

Chapter 10

The Socio-Spatial Articulations of Tourism Studies in Nordic Geography



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Introduction

This chapter will focus on geographical contributions to tourism studies in Nordic scholarship. The chapter provides a thematised overview of the ways in which tourism dynamics and developments have been understood and researched by Nordic geographers, drawn from a bibliometric analysis arranged around the key geographical concepts of place, space and time. The analysis is of works published since the year 2010, thereby slightly overlapping Saarinen's (2013) explication of 'Nordic Tourism Geographies' and framing the most recent emerging thematic areas. This introduction will explain the object of study and provide the scaffolding of the chapter.

Tourism, much like other aspects of the complex socio-ecological systems composing our society, needs to be understood through an interdisciplinary mode of inquiry. The 'knowledge system' of tourism as explained by Tribe and Liburd (2016) is thereby comprised of the 'disciplines of tourism', wherein geography is to be found, and 'extra disciplinary' knowledge. The former disciplinary field is dominated by business studies and social sciences. These in turn dominate academic tourism knowledge production, focused on understanding the phenomena from a range of disciplinary perspectives, much like geography. This multi-disciplinary range and the prominence of business studies has led to the diffusion of tourism geographers into dedicated tourism departments and/or business schools (Müller, 2014, 2019b). Furthermore, these loose disciplinary boundaries of tourism allow

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researchers from related disciplines, such as economic history, anthropology or sociology, to address tourism. The latter disciplinary field is about problem centred knowledge creation, focusing on highly contextual practical issues of the tourism industry and providing solutions to these. When it comes to common knowledge about tourism and general public discourse, this extra disciplinary focus dominates as lamented in an editorial of the first issue of the journal *Tourist Studies*. The editors Franklin and Crag (2001) state that;

... tourist studies has been dominated by policy led and industry sponsored work so the analysis tends to internalize industry led priorities and perspectives. (p. 5)

From the disciplinary perspective these priorities and perspectives include vocational areas of operation for tourism, such as marketing, finance, human resource management, service management, destination planning, ICT and innovation (see Tribe & Liburd, 2016). Contradicting this lamentation around the same time is the opening editorial of the by now well-established journal *Tourism Geographies* which stated that geographers dominated tourism studies (Lew, 1999). Lew (1999) was most likely referring to the academic side, yet these somewhat contradicting sentiments indicate the fluidity of what constitutes tourist/m studies. On the most general level though, within academia this field of study is split between the departments of business and management and geography at universities worldwide.

Gibson (2008, p. 407) in his three part progress report on geographies of tourism sees strength in the loose disciplinary boundaries of tourism and views it as an emerging “important point of intersection within geography ... gel[ing] critical, integrative and imperative research”. Müller (2019b, p. 19) in his edited volume on the research agenda for tourism geographies shows how until the compilation of his edited volume, these geographies of tourism ‘gelled’ around notions of,

- Protected areas and sustainability
- The impacts of tourism on people, places, climate and the environment
- Primary industry diversification and land use valuing
- Rural areas and access
- Economic restructuring and particular industry dynamics
- Heritage, image and identity

Müller (2019b) concludes his review stating that “tourism geographies seems to be in a state of rapid globalization and inclusion” (p. 20). On this international arena the emerging research agenda draws on geographers’ expertise knowledge of transport, mobilities, spatially articulated economic development, diffusion and the dynamic relation between people and their physical environment; life and land in the context of visitors and people’s expectations thereto. Mediating thereby between the geographical perspective and the phenomena of tourism, constructs knowledges of considerable paradigmatic plurality.

The question to be explicitly addressed in this chapter is what makes for a Nordic tourism geography and what spatial conceptualisations prevail therein? Framing tourism studies from a Nordic perspective is the explicit agenda of the journal *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*. Albeit not a geography journal,

it has been published since 2001 in relation to the annual Nordic Symposium on Tourism and Hospitality Research. It provides an outlet for Nordic-specific tourism research and explications of the “Nordic context” for researchers, managers, decision makers and politicians (Mykletun & Haukeland, 2001, p. 1). In the published articles of that journal the split field of study already outlined is very clear, whilst what constitutes a specifically Nordic context, apart from being about places there, remains much vaguer. Avoiding to “leave ourselves open to the seduction of proximity, nostalgia, or protectionism, engaging in a reductive strategy of triage...” (Ruddick, 2017, p. 120), this “Nordic context” needs to be conceptually interrogated through the key constituent parts of geographic thought, that of place, space and time. The ways in which Nordic geographers do so makes for the Nordic context in our view.

Hence, this chapter will engage in such an interrogation and proceed in four parts. First and following this introduction is an explication of the methods employed for this study and a more general framing of the topics of tourism studies and tourism geographies. Thereafter we will focus on the ways in which Nordic tourism geographies have made sense of the fact that tourism is part and parcel of social processes that get articulated and maintained in certain places. The place-based specificities of tourism geographies notwithstanding the spatial stretch and duration of the links that make for a place also needs to be considered and thereby how Nordic tourism geographies have been spatially articulated is the subject of the third part. The fourth and last part before some conclusions will be drawn deals with Nordic tourism geographies through and with time and what the future might hold. Only partly intended as a historical overview of approaches, this part explicitly thinks through how processes of change and development for the future are conceptualised and worked with.

Methodology and Framing of the Study

Based on the overview of tourism geographies provided by Hall and Page (2009) and complemented by Gibson’s already mentioned three-part progress reports for human geography, Table 10.1 shows the themes emerging as fields of inquiry for tourism geographers globally. Gibson (2008) sees all studies of tourism geographies as either looking at *development* or *encounters*. The development side picks up all manners in which tourism is a specific nexus of globalised flows transforming places. Thereby research emerges which focus on tourism as part of the capitalist system of production and consumption, whilst the flow of people most certainly predates that potent driving force (Gibson, 2009). When it comes to encounters framing these global mobilities, the focus is on the live worlds and livelihoods of people. Evoking multisensory, affectual and embodied ways we make for connections with spaces, places and people and the power geometries which play at this micro geographical scale of analysis (Gibson, 2010).

Table 10.1 Framing Nordic tourism geographies

Topic/field	Explication	Abbr.
<i>Development</i>		
GIS/spatial analysis	All manner of employing technologies of spatial analysis to understand tourism. New and emerging field with big data in particular, but heavily applied	GIS
Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) models	Using TALC and studies focused on the development of destinations through time and the processed by which places become tourism destinations	TALC
The tourism system	Studies premised on the ways in which tourism is an instantiation of globalised flows and how it relates to the superstructure of capitalism. Mobility, migration and globalisation come together here. Herein are also studies of tourism as a force for global change	TS
Commodity chain analysis	Economic geography perspectives tying together the elements of production and consumption in a spatial manner	CC
Planning and tourism impacts	Studies focused on how to plan and manage tourism be it in an urban, rural or wilderness setting	P
Tourism as a tool for development and change	Studies focused on the transformative power of tourism. Local empowerment, economic diversification and livelihood creation.	TD
Tourism and climate change	Studies with a particular focus on the role of tourism in global climate change	
Regional studies	Studies of clustering and industry agglomeration, innovation diffusion and studies focused on the different spaces of tourism (e.g. rural, urban, wilderness)	RS
<i>Encounter</i>		
Host/guest encounters	Focus on the multisensory, embodied and affective dimensions of tourism. The ethics of hospitality and the entanglement of people, places and identities	HG
Everyday setting of tourism	Connections made with spaces and places of tourism, materiality and power play	ET
Work in tourism	The live worlds and livelihoods of those in the industry or impacted thereby	WT

Nordic themes of tourism geographies already identified in these framing articles have to do with tourism in wilderness settings, second home tourism and lifestyle mobilities (Hall & Page, 2009, p. 8), along with a strong focus on tourism as a tool for regional development in the Nordic periphery (see Grenier & Müller, 2011; Müller & Jansson, 2007) and the specificities of nature-based tourism (see Fredman & Haukeland, 2021). These specificities of the Nordic agenda are confirmed by Müller (2019b) although adding that the scale of these issues ranges from local to the global.

The Methods Used

Defining tourism geographies is indeed a delicate undertaking, particularly considering the sometimes ‘post-disciplinary’ characteristics of tourism research (Coles et al., 2006). To try and get a more detailed handle on the most current geographical contributions to tourism studies in the Nordic realm a number of search queries were used combining tourism and geography-related terms to identify potential Nordic tourism geographers in the Scopus publication database. A minimum of three contributions were required in order to be classified as a tourism geographer. Applying our joint knowledge and considering publication profiles of the initial sample, we could add some additional names not captured in the original search queries. Altogether this resulted in a list of 96 researchers.¹ For being qualified an inclusion in the Scopus database has been mandatory, implying publications in English and in recognized journals and book series. Hence, some tourism geographers may have been neglected.

What emerged was that Nordic tourism geographies are not primarily published in geography journals (Table 10.2). Among the 10 journals presenting most of Nordic tourism geographies, only three are self-identified geography journals (marked with *), while seven identify as tourism journals. Beyond the previously discussed split field of study, this mirrors how tourism geographies remain marginal from the mother discipline, prompting e.g. Ioannides (2006) to urge tourism geographers to disseminate their knowledge also through generic geography journals.

Table 10.2 Top 10 journals in relation to Nordic tourism geographies, 2010–2019

Journal	Nordic articles
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	49
Tourism Geographies*	38
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	30
Annals of Tourism Research	19
Current Issues in Tourism	17
Tourism Management	14
Polar Geography*	9
Fennia*	8
Sustainability	8
Tourist Studies	8

Source: SciVal

¹We decided to exclude guest researchers who have a major affiliation outside the Nordic realm. This refers mainly to C. Michael Hall, University of Canterbury, who is also affiliated with the universities in Oulu, Lund and Linnaeus University. Otherwise Halls publication output would be 37, significantly affecting the overall pattern.

Of course, for some geographers tourism is just one among many themes researched and not all of the identified researchers have their career entirely in the Nordic countries. In the sample generated for this study 50 researchers were located in geography departments, while 46 were outside these. Distinct national patterns of tourism geographies emerge partly due to their embeddedness in the geography departments (Table 10.3). Analysing the publications of the scholars identified, it seems that publications originating from geography departments have a higher field-weighted citation impact than those from other departments. An exception is the Swedish situation, where this pattern is inverse. This is explained by a single researcher, Stefan Gössling at Linnaeus University's School of Business and Economics, who authored 58 of those publications with a field-weighted impact of 4.44.

However, as mentioned above, tourism geographies are mostly not found in geography journals and the same diffusion is taking place away from geography departments (Müller, 2014). A closer look at the geography departments reveals that most of the publications can be related to a couple of departments in every country (Table 10.4). In fact, three out of four publications are published at three universities, i.e. Oulu, Umeå and the University of Iceland, which together form the core of tourism geographies in the Nordic countries.

Examples of tourism geographies done outside geography departments can be found at Aalborg University (14 items), the University of Akureyri (19), UiT The Arctic University of Norway (12), Lund University (51), Linnaeus University (49),² Mid-Sweden University (46) and Dalarna University (20).

Table 10.3 Tourism geographers at Nordic universities

Country	Geography departments			Other departments		
	Researchers	Output 2010–19	Field-weighted impact	Researchers	Output 2010–19	Field weighted impact
Denmark	2	13	2,29	5	35	2,09
Finland	21	121	1,61	5	28	1,27
Iceland	5	56	1,69	2	20	1,51
Norway	2	7	1,74	11	36	1,55
Sweden	20	90	1,81	23	157	2,73
Total	50	283 ^a	1,73	46	268 ^a	2,28

Source: Scopus & SciVal

^aThe total is not equal the sum of the countries, since some items are co-authored from authors from two of the included countries

²There is a significant overlap for publications recorded for Linnaeus University and Lund University. For 37 publications the author, Stefan Gössling who is not a resident of any Nordic country, reports both affiliations Lund and Linnaeus University. In addition, a significant share of his publications mentions Western Norway Research Institute as a third affiliation.

Table 10.4 Publications by Nordic geographers at Nordic universities with geography departments with significant research into tourism geographies, 2010–2019

Universities	Publications	Field-weighted Impact
Oulu University	97	1,39
Umeå University	61	1,94
University of Iceland	55	1,68
University of Eastern Finland	19	2,13
Roskilde University	12	2,38
Karlstad University	18	1,64
NTNU	6	1,36

Source: Scopus & SciVal

In order to discern publications on tourism geography and provide a thematic overview of topics, we used a search string “touris*” in title, abstract or keywords in combination with each of the 96 researchers included in the final publication database. Thematic topics are automatically created by SciVal based on more than a billion citation links between roughly 50 million Scopus entries published since 1996. The SciVal method employs a cluster analysis to split the data into approximately 96,000 topics, based upon direct citations. Where there is a weak citation link, there is a break and a new topic is formed. Analysing the selected dataset reveals that Nordic tourism geographies stretch over 166 topics. From these we selected those most frequent, vary of the dominance of a limited number of geographers implying a thematic concentration. Thereby seven topics emerge with more than 10 entries of the 520 emerging academic outputs from 2010 to 19. The following sections present these topics within the conceptual framing of place, space and time and highlights therein some key contributions.

The Place of Tourism

Encounters need to take place and the live worlds and livelihoods of people are articulated through relations constituting places (Gibson, 2008). Adopting the eclectic openness to place that is the hallmark of geography, Lew (1999) claims that understanding place is an intrinsic element of tourism research complimenting studies of marketing and business. Coles and Hall (2006) in their editorial to a *Current Issues in Tourism* theme issue, in an epanalepsis outcry of the concomitant demise and long life of tourism geographies, argue that tourism cannot be left to geographers alone, as tourism per se is as eclectically open as a place. This section is not about espousing the Nordic realm as a particular place worthy of particular findings, but to understand how Nordic tourism geographies have dealt with the notion of place through the articles gleaned from the research employed for this chapter. Two distinct topics emerge.

Tourism Experiences and Social Relations

The first topic to emerge from the bibliometric analysis we see as articulating places and encounters, focuses on experiences and social relations. This topic comprises 45 publications in the period 2010–2019, and although Nordic universities are well represented, it is dominated by sociological and anthropological research rather than geography. Hence, in contrast to the other topics presented in this chapter, Nordic geographers play a less dominant role, although Bærenholt at Roskilde University is among the 20 most productive contributors to this topic globally.

The topic contains one of the most cited Nordic contributions to the international tourism literature. *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (2011) is an updated edition of a classic work by British sociologist John Urry, now co-authored with Jonas Larsen, Roskilde University. This work is about the touristic consumption of places. Beyond that; topics of touristic co-production of experiences and destination development and the material and more-than-human play a role in the constitution of places (Larsen & Meged, 2013; Thulemark, 2017; Jóhannesson & Lund, 2018; Huijbens & Johannesson, 2019). In this context rare contributions on mass tourism can be found (Vainikka, 2013, 2016; Wall-Reinius et al., 2019). Furthermore, the role of technology for tourism experiences is assessed (Bohlin & Brandt, 2014; Varnajot, 2020), the role of authenticity for tourist consumption (Daugstad & Kirchengast, 2013; Frisvoll, 2013; Prince, 2017b) and semantic interpretations of images (and branding) and literary landscapes can be found.

Overall, the topic is far more theoretically oriented than most of the other presented topics in this chapter. The topic provides approaches inspired by actor-network theory (Van der Duim et al., 2012), performance theory and embodiment (Larsen & Urry, 2011), non-representational theories (Larsen, 2019; Prince, 2019) and theories of practice (James et al., 2018). In these articles a place is predominantly understood as an emergent relational construct, albeit primarily socially constructed and performed, rather than being a physical container for human action as evidenced in the strong focus on social practices and the ways in which these animate consumption and production; travel and the everyday; governance and policy; technology and the social (James et al., 2018).

The Tourism Industry

Another topic we could easily relate to the articulations of place and encounters is focused on destination-specific industry development dynamics. This topic is not dominated by any specific Nordic geographer, and although Nordic universities are active, they are so mainly within management research.

Most frequently cited among those are studies by Brouder and Eriksson (2013a, b) on firm survival within the tourism industry. Otherwise, contributions on innovation and product development dominate the list of contributions (Konu et al., 2010;

Halkier, 2014; Ioannides et al., 2014; Hjalager et al., 2016). Beyond the thematic topic identified via SciVal articles in the overall database, articles about industry agglomerations and clustering for innovation and knowledge diffusion along with interfirm linkages, path dependencies and tourism enclave dynamics can be discerned (in this book, see also Asheim et al., 2022). Herein studies integrating issues of work in the industry and the role of migrants can be found. What characterises all these publications is an emphasis on place based empirical insights from the tourism industry. As such the contributions to this topic are not particularly concerned with place dynamics, although it is understood as important container of properties that make the success of destination development more or less likely. So, whilst these studies are rich in empirical detail, they are not critically engaging with conceptualisations of place and are more akin to descriptive economic geographies trying to identify success factors in spatial arrangements of people and industry.

Tourism is but one of many particular frames for the converging relations that make for a place. As tourism hinges on access and thereby transport infrastructure, these need to be considered as key drivers of tourism and be carefully negotiated as they open gateways of global flows into societies, nature areas and communities that need to be prepared and involved. This focus on the critical role of transport and access is distinctly missing in Nordic tourism geographies, which is surprising seeing the price placed on tourism as a tool for economic and regional development of the Nordic periphery.

The Space of Tourism

Tourism needs to be conceived as part and parcel of a myriad of processes that converge upon and make for places in an ever increasingly globalised world. Tourism involves a plurality of actors and stretches from the local to the global through all kinds of practices whereby recreation and leisure have become an integral part of the everyday life world of people across the planet since WWII. Tourism is thereby a particular way of framing the development of every aspect of our lives and is fundamentally relationally enacted (Darbellay & Stock, 2012). A place becoming a destination is thereby not a simple point on a map, or a place to 'go to', but a complex amalgam of situational factors and relations, some of which are of global stretch and duration (Massey, 2005). As stated, transport and mobilities infrastructure are typical of these relations. The ways in which these converge upon and make for a place and are actively maintained and perpetuated in locally specific manners should be a key concern for geographers researching tourism. Indeed, what animates places are spaces of flow and by now globalised processes. Nordic geography scholarship on tourism can be gleaned through three particular topics in this context.

Second-Home Tourism and Lifestyle Mobilities

Second-home tourism is a particular Nordic type of consumption-led mobility. Indeed, Nordic researchers are leading globally in this field and particularly Umeå University is the epicentre for this research (Müller, 2021) along with the University of Eastern Finland/LUKE.

Two kinds of perspectives govern Nordic second-home research. A significant fraction focuses on how second homes and related mobilities affect and change places (Overvåg, 2010; Müller, 2011; Müller & Marjavaara, 2012; Hiltunen & Rehunen, 2014; Back & Marjavaara, 2017; Larsson & Müller, 2019). In this context it has been argued that second-home owners are integrated parts of rural communities that frequently are disregarded by planning and social science (Nordin & Marjavaara, 2012; Hannonen et al., 2015). The other perspective is concerned with experiences of mobility (Vepsäläinen & Pitkänen, 2010; Pitkänen, 2011; Tjørve et al., 2013; Åkerlund & Sandberg, 2015; Cohen et al., 2015). In this context the role of lifestyle migration and the role of immigrants for rural tourism development are analysed (Carson & Carson, 2018; Eimermann et al., 2019).

A source of inspiration for this research has doubtless been the mobility turn in the social sciences (Cresswell, 2006; Hannam et al., 2006). The interpretation of such inspiration has been divergent. While the Umeå environment firmly remained in a spatial analysis tradition analysing large data sets and aiming at mapping mobilities and their impacts, the Joensuu geographers are more concerned with the role of second homes for identity work and representational geographies. In this tradition social constructions of rural places are discussed in relation to spatial contestation of rural traditions. However, some publications also address second homes in relation to the environment and as consumers of resources (Adamiak et al., 2016). However, they share a commitment to critique sedentarist approaches in the social sciences by questioning stereotypic understandings of home and away, a topic also recently addressed by Nilsson and Tesfahuney (2019). What emerges thereby is a reconfiguration of what is perceived as centre and periphery and a distinct reframing of national and supra national spaces through valuing distinct areas through leisure.

Tourism, Wilderness and Landscape

Understanding spaces of tourism from the perspective of general global debates around wilderness and landscapes is a topic with a stronghold at the University of Iceland. Particularly Sæþórsdóttir with 11 contributions, but also Ólafsdóttir and Benediktsson are among the top five contributors to this topic. However, it can be noted that the prominence of this topic, i.e. the scope of citations, is low in comparison. The number of Nordic contributions to this field 2010–2019 is 18.

The wilderness topic is dominated by publications assessing how wilderness is perceived and socially constructed (Benediktsson et al., 2011; Sæþórsdóttir et al., 2011; Wall-Reinius, 2012; Sæþórsdóttir & Saarinen, 2016) and how these feed into

spatial and participatory planning processes and control devices (Sæþórsdóttir, 2010, 2012). Attempts to classify and quantify wilderness using GIS are also present (Ólafsdóttir & Runnström, 2011; Ólafsdóttir et al., 2016). The topic of wilderness can also be related to the particularities of rights of access and Nordic traditions of *friluftsliv* (outdoor recreation), which translate into research on well-being and health by nature (Puhakka et al., 2017) as well as the emphasis on wildlife, in particular marine mammals, in the Nordic realm (Huijbens & Einarsson, 2018). Herein also competing land use claims and more broadly issues of the Arctic as a wilderness frontier being penetrated by tourism, in particular by cruise tourism, can be discerned.

Theoretically, the topic is particularly influenced by physical geography and a materialist view of landscape as politically contested in terms of meaning making and valuing. A crucial component to this politicisation is the globalised flows of tourist coming to particular places with images and ideas globally mediated about what a wilderness could and should be. A limitation of these studies is how wilderness is mostly seen as socially constructed and embedded in cultural perceptions and complex competing land use contexts. Something Huijbens (2021) explicitly moves away from with emphasis on earthly attachments in the Anthropocene.

Indigenous Tourism and Ethical Perspectives

Another culturally oriented way of understanding spaces of tourism from the perspective of global debates is focused on issues of indigeneity and ethics. The SciVal analysis pools ethical perspectives on tourism and indigenous tourism in one topic. This mirrors an overall concern for cultural impacts of tourism present in much of the indigenous tourism literature. In Nordic geography, the indigenous Sami are the focus.

Nordic tourism geographers have addressed indigenous tourism from a livelihood perspective, highlighting tourism as an opportunity to make a living in a periphery but also identifying challenges to such coping strategies (Leu & Müller, 2016; Müller & Hoppstadius, 2017; Leu et al., 2018). Additionally, Nordic geographers have presented research on representations of indigenous peoples (Niskala & Ridanpää, 2016; Pashkevich & Keskitalo, 2017). However, the most frequently cited contribution here is somewhat deviant. It addresses the earthly boundaries of tourism development and, thus, concerns another kind of ethical dimension of tourism, aspiring to earth-led priorities and perspectives (Gren & Huijbens, 2012).

The above themes and contributions employ various spatial conceptualizations, but generally see tourism as an emergent property of globalised flows of people, ideas and investment. While materialist understandings dominate the work on tourism as a livelihood strategy and understanding wilderness, ideas of uneven social representations dominate the other fraction of indigenous tourism research and a relational processual understanding of space is dominant although primarily concerned with socio-cultural aspects thereof and articulations of perceptions in the political arena of land-use contestations.

Tourism Research Through Time

According to Darbellay and Stock (2012), tourism emerged as a particular focus area within geography in the 1970s, although examples of research exist as far back as the 1930s along with several initiatives in German academia of applied research focused on travel and tourism from the dawn of the twentieth century (see also Gibson, 2008; Smith, 1978; Spode, 2009). In the Nordic context Lillehammer University College in Norway was the first to offer a comprehensive tourism study programme in 1973. Sweden followed suit shortly after and in 1978 set up tourism colleges in Borlänge, Östersund and Kalmar. These four are well known tourism regions and the education was focused on industry skills training. Tourism as part of a full university degree programme emerged later in Sweden and then as part of a human geography degree, business studies degree or sociology. In Denmark tourism originally emerged as a last year specialisation in geography from the Copenhagen Business School, similar to the University of Iceland where tourism is embedded in geography. Holar University College in Iceland and Finland originally followed the Swedish and Lillehammer model, but morphed into tourism academic degrees (Nilsson, 2012). In these budding places of tourism scholarship the geography angle revolved around planning, policy and above all the notion of 'destination' as a way of framing place almost solely as a social construct and subject to tourism consumption.

Saarinen (2013) provides a detailed account of the development of Nordic Tourism Geographies through time. His point of departure is the history of tourism and travel to the Nordic realm, characterised by the search for authentic wilderness, the edge of Europe and unravelling the myths of the hyperboreans, spawning a wealth of travelogues and accounts that have to date sustained some of the allure associated with the Nordic realm in the minds of those living further south (Ísleifsson & Chartier, 2011). But beyond these Saarinen (2013, p. 36) emphasises that "systematic research beyond descriptions and individual experiences was mainly missing till the second part of the twentieth century." What follows is neatly summarised by Saarinen in Table 10.5.

Table 10.5 generally outlines five phases of theoretical frameworks applied to Nordic tourism geographies. The first phase is mainly in the spirit of regional descriptions, inventorying resources and describing places and spaces of tourism in the Nordic realm. As such these harken explicitly to the Vidalian and Annales school of regional geography. The second phase is where the impact of the quantitative revolution in spatial theory starts to be felt. Nordic tourism geographies start to model flows and analyse the tourism system, as proposed by Leiper (1979). Thereby areal differentiation began to matter and the relationship between the different places and the relational transformations wrought as places became destinations. The third phase is then characterised by the further augmenting of quantitative techniques, whereby behaviour modelling and preference gauging rule the day. The fourth phase is where Nordic tourism geography adds a focus on management and policy relevance and how tourism is defined and has measurable impacts on places

Table 10.5 Specific theoretical frameworks related to Nordic tourism geographies through time

Period	Theory
1950s	Regionalism, regional description
1960s	Regionalism, regional description, and areal differentiation
1970s	Regionalism and spatial modelling, regional description, economy, and areal differentiation
1980s	Spatial modelling and regional economy, supply-demand, and growth of cautionary approaches
1990s	Critical and adaptive studies, rise of sustainable tourism
2000s	Diversification of tourism geographies
Present	Diversification of tourism geographies

Source: Saarinen (2013, p. 36)

as they become destinations. Herein the debates surrounding sustainability and carrying capacity play a large role. The fifth phase can then roughly be equated with the cultural turn in spatial theory whereby diverse approaches come together to address tourism as a socio-ecological system of some complexity. Throughout these phases and their characterising epistemologies there are cross-cutting themes of Nordic tourism geography directed by the characteristics of the Nordic realm, i.e. its sparsely populated regions, wilderness frontiers, issues of regional socio-economic development, rurality, welfare provisions and distinctive Nordic traditions such as keeping and having a second-home, *friluftsliv* and the presence and geopolitical implications of indigenous communities in the Nordic realm. Beyond these concerns, one theme in particular is gaining recognition and that is the fact that actually most of Nordic tourism takes place in the urban context, i.e. that of the bigger cities in the region (see e.g. Müller et al., 2020).

Although the periodization presented by Saarinen proves to be a nice heuristic devise, it should be cautioned that the approaches identified therein and more generally in this chapter do not represent clear breaks from past traditions. In the last instance under the general rubric of diversification we see for example the resurfacing of travelogues and detailed accounts of individual experiences, yet framed with a variety of theoretical lenses. Birkeland's (2005) feminist *choragraphy* of people seeking orientation in their lives through finding 'true north' represents a neat blending of travel accounts of old laced with regional descriptions with a critical bend. Building on these traditions and into the future we see two distinct themes of particular relevance for Nordic tourism geographies.

Destination Development and Sustainability

Altogether 59 publications gather under the umbrella of destination development and sustainability in lieu with Saarinen's fourth phase. Two different foci can be distinguished. The more prominent of those relates to the geographical conceptualization of sustainability.

A substantial part of publications within this topic addresses a development context, where issues of cultural relations and representations (Saarinen, 2011) as well as the role of tourism for community development are central questions (Biddulph, 2015, 2017; Kavita & Saarinen, 2016; Manwa et al., 2017; Saarinen & Lenao, 2014) with case studies from the Nordic realm (Førde, 2014; Hultman & Hall, 2012; Prince, 2017a). In this context the role of wilderness and nature are scrutinized as well (Haraldsson & Ólafsdóttir, 2018; Puhakka et al., 2014). Another variety under the destination development umbrella is related to evolutionary economic geography and its explanatory value for destinations (Brouder & Eriksson, 2013a, b; Brouder & Ioannides, 2014; Halkier et al., 2019; Petridou et al., 2019) as well as to the role of local networks (Kulusjärvi, 2016), governance and policy.

A common though not exclusive denominator for those studies is a rootedness in understanding how destinations change and who and what plays a role. Wedding thereby insights from business and geography, places transform from being lived spaces of the everyday to become value-added experiences whereby tourism is addressed as a global economic-political force bringing about change to local community and nature (Fredman & Haukeland, 2021). However, local socio-economic and cultural structures and ecological preconditions provide important constraints for this development and sometimes trigger resistance and alternative development practices. Hence, theoretically many of the studies under this umbrella are to be found in a political economy and even political ecology traditions. Critical engagements with space and spatialities are thereby rendered moot and the time dimension as such is mainly around the mapping of a development trajectory either accepting normatively established goals or problematising these.

Tourism and Climate Change

An equally important topic for Nordic tourism geography into the future relates to the topic of climate change. The output within this topic is to a high degree moulded by the work of Gössling who has been an author of 38 out of the 59 publications.

Besides attempts to measure the impact of tourism on climate change (e.g. Gössling & Peeters, 2015), much of the work targets issues related to perceptions of climate change and consumer behaviour (Gössling et al., 2012; Hibbert et al., 2013; Tervo-Kankare et al., 2013) and mitigation and adaptation activities not least at the destination level (Gössling et al., 2010; Kaján & Saarinen, 2013). Furthermore, policy responses to climate change are discussed from various angles (Scott et al., 2010, 2016) and what the future of tourism might look like under various scenarios (Peeters et al., 2019). Recently, particular interest has been directed to tourism and the availability of snow and water (Brouder & Lundmark, 2011; Demiroglu et al., 2018, 2020).

Research on tourism and climate change is conducted in a rather descriptive and empirical fashion, acknowledging the science tradition of gauging the material characteristics of climate change and its impacts. Similarly in a behavioural

geography tradition human responses to environmental change are quantitatively addressed. In both instances time is addressed through a relatively straightforward historiography. A significant deviation to this tradition can be discerned in the work of Gren and Huijbens (2016) in their focus on tourism and the Anthropocene and Huijbens (2021) in addressing issues of climate change through earthly attachments, whereby earthly and ecological processes are made explicit in making for us and tourism at the same time. As Gren and Huijbens (2016, p. 3) state;

... in the Anthropocene the Earth may become both a subject which underpins and makes for the Anthropos, and, at the same time, an object which is before it and may be set against its earthly undertakings. Integral to understanding the Anthropocene is thus a realization of the objective and subjective geo-agency of the Earth System, or Gaia, attuned to the way it “talks back”, and communicating this among disciplines.

Through time, Nordic tourism geographies have evolved somewhat in tandem with geography globally adopting the tools and focus areas of study to tourism dynamics. Significant overlap can be discerned through time where descriptive regionalism, spatial modelling and empirically informed specific interventions all hold sway whilst ever more theory is being brought into play. Yet at the same time tourism geographies of the Nordic realm struggle to balance imperatives of the industry and economic development with a more encompassing view of tourism as part and parcel of the complex socio-ecological systems that compose our society. Addressing the objective and subjective nature of tourism as emerging in tandem can pave the way to such critical engagements.

Concluding Points

We concur with Lew (1999) that there is no need to set up a particular disciplinary frame for tourism, be it for the Nordic realm or more generally. Similarly tourism geographies, residing at the margins of geography and tourist studies, need to be seen as a particular and distinct perspective beyond the narrow borders of tourism and the tourism industry (see also Müller, 2019a), whereby primacy is placed on emergent relational properties of spaces and places in the context of global power geometries skewed to the benefits of capital and boundless growth. A geographically differentiated perspective is therefore necessary to understand how places and spaces negotiate demands for growth, ever accelerating consumption and the ever more pervasive monetisation of social relations and the everyday and how these are spear headed by tourism (Harvey, 2017).

At the outset we posed the question what makes for a Nordic tourism geography and what spatial conceptualisations prevail therein. Revisiting the frame produced in Table 10.1, what becomes evident is that regional studies and empirical studies of tourism as a tool for planning, development and change are prevalent Nordic topics at the most general level, while tourism and climate change is a strong emerging topic area. More specifically this study confirms what Hall and Page (2009) and Müller (2019b) state about the Nordic scholarly focus when it comes to tourism

geographies as summed in the introduction. What we have highlighted is that over and beyond thematic topic listings, these can be scrutinised in terms of their socio-spatial articulations. Through the topics we show how a place gets transformed into a destination through tapping into the myriad networks of global stretch and duration that make up the tourism phenomena. Places as emerging, developed or mature destinations are the framing device of Nordic tourism geographers yet too often leading to highly applied and empirical studies dominating the field from the perspective of social constructivism. Thereby place is largely understood as a material setting lending itself all too frequently to becoming a resource, tallied and accounted for in the consumptive practice of tourism and/or how these are transformed by tourism practices. In most studies, time and space are taken at face value, as containers wherein development trajectories or even tourist trajectories can be traced and tracked. Here a more hardnosed science approach is needed, e.g. analysing and modelling holistic spatial dynamics from the perspective of complex socio-ecological systems, even using big data. But for that an explicit concern with spatial theory and more fundamental questions about the prevailing onto-epistemological stance adopted by Nordic tourism geographers need to be addressed. Some promising signs of a more substantive and explorative theoretical engagements can be seen in Nordic tourism geographies making for the simultaneously objective and subjective emergent properties of space, e.g. through notions of topology (see Ek, 2016; Ek & Tesfahuney, 2019), addressing the prevalent growth paradigm (see Hall et al., 2021) and bringing tourism to bear on how we relate to the planet (see Huijbens, 2021). We would like to see Nordic tourism geography furthermore explore ‘the radical possibilities of ontological politics in tourism research’ (Tribe & Liburd, 2016, p. 59), recognising how tourism has mobilized places and spaces primarily in the service of capital and highlighting that these mobilisations are not constructed locally but in complex global power geometries of scapes and flows.

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