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Geography of Leisure and Tourism Research in the German-speaking World: Three Pillars to Progress

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ABSTRACT *The development of leisure and tourism research in the German-speaking world shows a number of distinct stages. The origins of tourism research can be traced back to Hans Poser and his analyses of tourism in the Riesengebirge in 1939 (today Krkonosze, Krkonoše). His main focus was on the landscape as a setting for tourism. He considered the analysis of the interactions between landscape and the holidaymaking public the main task of geography. In contrast, 'Geography of Leisure Behaviour', from the so-called Munich School, placed more emphasis on people and leisure-based human behaviour. Current approaches focus on applied issues such as sustainable tourism and spatial carrying capacity, as well as current societal changes and the ensuing changes in supply and demand. Another current focus of research is the significance of geographical space for leisure and tourism. This is no longer limited to physical space, but also includes so-called 'action space', perceived space and even virtual space. Notwithstanding the many special trends that result from the increasing fragmentation of society, the main task of geography of tourism and leisure must remain to support sustainable development and take a holistic view of leisure and tourism.*

KEY WORDS: Tourism, leisure, research, Germany, history, prospects

Introduction

It is one of the most challenging tasks to be invited to write a review of disciplinary progress in one's field. This task is made all the more daunting when three points are considered. The first two of these are operational and relate to language and the culture of enquiry. In the case of the former, to communicate effectively the nuances of the approach by German-speaking

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scholars and their respective relevance in English would be a devilishly difficult task, even for a professional translator! In terms of the latter, it is important to reflect that there are key differences in how geographies of tourism and leisure are constructed and interpreted. Scholars working in North America, the UK and Australasia on the one hand, and those in Germany, Austria and Switzerland on the other (and in other parts of the world for that matter), may be bound together by their perceived mutual interests in the geographies of tourism, leisure and recreation. However, to describe the term 'geography' as a common denominator may be to gloss over significant disparities in approach, focus and emphasis based on their backgrounds and training. As more mainstream accounts of the history of geography as a discipline have demonstrated, interpretations and schools of thought as to what actually constitutes geography and geographical enquiry, as well as how geography as an academic pursuit has evolved, vary often quite markedly, depending upon the intellectual settings and traditions from which geography has materialized. Distinctive modes of geographical enquiry and geographical thinking have emerged over time, not least in Britain, North America, Germany and France, each with important differences of emphasis, but also simultaneously with common core interests and epistemological and ontological overlaps. The proliferation of English as a global academic language and enhanced communication skills among non-English native speakers may have increasingly facilitated the transfer of knowledge and ideas from contemporary human geography in Britain and North America to Europe. These ideas may inform the pursuit of geographical knowledges about leisure and tourism in the German-speaking world which are constantly unfolding (see, for example, Hennig 1997); more crucially, the nature of contemporary enquiry is also deeply rooted in, and shaped by, the traditions and concerns of the past. In this respect, at the beginning of this review it is crucial to establish the principal concerns of the geography of leisure and tourism in the German-speaking world. These are based on a long-held – even 'traditional' – view of geography as a spatial science. Hans Hopfinger (2003) has recently argued that the geography of tourism and leisure is defined by its focus on the spatial dimensions of leisure and tourism and attempts to explain the underlying spatial processes. This may be dissimilar with perspectives on, and approaches to, the geography of leisure and tourism elsewhere in the world; irrespective, it underscores the direction taken in the German-speaking world, which we may broadly interpret as research workers trained and/or active in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

As a third introductory observation, it is crucial to record the sheer volume of scholarly material that has been published on tourism and leisure within the German-speaking world, where scholars have been as prolific as their counterparts in the UK, North America and Australia and New Zealand. Becker *et al.*'s (2003) comprehensive synthesis of progress in leisure and tourism geographies stands as testament to this. Almost

inevitably, therefore, by definition, any review of the main historical and intellectual thrusts will be limited by the scope of the setting, inevitably selective and determined by personal value judgements. Thus, there are two aims to this paper. The first is to raise awareness beyond the German-speaking world of the long and distinguished progress made in understanding the landscapes of tourism and leisure. Beyond a historical account of the emergence of leisure and tourism as credible research themes in geography, this paper has a second aim – to point to current critical issues and themes as a means of stimulating inter-cultural exchange and debate.

There are three main sections to this paper. Each covers a defining epoch in the development of the geography of leisure and tourism, or the three main pillars of contemporary knowledge: the early Poserian period; advances associated with the Munich School; and current developments.

Early Precedents

First Steps: Fremdenverkehrsgeographie *as a Holistic Approach*

Hans Poser's (1939a; 1939b) work on the Riesengebirge mountains marks the main awakening of interest in the geography of tourism in the German-speaking world (see also Hoevermann & Oberbeck 1972). This early exploration is interesting because it is the first major commentary to contemplate how tourism and geography are connected. At the time he wrote, mass tourism and the sheer number of niche markets we encounter today simply did not exist. Although we now recognize that mountains are just one specific type of tourism destination, at that time they attracted important numbers of visitors from external or 'foreign' sources (hence, the early term *Fremdenverkehrsgeographie* – lit. 'foreign traffic geography' – for 'leisure and tourism geography'). Far from working on a recognizable, exclusive tourism geography *per se*, Poser's interest was really in the wider entity of tourism and the specific role of geography in this context. Convinced that a 'geography of tourism' should not be a question of statistics or a mere mapping of tourism functions, he was a strong advocate of a much broader approach that went beyond selected spatial elements of tourism, such as into the natural environment.

Poser's contribution was to highlight the importance of tourism and leisure in reading the landscape and its development, and vice versa. Posited in and driven by the dominant regional geography paradigm of the day, he argued that tourism and leisure represented important land uses in the region and to exclude them would be to develop only a partial understanding of the organization and development of the environment. Moreover, to read tourism alongside other (physical as well as human-induced) geographical dimensions was crucial because there were mutually

reinforcing relationships. As Poser (1939b: 177) put it, 'only by doing so can the essence of the geographical meaning of tourism manifest itself, [and] only by doing so can we understand the manifoldness of the relationships and problems' associated with it. Poser argued that tourism takes place within geographical space to create its own particular type of cultural landscape in the process. Tourism, alongside other processes, creates distinctive regions – practically 'tourism regions' – which are special entities with a definite character that sets them apart from other regions. This character is expressed in their settlement, economy, traffic and lifestyle, all of which are subject to change in space and time.

Thus, tourism was interpreted as a function of environmental conditions; the principal factors driving the development of tourism spaces were landscape and climatic conditions in the destination region itself, as well as the population situation in the visitor's home region. This was an early attempt to develop dialectic factor sets (like 'push' and 'pull' factors), the resolution of which dictates the nature of tourism development. Favouring factors (such as a growing population in the visitors' areas of origin, increasing interest in leisure and tourism, improved infrastructure etc.) and inhibiting factors (such as political crises, climate etc.) all contributed to the shaping of a tourism region. In his view, *Landschaft* (Landscape) – with all its physical and cultural manifestations and connotations – offered the decisive potential for tourism development and consumption. However, *Landschaft* was a double-edged sword in so far as the contrast between the areas of origin and the destination also represented a basis for tensions.

Today, Poser's work is understandably dated and such a holistic approach to identifying and interpreting particular types of landscapes and regions, among which tourism and leisure are components, has long-since been abandoned. Notwithstanding, however obvious and contestable Poser's work may now appear, his research constitutes the first pillar of the emerging field of leisure and tourism geography in the German-speaking world because he shifted the focus of interest in tourism and leisure to where tourism actually takes place; that is, to space, the region and landscape. Although Poser was not especially interested in mapping tourism in a more isolated, abstract sense as we may do today, his study heralded the beginning of complex spatial analyses. These combined the analysis of functional and structural elements with analyses of cultural landscape developments.

Research on the Principal Regulating Factors of Tourism Space

Poser's approach was not considered the only approach to interpreting the geographies of leisure and tourism. Several scholars set out to discover basic principles underlying the development of tourist areas. For instance, perhaps most notably, Christaller (1955) attempted to apply his central

places theory to the spatial system of tourism. His hypothesis was that zones more distant from urban and industrial agglomerations offered more favourable conditions for tourism development. The so-called 'periphery hypothesis' suggested a central–peripheral nexus in which the polarization between the source area in the centre and the tourism area in the periphery is decisive. However, even he had to concede that it was practically impossible to define explicit rules determining the spatial patterns of tourism; that is, rules that showed the same mathematical regularity as his central places theory. Later, a distance gradient for international tourism was devised based on the assumption that the flow of travel between origin and destination regions depended on their respective size and distance (cf. Kaminske 1977). This quasi-mathematical approach has since been superseded by developments in human mobility and transportation. Today, leisure and tourism not only take place in 'pleasure peripheries', but also – as it were – in central places which are no longer perceived as grey and industrial. Similarly, the perception of space has rendered such ideas largely obsolete. 'Geographical space' has, for a long time, not been synonymous with 'real space' because not only spatial distance, but also social, mental or psychological distance play an important role in how the world is understood.

Christaller's abstract conceptualizations were a precursor to other early reductionists, some of whom attempted to equate tourism and its patterns to economic principles (Böventer 1988). This was not a surprising approach in view of tourism's status as one of the most significant industries worldwide. While such theoretical approaches may have provided useful hypotheses, like most positivist academic ventures, they were criticized for their failure to incorporate the human dimension adequately, in spite of the social sciences' long-standing belief that human activities and human behaviour should, in fact, be the starting point and core concern of research. Moreover, they also came under attack from those who argued that economic statutory principles alone could not explain the causes and consequences, mechanisms and processes of leisure and tourism.

Progress in leisure and tourism research followed separate paths in West and East Germany. In the communist German Democratic Republic (GDR), where the entire leisure industry operated under the suspicious eyes of the state, tourism research took a different tack to the West. In a curious way both Poser's and Christaller's legacies were evident in the GDR. At first, East German geographers remained faithful to Poser's dictum that geography of leisure was primarily a geography of tourism destinations (Benthien 1997: 36). Gradually, this focus changed. Tourism was extricated from its relationships with physical and cultural landscapes. Instead, it was conceptualized in a more abstract manner as a component in economic landscapes and in the state-regulated system of production and consumption. Soon the main task of tourism geography became the study of tourism as a factor of territorial production complexes (Jacob 1968: 51). Later, Benthien was to

provide the impetus for the development of the so-called 'Greifswald Model of Recreational Geography'. Its purpose was to draw together – in one major overview – the societal origins of tourism and leisure (by considering tourism and recreation as basic human needs with available leisure time), the theoretical basis or basic model (i.e. the territorial or spatial recreational system), the main fields of research and teaching (i.e. the spatial requirements and consequences of leisure use) and the main methodological steps in theoretical and applied syntheses (i.e. classification, categorization, regionalization and modelling). This comprehensive model also included other results, drawn for instance from tourism literature (Benthien 1997: 38). Although this model was conceived against the background of state planning, its authors still consider it suitable for application to the conditions of a market economy on account of its abstraction of space and comprehensive approach.

The Munich School and the *Geographie des Freizeitverhaltens*

Within the German-speaking world, the geography of leisure and tourism has often oscillated between two extremes. 'Too much' emphasis on the spatial aspects resulted in a shift in the other direction, which considered tourism and its spatial patterns as part of broader leisure activities. Driven by the so-called 'Munich School', the now well-established field of social geography focused on the consumption of time and space by human groups and societies in their non-obligated, 'free' time. Here, the main thrust became 'leisure', which is considered one of the basic functions of existence (*Daseinsgrundfunktion Erholung*) within the so-called 'process-field landscape' (*Prozessfeld Landschaft*) (Ruppert 1975; see also Ruppert & Maier 1970).

In the 1970s, the geography of leisure and patterns of human behaviour gradually replaced traditional work on the 'geography of tourism', with its Poserian link to cultural landscapes. Recreational behaviour and activities now dominated debate. Detailed case studies attempted to define the capacities, the range and radius of different socio-geographical groups. One particular concern was the 'action-space approach' which attempted to explain leisure-related interactions between individuals and their effects on space (cf. Heinritz & Popp 1978). This approach remained unsatisfactory, primarily because it only provided a partial explanation of the connections between the individuals and the spaces concerned, and its inability to closely reflect reality. Some critics argued that geography should be primarily concerned with space not behaviour (Uthoff 1988), albeit this is controversial, not least since conceptualizations of 'space' have since changed. Whatever the merits of work driven by the Munich School, this body of work forms the second pillar of tourism research in the German-speaking world in that, for the first time, it provoked serious

discourse about the nature of human behaviour in the specific activities of leisure and tourism.

Towards the 'Third Pillar': Current Emphases in Leisure and Tourism Geography

The development of 'leisure society' and associated social and cultural transformations in the past two decades have stimulated a sudden burst of recreational activities and opportunities for tourism. Unlike other parts of the world, Western populations now have near-universal access to leisure and tourism. Supply and demand are widely diversified to meet the desires of ever more individualistic customers and there is also a solid base of package offers designed for mass tourism. Today, leisure and tourism are major global economic dynamos. They not only contribute to globalization by accelerating international flows of capital and the transfer of information and know-how, but also they generate new, short-lived and dynamically changing patterns of consumption, needs and values. *Mise-en-scène*, emotionalization, personalization and fictionalization, together with artificial leisure and consumption worlds, are gradually replacing 'real' spatial structures. Tourists are less easily identified, targeted and captured: new, 'hybridized' tourist types are taking the place of formerly well-differentiated target groups. Recent progress in German-language leisure and tourism geographies has reflected this diversification by becoming more detailed and pluralistic. While this work has been taking its cues from cultural, economic, social and political conditions at the turn of the millennium, recent research has been more than ever concerned with applied issues in tourism planning. Where once there was a need to populate leisure and tourism geography in order to reappropriate it from the reductionists, recent work has attempted to remain faithful to the core constructs of social science through its practicality, applicability and relevance. This commitment is pivotal and, as the remaining sections of this paper will argue, for geography to meet the challenges of 'real life', it has had, and continues, to deal with applied questions, or the third pillar of modern leisure and tourism geography.

Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Development

After World War II, new means of transportation, higher incomes and more available leisure time turned tourism into a mass phenomenon. Geographers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland were quick to detect the links between tourism and severe environmental damage in developing countries, the Mediterranean and the Alps. Their work has informed concerted and ongoing criticism of tourism which, in turn, has formed part of a wider,

fundamental critique of the state of contemporary society. As Thiem (1994: 168) has noted of early critics,

> Although they set out to explain the phenomenon of tourism, views often reduce this phenomenon to certain societal mechanisms. In some interpretations tourism is simply labeled a mass escape, which in turn is regarded as "evidence" for the sorry state of industrial society.

Thus, élitist attitudes – more often than not reflecting individual interests rather than societal consensus – became an initial platform for criticizing mass tourism, blaming apparently unaware and insensitive tourists for the worst outcomes of their consumptive practices. For a long time, this deep scepticism of mass tourism held firm, only later did the tourism policy and decision 'makers' in the public and private sectors, rather than the tourists, assume the mantle of responsibility.

This type of criticism still carries within it certain elements of cultural pessimism, 'in the sense that the holiday culture is always compared to some historic or personal notion of what "good" traveling actually entails' (Thiem 1994: 169). For Romeiss-Stracke (1996a: 20), such an élitist view is also an inherently negative one, lacking, as it does, more constructive solutions. In one of the more novel contributions, she proposes that tourism research has failed to consider 'love' as a central motive in defining the motives for travelling. 'Love' describes the desire for 'human contact and attention, friendliness, a smile, or general appreciation of a person. Loving care tends to form part of the dream . . .'. Snobbish critics are tourists themselves, she contends. They have been quite happy to vilify their fellow citizens for their willingness to populate full beaches, pubs and ski-slopes without for a moment reflecting on their own contributions to the problem. Mass tourists became easy targets for high-brow, populist criticism because it became politically correct to say how ghastly mass tourism was in terms of ecology, ethics or society. She argues that such criticism is a futile gesture because, rather than progress the agenda, it impedes it. For her, more creative approaches are required:

> Clinical interest in the object of research unaccompanied by sympathy is not likely to lead very far. Indeed, this state of affairs might be one of the reasons for the decided lack of innovation in German tourism research. Only open and loving curiosity enables us to capture new structures beginning to emerge. (Romeiss-Stracke 1996a: 20)

Staying at home has been advanced as the most radical solution to the negative outcomes of tourism. Travelling has been cast as a compulsion, only to offer illusionary compensation for estranged working and living conditions. A better-known, yet highly creative solution when it first appeared, 'soft tourism' attempted to develop new ideas and new forms of travelling. Krippendorf's (1976) classic description of tourists as 'landscape

devourers' and the book 'Holiday People' (1984) were both crucial for the emergence of environmentally- and socially-acceptable tourism. These ground-breaking ideas in their day were brought to wide public attention by Jungk (1980) and have since played a pivotal role in geographers' attempts to understand and manage the impacts of tourism.

Initially, this approach aimed to undo the damage done by 'wrong' tourism developments by aiming to work on modified concepts for 'right' tourism development. The idea was to encourage university-based geographical research to become more acquainted with real and practical challenges by turning to applied research to contribute towards solving major problems. Because issues of tourism development involve intricately connected economic, social, cultural and political issues, university research communities were perceived as ideally equipped to fashion solutions and to interpret the wealth of data tourism management research would generate. In this context, 'soft', 'adapted' and accountable tourism present certain methodological challenges because they can yield positive effects, both in terms of economic growth as well as ecological balance and intercultural exchange. This requires the preservation and sensitive use of countryside potentials rather than their exploitation.

With its principles of environmental compatibility and social responsibility, soft tourism implies qualitative rather than quantitative growth, delivering optimized values and broad economic gains. Visitors obtain optimum recreation, with particular focus on personal growth, creativity and responsibility. And, lastly, tourism operators act as mediators between the destinations and the visitors, and benefit through long-term, acceptable gain. Many individual measures contribute to this tailored approach to tourism and need to be brought together in an integrated concept.

The soft tourism debate implies that 'thinking globally and acting locally' must lead to the kind of tourism that yields long-term positive effects. Sustainability, sustainable development of tourism production and consumption, or 'sustainable tourism', therefore, becomes the main goal (Hopfenbeck & Zimmer 1993: 256). In this regard, Travis's (1992: 20) early definition encapsulates the ethos of the emerging consensus over appropriate tourism development: namely,

> sustainable tourism is all forms of tourism development and activity which enable a long life for that cultural activity which we call tourism, involving a sequence of economic tourism products compatible with keeping in perpetuity the protected heritage resource, be it natural, cultural or built-, which gives rise to tourism.

Sustainable tourism is, therefore, synonymous with strategic resource and quality management. In practice, it means that tourism has to be planned sensitively, using rather than abusing the potentials offered by a landscape.

Sustainability has remained one of the key words of tourism geography

today, with international conceptualizations – such as Tourism Concern's (1992: 3) 10-Point Definition or Travis's (1992) above – sitting comfortably alongside indigenous local interpretations in German-speaking academic discourse. One of the critical issues surrounding soft or sustainable tourism concerns how to translate such aspirations into workable realities. In this context, much recent work has concentrated on the concept of carrying capacity and establishing the limits of the available resources. As Hopfenbeck and Zimmer (1993: 269) note, the challenge is to determine an acceptable level of use through tourism that minimizes its negative impacts on the environment, whilst at the same time maximizes tourist satisfaction. Optimum saturation is the desired end state. At the same time, a saturation point is to be set, beyond which the precarious balance would be lost. As Hopfenbeck and Zimmer (1993: 270) put it,

> Some of the criteria (to be used) will be quantitative measures (eg. certain coefficients), others qualitative descriptions (eg. cost-benefit analyses, EIA). The saturation point resulting from a 'balance' between different criteria is likely to depend on seasonality and the degree of development of the area in question. This theoretical boundary forms the basis of any strategic development plan. An idea of the desired aims (quality instead of quantity, small rather than large projects etc) forms an essential basis for this process.

The Austrian Institute of Spatial Planning has suggested the following five components as determining factors of a region's carrying capacity (Österreichischer Gemeindebund 1989: 18): physical capacity (capacity of the structural landscape); capacity of use (potential absorption of the region); ecological capacity (nature and landscape protection); socio-psychological capacity (capacity of human interaction and interrelations); and wider area or effective capacity (infrastructural capacity and capacity of supply).

A more intricate schematic has been developed by Seiler (1989: 50), whose 'indices of balanced tourism development' are a concise concept to determine limits of use. He suggests seven key indices which he then applies to a number of Swiss communities based on Swiss tourism policies. His first test concerns the **landscape** and it establishes to what degree it is used sustainably. **Agriculture** is closely linked to the landscape since landscapes attractive and accessible to tourism usually rely on forms of working agriculture. **Accommodation** and **transport** consider the most important elements of infrastructure and service and are directly linked to economic growth. One of the indices used here is the ratio of non-hotel and hotel accommodation. **Level of use** is placed at the intersection between demand and supply. **Self-determination** bridges the interests of the local population and economic success achieved through tourism. **Cultural identity** evaluates the relationship between local residents and tourists, as well as the mutual relationships between the locals. These 'key indicators' are supplemented by 'additional indicators', leading to a total of 61 potential indicators. The

essence of Seiler's approach is a profile of opportunities and threats expressed in a set of qualitative statements: green denotes opportunities and the absence of problems, yellow highlights cautionary areas and red means management is urgently required.

Although the above principles might serve as a common baseline, every region or tourist destination, however, demands specific criteria to determine its carrying capacity. Not just starting points and available data, but also the aims of those affected and the potentials offered by regions considerably differ. The development of a universally applicable quantitative system of measuring carrying capacity is, therefore, unlikely. In any case, criteria need to be developed and set out in a way that renders them readily applicable and transparent to practitioners.

The same is true for methods designed to stop the overuse of landscape resources (i.e. measures of landscape zoning, limits of visitor numbers and visitor management). Barth (1995: 393) uses forest areas to demonstrate that people can be channeled to less-sensitive areas using relatively inexpensive, clever psychological means ('gregarious effects'). For instance, visitors experience attractive landscapes without endangering the threatened, particularly valuable zones of the landscape: The desired goal could be achieved by introducing several zones: as an example, Zone I – 'tourism core zone', with comprehensive tourist infrastructure; Zone II – 'walking zone', with linear tourist infrastructure; Zone III – 'backpacker's zone', with periodic, nodal tourist infrastructure; and Zone IV – 'nature conservation zone', without tourist infrastructure.

The implementation of such concepts remains difficult. For a long time, despite their more immediate and obvious apparent synergies, tourism and nature/landscape conservation simply seemed too different to overcome their traditional enmity. Today however, forward-looking representatives of both camps have become convinced that well-planned tourism can assist in landscape protection and structural regional development. In areas where attractive landscape and cultural resources are protected and not diminished, many opportunities exist for the development of sensitive tourism. Co-operation should not be limited to damage control, but rather begin early and continue throughout the entire tourism planning process. In this context, geography plays an essential role as a mediator. Rather than focusing on one field, it takes a comprehensive view of tourism and is, therefore, able to act as a moderator. Geography brings together different interest groups and creates a forum for tourism, where existing conflicts and different views of 'appropriate' tourism development can be heard.

Indeed, there seems even greater potential for tourism and leisure geographers to be involved in a practical sense in environmental management if disciplinary barriers can be broken down further. Sensitive tourism development is particularly important in protected areas, such as national parks, nature parks and other protected areas, which were created to protect some of the most important natural and cultural landscapes (FNNPE 1993: 80).

Whilst the primary concern of protected areas is to maintain and conserve this special heritage, the attractiveness of such areas also renders them particularly important for visitors and tourism. Many European protected areas show rising tourism numbers and growing tourist demands, underlining the importance of limits and management measures. Many action plans already exist, most of which remain steadfastly uninformed by recent progress in leisure and tourism geography. The Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe (FNNPE 1993: 82 – now Europarc) has provided 15 guiding points for tourism development in protected areas (Table 1).

Thus, an increasing number of those responsible for environments understand the necessity of sustainable tourism development. However, geographers must actively encourage the further spread of this conviction since our recreational and leisure-time needs cannot be met at the expense of future generations. Advocacy of landscape-orientated tourism offers one means by

Table 1. Development of an ecologically and socially acceptable action plan for protected areas

1.	Setting conservation objectives. Discussion and agreement of ecologically and socially acceptable objectives with other stakeholders.
2.	Carrying out an inventory of the natural and cultural potential, tourism infrastructure, future potential and analysing that information.
3.	Co-operating with the local population, tourism operators and other regional organizations.
4.	Identifying the image and special value of the protected area.
5.	Establishing the qualitative and quantitative carrying capacity for different parts of the area.
6.	Monitoring and analysing the tourism industry and visitor needs both prior to and after the development of new forms of tourism.
7.	Providing assistance with respect to new and potentially unsuitable types of development.
8.	Development of new tourism products containing options for education.
9.	Establishing the environmental effects of tourism developments.
10.	Definition of necessary management measures, such as zoning or visitor management, linked to the provision of environmental interpretation and education.
11.	Provision of traffic management and sustainable transport systems.
12.	Development of a communication and PR strategy in order to develop the image of the protected area, new tourism products and management techniques.
13.	Implementing a monitoring programme for the protected area and visitor use. This is considered a prerequisite for the revision of the management plan and makes certain that tourism does not exceed the area's carrying capacity.
14.	Establishing funding requirements and sources of funding including funds for further training.
15.	Implementation of the plan.

To be integrated into wider regional management.

which geography should take a more active role in tourism planning. Rather than 'what kind of tourism infrastructure can be developed?', the question should be 'what can the landscape offer?'. Sustainability and the maintenance of regional identity depend on the kind of tourism that takes account of the landscape and stops short of a blind commodification of it, for instance through the installation of inappropriate large-scale tourist infrastructure.

Landscape-based tourism of this nature has been implemented on different levels and appears justified by current fashions. Recent surveys have confirmed that trend-sensitive tourists who place particular importance on landscape and environmental quality represent the most significant and fastest growing market segment. In Germany, Federal and State governments have supported approaches that aim to balance different recreational demands with the protection of valuable landscape areas for some years. Landscape-based tourism products have been developed successfully at a communal and regional level in different countries (e.g. Eco-model Hindelang in the Allgäu region, Naturally Village Holidays in Austria). The accommodation sector has also been successful in the contexts of nature conservation and the maintenance of regional identity (e.g. guidelines for environmentally friendly hotel management, green quality label). Many operators have also recognized the importance of the environment for an increasingly sensitive public.

To fashion solutions of this nature demands immense practicality, to which geographers have become especially well-suited; it requires inventories and audits of dominant elements of landscapes, their cultural and natural dimensions, from which an assessment of potentials, strengths and weaknesses as well as a definition of potential tourism (development and promotional) themes may be derived. A recent assessment of the Eifel-Hohes Venn region is exemplary of this approach (PROTOUR 1995). Detailed analysis of the natural and cultural landscapes exposed the region's main assets to be commodified for tourism. Based on the most important 'themes' of the landscape, specific potentials and trajectories were identified and these were reflected in an overall strategy for tourism development: the moorlands as natural areas and living areas; the hedges typical for the Monschau and Malmedy region; water, brooks, rivers and lakes with their significance for the economic development of the area; forests and species-rich grasslands; the history of settlement with particular focus on the Roman period; monasteries in the Eifel and Ardennes regions; the iron trade dating back to medieval times; wool- and leather manufacture. A more detailed differentiation still resulted in designation of the so-called 'five faces [i.e. landscapes] of the region Eifel-Hohes Venn' (PROTOUR 1995: 28–31), including: the *Eifelvorland* (fields, farms built from limestone, hedges and limestone quarries); the *Hohe Venn* (moorland, mostly conservation areas, beech hedges up to 6 m high); the *Hocheifel* (narrow, deep valleys, elongated forested hilltops, hedges), the *Rureifel* (meandering, deeply carving

rivers, storage lakes, old wool factories, timber-framed buildings in the small town of Monschau); and the *Kalkeifel* (intensive agriculture, Roman remains, cloth weaving, the town of Bad Münstereifel). The definition of such regions and their associated landscape types became an essential prerequisite for the development of tourism strategies as well as their practical implementation.

Heritage Interpretation

Sustainable development can be enhanced by strengthening public aware-ness of the importance of the physical or cultural environment. 'Environ-mental' or 'Heritage Interpretation' is a familiar term in the English-speaking countries but, to date, it is still rather new in the German-speaking area (see also Kreisel 2003). Rather than merely 'informing' visitors, heritage interpretation aims to engender a more profound 'understanding' and 'awareness' of place. It also recognizes that visits should be enjoyable, which can be enhanced by 'provoking, relating, revealing' instead of tradi-tional teaching and learning. Memorizing facts is unlikely to help change attitudes and behaviour or lead to greater respect for the value of the environment. As Ziegenspeck (1996: 57) notes, the case is immutable in so far as 'When will we finally realize that despite its continued high regard, drumming facts into people's heads is not the royal road to learning and unlikely to positively influence our future conduct?'.

Environmental interpretation is, thus, a planning and communication strategy which aims to give the region or destination higher profile; strengthen identity and identification; support tourism development based on the particular local resources and potentials; create attractive and high quality tourism products; and to initiate sustainable development through appropriate tourism management. Tilden's (1977: 9) seminal principles for a sensible interpretation strategy have guided recent work on interpretation. These aspects have so far received little attention in Germany. An assess-ment of 43 trails in the Eifel-Hohes Venn region carried out by the UK-based Centre for Environmental Interpretation concluded that none of these met the requirements of quality heritage interpretation. Rather than under-standing and experience, emphasis was placed on teaching, often involving little didactic skill. Contents were often too factual and bore no relevance to the surrounding landscape. In this respect, it is hardly surprising that complex relationships, developments or threats to ecological and societal structures do not become obvious. Visitors are bored, not inspired and the response to such interpretative approaches, if they exist at all, is more often negative than positive. Much potential for furthering an understanding of the need for sustainable development is, therefore, lost. Similarly, 'experi-ence', 'recognition' and 'insight' also form central topics for environmental education (*Erlebnispädagogik*). Rather than pure cognition, the central

motto here is 'learning through activity', with immediate observation and experience constituting key elements. However, touching things, using hands and senses to explore the environment requires opportunity to do so. Again, as Ziegenspeck (1996: 57) bemoans, the question is one of when we will finally understand that traditional teaching might be the wrong approach to significantly alter our behaviour?

Thus, as a tool in communicating the special qualities of landscapes to the public, the concept of heritage interpretation has been unjustly neglected by German geographers, not least because they have the skills and back-grounds to be able to compile appropriate and relevant narratives. This practical task of communication, which not only demands didactic skill, but also deep subject knowledge and the ability to abstract, should receive more attention, in particular since other disciplines such as forestry have already started to rise to the challenge.

In the meantime, some additional positive developments have ensued. In 2000, the international network 'Interpret Europe' was established to link practitioners and academics across Europe, with a secretariat maintained at Freiburg and Göttingen universities. Göttingen is also host to the German Centre for Heritage Interpretation and Tourism (ZELT), which was founded in 2002.

Social Change: Trends in Leisure and Tourism

Geographical research has attempted to keep pace with the recent rapid transformations in the production and consumption of tourism and leisure, in particular those that reflect the fundamental restructurings of culture, society, economy and governance. While contemporary consumers may be highly empowered to travel, the democratization, individualization, plural-ization and diversification of travel and tourism are not overnight phenomena. In Germany, in particular, the first significant signs of change accompanied the so-called 'economic miracle' (*Wirtschaftswunder*) after the Second World War. The democratization of travelling has been closely documented in geography. As in other countries, standard narratives have proposed that, with higher incomes and more available leisure time, travel has become an important component of quality of life (Hennig 1997). Flexibility has continued to increase, replacing the usual long annual 'holi-days' with a collection of shorter, often second and third trips. Although mass tourism forms the largest and still growing part of touristic demand, today's situation is characterized by a high degree of diversity depending on age, life cycle, formal education and a whole range of individual reasons for travelling. Some researchers speak of a 'confetti-society' where many groups have their own values and criteria. This fact is reflected in current diversity and individualization within the tourism industry (cf. Romeiss-Stracke 1998: 65–72; see also Romeiss-Stracke 1989, 1996b).

To accompany such individual demands and tastes, Steinecke (2000: 11) has argued that a new generation of consumers demands an increasingly high quality of tourism product. Diversification of a very great number of products and services has also resulted in relatively low price levels, albeit ones which are not very transparent and evident to the holiday-maker. Instead, transparency is limited to a strategy of 'brand-building', which contributes to a clear profile for the business, its brands and products within the saturated travel market. New leisure and tourism spaces have been devised to satisfy the need for high quality tourism and recreation environments. As Table 2 demonstrates, a plethora of new forms, often attractively appointed and with diverse functional structures, have been identified. These mixed-use centres include shopping possibilities, evening entertainment, sports, cultural events and hotel accommodation. Multifunctionality and convenience are the principles behind these new developments. Many such as sub-tropical spas, shopping malls and holiday parks are mega-projects in size, scope and catchment.

These new spaces have been read by Romeiss-Stracke (1998: 69), among others, as offering the visitor the satisfaction and happiness that would otherwise be missing in everyday life. They are spaces which are consumed in an attempt to compensate for deficiencies in life by offering enjoyment, adventure, activity, thrill and fun. Indeed, 'enjoyment' has become a central term in the service and tourism industry and has been promoted commercially through 'enjoyment-marketing'. This includes narrative world and artificial leisure worlds which create illusions with no relation to the surrounding cultural and physical landscapes (for instance, the CentrO shopping complex

Table 2. Different types of mixed-used centres and the functions they provide for tourism and leisure users

Centre	Function
Urban Entertainment Centre	Shopping Centre + gastronomy + art exhibition + arena + leisure park + Multiplex cinema
Leisure park	Leisure facilities + gastronomy + events + thematic hotel
Holiday park	Accommodation + gastronomy + leisure facilities + shopping mall + events
Brand Land	Company museum + retail store + art gallery + events + visitor information
Thematic hotel/-restaurant	Accommodation + gastronomy + special architecture + spa + shop
Musical Centre	Theatre + hotel + restaurant + shop
Infotainment Centre	Multi-Media-Information + event + rooms/stages for events + shop

Source: Steinecke (2000: 19–20).

in Oberhausen and the transformation of former industrial landscapes for recreation, leisure and tourism purposes in the Ruhrgebiet – Merian 2001). Landscape forms a backdrop, a framework for these artificial illusions ('ageographia'). Increasingly, such developments are no longer in the hands of businesses with tourism and leisure as their core businesses, rather those from other branches of the economy, such as the automobile industry. For instance, Volkswagen operates its 'Autostadt' theme park in its home town of Wolfsburg as a means of building a lifelong relationship with its current and potential future customers. Visitors are invited to immerse themselves in, and live, the brands of the VW corporation (Merian 2002). Audi, a member of the VW stable, has developed synergies with tourism producers and governors in the hinterland of its Ingolstadt headquarters in Bavaria (Meinicke 2002). Tourism attractions and infrastructure such as Naturpark Altmühltal and the local accommodation and hospitality functions are engaged in collaborations intended to enhance the efficiency of the Audi personal delivery service and the visitor centre experience (von Ingelheim 2000). In these scenarios, landscape has become almost subordinate, a secondary concern in the marketing concept of an enterprise, which by attracting visitors attempts to increase its revenue. Vacation and leisure scapes have become essential building blocks in the brand architecture of lifestyle products and commodities.

In this manner, the reconceptualization and manipulation of tourism spaces for wider social and cultural purposes extends to the artificial, mental, psychological and virtual spaces available to 'travel'. This idea is not new and such differential experiences not only take place when travelling through physical space, but also through reading books, in illusions, the imagination or in dreams. Recent developments, however, show huge growth in the fields of internet and cyberspace and the creation of worlds to be navigated and experienced through data highways and chat-rooms. The question remains whether or not traditional travel can be replaced by 'virtual' trips in cyberspace (Krüger 2001). This sort of question also forces us to rethink our reasons for travel. Many reasons exist for travelling, but the most conventional idea has been that travelling constituted an escape from the pressures of work and problems at home, the so-called push factors. Many other reasons have been used to explain motives for travelling, including self-actualization and the search for perfect harmony between all elements of conscience and personal goals. Recent work has underscored, more than ever, that holiday travel cannot be reduced to just one motive that applies to society as a whole. On the contrary, a multitude of criteria have to be considered, including individual status within the social hierarchy, position within the family life cycle, the political and social environment, available options and, above all, the desire to travel. Furthermore, individuals may have many different motives for travelling at various stages in their lives, with motives changing, overlapping, combining and so on. More concerning is not the multitude of motives for travel, but rather that recent research on contemporary travel motives is far from complete

and that most explanations are monocausal and unspecific (Allmer 1996; Hennig 1997; Becker 1998). Moreover, research has reached an awkward impasse. Few of the elaborate theorizations of recent tourism consumption practices and patterns are tested by empirical studies. Conversely, as Krauß (1993) has observed, there has been a proliferation of studies of holiday-makers' motives for travel, which are repeatedly demonstrated by standard representative surveys. Unfortunately, however, this sort of work provides little in the way of innovative or radical material by which to move on the theoretical agenda.

Conclusions: Future Challenges for the Geography of Leisure and Tourism

Whether 'real' or 'virtual', the main object of geographical research on leisure and tourism in Germany, Austria and Switzerland steadfastly and determinedly remains 'space' and its relationships with humans and their behaviour. Over the last 70 years, these relationships have been reconceptualized and revalorized. Where once there were only very literal interpretations of spaces based on tangible manifestations 'on the ground', geographers now handle leisure and tourism phenomena in more abstract 'action spaces', 'perceptual spaces' and even 'virtual spaces'. Progress has been from relatively simple discussions of *Daseinsgrundfunktion Erholung* (leisure as a basic function of existence) to more complex discussions of motivations, value systems and psychological experiences and decision-making rooted in the restructuring of society and economy in the late twentieth century.

Since Hans Poser's pioneering steps in the 1930s, the geography of leisure and tourism has contributed strongly to the development of geography as a discipline in the German-speaking world and to the practical management of tourism. Broadly speaking, three main pillars of geographical research into tourism and leisure are identifiable: one attributed to Poser, dealing with tourism and leisure in a wider, more holistic regional context; one inspired and driven by the Munich School of social and cultural geographers, which aimed to place humans, their behaviours and their outcomes more firmly at the top of the agenda; and a more recent pillar, not associated with an individual or a group of research workers, but one based on the need to develop deeper and meaningful understanding of contemporary tourism and leisure production, consumption and outcomes, and to develop relevant, powerful and applied knowledges as solutions.

As the preceding discussion has highlighted, each of these pillars is associated with a different period of the twentieth century and its geographical *Zeitgeist*; simultaneously each reflects, and helped to shape, the discipline of the day. Although the precise nature of enquiry and the thematic priorities of the day have varied over the past seven decades, there are, nevertheless, common strands running through the history of geographical

research into leisure and tourism. Within the German-speaking world the contributions made by geographers have been defined, first, by their focus on the region, landscape and space and, second, by their ability to synthesize in order to develop 'holistic and multifunctional views' (Krippendorf 1984; Freyer 1995: 27; Kaspar 1996). Without synthesis, it would have been impossible to have developed the sorts of comprehensive, systematic perspectives that are necessary to understand leisure and tourism in the contemporary world and the intricate linkages between their resultant economic, ecological, cultural and social outcomes (Freyer 1995: 31; Kreisel 1997: 235).

So, what are the future prospects for leisure and tourism geography in the German-speaking world? First of all, notwithstanding the advances made since Poser, there remain large lacunae, not least in the adequate theorization of contemporary patterns of production and consumption of leisure and tourism. While this remains a priority, applied research and practice look set to dominate the agenda in the immediate future. In no small measure this relates to the current social and intellectual settings of higher education institutions and academic research. Geography has gained acceptance in society by providing elaborate conceptions and practicable solutions. It has demonstrated considerable worth to planning and businesses. Geography students in higher education programmes are trained with an attractive mix of skills and expertise, among others, those that cover regional development and planning issues, that allow the economic, social, ecological and cultural implications of tourism and leisure to be assessed synergistically and which allow the potentials inherent in landscapes to be released and regulated. To maintain its status and to preserve its identity, geography has an obligation to continue to deliver relevant knowledges and solutions as well, as appropriately trained and educated workers and citizens. As an applied science and as a socially relevant discipline, geography must aim at fostering 'sustainable development' as a dominant ethos in global thinking and local/regional acting. Thus, geographers are committed to supporting the kinds of tourism that are based on the inherent potentials of landscape and the environment and which are able to yield long-term positive effects. Geographers are ideally equipped to draw attention to unsustainable developments and to provide guidelines for sustainable tourism planning. In this sense, tourism needs to become ever more closely synonymous with strategically orientated resource and quality management. As Hopfenbeck and Zimmer (1993: 256) stress, it is the duty of geography to support this type of development. Finally, applied, empirical work provides a platform for other activities, not least criticism which has albeit to date been the exception. Academic research must keep a certain distance from practitioners; powerful critiques are possible by remaining independent, self-confident, as objective as possible and certainly not pandering to the likes and dislikes of potential employers.

The Swiss concept of tourism (Freyer 1995: 27; see also Krippendorf

1984; Kaspar 1996) provides one direction for the future tasks of, and comprehensive approach to, the geography of leisure and tourism. This maintains four main fields influence the shape taken by tourism as a system: society and societal values; environment and resources; economy; and government and associated policy as an umbrella and steering force. The challenge is to integrate the individual disciplines that all deal with tourism from their special perspectives and which address these thematic priorities. This requires effective networking in order to achieve a 'multifunctional and holistic view that perceives tourism as a cross-sectoral discipline' (Freyer 1995: 31). With its integrative approach geography is particularly suited to this task and well able to bring together these different modules into an inclusive, integrative and systematic model of tourism. Ironically, in this respect, geographical enquiry into tourism and leisure may be going back to the future with a new take on Hans Poser's claim that geography should be concerned with the 'effective whole' of tourism and leisure.

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Résumé: La recherche en géographie du tourisme et des loisirs en pays de langue allemande: trois piliers de soutien évolutif ?

L'évolution de la recherche sur le tourisme et les loisirs en pays de langue allemande est caractérisée par plusieurs étapes distinctes. L'analyse du tourisme dans le Riesengebirge

(aujourd'hui le Krkonos(z)e) effectuée par Poser marque les débuts de cette recherche. Lui s'est concentré sur le paysage comme toile de fond du tourisme. Il considérait que la géographie s'occupait avant tout d'analyser les interactions entre le paysage et ses visiteurs. Par contre, l'école dite de Munich avait choisi d'étudier les gens et leur comportement pendant leurs loisirs. Les problèmes de géographie appliquée tels que le tourisme durable ou les changements en demande et en fourniture causés par les transformations récentes de la société caractérisent l'approche actuelle. La signification de l'espace géographique pour les loisirs et le tourisme représente un autre volet de la recherche actuelle. On ne se limite plus à l'espace physique; on inclut maintenant l'espace dit 'd'action', l'espace perçu et même l'espace virtuel. Malgré la fragmentation de plus en plus marquée de la société et les nombreuses tendances qui en résultent, la géographie du tourisme et des loisirs doit s'appliquer à maintenir une perspective intégrale et à appuyer le développement durable.

Mots-clés: tourisme, loisirs, recherche, Allemagne, histoire, perspectives

Zusammenfassung: Geographie der Freizeit- und Tourismusforschung im deutschen Sprachraum: Drei Säulen zum Forschritt?

Die Entwicklung der Freizeit- und Tourismusforschung im deutschen Sprachraum zeigt einige klar unterscheidbare Epochen: Die Beschäftigung mit dem Fremdenverkehr beginnt mit der Untersuchung von Hans Poser über den Fremdenverkehr im Riesengebirge (1939). Er sah die Aufgabe der Geographie in einem umfassenden raumwissenschaftlichen Ansatz. Der Landschaft, in der sich Fremdenverkehr abspielt, galt dabei das Hauptinteresse von Poser, die Aufgabe der Geographie ist die Untersuchung des Wirkungsgefüges zwischen Landschaft und erholungssuchenden Menschen. Die 'Geographie des Freizeitverhaltens' (Münchner Schule) stellte hingegen den Menschen und seine auf der Daseinsgrundfunktion 'Erholen' basierenden Verhaltensweisen in den Vordergrund. Gegenwärtige wissenschaftliche Ansätze behandeln einerseits angewandte Fragestellungen, etwa die des nachhaltigen Tourismus und der touristischen Tragfähigkeit von Räumen, andererseits den gegenwärtig vor sich gehenden gesellschaftlichen Wandel und die sich dadurch ergebenden Veränderungen im touristischen Angebot und in der Nachfrage. Ein aktuelles Thema ist die Bedeutung des geographischen Raums für Freizeit und Tourismus. Dieser ist heute nicht mehr nur der reale sondern auch der Aktionsraum, der Wahrnehmungsraum und sogar der virtuelle Raum. Bei aller Berücksichtigung spezieller Entwicklungen entsprechend der gesellschaftlichen Auffächerung der Gesellschaft muss es die Hauptaufgabe der geographischen Freizeit- und Tourismusforschung bleiben, eine nachhaltige Entwicklung zu fördern und eine ganzheitliche Betrachtungsweise des Phänomens Freizeit und Tourismus zu praktizieren.

Stichwörter: Tourismus, Freizeit, Forschung, Deutschland, Geschichte, Aussichten