

# Conceptualizing justice tourism and the promise of posthumanism

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## ABSTRACT

The past two decades of tourism research have seen a growing interest in the relationship between tourism and justice. Some of this attention has focused on the just or unjust outcomes of mainstream tourism, and how it could contribute more to justice. Other research has directed the attention to the justice outcomes of alternative forms of tourism, where their increased commodification and de-politicization has limited the potential justice benefits enormously. Yet, a clear conceptualization of justice tourism is still lacking, and its theoretical grounding is still too limited. This paper addresses these concerns and aims to clarify the concept of justice tourism and advance a conceptual framework where types of justice tourism and justice through tourism are systematically identified and classified. Moreover, from the proposed conceptual framework, posthumanism emerges as a promising ethical regime with which the commodification and depoliticization of justice tourism could be reversed, and its increasing co-optation by neoliberal capitalism curbed. Posthumanism's affirmative ethics and political responsibility, along with its political forms of solidarity and advocacy, can become an effective mechanism for radical transformation and a crucial catalyst for justice in tourism and tourism research.

## Introduction

Justice is a complex phenomenon, ranging from justice for individuals to justice for societies at both local and global levels. Justice not only applies to human beings, but also to non-humans, e.g., rights of animals, and even rights of nature. During the 20th century, philosopher John Rawls (1971) turned liberalism towards a concept of justice grounded in contractarian, liberal egalitarian values, yet distributive in nature. Thus, in terms of rights and the fair distribution of societal goods, justice becomes fairness in the sense that individuals have rights and should have equal opportunity to access societal goods and opportunities. Feminist, post-structural and post-humanist perspectives have since introduced new turns with alternative approaches to justice which address topics such as agency, power and performativity, identity politics and difference, relational ethics and care, and non-human others.

Unsurprisingly, this complexity deepens when "tourism" is added to "justice." Fennell (2006) states that tourism is an inherent issue of justice. Smith and Duffy (2003, p. 92) offer different perspectives on justice and tourism, and note that among other things, "social justice is about the fair distribution of power, goods and so on within and between societies". The recent book *Justice and Ethics in Tourism* by Jamal (2019) similarly introduces distributive,

procedural and socio-environmental aspects of justice associated with tourism, and calls for new ethical directions that seek what is just and good in tourism. This ethical thread has run consistently through discussions on tourism since the 1990s. Early on, Hultsman (1995) referred to “just tourism” in relation to ethical behavior among service providers and marketers: “if service providers view tourism, first as a business, and second as an experience and ethical practice, tourism ceases to be just by becoming an “industry” (Hultsman, 1995, p. 561). Goodwin (2011, p.16) similarly incorporates ethics when he presents responsible tourism as an approach that “recognizes the importance of cultural integrity, ethics, equity, solidarity, and mutual respect, placing quality of life at its core”. Moreover, the UNWTO’s (1994) concept of sustainable tourism introduces equity into tourism by developing, promoting and practicing tourism in a way that carries more social and environmentally friendly prospects for the ensemble of stakeholders involved, especially host communities and the environment. Here, whether mainstream or alternative, tourism should contribute to justice more effectively; hence, the emphasis shifts to justice through tourism.

For others, however, the relationship between justice and tourism is not so much related to being an approach, as a particular type of tourism. Justice tourism, as described by Scheyvens (2002), is a type of tourism which develops solidarity, mutual recognition and equity between guests and hosts, while also providing local communities with economic, social and cultural benefits, and supporting their self-determination. Higgins-Desbiolles (2008, 2009), Isaac and Hodge (2011), and Rami and Hodge (2011) take an even more restrictive view and conceptualize justice tourism as a particular type of tourism which involves visiting places faced with injustice and human rights violations, where visitors can advocate for justice and use activism to counter neoliberal globalization.

It can be argued that the need for a more activist stance is due to the global proliferation of neoliberal capitalism, which until now, has fed mass tourism with the commodification and mass consumerism needed to sustain capital market expansion (Mostafanezhad, 2013; 2016; Luh Sin et al., 2015, Gascon, 2019). Moreover, tourism’s potential for emancipatory praxis has been depoliticized in the process. Therefore, more must be done to reclaim the potential of justice tourism amidst the proliferation of different new forms of ‘alternative’ tourism and the global machinery of international tourism. Justice tourism is thus an attempt to recover the potential for justice, through the key parameters of political responsibility, activism, and action.

However, the above introduction demonstrates that a clear, precise conceptualization of justice tourism is needed in order to position such an affirmative praxis. We argue in this paper that justice tourism is a political praxis characterized by political responsibility, solidarity, advocacy and social transformation. Accordingly, as our analyzes will show, the theoretical development of justice tourism must be situated in political responsibility, as conceived by scholars such as Arendt (1958) and Haiki (2018), and the posthumanist affirmative ethics put forward by Nietzsche (1968), Deleuze (1990) and Braidotti, 2006a). The purpose of this paper is thus to situate an affirmative, political potential of justice tourism in contradistinction to the potpourri of justice outcomes evinced by the various tourism scholars above (we refer to this latter form of tourism as justice through tourism).

In what follows, we first clarify the concept of justice tourism as it has emerged in tourism studies, noting how commodification and depoliticization has increasingly sabotaged the potential of tourism to facilitate political praxis. Then, we introduce four ethical approaches relevant for justice and tourism and elaborate on the three main parameters of justice tourism, namely, responsibility, solidarity and advocacy. Consequently, a conceptual framework for justice tourism and justice through tourism is developed and portrayed in Figures 2 and 3. As a result, we observe how posthumanist theory emerges as a promising avenue to theoretically ground justice tourism as a de-commodified, re-politicized and affirmative praxis, and initiate a preliminary discussion on affirmative ethics and posthumanism in order to kickstart further theorizing on justice tourism ethics.

### **Justice tourism as it has emerged from tourism studies**

The justice tourism described by Scheyvens (2002) develops solidarity, mutual recognition and equity among guests and hosts; it also provides local communities with economic, social and cultural benefits; it supports their self-determination; and gives visitors the opportunity to feel like participants in an emancipatory process rather than agents of domination. It also entails having meaningful encounters with dissimilar people, and learning about different paths to new ways of being. This approach to justice tourism encompasses most forms of alternative tourism such as responsible tourism, pro-poor tourism, volunteer tourism and many others. A more focused perspective is employed by other scholars such as Higgins-Desbiolles (2008, 2009) and Isaac and Hodge (2011), to whom justice tourism is an overtly political form of travel that involves visits to communities facing injustices and human rights violations, and actively advocating to redress harms and advance justice. For instance, in his study of water control in Palestine, Isaac (2017, p. 140) identifies justice tourism as a mechanism by which “Palestinian host communities can experience transformations towards a higher level of personal development and growth, changing life perspective, and higher levels of self-consciousness of their rights as a sovereign nation.” But there is a further dimension to justice tourism, which Isaac (2017) describes thus:

Justice tourism ... as part of alternative tourism could (or should) provide a singular model of difference, in which it seeks not only to reform the inequities and damages of contemporary tourism but also to chart a footpath to a more just global order. (p. 140)

Isaac builds directly on the work of Higgins-Desbiolles (2008, 2009), for whom justice tourism should foster alternative and more just forms of globalization, and aim for radical transformation. Higgins-Desbiolles charts different forms of alternative tourism (responsible tourism, pro-poor tourism, fair-trade tourism, volunteer tourism, reality tours, and social activism tourism) along a continuum ranging from “decreasing depth of solidarity”, at one end, to “increasing depth of solidarity” at the other (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009, p. 338). She also proposes a transformation continuum that goes from maintaining the status quo at one end, to a “radical transformation of globalization” at the other (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2008, p. 359). Here, she identifies the underlying system at each stage in the transformation continuum as four processes in the global order: capitalist globalization, corporate social responsibility, fair trade, and humanistic globalization. But what justifies these processes of

global ordering? And what ethical framework underpins them in order to guide and inform the transformative potential of justice tourism?

These two frameworks are a promising start, but require close scrutiny and theoretical work to situate and justify the concept of justice tourism within them. Presently, much is missing, for instance, advocacy and activism appear to merit further consideration as relevant characteristics. There is also a strong affirmative aspect that plays out through story-telling and dialogue. Residents can tell their stories of past, or current oppression, as Scheyvens (2002) notes, for example. Isaac and Hodge (2011) provide examples of how tourists can engage in cross-cultural and critical understanding, and can “become holders of the knowledge that can eventually lead to equality, democracy, and human rights for all” (Isaac, 2017, p. 143). Additionally, further work is needed to conceptualize solidarity, which Scheyvens (2002) clearly associates with justice tourism, and which drives Higgins-Desbiolles’ (2009) framework. However, although the concept of solidarity has such an important role in the framework, it is only superficially introduced, and implicitly assumed to be unidimensional and continuous from one end to the other. Moreover, in Higgins-Desbiolles’ transformation framework, different forms of justice tourism are also implicitly presented as being uniform and idealized, while the practical reality of some of these forms of tourism is often far from uniform, and their transformative potential may easily be subverted or eroded by the relentless intrusion of neocolonial and neoliberal values. Related processes of commodification and de-politicization (e.g., through neoliberal capital markets that emphasize profit and consumption rather than well-being) may restrict, or even neglect, solidarity and can ignore or distort any potential advocacy (Mostafanezhad, 2013; Luh Sin et al., 2015).

This raises an important question: within the frame of neoliberal globalization (and other processes reinforcing its global capitalist order), how can justice tourism be kept within the proper sphere of political responsibility, solidarity, advocacy and activism? And is political responsibility the predominant form of responsibility needed to enable transformation of entrenched structural injustices that are often deeply rooted in colonial histories and global capital markets? To start addressing this requires an in-depth exploration of the global processes of commodification and depoliticization associated with neoliberal globalization, and which influence various other systems and processes in global transformation.

### *The commodification of everyday life and travel*

Neoliberalism fosters the subordination of state power to the requirements of the market; thus, the state outsources its responsibility for the wellbeing of the population to transnational corporations and individual publics who are expected to take care of themselves (Peters, 2006). Habermas (1989) had already warned about the administrative and economic colonization of our society, which increasingly constrict other spheres of our lives (the lifeworld), converting social relationships into commodities which are reified by the quantifiable exchange value of products (Slater & Tonkiss, 2001). Therefore, commodification changes the everyday life of consumption and production, and fosters a permanent search by corporate entities for new products, markets and sources of profit.

Tourism is one victim of this neoliberal governmentality that has rapidly diffused worldwide, aided by free trade agreements and globalization. We observe how cruise ships host flags of convenience registered in some 'other' country that allows them to escape environmental and labor regulations from any single source (Wood, 2000). International aid and development have not been immune to these pressures, where quasi-governmental organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have led structural readjustment programs and funded capacity building projects with development budgets being increasingly diverted towards multinational corporations (Sharpley & Telfer, 2014).

Tourists participate in neoliberal governmentality by means of both improving their skills as entrepreneurial and competitive citizens, and acting as caring and morally responsible individuals, e.g., being 'altruistic', responsible tourists and environmentally 'green' ecotourists/consumers (Griffith, 2015). Volunteer tourism is often criticized as a product of these new moral economies (Mostafanezhad, 2013). It is seen as one more instance of a moralistic solidarity-seeking commodity culture which attempts to effect social justice through consumption (Bryant & Goodman, 2004). Goodman (2004) notes similarly how fair-trade tourism, another ethical niche within alternative tourism, falls into a similar process by directly linking producers and consumers (economically and morally) into supporting fair labor practices in the provision of goods and experiences for tourists. But how well do the good intentions of fair-trade tourists translate into political action for structural and societal change in order to safeguard precarious low-wage workers, and resist exploitation of women and child labor?

Three main social trends are evident in the processes of social transformation that comport with tourism's transformation into a neoliberal playground domestically and globally: (i) the loss of state control, with increasing privatization of development and corporatization of traditional public services such as transport, education, housing, health services, etc. (Rieff, 2002); (ii) prioritizing the consumer in order to serve the market, in such a way that tourism development becomes a utilitarian tool for policy makers so they can use destination resources, and local people for the general satisfaction of the visiting public (Gascon, 2019); and (iii) the development of moral economies that slightly corrects these trends by introducing "morality" into the practice and consumption of tourism (Sayer, 2003). As discussed below, one way or another, all three contribute to depoliticizing tourism, affecting the solidarity and advocacy potential of its stakeholders (including residents and tourists), and severely restricting the activism needed to prevent or redress injustices.

### *The depoliticization of tourism*

As Straume and Humphrey (2010) put it, depoliticization is a contemporary tendency where the efforts of radical democracy to uphold social value over market exchange value are jeopardized by various factors such as commodification, which reifies economic value and accumulation of capital. Similar problems ensue in the commodification of relationships. For example, commodifying an ethnic group's cultural traditions and the rituals they practice instrumentally for display and profit, with little consideration for their well-being, relegates social value to a second plane, and makes what is social a tool for economic growth. The lack

of global regulation mechanisms which can govern transnational capital markets make it even harder to effect political responses to political problems, reducing them to a technical and neutral process where disagreement and contestation are limited to disparate actions that can easily be denied or delegitimized (Cuttitta, 2018).

Destination boycotts, for example, require coordinated actions in order to be effective. Consider, for instance, how calls for a destination boycott of Burma/Miyanmar due to human rights abuses (including the tourism sector) was disregarded by the Lonely Planet guidebook, but strictly adhered to by other travel marketing and booking platforms such as Responsible Travel (Henderson, 2007). Despite the well-intended efforts of sustainable tourism and responsible tourism stakeholders, the process of depoliticization is increasingly prevalent due to the varied kinds of global drivers and influences, for example:

i. Ideologies of neoliberalism and consumerism are embedded in many of the attitudes that well-intended 'alternative', 'responsible' and 'sustainable tourists' bring to a destination, advancing the same neo-liberal practices and values they are supposed to combat (Armitage & Graham, 2001). Hollinshead and Suleman (2018) discuss the powerful mechanisms of worldmaking by which consumers are co-opted into a neocolonial, materialist worldview through travel and tourism, where little control can be exercised (within or across porous borders) by governments over destination marketers and numerous other stakeholders that influence marketing images, destination offerings and tourist experiences. Moreover, in the case of volunteer tourism, as noted by McGuire (2012), even if the design of the trip favors political discourse, the mere presence of volunteers can have adverse social and political consequences (see also Hockert, 2018).

ii. Supremacism and lack of recognition of the different "other" are common in postcolonial and settler colonial spaces. Koensler and Papa (2011) note that both justice tourism itineraries and social activism volunteering often clash with the goals of locals and introduce unintended negative outcomes including subjection of the other through stereotyping and ethnocentrism. These are commonly attributed to factors such as lack of interpretive opportunities to understand differing lifestyles of locals and visitors, lack of visitors' knowledge of the sociopolitical space, the dominance of white savior narratives, etc. (Kelly, 2016; Hollinshead, 1992). Similarly, McGuire (2012) observed how volunteer tourism often omits effective visitor education of the historical, political and economic context of the destination, or presents a uniform and ahistorical view of emerging countries which perpetuates neo-colonialism and dependency (Escobar, 1995). Lack of quality time for dialogue and interaction is also a factor in stereotyping and ethnocentrism. Consider the fast-track tour itinerary with stops at various ethnic and indigenous sites just long enough for the tourist 'gaze' to rest upon the exotic other, purchase a few souvenirs and take a few photographs. Not surprisingly, Hollinshead (1992) warns of Western certitudes when interpreting history or present circumstances, and argues that the visitor's own life experience needs to be brought into the interpretive effort to counter idealized narratives.

iii. A predominance of moral engagement and humanitarian compassion over political responsibility is manifested in the cosmopolitan moral and romanticized type of individual consumption described above, and offers a cautionary warning to well-intended narratives of social and environmental justice (Levy & Sznajder, 2004). The shift towards alternative modes

of consumption such as fair-trade products and by extension, fair-trade tourism, has given notions of 'responsible tourism' and 'sustainable tourism' a new social meaning, and even a new apparent image of re-politicization where consumption itself becomes a 'form' of activism (Goodman, 2004; Mowforth et al., 2008). Thus, alternative consumer products romanticize and de-politicize development by shifting the problem of structural injustice towards one of individual consumer morality. This is evidenced by Conran (2011) in the way the narratives visitors are exposed to during their exchanges with members of the host community may be dominated by affection, familiarity, friendship, mutual understanding, goodwill and humanitarian compassion, while disguising injustices embedded institutionally or historically in colonialism, for instance, all which contribute to depoliticize the tourist experience.

It could be argued then that volunteer tourism reflects a type of modern humanitarianism from the rich in the global North towards the poor in the global South (Tester, 2010), a secular equivalent of traditional religious mission travel (Brown & Morrison, 2003) that keep expanding moralistic consumerism globally. Children perceived to be under the duress of hard labor in a destination may similarly arouse compassion, rather than the political action needed to tackle complex conditions often widespread in networks enabling such social injustices (Mathers, 2010). In the absence of political activism as a driving force for change (praxis), such humanitarian forms of travel aimed at 'helping' the destination through pro-poor tourism, volunteer tourism, etc., may be seen as a utilitarian and moralistic undertaking, and lacking the political responsibility needed to address the wider structural inequalities.

Recovering the potential and promise of tourism in order to tackle structurally engrained injustices thus requires (i) a re-politicization and reclaiming of political responsibility in a way that transcends the self-centered moralistic individual and the utilitarian calculus (as in government policies and incentives oriented to benefit the greatest number of residents and tourists), and (ii) making solidarity, advocacy and activism genuinely constitutive of political action and praxis. What is needed, among other things, is a turn away from dominant market-driven narratives, and the modernist, self-centered subject, towards a non-utilitarian and political way of being and relating. A post-humanistic affirmative ethic, we will argue later, offers a co-constitutive, relational approach to political responsibility, solidarity, advocacy and action (praxis) for justice tourism.

#### **Four ethical approaches to tourism and justice**

Before introducing the three main parameters of justice tourism, namely responsibility, solidarity and advocacy, and before moving forward to elucidate justice tourism and related forms of tourism, we need first to introduce four ethical approaches under which tourism praxis may operate, and the corresponding four ethical regimes.

Figure 1, displays utilitarian, deontological, care, and affirmative types of ethics, and their concomitant ethical regimes of neoliberalism, social liberalism, humanitarianism and posthumanism. Utilitarian and deontological ethics are both representative of classical humanism, where utility and moral universals are framed from the centrality of humans, and for the utility and moral good of humanity. Therefore, these approaches are male-dominated, colonial and anthropocentric, leaving 'minorities' or the subaltern human and non-human in

a position of inequality. In contrast, the ethics of care and affirmative ethics are approaches to ethics, which draw from feminist, postcolonial and posthumanist thought in order to try to revert this situation by putting relations and encounters with difference centerstage, rather than the dominating ‘colonial’ ‘male’ human.

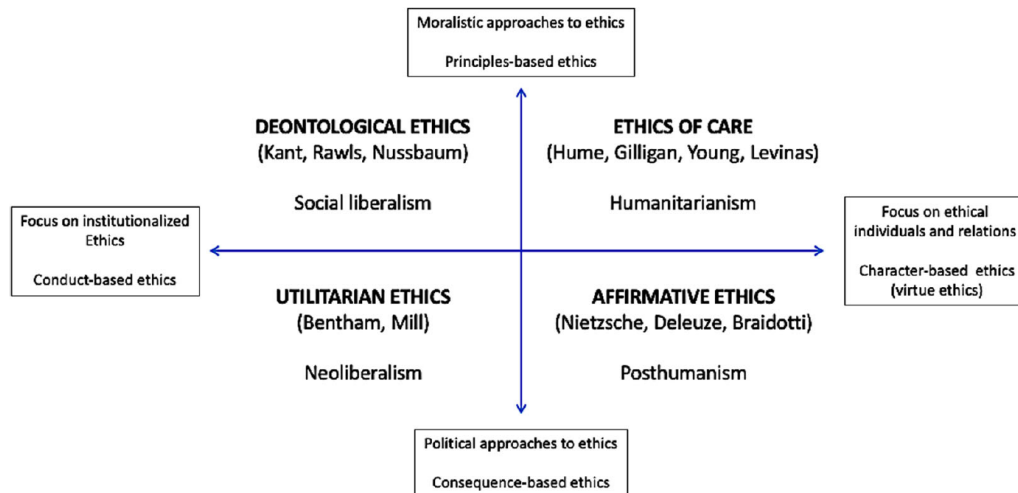


Figure 1. Ethical approaches and ethical regimes.

### *Utilitarian ethics and neoliberalism*

Utilitarian ethics is the dominant ethics in neo-liberal regimes and stems from the moral philosophies of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill (Quinton, 1974). Utilitarianism takes utility or the greatest happiness of the greatest number as the foundation of ethical behavior. In a business context maximizing happiness equates to maximizing profit, and even if consideration for the cost of a greater pain to other people is still considered, most of the time the only concern is private interest. Cost benefit analysis becomes the measuring tool of utilitarianism, which is a calculating approach to ethics that fosters commodification. As a result, utilitarianism is unconcerned with equity because maximizing the sum of utility is indifferent to the distribution of that sum, or because a little harm to very few individuals is acceptable if it results in a sufficiently large benefit for a sufficiently large number of individuals. All in all, utilitarianism is a type of institutional, conduct-based ethics, because it prescribes on the ethical behavior at institutional, rather than individual level; and it is political because this behavior is situational and based on the consequences or outcomes of the actions.

### *Deontological ethics and social liberalism*

Deontological or duty ethics is the dominant ethical approach of social liberal regimes. It was mainly developed in the moral philosophies of Kant and Rawls, and opened the door to the creation of modern welfare states, liberal conceptions of social justice, and Sen’s Capability approach (Dean, 2010). In deontological ethics, actions must abide to universal principles irrespective of their consequences. Actions are only morally right when carried out as a duty, rather than because a reward is expected. Moreover, the right thing to do is to act according to a moral duty, which is typically encapsulated in rules, as is the case for human rights. Therefore, like utilitarian ethics, it is conduct-based, but now this conduct responds to



institutionalized moral principles, and not to outcomes. Unlike utilitarianism, social equity is now a moral percept, on the basis of which distributive justice is prescribed (Rawls, 1971).

### *Ethics of care and humanitarianism*

Ethics of care is the dominant ethics of humanitarian and affective ethical regimes. Hume, Gilligan, Young and Levinas are representative philosophers of this approach. Like deontological ethics, the ethics of care holds on principles, particularly the moral principles of care and benevolence; not as institutionalized conduct, but rather as a moral action based on character or virtue and centered on interpersonal relations (Beasley & Bacchi, 2005). It brings the affective bases of morality to the forefront, expanding 'maternal' practices to those more distant from us, thus countering "the covert masculinist bias of mainstream notions of 'justice', given that these notions were typically legitimated by reference to universal/general/abstract and rational/disinterested moral thinking" (Beasley & Bacchi, 2005, p. 50). This is a similar ethics to Levinas' (1999) ethical interconnection with others, which focuses on the face-to-face encounter and on the relational responsibility, responsiveness and compassion, that the vulnerability of others awakens in us.

### *Affirmative ethics and posthumanism*

Affirmative ethics is the ethics of the posthumanist ethical regime. Nietzsche, Deleuze and Braidotti are the main representative philosophers of this approach. Like the ethics of care, affirmative ethics is character-based, or virtue ethics, and centered on encounters or relations; however, it is not moralistic, nor is it based on principles. Instead, it is consequentialist and radically political. Posthumanist thinking introduces a new ethical framework for a posthumanist concept of justice, fitting for the Anthropocene. Ethical encounters with difference are mechanisms for being and becoming, and for acting with political responsibility in relation to the vulnerable and disempowered, whether these are human or non-human beings (a concept integral to a posthumanist ethics). This is a type of ethics which involves meeting others with response-ability and without domination; an ethics of relational virtuosity, which is neither normative, nor moralistic, but an affirmative ethics which wills that which occurs, not with resignation, but with affirmation (Braidotti, 2019). It is an intense and active affirmation of the self that exists in intricate relations with the other (Braidotti, 2006b). Unlike the ethics of care, such affirmative ethics enables engagement with transformative politics in order to confront the conceptual and social contradictions of our times. According to Braidotti (2006b, p. 16):

... [A]ffirmative ethics allows us to contain the risks while pursuing the original project of transformation. This is a way to resist the dominant ethos of our conservative times that idolizes the new as a consumerist trend while thundering against those who believe in change. Cultivating the ethics of living intensely in the pursuit of change is a political act.

### **Three parameters of justice tourism: Responsibility, solidarity and advocacy**

The concept of responsibility To better understand the concept of responsibility and its relationship with justice tourism, three main types or responsibility are distinguished: social,

relational and political responsibility. Social responsibility entails individuals acting in their own interest, while at the same time, having the moral obligation to act to the benefit of society, social fairness and equity (Spence & Rutherford, 2001). Therefore, social responsibility resonates with an ethics of duty, i.e., a Kantian or Rawlsian ethics, and its main concern is “acts of wrongdoing – did she commit it or not? Did she attempt to prevent or avoid it, and if yes, with what attitude and under what circumstances?” (Zengh, 2019, p.110). In contrast, relational responsibility refers to the responsibility felt by individuals as humans to support and take care of those in need in order to relieve their distress and avoid contributing to their suffering. It thus coincides with the type of responsibility of care ethics. It reaches beyond norms of duty, to become a moral relationality that always puts the Other before self-interest. It is therefore an unlimited and infinite relational responsibility to the singular Other of the face-to-face relationship (Levinas, 1999).

Goodhart (2017), contends that the responsibility for systemic injustice is not some moral duty to be discharged, but rather a political responsibility to be taken up by those who seek to establish new conventions with others for a more just system. The concern is now on the political relationships between an individual and others: “did she publicly resist, and did she attempt to change the social circumstances that generate such wrongs?” (Zengh, 2019, p.110). The difference between the above moral types of social and relational responsibility and political responsibility lies in whether the purpose is to preserve own’s subjectivity or to bring about change in the world (Arendt, 1987). Through political responsibility, institutionally and historically engrained social structural processes that have unjust consequences can be transformed (Young, 2006). This is precisely the type of responsibility characteristic of posthumanist affirmative ethics, a “political responsibility for the vulnerabilities, injustices, and hazards that our assembled life of dual being in and with the [sic] nature entails” (Haiki, 2018, p.170).

### *The concept of solidarity*

Solidarity can be understood as “an obligation to act in support of particular others at a distance (or to stand ready to aid these others), with whom one shares a commitment to the achievement of justice” (Gould, 2009, p. 209). It implies a sort of social empathy and awareness of the extraordinary and difficult situation of other people, and a commitment and readiness to act in support of the vulnerable, the poor, the oppressed, or victims of violence in a way they would consider to be beneficial (Stjerno, 2005). Three types of solidarity are distinguished that are relevant for justice tourism: social, affective, and political solidarity.

Social solidarity refers to the social cohesion of a particular community; a type of natural solidarity between members of the same kinship or culture or other characteristics that members share. The shared characteristics produce social bonds among solidary members, together with positive collective moral obligations. It thus relates with the moral obligations of social responsibility outlined further above, and thus is expected to be the solidarity in deontological ethical approaches (Scholz, 2008).

Affective solidarity “is proposed as a way of focusing on modes of engagement that start from the affective dissonance that feminist politics necessarily begins from” (Hemings, 2012, p.148). It is not rooted on identity or group characteristics, but rather on mutual feelings

of care and concern. It transforms the risk of disagreement into the expectation of mutual attendance to each other. It prioritizes an awareness of mutuality over one's own interpretation of difference. It is therefore directly related to the relational responsibility and the ethics of care that are characteristic of the humanitarian ethical regime.

Political solidarity, on the other hand, goes beyond individual obligations within social or affective relations. It unites people who have made a conscious commitment to challenge an unjust situation with the aim of abolishing the sources of injustice and bringing about social change. It therefore engenders political advocacy and activism. However, as Ferguson (2009) argues in order to demonstrate political solidarity, advantaged solidary members can no longer simply identify their interest with those constructed under dominant white, supremacist capitalist patriarchal systems" (p. 196), they have to necessarily transform their own identities. This requires a commitment to continually seek a diversity of perspectives in an attempt to mutually understand the unjust situation, and demands a capacity to practice radical openness, attentiveness, empathy, and love (Scholz, 2008).

These are arguments about political solidarity that resonate with the principles of posthumanist philosophy, and the Deleuzian idea that an ethical encounter "is not at the expense of difference, or even despite difference, but is absolutely the result of a dynamic drive toward difference" (Parr, 2008, p. 122). A posthumanist theory of solidarity assumes that both posthuman societies and individual subjects are constituted by, and committed to both difference and connection (Llavis, 2017, p. 42):

Rather than erasing difference, the posthuman subject and society speak to a solidarity that thrives on differences being put in conversation with one another. ... [Moreover] posthuman solidarity develops when subjects within or across societies embrace individually and work together to overcome systems that seek to hierarchize differences.

### *The concept of advocacy*

Advocacy is described by Piccinini (2007, p. 16) as a "mix of persuasive communication and targeted actions aiming at 'pleading the cause of', 'acting on behalf of' and 'speaking out for or in support of others' ... designed to change policies, positions and actions on a specific issue or cause on behalf of the voiceless". Advocacy is not only about influencing public policy, but more importantly, public opinion. Through advocacy, people can make "demands, claims, or rights of the less powerful win out over the purported interests of the more powerful" (Keck & Sicking, 1997, p.217). This is done by presenting issues in new ways, confounding expectations, and mobilizing social networks.

Three types of advocacy can be distinguished for the purpose of justice tourism: cultural, humanitarian, and political. These coincide approximately with the three characteristic elements of advocacy advanced by Barnes (1998): giving voice to vulnerable people, protecting them, and promoting their rights.

Cultural advocacy implies commitment to social inclusion and equity for a particular cultural community (Diamond, 2011). For instance, cultural tourism walking tours that rewrite postcolonial history from a subaltern perspective become instruments for the cultural

advocacy of indigenous heritage. Enhancing visitors' experiential understanding of history and culture augments their recognition and respect for indigenous cultural identities, leading to the possibility of visitors becoming international cultural advocates. However, while cultural tourism can give some cultural recognition to marginalized minority groups, it has to be done critically and carefully to avoid the suppression of manifestations of injustice and oppression that would render it apolitical (Jafa, 2012).

The primary aim of humanitarian advocacy is to steer action "on the part of those with the power to assist, redress or enforce those in dire need" (Cotterrell, 2005, p. 113). It is grounded on the moral responsibility of humans to assist those in need and alleviate suffering, but without challenging the causes of the suffering (Gideon, 1998). Seen from this perspective, it is a form of moral advocacy which can be both secular and religious. Therefore, humanitarian advocacy uses "the language of morals and ethics rather than politics" (Chandler, 2001, p. 683), and it is a discourse of charity rather than entitlement (Ticktin, 2006).

Political advocacy is aimed at trying to influence policy-making through lobbying activities, to raise public awareness of a given cause, or to engage in street protests (Giugni & Grasso, 2018). These are channeled through a political discourse using language to challenge the causes of the oppression and injustice. However, seeking to engage governments and corporations through lobbying may prove to have limited effectiveness, as they are not the source of change so much as a reflection of it (Shellenger & Nordhaus, 2009). Similarly, raising public awareness of a cause and trying to change people's behavior has proven to have limited results (Crompton & Kasser, 2009). A more radical form of political advocacy calls for systemic change through activities that directly challenge those identities of audiences which prevent ambitious change (Gillan, 2008). Moreover, to be effective they must address underlying assumptions and wider belief structures (Groves, 2010).

Therefore, contrary to cultural and humanitarian advocacy, which are respectively related to deontological and care ethical regimes, this rather philosophical form of political advocacy conforms with posthumanism and is inspired by a posthumanist pedagogy of difference as emancipatory practice, while grounded in affirmative ethics. Literacy must be rewritten to spotlight justice and must create opportunities for people to understand otherness on their own terms (Giroux, 1992).

### *An elucidation of justice tourism and related forms of tourism*

The conceptual and theoretical insights outlined above lead us to a much clearer elucidation of justice tourism. Figure 2 portrays the three most relevant parameters of justice tourism previously discussed: responsibility, solidarity and advocacy, and the underlying ethics through which they can be manifested: utilitarian, duty, care, and affirmative. Each row of the matrix displays the type of responsibility, solidarity and advocacy corresponding to each ethical approach; and on the extreme right side of the figure we can see the tourism types or categories of tourism forms that correspond to each of these dominant ethical approaches: unsustainable, sustainable, humanitarian (or moralistic) and justice tourism.

This framework resolves the limitations we identified in that of Higgins-Desbiolles (2008, 2009), and clarifies some of the conceptual confusion prevailing in the current

literature surrounding tourism and justice. For example, broad tourism categories such as responsible tourism, solidarity tourism, advocacy tourism, sustainable tourism, humanitarian tourism and justice tourism are often united under the term ‘alternative tourism’, and seen to overlap to varying degrees; however, a clear or precise differentiation was ultimately lacking. Based on various parameters, Figures 1 and 2 offer a conceptualization that helps distinguish and situate these various types and the many forms of tourism in relation to justice tourism.

		JUSTICE PARAMETERS			JUSTICE-RELATED TYPES OF TOURISM
		RESPONSIBILITY	SOLIDARITY	ADVOCACY	
DOMINANT ETHICS	UTILITARIANISM <i>Neo-liberalism</i>	<i>Utilitarian responsibility</i>	<i>Utilitarian Solidarity</i>	<i>Utilitarian Advocacy</i>	UNSUSTAINABLE TOURISM <i>UNJUST TOURISM</i>
	DUTY ETHICS <i>Social Liberalism</i>	<i>Social Responsibility</i>	<i>Social Solidarity</i>	<i>Cultural Advocacy</i>	SUSTAINABLE TOURISM <i>JUSTICE THROUGH TOURISM</i>
	ETHICS OF CARE <i>Humanitarianism</i>	<i>Relational Responsibility</i>	<i>Affective Solidarity</i>	<i>Humanitarian Advocacy</i>	HUMANITARIAN TOURISM <i>JUSTICE THROUGH TOURISM</i>
	AFFIRMATIVE ETHICS <i>Posthumanism</i>	<i>Political Responsibility</i>	<i>Political Solidarity</i>	<i>Political Advocacy</i>	JUSTICE TOURISM

Figure 2. Dominant ethics and justice parameters informing (justice) tourism.

The central columns of Figure 2 show the types of responsibility, solidarity and advocacy corresponding to each ethical regime. Similarly, the column on the far right shows unsustainable, sustainable, humanitarian (or moralistic) and justice types of tourism, which directly correlate to particular types of dominant ethics.

Looking at the categories in the column on the extreme right, from top to bottom, we see first how utilitarianism lies behind all types of unsustainable tourism. The pursuit of self-interest and utility implicit in the neo-liberal conception of responsibility; the lack of solidarity manifested in its utilitarian, careless, exploitative and extractive practices; and the ‘advocacy’ practices characterized by utilitarian, indifferent, neo-colonial, or even antagonistic interpretations of the Other, are all well-known attributes of the most unsustainable forms of tourism. Capitalist mass tourism and other forms of detached, voyeuristic and passive sightseeing activities epitomize the utilitarianism and self-interest of neo-liberal consumption. Sex tourism, organ-transplant medical tourism, profanation of sacred rituals, poverty tourism, and other extreme types of exploitative and extractive niche tourism contribute to the destruction of land and banalization of cultures (Higgins-Desbiolles, Whyte & Tedmanson, 2013), are examples of the most unsustainable forms of tourism and illustrate the active, unethical practices these travelers adopt. To these practices, the conceptual model also adds the communicative actions of utilitarian travelers who show indifference, disdain or disseminate neo-colonial interpretations of the host communities.

The ethical framework of social liberalism introduces a deontological ethics that emphasizes duty and distributive justice. It makes a place for the forms of tourism classified

within the category of sustainable tourism, which are grounded in a social conception of responsibility. This dominant social responsibility still gives pre-eminence to the interests of the traveler, but much care is taken to contribute to the host communities' well-being. Enlightened mass tourism and responsible forms of niche tourism such as slow tourism are examples of these more passive forms of sustainable and responsible tourism. Solidarity outcomes are also social, and therefore involve contributions which relate to different forms of cultural membership or identification, and which reinforce the preservation of the culture. VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives), diaspora tourism, pilgrimage and religious tourism, and some instances of work and study immersion programmes are forms of tourism exemplifying both sustainable and solidarity tourism. Sociocultural advocacy activities entail social interaction between visitors and the members of their social networks. It is through these networks that they distribute socio-cultural knowledge of the places and communities visited and advocate for them. These communicative actions of cultural advocacy undertaken during and after the visits illustrate forms of both sustainable tourism and advocacy tourism.

Moralistic types of tourism are dominated by the ethics of care which is characteristic of humanitarianism. These tourism types obey moral conceptions of relational responsibility, where the self-interest of the visitor is now subordinated to the moral norms of care and benevolence. Pro-poor tourism and fair-trade tourism are representative forms of both responsible and humanitarian tourism. Solidarity is affective and its outcomes involve providing the vulnerable with moral and humanitarian support. Religious mission travel, celebrity humanitarianism, most types of volunteer tourism, and some academic fieldwork involve actions of affective solidarity, and can therefore be considered forms of both solidarity and humanitarian tourism. Advocacy is also a humanitarian act found in forms of tourism where the information exchanged and shared with others regarding the visitor's experience has the purpose of raising compassionate responses from audiences so that they may eventually contribute to assuaging the painful and unjust situation of the host communities. Therefore, the active contributions that these visitors may make through advocating for help to relieve the suffering of the hosts are illustrative forms of both advocacy and humanitarian tourism.

Finally, at the bottom of Figure 2, we have the case of affirmative, posthumanist ethics. Here, forms of justice tourism hinge on political forms of responsibility, where tourism is practiced affirmatively with the purpose of contributing to global transformations and eliminating systemic sources of oppression, injustice and inequality. Reality tours for global transformation are illustrative cases of facilitating political responsibility towards justice tourism. Solidarity here is also political and entails activities aimed at understanding the sources of oppression and acting in ways that contribute to transforming those sources for others in order to bring justice back. Several active forms of solidarity tourism and justice tourism are epitomized by the political activities of transnational solidary activists, as well as some cases of academic fieldwork and volunteering, when these involve political commitment and action. Advocacy is political, too, and represented by forms of tourism that engage affirmative ethics in advocacy activities; inspire listeners positively to adopt more just values, behaviors and new identities; affect policy making, or business practices; and encourage visitors to join and participate in transnational activist networks that support alternative forms of global transformation. In sum, the active contributions that these visitors make through political responsibility, political solidarity and political advocacy exemplify justice tourism.

Figure 3 offers further elucidation to situate the particular forms of tourism mentioned above, within the conceptual framework in Figure 2. The conceptual framework in Figure 2, and the categorization of forms of tourism in Figure 3, provide new theoretical grounding to clarify the many complexities underlying existing categorizations of tourism forms and types, and can therefore be used as a springboard for future research on justice tourism and justice through tourism. For instance, it is now clear that not all solidarity or advocacy in tourism are instances of justice tourism; there is no full correspondence between responsible tourism and sustainable tourism, as moral and political forms of responsibility do not correspond to the ethical framework of sustainable tourism; only responsibility, without solidarity or advocacy, can still bring justice outcomes although in a less direct fashion (because travelers will still be implicitly contributing to a particular type of ethical regime through their dominant ethical behavior), while solidarity and advocacy actions will make a more direct contribution to the justice outcomes of the host communities. The framework also distinguishes between justice tourism and justice through tourism, in that although sustainable tourism and humanitarian tourism differ from justice tourism, they still contribute to justice.

		JUSTICE PARAMETERS			JUSTICE-RELATED TYPES OF TOURISM
		RESPONSIBILITY	SOLIDARITY	ADVOCACY	
E T H I C A L  V A L U E S  O F  P A R A M E T E R S	UTILITARIAN	Capitalist mass tourism and other forms of careless, detached, voyeuristic sightseeing	Sex tourism, organ-transplant medical tourism, profanation of sacred rituals, poverty tourism, and other exploitative and extractive niche tourism that contribute to the destruction of land and banalization of cultures	Communicative or advocacy actions which show indifference, disdain or neo-colonial interpretations	UNSUSTAINABLE TOURISM  <i>JUSTICE THROUGH TOURISM</i>
	SOCIAL	Enlightened mass tourism and responsible forms of niche tourism such as ethical slow tourism are illustrative of more detached forms of sustainable tourism	Active forms of social solidarity e.g., VFR, diaspora tourism, religious tourism, and instances of work and study immersion programmes	Communication actions of cultural advocacy	SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  <i>JUSTICE THROUGH TOURISM</i>
	MORAL	Pro-poor tourism  Fair-trade	Religious mission travel, celebrity humanitarianism and most forms of volunteer tourism and academic fieldwork	Actions advocating for help to relieve the suffering of the host communities	HUMANITARIAN TOURISM  <i>JUSTICE THROUGH TOURISM</i>
	POLITICAL	Reality tours for ethical global transformation	Political solidarity of transnational solidary activism, and some cases of academic fieldwork and volunteering when they involve political action	Advocacy actions conducted by justice tourists with the purpose of recruiting adepts and to contributing to ethical forms of global transformation	JUSTICE TOURISM

Figure 3. Tourism forms by justice parameters and types of tourism involved.

## Discussion and implications for practice and research

A general definition of justice tourism emerges by knitting together the various nuances deconstructed above. Justice tourism can be redefined as an explicitly political form of travel which involves visiting destinations facing some type of injustice or human rights abuse in order to (i) develop and promote solidarity with communities, (ii) become advocates of justice for these communities, and engage in activism to (iii) foster alternative and more just types of globalization. This definition refers to a type of tourism that, in the current era of globalizing capitalism, engages its participants (including tour operators, residents and tourists) to take political responsibility to redress destination injustices and engage in political solidarity and political advocacy to enable praxis.

### *The promise of posthumanism*

In the presentation of our four ethical approaches, we have seen how neoliberalism and its utilitarian ethics reify commodification, and how the consequent socialization and moralization of the neoliberal regime brought by social liberalism and humanitarianism have not delivered their promises and instead have contributed, against its initial purpose, to expand commodification to the social and moral realms. This has been so because of the inherent depoliticization of moralistic and principle-based ethical approaches, and explains the recent expansion of both commodification and depoliticization in tourism. In the case of justice tourism, this is evidenced with its increased commodification and depoliticization, which restricts or even neglects solidarity, ignores or distorts advocacy, and at best, tames these processes by introducing morality.

If justice tourism wants to move beyond the dominant neo-liberal and liberal logics of most forms of tourism (Butcher, 2002), and beyond the current moralistic and compassionate logics (Caton, 2012; Jamal & Camargo, 2014) which silently conceal underlying moralistic forms of consumerism (Mostafanezhad, 2016), it must be well aware of the underlying dominant ethics with which it is practiced, and of the complexities of radical transformation.

We have also observed how the affirmative ethics of posthumanism is the only ethical approach that is both individual and relational (as against institutional) and political (as against moralistic), and therefore is the only one that escapes utilitarianism and moralism, and embraces both inclusiveness (as against utilitarianism) and political action, i.e., political responsibility (as against moralism). Therefore, posthumanism emerges as the only ethical regime that can battle universal commodification (as against institutionalized utilitarian quantification) and bring back politicization (as against apolitical moralism). This is also the reason why posthumanism envisions subjectivities or identities that are alternative to humanism, becoming the only ethical regime that can bring radical transformation and a truly alternative form of globalization.

Therefore, for tourism to effectively contribute to justice and the expansion of justice tourism, travelers, hosts and operators alike need to become politically literate (Gale, 1994), i.e., learn to become political and act politically; learn to become-other; desire ethical encounters with difference; and embrace affirmative ethics. Political literacy and political responsibility, solidarity and advocacy prevent certain aspects of depoliticization: non-recognition, supremacism and lack of social commitment. In turn, they correct the commodification forces manifested privatizing development and privileging the consumer, thus contesting neo-liberalizing tendencies and consumerism, as well as battling the predominance of moral engagement and compassion over political responsibility and action. It is through affirmative ethics and posthumanist pedagogies of difference (Bayley, 2018) that political responsibility, solidarity and advocacy can be constructively and positively engaged to enable just tourism.

We must therefore take the promise of posthumanism seriously to further advance our understanding and research of justice tourism and its effective deployment in practice. Posthumanism, as a philosophical and reflective approach, denies human exceptionalism, advocates nonanthropocentrism, de-centers the individual subject and abolishes dualisms



(Braidotti, 2013). It poses challenges to tourism because it undermines the often unquestioned ontological and ethical assumptions on which modern tourism is based as an exploitative, extractive humanist enterprise, and encourages the abolition of humanist binary divisions like host 'versus' guest, offering non-moralistic ways of engaging with tourism forms such as medical tourism, volunteer tourism or justice tourism (Cohen, 2019).

Taking posthumanism seriously means actively resisting the co-optation of tourism by the market, that is, learning to contest neoliberalism with others from within a generative, transformative mode of being (Jenkins, 2005). It paves the way for re-introducing political responsibility, solidarity and advocacy as positive world-making practices with which to subvert the current commodification and de-politicization of all forms of tourism. Therefore, posthumanist theory provides a new theoretical lens with which re-conceptualize justice tourism, introduce conceptual clarification, and open a pathway for future theoretical research.

### *Implications for practice and research*

While the paper has sought to conceptualize justice tourism and probe into the promise of posthumanism, our findings are also useful for practitioners, managers, tourists and host communities to better discern the nuances of contributions (or lack of) offered by different types of tourism to justice.

Figure 3 provides a framework to micro-segment justice-related forms of tourism and tourism behavior; a guide for travelers to be able to self-assess their travel behavior and learn how to meaningfully contribute to justice; and a reference for host communities to help them decide what forms of tourism and types of travelers they wish to welcome (or not).

Political responsibility and solidarity can be fostered by introducing and emphasizing provocative and well-crafted narratives of shame addressed to ethically empathetic visitors. They must highlight the visitors' privileged situation (e.g., their freedom of movement and ability to advocate on behalf of the oppressed) and serve as "ornamental reminders of complicity" (Kelly, 2016, p. 741). Stirring up shame in solidarity visitors is thus particularly important if practitioners are to counteract the dominant, 'colonial' narratives of powerful oppressors that usually frame their worldview. It is not, however, the shame that negates and operates as a mechanism for social exclusion, but a shame that is transformative and that creates pedagogical possibilities (Zembylas, 2019).

Moreover, in order to encourage political advocacy, tour organizers should extend their services beyond the trip, and offer advocacy platforms and opportunities for volunteer tourists to stay engaged with the politics of injustice and active advocacy in order to educate others about this type of solidarity activism once back home.

Justice tourists must be aware of Mahrouse's (2008) findings regarding advocacy work. In her research, the accounts given by justice tourists to their fellow nationals, of injustices found and experienced in the destination after the trip, mainly drew compassion for the activists and pity for those suffering in the destination. Therefore, using sentimentalism and morality may be much less effective as a mechanism to tackle justice through humanitarian advocacy than

political advocacy. The representational practices of justice tourists' advocacy actions must be affirmative and examined in terms of the audience, and of how the tourists represent themselves as the objects of empathy. Posthumanist pedagogies of difference (Bayley, 2018) must be adopted for this purpose.

In what concerns future academic research, and in light of our conceptual work here, several avenues can now be taken. Firstly, elucidating the concept of justice tourism can broaden research on various topics within areas of volunteer tourism and other justice-related types and forms of tourism. Secondly, the dilemma of whether approaches to tourism should be dominated by neo-liberal principles, social liberalism or moralistic doctrines can be finally overcome by transcending these, and further exploring the affirmative and posthumanist foundation of justice tourism. Therefore, if we want to deploy posthumanism's promising potential for advancing justice tourism and justice in tourism, we must go beyond our brief preliminary discussion on affirmative ethics and posthumanism and encourage for future research on these.

Finally, this proposed posthumanist turn also opens new avenues to further explore the implications and prospects of tourism in our current struggle to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and thus contribute to a more just world in the age of Anthropocene. At a time when global warming and the COVID-19 pandemic are exerting immense stress on planetary systems (including the global tourism system), and the global society as a whole is in jeopardy, new nomadic subjectivities capable of embracing affirmative forms of ethics and taking on political responsibility towards radical difference are needed more than ever if we are to secure a new and more just global order, and avoid further devastation and destruction of the Earth.

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