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Attuning to affect and emotion in tourism studies

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ABSTRACT

Affect and emotion permeate all levels of the everyday and extra-ordinary entanglements of travel and tourism with personal, collective and political life. With this Special Issue, we consolidate an emerging approach and establish a route for scholarship that explores these entanglements. Through a range of theoretical and empirical lenses, the contributors reveal what emotion does in tourism, tourism practices, and tourism studies. Attuning to affect and emotion in tourism studies we steer the affective turn already underway in cultural studies and geography so as to encompass touring bodies and tourism places. Engaging the concept of affect as a constitutive element of social life often leaves us grasping for terminology to describe something that is, by its very nature, beyond words. For this reason, as we see in some of the papers in this collection, studying affect poses a significant and fruitful challenge to the status quo of social scientific method and analysis. Along with the contributors to this Special Issue, we make a case for thinking about emotions and affects through 'collective practice' as interrelated shaping tourism encounters *in* and *with* places. That is, to break it down as *doing* and as *shared between bodies (and places) through the doing*.

摘要

情感和情绪遍布于旅行游览与个人、集体的政治生活日常性和临时性的相互影响的方方面面。通过本期特刊，我们着力推出了一种新兴的学术路径，并建立了研究旅行游览与政治生活复杂影响的研究路线。通过一系列的理论和经验成果，作者们揭示了情感情绪在旅游、旅游实践和旅游研究中的影响。为了探索旅游研究中的情感和情绪，我们承袭文化研究和地理研究中的情感转向以涵盖各种旅行的主体和旅游场所。

将情感概念作为社会生活的组成部分，常常会让我们运用术语来捕捉一些本质上无法用语言表达的东西。因此，正如我们在本期一些论文中所看到的，研究情感对社会科学分析方法的现状提出了重大而富有成效的挑战。我们与本期的作者们一起，通过“集体性的实践”充分地探索了情感和情绪在人们旅行生活中的复杂影响，因为它们相互关联地塑造了旅游地内部和旅游地之间的各种旅游邂逅。也就是说，在旅行游览中解构情感情绪，通过旅游实践在旅游者与旅游场所中共享情感与情绪。

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Introduction

This editorial began to take shape several months before the COVID-19 pandemic brought travel to a standstill. The two of us were travelling together from Leeds to visit a mutual colleague in Edinburgh and the train journey seemed like a good opportunity to work on this piece. We sat across from each other, laptop open on the small table between us, and talked about emotion, affect, and tourism as the train shifted our bodies side-to-side, forward and backward, accelerating ahead and then settling to a stop as we pulled into a station. The urban landscape outside melted into rural pastures, first green and brown then white with snow. At times the movement of the train seemed to jog ideas; at others, it lulled and distracted us. Inside the carriage, passengers dozed or chatted or, like us, tapped away at laptop keyboards. We made a note of the atmosphere on the train:

This is not a quiet carriage. Someone plays a video game on their phone and the game's digital music becomes part of the soundscape. A nervous terrier parks himself under one of our seats and keeps watch. The atmosphere shifts like different acts in a play as passengers file off and on at each stop. At one station, a little girl boards with her family. She chats animatedly – first about drawing a picture and then about seeing her grandmother – until the family disembarks at the next station.

There, a group of mothers and their adolescent daughters board, apparently on their way to an event. There aren't enough open seats for them to sit together, so the girls sit near the back of the train carriage while their mothers find seats elsewhere. The girls talk to each other and their mothers call back to them as they pass packed snacks up and down the aisle to one another. One of the women opens a bottle of sparkling wine with a loud 'pop' that sets the rest of her group into giggles. Other passengers glance up from their books or phones. Some seem amused, some seem annoyed.

More people get on at the next stop and the next and soon the crush of bodies creates a heat and vibrancy that is at once exhilarating and suffocating. People brush past in the aisle, knocking our elbows as we try to type. And then the train slows to a stop. A clutch of passengers disembarks at Berwick upon Tweed. The girls and their mothers stay on, but their excitement settles. They stare quietly out of the window. As space frees up and silence sets in for a moment, the atmosphere shifts. A sense of relief. An arc of anxiety, claustrophobia, tension, and release.

Revisiting our observations now, more than a year into a global pandemic that has taken us on an emotional journey even while many of us were stuck at home, invokes nostalgia for a less-than-perfect pre-COVID world and a sense of anticipation for what might come next for tourism. These notes from our journey also recall geographer David Bissell's (2010, p.270) ethnographic observations of passenger mobilities and the way 'different affective atmospheres erupt and decay in the space of the train carriage' as passengers board and alight, as the train accelerates, slows, or halts, and as bodies avoid each other or come together. According to Bissell, these atmospheres emerge from something other than conversational interaction among passengers and they register at something other than a conscious level (p. 276). He takes care to distinguish these 'precognitive, prediscursive affective registers of communication' from the more subjective sense-making and reflexive interpretation of the 'emotional dimensions of experience' (p. 271). Bissell reminds us of the intensities that swell and flow through embodied proximities in places and on the move. Some

of those intensities sediment into emotions we can name and manage, like irritation or relief, while others circulate beyond individual consciousness and between bodies.

We start with this moment from our train journey not because it breaks new ethnographic ground, but because it orients us to the way travel and tourism are entangled with embodied sensations, subjective emotions, and affective atmospheres. These are the entanglements we invited contributors to explore in this Special Issue. The response to our call affirmed that tourism scholars are eager to examine these concepts and that they are already doing so across a wide range of empirical venues and theoretical perspectives. In the articles included here, readers will not find one settled definition or established framework of emotion and affect. Some of the contributors make a clear distinction between these two terms while others argue that we must interweave concepts of emotion, feeling, embodiment, attachment, and affect.

David Bissell's description of emotion and affect is a helpful starting point for teasing out these different approaches. On the one hand, he refers to emotion as a subjective experience of feelings that we can think about, name, and manage. Emotions are the feelings that come into consciousness, straddling the biological aspects of embodied experience, such as a sensation in the heart or gut, and the social structures of race, class, and gender that discipline both the feeling of those feelings and the way we express them. This brings to mind the work of sociologist Arlie Hochschild (1983), who argues that emotions are governed by socially constructed 'feeling rules' that compel us to induce or suppress the proper emotions for a given situation. They are also subject to being compartmentalized and commodified as 'emotional labor'.

Affect, on the other hand, refers to the intensities and atmospheres that exist beyond conscious representation or discursive structures. Following theorists like Massumi (1995, 2015) and Clough (2007), several of the contributors in this issue describe affect as the ineffable moods or sensations that well up before we are aware of them, if we ever are. Like emotion, affect is corporeal, but in the sense that it circulates in between rather than residing within individual bodies. Engaging the concept of affect as a constitutive element of social life often leaves us grasping for terminology to describe something that is, by its very nature, beyond words. For this reason, as we see in some of the papers in this collection, studying affect poses a significant and fruitful challenge to the status quo of social scientific method and analysis.

The thirteen papers included here expand on the critical and multilayered insights that tourism scholars, many inspired by the turn toward emotion and affect in cultural studies, have brought to the field in recent years. This is not to suggest that emotion or multisensory experiences were previously absent from tourism studies. Thanks to the increasing popularity of various forms of experiential tourism over the past two decades, tourists' emotions have long been a part of business and management accounts of the industry. A relatively large body of research has developed out of this perspective, much of it focused on measuring customer satisfaction, commodifying and marketing experiences, designing emotional outcomes, and even using virtual reality to simulate tourists' good feelings (Nawijn & Fricke, 2015; Pestek & Sarvan, 2021; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Volo, 2017).

We argue that thinking about emotion not just as a subjective outcome but as constitutive of tourism worlds leads down a somewhat different theoretical path than the impulse to measure, market, and manage tourists' emotional experiences. For this

reason, we invited contributors to consider what embodied emotions, feelings, senses, and affects *do* in tourism. Inspired by Ahmed's (2014) work on the cultural politics of emotion, this question moves us beyond the realm of tourists' individual or interior feelings and opens onto emotion and affect as relational and political practices. Rather than asking how tourists feel, then, this approach explores the kinds of togetherness and tensions, privileges and hierarchies, places and relations, or presence and futures that emotion and affect make possible within the context of tourism.

The aim of this Special Issue is to create a space for scholars to explore and debate the insights such an approach can yield. In this sense, we are building on existing layers of critical thinking in tourism studies. Energized initially by a desire to shift the focus in tourism studies away from a disembodied 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 1990), critical and feminist theorists turned our attention toward the differentiated and multisensory experiences of embodied tourists (Veijola & Jokinen, 1994). Since then, tourism scholars have traced the emotional geographies and multisensuous performances of tourism (Crouch & Desforges, 2003; Edensor & Falconer, 2011; Everett, 2008; Saul & Waterton, 2019). Feminist scholars have revealed how emotions like pride and shame are intertwined with gendered and sexualized tourism spheres and tourism work (Johnston, 2007; Veijola, 2009). They have interrogated the emotional labor of tourism work (Heimtun, 2016; Veijola & Jokinen, 2008), including the intimate labor of sex tourism (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000; Williams, 2013). They have highlighted the interplay between motion and emotion in the realm of tourism (Picard & Robinson, 2012), and examined the politics of feeling in tourism (Buda et al., 2014). Meanwhile, the affective dimension of doing fieldwork (Pocock, 2015) sensitized tourism scholars to the significance of emotion in understanding tourism and tourism research in all its complexity.

Building on the rich insights into the ambivalent desires, affective flows, and emotional geographies that shape and are shaped by tourism, our intention here is to provide a foundation for further advancement into this emerging theoretical and empirical terrain. If we follow Ahmed's (2004) question about the way emotions work to align some bodies into collectives, we can move beyond individual feelings to better understand how tourists come together, with each other or with 'other others', as Ahmed puts it, and how they move apart. Sociologist Bialski's (2012) concept of 'intimate tourism', for example, captures tourists' desires not just to gaze at places but to have meaningful embodied and emotional encounters with strangers in their private lives and domestic spaces. Research on voluntourism similarly reveals how emotions such as intimacy or care, can align bodies into familiar relations but also differentiate 'helpers' from 'those in need' (Everingham & Motta, this issue; Germann Molz, 2017; Mostafanezhad, 2016; Sin, 2010).

The affective qualities of tourism are also apparent in the 'emotional risk-taking' and existential edgework of dark tourism (Buda, 2015; Tzanelli, 2021). As Tzanelli points out, COVID-19 now presents a set of timely questions about emotions and biopolitics; the papers in this issue were researched and submitted pre-COVID and so the pandemic is not a visible protagonist in the issue, but the questions, theories, frameworks, and approaches offered here may shed light on how tourist scholars might make sense of the affective contours of the 'post-viral' tourism world Tzanelli describes.

We have organized the articles around four central themes: emotion, labor, and power; feeling places; symbolic sentiments; and affective epistemologies. As readers

will quickly realize, however, the articles included here overlap and inform one another in multiple ways that spill across these thematic categories.

Emotion, work, and power

The emotional geographies and affective mobilities of tourism are often entangled with histories of violence and hierarchies of power, as the articles in the first section illustrate. In this section we discuss the 'workings' of emotions and power – *emotional work*, *the work of emotion*, and *emotions at work* – to show how these unequal hierarchies of power work through specific articulations of emotion.

In their historical analysis of automobile tourism during the Jim Crow era in the United States, Alderman, Williams, and Bottone examine how the 'atmospheric politics' of white supremacy created an emotional geography of fear and intimidation for Black tourists. At the same time, however, automobility represented an avenue of freedom and defiance for African American motorists. With poignant details of the emotion work African American tourists did not just to navigate but to survive this fraught landscape, the article sheds light on the violent histories that echo in the present-day policing of Black mobilities. Atmospheres of fear, anxiety, harassment and intimidation can generate anger, which in turn can challenge the status quo and generate pro-social action. Fear can awaken anger and shame, but as in the case of Black motorists during the Jim Crow era help build resilience and resistance in the face of white supremacy.

Everingham and Motta's article also brings attention to enduring legacies of power inequalities, this time in relation to the emotional and affective work of volunteer tourism. They observe that the critical scholarship on voluntourism has tended to either frame its emotional appeal as symptomatic of colonial and neo-liberal geopolitics or emphasize the ability of affective voluntourism encounters to transcend such power dynamics. To unsettle this binary, Everingham and Motta engage with decolonial feminist theory. From this perspective, they uncover the nuanced moments of vulnerability and critical intimacy that temporarily subvert the power relations that voluntourism also reproduces. This resonates with Burrai et al.'s work (2015, 2017, 2019) and the calls to re-think the ideology of volunteer tourism, and indeed decolonize all claims of 'sustainability' and 'responsibility' in travel and tourism. The current flawed moral and ideological character of volunteer and responsible tourism continue to sustain a replicating neoliberal mechanism of modern global capitalism.

The final article in this section is Díaz-Carrión and Vizcaino's study of rural tourism in Mexico in which they detail the emotional work Mexican women use to navigate the social and spatial restrictions placed on them. In this analysis, we again see how emotions work both as a mechanism of social control and as a site of resistance to traditional gender stereotypes. The women they interviewed expressed ambivalent emotional responses of anger, shame, happiness, and joy as they negotiated gender roles. Here, tourism work intersects with gender and power through contradictory emotions. Shame as a barrier to engage in the tourism sector is one of the most important findings, according to Díaz-Carrión and Vizcaino. The authors' treatment of shame as 'core affective or emotional responses by women in relation to their work

in tourism' echoes Elspeth Probyn's argument that shame is productive both 'politically and conceptually in advancing a project of everyday ethics' (2004, p. 329). Indeed, shame as affect explains what 'the feeling body does in shame' (p. 330), whereas shame as emotion, privileges cognition. Negotiating these blurred boundaries between shame as visceral affect and cognitive emotion, Mexican women are able to reclaim tourism work for themselves with joy and happiness.

Feeling places

The articles in this section explore the emotional relationship between humans, places, and nature in the context of heritagescapes, family holidays, and dark tourism sites. In these accounts, emotions do not reside in the tourist or in the destination. Instead, interactions between people and places afford the emergence of certain emotional experiences or affective atmospheres. For example, Burlingame's phenomenological account of a Viking heritage site in Sweden uses the concept of 'presence' to highlight the affective and emotional potential of landscape. Acknowledging a growing sense of 'emotional curiosity' among tourists, Burlingame suggests that site managers collaborate with tourists' desires to have multisensory experiences of presence within the heritage landscape.

Kelly's case study of family holidays in Brighton, UK similarly focuses on the emotional affordances of place. This study describes how coastal spaces allow certain emotions to 'flow', with families imagining and performing themselves *as* families through their emotional connections with one another and with the seascape.

The last two articles in this theme, Biscaia and Marques, as well as Driessen deploy the concept of dark tourism. They address a long-standing critique levelled at dark tourism studies, that death, disaster and atrocities are analysed as commoditised products, and experiences at dark sites being devoid of emotions, feelings and affects (Buda et al., 2014; Buda, 2015; Lisle, 2000).

Biscaia and Marques analyze Dismaland: the Bemusement Park built in Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset, a seaside destination in England by the elusive English artist Banksy. Their description of the seaside park's affective atmosphere as dystopic and dismal reminds us that the emotional affordances of place are relational, contextual, and contradictory. Dark tourism experiences in this park challenge the pervasive industry-based commodifications, and bring forth socio-affective encounters immensely productive to empathise, and affectually connect with the human tragedies of the Mediterranean refugee crisis, for example.

A similar theme emerges in the final article in this section, an analysis of immersive tourism at former war sites in Europe. Drawing on interview data with volunteers, Driessen describes the affects that circulate between volunteers and these sites of war and conflict as complex and highlights the contradictory feelings of purpose and powerlessness, sympathy and connection, guilt and disappointment that emerge in these settings. Like the other articles in this section, the focus here is on tourists' desires to be affected, but also on what emotions 'do' and how they shape and are shaped by tourists' performances in and with places.

Driessen, and Biscaia and Marques anchor their forays into emotions and affects in dark tourism in the affective tourism framework which contextualizes affects as transactions between touring bodies and tourist places (Buda, 2015). Their work

expands the concept of affective tourism with due attention to the ways affects, emotions, and feelings are accessed, felt, experienced and performed in encounters with places of 'present dystopian darkness', or 'darkness' of past wars.

Symbolic sentiments

The articles in this section expand on the idea that tourists travel not just to experience certain places, but to feel certain feelings. Particular emotions may be symbolically attributed to a place, but as the contributors in this section illustrate, these affective experiences emerge in complex webs of human and non-human interactions and in-between cognitive meaning-making and pre-cognitive impressions. In their study of a gastronomic tourist route through Hunter Valley, Australia, Roy and Gretzel describe how tourists engage cognitively as well as bodily as they travel to the valley and move through the themed trail. In this case, the socio-material interactions between tourists and the food and wine, stories of authenticity, and services and scenery allow tourists to express and embody opulence, exclusivity, and indulgence.

The article that follows similarly focuses on tourists' desires to experience symbolically 'positive' emotions. In this conceptual paper, Yan and Halpenny introduce 'savoring' as one of the mechanisms through which tourists become positively attached to places. Like gazing, interpreting, or evaluating, savoring is a way of interacting with and making meaning of a destination. Savoring is not just an orientation to a place, however, but to the tourist's own emotional state; a mode of attuning to, regulating, or prolonging pleasurable feelings. In this sense, we might consider savoring as part of the emotion work tourists do.

Another dimension of emotion work involves what the authors of the last article in this section refer to as 'self-love'. In this exploratory study, Lykoudi, Zouni and Tsogas propose the framework of self-love in relation to symbolic consumption and destination branding. Highlighting survey results in which tourists associated a particular place with self-focused sentiments like actualization, confidence, discovery or fulfillment, the authors draw a parallel between tourists' love for a destination and their desire to experience self-love.

Affective epistemologies

The articles in this final section illustrate the way tourism researchers feel their way in the field. They engage with theories of knowledge that foreground our embodied being, and being with others, in the world as both an object of knowledge and a way of knowing. Feminist epistemology, in particular, recuperates the forms of embodied knowledge and ways of knowing through feeling and affect that have historically been discounted (Berlant, 2011; Collins, 1990; Stewart, 2007). These theories take seriously the idea that feelings are 'clues' to some kind of truth, as Hochschild (1983) puts it, while acknowledging the power relations that have made certain questions worth asking, certain sources of knowledge more reliable, or certain truths more true.

While embodied or expressed emotions appear to be more available to the researcher's eye, the more-than-representational qualities of affect pose a methodological challenge. How can we know, let alone represent in some recognizable form of scholarship, something that is by definition, beyond cognition or representation? Each of these

articles situates its epistemological approach as a bridge between emotion and affect, focusing on the *relationality* of bodies, places, and things as a site of knowledge.

Ramanayake, Cockburn-Wootten, and McIntosh recognize that conventional social scientific techniques are limited in their ability to uncover the often invisible or unspoken aspects of people's affective experiences of traveling with a chronic illness. To address these limitations, the researchers employed a creative visual technique called the 'MeBox' method to make room for respondents to share a sense of intensity, loss, grief, or pain that might otherwise be 'unshareable'. Anderson and Smith similarly explore methodological techniques that span the conscious feeling of emotions and the unconscious realm of affect, in this case in between the real and imagined worlds of places featured in literature. To study the emotional dimensions of literary walking tours, they engaged a 'relational methodology' with small groups of tourists, an approach that combined the embodied practice of 'walking whilst talking', cues from the book and the place, and interactions within the group to create a literary map that merges both affective and cognitive elements.

Paying careful attention to the way people, places, and objects affect one another, Kugapi and Höckert use craft tourism as a method for exploring embodied encounters with material souvenirs. In this concluding article, their autoethnographic account of crafting, gifting, and touching a pair of green-and-white mittens traces the multisensory tourism geographies in which, as Kugapi and Höckert write, 'non-human actors ... entangle us with places and to other members of the Earth'.

Conclusion

The intention in this Special Issue is not to add yet another turn to the research agenda in tourism studies, but rather to steer one that is already underway in cultural studies and geography so as to encompass touring bodies and tourism places. Where has it led us so far and what new directions it might yet yield. We aim to establish a route; consolidate an approach; make explicit what emotion does in tourism, tourism practice, tourism studies. What this Special Issue demonstrates is that emotions and affects are the drivers behind travel and tourism. We make a case for thinking about emotions and affects through 'collective practice' as interrelated shaping tourism encounters *in* and *with* places. That is, to break it down as *doing* and as *shared between bodies (and places) through the doing*.

One thing that all of the articles in this issue have in common is that they illustrate how tourism geographies register as emotional and affectual geographies (Anderson & Smith, 2001; Davidson et al., 2007; Pile, 2010). This goes some way to addressing a longstanding critique levelled at tourism studies – that an intimate language of emotions, feelings, affective style, moods, sentiments, passions is not pervasive in our vocabulary. Moreover, it has been lamented that *the tourist* as the central tenet in tourism studies, has been historically portrayed as passively consuming commoditized products, largely, devoid of emotions, feelings and affects. Earlier engagements with a commoditised tourism phenomenon have thus far obfuscated feelings, emotions, moods and affects that circulate in tourism places amongst tourists, locals, and everyone else in between.

Our re-routing of tourism studies more steadily towards emotional and affectual geographies can be considered within the wider turn to affect in the social sciences and

humanities. Indeed, a re/turn to affect was registered in cultural studies and geography starting in the early 1990s (Clough, 2007; Harding & Pribram, 2002; Stewart, 2007). That call to re-turn to affect, was, at the time, largely ignored in tourism, surprisingly so, since tourism is about movement *to*, *in* and *between* places whereby social practices relating to physical motions of touring bodies are experienced *in* and *through* affects and emotions. The subjective experience of emotions becomes most obvious in tourism since tourism moves people (Picard & Robinson, 2012), in a physical sense, emotionally and affectively.

The affective turn occurs at a time when critical cultural theories face challenges to analyse, interpret and understand terrorism, on-going conflicts, pandemics, tortures and massacres. Considering such events as mirroring deep cultural, socio-political, economic and spatial transformations, the affective turn can be argued to be symptomatic of the changes in the cultural, political and economic co-functioning. Within the affective turn, the focus of critical cultural, social and spatial theories has been on dis/connections and circuits between affect and emotion and a re-consideration of the subject as 'subject of emotion' (Clough, 2007).

The affective turn in its twists, turns, and meanderings has detoured the life sciences, neurosciences, and biology's dealings with emotions and affects. John Cromby reminds us that 'between neuroscience and social science there has been something of a history of mutual distrust' (2007, p. 149). In a cautiously hopeful account Cromby details the potentials for biology, psychology and neurosciences together with increasing attention in the social sciences on the body, embodiment and affect, to produce more systematic collaborations. From its beginning the affective turn has invited 'a transdisciplinary approach to theory and method' (Clough, 2007, p. 3). Yet, there seem to have been 'some fascinating missteps characterizing the taking up of scientific literature' (Papoulias & Callard, 2010, p. 29). As affective meanderings seep into our worlds attuning them to the mind, brain, body and soul, for the next affective journey we invite colleagues to head these calls for transdisciplinarity and interrogate Spinozan cultural theories on emotion and affect in connection with biology's gift, or neurosciences' theory of mind.

In the meantime, investigations of affect and emotion permeating all levels of the everyday, the extra-ordinary of travel, personal, collective and political life and, thus undermining entrenched hierarchies of power – need to further make their way to the top of the tourism research agenda.

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