

ALAN CLARKE & KATALIN LÓRINCZ

EPILOGUE: SUSTAINING THE SUSTAINABLE

When we first came up with this title, we were aware that the sustainability debates had been around for a long time. They were focussed in April 1987 by Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former Norwegian Prime Minister who had been chairing the World Commission on Environment and Development. She presented her report “Our Common Future” to the United Nations which still refer to by her name as the “Brundtland Report”. It was eight years before this was formally adopted by the United Nations’ World Tourism Organisation in the Charter on Sustainable Tourism.

The commitment to sustainability can now be found in almost all tourism policies around the world but there have been and continue to be some fairly fierce debates about whether this a real commitment or merely a rhetorical pledge designed to make us all look good. There were accusations of ‘greenwashing’, allowing us to appeal to a customer base which has apparently become more aware of and supportive of sustainable claims.

Work has continued to allow us to more easily demonstrate the reality of our efforts. We have seen the introduction of a range of critical indicators which will demonstrate how sustainable we have become. These indicators are extensive and sometimes difficult to evidence satisfactorily but this work is creating the benchmarks for our ongoing development activities.

However, we believe that there is a danger in getting bogged down in the dense details of all these indicators and of losing our sense of purpose in positively striving to deliver a truly sustainable version of our common future. We hoped that by giving people the opportunity to tell their stories, we could hear some of the good, the bad, the difficult and the successful stories of dealing with cultural and heritage developments, which would inspire us and renew our energy to keep at it in our never ending task of establishing and maintaining sustainability.

The first part sets our values and focusses on the issues which we, at the University of Pannonia, hold to be the core of our endeavours when researching, teaching and working in tourism development. This paper will investigate the prevalent rationales giving value to the investments in cultural capital. It will explore these issues around re-valuing and devaluing cultural values by examining World Heritage Sites.

We believe we have gathered together a collection of very interesting papers in this volume and we hope you agree. In editing them we have attempted to theme

them so that the volume has an internal logic to it as well the rationales you will find in every one of the papers. There are significant differences but sustainability can only be experienced and delivered within specific local contexts. Our indicators may be generalizable but our experiences will be local.

One of the successes of the conference was that we attracted speakers from very diverse backgrounds and that has made this editing task much more difficult. We began with papers that operated with a generic sense of sustainable cultural heritage tourism. These papers help to set the terms for the debates that inform all our accounts. We moved onto a section clustered around museums. Then we are taken into festivals and a group of papers taking a regional look at the issues involved in cultural and heritage tourism management and development. We conclude with a section developing the idea of cultural and heritage developments acting as a metaphor and we therefore find ourselves looking at the benefits arising from different forms of cultural and heritage tourism forms.

We recognise the amount of effort made by our contributors but it cannot go unnoticed that we are indebted to Viktória Krémer for all her hard work in getting us through to publication – thank you so much Viki.

We are proud to present this volume on behalf of the University of Pannonia, the Department of Tourism and BATUKI, the Balaton Tourism Research Institute. We see this volume as a contribution to an ongoing debate not a concluding statement. The issues are ongoing and will always be ongoing. As a reader, you can contribute to these discussions by e-mailing your thoughts, responses and reactions to us at alanhungary@hotmail.com. We look forward to your responses.

Furthermore, our promise is that our work in teaching and researching will continue to promote sustainable development. If you want to know more about how you can contribute to this journey or you want to talk about how we might be able to work together to help make your journey to sustainability more effective, please do not hesitate to contact us (alanhungary@hotmail.com).



Professor Alan Clarke works in the Tourism Department at the University of Pannonia and is Visiting Professor at the University of Derby in the UK. Alan's PhD was a semiotic analysis of post war UK images and he has continued this interest in cultural constructions throughout all of his work. He was a contributor to the UN Charter on Sustainable Tourism and worked with various UNESCO projects promoting the recognition of the importance of the cultural within tourism development. He has undertaken strategic development reports for local communities, as well as looking at visitor satisfaction and marketing strategies. He has written widely, editing 9 books, contributing

over 100 articles and chapters in the fields of strategy, policy, communities and cultural tourism.

Contact: alanhungary@hotmail.com



Katalin Lőrincz is associate professor at Tourism Department and the Head of Business Institute, University of Pannonia. Besides lecturing spatial-based modules (Tourism Geography, International Tourism Geography, Cultural Tourism), her research interest is focusing on urban and cultural tourism in Hungary, the role of destination management organizations and the linkage between tourism and sustainable development. She maintains contacts with both colleagues from academics and professionals of tourism/regional development sector. She was invited to various international universities in order to teach as a short-time lecturer in Erasmus program (University of Lapland, University of Lisbon, University of Handlowa, and University of Derby). Furthermore various consultant activities (tourism strategies, product development, tourism marketing) and international conference attendance she is working as a KRAFT-Point coordinator of Veszprém. In 2015 she worked as a fellow-researcher at New Central Europe II program, Kőszeg, with a special research, entitled Sustainable Tourism in Historic Towns – Kőszeg Case Study.

Contact: lorincz.katalin@gtk.uni-pannon.hu