

Final Report
Understanding the Power of Tourism in Contested Landscapes
STINT Grant ME 2018-7552

Prepared by

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Introduction

The project **Understanding the Power of Tourism in Contested Landscapes** (hereafter Project) aimed to develop inter-institutional cooperation between Mid Sweden University, represented by the Department of Economics, Geography, Law and Tourism (hereafter MIUN) and Ashkelon Academic College in Israel, represented by the Department of Tourism Studies (hereafter Ashkelon). The aim of this project was to enhance the academic quality of tourism higher education in Sweden and Israel capitalizing on cutting-edge research, innovative pedagogical approaches and action-oriented social science. This was achieved through inter-institutional exchanges, involving pedagogical, educational and research activities.

Accomplishments

The MIUN application identified four objectives for this project:

- Contribute to internationalization of Mid Sweden University;
- Develop partnership networks in the Middle Eastern region, with a specific focus on Israel and Palestine and peace efforts in tourism;
- Strengthen competence in tourism research with a focus on heritage, borders and peace-building in contested spaces, through joint research projects;
- Strengthen tourism education on BA, MA and PhD levels through teacher and student mobility.

The remainder of this section provides a description of specific outcomes associated with each of these four objectives.

Contributions to Internationalization of Mid Sweden University

In 2019, MIUN adopted a new university vision and strategy that emphasizes internationalization:

“Mittuniversitetet är ett globalt universitet med regionalt engagemang där vi forskar och utbildar för hela livet.” (Mittuniversitetets strategi 2019–2023, p. 5).

Within the context of our new vision, MIUN as a peripheral university, has a strategic interest to expand its academic networks beyond the EU and Nordic context to create learning, experience sharing and competence enhancing opportunities for both students and staff in the fields of tourism, transboundary cooperation, peacebuilding, globalization, natural and cultural heritage management, gender and identity politics and beyond. In addition, MIUN has a special interest in developing tourism research competence in the context of the Middle East, specifically focusing on Israel. MIUN has been actively cultivating partnerships in Israel since 2011. Since then collaborative activities have included student and staff mobilities, co-supervision of student theses, co-authorship of scientific manuscripts and conference presentations, jointly developed research proposals, and collaborative research activities. Since 2011 there have been over 20 mobilities which have included teachers and students, aimed at pedagogical, educational and research development, with various sources of funding.

The mobility exchanges conducted through this project (three visits from MIUN to Ashkelon and one visit from Ashkelon to MIUN) made important contributions to the tourism environment within the context of MIUN's new vision and internationalization strategy. Most importantly, the project allowed MIUN to continue to remain active in one of the world's most pressing challenges, namely, the use of tourism as a resource for peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian context. This is a clear benefit to a peripheral university like MIUN and provided important opportunity to critically examine such issues in a supportive and constructive manner.

The following mobilities were undertaken through the Project:

- Mobility Activity #1: Jack Shepherd (doctoral student, MIUN) and Martin Wallstam (doctoral student, MIUN) visit to Ashkelon. During this visit, Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Wallstam delivered a lecture and seminar on tourism events and politics in light of Eurovision Tel-Aviv event. In addition, Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Wallstam collected extensive data during the Eurovision event.
- Mobility Activity #2: Jack Shepherd (doctoral student, MIUN) visit to Ashkelon. During this visit, Mr. Shepherd delivered a lecture and seminar in which he reported preliminary findings from the data that were collected on the Eurovision Tel-Aviv event. In addition, Mr. Shepherd conducted additional initiated data collection activities in Palestine for a new project associated with the Abraham's Path initiative.
- Mobility Activity #3: Yael Ram (senior lecturer, Ashkelon) visit to MIUN. During this visit, Dr. Ram gave several lectures and seminars with a special focus on her current interests on sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality sector. Attachment 1 is the electronic material that was used to promote Dr. Ram's open seminar to MIUN.
- Mobility Activity #4: Daniel Laven (associate professor, MIUN) visit to Ashkelon. During this visit, Dr. Laven delivered a lecture on his current research on the intersection between local food (gastronomy), sustainability, and tourism. In addition, Dr. Laven undertook extensive data collection activities in Tel-Aviv/Jaffa, Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem.

Development of partnership networks in the Middle Eastern region, with a specific focus on Israel and Palestine and peace efforts in tourism

MIUN is pleased to report that the Project facilitated the development of several new partnerships between MIUN researchers and our Israeli and Palestinian counterparts. Unfortunately, the current political climate makes it difficult (or impossible) for Israelis and Palestinians to collaborate directly.

This is due to a variety of factors associated with the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As a result, the Project enabled direct collaborations between MIUN staff and their Israeli counterparts, and MIUN staff and their Palestinian counterparts. However, the Project did not result in direct collaborative activities between Israelis and Palestinians.

On the Israeli side, the Project led to fruitful discussions with Dr. Yael Ram (Ashkelon), Dr. Maya Mazor (Ashkelon), Dr. Alon Gelbman (Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee), and Suraida Nasser (resident of Nazareth and founding manager of the acclaimed Fauzi Azar Inn). As described above, Dr. Ram visited MIUN and delivered a series of lectures and seminars that focused on her interests in labor discrimination (particularly from a gender perspective) within the tourism sector. Dr. Ram's visit to MIUN was arranged by Dr. Kristina Zampoukos who is currently exploring similar questions in Sweden. During his visit to Ashkelon, Dr. Laven and Dr. Mazor discussed potential for new collaborations on gastronomy related research. In addition, Dr. Laven extended existing collaborations with Ms. Nasser and Dr. Gelbman regarding their on-going work on tourism development in the old city of Nazareth. In addition to these individuals, the Project also led to fruitful discussions with some of Israel's leading tourism ventures including the acclaimed Abraham Hostels/Abraham Tours. This venture has become a central focus of research for Dr. Laven and Mr. Shepherd.

On the Palestinian side, the Project resulted in new connections with Masar al-Ibrahim, which is the organizing entity for the Abraham's Path initiative. In addition, extensive contact was established with Mohammad Zarour. Mr. Zarour is a Palestinian tourism stakeholder who operates bike tours across Palestine and is involved in hostel development in the West Bank. His approach to tourism in the region ties very closely to the aims of the Project with regards to increasing tourists understanding of this deeply contested space and providing hope of both a Palestinian tourism industry but also increased cross-cultural understanding.

Strengthened competence in tourism research with a focus on heritage, borders and peace-building in contested spaces, through joint research projects

Extensive research and data collection activities were carried out during the Project. Mobility #1 included the implementation of a survey that focused on the Eurovision Song Contest Tel-Aviv and its associated boycott. The survey yielded over 2500 respondents, which constitutes a very unique data set with which to examine attitudes associated with visiting Israel and boycotting Israel. Mobility #2 produced extensive interview and observational data collection across both Israel and Palestine, with particular focus on Abraham Hostels, Tours and Masar al-Ibrahim. Much of these data will support the second half of Mr. Shepherd's doctoral thesis that focuses on tourism and peace, role of hostels and tourism spaces in peacebuilding. Mobility #4 resulted in extensive observational data in Israel and Palestine as described above.

These data collection efforts have already contributed to – and will contribute to in the future – the following scientific outputs:

- Shepherd, J. and Laven, D. (Accepted). Hostels in Hostile Territory: The Role of Hostels as Spaces of Transformative Dialogue. In J. T. da Silva, Z. Breda, and F. Carbone (eds.), *Role and Impact of Tourism in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation*. IGI Global.
- Laven, D., Shepherd, J. and Shamma, L. *Autoethnographic Journeys through Contested Spaces: The Role of Tourism in Facilitating Transformative Dialogue*: Presentation to be made at the NCK annual conference on 12 February 2020. Jamtli Museum, Östersund. See attachment 2.

- Shepherd, J. and Laven, D. *Crossing (Your Own?) Borders: Tourist Movements in Difficult Spaces*. Special Session at the 2020 ISA RC50 Conference titled, THE POWER OF TOURISM: CONTESTED REPRESENTATIONS OF PEOPLE AND PLACES. 1-5 April 2020, Chaing Mai, Thailand. See attachment 3.
- At least one scientific manuscript is anticipated from the data collection associated with Mobility #1.
- At least one scientific manuscript is anticipated from the data collection associated with Mobility #2
- At least one scientific manuscript is anticipated from the data collection associated with Mobility #4.

Strengthened tourism education on BA, MA and PhD levels through teacher and student mobility

The Project resulted in high quality, professional exchange experiences for doctoral students, and other senior staff, to gain international teaching experience. In addition, the substantial amount of research conducted by Project participants improved teaching quality by providing better results to be used in explaining issues around tourism and peace, borders and heritage.

Challenges Encountered

Along with the “usual” challenges associated with the Israeli-Palestinian context (e.g., sporadic violence, intimidating security procedures, political uncertainty, and all-out war), the Project did suffer from two specific challenges that hindered MIUN’s ability to complete all of the tasks proposed in the Project’s application. The challenges are interrelated: During the project, Dr. Chaim Noy left Ashkelon for another university in Israel. His new university affiliation made it difficult to him to participate in the Project, thus MIUN was unable to engage Dr. Noy in a mobility exchange activity.

MIUN sought to replacement Dr. Noy’s involvement in the project by hosting Mohammad Zarour (introduced above). It was envisaged that Mr. Zarour would visit MIUN to give a series of public, open lectures to students, staff and the broader community on his experiences, and perhaps from that, a cooperative project could have started. Although Mr. Zarour was cleared to travel by the Israeli domestic security service, his visa application to visit Sweden was rejected for reasons unknown to MIUN. Dr. Laven and Mr. Shepherd deeply regret this decision by the Government of Sweden. Please also note that MIUN had been working on Mr. Zarour’s visit for several months, but the final visa rejection did not occur until the last quarter of the project period (October-December 2019). This rejection was the primary reason why MIUN was unable to expend all of the Project funds.

Summary Statement

Despite the challenges encountered during the Project, the majority of objectives were achieved, and in some cases exceeded what was expected when the Project was initiated.

Budget Summary

Projupp (T)	Konto	Konto (T)	Projekt (T)	Belopp
Bidrag från övriga	3721	Bidrag fr. övr. org o ideella för.	STINT Internationalisations grant	140 500,00
Intäkter				140 500,00
Resor	4321	Skattefria traktamenten, Sverige	STINT Internationalisations grant	-1 035,00
Resor	4322	Lönstillägg, Sverige	STINT Internationalisations grant	-1 154,85
Resor	4323	Skattefria traktamenten, utlandet	STINT Internationalisations grant	-17 631,90
Resor	4382	Fria eller subventionerade måltider	STINT Internationalisations grant	-235,65
Resor	5511	Biljetter resor - Sverige, utomstatlig	STINT Internationalisations grant	-5 102,16
Resor	5512	Biljetter resor - utlandet,	STINT Internationalisations grant	-29 649,71
Resor	5513	Hotell och logi - Sverige, utomstatlig	STINT Internationalisations grant	-14 331,87
Resor	5514	Hotell och logi - utlandet	STINT Internationalisations grant	-15 421,81
Resor	5515	Lokala resor, buss, taxi, utomstatlig	STINT Internationalisations grant	-5 761,59
Resor	5522	Hotell- och restaurang, ej avdragsgill moms, utomst	STINT Internationalisations grant	-1 706,20
Övrigt	5641	Böcker, utomstatliga	STINT Internationalisations grant	-395,28
Övrigt	5691	Övriga varor, utomstatliga	STINT Internationalisations grant	-850,00
Övrigt	9602	PR, reklam, intern kostnad	STINT Internationalisations grant	-588,00
Kostnader				-93 864,02
Resultat				46 635,98

As stated in the *Challenges Encountered* section, the primary reason for this underspend was the Government of Sweden's rejection of a visa application by Mr. Mohammad Zarour and change of institutions by Dr. Chaim Noy.

Attachments

Attachment 1. Promotional Material for Dr. Yael Ram.



**From “the guest is always right” to #MeToo:
How does the tourism industry response to
Sexual Harassment, Bullying and violence?**

Open ETOUR Seminar, 18/3, 13.15
Östersund Q221, Sundsvall M104

The seminar addresses the current knowledge about violence, bullying and sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry. It indicates the high prevalence of these aggressive behaviors and identifies their main causes and impacts. Despite the clear negative consequences, the seminar shows how mainstream academic studies have overlooked the subject. Focusing on cases when staff members are victims of sexual harassment, the seminar offers a conceptual model explaining why the subject did not gain academic attention and suggests ways to enhance awareness and research.

The #MeToo movement, which began to spread in fall 2017, sheds light on the hospitality industry. Not only did Harvey Weinstein attack his victims in hotel rooms, but also a group of hotel employees broke the silence and were among the women and men that received the title of “the person of the year” by Time magazine in 2017. The seminar reviews the social media content that addresses the issue of sexual harassment in the tourism industry (by using the #MeToo hashtag) and discusses why cases of bullying and violence have not gained similar attention and media coverage.

The final section of the seminar focuses on intervention programmes and identifies the #Metoo movement as a turning point in moving from scattered policies to practical and immediate actions. However, the intervention programs tend to overlook bullying incidents as well as sexual harassment among staff members and managers. Consequently, more programs have to be researched, developed and implemented.



Attachment 2. Shaping Sustainable Futures through Heritage Conference Program. Note the 11.30-13.00 session on 12 February 2020.

ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

NCK

2020

Shaping

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

THROUGH HERITAGE

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

12 FEB

WEDNESDAY

09.30-10.00 Registration

10.00-10.15 Introduction to the conference
Gustav Wollentz, NCK

10.15-11.00 Sustainable Futures for Heritage
Cornelius Holmér, Linneaus University

11.00-11.30 Coffee break, Jamli Café

11.30-13.00 **Theme 1. Conflict Resolution through Dissonant Heritage**
Long term perspectives on dissonant heritage and the potential of commemorative periods: Lessons from Iceland
 Lúsi Nícolásson, Árlus University

Aethnographic journeys through contested spaces: The role of tourism in facilitating transformative dialogue
 Daniel Laitin, Jack Sheehy, Mid Sweden University, and Anni Linda Sharma

Moving from the ghettoisation of conflicts: heritage dissonance in agrarian politics and pluralist societies
 Vanya Kozak, Centre for Museology and Heritage, University of Belgrade

13.00-14.00 Lunch, Restaurant Hor

14.00-15.30 **Theme 2. Creating a Future of Diversity through Heritage**
Including Refugees through Heritage Learning: How do we develop a heritage learning methodology with a purpose to contribute to the inclusion of refugees in Europe? Results from a European project
 Lasse Storme, University of South Eastern Norway

Preserving archival records for the future – for whom, and for what purposes?
 Samuel Edqvist, Mid Sweden University

How Refugee Heritage will shape Future Heritage Management: lessons from Norway
 Torbjørn Greve Ostmoen, NCK

15.30-16.00 Panel discussion

16.00-16.30 Coffee break, Jamli Café

16.30-17.15 International opportunities for sustainability?
 Emma Holmstedt and Maria Henning, Swedish Council for Higher Education

19.00 Conference dinner, Restaurant Hor

13 FEB

THURSDAY

08.00-08.30 Helene Møllevik, winner of NCK's Pedagogical Award 2019

08.30-10.00 **Theme 3. Heritage and Climate change**
RE:USE! about sustainable and immersive exhibition rooms with innovative technique
 Jenny Gällstrand, Bohusläns Museum

The Dead Fall, World Heritage and UN's Sustainable Development Goals
 Anders Hansson, Jamli, and Peter Lidén, Världsunivisbolaget Ragundabölen

More speakers to be announced

10.00-10.30 Coffee break, Jamli Café

10.30-11.00 Panel discussion

11.00-12.00 Lunch, Restaurant Hor

12.00-14.00 Workshops
Parallel Block: A Time Travel to 2070! Bridging Ages,
 Kalmar County Museum

Parallel Block: A creative democracy workshop that uses waste from Jämtland's industries in all its doing and thinking.
 SjöVotekar

End of conference: 14.00

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FOR MORE INFORMATION & REGISTRATION

<http://nckkultur.org/verksamhet/varkonferensen/>

GOT QUESTIONS?
✉ gustav.wollentz@nckkultur.org

f [nckkultur](#)

ÖSTERSUND SWEDEN

Attachment 3. ISA RC50 Call for papers. Note session #9.



Call for Papers
ISA RC50 Interim Conference 2020
Theme: THE POWER OF TOURISM: CONTESTED REPRESENTATIONS OF PEOPLE AND PLACES
Location & Dates: Chiang Mai, Thailand 1-5 April 2020

Submission deadline: Monday 1st September 2019

The Research Committee on International Tourism (RC50) of the International Sociological Association is pleased to announce the Call for Papers for RC50 interim Conference 2020.

The conference will carry on the recent traditions of multi-, trans-, and postdisciplinary avenues to national and international tourism.

The committee would like to extend a welcome to all researchers working in any area of the sociology of tourism, regardless of whether you are a current member of the ISA. Themes of the sessions are outlined below but there is also an open session to presentations not related to these issues.

Abstract Submission

An abstract between 300 to 500 words (excluding references) should be submitted to be presented at one of the sessions below. The abstract should include, session number and name, an indication of the research aim, the (inter)disciplinary approach taken, the methods used and the key (expected) findings. The abstract should be submitted as a MS Word document to both Erdiņ Çakmak Cakmak.e@buas.nl and Rami K. Isaac Isaac.r@buas.nl.

Key Dates

Deadline for abstract submission: Monday 1st September 2019
Notification of acceptance: until Monday 16th September 2019
Early Bird Registration Deadline: Sunday 1st December 2019

The sessions will cover the following topics:

1. "Bangkok street food: conflicting discourses of tourism and modernity" chaired by **Ray Boland**
2. "Agency and authority in the representations of people, places, pasts and presents" chaired by **Keith Hollinshead & Rukeya Suleman**
3. "Tourism as a legitimizing discourse" chaired by **Evi Eftychiou**
4. "Community-based Tourism in Asia" chaired by **Claudia Dolezal**
5. "Gender and Work in Asia's Tourism Economies" chaired by **Sirijit Sunanta & Alexander Trupp**
6. "Imagined sustainability? Going beyond the image" chaired by **Can-Seng OOI, & LIU Jun**
7. "The Power of New Urban Tourism: Representations and Contestations" chaired by **Sybillie Frank & Anna Laura Raschke**
8. "Gentrification: Local (Urban) Image Development Instrument while Carrying Out Cultural/Creative Tourism" chaired by **Virginija Jurėnienė**
9. "Crossing (your own?) borders: Tourist movements in difficult spaces" chaired by **Jack Shepherd & Daniel Laven**