

Female friends' holiday experiences in heterotopia

Xavier Matteucci*

Department of Business, University of Applied Sciences for Management and Communication, Vienna, Austria

While the travel experiences of women have received some attention, there is scope for further exploration of the relationship between holiday spaces and the impact they have on females' experiences. Drawing from narrative interviews, and informed by the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia, this paper explores the tourism experiences of female friends on the island of Ada Bojana, Montenegro. The findings reveal that the island's environment facilitates release from the pressures of everyday life through playful and transgressive practices. Also, the intimate socialities of some holiday spaces are conducive to empowerment, self-transformation and bonding with significant others. It is argued that heterotopias possess the agency to foster positive change in the individuals who dwell in them.

Keywords: *heterotopia, tourist experience, women, self-change, narrative interviews, Ada Bojana*

1 INTRODUCTION

Female holiday experiences have received some attention in the tourism and leisure literature. Two main streams constitute research on female leisure travelers: female solo travel (for example, Jordan/Aitchison 2008; Jordan/Gibson 2005; Osman et al. 2020; Wilson/Little 2008; Yang et al. 2017) and all-female travel or girlfriend getaways (for example, Berdychevsky et al. 2013a, b; Chen/Mak 2020; Gibson et al. 2012; Kong et al. 2022). Beyond the economic contribution to tourism businesses and destinations, the value of all-female travel has been linked to wellbeing themes such as positive emotions, personal growth, relaxation and bonding with significant others (Heimtun 2012; Gibson et al. 2012; Kong et al. 2022). In fact, Gibson et al. remark that many women take trips as a way to overcome stressful life events and as a resource for self-renewal. For instance, Berdychevsky et al. found that women traveling with female friends are able to unwind and feel authentic about their identity, and in Heimtun's (2007) study midlife Norwegian women expressed the need to feel that they matter to their friends. Also, middle-aged Australian women were found to use travel as a means of escape from their everyday chores and family duties (Small 2005).

A growing body of literature has explored the leisure/tourism experiences of women from a post-structuralist feminist standpoint. For instance, Fullagar (2002; 2008), Green (1998), Jordan and Aitchison (2008), Jordan and Gibson (2005) and Wearing (1998) have construed the female leisure/tourism space as a site of resistance to dominant ideologies, and a space where females' identities can be reconstituted.

* Email: xavier.matteucci@fh-wien.ac.at

Further, Jordan and Gibson argue that, being away from their usual home environments, women feel 'less inhibited because they are no longer subject to the same social scrutiny as they would be at home' (2005: 207). In the same vein, Fullagar (2008) articulates leisure spaces as sites of playful social relations that offer women opportunities for subversion and personal transformation. The safe and playful environment of gendered leisure spaces, Fullagar notes, is fertile ground for letting go of self-surveillance, and hence for experiencing freedom and practicing self-care.

The recent study on Chinese girlfriend getaway by Kong et al. (2022) provides further evidence of the central role of gendered spaces in freeing women from the social norms that pervade their home environment. The girlfriend getaway is presented as an intimate space in which women challenge gender power relations, relax, attain empowerment and embody sisterhood practices. The empowering outcomes of female leisure and tourism experiences have also been emphasized by Wearing and Wearing (2001), who see the tourist experience as both an expansion and a reaffirmation of the self. A few other studies (for example, Berdychevsky et al. 2013a, b; Matteucci et al. 2022) have similarly associated bonding and friendship enhancement with the liminoid character of travel and the intimate sociality of some tourism spaces. The intimate quality of some tourism spaces is also underscored by Trauer and Ryan (2005: 482), who characterize tourism settings as 'centre[s] for emotional and physical exchange, a felt experience of sensual intensity and complexity'.

This introduction has highlighted the link between some tourism spaces and their transformative potential in women's experiences. Yet, the way in which female holiday experiences are constructed within specific spaces remains fairly limited in tourism studies (Kong et al. 2022). Given the social significance of tourism experiences in women's lives, understanding women's holiday experiences should be valuable to policy makers and practitioners alike.

The aim of this paper is to examine how the social, spatial and atmospheric qualities of holiday spaces influence female friends' experiences. By spatial and atmospheric qualities, for example, is meant the objects, configurations and textures in spaces and their symbolic and affective atmospheres. In an attempt to go beyond the mere recollection of on-site experiences, I focus on the long-term effects of the women's holiday on their everyday life. In this endeavor, Foucault's (1986) concept of *heterotopia* is adopted as a theoretical lens through which women's experiences are explored. In the following section, as a theoretical departure, I link Foucault's heterotopia with Victor Turner's liminoid space. This theoretical account will help situate the context of study and analysis of the women's experiences.

2 TOURIST SPACES, HETEROTOPIA AND LIMINALITY

Edensor (2006) distinguishes between tourist enclaves and heterogeneous tourist spaces. While tourist enclaves refer to tourist bubbles – characterized by heavy regulation, glossed, orchestrated and/or packaged experiences – heterogeneous spaces are far less regulated and afford a vast range of unpredictable and vivid sensory experiences. Many sites, however, combine the characteristics of both types of environment, thus challenging fixed dualisms between tourist enclaves and heterogeneous sites (Larsen 2008). For example, Bartling (2006) offers a critique of The Villages, a mature adult community in Florida which provides its permanent residents with the fantasy environment of a tourist-themed landscape. Many tourist enclaves and heterogeneous sites can be construed as heterotopias.

In his essay originally published in 1967 under the title *Des espaces autres* [Of other spaces], French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault theorizes that some spaces act as counter-sites or alternative sites to mainstream society's accepted spaces. Contrary to utopias, which Foucault (1986: 24) describes as 'fundamentally unreal spaces', counter-sites or heterotopias are real spaces in which utopian visions of social life can be enacted. It is worth noting here that the notion of 'real space' [*lieu réel*] invites multiple interpretations. For instance, by *real spaces* Foucault may have been referring to real physical spaces that are structurally distinct from mainstream spaces or/and perhaps to mere ideas of spaces (for a discussion on this point of contention, see Saldanha 2008).

Heterotopias follow six principles. First, they are universal in that they can be found in every culture, albeit in different forms. Yet, an intrinsic quality of heterotopias is that such sites invite behaviors that are, in some way, deviant from the norms. Foucault provides the example of rest homes, which call for idleness – idleness being a sort of deviance from modern lifestyles which are ruled by the clock. The second principle of heterotopias is that, over time, societies can cause them to operate in various ways. To illustrate this second principle, Foucault expounds that, over the course of time in Western society, the relocation of cemeteries from city centers to peripheral areas has been linked to changing beliefs regarding death and the dead body – the dead being desacralized and associated with the propagation of illness. The third principle of heterotopias is that disparate real sites are brought together in one space. For instance, through varied combinations, the garden allows plants from different continents (for example, exotic sites) to grow alongside each other; and peculiar architectural elements may carry different symbolic meanings and functions.

Fourth, heterotopias are 'linked to slices of time', with their full potential being when 'men arrive at a sort of absolute break [*rupture absolue*] with their traditional time' (Foucault 1986: 26). This absolute break is twofold in that heterotopias either accumulate time (as in the case of museums which present objects from different periods) or are fleeting and transitory (as in the case of festivals). The fifth principle of heterotopias relates to their openness and closure. Most of the time, one can enter and exit heterotopic sites at will; however, once inside, one is isolated from other spaces. Furthermore, some sites may require some ritual or performance in order to gain access to them. The holiday resort epitomizes this trait. The sixth and final principle is that heterotopias have a function in relation to all other sites. Foucault suggests that heterotopias either offer the illusion of perfect social order or serve as sites of release (or compensation) where one can escape the normative behavior of the mainstream.

Some heterotopias are liminoid for their transitional nature. Liminality has both spatial and temporal dimensions (Turner 1969), and time and space are inherently interwoven (Massey 1999). Turner (1979: 465) defines liminality as 'a state or process which is betwixt-and-between the normal, day-to-day cultural and social states and processes of getting and spending, preserving law and order, and registering structural status'. Such places imply particular performances in the form of rites during which people experience a sense of intimacy (*communitas*); and those rites find legitimacy within the physical limits of those spaces. Liminoid spaces act as thresholds (Turner 1979) or transitory zones between two other states/spaces. In other words, liminoid spaces occupy the space between one place/time and another. Due to its temporality and its delimitation, the holiday resort is a liminoid space that one enters and then leaves to reintegrate one's home environment.

Berdychevsky et al. used the concept of liminoid to research women's sexual behavior in tourism, suggesting that the spatial and temporal transition of tourism 'serves as

a license for seeking thrills and crossing boundaries' (2013b: 80). These authors argue that the unique social atmosphere in liminoid tourism contexts not only provides an outlet for temporal departure from social norms, but also provides one for resistance and creation. Therefore, the liminoid tourist experience may be understood as 'an escape to a social space which allows for learning and growing' (Wearing/Wearing 1996: 229). The playful, liminoid character of girlfriend getaways, for instance, has been associated with transformative experiential outcomes such as freedom from gender roles, empowerment and a sense of connection between women (Berdychevsky et al. 2013b).

Liminoid spaces and heterotopias are intertwined concepts: both are disruptive in that individuals entering them may undergo a period of uncertainty (Bonasera 2019); and both may involve non-normative behaviors that lead to experiences of *communitas*. Yet, not all liminoid spaces are heterotopias, and not all heterotopias can be said to be liminoid (Livingstone/Matthews 2017). Heterotopias are not necessarily transitional spaces as illustrated in Bartling's study of The Villages in Florida, and liminoid spaces do not always offer opportunities to challenge and subvert mainstream prevailing hegemonic practices from within, as revealed in Small's (2016) study about Australian women's holiday experiences. If all heterotopic spaces are counter-sites, they are, however, not homogenous; and what defines them are the activities, the performances and the fantasized and embodied experiences these sites afford (Foucault 1986). Wearing and Wearing (1996: 235) liken heterotopia to the feminist concept of 'chora', which they present as a social space open to many possibilities – that is, 'a space whose meaning can be constantly redefined by its inhabitants'. Wearing and Wearing underscore the relational potential of tourism spaces in which tourists can interact in creative ways, thus fostering alternative subjectivities. Like the 'chora', the power of heterotopias lies in their capacity to affect and to enable change and action. Unlike utopias, which tend to be associated with mythical rather than real spaces (Christou/Farmaki 2019), Foucault's heterotopias 'question existing relations and create a moment of displacement, disconnection from an existing social, cultural and aesthetic order' (Sacco et al. 2019: 201).

Although travel has been described as a form of heterotopia (Fullagar 2002), its use has remained limited in tourism research. Yet, a number of researchers have drawn from the notion of heterotopia to examine various tourism and leisure spaces – such as Chernobyl (Stone 2013), the English cathedral (Shackley 2002), the public nudist beach (Andriotis 2010), festivals (Ravenscroft/Matteucci 2003; Wilks/Quinn 2016) and cruise ships (Rankin/Collins 2017). Despite some attention being given to the concept of heterotopia in women's leisure (for example, Fullagar 2002; Wearing 1998), there is scope for further exploration of how female friends' experiences unfold in tourism spaces. Foucault's (1986) essay about other spaces (heterotopias), therefore, offers a theoretical frame within which river lodge experiences are explored here.

3 ADA BOJANA AS HETEROTOPIA

The site of interest in this article is the island of Ada Bojana in Montenegro. In particular, women's holiday experiences are explored at a river lodge on the island. Because lodges are embedded within remote and natural areas, they are often associated with the ecotourism sector; and, in this context, these are usually referred to as ecolodges (Ceballos-Lascurain 2008). Ada Bojana is a 5-square kilometer, triangular-shaped island within the municipality of Ulcinj on the southernmost tip of Montenegro, bordered by the Adriatic Sea on one side and the Bojana River delta on the

two other sides (Figure 1). While the island's Adriatic coast boasts a 3-kilometer stretch of sandy beach, the banks of the western arm of the delta are covered with luxuriant vegetation. As illustrated in Figure 1, wooden river cabins or lodges are found on the lush river banks. Ada Bojana is a protected natural park which boasts untouched forests as well as dunes and wetlands that are home to subtropical and Mediterranean plants unique to Europe. Some animal species, such as the golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) and the endangered loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), have also found refuge on Ada Bojana (Euronatur Stiftung 2019). The island is known as the first and largest nudist spot in the former Yugoslavia, and in summer its sandy beach is reserved exclusively for nudists. Accommodation offerings on the island consist of small cottages and river lodges, as well as a campsite that welcomes both nudists and non-nudists. The dark grey volcanic sandy beach and the nudist cottages can be seen in the Serbo-Croatian film *Lepota poroka (The Beauty of Vice)*, released in 1986 in the former Yugoslavia, which depicts liberated Western Europeans impinging upon traditional Montenegrin mores. Today, the island's peaceful ambience and unique atmosphere attract many tourists from Serbia and other European countries every summer.

Ada Bojana, with its river lodges, provides an example of Foucault's conceptualization of heterotopia. The island, which sits on the margin of the main resort town of Ulcinj, is promoted as a hidden paradise for nudists by the Montenegrin tourism authorities and private river lodge accommodation owners, as well as by enthusiastic visitors themselves. Ada Bojana is heterotopic in that it is a discordant site in which disparate spaces are lumped together. Foucault's first principle of heterotopia (site of deviance) and his third principle (juxtaposition of spaces) are manifested by the presence of nudists and non-nudists in various areas of the island. Nudism is often seen, at least by non-nudists,



Source: Ulcinj Travel.

Figure 1 Aerial view of Ada Bojana island

as a deviant practice from mainstream social norms (Clinard/Meier 2011). The only accommodation complex on the island is a designated nudist resort; however, in the adjacent campsite deviance is explicitly revealed as nudists and non-nudists are separated by low fences. For the privacy these spaces afford, both types of visitor can rent small lodges nestled along the lush shores of the Bojana River. Ada Bojana's marginality is emphatically articulated in tourism advertisements:

The nudist place on Ada with the specific ambience is skillfully hidden from the curious looks, which from two sides is surrounded by the beautiful River Bojana, and from the third with the clearest seawater. Many people say that the best recommendation for tourists that wish to come to Ada is an advice: 'If at any point of your life you wish to have a summer vacation from your dreams, in the costumes of Adam and Eve, Ada Bojana is definitely the right choice.' (Visit Montenegro 2020)

Isolated from the rest of the world, the island of Ada Bojana is the most famous nudist settlement in Europe where the sand, sea and the sky melt. (FKK Ada Bojana 2020)

Not only does it require significant effort to reach Ada Bojana, but its natural separation from Ulcinj's main beach also provides visitors with an illusion of freedom from the norms prevalent in other Montenegrin leisure spaces. Openness and closure, heterotopia's fifth principle, are embodied in Ada Bojana's secluded location. Openness and closure are further epitomized by restricted entry to the private spaces of the river lodges. The nudist island of Ada Bojana, therefore, offers experiences that are distinctly different from the norms of home life. As Andriotis (2010) remarks, nudist spaces allow those who dwell in them to seek hedonistic pleasures by freeing themselves from the wider social structure of everyday life and by adopting liminoid practices. The river lodges or cabins are in themselves micro heterotopic spaces within a larger heterotopia.

Foucault's second principle is that heterotopias fulfill different functions, and that these functions may vary over time. In Ada Bojana, while the small wooden river cabins used to play host to the activities of fishermen, today's visitors primarily use the lodges as spaces for nudism, relaxation, isolation and contemplation of nature. However, endowed with a steady thermal wind, Ada Bojana and Ulcinj's long beach have recently become very popular spots amongst young windsurfers and kitesurfers, making the delta area the host of many beach and river lodge parties.

Foucault's fourth principle posits that heterotopias 'function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time' (1986: 26). Both the island itself and the individual river lodges afford temporary fleeting moments of bliss and idleness that stand in sharp contrast to the busy life schedules of urban dwellers. The sixth principle of heterotopia is reflected in the capacity of Ada Bojana (and the micro spaces of the lodges) to facilitate release from the pressures of everyday life through transgressive practices such as idleness, nudism, promiscuity, and alcohol and drug consumption. In other words, the island environment invites reverie, fantasy and compensation. The social, spatial and atmospheric qualities of the river lodge located on Ada Bojana inhabited by Mina and Nada – two female friends – were found to have an impact on their holiday experiences.

4 METHOD

This research follows a constructivist approach suffused with Deleuzian thinking. While a constructivist epistemology entails that knowledge is constructed through

social interaction, a Deleuzian relational onto-epistemology emphasizes that human beings and matter are both entangled and agentic (Matteucci/Gnoth 2017). Within Deleuzian thinking, researchers, research participants, data and research contexts are intertwined in such a way that they influence and are affected by each other. Plugging Deleuzian thinking into a constructivist approach, therefore, helps researchers engage sensually and creatively with the world (Matteucci/Gnoth 2017). Approaching qualitative inquiry from a constructivist relational perspective seems appropriate for attending to subjective embodied experiences, which are formed by interactions with and within tourism spaces. This perspective echoes Wearing and Wearing's understanding of tourism as 'chora', which highlights 'social interactions in space' as 'an important element of [the] tourist experience' (1996: 240).

This paper draws from narrative interview data and secondary sources. The interview data was collected from two middle-aged Serbian female friends about their shared holiday experiences in a small river lodge accommodation in Ada Bojana, Montenegro. In this paper, pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity. 'Mina' and 'Nada', the research respondents, were recruited through purposive sampling. The main criterion was that the two women had spent a holiday together away from home for at least seven days. The secondary sources consist of official and unofficial descriptions of Ada Bojana, taken from documents available on the World Wide Web. Mina (aged 40) and Nada (44) spent a ten-day holiday on Ada Bojana. Mina and Nada are from Novi Sad (Serbia's second largest city after Belgrade), which sits on the banks of the River Danube in the northern region, about 620 kilometers (by road) from Ada Bojana. Mina, Nada and the latter's ex-partner 'Dejan' traveled together by car to Ada Bojana in August 2013. Nada and Mina were interviewed three times between 2017 and 2021. Mina is single and works as a journalist and a yoga instructor. Nada is a self-employed financial consultant. Nada and Dejan have a young daughter who did not join them on their holiday. Nada had been vacationing in Ada Bojana for many years, and Mina went there for the first time in 2013. While the two women had known each other for about four years at the time of their holiday, it was only after the trip that their relationship developed from revolving around common interests to being based on mutual affection.

A Serbian female research assistant conducted the first round of interviews in Serbian in 2017, four years after Mina and Nada's shared holiday experiences in Ada Bojana. These interviews took place in local cafés in Novi Sad. The research assistant and I then conducted the first follow-up interview with Mina in English in February 2020, and I conducted the second follow-up interview in June 2021. Nada did not feel comfortable speaking English, so two further interviews were conducted in Serbian by the research assistant. Being a middle-aged Serbian woman, and a distant acquaintance of Mina and Nada, the assistant was able to relate to them in an authentic manner and establish trust. Since 2016, as a non-Serbian male, I have undertaken numerous private and research trips to Serbia; consequently my Serbian experiences, the support of the research assistant and the multiple rounds of interviews facilitated rapport with Mina. It is worth noting that, given the time gap between the women's holiday experiences and the interviews, memory decay may have affected their recall of events. However, Mayer (2008) asserts that important personal events (like meaningful holiday experiences) are more easily remembered than other, less personal events. Mina invited us to her home for the second interview, and I met her in a park near her home for the third interview. The second and third interviews with Nada took place on the terrace of a local café. All interviews took the form of a casual and friendly conversation.

The follow-up conversations sought to expand on topics insufficiently covered during the previous interviews. While the first round of interviews focused on the women's on-site experiences, the second and third rounds sought to understand how the women's lives had changed since their trip in 2013. The first round of interviews included questions such as:

- Can you recall your best experience with your friend on this trip?
- Can you describe how it felt to be in Ada Bojana?
- Did this trip help you get closer to your friend?

The protocol for the following rounds of interviews included questions such as:

- Is there something about Ada Bojana that is magical to you?
- Now that a few years have passed, what does this trip mean to you?
- How do you feel in your life today?

On average, interviews lasted over an hour, with the shortest being 55 minutes and the longest about 95 minutes. With the consent of Mina and Nada, all six conversations were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The research assistant translated the transcripts of the first round of interviews and the two follow-up interviews with Nada from Serbian into English.

Some researchers may question the trustworthiness of stories as told by two informants only. First, as Chase (2008) remarks, researchers working with narratives tend to devote much more space to fewer individuals in their papers than do other qualitative researchers. Unlike other qualitative research approaches (for example, grounded theory and phenomenology), the present study does not seek to develop a nomothetic account of the tourists' experiences; instead, my aim is to capture idiographic descriptions of shared holiday experiences of female friends at a river lodge. The idiographic accounts allow us to better understand the human thoughts, emotions and contextual forces within which experiences are embedded. Also, as Robinson (2014) notes, idiographic-based interviews need to be few in number so that informants' voices are locatable within the study. This form of inquiry seeks to evoke empathy (Gamson 2002) and generate insight into the uniqueness of human actions (Holstein/Gubrium 2016). Second, small sample sizes can provide sufficient empirical material to illuminate social phenomena in credible ways (Farkić 2019). For instance, Farkić (2019) and de Jong (2017) have both relied on a single participant to explore embodied experiences of dystopic sites and Pride events, respectively.

4.1 Data analytical procedures

I borrowed elements from various methods; my qualitative methodological approach, therefore, can be described as bricolage. The idea behind methodological bricolage is that the boundaries between different disciplinary literatures, methods and paradigms can be dissolved (Rogers 2012). In line with a constructivist relational perspective, I entered into a dialogue with the informants, with the research assistant, with the data collected, with the concepts of heterotopia and liminoid, and with the feminist post-structuralist work published on female travel. My approach draws from the analytical procedure of inductive thematic analysis (Braun/Clarke 2006), memo-writing (Charmaz 2006) and narrative inquiry (Chase 2008). Thematic analysis, which involves breaking down the data into small units of meaning, is useful for identifying important aspects of people's experiences (Braun/Clarke 2006). In the first step, in order to familiarize

oneself with the data, the transcripts are read a few times in their entirety. The transcripts are then coded in order to highlight interesting features contained within the data. At this point, labels are used to describe chunks of the data. In the subsequent step, the initial codes are refined, and themes that flesh out key aspects of the informants' experiences are developed. In light of the research question, four main themes were found to underpin the women's experiences: *alienation*, *transgression*, *intimacy* and *reterritorialization*.

During these three main analytical steps, I wrote memos about my impressions of the data and any theoretical ideas that may have been relevant to shed light on the informants' realities. In the last step, these memos were explored further, checking them against my analytical themes and the concepts of heterotopia and liminoid; in this way, I was able to enrich my interpretations of the informants' experiences. However, in order to avoid prioritizing the rationality of thematic analytical steps over emotions and intuition, and to guard myself against the possibility of failing to understand the meanings contained within the complete accounts (Willis 2007), I also present the informants' life stories as recounted by the informants themselves. The power of narratives is that, in recounting their personal life events, participants are able to make sense of themselves (Fullagar/Owler 1998). Chase argues that narratives or life stories can take different shapes and forms. One definition of a life story, which fits my interview data, is that of 'a narrative about a specific significant aspect of a person's life' (Chase 2008: 59).

To enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis, three types of triangulation were employed: namely data triangulation (combining primary and secondary data); investigator triangulation (the research assistant and the informants were invited to comment on my interpretation); and theoretical triangulation (using multiple theories to examine the data). Also, in order to remain faithful to the informants' stories and to reflect their own voices, lengthy excerpts from the interview transcripts are presented.

5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Alienation

MacCannell (1999) argues that the more people are immersed in their workaday lives, the more alienated they become; as a result, individuals feel the need to escape their everyday environment through tourism. Expressions of alienation are found in Mina and Nada's accounts. Nada humoristically described her relationship with Mina as one of 'co-suffering friendship'. Both women articulated having experienced moments of stress and anxiety, and both articulated an emotional crisis prior to their holiday to Ada Bojana. 'My partner had an affair with my best friend', Nada disclosed. With some disenchantment, she went on to say: 'We have a child, so I decided to stay with that man for that particular reason, which is mine. But he became replaceable for me.' Mina similarly reported cumulative stressful life events, such as the recent break-up with her partner of ten years, an unfulfilling work life and falling ill. Below, she describes her gloomy state of mind a few days before leaving for Ada Bojana:

So, I found out that I was sick in 2012. And I was like 'I will finish EXIT [festival]' because I'm in the middle of preparations. I stopped eating sugar, white flour, everything, everything bad, except alcohol [laughter], but I even stopped alcohol after Ada Bojana. I prepared myself for everything and I said 'ok, no doctors, no anything, I will see what happens, I will heal myself' [laughter]. So, that was our joke on Ada Bojana all the time. I did heal myself eventually. I was at the place I don't care with all that, with 3B [precancerous conditions of the cervix], EXIT, blah blah, I was like 'I don't care.'

The words articulated by Mina and Nada intimate a sense of alienation, which forms the backdrop to their trip to southern Montenegro. Neither of the two women felt happy. Because Nada's trust of and feelings towards her partner had been compromised, she found herself questioning her ability to trust and love someone again. At that point, Nada felt vulnerable; nobody could help her overcome this crisis – no companion, no confidant. Meanwhile, Mina felt physically and emotionally exhausted by the strenuous conditions of her precarious job as a stage manager at the EXIT music festival. Her intimate relationship had fallen apart and she had been worrying about her poor health. These descriptions point to a malaise, an existential life crisis, which may have pushed the two women to travel to Montenegro as a way to escape their everyday struggles.

In this context, it is tempting to relate Mina and Nada to Cohen's (1979) diversionary type of tourist who feels estranged and seeks a break away from their dreary routine in order to maintain a life balance. Diversionary tourists are arguably the symptoms of a social crisis in neoliberal societies that, according to Foley (2017: 3), is rooted in 'the practice of time-thrift' and 'the creed of social advancement'. Farkić et al. (2022) similarly suggest that escaping the strict rules of everyday life by finding sanctuary in natural environments and experiencing moments of idleness corresponds to what Löfgren and Ehn (2010: 208) describe as the 'bohemian flipside of Western modernity'. The secluded nature of Ada Bojana and the privacy of its river lodges allow the downhearted dwellers to experience themselves through new modalities – modalities that are liminoid for their transitional, playful and marginal nature. Now I turn to the theme of transgression as a key feature of experiences in heterotopia.

5.2 Transgression

'I am always there in summer. This is a magical place', Nada said about the island. This comment about Ada Bojana's character was somewhat elusive because whatever it was that was magical about the place was never explicitly articulated. Although it was Nada who had referred to the island's magical nature, two years later, when I met Mina, I asked her what was magical about Ada Bojana. She unhesitatingly described the river lodge environment in the following terms:

They have these horses; they are free to walk around on the island. There is this camp and no one cuts the grass, but no one minds; but really no one minds. And there are snakes; there are spiders, but nothing bad happens ... what was magical was that everything was so easy going, you know? We had that magical energy around. Everything is happening at the right time, you don't have to ask, it's there. No time, no space filling, that good isolation. It's also because of nature, because nature is wild and you can sense it. Because there was this hippie commune here sixty years ago, so maybe something [from that time] stayed; there is something in the air. I don't know. There are places that have that. And, as a yogi, I do believe that place, soil, everything gets ... is soaked with energy. This is how you make a temple, with your energy. [It is] with your prayers that you make a temple, but not with bricks. So, that lodge is like a small temple of what we needed at that time, that we shared. It [the lodge] was very small and very basic, like we had a terrace with awning. There is a fence on one side so that neighbors won't see you. That's why we don't even see anyone. One big room. You are two minutes to the beach but you are in the wood. Simple interior. It reminded me of the American South, wooden beds and simple white linen bed sheets. Louisiana. If it was more, it would be too much. It would be spoiled. There is a very natural feeling to it.

A number of words and phrases articulated by Mina also point to the peculiar character of the river lodge environment. Ada Bojana boasts a ‘magical energy’, which Mina associates with ‘wild’ nature, a sense of ‘isolation’ from the rest of the world and the imaginary vestige of a ‘hippy commune’. Ada Bojana is magical because, despite the many hazards of its untamed nature (snakes, spiders, wild horses), ‘nothing bad happens’. In contrast to many tourism sites, where gardens and green areas are neatly designed to accommodate the aesthetic tastes and expectations of international holidaymakers, in Ada Bojana ‘no one cuts the grass’. Also, it is magical because of the freedom felt within the ethereal space of the river lodge where time and tensions are suspended. There is a divine feeling to the humble wooden lodge that Mina likens to a ‘temple’ where one finds rest and peace – the peace that the female friends ‘needed at that time’. The river lodge allows concealment, and hence escape and a sense of privacy; it is a refuge away from the hustle and bustle of the big city. The simplicity and the rustic nature of the small wooden lodge invite Mina for a reverie into the ‘American South’.

The river lodge, and perhaps the island of Ada Bojana in a broad sense, is favorable ground where holidaymakers feel free to engage in playful practices that may, in other contexts, be considered to be transgressive behaviors. Playfulness is illustrated when Nada says: ‘We listened to a lot of music, talked about music, played cards and I laughed a lot.’ The playful nature of leisure in heterotopia is also embodied in the following anecdote:

I remember, it was a very nice day when we opened a bottle of some ‘serious’ white wine ... And yes, our friends from across the Bojana river, they called us to go to visit them for some coffee, and we had a rubber boat, that Mistral or whatever it’s called. Yellow-blue, whether that was ‘Jugoplastika’ or whoever produced it, every other house had that kind of thing. And we took it with us, but we only had one paddle, half of which was broken. And there was the three of us – naked, since we are nudists in a nudist settlement. To go across the river, us, three adults needed to get into that boat that was a meter and half in length ... And we managed to fit in there somehow, a bit tipsy and all that. We managed, with one paddle, using some Indian methods to come across the river, drank coffee, and it was very funny. Our preparation to get back to our place ... Well, our friend could not help herself to record us on her phone. We have this clip, it’s very funny.

This anecdote recounted by Mina lends credence to Fullagar’s argument that ‘Play has an emotional quality that invites joy, being in the moment, and a letting go of the tyranny of self-surveillance’ (2008: 49). Unlike the young Australian women in Small’s (2016) study, Mina and Nada did not engage in body practices of self-surveillance; their naked bodies exposed to the gaze of others did not prevent them from having a good time. Letting go playfully here indicates that the nudist island, as heterotopia, is a space of resistance (Foucault 1986). As in the liminoid experience (Selänniemi 2003), in heterotopia corporeality is conferred an elevated status. The physical and psychological relief and pleasures obtained from playful practices and acts of transgression may be thought of as a therapeutic process of empowerment and living a good life. Jordan and Gibson (2005) and Berdychevsky et al. (2013a) similarly demonstrate that the female friends’ holiday experience provides a safe space of playful relations that allows women to practice self-care (Fullagar 2008) and approach empowerment (Kong et al. 2022). When we asked Mina about a typical day in Ada Bojana, she openly referred to the long hours of idleness spent lying on the lodge’s deck, under the awning, drinking ‘good wine’ and smoking marijuana.

Below, she narrates these holiday moments of self-indulgence, excess and abandonment.

I brought mescaline with me. I got some mescaline from Peru. And I wanted to experiment, and I always wanted to try it. And I don't know why I don't want to have that mescaline. But we had it with us and we are trying to exchange it for 40 grams of weed. But what happened, one night, Dejan (my friend's partner) – it doesn't look like him at all – he didn't tell me, he didn't tell Nada, no one. He knew where the mescaline was, he prepared it with water, he drank it, and he said 'ok, it's starting' [laughs]. We lost him for two days [laughs]. He was talking to horses, he was talking to witches, he was talking to everyone that has ever been to that island [laughs]. He has long hair and a beard, so he came like a Jesus from the wood [laughs]. It was so crazy. We were high, super high the whole time. Weed, of course. We only smoked weed and we were drinking good wine. That was the idea, not to drink anything but we had four bottles, good bottles. We were outside all the time. We only slept inside. We had these *liegestuhl* [sun loungers] you know? All day, you just lie in the sun with a few of your friends ...

The incidental intake of mescaline illuminates the hedonistic and transgressive character of the shared holiday experience in heterotopia. Due to its strong hallucinogenic effects, mescaline is an illicit drug in many countries, as is marijuana; however, its use may be considered a 'tolerable deviance' for having become a ubiquitous aspect of the middle classes' lifestyle (Hathaway 1997). In the river lodge context, beyond frivolous, hedonistic pursuits, the women's excessive consumption of marijuana can be interpreted as an attempt to manage anxiety. Being idle, savoring good-quality wine and smoking marijuana in the company of meaningful others are activities that have helped Mina and Nada find relief from the tensions accumulated over the months prior to their holiday. In Ada Bojana, Mina and Nada lived life at a slow pace. They felt no need to use their holiday time purposefully. Slowing down and letting go of time-thrift are both conducive to relaxation and developing closer social bonds (Foley 2017). In Nada's account below, transgression is further expressed in terms of freedom. Freedom is here associated with transgressing one's own boundaries, and entertaining one's fantasies.

I am a nudist and it is a nudist beach, and Mina is not a nudist. She went over something that might have been a taboo to her, which was not so natural to her. She did that to be with us, to be with me. We have this open relationship, which we built at that place, being directed only at each other for 24 hours. We were in this small cottage, two beds, big [enough] for both of us and one [other person]. So, there was no option to close the door ... I mean, there was one door, but nobody felt the need to be alone, for some reason. This holiday was a ten-day merger for us; or how am I supposed to call it? One little threesome. Everyone thought the three of us were a 'couple'. Do you understand? He [Dejan] was like, in front, and the two of us behind him; we were together all the time. And people started to approach him. Like, 'man ...' [laughter]. And we stayed silent. Of course, I would not deny [it]; there was no chance. I deliberately let people fantasize about us [laughter]. In fact, this may best show the extent to which we merged during that holiday. It seemed like we were one couple. In fact, people saw it, it happened; we were, in a way, like a couple. You know, although one part of the union was absent. You understand?

Mina had somehow paradoxically described her unclothed experience as both 'an extreme condition' and 'a wonderful thing'. It may have been 'extreme' to her because, as Nada commented above, Mina was not a nudist before visiting the island. By exposing her naked body to her friends and strangers on the beach, Mina had

certainly transgressed her own normative behavior. At the same time, it was ‘wonderful’ because the friends felt so ‘relaxed in front of one another’, thus pointing to new unleashed modes of being together. New modes of being are further epitomized by Nada’s reference to their ‘threesome’ relationship. By describing the holiday’s social configuration as ‘not two plus one but a couple made of three’, she alludes to non-dyadic intersubjective relatedness characterized by heightened openness, trust, intimacy and fusion with others. While not implied in a sexual sense, Mina’s use of the term ‘threesome’ intimates the blurring of the boundaries between friendship and romantic relationships. This observation finds an echo in the sociological work of Roseneil and Budgeon, who argue that contemporary cultures are typified by two interrelated, fluid processes, namely ‘centering on friendship, and decentering sexual relationships’ (2004: 135). While centering on friendship highlights an ethic of care shared between non-normative, non-conjugal couples such as same-sex friends living together, decentering sexual relationships relates to prioritizing friendship over romantic relationships. These two processes are apparent in the women’s accounts.

5.3 Intimacy and reterritorialization

Some leisure and tourism spaces, like the river lodge, invite intimate socialities. Intimacy was revealed in Nada’s earlier comment when she alluded to the friends’ around-the-clock proximity as experienced at the lodge. Proximity was conducive to intimate talks, moments of emotional sharing and feelings of togetherness (or *communitas*). *Communitas* is a characteristic of the liminoid and an intrinsic quality of the ‘chora’ (Berdychevsky et al. 2013a). Fullagar argues that a shared feminine embodiment may foster a ‘feeling of being at home’ in the company of a friend (2002: 71). Kong et al. (2022) similarly found that, for Asian women, intimacy was revealed as physical closeness, which in turn facilitated the feeling of togetherness. In their study, heterotopia is described as a ‘gender asylum’, in which Asian women are sheltered from social pressures and where they can experience sisterhood (p. 6). ‘We bonded’, Mina said. ‘It’s like falling in love; it brought us together’, Nada uttered. Previous research – for instance by Berdychevsky et al. (2013a, b), Heimtun (2012) and more recently Kong et al. (2022) – has highlighted the centrality of intimate talks in fomenting ties amongst female friends away from home. In the same vein, Matteucci et al. (2022) refer to relational realizations to describe a sense of learning about oneself through moments of intimate exchange with a friend. The following excerpt from Nada gives credence to the idea that heterotopic spaces, for their affordances, are fertile ground for finding oneself again.

To me, this holiday was, in a way, very cathartic because I returned to myself. There, I was happy because I understood one truth. And that is that I can replace a man. Sometimes a friend can be your ultimate partner, female or male – it does not matter. And that knowledge restored my inner peace because I figured that I will never be alone, and, whatever happens, I have someone to take care of me, to catch me if I fall ... I came back to myself, to my real nature, changed my perspective on life.

Also reflecting on her holiday experience, Mina emphatically points to both her experience of self-renewal and her strong connection to Nada:

This holiday was terribly beneficial; it had a therapeutic effect on all of us. In reality, this holiday has changed everything, not just for me; actually we talked about it. We returned [home] with this feeling that something very important had happened, which later turned

out to be true. We talked about it, like, 'God, what's going on?' In fact, nothing, but we felt a collision of auras; I don't know, a strong energy that had increased with our mutual presence there at that place. And we knew that we had started something, but we did not know what it was. We did start something. Now, with the distance, it has become clear.

A number of words in the women's testimonies reveal the shared holiday experience in Ada Bojana as a pivotal moment in their lives. Nada looks back on her holiday experience and describes it as 'cathartic', or a moment of truth that afforded new potentialities to emerge. Thanks to Mina's unconditional love, she not only found herself again, but she also concedes that her holiday experience had opened new horizons, a new life perspective. She has emerged as a stronger person; she is now able to move her life forward. Mina talks about the 'therapeutic effect' of their holiday in Ada Bojana; there, under the island's spell, everything changed. The women started something new, something beneficial to their lives. The holiday experience in heterotopia epitomizes this turning point, which paves the way to a more meaningful life. To encapsulate this transformative process, this flux or movement towards new self-territories, I use the term *reterritorialization* – a term coined by Gilles Deleuze – because it embodies the emotional and sensual realignment of becoming other (see Deleuze/Guattari 1980). While becoming other is arguably a never-ending process, this process may be heightened within heterotopic spaces (Topinka 2010).

Although at the time of writing eight years have passed since Mina and Nada were last together in Ada Bojana, their friendship has remained strong despite some long periods of silence. The day before Nada was last interviewed the two women had been in touch again after not talking to each other for months. The emotional charge of this reunion is expressed in Nada's words below:

That trip to Ada Bojana sparked a lot of changes in my life, and today again, it feels like my life takes a new turn again. I cried a lot yesterday, I just let it go. It's nice to know that someone is there for you [after all these years], that you have a friend. It's nice to know that someone is actually the one [true friend].

In the above excerpt, the way Nada talks about her recent re-encounter with Mina intimates a deep sense of attachment to her friend. This attachment, she acknowledged, had grown out of their ten-day summer holiday on the resort island. Nada also refers to 'many changes' in her life since that holiday in 2013. In particular, she mentioned breaking up with Dejan (the father of her child), starting a new intimate relationship and finding a true friend (Mina). This account suggests that the shared holiday environment in Ada Bojana provided a space in which the two women could resist everyday struggles, and in so doing empower themselves. These findings reinforce the point made by Fullagar (2002; 2008) and Wearing and Wearing (1996), who argue that, through intersubjective emotional bonds amongst friends in liminoid spaces, women can learn about themselves, embody their feminine selves and practice self-care.

6 CONCLUSION

This study explored the experiences of two female friends holidaying in a river lodge on the Montenegrin island of Ada Bojana. Since the late 1980s, Ada Bojana has been host to a growing number of visitors from both Western and Eastern European countries. If the lush banks of the Bojana River are no longer wild and uninhabited (as once shown in the aforementioned film *The Beauty of Vice*), Ada Bojana has

remained a singular place with its geography and ecosystem. Its isolation from the mainstream resort town of Ulcinj, the remnants of a hippy commune and the current nudist settlement all give Ada Bojana a liminoid character. Because Ada Bojana is detached from yet also connected to other spaces, in this paper I have described it as a heterotopia.

This study contributes theoretically and empirically to a better understanding of female embodied experiences in tourism. First, the four main themes that underpin the women's experiences – namely alienation, transgression, intimacy and reterritorialization – lend support to the idea that heterotopias are spaces of resistance (Foucault 1986). In the private space of the river lodge and the nudist areas of the island, the two women found a hideaway from the social constraints and realities of everyday life. The heterotopic holiday context, as an alternate order to the dominant social order, offers opportunities for release in which taboos are confronted (Andriotis 2010). Transgressive practices such as nudism, drug use, idleness and promiscuity are visible forms of contestation within heterotopias. Furthermore, the intimate socialities of the river lodge and its surrounding environment were conducive to acts of disclosure and emotional sharing, which in turn facilitated self-transformation. For the women in this study, acts of transgression and experiences of *communitas* resulted in them feeling empowered, which had some resonance after the holiday was over.

Second, this study presents heterotopia as a powerful epistemological concept that can inform processes of change. The social, geographical and topographical conditions of heterotopias – with their textures, their diacritical atmospheric qualities, and the energy flows and interactions contained therein – constitute forces that affect those who are immersed within. The contextual forces (intimate lodge, nudist island) and the women's interactions in heterotopia were factors that nurtured the women's personal development. This argument is concordant with Topinka's observation that 'heterotopias, with their intrinsic contestation of order, are spatial organs of knowledge production' (2010: 66). This also reflects Wearing and Wearing's view that some social practices within tourism spaces may 'impact upon the self in a number of ways including both an expansion and a reaffirmation of encultured selves' (2001: 153). Heterotopias, as spaces for resistance and for the contestation of hegemonic socio-cultural relations, provide women with opportunities to explore their embodied identities as liberated tourists (Wearing 1998; Wearing/Wearing 2001).

In terms of practical implications, given the social value of heterotopias, providers of accommodation and public or private leisure spaces that cater to women should create spaces of individualized intimacy. Places that are remote, embedded in nature and that encourage idleness are likely to foster regenerative experiences. Drawing from Gilles Deleuze, Saldanha (2008) suggests that, instead of understanding heterotopias as distinctive physical places, heterotopias should be regarded as *local intensities* that affect those who move through them. Likewise, Johnson (2013: 800) remarks that heterotopias 'are not stable entities; they are contingent qualities'. These observations reiterate the necessity for social science research to embrace relational, embodied approaches to make sense of the world. To contrast and extend the findings presented here, more research on how different leisure spaces shape tourists' experiences is needed. This paper has drawn from the stories told by two midlife Serbian female friends only; the scope of this data is therefore a study limitation. In Ada Bojana, further research could explore the embodied experiences of a larger sample of female friends, including younger and older tourists. In other holiday contexts, future research may also attend to tourists' personal histories and consider how spaces' historic past, present and context are imagined

and experienced by various types of tourist in order to further understand processes of empowerment and self-change.

REFERENCES

- Andriotis, K. (2010): Heterotopic erotic oases: the public nude beach experience, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(4), 1076–2010.
- Bartling, H. (2006): Tourism as everyday life: an inquiry into The Villages, Florida, in: *Tourism Geographies*, 8(4), 380–402.
- Berdychovsky, L., Gibson, H., Bell, H. (2013a): Girlfriend getaways and women's well-being, in: *Journal of Leisure Research*, 45(5), 602–623.
- Berdychovsky, L., Gibson, H., Poria, Y. (2013b): Women's sexual behavior in tourism: loosening the bridle, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 42, 65–85.
- Bonasera, C. (2019): Of mirrors and bell jars: heterotopia and liminal spaces as reconfigurations of female identity in Sylvia Plath, in: *Humanities*, 8(20), 1–16.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2006): Using thematic analysis in psychology, in: *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Ceballos-Lascurain, H. (2008): Ecotourism and ecolodge development in the 21st century, in: Stronza, A., Durham, W.H. (eds), *Ecotourism and Conservation in the Americas*, Wallingford, UK: CABI, 193–203.
- Charmaz, K. (2006): *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, London: SAGE Publications.
- Chase, S. (2008): Narrative inquiry: multiple lenses, approaches, voices, in: Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, London: SAGE, Publications, 57–94.
- Chen, X., Mak, B. (2020): Understanding Chinese girlfriend getaways: an interdependence perspective, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 81, 102878.
- Christou, P.A., Farmaki, A. (2019): Utopia as a reinforcement of tourist experiences, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 77, 144–147.
- Clinard, M.B., Meier, R.F. (2011): *Sociology of Deviant Behavior*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Cohen, E. (1979): A phenomenology of tourist experiences, in: *Journal of the British Sociological Association*, 13(2), 179–201.
- de Jong, A. (2017): Unpacking Pride's commodification through the encounter, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 63, 128–139.
- Deleuze, G., Guattari, F. (1980): *Mille Plateaux: Capitalisme et Schizophrénie, Vol. 2*, Paris: Minuit.
- Edensor, T. (2006): Sensing tourist spaces, in: Minca, C., Oakes, T. (eds), *Travels in Paradox: Remapping Tourism*, London: Rowman and Littlefield, 23–46.
- Euronatur Stiftung (2019) Ada Bojana: nudist paradise and nature's store of treasures, URL: <https://www.euronatur.org/en/what-we-do/project-areas/project-areas-a-z/bojana-buna-delta-and-lake-skadar/projects/ada-bojana/> (accessed 10 March 2020).
- Farkić, J. (2019): Consuming dystopic places: what answers are we looking for?, in: *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 33, 100633.
- Farkić, J., Isailović, G., Lesjak, M. (2022): Conceptualising tourist idleness and creating places of *otium* in nature-based tourism, in: *Academica Turistica*, 15(3), 11–23.
- FKK Ada Bojana (2020): FKK Village Resort Ada Bojana, URL: <https://ulcinjska-rivijera.com> (accessed 10 March 2020).
- Foley, C. (2017): The art of wasting time: sociability, friendship, community and holidays, in: *Leisure Studies*, 36(1), 1–20.
- Foucault, M. (1986): Of other spaces, in: *Diacritics*, 16(1), 22–27.
- Fullagar, S. (2002): Narratives of travel: desire and the movement of feminine subjectivity, in: *Leisure Studies*, 21(1), 57–74.

- Fullagar, S. (2008): Leisure practices as counter-depressants: emotion-work and emotion-play within women's recovery from depression, in: *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 35–52.
- Fullagar, S., Owler, K. (1998): Narratives of leisure: recreating the self, in: *Disability and Society*, 13(3), 441–450.
- Gamson, W.A. (2002): How storytelling can be empowering, in: Cerulo, K.A. (ed.), *Culture in Mind: Towards a Sociology of Culture and Cognition*, New York: Routledge, 187–198.
- Gibson, H.J., Berdychevsky, L., Bell, H.L. (2012): Girlfriend getaways over the life course: change and continuity, in: *Annals of Leisure Research*, 15(1), 38–54.
- Green, E. (1998): 'Women doing friendship': an analysis of women's leisure as a site of identity construction, empowerment and resistance, in: *Leisure Studies*, 17, 171–185.
- Hathaway, A.D. (1997): Marijuana and lifestyle: exploring tolerable deviance, in: *Deviant Behavior*, 18(3), 213–232.
- Heimtun, B. (2007): Depathologizing the tourist syndrome: tourism as social capital production, in: *Tourist Studies*, 7(3), 271–293.
- Heimtun, B. (2012): The friend, the loner and the independent traveller: Norwegian midlife single women's social identities when on holiday, in: *Gender, Place and Culture*, 19(1), 83–101.
- Holstein, J.A., Gubrium, J.F. (2016): Narrative practice and the active interview, in: Silverman, D. (ed.), *Qualitative Research*, London: SAGE Publications.
- Johnson, P. (2013): The geographies of heterotopia, in: *Geography Compass*, 7(11), 790–803.
- Jordan, F., Aitchison, C. (2008): Tourism and the sexualisation of the gaze: solo female tourists' experiences of gendered power, surveillance and embodiment, in: *Leisure Studies*, 27(3), 329–349.
- Jordan, F., Gibson, H. (2005): 'We are not stupid ... but we'll not stay home either': experiences of women solo travelers, in: *Tourism Review International*, 9(2), 195–211.
- Kong, S., Guo, J., Huang, D. (2022): The girlfriend getaway as an intimacy, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 92, 103337.
- Larsen, J. (2008): De-exoticizing tourist travel: everyday life and sociality on the move, in: *Leisure Studies*, 27(1), 21–34.
- Livingstone, N., Matthews, P. (2017): Liminal spaces and theorising the permanence of transience, in: Hennebery, J. (ed.), *Transience and Performance in Urban Development*, Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 31–46.
- Löfgren, O., Ehn, B. (2010): *The Secret World of Doing Nothing*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- MacCannell, D. (1999): *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Massey, D. (1999): Philosophy and politics of spatiality: some considerations. The Hettner-Lecture in Human Geography, in: *Geographische Zeitschrift*, 87(1), 1–12.
- Matteucci, X., Gnoth J. (2017): Elaborating on grounded theory in tourism research, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 65, 49–59.
- Matteucci, X., Volić, I., Filep, S. (2022): Dimensions of friendship in shared travel experiences, in: *Leisure Sciences*, 44(6), 697–714.
- Mayer, K. (2008): Retrospective longitudinal research: the German Life History Study, in: Menard, S. (ed.), *Handbook of Longitudinal Research*, Burlington, MA: Academic Press, 85–106.
- Osman, H., Brown, L., Phung, T.M.T. (2020): The travel motivations and experiences of female Vietnamese solo travellers, in: *Tourist Studies*, 20(2), 248–267.
- Rankin, J.R., Collins, F.L. (2017): Enclosing difference and disruption: assemblage, heterotopia and the cruise ship, in: *Social and Cultural Geography*, 18(2), 224–244.
- Ravenscroft, N., Matteucci, X. (2003): The festival as carnivalesque: social governance and control at Pamplona's San Fermin fiestas, in: *Tourism Culture and Communication*, 4(1), 1–15.
- Robinson, O.C. (2014): Sampling in interview-based qualitative research: a theoretical and practical guide, in: *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 11(1), 25–41.
- Rogers, M. (2012): Contextualizing theories and practices of bricolage research, in: *The Qualitative Report*, 17, 1–17.

- Roseneil, S., Budgeon, S. (2004): Cultures of intimacy and care beyond 'the family': personal life and social change in the early 21st century, in: *Current Sociology*, 52(2), 135–159.
- Sacco, P.L., Ghirardi, S., Tartari, M., Trimarchi, M. (2019): Two versions of heterotopia: the role of art practices in participative urban renewal processes, in: *Cities*, 89, 199–208.
- Saldanha, A. (2008): Heterotopia and structuralism, in: *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 40(9), 2080–2096.
- Selänniemi, T. (2003): On holiday in the liminoid playground: place, time, and self in tourism, in: Bauer, T., McKercher, B. (eds), *Sex and Tourism: Journeys of Romance, Love and Lust*, New York: Haworth, 19–30.
- Shackley, M. (2002): Space, sanctity and service: the English cathedral as heterotopia, in: *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4, 345–352.
- Small, J. (2005): Women's holidays: disruption of the motherhood myth, in: *Tourism Review International*, 9(2), 139–154.
- Small, J. (2016): Holiday bodies: young women and their appearance, in: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 58, 18–32.
- Stone, P. (2013): Dark tourism, heterotopias and post-apocalyptic places: the case of Chernobyl, in: White, L., Frew, E. (eds), *Dark Tourism and Place Identity*, Melbourne: Routledge, 79–93.
- Topinka, R.J. (2010): Foucault, Borges, heterotopia: producing knowledge in other spaces, in: *Foucault Studies*, 9, 54–70.
- Trauer, B., Ryan, C. (2005): Destination image, romance and place experience: an application of intimacy theory in tourism, in: *Tourism Management*, 26, 481–491.
- Turner, V. (1969): *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Turner, V. (1979): Frame, flow and reflection: ritual and drama as public liminality, in: *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 6(4), 465–499.
- Visit Montenegro (2020): Ada Bojana, URL: <https://www.visit-montenegro.com/destinations/ulcinj/attractions/ada-bojana/> (accessed 10 March 2020).
- Wearing, B. (1998): *Leisure and Feminist Theory*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Wearing, B., Wearing, S. (1996): Refocussing the tourist experience: the flâneur and the chora-ster, in: *Leisure Studies*, 15, 229–243.
- Wearing, S., Wearing, B. (2001): Conceptualizing the selves of tourism, in: *Leisure Studies*, 20(2), 143–159.
- Wilks, L., Quinn, B. (2016): Linking social capital, cultural capital and heterotopia at the folk festival, in: *Journal of Comparative Research in Anthropology and Sociology*, 7(1), 23–30.
- Willis, J.W. (2007): *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretive and Critical Approaches*, London: SAGE Publications.
- Wilson, E., Little, D.E. (2008): The solo female travel experience: exploring the 'geography of women's fear', in: *Current Issues in Tourism*, 11(2), 167–186.
- Yang, E.C.L., Khoo-Lattimore, C., Arcodia, C. (2017): A narrative review of Asian female travellers: looking into the future through the past, in: *Current Issues in Tourism*, 20(10), 1008–1027.