Chapter 5

Looking at Tourists Through the Lens of Aristotelian Friendship – On Altruism in Tourism[1]

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Abstract

Tourism recovery after the pandemic has failed to take the path leading to sensitivity and humaneness at destination level. This chapter argues that to open this path, we need to confront the belief that tourists are self-centred, fun-driven and cheating individuals. This view on tourists and more generally human beings is central to the neoliberal understanding of consumers. It has moreover taken a strong grasp on the mind of economists, politicians, academics and the public at large.

To counteract this idea, I call upon Aristotle's discussion of friendship. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle distinguishes between three forms of friendship: of utility, of pleasure, and of goodwill. Utility implies a relationship where people befriend each other in virtue of some good or service that they get or expect to get from each other. Friendships of utility, therefore, imply reciprocation. Friendships of pleasure can also be understood as a form of reciprocal altruism. However, friendships of goodwill are different because they are felt for others for their own sake and not in expectation of a favour in return. Friendships of goodwill include therefore others who may not be

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Destination Conscience, 37–50

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able to reciprocate, such as tourists staying only a short time at a destination. Looking through the lens of friendships of goodwill, one could argue that all tourists, including short-stay visitors, will be friendly and caring towards their hosts.

This chapter explores the soundness of friendships of goodwill in the light of more recent research on human nature. It also discusses its implications for our understanding of human beings, the relationship between hosts and guests, and ultimately the opportunity to steer tourism along a more sensitive, human and sustainable path.

Keywords: Sustainable tourism; hosts and guest relationship; value theory; pro-environmental behaviour (PEB) theory; Aristotle; friendship

Introduction

In the debate about the post-pandemic recovery, the scholarly community, almost unanimously, voiced the hope that tourism after COVID-19 would become more gentle, more attentive to local people, more respectful of local culture and heritage, more protective and – when needed – restorative of the natural environment (see e.g., the special issue of *Tourism Geographies* edited by Lew et al., 2020). Yet, the first data after the easing of restrictions tell a different story. In an interview with the Dutch newspaper *NRC*, Matthijs ten Brink CEO of Sunweb Group reflected on their 2021–2022 turnover, the highest ever achieved by the tour operator, and shared his expectations that the 2022-2023 season would break all records (Benjamin, 2022a). Ten Brink's expectation is supported by the conclusion of a study for the European Travel Council: travellers have no intention of changing their travel behaviour compared to the pre-COVID-19 period except for a slight preference for less exotic destinations (CELTH et al., 2022). The preference for European destinations, however, may change once restrictions are completely lifted worldwide and tourists regain confidence. Indeed, tour operator TUI reported that Dutch tourists tend to book vacations further away and for longer periods than they did before (Benjamin, 2022b).

Post-pandemic tourism follows the same track as pre-pandemic tourism, a track that was denounced by local communities, activists, scholars and even tourists themselves because it focusses only on economic growth at the expense of culture, nature and people.

In my efforts to grasp the reason why tourism did not change after COVID-19, my thoughts were repeatedly caught by a statement by Nobel Prize laureate and champion of neoliberal economic thinking Milton Friedman. Reflecting on the changes in the public and academic opinion between the 1960s and the 1980s about the role of capitalism in society, in the 1982 preface to his influential book on *Capitalism and Freedom*, he stated:

> Only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas

> that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable. (2002, p. xiv)

The first sentence of the quote seems to back up the expectation that COVID-19 would produce an opening for radical change. Yet, Friedman also clearly states that a change does not happen by default because people during crises tend to fall back on existing options, on 'ideas that are lying around'. During crises, people do not have the time nor the energy to develop innovative ideas. A crisis offers an opportunity to implement alternative ideas only if these have been developed and embraced by a coalition of advocates beforehand.

In my early ruminations on Friedman's quote at the start of the pandemic, I was hopeful. Sustainable and ethical tourism has been debated in the scholarly community since the 1970s, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation has been promoting it for decades, and several big players in the sector – such as the already mentioned tour operators TUI and Sunweb Group – have committed to it. It seemed to me that a more sustainable, sensitive and human form of tourism was an idea that had been lying around for a while, that had been openly supported by tourism stakeholders and that could therefore have become the politically, environmentally and economically inevitable alternative after the pandemic.

When this consideration proved wrong, I started looking at Friedman's quote and at the scholarly work on sustainable tourism with fresh eyes. I started realizing that either ideas around sustainable tourism had not been lying around long enough to become the inevitable alternative during a crisis, or tourism scholars had failed to address beliefs that are less evident and more fundamental than (un) sustainable tourism practices. Neoliberal economy, the view that Friedman developed and that become the inevitable option during the 1980s macroeconomic crisis, is grounded on a specific belief about human nature as self-interested, egoistic and greedy. It moreover explains behaviour as dependent on a rational calculus of costs and benefits for the self. In reflecting on this ground belief of economic theory in the context of the post-pandemic tourism recovery, it occurred to me that, as Przeclawski stated, 'Tourism is first of all a form of man's behaviour. Man is the essential subject of tourism. Tourism can not be explained unless we understand man, the human being. Tourism is at present a form of man's life, a way to materialize various values' (1996, p. 239). Ideas on human nature and their implications for our understanding of human behaviour, including tourism, are seldom discussed. Tourism scholars form no exception, and therefore, beliefs about the main subject of tourism, the tourist, are seldom made explicit and discussed. This chapter attempts such a discussion by intertwining ideas about human nature from ancient philosophy and modern science, particularly Aristotle, socio-biology and environmental psychology. Aristotle is called upon as one of the most influential Western philosophers. Socio-biology and its basis, evolutionary biology, have been chosen because they are the theoretical frame from which altruism is often discussed in tourism studies. Environmental

psychology builds on the insights of evolutionary biology and not only offers a more articulated vision on human beings but also validates Aristotle's intuitions of human as capable of friendships of goodwill, a view that opens the possibility to steer tourism along a more sensitive, human and sustainable path.

Therefore, the following sections of the chapter are dedicated firstly to discussing beliefs on human nature and secondly to addressing altruism and its role in tourism. The second discussion has been divided in three sections dedicated respectively to socio-biology, Aristotle and an extension of Aristotle's view on friendships of goodwill. The conclusion highlights some implications of this discussion for both tourism scholars and practitioners.

Human Nature

In reflecting on Przeclawski's quote reported above, Wheeler stated that tourism '[...] is a world driven largely by avarice, greed, self interest [...]. We need, therefore, to look first at ourselves and then at society when we address tourism' (Wheeler, 2004, p. 471). What do we see when we look at ourselves, as Wheeler suggests?

A thought experiment developed by Tom Postmes, professor of Sociology at the University of Groningen (The Netherlands), is explicitly designed to uncover (to paraphrase Friedman) ideas lying around on human nature. Imagine a crisis, such as an aeroplane during an emergency landing. What do you think happens after the aeroplane has landed? Would passengers panic and try to reach the exit at any cost, even if it implies leaving injured people and children behind? Or will passengers keep relatively calm and help each other reach the exit? (Bregman, 2021).

If you resemble the people to whom I have asked to react quickly on the two scenarios presented above, you will very probably answer that individual passengers will try to reach the exit at any cost. You may add that you would very much like it to be otherwise, but that under life threatening circumstances, human beings choose for their own life first. If asked to elaborate, you may refer to the fight, flight or freeze response (Cannon, 1929) and add that flight is an instinctive reaction to fear and has developed from the 'innumerable injuries' that our ancestors had to suffer during evolution (Cannon, 1929, p. 196). Fear has thus become 'capable of arousing in the body all the offensive and defensive activities that favour the survival of the organism' (Cannon, 1929, p. 196) such as increased blood sugar and deep and rapid respiration. Flight is an instinctive reaction to fear, and an emergency landing is fearful. Instinctive means that people have no other choice than to fly and save themselves without regard for others.

This dismal view on human nature has been lying around for quite some time. It is reflected in the story of the Genesis about the fall from paradise and Cain's murder of his brother, Abel. The Genesis is the first book of the *Bible*, a very influential book not only for Christian but for Western thought in general. In the IV century AD the *Bible* and the work of Neoplatonists inspired Augustin's view of humans as a damned race, and through Augustin, this gloomy paradigm of

human nature passed into Western Philosophy. It is voiced by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), one of the fathers of modern political philosophy, who saw humans as matter in motion, instinctively seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. It is central to the neoliberal economic view on human beings as individuals guided by self-interest maximisation promoted by scholars like Milton Friedman. It has also entered tourism studies. Fennel, for example, states that 'humans, having little control over their actions, are subject to the same laws of nature, where acts of promiscuity, aggression, and so on, would essentially be out of our hands' (2006, p. 112).

If this is how we think of humans who are the subject of tourism as Przeclawski reminds us, then it is no wonder that post-pandemic tourism is following the same unsustainable path along which it was moving before COVID-19 brought it to a grinding halt. Tourism does not follow a more sensitive, more ethical, more protective, more restorative path because the target group of tourism, that is humans, are not sensitive, ethical, protective and restorative. In other words: the defects of tourism are defects of human nature and cannot be helped because human nature, having developed in the long history of human evolution, cannot be easily changed.

Notwithstanding this long and successful tradition, the dismal view on human nature is not unchallenged. Let us go back to the example of an emergency landing and more generally of how people react during crises. Although academic research on how people behave during crises emerged only recently, consensus is building that people's first reaction is not led by fear and not aimed at self-preservation but is pro-social and aimed at the survival of the group.

As Helsloot and Ruitenberg (2004, p. 98) state: 'Contrary to widespread belief, citizens do not panic in disaster situations. In fact, research into different aspects of citizen response shows that most citizens act in a rather rational way. Indeed, citizens often prove to be the most effective kind of emergency personnel. Disaster evaluations invariably show that most lives are actually saved by the "average" citizen'.

The above is also true in tragic cases that highly resemble the thought experiment devised by Professor Postmus with which this section opened. On 25 February 2009, a Turkish Airlines Boeing 737–800 with 135 people on board crashed in a soggy field near Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands. The aircraft broke into three pieces, but it did not catch fire. Passengers reacted pro-socially as Scanlon, Helsloot and Groenendaal report (2014, p. 48): 'Most passengers escaped through the emergency exits and the breaks in the aircraft frame, including some of the most heavily injured. [. . .] The less injured victims helped other passengers out of the wreckage [. . .]. Some severely injured victims who could not be moved were encouraged by bystanders ("the ambulance will arrive within a few minutes") who opened suitcases in a search for clothing to keep the victims warm. The bystanders then went back into the plane to search for travel companions of the severely injured victims. Only six living victims had to be rescued by the professional emergency responders'.

In other words, people do help each other when faced with a fearful calamity and do not focus only on their own, individual survival. In fact, communities

where the ties among people are strong have a significant higher chance of surviving a disaster than communities where those ties are weak (Fisher, 1994; Lindell, 2013). Moreover, there is mounting evidence from studies in disciplines as different as motivational studies (Alderfer, 1969), brain studies (Lawrence, 2010), behavioural economics (Thaler & Sunstain, 2021), neurobiology (Churchland, 2021) and pro-environmental behaviour (Steg et al., 2014) that people value more than an evolutionary reinforced instinctive response to save the self or the kind. People truly value others alongside the self and are capable of extending care and compassion to non-human beings and to nature (Cavagnaro & Curiel, 2023). There is therefore still hope that, if tourism's stakeholders abandon the dismal view on human nature and embrace people's ability to care for others, tourism could develop on a more sensitive, ethical, protective and restorative path.

Altruism in Tourism Through a Socio-biological Lens

Tourism scholars have not fully denied a vision of humans as able and willing to care for others, to benefit others and to avoid harming others: in short, as capable of altruism (for a more articulate discussion see Cavagnaro & Curiel, 2023, Chapter 10). There is indeed a vivid discussion about altruism in tourism, as a recent webinar conducted by Professor Fennel demonstrates.[2] Altruism, though, is hereby framed as reciprocal altruism and, as we will see in a moment, this frame is still grounded on a dismal view on human beings.

The theoretical perspective from which altruism is discussed by, for example, Fennel is the socio-biological theory on reciprocal altruism proposed by Trivers (1971). Socio-biology is a field of biology that aims to examine and explain social behaviour in terms of evolution and behaviour's biological basis. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Trivers defends altruism if and only if it supports the survival of the individual. Reciprocal altruism, that is an act of altruism performed in the expectation that the recipient will return the favour, fits this condition. Reciprocal altruism acts are supportive of survival because 'in the long run they benefit the organism performing them' (Trivers, 1971, p. 35). Yet, as Trivers explains, 'the time lag is the crucial factor' (1971, p. 39), and therefore, reciprocal altruism can only develop under strict conditions. Such conditions include:

- a suitably long lifespan favouring repeated encounters;
- a low dispersal rate favouring repeated interactions among the same individuals;
- interdependence of individuals, i.e. limited possibility to force others in giving to/sharing benefits with the self.

If one of these conditions does not exist or ceases to exist, then cheating (non-reciprocating) is an attractive option from an evolutionary perspective.

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[2]See: https://scotwebinars.org/events/volume-32/, accessed 4 April 2023.

Modern tourism does not present the conditions for reciprocal altruism to develop. Tourists do not tend to visit the same place twice, and when they visit, they stay for a very limited amount of time. In their 2018 study, Gössling, Scott and Hall reckon that the weighted average of the length of stay for the entire sample was 5.4 nights in 1995, falling to 4.6 nights in 2015. They conclude that global trends in length of stay fell by 14.8% on average over the years 1995–2015. There is therefore very limited chance for repeated encounters and thus for reciprocal altruism to form (Fennell, 2006). The conclusion seems unavoidable that cheating, i.e. not reciprocating and even taking advantage of altruists, is an attractive option from an evolutionary perspective. In other words, if the socio-biological perspective on altruism is correct, then cheating would be the norm in tourism encounters. Policymakers and business actors in the sector should prepare accordingly.

Reciprocal altruism does explain the findings from disasters' study that close-knit communities have a higher chance of surviving than loose communities because close-knit communities are characterised by low dispersion rates and individuals' interdependence. These conditions, as we have seen above while discussing Trivers, favour reciprocity. Reciprocal altruism, however, does not explain why people also tend to help strangers, as has been reported by Helsloot and Ruitenberg (2004) and Scanlon et al. (2014). It also does not fully explain tourists' behaviour and experiences. Of course, we have all read about and been told of cheating taxi drivers, dishonest shop keepers, guests stealing from hotel rooms and the like. Yet, how often have you cheated or have been cheated? And: how often have you been genuinely helped by a host or a fellow tourist? If your tourist experience resembles mine, the number of times that you have been helped greatly surpasses the number of times that you have been cheated. If it needs some refection to come to this conclusion, it is because we tend to attend to, recollect and share negative experiences more often than positive ones, a phenomenon known as negativity bias (Rozin & Royzman, 2001; Vaish et al., 2008).

In short, both disaster studies and a reflection on personal tourism experiences (when corrected for negativity bias) contradict the belief that, in short-lived tourism encounters, reciprocal altruism cannot develop, and cheating should be the norm. It is thus appropriate to ask the question whether there are alternative perspectives on altruism that can explain these findings and experiences.

Altruism in Tourism Through an Aristotelian Lens

My answer to the question above is affirmative. Even more strongly, my claim is that we can trace a more articulate approach to altruism in the Western scholarly tradition back to one of the first writings on ethics handed down to us: the *Nicomachean Ethics* written by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle around 350 BC. Aristotle's discussion is particularly interesting to tourism scholars because,

when introducing the subject, he states that we can experience ‘even in our travels how near and dear every man is to every other’ (Aristotle, 1999, VIII, 1)[3].

In book eight of *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE VIII), Aristotle distinguishes three forms of friendship: of utility, of pleasure and of goodwill. Utility implies a relationship where people do not befriend each other for themselves but in virtue of some good or service that they get or expect to get from each other. In the words of Aristotle: people who befriend others for utility associate ‘to each other only in so far as they rouse in each other hopes of something good to come’ (Aristotle NE VIII, 3). Although Aristotle does not speak of ‘altruism’, a term that entered modern language only in the nineteenth century, friendships of utility echo Trivers’ (1971) understanding of altruism as reciprocation. Both friendships of utility and reciprocal altruism are sought after by people ‘for the sake of what is good for themselves’ (Aristotle NE VIII, 3), thus not for the sake of the other but for the sake of the self.

Pleasure is a specific form of good that people may expect from each other. Therefore, friendships of pleasure are framed by Aristotle as a sub-category of friendships of utility. Importantly, Aristotle adds that pleasure is a particularly short-lived form of utility. In the words of Aristotle (NE VIII, 3): ‘Now the useful is not permanent but is always changing. Thus, when the motive of the friendship is done away, the friendship is dissolved, inasmuch as it existed only for the ends in question’. Friendship for pleasure is even more unstable: ‘it changes with the object that is found pleasant, and such pleasure alters quickly’ often ‘within a single day’ (EN VIII, 3). Contemporary pro-environmental psychology confirms Aristotle’s intuition that hedonic motives (pleasure) are short lived and cannot sustain behaviour (such as being compassionate friends) for long (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013; Steg et al., 2014). Aristotle also recognises that friendships of utility and pleasure are strongly dependent on the contact, the association between the parties involved (NE VIII, 3 and 12). In short: friendships of utility and pleasure are short-lived and, aiming at reciprocation, need repeated contacts among the people involved. These two Aristotelian forms of friendship, therefore, are as unable as reciprocal altruism to explain altruism in tourism and justify the hope that tourists will not cheat in short-lived tourism encounters but behave in a more sensitive, careful and compassionate manner (Fennell, 2006; Trivers, 1971).

There is, however, reason to hope because alongside friendships of utility and pleasure, Aristotle introduces friendships of goodwill. Friendships of goodwill are a purer form of friendship felt for others for their own sake. Aristotle explains this form as follows: ‘Now those who wish well to their friends for their sake are most truly friends; for they do this by reason of own nature and not incidentally; therefore their friendship lasts as long as they are good – and goodness is an enduring thing (NE VIII, 3) [. . .] men wish well to those whom they love, for their sake, not as a result of feeling but as a result of a state of character (NE VIII, 5)’. Friendships of goodwill point to altruism beyond reciprocity.

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[3]From now on, we will refer to this text using the acronym NE followed by the number of chapter in Roman and the number of paragraph in Arabic numbering.

In the passage quoted directly above, Aristotle contrasts nature or character with something that is only incidental. The difference between what is constant (nature, character or essence) and what is only incidental (or accidental) to something is one of the main distinctions in Aristotelian philosophy. Essence refers to the intrinsic nature of things, to the unvarying aspect of phenomena that should be captured, for example, in their definition. An accident, as the word itself says, is not an aspect of the intrinsic nature of things but only incidentally connected to it. To exemplify: Aristotle defines human beings as rational animals. Following Aristotle, therefore, the words 'rational animal' capture the essence of humans. Whether a specific person is tall or short is an accident in the sense that it does not change the intrinsic nature or essence of that person. Short people are as human as tall ones. Thus, in Aristotelian philosophy, claiming that friendship of goodwill springs from the nature and character of the people involved is a very strong statement. For these people, being good and feeling goodwill towards their friends has become part and parcel of who they are. Consequently, this form of friendship lasts as long as people live. Good people cannot act against their own nature; they cannot – so to speak – avoid being good.

Altruism in Tourism: Expanding the Aristotelian Lens

Friendships of goodwill spring from the unvarying good-naturedness of the person and do not expect reciprocation. They can therefore, at least theoretically, include others who are unable to reciprocate such as those hosts and tourists who meet each other only briefly. Aristotle, however, does not reach this conclusion for two main reasons: firstly, because he believes that 'such men are rare' (NE VIII, 3) and, secondly, because also this form of friendship requires 'time and familiarity' (NE VIII, 3).

Let us examine, though briefly, these two beliefs starting from the statement that truly good characters are rare. From an Aristotelian perspective that only few men can achieve a state of character of pure goodwill, or in modern terms non-reciprocal altruism, does not imply that all others are by their own nature incapable to reach such a state. This is due to a second main tenant of Aristotelian philosophy, alongside the distinction between essence and accident: nothing can be actuated that is not already present as a capacity. To exemplify, if an infant has not the capacity to talk, then that infant would never be able to talk when growing up. Yet, that a specific infant does not talk does not mean that they are not able to: some accident may have occurred impeding them to develop the capacity to talk. Thus, that some people can actuate friendships of goodwill does not exclude that other people have the same capacity but have not yet been able to activate it. This resonates with findings from current studies on antecedents of pro-environmental and pro-social behaviour that have proven that all people act from three goal frames, a gain, an altruistic and a biospheric one. A gain goal frame implies that people take decisions based on utility or pleasure that can accrue to themselves. People acting from an altruistic goal frame take into consideration costs and benefits for others. The altruistic goal frame is built on the

benevolence value orientation individuated by Schwartz (1992, 2012). Notably, this value orientation does not include reciprocal altruism, but it does include values such as helping others for their own sake. A biospheric goal frame spurs people to take care of the environment for its own sake. Though the importance to individuals of each goal frame can vary, and not all might be activated when taking a decision, they are all present in each of us (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013; Steg et al., 2014).

Goal frame theory (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013) and basic values theory (Schwartz, 1992, 2012) are not the only modern perspectives pointing to the innate capability of people to act altruistically. Particularly interesting insights have been developed by neurobiology. Patricia Churchland, a neurophilosopher, summarises these insights meaningfully when she states that 'We are wired to care', the title of the introduction to her book *Conscience*. We are wired in the sense that 'infant brains are genetically set up to take pleasure in the company of certain others and to find separation from them painful' (2021, p. ix). Growing up, we learn to enlarge the circle of care to others. We get attuned with the standards of the community we live in, and we also learn to critically reflect on these standards. As Churchland says, we develop a conscience: an irksome inner voice that asks us to discriminate between what is morally right and wrong, and act to bring about what is right mainly in line but sometimes against the standards of our own community. Thanks to conscience, we are therefore able to care for others, including strangers, beyond any good that could accrue to us. Showing goodwill and pro-socially reacting to crises is not rare; it is a behaviour hardwired in our brain.

The conclusion seems unavoidable that all people have the capacity to develop altruistic behaviour and friendships of goodwill, but that not all of them actuate this capacity at any given time. The question is then what impedes people to act on their capacity for altruism and goodwill. One of the reasons may indeed be the lack of 'time and familiarity', as Aristotle says, or the lack of repeated encounters over time as Trivers and Fennel state. A full discussion of the philosophically and practically complex concepts of time, familiarity and encounter would exceed the space limit of this chapter. For the current discussion, it may suffice to say that the rise of the internet and social media has opened the opportunity for encounters that do not require people to be physically present in the same space at the same time. We have now the opportunity – unthinkable in the time of Aristotle and Trivers – to stretch the time and space of encounters among people, including guests and hosts. In other words, the internet and social media can be used to create familiarity and consequently goodwill before the hosting community and the tourists physically meet at a destination. To exemplify, I would like to refer to Karin Velthuizen, owner of camping Vrijhaven in the Netherlands. Karin Velthuizen 'chooses her guests'. This may be a confounding statement. It confounded me when Karin Velthuizen shared it with me. Her explanation was simple. Karin Velthuizen observes her guests closely when they are on site. She then keeps contact with those guests who during their stay clearly embraced the camping's commitment to sustainability, for example, by properly separating waste. She also asks these guests to recommend her camping to their family and

friends (personal communication by Karin Velthuizen to Elena Cavagnaro, April 2019). By a skilful use of social media, Karin Velthuizen creates and extends familiarity and friendship beyond the short moment of physical encounter with her guests. Karin Velthuizen is an entrepreneur. Similar tactics could be applied by other entrepreneurs and by destination management organisations (DMOs) to create familiarity with tourists before and after their physical stay.

In sum, if all human beings (including tourists) have the capacity to develop friendships of goodwill and if familiarity between hosts and guests can be created using tools that are independent from physical presence in the same space and time, then we do not need to design tourism experiences that fit only, or mainly, a vision of humans as self-interested and pleasure-seeking individuals. The path to a gentler form of tourism is not blocked anymore by such a dismal vision on human nature and is therefore practicable.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have claimed that to open the path towards sensitivity and humaneness at destination level, we need to confront the belief that tourists are self-centred, fun-driven and cheating individuals. This view on tourists, and more generally human beings, is central to the neoliberal understanding of consumers and has taken a strong grasp on the mind of economists, politicians, academics and the public at large. To counteract this idea, I have called upon Aristotle's discussion of friendship. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle distinguishes between three forms of friendship: of utility, of pleasure and of goodwill. While friendships of utility and pleasure are short-lived and require reciprocation to develop, friendships of goodwill are felt for others for their own sake and not in expectation of a favour in return. Friendships of goodwill include therefore others, such as tourists staying only a short time at a destination, who may not be able to reciprocate. With reference to basic values theory (Schwartz, 1992, 2012), goal frame theory (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013; Steg et al., 2014) and neurobiology (Churchland, 2021), I have shown that this form of friendship or altruism is not the prerogative of few but is hardwired in all human beings. Finally, I have claimed that the new opportunity arising from the internet and social media can help us in removing barriers – supposing they are indeed such – to the full deployment of altruism like the limited amount of time that modern tourists spend on a destination.

In this conclusion, I would like to stress some consequences of this new view for tourism and tourists by going back first to Aristotle and adding then some personal ideas and suggestions for further research.

In his discussion of friendship, Aristotle repeatedly reflects on the relationship between hosts and guests. At first, he subsumes 'the friendship of a host and guest' under friendships of utility (Aristotle NE VIII, 3). As he makes explicit a bit later in the text (NE VIII, 6), Aristotle is thinking here of the 'commercially minded' and therefore arguably of commercial hospitality in its strictest form (Lashley, 2015). Later, Aristotle insists that each form of friendship involves association,

thus including the friendship between hosts and guests and particularly the friendship among fellow travellers (NE VIII, 9). The stronger this association is or is made to be, the lesser is the propensity to cheat, to not help, to harm or to complain towards the people one associates with (NE VIII, 9). The useful lesson that we can derive here for tourism professionals is that they should develop knowledge on how to favour the development of a sense of community among fellow travellers or between a host and a guest even if they associate only for a short period of time. Proper segmentation and targeting (Cavagnaro et al., 2021) can facilitate this task. Tourism professionals could also consider the vast literature on team building. Skills in the use of social media, as already highlighted above in the case of Karin Velthuizen, are also essential for professionals in the tourism and hospitality industry.

However, more important than the acquisition of new skills is the change in mindset that the understanding of human beings as capable of unqualified altruism and friendship for goodwill can bring in scholars and practitioners. When the mindset or paradigm out of which the system arises changes, then the system itself – its goals, power structure, rules and culture – changes (Meadows, 1997/1999). If when looking at ourselves, we stop seeing self-interested and greedy individuals who at the very best engage in reciprocal acts of altruism and starts seeing human beings, including hosts and guests, as capable of friendships of goodwill because they have a conscience impelling them to care for and help others beyond reciprocity, then the system that we call tourism may start changing towards a more sensitive, human and sustainable path.

This chapter is no more than a first attempt to address altruism in tourism from a broader perspective than reciprocity. Therefore, future research is needed on several issues that have not been touched here. Firstly, future research should more profoundly discuss non-reciprocal forms of altruism in tourism, in general and particularly considering specific forms of tourism such as voluntourism (Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2017; Thompson, 2022). Secondly, future research should explore and learn from practitioners who, as Karin Veldhuizen, already approach their guests as humans and as possible friends. Finally, altruism should also be discussed with reference to non-Western literature and culture, particularly when trying to understand how people interact in a world-wide phenomenon such as tourism.

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