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Hospitality, Peace and Conflict: "Doing Fieldwork" in Palestine

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is the interconnections among in/hospitality, peace, conflict and tourism. Using excerpts from interview notes and a field diary, the paper presents and debates the complex and embodied connections between a Palestinian local host, some tourists and a tourism researcher. Analysis of the data reveals the emotional entanglements experienced within the empathetic space formed during interviews with the distressed local host in Bethlehem. Her tragic stories of living under occupation touched the heart of the researcher. Feelings of sorrow, helplessness, anger, discomfort and guilt were negotiated. In this light, the paper contributes discussions and thinking on the emotional, situated and reflexive implications of fieldwork interactions in an area of ongoing conflict.

Key words: emotions, hospitality, hostility, peace and conflict.

Introduction

In this research we seek to analyse the nature of tourism experiences in a context of in/hospitality, peace, conflict and tourism occurring in a region of ongoing conflict, namely the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. More specifically, we examine the emotional interactions between a Palestinian host, some tourists and the first researcher during an organised tour to the Palestinian host's souvenir shop in Bethlehem. The emotional nature of the encounter is perhaps not surprising given the politically unstable context of the region, where peace and conflict are continually challenged and renegotiated, and where people have been for a long time affected by violence (see Nordstrom & Robben, 1995). Although emotions can be controversial to articulate and politically/ethically-charged, acceptance of emotions in research provides a richer and less sanitised layer of understanding the ways in which research is carried out and theory constructed – revealing an otherwise 'hidden ethnography' (Blackman, 2007). It illustrates the often unconscious form of interaction we have with those with whom we engage in the field, and gives recognition to the challenges and opportunities faced by qualitative researchers which inevitably involves emotions, and which often may not be expected (McIntosh, 2010). It also raises the opportunity to discuss the nature of empathy in our research relationships.

The key questions that we intend to tackle in this article are: In the context of tourism in an area of ongoing socio-political unrest, how are hospitality, peace and conflict interconnected? In what ways does engagement with emotions, felt and performed by researchers while 'doing fieldwork', contribute to understanding the hospitality/hostility binary opposition? To what extent are researchers able to tolerate the embodied emotional entanglements that emerge in the field? How can empathy be mobilised in our emotional responses? As such this paper responds to Hazel Tucker's (2009) invitation for a closer engagement with emotions so as to better understand tourism encounters. Tucker's approach, like this case study, interrogates one particular tourists-researcher-host encounter, which took place in the village of Göreme between a local Turkish woman, a tourist German couple and herself. She argues that tourism is "not reducible to questions of discourse alone and that, if we

are to understand tourism encounters more fully, it is necessary to examine closely their emotional and bodily dimensions" (Tucker, 2009, p. 444).

Through this case study research we join Tucker's discussion on emotional entanglements, empathy and reflexivity while conducting fieldwork. The originality that this article contributes to tourism studies is the examination of the emotional hosted encounter between the researcher, the host and the tourists in a location of continuing socio-political turmoil, that of Israel/Palestine. From this standpoint, this paper also contributes critical thinking to the interdisciplinary studies of conflict, peace, hospitality and tourism. While other disciplines such as biblical studies (Swartley, 2006; Yoder, 1989), international relations (Richmond, 2005, 2008) and geography (Gregory, 2010; Megoran, 2008, 2010, 2011; Ramadan, 2011; Spykman, 1944, 2007) have long pondered matters of peace and war, tourism researchers have only recently engaged with theories on peace and conflict (see Moufakkir & Kelly, 2010). Our research seeks to open an inter- and multidisciplinary discussion, specifically in relation to emotions and empathy and how they shape conceptualizations of peace, conflict and hospitality.

Literature Review: Hospitality, Peace and Emotions

Discourses of peace, safety and security are readily present in tourism narratives on Israel/Palestine. "Peace – the word evokes the simplest and most cherished dream of humanity. Peace is, and has always been, the ultimate human aspiration," said Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary-General of the United Nations (as cited in Moufakkir & Kelly, 2010, p.xvii). In this place of socio-political turmoil, discourses of peace accentuate a perpetual condition of living with conflict and war. Desire for peace is understood not as the 'absence of war' but living in harmony and having harmonious relationships amongst neighboring countries. It is argued that "there is more to peace than the absence of arms and conflicts" (Moufakkir & Kelly, 2010, p.xvi). However, war is incompatible with peace, and a basic precondition for peace is the absence of violence. Salazar (2006) argues that peace is not static and utopian, but imperfect and permeable and there are as many types and definitions of peace as there are cultures. The author proposes a broad definition for peace as referring to "peaceful relationships not only between nations, but also between groups or communities, between individuals, and between people and nature" (Salazar, 2006, p.322). Building these peaceful relationships can be achieved through understanding and accepting 'difference' of 'the others', as rebuttal of cultural identities fuels wars and conflicts around the globe.

Derrida (2000), for example, discusses hospitality in connection to peace as being a right, not philanthropy, linked to Kant's perpetual peace. Hospitality then becomes an aporia – an irresolvable philosophical contradiction – of unconditional welcoming offered to strangers when they arrive on someone else's territory. Trying to articulate a deeper understanding of hospitality, the author describes it as a utopian ideal based on the ethics of responsibility for one another. Hospitality is, however, "opposed to what is nothing other than opposition itself, namely, hostility. The welcomed guest is a stranger treated as a friend or ally, as opposed to the stranger treated as an enemy (friend/enemy, hospitality/hostility)" (Derrida, 2000, p.4). The pairs friend/enemy and hospitality/hostility are in place, the author maintains. We, further contend, that these seemingly dichotomous terms, act not as binary oppositions, but as interrelated and overlapping elements. The complex interconnection between hospitality and hostility – hence Derrida's hostipitality – is generated by affects, feelings, emotions and senses engaged while travelling in an area of ongoing conflict. Such an approach that incorporates emotions felt and performed in danger zones will contribute to tourism studies. Examining the interconnections between hospitality, peace and conflict, the hospitality/hostility binary opposition is destabilised as emotions are brought forward in tourism research. Drawing on

Derrida's concept of hostipitality we seek to argue that engaging with emotions, felt and performed by researchers while 'doing fieldwork', contribute to understanding how the hospitality/hostility binary opposition is being troubled.

Emotions matter, yet they have been conspicuously absent from previous hospitality and tourism research. Jamal and Hollinshead (2001) argue that "[t]he omission of studies and narratives which locate … 'emotion' in tourism, whether that of the tourist or the host, is a problem which has been noted and addressed by very few scholars" (p.67). Their call for more recognition of emotion in tourism studies a decade ago seems to have been a cry that remains mostly unheard. Disparate accounts of shame and pride (Johnston, 2005, 2007; Tucker, 2009; Waitt, Figueroa & McGee, 2007), and fear (Mura, 2010) in tourism have been recently published. However, debate on the place of emotions in tourism research remains largely absent; arguably, it has been marginalised through the gender politics of research wherein the academy is conditioned to principles of distance, objectivity and rationality (Pritchard et al., 2011), and is often judged to be unscientific, pretentious or evasive (McIntosh 2010). As a consequence, perhaps, emotions are not only absent from understanding the tourist experience and the tourist-host encounter as presented in scholarly writing, but also notably from tourism researchers' accounts of their fieldwork.

The discipline of geography, on the other hand, has witnessed a "welling-up of emotions", which has resulted from recognition that emotions are "all-pervasive yet also heart- and gut-wrenchingly present and personal" (Davidson & Smith, 2009, p.440). To maintain its critical edge, geography has positively engaged with work on affects, emotions and feelings. Likewise, we advocate a genuine expressing of, and dealing with, emotions, including an emotional attachment within tourism research to counteract the emotional detachment of past research, which proliferated in the name of 'researcher's objectivity'. "Our human world is constructed and lived through the emotions" (Anderson & Smith, 2001, p.8); so too is our travel and tourism world, and our tourist encounters with people and places. Emotions travel with us and through us. This paper aims therefore to raise attention to the situated and emotional nature of research through revealing, in particular, some of the emotional dialogue involved in fieldwork.

Fieldwork and Methods

In this case study research we undertook two interviews, in July and October 2010, with a Palestinian host in Bethlehem, Claire Anastas[1]. In addition we also employ data obtained from ethnographical observations capturing the dynamics of tourists-host interaction during the two visits to her souvenir shop. Further reflections were written in the first author's field diary at the end of the two tours. The aim of the in-depth interviews and participant observation notes was to critically reveal the nature of the embodied emotional connections between the tourists, the host and the researcher (Crouch & Desforges, 2003). As the sensitive nature of such encounters is revealed we also discuss the ability of the first author to tolerate emotional entanglements which surfaced while 'doing fieldwork'.

[1] We have cautiously considered whether to use Claire Anastas' name in this paper in an attempt to protect her privacy. Two considerations made us decide to name her. First, a simple online search using some or all of these words 'Palestinian house in Bethlehem surrounded by the wall' yields numerous results in text and image about and with her face and house. Second, it is the first author's understanding that the more known her story becomes the more the international community will mobilise to support her and the others like her in their claims to live in peace and dignity. These are the views Claire expressed during the interview with the first author when she signed the interview consent form and agreed to have her name and the information in the interview employed in articles, book chapters, published and unpublished work and presentations.

The ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects that define our worldview and hence underpin our research fit within a critical social sciences approach. We view reality not as containing one general truth waiting to be uncovered and recorded, but as made up of nuanced, individual stories, of multiple subjectivities which bring different insights and empathies to the field. Such an ontological outlook is intertwined with our epistemological approach to knowledge production, namely that our backgrounds, values, ideologies and, above all, our affects, emotions and feelings shape our research, as opposed to an 'objective' and unidirectional perspective (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004). Central to our qualitative approach to this research is the acknowledgement that the researcher is not the expert and his/her own voice represents one amongst the rest (Crang, 2002, 2003, 2005). This critical research stance fosters reflexivity of the in/hospitable experiences that are actively co-created between researcher and participants (Aitchison, 2005, 2007; Franklin & Crang, 2001). We argue that emotions of anger, fear and guilt that emerged from the interviews and notes, as well as the empathetic space formed between the first author, as the interviewer, and the interviewee are useful experiences in the field and should not be bracketed out from our accounts. We, therefore, reveal the role of empathy and reflexivity in the emotional plight of field research in a region of conflict. As Hall (2011) has noted of tourism fieldwork in general: "[f]ieldwork is as much about emotion as it is about the formal research process" (p.317).

The Case Study

"Trapped in Bethlehem" (Downes, 2007), "Boxed in" (Adamski, 2007)", "The house with seven walls" (Palestine Monitor, 2008), are some titles on the World Wide Web about Claire Anastas' story. Claire Anastas lives in Bethlehem, Palestine together with her husband, children and extended family in a three-storey house, which was built in the early 1960s. On July 23rd 2001 the Israeli Government decided to build a security fence in "response to the horrific wave of terrorism emanating from the West Bank, resulting in suicide bombers who enter into Israel with the sole intention of killing innocent people" (Israeli Ministry of Defence website, 2007). The security fence is a contentious issue in the Israeli-Palestinian landscape generating much dispute among politicians, social and political activists, journalists, academic researchers and others (Curti, 2008; Gelbman & Keinan, 2007; Isaac, 2010; Falah, 2004; 2007; 2008). While it is not our intention to contribute to the discussion on the legitimacy of the security fence, we are acknowledging the decision of the International Court of Justice of July 9th 2004 to rule, by 14 votes to one, the security fence as illegal.

The aim of this article is not to 'set the matters straight', or to pontificate who is right and who is wrong. We are concerned with enquiring into the interconnections arising from hostility, hospitality and emotions felt in a region of ongoing conflict. The presence of the wall/fence/barrier, irrespective of the terminology, contributes to the intricate historical, political, social and economic background in Israel/Palestine. By discussing tourism in an area of complex geo-political relations we do not seek to take sides, nor to remain 'neutral'. As stated above, we understand that we cannot divorce ourselves from our emotions in our research process. It is our contention that travel within an area of ongoing conflict inevitably raises emotions and empathy for those affected by the conflict, leading to disruption of the hospitality/hostility dichotomy.

Throughout this paper, however, we will use the United Nations and International Court of Justice terminology for the "wall" since it is "a complex construction and … cannot be understood in a limited physical sense. However, the other terms used, either by Israel ("fence") or by the Secretary-General ("barrier"), are no more accurate if understood in the physical sense" (International Court of Justice website, 9 July 2004). It is argued that the term 'separation wall' is "employed by those negatively affected by its existence and those engaged

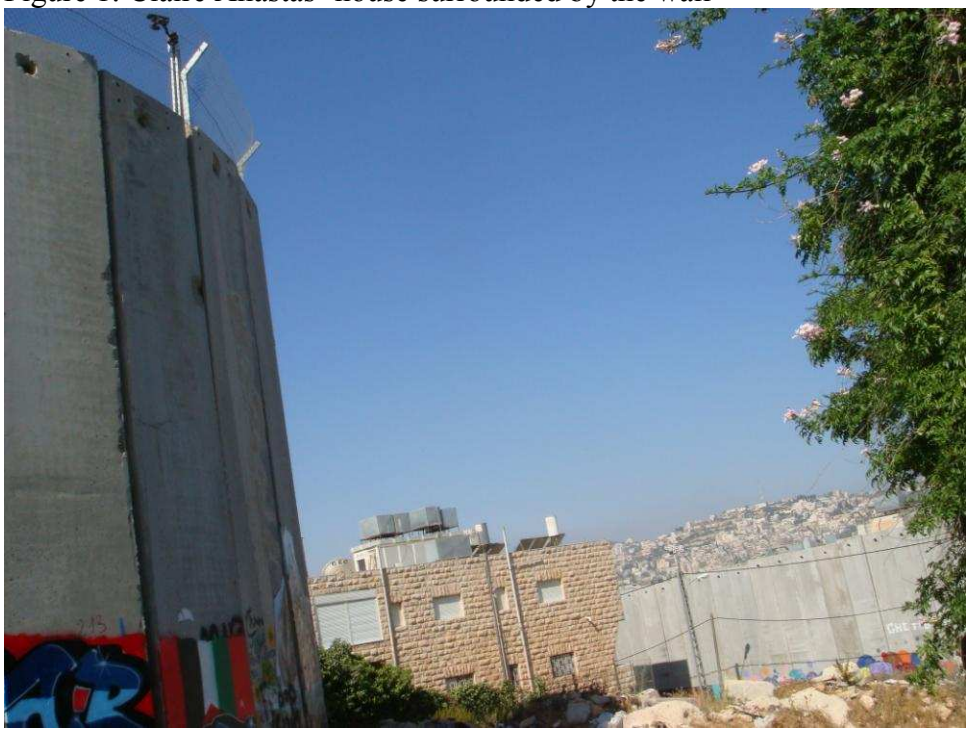
in challenging it" (Pallister-Wilkins, 2011, p.28). In an attempt to respond to calls for cessation of hostilities and animosities between the two sides we refer to this construction as the 'security wall' to render both perspectives.

In 2003, the security wall was built in and around Bethlehem, one of the main cities in Palestine, with devastating social, cultural and economic effects for the city. Claire Anastas bitterly remembers when and how it happened:

> In 2003 before Christmas time, one week and a half before Christmas time – I remember it – they put the wall up in one day. They dug for two months before, and we were fighting, trying to communicate our struggle [to authorities]. They [Israeli Defense Establishment] surrounded our building in one day. When the children went to school, they returned back at 2.30 [in the afternoon]. They found themselves blocked completely with that ugly wall. They saw it as a high – very, very high, long ghost surrounding their life. It became hopeless for them, and no future, they became frustrated with life, with what happened with us while we were living under occupation and terrible situation, in this horrible life, horrible fear and terror (Claire Anastas, interview, July 20, 2010).

Claire Anastas' house is located on what used to be one of the busiest roads at the entrance into Bethlehem from Jerusalem. Now, it sits in its own dead end and is directly enclosed on three sides by the eight-meter high security wall (see Figure 1). Together with her family she now runs a souvenir shop, but many pilgrims and tourists to Bethlehem do not visit her shop because it is about seven miles from the Church of the Holy Nativity and pilgrims are on a set schedule with limited time for anything else.

Figure 1: Claire Anastas' house surrounded by the wall



Source: Photograph taken by the author, 2010

Study Findings and Discussions: The Interviews and Field Diary Notes

I met Claire Anastas on two occasions, once on the 20th of July 2010 and the second time on 12th of October 2010. The first time was after approximately 10 days of being in Israel and

Palestine. It was a short visit to her souvenir shop together with a small group of tourists and a Palestinian guide. On this occasion I also had an interview with her.

> *My story is a long story … As we are civilians, we are only victims here, and nobody* [helps us], and we are ignored by almost everybody, who has the power to do [change] something (Claire Anastas, interview, July 20, 2010).

This is how Claire started recounting her story. She has told it many times before to many people. There was sadness in her eyes, bitterness in her voice, but dignity in her demeanor and consideration for her grooming and clothes. 'We are victims', 'nobody helps', 'we are ignored' resounded powerfully in the first author's heart, mind and soul. My empathy and emotions were aroused, but I had to stay composed and be a good listener during the interview. Our shared gender identity provided a base for empathy between us. Our 'eastern' backgrounds are also something we have in common, an aside that I could resort to so as to better communicate and empathise with her. I lived through the 1989 revolution and several violent clashes in the early 1990s in my native Romania. I was but a child then, not a woman like Claire needing to take care of a whole family. However I felt I understood her, I felt empathy.

Bondi (2003) argues that there is nothing mysterious about feeling sad upon hearing a story of loss and suffering but it does "depend on an intersubjective exchange: something of the inner reality of one person is not only communicated to another person, but is actively incorporated into the inner reality of that other person" (p.70). As Claire was recounting her story I became angry with those who do not help her and her family. I empathised with her struggles as I tried to remain aware of our differences while understanding and feeling her own experiential frame of reference.

By empathising with Claire, I validated the details she described of the Bethlehem siege in 2002, the Israeli soldiers' alleged brutality when they occupied her house and transformed it into a buffer zone between the two clashing sides, the leaders who never are there to help, and so on.

> In 2002 the Israeli military made the siege and occupied all Bethlehem, and they put us in a curfew. They caged people inside the Nativity Church. There were clashes there, and they caged us for 40 days here in our house. They [Israeli soldiers] turned our building and all the area into a military-base area – completely military, full of *military, and that's why people left. They couldn't bear staying* here. For my family, *we couldn't leave our property. We couldn't leave it for them. And we couldn't even get the children out. Nobody helped with that. … We were shaking. Our brains were* shaking and we were under fear; we used to see our children turning their eyes up. We were all traumatised. Their legs were blue from the fear of the bullets and the *bombs around…the noise, the most horrible noise. And we used to cover their ears, but it didn't work. They used the nig*ht to shoot, and we never slept (Claire Anastas, interview, October 11, 2010).

'Siege', 'cage', 'curfew', 'clashes', 'bombs', 'trauma' were words that further emphasised my emotional involvement during the interviewing process. In the process of empathising with my interviewee, that is, imaginatively entering her experiential world, a wealth of affects, emotions and feelings were mobilised. I felt angry, sad and guilty for not being able to help with anything. While listening empathetically trying to understand her, I felt useless for not being in the position to provide her with any support. I could but imagine how terrible it must feel to 'be caged in' your own house for 40 days, to have soldiers in your own house shooting at night. By the end of the interview I was overwhelmed, moved to anger and having teary eyes. I knew then that interviewing 'in the trenches', as it were, was not going to be emotionally easy. Hospitality and hostility as intimately linked reflect the uncanny connection between war and peace. To understand peace and how to make peace "[w]e might have to

study war" (Ramadan, 2011, p.195). To begin to understand peace and hospitality I wrote daily entries and pondered my feelings and emotions in the field.

The Field Diary

Tuesday 20th of July 2010

We were a small group made up of a young couple from Canada, Sean from the UK, a German guy and myself. We reached Claire's house, and were offered Turkish coffee in her souvenir shop, which is located on the ground floor of her house. She narrated her sad story in a victimised, low voice and you could not help but feel sorrow for herself and her family 'buried alive in a tomb.'

When the rest of the group left I stayed behind and had an interview with Claire. It was a long talk, slightly more than one hour. She emphasised that the small souvenir shop and the bed and breakfast accommodation that she offered for foreigners were the only sources of income her family had. I almost felt like crying, I felt guilty I couldn't help them, so I promised myself that later on, in a month or so, I would travel back to Bethlehem and stay in her small hostel, thus contributing to her income from the little money I had.

Tuesday, 12th of October 2010

It was Tuesday morning, so, my friend, the Palestinian guide, had his usual Bethlehem tour. As I was already living in Claire's house for one day I suggested that he, together with the group of tourists, could pass by her souvenir shop. My friend takes tourists to Claire's shop mostly to have them hear her sad story of life near the wall and on this occasion they might decide to purchase souvenirs from her shop.

This particular visitor group consisted of two women in their 60s from the United States, and two couples in their early 30s. Welcoming the group with Turkish coffee Claire started to tell her story:

- 'military area – biblical roots' to refer to Bethlehem
- 'when Israeli military occupied our house they gave us legal papers to show us they can occupy whenever and whatever'.
- 'from 2000-2003 they put the wall, they buried us alive'
- 'as civilians we are weak'
- she shows the nativity scene carved in wood behind a carved wall, the wall is a recent addition and is the 'symbol for our situation – Nativity Church with removable wall carved in wood.'

After her talk, visitors are invited to look around the shop and perhaps buy something. As the visitors left the shop I wanted to spend some time with Claire trying to relate my unhappiness with the small, window-less room and the whole accommodation deal in her bed and breakfast level of her own house. As soon as we sat to chat a big truck came to repair the sewage system, then she was busy on the phone so I decided to mind my own business. In the evening I returned to her house, paid for one day of room and board and moved to a different family in Bethlehem.

Why did I feel like crying upon hearing her story? It was the first time I had ever seen or heard about her; she is not related to me in any way. Why then did I feel sorry and guilty that I could not do anything to help? Was I right to leave Claire's house and look for different accommodation in October during my second time in Bethlehem? Was it too much for me to witness or live, even if it was just for a few days, the Palestinian plight? Should I have stayed in spite of my feelings of discomfort? Were those initial sentiments of moral outrage experienced only at a superficial and hypocritical level?

The difficulties of negotiating my feelings and emotions in the field emerged, as described in the field diary notes above. Doing tourism fieldwork is not a straightforward and totally pleasant experience. Punch (in press) acknowledges that, "[f]ieldwork can be difficult as we have to actually go out there and do it; it is not armchair theorizing in the comfort of our home. It can be messy, nerve-wracking and hard work" (p.4). I felt the initial encounter with Claire very intensely, I was deeply touched by her situation. As researchers we do not want to be perceived as weak and have tears in the eyes when listening to a participant's sad life story, yet we cannot remain aloof and robotically proceed with the data collection.

Being so immersed in the sadness of her recount, that days and weeks after the interview I kept thinking about ways to provide some help, such as searching scholarships online for one of her children who was at a local university and wished to study abroad. I even emailed the scholarship advisor at my university to ask whether there were any grants for Palestinian students, or whether the advisor knew of any such grants Palestinian students could apply for elsewhere. While Dowler (2001) advocates attachment, involvement and intense contact with participants, Linkogle (2000) warns researchers not to immerse and identify themselves so much with their informants "that they lose sight of their own physical and emotional vulnerabilities" (p.3). Intensity, guilt, desire to be of help was what I felt during my first encounter with Claire.

The second time I met Claire I was more disappointed than sympathetic. To this day I cannot explain how that sympathy for her situation turned into disappointment, or how the experience of hospitality turned into hostility, which eventually made me leave her house. Was it her insistence to bring tourists to her souvenir shop? How could I even do that? I am a tourist/researcher myself, not a tour guide. Was it the small windowless room she assigned for me in her bed and breakfast hostel? Was it the last minute raise in price for the room and one meal a day? Was it my own self-consciousness about money since I was in the region on a very tight student budget? Was it the strength of dramatic emotions she exuded whenever she talked to me and other tourists? Was it the intensity of the struggles of this Palestinian family, encircled by the wall, which was emotionally too much for me to deal with? It must have been a combination of all these reasons and feelings. To consider, even in passing, that Claire was financially benefitting from the wall would be unfair, to say the least. How can one financially or otherwise benefit from 'living in a cage', 'boxed in' by an eight meter high concrete wall? It was my inability to cope with my own emotional responses to Claire's tragic situation that made me leave her house. From this perspective it would be interesting and useful to read in future articles how other researchers deal with their emotional entanglements that emerge in the field.

Writing about these emotions and struggles in the field was therapeutic for me. Field diary writing was a safe channel to express, negotiate and understand my thoughts, my feelings, especially those which might have been 'unacceptable', such as anger and discomfort. It is claimed that the emotion of anger has been socially constructed to necessarily lead to negative socio-political outcomes and should be avoided at all times (Henderson, 2008). I join Henderson (2008) and other researchers (see for example Mikula et al., 1998) who challenge this idea and make a guarded defense of anger as an emotional response to experiencing and witnessing perceived injustice and hostility. Henderson (2008) argues that, for this very reason, the absence of anger is problematic and that "[t]here are some things for which we ought to be angry, and these things include affronts to common human dignity" (p.35). Witnessing the life of a family who lives in a house 'boxed in' by a wall is, I feel, something to be angry and emotional about. I also acknowledge the duty to regulate this anger. Conversely, if moderated anger is not expressed, I would, therefore, tacitly agree to that particular mode of behavior and leave the impression that it is acceptable and thus it may become the norm.

Conclusion

In this paper we have presented our analytical reflections and excerpts from two interviews and the field diary of a tourism researcher to illustrate the emotional and situated nature of fieldwork in an area of ongoing conflict – specifically, that of a visit to the souvenir shop of Claire Anastas in Bethlehem. We agree with Hall (2011) that contemporary tourism fieldwork often involves locational notions of 'otherness' with 'the field' being tied to cultural and environmental differences. Emotional reflections on fieldwork can be perplexing and personally uncomfortable to reveal, and leave a lasting impact on the researcher as well as the researched. Punch (in press) explains, "the emotional, practical and personal challenges of fieldwork remain complex and often unresolved" (p.2). Field diaries are useful places to articulate and accept conflicting emotions and to navigate through them while on the field and later when analysing the information collected. Using the reflexivity and emotionality of diaries as autoethnographic accounts of our experiences in the field is an invitation to all readers to look inside reported research experiences and construct their own interpretations of them.

We have also discussed matters of hospitality in a place of ongoing conflict, in particular we have focused on the ways in which emotions of anger and discomfort bridge the two seemingly opposed terms, hospitality and hostility. We encourage readers to also share their emotional reflections in their published writing rather than just leaving it in the confines of their field notes, and to share the nature of their emotions, even if the emotions described are perceived as somehow 'unacceptable', for example, anger.

Discussing hospitality in relation to war and peace, Ramadan (2011) notes that "hospitality, based on an ethical responsibility for others, is possible at a time of war [and] can also be the foundation for building more peaceful relations when the fighting stops" (p.196). The author analyses feelings of humility, tradition and solidarity, in extenso of hospitality, shown by Palestinian refugees in Lebanon towards Lebanese citizens seeking refuge in Palestinian camps in the wake of the 2006 war between the Israeli Defence Force and Hizbullah, a Lebanese militant group. As tourists and researchers, we join authors who maintain that hospitality in Israel/Palestine and the wider Middle East region should be understood beyond "abstention from hostility" (Ramadan, 2011, p.196). If and when the conflict in the region subsides peaceful relations can be built with peace being understood not simply as an armistice because then it would not be peace (Derrida, 2000). Derrida argues that "[p]eace implies within its concept of peace the promise of eternity" (p.6). In such a peaceful context, Claire would no longer recount stories of war but of joy and would welcome tourists in the Holy Land of Bethlehem.

Tourism academics, we think, need to more comprehensively embrace research as not being done by "someone 'out there' a shadowy figure set apart" (Widdowfield, 2000, p.199). We encourage researchers to bring themselves into the research process in a reflexive manner that acknowledges and articulates the role of emotions and empathy in their accounts and thereby builds an academic climate of legitimacy for emotions and tourism research. Not only adding to the quality and transparency of reflexive research, discussions of emotional entanglements in the research process are also important to the researcher's ability to cope in the field, and for others to learn coping strategies from the entanglements articulated and negotiated in field diaries. Dunkley (2007), for example, was supported and empowered by her supervisors to include herself and her experiences in the writing process by using direct quotes from her field diary as a thanatourist/researcher, thus breathing life and meaning into her research. Such examples do not, unfortunately, abound in tourism research. The author describes her struggles with traditional research conventions when trying to understand how the different 'selves' bring different insights and empathies to the field. Although not always easy to achieve, empathy is needed for researchers to be able to understand the interviewee's

feelings and experiential world whilst staying in touch with the difference between the other person's feelings and his/her own (Bondi, 2003). Thus, the interviewee feels understood emotionally and experientially, but the interviewer does not become overwhelmed or incapacitated by the emotional engagement.

Empathising with those we interview may be a challenge not attempted or indeed achieved successfully by all, but reflecting on the emotional situations of those whom we interview can ensure the vitality and rigour of research practices. The benefit of empathy, as Bondi (2003) describes, is that it provides space for difference in the research relationship whilst also enabling the researcher to communicate respect and recognition. As such, empathy does not expunge differences or inequalities; rather, it can be a useful means to reflect upon the experiences of fieldwork relationships, especially in the context of emotional entanglements which are brought about by the nature of the sensitive Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

One last point we wish to emphasise is that this account is not a tale of woe, not even of the unusual; rather, the experiences reported here provide evidence that an area of ongoing conflict inevitably raises emotions, and these should be acknowledged and debated in tourism studies. Our accounts of in/hospitality in an area of conflict, our emotions and our feelings are also likely to be notably different compared to those of the deeply uprooted by such conflict.

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