights children's animism, which Merewether (2019) defines as the common worlding between mutually entangled humans and non-humans. Common worlding eliminates the division between children and nature and emphasizes the agency humans and non-humans have on each other. The rocks in this example house the fire, preventing the fire from spreading, and insulating the fire's heat. The rock helps to facilitate the cooking experience and, through its interaction with Piia and her mother, influences how much bannock Piia will eat.

This animism can often be perceived as naiive or problematized and educated out of children, but scholars are beginning to highlight the importance of this view in recognizing the agency of non-human nature and materials (Merewether, 2019; Rautio, 2013). In these anthropocentric times, many scholars are turning to post-humanist theory and new materialisms to emphasize the ways in which humans and non-humans are mutually entangled (Barad, 2007; Merewether, 2019; Rautio, 2013; Änggård, 2016). Children's animism and common worlding between humans and non-humans can move adults closer to accepting and recognizing non-human agencies and, in turn, move us away from hierarchical worldviews where humans reign supreme as the only agential beings.

## Children teach adults...

The children in this study often led adults towards knowing with them, and knowing with nature. They led us towards moving through nature in curious, exploratory ways, using all our senses and illuminating the ways humans and non-humans are mutually entangled. They guided us in wayfaring, and showed how we can see familiar spaces in new ways if we choose to see things with a sense of wonder and awe. Gurholt and Sanderud (2016) propose "that children should be viewed existentially, as active explorers and playful agents in shaping their selves, knowledge, skills and world-view" (p. 326). This research note has illustrated that children are indeed active in shaping their world-views, but also that knowing with children in nature-based proximity tourism settings can influence adults worldviews as well.

This attitude towards enjoying the journey and exploring with the senses can also highlight other sustainable types of tourism like slow travel, a form of tourism that rejects transportation by air, and emphasizes enjoying the journey instead of reaching a destination (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2018). Spending time with children in local nature spaces not only guides parents towards an understanding of nature-based proximity tourism and tourism as a chosen experience (Diaz-Soria, 2017), but it also emphasizes this overlapping concept of slow travel. Fuentes and Svingstedt (2018) state "what is important here is taking one's time, escaping the hectic life, adopting another pace, and connecting with local culture" (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2018, p. 15). Children lead families to become wayfarers, enjoy the journey, slow down, and connect with the in-between spaces.

Although learning from children presents a great opportunity in tourism and nature-based tourism research, it is important to mention some of the limitations of this study. Different children have different relationships with nature, and many face barriers to building this relationship. These relationships also change as children develop across the lifespan. It is important

to acknowledge that not all children have the same relationship with nature as it can take time and sustained interaction to become comfortable to engage in curious play outdoors (Gross, Mcgee, James, & Hodge, 2019; Gurholt & Sanderud, 2016). Decreased access to green spaces and more organized, overscheduled lives are a few of the many barriers children face to spending time with nature (Mjaavatn, 2016; Skar, Gundersen, & O'Brien, 2016). Not investing in this relationship can lead to fear, disgust, and a desire for more modern comforts as children move into adolescence (Gross et al., 2019). In the context of our study, things like weather, hunger, fatigue, and irritability were all also challenges that affected the children – especially the younger ones – and families at different points during the walks, influencing the children's ability to focus on the scavenger hunt or interview questions.

We also must consider how children's relationships with nature will change across the lifespan often moving towards an interest in more structured, organized leisure activities in adolescence (Nordbakke, 2019). A few of the older children in the study looked for and desired more organized activities and challenges, occasionally losing interest and turning to technology to keep themselves entertained. Thirteen year old Veera was one of these children, who tended to stay on the trail and relied on her sense of vision to interact with her surroundings. This further highlights the importance of a multi-disciplinary understanding of children's development; how their relationship with nature changes over time and how these changes influence their relationships with tourism. Future tourism research should focus on children's changing relationships with nature through adolescence to better understand how their role as a tour guide will transform over time. In spite of these limitations, this study highlights the potential of learning with children at every stage of development, and demonstrates the agency of children in guiding the rest of us towards different ways of building intimate relationships with nature.

Children are not just the future, they are also the present. Linzmayer and Halpenny (2014) state that "children in most societies are valued for their potential and for what they will grow up to be but are devalued in terms of their present perspectives and experiences" (p. 414). In this research note, our aim has been to demonstrate that we do not need to wait for children to become adults before we can learn with them. In today's turbulent political and climatic circumstances, children and youth around the world are taking action and speaking out for their future. Greta Thunberg and Autumn Peltier are advocating for climate justice and clean water, Florida Parkland school shooting survivors organized The March for Our Lives, and many Indigenous youth are protesting the Dakota Access Pipelines. All of these children demonstrate their deeply rooted and passionate connection to environmental and social justice. We learn with children all the time, and we should appreciate these learning experiences in tourism and nature-based tourism studies. The research note has provided insight into what children can teach us about environmental connection and sustainable attitudes. Perhaps we need to learn to be more attentive listeners and observers of children and enable them to be present-day proximity tour guides.

## Acknowledgements

The study was funded by the Mitacs Globalink Research Award (grant number IT14772) and Academy of Finland (grant number 324493).

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# Knowing through interspecies relationality in tourism? Animal agency in human-sled dog encounters

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A countless number of individual animals representing several species are nowadays involved in the tourism industry. Animals and tourism intersect in many ways, whether as tourist attractions as such, as wildlife conservation tools, as travel companions, or as culinary experiences for tourists (Fennell, 2012; Markwell, 2015). This also applies to the northern parts of Fennoscandia referred to as Arctic Europe within the tourism industry (Visit Arctic Europe, n.d.). For example, Finnish Lapland is a popular tourism destination especially in wintertime and the number of (semi-)domesticated animals working within the tourism industry is great (García-Rosell & Äijälä, 2018) and the brand value of animals for tourism industry is significant. One of the most popular animal species is the dog, as dog sledding has become one of the most important activities in the ongoing rapid growth of tourism in Arctic Europe (Granås, 2018).

The dog as a companion animal has a special, yet controversial, place in human communities as dogs are seen both as 'man's best friend' with the capability for rational thought, and as objects for human values. Despite – or maybe because of – the extensive shared history of dogs and humans, the dog's place is difficult to define. The social space for dogs is both inside and outside of human society and human understanding of dogs' consciousness and self-fulfillment is very limited (Koski & Bäcklund, 2017). Given their status associated with polar and adventure histories, sled dogs in particular occupy a liminal position, as in human perceptions, they often reside on the boundary between the domestic and the wild (Granås, 2018; Onion, 2009). Dog sledding is one of the fairly new practices that dogs have occupied, as particularly in Scandinavia people have a rather short history in terms of using dogs as draft animals (Knudsen, 2019) – let alone using them in touristic dog sledding in Arctic Europe.

Tourism is "a relational phenomenon", which "comes about and contributes to shaping our world through relational encounters" (Jóhannesson, Ren, & van der Duim, 2015, p. 2), in which the roles and characteristics of related agents are co-constituted (e.g. Jóhannesson et al., 2015). Through tourism, sled dogs become part of relational encounters between several agents, including dogs themselves, tourists, entrepreneurs, DMO representatives and travel agents. To

achieve any success, these encounters require the development of effective communication and cooperation. Practices, such as goal-oriented training of the dogs, requires understanding, empathy and communication also in interspecies level, which entails the idea that the dog is capable of cooperative communication in certain level, and therefore possesses "some kind of agency" (Koski & Bäcklund, 2017, p. 11). However, dogs' own role and agency in tourism and tourism research is often overlooked (Bertella, 2014).

During the past decade, scholars in social sciences and humanities have started to realize that humans depend on animal lives in several ways. One of the most common approaches has been to study human images of and attitudes towards animals. Another widely used approach has been the ethics of the human use and abuse of animals and the possibility of animal rights (Räsänen & Syrjämaa, 2017). Animal ethics as an area of inquiry has started to gain ground also in the field of tourism research (Fennell, 2012). These approaches rest on human representation of animals. Problems of representation do not remain isolated, but rather affect the ways in which society interacts with non-humans as it disregards the presence of non-human agency in theory and possibly restrains the agency in practice (Lulka, 2004, p. 446).

Most recently, animal agency has been adopted as the focus in studying human-animal relations in order to understand the agentive role of animal species and individuals in human communities (Räsänen & Syrjämaa, 2017). This approach focuses on exploring the ways in which non-humans themselves might have subjectivities, agency and practices through which they might create lifeworlds of their own that may have an impact on human ideas of animals themselves (Johnston, 2008). In the field of tourism research, the analysis of status, significance and agency of animals has remained at a rather superficial level apart from some exceptions. Therefore, animals have mostly been considered as resources and passive objects which can be used for human purposes (Bertella, 2014; Yerbury, Boyd, Lloyd, & Brooks, 2017; see also Äijälä, García-Rosell, & Haanpää, 2016).

Following the patterns of tourism development requires adaptation with reference to practices prevailing around touristic dog sledding. These issues relate to questions about science, capitalist industry, ethics, welfare and politics (Philo & Wilbert, 2000, p. 2) defining "the meaning, the agency and the subjectivity of both the keeper and the kept" (Buller, 2016, pp. 208–209). However, animals are not passive participants as they shape tourism practices through their actions and reactions and bring their own experiences and life history to the human-animal encounter (Notzke, 2019). Practices such as training sled dogs and providing housing to them in kennels of a certain size situated in a certain location are multispecies affairs. As such, they are about human control as well as about human-animal modifications and modes of co-existence, which derive from, yet also trouble, the relations we humans think we have with sentient yet domesticated, non-humans (Buller, 2016). Through collaborative encounters in touristic dog sledding, the dogs object to their roles and enter into new relations and collaborative arrangements (see Picken, 2018). This indicates that not only humans but also animals are capable of agency (Buller 2012; Philo & Wilbert, 2000). The ability to act, effect change, or make a difference is multidirectional and does not come from individuals as "purified entities", since "everything is engaged in relations" (Urbanik, 2012, p. 43).

Given the important role sled dogs play in tourism industry in Arctic Europe, and the fact that they inhabit a controversial space in human perceptions, and that, until recently, tourism researchers have been rather reluctant to work around issues of animal agency, it is important to explore sled dogs as social agents in relation to humans and in their own right. The question of non-human agency entails to be approached from the viewpoint of relationality between non-humans and humans. The point of departure is non-representational theory, which takes the argument that life is based on and in movement (Thrift, 2008; see Ingold, 2011). Movement, as a shared practice between animals and humans (Buller, 2012; Lulka, 2004), enables interspecies, non-verbal communication and cooperation between the agents (Gooch, 2008; Holmberg, 2019). As a result, human-animal encounters in tourism can be constructive. According to Buller (2012, p. 153) "movement and the sharing of movement offer us the potential for original ways of knowing animals and of understanding our relationship to them".

Methodologically, the endeavor of evoking "the fleshy presences and absences of animals in certain spaces, representations and discourses" (Brown & Banks, 2015, p. 96) requires to move away from human exceptionalism in knowledge production and scientific practice. One can follow the existing collection of ethnographic research and writing known as *multispecies ethnography* (Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010; Ogden, Hall, & Tanita, 2013; see Buller, 2015) – or sometimes as ethnography after humanism (Hamilton & Taylor, 2017). To explore the diverse interactions between mobile humans – and maybe even more mobile animals – demands to tackle the non-representational dimensions of spatially and temporally complex lifeworlds (Vannini, 2015). Moving image methodologies offer a technique for monitoring, tracking and analysis of the spatialities of animal culture (Hodgetts & Lorimer, 2015) and a means to explore the non-representational dimensions of the human-animal encounter (Brown & Banks, 2015; Lorimer, 2010) in order to evoke the presence and agency of sled dogs.

Methodological choices base on the understanding that tourism practices expose both humans and dogs to different forms of encounter and learning, which differ from more everyday human-dog interactions, such as dog walking (e.g. Holmberg, 2019). Practices of human -sled dog encounters with the shifting ecologies, topographies, terrains and proximities require embodied ways of knowing across species and geographical difference. According to Brown and Dilley (2012) that bodily knowing relies on anticipatory ways of knowing-with. Tracing the encounters through relationality reveals routine practice as well as eventful and troubling interruptions to pre-fixed categories in touristic dog sledding, which sheds light on ways of being-, acting- and knowing-with (Brown & Dilley, 2012; Buller, 2015; see also Haanpää, Salmela, García-Rosell, & Äijälä, 2019).

Understanding the value of animals only in economic – namely human – terms may have serious consequences when it comes to animals as living beings (see Fennell, 2012) and, consequently, regarding our understanding of tourism practices (Granås, 2018; see Knight, 2010). With regard to animal agency, sentience towards the interactional practices contributes to suggesting what matters, or what might matter, to animals as subjective selves (Buller, 2015). Responsible practice towards – and with – animals is not only about allowing animals to be articulate, but humans to nourish ways of knowing-with that enable acknowledgment of such articulations

"in a timely and geographically-attuned manner" (Brown & Dilley, 2012, p. 44). What follows is that collaborative tourism knowledge is not about making the subjects consensual or captive to knowledge production but about allowing them more freedom and space in the collaborative process (Picken, 2018; see Haanpää et al., 2019). Regarding the argument that place-sharing and place-making is generated from a variety of shared and collaborative practices and technologies in human-animal encounters (Buller, 2016), we should be sensitive to the collaborative ways of knowing if we are to support responsible planning and development of tourism.

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# Immigrants in Northern nature – Environmental biographies through photo elicitation

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## Introduction

A picture of a white-tailed eagle reminds one of one's grandfather who raised hunting falcons. An owl peeping out from a nesting box raises various associations. One associates it with the will to set up a home, and for another it is like a gaze to the future and its problems. For a third, the owl is seen simply as an emblem of a beautiful forest and the will to observe birds. Pictures of domestic animals present memories of nomadism of the family in their country of origin.

In the project 'Polut' ('Paths'), immigrants were asked to choose one or two of their favorite images from a wide array of nature photos and to explain why they chose the ones they did. The basic assumption was that their mobility affects their choices and that the nature of their country of origin would be present in their relationship to their new home country's nature. Although immigrants' non-voluntary mobility is not similar to touristic mobility, the nature of the new country appears to be the same for both groups in many ways. The practice of walking in a forest or finding one's way requires in both cases skills and knowledge which they have not been learned in childhood. Many natural phenomena also raise admiration, hesitation or even fear both among immigrants and tourists. In addition, the touristic images of the new country are widely distributed and familiar both to immigrants and tourists.

The 'Polut' project was based on the notion that even those immigrants originally from different countries in Africa, Asia and South America who had lived in northern Finland for many years did not have much of a connection to the natural environments of their new home country. Most of the participants had, however, lived only a short time in the north, and their relationships to nature might resemble even more that of the tourists, and the images of nature might be only those offered by tourism marketing material. The official integration training of immigrants has concentrated on issues such as adaptation to society and language learning. At the same time, being in nature and using natural products, such as berries, mushrooms and fish,

form an extremely important part of the lifestyle of the citizens in the north. The 'Polut' project was carried out during 2016-2019, led by the Lapland University of Applied Sciences and funded by the European Social Fund.

The focus of this research note is on analysing different dimensions of the photo choices from the perspective of immigrants' relationships to nature. How personal environmental history is reflected in the choices and narratives is also discussed.

## The specificity of immigrants' relationships to nature

There are many ways to evaluate the human-nature relationship. For example, it can be emphasised that humans are part of nature (Flint, Kunze, Muhar, Yoshida, & Penker, 2013; Willamo, 2005), or the environment can be seen as a continuum from untouched nature to the man-made environment and constructions (Rossi, 2010). For research purposes, there is a reason to investigate the relationship to nature, at least to some extent, as a separate part of human life. Here nature is understood widely as diverse environments and rural and nature-based livelihoods as part of this relationship.

Immigrants' history of moving from one culture to another makes their relationship to nature especially interesting. Often an individual takes his or her environment and relationship to it as given – a question which does not have to be evaluated consciously and explicitly. A visitor, outsider or tourist encounters an environment which is new to him/her. Instead of living it, they want to see something new, strange and changing (Karjalainen, 1987, cited in Rossi, 2010). This new then mirrors the old.

As Rossi (2010) states, there is a need to emphasise the individual's lifelong environmental (or nature) relationship, which can be called an environmental biography or an individual's environmental history. Many immigrants also have experiences of other environments than those of their countries of origin or their present home country in that many have spent years or even decades in refugee camps, for example. Thus, the entire life and all stages and difficulties of the migration history are part of their relationship to nature.

Since immigrants have been brought to a new environment, they have a specific need to create a relationship with their new home. Siim (2006) has noted that nature is one important element in this process. However, natural environments can be something that are not meant for all. Laura Huttunen (2002) has collected immigrants' life stories in Finland, and in those they describe how white Finns seem to belong self-evidently to a place and use decisive power regarding those who do not belong (see also Bujis, Elands, & Langers, 2009). Although nature environments can give comfort, protection and a place for social interaction (Faehnle, Jokinen, Karlin, & Lyytimäki, 2010; Gentin, 2011), some studies have noted that they are not especially good places to meet new people (Stodolska, Peters, Horolets, 2017) and they can be even negative places – strange, frightening or forbidding (Pitkänen et al., 2017). Some studies have also noted that 'passive' recreational use modes, such as picnics, relaxing and resting are more important to immigrants than those active ones (Özgüner, 2011), and that many immigrants prefer treated landscapes rather than wild or wilderness nature (Buijs et al., 2009; Gentin, 2011).

From the point of view of integration, it is important that immigrants become acquainted with the idea of the northern relationships to nature and are able to use nature in similar ways to those who have their origins in Nordic countries where nature is an important part of local culture (Pitkänen et al, 2017). Northern relationships to nature can be seen as a mixture of functionality, utilisation and a source of experience and well-being. Thus, many people go to nature to exercise, to collect natural products or to recover – or they do all three of these activities.

## Photos as interview stimuli

In the 'Polut' project, nature photos were used as stimuli in interviews. With the aid of the selected photos, the participants' relationships to nature throughout the course of their lives were discussed. Photo elicitation in interviews is based on the idea that it is possible to use images as bridges between worlds that are culturally distinct, and to notice how differently people see things in the same photos and how photos can be related to diverse contexts (Harper, 2002).

In the 'Polut' project, eight groups participated in photo-based discussions at the beginning of the series of group meetings. Altogether, 63 people from 13 different countries of origin in Africa, Asia, Russia and South America participated in these initial interviews. 32 of the participants were females and 31 males. Eight of the interviewees had come to Finland before 2014 and 55 after that. The stimuli photos were pictures from magazines and newspapers. The interviewees selected mainly one picture, although some wanted to have two and even three pictures. The selection of photos included 154 photos, of which 124 were taken in summer, 21 in winter and 8 were clearly autumn photos. The main theme was people in nature, numbering 64 photos (Table 1). Many of these photos presented different kinds of activities from kayaking and cycling to fishing and berry-picking.

Table 1. Numbers of offered and selected photos and their relative amounts.

| THEME OF THE PHOTOS | WHOLE SELECTION, NUMBER (%) | SELECTED, NUMBER (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **People in nature** | 64 (41%) | 20 (26%) |
| **Nature without humans** | 43 (28%) | 25 (32%) |
| **Domestic animals (with or without humans)** | 17 (11%) | 9 (12%) |
| **Animals in nature (incl. semi-domesticated reindeer)** | 15 (10%) | 12 (15%) |
| **Constructions, parks, means of transportation (ships, boats, etc.)** | 15 (10%) | 12 (15%) |
| ***In total*** | 154 (100%) | 78 (100%) |

The interviewees did not use much time to choose their favorite photo. The photos were on a table and the interviewees went to select one or several pictures which, at first glance, appealed to them and somehow illustrated their relationship to nature. Pictures of animals and constructions were slightly overrepresented in the selections (Table 1). Additionally, pictures without people were selected relatively more than pictures offered.

The interviewees were first asked to tell which country and what kind of area they are from and how long they have been in Finland. After that the reasons to select the photo in question were discussed. In addition the meaning of nature in their country of origin was discussed. Then the discussion proceeded to their experiences of Finnish nature and their interests in nature activities. This discussion cannot be regarded as creating a deep environmental biography but relationships to nature in connection to different life stages arose.

In this analysis, the contents of the pictures have been divided, based on three observations: firstly, how the country of origin is revealed in the choice; secondly, what kinds of experiences are related to nature, and thirdly how nature reflects the state of mind. These categories are based on the narratives the interviewees used in describing their choices.

## Photos with memories of the country of origin

The country of origin is present in choices in many ways. Photos presenting domestic animals and gardens or very green landscape were especially chosen, since they contained memories of home. The greenness of the country of origin was especially emphasized in the narratives. For example, one interviewee said, *"we had this kind of nature in Ethiopia, a lot of green. I miss the green environment just because it existed in my home country"*.

Some choices fell on a specific picture as it evoked memories of people. One interviewee from Afghanistan said, *"I was born in Kandahar in Afghanistan, everything was good there, since the whole family lived there*". A remarkable part of the choices, ten photos, focused on pictures of domestic animals, sheep, horses and cows, or fishing. These choices were related to the fact that the family had been nomadic or fishermen, or that animals had in some other way been an important part of life. A notion was made that it is rare to see domestic animals in Finland.

Some photos served for comparing the situation in the country of origin and in the present home country. Differences, for example in safety and peacefulness, were pointed out: Walking in a forest in Lapland felt safe contrary to walking in the country of origin. Additionally, it was mentioned that in the parks of the country of origin or in the refugee camp it was not peaceful because of the crowds or because of the loss of a general feeling of safety.

## Nature as an experience and a place for action

Many of the photo choices were justified by the natural environment itself. The interviewees said, for example, that they liked the forest, trees and being in a forest in general, or that they liked beautiful scenery, being in nature and observing animals.

Northern nature was present in many ways. One interviewee stated that *"when living here in the north, nature is close*". Reindeer and northern lights were popular. In general, winter was not

the favorite season; only six winter photos were chosen, but winter photos were also a minority in the whole selection. One interviewee said that she likes winter, and another very keen fisher said that she liked fishing in winter as well as in summer. Northern nature seemed to be more familiar to those who had, for example, a Finnish spouse or friends in the community.

Hiking, swimming, running, photographing, cross country skiing and skating were mentioned as activities in nature. However, picnicking and eating out with friends or family received the most mentions (seven mentions) of individual activities.

The selection by a group of young Afghan boys drew our attention because almost all of them chose beautiful nature photos without people and said that nature is important for them. Sunsets, the awakening of nature in spring time and visits to forests, in addition to swimming and sauna, were mentioned as great experiences. On the whole, nature and the Finnish way of using nature seemed to be more familiar to this group than to other groups. They were different in comparison to the other groups in that they were younger and that they lived deeper in the countryside than most of the others.

In the use of natural products, berry picking, mushroom picking and fishing received the most mentions. Bilberries were the most popular of the berries and only one individual said that he had picked cloudberries – an activity which is most appreciated by the original locals in Lapland. Two of the interviewees had picked berries in their country of origin but for many it resembled fruit picking which was a more familiar activity from their childhood.

## Nature photos reflecting the state of mind and dreams

Nature photos raised many kinds of emotions. Relaxation and good feeling were among the positive emotions. These aspects were mentioned many times: *"Nature helps us to breath"*, said one young interviewee. On the other hand, nature was seen as a place where one can relieve the pain and banish other people: *"Especially if I am in a bad mood, I go to nature to calm down and to relax"*, said one individual who chose a picture of a seashore. The bright forest picture, in turn, is comforting when *"I have a feeling that this summer people have behaved badly and my incompetence in language has been exploited"*. A photo of a mire in autumn gives one interviewee a feeling that she would like to be alone in that place; she says that she easily gets tired and bored in the noisy company of other people.

Dreams of home and houses were an important part of the meanings of the images. This was symbolised, for example, by the laundry drying outside a house or a palace in the middle of a park. One interviewee who chose the picture of the palace joked that: *"When I came to Europe I thought that I can live in a house like that but, now I live in a standard apartment block on the fourth floor without an elevator"*.

## Conclusion

The immigrants' photo choices show that their original home country is with them in many ways. The greenness, fertility, rural livelihoods and life close to nature are emphasised. There is a lot of nostalgia: interviewees recall how *"the sun shines all the time in my home country and the climate*

*is good"*, or that *"I have a longing for trips to nature with my family"*. When talking about Finland, forests and peacefulness are emphasised. In addition, safety and the possibility to walk outside are related to Finland.

In relationships to nature, there does not seem to be clear differences between those whose origins are in the countryside or those whose origins are in cities, although nomadism, cultivation and domestic animals are naturally more typically a part of the lives of those coming from rural environments.

Since only eight of the interviewees had come to Finland before 2014, this means that at the time of the interviews 55 interviewees had been in Finland for a fairly short time, no more than four years. Due to that, it is no wonder that Finnish nature was not familiar to them. Nevertheless, northern nature raises a lot of curiosity and interest. Partly, this interest is similar to that of tourists; the places are seen through the eyes of the stranger, and the northern lights and reindeer are fascinating. It also became clear that contacts with the locals help one in getting to know nature and in collecting and utilising nature's offerings. These local contacts seem to be almost as rare as they are among tourists who are also eager to seek them and to 'live like a local'.

The results of this approach support the results of earlier studies in that sociality seems to be important in the use of nature, and that gardens, parks and built environments are at least as important as 'wild' nature. The passive use and admiration of nature are common. Still, active ways of using nature also exist. For many, nature was a place to reflect feelings and also to combine experiences from their earlier life history with the new situation. Previous knowledge of animals and plants was adjusted to the new living environments and the new natural phenomena created similar types of excitement and astonishment which tourists have when they enter new countries.

The great variety of immigrants' experiences of nature could be a richness for Finnish culture. Recognising and sharing these different kinds of biographies and knowledges could strengthen both the immigrants' own understanding of the role of nature in their life history and the Finnish communities' acceptance and understanding of the new residents' relationships to nature. Not many Finns have experiences of nomadism or hunting falcons and they have little knowledge of how different the experiences of the newcomers can be. That might also give some understanding of the tourists' relationships to nature coming from a far. For the immigrants, the knowledge of the nature of the present home country would help them attach to local communities.

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# Being in nature together: Photovoice of an Icelandic youth nature club

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## Introduction

Educators who focus on creating connections between youth and nature have found that such connections through hands-on learning (or experiences) may lead to greater empathy and stewardship (Barane, Hugo, & Clemetsen, 2018; Sobel, 1996). There is no doubt that global climate change is a concern for youth, as children and youth in the developing world are among the most vulnerable to its effects (Sanson, Wachs, Koller, & Salmela-Aro, 2018). Education can be transformative if people are given chances to acquire it in a fair and equitable manner, and youth have the right to be given opportunities to become aware of local issues that affect them within their own cultural context. These opportunities, of course, create a spillover effect: learning about local issues leads to learning about global issues. Freire (1970) cultivated learners' social transformation using education as a process of open dialogue. This creates a space where learning socially in action can be combined with reflection, which leads to praxis (Freire, 1970). Learning reinforced through practice becomes hope, which is, as Freire explains, an ontological need (Freire, 1994). Without hope there is no action, but people who work with children and youth, and who believe that education is transformative, have hope. Through reflection and action, we practice empathy and stewardship – we build the foundations for hope. Educators have a responsibility to offer opportunities for experiences that will give youth an awareness of their own strength and develop their capacity and resilience.

This research note describes the efforts of a rural community in Northwest Iceland to establish a youth nature club called *Húnaklúbburinn*. The main goals of *Húnaklúbburinn* (Hunaklub) are to develop local identity through place-based education and to increase awareness of how youth can contribute to the sustainable development of their community. I am the director and one of the founders of Hunaklub, and I have many years of experience working with youth in nature. The youth described here are between the ages of 13–16 and are from the community of

Húnaþing vestra. Joining the club is voluntary, and its main activity is outdoor recreation that takes place during their leisure time. Every effort is made to aid in full participation and inclusion. Often, only a few small adjustments are required to be inclusive of all abilities and skills (including physical, emotional, social, and developmental). For example, the club uses multisensory activities, and members partner with peers for extra assistance.

In 2018, Hunaklub was awarded funding to participate in an Erasmus+ youth exchange where a Swedish youth group came to Iceland for one week to participate in activities in nature (see Aquino, 2019). We selected this event to capture the lived experiences of the exchange with the goal of learning how to better incorporate youth in the leadership and ownership of their club. Youth leadership in program development creates ownership, builds capacity, and promotes empowerment. The establishment of the club was initiated by adults, but we have since worked on transitioning the club to foster shared decisions with young people. Photovoice was explored as a strategy for the integration of the youth in the development of their club because of its method of reflection and dialogue though photographs. The outcomes of the photovoice activity were more than expected, and a deeper understanding of how youth interact in nature was also discovered. In this research note, the development of Hunaklub as a concept is discussed along with a description of how photovoice was used as a strategy for empowering youth in the club's overall development.

## Hunaklub's philosophy

Hunaklub was established in 2016 through local efforts involving the municipality's Youth Association of Vestur Húnavatnssýsla (U.S.V.H.), a local youth center (*Félagsmiðstöðin Óríon*), a community-owned nonprofit (Icelandic Seal Center), and Hólar University. Members of Hunaklub's board are people from the local community who have an interest in strengthening youth leisure and recreational programs in general, and who understand that this activity contributes positively to the youth's development and quality of life. Programs that encourage youth involvement in community development have been shown to have a positive effect on youth resilience and coping skills, making them ready for the challenges ahead (Christens & Dolan, 2011). Hunaklub views youth as a resource and increasing their exposure to developmental opportunities as an investment.

Hunaklub is founded on two principles. First, youth have the right and responsibility to take part in shaping their own futures and the futures of their communities (UNICEF, 1989). Secondly, through direct interaction with nature, youth develop a genuine appreciation of the natural environment and a sense of their own competence (Hart, 1997). Each year, the club develops a theme where activities are designed holistically around how youth learn in nature. The added element of travel afforded by the Erasmus+ grant has allowed an opportunity to learn about other cultural landscapes and ecosystems. Furthermore, on an organizational level, the club was influenced by the Swedish youth leaders, as they gave us strategies for how to empower the youth

by having Youth Leaders and youth[1] share decisions on the development of projects and putting the responsibility of learning in the youth's own hands. In a sense, Hunaklub's 2018 program was co-created, combining the two youth groups' organizational philosophies, methods, and dialogue. Knowing and being are inseparable (Rautio, 2013), and being in nature offers opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of how to preserve and protect the environment. Learning with nature entails working together in natural spaces (Warden, 2015). Learning together offers chances to "unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be" (Freire, 1994, p. 3). Education is part of the life of communities and ecosystems – it is not abstracted from them (Shannon & Galle, 2017). Together, through reflection and action, we can practice skills to become future leaders. We nurture hope.

Interaction between youth and the natural world is valuable, while reflection that takes place after such interaction helps youth to appreciate their lived experiences of being in nature. Sobel (1996) argues that without giving children the chance to be in nature, teaching environmental issues may only lead to distancing them from what we hope they would learn to protect. What Hunaklub has observed is that opportunities to socialize together in nature are essential, as they help to co-create an understanding of how to be in and learn from nature. Learning is mobile – moving from indoors to outdoors, from local to global, and from individual to social. Additionally, this connection with nature, through the practice of place-based education and outdoor recreation, helps to develop the skills needed for leadership in the community.

Place-based education is deeply rooted in environmental education; however, it also acknowledges that humans are connected to and have influence on ecosystems (Shannon, 2017), while the boundaries of place are elastic, allowing it to grow (the global in the local) or shrink (the local in the global) (Adams & McGehee, 2017). Hunaklub sees learning in nature as action toward sustainability. Youth clubs should work holistically within a community involving youth, educators, guardians, and policymakers to arrive at solutions for environmental questions, problems, and issues (Davis, 1998). This can be somewhat challenging, because Youth Leaders and educators may feel that they need to know everything about the environment or science before they can teach it. However, engaging people with nature is less about teaching what you know than how you learn it. Place-based education and outdoor recreation are about being in nature and about community building. Young people should be offered opportunities to practice their diverse skills through engaging with nature and perceiving possibilities for engagement (Rantala & Puhakka, 2019). Children need to experience nature to connect with it, to be "hopelessly entangled in the mesh" (Morton, 2010, p. 293). Youth leaders participate in community development by connecting youth with others who have valuable skills and abilities to share and who have an interest in working with youth on community development.

1 Here I define "Youth Leaders" as educators who work with youth using informal and non-formal education during youth's leisure time, whereas "youth" are the learners who have voluntarily chosen to take part in learning during their leisure time. Defining youth leaders as educators and youth as learners in this manner acknowledges the link that Freire (1970) made of the power dynamics between educator (powerful) and student (less powerful). The acknowledgment of this potential power inequality between educators and students helps to transform oppressive forms of education into a fair and equitable learning environment (i.e., education as co-creation).

## Photovoice method

Photovoice is both a technique and a process, first developed by Wang and Burris (1997) and used in the field of community development to help create change by giving a voice to those who are not often heard (Krutt, Dyer, Arora, Rollman, & Jozkowski, 2018). Photography and discussion were used during the youth exchange to enable self-expression, reflect on experiences, promote critical dialogue for evaluation, and further program development led by the youth. An international youth exchange had never been done before in the community of Húnaþing vestra, so until this youth exchange took place, it was difficult to understand what type of impact or effect it would have. Therefore, it was essential to use an evaluation method where both youth and Youth Leaders could visually see and discuss the process of the youth exchange. Visually seeing and reflecting on the lived experiences of the exchange enables a better understanding of how youth engage in activities, and it helps Youth Leaders evaluate how they can empower the youth to further the development of the club in the future. Participant engagement with photographs and dialogue has been shown to help increase self-expression and self-development through reflection, as well as ownership, knowledge creation, and polysemic data (Rydzik, Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2013). The use of photovoice as a method of evaluation was intended to engage both youth and Youth Leaders in the process of social learning, analysis, and empowerment (Rose, 2016). Hunaklub youth have a variety of different abilities, talents, likes, and strengths. Some of the youth need help in verbally expressing themselves. To help with inclusion, enable full participation, and facilitate self-expression, photovoice was considered to be appropriate for this project because it has been used by Krutt and her colleagues (2018) as a method of evaluation while empowering adults with autism to discuss their community center and its services.

Both youth groups (Swedish and Icelandic) used their selected photos for a photovoice exhibition open to their home communities. However, only the interviews with the Icelandic youth and the process of photovoice as an evaluation method are described in this research note. Meetings with the parents, Youth Leaders, and youth occurred separately to inform each group of the photovoice method and how it would be used to create an exhibition after the youth exchange. Both parents and youth signed a document giving consent to participate in the photovoice. Nonetheless, the youths were reminded that the photovoice was voluntary and they could choose not to participate or to drop out at any time. A total of 32 youth participated in the exchange (17 Icelandic and 15 Swedish), with 14 of the Icelandic youth choosing to participate in the photovoice. A total of 64 photos were used for discussion with the Icelandic youth, while a total of 191 photos were used for the photovoice exhibition in Iceland, combining both Icelandic and Swedish youth photos.

Photovoice was explained again once the participants were given cameras during the exchange. The objectives were "to use photos and discussions for youth-led development of Hunaklub, and to help tell a story of the youth exchange." In order for the photos to be individualistic and to be a reflection of their own voices, it was decided that the instructions for what to take pictures of would be kept very simple. When the youth were given camera, they were told to "take pictures of anything that happens today and pick 3-5 of your favorite photos for discussion." The

Icelandic youth leaders later met with the youth for discussions. Handwritten notes were taken, which were then paired up with the corresponding photos.

Discussion of the photos and evaluation of the youth exchange was also conducted during four workshops to contextualize the photos and prepare for the exhibition. To start, there was a kickoff workshop where all of their photos were shown together as a group using a projector. After the group discussion, the youth voted on their favorite photo and the photo that best represents Hunaklub. These two photos were then printed as posters and awarded to the youth who had originally taken each photo. During the next three workshops, youth were asked to use their photos as a form of storytelling and to place them according to what they were trying to say. Next, the youth were asked to write words, poetry, or drawings to describe either individual photographs or the photos as a whole (Figure 1). At the final workshop, a meeting was held with just the Icelandic youth leaders to discuss observations and have a final discussion of the photovoice overall.

Figure 1. After the final workshop in preparation for the photovoice exhibition. (Photo: author.)

## Results

The interviews and photos were first analyzed separately, and then the two analyses were explored together to see relationships between the photos and the interviews. Dividing the data in this manner allowed the specific roles of the photographs and the interviews to show different trends and for the relationships between them to be seen more directly (Rose, 2016). A codebook was used to create themes and codes for the photographs. The photos were coded with themes, which were then reduced to four overall themes. Many photos had a mixture of themes. The themes most often identified were *nature* (61%), *people* (47%), and *silly* (31%). Two other themes noted less frequently were *activity* (5%) (representing people doing an activity that was part of the exchange), and *object* (1%) (a photo of an object not found in nature).

As the Icelandic youth group is from a small rural community of around 1,200 people, it would not be ethical to reproduce many of the direct quotes because of the impossibility of keeping the quotes confidential. Therefore, this section will discuss a generalization of the interviews using their words clustered together as an aggregate. Using the youth's discussion about their photos created more in-depth themes than what was created for the photos alone. The theme most often spoken about was *being in nature together*. In this theme, the youth talked about how the place was beautiful or how it was "nice to be there," to walk and to be with friends. The words that were used to describe these photos were "beautiful," "making," "walking," "talking," "together," "be there," "place," and "landscape." The second most mentioned theme involved photos that *show off nature*. The participants used words such as "beautiful," "nice," "good," "colors," and "it's Icelandic" to describe important natural and cultural landmarks, animals, and scenery. The way the youth described why they picked these photos was more about how the images "show off" nature. Next was the theme *captures a moment*. These photos were described as the youths' favorites because they each captured a moment that was silly or funny and made them laugh with their friends. Words that they used to describe this theme were "funny," "silly," "cute," "friends," "flowers in hair" or "flowers in beard." The final theme was *it's a good photo*. In this theme, the youth talked about the photo as, quite simply, a good photo. They talked about the aesthetics of the photo using words such as "good," "different," "cool," and "scenery."

The youth were asked about what they liked and disliked about the youth exchange two times during the photovoice evaluation. The first time was when they were interviewed one-on-one with me or with another Youth Leader and were asked, "What was your favorite thing that happened today?" They were interviewed together as a group to discuss the question, "What did you like about the youth exchange?" The responses were divided into three themes. In the first theme, *being in nature together*, youth talked about how they liked being in or interacting with nature with friends. The words that they used most often were "kids", "friends," "garden," "spider," and "being here together." The next theme was *activity*. The youth enjoyed the activities the most when they were actively engaged. They used words such as "horse gymnastics," "being part of the show," "birding," "taking pictures," "horseback riding," and "games at the horse arena." A few mentioned that they liked it because the "entire group was doing it together." The final theme of *nature* was less often mentioned. This theme describes youth being in nature individually rather

than together. After the workshops, Hunaklub's youth hosted a photovoice exhibition[2] where they had a chance to talk to the community about their experience with the youth exchange.

The photos helped to visually represent the lived experience of the youth group during the youth exchange, and they show a strong link between nature and socialization. The dialogue and reflection during the photovoice demonstrated that the majority of the Icelandic youth felt that their favorite thing about the experience was being in nature together, showing an essential link to experiencing nature as a social activity. The next most favorite thing the youth mentioned was engaging in activities and doing these activities together as a group, again showing how important socialization is to the youth.

## Discussion and conclusion

Checkoway (2011) describes the importance of participation as something that helps youth to develop "their expertise, enables them to exercise their rights as citizens, and contributes to a more democratic society" (2011, p. 340). The main goals of using photovoice as an evaluation method during the youth exchange were to create a space for open dialogue and to explore a method to help integrate youth in the decisions of the development of their club. However, through the process of photovoice, we also learned more about the lived experiences of youth in nature. Youth clubs have an important role in building awareness of and capacity for how youth can contribute to the sustainable development of their community, and this can begin with giving them leadership in the development of their own clubs and projects. Place-based education is about creating inclusiveness and a more sustainable environment through building compassion, responsibility, and respect that includes all members of the community.

Youth learn about science in classrooms passively, but knowledge is best reinforced through active learning in the natural environment, which sparks a lifelong interest in the natural sciences and outdoor activities (Davis, 1998). Developing a relationship with nature, and with each other, may help to deepen an understanding of the interaction between humans and nature. If cultural understanding is created socially, then cultural understanding of nature is also understood together. Culture and nature are intertwined, and learning in nature can be transformative. Youth nature clubs have the potential to create a lasting impact on the participants' lives because these experiences with nature are crucial in developing an awareness of environmental issues, fostering biocentric values and attitudes, and sparking actions toward stewardship. Learning and acting in nature together is part of knowing and developing with nature. Educators using place-based education as their practice should provide a learning environment that gives youth opportunities for learning socially in action combined with reflection for praxis. This approach implies a respect for the knowing of lived experiences (Freire, 1994), and in this way, it empowers youth, gives them confidence, and integrates them in the development of the club – the foundations of hope.

Barane, Hugo, and Clemetsen (2018, p. 24) contend that "an overarching aim of ecological literacy is to bring about a fundamental change in our relationship with the world, so that we

2 To see photos from the Photovoice Exhibition, please go to http://bit.ly/IcelandPhotovoice.

may interact considerately with humans and animals." Youth being active in nature can positively affect their well-being, and it helps to develop their relationship with the natural world (Rantala & Puhakka, 2019). Additionally, socialization through leisure activities has been shown to have a direct positive effect on youths' quality of life (Brajša-Žganec, Merkaš, & Šverko, 2011). Youth who are active in nature and are afforded the chance to reflect on it may have a greater impact on the community's understanding of the environment, because they will teach what they have discovered to others (parents, siblings, friends, the community, etc.), either directly through events such as the photovoice exhibit (Figure 2) or indirectly through conversations and actions.

Figure 2. Photovoice exhibition during the Eldur Festival in Húnaþing vestra. (Photo: author.)

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# Student's greetings from TEFI10 conference in Pyhä

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When I returned home from the conference to my shared student apartment in Rovaniemi and sat down on my floor mattress, I was feeling lucky, exhausted, inspired, and more lost and awakened at the same time. For me, those couple of days under Pyhä fell had been more than an ordinary conference experience. The conference had gotten under my skin – emotionally, physically, socially, and cognitively.

I was a third-year master's degree student in tourism research, and I was pondering the path on which I should continue: would it be under the structures of academia as a researcher, or perhaps a trendy entrepreneurship dream (or nightmare)? Maybe I would enjoy being a normal worker in someone's company. Or what if I end up in an entirely different field? Participation in TEFI's conference "Knowing with nature – the future of tourism in the Anthropocene" made me seriously reconsider all my thoughts about the future.

I realized the Anthropocene is an epoch that must be considered with care. Originating from the natural sciences, the term refers to humanity's power to geologically move, shift, and impact the planet (Gren & Huijbens, 2014, p. 1). I understood that it can bring a huge load of responsibility, and can almost result in a mental paralysis in a person. I was not encountering this issue for the first time in the conference, but recognition of the significant influence of human action had hit me like a punch in the face during my studies and work.

When I started my studies in tourism in 2012, I totally believed in turquoise waters, happy fish, rich coral reefs, shiny holiday moods, and tourism as a gateway to develop community and hospitality behind every door. Today, waters are darker and deeper, coral reefs are grey, and fish swallow plastic. There exist communities that hate tourism because of its impacts. In response to these notions, I had tried to find a holiday in a family forest rather than dreaming of my next holiday trip in Southeast Asia. I suppose nature had shaken me in a way that left my anger and sadness towards the field of tourism elevated: is this exploitation? I do not want to be part of this.

These darker thoughts propagated during a dream job as a tourist guide in a company with a good reputation in 2016. Fringe benefits, such as living in warm places, the ability to travel for work, after-work drinks at the beach, and swimming pools suffice to stifle my misgiving about

tourism industry for some time, but soon I came to a point where I realized that this was not right. I found myself cleaning the plastic from the sea during my days off, guiding drunken tourists older than myself to their destinations, and getting myself caught in the middle of political warfare. I could not understand what was happening around me. I thought I needed more tools to understand all of this. I desperately wanted someone to tell me how to deal with all this, so I hiked to the University of Lapland and left behind the fresh fruits of the Mediterranean climate.

## Staying with the trouble

The conference provided significant ways to deal with the pain of being a human. One of the most powerful insights came from the Icelandic professor Gunnar Thór Jóhannesson. His words comforted me in my anxious existential crisis: 'Stay with the trouble.' 'Staying with the trouble' refers to Donna Haraway's idea of engaging with the present, with all its troublesomeness (Haraway 2016, p. 1). During Gunnar's keynote speech on the very first day, I was sitting on the ground in the cold, pouring rain in a not-so-waterproof outfit. I stayed – I wanted to take that sentence to heart. Maybe it was Icelandic charm, Jóhannesson's calm presence in harsh conditions, or my weak, light-hearted mindset, but in that moment, the rain and its humble invitation to stay sounded like a symphony that should have been played nonstop in my heart.

Still feeling the cold summer rain of Lapland on my skin, I continued practicing Haraway's thought. I found myself in the middle of the trouble at the table with professors, teachers, and researchers. I felt lonely and separated, it was hard to place myself with these people. My troubled mind spoke to me: I am just a student. How should I talk to these people? Are they even interested in my thoughts? During those moments of loneliness, I was missing my creatures – other students with whom I could have shared my feelings. I did not have that chance, and I had to stay with the trouble and move along with it. To be honest, I am happy I stayed.

## Dwelling with the trouble

Not only staying, but also dwelling with the trouble, forced me to dive deeper into accepting what is. I shared a beautiful cottage with teachers and professors, and post-seminar discussions in the sauna revealed to me a new side of family and caring in an academic context, which I understood is not separate from academic life, but connected and intertwined. My troubled mind wanted to float in this beautiful place of belonging and understanding, but I was reminded of the hierarchies between student and teacher. I felt uncomfortable dwelling together. Miia Mäkinen, Outi Rantala, and Kaarina Tervo-Kankare's presentation made me understand more about my struggle, and their talk of friendship of a place resonated in me. I acknowledged how friendship demands time, and wondered whether only a few conference days together with people and place might not be enough for strong bonding (see Mäkinen, Rantala, & Tervo-Kankare 2016, pp. 26–41).

TEFI community (tourismeducationfutures.org) had emphasized equality and openness in their practices. They had taken a step towards disrupting hierarchies by inviting students into the dwelling, and to invite children in the conference (a decision which made me especially hap-

py). When I looked at children with their families at the conference, I realized that these people were not only researchers, but also mothers and fathers. It is not all about studying. Life happens at the same time! Professors do normal things as well! I started to develop a more diverse perspective on academic life, because studying under the structures of the university had not revealed to me this side of academic life before.

I had my hardships in dwelling with the trouble, but I got a chance to practice understanding and compassion through various activities. Meditation in the forest and poetic sessions improved friendship with the place and undressed everyone as professors, researchers and students: we were all together in the same position, with Mother Earth and with the art of words. I saw how academic diversity and co-operation during our multidisciplinary sessions bloomed together – literature, arts, geology, architecture, anthropology, archaeology, all came together under tourism discourse.

Usage of language in Christer Foghagen's and Emily Höckert's (2018) poetic session made me wonder about the ways of expression in academic writing and boundaries in language. Jonathan Karkut and Julie Scott (2018) talked about reconnecting with a rock, synching human time with Earth time, and made me wonder in awe: how should we follow a rock's time? Maybe we could try Stone Walks (Springgay & Truman, 2017, p. 851) in our next conference? We had already sat with the rain as if the rain had been one of the conference's guests – and then, we could walk with stones.

As Springgay and Truman (2017, p. 858) disclose, Stone Walks call for the reconsideration of the taxonomies of rocks, and encourage us to rethink effects as not human only, but to expand our thinking to inhuman entities – to think of such effects as friction, flow, trajectory, tendency, and liveliness, and extend the thought from human-centrism towards a material world that is not only an external place, but the substance of ourselves and others. When I think about these queer feelings of Stone Walks, I think it would have some serious consequences to our being-in-the-world. Perhaps we could learn with the world, rather than about it (Springgay & Truman ,2017, p. 858).

Brendan Paddison's (2018) presentation expanded the time horizon with a different perspective. Paddison led us to the past by introducing a project where a community participated in archaeological research in order to engage with their heritage. Paddison's team had found out that participation in excavations can increase wellbeing in the community, as well as contribute to value creation, sense of place, and cultural and social identities. I had observed that in the excitement of the future and "development," we tend to forget what happened, how we are, and how we were. Exploring roots can be a touching, moving, and life-changing experience.

## Final thoughts

Being back in the student life, I am more aware that tourism education is tied to the Anthropocene, and learning with, not only about it, is essential. Participation in this conference comforted me through the pain of staying with the trouble, and I am thankful for those who inspired me, and especially for those who have troubled me. I believe practices of patience are a more

sustainable form of recovery. I hope that in future TEFI conferences, there will be chances for more students to get involved and to reflect their learning through these thought-provoking, troublesome events.

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