EDUCATIONAL TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS: A FRAMEWORK FOR EXPERIENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

A brief investigation into the issue of environmental degradation reveals that environmental ethics is indispensable in successfully addressing environmental issues. Environmental ethics, as advocated by A. Leopold, should widen our moral sensibility to non-human subjects and develop a more viable attitude towards the environment. However, when practically trying to widen our moral sensibility we run onto an obstacle – environmental denial. Because our personal identities are intimately bound with our materialist consumption habits, and because these identities give our lives meaning, we are not prone to give them up. In order to change our environmental impact it is thus necessary to reconstruct our identities on a more sustainable basis. A useful tool in this reconstruction could be educational tourism. In this way, we may begin to shift our view of tourism as simply an environmentally destructive practice, and see its promise as a significant contributor in solving environmental issues.

Key words: environmental ethics, environmental denial, environmental education, educational tourism, Aldo Leopold, Richard Rorty

TURISMO DIDATTICO E L'ETICA AMBIENTALE: IL QUADRO D'INSERIMENTO PER IL PERCORSO SPERIMENTALE DI EDUCAZIONE AMBIENTALE

SINTESI

Già un rapido sguardo ai problemi di carattere ambientale ci fa capire per la soluzione dei problemi legati all'ambiente non è più possibile prescindere dall'etica ambientale. L'etica ambientale come sostenuta da A. Leopold, cerca di estendere la nostra sensibilità morale a soggetti non umani e configurare una visione diversa rispetto al concetto di sostenibilità ambientale. Eppure nei tentativi pratici di ampliare la nostra sensibilità morale ci scontriamo con l'ostacolo del diniego ambientale. Le nostre identità sono fondate su consumi materiali, pertanto non siamo disposti semplicemente a rinunciare alle abitudini che danno un senso alla nostra vita. Se vogliamo modificare la nostra influenza sull'ambiente dobbiamo ripensare la nostra identità su fondamenta più sostenibili. Il turismo didattico potrebbe rivelarsi un utile strumento e il turismo settore da non considerare solo come problematico per l'ambiente ma che potrebbe, al contrario contribuire in modo significativo alla soluzione dei problemi ambientali.

Parole chiave: etica ambientale, diniego ambientale, educazione ambientale, turismo didattico, Aldo Leopold, Richard Rorty

INTRODUCTION

The human relationship with nature is determined by technology as well as by a set of beliefs – 'rules of action' as pragmatists would have it – that inform and guide our conduct. Although this statement may sound self-evident, its potential and relevance for our attitude towards nature are often overlooked. It implies that environmental issues will not be addressed thoroughly if we do not consider our ethical dispositions towards the natural environment. Were we to have at our disposal technological tools sufficient to address our most pressing environmental problems, these tools would still stand in need of proper handling. Let us not forget that science and technology are political and social by their very nature (cf. Kleinman, 2005, 5–14). Or, as Aristotle said in *Nicomachean Ethics*: "Virtue makes the goal right, practical wisdom the things leading to it" (1144a7–8). This much is an illustration that environmental ethics – the study of our moral relationship and attitude towards nature and non-human moral subjects – is as necessary for managing our environment as technology and science. As outlined by S. R. Carpenter, the role of environmental ethics in the debate on sustainability can be at least threefold: 1) "Ethical discussion can contribute positively to sustainability discussions by addressing the tradeoffs between the intergenerational human interests and the intragenerational requirements that human populations are faced with in a world of scarce resources." 2) "Ethics can also provide methods of articulating current values reflective of the human/nature interaction." 3) "Additionally, ethics can draw attention to unsustainable human practices by formulating systematic sanctions for anthropogenic activities directly implicated in a loss of human cultures, nonhuman flora and fauna, as well as geological processes and cycles" (Carpenter, 1998, 277).

But if environmental ethics are to be properly implemented, they stand in need of environmental education. The importance of the latter was acknowledged in 1977 at the Tbilisi Conference:

"The role of education in the face of environmental problems and opportunities is therefore a crucial one. Environmental education should be integrated into the whole system of formal education at all levels to provide the necessary knowledge, understanding, values and skills needed by the general public and many occupational groups, for their participation in devising solutions to environmental questions" (Tbilisi Conference Final Report, 1978, 12).

However, despite the efforts of educators, governmental and non-governmental institutions and various groups and engaged individuals, our global ecological footprint continues to rise. Based on data collected by the UN, the ecological footprint is an indicator which shows the amount of land a society needs in order to support its current life-style; i. e., how much area is needed in order to provide for a society's resources and absorb its waste. The current global footprint (which takes into account humanity as a whole) is 1.4, which means that it now takes the Earth roughly one year and five months to regenerate what we use in a year (Global Footprint Network, 2009). This implies that we are in fact dealing with something which we might call 'environmental denial' - a refusal to acknowledge the impact of our consumerist habits on the natural environment *even though* information to this end is readily available and has been concisely presented to us. Recently, researchers in the field of social psychology have proposed that environmental inaction and a lack of practically undertaken green measures could be attributed to massive public denial of the severity of environmental problems (Feygina, Jost, 2010). If this is so, then environmental education responsible for teaching environmental ethics must be viewed from a new perspective, and its methods must be reconsidered and reevaluated.

Such a reconsideration may well propose an experiential educational approach, taking more fully into account the role that personal experience plays in the learning process. As observed by J. Dewey, "Education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based on experience – that is always the actual life experience of the individual" (Dewey, 1938, 89). Here a connection could be established between educational tourism and experiential education for environmental ethics: educational tourism (or 'edu-tourism') could be invoked in order to provide experiences upon which environmental education – the advocating of more concrete pro-environmental habits – could be based. Thus, tourism as such need not be written off as an inevitably polluting factor of our modern society and contemporary life-style, but could actually be viewed as a potentially useful tool with the ability to bring us a step closer to a more sustainable way of life.

In what follows, the environmental ethics of some of the most influential environmental thinkers is briefly presented. We shall then examine further evidence which suggests that we may indeed be confronted with the problem of 'environmental denial.' From this consideration, the need for experiential education in environmental ethics will be inferred. The phenomenon of tourism will then be linked to this idea and briefly elaborated. This paper should thus be read as a theoretical and practical framework out of which edu-tourism's attractions and its management could be deduced in an effort to foster greater environmental awareness and concomitant personal growth.

EXTENDING ETHICS

Environmental degradation caused by man is a fact that has been long observed, and one described in Plato's *Critias* (111. a–d) from the 4th century BCE in ancient Greece, as well as in Montaigne's essays, which date back to the 16th century, and represent one of the first environmental ethical statements in the West. In his essay *On Cruelty* Montaigne states that "there is a kind respect and a duty in man as genus which links us not merely to the beasts, which have life and feelings, but even to trees and plants.« (Montaigne, 2004, 185). We can refer to this widening of our moral sensitivity as an 'extension of ethics,' a concept introduced by forester, philosopher-writer, and early conservationist A. Leopold.

In his *Land Ethic* Leopold speaks of 'steps in a sequence of ethical extension.' For Leopold, ethics have, from a historical perspective, undergone a sequence of 'extensions.' Whereas Odysseus viewed his slave-girls as tools, as a dispensable property judged in 'terms of expediency only,' later times witnessed the development of a more inclusive moral attitude towards all humans. Drawing from the history of Christianity, Leopold says that: "The first ethics dealt with the relation between individuals; the Mosaic Decalogue is an example. Latter accretions dealt with the relation between individuals and society. The Golden Rule tries to integrate the individual to society; democracy to integrate social organization to the individual" (Leopold, 1949, 202–203). However, Leopold's truly original and groundbreaking idea is the advocated 'third step' in this sequence:

"There is as yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it. Land, like Odysseus' slave-girls, is still property. /.../ The extension of ethics to this third element in the human environment is, if I read the evidence correctly, an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity. It is the third step in a sequence" (Leopold, 1949, 203).

Exciting as it is and definitively more inclusive than the first steps in the development of human morality, this step – of course – still needs to be carried out. When exploring the realization of such a step, R. Rorty's neo-pragmatist ideas may prove useful.

Rorty's ethics, to be sure, are in important ways very similar – if not almost identical – to Leopold's: moral progress for him is the ability to increasingly see that differences between ourselves and others are morally irrelevant. More specifically, *moral progress* for Richard Rorty consists of something which he – after the title of Baier's book – calls '*a progress of sentiments*', a phrase that clearly echoes the philosophy of Hume. As Rorty states, 'This progress consists in an increasing ability to see the similarities between ourselves and people very unlike us as outweighing the differences' (Rorty, 1998a, 181). Moreover, even the *purpose of Christianity*, as Rorty sees it, is 'the alleviation of cruelty' (Rorty, 1989, 55; 1999, xxix) via the promotion of Catholic and cosmopolitan idea of universal brotherhood among fellow suffering human beings. Thus perceived, the progress of morals is simply the recognition of increasing numbers of human beings as similar to ourselves in the sense that they are vulnerable to suffering and humiliation; it requires the inclusion of more and more people under the pronoun 'we'; it actually entails – in Emersonian terms – a widening of our circle of moral experience so as to expand the domain of our compassion to more and more human beings.[1]

However, Rorty has very specific ideas about the status of our moral beliefs (as well as their justification) and the means by which the previous ethical extension can be achieved. For Rorty all attempts to secure morals in the realm of Immutable Truths, or in the logical space of ahistorical Universal Reasons, will prove to be much less successful than the attempts to widen our moral responsibility by manipulating our feelings. We will be much more successful in developing moral intuitions if we will think about ourselves as 'flexible, protean, self-shaping animal(s)' than if we conceive of ourselves as 'rational animal(s)' containing a special ingredient called 'Reason' (Rorty, 1998a, 170). The difference between two 'parties': the Universalists (who think that there exists an immutable rational human nature from which universally valid moral intuitions can be deduced) and the Historicists (who contend that there are no moral intuitions apart from those of the historical societies from which they emerge) in matters of ethics is one of philosophical approach. Whereas Universalists will be engaged by investigation into our *true nature*, thereby attempting to peek behind the shroud of 'mere appearances' and disclose Nature as it *really* is, the Historicists (as they are not prone to view humans outside of

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1   It is, however, important to stress one important difference between Leopold and Rorty : Rorty stops short of actually extending ethics to non-human subjects and of thus including Leopold's third step. This is somewhat odd, as Rorty maintains that : "The position put forward in Part I of this book is incompatible /.../ with the idea that there is a 'natural' cut in the spectrum of similarities and differences which spans the difference between you and a dog, or you and one of Asimov's robots – a cut which marks the end of the rational beings and the beginning of the nonrational ones, the end of moral obligation and the beginning of benevolence. My position entails that feelings of solidarity are necessarily a matter of which similarities and dissimilarities strike us as salient, and that such salience is a function of a historically contingent final vocabulary" (Rorty, 1989, 191–192). Moreover, in one of his important essays he writes : "The relevant similarities are not a matter of sharing a deep true self that instantiates true humanity, but are such little, superficial similarities as cherishing our parents and our children – similarities that do not distinguish us in any interesting way from many nonhuman ani-mals" (Rorty, 1998a, 181).

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contingent historical circumstances, and as they do not presuppose a common, fixed human nature) will be more open to future possibilities and to exploring what we can *make* of ourselves (Rorty, 1998b, 205). Rorty in his writings clearly favours the latter party, which explains, at least in part, why his ideas of moral progress consist in the manipulation of feelings instead of the discovery of foundations and things 'as they really are'.

In addition, Rorty conceives of spreading solidarity through narratives, typically through story-telling. By abandoning traditional philosophical vocabularies, he argues, we can 'cultivate our sentiments,' and thus become more sensitive to our environment. "To stuff off an obsolete terminology makes us more sensitive to the life about us," he writes," for it helps us to stop trying to cut new, recalcitrant material to fit old patterns" (Rorty, 1998c, 6). This is why, for Rorty, 'strong poets' are more welcome in the morality debate than traditional philosophers: in Rorty's view a 'strong poet' is capable of inducing a moral Gestalt-switch by redescribing known things in a previously unimagined way.

Nevertheless, stories and imagination still need hinges upon which to be affixed. If we are to spread solidarity and widen our moral sensitivity – if we are to 'extend' our ethics – through story-telling and compelling narratives, we still need to understand which narratives will be accepted and which will fail to make an impact on readers. If we wish to 'manipulate' public sentiments and – as J. Bruner may call it – narratively create new, extended selves, we must find a way to interweave the fabric of our new stories with our worldview. This paper suggests that relevant experience – including new habits and new behaviours – may indeed be such a way. And this experience could be provided by edu-tourism.

ENVIRONMENTAL DENIAL

In Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People,* Dr. Thomas Stockmann is a popular citizen of a small coastal town. With the help of the mayor – his brother – he leads a project (financed by the community) to develop a spa. The spa is said to be beneficial for health but Dr. Stockmann soon realizes that the water in the baths is contaminated. He reports his findings to the mayor and proposes a solution, only to discover that authorities do not wish to acknowledge this problem publicly, as the suggested solution would cost a considerable sum. When Dr. Stockmann goes directly to the public he again faces a refusal to acknowledge his claims, and is in fact met with vitriol for having made them. Ibsen's fictional plot seems to be curiously similar to the current real-life experiences of scientists and journalists who have chosen to speak publicly about global warming. A recent documentary about global warming's messengers, entitled *Everything's Cool,* shows that Ross Gelbspan's decade of writing about environmental problems has had minimal impact; and Rick Piltz, who presented scientific reports covering the latest research on climate change to the US Congress is described as 'repressed and depressed' due to political censorship.[2] Indeed, as has been recently proposed by researchers in the field of social psychology, we may be dealing with the massive public denial of environmental problems. Feygina and Jost (2010) suppose that environmental inaction is the result of 'system justification tendencies': inclinations to defend and justify the societal status quo.

From a more humanistically oriented perspective, this 'environmental denial' might – in Stanley Cavell's words – be called 'a skeptical refusal to acknowledge truths about oneself and one's relations to others.' In light of the above mentioned events, which seem unfortunately similar to Ibsen's masterpiece, we may say that *we do not face a lack of information or the poor education of the general public* regarding practical measures towards greater sustainability. We are confronted instead, as Cavell would put it, with a problem of '*avoiding the knowledge*' (in this case, avoiding the recognition of consequences resulting from our impact on the natural world). In his discussion of slave owners, Cavell claims that they avoid the recognition of their 'property' as human, when in point of fact they 'know, or all but know, (their slaves) to be human beings' (Cavell, 1979, 377). The refusal to acknowledge this information is precisely what allows for the justification of slavery. Thus Cavell diagnoses the inability to widen our moral sensibility – to make Leopold's third, or even second step (acknowledging slaves as human beings) in a sequence of extending ethics – as a 'refusal to acknowledge'; an 'avoidance of knowledge.'

But how could such a denial occur in the first place? As we have seen, Feygina and Jost cite a 'system justification tendency.' An additional, perhaps complementary, explanation for environmental denial could be the role consumerism plays in our contemporary life-style. The importance of material possessions and the role they play in constructing our identities is pointed out by William James, and is confirmed more than a hundred years later by consumer behaviour researchers, who tell us that consumer choices fulfill a social-identity function (Wänke, 2009). Similarly, C. T. Allen, S. Fournier, and F. Miller (Allen et al., 2008) show how consumers actually infuse brands with meaning(s), a process somewhat akin to the well known hermeneutical cycle. They say that "(within an alternative perspective in consumer research) consumer products were re-cast from simplifying infor-

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2   More information about the documentary can be found at: http://everythingscool.org/index.php.

mational vehicles to meaning-rich tools for personal and social identity construction. Consumers were re-conceptualized as active meaning makers rather than passive recipients of marketing products and communications" (Allen et al., 2008, 784). Moreover, in their monograph *Status, Growth, and the Environment*, K. A. Brekke and R. B. Howarth contest that consumption must be understood within a social context and argue that identity is, again, based on possessions:

"Examples like the enamel bowls of the Ibadan housewives, Rolex watches and SUVs may leave readers with the impression that status preferences are somewhat esoteric, focusing primarily on a few special commodities. If this were the case, the impact on aggregate economic activity would be relatively small. We argue, however, that *most* consumption behavior is influenced by the socially constructed meanings of goods. If this assertion is correct, then the economic impact extends well beyond the status-induced demand for diamonds, fancy watches and the 'trophy homes' of the highly affluent. Instead, the social contingency of preferences has pervasive effects on everyday economic behavior" (Brekke, Howarth, 2002, 15–16)

But how could consumerism play such a central role in providing identity in our contemporary lives? That consumerism is important in providing an identity for us because it serves as a Frommian 'escape from freedom' and replaces more traditional institutions that used to provide meaning in our lives was argued by Å. Daun (1983). Daun maintained that the materialistic life-style offered by consumerism functions as a stand-in for declining 'ambitions' such as religion, tradition, and collective ambitions.

It is perhaps easier to see now that we may be wrestling with denial regarding the recognition of the severity of environmental degradation and the necessity of taking action. One may be reluctant to give up specific consumption habits, despite the environmental detriment they entail, out of fear for the loss of personal identity. If consumerism provides us with our contemporary identities then – in relinquishing it in its present form – we would be confronted with a crisis of identity, and with ensuing existential anxiety. In order to preserve identity and avoid anxious situations and uncertainty, we thus refuse to acknowledge the seriousness of our current environmental situation.

If materialist consumer habits and practices provide identities for us and if we cling to them because we would otherwise have to face anxiety ridden-situations than change in our attitude towards the natural environment cannot be brought about except with a reconstruction of our identities around practices which are more sustainable. If we want to lessen our environmental impact and dissolve the link between identity and materialist-consumerist habits, we have to provide new, more environmentally friendly habits which offer a similarly strong foundation upon which to base our identities. If we take something away, we must offer something in its place, otherwise the large-scale behavioural shifts necessary to affect significant environmental change cannot occur.

EDUCATIONAL TOURISM IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

How, precisely, could tourism turn out to be a useful tool in overcoming our somewhat debilitating environmental situation? As shown in the introduction, the role of environmental ethics, and especially of education in environmental ethics – more generally: environmental education – is indispensable if we are to fashion more sustainable life-styles which minimize our impact on the natural environment. Environmental education's significant role in this regard was recognized as early as 1977 at the Tbilisi conference. However, our lifestyles – despite the efforts of many educators, organizations, and activists – have not changed significantly since this time. In fact, the rate of our environmental damage continues to accelerate. Perhaps one of the reasons for the evident inefficacy in traditional education is the environmental denial previously mentioned: we are not prone to give up our damaging habits, because they serve to provide us with identity. When confronted with the severity of our current environmental situation, we clearly – as was the case involving the aforementioned journalist – avoid such knowledge. This means that further information regarding our detrimental impact on the environment will not be enough for change to occur. What we need instead is something more thoroughgoing. In accordance with Rorty's notion, narratives about the suffering of people (and by extension animals and the environment) do better to create a sense of solidarity than the attempt at epistemic justification of moral claims. It is worth looking into the possibility of extending ethics by presenting reality in a novel way, devising new stories which would widen our moral sensibility and help to create our new identity.[3] Such stories could be, it is argued here, better woven into the fabric of our lives if

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3   The importance of narrative in creating a self, or selfhood (which does not exist before this story-telling act is carried out), is of primary importance to J. Bruner. For Bruner, and similarly for Rorty, autobiographical narration is basically all there is to a particular 'Self': "I want to begin by boldly proposing that, in effect, there is no such thing as an intuitively obvious and essential self to know, one that just sits there ready to be portrayed in words. Rather, we constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears for the future " (Bruner, 2002, 64).

they were supplemented by adequate experience and new habit formation. Our new, more ecologically responsible identity could, then, be narrated via the experience gathered in educational tourism's programs. Proper programs connected with outdoor education could provide the experience needed for the reconstruction of our ecological identities. Engaged close encounters with both human and natural environments can re-establish an awareness of the natural sources of goods and resources, and of the embeddedness of human life in its surroundings, thereby overcoming what A. Borgmann calls 'the attenuation of human engagement with material reality' (Borgmann, 2000, 419). Via this concrete experience in the natural world, the nature of our ethical values is implicitly reinterpreted. In this way, experiential education could provide a tangible basis from which to assume new identities. Replacing those previously constructed through nature-alienated consumerism, these new identities could, in turn, lessen further denial regarding our environmental impact.

Experiential forms of environmental education take into account more fully the role that experience plays in the learning process, as observed by J. Dewey (cited in the introduction). For this reason, a connection could be established between educational tourism and experiential education for environmental ethics. Educational tourism (or 'edu-tourism'),[4] invoked to offer concrete experiences, could provide a foundation upon which to base an environmental education which advocates green habits. In this way, we may shift our view of tourism as simply an environmentally destructive practice, and begin to see its promise as a significant contributor in *solving* environmental issues. Education based on the field-experience provided by edu-tourisms products could thus turn out to be the most effective method of teaching environmental ethics, and of facilitating what Rorty calls 'a progress of (moral) sentiments.' Indeed, a meta-analysis examining 187 cases of research-based literature seems to confirm the benefits of outdoor and wilderness education, citing positive results in personal growth, therapy, education, and leadership development (cf. Friese et al., 1995).

Tourism seems a proper candidate for experiential environmental education because its main function is precisely the manufacture and delivery of 'experience.' As MacCannell sees it:

"The value of such things as programs, trips, courses, reports, articles, shows, conferences, parades, opinions, events, sights, spectacles, scenes and situations of modernity is not determined by the amount of labor required for their production. Their value is a function of the quality and quantity of *experience* they promise. ... All tourist attractions are cultural experiences" (MacCannell, 1999, 23).[5]

There are, to be sure, many sites that could become 'attractions' in educational tourism, although we must be careful to design them for a specific purpose: environmental education connected with personal growth.[6] These attractions could include not only natural areas, as might be supposed. On the contrary, sightseeing tours targeting landfills, industrial and production sites and mining sites – via the unpleasant and powerful experience they would convey – could trigger greater awareness about the consequences of our life-styles. Sights of environmental degradation arouse curiosity, as can clearly be observed in the work of photographer Edward Burtynsky, whose large-scale devastated landscape photos have become famous precisely for that reason. Today, a comparison of industrial sightseeing, as well as landfill and slaughterhouse tours, to sights such as German concentration camps[7] might seem a bit far fetched. But it is possible to imagine that such sights will someday provoke similar feelings in their visitors: sadness and feelings of being overwhelmed, as well as disgust with the irrationality and cruelty of human conduct.[8] And if we desire to achieve greater sustainability and minimize human-caused environmental damage, this would certainly be a desired outcome. Moreover, sightseeing within a moral context is again in line with MacCannell's observations that "The organization of behavior and objects in public places is functionally equivalent to the sacred text that still serves as the moral base of traditional society. That is, public places contain the representations of good and evil that apply universally to modern man in general" (MacCannell, 1999, 39–40). In other words, by making educational tourism's attractions explicitly morally relevant, we are simply utilizing a trait already inherent to tourism.

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4   The definition of educational tourism as 'travel for learning and education' is provided by Ritchie (2003, 9).

5   Cultural experiences have two parts for MacCannell: they are an embodied ideal (in MacCannell's words: a 'model') and they also influence people ('influence'): "The spectacle of an automobile race is a model; the thrills it provides spectators and their practice of wearing patches and overalls advertising tires and oils are its influence" (MacCannell, 1999, 24). It is worth noting here that MacCannell is critical of this (hyper)production of experience – and so should be we – meaning that the quality of experience and its interrelatedness with education should be carefully considered so that 'natural experience' does not turn out to be yet another commodification of nature.

6   Indeed, Arne Næss, the founding father of *Deep Ecology*, viewed self-realization as contiguous with greater environmental awareness (cf. Næss, 2008).

7   For a valuable discussion on Nazi concentration camps as tourist attractions, see Ritchie (2003, 78–82).

8   The connection between massive farm animal killing and the holocaust has, as a matter of fact, already been pointed out by such notable figures as Nobel laureate J.M. Coetzee in his novel *Elisabeth Costello*.

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Another possible argument for educational tourism as a vehicle for increasing environmental awareness is the fact that edu-tourism is already gaining in popularity. 'Serious leisure' and volunteerism in the form of holiday experiences (which both justly qualify as edu-tourism) (Wearing, Neil, 2001, 239), have seen a 400% growth in their investment in volunteers from 1976 to 1991 (Wearing, Neil, 2001, 242). Moreover, 'volunteer vacations' and 'ethical holidays' are predicted to experience a similar growth in popularity (Swarbrooke, Horner, 1999, 257). The same conclusion – that of an increasing desire for travel in search of a 'new unity in life' – can be found in other sources as well, (Ritchie, 2003, 25–32) meaning that investments in alternative tourism attractions will likely be a lucrative enterprise in the future and should be of serious interest to developers.[9]

Considering these arguments, the adoption of edu-tourism as a viable (and perhaps the most successful) means of alleviating some of our most pressing environmental issues should seem a sensible strategy. However, there is still much work to be done in practically implementing such a program.

CONCLUSION

Educational tourism might turn out to be an important ally in achieving healthier human attitudes towards nature and in shifting our identities away from an axis of materialist consumerism and towards a more ecological and bio-centric one. In fact, tourism as a modern phenomenon started precisely as an educational enterprise for young British aristocrats who went on the so called 'Grand Tour' to France and Italy in order to enrich their educational experience.[10] Theoretical as well as practical frameworks – as presented here – from which edu-tourism could be developed might aid in its becoming a respected addition in debates about environmental and experiential education. The current, pressing environmental situation obliges us to consider it further, and to argue in favor of its wider implementation based on the practical experiences of similar, existing programs.

IZOBRAŽEVALNI TURIZEM IN OKOLJSKA ETIKA: OKVIR ZA EMPIRIČNO OKOLJSKO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

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POVZETEK

Že kratka refleksija pokaže, da je okoljska etika nepogrešljiva pri praktičnem reševanju okoljskih izzivov. Okoljska etika, ki se ukvarja z našim odnosom do naravnega okolja, si prizadeva za razširitev naše moralne senzibilnosti na nečloveške subjekte, kot je to zagovarjal A. Leopold. Na način, ki je nekoliko podoben Leopoldovemu, se je z razširitvijo etike ukvarjal tudi Richard Rorty in čeprav same etike ni razširil na živali in okolje, je njegova ideja glede tega, kako naj tako razširitev izpeljemo, koristna. Namesto utemeljevanja morale v območju nespremenljivih resnic je Rorty zagovarjal 'napredek sentimentov.' Za Rortyja pripovedovanje zgodb in naracija lahko opišeta realnost na način, ki spodbuja širjenje solidarnosti. Vendar pa se pri praktičnem poizkusu etične razširitve znajdemo pred oviro: okoljskim zanikanjem. Okoljevarstvena stagnacija in manko spodbud za spremembo lahko v veliki meri pripišemo naši nepripravljenosti opustitve materialističnih potrošniških navad. Te navade nas oskrbujejo s smislom, kot je to zagovarjal Å. Daun in okoli njih zasnujemo svoje identitete. To bi lahko bil razlog zakaj zavračamo spremembo in se – z besedami S. Cavella – izogibamo vednosti glede resnosti okoljske situacije. Če želimo biti uspešni pri zmanjševanju našega negativnega vpliva na okolje, moramo ponuditi nove načine konstruiranja naših identitet okoli navad, ki bodo manj škodljive za okolje. Izobraževalni turizem bi se lahko izkazal za koristnega v tej fazi. Turizem tako ne bi veljal v glavnem le za okoljski problem, ampak bi lahko tudi bistveno prispeval k reševanju okoljske problematike.

Ključne besede: okoljska etika, okoljsko zanikanje, okoljsko izobraževanje, izobraževalni turizem, Aldo Leopold, Richard Rorty

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9   Although, as said before, experiential education within the framework of educational tourism should not give in to the commerciali zing pressure of grotesque nature commodification.

10 For a concise discussion of the Grand Tour in the Mediterranean, see Loefgren (2002). Also, when seaside visits first came into fashion in Victorian Britain, one of the motives was an educational one (next to religious and national) in the sense of natural history (specimen collecting); for that, cf. Payne (2002).

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