

**Ethical Agency within the Responsible Tourism  
Experience: A PARTicipative Inquiry**

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## *Thesis Abstract*

This thesis examines consumers' ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. It aligns with a post-structuralist, (late) Foucauldian position, adopting the theoretical constructs of 'power struggles' (1982), 'problematizations' (1984a) and 'self-care practices' (1984c) to engender a more fluid view of the market-consumer interface. It investigates (i) how consumers conform to, critique or resist market-promulgated ways of being a 'responsible tourist'; (ii) how consumers (re)negotiate alternative meanings of how to be ethical and act ethically; (iii) what this reveals about the ways in which consumers retain, apportion or relinquish a sense of autonomy over their ethicality; and (iv) the tensions, struggles and dilemmas that consumers concurrently face.

The thesis adopts a participative methodology in order to foster the involvement of participants across the total tourism experience. More specifically, the thesis conducts a PARTicipative inquiry in order to facilitate data collection before, during and after the holiday; enabling 'prospective', 'active' and 'reflective' triangulation (Ingram et al, 2017). To this end, the thesis presents data from participants' pre-holiday and post-holiday interviews, as well as their (on-holiday) diaries and photographs.

The findings of this thesis suggest that consumers' ethical agency manifests in three main ways. Agency is represented through a *critical awareness* of the rhetorical construction of 'responsibility' within three types of market-consumer interface, namely ethical tourism spaces, ethical policies and market materials. Agency is also represented through consumers' *resistance* towards three key areas of the organised tourism industry, specifically large corporations (e.g. chain hotels, international franchises), the tourism 'package', and tourism 'hotspots'. Further, agency is represented through consumers' *self-reflexivity*. Tourists are highly introspective of the ways in which they transform personal ethical reflection into action ('walk the talk'); the ways in which they reflect on ethics but are unwilling to make any material alterations to their behaviour ('reflexive inertia'); and the personal, product, and destination level considerations that impede their engagement in certain ethical practices ('pragmatic utility').

Overall, this thesis aims to contribute to existing literature by fulfilling four research gaps. First, it focusses on the practices and narratives of responsible tourists, as opposed to the 'responsibility' discourses of travel companies (e.g. Caruana & Crane, 2008; Hanna, 2013). Second, it attends to the current lack of

Foucauldian ethics within the consumer responsibility and responsible tourism literatures (Crane et al, 2008). Third, it progresses from studying the ethical consumption of commodity goods to focus on experiential consumption; specifically, highly performative experiential consumption in a potentially environmentally and socio-culturally disparate context to the 'home' setting (e.g. Jamal, 2004). Finally, it focusses on the total responsible experience by triangulating tourists' prospective, active and reflective data.

This thesis also has important practical implications. A stronger awareness of how tourists experience responsible tourism will better enable the tourism industry to tailor their products, services and spaces in a way which more effectively matches consumer demand. Further, an improved understanding of how consumers evaluate discourses on 'responsibility' will inform the tourism industry as to how responsible policies, guidebooks and other marketing messages are interpreted, and thereby constructed and communicated.

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## *Publication Declaration*

The following publication relates to and arises from the content of this thesis:

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## *Glossary of Key Terms*

<b>Ethical Agency</b>	“The ability to identify, [act on] and resolve issues in a manner consistent with individual ethical and moral foundations and beliefs” (adapted from Matherne et al, 2006: 107)
<b>Ethical Consumption</b>	“Consumption experiences that are affected by the consumer’s ethical concerns” (Cooper-Martin & Holbrook, 1993:113)
<b>Ethical Work</b>	“The work one performs to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one’s behaviour. (What are the means by which we can change ourselves in order to become ethical subjects?)” (Foucault, 1984, as in Rabinow, 1997: xxxiii)
<b>Problematization</b>	“The conditions in which human beings ‘problematise’ what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live” (Foucault, 1985: 10)
<b>Power Struggle</b>	“Power relations are possible only insofar as the subjects are free. [...] This means that in power relations there is necessarily the possibility of resistance because if there were no possibility of resistance (of violent resistance, flight, deception, strategies capable of reversing the situation), there would be no relations of power” (Foucault, 1984c: 292)
<b>Responsible Tourism</b>	“A business and consumer response to some of the major economic, social and environmental issues which affect our world [...by] taking responsibility for the impacts that our actions have” (adapted from Goodwin and Pender, 2005: 303)
<b>Subject</b>	“An entity which is self-aware and capable of choosing how to act” (O’Farrell, 2005: 158)
<b>Self-Care Practices</b>	“If we constantly practice the ‘care of the self’ – that is, if we are intimately involved in making judgements, in thinking critically and imaginatively about who we wish to be and the actions we perform, and if we practice self-reflection and dialogue with others – then the self we produce emerges out of the practice of freedom” (Infinitio, 2003: 163)

“I think it is a very interesting thesis really, you know, of going into this and looking at it. Because it applies in all forms of life. Not just tourism. [...] How we close our minds to things. What are we willing to put up with? Or where do we feel that we don't have a choice? When we always do have a choice. Even if that choice is not very good. [...] So it's all about that choice, and not blaming others, and not giving your responsibility away”.

(Barbara, a participant of this thesis).

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## *Ethical Agency*

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### **1.1 Research Context and Focus**

This thesis examines consumers' ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. It considers tourists' "ability to act" (Borgersen, 2005: 441) in the ethical ways in which they desire and their freedom to "make decisions [...that] are consistent with [their] ethical standards" (Matherne et al, 2006: 106) while on holiday. In so doing, it provides a bottom-up view of the market-consumer interface and highlights the associated implications for consumer autonomy, identity, power and ethics. This is significant because, as espoused by the recent work of Papaoikonomou and Alarcón (2017), an understanding of how consumers are empowered to shape their own ethics remains a much-needed avenue of academic exploration.

Although research into consumer ethics and consumer social responsibility (CnSR) has started to increase, it has generally taken a backseat comparative to scholarship into corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Vitell, 2015). Nonetheless, there are a range of approaches which spotlight the consumer and, aligning with Brinkmann and Peattie (2008) and Caruana and Crane (2008), this thesis views terms such as consumer citizenship (Dickinson & Carsky, 2005), political consumerism (Micheletti, 2003; Micheletti et al, 2004; Jacobsen & Dalsrud, 2007) and ethical consumerism (Harrison et al, 2005) as broadly synonymous (see section 2.2., specifically Table 2.1). To this end, it adopts the definition of Cooper-Martin and Holbrook (1993: 113) and regards

ethical/responsible consumption as the “consumption experiences that are affected by the consumer’s ethical concerns”.

Alongside the adoption of varied terminology, research has also aligned with several disciplinary perspectives, namely economics, psychology, and sociology. Each disciplinary perspective lends itself to viewing the market-consumer interface and status of the responsible consumer in a specific way, engendering a set of conditions under which consumer agency can emerge as well as implications for where the locus of ethics resides (see Table 2.2).

The economic literature generally regards the ethical consumer as sovereign of the market, in that businesses supposedly supply the ethical goods and services that consumers purportedly demand (Dickinson & Carsky, 2005). Consumers are believed to express their desire for ethical products – and/or their disdain for unethical products – through market-based practices such as positive buying, boycotts and ethical screening (Harrison et al, 2005). Yet, while this suggests that the locus of ethics predominantly resides with the consumer, Shaw et al (2006: 1052) suggest that the consumer sovereignty approach overlooks how organisations “persuade and manipulate” individuals to favour certain types of goods and services over others. Moreover, Crane and Matten (2010) highlight that the extent to which consumers can direct the market is also heavily dependent on certain conditions, particularly perfect competition. They note that oftentimes consumers’ knowledge of (un)ethical goods and services is insufficient to inform purchasing decisions, and that a lack of choice amongst few competitors can confine their spending to certain (less ethical) businesses.

Research aligning with the psychology discipline tends to demarcate the responsible consumer by personality type and motivation. This has led to a stream of literature that attends to ethical character traits (e.g. Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Akehurst et al, 2012), unethical character traits (e.g. Rawwas, 2001; Liao & Hsieh, 2013), and reasons for and against ethical consumerism (e.g. Burke et al, 2014). As with the economics approach, the locus of ethics primarily resides with the individual, with consumer empowerment increasing in line with the strength of a consumer's ethical disposition and cognitive functioning. That said, psychological research differs in that it has shown the role of marketing in increasing consumers' propensity to purchase (e.g. Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008). Social marketing, for example, targets specific market segments in the hopes of encouraging them to accept, reject, modify, abandon, continue and/or switch certain behaviours (Lee & Kotler, 2011: 9). While this is indicative of the fact that the conditions of consumer agency are at least partly dependent on market-constructed knowledge, there is a dearth of research examining *how* consumers respond to such marketing.

Lastly, research aligning with the sociological discipline has primarily taken a structuralist stance and considered the ways in which external, top-down narratives impose an image of an "ideal self" towards which consumers can "strive" (Hirschman & Thompson, 1997: 47). This view suggests that the locus of ethics rests with the market, and that consumer behaviour is guided by market constructions of 'right' and 'wrong' (Caruana, 2007a; 2007b). While early Foucauldian research has examined how market materials offer ethical subject positions which consumers are free or otherwise to adopt (e.g. Caruana & Crane, 2008; Caruana & Crane, 2011; Hanna, 2013), there again remains a paucity of

research which spotlights consumers' (non)embracement of, and/or reaction towards, these discourses. To this end, Crane et al (2008: 300) advocate the application of Foucault's later works to examine how consumers "participate in the formation of [their] own subjectivity" within certain conditions of freedom. It is here that this thesis is situated in that it adopts the Foucauldian concepts of 'power struggles' (1982), 'problematizations' (1984a) and 'self-care practices' (1984c) as a theoretical lens for examining consumers' ethical agency. This ultimately serves to provide a more dialectic view of the market-consumer interface (e.g. Cherrier, 2006) which is either neglected or under-recognised by research aligning with the above paradigmatic positions.

The majority of literature into ethical consumption and the ethical consumer has concentrated on the study of low value, generic commodity goods (Davies et al, 2012). For example, focus has been on clothing (e.g. Ritch & Schröder, 2012; McNeil & Moore, 2015), Fair Trade (e.g. DePelsmacker et al, 2006; Doran, 2010) and Tradecraft (Barnett et al, 2005c) items, organic produce (e.g. McEachern & Mclean, 2002; Doorn & Verhoef, 2011; Cairns et al, 2013), and every-day food consumption (e.g. Pecoraro & Uusitalo, 2014). Breaking away from this tradition, Ulusoy (2016), for example, recently examined *experiential* responsible consumption, exploring how individuals experience self-transformations from volunteering in an alternative break program "that is radically different from everyday life" (p.284). Developing upon this extremely limited line of research, this thesis examines ethical consumption within another experiential context, responsible tourism. While responsible tourism has been employed as context for investigating consumers' accounts of their own ethics

(e.g. Caruana et al, 2014), it has not been deployed as a means of explicitly examining consumers' ethical agency.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (2017) cites tourism as an “economic and social phenomenon”, given that it: (i) is the fastest growing economic sector, (ii) has a global business volume which matches or exceeds that of oil, food, and automobiles, and (iii) is a chief source of income and employment. With this size and scope, however, brings a set of negative implications which can be of detriment to the future viability of tourism destinations. Archer et al (2005) posit that adverse *economic* impacts may include an over-dependence on tourism revenue and over-consumption of scarce resources; *socio-cultural impacts* may include cultural homogenisation, cultural blending, and cultural displacement; and *environmental* impacts may include over-population and over-visitation. Given the potential for such negative impacts, a chief aim of the UNWTO is to propound a more ‘responsible’ and ‘sustainable’ approach to tourism amongst member states and industry stakeholders.

Goodwin and Pender (2005: 303) describe responsible tourism as “a business and consumer response to some of the major economic, social and environmental issues which affect our world” by “taking responsibility for the impacts that our actions have”. The Responsible Tourist and Traveller (UNWTO, 2005) brochure asserts that consumers can enact and fulfil their ‘responsibility’ by being open to host cultures and traditions, respecting human rights, preserving natural environments and eco-systems, purchasing local goods, and being attuned to local laws, norms and customs. While still a niche area of the tourism market, there are a host of agencies and operators that specifically market and sell

ostensibly responsible products (e.g. [responsibletravel.com](http://responsibletravel.com)<sup>1</sup>, Tribes<sup>2</sup>, Exodus<sup>3</sup>), as well as several tourism charities that encourage responsible practice (e.g. Tourism Concern<sup>4</sup>, The Travel Foundation<sup>5</sup>).

This thesis contends that responsible tourism is a particularly appropriate context for investigating consumers' ethical agency for three primary reasons. Firstly, responsible tourism is a highly performative mode of ethical consumption wherein individuals are exposed to a range of 'principal' (e.g. transport, accommodation) and 'ancillary' (e.g. care hire, gastronomy) services (McCabe, 2009). This coupled with the often unfamiliar or different socio-cultural environment (Jamal, 2004) may or may not render the tourist more susceptible to being "[chaperoned] along prescribed paths" (Edensor, 2000: 326) and/or guided by the panoptic "signposting" (Hollinshead, 1999: 11) than for more mundane, low-involvement and habitual types of ethical purchases. Secondly, tourists may experience disparities between personal ethics and (purportedly) 'good' local practice, possibly resulting in different or conflicting responsibilities when 'home' and 'away' (Bhattacharyya, 1997). Thirdly, it is also possible that consumers may find that their responsible actions, behaviours and choices conflict with, or require balancing alongside, other motivations for travel (e.g. escape, enjoyment, adventure, rest and relaxation (Gilbert, 1992, as in Cooper & Gilbert, 2008)). In light of these conceptual issues, it is argued that responsible tourism is not only a well-suited context for examining the ethical

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<sup>1</sup> [www.responsibletravel.com/copy/about-us](http://www.responsibletravel.com/copy/about-us)

<sup>2</sup> [www.tribes.co.uk/about-us](http://www.tribes.co.uk/about-us)

<sup>3</sup> [www.exodus.co.uk/about-exodus](http://www.exodus.co.uk/about-exodus)

<sup>4</sup> [www.tourismconcern.org.uk/about](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk/about)

<sup>5</sup> [www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/about-us](http://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/about-us)

market-consumer interface, but further lends itself to exploring a new set of micro, meso and macro tensions and compromises that ethical consumers face.

To best examine ethical agency, this thesis conducted a PARTicipative inquiry with sixteen participants who self-identified (to varying degrees) as practicing a variety of activities and behaviours associated with responsible tourism. Whereas previous research has tended to explore the tourism product from a single, fixed point, this methodology readily encouraged the involvement of subjects as they transitioned *through* the totality of the experience; enabling the acquisition of data before, during and after the holiday while facilitating Prospective, Active and Reflective Triangulation (PART) (Ingram et al, 2017). Data collection entailed a contextual interview pre-holiday (see Appendix 1); maintaining a diary (see Appendix 2-4) and taking photographs on holiday; and an in-depth ‘active interview’ (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) post-holiday (see Appendix 6). Concurrent with the participative ethos of the methodology, subjects were also actively encouraged to collect any other forms of data which – along with their photos and diaries – could serve as prompts (e.g. Cederholm, 2004) in the Reflective Phase (see Appendix 5).

In accordance with the theoretical underpinnings, the thesis adopted Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine’s (2008) approach to Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) in order to analyse the verbal and written data. This entailed an inductive and iterative process of ‘open coding’ (Babbie, 2013) and ‘axial coding’ (Klenke, 2016) (see Appendix 7), with the ‘corpus of statements’ being read and re-read for instances of ‘problematizations’, ‘technologies’ (of power and self), ‘subject positions’ and ‘subjectification’. It is argued that Ayllon and

Walkerdine's (2008) methodological guidelines were highly congruent to the aims of the research, in that they readily transposed onto the concepts of power struggles, problematisations and self-care practices.

### **1.1.1 Research Aims from Research Gaps**

This section serves to briefly extract and reiterate the four research gaps which this thesis aims to fulfil in light of the above research context.

First this thesis aims to address the current lack of research into (late) Foucauldian ethics within the consumer ethics and responsible tourism literatures (Crane et al, 2008). It aims to advance from the current early Foucauldian focus (e.g. the 'gaze' and 'panoptic surveillance' (Hollinshead, 1999)) which views individuals as 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1979) who are subjected to – and disciplined by – technologies of domination; the techniques which impose certain 'ways of seeing' and 'doing' on to a given subject position (e.g. Caruana & Crane, 2008; 2011). Further still, it builds upon current research which – although starting to align with key tenets of Foucault's later work – predominantly focusses on ethics as a practice of 'self-formation' (Infinitio, 2003) or as an 'experimentation with subjectivity' in the context of specific power/knowledge structures (Hanna, 2013). In brief, this thesis expands on existing literature by demonstrating the complex *interplay* between *three* of Foucault's theoretical concepts – power struggles (1982), problematisations (1984a) and self-care practices (1984c) – in the construction of consumers' ethical agency.

Second, this thesis aims to attend to the current lack of consumer voice in the ethical consumption literature. While the economic and psychology perspectives do spotlight the consumer – i.e. in terms of the purchasing practices they engage in (Harrison et al, 2005), their personality (Akehurst et al, 2012) and motivations (Burke et al, 2014) – there is much less literature that analyses consumers’ narratives on issues relating to ethical agency. In this regard, the thesis aims to provide a substantive assessment of the ways in which *consumers*: (i) conform to, critique or resist market-promulgated ways of being a ‘responsible tourist’ (e.g. Hanna’s (2013) ‘experiments with subjectivity’); (ii) how they (re)negotiate alternative meanings of how to be ethical and act ethically; (iii) what this reveals about the ways in which they retain, apportion or relinquish a sense of autonomy over their ethicality; and (iv) the tensions, struggles and dilemmas that they face.

Third, this thesis aims to address ethical consumption in the experiential context of responsible tourism. This redirects the aforementioned attention on every-day ethical products such as organic foodstuff (e.g. Cairns et al, 2013), Fair Trade (e.g. Doran, 2010) and clothing (e.g. McNeil & Moore, 2015) to instead expand on the extremely limited research examining experiential consumption (e.g. Ulusoy, 2016). It is argued that tourism is a particularly pertinent context due to its highly-performative and often socio-culturally unfamiliar (e.g. Jamal, 2004) nature, offering new insights into (dis)similarities in ethical practice when ‘home’ and ‘away’ (e.g. Barr et al, 2010).

Lastly, the thesis examines ethical agency across the entire tourism experience, remedying the significant lack of literature that examines the consumer at multiple stages of consumption. While in the general tourism literature there are (relatively) rare examples of research spotlighting two phases of the tourism

experience (i.e. post-holiday and on-holiday (Gyimóthy, 2000); on-holiday and post-holiday (e.g. Markwell, 1997)), very few papers examine the tourist pre, during and post consumption (e.g. Heimtun, 2011).

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research seeks to answer the following research questions. The three research questions map onto the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases of the tourism experience respectively, as discussed in the methodology chapter:

### ***RQ1) How do tourists envisage the responsible tourism product prior to travel?***

- i) What types of ethical actions, behaviours and choices do consumers project to undertake?*
- ii) What types of (non)market discourses do consumers draw on to shape their projections?*

### ***RQ2) How do tourists experience responsibility whilst on holiday?***

- i) How do tourists frame, rationalise and resolve their (un)ethical actions, behaviours and choices (and why)?*
- ii) What types of ethical dilemmas do consumers encounter (and why)?*
- iii) How are ethical actions, behaviours and choices – alongside any tensions, contradictions and compromises – influenced by the tourists' broader context at the individual (micro), market-consumer (meso) and destination (macro) levels?*

### ***RQ3) How do tourists reflect on their responsible tourism experience as being shaped (or not) by market influences?***

- i) How do tourists reflect on the tourism industry's products and communications?*

- ii) How do tourists maintain, protect or devolve a sense of freedom over their practices and subjectivities?*
- iii) How do tourists recount, rationalise and resolve any struggles between promulgated and personal constructions of responsible practice?*

### **1.3 Personal Motivations**

I was introduced to the concepts of ‘responsibility’ and ‘sustainability’ in a tourism context while I was an undergraduate student at Nottingham University Business School. I became particularly interested in the social and environmental conflicts that often transpire from the divergent practices and viewpoints of different stakeholder groups (i.e. tourists, hosts, local governments, tourism companies), as well as the ‘solutions’ that these actors develop in an attempt to reduce any negative impacts and behaviours.

It was this interest that prompted me to broaden my understanding of CSR by studying for a MSc at the International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (ICCSR). Again, I very much enjoyed viewing CSR from a multi-stakeholder approach, most especially in regard to the relationship between the socially responsible business and the ethical consumer. Wanting to continue focussing on this area of study, I applied for, and was granted, an ESRC scholarship to undertake my PhD at the ICCSR; combining research interests in the market-consumer interface and tourism to examine tourists’ ethical agency before, during and after the holiday.

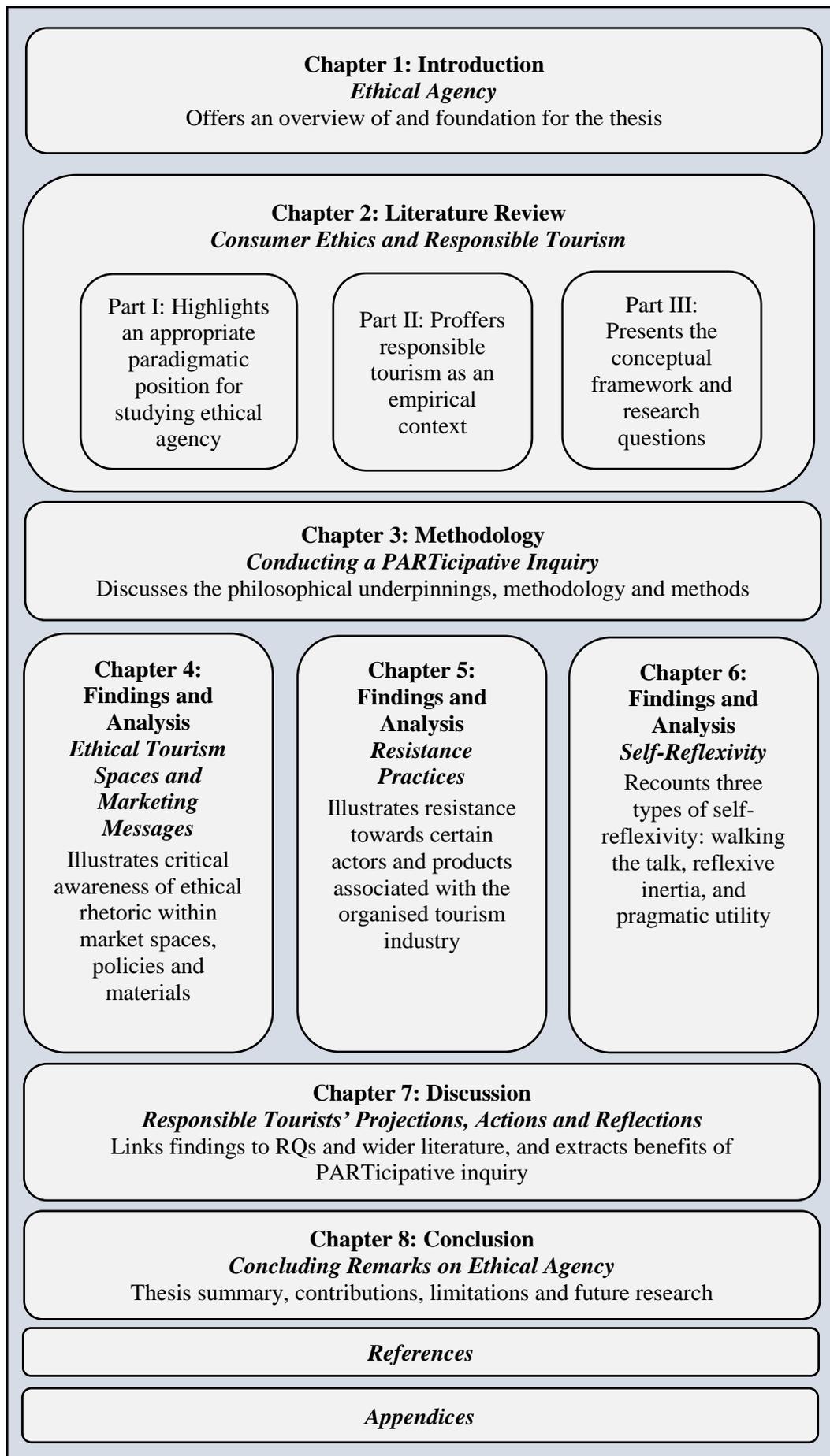
## **1.4 Thesis Structure**

This section offers a concise summary of the chapters that constitute this thesis. The structure of the eight chapters is also captured diagrammatically in Figure 1.1.

### ***Chapter 2: Literature Review – Consumer Ethics and Responsible Tourism:***

Part I of the literature review focusses on extant research into ethical consumption and the ethical consumer. It demonstrates how the literature has predominantly aligned with one of three disciplinary perspectives – economics, psychology and sociology – and highlights how each in turn tends to view the ethical consumer, the locus of ethics, and the conditions for agency in a certain way (2.2.2). The primary aim here is to underline a paradigmatic position which is well attuned to furthering the study of consumers’ ethical agency; and therefore finishes by justifying the selection of a post-structuralist position within the sociological discipline (2.2.3).

Part II of the literature review chapter attends to the empirical context of responsible tourism. It proceeds by defining what is meant by the term ‘responsible tourism’ and highlights how it is both growing in popularity (Goodwin & Francis, 2003) and developing as a type of tourism experience (Mowforth & Munt, 2016) (2.3.1). From this, it provides an overview of existing research into the responsible tourist (2.3.2), concomitantly emphasising how certain conceptual aspects render responsible tourism a highly-suited empirical context for studying consumers’ ethical agency (2.3.3). Part II ends by considering previous applications of Foucauldian thought (2.3.4) and considers the methods traditionally used to examine the tourist experience (2.3.5).



**Figure 1.1** Visual summarisation of the thesis structure

Part III of the literature review presents the conceptual framework, explicitly demonstrating how the theoretical concepts are intertwined with and/or embedded within the empirical context (2.4.1). The chapter ends with a reiteration of the research questions (2.4.2).

***Chapter 3: Methodology – Conducting a PARTicipative Inquiry:*** Chapter 3 seeks to outline and justify the methodology of the thesis. It starts by discussing the philosophical underpinnings of participative research, namely the subjective-objective ontology and extended epistemology (Heron & Reason, 1997) (3.2). It provides a brief overview of participative research (3.3) before outlining the thesis' adoption of PARTicipative inquiry (Ingram et al, 2017) (3.4). From this, it discusses the methods of data collection (primarily interviews, photographs and diaries) (3.5.1), data analysis (Foucauldian Discourse Analysis) (3.5.2), and sampling (purposive and snowball) (3.5.3). The chapter ends with a discussion on researcher reflexivity (3.6), an evaluation of research quality (3.7), and a consideration of research ethics (3.8).

***Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis – Ethical Tourism Spaces and Marketing Messages:*** The first empirical chapter depicts how agency is represented through tourists' critical awareness of the rhetoric within ethical tourism spaces (4.2), ethical policies (4.3), and market materials (4.4). The predominant power struggle here is between the consumer and market, with tourists problematising the way in which the tourism industry conveys 'responsibility'. The chapter highlights how consumers respond to their resulting dissonance (e.g. Hindley & Font, 2017) and (often extreme) disaffection by employing practices of self-care and/or repair-work.

**Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis – Resistance Practices:** The second empirical chapter also attends to the market-consumer interface, but highlights how tourists engage in resistance practices in light of their power struggle with the tourism industry. It shows how resistance often manifests in corporate avoidance (5.2), either as a means of subverting big business (5.2.1) or as a practice of self-care (5.2.2). The chapter evidences how tourists attempt to (re)work (5.3.1) or evade (at least elements) of the tourism ‘package’ (5.3.2), as well as how they engage in independent travel outside of tourist ‘hotspots’ (5.4).

**Chapter 6: Findings and Analysis – Self-Reflexivity:** The final empirical chapter focusses on the ways in which consumers are reflexive over the degree to which they have the agency to engage in their preferred responsible practices. The chapter pinpoints three prominent themes of self-reflexivity: (i) *walking the talk*, wherein the locus of agency is constructed as residing with the individual tourist to translate ethical reflection into action (6.2); *reflexive inertia*, whereby the tourist is aware of (un)ethical aspects but remains unwilling to adapt their behaviour (6.3); and *pragmatic utility*, where certain practical factors at the micro, meso and macro level impede the extent to which consumers are able to put their ethics into practice (6.4).

**Chapter 7: Discussion – Responsible Tourists’ Projections, Actions and Reflections:** The discussion chapter links the key empirical findings from Chapters 4-6 to the research questions and wider literature (7.2), and shows how certain empirical insights were specifically garnered through the adoption of a PARTicipative inquiry (7.3). It ends by presenting the revised conceptual framework (7.4).

***Chapter 8: Conclusion – Concluding Remarks on Ethical Agency:*** The final chapter summarises the entire thesis (8.2) before considering the main contributions (8.3), research limitations and avenues for further research (8.4).

### **1.5 Conclusion of Chapter**

The chapter has provided an overview of and foundation for this thesis into ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. It has briefly contextualised the research in relation to previous literature (1.1) and, in so doing, pinpointed four main research gaps (1.1.1). The chapter has also presented the research questions (1.2), personal motivations (1.3) and the thesis structure (1.4). The next chapter, the literature review, serves to demarcate previous study into consumer ethics and responsible tourism in more detail.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Consumer Ethics and Responsible Tourism*

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#### **2.1 Introduction to Chapter**

This chapter critically discusses literature into ethical consumption, both generally and in tourism, in order to highlight the need for greater attention to be placed on consumers' ethical agency. Part I begins by briefly considering what is meant by the terms 'consumer agency' and 'consumer ethics' (2.2.1) before contextualising previous study into ethical and responsible consumerism (2.2.2). It highlights how previous research has examined: the types of market-based practices (un)ethical customers engage in (2.2.2.1); the (un)ethical consumer identity as explained by cognitive, dispositional and/or psychographic traits, qualities and characteristics (2.2.2.2); and the ways in which responsible consumption has been given meaning, most predominantly via corporate discourse (2.2.2.3).

This discussion culminates in justifying the adoption of a post-structuralist position within the sociological discipline in order to provide a consumer-led insight into the market-consumer interface (2.2.2.4). It advocates aligning with a (late) Foucauldian lens to draw on the theoretical concepts of 'power struggles' (1982), 'problematizations' (1984a) and 'self-care practices' (1984c) to diverge from current (top-down) study of how corporations proffer preferred ways of 'doing responsibility' and 'being responsible' and instead consider how consumers (re)negotiate alternative meanings on how to be ethical and act ethically (2.2.3). This enables a clear assessment of how consumers maintain,

apportion or devolve a sense of freedom over their ethical practices and identities when purchasing (or, more accurately, experiencing) a product that is often marketed around a specific set of ‘responsible’ attributes. It is here that the research is argued to make its principal theoretical contribution, in that it engenders new (bottom-up) insights into the strength, scope and dimensions of consumers’ ethical agency.

Part II focusses on the responsible tourism experience (2.3). It defines ‘responsible tourism’ (2.3.1), outlines the main ways in which it has been previously studied (2.3.2), and elucidates how it is a particularly well-suited context for situating an examination of consumers’ agency (2.3.3). Following on from this, it provides an overview of previous responsible tourism literature aligning with a Foucauldian view (2.3.4), before ending with a brief consideration of the methods traditionally employed for examining the tourist experience (2.3.5). Lastly, Part III provides the conceptual framework for the thesis (2.4.1) and presents the research questions (2.4.2).

## **2.2 Part I – The Ethical Consumer**

This section outlines previous research into the ethical consumer. It defines ‘consumer agency’ and ‘consumer ethics’ (2.2.1), and then considers how research has predominantly aligned with the economics (2.2.2.1), psychology (2.2.2.2) and sociology (2.2.2.3) disciplines, showing how each perspective has diverse yet important implications for how consumers’ agency and ethics are viewed. In so doing, the section outlines a need for, and justifies the benefits of,

aligning with a post-structuralist position, a perspective which has arguably received the least attention to date.

### **2.2.1 Defining Consumer Agency and Consumer Ethics**

**Agency:** Bergen et al (1992: 1) define an agency relationship as when the ‘principal’ (e.g. consumer) is reliant on the ‘agent’ (e.g. market actor) to carry out an action on their behalf. With a specific focus on consumers, Borgersen (2005: 441) defines agency in relation to the individual’s “*ability to act*”; more specifically, the subject’s “uncoerced decision-making powers to choose between alternatives based upon an understanding of circumstances and options available”.

Specifically focussing on ethics, Matherne et al (2006: 106) define personal ethical agency as “the ability to make decisions that involve ethical dilemmas consistent with an individual’s ethical standards”. Extending this notion, Weaver (2006) and Bhattacharjee (2014) further link (moral) agency to an individual’s self-concept or self-identity, with Bhattacharjee et al (2014) in particular claiming that consumer agency is linked to consumers’ self-expression.

Aligning with this view, this thesis draws on the above definitions to view ethical agency as the consumer’s freedom to engage in his or her desired set of responsible practices and subjectivities in the context of any personal (micro), product (meso) and destination (macro) level considerations. As in Bhattacharjee et al (2014), this thesis further considers ‘agency’ as interchangeable with the related terms of ‘freedom’, ‘control’ and ‘autonomy’.

*Consumer ethics:* As stated in Chapter 1, the thesis adopts Cooper-Martin and Holbrook's (1993:113) definition and regards ethical consumption as the "consumption experiences that are affected by the consumer's ethical concerns". Mirroring others (e.g. Brinkmann and Peattie, 2008; Caruana and Crane, 2008; Davies and Gutsche, 2016), this thesis views the concepts of consumer responsibility (or CnSR) (e.g. Vitell, 2015), consumer citizenship (Dickinson & Carsky, 2005), political consumerism (Micheletti, 2003; Jacobsen & Dalsrud, 2007) and ethical consumerism (Harrison et al, 2005) as broadly synonymous. To this end, Table 2.1 proffers a definition of each to demonstrate how the terms are understood by the researcher; highlighting, in bold, any key words of crossover. It is stressed that the similarities between concepts means that, in this thesis, the terms 'ethical consumer', 'ethical consumption', 'consumer responsibility' and 'responsible consumption' are used interchangeably.

Furthermore, the research also aligns with Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014: 588) and views responsible consumption as "not (only) the aggregate choices of ethically reflexive consumers but crucially, as outward manifestations of competing logics and re-articulations within a more pluralistic, multi-agent framework". In so doing, when combined with the above definitions of consumer agency, it is evident that this is better attuned to examining the ways in which consumers have the freedom to engage in certain responsible practices and subjectivities in accordance with the broader consumption context in which they and other (non)market actors and influences are embedded.

Concept	Definition/Understanding
Consumer responsibility (CnSR)	“...consumers have at least two major responsibilities. First, toward other stakeholders, in their one-on-one dyadic relationships they have a responsibility to act ethically which usually involves the obtaining and perhaps use of goods and services, but could also involve disposal. We might call this responsibility, <b>consumer ethics</b> . Second, toward society as a whole consumers have a responsibility to avoid societal harm and even to act proactively for social benefit which may involve all three facets of consumer behavior—obtaining, use and disposal. We might call this responsibility, CnSR” (Vitell, 2015: 768).
Consumer citizenship	“...citizenship and <b>consumption</b> are not divorced concepts, but rather that the importance attributed to consumption in today’s society and the impact of consumption on individuals and the environment means it has become a vehicle within which to exercise citizenship” (Shaw et al, 2006: 1054).
Political consumerism	“...represents actions by people who make choices among producers and products with the goal of changing objectionable institutional or market practices. Their choices are based on attitudes and values regarding issues of justice, fairness or non-economic issues that concern personal and family well-being and <b>ethical</b> or political assessment of favourable and unfavourable business and government practice” (Micheletti, 2003: 2).
Ethical consumerism	“...refers to a set of debates and strategies in which consumption is not so much the <i>object</i> of moral evaluation, but more a <i>medium</i> for <b>moral and political</b> action. This is the dominant sense in the case of consumer boycotts, ethical audits, <b>corporate social responsibility</b> initiatives and fair trade campaigns” (Barnett et al, 2005: 21).

**Table 2.1** Definitional similarities between consumer responsibility and related concepts

## **2.2.2 Situating Consumer Agency and Consumer Ethics**

This section delineates study of the responsible consumer – and their responsible practice – in accordance with three key disciplinary perspectives: economics (2.2.2.1), psychology (2.2.2.2) and sociology (2.2.2.3). These disciplinary perspectives were selected because of their pervasive (i.e. economics and psychology) or growing foothold (i.e. sociology) in the consumer responsibility literature (cf.; Dickinson & Carsky, 2005; Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Cherrier, 2006; Caruana, 2007b). It is emphasised that the aim of this section is not to discount or diminish particular strands of research, but to highlight the ways in which each disciplinary perspective is (or is not) attuned to examining the core focus of this thesis. It simply leads to an assessment of how each discipline perceives consumer agency, alongside the conditions under which their agency emerges (see Table 2.2). This section concludes by presenting the post-structuralist position (within the sociological discipline) as being well suited to studying issues relating to consumers' ethical agency (2.2.2.4).

### **2.2.2.1 Economics**

Economic theory stresses the role of the market in co-ordinating the utility-maximising actions of self-interested consumers (Becker, 1976: 5). It assumes that agents stimulate demand in accordance with stable personal preferences, and that, to varying degrees of efficiency, the market allocates resources in a manner which optimises the collective good (Becker, 1976: 5). A large body of research into consumer responsibility and ethical consumerism has aligned with neo-classical economics, depicting responsible individuals as those who veto against undesirable market practice(s) through their 'consumer vote' (Dickinson &

Hollander, 1991). Such vote is cast by, but not limited to, abstaining from unsustainable goods and services (i.e. boycotts and anti-consumerism), engaging in positive buying (i.e. 'buycotts'), undertaking ethical screening (i.e. comparing ethical ratings), and/or relationship purchasing (i.e. educating sellers on ethical grounds) (Harrison et al, 2005).

In each of the above scenarios, the subject is viewed as a prudent consumer who marks his or her ballot in instances where consequent gains or rewards exceed any associated losses or costs (Goodin & Roberts, 1975). Goodin and Roberts (1975) argue that this behaviour is relative to the rational consumer's assessment of 'stake' and 'efficacy': if (s)he has much to risk, yet the ability to ensure a favourable outcome, (s)he will act egoistically; conversely, if (s)he lacks such ability, or has little to win or lose, (s)he will consume ethically. Consequently, central to the economics perspective is the notion of 'consumer sovereignty' (Crane & Matten, 2010), whereby "with every penny spent the consumer [can determine] the direction of all production processes [...] and business activities" (Mises, 1998: 271) towards a responsible end. More succinctly, through casting their vote in favour of ethical goods and services, consumers signal their empowered position within the marketplace to affect (macro) social change (Shaw et al, 2006: 1052).

In critique of this, however, Hansen and Schrader (1997, 443) argue that the consumer as sovereign model incites several "descriptive and normative shortcomings" in terms of both supply and demand. With reference to the former, they argue that consumer sovereignty disregards the possibility that suppliers may be averse or unable to match the increased call for ethical goods and services (i.e. 'imperfect supply adjustment'). Hence, the power of the

consumer to encourage ethical practice may in fact be limited to the extent to which suppliers are also beholden to the mandates of other stakeholder groups (e.g. governments, contractors) (Dickinson & Carsky, 2005: 28-29). Further critique comes from Dickinson and Carsky (2005), who suggest that consumer sovereignty discounts the ways in which corporations mould consumer demand for certain (ethical or otherwise) products and services. In this regard, the focus on individuals' (presumed) 'free' choice is problematic, as responsible decisions pertaining to ethical goods and services may be influenced, or manipulated, by the "perceptually salient cues" (Karlsson, 2013: 186) of marketers.

Further conditions of agency are apparent on the demand-side, in that the economic approach assumes that the extent of consumers' ethical behaviour largely resides with their ability to make a rational, informed choice – i.e. Strong's (1996) 'well informed consumer' – based on a range of social and environmental evaluative criteria (Schafer & Crane, 2005: 79). Yet, critics have questioned the extent to which consumers have access to quality information pertaining to 'good' and 'bad' practice, and thereby indicate that this may serve to impact upon consumers' perceived self-efficacy to behave responsibly (Valor, 2008: 317; Crane & Matten, 2010: 368). Shaw et al (2006: 1060) recount how consumers acknowledge that, in reality, the lack of informational sources and choice renders the extent of their agency (or sovereignty) debatable – ultimately suggesting that "their empowerment must be perceived as partial". Equally, even when provided with information, Barnett et al (2005b) question the narrow, consequentialist assumption that market discourse is sufficient in "magically" (Barnett et al, 2005a: 45) inciting rational, unified and consistent ethical decision-making across all ethical consumers. In this regard, Barnett et al

(2005b) suggest that issues surrounding how we derive – and indeed the feasibility of deriving – at a singular (objectivist) view of what constitutes ‘good’ practice remains under theorised.

In addition, Brinkman and Peattie (2008: 25) argue that the economics perspective discounts how ethical actions may differ according to the ‘moral intensity’ of ethical issues. This neglects the possibility that, the greater the ‘seriousness’ of the (ir)responsible product or practice, the greater the reasoning and deliberation required by consumers when voting (Brinkmann & Peattie, 2008: 25). Moreover, it is also important to consider the intensity of the consumption context. In limiting consumer responsibility to ‘ethical purchase behaviour’ (Smith, 1990, as cited in Dickinson & Carsky, 2005), the economics perspective axiomatically precludes subjects from any ethical accountability beyond the point of purchase. This becomes problematic when viewing consumers’ responsible practice in high-involvement, experiential contexts – such as responsible tourism – as it is likely that individuals continue to participate in ongoing (co)constructions of responsibility throughout the duration of the holiday.

#### **2.2.2.2 Psychology**

Much of the literature into ethical consumerism and the ethical consumer has adopted a psychological perspective (Moisander, 2000), with research deductively seeking conditional relationships between the precursors (i.e. traits) of (ir)responsibility (i.e. trait-relevant behaviours) and specific consumption contexts (i.e. trait-relevant conditions) (Doris, 2012: 528). To determine why certain consumers engage in particular types of consumption practices,

consumer psychology primarily focuses on consumers': (i) personality, ascertaining the character traits that objectify specific consumer-types; and (ii) cognitive functioning and mental processes, establishing the motivations, decision-making procedures and perceptions that incite individuals to consume (Jansson-Boyd, 2010; Foxall et al, 1998). Consequently, psychological research ultimately lends itself to 'social categorisation' exercises, wherein consumers are 'pigeon-holed' into particular subject positions as a means of stressing (dis)similarities between the practices of the desirable 'self' and the undesirable 'other' (Jansson-Boyd, 2010: 57).

***Personality:*** Causality has been sought between ethical practice and personality. Here, attention has been paid to the "big five taxonomy" (Weeden, 2013: 37), with research, for example, pinpointing a strong correlation between agreeable, conscientious, intellectual and emotionally-stable extroverts and ecologically-oriented purchases, environmental conference attendance and pro-environmental group membership (Fraj & Martinez, 2006). The ecological or green identity has elsewhere been assigned to altruistic (Straughan & Roberts, 1999; Akehurst et al, 2012) and caring (Laroche et al, 2001; Anquino & Reed, 2002) individuals who demonstrate concern towards the wellbeing of others. Overall, the ethical consumer has been presented as a highly complex and multidimensional subject, which in itself has spawned a divide between researchers who expound the resultant commercial and strategic opportunities for intricate consumer segmentation (Laroche et al, 2001; Rawwas, 2001), and those who question the ease with which *all* potential responsible variables can

be comprehensively delineated and successfully measured (Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Weeden, 2013).

Research has also sought linkages between consumer dispositions and transgressive actions and behaviours. For example, risk-taking, autonomous and aggressive innovators have been deemed less likely to view dubious conduct as 'wrong' (Rallapalli et al, 1994). Nevertheless, these findings are partially contradicted by Rawwas (2001), who posits that intolerant, security-seeking aggressors (i.e. the 'deferent' identity-type) are in fact less lenient towards questionable practices than strong, forceful and materialistic individuals (i.e. the 'functionalist' identity-type). Such inconsistencies also manifest across other studies, with the initial positive correlation between counterfeit CDs, value consciousness and low-integrity (Ang et al, 2001) being later contradicted by the inverse relationship between grey-market Smartphones, integrity and status (Liao & Hsieh, 2013). This again suggests that profiling (un)ethical practices solely in relation to personality is problematic, as similar (or the same) character traits can, (i) propagate inconsistent (un)ethical behaviours (Weeden, 2013), and (ii) be of greater or lesser bearing across different products (e.g. CDs versus Smartphones).

A further critique is the problem of social desirability bias, whereby participants may be reluctant to 'tick yes' (Crane, 1999) to certain character traits or unethical behaviours, thus impacting upon the scope of personality variables associated with (ir)responsible conduct. In this regard, it has been argued that interpretive approaches grounded on the meanings attributed to unethical behaviours may be

“epistemologically more appropriate” than the functionalist approaches currently employed (Crane, 1999: 244).

Schlegelmilch et al (1996) offer a further critique in their assertion that personality traits serve only to explain ethical practice(s) at a solitary point in time. It is problematic to presume that the (ir)responsible personality is (i) “stable and enduring” (Nairn & Berthon, 2003: 84), and (ii) a unitary concept (Walker & Frimer, 2007: 856). By reductively assuming that individuals are consistently (un)ethically-oriented due to innate qualities – i.e. ‘personality genes’ (Nash, 1988, as cited in Nairn & Berthon, 2003: 84) – consumer psychology ineffectually encapsulates the ways in which individuals ascribe meanings to their (ir)responsible behaviours when faced with “changing contexts and challenges” (Walker & Frimer 2007: 856). Research suggests that such contexts and challenges may be: (i) socio-cultural, with the psychological literature often ethnocentrically disregarding how country-specific influences may affect personality traits (Lu et al, 1999); and (ii) institutional, neglecting how consumers encounter the “manipulable” role of the market in ‘creating’ the responsible personality (Nairn & Berthon, 2003: 83). Consequently, there is a space for future study to determine how ethical practice (and thereby ethical agency) is at least partially shaped throughout the responsible consumption experience by the subject’s (non)institutional backdrop.

***Motivations: Personal and social:*** Research has also ascribed responsible consumption practices to particular types of motivations. Here, the role of internal and external motivations has been considered, reflecting Uusitalo and Oksanen’s (2004) argumentation that ethical consumerism involves a

consideration of both private and collective objectives. For example, research has shown how social positive motivators (e.g. ‘better for everyone in the long run’) continually incite higher mean levels of agreement than personal positives (e.g. ‘I feel better about myself’) (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008); particularly amongst ‘committed’ millennials, who are more likely to oppose negative personals (i.e. inconvenience, choice-restrictions) and negative socials (i.e. time-wasting perceptions of others) than other consumer types (Bucic et al, 2012). In this vein, this line of research has tended to compare the motivations of ethical and non-ethical consumers, with Doran (2009) suggesting that while loyal ethical consumers are often driven by outer-oriented motivations, such as a desire to protect and be tolerant towards others (i.e. ‘universalism’), unethical subjects are contrarily motivated by independent thought (i.e. ‘security’). This has most recently been supported by Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker (2016) who found that the altruistic antecedents of ecologically-friendly purchases are of greater significance for the former set of consumers than the latter. It is possible that this is due to Antonetti and Maklan’s (2016) finding that individuals who shun responsible brands do so in order to avoid being associated with the often-altruistic behaviours of ‘warm’ consumers (i.e. the ‘hippies, greenies, and tree huggers’).

This outward-looking approach has been contradicted, however, with literature addressing the role of inner-oriented feelings, such as guilt. Antonetti and Maklan (2014: 122) argue that “the experience of guilt and pride, after a specific instance of consumption, activates psychologic processes that increase consumers’ sense of agency” to engage in ethical behaviours. This is supported by Chatzidakis (2015: 88) who claims that ethical consumption is particularly

motivated by “depressive guilt, an unconscious effort to engage in reparation”. Most recently, Newman and Trump (2017) suggest that reducing such guilt is a particularly important motivation for consumers with high moral identity importance.

As with research into personality, the literature into motivations has been subject to critique. Foxall et al (1998), for example, query the likelihood that (un)ethical consumers always expose their true motives because of social desirability bias. More specifically, the authors suggest that ethical actions which appear ‘altruistically’ (or externally) oriented may, in reality, be motivated by (internal) ‘avarice’ (p.134). Accordingly, Moisander (2007: 407) suggests that the ways in which extant psychological literature has largely ignored the possibility for “motivational conflicts” is somewhat problematic. It might be that individuals encounter ethical tensions when faced with the ‘individual-collective paradox’, requiring the negotiation of moral dilemmas surrounding benefiting society at large and/or benefiting the self (Uusitalo, 1990, as cited in Moisander, 2007; Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004). This omission is particularly significant in high-involvement consumption contexts such as responsible tourism; whereby consumers may feel motivational tensions between continually benefiting the host whilst concurrently “thinking about [oneself] because it’s [tourists’] time away” (Barr et al, 2010: 475).

A further question is the extent to which human behaviour can be attributed to a specific set of motivations. While decisional balance scales have been ascribed significant explanatory power (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008; Bucic et al, 2012), critics highlight the struggle surrounding the development of a taxonomy sufficiently inclusive of all responsible motivations (Foxall et al, 1998). This

criticism is exacerbated further by the possibility that primary motivations may in fact be intricately revealed through multiple selective motives (Moisander, 2007).

Moreover, decisional balance scales generally lack a longitudinal element, discounting the likelihood that a consumer's personal and social motivations change over time (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008). Consequently, such objective ontological status of responsibility prevents an adequate assessment of how consumers' motivations to act responsibly fluctuate in accordance with their evolving familial and occupational ties (non-institutional context) and brand attachments (institutional context) (Schudson, 2006).

***Motivations: Issue type:*** Research has also demarcated consumer motivations relative to issue type. Ecological motivations (e.g. environmental friendliness, minimised harm to animals and nature) are considered imperative in framing ethical attitudes, alongside political motivations (e.g. sourcing from countries respectful of human rights) and, to a lesser extent, religious motivations (e.g. congruence with faith) (Honkanen et al, 2006; Wheale & Hinton, 2007; Megicks et al, 2008). Additional research has extended this further, demonstrating that ethical consumers not only express varying strengths of feeling for ethical issues (in general) across goods, but for the same ethical issue across product categories – demonstrating the importance of the 'ethical bundle' (Wheale & Hinton, 2007).

Whilst a benefit of the above segment of research is the sheer range of motivations identified (Megicks et al, 2008), a prominent critique is the narrow focus on the grocery sector, and organic foods more specifically (McEachern & McClean, 2002; Honkanen et al, 2006). Accordingly, research which progresses

beyond low-involvement commodity goods is vital, especially as ethical and socially responsible (ESR) motivations have been found to fluctuate across different types of shopping experience (Megicks et al, 2008). For example, Megicks et al (2008) suggest that local and global issues are of increased pertinence for the ‘main-shop’ experience than for the ‘top-up’ encounter, implying that ethical concerns are of greater magnitude when shopping is planned. Therefore, an assessment of how consumers experience responsibility in a highly-performative empirical context is necessitated.

It has also been suggested that future research should examine the ways in which consumer motivations are subject to “various levels of agent influence” (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014: 578). As in the personality literature, Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014: 579) suggest that there remains a significant ‘gap’ for research to progress from the current “micro-cognitive interpretations” and alternatively develop an understanding of how consumer motivations are negotiated, constrained and or facilitated in the broader (meso) context of “institutional logics”.

***Attitude-behaviour gap:*** A body of psychological research has considered the “gap between what consumers say about the importance of ethical issues and what they do at the checkout counter” (Auger & Devinney, 2007: 361). Examining the factors which impede ethical consumption, Bray et al (2011) found that price-sensitivity, personal experience, ethical obligation, lack of information, perception of quality, inertia in purchasing behaviour, cynicism and guilt all served to limit the extent to which consumers were motivated to consume ethically. This is comparable to Papaoikonomou et al’s (2011) own demarcation of impeding factors, which are demarcated by (i) external

limitations, such as lack of or inefficient ethical alternatives, lack of transparent information, limited budget/high prices, social obligations, and peer power; and (ii) internal limitations, particularly the presence of ‘easier’ options, the need for ‘compromise in every-day life’, and the idea that ‘change takes time’.

In reference to the attitude-behaviour gap, Carrington et al (2010) suggest that previous cognitive research is limited for four reasons: (i) it assumes that ethical intention will always translate into ethical behaviour; (ii) it disregards the role of external factors in the decision-making process; (iii) it overlooks how consumers may lack the same control at the point of purchase that they have when forming their ethical attitudes; and (iv) it is open to social desirability bias in that it focusses on self-reported behaviour over (potentially different) actual behaviour. To this end, Carrington et al (2010) propose a conceptual framework to capture how ethical behaviour could be affected by ‘implementation intentions’ (e.g. ‘if/then plans’ (p.144)), ‘actual behavioural control’ (e.g. internal and external factors affecting self-efficacy), and the ‘situational context’ (e.g. surroundings, time, task type). Similarly, Fukukawa and Ennew (2010) propose three additional antecedents – ‘social norm’, ‘perceived behavioural control’ and ‘perceived unfairness’ – which they suggest should also be accounted for in considering how “what we believe is not always what we do” (p.49) when faced with ethical dilemmas.

Most recently, psychological research has considered how consumers justify the attitude-behaviour gap. For example, it has shown how consumers engage in ‘prospective moral licensing’ as a means of mitigating unethical behaviour ‘now’ by promising ethical behaviour ‘later’ (Casico & Plant, 2015). Shalvi et al (2015) propose that consumers not only adopt pre-violation justifications as a

means of protecting their moral identities, but further consider how individuals employ post-violation justifications as a means of atoning' for their unethical behaviour. These include: (1) physical or symbolic 'cleansing'; (2) 'confessing' as a means of "turn[ing] over a new leaf in their moral ledger" (p.128); and (3) 'distancing' themselves from their wrongdoing. Barkan et al (2015) suggest that these justifications enable consumers to reduce any anticipated (i.e. pre-justifications) or experienced (i.e. post-justifications) dissonance when perceiving a personal attitude-behaviour gap.

***Social marketing:*** Straughan and Roberts (1999: 558) claim that profiling the ethical consumer by psychographic criteria has important implications for the "future of green marketing", in that it enables marketers to better devise campaigns that more strongly encourage pro-environmental behaviours. Lee and Kotler (2011) define this 'social marketing' as the marketing strategies and techniques that seek to influence consumer behaviour for the better (i.e. marketing that incites behavioural change 'for the good'). Steg and Vlek (2009) propose four main issues for marketers to consider when promoting pro-environmental behaviour, namely the need to: (1) distinguish the behaviour necessitating change (e.g. car usage); (2) consider the factors that encourage or discourage behavioural change (e.g. benefits and costs, contextual factors, and habitual practice); (3) determine the appropriate interventions for inciting a change in behaviour (e.g. information provision, structural change); and (4) analyse the resulting effects. In considering the challenges facing marketing, Carrigan and Bosangit (2016: 86) claim that responsible marketing is especially important in the future because "people's lives are increasingly being controlled and shaped by corporations rather than governments".

Examining consumers' response to social marketing, Pickett-Baker and Ozaki (2008: 290) conclude that "greater marketing exposure matters", as their propensity to purchase environmentally friendly brands increases when they are presented with marketing information. Yet, at the same time, the authors also suggest that consumers often struggle or fail to notice these marketing materials, indicating that marketers need to improve upon their current strategies to secure consumer attention. Given this finding, it is unsurprising that Varadarajan (2016: 6) notes how previous research into 'sustainable marketing', 'environmental marketing' and 'green marketing' has often been focussed on minimising the aforementioned attitude-behaviour gap.

### **2.2.2.3 Sociology**

Giddens (1991) distinguishes between the Conservative and Liberal schools of sociological thought; those who respectively view the individual as regulated by, or liberated from, the restraints and structures defining social life. He argues that the fundamental distinction centres on the extent of autonomy granted to the individual; more specifically, the freedom with which subjects are (dis)empowered to conduct an action, or make an informed decision, independent from external control (pp.211-213).

The conservative or structuralist view regards consumption as "something which is institutionalised [or] forced upon us" (Ritzer, 1998: 4). The locus of ethics resides with the market, with ethical consumers being collectively 'guided' by the coercive (macro) corporate discourses that inflexibly define notions of 'right' and 'wrong' or 'good' and 'bad' (i.e. objective ontological status of

responsibility) (Caruana, 2007a; 2007b). In this regard, the status of consumer agency is negligible, in that the disempowered consumer is thought to passively conform to a predefined notion of how to act ethically.

Conversely, the liberal or postmodernist view is sceptical of this “macroscopic” (Ritzer, 1998: 5) focus, and rejects the imposition of grand narratives and ideologies in favour of ‘demassification’, ‘fragmentation’ and ‘individualisation’ (Toffler, 1970, as cited in Raaij, 1993). Given this pluralistic focus – or subjective ontological status of responsibility (Caruana, 2007a) – consumers are thought to have the freedom of self-expression as well as the agency to engage in personalised consumption experiences (Raaij, 1993). Here, the locus of ethics resides at the micro level with the autonomous consumer. The individual is deemed to be fully empowered to negotiate his or her own (responsible) behaviours, actions, choices and identities in as “many ways of being as desired” (Firat & Venkatesh, 1993: 229; Caruana, 2007b).

Previous consumer research has tended to align with the structuralist view, examining the ways in which “cultural engineers” provide “cultural authority narrative[s]” to mould consumer conduct (Holt, 2002: 1). This has served to offer a “template” or “cultural idealisation” of who the (‘responsible’) consumer is, and against which future (‘responsible’) behaviour can be assessed (Hirschman & Thompson, 1997: 52; Caruana & Crane, 2008). Much of this investigation has centred upon a discourse analysis of corporate communications, predominantly in the form of online texts. For example, Caruana & Crane (2008) and Caruana et al (2008) adopt a Foucauldian lens to demonstrate how corporate discourse juxtaposes the identity of the ‘good’ and ‘concerned’ responsible consumer against the ‘bad’ and ‘exploitative’ mass consumer, whilst Banaji and

Buckingham (2009) suggest that corporations employ the rhetoric of ‘cool’ and ‘alternative’ to construct the ethical teenage subject.

To date, however, there has been a distinct lack of research examining how consumers negotiate the responsibility discourses proffered by the market. Although Moisander and Pesonen (2002) compare industry and consumer discourses to examine the ways in which certain ‘green’ subject positions are propagated, and Lee et al (2009) refer to moral brand avoidance, research has generally failed to investigate how consumers (co)construct their *ethical* actions and identities in relation to corporate discourses. This is perhaps surprising given that broader anti-consumption research has shown that consumers are cynical of (e.g. Odou & de Pechpeyrou, 2011; Mikkonen et al, 2014) and/or resistant to (Valor et al 2017) corporate discourses, while research aligning with consumer culture theory (CCT) has examined the “co-constitutive and co-productive” ways in which individuals utilise “market-generated materials to forge a coherent if diversified and often fragmented sense of self” (Arnould & Thompson, 2005: 871). For example, Luedicke et al (2010) examine how consumers incorporate market myths into their own life circumstances to defend their virtuous identities against transgressive ‘others’; whilst Arsel and Thompson (2011) explore how consumers employ counter-narratives to disassociate from myths entirely (e.g. the ‘hipster icon’). It is primarily Henry (2010: 670) who refers to a sense of ethical agency, demonstrating how four “political myths compete” in ways which stimulate individuals to reconcile ‘individual autonomy and social equality’ and ‘consumer sovereignty and corporate dominance’ in the context of human rights and responsibilities. Through drawing on these myths, Henry (2010) evidences how individuals

“apportion degrees of responsibility” (p.670) at the micro (i.e. self) and macro levels (i.e. markets, governments), and considers the subsequent implications for consumer empowerment (i.e. ‘free to flourish libertarian’, ‘capabilities approach liberal’ and ‘long-term disadvantaged’).

Elsewhere, research currently indicates that, whilst ethical consumers are often acquainted with ethical tropes – i.e. the ‘antihero’s’ cynicism of “you are one of many who can make a difference” – individuals do not attempt to integrate these ideologies into their consumption stories (Autio et al, 2009: 44). Markkula and Moisander (2012: 115) suggest that this may be attributable to ‘discursive confusion’, whereby disempowered consumers feel “frustrated and unable to perform the roles ascribed to them”.

Sociological research has – as in the psychological literature – also attended to the attitude-behaviour gap (e.g. Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Caruana et al (2016) show how a more interpretive approach can be taken, painting ethical consumption as a socially constructed, multi-faceted phenomenon that is entwined with, and balanced alongside, other considerations. For example, Carrigan and Attalla (2001) found that ethical purchases are likely to be affected by competing personal considerations of price, value, brand image and fashion trends, while other have shown how ‘greenness’ is influenced by consumers’ broader lifestyles (Connolly & Prothero, 2003) and views of others in the household (i.e. ‘household agreement’) (Aschemann-Witzel and Aagaard, 2014).

Here, research suggests that there is an element of ethical flexibility when balancing personal responsibility against other social (i.e. family, convenience)

and economic (i.e. price) influences (Szmigin et al, 2009). For example, Ritch and Schroder (2012: 208) find that parents who purchase unsustainable clothing stress the benefits of cheaper garments for fast-growing children in order to “avoid disjunction with morals”. Similarly, Cairns et al (2013) evidence how, despite wanting to feed their children organic produce, mothers purchase a non-organic version of an item requested by their children if it is the only way they can buy it (i.e. lack of a nearby organic store), or if it is all they can afford. This reinforces the complex role of care in ethical consumption (e.g. Shaw et al, 2017).

In this vein, research has shown how, when faced with moral tensions or ethical compromises, consumers deploy ‘vocabularies of motive’ to vindicate deviance from gendered social norms of the ‘good’ self – enabling them to (re)negotiate a ‘successful’ identity that juxtaposes that of the ‘spoiled’ or ‘bad’ (May, 2008: 472). In addition, Chatzidakis et al (2004) maintain that consumers deploy five types of neutralisation techniques, namely: (1) denial of responsibility, wherein consumers denounce their personal accountability; (2) denial of injury, whereby consumers contend that no harm has been caused by their actions; (3) denial of victim, where consumers claim that the other party deserved, or was unaffected by, the norm-violating behaviour; (4) condemning the condemners, with consumers shifting the censure towards those criticising their behaviour; and (5) appealing to higher loyalties, with consumers contending that they violated the ethical norm so as to engage in another highly-valued behaviour. Chatzidakis et al (2007) suggest that future research should consider at which stage of the consumption process these techniques are employed – i.e. prior to or post consumption – when rationalising the attitude-behaviour gap.

#### **2.2.2.4 Summary of Perspectives**

Drawing on the above sections, Table 2.2 presents a comparison of the main assumptions and philosophical underpinnings of each approach, while concurrently outlining what this means for the way in which each paradigm views the locus of ethics and conditions of agency.

While the economic perspective views the responsible consumer as having complete agency, it does so in a way which ultimately proffers a “highly-idealised model of consumer behaviour” (Barnett et al, 2005a: 45). Through solely focusing on the types of practices rational, informed and utility-maximising subjects are free to engage in – i.e. at the checkout (Jacobsen & Dalsrud, 2007) – the economic position ultimately restricts the (macro) aggregate benefits of ethical consumption to the augmentation of (micro) individual control and self-interest (Barnett et al, 2005a). Accordingly, as highlighted in Table 2.2, the economic perspective denies an assessment of how consumers experience ethical agency in instances wherein: (i) consumption extends beyond the point of purchase; (ii) there is a lot of information; and (iii) consumer sovereignty is impacted by imperfect market conditions.

In terms of the psychology perspective, it is argued that by viewing ethical practices as correlated to personality and cognitive functioning, this line of research ultimately views the locus of ethics as residing at the micro level. More specifically, it suggests that ethical agency increases in accordance with the cognitive development and (specific) ‘responsible’ predispositions of the individual consumer. In this regard, and as depicted in Table 2.2, psychological research denies an assessment of how the strength and scope of consumers’

Disciplinary Perspective	Economics	Psychology	Sociology		
			<i>Structuralist ('Conservative')</i>	<i>Post-modernist ('Liberal')</i>	<i>Post-structuralist ('Middle Out')</i>
<b>Main Assumptions</b>	Consumers act ethically by casting a market 'vote', from which the collective social good is maximised	Consumers are ethical as a result of cognitive functioning and personality traits	Consumers' ethical conduct is defined/determined by broader metanarratives	Consumers' ethical conduct is defined/determined by the individual	Consumers' ethical conduct is dialectically (co)determined through market and personal discourse
<b>Ontological / Epistemological Underpinnings</b>	Objectivist / Positivist	Objectivist / Positivist	Objectivist / Positivist	Subjectivist / Interpretivist	Subjectivist / Interpretivist
<b>Levels of Analysis</b>	Micro (individual purchases) / Macro (social welfare)	Micro (individual traits, motivations)	Macro (market structures)	Micro (individual constructions)	Micro (individual constructions) / Meso (market constructions)
<b>View of the Subject</b>	Rational, self-interested and utility-maximising	Socially and personally conscious	Follower of prescriptive codes defining 'responsible' conduct	Free to ascribe personal meanings to their responsible practices and identities	Free to (re)negotiate own practices and subjectivities in relation to the 'ways of seeing' and 'doing' proffered by the market

Cont'd

Disciplinary Perspective	Economics	Psychology	Sociology		
			Structuralist ('Conservative')	Post-modernist ('Liberal')	Post-structuralist ('Middle Out')
<b>Locus of Ethics</b>	Consumer	Consumer	Market	Consumer	Consumer / Market
<b>Status of Consumer Agency</b>	Sovereign of the market, free to choose  <i>(complete empowerment)</i>	Agency increases as consumers' morality cognitively develops  <i>(progressive empowerment)</i>	Coerced by the market  <i>(complete disempowerment)</i>	Autonomy to personalise consumption  <i>(complete empowerment)</i>	Autonomy to (re)negotiate consumption practices proffered by the market  <i>(partial empowerment)</i>
<b>Conditions of Agency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dependent on sufficient quality and quantity of information</li> <li>- Dependent on market equilibrium (between demand and supply)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dependent on sufficient quality and quantity of information</li> <li>- Dependent on predisposition(s) to act ethically (e.g. consistent personalities and motivations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dependent on guiding structures (i.e. sufficient quality and quantity of information)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Power to act as ethically as personally desired</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Power to act ethically within certain 'conditions of freedom'</li> </ul>

**Table 2.2** A view of consumer responsibility – and the associated implications for ethical agency – by disciplinary perspective

ethical agency is (or is not) shaped by (non)market influences (e.g. Nairn & Berthon, 2003).

It is clear from Table 2.2 that the sociological literature is attuned to the relationship between the market and consumer. However, it appears that research should progress from the current (polarised) Liberal and Conservative views in favour of adopting more of a ‘middle-out’ perspective (Cherrier, 2006: 516). In so doing, Cherrier (2006: 516) argues that research will start to view consumer responsibility as a form of “dialectical interplay” between (i) an individual’s freedom to consume in certain ethical ways (i.e. Liberal), and (ii) the institutional discourses which shape (or mediate) their responsible actions, behaviours and choices (i.e. Conservative). Referring to the table, it would examine how individuals (at the micro) level are at least partially empowered (i.e. status of agency) to frame their ethics in relation to market (meso) constructions; with the locus of ethics sliding between the consumer and market in accordance with the degree to which the former draws on or deviates from the discourses of the latter. More specifically, this works towards overcoming the current structure versus agency debate within the ethical literature by advancing from the simplistic, dichotomous view of the responsible consumer as *either* an empowered individual *or* a “powerless dupe” (Denegri-Knott et al, 2006: 958).

This research proposes to adopt a sociological, (late) Foucauldian, post-structuralist lens, and thereby draw on the concepts of ‘power struggles’ (1982), ‘problematizations’ (1984a) and ‘self-care practices’ (1984c) to explore issues relating to consumers’ ethical agency within responsible consumption. This allows for a substantive assessment of how consumers present, produce or

protect their ethical freedom when drawing on, or diverging from, market discourses on responsibility and the responsible self. Through undertaking a consumer-oriented assessment of the ways in which individuals (do or do not) draw upon market knowledge, research will begin to uncover: (i) the complex and intricate power relationships that exist between consumers and corporations, and (ii) the subsequent ethical tensions and compromises that (may) ensue when consumers abide by, or deviate from, (purported) best practice.

### **2.2.3 A Foucauldian Lens**

Crane et al (2008: 315) remark how, to date, Foucauldian ethics have “featured little” in the ethics literature, despite the fact that “for those interested in power, the ethical self, freedom and virtue, Foucault provides important, if not fully realised, contributions”. They contend that Foucault’s later works are particularly valuable, in that they “offer a richer understanding of how we participate in the formation of our own subjectivity” as well as “a way to connect an understanding and critique of power with a personal project of self” (p.300). This section shows how (early) Foucauldian thought has been applied within the consumer responsibility literature, considers the subsequent implications for consumers’ restricted possibilities of ethical subjectivity and agency, and consequently highlights the importance of adopting the (later) concepts of ‘power struggles’ (1982), ‘problematizations’ (1984a) and ‘self-care practices’ (1984c) as a lens for examining ethical agency.

***Power struggles and problematisations:*** It is argued that the thesis’ focus on ethical agency lends itself to the application of the lesser studied Foucauldian concepts, ‘power struggles’ (1982) and ‘problematizations’ (1984a). Foucault

(1982) contends that in order to understand the complex power relations between institutions and individuals, we must first comprehend strategies of resistance; given that, “every power relationship implies, at least *in potentia*, a strategy for struggle” (p.794). Whilst Foucault concedes that the possibility for resistance is often small – i.e. in terms of an “asymmetrical” or “limited margin of freedom” (Foucault, 1984c: 292) – the subject is thought to have the agency to (at least partially) subvert traditional (top-down) relations of power. To this end, following Valor et al (2017), who examined how consumers expressed their resistance towards the ‘managerial elites’ (or ‘enemies’) as a means of establishing an alternative identity, this thesis aims to examine the way in which individuals do or do not struggle against the ‘responsible’ practices and subjectivities offered (or imposed) by the tourism industry.

Problematizations are defined as “the conditions in which human beings ‘problematise’ what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live” (Foucault, 1985: 10). Rabinow (1997: xxxvi) claims that “for Foucault, ‘being’ is given through [these] problematizations and practices, it is not prior to them”. This, therefore, lends itself to an examination of how consumers employ self-care practices in response to the facets of the consumption experience which they render particularly problematic. This could be in relation to the conditions of ‘responsibility’ proffered or imposed by the tourism industry’s ethical spaces and texts, and/or in relation to their own (un)ethical actions, behaviours and choices.

***Self-care practices:*** In his earlier more structuralist work, ‘Discipline and Punish’, Foucault (1975) conceives individuals as ‘docile bodies’ that are subjected to the disciplinary power of institutions (i.e. ‘disciplinary society’). It

is here that Foucault speaks of ‘technologies of domination’, the techniques which “determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends” (Foucault, 1984b: 225). Fairclough (2010: 41-42) posits that this view suggests that institutions inflict ideological and discursive constraints upon passive individuals, providing a ‘knowledge-base’ of the approved ‘ways of seeing’ and ‘doing’ as a specific type of subject.

However, concerned with his overemphasis on individual subjugation, Foucault later progressed from the disempowering view of ‘technologies of domination’ to the more empowering concept of ‘technologies of self’ (Besley, 2002: 49; Crane et al, 2008: 303). Foucault (1984b: 225) defines technologies of the self as the techniques which:

Permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves.

Infinitio (2003: 163) contends that it is through these technologies of self – or practices of self-care (‘care of self’) – that Foucault sees individuals as creating themselves as “as ethical beings”:

If we constantly practice ‘care of the self’ – that is, if we are intimately involved in making judgements, in thinking critically and imaginatively about who we wish to be and the actions we perform, and if we practice self-reflection and dialogue with others – then the self we produce emerges out of the practice of freedom. Absolute control of and liberation from the forces of power was not Foucault’s goal – indeed, for him this is an impossibility – nevertheless, he advocated exerting our positive freedom by experimenting on and creating a self (p.163).

As alluded to in the above extract, for Foucault, relations of power are still present in the practice of self-care, but not coercive (unlike ‘technologies of domination’) (Foucault, 1982; 1984c). Foucault contends that wherever there

are relations of power, there are always (albeit perhaps limited) opportunities for resistance (1984c); enabling individuals to “constitute [themselves] as active moral agents within [...certain] fields of disciplinary practices”, or, more simply, engage in self-care practices within certain ‘conditions of freedom’ (Crane et al, 2008: 304).

It is within this area that Foucauldian thought has been predominantly applied within the consumer responsibility literature. Caruana and Crane (2008) examine how an online text proffers certain (ir)responsible identity positions that consumers are free (or otherwise) to adopt, whilst Hanna (2013: 3) similarly explores how the same corporate website “invite[s] particular ‘experiments with subjectivity’”. Here, Hanna (2013) highlights that although the responsible tourist *is* encouraged to experiment with the ‘traveller’ identity, certain ‘experiments’ are foregrounded whilst others are silenced. Caruana et al (2008: 261) also note that, in presenting individuals with a “well-defined”, “stable” and “unconflicting self”, these identity positions may ultimately serve to subvert possible tensions or contradictions that consumers face (in reality) when engaging in self-care practices. This resonates with Caruana and Crane (2011) who demonstrate that, in promoting certain ‘ways of seeing’ and ‘doing’ over others, responsible texts propound “important limits” (pp.1507-08) that may affect consumers’ (perceived strength and scope of) freedom to resist or engage in certain types of actions and behaviours.

In this regard, it is argued that while the literature has examined the ways in which corporations invite consumers to ‘experiment with subjectivity’ (e.g. Hanna, 2013), the next step is to examine how *consumers* (do or do not) contest,

critique or resist these confines in order to (re)negotiate alternative meanings and possibilities of how to be ethical and act ethically.

**Summary:** In sum, it is argued that these three Foucauldian concepts are well attuned to examining how consumers (re)negotiate alternative meanings of how to be ethical and act ethically, while considering what this reveals about the ways in which individuals retain, apportion or relinquish a sense of autonomy over their ethicality. While viewing the three constructs as conceptually distinct, this thesis further seeks to examine how power struggles, problematisations and self-care practices interrelate. Put simply, the thesis is attuned to the ways in which certain problematisations may transpire from power struggles between consumers and (non)market actors, necessitating that individuals engage in certain practices of self-care in order to (re)negotiate themselves as an ethical subject.

### **2.3 Part II – Responsible Tourism**

The second part of this chapter presents the responsible tourism experience as a well-suited empirical context for examining consumers' ethical agency. Part I highlighted the need for more research into consumer ethics to be situated in a highly-experiential context, rendering tourism generally, and responsible tourism specifically, an ideal setting.

Literature on the tourist experience is becoming increasingly holistic. Adhikari and Bhattacharya (2016) recently categorised extant research into four main conceptual strands: definitional aspects of customer experience; formation of customer experience; consumer psychology in the creation of experience and its

consumption; and effects of customer experience. In addition to these conceptual developments, research within the last few years has examined the experience of a spectrum of *consumers* (e.g. mindful tourists (Chen et al, 2017); business travellers (Willis et al, 2017); flamenco tourists (Matteucci, 2014)), across a diverse set of empirical *contexts* (e.g. Egypt as an Islamic destination (Brown & Osman, 2017); crime detective fiction tours (van Es & Reijnders, 2016); Chinese wetland parks (Wang et al 2012)), and via a range of *mediums* (e.g. travel blogs (Bosangit et al, 2015); online travel videos (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier (2009))).

Yet outside of specialist journals such as *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, there are few studies – particularly in the top-ranking journal, *Annals of Tourism Research* – that specifically focus on the experience of *ethical* tourists; namely Tolkach et al’s (2017) examination into the ethics of Chinese and western travelers, Malone et al’s (2014) exploration of hedonism in ethical tourism, and Caruana et al’s (2014) consumer accounts of responsible tourism. This too suggests that responsible tourism is a prime empirical context for situating an examination of consumers’ ethical agency.

The following subsections consider what is meant by responsible tourism (2.3.1) and outline previous areas of study (2.3.2). Several key justifications for situating an examination of ethical agency within responsible tourism are proffered (2.3.3); Foucauldian thinking within the current tourism literature is presented (2.3.4); and the methods that have been employed to examine the tourist experience are highlighted (2.3.5).

### 2.3.1 Defining Responsible Tourism

“Tourism is essentially a temporary reversal of everyday activities – it is a no-work, no-care, no-thrift situation; [...] it is in itself devoid of deeper meaning: it is a ‘vacation’, i.e. ‘vacant’. If tourism became central, the individual would become ‘deviant’, he would be seen as ‘retreating’, opting-out, or escaping the duties imposed upon him by society” (Cohen 1979: 181).

As espoused in the above extract, the tourism experience is frequently presented as an outlet for escape (Cohen, 1979; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Holidays have traditionally been portrayed as “socially sanctioned periods of play” (Ryan, 2002: 4) that serve to break into, or juxtapose against, the responsibility and monotony experienced during the rest of the year (Krippendorf, 1987). Within these breaks from reality, tourists frequently consume in greater quantities than ordinarily accustomed (Williams & Ponsford, 2009), often drawing on or draining the host destination’s social and environmental resources to the detriment of the local populace (i.e. the ‘tragedy of the tourism commons’ (Briassoulis, 2002)).

To this end, responsible tourism has become a “significant trend” in the tourism market (Goodwin & Francis, 2003: 271); with the demand for a care-free, “sun, sand and sea holiday” (Goodwin & Francis, 2003: 271) progressively turning towards more moralistic experiences of ‘sun, sea and saving the world’ (Butcher, 2002). This is captured by Mowforth and Munt (2016), who show how the traditional tourism model has developed from a mass tourism approach (‘the work ethic’) to a more sustainable form of tourism (‘the conservation ethic’) (Figure 2.1).

<i>Cultural Trend</i>	<i>Economic Trend</i>		<i>Tourism</i>	<i>Power</i>
Modernist	Fordist	<b>THE WORK ETHIC</b>	Mass and package	Merchants and new service providers
		<b>THE LEISURE ETHIC</b>	Package, exploration, adventure	Transnational corporations (TNCs) + lending organisations
Post-modernist	Post-Fordist	<b>THE CONSERVATION ETHIC</b>	Nature and sustainable	Socio-environmental organisations + TNCs + lending organisations

**Figure 2.1** ‘Ethics and Industry’ (Mowforth & Munt, 2016, Ch.4, Fig 4.2).

As expressed by Hindley and Font (2017), the term responsible tourism is often employed interchangeably with ethical tourism, sustainable tourism, and ecotourism – and sometimes alternative tourism and pro-poor tourism – despite minor conceptual differences. Although general consensus is lacking over a specific definition, this thesis draws on the work of Goodwin and Pender (2005: 203) and views responsible tourism as:

A business and consumer response to some of the major economic, social and environmental issues which affect our world [...by] taking responsibility for the impacts that our actions have.

Responsible tourism generally aims to minimise the negative environmental, economic and socio-cultural effects of leisure travel for the mutual benefit of guests and hosts (Sharpley, 2013). Specifically, while tourists are presumed to benefit from a more authentic holiday experience, the local population are thought to benefit from improved welfare, effective resource management, and

enhanced commercial opportunities (Spenceley et al, 2002 as cited in Frey & George, 2008). To achieve these effects, Leslie (2012: 1) contends that all stakeholders involved in the tourism experience are subject to ‘moral accountability’; with the onus of responsibility not only residing with the producers (i.e. tour operators, tour guides, host communities), but also the consumers. It is thus surprising that the responsible tourist has been largely “overlooked” in the tourism and responsible tourism literatures (Stanford, 2008: 258).

### **2.3.2 Research Perspectives on Responsible Tourism**

In their special issue on responsible tourism, Bramwell et al (2008) outline four perspectives adopted within the literature, research which: (1) focusses on the producers or consumers of tourism; (2) explores the relationships between different tourism actors; (3) concentrates on individual or collective responsibility; and (4) relates to the political processes behind achieving small-scale or large-scale change. Given the focus of this thesis, this section concentrates on presenting recent research aligning with the first two perspectives.

Starting with the first perspective, Dolnicar et al (2008) argue that research has largely focused on ‘supply-side’ measures at the expense of ‘demand-side’ approaches to sustainability. For instance, recent examples include research into the marketing and management of conservation sites (e.g. Gilmore et al, 2007), alongside literature into hotels’ CSR practices (e.g. Martínez et al, 2014), policies (e.g. Ayuso, 2007), reporting (e.g. De Grosbois, 2012) and greenwashing (e.g. Smith & Font, 2013).

An area which has perhaps received most attention is tourism texts, particularly the role of guidebooks in shaping consumer behaviour. Bhattacharyya (1997: 379) suggests that guidebooks ‘mediate’ tourists’ experiences by highlighting local, authentic objects “worthy of the tourists’ attention”, while Luh Sin (2017) suggests that guidebooks ‘sell ethics’. Much attention has been paid to the *Lonely Planet*, with Lisle (2008) highlighting how guidebooks within this series engage in ethical communication. The main focus here has been on the authors of the *Lonely Planet*; both in terms of the writers’ tensions surrounding the ways in which these guidebooks have started to mainstream the ‘off-beaten’ track (Iaquinto, 2011), and the ethical dilemmas writers experience regarding their role as a ‘cultural mediator’ in presenting destination image and culture (McWha et al, 2017: 1401).

McWha et al (2016) have also focused on another form of tourism text – the travel magazine – showing how this too has the “persuasive power to mediate foreign cultures and destinations (p.85). Again highlighting the importance of authenticity, the authors extract two (dichotomous) identities constructed within travel magazines, the tourist and the traveller. The ‘traveller’ (or ‘anti-tourist’) image is associated with the positive promotion of responsible tourism and the negative portrayal of mass tourism; while also presented as someone who seeks unique experiences and relationships with the local population. It is argued, however, that what remains to be analysed in detail is the way in which tourists themselves respond to the responsibility discourses within these tourism texts.

Research focussing on the consumer has tended to segregate the tourist by moral traits and ‘shades of green’ (Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999), leading to the

extrication of the ‘Good Tourist’ (Wood & House, 1991, as cited in Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007), the ‘big E’ versus the ‘little E’ (MacKay, 1994, as cited in Holden, 2008), and the ‘special ecotourist’ versus the ‘lounger’ (Cleverdon, 1999, as cited in Holden, 2008). Comparatively less research has analysed tourists’ *narratives* in order to examine how consumers experience responsible tourism, rendering our current understanding generally limited to: what it means to be, and behave as, an ‘exceptional visitor’ (Stanford, 2008); tourists’ understandings of responsible tourism and responsible behaviours (Miller et al, 2010); and how the responsible self is constructed in relation to, or in contrast against, the (industry’s) “ideal type” (Caruana et al, 2014).

Hindley and Font (2017) posit that “to encourage ethical behaviour there is a need to better understand consumers who face challenges which prevent ethical behaviour, or who express ethical intentions but are unable to follow through”. Accordingly, they demarcate what they believe to be five potential challenges to ethical consumer behaviour that are worthy of future study (see Table 2.3). It is argued that in fulfilling the research aims, this thesis contributes to advancing this line of inquiry while further revealing new insights into the attitude-behaviour gap (e.g. Carrigan & Attalla, 2001) (see sections 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3).

Bramwell et al’s (2008) second perspective captures research that has explored the relationships between different actors, such as the guest-host or tourist-tourism industry. In relation to the guest-host relationship, research has shown how tourists employ ‘strategies of localisation’ (Muzaini, 2006) in order to immerse themselves in the local population. With regards to the tourist-tourism industry, research has shown how consumers (dis)obey industry policies

Challenge	Description
Barriers to change	<p>“Structural barriers can restrict the ability to engage in actions and include institutional [...] and regulatory barriers. They also include cultural [...], physical [...] and economic barriers.</p> <p>Psychological barriers [...] include habit [...]; perceived behavioural control [...]; perceived risks from behavioural change [...]; conflicting goals and aspirations; beliefs in solutions outside of human control [...], and mistrust and reactance” (pp.81-82)</p>
Ignorance, confusion and lack of motivation	<p>“Tourists may be ignorant of their impacts”</p> <p>Tourists can be “confused, indecisive and uncommitted” (p.82)</p>
Ethical intentions and behaviour	<p>“Although ethical intentions are expressed, the actual behaviour that results may be less ethical and requires consideration” (p.82)</p>
Cognitive dissonance	<p>“A state of tension and unease motivates the individual to change attitude or behaviour to achieve cognitive consistency. Behaviour has to be perceived to have an unknown consequence if dissonance is to result” (p.82)</p>
Moral disengagement	<p>“Considers that harmful actions can be rationalised. It justifies conduct and allows individuals to maintain their values – separating them from their actions” (p.83)</p>
Diffusion of responsibility	<p>“Diffusion of responsibility has variously considered the bystander effect (leaving responsibility to others in group situations), moral disengagement and denial – knowledge denial (‘we didn’t know’), control denial (‘we knew, but couldn’t do anything about it’) and connection denial (‘whether we knew or not, it’s the responsibility of someone else’) (Phillips, 2012)” (p.83)</p>

**Table 2.3** Hindley & Font’s (2017: 81-83) challenges to ethical consumer behaviour

(Cvelbar et al, 2017), as well as how they associate with (i.e. ‘mass ecotourists’) – or dissociate from (i.e. ‘backpackers’) – the tourism industry in accordance with their respectively low and high desire for cultural authenticity (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003; Noy, 2004). Here, sits the notion of ‘staged

authenticity' (MacCannell, 1976), with research showing, for example, how tourists are attuned to the way in which cultural heritage is 'staged' as a tourism attraction (Chhabra et al, 2003).

Research has also considered the relationship between tourist and tour guide, with Salazar (2005) contending that local tour guides act as a "window" (p.629) through which tourism products are packaged, "(re)presented" and "(re)constructed" (p. 639). Specifically focusing on cultural tourism, Salazar (2012: 9) contends that tour guides have "considerable agency in the image-building process of the people and places visited, (re)shaping tourist destinations and indirectly influencing the self-image of those visited too". Outside of the responsible tourism literature, research has also considered the relationships between consumers, with research highlighting the importance of user-generated content (e.g. Ayeh et al, 2013) such as TripAdvisor (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010) in shaping tourists' projections for their holidays.

Overall, this subsection suggests that there is a need to attend to the consumers' perspective in the responsible tourism literature, particularly in terms of how they respond to the ethical tourism spaces and marketing messages proffered by the market. This in itself is likely to induce new insights into the relationship between the responsible tourist and tourism industry given that it spotlights the market-consumer interface.

### **2.3.3 Justifying Responsible Tourism as an Empirical Context**

This section offers several justifications for exploring ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. Firstly, current inquiry has almost exclusively

studied ethical consumption in relation to low-value, generic commodity goods (Davies et al, 2012: 37), particularly focusing on organic foods (Honkanen et al, 2006; van Doorn & Verhoef, 2011) and sustainable fashion (Ritch & Schröder, 2012; Shaw et al, 2006) (see section 2.2.2.2). This is problematic because, while the responsible consumer may be able to ‘unpack’ (Crane, 2001) ethical issues pertaining to individual products, they may not be able to do so in highly-performative ethical consumption contexts such as holidays. For example, whereas consumers might be aware of the criteria constituting a ‘good’ product – e.g. Fair-Trade labelling (De Pelsmacker et al, 2006) – tourists might lack a comprehensive knowledge-set of all ethical issues pertaining to each ‘principal’ and ‘ancillary’ service (McCabe, 2009) encountered in the tourism experience. This, coupled with the fact that “personal wisdom in the tourism domain is particularly challenging [because of a] complex mix of environmental, social and cultural” factors (Jamal, 2004: 532), may have important implications for the extent to which consumers draw on or deviate from the marketing messages of the tourism industry.

Moreover, responsible tourism is unique in that it offers an empirical context wherein the spatial distance between producer and consumer is minimised (e.g. Lyon, 2006, as cited in Ritch & Schröder, 2012). Hence, whilst findings in the consumer responsibility literature suggest that consumers safeguard their self-image when deviating from best practice – e.g. through employing neutralisation techniques such as the denial of responsibility, injury and victim (Chatzidakis et al, 2004) – responsible tourism engenders a novel space to assess how a (potentially) different set of ethical tensions may transpire when the ‘victimised’ (or benefitted) party is of greater visibility. It might be that, when directly

confronted with the host's 'reality', tourists are less (or more) inclined to deny their responsibility in favour of non-ethical factors (i.e. value) than for other ethical products (e.g. clothing (Szmigin et al, 2009)).

Alternatively, as holidays are traditionally viewed as periods to "switch off and fill up" (Krippendorf, 1987: xiv), it might be that tourists experience less dissonance when transgressing, or deviating, from purported best practice. Findings suggest, for example, that there is a "major gap between what individuals are willing to do at home and what [is] acceptable and desirable [...] on vacation" (Barr et al, 2010). Hence, this context allows a new assessment of how 'sustainable lifestyles' and identities transpose across different settings (Barr et al, 2010). If tourists construct their 'home' identity as staunchly sustainable, they may regard their holiday as a temporary period in which they "can behave hedonistically, without the need to be responsible" (Swarbrooke, 1999: 11). The mere purchase of a responsible holiday in itself may mitigate, or suffice to excuse, consumers from any further responsibilities throughout the holiday (Sharpley, 2013: 387).

#### **2.3.4 Foucauldian Thinking within Responsible (and General) Tourism**

Hall (2010) contends that Urry's (1990) work on the 'tourist gaze' has been seminal within tourism studies. This is reiterated by Hollinshead (1999: 7), who maintains that the "institutional/professional 'gaze' has come into currency" within the tourism field. Here, as in the ethics literature, research has drawn on Foucault's earlier works to examine how the tourism market acts as an 'eye of power' or 'panoptic authority' that directs tourists' attention towards

“selectively celebrated sites and sights” (Hollinshead, 1999: 11). Edensor (2000) likens the tourism industry to providers of a ‘stage’ on which consumers can choose (or not) to ‘perform’; whilst Cheong and Miller (2000: 383) proffer a “stronger Foucauldian statement” and suggest that industry practitioners “define, constrain, and elicit a normalising behaviour for tourists”. Nevertheless, while research has investigated the (normalising) texts of the tourism industry (e.g. Caruana et al, 2008; Caruana & Crane 2008; Caruana & Crane, 2011; Hanna, 2013), less empirical research has attended to the experiences of the responsible tourist to consider the ways in which they incorporate, integrate or ignore the purported ‘ways of seeing’ and ‘ways of doing’ (e.g. Caruana et al, 2014).

That said, Urry (1992: 178) is attuned to the possible ways in which ‘counter-tourists’ may “disturb” or “challenge” dominant regimes of truth. Similarly, Edensor (2001: 75-78) offers four types of non-conformist touristic performances. He suggests that tourists may engage in: *resistance*, wherein the consumer is disinclined to adopt particular subjectivities; *improvisation*, with individuals (re)interpreting normative prescriptions to match one’s own desired touristic performance and/or sense of self; *ironic cynicism*, with tourists deriding the promulgated gaze; and *involuntary conformance*, where tourists conform in a way which suggests an understanding which is different to the intended meaning. Adding to this, however, Jorgensen (2003: 150-11) indicates that contestation of the ‘gaze’ may not necessarily be pejorative; evidencing how, whilst tour guides shaped the ‘gaze’ towards Ireland’s people (e.g. friendly, loquacious drinkers) and past (e.g. Celtic, medievalist), subjects assigned alternative, but not depreciatory, meanings to those offered.

In summary, it is argued that whilst the responsible tourism literature has gone a considerable way in examining how corporations direct the ‘gaze’, this has generally not progressed towards a (bottom-up) application of (later) Foucauldian thinking. Accordingly, whilst at the theoretical level this thesis contributes to our understanding of the conditions through which consumers’ ethical agency emerges, it also has empirical contributions in terms of its application to, and thereby advancement of, Foucauldian thinking within the responsible tourism literature.

### **2.3.5 Methods of Examining the Tourist Experience**

Although there has been a growth in research which conceptualises the tourist experience, (e.g. Uriely, 2005; Adhikari and Bhattacharya, 2016), there has been less research into the methods and methodologies adopted to investigate these new theorisations. After examining five strands of experiential research within five leading tourism journals between 2000 and 2009, Ritchie et al (2011) find that the methodological strand is the smallest, accounting for only 3.3% of articles published. This is perhaps because – according to their earlier paper (Ritchie and Hudson, 2009) – methodological papers have the highest ‘difficulty ranking’ in terms of the challenges faced by tourist experience researchers.

The majority of responsible tourism research has predominantly adopted single-point methods. This contrasts to studies into the broader tourism experience which have – albeit uncommonly – employed multiple methods as a means of actively engaging subjects in the research process. For instance, Cederholm (2004: 231) used tourist-generated photography during interviews to “put the

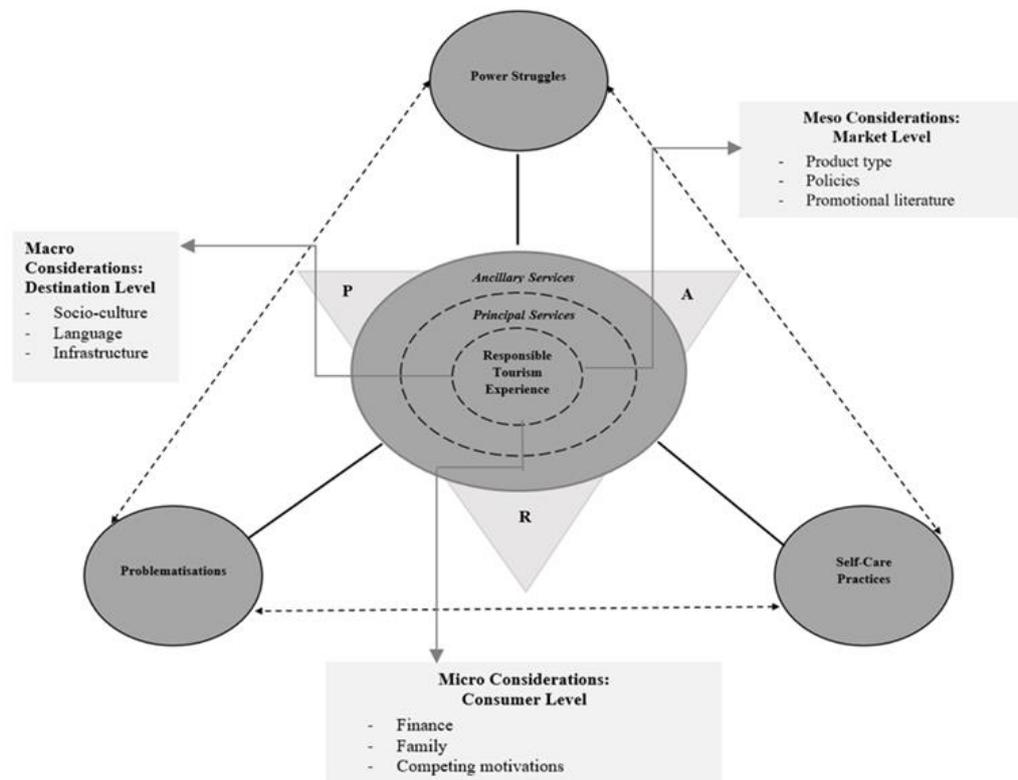
informant in charge of the situation and the story [they] wanted to tell”, while Scarles (2010: 906) combined autoethnography and photo-elicitation within interviews to engender “an embodied connection and understanding between researcher and respondent”.

Another body of research has also examined the tourism experience from two or more points in time; analysing tourists before and during the holiday (e.g. Gyimóthy, 2000); on and after the holiday (e.g. Markwell, 1997), and, more rarely, before, during and after (e.g. Heimtun, 2011). It is this last, rarer type that offers the most scope for obtaining deeper insight into lived experiences – via participants’ own perspectives – across the totality of the responsible holiday. This provides the researcher with three unique, interrelated datasets, responding to Westwood’s (2007) call for innovative methodologies that “encourage participant engagement and involvement, individual, subjective expression, and that minimise prior outcome constraints and researcher interference” (p.294). In summary, therefore, it appears that there is a gap in the literature for this thesis to examine tourists’ ethics as they transit through the total tourism experience, producing insights into consumers’ agency pre, during and post consumption.

## **2.4 Part III – Conceptual Framing**

The final part of this chapter presents the conceptual framing for this thesis. The conceptual framework offers a visual illustration of the ways in which the theoretical constructs of this thesis map on to, or are viewed as embedded within, specific features pertinent to the responsible tourism experience (2.4.1). The section culminates with the thesis’ research questions (2.4.2).

## 2.4.1 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 2.2** Conceptual framework

At the centre of the framework lies the subject's responsible tourism experience; the high-involvement nature of which is portrayed through a recognition of the layers of 'principal' and 'ancillary' services that tourists encounter (McCabe, 2009) (see 2.3.3). Stemming from the responsible tourism product are the three Foucauldian theoretical concepts, denoting how the subject's engagement in the ethical holiday may result in 'power struggles' (1982), 'problematisations' (1984a) and 'self-care practices' (1984c). As evident from Figure 2.2, it is noted that the three theoretical concepts are viewed as conceptually distinct but interrelated phenomena, as portrayed by the (connected) dotted lines. This

framing serves to account for instances where problematisations may transpire in response to power struggles between themselves and (non)market actors (for example), necessitating that tourists engage in practices of self-care (see 2.2.3).

The conceptual framework is also attuned to how power struggles, problematisations and self-care practices may emerge in light of a range of personal (micro), product (meso) and destination level (macro) considerations that tourists encounter or have to balance alongside their (un)ethical practices and subjectivities (see 2.2.2.3). At the consumer level, the framework is attuned to how responsibility may be influenced by the subject's broader 'life politics' (Giddens, 1991) – such as financial and familial considerations (e.g. Szmigin et al, 2009; Ritch & Schroder, 2012) – and other motivations for travel (e.g. Gilbert, 1992, as in Cooper et al, 2008). At the market level, the framework is attuned to the influence of product-type, policies and promotional literature, and at the destination level it considers how consumer responsibility may be impacted by novel or (un)familiar socio-cultures (e.g. Jamal, 2004), language or infrastructural availability.

Providing several illustrative examples, it is possible that consumers may face 'power struggles' regarding certain ethical practices promoted in guidebooks – e.g. such as using public transport – when, as a parent, familial circumstances make travelling by car more convenient and flexible with young children. Equally, it might be that infrastructural considerations at the destination level – such as lack of recycling facilities – stimulate consumers to protect their responsible identity by attributing their inability to recycle to differences in 'home' and 'away' ethics rather than personal ethical transgression. In this vein,

it is evident that the framework effectively captures factors which may influence a consumer's agency to engage in certain (un)ethical actions and behaviours in light of the context in which they are situated.

Finally, the conceptual framework captures the (angles) from which the holiday can be examined (and triangulated) (see 2.3.5); namely before (Prospective Phase (P)), during (Active Phase (A)) and after (Reflective Phase (R)). More detail on the three phases of the tourism experience is provided in Chapter 3, specifically sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3.

#### **2.4.2 Research Questions**

The thesis will seek to answer the following research questions. The three research questions map onto the Prospective (pre-holiday), Active (on holiday) and Reflective (post-holiday) phases of the tourism experience respectively (see sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3):

***RQ1) How do tourists envisage the responsible tourism product prior to travel?***

- i) What types of ethical actions, behaviours and choices do consumers project to undertake?*
- ii) What types of (non)market discourses do consumers draw on to shape their projections?*

***RQ2) How do tourists experience responsibility whilst on holiday?***

- i) How do tourists frame, rationalise and resolve their (un)ethical actions, behaviours and choices (and why)?*
- ii) What types of ethical dilemmas do consumers encounter (and why)?*

*iii) How are ethical actions, behaviours and choices – alongside any tensions, contradictions and compromises – influenced by the tourists’ broader context at the individual (micro), market-consumer (meso) and destination (macro) levels?*

***RQ3) How do tourists reflect on their responsible tourism experience as being shaped (or not) by market influences?***

- i) How do tourists reflect on the tourism industry’s products and communications?*
- ii) How do tourists maintain, protect or devolve a sense of freedom over their practices and subjectivities?*
- iii) How do tourists recount, rationalise and resolve any struggles between promulgated and personal constructions of responsible practice?*

## **2.5 Conclusion of Chapter**

After demarcating the consumer responsibility literature in accordance with three disciplinary perspectives, Part I argued that the sociological discipline is the best-suited perspective for examining the complexities of the market-consumer interface in a way which induces new insights into consumers’ ethical agency. Here, it was argued that the adoption of the (late) Foucauldian concepts of ‘power struggles’, ‘problematizations’ and ‘self-care practices’ enables an examination of how consumers conform to, critique or resist market-promulgated ways of being a ‘responsible tourist’, as well as how they (re)negotiate alternative meanings of how to be ethical and act ethically.

Part II contended that responsible tourism presents a highly performative and (often) unfamiliar experiential context, two factors which may have novel implications for the strength and scope of the market-consumer interface. It

further suggested that these empirical conditions may render the tourist susceptible to a different set of ethical tensions and compromises to those previously considered, potentially providing new insights into the reasons behind, and rationalisations for, the attitude-behaviour gap. Finally, Part II demonstrated that there is space for this thesis to examine issues relating to consumers' ethical agency across the total tourism experience, examining how consumers' practices and subjectivities are (in)consistent within and across the three phases of the holiday.

Overall, it has been argued that by sharpening the theoretical conditions through which consumer responsibility is viewed, this thesis engenders alternative thinking on the market-consumer interface while considering the associated implications for consumer agency and ethics. The next chapter outlines and justifies the participative methodology and methods adopted to answer the research questions.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### *Conducting a PARTicipative Inquiry*

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#### **3.1 Introduction to Chapter**

The purpose of this chapter is to present and justify the participative methodology adopted by the thesis. The chapter begins by examining the philosophical assumptions associated with the ‘participatory paradigm’ within which the methodology is grounded (3.2). It then outlines three different modes of participative research, leading to a discussion of how the thesis draws on the guiding principles of a ‘supported action inquiry’ (Heron, 1996) in order to conduct a PARTicipative inquiry (Ingram et al, 2017) (3.3). Section 3.4 explains the features of the PARTicipative inquiry, considering: the degrees of researcher and participant participation (3.4.1); the opportunities for Prospective, Active and Reflective Triangulation (PART) (3.4.2); and the way in which PART maps on to Heron’s (1996) four stage process of action and reflection (3.4.3). Following on from this, the methods and techniques used to collect the data (3.5.1), analyse the data (3.5.2), and form a research sample (3.5.3) are offered. The methodology chapter ends with a consideration of researcher reflexivity (3.6), research quality (3.7), and research ethics (3.8).

#### **3.2 Philosophical Underpinnings**

To situate the methodology, it is important to consider the “philosophical stance” which informs it, as well as the types of knowledge that it seeks to incite (Crotty, 1998: 2-3). This requires an examination of two main questions: (i) the

*ontological* question, “what is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what can be known about it?” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: 108); and (ii) the *epistemological* question, “what is the relationship between the knower or would-be-knower and the known?” (ibid). This section provides answers to these questions by presenting the ways in which this thesis aligns with the ontological and epistemological positioning of the ‘participatory paradigm’ (Heron & Reason, 1997; Lincoln et al, 2011).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) demarcate the ontology, epistemology and methodology of four research paradigms: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism. It has been argued that participative methodologies are closest aligned to the constructivist paradigm due to the relativist ontology and the subjectivist epistemology (i.e. the (co)created and pluralistic nature of knowledge) (Lincoln et al, 2011). The social constructionist view holds that ‘reality’ and ‘knowledge’ are not only relative to the individual but subject to the particular social context in which they are embedded (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In this regard, what an individual understands as ‘reality’ is locally constructed, can differ from the ‘reality’ of other members in the same ‘society’, and can be disparate to the ‘reality’ of other ‘societies’ (Howell, 2013). To construct and articulate this ‘reality’, the social constructionist view emphasises the importance of language; with individuals making sense of, and giving meaning to, their experiences through words (Burr, 2015). Put simply, social constructionism considers how ‘reality’ is constituted by individuals through their discourse (e.g. Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

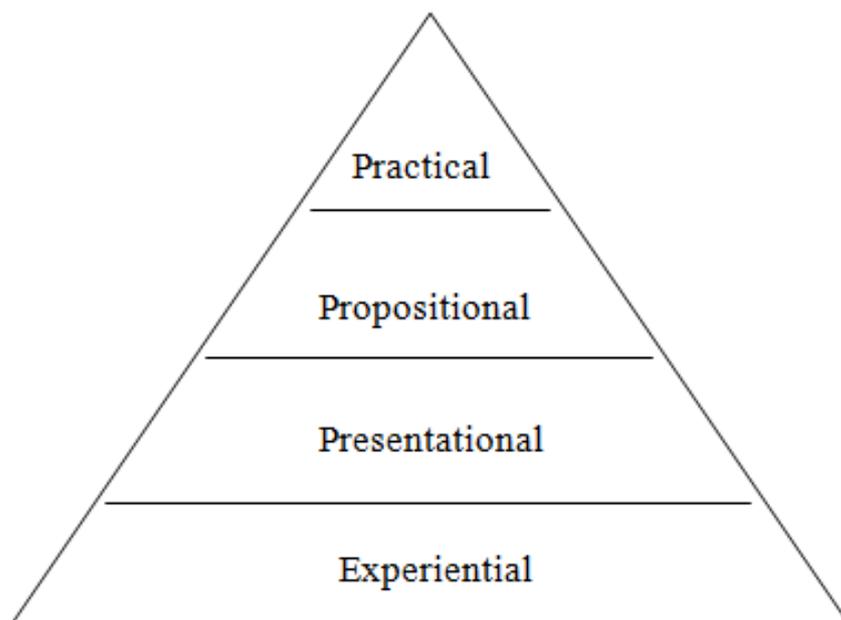
Despite this alignment, however, Heron and Reason (1997) offer several critiques of (fully) associating participative research with a constructivist worldview. Firstly, in solely viewing 'reality' as a linguistic construct, they argue that the constructivist paradigm fails to account for experiential knowing. Consequently, the authors call for a participatory paradigm that recognises how the 'knower's' constitution of the 'real' can also be grounded in his/her participation in a particular experience. Secondly, Heron and Reason (1997) also contend that a participatory paradigm would recognise that social constructions are ultimately subjectively based on what is objectively 'there'. In light of this critique, Lincoln et al (2011) have since incorporated a 'fifth paradigm', the 'participatory paradigm', the basis of which serves to underpin the philosophical assumptions of this research.

The research adopts a 'subjective-objective' ontology, whereby it is assumed that there is an objective or "given cosmos", and that, through experiencing it, individuals can ascribe meaning (Heron & Reason, 1997: 4). Here, Heron & Reason (1997: 5) contend that ultimately "knowing a world is in [the] felt relation at the interactive interface between a subject and what is encountered". It is argued that this subjective-objective ontological position is particularly compatible with the theoretical lens of the thesis based on the work of McLaren (2002). McLaren (2002) argues that, while Foucault aligns with the social constructionist paradigm, research which takes an overly strong constructivist view discounts the way in which he considered individuals to interact with 'real' objects and subjects. She states:

Foucault is clearly concerned with social construction as it applies to classifications and categories of people, as his interest in the human sciences demonstrates. Some critics, however, wrongly attribute a

*stronger* constructionist view to Foucault. The strong view of social constructionism seems to deny the materiality of things. [...] Foucault's analyses are grounded in real, material practices and institutions (p.121, emphasis added).

In this sense, it is clear that the theoretical position is congruent with the ontological assumptions as both recognise that the meanings that individuals ascribe to their ethical practices and subjectivities are grounded in, and result from, their subjective interaction with 'real' ethical market spaces and marketing messages. More specifically, in the context of this thesis, it is through their participation in the responsible tourism experience that individuals construct their agency to be ethical and act ethically in certain ways over others.



**Figure 3.1** The four ways of knowing (Heron, 1996)

The research further adopts an extended epistemology, wherein the knower is assumed to articulate the known through four interdependent ways of knowing:

experiential knowing, presentational knowing, propositional knowing and practical knowing (Heron & Reason, 1997). As depicted in Figure 3.1, Heron (1996: 52) suggests that these four ways of knowing form a systematic “pyramid of upward support”, whereby: from experiential knowing – or participatory involvement – the individual can present or articulate their experienced ‘reality’ through language and imagery (i.e. presentational knowing); from presentational knowing, the individual can propose certain concepts and ideas pertaining to that ‘reality’ (i.e. propositional knowing); and finally, through propositional knowing, the knower can understand certain standards of practice or ‘ways of doing’ within that ‘reality’ (i.e. practical knowledge) (Heron & Reason, 1997; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Applying this extended epistemology to the empirical context of the thesis, it is argued that: (i) participants’ engagement in responsible tourism affords experiential knowledge; (ii) participants’ collection of experiential data engenders presentational knowledge; (iii) the researcher and participants’ co-reflection incites propositional knowledge; (iv) which in turn results in practical knowledge regarding issues pertaining to consumers’ ethical agency.

In sum, it is argued that there is significant value in aligning with the participatory paradigm, primarily because it incorporates the “strengths of [the] ‘constructivist’ paradigm” (Mukherjee, 2002: 43), while concurrently marking a “sharp” and “conceptually interesting” shift beyond mere linguistic interpretation towards a simultaneous examination of social action and experience (Lincoln et al, 2011:117). This is central to the aims of this project, as it is open to how consumers discursively reflect (RQ3) on their practices and subjectivities on holiday (RQ2) in a way which reveals new insights into the

(constructed) dimensions of ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience.

### **3.3 Participative Research**

This section presents participative research as a well-suited methodology for examining (and engaging with) tourists throughout the total tourism experience. It starts by providing justifications for use and highlighting examples of previous application (3.3.1). It then demarcates three types of participative research (3.3.2) before selecting the most appropriate approach given the aims of this thesis (3.3.2.1).

#### **3.3.1 Justification of Use and Previous Application**

Cornwall and Jewkes (1995: 1167) define participative inquiry as research which “focuses on a process of sequential reflection and action, carried out with and by local people rather than on them”. This means that subjects do not passively ‘take part’ in the same way that a participant traditionally would; but are instead encouraged to be actively involved in decision-making and agenda-setting throughout different stages of the research process (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). This has important implications for the way in which resulting ‘knowledge’ is produced. First, participative inquiry empowers participants through increased democratic exchange (Heron & Reason, 1997: 8). This not only readdresses the typical imbalance of power between the researcher and the researched by ‘amplifying’ (Bowd et al, 2010: 4) participants’ voice, but further provides greater opportunity(ies) to co-create shared meanings in light of the

heightened attention to researcher-subject-dialogue (Sohng, 2005). In this vein, the researcher and participants become ‘co-producers’ of knowledge (Phillips et al, 2013: 1). Secondly, participative research enables the researcher and participants to produce knowledge of a particular reality in accordance with each party’s respective experiences, competences and interests (Kristiansen & Bloch-Poulsen, 2013: 201). Put simply, participative research generates finding which are of use and benefit to both parties.

Participative research has predominantly been applied in the field of health, exploring topics such as women’s health (Wang, 2009), mental health (Hostick & McClelland, 2002) and occupational health (Laurell et al, 1992). It has been particularly dominant in research attending to the health issues, healthcare, and health programmes of minority communities; examples of which include black women’s health in rural and remote communities (Etowa et al, 2007), and grandmothers’ health needs in aboriginal communities (Dickson & Green, 2001). Elsewhere, participative inquiries have been undertaken in education research, both in terms of ‘teacher as researcher’ (Sell & Lynch, 2014) and ‘children as researchers’ (Bucknall, 2012). It has been found that participation enables schoolchildren to develop their analytical skills, confidence levels and self-determination in relation to their own actions and behaviours (Alderson, 2000: 253), while encouraging teachers to reflect on their current practices, anxieties and dilemmas regarding classroom-management, curriculum-implementation, and student-progress (Mitchell et al, 2009).

In the business and organisation literature, *participatory (visual) techniques* have been advocated or adopted in order to “explicitly involve research

respondents in the co-creation of qualitative data” (Vince & Warren, 2012: 275). Warren (2005) presents photography as a means of increasing participant voice due to the ‘immediacy’ and the increased ‘ownership’ that it allows; Latham (2014: 128) proffers an ‘arts-informed’ perspective to foster “socially interactive engagement” and “shared meaning making” between researcher and respondent; Bell and Clarke (2014) employ ‘free-drawing’ as a means of inciting (collective) researcher and subject interpretation through talk; while, more recently, McCarthy and Muthuri (2016) employ visual participatory research in the form of drawing and discussion to increase the voice, power and participation of cocoa farmers. In contrast, however, *Participative inquiry* is only just starting to emerge within the business, consumer and marketing literature. For example, Clatworthy (2012) employed a participatory co-design approach to align brand strategy with consumer experience, while, in the following year, Tsybina and Rebiyazina (2013) analysed the impact of customer-interconnectedness on portfolio management and Tretyak and Sloev (2013) examined the long-term impact of firms’ marketing activities on value creation. In light of the current attention in marketing to value co-creation – e.g. Ramaswamy & Ozcan (2016) – it is unsurprising that the benefits of participative research are (slowly) starting to be recognised. Crane et al (2017: 15), for instance, suggest that participatory research is “ideal” for examining the relationship between business and society, arguing that it is: “collaborative” with, and reflects the worldviews of, the subjects under study; and “situational”, as it is located in the context under study.

Participative methodologies are also rare within the critical tourism literature. To date, Richards et al (2010) highlight the value of knowledge co-creation after examining the experiences of marginalised (visually-impaired) tourists, while

Sedgley et al (2011: 423) demonstrate how the active foregrounding of ('older') tourists' voices and agendas engenders personalised and socially-inclusive experiential accounts that are reflective of subjects' 'individuality' and 'agency'. In this sense, it is clear that current scholarship has very much focused on the emancipatory potential of participative research in attending to the needs of understudied social groups (e.g. the elderly and disabled respectively). It appears that little (if any) research has adopted a participative methodology as a means of accessing (and collaborating with) the research participant as (s)he moves through the full tourism encounter.

Against the backdrop of this small strand of participative research, Pritchard et al (2011) have called for a "regime change" (p.941) from traditional approaches of investigation and presented 'hopeful tourism' as a means of co-transforming learning and spotlighting action. Pritchard and Morgan (2012: 11) maintain that 'hopeful tourism' would 're-order knowledge production' in a way which would "create more holistic knowledge, fostering dialogue, reflexivity, equality, and co-created and empowering knowledge". As yet, however, while the benefits of participative methodologies have been espoused and demonstrated, they have not yet gained a foothold in practice.

### **3.3.2 Types of Participative Research**

Reason (1994) demarcates three by no means exhaustive approaches to participative research: participatory action research (PAR), action inquiry and co-operative inquiry. This section serves to emphasise how, given such plurality in form, focus and method there is no one way to conduct participative research

(Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Bradbury & Reason, 2003), but a set of principles researchers can adopt to design their own form of participative inquiry.

***Participatory action research (PAR):*** McIntyre (2008: ix) outlines three key tenets of participatory action research (PAR): (1) collaboration between researchers and participants; (2) co-construction of knowledge; and (3) social transformation. Distorting conventional “hierarchical role specifications” (Kindon et al, 2007: 1), participatory action research is thought to encourage researchers and their participants to work together in order to identify a research problem, collect research data, and accrue resultant knowledge (for action) that will be of direct benefit or pertinence to the community studied (Reason, 1994; McIntyre, 2008). In this regard, participants are no longer viewed as ‘objects’ of research, but liberated ‘subjects’ whose lived experience, when coupled with the expertise of the researcher, engenders a “more profound understanding” of a given topic (Reason, 1994: 13). Moreover, as argued by Fals-Borda and Rahman (1991), PAR tends to encourage a once oppressed community to retain an element of control in co-determining the need, scope and direction of social change. In this vein, McTaggart (1997) argues that PAR can be political in the way that it: (i) rebalances unequal power relations between the researcher and researched, (ii) ensures that the “arguments” of all parties are “heard [and] understood” (p.1), and (iii) empowers communities to “improve the conditions of their [own] lives” (p.2).

***Action inquiry:*** Action inquiry encourages individuals to “engage with one’s own action and with others in a self-reflective way, so that all [parties] become more aware of their behaviour and of its underlying theories” (Reason, 1994: 22). Action inquiry may involve first-person, second-person and third-person

research into past, present and future experiences (Torbert, 2001; Torbert, 2004; Torbert & Taylor, 2008). First-person research/practice focuses on the ‘subjective’. Subjects self-observe their ‘moment-to-moment’ actions as a means of exposing differences – in ‘vision’, ‘strategy’, ‘performance’ and ‘assessment’ (i.e. the ‘four territories of experience’) – between intended and actual behaviour (Torbert, 2001: 208). In so doing, individuals can personally modify or maintain current behaviours according to their respective feelings of dissonance or consonance (Torbert & Taylor, 2008: 241). Second-person research/practice spotlights the ‘intersubjective’, focusing on the ongoing small-group interactions wherein individuals communicate over past experiences in order to “co-generate first-person research/practice” (Torbert, 2001: 213; Bradbury & Reason, 2003). Lastly, third-person research/practice concentrates on the ‘objective’, wherein the large-scale adoption of certain practices (determined during the first and second stages) leads to future timely and transformational action at the collective level (Torbert, 2001: 213).

***Co-operative inquiry:*** Co-operative inquiry lends itself to the study of the ‘human condition’, with potential topics including ‘informative inquiries’ – e.g. examining individuals’ ‘participation in...’ – and ‘transformative inquiries’, such as participants’ resultant ‘transformation of...’ (Heron, 1996: 37-38). *Full form co-operative inquiry* invites complete ‘political’ and ‘epistemic’ participation from both parties, with researchers and participants working as: (i) ‘co-researchers’ throughout all periods of decision making (i.e. reflection stages); and (ii) as ‘co-subjects’ during the experiential stages (i.e. action stages) (Heron, 1996: 22). Conversely, *partial form co-operative inquiry* generally involves the full political participation of both parties, yet the full and partial epistemic

participation of the subject and researcher respectively (Heron, 1996). Heron (1996: 24) also presents *supported action inquiry* as a form of co-operative inquiry, wherein the “‘subject’ becomes the full researcher [of their experience], and the ‘researcher’, having launched the ‘subject’ supports and facilitates him or her” in the reflection stages. In each form, co-operative inquiry ultimately recognises that, as participants are self-determining persons, anything other than their active involvement paradoxically overlooks the (presumed) agency of individuals (Reason, 1994: 6).

### **3.3.2.1 Selecting an Approach to Participative Research**

This subsection outlines the rationale for selecting a co-operative inquiry, in the form of ‘supported action inquiry’. The subsection serves to compare the above three modes of participative research on the basis of three main conditions that the researcher considered most pertinent to the research aims, namely focus/level of analysis, sample and method. In so doing, it is emphasised that it is not the researcher’s intention to reduce any intricacies of the three approaches, but to demonstrate how the overarching principles of the selected approach are most suited to the research.

***Focus/level of analysis:*** It is argued that the (macro) political orientation of PAR is of least relevance, as the thesis is not concerned with the emancipation of participants. More particularly, this thesis does not presuppose that responsible tourists are an oppressed group but is instead geared toward examining how participants construct issues pertaining to their personal ethical agency.

As action inquiry actively considers discrepancies between tourists' intended and actual practices, it has the potential to yield fruitful data into the ethical tensions, contradictions and compromises that responsible consumers may experience (e.g. as in Mitchell et al (2009)). Nonetheless, action inquiry – as with PAR – is more oriented towards transformative practice, with individuals examining their behaviour as a means of 'cultivating' their future actions (Reason, 1994). Action inquiry was, therefore, also discounted given that it was not within the remit of this thesis to intentionally stimulate behavioural change.

Overall, co-operative inquiry was considered the most appropriate approach, due to the possibility of conducting an 'informative' – as opposed to 'transformative' – inquiry into participants' experiences of responsible tourism (Heron, 1996: 37-38). Put simply, co-operative inquiry provided an effective channel for examining how tourists act in, and reflect on, their ethical practices on holiday, rather than a conduit for enhancing participants' future responsible practice.

**Sample and method:** PAR was again considered the least appropriate approach due to sample *type* and *size*. In relation to sample *type*, PAR typically conducts research with and for disempowered, marginalised and 'oppressed' communities (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991). It is reiterated that it is not for this research to deductively assume that responsible tourists need liberating from the tourism industry, but to inductively explore how tourists construct their agency when experiencing the responsible tourism product.

In relation to sample *size*, the fact that PAR traditionally favours larger groups is viewed as problematic for two primary reasons. First, due to the niche nature of responsible tourism (Sharpley, 2013: 383), the formation of a large sample of

potentially “hard-to-find people” (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012: 229) would prove difficult. This ‘hard-to-find’ nature is further exacerbated by several other characteristics unique to responsible tourists, whom unlike participants in other inquiries are: (i) independent, given that they are not directly affiliated to a specific community (e.g. aboriginal communities (Dickson & Green, 2001)); and (ii) unconnected, as despite being united by their penchant for responsible tourism and/or ethical consumerism, they (presumably) share no “history and dynamics” (Heron, 1996: 39) with one another. Consequently, the lack of structural cohesion – combined within the small population – arguably renders the formation of a sizeable sample an unviable task. Second, as the tourists will holiday at different times, it is impracticable to successfully co-ordinate full (large) group-meetings around the pre-holiday, on-holiday and post-holiday schedules of each and every tourist in order for the researcher and participants to collaborate in designing the research, engage in group methods, and make sense of the resulting data (Reason, 1994).

As action inquiry spotlights first-person practice (Torbert, 2001) of the *individual* participant, it eradicates the aforementioned challenges that would be faced with conducting PAR given the lack of group level activities. A separate hurdle posed, however, is that the approach encourages participants to undertake “action experiments to test new theories of action” (Reason, 1994: 22). Action testing would thus require participants to self-reflect on their (un)ethical practices during one holiday, and, in instances of inconsistency between projected and actual performance, plan for and adopt new (more ethical) activities and behaviours in subsequent holidays. Yet, it is unfeasible for any

‘action experiments’ to be conducted within the scope of this research, as the participants’ consent is confined to one tourism experience.

It is argued that co-operative inquiry, in the form of a ‘supported action inquiry’, would be most preferential as the researcher has no involvement in the tourism experience (i.e. action stages). As outlined in section 3.3.2, *full form co-operative inquiry* necessitates that the researcher and subject(s) both have ‘full’ involvement in the experience; *partial form co-operative inquiry* requires the ‘partial’ participation of the researcher and the ‘full’ participation of the subject(s); and *supported action inquiry* involves ‘nil’ participation from the researcher and the ‘full’ participation of the subject(s) (Heron, 1996:23-25). First, as it is impossible – and further undesirable – for the researcher to holiday with each individual participant, supported action inquiry enables the researcher to simply ‘support’ and ‘facilitate’ the participant (i.e. prior to the holiday) before the subject records their own findings in the experiential setting (i.e. during the holiday) (Heron, 1996: 24). Second, the fact that the researcher has significant control over the research aims and design of a supported action inquiry – given that they ‘propose’ and ‘facilitate’ the inquiry (Heron, 1996: 24) – ensures that there is an element of consistency across the data collection techniques (for example) employed by each participant. This simultaneously overcomes the need to co-design the research process at the group-level to ensure an element of uniformity across each participant’s individual inquiry.

**Summary:** From the above, co-operative inquiry is presented as the best suited methodology relative to the aims and objectives of the thesis. In terms of focus, co-operative inquiry is ultimately less concerned with inciting broader (meso or

macro) social change, and instead presents a solid foundation for focusing on the types of practices and subjectivities that tourists engage in. With regard to sample and method, it is clear that ‘supported action inquiry’ – as a form of co-operative inquiry – is particularly fitting, as it: (i) removes the challenges associated with research participation in the action stages; and (ii) ensures an element of consistency over the methods that a small sample of (geographically diverse) participants will use (at different times) to collect their data. Overall it is argued that, by drawing on the principles of supported action inquiry, this thesis is methodologically innovative, not only in the way that it starts to give *tourists* a ‘voice’ throughout the research process, but how, as a result, it incites deeper and richer findings into the tourism experience.

### **3.4 PARTicipative Inquiry**

This section shows how the thesis draws on the principles of a ‘supported action inquiry’ to conduct a PARTicipative inquiry (Ingram et al, 2017). The section begins by establishing the degrees of researcher and participant participation in the research process (3.4.1). It then discusses the importance and benefits of triangulation in participative research, outlining how participants’ involvement at the pre-holiday, on-holiday and post-holiday phases facilitates Prospective, Active and Reflective Triangulation (PART) (3.4.2). It ends by mapping PART on to Heron’s (1996) suggested stages of action and reflection in order to demonstrate how PARTicipative inquiry will play out during each phase of the tourism experience (3.4.3).

### 3.4.1 Degrees of Researcher and Participant Participation

This research draws on the principles of a ‘supported action inquiry’, wherein the researcher proposes an inquiry to the subject (i.e. pre-holiday), the subject enters the research setting to examine his/her own behaviour (i.e. on holiday), then the two reconvene in order to (co)reflect on the subject’s experience and thereby make sense of his/her actions (i.e. post-holiday) (Heron, 1996). This subsection draws on Heron’s (1996) categories of ‘epistemic’ and ‘political’ participation to highlight the degrees of researcher and participant participation within the research.

In terms of ‘epistemic’ participation, Heron (1996) argues that supported action inquiry is the *only* mode where the participant becomes the sole researcher of their experience (in situ). Instead of the researcher becoming a ‘co-subject’ (as in full form co-operative inquiry), or periodically entering and exiting the research environment (as in partial form co-operative inquiry), the researcher merely supports the participant (if needed) in a ‘supervisory’ capacity (Heron, 1996). Consequently, only the subjects participated in the holiday space.

In terms of ‘political’ participation, Heron (1996) suggests that supported action inquiry requires the full involvement of participants “in the thinking and decision-making that generates, manages and draws knowledge from the whole research process” (Heron, 1996: 20). Nevertheless, in order to suit the unique conditions of the research sample, this thesis refines Heron’s (1996) ‘political’ parameters of supported action inquiry by distinguishing between decisions pertaining to ‘content’ and ‘method’ (see Table 3.1).

Participation Type	Researcher Participation	Participant Participation
<b><i>Political Participation</i></b>		
Participation in Design (e.g. Method)	Selected the primary methods of data collection (i.e. interviews, diaries, photographs)	Autonomy to collect data by any other <i>additional</i> methods
Participation in Decisions (e.g. Content)	Full control over the pre-holiday interview schedule  Suggested several <i>potential examples</i> of the type of content that could be recorded on holiday (e.g. ethical activities undertaken; ethical tensions encountered)  Co-control over the content of the post-holiday interview	Full control over what to record, how much to record, and when to record during the holiday  Autonomy to steer the opening of the post-holiday interview by discussing the data gathered
<b><i>Epistemic Participation</i></b>		
Participation in Experience	Nil	Full

**Table 3.1** Degrees of researcher and participant participation in PARTicipative inquiry

Decisions pertaining to ‘method’ were predominantly determined by the researcher. Effectively, multiple individual inquiries were conducted simultaneously – i.e. one per participant (as in Bucknall, 2012) – hence it was essential that the methods employed to accumulate the data were consistent across all participants (see section 3.3.2.1). Due to the aforementioned practicalities of organising a single group-meeting for “*everyone* to [contribute] to thinking about how to explore the questions” (Reason, 1999: 208 – emphasis added), it was necessary that the researcher took full control in determining the

main methods (i.e. diaries and photographs) of data collection. It is noted, however, that in addition to the methods selected by the researcher, participants had the freedom to collect other forms of data if they desired (see Table 3.5 for an itemisation of supplementary data by participant).

In the pre-holiday stage, the ‘content’ was fully determined by the researcher, who followed a semi-structured interview schedule (see section 3.4.3; Appendix 1). On holiday, the ‘content’ was determined by the participant, who retained full autonomy over: (i) the type of data that they recorded; (ii) the quantities of data that they collected; and (iii) the frequency with which they collected it. In this sense, the agency of the sample was preserved as the participants were able to retain a “sense of ownership” (Bucknall, 2012: 26) over the way in which they conducted their individual inquiry. As depicted in Table 3.1, it is noted that the researcher did provide several examples of what could be recorded. This was not to explicitly direct the tourists, but rather to offer suggestions in a way which eliminated any uncertainty over the task ahead. It is reiterated that the participants had complete autonomy over whether they heeded the researcher’s suggestions or disregarded them entirely. Lastly, in the post-holiday phase, the participant had the opportunity to steer the ‘content’ of the interview by discussing their experiential data; while the researcher asked clarificatory questions and helped draw linkages where appropriate (see section 3.4.3 for more detail, and Appendix 6 for an example interview schedule).

### **3.4.2 Triangulation in Participative Research: PART**

Oppermann (2000: 141) contends that, although triangulation has been ‘embraced’ in tourism studies, an array of approaches has – as in the social

sciences more broadly – engendered confusion surrounding what it “currently denotes and what it should connote”. Smith (2010: 57) argues that “a defining characteristic of triangulation is the use of multiple sources of comparable data from different perspectives to arrive at a desired new piece of information”; while Denzin and Lincoln (2011: 5) claim that triangulation is the “display of multiple, refracted realities simultaneously”.

Decrop (1999) demarcates Denzin’s (1978) four types of triangulation to show how it has been employed within tourism research. This includes the triangulation of qualitative and/or quantitative *methods* (e.g. Matteucci, 2013); the triangulation of primary and/or secondary sources of *data* (e.g. MacKay & Couldwell, 2004); the triangulation of *theories* that serve to frame the data (e.g. Kwon & Vogt, 2010); and the triangulation of *investigators* who analyse the dataset (e.g. Conran, 2011). In his later work, Decrop (2004: 162) contends that, by engaging in the above four types of triangulation, “richer and potentially more credible interpretations” can ensue. It is significant, therefore, that Bowd and Özerdem (2010) emphasise that participatory methodologies are beneficial in facilitating all four types of triangulation.

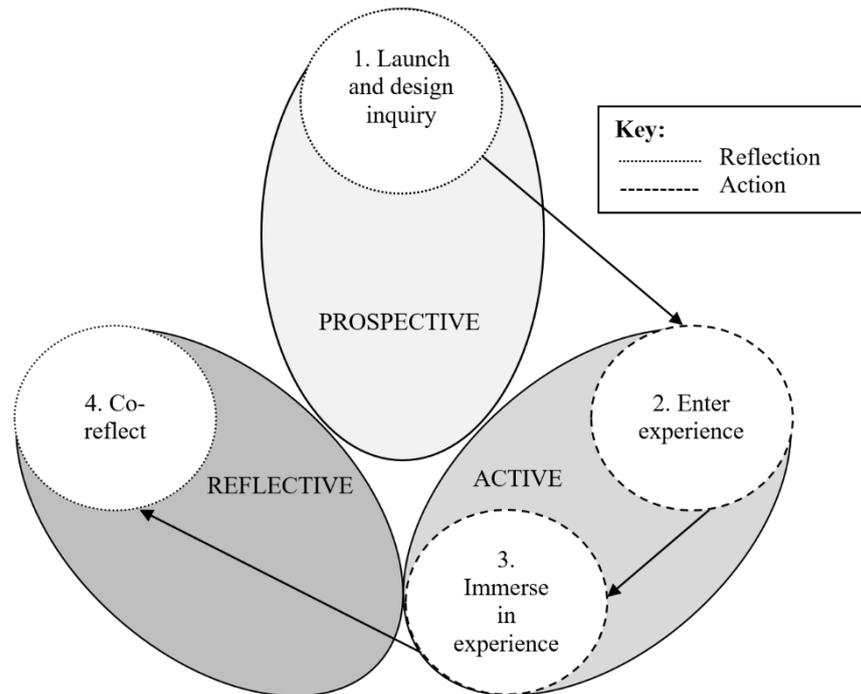
Yet, through the above four modes, it is clear that triangulation is essentially equated to *collecting* and/or *doing more* of the same phenomenon, as opposed to a process that facilitates the examination of a research ‘problem’ from contextually *distinct vantage points*. This is particularly surprising given that, according to Wall and Mathieson (2006: 19), tourism is constituted by three marked elements: (1) a desire for, and the decision to, travel; (2) a temporary residence in and interaction with the economic, environmental and social

systems of the host destination; and (3) a consideration of the (in)direct effects of tourists' behaviour(s) in preceding phases.

This thesis, therefore, breaks away from previous applications of triangulation and considers the three phases through which tourists' transition as the basis for triangulation (i.e. Prospective, Active and Reflective Triangulation (PART)). In so doing, the research adopts an emic approach to triangulation in that it situates the participants' experience(s) and narrative(s) within the specific context in which they are embedded at any given point. Consequently, rather than viewing triangulation as a 'validation strategy' (Flick, 2004: 178) – as is more commonly the case – this thesis aligns with Jick (1979: 603-604) and regards it as a conduit for eliciting “a more complete, holistic and contextual portrayal” of the *total* tourism experience.

### **3.4.3 Mapping PART on to the Four Stage Cycle of Action and Reflection**

This thesis maps the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases of the tourism experience on to Heron's (1996) four stage process of action and reflection (Figure 3.2). According to Heron, the first stage of reflection (Stage 1) involves the launch and design of the inquiry, with the researcher and subject determining how to collect data in the action stages. The first stage of action (Stage 2) occurs when participants enter the research setting, with the second action stage (Stage 3) transpiring as a “state of mind” (p.73) once subjects become immersed in the research environment and begin “bracketing off preconceptions” (ibid). Lastly, the second reflection stage (Stage 4) necessitates that the researcher and subject



**Figure 3.2** Heron’s (1996) four stages of participative inquiry mapped on to the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases of the tourism experience

reconvene in order to (co)reflect on the data elicited in the previous stages. With the four-stage process of action and reflection in mind, this section outlines the researcher and participants’ processes and practices at each of the three phases of the PARTicipative inquiry. Although a brief indication of methods will be proffered, these will be further elaborated upon in the succeeding section (3.5).

**Prospective Phase:** In the Prospective Phase (Stage 1), the researcher and participant engaged in a semi-structured, contextual interview that averaged 45 minutes (see Appendix 1). The purpose of the Prospective Phase was twofold. First, it enabled the researcher to introduce the aims of the research and explain the research design, with a particular focus on methods of data collection for the

Active Phase. Second, it enabled the researcher to ascertain participants' pre-holiday images and projections for their upcoming responsible tourism experience. To start with, participants were asked to define what responsible tourism meant (to them), and describe the type of responsible practice they typically engaged in (and/or their 'identity' as a responsible tourist). Following this, the tourists were asked if they had read any (non)market materials (e.g. guidebooks, consumer review sites etc) to shape their 'responsibility' and/or their projections for their upcoming holiday more generally. The interview also considered their motivations for travel, reasons for selecting their destination, and their planned activities. The interview ended with a discussion of how they viewed themselves as ethical, or engaged in ethical practices, within their 'home life'. Given the semi-structured nature of the interview, questions varied somewhat depending on the responses of the participants.

Overall, the data elicited in this phase acted as a contextual backdrop – or discursive 'benchmark' – against which participants could not only compare or contrast their actual experience, but more readily expose any instances of ethical tension or struggle between projected and lived behaviour (e.g. Torbert, 2001). Equally, the Prospective Phase also allowed participants to recount how experiences within past holidays had served to iteratively (re)shape their projections for their current holiday. In this regard, this demonstrates how PARTicipative inquiry is attuned to the ways in which tourism experiences can be viewed as circular, or interrelated phenomena.

**Active Phase:** In the Active Phase (Stages 2 and 3), the participants collected their own data during their holiday. As previously emphasised (3.4.1), the

participants had full control in determining what they captured in their diaries and photographs, and had the freedom to collect data via any other methods that they wished. Out of the sixteen participants: fifteen kept diaries (see Appendix 2-4), thirteen took photographs; and half brought back additional materials such as corporate documents (i.e. hotels' 'Green Codes'), magazine/newspaper cuttings (Appendix 5), leaflets, poetry and drawings. Although the level of input varied, all of the participants had at least one form of data – most commonly two, but often three – that they could use as a prompt in the post-holiday interview.

***Reflective Phase:*** In the Reflective Phase, the researcher and participant reconvened in order to conduct an 'active interview' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) (see 3.5.1; Appendix 6). On average, the interviews lasted just over one hour, with the longest running to two hours (see Table 3.5). Participants tended to steer the direction of the interview by reflecting on the visual and written data that they had collected, with the researcher interjecting with questions and/or to ask them to expand on certain reflections. The primary purpose of the Reflective Phase was for the researcher and participant to 'make sense' of the holiday – often by drawing links between the Active and Prospective data – in a way which allowed 'meaningful patterns' to emerge (Heron, 1996: 87-88). Put simply, the Reflective Phase provided space to examine: (i) how participants experienced responsible tourism (RQ2); (ii) how they rationalised or resolved any trade-offs, tensions and/or deviations (RQ2) (perhaps in light of envisaged practice (RQ1)); and (iii) how they framed their moral autonomy to act as desired (RQ3) (again, perhaps in comparison to envisaged practice (RQ1)). It is noted that while participants ascribed meaning to their practices and subjectivities in the

Reflective Phase, their participation in the research terminated after the post-holiday interview. They were not invited to take part in the formal process of data analysis, which was conducted solely by the researcher.

#### **3.4.4 Summary**

This section has shown how the research was guided by the main principles of a supported action inquiry to develop what has been termed a PARTicipative inquiry (Ingram et al, 2017). Section 3.4.1 outlined the researcher and participants' degrees of participation. It showed how participants would be the sole researchers of their experience on holiday, focussing on how they had complete autonomy to determine the content and quantity of data they recorded in the Active Phase. Section 3.4.2 then illustrated how PART presented a unique approach to triangulation, in that it centralised the narrative(s) and experience(s) of the participant within the specific context in which they were situated. Lastly, Section 3.4.3 discussed how PART transposed on to Heron's (1996) four stage process of action and reflection, outlining the practices and processes of the researcher and participants at each phase. The next section elaborates on the research methods adopted in more detail.

### **3.5 Research Methods**

This section presents and justifies the methods used to collect (3.5.1) and analyse (3.5.2) participants' data as well as to form a research sample (3.5.3). It justifies the use of interviews, diaries and photographs; the adoption of Foucauldian

Discourse Analysis (FDA); and a combination of purposive and snowball sampling respectively.

### **3.5.1 Data Collection**

Participant-elicited photography, diaries and interviews were employed to collect tourists' data. As aforementioned, tourism studies have frequently combined two or more of these qualitative methods, often as a means of data triangulation (Decrop, 1999) (3.4.2). For example, Cederholm (2004) used photo-elicitation and in-depth interviews to examine the backpacker experience (Cederholm, 2004); Heimtun (2011) used solicited diaries and focus-group interviews to investigate tourists' interpersonal conflicts; and MacKay & Cauldwell (2004) used intercept interviews, photography and diaries to explore destination image. The following section outlines and justifies how each method was utilised in this thesis.

***Photographs:*** The tourists used their 'photographic voice' (Wang, 1999) to capture their responsible experiences in the Active Phase. Photography was considered a particularly congruent method for recording tourists' actions and behaviours for two primary reasons. Firstly, it is renowned for being a prime conduit for portraying the 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 2002; Urry & Larsen, 2011). More specifically, it is a highly performative method of "framing [...] the world", wherein subjects have the agency to determine who and what is included or excluded from a touristic scene, and why (Robinson & Picard, 2009: 13). Secondly, photography is a "deeply-rooted [and] institutionalised" (Cederholm, 2004: 225) part of travel. Larsen (2006: 241) declares that "tourism and

photography are modern twins”; Urry (2002: 149) concurs that “tourism and photography came to be welded together”; and Robinson and Picard (2009: 1) suggest that “to be a tourist, it would seem, involves taking photographs”. In this sense, it is argued that as photography is a normalised touristic practice, recording behaviour via this method made data collection less of an arduous task for subjects, who were, after all, on holiday.

The research adopted a similar approach to Cederholm (2004: 226) and employed participant-elicited photos as a “technique for triggering responses” in the Reflective Phase (i.e. acting as, what he labels, a ‘can-opening’ device). In this vein, participants were asked to take photographs solely as a means of providing prompts over which the researcher and subject could co-reflect in the post-holiday interview. Unlike other studies, the participants were not given an expected minimum or maximum number of images to collect (e.g. 12 photographs (Garrod, 2008)). Whilst one could argue that imposing a specific quantity may have proved beneficial in containing the dataset (Brandin, 2009), the researcher was reluctant to inflict explicit parameters in order to respect the participants’ agency regarding ‘content’ (see Table 3.1).

Participants were reassured that photographs need only be taken in instances where they felt at ease to do so. This was to avoid or reduce any feelings of discomfort such as those reported in Markwell’s (1997: 150) study of nature-based tourism, wherein one participant preferred to “rely on her memory” as opposed to intrusively photograph “the mosque and things like that” and “children [who] were playing with their deformed dogs”. It is noted that thirteen out of the sixteen participants took photographs in the Active Phase; the least number of images was five, while the highest was ninety-nine (see Table 3.5).

Although none of the participants reported that they felt uncomfortable taking photographs while on holiday, three participants chose to focus on collecting other forms of data instead.

**Diaries:** In addition to photographs, tourists were also asked to keep a diary in order to provide ‘naturalistic’ accounts of their conduct in situ (Alaszewski, 2006). This method was selected as diaries enable subjects to record their encounters and impressions in “their own words” (Markwell & Basche, 1998: 229), thereby producing data that directly reflects their personal perspective (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012). Moreover, diaries readily facilitate the capture of longitudinal data, enabling the researcher to assess (in)consistencies or developments in practice over the course of the holiday (Markwell & Basche, 1998).

When developing the research design, the researcher was mindful that, as diaries often “need very strong involvement” (Puczkó et al, 2010: 67), some participants might find it a “distracting, disruptive, tiring, and time-consuming process” (Shoval & Isaacson, 2010: 34) when on holiday. Consequently, subjects had full control over the following three factors. Firstly, tourists had complete autonomy over the *quantity* of information recorded – with the diary entries varying from a list of bullet points to tens of pages. Secondly, in terms of *frequency*, they had the freedom to record in ‘real time’ (Shoval & Isaacson, 2010), or, as participants opted for in Heimtun’s (2011: 89) study, document “several days at the same time”. While the majority of participants wrote their diary in situ, some participants – such as Sophie (see Table 3.5) – noted key words on holiday, and then elaborated on these once home to produce more in-depth reflections.

Thirdly, tourists had the freedom to determine the *content*. This contrasts to Heimtun's (2011) semi-structured diary, wherein tourists were required to register one daily activity and one (associated) positive and negative thought/feeling. In the context of this research, Heimtun's approach was considered too prescriptive, in that it deductively presumed that tourists would experience both positive and negative feelings in relation to each and every ethical practice. A further associated issue is that Heimtun recalls how participants often ignored the 'negative feelings' question; preferring not to "dwell on problems and difficult situations during the holiday itself" (Heimtun & Jordan, 2011: 277). Accordingly, again in order to minimise any anxiety, the researcher reassured participants that the diaries need only act as prompts; reminding participants that they could elaborate on any 'negatives' (if they felt comfortable doing so) in the Reflective Phase. That said, it is noted that none of the participants reported any tensions regarding keeping a diary, and several commented on how they had enjoyed the process. Overall, the majority of participants recorded their actions and reflections by day (e.g. Lina, Appendix 2), yet there were instances where participants reflected by activity/location (e.g. Giovanna, Appendix 3), or by the 'positive' and 'negative' aspects of the responsible tourism experience (e.g. Josh, Appendix 4). Examples of each have been provided as appendices.

**Interviews:** As in previous consumer-oriented studies into responsible tourism (e.g. Caruana et al, 2014), this research adopted Holstein and Gubrium's (1995) style of 'active interviewing' in the Reflective Phase. Whereas in the conventional interview respondents are regarded as "passive vessels of answers" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 7), this approach was regarded as befitting of the

participative methodology in that it views subjects as possessing “interpretative capabilities which must be activated, stimulated and cultivated” (p.17). The researcher thus aimed to:

- (i) “provide an environment conducive to the production of the range and complexity of meanings that address relevant issues, and not be confined by predetermined agendas” (p.17);
- (ii) “converse with respondents in such a way that alternate considerations are brought into play [...suggesting] orientations to, and linkages between, diverse aspects of respondents’ experience, adumbrating – or even inviting – interpretations that make use of particular resources, connections and outlooks” (p.17).

In this vein, the ‘active interview’ has been likened to an “improvisational performance” (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 17), wherein the researcher ‘shifts’ positions as a means of examining subjects’ alternative perspectives and ‘stocks of knowledge’ pertaining to a given experience (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004: 154). This method was considered particularly pertinent to the research topic, as it actively encouraged participants to ascribe meaning(s) to and links between: (i) the projected practices (as noted in the Prospective Phase) and actual actions, behaviours and choices (as experienced in the Active Phase); and (ii) the subsequent tensions dilemmas or struggles that they encountered and the implications this had on resultant constructions of agency.

Both the active interview (Reflective Phase) and the contextual interview (Prospective Phase) were semi-structured so as that the researcher could set

(flexible) boundaries around points of discussion. This ensured that the narrative was generally “germane to the researcher’s interests” (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004: 154), yet simultaneously free enough to produce ‘personal’ responses (Easterby-Smith, et al: 2012: 128). To maintain a “loose structure” (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012: 127), a topic guide was employed in both sets of interviews; with all questions being, where possible, open-ended and non-leading (e.g. as in Caruana et al, 2014). It is important to note that questions were not “tied-up” by the topic guide, and that the researcher digressed to probe into lines of interesting inquiry as and when necessary (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012: 127). While in the Prospective Phase the topic guide (see Appendix 1) focussed on more generic questions pertaining to participants’ upcoming responsible tourism experience – and was consistent across the sample – the topic guide in the Reflective Phase was tailored to the individual based on the data they had elicited in the proceeding phases (see Appendix 6).

All interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder. The recordings were uploaded onto Express Scribe Transcription Software and transcribed into Microsoft Word. This software enabled the researcher to timestamp the questions and responses, as well as slow down the speed of recordings for ease of use.

### **3.5.2 Data Analysis**

The thesis aligned with a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis (FDA) to analyse the verbal and written data. It is noted at this point that – mirroring Cederholm (2004) – the photographs (as first and foremost prompts) were

generally regarded “as a tool for framing and reflecting upon the extraordinary experience of travelling, that is; on the narratives of the photographic experience, rather than on the photographs per se” (p.226). Consequently, the photographs were not subjected to any analysis, but (some) have been included in the empirical chapters to provide a visual illustration complementary of participants’ narrative.

Although Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) contend that there is no singular or bounded approach to conducting a Foucauldian discourse analysis, they offer a set of ‘methodological guidelines’ which, as highlighted below, are congruent to the researcher’s aims and objectives:

***Selecting a corpus of statements:*** Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008: 100) maintain that FDA is commonly applied to speech activities, in-situ interactions and semi-structured interviews – rendering Foucauldian discourse analysis a suitable approach for analysing the types of data collected in this thesis. The authors advocate selecting texts on the basis of ‘temporal variability’, given that it allows the researcher to ascertain how an ‘object’ (for example) is referred to over time. In this regard, the interview transcripts and diaries were again considered appropriate texts, in that they facilitated an emic triangulation of how participants constructed issues relating to their ethical agency within and across the three phases of the tourism experience (3.4.2). Moreover, as previously mentioned, the diary in and of itself demonstrated ‘temporal variability’, in that it also enabled the capture of longitudinal data across the duration of the holiday (Markwell & Basche, 1998).

***Problematizations:*** The second guideline is to search for problematisations, instances whereby “discursive objects and practices are made ‘problematic’ and therefore visible and knowable” (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008: 99). In the context of this research, it is argued that this guideline was especially relevant, given the thesis’ adoption of ‘problematisations’ as a theoretical construct. Searching for problematisations enabled the researcher to more easily extract ethical tensions and dilemmas that tourists experienced while simultaneously educing how these resulted from, and emerged in response to, ‘power struggles’ with the tourism industry.

***Technologies:*** The third guideline seeks the presence of both ‘technologies of power’ – i.e. occasions where participants’ conduct is governed – and ‘technologies of self’, the “techniques by which human beings seek to regulate and enhance their own conduct” (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008: 99). Technologies are thus attuned to the ways in which tourists may readily abide by purported best practice (i.e. conforming to responsible codes and policies), perhaps to absolve themselves from having to make ethical choices or decisions while still ‘knowing’ that their (self-regulated) behaviour is ostensibly responsible.

***Subject positions:*** This guideline requires the researcher to pinpoint the “positions on which to ground [participants’] claims of truth or responsibility” alongside the ways in which they “allow individuals to manage, in quite subtle and complex ways, their moral location within social interaction” (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008: 99). By extracting subject positions, it is argued that the researcher was enlightened to the (non)ethical identities that responsible consumers adopt.

**Subjectification:** Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine’s (2008: 99) final guideline “refers to an ‘ethics’ of self-formation [where...] subjects seek to fashion and transform themselves within a moral order and in terms of a more or less conscious ethical goal”. It is here, therefore, that the researcher became attentive to the ‘self-care practices’ (Foucault, 1984c) that subjects engaged in as a means of protecting or reinforcing their self-image as responsible traveller (often) in light of the ‘power struggles’ and ‘problematizations’ faced.

### **3.5.2.1 Coding the Data**

To conduct the above form of Foucauldian discourse analysis, the researcher began with an inductive and iterative process of ‘open coding’ in NVivo. At this phase, instances of problematisations, technologies (i.e. power struggles), subject positions and subjectification (i.e. self-care practices) were extracted from the verbal and written data. The texts were “broken down into discrete parts, closely examined and compared for similarities and dissimilarities” (Babbie, 2013: 397), with each grouping of (related) extracts being coded under an appropriately titled code (or, in NVivo, ‘node’) (see Table 3.2, column 1). Extracts were coded more than once if the subject matter crossed over several codes. It is noted that this process of open coding did not separate the extracts by theoretical construct, but by similarities in content. This was because there were instances where more than one theoretical construct was evident within an extract (as captured in the conceptual framing, Figure 2.2). Appendix 7 provides an example NVivo coding summary for the code, ‘lack of alternative’; see Figure 3.2, column 1, row 4 for the code’s placement in the overall coding process.

First round of Open Coding (Codes)	Second round of Open Coding (Categories)	Axial Coding (Higher Order Categories)	Title of Theme (Core Category)
'Didn't see...'	Unavailable	Infrastructural availability	Pragmatic Utility
'Can't do...'			
'No access to...'			
'Lack of alternative...'			
'Difficult to do...'	Hard to do/find		
'Struggled to find...'			
'Can't rely on...'			
'Not local practice...'	'Home'/'away' differences in availability		
'Assumed it would be the same...'			
'Determined to speak'	Interacting with host	Language (barriers)	
'Interact better'			
'Don't want to appear ignorant'			
'Polite and courteous'			
'Can ask'	Making oneself understood		
'Can't ask'			
'Hard when don't have the language'			
'Hard off beaten track...'			
'They start speaking English'			
'Hard to understand'	Understanding others		
'Accents can be difficult'			
'Stressed with understanding different language'			
'Easier when can speak language'			

Cont'd

First round of Open Coding (Codes)	Second round of Open Coding (Categories)	Axial Coding (Higher Order Categories)	Title of Theme (Core Category)
'Language proficiency makes it easier to navigate'	Confidence	Language (barriers)	Pragmatic Utility
'Language proficiency increases confidence to travel independently'			
'Financial restrictions'	Budget	Finance	
'Not got a lot of money'			
'Pay more for ethics'	Expensive		
'Price factor'	Cost/price		
'Already paid'	Conflict	Fellow travellers	
'X enjoys...'			
'X prefers...'			
'X wanted to do...'			
'X didn't want to...'			
'X was in charge of plans...'			
'We compromise'	Compromise		
'We do/did this instead'			
'X is young'	Other considerations		
'X is pregnant'			
'Grim'	Bad conditions	Weather	
'Pouring down' / 'soaking wet'			
'Plans depend on weather'	Influences activities		
'Drove more due to bad weather'			

**Table 3.2** Coding process for 'Pragmatic Utility'

To demonstrate, the following passage from June's Reflective interview provides an example of how one extract was coded twice (i.e. under 'can't do' and 'lack of alternative', Table 3.2, column 1, rows 2 and 4):

All the time we had to buy bottles of water. So the whole time we were contributing to this heap of plastic, because there was absolutely no way to obtain water that was safe for us to drink unless we bought bottles. *But if there was some sort of water purification, or something where we could have filled up bottles, we would have happily done that.* But there just wasn't the opportunity.

Despite not wanting to continually drink from plastic bottles, June and her friends had to as "*there was absolutely no way to obtain water*" (e.g. 'can't do'); there was not even "*some sort of water purification*" which would have allowed them to re-fill old bottles ('lack of alternative'). This excerpt further evidences two theoretical constructs, in that given her 'problematization' (see underlined section), she offers a 'subjectification' narrative (see italicised section) as a form of 'self-care'. More specifically, to remedy her anxiety over her mass use of plastic, she makes it known that she would have "*happily*" acted more ethically, and resorted to refilling the same bottle, had she been able to do so.

Following this first round of open coding, a second round of open coding was conducted. This involved grouping the initial codes into "abstract concepts termed categories" (Babbie, 2013: 397) (see Table 3.2, column 2). The researcher then engaged in a process of 'axial coding', whereby these categories were developed into higher order categories (Table 3.2, column 3). Klenke (2016: 100) suggests that these "axial categories are enriched by their fit with as many passages as possible". Table 3.3 provides example data to show how the first-round codes (e.g. 'financial restrictions' and 'not a lot of money') evolved

<b>Codes</b> <i>(First round of open coding)</i>	<b>Categories</b> <i>(Second round of open coding)</i>	<b>Higher-order categories</b> <i>(axial coding)</i>
<p><b>Financial restrictions:</b>            “When I was camping in the States, like I could have bought sort of local, you know, food from with the area I was staying that was kind of from local produce. And maybe gone to local restaurants. But just because of, you know, sort of financial restrictions and ease of doing it, I instead just bought a Calor gas stove and some Ramen noodles and just cooked them. Which is like... which is just really bad”</p> <p>(Alex, Prospective Phase, subject position)</p>	<p><b>Budget</b></p>	<p><b>Finance</b></p>
<p><b>Not got a lot of money:</b>            “So that’s why I think I’m at a basic level of responsible tourism. I plan to be better in the future, but right now on a budget”</p> <p>(Giovanna, Prospective Phase, subject position and subjectification)</p>		
<p><b>Pay more for ethics:</b>            “Bit miffed with the [Name] Cafe...very popular..VERY EXPENSIVE...why do we have to pay through the nose for eating ethically?”</p> <p>(Barbara, Active Phase, problematisation)</p>	<p><b>Expensive</b></p>	
<p><b>Price factor:</b>            “Some choices maybe appear more ethical (like walking or eating at local places) - but are actually based on cost”</p> <p>(Sam, Active Phase, subject position)</p>	<p><b>Cost / price</b></p>	
<p><b>Already paid:</b>            “Money tension again, yeah absolutely. That, you know, if you’ve paid for one thing, going and spending money elsewhere doesn’t feel right”</p> <p>(Sophie, Reflective Phase, problematisation)</p>		

**Table 3.3** Open and axial coding

into a category (e.g. 'budget'); and how these categories (e.g. 'budget', 'expensive' and 'cost/price') combined to form a higher-order category (e.g. 'finance').

The final stage of the analysis consisted of the researcher categorising the higher order categories into a set of 'core' categories (Strauss, 1987) – such as 'pragmatic utility' (see Table 3.2, column 4) – that demonstrate the main, overarching ways in which tourists exert their ethical agency. These core categories tended to provide the foundations for the results chapters; for example, 'walking the talk', 'reflexive inertia' and 'pragmatic utility' form the building blocks for Chapter 6, Self-Reflexivity.

It is highlighted that, while data was collected from the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases of the tourism experience (3.5.1), Chapters 4, 5 and 6 do not consistently present an analysis of excerpts from each phase. This is because, data pertaining to each code or category might not transpose across all three phases. For example, a participant might only reflect (post-holiday) on the importance of 'cost/price' after noting the expense of a particular product or service on holiday; while in the pre-holiday interview financial concerns were not alluded to as a potential impedance of ethical action. In instances such as this, it was not for the researcher to automatically assume that 'cost/price' was not deemed an issue in the Prospective Phase, simply that it wasn't brought to her attention. In this regard, data was only explicitly triangulated in instances where the availability of data permitted.

### 3.5.3 Sampling

Initially, purposive sampling was employed with the aim of generating a research sample of circa sixteen subjects, wherein each participant: (1) self-identified as an ‘ethical’ or ‘responsible’ tourist (and/or consumer), and; (2) was holidaying within the 12-month period of June 2015 – June 2016. This form of sampling was chosen to ensure that the recruited participants had sufficient experience or knowledge in ethical and responsible tourism practices to “facilitate an investigation” (Adler & Clark, 2008: 121).

In April-July 2015, the researcher contacted and/or disseminated a Participant Information Sheet to: 13 tour operators and companies that market themselves as specialising in responsible (and/or sustainable, eco, green etc.) tourism; 1 tourism network on LinkedIn (i.e. Responsible Travel and Tourism, 16,000+ members at the time of sampling); 5 travel forums; 3 responsible tourism associations; 1 ethical consumption forum; 5 Facebook pages; 1 sustainable association; and 1 charity. In total, the research was promoted via thirty outlets, however only two participants were recruited; one from the Responsible Travel and Tourism group on LinkedIn (i.e. Maria, see Table 3.4), and one from the Ethical Consumer Forum (i.e. Lina).

Accordingly, while maintaining the initial ‘purposive’ criteria, snowball sampling was then employed. The researcher contacted several individuals who she knew to self-identity as responsible tourists to ask if they would like to participate, and, from this, “asked those individuals to provide the information needed to locate other members of [the target] population whom they happen to know” (Rubin & Babbie, 2010: 149).

Code	Pseudonym	Age	Occupation	Destination	Travelled with	Holiday Type	Duration
A5	Alex	20	Student	Borneo	University students	University fieldtrip, arriving three days early for relaxation	2.5 weeks
A10	Anne	54	Academic support Tutor	Devon, UK	Family	Family holiday	1 week
B16	Barbara	59	Personal assistant	Cambridge, UK	Alone	Long weekend break	2 nights
C8	Connor	37	Dietician	Peru	Partner	Sight-seeing holiday	2 weeks
E2	Edward	58	IT/Management consultant	France	Partner	Relaxation holiday	1 week
F6	Freddie	54	Financial advisor	Lanzarote	Friends	Fitness holiday	1 week
G1	Giovanna	25	Charity administrator	Spain	Boyfriend	Road trip / sight-seeing holiday	1 week
J12	Josh	32	Doctor	Seychelles	Wife	Late honeymoon	2 weeks
J14	June	58	Retired	India	Husband / friends	Sight-seeing holiday	3.5 weeks
L4	Lina	24	Student	Morocco	Family	Family holiday	1 week
M7	Mabel	77	Semi-retired yoga teacher	Northumbria, UK	Friend	Long weekend break	2 nights
M3	Maisie	44	Midwife and Student	Blackpool, UK	Partner	Long weekend break	2 nights
M9	Maria	32	Administrator	Spain	Partner	Family holiday	1 week
S15	Sam	51	Local government officer	New Zealand	Wife	Sight-seeing holiday (coinciding with wife's study abroad)	1 month
S11	Sophie	33	Physiotherapist and student	Seychelles	Husband	Late honeymoon	2 weeks
W13	William	24	Student	Cairngorms, UK	Alone	Activity holiday	1 week

**Table 3.4** Characteristics of sample

	2015							2016								
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
<i>Giovanna</i>	G1_P (25 <sup>th</sup> )	G1_R (19 <sup>th</sup> )														
<i>Edward</i>	E2_P (28 <sup>th</sup> )	E2_R (28 <sup>th</sup> )														
<i>Maisie</i>		M3_P/R (9 <sup>th</sup> / 27 <sup>th</sup> )														
<i>Lina</i>		L4_P (14 <sup>th</sup> )		L4_R (2 <sup>nd</sup> )												
<i>Alex</i>			A5_P (18 <sup>th</sup> )	A5_R (30 <sup>th</sup> )												
<i>Freddie</i>			F6_P (21 <sup>st</sup> )		F6_R (14 <sup>th</sup> )											
<i>Mabel</i>			M7_P (24 <sup>th</sup> )	M7_R (24 <sup>th</sup> )												
<i>Connor</i>				C8_P (1 <sup>st</sup> )	C8_R (22 <sup>nd</sup> )											
<i>Maria</i>				M9_P (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	M9_R (11 <sup>th</sup> )											
<i>Anne</i>				A10_P (9 <sup>th</sup> )		A10_R (9 <sup>th</sup> )										
<i>Sophie</i>					S11_P (1 <sup>st</sup> )	S11_R (12 <sup>th</sup> )										
<i>Josh</i>					J12_P (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	J12_R (22 <sup>nd</sup> )										
<i>William</i>							W13_P (23 <sup>rd</sup> )			W13_R (16 <sup>th</sup> )						
<i>June</i>								J14_P (15 <sup>th</sup> )		J14_R (15 <sup>th</sup> )						
<i>Sam</i>										S15_P (8 <sup>th</sup> )	S15_R (26 <sup>th</sup> )					
<i>Barbara</i>														B16_P (6 <sup>th</sup> )		B16_R (2 <sup>nd</sup> )

**Figure 3.3** PARTicipative inquiry timeline (N.b. \_P and \_R denote Prospective and Reflective phases; shading denotes month of Active Phase)

Overall, as shown in Figure 3.3, it took thirteen months to form a research sample in this way, and one year and three months to collect the data of all sixteen participants (i.e. extending 3 months beyond the initial June 2015-2016 timeframe). Seven participants were recruited in the summer of 2015; five were recruited in the autumn of 2015; two were recruited prior to their winter holidays in 2015-16; one was recruited in the spring of 2016; and one in the summer of 2016. As the timeline indicates, the frequency with which participants were recruited slowed down over time. Out of the sixteen participants, nine were female and seven were male, and the spread of domestic (4), European (5) and international travel (7) was relatively even. Table 3.4 provides the age, occupation, destination, travel partners, holiday type and duration for each participant.

As responsible tourism is a niche area (Sharpley, 2013), the sample size was considered acceptable due to the smaller 'population' of potential respondents (Bailey, 2008). The sample size was equal to, or greater than, that within recent studies into the tourist experience (e.g. Small, 2016 (n=16); Brown & Osman, 2010 (n=14)), especially literature which specifically focuses on the experience of ethical and responsible tourists (e.g. Malone et al, 2014 (n=13); Caruana et al, 2014 (n=16)).

The sample size was further deemed appropriate given that the focus of the thesis was on providing in-depth and 'thick descriptions' (Guba, 1981) of the tourist experience. The nature of PARTicipative inquiry meant that the researcher accumulated three bodies of data for each participant (one per phase), ultimately resulting in a large, rich dataset. Table 3.5 itemises the data by participant, listing

Participant	Prospective Phase (Interview Minutes)	Active Phase			Reflective Phase (Interview Minutes)
		Number of Photos	Diary Length (Word Count)	Other Materials	
Alex	0:43:22	5	1,653	-	1:03:04
Anne	0:41:39	9	362	-	0:35:53
Barbara	0:50:45	-	779	YHA Green SPIRIT Plan 2011-2014; sample YHA menu	1:13:42
Connor	0:37:47	5	353	-	0:47:14
Edward	0:36:50	5	638	-	0:49:57
Freddie	0:48:21	99	2,178	Hotel's weekly activity programme	1:08:44
Giovanna	0:40:38	39	852	Leaflets (e.g. for her canoeing activity, wine tasting experience, and Praia das Catedrais)	0:58:47
Josh	0:51:25	18	1,649	Hotel Green Guide and receipt (material he shared with his wife, Sophie (below))	2:00:40
June	0:42:35	-	1,873	Magazine cuttings (e.g. on Virgin Atlantic's sustainability strategy); a newspaper cutting titled 'Elephant Rides Top Cruelty List' (Appendix 5); in-flight magazine for Jet Airways	1:17:19
Lina	0:31:39	-	335	-	0:54:44
Mabel	0:50:21	4	846	Photographs from a previous holiday to India; diary reflections from previous holidays to India and Nepal	1:12:07
Maisie	0:59:36	7	1,441	Leaflet for Martin Mere Wetlands (a place Maisie had hoped to visit in the Prospective Phase but chose not to visit in the Active Phase)	1:19:15
Sam	1:11:10	3	3,095	Visitor guide; leaflets (e.g. on the 'Ko Tane Maori experience' and 'Banks Peninsula conservation walks')	1:32:10
Sophie	0:36:15	16	533	Prompt words; hotel's 'Green Guide'; hotel's code of conduct for turtle watchers; hotel information; receipt	1:12:22

*Cont'd*

Participant	Prospective Phase	Active Phase			Reflective Phase
	<i>(Interview Minutes)</i>	<i>Number of Photos</i>	<i>Diary Length (Word Count)</i>	<i>Other Materials</i>	<i>(Interview Minutes)</i>
William	0:55:30	5	1,065	-	1:02:45
	<b>12:13:35</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>17,652</b>		<b>17:52:59</b>

**Table 3.5** Itemisation of data by participant

the length of interviews (in minutes) and diaries (in words), the number of photos collected, and the extra materials gathered. In total, the researcher amassed over 30 hours of interview recordings, 17,652 words of written data, 220 photographs, and an assortment of supplementary materials.

### **3.6 A Reflexive Note**

Given that participative research fosters greater interaction with participants, it was considered important to be reflexive as to how the researcher's personal experiences, demographics and values may have shaped any questions, interpretations and descriptions (Feighery, 2006), as well as how the researcher's identity may have been viewed by the participants of the thesis. This section provides a short insight into the researcher's "lifeworld" (Learmonth, 2009: 1894). I am a British female who is currently a doctoral researcher at Nottingham University Business School (UK). I commenced my first year of the doctoral programme aged twenty-two, and submitted my PhD aged twenty-six. Prior to commencing my PhD, I gained a Master's degree in Corporate Social Responsibility, and before this a BA(Hons) Management, both from the University of Nottingham.

It is important to be reflexive of how my "autobiography" (Russell, 2005: 197) as a Doctoral student in Corporate Social Responsibility necessitates caution over imposing or comparing any personal ethical ideals to those of participants. This will improve methodological rigour, in that through "bracket[ing] out" (Finlay, 2002: 537) any personal moral biases and interests, I can remain 'neutral' to tourists' responsible accounts (Guba & Lincoln, 1982: 246). It is also

necessary to be cognisant of the possible ways in which my ‘ethics student’ status may have conveyed a certain degree of moral sensitivity to participants. It may have unintentionally invited them to: (i) embellish upon their responsible practice and interactions, resulting in social desirability bias and/or self-presentational issues (Rook, 2007)); and/or (ii) exploit my understanding of ethics as a means of gleaning reassurance that their ethical practice was ‘good’.

It was also essential to remain vigilant of my own identity position as ‘tourist’. The fact that I have adopted the subject position of ‘tourist’ may serve to blur the traditional “dichotomy between insider/outsider positioning” (Dixson & Seriki, 2013: 216). When responding to my interview questions, subjects may have inferred that I am familiar with the types of practices that tourists engage in, as well as the kinds of moral dilemmas and ethical tensions faced when holidaying in unfamiliar environments and cultures. This may eradicate participants’ presumed need to fully elaborate on certain lines of thought on the assumption that I can “[read] between the lines” (Jootun et al, 2009: 44)). Therefore, to maintain methodological rigour, I made sure that I probed into participants’ responses during times of uncertainty, ensuring that I did not lose any “complexity” or intricate “nuances” when collecting interview data (Dixson & Seriki, 2013: 214).

### **3.7 An Evaluation of Quality**

The following section draws upon Guba (1981) and Guba and Lincoln’s (1982) four criteria of trustworthiness in order to evaluate the quality of the research. Firstly, as the philosophical underpinnings of the participative paradigm denote

that there is no single ‘truth value’, it is important to be epistemologically reflexive and recognise that the researcher’s end account will neither be “true or false” (Tribe, 2008: 927; Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Therefore, to maintain *credibility* (Guba & Lincoln, 1982) of findings, the researcher attempted to provide sufficient supporting evidence from transcripts to ensure that all accounts remained ‘plausible’ and ‘measured’ (Tribe, 2008).

It is suggested that the research findings are *transferrable* to the experiences of other responsible tourists, as the sampling criteria facilitated the recruitment of participants who shared certain characteristics relevant to the research topic (Stommel & Wills, 2004: 302-3) (3.5.3). Further, it is also maintained that the in-depth FDA engendered sufficiently ‘thick descriptions’ of ethical agency to potentially transfer findings to comparable empirical contexts (e.g. other fields of responsible consumerism) (Guba, 1981).

In terms of *confirmability*, it is suggested that the use of multiple methods (i.e. interviews, photographs and diaries) ensured that the responsible tourists’ experiences were fully explored from a variety of perspectives (i.e. verbal, visual and written accounts). Moreover, the degree of participation that PARTicipative inquiry afforded (see 3.4.1) served to provide space for a ‘confirmability audit’ – allowing the researcher to clarify any meanings ascribed to issues relating to ethical agency during periods of co-reflection (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Similarly, the research is considered *dependable*, as the researcher has provided an adequate ‘audit trail’, enabling others to follow how the data was collected, framed and analysed (see Tables 3.2 and 3.3) (Guba, 1981: 87).

### **3.8 Research Ethics**

The research was granted ethical approval by Nottingham University Business School's Research Ethics Committee on 8th April 2015. The researcher addressed the relevant ethical principles stated in the Economic and Social Research Council's Framework for Research Ethics (2015), as further outlined below:

- (i) The research was designed and undertaken in a way which ensured quality, integrity and transparency.
- (ii) Participants were fully informed about the purpose, methods and uses of the research via a Participant Information Sheet and signed an Informed Consent Form.
- (iii) Participants were assured that all data provided would be treated as confidential. The data was stored on a password-protected computer and the resulting transcripts were only available to the researcher and the researcher's supervisors. Anonymity was preserved through the "common recourse" of pseudonyms (Bryman & Bell, 2015: 136). To maintain a sense of ownership over their accounts, subjects were given the option to select their own pseudonym.
- (iv) Subjects' participation was voluntarily and free from coercion.
- (v) Participants were not considered to be at any foreseeable risk or harm.

In addition to the above principles, the ESRC pose several other points for consideration which were deemed relevant to the research project. Firstly, as the research explores individuals' ethics, it is possible that the nature of the topic could be considered personal or sensitive. Participants were informed that they could refuse to answer any questions they regarded as too private. It is noted that none of the participants exercised this right, and that all participants were happy to answer the questions posed.

As the research was designed in a way which readily highlighted (in)consistencies between constructions of responsible practice (Prospective Phase) and subsequent actions and behaviour (Active Phase), the researcher was mindful to the reactions of participants when exploring any ethical contradictions, tensions and/or compromises (in the Reflective Phase). Reason (1999: 213) posits that:

“...inquiry can be an upsetting business. If the co-researchers are really willing to examine their lives and their experience in depth and in detail, it is likely that they will uncover things that they have been avoiding looking at and aspects of their life [or experience] with which they are uncomfortable [...so they] must be willing to address emotional distress openly when it arrives”.

However, again, it is noted that none of the participants expressed or showed signs of any ‘distress’ in their interviews, and were more than happy to elaborate on any deviations between projected and lived experiences.

Finally, although all stages in which the researcher made direct contact with the participants occurred in the UK, tourists who holidayed abroad axiomatically collected their data overseas. To this end, as the participants selected the holiday destination themselves, any foreseeable risk associated with the country/region

visited was their sole responsibility. However, none of the participants reported any situations wherein they felt themselves to be at risk.

### **3.9 Conclusion of Chapter**

This chapter has presented PARTicipative inquiry as an appropriate methodology for examining consumers' ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. It has argued that the philosophical underpinnings are particularly congruent to the thesis' Foucauldian lens, as both recognise the agency of subjects to assign subjective meanings to what is objectively experienced (3.2). It is clear that the methodology also facilitates the fulfilment of the thesis' fourth research aim (1.1.1), in that it enables the tourist experience to be examined from the specific context within which the participant is situated at any given point (i.e. PART).

In terms of data collection, it has been suggested that photographs and diaries are effective methods for recording participants' data in situ, successfully capturing '*reflection-in action*' (Schon, 1983) during the Active Phase. Equally, it has been argued that the 'active interview' is valuable in exploring how participants make sense of the 'whats' and 'hows' of their ethical agency (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995), thereby providing a valuable channel for '*reflection-on action*' (Schon, 1983). Regarding data analysis, Foucauldian discourse analysis has been proffered as a fruitful method, as Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine's (2008) proposed search for 'problematizations', 'technologies', 'subject positions' and 'subjectifications' harmoniously map on

to the theoretical constructs of the thesis (i.e. ‘power struggles’ (1982), ‘problematizations’ (1984a) and ‘self-care practices’ (1984c)).

Overall, it is suggested that this research ultimately offers a methodologically unique approach within the ethical consumption and responsible tourism literature. More specifically, it is contended that the introduction and application of a (consumer-oriented) participative inquiry incites an innovative examination of ethical agency as experienced, and constructed, by the tourists themselves.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### *Ethical Tourism Spaces and Marketing Messages*

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#### **4.1 Introduction to Chapter**

Chapter 2 highlighted how a branch of literature has examined the ways in which consumer behaviour is discursively shaped and idealised (e.g. Hirschman & Thompson, 1997; Holt, 2002) within guidebooks (e.g. Caruana et al, 2008; Lisle, 2008; Luh Sin, 2017), online corporate texts (e.g. Caruana & Crane, 2008; Hanna, 2013), and civic websites (e.g. Banaji & Buckingham, 2009). While research has shown that consumers draw on (e.g. Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Luedicke et al, 2010) and disassociate from (e.g. Arsel & Thompson, 2011) these ‘myths’ in order to construct their own identity, there still remains a general paucity of literature that provides a consumer-led perspective into the market-consumer interface more broadly.

This chapter conveys how ethical agency can be represented in terms of tourists’ critical awareness of the rhetorical construction of consumer experience within three types of market-consumer interface: market spaces (4.2), market policies (4.3), and market materials (4.4). Central to this chapter is the understanding that consumers are highly cognisant of being ‘communicated at’ in multiple ways and via a myriad of channels. Any divergence between the tourism industry and tourists’ constructions of ‘responsibility’ and the ‘responsible tourist’ commonly leads to a sense of dissonance (Hindley & Font, 2017) and disaffection, inducing consumers to problematise the ethical substance behind marketing messages. To

lessen their resultant angst, participants employ multiple strategies in order to repair, resolve or rationalise their (un)ethical practices and subjectivities.

Section 4.2 demonstrates how consumers evaluated and responded to paradoxes within ostensibly ethical tourism sites (e.g. accommodation sites, excursion sites, and conservation sites), and delineates the ways in which tourists repaired their participation in these spaces. Section 4.3 expounds how consumers evaluated and responded to ethical policies, particularly focusing on tourists' sense of absolved responsibility (4.3.1), cynicism (4.3.2), and concerns regarding (non)enforcement (4.3.3).

Lastly, section 4.4 elucidates how consumers evaluated and responded to market materials. It illuminates how tourists corroborated the content of guidebooks with non-market materials such as online consumer reviews and government websites (4.4.1). Further, it highlights how tourists are aware of, and critical toward, the general lack of information pertaining to responsible tourism and the responsible tourist (4.4.2).

Aligning with the conceptual framework (Figure 2.2), the chapter ends by providing a visual summary of how the findings can be mapped on to, or viewed in light of, the theoretical constructs of 'power struggles', 'problematizations' and 'self-care practices' (Figure 4.1, section 4.5). For a more detailed breakdown, Appendix 8 outlines instances of 'power struggles', 'problematizations' and 'self-care practices' in each section and subsection; with column 2 showing how problematizations often arise in relation to power struggles (column 1), prompting the tourist to engage in repair type practices as a means of self-care (column 3).

As noted in Chapter 3, the PARTicipative inquiry provided the time and space for participants to be highly reflexive over their ethics; particularly as the researcher actively encouraged subjects to collect and reflect on their own data over the three phases of the tourism experience. Therefore, while certain reflections over ethical tourism products and marketing messages were prompted in relation to questions asked by the researcher, others transpired naturally when participants led discussion or wrote their diary entries. To this end, attempts have been made to contextualise the numbered data extracts by stating the phase of PARTicipative inquiry from which they were taken (i.e. Prospective (\_P), Active (\_A), or Reflective (\_R)), as well as the way in which each narrative emerged (i.e. in response (or not) to the researcher's questioning). Where possible, attempts have been made to present excerpts from all three phases of a participant's experience; however, as stated in section 3.5.2.1, not all findings consistently weaved through the three datasets.

#### **4.2 Evaluating and Responding to Paradoxes within Market Spaces**

The participants encountered multiple types of tourism 'space' during their holidays, including but not limited to: accommodation (e.g. hotels, bed and breakfasts, hostels, rental properties, homes of friends and family); eateries (e.g. local cafes, local restaurants); natural environments (e.g. rainforests and beaches) and urban environments (e.g. markets, towns and cities); places of heritage (e.g. museums, castles and forts) and conservation (e.g. nature reserves); as well as attractions (e.g. theme parks) and excursions (e.g. day-trips).

	<b>Prospective</b>	<b>Active</b>	<b>Reflective</b>
Alex	Which I just thought I'll just sort of walk around the <b>town</b> , have a look at the restaurants, or go to the <b>beach</b> or something. I mean I did look at a couple of places I could go bird-watching as well, so. Which seemed quite good. So if I'm feeling up for it I think I'll go there.	Decided to walk down to the <b>seafront</b> . In my Britishness, I assumed that the front would be the centre for cafes and shops. Wrong. Lots of markets and marinas. Ended up eating noodles for breakfast.	I thought "the <b>seafront</b> is where the things will be", and I think this was kind of my British idea of "oh it's a <b>coastal resort</b> because it's on the sea". And I wandered down there and it's all just like empty markets and sort of industry. And I was like "oh, God", and then wandered around in the heat for ages and just kind of got completely crippled by this country which was so unfamiliar.
Anne	Go and see local little... go to the <b>beach</b> . I don't suppose it will be very sunny and warm, but we'll go for a walk along the beach. We'll go and eat out in the <b>local cafes</b> and <b>restaurants</b> and <b>pubs</b> . And go visit local <b>shops</b> and things like that really.	Drove to Woolacombe and had lunch at the Boardwalk and then locally produced ice cream. Drove to Appledore and walked along the <b>sea front</b> and down the back streets and had coffee and tea at [Name] <b>Tea Shop</b> .	We didn't do much other than walk, drink and eat really [laughter].
Connor	So as well as the usual, you know, <b>city tours</b> I suppose that we're going to do in a couple of places, we're also going to go to Machu Picchu. And I believe we're doing that by train. So we're not doing the Inca Trail, we're not trekking for ten days like some people do [...]. And then we're going obviously to spend some time in the Amazon.	Famous <b>historic sites</b> and <b>landmarks</b> - can see the conflict between supporting the tourism industry (main source of income) and protecting the sites. Lots of guards / roped off areas where you can't go. E.g. Machu Picchu. Our guide for this part of the holiday was kechuan (incan heritage) so we got a very interesting viewpoint on what the standard history	So the Machu Picchu thing, I don't know, I think... it's just one of those experiences where it's so breath-taking and unique and different, that you kind of... you probably look past any impact you're having by being there, and you just hope that the authorities are doing what they're supposed to to protect it for future generations.

Cont'd

	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Connor		says. Quite a spiritual perspective actually. Which may have affected how we appreciated the things we saw and experienced.	
June	For example, the official <b>tourist places</b> in the Golden Triangle, like the Taj Mahal and some of the temples. And then we're going to the south, where we have a chance to have a more rural time. We're going to be staying on a farm there, we're staying in <b>eco-lodges</b> , and having the chance just to explore the countryside a little bit. And then we're flying to the north part, again to look at a bit more temples and the more cultural side of things for the third week.	Saw Humayun's Tomb, Lotus Temple, Qutub Minar, India Gate. Given many names and facts - all forgotten!	We had expected because it was the Golden Triangle area that we would see many more tourists as we would most other places. But that was unexpected.
Lina	Obviously we've got Dinan, then we're going to visit Medina, which I think is a different town. I think we're going camel-riding.	I saw some really sad donkeys around the leather <b>market</b> . [...] I saw one with missing flesh around its back and some bones jutting out with flies all around it. I wanted to do something but felt helpless. I chose not to go camel-riding (which is stereotypically touristy) for that reason.	And sometimes we would drive past the camels and they – I know they walk slowly anyways – but I just felt like they looked really sad. And I was just like “I don't want to really be, I don't want to...”... I think it's because it happened anyway regardless of whether I went camel-riding or not, but I was just like “I don't want to be part of it, and I don't

Cont'd

	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Lina			want to like encourage that kind of thing”.
Mabel	It's going up to Lindisfarne and to Alnwick <b>Castle</b> , both of which I've seen before but many, many years ago, and I love that coastline, Northumbrian coastline, to see the big castles and that. So it will be part history. It will be part garden.	Had very pleasant couple of hours (re)visiting the amazing cathedral with the shrine to St Cuthbert & St Bede and a very informative tour of the castle.	It was a gated garden [at Alnwick], and there was a guide outside with locked gates. It was because of the busy day and it was a weekend, you see, so he wanted to cram in as many as he could. So he'd got these groups waiting, so you were sort of rushed around it. So we were in and out in twenty minutes and it was eight pound. And a lot of people wanted to say 'well what's that plant, or that'. But he was obviously thinking I can get three groups in before lunch time.
Maisie	I used to live near a <b>nature reserve</b> and I love it [laughter]. And Martin Mere was on Spring Watch as well, so I've always been interested to actually go there and see it for myself. So I'm hoping we could call in there at least as a trip.	Martin Mere – didn't go – resolved by acknowledging shared decision making. [Partner] didn't want to go and wanted to see his parents. This removed the responsibility from me so I felt a bit unsatisfied rather than guilty. (I feel supporting <b>Nature Trusts</b> is crucial).	The only other tension that comes up, I suppose, is if I, if I want to do something like visit Martin Mere and my partner doesn't. There's a bit of a tension there, because we're both on holiday, he's got equal rights to choose what he wants to do and what he doesn't want to do.
Sam	In Auckland there's a <b>museum</b> of Maori culture and things like that. So we definitely will be trying to find out a bit more about that, and embracing it and	More experiences of Maori culture, albeit in a tourist setting. Impressive new interpretation centre of a significant national treaty. Annoyed that even when the tourists had been told it would be	It's funny how I actually mentioned quite a few of the things that we actually then reflected on in the diary that I wrote while we was there. You know, things like the cultural side of things of New

*Cont'd*

	<b>Prospective</b>	<b>Active</b>	<b>Reflective</b>
Sam	understanding it. Because it's, you know, it's what makes that country.	disrespectful to laugh when the warriors approached, some ignorant people (British sadly) still laughed.	Zealand, the Maori stuff. And I thought that was... that came across really strongly. If there was something that's worth mentioning – I feel almost like an abstract of all this – was to understand the country that we were in, we just... we thought it was a no-brainer to then understand the Maori culture and what all that was about.

**Table 4.1** Constructions of tourism spaces at each phase

Table 4.1 evidences specific examples of the types of tourism spaces that the participants planned to experience; went on (or not) to experience; and subsequently reflected on. Some tourists happily participated in the space(s) that they had envisaged (e.g. Anne: beaches), others forwent visiting a site (e.g. Maisie: Martin Mere) or opted not to engage in certain activities within it (e.g. Lina: camel-riding). The table shows how participants' experience of a tourism space did not always conform to initial expectations (e.g. June: lack of tourists), leading in some cases to a sense of unease (e.g. Alex: 'crippled' by the unfamiliarity). Several tourists were also cognisant of the positive and negative role of other actors within the space; remarking, for example, on the impact of guides (e.g. Connor: "*interesting viewpoint*"; Mabel: 'cramming' and 'rushing') and other tourists (e.g. Sam: "*ignorant people*").

The remainder of this section focusses on the way in which participants problematised the tourism spaces that they (or the tourism industry) had particularly constructed as *ethical*. Here, participants commonly reflected on how their experience in purportedly ethical tourism spaces was contradictorily encountered as something other than ethical. Such paradoxes were reported within three types of tourism space, namely accommodation sites, excursion sites, and conservation sites. While these three tourism spaces are spatially distinct, the angst consumers experienced from participating in them was comparable. All of the participants questioned – in considerable depth – the ethicality of certain objects/practices, and were quick to reflect on how these made them sceptical of, or uncomfortable in, the tourism space. In several cases, tourists' narratives powerfully highlighted the (negative) emotional impact of their participation, leading them to self-question their own and others' identity

as a responsible tourist. How tourists repaired being in an ‘unethical’ environment, however, did not always appear to necessarily correspond to the strength of their reported ethical anxiety.

The section presents the ways in which participants problematised ethical tourism sites and considers the resultant strategies employed in the face of their dissonance (e.g. Hindley & Font, 2017). These three responses include: critique and continue; critique and compensate; and critique and cut loose. Overall, this section demonstrates the ways in which tourists can be highly reflexive of marketing messages in tourism spaces and how they are often (but not always) impelled to repair the anxieties arising from their participation.

*Critique and continue:* The first type of response, critique and continue, demonstrates how tourists can be affected by the incongruities of an ostensibly ethical tourism site yet continue to participate in it without any significant behavioural change. Alex, a student on a university field-trip to Borneo, typified this position. From the outset, Alex was critical of the rhetoric of the luxury eco-lodge in which he would be staying in the Bornean rainforest. When asked in the Prospective Phase whether his notion of responsible tourism and the responsible tourist was congruent to the image constructed by tour operators (for example), he stated:

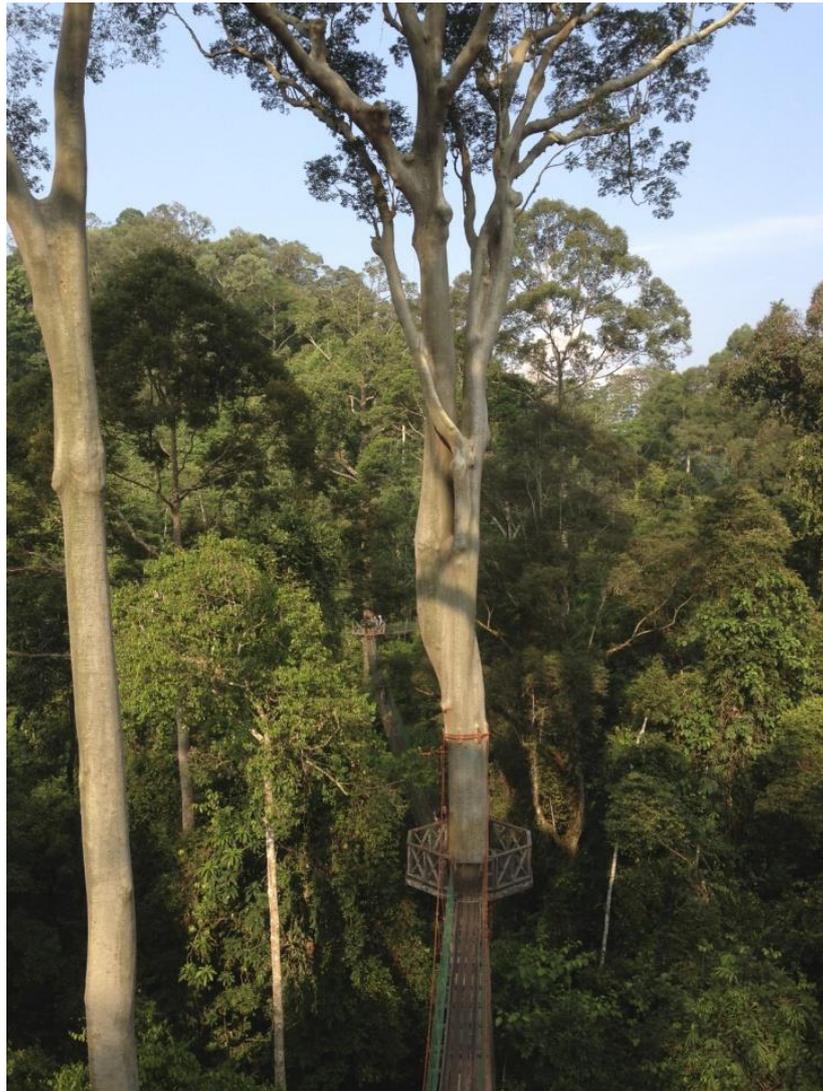
**Extract 1a (A5\_P):** I’m a little bit cynical about the whole ecotourism thing. I think it’s good, but I think it’s very much aimed at the sort of the crème de la crème – very rich people. So I think a lot of the rhetoric they give kind of doesn’t really sit with my own knowledge about what... because ecotourism is a lot of the time about conservation. So for example the place we’re going in Borneo [...] there’s like the [Name] Lodge, which for a three-night stay is like £14,000 or something horrendous like that. And, yeah, I think a lot of the rhetoric for that is that they... it’s a very simplified, basic version – ‘oh, you know, you’re supporting this ecosystem’ in this kind of woolly way. And that doesn’t

really... I mean it's good because conservation needs money and you may as well kind of loosen up the rhetoric in order to get it. That sounds really bad, but [laughter] it's true.

Alex felt that responsible tourism was a marketing niche that targeted affluent consumers (*“the sort of the crème de la crème”*). He jokingly exaggerated the price of a short stay (*“£14,000 or something horrendous”*) to project that the lodge would be more focused on providing an opulent service to *“rich”* tourists than being serious, sustainable accommodation. While he did concede that *“loosen[ing] up the rhetoric”* on sustainability may be an effective means of securing money for protecting the rainforest, he envisaged that the luxurious accommodation would stand at odds with how he viewed conservation (*“doesn't really sit with my own knowledge”*).

His projections were confirmed when visiting the lodge, with Alex noting in his diary that: *“it looks like one of those places that a) is advertised in brochures and b) I would never intentionally visit”*. When directing the line of inquiry in the Reflective Phase, Alex showed the researcher a photo (Image 1) in order to support and expand upon these reflections; recounting how he was presented with perceived contrivances such as designated boardwalks and verandas, an infinity pool, cold towels, and cocktails:

**Extract 1b (A5\_R):** Like in that part of the world it is the tip-top of rainforest lodges. And it's this archetype of ecotourism [...]. And we went to it and it has like this – this is a canopy, sorry a boardwalk in the canopy – and these things are obviously horrendously expensive. And this was really cool to walk on because like you get all these beautiful like classic views of the rainforest. And all this stuff. And you get that. But then when we were talking amongst ourselves – and kind of from our knowledge of wildlife – and we were saying ‘this is a complete gimmick’ and that ‘this isn't how like you would normally see anything in the forest’. Because this is a place where people come a lot, and animals go ‘oh, there's people there, let's not go there’ – so it's really



**Image 1** Treetop canopy walk at the luxury eco-lodge (A5\_A)

hard to see wildlife from that place. And we thought ‘God, this is a total gimmick’. This is what people are paying – thousands of pounds – to get an experience like this, and it’s not authentic because they’re sort of imposing this like documentary idea of a wild place on to the way you visit it. Like ‘oh, you know, you want to get these views’ and ‘you want to be above the canopy’. And actually the way you see stuff in a rainforest, you have to walk through the shit on the ground, and like dig in the mud, and break open logs, and climb up trees. And that’s how we’ve seen stuff, and that’s how we’ve seen lots of stuff. And I thought at this place, ‘God, I would be really surprised if you saw anything’.

[...] It was far and away more extreme than I thought it would be. Like it was this absolute luxury. [...] There was this lovely open bar that was all like serving cocktails. And when we arrived we were given cold

towels to wash our face. And we were like ‘what the hell?’. And we were on this sort of veranda looking out. And so there’s the river comes through like this, and there’s like a hill and rainforest. And it’s really gorgeous [laughter]. And we were sort of sat there, we had a pina colada, and we said “you know” – I said to someone – I said ‘you know, it’s like someone came up here, looked around, and went “this would be perfect to make as much money out of American tourists as possible”’. And then they built a lodge here. And it was almost too obvious how they targeted it at these, you know, extremely wealthy people that are just coming out here to get the kind of, you know, classic what you’d expect of an experience in the rainforest. Oh, you know, ‘you just walk around with your camera and your trainers along the paved trail and you can see an orangutan’.

Alex exhibited a very strong and conscious reflexivity regarding the paradoxes of ethical accommodation in that he thought that the luxury eco-lodge necessitated that tourists engage in ecotourism in a way which rendered them increasingly disengaged from ecosystems. It was this discrepancy between his and the accommodation’s constructions of responsibility which prompted him to experience the eco-lodge as a “*total gimmick*”. Alex particularly condemned the way in which the lodge ‘sold’ (Goodall, 2013) the Bornean rainforest by “*imposing this like documentary idea of a wild place on to the way people visit it*”. This is particularly interesting, as Alex initially conceded that the boardwalk over the canopy was “*really cool to walk on*”, and it wasn’t until he reflected on it – from an ecological viewpoint – with peers, that his perception changed. It was here that Alex’s reflexivity led him and his fellow travellers to juxtapose the lodge’s idealistic, sanitised and relaxed approach with how they themselves had observed wildlife in the past; an activity which required considerable effort, mess and exertion on the ground level (“*you have to walk through the shit on the ground, and like dig in the mud, and break open logs, and climb up trees*”). Put simply, it is clear that what Alex claimed was the “*archetype*” of ecotourism at

the beginning of the excerpt later provided a foil to his personal prototype of what constitutes an ethical space. This relates to Arsel and Thompson's (2011) demythologising practice of 'aesthetic discrimination', with Alex making distinctions between his own consumption practice and the practices "subsumed" (p.799) within the ecotourism myth. While for other tourists Alex assumed the site was a space to "*like get the view*", for him and his friends it served to spark debates about "*what the hell*" the eco-lodge's ethos was actually all about. To this end, and mirroring his initial projections (Extract 1a), the group concluded that the luxury eco-lodge was primarily a profit-making scheme; with Alex drawing on social structures (i.e. nationality; class) to again suggest that those who built the lodge did so in order to financially exploit "*rich*" and "*American*" tourists who wanted a (supposedly) "*classic*" experience in the rainforest.

Despite his scepticism, however, Alex made no material alterations to his behaviour. Although his time at the lodge was likely necessitated by his travel agenda – a pre-organised university trip – it could be argued that Alex need not have participated in the 'gimmicky' services and activities that fuelled his dissonance. Yet, he himself recognised that he adopted the behaviours and conformed to the practices that he was critical of. For example, Alex jokingly observed how he still ended up sitting on the "*really gorgeous*" veranda, drinking a pina colada. This suggests that, for Alex, it was the fact that he was attuned to the contrivances that was important. He didn't feel that he had to opt out of the activities offered, but wanted to make it known that he was cognisant of the artificiality of his ecotourism experience and the practices he was engaging in.

It is also noteworthy that Alex did not condemn other tourists who bought into the rhetoric of eco-lodges. When asked whether he considered containing tourists to certain sections of the rainforest, or prescribing certain methods of interacting with the wildlife (e.g. boardwalks), to be a responsible approach to impact minimisation, Alex asserted that he still thought it was “*really good that people have this – these rich people [laughter] – have this limited experience because it just keeps them away from everyone else*”:

**Extract 1c (A5\_R):** And they, you know, they get on their plane, they drive there, and then they leave, you know, they’re not... But they’re paying all the money to help it, and that... Yeah, I don’t have a lot of problem. It’s a complicated thing but I agree with it and also kind of find it... I’m also quite cynical about it. I’m cynical about people who are doing it, but I’m not complaining about the money and what it’s doing to the environment. Because it is good. It is a good thing.

Alex was content that visitors to the eco-lodge confined their impact to a particular space while, at the same time, contributed to the preservation of the rainforest (more broadly) via their tourist spending. Thus, the key finding here is that although Alex was happy for tourists to engage with the environment through ethical tourism sites such as the eco-lodge, he was “*cynical*” of *why* tourists would *want* to. While some tourists are happy to support sustainable practices simply by injecting money, it appears that other tourists want to be more actively immersed, with Alex in particular wanting to have more engagement with conservation at the grass-roots level. A practical implication here is that certain (sanitised) elements of ethical sites may not conform to tourists’ expectations of what constitutes a sustainable tourism space.

***Critique and compensate:*** The second type of response, critique and compensate, captures the compensatory strategies that tourists employ to offset

their participation in tourism spaces that are marketed as ethical but experienced as unethical. The following example depicts Maisie's experience on an excursion during a previous holiday to Turkey. In the Prospective Phase, Maisie was asked whether she was happy to draw on the content of guidebooks, to which she responded: *"I'm fairly happy to rely on the guidebook. But, saying that, I think some of the things that are promoted as being what you might think of as ethical aren't"*. This statement immediately stimulated a lengthy narrative (exceeding 1000 words) of how she *"really started to question [her] choice"* to participate in a jeep safari, despite selecting it on the grounds that it incorporated several responsible activities (i.e. *"[I] specifically chose it because I thought 'crikey, that's really great. I get to see some of the local countryside. I want to find out what the local people are like, and how they live, and what it's like and that kind of thing'"*). She stated:

**Extract 2a (M3\_P):** Because whilst it was great to go around the country park, I was thinking 'well, we're driving around it in a jeep' [laughter] [...]. And the jeep was really noisy and I was thinking 'oh God, this is turning quite rattley and quite noisy'. And I started thinking 'oh, maybe this wasn't such a great idea'. And then when we got to the village – well it wasn't even a village it was literally a camp on the side of the road – we got out and this family had got like this amazing little tent complex set up. And I'm vegetarian. And they had made like every kind of meat stew possible, because they only eat what they've got and basically it's sheep [...]. And I felt really awful. I didn't sit there and say I didn't like [laughter]... I felt really on the spot [...]. And I was trying to be really sort of diplomatic. But I just felt dreadful because I thought 'oh'. I really felt like 'I hope it doesn't come across like I'm snobby'. Because they'd really laid on a spread. It was obvious that they were trying to be very gracious. But I actually felt like... it was almost like... I felt like I was being in a zoo. And I feel like who was looking at who. I don't know who was in the cage, you know? Because we'd gone into their home as part of the sort of the cultural touristic experience – and I wanted that experience – but when I actually found myself in it, it wasn't what I thought. And I almost felt like, argh... I felt like I was going in and... they didn't have many belongings and they obviously didn't have much money, and we weren't wearing really nice clothes – I was just wearing

like shorts and some old trainers and a t-shirt – but even so I kind of felt like I was walking in with lots of money and they were quite poor and yet they'd put on this huge spread. And I felt like I was sitting there kind of looking at them, and kind of taking in how they lived and it all... and there was something that I thought 'God, this could be seen as really patronising in some way'. Or some sort of, you know, 'oh we're kind of breezing in, eating their food, being rich and going back out again'. And they're probably getting paid – like obviously they'll be getting paid money for it – but they had so little that I actually felt quite embarrassed to be there. I felt like an intruder. Even though I'd actually selected that experience as... because it was promoted as being, you know, local... you know, visit local people, find out what the nature is like. And I thought 'yeah, that's exactly what I've come here for'. But what actually when I found myself in the situation it... my experience of it was I felt... I felt... I don't even know what the word is I'm trying to say.

From the very beginning of her excursion, Maisie was dubious of the ethical qualities of her jeep safari. First, she was attuned to the paradox of visiting a protected environment in a vehicle that palpably contributed to both air and noise pollution. Second, a visit that she initially thought would allow her to celebrate and learn about local cultural heritage was in fact experienced as an intrusion on the tribal family ("*I felt like an intruder*"). This intrusion was twofold, and related to: (i) the exhibition type nature of the trip, whereby Maisie was troubled by "*sitting there kind of looking at them*", and (ii) the "*spread*" that they provided, with Maisie being conscious that the tourists were drawing on their limited resources ("*breezing in, eating their food*") (e.g. 'tragedy of the tourism commons' (Briassoulis, 2002)). It is interesting that, while the fayre of meat stews went against her personal ethics as a vegetarian, it was her decision *not* to eat the delicacy that caused her the most anxiety ("*I felt really awful*"; "*I felt dreadful*"). She not only became anxious as to how her decision would come across to the host ("*I really felt like 'I hope it doesn't come across like I'm snobby*"), but introspective as to how her identity in general – as a 'richer'

individual – could appear condescending when (to her) they had comparatively little.

It is clear that Maisie was attuned to the ‘staged authenticity’ (MacCannell, 1976) of the excursion, and attempted to lessen her anxiety by rationalising that the family would receive a financial remuneration for facilitating her trip. Yet, ironically it was the fact that the “tourees (hosts) [had] put their culture (including themselves) on sale in order to create an appealing tourism package” (Chhabra et al, 2003: 705) that at least partly led to her disaffection. It is also important to note that Maisie’s disaffection from this excursion did not prevent her from participating in similar cultural-heritage trips later in that same holiday to Turkey, nor did she think it would stop her from participating in them again in the future: “*I would still go on those trips now, even knowing that it would make me probably feel quite uncomfortable*” (M3\_P). However, following directly from Extract 2a, Maisie asked the researcher if she could provide another example of how, after the jeep safari, she had since attempted to (at last partially) compensate for her participation in other, similar trips. This demonstrates how reflections from one tourism experience can serve to instigate new ethical behaviours within and across responsible holidays:

**Extract 2b (M3\_P):** [The jeep safari] really opened my eyes because, you know, the same holiday I did go on another village trip as well in a similar type of experience. Do you want me to talk about that, or shall I stop talking and let you ask? Is that alright?

At this point, Maisie reflected on how in another home visit she tried to lessen her “*awkwardness*” and “*guilt*” by (over)purchasing handicrafts; as well as how, on an olive grove trip she “*kind of tried to equal it out a little bit by learning the language a little bit*”, something which immediately made her feel “*less*

*humiliated*”. This links to Antonetti and Maklan’s (2014: 122) argument that “the experience of self-conscious emotions” – such as guilt – enhances consumers’ sense of agency to engage in ethical behaviours. Maisie stated:

**Extract 2c (M3\_P):** I feel like I’m trying to balance it up. We’re not just walking in with money as tourists, and they’re not just sitting there on the floor hoping that we’re going to buy something, I’m kind of sitting down with them and saying ‘well, who are you?’

As evidenced in the above extract, Maisie was attuned to the relations of power within tourism (Cheong & Miller, 2000), and sought to equalise the tourist-touree relationship by communicating with the host on their own terms. It appears that this act of compensation served to reduce and/or eliminate several of the ethical tensions arising from her first experience, namely her identity as a ‘rich’ tourist and the exhibition style nature of cultural-heritage trips; i.e. now that she’s “*not just walking in with money*” and instead “*sitting down with them*” and communicating. This corresponds to Newman and Trump’s (2017) finding that consumers with high moral identity importance often consume products from ethical brands in order to reduce personal feelings of guilt. In the context of Maisie’s case, however, it appears that she engaged in ‘extra’ ethical activities in order to reduce her personal ethical anxieties. In many ways, this relates to Alex’s case (above), in that both tourists (i) were aware of or wary to the ‘rich’ identity that is often projected on to western tourists, and (ii) wanted to immerse themselves with the host and/or destination rather than simply inject money. The key distinction is that while Alex merely voiced his desires, Maisie went one step further and acted upon them by deploying compensatory strategies.

***Critique and cut loose:*** The third response, critique and cut loose, captures instances where paradoxical practices within ethical sites prompt tourists to stop

participating in them altogether. Josh and Sophie, husband and wife, reflected on how they ‘cut loose’ on a previous visit to a turtle conservation sanctuary in Borneo. When asked in the Prospective Phase whether she had ever specifically chosen to visit somewhere based on its ethical features, Sophie reflected on how she had opted to visit the turtle sanctuary because when “*reading about it, it seem[ed] like it was a really worthwhile conservation project*”. However, she reflected that in reality the ineffective management mechanisms at the sanctuary rendered it more of a profit-driven tourism attraction than a socially and environmentally responsible entity:

**Extract 3 (S11\_P):** It was a turtle island, and it was off the east coast of Malaysian Borneo [...] And they’ve set it up as a kind of, not a sanctuary – I don’t know what the right word is – but it’s a protected island and there’s a sort of research conservation sort of project on there that ensures that the turtles can kind of lay their eggs. [...] So it was something that we were really interested in doing. And reading about it, it seems like it was a really worthwhile conservation project. Sounds like it was really well-run. And very sort of keen to go and see what it was all about and go. [...] The island is amazing, and I think the people that work there are trying to do a really good and important job. But I found the other tourists really difficult. Their behaviour I found really upsetting. So what tends to happen is you sort of hang around until it gets dark at night, and then the rangers on the island will alert people to the fact that there’s a turtle laying eggs. And then everyone goes down to the beach to kind of watch at a distance sort of what, you know, them laying eggs and them kind of harvesting – you know, not harvesting – but collecting the eggs to then take them to the hatchery, that kind of thing. Which was fine, until it was announced that there was a turtle laying eggs. And then literally there was this mass exodus out of the kind of building. And people just running furiously to get to the beach. And what happens, because there’s so many turtles on the island, they don’t manage to collect all the eggs. Some turtles have been hatching at that time. And they hatch at night, and they migrate down to the beach. And people were just running over these turtles and squashing and killing the turtles that weren’t actually protected in the hatchery. They were just naturally kind of there. And I found that really, really upsetting to see. Because I thought ‘you’ve come to this island, which is a conservation project to help support the work that they’re doing, and all people are interested in was getting down to go and experience watching the turtle lay eggs’. And they were

forgetting that actually the baby turtles were the outcome, and people were just trampling on these turtles and it was just, it was so upsetting to watch. And it really put a dampener on me being there. Because I was partly... I was really cross with the tourists...I was sort of partly cross with the people running the conservation projects on the island as well. Because no-one seemed to be doing anything about trying to at least sort of have some sort of control mechanisms in place to stop this happening. It was just really, it was just really upsetting. And I then didn't really enjoy or want to participate in it quite so much. Because I just didn't really believe in it so much anymore. It felt like it went from being a conservation project to just a money-making thing. And actually they were just getting people on the island to go and do that. And actually there were lots of turtles that were just being squashed and killed, which was not very nice at all.

Like Maisie, Sophie highlighted from the outset that she had specifically chosen to engage in the conservation project from what she had read. Nevertheless, her initial positive assessment of the conservation project was soon inverted when a lack of visible control mechanisms meant that the unethical behaviour of other tourists was overlooked. This corresponds to Gilmore et al's (2007) finding that a lack of integrated management at conservationist sites, namely World Heritage Sites, was a factor in preventing the fulfilment of sustainable objectives. While Sophie was pleased with the broader ethos of turtle conservation ("*The island is amazing, and I think the people that work there are trying to do a really good and important job*"), it was the way in which other tourists responded to it – or indeed were permitted to respond to it – that she rendered problematic. To this end, and comparable to Alex, Sophie subsequently constructed the ethical space as more of a profit-driven business ("*a money-making thing*") than a legitimate approach to ecotourism and sustainability.

Again, similar to Alex, Sophie's case is also reflective of how, even amongst supposedly like-minded responsible tourists, subjects make social comparisons between the 'self' and 'other'. While ethical holidays remain a relatively niche

product, in-group/out-group comparisons can easily be made between ‘good’ (responsible) and ‘bad’ (mass) tourists (i.e. explicit ‘identification through differentiation’ (Gillespie, 2007)). However, as ethically-mediated sites become more popular, it appears that responsible tourists are provoked to make ‘us’ versus ‘them’ comparisons within the *same* subsection of the tourism market. More specifically, while all the tourists were supposedly there to “*support the work*” of the sanctuary, it was only Sophie and her husband who were sufficiently discerning to the weak substance behind the project’s message. Sophie’s angst was severe to the point where she felt compelled to immediately remove herself from the conservation project, thereby highlighting the radical measures that some tourists are prepared to take in order to protect themselves from exposure to ‘unethical’ tourism spaces. To this end, whereas reflections from one experience induced Maisie to adopt compensative strategies in *subsequent* experiences, Sophie demonstrated a willingness to learn and adapt within the *same* experience.

Same is true of Josh, who also recounted his time at the turtle sanctuary. When asked whether he had ever had to ‘recover’ his participation in something which was not necessarily as ethical as he once thought, Josh recalled how he felt obliged to voice his concerns to the guide at the conservation project as well as to the tourists visiting it:

**Extract 4 (J12\_P):** And some of them even get trodden on and it was to the point where I actually said something to the guide. And I said ‘are you actually going to let people do this, and sort of just stand by and watch?’, and he did. And so I was quite annoyed at the guide who is supposed to be the example of how you should treat your environment with respect, and he didn’t seem to give a toss one way or the other. [...] Because there was one guy in particular – there was a turtle trying to lay her eggs at the time – and this one guy just kept sort of touching the turtle

and interfering with her, and shining lights in her face and all that stuff, and I actually [laughter] had a go at him. And so, in the end, because the guides weren't interested in being responsible – and neither were the tourists – we sort of withdrew ourselves from it.

Josh's excerpt underscores how, in problematic environments, certain subjects have a cultural base for asserting their affirmative agency. More specifically, Josh not only demonstrated resistance, like Sophie, but *articulated* his resistance (e.g. “*are you going to stand by and watch[?]*”). It is interesting that, out of the participants who experienced paradoxes at ethical tourism sites, Josh was the only one who expressed his negative emotions to the people working there. This is indicative of an important practical and managerial implication as, unless responsible tourists are prepared or confident enough to make their ethical anxieties known, key unethical features of ostensibly ethical tourism spaces and products are arguably unlikely to change.

#### **4.2.1 Summary of Evaluating and Responding to Paradoxes within Market Spaces**

Section 4.2 highlighted how participants problematised the ethical paradoxes within three responsible tourism sites: an eco-lodge, a safari/cultural-heritage trip, and a conservation sanctuary. It showed that, while Maisie, Sophie and Josh's power struggle with the tourism space was severe enough to incite them to act upon their problematisations, Alex was content to simply *critique and continue*. Put simply, Alex was content to simply make it known that he was astute to the paradoxical way in which he was being 'communicated at' rather than make any alteration to his circumstances.

For the other participants, however, the tourism space created a set of conditions which compelled them to engage in self-care practices as a means of protecting their identity as a responsible tourist. For Maisie, the conditions imposed by the cultural-heritage trip (i.e. “*breezing in*”, “*eating their food*”, “*being rich*”, and “*going back out again*”) made her negatively construct her identity as a “*snobby*” and “*patronising*” “*intruder*”, impelling her to *compensate* by over-purchasing handcrafts. For Sophie and Josh, the conditions of the conservation project (“*mass exodus*”, “*running furiously*” and “*killing the turtles*”) resulted in them both feeling ‘upset’, prompting them to *cut loose* from the conservation project.

Overall, this section has shown that, while participants appeared to be attuned to and wary of the paradoxical ways in which ‘responsibility’ is communicated within ethical tourism spaces, the degree to which they responded to these paradoxes was variable. In many ways, the tourists provided a spectrum of responses: with Alex, at one end, positioning himself as willing to tolerate the paradoxes; Sophie and Josh, at the other end, positioning themselves as unwilling to tolerate the paradoxes; and Maisie, in the middle, positioning herself as willing to tolerate the paradoxes so long as she could offset doing so.

### **4.3 Evaluating and Responding to Ethical Policies**

This section considers how tourists evaluated and responded to marketing messages behind ethical policies, particularly those found at their accommodation. Overall, tourists were pleased to observe that ethical policies and practices that served to regulate or inform both market and consumer conduct were in place. However, this in itself was not sufficient in eliminating

multiple tensions. Section 4.3.1 highlights how participants positively and negatively constructed policies as absolving (an element of) their responsibility, necessitating the enactment of certain strategies in order to retain a sense of ownership over their devolved ethicality. Section 4.3.2 relays how participants told of their cynicism towards the rhetoric of market policies, as well as how they subsequently constructed these discourses as a form of marketing spin. Finally, section 4.3.3 highlights how participants problematised the non-enforcement of ethical policies, the degree to which tourists can establish (non)enforcement, and the need to trust that policies will be enforced.

#### **4.3.1 Absolved Responsibility**

This subsection shows how ethical policies and practices served to (varying degrees) absolve consumers' responsibility. For Maisie, William and Josh, the presence of an ethical policy led to a sense of absolved responsibility in that, so long as they conformed to the code, their need to make ethical decisions was lessened. While for Maisie the code allowed her to happily share her responsibilities, William and Josh's narratives underscore how some tourists still attempted to maintain an element of control in the face of their absolved responsibility by re-working policy parameters and maintaining personal accountability.

***Sharing responsibility:*** This example depicts how ethical policies at least partially absolved tourists from having to make certain ethical choices and decisions by enabling them to share their responsibility with the owners/managers of their accommodation. Maisie, in particular, had no qualms

about the ethical policy at her B&B in Blackpool and was “*overjoyed*” (M3\_R) to read how extensive it was<sup>6</sup>. She noted in her diary that “*no resolution was needed*” for any (un)ethical issues, as the owner’s attention to local and vegan foods, linen, water-usage, energy efficiency and recycling excused her from “*need[ing] to make ethical decisions because they are!*”. So long as she conformed to the policy, Maisie was very happy to relinquish her control and share her responsibility over the bigger ethical decisions, mainly on the grounds of scale; arguing that, if the guesthouse is “*abiding by this ethical policy every day then it makes a bigger impact than [her] doing it [herself]*” (M3\_R).

In the Reflective Phase, Maisie also spoke of how she spent some time with the owner discussing the environmental policy: “*she sort of said ‘there’s this folder and it’s just got’ – and she was pointing out all the normal touristy things – and I opened the page and saw this environmental policy document, and I was like, ‘oh look at this!’ [laughter]*”. Maisie animatedly relayed at length (in excess of 1000 words) the content of the policy to the researcher, after which the latter asked whether the owner of the B&B picked up on her excitement. Maisie believed that she did, leading her to juxtapose her own evaluation of the importance of the environmental policy to the (presumed) disinterested response of other tourists:

**Extract 5 (M3\_R):** I don’t know whether people were normally not that fussed, or whether people normally think, ‘oh well I’m on holiday so it doesn’t really matter’. I don’t know, I don’t know. But for me it does matter. And it made me feel a lot less guilty about using the resources that were there. So when I was in the whirlpool bath I thought, ‘oh, this

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<sup>6</sup> Maisie showed the researcher four photographs of the B&B’s environmental policy, capturing: (1) the environmental policy statement; (2-3) measures for promoting a “healthier, cleaner and more environmentally friendly ethos”, demarcated via the headings, recycle-reuse-refill, laundry, energy, water, breakfast; and (4) a list of local suppliers. The researcher purposefully chose not to include the four images in this thesis as they contained personal information of the B&B and its local traders.

is OK now because [laughter] I know she's only using up the water from the washing machine'.

It is clear from Extract 5 that Maisie joked how the presence of the ethical policy served to offset any behaviours which she would traditionally view as problematic. Maisie implied that the extent to which she was conscious of her ethics was consistent across her 'home' and 'away' environment, and that the ethical policy served to reduce her angst at having drawn on local resources. This occurred to the point where Maisie constructed the policy as a justification for excusing her (admittedly infrequent) participation in more resource-intensive activities. More specifically, she counterbalanced the negative impact of her activities (e.g. whirlpool path) with the positive savings that had been made by the B&B elsewhere (e.g. water-efficient washing machine). In this sense, Maisie happily apportioned some of her responsibility on to, or shared her responsibility with, the owner of the B&B; with the owner's environmental practices serving to compensate for or counteract against her (occasional) unethical actions.

*(Re)working policy parameters:* This example demonstrates how tourists' responsibility is only absolved to the extent to which the policy mirrors their personal ethical beliefs and standards; necessitating that tourists occasionally take responsibility for certain practices which fall outside of the policy's parameters. William believed that conforming to an ethical policy relaxed and/or de-pressured him from having to make broader ethical decisions, especially on his current holiday to a hostel/lodge in the Highlands. He justified this on his belief that the owner of the hostel/lodge would have superior knowledge pertaining to the most pertinent ethical issues affecting the environment in the Cairngorms: "You know, I kind of know that these people are... they're well

*aware of all these kind of, you know, environmental decisions” (W15\_P).* Nevertheless, earlier in the Prospective Phase, when discussing chain-hotels’ policies in general, William was quick to highlight that while they were “*reasonably good*”, there remained common areas of weakness. William declared:

**Extract 6 (W15\_P):** But no, I think, yeah, most hotels, I think they could probably do better on recycling. Like I often find in hotels they maybe just have one bin. And I’d often quite like a two bin system. Minimum [laughter]. Like, genuinely, a couple of times I’ve found myself having, you know, like a plastic bottle or something, and I won’t put it in the bin in my hotel room. And I’ll just, you know, stick it in my bag, and I’ll walk to wherever I’m going and when I see a recycling bin I’ll chuck it in there instead. Just because I don’t know where it’s going with the hotel. So I think that’s one thing that I’ve noticed as a rule with hotels they’re not very good at.

From William’s evaluation, it is clear that he often finds ethical policies to be lacking, necessitating him to take control and act on certain ethical issues (e.g. recycling) which fall outside of their remit and/or fail to meet his own ethical ideals (e.g. “*two bin system. Minimum*”). More specifically, William was prepared to collect and dispose of his plastic himself by seeking recycling facilities external to the hotel, given that he could not be sure of its policy on waste management. This demonstrates that tourists’ responsibility does not simply fall within, or become limited to, the ethical boundaries constructed by hotels. Tourists do not simply restrict their ethical conduct to the practices constituting an ethical policy, but, in some cases, (re)work these confines in order to conform to or better capture their own ethics.

***Maintaining personal accountability:*** The final finding is that tourists still attempted to maintain an element of personal accountability even in instances where they constructed their responsibility to have been (at least partly)

absolved. When considering the degree to which the ‘Green Guide’ at his hotel in the Seychelles absolved his responsibility, Josh initially claimed that it “*set the boundaries so as long as you behave within their boundaries you can do what you like*” (J12\_R). Immediately after this statement, however, he claimed that he still hoped he would have sufficient knowledge to self-determine appropriate parameters around his own conduct without being told the dos and don’ts by his hotel: “*I suppose I’d like to think I would know – without being told what the boundaries are – the rules. I’d like to think I would know what they were, so without having to be told about it*”. Giving an example of the information boards at his hotel, he stated:

**Extract 7 (J12\_R):** I don’t think in that respect then because they set the boundaries I felt like I could do what I wanted. I still felt a personal responsibility. Because it’s so much more tangible when it’s personal. You know, if you were to damage the coral yourself you would feel a personal guilt about it, so therefore you’ve got to set your own rules so that you don’t feel guilty about it. And, you know, you’d feel guilty because of for that reason rather than because you’d broke a governmental rule. But then I know those rules with swimming in the sea and coral and stuff.

This extract indicates that tourists not only problematise the limits of the code (like William), but also problematise the idea of needing a consumer-oriented policy to regulate their ethical activities and behaviours. Josh’s extract highlights the importance of “*personal guilt*” (e.g. Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; Chatzidakis, 2015; Newman and Trump, 2017), and how a sense of personal answerability is much more influential (to him) in reducing malpractice than an externally imposed rule of general best practice. What is most interesting is the way in which Josh refined his aforementioned initial views (e.g. “*as long as you behave within their boundaries you can do what you like*”) to better incorporate this

sense of personal culpability (“*I don’t think in that respect then because they set the boundaries I felt like I could do what I wanted. I still felt a personal responsibility*”). This fine-tuning of narrative serves to reinforce the complex and intricate ways in which tourists work to retain a sense of ownership over their ethical actions in instances where policies prescribe certain ways of being responsible (i.e. not breaking coral).

#### **4.3.2 Consumer Cynicism Towards Marketing Spin**

This subsection shows how participants were cynical towards ethical policies, constructing them as a form of marketing message or, more specifically, a form of ‘marketing spin’. This finding, therefore, provides empirical support for research depicting the link between consumer cynicism and consumer resistance towards “false” market discourses (Odou and de Pechpeyrou, 2011: 1805). Mikkonen et al (2014), for example, employed the Foucauldian constructs of ‘political struggle’ and ‘politics of self’ to highlight how, as a means of resisting the commercial constructions of Christmas, online consumers proposed an alternative ‘Scrooge’ subjectivity as part of a cynical identity project. In this thesis, however, consumer cynicism was less to do with resistance towards the (suggested) ethical tourist identity, and more to do with being cynical of the *substance* behind ethical policies. Participants were mindful that hotels, through their ethical policies, institutionalised their products and services as ethical, yet tourists remained uneasy as to whether these policies were truly reflective of the actual practices and ethos of the accommodation. Table 4.2 highlights examples of consumer cynicism across participants’ transcripts.

Barbara (B16_P)	<i>Interviewer:</i> Say the Hilton or another chain – would how you view that chain be different in terms of their ethics? Like I know some of them have an ethical code of conduct and they do all these things, would you believe into that [...]? <i>Barbara:</i> I don't believe it [laughter]. I don't because they're too big.
Connor (C8_R)	I think the situation enforces a kind of ecological approach [laughter] rather than it being all about impact on the environment. But I suppose the cynic in me sees it as well they can sell it to the tourists as 'this is minimising our impact on the environment and you're helping this place to be eco by doing all those things'. But actually there's probably no other way of running the place [laughter].
Josh (J12_P)	But yeah it seems to be this ubiquitous policy doesn't it, the towel policy in every hotel. And I think hotels think 'oh well we need to be good to the environment, right let's just do the towel policy that every other hotel does'. And then they've sort of washed their hands of it – 'right, job done, now we can, you know, turn the air con on full blast and not worry about it'.
William (W13_P)	...so I think as soon – from a big company – as soon as I see anything with the word environmental or responsibility in, my first immediate reaction is like 'ok, this is just a marketing thing'. And I would probably find myself looking into it a little bit more.
Sam (S15_R)	We sort of noticed all this sort of environmental policy with the first place we got to. And I think hotels have always had this appearance that they say 'oh if you don't want your towels washing, because we'll save the environment and things'. And I think 'well it saves them money as well' doesn't it? So I'm never convinced about that.

**Table 4.2** Consumer cynicism towards ethical policies and practices

As evidenced in Table 4.2, participants were cynical as to whether ethical codes and policies were merely a cost-cutting device (e.g. Sam), a pragmatic device (e.g. Connor), or a marketing device (e.g. William). This suggests that consumers are cognisant of several of the (non-ethical) reasons why hotels implement voluntary policies, namely financial gains (e.g. “*saves them money*” (Sam)) and the promotion of company image (“*ok, this is just a marketing thing*” (William)) (Ayuso, 2007). Barbara and William also constructed the size of the hotel or hotel chain as a discursive gauge for measuring the likelihood of

marketing spin, with both participants framing the policies of “big” or “bigger” hotels as more likely to be a form of ‘greenwashing’ (e.g. Ramus & Montiel, 2005; Smith & Font, 2013). From this, it is inferred that consumers have greater trust in the ethical policies of smaller, independent accommodation sites, however reasons supporting this assumption were not provided.

Josh went one step further than the other participants and suggested that ethical policies were introduced by hotels as a means of exonerating themselves from engaging in other unsustainable activities (e.g. “*turn the air con on full blast and not worry*” (J12\_P)). Hence, while the other participants’ cynicism stemmed from the belief that ethical codes were a business mechanism for securing increased institutional efficiency and profitability, Josh was conscious to the possibility that ethical codes were a conduit for strategic institutional deflection. This suggests that policies are sometimes viewed as a proxy for ethical action, again rendering the substance behind ethical policies as somewhat meaningless or insincere. Josh’s reflection here is particularly interesting because, despite his cynicism, he still thought the fact that his hotel placed a ‘Green Guide’ in each hotel-room was “*positive*” and “*a really handy thing, because it highlights something that most people would never even think about it*” (J12\_R). This offers an interesting caveat, in that while he considered the sustainably-driven motives (and subsequent ethical weight) behind policies to be wanting, he still viewed them to be an effective strategy for raising consumers’ ethical awareness.

The data also suggests that cynicism was not simply a post-hoc reaction to lived discrepancies between promoted and actual ethical practices, but, particularly in Connor’s case, a thematic thread across Prospective, Active and Reflective data.

In the Prospective Phase, Connor was attuned to the possibility that his eco-lodge in Peru would simply be named as sustainable accommodation (“*I’m guessing that’s just the name of the place*”) as a marketing ploy (e.g. Lansing & De Vries, 2007). Accordingly, when asked how he thought ethics would feature within his holiday, he envisaged that he wouldn’t fully know “*until [he] got there*” and saw how ethical his eco-lodge actually was. Here, Connor believed that he would be able to determine the degree of marketing spin by observing the extent to which the eco-lodge had the comfort and commodities offered by well-known corporate chains: “*If I get there and it’s kind of, you know, it’s like staying at the Hilton, I’m going to think ‘hmm, this isn’t what I expected’ [laughter]*”. This intimates that, to be recognised as valid ethical accommodation, eco-lodges need be free from luxury. Not only does this mirror Alex (Extract 1b), but is further supported by June, who tendered that eco-lodges require consumers to ‘go back to basics’ in order to truly minimise their environmental impact (e.g. “*managing without electricity*”, having “*no walls to the bedrooms*”, and “*[sleeping] with bats flying around*” (J14\_P)).

In the Active Phase, Connor’s diary entry indicates that – again like Alex (Extract 1b) – his initial cynicism was actualised:

**Extract 8 (C8\_A):** Stayed in two lodges - one deep in the jungle with no hot water or electricity (except for 2 hours a day to charge camera batteries, and a battery powered LED light in your bungalow etc.). The other lodge was in the town on the edge of the jungle so had all usual amenities. Ironically, the one in the town was called an ‘ecolodge’ (as were many others) but I don’t know why and didn’t ask what made it ‘eco’. I’d say the other one in the jungle was more eco.

Steering the Reflective interview, Connor opened discussion by relaying the general ethical features of his holiday, and, unprompted, evaluated the ethical



**Image 2** Ethical Policy at the first eco-lodge (C8\_A)

policies and practices of the two lodges he stayed at (Image 2). Connor stated that – even though it was ‘ironic’ that the lack of amenities made the first lodge appear more ethical than the actual eco-lodge – he was cynical as to whether these conditions “*were probably forced upon*” tourists as, due to limited resources, there was “*no other way of running the place*”. This shows that it is not merely ‘named’ ethical accommodation sites that are subjected to tourist cynicism (i.e. the eco-lodge), but also more conventional types of accommodation that actively adopt ethical policies (i.e. the first lodge). This

suggests that regardless of the strength and scope of the accommodation's ethical ethos, consumers can still be critical of, or resistant to, motives for policy implementation. That said, it does appear that the less hotels/lodges market their ethical policies and practices, the more receptive consumers are to any ethical measures and/or instances of good practice. This reveals an important practical application, as tourists may perceive too much communication on sustainable practice as indicative of marketing spin.

Nevertheless, despite his cynicism, Connor reflected that overall the first lodge's sustainable approach was "*fine*", as ultimately it "*allows you to enjoy the environment that you're in, otherwise what would you do, you know, you just fly in in a helicopter and fly out again the same day*". Firstly, this indicates that consumers are (at least in some cases) willing to 'go along' with the marketing spin as, in the long run, it serves a purpose ('environmental enjoyment') and is better than any other alternative ('flying in and out'). Secondly, and in relation to the above, it demonstrates how consumers seek to repair a largely pejorative evaluation by seeking (at least) one positive appeal. Like Josh – and his recognition that ethical policies, regardless of spin, do raise consumer awareness – Connor commended the way in which the first lodge, as first and foremost a form of accommodation, enabled tourists to stay in the jungle for an extended period of time.

#### **4.3.3 (Non)Enforcement of the Code**

This third subsection shows how the perceived presence of marketing spin was largely influenced by the extent to which policies and codes were seen to be

enforced. With the exception of Barbara, this occurred almost exclusively in relation to towel policies. Cvelbar et al's study (2017) investigated which guests re-use their towels – and thereby conform to environmental policies – in order for hotels to segment tourists based on their ecological footprint. The findings of this thesis, however, suggest that it is the market's lack of enforcement, rather than the tourists' (dis)obedience, that is problematic. The following examples demonstrate how participants problematised non-enforcement; problematised the extent to which they could establish (non)enforcement; and problematised the subsequent need to trust that policies would be enforced.

***Problematising non-enforcement:*** This thesis found that several tourists experienced significant tension when hotels flouted, or failed to enforce, their ethical policies; with tourists recounting their angst at the incongruities between the sustainable activities/measures propounded and those implemented in practice. In the Prospective Phase, Sophie (for instance) communicated the irritation she experiences when she conforms to the hotel's towel policy, but the hotel itself doesn't:

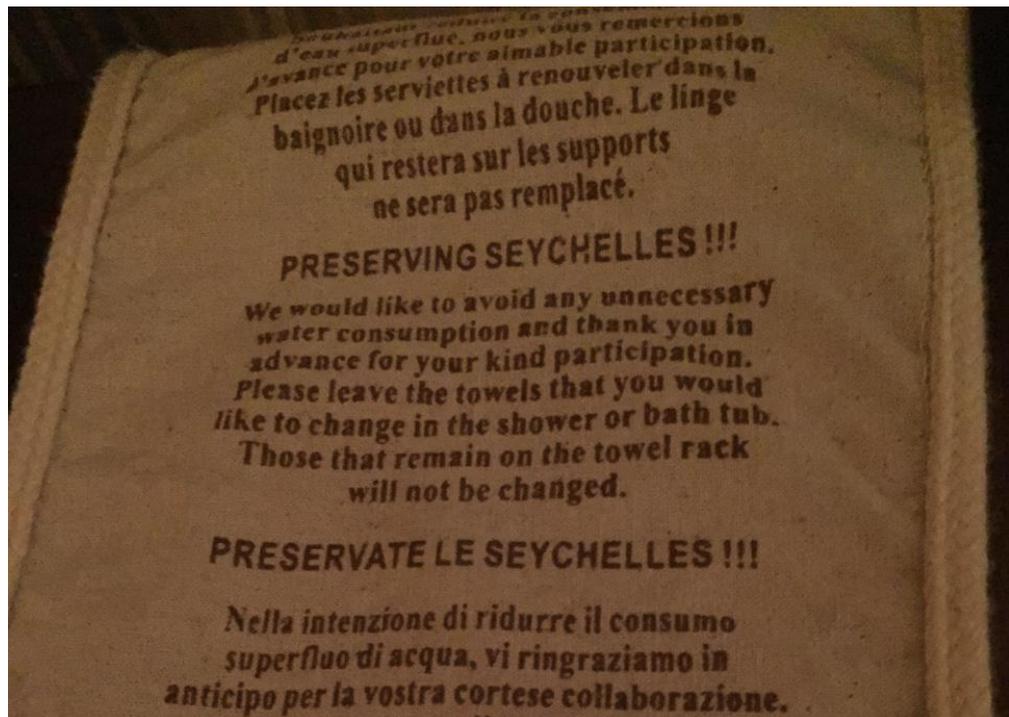
**Extract 9 (S11\_P):**

- Sophie: It annoys me actually if they don't do it. If there's a sign there and it says hang your towel up or put it in the bath, and you hang your towel up and then you realise that actually they've just been changed. And so that, I find that really annoying actually, because I think 'I've sort of done what you've asked me to do, but then you've not actually done what you said you're going to do'. I find that really annoying
- Interviewer: Have you found that quite common?
- Sophie: No, not hugely common. But a few places I've been to I have noticed it happen. And I do think it's really silly. Because it feels very token in that respect.

It is clear that when hotels renege on their (advertised) ethical practices they are confirming to Sophie the lack of substance behind their sustainable policies. Firstly, this renders the policy (to her) a weak gesture (“*very token*”) as opposed to a dedicated attempt to conserve water usage. Secondly, and more significantly, she becomes aggrieved by the imbalance of commitment between herself and her hotel; with Sophie being disgruntled when she fulfils her ethical duty by saving her towel, only to find that the hotel has provided new ones.

***Problematising the establishment of (non)enforcement:*** Less commonly, tourists expressed tension concerning the degree to which they could observe or ascertain whether ethical policies had been implemented by their hotel. Josh typified this position, again giving the example of hotels’ towel policies. Like Sophie, Josh’s anxiety stemmed from him constructing the policy as a form of “*lip-service*”, but also extended to cover the difficulty he experienced in establishing whether or not his towel had actually been changed. When specifically asked how his concerns regarding non-enforcement made him feel, Josh was highly reflexive (548 words) over the towel policy at his hotel in the Seychelles (Image 3), as evidenced in the (shorter) extract below:

**Extract 10 (J12\_R):** You sometimes feel like they’re just paying lip-service to it. So they give you this instruction to, you know, chuck your towels in the bath if you want them replaced, and when they flagrantly ignore it you kind of think ‘well what’s the point? You’re actually creating more work for yourself by replacing the towels when it really isn’t necessary’. And I think sometimes they kind of... they almost behave in the way that they think you want them to behave if that makes sense? And they think ‘oh no, guests will definitely want to have fresh towels every day because I mean how could they possibly re-use their towels’, when actually I would imagine most guests wouldn’t care one way or the other, or wouldn’t even notice. And so sometimes I think the hotels behave in a way that they think they want you to behave rather than behaving in a way that is actually sensible. But I don’t know, they may not have replaced them, they may have just have folded them up



**Image 3** The ‘ubiquitous’ towel policy (J12\_A)

properly and put them back. I don’t know. But when they’re much fresher and drier than when you left them it does arouse your suspicions. And the thing is, even... it’s not just leaving them in... if you leave them anywhere near the bath they disappear. So I remember one time I actually hung mine over the bath, and maybe that was my error, you know, because that’s, you know, it’s making it quite ambiguous for them isn’t it? Because they think ‘is this in the bath, or not in the bath?’. So they take the default position of replacing it, because if you replace it then the guests could never get angry if you replace it. Whereas if you don’t and they had wanted you to they’re likely to moan about it. So perhaps you need to make it patently clear that ‘no, I’m going to keep my towel thank you very much’ by leaving it somewhere else.

As evidenced in Extract 10, Josh provided a potential justification as to why hotels flout their own ethical policies by suggesting that they are responding to (perceived) consumer expectations for a certain level of service. Here, Josh problematised the way in which hotels assume that, for consumers to adopt the subject position of ‘guest’, and thereby receive a luxurious service (i.e. “*fresh towel every day*”), there has to be at least an element of trade-off with their

subject position of ‘ethical tourist’ (an individual who would “*re-use their towels*”). The fact that Josh believes that most tourists, such as himself, neither need nor demand this service intimates that he is cognisant to a degree of disconnect between perceived and actual consumer demand. In addition, it is particularly interesting that Josh also gave a practical logic to justify why hotels should not change towels (i.e. “*creating more work*”). It appears that consumers are happy to project or ascribe pragmatic rationales as to why hotels should abide by an ethical code, but that they are cynical when they perceive hotels (themselves) to be implementing policies solely on pragmatic grounds (see 4.3.2).

Josh also proffered a practical implication, reflecting how tourists’ anxiety, and hotels’ uncertainty, could be lessened by modifying the way in which towel policies are designed and enacted. Recalling how – after leaving towels in and around the bath at his hotel in the Seychelles – he occasionally found it difficult to ascertain whether they had been changed or simply folded, he concluded that a different set of instructions was needed. He posited that, not only would this ensure that the process was more clear-cut for both parties, but further enable tourists to better establish whether the policy had been enforced. This reflection intimates that tourists do not only conduct repair work as a means of smoothing over and/or fixing their own personal ethical practices, but also the practices of others, in this case, housekeeping at hotels.

***Problematising the need for trust:*** Finally, given the difficulties in establishing the (non)enforcement of ethical policies and practices, there was an instance where the need for ‘trust’ was highlighted. In the Prospective Phase, Barbara was asked how easy it was to find out whether something had been ethically

sourced, to which she responded that consumers could only ever “*trust*” that service providers were conforming to their ethical policies. She made the general acknowledgement that trust was particularly important in relation to vegan foods:

**Extract 11 (B16\_P):** But [laughter] you do have to trust, because you can go to people and say, you know, ‘I’m vegan, have you got any sausage or anything?’ – ‘oh yeah, yeah, it’s vegan, this sausage is vegan’ – and then you think ‘is it? I didn’t know that that brand made vegan’, and you find out it’s not, because people haven’t read it properly or something like that. So you do have to have an element of trust. But what I find interesting is that you can investigate something, and they’re saying ‘oh we’re ethical, and we’ve done this and we’ve done that’, and then you might go in another way – round the back way, perhaps through another... just somebody like, not Trip Advisor because I don’t really believe a lot of stuff that’s on there... but a really profound source – and you can go into that and they’ll say ‘yes, but they’re doing this’. And you think ‘hmm, that’s not as ethical as I thought’. And that would make me feel uncomfortable.

Barbara was attuned to the relations of power that exist between service providers and consumers, in that the service provider has control over which (un)ethical products are (or are not) served, in this case at restaurants. Barbara was aware that she could try to “*investigate*” the ethicality of certain products or businesses from multiple “*ways*” in, yet it appears that the conditions of her ethical agency are heavily restricted to and impacted by the limits of the information available to her. Put simply, she is reliant on the availability of external sources of information to corroborate or contradict the ethical claims of a restaurateur (e.g. linking to Strong’s notion of the (1996) ‘well informed’ ethical consumer). This suggests that Barbara’s responsibility aligns with Henry’s (2010: 678) ‘capabilities-approach liberal’, in that it appears her sovereignty as an ethical consumer is constrained by her limited knowledge.

#### **4.3.4 Summary of Evaluating and Responding to Ethical Policies**

Section 4.3 expounded the power struggles that exist between the responsible tourist and the tourism market in relation to ethical policies. First it showed how tourists problematised the way in which ethical policies sometimes served to absolve consumers from a sense of responsibility. In some cases, this was welcomed – allowing Maisie to share her responsibility with her B&B owner – while in others it incited tourists to (re)work the externally imposed parameters of the policy and maintain a sense of personal accountability (4.3.1).

Secondly, it revealed how consumers were cynical towards ethical policies, with participants problematising the way in which they came across as a form of marketing spin (4.3.2). Here, participants tended only to critique (non)ethical motives for implementation, with no further responses or resolutions apparent.

Thirdly, it illuminated how consumers problematised the (non)enforcement of policies, the difficulties in establishing (non)enforcement, and the consequent need to trust in enforcement (4.3.3). It was at this point where practical implications are most evident, in that it emphasised the need for hotels (and other types of accommodation) to not only implement – but be seen implementing – their ethical policies. This would not only make it significantly easier for tourists to establish enforcement, but likely go some way in reducing the aforementioned constructions of marketing spin.

#### **4.4 Evaluating and Responding to Market Materials**

This smaller section considers consumers' constructions of rhetoric within a third type of market-consumer interface, market materials – particularly guidebooks. Luh Sin (2017: 230) concludes that guidebooks:

“...have a potentially large role to play in regulating ideas of responsibility and irresponsibility within the tourism context. Unlike other forms of consumption where consumers can easily choose to ignore ethical consumption campaign materials, the dominance of tourists seeking out information from travel guidebooks or Internet sources prior to their travel suggests that these are in a unique position to set the expectations and agendas of tourists and can become key resources in instructing potential tourists on the dos and don'ts of how to behave when on vacation”.

The above notion that guidebooks are a significant material upon which consumers draw to increase their travel knowledge is concordant with the findings of this thesis. Nearly all of the tourists had read guidebooks prior to their current or previous holidays, the most common (if not sole) guidebook being the *Lonely Planet* (51 references). However, the extent to which guidebooks served to regulate consumers' ethical “expectations and agendas” (Luh Sin, 2017: 230) was minimal. This section shows how a mixed set of positive and negative evaluations impelled tourists to corroborate content with non-market materials (4.4.1), as well as how a general lack of information pertaining to responsible tourism further resulted in a call for more information on ethics (4.4.2).

##### **4.4.1 Corroborating and Complementing Market Materials**

As demonstrated in Table 4.3, participants' positive and negative evaluations of guidebooks predominantly centred on the notions of ‘timeliness’ and ‘accuracy’.

Positive	Negative
<b>Timeliness</b>	
<p><b>June (J14_P):</b> It's easy to read. It's not too much information. And it seems to be quite up to date and useful information that I get from that.</p>	<p><b>Barbara (B16_P):</b> And I'd got all these vegetarian restaurants written down from the Lonely Planet, and when I get there they're closed. Do you know what I mean, they haven't been open for years and things like that. So that is very disappointing. And that is... especially when that's all you eat. It's not like I can go 'oh ok, let's go and have a burger or something'</p>
	<p><b>Edward (E2_R):</b> But again the difficulty they have is that the books are published and they only come out so often and things change very quickly.</p>
	<p><b>Sophie (S11_P):</b> Maybe places are just too over-publicised, so they become too touristy and you don't get maybe that authenticity as you would have got maybe when the book was written.</p>
<b>Accuracy</b>	
<p><b>Sam (S15_P):</b> ...wherever we've been – we've found certainly the Lonely Planet series as being honest and straightforward.</p>	<p><b>Barbara (B16_P):</b> I would look at like Rough Guide or Lonely Planet. I don't always believe Lonely Planets. I just think they're so romanticised.</p>
<p><b>William (W13_P):</b> So it's all been fairly accurate. [...] it's written by individual people, so Lonely Planet, they don't really have a vested interest in the place I guess. So it's not in their interest to make stuff up</p>	<p><b>Edward (E2_P):</b> I mean it's always what they say always sounds fairly straight forward. But again, some of it if you do go some obscure places it is very difficult, it is very different, you know? And the Lonely Planet, as good as it used to be – I don't know if it's still</p>

Cont'd

Positive	Negative
<p>to make people go there. It's all genuine kind of honest reviews from people, and honest advice.</p>	<p>published – but they do make sort of sweeping statements about how to do this, that and the other. But if you do go to some of the really off-beaten tracks it isn't quite as easy as maybe they made out, or it isn't quite as they've said it. So it is difficult.</p>
	<p><b>Josh (J12_P):</b> Lonely Planet does get on my nerves sometimes. Because sometimes I think they paint a picture of somewhere being quite a romantic... or romanticising a place, and showing you how harmonious you can live with nature and all this sort of thing. And then you turn up and, you know, you find that there's a load of rubbish in the place that you're staying. You know, and that they're chopping trees down left, right and centre. And then they serve you, you know, fast-food burgers and chips and it's like... and you think "well that's not what it says in the Lonely Planet" [...]. And I know the Lonely Planet can only, only gives a snapshot of things, because they've probably only been to this place once. But sometimes I think they do overegg the cultural side of things, and you turn up somewhere and you're quite underwhelmed. And you sort of think they're just hamming somewhere up. Just because I think, sometimes I think the Lonely Planet has become almost a caricature of itself, in that they try and write things that they think people want to read.</p>

**Table 4.3** Positive and negative constructions of guidebooks' 'timeliness' and 'accuracy'

Overall, participants' responses to guidebooks were mixed, with the perceived 'timeliness' of content ranging from "*up to date*" (June) to promoting businesses which haven't been "*open for years*" (Barbara), and the 'accuracy' varying from "*honest*" (Sam; William) representations to "*romanticised*" (Barbara; Josh) and "*sweeping statements*" (Edward). This occasional disparity between marketing communications and lived experiences sporadically led to problematisations regarding consumer agency; with Barbara, for example, recounting how the outdated restaurant listings left her unable to source vegetarian food, something which (to her) was especially ethically problematic when that's "*all you eat*" and you are unable to opt for an alternative ("*It's not like I can go 'oh ok, let's go and have a burger or something'*").

Therefore, in an attempt to corroborate or substantiate market materials, tourists frequently resolved to draw on non-market materials such as government websites, the internet in general, and consumer-to-consumer sites such as Trip Advisor. As with guidebooks, the reaction to Trip Advisor (and similar websites) was again equally mixed, with some finding it "*much more helpful*" (Alex) because fellow tourists have "*gone out there, and they've experienced it*" (Lina), while others highlighted the importance of taking reviews with a "*pinch of salt*" (Connor; Freddie; Sophie) given that they are subject to "*personal opinion*" (Maria).

#### **4.4.2 Critiquing the Lack of Ethical Information**

Caruana and Crane (2008) demonstrate how responsibletravel.com constructs certain (ir)responsible identity positions for tourists; Caruana and Crane (2011)

suggests that the same website proffers certain ‘ways of seeing’ and ‘doing’ over others in a way which demarcates “important limits” (pp.1507-08) around consumers’ freedom to (dis)engage with certain practices and subjectivities; and Hanna (2013) employs the Foucauldian constructs of ‘power’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘ethics’ to demonstrate how responsibletravel.com invites consumers to ‘experiment with subjectivity’. While it is unsurprising that such ‘ways of seeing’ and ‘doing’ are found within responsibletravel.com – given that it is considered an “exemplar company from which to gain an insight into the promotion of sustainable tourism” (Hanna, 2013: 369) – the data of this project finds that the promotion of ethical practices and subjectivities does not typically transfer to guidebooks and/or other forms of marketing from travel companies. This is perhaps surprising, given that Lisle (2008: 155) argues that the *Lonely Planet* guidebook particularly advocates “a form of responsible independent travel”.

Although Alex claimed that such guidebooks do “*tell you like ‘here’s the right thing to do’. Like ‘here’s the way to interact with that country’*”, and Maisie suggested that “*there are little sections in the front like ‘how to go’, ‘how to dress’ and that*”, participants predominantly tended to problematise the lack of information pertaining to ethics (Table 4.4). On the one hand, Giovanna emphasised that there should be more information equipping tourists with the knowledge against which they can make their own choices pertaining to the types of (ir)responsible *activities* they do or do not engage in (i.e. “*at least the guidebook should give you a hint of where to go, and then you decide*”). On the other hand, Connor suggested that having more information would provide a bigger overview of environmental and socio-cultural “*issues*” of a destination,

Anne (A10_P)	I mean to be honest though the guidebooks are kind of limited in that respect – in terms of how you behave. I mean they’ll give you an idea, but I tend to go on the internet and look things up as well. I don’t just rely on guidebooks for things like that.
Connor (C8_P)	[Guidebooks] often don’t have much information about the ethics or responsible tourism of the places that you’re going to.
Giovanna (G1_R)	Giovanna: To be honest, the guidebook never mentioned those places where we actually been to and we experienced that issue with... the responsible tourist issue. So that wasn’t a problem for the guidebook [laughter] Interviewer: Yeah [laughter]. So the responsible tourism very much came from you rather than the guide? Ok [laughter] Giovanna: Yes. Which is not a great thing, because at least the guidebook should give you a hint of where to go, and then you decide, and then you do some extra research.
Mabel (M7_P)	Travel companies very rarely tell you what you should do and what you shouldn’t do. There’s a lot of assumptions that people will behave [...]. But as a tourist, I found very few guidelines on how to behave. It’s really about where to eat in restaurants, and where we’re going to take you, and where you’ve got to take the photographs.
Maisie (M3_R)	I don’t think ethical tourism is promoted enough. I think that it’s, it’s kind of aimed at, the ethical tourism is aimed at kind of hippies, and tree-huggers and new-age people. And people who have got quite a lot of money, who can afford to live in a super, massive house with solar power [laughter], which seems a bit, you know, weird. But I don’t think there’s enough, at all, about the little ethical steps that regular people can make. And I don’t think people are aware of the ethical choices that they could make. I think people think that ethics is, like ethical tourism is for rich people that can go and trek Nepal for six months every year, and go and live in the Andes for their six weeks, and...
Maria (M9_P)	I don’t buy travel guides for example. I don’t believe in that. That doesn’t tell me anything about the culture of the country really. It tells me what is the most trendy places to go. But for me not necessarily it represents the country.

**Table 4.4** Problematizing the lack of ethical information in guidebooks and/or market materials

better informing his responsible tourism “*approach*” and “*opinions*”. When asked what he reads to inform his understanding, Connor answered guidebooks,

but immediately noted that they were lacking in ethical information, impeding a proper understanding of the country:

**Extract 12 (C8\_P):** But I suppose... I think, for me, gaining an understanding of the culture and the issues facing that area that you're visiting, that informs my own development of a responsible tourism, you know, approach if you like. So, if I have an understanding of what are the particularly environmental issues, socio-cultural issues in that area, understanding what... how the people live, you know, what are the potential... what's the economic situation like, you know, that sort of thing, that's what then I form my opinions.

Following from Connor's extract, it appears that having more information on environmental and socio-cultural issues would be particularly useful, and important, when visiting destinations that are culturally-disparate to the tourist's home country. For instance, when discussing guidebooks in the Prospective Phase, Anne recalled how her holidays to Mexico and Egypt required much more information than her trip to America, "*because it's very different*". She rationalised:

**Extract 13 (A10\_P):**

Anne: Like we went to Egypt a few years ago and I was very aware that I didn't want to offend anybody. So we read up a lot about what was acceptable clothing and things like that. So no, we do. If we're going to a culture that we don't know very well we do do a lot more research. But I did quite a bit more of research in Mexico than I did for America, I think

Interviewer: Yeah?

Anne: Yeah, because it's a very different. Although America is a very different culture you've got an idea, much more of an idea of what it is like. But Mexico is quite unknown to us, so we did do much more research about where it was safe to travel as well. And the food, and that kind of thing as well. So we want to know everything really, as much as possible I think. You know, part of being looking after ourselves as much as anything else

Anne wanted to know as much as she could (“*as much as possible I think*”) both as a means of ensuring that her conduct was culturally-sensitive toward others (“*I didn’t want to offend anybody*”) and protecting herself in an unfamiliar destination (“*looking after ourselves as much as anything else*”). Although Anne did have sufficient information, if, in similar situations, other tourists faced ambiguities surrounding what is ethical, a lack of information and guidance represents a serious issue. As evidenced by Anne, this issue is significant in terms of outer-oriented reasons – i.e. abiding by best practice (e.g. wearing “*acceptable clothing*”) – and inner-oriented reasons, such as staying “*safe*”. More specifically, this finding is of extreme practical importance, as it suggests that guidebooks need to contain more information pertaining to how to be and act in different cultures and environments both in order to respect the host and safeguard the tourist.

It is also noted that this practical implication is especially significant given McWha et al’s (2017) recent work into the ethical dilemmas faced by contemporary travel writers. McWha et al (2017) conclude that travel writers “actively aim to contribute to sustainability outcomes through their work in travel writing” (p.15); namely through ‘cultural mediation’, striking a balance between ‘fact versus fiction’, and attempting to diminish the ‘Lonely Planet Syndrome’ (defined as “where a destination that may not have the capacity (or desire) for tourism is faced with a mass increase of visitation” (p.1)). While the current (in)effectiveness of these strategies directly links to the positive and negative perceptions relayed throughout section 4.4 – i.e. ‘cultural mediation’ (“*here’s the way to interact with that country*” (Alex)); ‘fact versus fiction’ (“*fairly accurate*” (William), “*romanticising*” (Josh)); ‘Lonely Planet

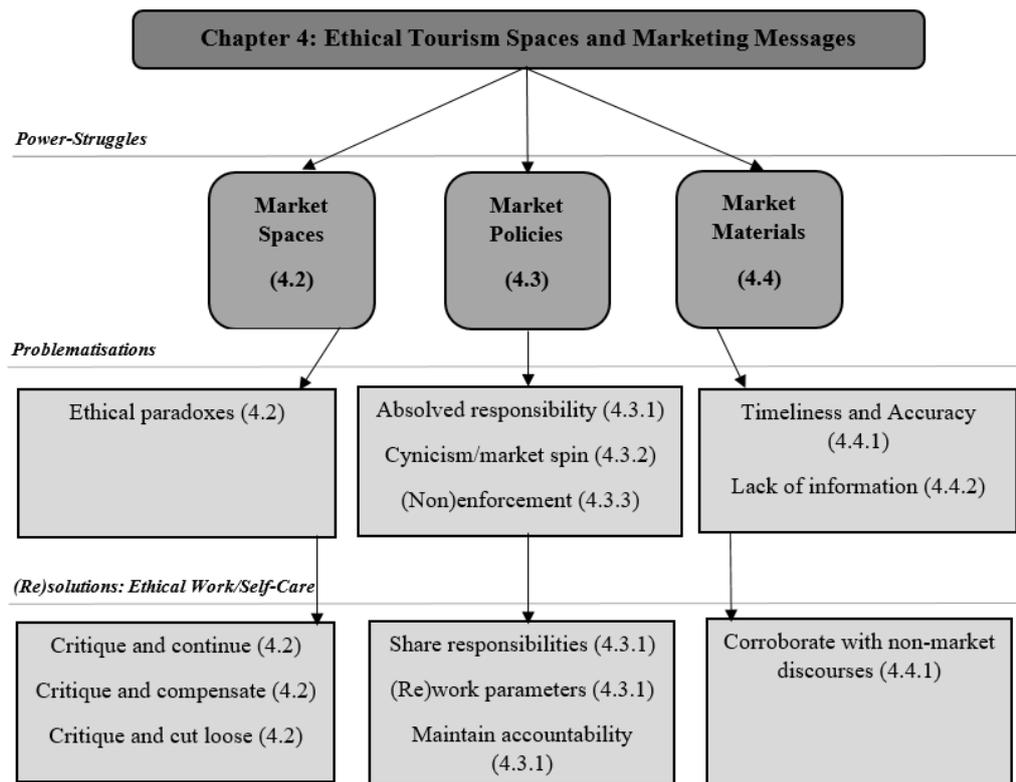
Syndrome’ (“*too over-publicised, so they become too touristy*” (Sophie)) – it is evident that contemporary sustainable travel writing would benefit from having more information on ethical issues.

#### **4.4.3 Summary of Evaluating and Responding to Market Materials**

The comparatively smaller section of 4.4. has served to highlight the power struggles consumers experience when reading market materials. While market materials, most particularly guidebooks, are constructed as useful for providing a general overview regarding the sites and sights (e.g. Hollinshead, 1999) of a destination, consumers problematised their timeliness, accuracy, and general lack of ethical content. Consumers thus resolved to corroborate their (market-constructed) ‘knowledge’ with non-market discourses. Moreover, approximately one third of tourists also underlined the need for more information pertaining to the ethical tourist subject position, suggesting that more material is currently required for consumers to fully experiment with their subjectivity (e.g. Hanna, 2013).

#### **4.5 Conclusion of Chapter**

This chapter has demonstrated how agency can be represented in terms of tourists’ critical awareness of ethical rhetoric within three types of market-consumer interface: market spaces (4.2), market policies (4.3) and market materials (4.4). Throughout the chapter, it is clear that market rhetoric serves to induce both dissonance (Hindley & Font, 2017) and disaffection, leading tourists to resolve or repair their angst in a multitude of ways. Figure 4.1 serves to



**Figure 4.1** Visual summary of key findings from Chapter 4

encapsulate the main findings of this chapter by extracting and interrelating the key power struggles, problematisations, and subsequent practices of ethical work and self-care (see also Appendix 8).

Section 4.2 presented the ways in which consumers responded to paradoxes within ethical market sites, either by continuing, discontinuing or compensating for their participation. An understanding of the ethical tensions experienced when participating in these sites is of significant practical importance, as it stresses the need for such spaces to be better designed (e.g. Alex's eco-lodge; Maisie's excursion) and managed (e.g. Sophie and Josh's conservation project) in order to more strongly meet and reflect consumers' ethical ideals. Drawing

on Swarbrooke (1999: 218), this will assist in the provision of market products in spaces which are both “more sustainable in nature” and concurrently move away from those “which are intrinsically not sustainable”.

Section 4.3 portrayed how consumers recounted limits (or conditions) around the extent to which ethical policies absolved their responsibility; with participants (re)working the parameters of policies, or indeed questioning the need for policies as a means of retaining personal accountability. Consumers also highlighted their cynicism towards corporate motives for implementation as well as concerns regarding non-enforcement. This suggests that, in order for policies to have the greatest effect, market actors need to be seen to be actively enforcing their voluntary mechanisms in order to candidly demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and reduce any perceptions of marketing spin.

Lastly, Section 4.4. showed that consumers draw on market materials prior to travel yet often critique these texts on the grounds of timeliness and accuracy. While consumers do attempt to substantiate market texts with non-market discourses, it is important to note that participants have called for more information on ethical issues, particularly in guidebooks.

The next chapter considers another aspect of the market-consumer interface by examining consumers’ practices of resistance. It evidences how consumers attempt to maximise their ethical agency by minimising their participation in the organised tourism market.

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### *Resistance Practices*

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#### **5.1 Introduction to Chapter**

While research indicates that tourists are “signposted” (Hollinshead, 1999:11) towards certain sites, or herded toward specific tourism stages (Edensor, 2000; 2001), little is known about how *tourists* construct their freedom to contest or deviate from the tourism spaces designed and managed by the tourism industry. Although research has spotlighted the ways in which tourists prefer to get a more authentic experience off the beaten track (Noy, 2004), there remains an opening for research to consider how this specifically manifests as a form of resistance to organised tourism.

This chapter examines how consumers’ agency is represented through their (varying degrees of) resistance towards three main areas of the tourism industry: big businesses, such as chain hotels and international franchises (5.2), the tourism ‘package’ (5.3), and tourist ‘hotspots’ (5.4). Throughout this chapter, it becomes clear that the strength and scope of tourists’ resistance practices are heavily influenced by certain ‘conditions of freedom’ (e.g. Crane et al, 2008), with participants’ resistance to the tourism industry being impacted by a host of considerations at the personal, product and destination level.

Section 5.2 focusses on tourists’ resistance to big business, showing how resistance occurs as both a practice of subversion (5.2.1) and as a practice of self-care (5.2.2). Section 5.3 attends to tourists’ resistance to the package holiday

and package tour, highlighting how consumers attempt to maintain a sense of control over their tourism experience by re-working (5.3.1) or evading (5.3.2) the tourism package. Lastly, section 5.4 considers the tensions associated with establishing what constitutes a mainstream activity, alongside whether or not it is more ethical to constrain their impact to an (already) high-impact hotspot.

As in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 ends with a visual breakdown of how the above findings can be viewed in terms of the three theoretical constructs (Figure 5.1); with Appendix 8 – rows 4-6 – again detailing instances of each construct by section and subsection.

## **5.2 Resistance to Big Business: Corporate Avoidance**

One of the most commonly cited power struggles pertained to the relationship between tourists and the corporations operating within the tourism industry. While all participants mentioned the importance of ‘going local’, the majority of the sample specifically emphasised its significance in relation to avoiding large, multinational organisations (Table 5.1). For instance, rather than staying at a chain-hotel, or eating at an international franchise, participants much preferred frequenting local businesses and contributing directly to the economy of the holiday destination.

This section highlights the two main rationales for avoiding large corporations. The first rationale, resistance as a practice of subverting big business (5.2.1), encapsulates instances where participants problematised the profit-driven motives of large corporations, stated their preference for supporting specific

	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Anne	And so we'll be using local produce. We'll buy food in the local shops. <b>We'll go to local restaurants and cafes. We don't go to McDonalds.</b> [...] you know, helping the local economy [...]. And going to the local museums or gardens or whatever.	(e.g.) ...drove to a local pub in Bishop Tawton (The Chichester Arms). Had locally sourced sea bass.	And I chose... like I sort of... it's nice to have locally sourced stuff, and I will try and do that as much as I can. So, so I did sort of bear that in mind. And I... <b>we don't tend to go to chain stores or chain, you know, like McDonalds</b> or anything like that.
Connor	So I always look into, you know, what the local cuisines are. And we try and go to a couple of really nice restaurants while we're somewhere, but we also try and eat like the local food if you like. You know, we like to go a bit off the beaten track and find ourselves somewhere where there's no other westerners. And that's not because of any, you know, necessarily ethical or responsible motives that's just because I think I get a better experience if I do that.	Good opportunity to eat, drink & buy local.	I think it did happen how I would have liked it to actually [...]. <b>We only ate in local restaurants. You know, we didn't go to any international or chain restaurants.</b> [...] Yeah, so I think, you know, having all that local stuff did give us a better experience.
Edward	...you bring trade to the locality rather than to <b>agents that then just squirrel it back</b> to the original country... their country of origin if you like.	Arrived OK at La Rochelle, checked into hotel ( <b>French chain</b> ) and walked around the Port.	<i>Interviewer:</i> you also mentioned that you'd like to contribute money to the local economy, so I wondered if anything came up between staying in the chain and maybe a local B&B, or something like that? <i>Edward:</i> We didn't have a choice. Our friends had booked it already and they like living relatively luxurious lifestyles. They also have a dog and there's not... they have to be very

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	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Edward			choosy as to what hotels take dogs. So this particular chain they do take dogs. And that had something to do with it. <b>But it was a French chain [laughter]. And it was very nice.</b>
Freddie	Try and deal with the local population and buy from individuals <b>rather than it goes through larger, international type organisations</b> . So, it's dealing with more local people rather than a big national corporate, I think, yeah.	Fresh fish at the local restaurants was very good. The restaurant we had chosen tonight was owned by an English lady who set it up about 15 years ago.	I think she was probably vegetarian as well, because the menu was very good. It's a shame we only went there once. But unfortunately, it's indoors, so it's a bit like, you know, it can be 26-28 degrees outside and then you go into a cooker. [...] But the food was so good.
Giovanna	<b>So I want to avoid chains as much as I can</b> . Well actually I would rather not eat there [laughter]... go to a chain because I don't think it's the purpose of my holiday. It's not to go to McDonalds [laughter], but it's to eat whatever the sea or the fields are offering in Spain [...] So local bed and breakfasts. Also again in the <b>perspective of giving money to the local people, to the locals and none to chains</b> .	Hotels: <b>local businesses, but one night in a chain in a big city</b> . Decision made because it offered better services at cheaper price-choosing local businesses is sometimes difficult when you perceive that the pleasure of your stay might be compromised by low quality of service.	But with regard to cities – and big towns in general – we had to compromise because the <b>local businesses were not as good as the chains unfortunately</b> . They were all just one-star hotels. And sometimes you need to... compromise [laughter]. We wanted some quality as well, and so we had to decide to go to chains. Which are still not big chains – so international – they're still locals, so Spanish, but they were definitely not [laughter] run by locals that's for sure.
Lina	In the sense that I would go to a <b>local restaurant over a chain</b> because I want to experience the culture.	<b>I hardly visited any commercial/chain stores</b> which was good as I felt like I was helping the community by buying food or jewellery from locals.	Actually most of the holiday I spent like most of the time buying from like locals. <b>And buying from the stalls instead of going to – because they have a shopping mall, like H&amp;M, Zara and stuff like that</b> – but I was like I get all this

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	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Lina			in the UK, so I might as well, you know, look for like the local sellers. Which is nice, it was nice to see like... Well I hope the money goes to them, or the majority of it at least.
Maisie	And it means that also if you try to <b>support local businesses as well, and local economy, rather than just going somewhere really commercialised and where it's all sort of Spa foods and sort of big posh chains of hotels</b> that have got like hotels in every town type of thing. I wouldn't go to anything like that. I'd rather go to somewhere sort of locally run and locally maintained...	But happy days! (see pics). This B&B – all food is organic and locally sourced if possible.	And it felt so good to be in that, so when it came back to choosing to eat the cooked vegan breakfast, it was like 'well I know I'm helping, like if somebody's giving their... selling their eggs to this lady, or their tomatoes or whatever, and I'm eating that, then I know it's only coming down the road and it's somebody's kind of local business'.
Maria	If you buy a package, most of the money is going to stay in the company so it's not going to go to the destination. <b>If you stay in a hotel, it's an international chain, so what is the percentage of local employment that the hotel has</b> , or what type of investment in local business has?	<i>No diary provided</i>	<b>So we didn't go for chain hotel</b> , so group hotel. We just choose small accommodations. So we arrive in the evening and then we just look around, 'okay, this looks like a family owned business', and this is how we chose the accommodation. Yes because I like more contributing to local economy.
Sam	Try and shop and go to <b>cafes and things that are more independent from chains</b> . But that's not – it makes it sound very honourable – but...	<b>Ate at an independent restaurant in the evening, rather than a chain</b> . Even though McD's and Nando's were far more available and would	<b>And we were determined not to just go to KFC or a McDonalds</b> . So we ended up going in this pub really. And it was almost like a Toby Carvery, but it wasn't a carvery it was just this... and it was empty because it was like Sunday

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	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Sam		have been easier/cheaper to go to!	evening. And the food was really horrible. And we thought... 'we just could have gone across the road and just had a burger' [...] at least you go into McDonalds or KFC and you get exactly what you're going to get here.
William	I always try and make sustainable decisions when I'm travelling. So, you know, that involves things like avoiding, you know, <b>avoiding chain based shops. Avoiding the really big tour operators</b> , because obviously they're naturally entwined with, you know, chains – including hotels or food or whatever – they're entwined with all those kind of things, which are often less sustainable than the local alternatives.	...much locally sourced (or even home-grown) produce	

**Table 5.1** Resistance to big business (corporate avoidance) at the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases of the responsible tourist experience

local traders, and engaged in positive buying from smaller businesses. The second rationale, resistance as a practice of self-care (5.2.2), captures the more inner-oriented motivations for subversion; with participants resisting the homogeneity of the corporate scene in order to get a more authentic experience and live like a local.

While in the Prospective Phase ten of the sixteen participants constructed corporate avoidance as an important part of their approach to responsible tourism, the Active data highlights how in reality tourists occasionally deviated and tapped into the corporate scene (see Table 5.1). This section thus ends with a discussion of how participants reflected on their deviations, as well as the numerous factors that they constructed as impeding or inhibiting their ethical agency to completely avoid big business (5.2.3).

### **5.2.1 Resistance as a Practice of Subverting Big Business**

One rationale for avoiding the corporate scene (i.e. chain-hotels, franchise restaurants and mainstream tour-operators) was to subvert large organisations. A key justification here was comparative size, with participants indicating that the relative smallness of local businesses warranted greater tourist spending than at the “*big*” (Freddie), “*big and posh*” (Maisie), “*really big*” (William), “*huge*” (Lina) companies that are “*really commercialised*” (Maisie). This mirrors the findings of Valor et al’s (2017) Foucauldian study of power in the ‘consumer resistance movement’, in which ethical individuals ‘blamed the managerial elites’ and criticised the socio-economic impact of large multinational corporations (e.g. “If I buy from Ikea, it’s not going to benefit the local

economy and I don't know who will benefit from it'" (Valor et al, 2017: 76)). This section provides five extracts of data to show how subverting big business occurred for three main reasons: to thwart their pecuniary motives; to demonstrate an ethic of care towards local suppliers; and to engage in positive buying from small businesses.

***Subverting pecuniary motives:*** A key reason for avoiding big business was to subvert the pecuniary motivations of large corporations. Edward and Freddie were particularly forward in challenging the profit-driven motives of international businesses operating within their holiday destinations of France and Lanzarote. As evidenced in the extracts below, both participants described this as a key tenet of being a responsible tourist when asked what responsible tourism meant to them in the Prospective Phase:

**Extract 14 (E2\_P):** I suppose my idea of responsible tourism is basically when you go to another country you respect the rules and the regulations that are associated with that place. And that, you know, you... whenever you... when you bring trade to it, as you already said, you bring trade to the locality rather than to agents that then just squirrel it back to the original country... their country of origin if you like.

**Extract 15 (F6\_P):** It means to me that you, I think as much as possible, try and deal with the local population and buy from individuals rather than it goes through larger, international type organisations. So it's dealing with more local people rather than a big national corporate, I think, yeah.

It is clear that Edward and Freddie limited the scope of their economic interactions to the physical exchange of money. This suggests that tourists' constructions of 'responsibility' do not always fully mirror the depictions found in tour operators' websites; with Caruana and Crane (2008: 1507) showing that the responsible tourist is constructed as an individual whose economic

relationships extend to the employee-centred considerations of high/low “pay” and “job security”. Edward and Freddie appear to assume that frequenting small businesses is sufficient in fulfilling their responsibility, silencing (or unknowing to) the possibility that large corporations may offer better salaries and/or benefits to local employees than the potentially exploitative local enterprises. Moreover, it is also significant that neither participant provided specific examples of instances informing their assumption that large corporations divest money from the local economy, nor did they make any exceptions or allowances to their (supposed) generalisation. This fails to account, therefore, for large tourism companies that do invest in host destinations and/or engage in other CSR practices (e.g. de Grosbois, 2012; Martinez et al, 2014).

It is also interesting that Edward and Freddie – a management consultant and financial advisor (see Table 3.4) – both employed business terminology within their narratives (“*trade with*”; “*deal with*”) to describe their economic interactions in the destination visited. Given their professions, it could be argued that this is indicative of how participants’ ‘home’ identity may, at least partially, conflate with or influence tourists’ ethical practices on holiday. More specifically, linking to Bennett (2006), the above excerpts demonstrate how tourists’ ethical consumerism can be situated in, or affected by, their broader ‘life politics’, including their familial relationships, recreational enjoyments or, as in this case, occupation. It is possible that Edward and Freddie’s daily ‘performance roles’ (Holzer, 2006) as businessmen predispose them to model their guest-host interaction on their professional agent-client relationships in their ‘complementary role’ (ibid) as tourists.

*Subverting as an ethic of care*: Subverting big business also arose as a means of demonstrating an ethics of care towards locals. This occurred almost exclusively (if not solely) in relation to the female participants, who wanted to ensure that they were “*helping*” (Anne; Lina), “*giving*” (Giovanna) and “*contributing*” (Lina; Maria) to the local people. Here, subverting big business was constructed as important as it enabled consumers to directly target their ethicality towards specific individuals and/or groups of their choosing. For example, Maria reflected that she “*didn’t go for a chain hotel*” in Oviedo (Spain), and instead “*just look[ed] around [and said] ‘okay, this looks like a family owned business’*” in order “*just to contribute economically*” to a family-run enterprise (M9\_R). Similarly, Lina also reported in the Reflective Phase that she was happy to have personally assisted street-market vendors in Marrakech to “*get by*”, rather than spend her money in chain-stores where her “*input probably will never make a difference*”. She claimed that her assistance was particularly “*nice to see*”, and “*one thing [she] felt good about*”, as Marrakech appeared to her “*as a bit of a poor city. In the sense that like everyone’s kind of struggling and trying to like make a living for themselves*”. To this end, Lina’s case serves to particularly mirror the findings of Shaw et al (2017: 14), in that for her the “*needs of the other are balanced and often embedded with care for the self*”. More specifically, by subverting big business, and assisting those who she felt most needed her support, Lina was able to transform into an ethical tourist in a way which made her feel “*good*”.



**Image 4** Traditional vineyard visit in the north of Spain (G1\_A)

For Giovanna, the decision to subvert big business revolved around the resulting “*message*” that her custom conveyed to local business. In the Reflective Phase, Giovanna recalled how, rather than engaging in “*touristic experiences run by big companies*”, she opted to visit a small, traditional winery in the north of Spain (Image 4). Once there, she made a conscious decision to buy more wine than she perhaps would have done in recompense for a non-existent entrance fee. When prompted by the researcher to expand on the reasoning for this, Giovanna responded:

**Extract 16 (G1\_R):** And also because it’s really nice when you can make a difference – ok, no, you can’t make a difference, because it’s not that extra bottle of wine that’s going to save their business. But it sends a message. It sends a message to them that says there are people like us around, so be open to it. And be open to the possibility that things can be better. And you will probably be able to compete even better in the future. [...] So just telling them ‘your wine is good, I’m buying even more than I should, thank you so much for the visit, it has been beautiful’ maybe it might give them some sort of help to their business. They think about more visits and to sell wine somewhere else – I don’t know – it’s probably just inside my head. But I really hope that made some sort of difference.

It is clear that Giovanna was attuned to the parameters bounding the scope of her agency to actually make a tangible impact (e.g. “*it’s not that extra bottle of wine that’s going to save their business*”). Nonetheless, Giovanna recognised that although her one-time purchase was not financially significant, the social meaning tacit within her purchase of the ‘extra bottle’ was powerful. Interestingly, Giovanna also adopted a business mindset, yet while Edward and Freddie used business terminology to describe their own economic interaction (‘trade’; ‘deal’), she deployed it to show how her “*message*” could encourage local businesses to engage in economic interactions with others (“*compete even better*”; “*think about more visits*”; “*sell wine somewhere else*”). In this sense, Giovanna positioned herself as a stimulus for enhancing the viability of the local business, in that she envisaged her purchase to spark a butterfly-effect. She provided *reasons* as to how her transaction may benefit the local winery in the future – even if they were “*just inside [her] head*” – rather than merely assuming that a contribution would be made immediately, simply as a result of subverting larger wine-tasting tourist attractions.

***Subverting as positive buying:*** The third, less common, reason for subverting big business was to engage in a form of positive buying. Shaw et al (2006) claim that consumers are increasingly making consumption choices (i.e. ‘buycotts’ or ‘boycotts’) based on business practices, particularly the way in which goods and services are produced. William epitomised this position, explicitly constructing his subversion based on his assumption that big tour operators and chain-based businesses have a smaller capacity to engage in sustainable decision-making; asserting that “*just by necessity to produce money, they have to make decisions that aren’t necessarily as ethical*” (W13\_P). In the Prospective Phase, William

was asked how he would describe his identity as a responsible tourist, to which he replied:

**Extract 17a (W13\_P):** I always try and make sustainable decisions when I'm travelling. So, you know, that involves things like avoiding, you know, avoiding chain based shops. Avoiding the really big tour operators, because obviously they're naturally entwined with, you know, chains – including hotels or food or whatever – they're entwined with all those kind of things, which are often less sustainable than the local alternatives.

He also continued this argumentation later in the Prospective interview when the researcher encouraged him to expand on what influenced his decision to avoid chains:

**Extract 17b (W13\_P):** I mean part of the reasons that I would go with a smaller tour operator anyway is just because I think a lot of the things are far more within their control. And they have the ability to go to more local hotels and more local food places, and I think, you know, they can build these better relationships. Whereas a big tour operator, just because of the sheer number of people going through them, they have to go to the big venues. And that often means that they also have to go to chainy kind of venues and big global brands. But no, I think if they were genuinely trying to, you know, make things more local, then I would certainly consider it, yeah definitely.

From the above two extracts, it is clear that William's rationale is comparable to him casting his 'consumer vote' (Dickinson & Carsky, 2005). He actively boycotted bigger tour operators ("*avoiding the really big tour operators*") who work with more mainstream hotels and restaurants ("*chainy kind of venues and big global brands*") on the grounds that their offerings are "*less sustainable than the local alternatives*". William preferred to seek out smaller tour operators who he perceived to have more "*control*" over who they work with, better enabling him to frequent "*local hotels*" and "*local food places*". In this sense, while it is William's sustainable decision to engage in positive buying, it is the effect

stemming from his decision – i.e. the resultant (inter)actions of and between the smaller tour operator and local businesses – that he viewed as inciting ethical practice (i.e. “*better relationships*”). Here it is noted that, although William (unlike the others) did provide justifications for why he equates “*chainy*” with unsustainable (i.e. due to economies of scale), what he constitutes as a “*better relationship*” remains silenced.

### **5.2.2 Resistance as a Practice of Self-Care**

A second rationale for resisting big business was to care for the self. In these instances, tourists problematised certain features characteristic of large organisations as well as the way in which these served to negatively impact upon their tourism experience. Tourists highlighted how, in actively avoiding these aspects, they could not only enhance their experience but better fulfil their subject position as a responsible tourist. To this end, this section depicts how participants problematised the homogeneous services offered by large corporations, specifically chain-hotels. It shows how tourists constructed chain-hotels as offering a standardised tourism product across multiple destinations, prompting tourists to resist the corporate scene in order to get a more authentic insight into the ‘real’ country or region visited. In this regard, chain-hotels were very much constructed as an ‘enclavic space’ (Edensor, 2000), a tourism stage with “‘Western’ standards (air-conditioning, cleanliness, deference, decor, ‘quality control’ of commodities)” (p.328), organised in such a way as to “provide a self-contained environment” (p.329). The section also shows how resistance to the corporate scene enabled tourists to ‘live like a local’, in that, by

visiting local restaurants (for example), they got a better insight into what life was really like for the host population. This section also shows, however, that resisting the corporate scene was not without its problems, as opting for a local alternative occasionally meant that tourists compromised on quality of service.

***Resisting the homogenous:*** One technique of self-care involved tourists resisting the homogeneity of chain-hotels in order to get a more authentic experience. Central to this finding was the notion that chain-hotels essentially provided the same or similar service and aesthetic across culturally-diverse destinations, resulting in a lack of differentiation across holidays. Given this homogeneity, Mabel and Freddie, in particular, were keen to avoid chain-hotels and instead stay at smaller, independent accommodation. The first of the two extracts, Extract 18, arose when Freddie was discussing his wife's preference for chain-hotels; he claimed, while still "nice" hotels, for him the level of consistency meant that he could be "*staying anywhere in the world*". The second, Extract 19, comes from Mabel, who discussed how the homogeneity of hotels influenced her decision to travel independently on a previous holiday to India:

**Extract 18 (F6\_P):** And unfortunately, a lot of these nice hotels they can be anywhere in the world actually can't they? You can, you know, whether they're in Vietnam, or in Japan, or anywhere, you know, Hong Kong, there are these just they're in a location. [...] It's a nice location wherever it is, so it's an experience that people want to go to. But I think such an individual – if you want to seek out something more ethical – you just want to escape from that mass market appeal and do something yourself.

**Extract 19 (M7\_P):** And there's lots of travel companies go to India, and they put people up in five-star hotels, and if you stay in a Hilton in Delhi it's the same as the Hilton in Timbuktu – you know, it's just that standard which people expect to have been looked after and having clean showers, and everything. But I wanted to experience the real India [...].

So my friend and I travelled independently [...]. We booked accommodation in people's homes and in cheap boutique type hotels.

It is interesting that both Mabel and Freddie followed the same pattern in their narratives, underlining: the standardisation of chain hotels across locations; how *other* tourists “*want*” (Freddie) or “*expect*” (Mabel) such consistency; and how they themselves, as more ethical individuals, wanted to disengage from the corporate scene by travelling independently. Mabel was particularly mocking of the sanitised experience that mass tourists demand, claiming that while others wish to be well cared for (“*looked after*”), and have access to facilities (“*clean showers*”), she wanted to experience the “*real*” destination. This links back to the finding – expressed throughout Chapter 4 – that for accommodation to be constructed as ethical, it has to be free from luxury (see 4.2) and/or provide only the most basic of amenities (4.3.2).

Extending this line of thought further, Mabel – following straight on from Extract 19 – went on to state that she was especially proud that she was prepared to “*put up with conditions that some people wouldn't put up with here [such as] rats on the floor [and] street food*”. It appears, therefore, that Mabel's sense of satisfaction from resisting homogenous chain-hotels not only arose from her resultant authentic home-stay experience, but also from how this authenticity enabled her to construct herself as a more committed and hardy tourist (i.e. “*put up with conditions*”). It allowed her to constitute herself as a resilient ethical traveller who, unlike more mainstream tourists, was prepared to forgo a certain standard of service in order to get a ‘true’ experience of India as opposed to a ‘five-star’, ‘Hilton’ experience.

***Living like a local:*** A second, and somewhat inter-related, technique of self-care involved tourists resisting big business in order to ‘live like a local’. Tourists highlighted how visiting local businesses over chains enabled them to experience “*what the locals get up to*” (F6\_P) and “*what it’s like to actually live in that place*” (M3\_P). While some participants, such as Giovanna, announced their intentions to denounce their ‘tourist’ identity – e.g. “*It’s almost like I don’t want to be seen as the tourist, and I almost want to blend in [laughter]*” (G1\_P) – the majority attempted to ‘localise’ (Muzaini, 2006). As with Muzaini’s (2006) backpackers in Southeast Asia, the participants adopted ‘spatial tactics of localisation’, most typically in regard to the sourcing and tasting of local cuisine (i.e. “the strategy of consuming local” (p.149)).

For example, following from a discussion regarding his willingness to draw on the Lonely Planet, Sam commented in the Reflective Phase how he also particularly valued personal recommendations from locals:

**Extract 20a (S15\_R):** And I think that personal recommendation from either somebody like at a tourist info place, or a local saying ‘oh yeah, have you been to so and so’ is almost more powerful than reading about it in a Lonely Planet guide. And so we followed those up.

This assertion directly stimulated a lengthy (approximately 630 word) recollection of how he and his wife had a “*brilliant*” experience after following the recommendations of their B&B owner in New Zealand and dining at a “*really ordinary sounding restaurant in like a small precinct in a housing estate you’d never go*” rather than a big business such as McDonalds:

**Extract 20b (S15\_R):** But it was so well-done, it was like obviously all locals but in a really friendly atmosphere. And that’s the sort of thing that I think you don’t get if you don’t try and sort of interact with the people. Because [B&B owner] said you can sort of go into the main town and there’s all the, you know, usual thing – but he said if you want

somewhere a bit different go to this place. And when we got there we were like ‘ah this is ace’, you know. It was just... it felt really good to do that. We didn’t feel as though, you know, ‘oh look here come the tourists’ sort of thing [...]. Now I’m sure that everybody who goes to his B&B he recommends them to go there and all that sort of stuff. So we don’t think it’s some kind of unique experience. But I think, when you just step outside of that sort of, you know, off the main drag if you like, you do feel as though you’re doing something a bit more... yeah, there’s a bit more integrity to what you’re doing, rather than just sort of soaking up the tourist dollar. And it’s not feeling some smugness about all this. It’s not what I’m trying to say. It’s just that it’s more of a fun thing to do. And it’s more memorable. You know, if you go into McDonalds – anywhere – it’s exactly the same. And how unmemorable is that? Whereas we went to this nothing restaurant probably to the locals – ‘oh yeah, we go over there every night, big deal, why are you making...?’ – whereas to us it was memorable, because it was that – to us – unique and different.

Sam felt that his experience had more “*integrity*”, as he and his wife had distanced themselves from familiar franchise restaurants (the “*usual thing*” on the “*main drag*”) and eaten somewhere where locals would dine (“*go over there every night*”). It is apparent that Sam’s narrative presents a paradox, however, in that while his “consuming local strategy” (Muzaini, 2006: 149) made him feel like he wasn’t a typical tourist, he was equally astute to the probability that the B&B owner frequently signposted his guests to the restaurant. Hence, while Sam constructed his local experience as being “*unique and different*” to *him* – in that it was distinct from the typical McDonalds experience – he was also discerning of the fact that his experience perhaps wasn’t unique from that of *other* holidaymakers. It is also interesting that Sam explicitly sought to protect his identity by claiming that his decision not to ‘soak the tourist dollar’ was neither conceited nor borne from “*smugness*”. He made sure to actively assure the interviewer that his decision to frequent local restaurants was purely based on

the resulting enjoyment (i.e. “*more of a fun thing to do*”) as opposed to any potential self-righteousness.

At this point, however, it is noted that the consistency with which participants attempted to ‘localise’ occasionally induced tensions. Again, using Sam as an example to more easily highlight divergences in narrative, it is evident that, in avoiding the corporate scene, tourists sometimes compromised (or sacrificed) an enjoyable experience. Searching for somewhere to eat the day after he dined at the local restaurant (Extract 20b), Sam recorded in his diary how, although McDonalds was open, they purposefully avoided it and chose another local business, something which they regretted:

**Extract 20c (S15\_A):** Found it hard to find somewhere decent to eat in Rotorua - it’s Sunday and lots of places are closed - but of course McD etc is open - but in order to avoid their clutches went to a bit of a dive and couldn’t help thinking longingly about having a Big Mac.

Using Extract 20c as a prompt, the researcher joked with Sam in the Reflective Phase about how it was because he and his wife had *conformed* to their initial desire to “*go to cafes and things that are more independent from chains*” (S15\_P) that, in reality, induced tension (“*couldn’t help thinking longingly about having a Big Mac*”). Elaborating on the ‘dive’ further, Sam soon started to recount the benefits of eating at franchises such as McDonalds:

**Extract 20d (S15\_R):**

Sam: ...the food was really horrible. And we thought... ‘we just could have gone across the road and just had a burger’. And I suppose it wasn’t because we were... I think we would have done that anyway. It wasn’t because we were doing this. It was just we’d made a bad choice, whereas at least you go into McDonalds or KFC and you get

exactly what you're going to get here. Because that's what...

Interviewer: Literally what it says on the bucket [laughter]

Sam: Yeah. Yeah. A bucket of fried crap. But that was just, yeah, that was just something that where we thought 'yeah actually we would have been better off going in there because we'd have got standardised food'. And there was just nowhere else open. But, you know, you can guarantee these places are always open twenty-four seven practically so...

While in Extract 20b Sam criticised all chain restaurants for being “*exactly the same*” – providing a foil for the benefits of his “*unique*” experience – in Extract 20d he conflictingly welcomed the advantages of international fast-food outlets, namely: (i) standardisation across the types of food/menu offered, with Sam jokingly asserting that “*you get exactly what you're going to get here. [...] a bucket of fried crap*”; and (ii) consistent opening hours, recognising that “*these places are always open twenty-four seven practically*”. In many ways, Extract 20d mirrors the findings of Thompson and Arsel's (2004: 635) anti-corporate experiences of glocalisation, wherein although consumers deemed Starbucks – in comparison to local coffee shops – to be a “relatively banal culture space, catering to an equally bland corporate clientele”, their censure was “tempered by an appreciation for Starbucks' high level of quality of service and the comfort offered by its familiar settings”. Overall, Sam's case serves to exemplify how responsible tourists are attuned to the personal gains of tapping into the corporate scene in certain situations or contexts while resisting it in others. Here, it is especially clear that the availability (see 6.4.1) of *good* local alternatives to global franchises plays a significant role in determining the extent to which tourists do – and want – to actually ‘live like a local’.

### 5.2.3 Reflecting on Deviations

This subsection shows how, as evidenced in Table 5.1, tourists' intentions to avoid the corporate scene in the Prospective Phase did not always translate into practice in the Active Phase. This demonstrates that tourists' constructions of what constitutes 'ideal' ethics does not always correspond to actual actions and behaviours on holiday, with tourists often having to make compromises between what they want and are able to achieve. As the pragmatic factors influencing tourists' deviations are discussed at length in the following chapter (Chapter 6), this subsection predominantly focusses on the act of deviation. The subsection starts by providing examples of how tourists reflected, rationalised and/or resolved cases of major deviation, and ends by proffering a more minor example of how inconsistencies occurred across tourists' narratives.

**Major deviations:** One of the most common major deviations when attempting to resist big business occurred in relation to accommodation. This was the case for Edward and Giovanna. In the Prospective Phase, Edward broadly stated that responsible tourism meant that you "*bring trade to the locality*" (see Extract 14), while Giovanna was more specific in her assertion that she wanted to stay at "*local bed and breakfasts*" in order to 'give money' to the locals and "*none to chains*". Nevertheless, when on holiday, both participants reported in their diary that they had stayed in chain-hotels. Here, Edward simply recorded his stay ("*checked into hotel (French chain)*"), while Giovanna wrote a justification ("*better services at cheaper price*") as to why she had deviated ("*choosing local businesses is sometimes difficult*"). Extracts 21 and 22a depict Edward and Giovanna's post-hoc rationalisations for staying at chain-hotels: Extract 21 arose when the researcher questioned Edward as to why he had selected a chain-hotel

over a local B&B in La Rochelle; and Extract 22a emerged when the researcher asked Giovanna whether she had managed to stay at local accommodation throughout her road-trip around northern Spain. It is particularly interesting to note that both participants deployed a concession and counter argument in their post-hoc rationalisations:

**Extract 21 (E2\_R):** We didn't have a choice. Our friends had booked it already and they like living relatively luxurious lifestyles. They also have a dog and there's not... they have to be very choosy as to what hotels take dogs. So this particular chain they do take dogs. And that had something to do with it. But it was a French chain [laughter]. And it was very nice.

**Extract 22a (G1\_R):** But with regard to cities – and big towns in general – we had to compromise because the local businesses were not as good as the chains unfortunately. They were all just one-star hotels. And sometimes you need to... compromise [laughter]. We wanted some quality as well, and so we had to decide to go to chains. Which are still not big chains – so international – they're still locals, so Spanish, but they were definitely not [laughter] run by locals that's for sure. But the quality of it was much better and the price was lower so...

Both participants conceded that they were unable to stay in anything other than a chain-hotel. It is clear that Edward absolved himself at the decision-making stage, claiming that he and his partner lacked any control (“*didn't have a choice*”) over the booking of accommodation as this was done by friends who required specific facilities (‘dog friendly’) and a certain standard of service (“*luxurious*”). Giovanna, on the other hand, felt that she had to consider the availability, price and quality of local accommodation – which were “*one-star hotels*” – in relation to her personal enjoyment (i.e. a “*pleasurable*” experience). In both cases, it is evident that their freedom to be ‘responsible’ was impeded by an interplay of external and internal considerations, as they had to compromise on their ethical ideals in order to balance (macro) infrastructural

availability (i.e. dog friendly/high-end hotels) and their (micro) desires (i.e. luxury/quality). It is further apparent that Giovanna and Edward justified this compromise on the grounds that their chosen hotels belonged to French and Spanish chains respectively. This implies that the participants attempted to smooth over their perceived irresponsible practice by finding caveats to their ethical views on the corporate scene. More specifically, Edward and Giovanna relaxed their negative evaluations of chain-hotels by making a distinction between international (i.e. “big”) and national organisations (i.e. “*but it was a French chain*”; “*still locals, so Spanish*”).

It is perhaps due to this caveat that neither Edward nor Giovanna explicitly reported any anxiety over their deviation in their diaries. However, it is interesting to note that, when Giovanna was specifically asked in the Reflective Phase as to whether her deviation was a source of ethical tension, she affirmed that it was. The following extract demonstrates how Giovanna’s deviation elicited feelings of retrospective dissonance:

**Extract 22b (G1\_R):** It is some sort of a tension. And it’s one of those decisions that, yes, I had to make because of the price and because of the quality. I haven’t felt that bad while doing it, also because we’ve always done it in a rush. Because we were booking the hotel two or three hours before checking in, so there was also this rush for find a place where to sleep. But I felt that tension after, when I thought ‘hmm, maybe I should have looked for a local bed and breakfast – it would have been better’. But then when you are in the city, and you have a walk around, you realise that it is difficult. Because big cities are organised, and being organised also means that you can’t let a small business have just few rooms, for example, you need more rooms to welcome all the tourists [laughter]. So, yes, I felt a bit bad, but not so bad because it happened just when there wasn’t much of a choice. In all the other situations it was almost natural for us to go to a local business.

Giovanna elaborated on the destination-level impedances recounted in Extract 22a – namely the lack of good-quality local accommodation – by rationalising

that, because little independent hotels are less commercially viable, there are fewer to choose from in large cities than in the outskirts. Given this pretext, Giovanna, while still feeling that she could have tried harder (“*hmm, maybe I should have looked for a local bed and breakfast...*”), felt that she could justify her diminished self-reproach (“*I felt a bit bad, but not so bad*”). Moreover, it is also worth noting that, when asked if she would like to add any final thoughts or comments at the end of her Reflective interview, Giovanna was particularly keen to highlight that she “*did enjoy local foods – never been to chains*”, to the point where if “*[they] couldn’t find a place, [they] didn’t have lunch*”. This could be seen as an attempt to excuse her previous deviation (Extracts 22a and 22b) by reinforcing the extent to which she normally aimed to adhere to her ethical ideals when and where the situation allowed. Here, it is evident that product/service type is a huge determinant, in that when faced with a lack of local restaurants (an ‘ancillary service’ (McCabe, 2009)), Giovanna actively chose to miss a meal; yet, when faced with a lack of local accommodation (a ‘principal service’ (ibid.)), Giovanna had to opt for the only alternative, a chain-hotel.

***Minor deviations:*** In addition to the more noticeable deviations, a triangulation of the Prospective, Active and Reflective data also revealed more minor instances of divergence or inconsistency between participants’ projections and actions. As a typical example – and as shown previously through Extract 15 – Freddie projected that responsible tourism meant trying to “*deal with the local population and buy from individuals rather than [money go] through larger, international type organisations*”. Nonetheless, while in Lanzarote, he wrote that the restaurant they “*had chosen tonight was owned by an English lady who set it up about 15 years ago*”. This suggests that responsible tourists have the

freedom to define what is and is not classed as a local ‘object’ or ‘subject’. It appears that, in Freddie’s case, ‘local population’ was synonymous with any individual trading in the locality whom was spatially distinct from the corporate scene. One could argue that, although the ‘English lady’ was a long-term resident of Lanzarote, and an actor within the local economy, she was not a native member of the local population. It might be that expatriates (such as the ‘English lady’) transfer money between their place of business (Lanzarote) and place of birth (England) in the same way that money “*goes through larger, international type organisations*” (Extract 15). However, for Freddie, the (potentially) comparable actions between individuals and multinationals appeared to be conceptually distinct, silenced, unimportant, or unthought of.

#### **5.2.4 Summary of Resistance to Big Business**

This section has offered two overarching rationales as to why responsible tourists demonstrate resistance toward big business by avoiding the corporate scene. Firstly, 5.2.1 provided evidence to support how resistance was an act of subversion. It showed how, for the businessmen of the sample, certain aspects of their ‘life politics’ (Bennett, 2006) – namely occupation – at least partly influenced how they constructed their economic relationship with the host. It spotlighted how these participants deployed business terminology to express how they preferred to negotiate with local businesses, enabling them to redirect their money from profit-driven, multinationals to smaller organisations. In contrast, the female participants appeared to subvert big business primarily as an ethics of care; extending their relationship with the host to not only target specific individuals whom they deemed to be in most need of their financial

assistance (e.g. Lina; Maria), but also those who they thought would benefit from their moral support (e.g. Giovanna). Lastly it depicted how one tourist constructed his subversion as a form of ‘boycott’ (Shaw et al, 2006). In this sense, while the other participants constructed the locus of responsibility as residing with the individual – i.e. in terms of it was *their* action of giving money to certain businesses/traders over others that was the ethical act – William at least partially constructed the locus of ethics with the smaller organisations. More specifically, he targeted smaller businesses who (he presumed) had greater capacity for ethical activities and decision-making.

Subsection 5.2.2 demonstrated how resistance was also an act of self-care. It not only depicted how tourists problematised the homogeneity of the corporate scene, but – mirroring the findings of Chapter 4 – emphasised how the more ‘luxurious’ aspects of chain-hotels (for example) were particularly constructed as problematic. Here, luxury appeared to be incongruent to authenticity – at least in certain destinations (e.g. Mabel, India) – with the more resilient responsible tourists wanting to avoid the cossets of large hotels in order to see the ‘real’ destination. It also spotlighted how tourists adopted ‘spatial tactics of localisation’ (Muzaini, 2006) as a means of mirroring host practice, particularly with regard to local cuisine. Nevertheless, it illustrated how frequenting local business occasionally induced tensions, with the admission that the standardisation and consistency of service rendered chain businesses a better option in certain situations and contexts.

Finally, subsection 5.2.3 demarcated several major and minor deviations between participants’ intentions to resist the corporate scene and their actual

behaviour on holiday. A key finding here was that tourists often have to compromise their ethical ideals in light of: (i) micro considerations, such as other motivations for travel (e.g. enjoyment; luxury), and (ii) macro considerations, such as the availability of (good) local alternatives.

### **5.3 Resistance to the Tourism Package**

A second power struggle pertained to the dynamics between the responsible tourist and the package holiday or package tour. On the whole, participants generally constructed this type of tourism ‘package’ as constraining their “*freedom of choice*” (M9\_P). This occurred to the point where purchasing a package induced tensions over the ethicality of specific product features, and/or a sense of anxiety over tourists’ lack of autonomy to engage in certain ethical practices.

This section outlines the ways in which tourists exhibited their resistance towards the tourism package in one of two ways. First, it focusses on two examples of how tourists sought to repair their loss of autonomy by re-working certain boundaries of the tourism package and incorporating what they believed to be more ethical practices (5.3.1). This occurred both in regard to how tourists *actually* re-worked their tourism package, as well as how, given the chance, they would have *liked* to re-work it.

Second, it spotlights the narratives of another two participants to show examples of how tourists chose either to evade certain *parts* of their tourism package, or evade it in its *entirety* (5.3.2). This subsection also provides a brief overview of the two destination-level considerations that were constructed as key

justifications for *not* evading the tourism package: the safety of the visited country or region and socio-cultural unfamiliarity.

### 5.3.1 Re-working the Tourism Package

One strategy of resistance was to (re)work the boundaries imposed by the tourism package; with participants engaging in certain activities to compensate for their lack of control over their holiday agenda. This is comparable with Lee et al's (2009) notion of 'ideological incompatibility' as a precursor of moral (brand) avoidance, in that, although tourists did not specifically *avoid* the tourism package, they did attempt to (re)work certain elements of it due to incongruities between market and personal constructions (or ideologies) of what constitutes responsible practice.

Again recalling her previous holiday to Turkey, Maisie observed that there were certain implicit 'guidelines' that tourists were expected to oblige while travelling with a holiday company, and how in fulfilling her role as a 'package tourist', she felt disempowered. Extract 23a shows how Maisie particularly struggled over the idea that she was expected to buy additional excursions through her holiday company rather than seek out and purchase them from Turkish businesses. She felt that this prevented any form of interaction with locals, something which she constructed as a chief tenet of her role as a responsible tourist. In the Reflective Phase, she was asked how her (unwilling) dependence on the tour operator led her to stretch the boundaries of her tourism package, to which she responded:

**Extract 23a (M3\_R):** ...there's also something else in there about your perception of how you're expected to behave as a tourist. Like, for example, when you go to a holiday if you're with a holiday company,

they're going to take care of you as your client, or whatever the word is [laughter]. And but there's also an expectation that you will trust them, and it's seen as almost a little bit deviant that you might try and organise your own tour [...]. And I kept saying 'yeah, but why don't we...what about that company over the road? Look there's a little guy there and he's got a, whatever, a boat or some fruit or something' [laughter]. [... But for previous partner] there was an expectation that when you go on holiday, you give your power to the company – and your money – and you pay for an experience and they give it to you, and that's great, and that's your holiday experience. It's like no, no, no – that doesn't work like that for me. I resent giving my money to a tour guide, I want to sort it out myself [laughter]. Because I want to feel responsible for myself. And I want that interaction with somebody local. And if somebody's organising it for you, then that isn't there. And to me that's a big part of, of being ethical, is the responsibility that I feel myself being able to have, and also there how much control I've got in the outcome of that, you know [...]. So then, if you like, the repairing that I did was when we got in them situations then I would try and take control [Interviewer: To re-work the situations?] yeah, yeah, yeah. But it was, I felt like I was doing quite minimal compared to what I'd wanted to do. I felt like I was doing really the minimum and so I just tried to make the most of that, and I learnt as much Turkish as I could in two weeks [laughter].

It is clear that Maisie refuted the typical principal-agent relationship between herself and the travel company, and, more specifically, contested her corresponding subject position as "*client*". Maisie largely constructed her responsibility at the individual level, and believed that it was *her* control over her own purchases (and subsequent 'outcomes') that constituted "*a big part*" of her ethical approach. Consequently, her *lack* of control in Turkey provoked her to start "*repairing*" her identity as a responsible tourist by re-working the boundaries of the tour operator's excursions in a way which enabled her to increase her engagement with locals. This re-working was in reference to a previous discussion (see 4.2, especially Extract 2c) on how she: (i) (over)purchased handicrafts from the locals she met on excursions in order to

ensure that she was still giving them money directly; and (ii) learnt basic Turkish phrases in order to better communicate with them in their own language.

However, despite this re-working, Maisie was highly cognisant of her freedom to engage with locals as much as she desired (“*I felt like I was doing quite minimal compared to what I’d wanted to do*”). Maisie reflected on how certain destination-level considerations rendered her more dependent on the tour operator than she would have liked:

**Extract 23b (M3\_R):** Also it’s market situated within a foreign country, with foreign values, and foreign culture [laughter] and foreign ethics. So if [the tour operator] think[s] they’re providing what they think you want, that might not actually be what I want but if there’s no other alternative I’ll go along with that, and then try to make the best of it. So, repairing in that situation was much harder, because I had limited choice – in terms of, I didn’t have my bank account in that country, I couldn’t speak the language, so I couldn’t communicate and ask questions about things, I couldn’t ask the local people what I wanted to ask them. You know, like the woman in her house [see Extract 2a], there was so much I wanted to ask her, and above all I wanted to apologise [laughter]. None of which I actually did.

Maisie was aware that socio-cultural differences (“*foreign country, with foreign values, and foreign culture [laughter] and foreign ethics*”) meant that she had to place herself in the hands of the tour operator more than she perhaps would have done, as there was really no other option (“*if there’s no other alternative*”). However, while she had hoped to “*make the best of it*” by re-working the package, ultimately her inability to speak the language proficiently prevented her from communicating with locals as much as she desired (“*I couldn’t ask the local people what I wanted to ask them*”). Although she had managed to learn basic phrases (Extract 2c), this was far from sufficient in allowing her to ask the types of questions she wanted to ask (“*ask questions about things*”), or indeed to say sorry for the intrusive way in which she felt the tour operator managed

the excursion (“*I wanted to apologise*”) (Extract 2a). Overall, therefore, Maisie’s case spotlights how the degree to which tourists can exercise their resistance by re-working the holiday package is largely influenced by external constraints outside of tourists’ control. It particularly highlights the importance of language-barriers (see 6.4.2) as an impediment to consumer agency, especially in situations where tourists – such as Maisie – want a more intense/in-depth form of guest-host interaction.

While Maisie (at least attempted) to re-work the conditions of her holiday package, other participants merely expressed how they would have liked to re-work it by suggesting alternative activities and behaviours that they would have preferred to engage in. When steering discussion at the beginning of her Reflective interview, Sophie problematised certain features of the tourism package, especially the airport transfer. Sophie stated how she would have liked to re-work the ‘ridiculous’ rules by travelling to her hotel complex via public transport in order to contribute to the local economy:

**Extract 24a (S11\_R):**

Sophie: And everyone has these private transfers in these air-conditioned cars that you kind of like, you know, go from the airport into the hotel and stuff. And I kind of thought this is a bit ridiculous, we’re all going to the same place – well, not all of us, but we’re many people going to the same place, it did seem a bit excessive. But that was part of the thing, that was the only option when we booked it. You know, everything had to be booked through a tour operator and you had to book all those different parts, there wasn’t an option to do it ourselves. So you did sort of feel a little bit like you were... you’d been bullied into this slightly ridiculous method [laughter] of transport that we didn’t... you know, yes, it’s nice getting into this lovely air-conditioned car with a bottle of water and

whatever, but it did feel a bit unnecessary. And if we'd have been doing – if we could have done it independently – we'd have rather have probably gone for a local taxi and... of which probably would have been cheaper from our respect, but also, I don't know, I just feel like you're sort of helping the [laughter] economy a bit more I suppose by not having to go down this forced route of 'you do what the tour operators tell you to'.

Interviewer: Did you feel as well that kind of like there was the image of you as a tourist [S: Oh yeah, definitely yeah] like 'going in' – in inverted commas [S: Definitely] – did it put you in more... I don't know if privileged status is what we're getting at, but did it make you feel a bit...?

Sophie: You do, yeah, it does a little bit. And I found that a bit embarrassing. Sort of like 'oh here we are', kind of 'these people have arrived from a perceived wealthy country, and they get into their car and they're whisked off to their sort of self-contained resort'. And, you know, yes that's doing a lot for the economy, but is it really? You know, we're not getting out and experiencing the Seychelles, we're going from an airport to a sort of protected environment as it were, sort of in the hotel complex. So I do think it's a bit excessive, but like I say it wasn't... we've done lots of trips before where we've just booked a flight and we've kind of gone for it when we've got there and, you know, it's been absolutely fine. [...] I would have been happy to just jump on a bus or whatever [laughter], or a taxi or whatever. But, you know, that was the way it was and, you know, you kind of run with it.

Sophie's desire to re-work the rules stemmed from (i) what she perceived to be an unnecessary and extreme approach for ferrying tourists to and from the hotel ("*seem a bit excessive*"), and (ii) how this approach made her feel as a tourist ("*found that a bit embarrassing*"). Although she conceded that certain features of the transfer were at least partly appreciated ("*lovely air-conditioned car with a bottle of water*"), she simultaneously constructed these more luxurious elements as presenting a certain negative image of her as a rich tourist who wanted to quickly remove herself ("*get into their car and they're whisked off*")

to the seclusion of the hotel ‘bubble’ (“*self-contained resort*”). To remedy this image, Sophie made a point of reiterating how, while she would have preferred to travel to the hotel independently (“*we’d have rather have probably gone for a local taxi*”; “*I would have been happy to just jump on a bus or whatever*”), her freedom to do so was constrained by the fact that everything had to be booked through the tour operator. She adamantly emphasised that she was “*bullied*” and driven down this “*forced route*” of compliance, preventing her from re-working certain elements of the tourism package. Finding this power struggle particularly significant, the researcher – following from Extract 24a – linked back to Sophie’s Prospective interview and reminded her of how she had initially described “*rule-abiding*” as a key aspect of her responsible tourist identity. Sophie laughed, and remarked “*I think I like my own rules*”, before elaborating:

**Extract 24b (S11\_P):** I do like rules. Maybe that says a lot about me actually. I like rules when I see the benefit in them, but I don’t like being bossed around [laughter] and being told what I’m supposed to do on holiday. Because I, you know, I want to relax, and it just... it very much felt kind of like you were, you know, they were going to dictate what you were going to do and whatever, and I didn’t really feel like I had any control over that at all.

Sophie reflected that the extent to which she was inclined to fulfil the guidelines of the tourism package depended on the degree to which she judged the ‘rules’ to be worthwhile (“*I like rules when I see the benefit in them*”). Overall, therefore, it appears that it was her dislike for being “*bossed around*” and “*told what [she’s] supposed to do on holiday*” that at least partly contributed towards her negative evaluation of the tourism package’s rules (“*ridiculous*”), inducing her to reflect on the ways in which she would have re-worked her hotel transfer had she have had the opportunity to do so.

### 5.3.2 Evading the Tourism Package

A second strategy of resistance was to evade certain *elements* of the tourism package. In these instances, tourists would still buy a holiday package, but stop participating in certain aspects of it. In his Prospective interview, Sam made several references to how he felt “*so constrained*” by holiday packages. When the researcher asked him to expand on a specific example where this was the case, Sam recalled a previous holiday to Crete where he was particularly frustrated with the “*hard sell [...] of local trips and sort of, you know, BBQs on a beach*”. To this end, Extract 25 forms part of a much larger response to how he evaded the tour operator’s excursions and hired a car for the day to explore the island independently:

**Extract 25 (S15\_P):** If you go on a package tour, they encourage you – in inverted commas – to see the tourism side of the island and the community. But of course as soon as we go out in the car, drive around, you sort of see the other side of the island. [...] And you think ‘oh actually, you know, that’s quite interesting to see’. So all in all, I think it’s that lack of independence and that lack of ability to sort of be your own, you know, to affect your own agenda and timetable that we just didn’t like. [...] But we had, you know what I mean, once we got out of the hotel complex we got into a bit more of the real...

Sam’s resolution to evade the package tour was constructed as both a means of: (i) regaining his previously relinquished independence and, (ii) enabling him to see the “*real*” Crete as opposed to the Cretan ‘gaze’ constructed by the tourism industry (i.e. the “*tourism side of the island*”). Firstly, this suggests that some tourists dislike the way in which the rigidity and/or inflexibility of the tourism package limits the extent to which they can control *when* certain activities take place (“*lack of ability to [...] affect your own agenda and timetable*”). Secondly, it indicates that some tourists dislike being directed or told *where* to visit (e.g. “directive scopic signposting” (Hollinshead 1999: 11; Hollinshead & Kwon,

2013)). Sam's narrative implies that (at least some) tourists are mindful of the 'representative dissonance' that exists in the construction of destination image, not only by Western media (e.g. Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005), but by tour operators too. By evading the package tour, however, Sam felt that he had the freedom to see the sites that he would otherwise have missed ("*which you would never seen if you'd have stuck to the sort of, you know, the coastal beach resorts*"), resulting in a much better experience ("*far more interesting and enlightening*"). Sam's case thus underlines how some tourists feel encouraged to deviate from certain (negative) elements of the tourism package in order to create their own experiences away from, and in reaction to their power struggles with, the tourism market.

In addition to evading *elements* of the tourism package, there were also instances where participants avoided the tourism package *altogether*. For example, Sam recounted how his reflections in Crete shaped his decision to travel independently on his current holiday to New Zealand, mainly because he and his wife "*just like that sort of extra freedom that you can have*" (S15\_P). On the other hand, Mabel recalled how – in addition to resisting the homogenous (Extract 19) – a further reason for travelling independently on a previous trip to India was due to prior negative experiences of package holidays to Turkey and Peru. It is highlighted at this point, therefore, that while Sam's decision was based on his dissatisfaction with the 'confines' and 'restrictions' that the package imposed, Mabel's decision centred on the feelings and emotions that the package induced.

Participating in village tours on both occasions, Mabel recalled in the Prospective Phase how she had felt "*very uncomfortable*" in Peru as "*thirty or*

*forty people [were] walking around taking pictures”* of the locals’ “*home and their life*”; similarly, in Turkey she felt “*very uncomfortable*” at having “*just invaded this village and gawped like a human zoo*”. In both scenarios, Mabel problematised the way in which the organised group of tourists made an exhibition of the locals, often taking photographs in the process. As in Scarles’ (2013) research into the ethics of tourist photography – coincidentally in relation to the photographing of locals in Peru – Mabel felt that the tour group was “prostituting” (p.906) local life. She constructed the group as encroaching on the privacy of the villagers, and painted herself as an unwilling observer of the scenes that the package tour was directing her towards (e.g. “*the barber shaving somebody*” and “*somebody else cooking*”). Consequently, to avoid such feelings of moral tension in India, Mabel resolved to “*cut out*” the package element and “*just use agencies and things to help with booking*”. This finding shows how negative retrospections from one holiday can serve to iteratively reshape the type of tourism product (i.e. package or independent travel) that consumers select in the future. Tourists can at least attempt to increase their ethical agency by taking control over ‘who’ or ‘what’ they visit, as well as ‘how’ they visit it, in a way which aims to reduce the ethical anxieties associated with the holiday package or package tour.

It is important to identify a conflicting finding at this point, however, as despite her decision to evade purchasing a package holiday to India, Mabel chose to participate in an organised coach tour on her current holiday to Northumbria (UK). This is particularly interesting, as Mabel’s rationale for purchasing the package holiday was that “*coach travel to [her] is one of the ethical ways of travelling*” because “*a fifty-seater coach puts less impact in the carbon stuff than*

*the two cars, or one car*” (M7\_P). In the Reflective Phase, the researcher asked Mabel if she felt that, in choosing a package tour, she had lost an element of control over her ethical choices and activities – to which she maintained that she was prepared to “*compromise*” over the fact that she had “*less control*” over where she stayed (for example), “*because [when] the coach [is] laid on it’s usually ‘coach and hotel’. It’s not usually ‘coach dropped off in the middle of the town, you find your own accommodation’. So you buy the whole package*”. Consequently, Mabel’s experience provides a rare (if not sole) case in this research, as she was prepared to relinquish her autonomy, and purchase the package, given that the ethicality of parts of her tourism product (i.e. transport) were perceived to outweigh any personal sacrifice with regards to other areas of ethical decision-making. It is further noted that this decision also appeared to be at least partially impacted by price, as Mabel conceded that “*group holidays are very good value*” and that if she had “*gone as an individual, stayed B&B, it would have cost [her] a lot more to go into these places [e.g. Lindisfarne and Alnwick Castle] that I mentioned*”. In this regard, it appears that the strength of tourists’ struggle against or resistance toward the tourism package holiday is not only influenced by the strength of its ethical features (i.e. coach travel), but also personal (micro) factors, such as financial considerations (see 6.4.3).

Two destination-level considerations were also constructed as significant impediments to evading the tourism package. Firstly, tourists holidaying in international destinations commonly felt that travelling via a tour operator, or purchasing a package, was especially important in instances wherein they perceived their safety to be compromised. For example, Mabel (M7\_R) stated that in the past she made an “*informed choice*” that she “*would not do Peru*

*independently*” because it’s a “*big drugs*” nation; Anne (A10\_P) previously opted to travel to Egypt by a “*proper package tour. Because we felt it was safer that way*”; and William (W13\_P), giving the example of his visit to Nairobi – “*which isn’t the safest city in the world*” – claimed that he was happy to stay in a “*chainy*” hotel as “*you wouldn’t want to be staying in some small hotel in the outskirts, that didn’t have any security or anything necessarily*”. Consequently, it is apparent that the previously criticised corporate scene was occasionally welcomed on the assumption that ‘big’ can in some instances equate to ‘safer’. Put simply, the market product is viewed as a fail-safe mechanism that provides a security net to cushion or insulate tourists from external personal threats.

Secondly, lack of local knowledge and cultural unfamiliarity also discouraged tourists from travelling independently to certain international destinations. June (J13\_P) pointed out that, although for “*holidays in general, [they] usually sort of book independently and explore independently too*”, on her current holiday to India it was “*particularly important to have inside knowledge*” which is better achieved by “*people actually on the ground there*”. This reasoning was shared by Connor (C8\_R) who, traveling to Peru, explained that due to the “*nature of the trip, because it’s... being somewhere that bit more, I don’t know, different*”, parts of his holiday were “*actually organised*” – “*which like if you go to Europe and what have you, [he] wouldn’t normally do*”. In both examples, the two participants appeared to excuse their behaviour by juxtaposing their dependence on the tourism industry (this holiday) with what they “*normally*” or “*usually*” do on (European) holidays in general. This suggests that, although they purchased a tourism package on their current trip, they were keen to emphasise how this was a deviation from their customary behaviour.

### 5.3.3 Summary of Resistance to the Tourism Package

Section 5.3 has shown how tourists employed two main strategies of resistance toward the tourism package, re-working and evading. Reworking occurred both in terms of tourists highlighting what they *actually* did to stretch the boundaries imposed by the package, as well as what tourists would have *liked* to have done. In these cases, tourists were highly cognisant of their conditions of freedom regarding: (i) the *degree* to which they were able to rework the package; or (ii) their *inability* to rework the package, full stop.

With regards to evading, tourists consciously chose to evade either elements of or the entire package in order to engage in independent tourism. This was constructed as an effective approach for seeing the ‘real’ destination as opposed to participating in ‘directed performances’ (Edensor, 2001: 73) wherein tour guides (‘stage managers’) provide “cues about what to look at” (ibid). It also appears that previous negative experiences – both in terms of (inflexible) product features and (uncomfortable) emotional responses – often, but not always, compelled tourists to engage in independent travel in subsequent holidays. Factors which served to impede consumers’ decision to evade the tourism package were predominantly destination-level considerations, such as socio-cultural unfamiliarity and safety concerns. In these instances, consumers constructed the previously criticised standardised and cossetting nature of the tourism package to be beneficial in protecting tourists in dangerous or novel environments.

#### 5.4 Resistance to Tourist Hotspots

The final power struggle arose in relation to the dynamics between responsible tourists and tourist ‘hotspots’. Resistance towards tourist hotspots was generally deemed a way of isolating oneself from mainstream tourism activities as well as other tourists. In so doing, participants reported a more authentic experience as a result of travelling off the beaten track. More specifically, tourists could “*explore things that aren’t really on tourist destinations*” (A5\_R) and thereby expose themselves to “*part of the country or place that [they’re] going to that not everybody’s done*” (S15\_R). This, therefore, aligns with Noy’s (2004) finding that independent tourists deploy ‘romantic-adventurous narratives’ to depict how travelling off the beaten track enables the “continuous seeking of new, exotic destinations, supposedly as yet unexplored by scores of tourists and not yet institutionalized by the tourism industry” (pp.92-93); as well as Caruana et al’s (2008: 258) finding that travelling off the beaten track allows independent travellers to “[articulate] the places that they visit and the people they meet as ‘untouched’, ‘authentic’, and seemingly hard to reach (accessibility)’”.

Nevertheless, there were several instances where tourists problematised their resistance towards tourist hotspots. This section provides extracts of data from two participants to spotlight two ethical dilemmas associated with travelling off the beaten track, namely: (i) the ethicality of resisting tourist hotspots; and (ii) the ease with which tourists can determine whether they are actually ‘on’ or ‘off’ the beaten track.

***Ethicality of resistance:*** The first dilemma pertained to whether it was more ethical for tourists to confine themselves to specific hotspots, or exhibit

resistance by seeking untouched environments and an authentic way of life off the beaten track. Steering the opening of his Reflective interview, Alex initially discussed how he felt he had had a more authentic experience from travelling off the beaten track in Kota Kinabalu, Borneo. As highlighted in Extract 26a, Alex was particularly keen to disassociate himself from typical mainstream tourists, and was derogatory of those who had confined themselves to the tourist hotspots: tourists who “*come out here to like somewhere that’s got primary rainforest and a completely amazing culture, and just sit on a beach*”. He joked:

**Extract 26a (A5\_R):** We got to the point like in Malay the word for a western or white person is orang-putih, which literally means white person [...]. So we saw this [bar] and we were like ‘awh this is where the orang-putih hang out’ [laughter]. And we kind of got into this mindset that because we’d had this slightly more authentic experience we were somehow superior to the other western tourists.

This extract depicts how, by going off the beaten track, Alex constructed his experience as “*superior*” to those who had simply ‘hung out’ in tourist hotspots (a particular bar, in this case). This finding supports the work of Kontogeorgopoulos (2003: 193), who states that the ‘cultural capital’ arising from ecotourists’ authentic experiences can act as a form of ‘social differentiation’ amongst tourists in the ‘pursuit for status’. The fact that Alex actively adopted Malay terminology to pinpoint ‘western’ or ‘white’ tourists – a subject position which he himself fulfilled – also particularly reinforces how, from his authentic experience, Alex subjectified himself as having the cultural resources to align more with the “world of locals” (Muzaini, 2006: 151) than the world of westerners. Muzaini (2006) calls this learning of language – even at such a ‘rudimentary’ level – a common ‘behavioural tactic’ that tourists employ as a means of looking local.

However, despite his purportedly ‘superior’ experience, Alex still pondered – both on holiday and during the Reflective Phase – whether it was better for tourists to limit their impact to an area specifically designed for holidaymakers.

Following directly from Extract 26a, Alex reflected (unprompted):

**Extract 26b (A5\_R):** I aim for where you go off the track – off the beaten trail as it were – and kind of try and explore things that aren’t really on tourist destinations. [...] And actually at the same time some people aren’t looking for that. They just want to go and see the sights and have an easy time of it. But – I don’t think there’s anything totally wrong with that – but at the same time I think they’re just missing out. And I don’t know, like when I was saying back in the interview like I just don’t know if it’s...is it more or less kind of ethically sound to be a tourist like that? Is it better to kind of – this is the question I kind of asked myself over there – is it better to go out and try and integrate, or is it better to go over there and just be a tourist [...]. And you sort of fill your role as a tourist as it were, and access those things without impinging on local people. Because is it that tourism is a way of separating the people visiting and the people who live there? And if you integrate – like in the way that I was trying to do – do you actually kind of appropriate culture and do you kind of disturb it? Which is kind of how like Kota Kinabalu kind of suggested that to me, is that maybe what had happened is that it was very westernised – like they’d obviously, they had like European cuisine, cafes and KFC and things – and I was wondering is this what happens when you have lots of western tourists that want to kind of integrate into local culture and you get this kind of assimilation and dilution of local culture instead of it sort of retaining its identity and people accessing it without disturbing it.

It is apparent that an ethical tension arose for Alex as to whether, through tourists such as himself attempting to “*integrate*”, Bornean culture was being distilled (or “*assimilated*”) as opposed to being preserved and celebrated. Through the introduction of westernised and/or European eateries, for example, Alex was highly aware that tourism in Kota Kinabalu had engendered an element of ‘re-territorialisation’ (Minca, 2000). It is clear that this dilemma made him self-question whether he was being unethical by not necessarily fulfilling his

traditional, socially-constructed “*role*” and restricting his (potentially damaging) influence to a particular space that had already been specifically designed or altered to accommodate and/or segregate tourists. This suggests that Alex was aware that, in order to minimise his environmental and socio-cultural impact, a more responsible approach may be to (at least to some degree) isolate himself from local life and instead simply visit the previously criticised hotspots. This shows how, in certain destinations, the way in which tourists frame their responsibility may sometimes appear contradictory to the ‘responsible tourism’ concept. Put simply, Alex questioned whether he should or should not interact with locals while engaging in a mode of tourism that is frequently constructed as an outlet for ‘living like a local’ (Caruana and Crane, 2008).

***Hotspot or not:*** A second ethical dilemma arose with regard to determining whether activities were actually ‘on’ or ‘off’ the beaten track. Giovanna, for example, was particularly keen to avoid or limit her exposure to mainstream activities. In the Prospective Phase, she told the researcher that she purposefully resists mainstream activities because tourist hotspots are “*just too crowded, there are just too many people in the same place*”, ergo people are “*exploiting it too much. And so [she doesn’t] want to be the extra person [laughter] that is going to exploit that*”. Against this backdrop, Giovanna recorded an ethical anxiety in her diary regarding her canoeing excursion in northern Spain (Image 5), noting how she was worried that it was too overpopulated:

**Extract 27a (G1\_A):** Descenso Ribadesella: canoeing along the river Sella. Nice experience, but when I noticed there were many people doing it I got worried that it would have been on[e] of those mainstream



**Image 5** Canoeing excursion in northern Spain (G1\_A)

activities that leave the river dirty with food waste and disturb the animals.

It is clear that Giovanna automatically equated the presence of a large group (“*many people*”) to be indicative of a more mainstream and unsustainable activity, assuming that the other tourists would be disruptive (“*disturb the animals*”) and litter (“*leave the river dirty with food waste*”). In the Reflective Phase, the researcher questioned Giovanna as to whether she wanted to elaborate on this ethical tension in light of her diary entry and photograph:

**Extract 27b (G1\_R):** And I was a bit worried. I almost [laughter] didn’t want to do it anymore. Because there were all... many people canoeing around and just [laughter] trying to get the canoes straight, and yelling,

and laughing. And it was the very beginning of the route – and the river is quite long – we canoed for three hours, even four maybe. And but so I felt bad at the beginning, but then I realised it wasn't a problem at all. Because all these people they were just exciting at the very beginning, but once you put them in the river and there's silence – and everyone is quiet – so everyone is behaving in a good way. They all started to do exactly the same thing, so to be quiet and respectful [...]. And at the end it turned out to be quite a nice experience, yeah.

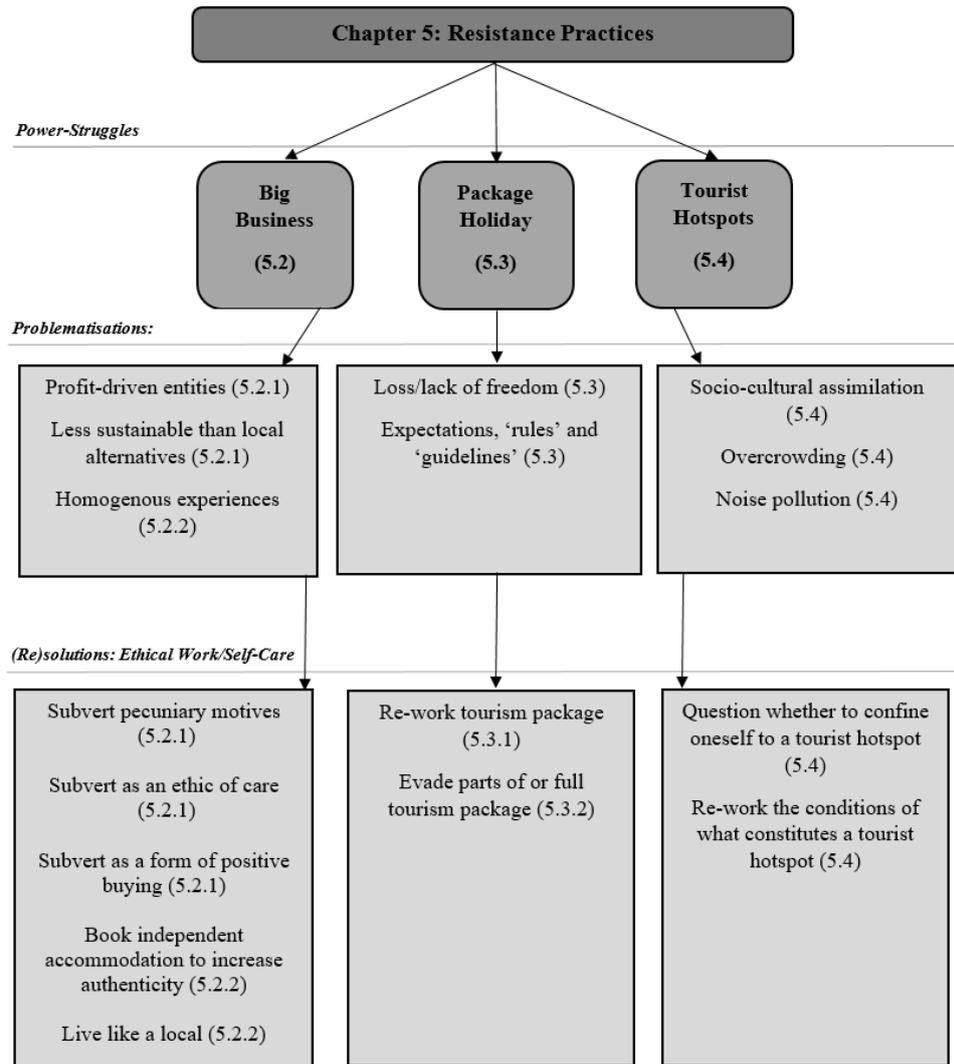
Extract 27b shows the severity of Giovanna's initial angst, in that she was prepared to stop her participation in the canoeing activity (“*didn't want to do it anymore*”). She was particularly distressed by the noise, and problematised the loud behaviour of other tourists (“*yelling, and laughing*”). However, Giovanna soon realised that what she had originally constructed as unruly behaviour was in fact just tourists' initial excitement. Once the canoeing began, Giovanna was pleased to see that the tourists became more considerate of their surroundings (“*quiet and respectful*”), immediately serving to eliminate her anxiety and alter her perception of the activity (“*nice experience*”). This suggests that so long as the behaviour of tourists is viewed as responsible, the mainstream activity is viewed as less irresponsible. Although there was still the same, large number of tourists – rendering it less ‘off’ track – it was their good conduct that appeared to play an important role in relaxing Giovanna's resistance toward the tourism space. This, therefore, highlights a caveat to Giovanna's initial projection (above) that “*too many people*” automatically equates to ‘exploitative’. More specifically, her reflections from the canoeing trip have (at least partly) served to nuance her construction of the conditions under which a hotspot should (i.e. ‘yelling’) or should not (‘respectful’) be resisted.

### **5.4.1 Summary of Resistance to Tourist Hotspots**

This section has highlighted how participants faced two types of ethical tensions with regard to resisting tourist hotspots and travelling off the beaten track. The first example demonstrated how tourists can recognise that, although they themselves benefit from a more authentic experience, the holiday destination can suffer (environmentally and socio-culturally) from holidaymakers attempting to integrate with locals. To this end, Alex's case exemplified how some tourists question whether certain concepts of 'responsible tourism' are in fact irresponsible; and whether, in reality, it would be more ethical for tourists to limit their impact to particular, well-bounded hotspots. The second example highlighted the ethical dilemma tourists face when attempting to distinguish between mainstream and off-track activities. It appears that the boundaries between the two are not necessarily clear-cut, making it difficult for responsible tourists to know which to engage in and which to resist on ethical grounds. Both of these ethical tensions reveal important implications, therefore, as they underscore tourists concerns and anxieties regarding the ethicality of participating in certain tourism spaces over others.

### **5.5 Conclusion of Chapter**

This chapter has demonstrated how agency can be represented in terms of consumers' resistance towards three specific areas of the tourism industry: large corporations, particularly 'big' travel companies, chain hotels and franchise restaurants (5.2); the package holiday or tour (5.3); and mainstream tourist hotspots (5.4). Figure 5.1 illustrates how tourists problematised specific features



**Figure 5.1** Visual summary of key findings from Chapter 5

of each of these three areas, as well as the ethical work and/or self-care practices engaged in as a means of resolving these problematisations (see also Appendix 8).

Section 5.2 focussed on the power struggle between the responsible tourist and large corporations. It showed how tourists attempted to subvert the power of the former by purchasing goods and services from local businesses (5.2.1). It also demonstrated how tourists problematised the way in which large corporations

offer a standardised or homogenous product, inducing them to search for more authentic alternatives through which they can live like a local (5.2.2). Nonetheless, several personal motivations and destination-level characteristics served to influence the extent to which tourists could always avoid the corporate scene, with section 5.2.3 highlighting instances of major and minor deviances between their ethical ideals and actual practice.

Section 5.3 attended to the dynamics between the responsible tourist and the package holiday or tour. It showed how, when package holiday/tours were purchased, tourists sought to redress the imbalance of power between themselves and the travel company, either by re-working the boundaries that it imposed (5.3.1) or evading certain elements (5.3.2). While tourists generally stated their preference for evading the entire tourism package, it was noted that the safety and socio-cultural unfamiliarity of the holiday destination served to lessen tourists' resistance.

Lastly section 5.4 depicted how tourists showed resistance to tourism hotspots and sought a more authentic experience off the beaten track. This engendered two ethical tensions concerning the ethicality of travelling off the beaten track, and the ease of determining whether an activity and/or destination is 'on' or 'off' the beaten track (i.e. hotspot or not).

While Chapters 4 and 5 have shown consumers' reflections on and resistance towards certain elements of the market-consumer interface, Chapter 6 attends to the way in which tourists are reflexive of their ethical agency to engage in their ideal form of responsible tourism. To this end it focusses on instances of 'walking the talk' (6.2), 'reflexive inertia' (6.3) and 'pragmatic utility' (6.4).

## CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### *Self-Reflexivity*

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#### **6.1 Introduction to Chapter**

Chapter 2 outlined previous literature into the ‘attitude-behaviour gap’ (e.g. Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Auger & Devinney, 2007; Carrington, 2010), an area of study focussing on how consumers attitudes towards ethics do not consistently translate into actual ethical behaviour. It especially highlighted the work of Papaoikonomou et al (2011), who synthesised the main factors that have been found across the literature to affect consumers’ ethical decision-making, namely: the nature and accessibility of information; scepticism towards the (non)ethical substance behind corporate motives; brand loyalty; the type of ethical issues that consumers support; traditional purchasing criteria; and, lastly, perceived consequences of consumers’ (in)action.

This chapter extends the literature into the attitude-behaviour gap by spotlighting how participants were self-reflexive over their agency to engage in the ethical practices and subjectivities that they desired. The chapter is separated into three main themes: *walking the talk*, wherein the locus of agency resided with the individual tourist to translate ethical reflection into action (6.2); *reflexive inertia*, whereby tourists were attuned to ethical considerations but unwilling to make any corresponding behavioural change (6.3); and *pragmatic utility*, where practical factors at the personal, product and destination levels were constructed as impeding – or influencing the extent to which – consumers translated their ethics into practice (6.4). It is noted that the three themes are

largely intertwined, with tourists' pragmatic utility, for example, affecting their freedom to walk the talk. As in previous chapters, it closes with a visual summary of the power struggles, problematisations and self-care practices evident within the findings (see also Appendix 8, rows 7-9).

## **6.2 Walking the Talk**

A prominent theme of self-reflexivity concerned respondents whose experience was one of ethical praxis; whereby tourists attempted to 'walk the talk' by transforming personal ethical reflection into action. Central to this theme was the way in which participants viewed responsible tourism in terms of their self-determining ability to arbitrate over matters of right and wrong, with the locus of ethics very much constructed as residing with the individual tourist.

This section focusses on two main practices of self-care associated with walking the talk. First, it considers the way in which participants constructed themselves as walking the talk after (de)regulating the self in accordance with socio-cultural 'rules' and personal ethical boundaries (6.2.1). Second, it considers the ways in which participants questioned the self as to whether they were walking their talk (6.2.2); particularly emphasising how tourists questioned the strength and scope of their ethicality when confronted with the 'ethics versus experience' dilemma.

### **6.2.1 (De)Regulating the Self**

This first practice of self-care, (de)regulating the self, captured instances where respondents walked the talk by (re)working their normal daily practice to

Anne (A10_P)	We sort of made sure we were well covered up, even though other people who were on holiday might be going around in shorts and stuff. So... even around the temples, and... But I... But it was something I would never have done because I'm aware that they're Muslim and, you know, that's not what they would see as acceptable. And it also would have made me feel uncomfortable.
Mabel (M7_P)	I respect the fact it's a Muslim country and I've covered my arms when I went in the Mosque.
Maisie (M3_P)	I've kind of read those types of guides and got an idea as to... you know, like because there are little sections in the front like 'how to go', 'how to dress' and that. I went to – when I travelled around Europe some years ago – and we went to the Vatican City. And before going it said 'well, you know, you have to... they won't let you in if you haven't got your head covered' and that. And it was the same when I went to Tunisia. You have to wear a head scarf, and you have to cover yourself up as a woman. So prior to going I made sure that I packed those kinds of things.
Maria (M9_P)	Like if I'm being in another country and you must have a scarf, I bring the scarf or I haven't been, you know, I have to... I'll be more protective just to be respectful. That kind of... Or if you are visiting temples, so there are certain things that you have to respect and be aware of.
Sophie (S11_P)	From a sort of cultural perspective as well, I've been to quite a few sort of predominantly Muslim countries. Just from kind of like what I know about the religion and things like that, you know, I would – and from reading up about it as well – I would dress quite conservatively. I would, you know, wear long skirts, I would cover my shoulders.

**Table 6.1** Regulating the self in accordance which host practice

conform to the socio-cultural values and expectations of the destination visited. This indicates that responsible tourists “constitute [themselves] as active moral agents within [...certain] fields of disciplinary practices” (Crane et al, 2008: 304) by *choosing* to adjust or regulate their normal behaviour to reflect the host's way of life. Table 6.1 shows how this most commonly occurred in relation to dress codes, with female tourists in particular consciously modifying the way they dressed in predominantly Muslim countries. The majority of female participants recounted how, in order to respect ‘home’ and ‘away’ differences, they actively ensured that they were “*covered up*” (A10\_P; M7\_P), with some explicitly

highlighting that they researched good practice beforehand by “*reading*” (S11\_P) and “*find[ing] out what their customs and their etiquette is*” (M3\_P).

However, there were multiple instances where tourists reported a sense of ethical anxiety prior to or post regulating the self. Thus, this section demonstrates how: (i) tourists (more commonly) felt anxiety before regulating the self, in that they were keen not to offend anyone so respected and adopted the host’s best practice; and (ii) tourists (less commonly) felt anxiety after they had regulated the self, problematising the fact that – while they, as guests, had conformed to the host’s ‘rules’ – the locals themselves had not. In this sense, the section focusses on the way in which tourists did not want to offend others, as well as the way tourists (albeit infrequently) constructed themselves as the offended party.

***Not wanting to offend:*** The mostly frequently cited ethical tension concerned participants’ desire to (de)regulate their own behaviour in accordance with host practice so as not to offend the local population. While Table 6.1 evidences more minor instances of self-regulation – with tourists simply dressing more “*conservatively*” (S11\_P) – William provided a rarer example of how participants were willing to modify their behaviour in a way which necessitated a significant compromise to personal ethics. In the Prospective Phase, William was asked whether he could recall any instances from previous holidays where he had relaxed his own ethics in order to adapt to the culture of the tourism destination, to which he responded that he had been prepared to eat meat despite ordinarily consuming a vegan diet. He recalled how, when offered zebu kebabs on a holiday in Madagascar, he at first declined the local delicacy (“*And I was*

like ‘no, I don’t, I don’t really eat meat’”), but, before long, and after “a couple of beers and stuff”, he yielded:

**Extract 28a (W13\_P):**

William: ...and they were like ‘oh go on, you have to try one. Like, you are here in Madagascar, it’s part of our culture’, and like I did. I did have one eventually. But that was like, you know, farmed. That was a farmed meat from probably, you know, a few meters away or something. And it was all very local and...

Interviewer: Is that how you justified it to yourself, by saying it was local so it was fine?

William: I think I justified it by just, you know, the fact... culturally I think I justified it yeah. And, you know, we were in this tiny little village in the middle of nowhere, and it basically made no difference whether I ate this thing or not. And it made them happy, so [laughter], you know. It genuinely, it did. And I got a bit of peace and quiet [laughter], so that was...

Interviewer: Perfect [laughter]

William: So that was nice [laughter]. So I think, yeah, in situations like that, I think... I think it’s kind of a fine line. I think, you know, between balancing the kind of culture and your personal ethics. And I think it reaches the point where, you know, I would never want to offend anyone.

It is clear that William’s personal views on the unethicity of eating meat were supplanted by his ethical desire to appease his host. This implies that tourists’ ethics are a multi-dimensional phenomenon, in that they are not simply confined to a specific area (e.g. veganism), but encompass numerous outer-oriented (i.e. “*culture*”; making hosts’ “*happy*”) and inner-oriented (i.e. “*personal ethics*”) considerations that need to be addressed and managed in conjunction. In this vein, while he initially turned down the delicacy, William soon relented on the grounds that he had to ‘balance’ his aversion to eating meat alongside other

factors. He rationalised that him eating a zebu kebab “*made no difference*” from a wildlife perspective as the meat was locally farmed, while, from a social perspective, satisfied the requests of the locals. To this end, he ultimately evaluated the experience as a positive one (“*nice*”), as he was able to regulate his behaviour in a way which conciliated the locals without impacting the wild zebu cattle, something which to him was a key ethical concern.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that William’s desire not to cause offence in Madagascar sparked parallels with previous experiences in his ‘home’ life. Following directly from Extract 28a, William immediately reflected on how he had also had to relax his stance on vegetarianism when eating with friends in the UK:

**Extract 28b (W13\_P):** And actually, you know, I’ve done this in the UK before [...]. There have been a couple of occasions where I’ve been around to a friend’s house, and perhaps it’s someone I don’t know very well, and I might have mentioned to them before that I don’t really eat meat but... I guess I’m not that assertive in it sometimes. And they may have cooked something, you know, with meat in. And I don’t tend to say anything. Or I’ll mention to them at a later date, like ‘oh, you know, I do tend to have vegetarian food’. But like I would never want to offend anyone with my personal ethics and stuff. [...] You know, I don’t impose my views on anyone, and I think it’s a fine line between just, you know, being with people and having a good time and culture and stuff.

This finding extends the literature into sustainable practices in the ‘home’ and ‘away’ environment (e.g. Barr et al, 2010) by focusing on the way in which consumers’ rationales for relaxing their ethics can also be consistent across the two contexts. More specifically, it is not just the ethical practice per se (i.e. vegetarianism) that can transfer from the home to the holiday destination, but also the ethical justification (i.e. not wanting to offend others) as to why these practices should or should not be rigidly adhered to. It is clear that William’s

anxiety over not offending others was not limited to situations wherein there were noticeable socio-cultural differences in best practice (e.g. Madagascar), but in any instance wherein he fulfilled the subject position of ‘guest’ (e.g. a friend’s home). Mirroring Extract 28a, he reiterated in Extract 28b that it was a “*fine line*” between abiding by his personal ethics and not wanting to force (“*impose*”) them on others; reinforcing that a central tenet of William’s ethicality was to have an appreciation of other people’s perspective – rather than merely prioritising his own ideals – and account for any differences when regulating his own behaviour accordingly.

***Tourist as offended:*** A second ethical tension arose when tourists regulated themselves against the host’s (purported) best practice, only to find that the locals were engaging in alternative activities and behaviours. While much less common than ‘not wanting to offend’, June recounted how *she* felt discriminated against at having walked the talk in India – i.e. by dressing appropriately at religious sites – when the locals themselves did not. For example, in her diary she wrote:

**Extract 29a (J14\_A):** In Mosque girls (foreign) had to wear overall - locals did not even though dressed in western clothing. Felt discriminated against - huge eye opener.

When talking the researcher through the content of her diary at the beginning of her Reflective interview, June – upon reaching her reflections of the Golden Triangle – immediately spoke about the discrimination she felt she had experienced. She elaborated:

**Extract 29b (J14\_R):** And it was strange to feel discriminated against when we had to actually cover up – the women had to cover themselves up – with a sort of tent overall so that people couldn’t see our figures.

But the locals didn't have to, even though they were wearing the same sort of jeans and a shirt and stuff like that [...]. That was something I'd never thought that I would ever experience, but certainly did.

Extracts 29a and 29b clearly evidence how June was aggrieved that her identity as a western tourist subjugated her to a different set of rules to locals; rules which, ironically, were presumably implemented to ensure that guest practice was consistent with the host's cultural ideals. Knowing (from the diary and interview) that June frequently sought answers from her guide, the researcher subsequently asked whether she had questioned him as to why western tourists such as herself were asked to conform to these 'rules' when locals were not. June affirmed that she did ask, but that the guide was not forthcoming, commenting:

**Extract 29c (J14\_P):** The guide said everybody is meant to do it but we could plainly see that the locals were not being asked to do it. So we didn't really get a lot of answer. Quite often when we asked things, particularly about gender, we felt that we didn't get necessarily an accurate answer because women are very, very much the second-class citizens. And as I've said later, it was interesting we very rarely saw women out sort of walking around. We saw groups of men everywhere, but the women were all kept hidden away. And I think it's something perhaps they're aware of but didn't really want to change or perhaps don't know how to change. So we just really formed our own opinion as to that, because the guide didn't say that specifically but then that's perhaps a little bit too politically sensitive. So, no, we didn't really get an answer.

It is interesting to note that June was reflexive of the perceived discrepancies between the self-regulatory behaviour of tourists and locals to the point where she was prepared to voice her anxiety. Yet, as June was dissatisfied with the response (“*we didn't really get a lot of answer*”), it appears that she ultimately resolved to devise her own conclusions in light of her observations elsewhere in India (particularly regarding gender inequality). This demonstrates how, even after only being in a novel destination for a short period of time, participants can

feel that they have sufficient knowledge to construct their own ‘answers’ to their ethical problematisations. While the ‘away’ environment undoubtedly remains an unfamiliar space, participants appear to accumulate, or believe they have accumulated, sufficient experience(s) on holiday to negotiate and/or make sense of this unfamiliarity.

To this end, it is worth noting that – when expanding upon other diary entries – June later commented that, as western tourists, they generally “*felt that [they] were the attractions*” and that they “*had loads and loads of people taking photographs of [them]*”. At this point, the researcher linked back to June’s experience at the Golden Triangle (Extracts 29a, 29b, 29c), and asked whether she had considered the possibility that such attention she (and other westerners) were drawing was a contributing factor in officials demanding that they “*cover up*” (Extract 29b). She conceded that she “*hadn’t considered that*”, and thought that it was “*quite possible*”; but that they “*were still photographed with [their] tents on [laughter] [...] much the same funnily enough [laughter]*”. Consequently, this shows how, in attempting to construct their own ‘solutions’ to their ethical problematisations (e.g. Extract 29c), participants consciously or unconsciously bracketed out other possibilities. As June was predominantly focussing on the fact that *she* felt victimised, it could be argued that she perhaps was more disposed to attribute her discrimination to the (macro) socio-cultural conditions of the country, rather than step back and accept responsibility for how her ‘different’ (micro) western identity was likely to garner interest and/or attention.

### 6.2.2 Questioning the Self – ‘Am I Walking the Talk?’

Although less common than self-regulation, another practice of self-care was to question, ‘am I walking the talk?’. Several tourists questioned whether or not they were walking the talk to the best of their abilities, and considered the implications that this had on their identity as a responsible tourist. This section considers the way in which participants sought to resolve this self-questioning. It shows how one tourist, Barbara, re-worked her responsible holiday to better conform to her ethical ideals, while, alternatively, Maisie recognised that there would always be limits to, or a trade-off with, her ‘responsibility’ when participating in any kind of experience.

***Re-working the responsible holiday:*** The first example presents an extreme case of how one participant’s recognition that they were not walking the talk prompted them to engage in a different holiday to the one originally planned. When describing her upcoming holiday in the Prospective interview, Barbara stated that she was planning to drive to an eco-lodge in Snowdonia (Wales, UK) with her grandson. In the interview, the researcher asked Barbara whether she could think of any factors that impeded her agency to be as responsible as she liked on holiday. While nothing obstructed her from being ethical when travelling alone, Barbara was aware that her locus of control was affected by her other responsibilities, in particular to being a good grandparent, when holidaying with her young grandson. Extract 30a shows how it was fulfilling the needs and meeting the abilities of her grandson that reinforced her initial decision to drive to Snowdonia rather than take a four-year-old on a train:

**Extract 30a:** What impedes me is... if I was going on my own, nothing impedes me. If I'm taking [grandson] [...] everything impedes me [laughter]. And that must be for all families, even though families do do it – they will get on the train with two or three children.

However, after the Prospective interview, and prior to her holiday, Barbara was highly reflexive as to whether her holiday conformed to her ethical ideals. Although she had initially claimed that driving was “*not doing anything*” (B16\_P) compared to flying, she started to self-question her decision to drive to the point where she altered her plans, and opted to holiday without her grandson in order to be able to travel somewhere by train. Extract 30b shows the diary entry capturing Barbara's rationalisation and change of decision:

**Extract 30b (B16\_A):** I've been thinking about Snowdonia. I still haven't booked, although there are vacancies. It seems such a long way to go in the car just to have a[n] ecotype holiday. After speaking with Claire, I really wondered about myself, mostly my ethics. I do live an ethical lifestyle but still use the car a lot. I could go by train with [grandson] but the hassle? How strong are my ethics about travelling? I realize that although for years I and the family did not travel abroad because of using planes- I've not really thought about the car, especially these last few years, here in England.

I've always wanted to go to Cambridge..not quite Snowdonia...and I could go by train, perhaps take my bike...nope, too heavy for me to get to Nottingham train station. Could just take a rucksack I suppose...stay at a hostel...investigate hostels, see how environmental they are.

While other participants were attuned to factors impeding their agency (e.g. family), they predominantly resolved to (re)work their ethical practices within their conditions of freedom (e.g. compromise with fellow travellers) (see 6.4.4). In this regard, tourists' ethicality tended to take a backseat relative to the prioritisation of participants' personal (e.g. familial) contexts. Barbara, however, was an exceptional case, as she was prepared to remove the 'impedance', and travel alone, in her quest for non-compromising ethical practice. Nevertheless, this self-care technique was still not without problematisations, as her desire to

walk the talk resulted in an emotional compromise at having to travel without her grandson. At the end of her holiday, Barbara wrote:

**Extract 30c (B16\_A):** Feel disappointed that I didn't find a holiday for [grandson] and I... funnily enough I bought Permaculture mag and there were several places [grandson] and I could have gone to do something eco and not too far away but still a little expensive [...]. Anyway, I will definitely look at ways to travel to tread even lighter on this earth...and take [grandson] with me.

This extract shows how negative emotions (“*feel disappointed*”) from one holiday can serve to stimulate new projections for future travel; with Barbara resolving to find a way to holiday with her grandson in a way which simultaneously minimised her impact. In light of this diary excerpt, the researcher asked Barbara to expand upon her disappointment in the Reflective Phase, to which she started to discuss her general “*feelings of ouch*”. In short, Barbara reflected that she had taken the easy option by travelling alone, by train, to Cambridge:

**Extract 30d (B16\_R):** An ‘ouch’ usually comes with something that – a realisation on my part that I’m perhaps not living up to something. And I did feel that I didn’t live up to it going to Cambridge. I think it felt like a cop out really. But I was restricted by time and everything. But really I thought to myself, ‘really, you know, you could have gone abroad’. ‘You could have gone on a train, you could have gone through the, you know, the tunnel and gone and pushed yourself to do something’.

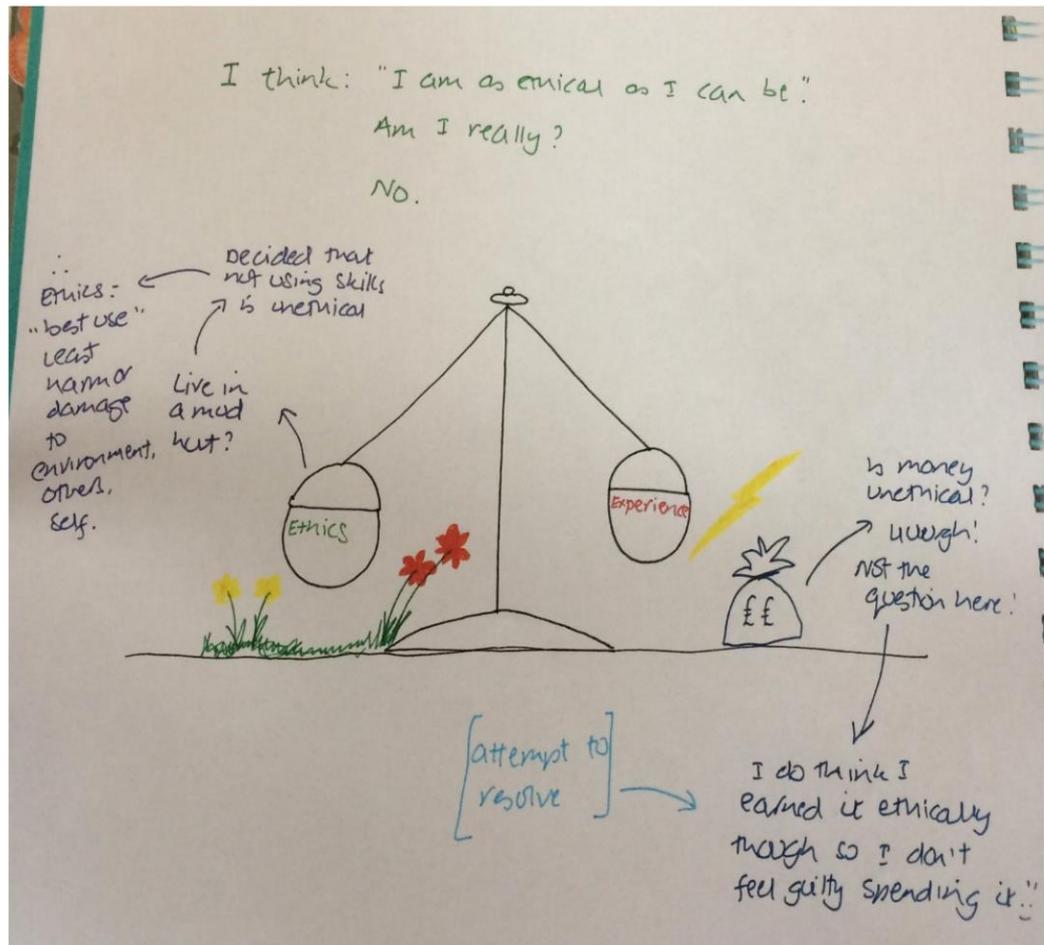
Barbara’s feeling of “*ouch*” is particularly interesting as, despite rearranging her first holiday to Snowdonia to better conform to her ethical ideals, she still felt that she wasn’t “*living up to something*” in Cambridge and that she could have “*pushed*” herself to travel further afield. This suggests that tourists’ self-constructed benchmark as to what constitutes personal ethical practice – or walking one’s talk – is both fluid and in a constant state of negotiation. It is also

interesting to note that, while in Extract 30a she claimed that “*nothing impedes*” her when travelling solo, in Extract 30d she highlighted the importance of “*time and everything*” in preventing her from stretching the boundaries and travelling to France. This indicates that participants ascribe *post-hoc* impedances as a means of rationalising or excusing any deviations or inconsistencies between desired and actual behaviour. It appears that walking the talk is so important to Barbara that, in instances where she believes she is *failing*, she becomes reflexive of the factors preventing her (i.e. family; time) in order to justify her (perceived) unethicality and highlight ways to better self-regulate her behaviour in the future.

***Recognising the limits to one’s ‘responsibility’ – the ‘ethics versus experience’***

***dilemma:*** Other tourists tended to problematise how the ‘ethics versus experience’ dilemma limited the degree to which they were able to walk the talk. For example, Maisie in particular noted in her diary how she suddenly realised that her participation in *any* experience required an element of balance alongside, or trade-off with, ethics. This led Maisie to capture her ‘ethics versus experience’ dilemma in a drawing (Image 6).

In the middle of the Reflective interview, the researcher told Maisie that she was particularly interested in the way in which she kept highlighting identity ‘struggles’, and asked whether she could expand on this further. It was at this point that Maisie focussed on her diagram (Image 6), calling it her “*big ‘ah-ha!’ moment*”. She reflected:



**Image 6** Balancing ethics and experience (M3\_A)

**Extract 31 (M3\_R):**

Maisie: This is my diagram. I was thinking ‘am I as ethical as I can be?’, ‘am I really as ethical?’ – and I realised ‘no, I’m not’. I could make more ethical choices than I do, which then led me on to drawing this diagram. It’s a scale, with ethics on one side of the scale with experience on the other. And I realised that if you’re going to have experience in anything, from getting out of bed to drinking your coffee in the morning and going out the door, ethics is... you’ve always got to balance that out. And can you? Can you balance it or not? I think if your experience is on the downside and your ethics is on a bit too light, you can just spend money, and this, this lightning flash here is just representing like a kind of shock or experience or the sort of, yeah, the shock really of doing something. And then balancing that out with ethics. And if your experience is anything – you could do

anything – if it’s completely unethical then, you know, that’s a bit rubbish. But if you’re going to have any experience at all, there’s got to be some sort of an ethical balance.

Interviewer: So would you say that’s one of your biggest tensions? It seems like from everything you’ve said [M: Yeah, it is actually] that that was one of the things?

Maisie: I think it comes, I think it’s the tension that underlies all the other ones. Because everything, when I look at this, I mean on the next page here, I’ve got this little green bubble here about how I’m attempting to compensate from the fact that I’ve had, there aren’t any bikes and I’ve had to drive up in the car so I’ve decided to walk everywhere [laughter]. I’ve tried to compensate. I judge myself as being ineffective because I can’t. I can’t. I haven’t been as ethical as I want to be. So I feel a bit sad. But it’s inevitable, I think I realised there’s an inevitability [laughter] as well. You know, you can’t not take part in life. And every time you go out the door, if I get on my bike, where has the rubber come from? Where has the metal? Who has made the bike, you know?

[...] I don’t have all of the answers to all of these questions. So my attempt of balancing it off is by my experience and what I think the ethical impact of that is going to be. So that’s how I try to get around it. Ultimately you have to, you know, you have to start asking questions about yourself, your self-identity.

This interview excerpt shows how Maisie was highly reflexive over the unethical impacts of her actions, leading her to ‘ask questions’ about her (“*ineffective*”) identity as a responsible tourist. Yet, despite this self-questioning, it is equally clear that Maisie was also sensible to the fact that, (i) she lacked the knowledge pertaining to the ethicality of each and every facet of an experience, and (ii) without this knowledge, she could only ever walk the talk to the extent to which she knew what needed ‘compensating’ and/or ‘balancing’. It is evident that it was Maisie’s awareness of these conditions of freedom that led her to resolve to do the best she could by minimising her participation in what she

thought to be high-impact activities (“*what I think the ethical impact of that is going to be*”). Overall, this shows the complex and intricate nature of ethical consumption, as, while Maisie was anxious that she wasn’t as ethical as she *wanted* to be, she was conscious that she was as ethical as she *could* be. To use her words, she was aware that it is unreasonable for her to “*not take part in life*”, and, other than take drastic measures such as “*liv[ing] in a mud hut*” (Image 6), she was doing her best to “*get around it*” by constantly questioning her identity and making sure that she self-regulated her activities, behaviours and choices to the best of her abilities.

### **6.2.3 Summary of Walking the Talk**

The theme, walking the talk, indicated that tourists construct a relatively high locus of control over their ethical tourism practices. Tourists engaged in self-care practices to not only (de)regulate the self in relation to the (macro) socio-cultural ‘rules’ of the destination visited, but to question the self as a means of ensuring that – where possible – they were conforming to their own ethical ideals. While in the main tourists constructed themselves as being able to walk the talk without experiencing significant ethical tension, emotional tension was reported. More specifically, Barbara was upset that walking the talk meant (to her) that she had to sacrifice a holiday with her grandson, while June felt offended that she alone was walking the talk.

Overall, this section illuminates the importance of examining how consumers ‘practice’ their ethics within experiential settings (e.g. Ulusoy, 2016) rather than simply focussing on how they express their ethics through their ‘purchases’. When ‘experiencing ethics’, it is evident that consumers do not always consider

external (i.e. availability) and internal (i.e. price) factors in the same way as in traditional purchasing criteria for products (e.g. Papoikonomou et al, 2011), but further have to balance other types of macro considerations, such as socio-cultural concerns, with different micro considerations, such as personal enjoyment. This section expounds the importance of examining consumers' ethicality within different socio-cultural contexts, as it provides new insights into how individuals have to negotiate a potentially divergent set of 'home' and 'away' responsibilities (e.g. dress codes (Table 6.1) and vegetarianism (William)).

While this section revealed that participants did frequently transform ethical reflection into action, the following sections consider how – in certain situations or scenarios – they were: (i) mindful of ethics yet unwilling to make any corresponding behavioural change (reflexive inertia) (6.3); and (ii) impeded by a set of practical considerations that impacted the extent to which their ethical ideals could be implemented in practice (pragmatic utility) (6.4).

### **6.3 Reflexive Inertia**

In stark contrast to walking the talk, there were also instances where respondents were reflexive about ethics but unwilling to translate this into corresponding ethical behaviours. The following section reveals instances of such reflexive inertia alongside the post-hoc 'repair' work subsequently undertaken as a practice of self-care. Ethical work is a Foucauldian term for one of four independent categories that seek to elucidate the relationship between ethical analysis and the self: a form of critical activity, it is defined as "the work one

performs to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behaviour" (Rabinow, 1997: XXXIII). Viewing ethical ('repair') work in the context of reflexive inertia is particularly pertinent, therefore, as it reveals the activities or choices that responsible tourists engage in to transform into ethical subjects after they have specifically chosen not to act ethically.

This section demarcates three rationalisations for reflexive inertia: 'once in a lifetime experiences' (6.3.1); 'identity protection' (6.3.2); and 'rendering the unethical ethical' (6.3.3). Where applicable, this section also attends to the ethical work that the tourists conducted to rationalise, repair or redeem their reflexive inertia.

### **6.3.1 'Once in a Lifetime' Experiences**

This rationale captures instances wherein tourists recognised that their ethics were often bracketed by a greater desire to participate in particular, novel excursions. Sam personified this position. When asked what types of ethical practices he engaged in at home, Sam responded that he walked a lot as he had "*always had this appreciation of the environment*". However, in the Active Phase, he candidly recorded how he had participated in a helicopter ride "*over and onto the glaciers*" in New Zealand, an activity which he recognised was "*not environmentally sound, unsustainable and contributes little to preserving the environment*". Extract 32a, taken from his diary, reveals how he rationalised his participation on the grounds that it was a 'once in a lifetime' experience:

**Extract 32a (S15\_A):** To me it was a once in a lifetime thing and so I just did it despite the expense too. I may have 'supported' a local business but that wasn't the primary justification for doing it. I must admit that I

also didn't feel guilty or wracked with the need to offset my footprint consciously.

Sam's case elucidates how responsible tourists can comprehend, in quite sophisticated ways, the ethical implications of their experiences yet choose not to make any corresponding alterations to their actions. With regard to negative ethical implications, Sam did not feel any tensions associated with the environmentally damaging nature of the helicopter ride, nor did he feel compelled to engage in any compensatory activities or behaviours to offset this damage. Further, in regard to positive ethical implications, it is clear that he viewed any benefits arising from the helicopter ride – i.e. supporting a local business – as transpiring solely as a by-product of his participation. Half way through his holiday, Sam became reflexive of his apathy, and resolved:

**Extract 32b (S15\_A):** I have concluded that I do not make 'ethically correct' choices while being a tourist as much as I hoped I would. I think my decisions are primarily driven by affordability and whether I want to have the experience or not [...]. So I suppose I do what I want to do on holiday, cost permitting, and then sort of justify it to myself that there is some element of doing those things that is ethical - so it's more retrospectively ethical - rather than prospectively perhaps?

Overall it is clear that the locus of ethical agency resided with the tourism excursion as opposed to with Sam as an individual tourist. Sam attempted to regain an element of control by *retrospectively* ascribing ethical attributes to the consequences of his participation, but this appeared somewhat tokenistic given his claims – in Extract 32a – that he was not concerned about ethics at the time of participation. In this vein, whereas Casico and Plant (2015) report instances of 'prospective moral licensing' – whereby “behaving morally allows a person to subsequently behave immorally (p.110) – Sam's case is suggestive of retrospective moral licensing; in that he attempted to later assign ethical

consequences of, or benefits to, what was at the time recognised as an unethical activity.

In the Reflective Phase, Sam continued to be reflexive of his helicopter ride, and again reiterated that it was “*one of the things that [he] thought ‘well where else am I going to be able to do that?’*”. In this regard, drawing on the work of Barkan et al (2015), it appears that Sam’s effort to justify his unethical behaviour was indicative of an attempt to reduce ‘experienced dissonance’; with Sam again endeavouring to defend his wrongdoing – after the event – by employing “post-violation justifications to compensate for [his] guilt and re-establish [his] moral self” (p.158). It is noted that, following from his justification, the researcher questioned Sam as to whether he thought that the holiday space in general necessitated that tourists relax their ethics (comparative to their ‘home’ life) in order to achieve certain novel experiences. Sam responded:

**Extract 32c (S15\_R):** I think that’s true to a certain extent. But I think the way you behave on a – well, you know, on a twenty-four seven thing – you don’t just shake it all off when you go on holiday [...]. I think those essential values of yourself stay with you. And because, again, I’m, you know, not sort of trying to sanctify myself or anything... is that because I’ve always been interested in the environment and the natural world, I’m naturally attracted to places where I can just indulge in that interest. And somewhere like – excuse me – New Zealand is full of all that. So it was always going to appeal to me in terms of being out amongst beautiful landscape, fantastic wildlife, and things. That was the bit that was appealing. So I just naturally followed that.

It is apparent, therefore, that Sam’s case reveals a contradiction. Sam claimed that an appreciation for the environment was one of his “*essential values*” that “*you don’t just shake off when you go on holiday*”, and that he was “*naturally attracted*” to sites and spaces which allowed him to “*indulge*” in his interest. At the same time, in indulging his interest – and observing the glacial environment

– he was sentient to the fact that his helicopter ride was “*not environmentally sound*” (Extract 32a). This signals that reflexive inertia can also be self-justified through a complex balancing of ‘home’ ethics (“*twenty-four seven*” values) and ‘away’ motivations (‘following’ the environmental appeal). Put simply, Sam was aware of the negative impact of the helicopter ride, yet appeared to vindicate his unethical participation by paradoxically stressing that it was his day-to-day fascination with the environment that impelled his decision to participate.

In contrast to Sam – who “*didn’t feel guilty*” (Extract 32a) – Maria detailed how she felt “*horrible*” for prioritising her experience over her ethics. In the Reflective Phase, Maria was asked whether she could recall an experience that she initially thought would be ethical but, in reality, wasn’t. Here, Maria recounted an ethical tension encountered on a previous holiday when wanting to travel by boat from Haloi to Halong Bay (Vietnam):

**Extract 33a (M9\_R):**

- Maria: I got a big shock because when I got off the bus, and I go to the port, and I saw all that many boats, and then I thought the pollution to the bay and to the water and I felt horrible. I felt like this is totally wrong. As so many boats, and all of them in... you could smell the petrol, you know? And then I felt like ‘well I want to go and to visit the bay’, you know, but then in the other hand I felt like ‘I’m being horrible, like this is not really ethical or sustainable. I’m damaging the environment and I’m contributing to that’. So that’s a time where I felt really bad about it
- Interviewer: Yeah? And how did you resolve that? Did you still go on the trip or did you decide not to?
- Maria: I went in to the trip, I’m not going to lie, because I was already there and I wanted to go around Halong Bay and to enjoy Halong Bay.

It is clear that, Maria not only felt personally responsible for the fact that her boat trip would ‘damage’ the environment, but that she struggled to

counterbalance her desire to “*enjoy Halong Bay*” with how her participation (which was “*totally wrong*” and “*not really ethical or sustainable*”) made her feel as a person (“*I felt really bad*”). Yet, despite the reported severity of this struggle, Maria still exhibited reflexive inertia in that she ultimately subjugated her ethical anxieties and resolved to continue with the unethical activity. Following from Extract 33a, however, she immediately highlighted how she attempted to exonerate her participation by researching into whether she could have visited Halong Bay via more ethical means. She said:

**Extract 33b (M9\_R):** But then, after the trip, I actually researched if there would have been another possibility to do the same trip in a more sustainable way. And then I found actually back in the time there was only one agency in Hanoi that did like a responsible tourism, but they didn’t market it much, so that’s why I didn’t find it. So you know, next time that I go, for example, I will know better and then when I speak with people actually advise like, ‘you’ve got a couple of agencies in Hanoi if you want to visit and, you know, it will have less impact, because they don’t go to Halong Bay, they go to a sister bay which you can still visit and it’s beautiful’. And also, you know, they only had a local people contribute to training and local community so it’s better.

Thus, like Sam, it was Maria’s retrospective behaviour that enabled her to repair her initial reflexive inertia. On her return, she researched more sustainable alternatives for visiting Halong Bay, and found one responsible travel company. To this end, she attempted to redeem herself by suggesting that, while she would have preferred to travel with this agency, the company’s lack of marketing in Vietnam rendered her unaware that such an option was available to her at the time. She emphasised that, given this new information, she: (i) would “*know better*” for the next time that *she* travels there; and (ii) be able to direct (“*advise*”) *others* to the more sustainable travel agency. In this vein, Maria’s narrative is akin to Shalvi et al’s (2015) notion of ‘cleansing’, in that she was able to atone

for her initial ‘polluting’ (Extract 33a) experience by seeking a “*more sustainable way*” for her (and others’) future experiences.

### **6.3.2 Identity Protection**

A second rationale for reflexive inertia was that it was a form of identity protection. This was particularly important for Lina, who purposefully suppressed her ethics as she was conscious of not wanting to appear an overly ethical individual. In the Prospective Phase, Lina continually highlighted the importance of recycling. She described the responsible tourist as someone who would make “*an effort to actually recycle*”, and told of how, after researching recycling for her Master’s degree, and visiting a recycling factory/eco-park with her university, she was “*more aware of recycling*” and tried to “*do it more*”. While she did note that she would “*only recycle if there was like recycling bins around*”, she emphasised that recycling was generally an activity that she had an interest in. Against this backdrop, Lina noted a concern in her diary pertaining to the amount of plastic she had accumulated during her in-flight meal:

**Extract 34a (L4\_A):** On the plane, the foods they served were all packaged for safety reasons and we had plastic cups too. After my meal I had a tray full of food wrappers and I noticed they were all put into one bin bag. I wonder if they will be recycled.

When asked at the beginning of the Reflective Phase if she would like to steer the initial direction of the interview, the plastic accrued on the plane was the very first diary entry that Lina discussed. Extract 34b highlights Lina’s reflection on the disparity between her desired and actual behaviour, in that, while she wanted to question the cabin crew as to whether food packaging would be

recycled, she problematised whether in doing so she would look “*a bit too into it*”:

**Extract 34b (L4\_R):** Most of the food they serve was obviously packaged. And there seemed like there was quite a lot. I was like aware of... I was aware of, you know, the packaging, and how they dispose of it. But I didn't – I probably should have – but I just didn't ask about, you know, whether they're going to recycle that. Because it felt like – like with the whole conflict thing – I felt like I'd be like, you know, the passenger that was a bit too into it. So I just kind of just left it [laughter]. So, I mean I felt bad, but I just kind of just left it.

This extract reveals how Lina's ethical dilemma did not simply stop at the unethical practice (i.e. the disposal of packaging), but caused additional “*conflict*” with regards to what her voiced concern would intimate about her identity as a responsible consumer. This indicates that tourists occasionally suppress their internal ethics – even at the expense of significant personal tension (“*I felt bad*”) – for fear of the external image they portray to others. This finding adds to the recent work of Papaoikonomou et al (2017), who examine the ways in which ethical consumers construct and communicate their ethical identity to others. The authors emphasise the importance of the in-group out-group dynamic, with ethical consumers often wanting to construct themselves as being part of the in-group. In Lina's case, however, it appears that she constructs ethical consumerism as being an out-group activity. Put simply, Lina appeared to suggest that being perceived as “*too*” ethical was damaging to the presentation of self. This concurs with the findings of Antonetti and Maklan (2016), who claim that individuals often attempt to disassociate themselves from the ‘warm’ ethical identity (i.e. the ‘hippies, greenies and tree-huggers’).

To this end, Lina later self-questioned her ethics, and felt that her resolution to silence her tension served to limit the extent to which she could construct herself

as a responsible tourist (i.e. “*in terms of like the things [she] did and things [she] didn't do*”). When asked how she would describe her identity as a responsible tourist after her trip to Morocco, she responded:

**Extract 34c (L4\_R):** Like, for example, on the plane I could have... I feel like if I was really ethical I could have asked the flight attendant and be like, ‘so do you guys recycle this?’. Like I wouldn’t care about, you know, what people think, or how people would feel about being ethical [...]. So yeah, there’s certain things I just feel like I don’t think a truly ethical person would do.

Lina was mindful that had she been a “*truly ethical person*” she would have been prepared to speak to the air steward, regardless of how others conceived of her actions. Firstly, this suggests that Lina was aware that she had the freedom to act upon her ethical tension (“*I could have*”), yet opted not to as a form of identity protection; highlighting that agency can very much be expressed in terms of what tourists choose not to do as much as what they choose to do. Secondly, Lina’s narrative suggests that consumers constantly assess their own ethical behaviour – or lack of behaviour – against a self-constructed, ideological benchmark of what constitutes a ‘true’ responsible subject. This is neatly depicted in a statement following Extract 34c, where Lina rated herself as “*a four*” out of ten on her (personal) responsible tourist scale; claiming “*I’d give myself a higher score first time around [in the Prospective Phase], and now I feel like I’m actually a four after I’ve gone to Morocco*”. This exposes the way in which consumers negotiate, in quite convoluted ways, their subject position as a responsible tourist, and how the (discursive) strength and scope of their responsible tourist identity can fluctuate across different spaces in light of their (in)action.

Josh also decided against vocalising his ethical tensions, however his reflexive inertia arose as a means of protecting the identity of the *host* as opposed to the self. In this sense, Josh's reflexive inertia was outer-oriented, as opposed to inner-oriented. In the Prospective Phase, the researcher asked Josh whether he could recall a previous experience wherein he felt ethical tension, to which he recalled a ferry boat trip in Indonesia. Extract 35a portrays how he problematised the way in which the locals were disposing waste into the sea:

**Extract 35a (J12\_P):** And it was around the time of Ramadan – so it was packed with locals – and you sort of see the locals, who perhaps aren't aware of the effect on the environment their actions might have – so they were just throwing stuff overboard into the sea. So there was kind of a line of rubbish going behind. And then in fact a lot of the crews threw stuff over as well – and mostly waste food actually – and so then you get a flock of birds coming behind the boat to sort of eat the scraps of food that have been thrown overboard.

Following from this, the researcher asked Josh whether his ethical tension arose in response to extreme differentiation between host practice and 'home' ethics.

Josh answered:

**Extract 35b (J12\_P):** Yeah. It was an internal conflict within me, but it wasn't something I ever voiced to them. Because I thought... I think part of the reason was because I could see... because I'm very lucky in that I've had a good education in this country that you know how even small amounts of waste into the sea can have a big impact on the environment. And then so you feel tension. You sort of feel like you should say something, but then actually the locals don't know any better because that's what they've always done. They may have never seen the direct effects of it, and they probably haven't been educated about it. But being British, you sort of tend to keep those tensions within yourself don't you? Rather than vocalising them.

This expounds how reflexive inertia can in and of itself be considered an ethical practice. In the other examples, reflexive inertia surfaced in instances where tourists were averse to making personal sacrifices (i.e. loss of face; loss of experience), yet Josh was sensitive to how him acting on (or voicing) his ethical

views would be inappropriate given the disparate worldviews between the host and guest. More specifically, Josh recognised that, as a tourist, he was not in a position to question the ferry crew because (i) their actions were a longstanding practice (“*that’s what they’ve always done*”), and (ii) they lacked the knowledge pertaining to how their practice had adverse environmental impacts (“*they probably haven’t been educated about it*”). Hence, this underscores the ways in which responsible tourists – in certain instances – deem it preferable to silence their individual (micro) beliefs, morals and values in order to respect (macro) socio-cultural divergences and protect the host’s way of life. In many ways, this thus links to self (de)regulation (6.2.1), in that Josh relaxed his own personal ethical boundaries in order to respect traditional practice in Indonesia. More specifically, it shows how practices of self-reflexivity – in this case, walking the talk and reflexive inertia – can in fact be, somewhat paradoxically, interrelated.

### **6.3.3 Rendering the Unethical Ethical**

The third rationalisation for reflexive inertia was that there are (purportedly) ethical elements to unethical experiences. June epitomised this approach when discussing her elephant ride in India. Interestingly, her case is distinct from the other examples, in that it was her reflections from her current holiday that occasioned a sense of reflexive inertia for *future* holidays. June recorded in her diary that she went “*up hill on an elephant*” while visiting Amber Fort, an event which she elaborated upon (unprompted) in the Reflective interview:

**Extract 36a (J14\_R):** I read since that apparently that’s one of the most awful things for an elephant to have to tolerate and survive. I hadn’t

realised that beforehand. Because these poor elephants just trudge up and down hoiking tourists. But we enjoyed it nonetheless.

It is clear from Extract 36a that, after reading a newspaper article on elephant-riding (see Appendix 5), June became empathetic towards the plight of working elephants; both in terms of the activities that they engage in (“*trudge up*”; “*hoiking*”), and the (“*awful*”) conditions that they have to endure (“*tolerate*”; “*survive*”). It is also interesting that after expressing her empathy, she immediately highlighted that she still “*enjoyed*” the experience – indicating that, for her, the pleasure she received from the experience was just as important, if not more important, than the unethicity of the activity. To this end, the researcher questioned June as to whether she would go on an elephant ride again knowing that it would possibly result in their mistreatment. She claimed that she would “*still give it a go*”, and rationalised her decision on the grounds that any material alterations to her future behaviour were unwarranted as the unethical practice would continue to take place, regardless of her participation:

**Extract 36b (J14\_R):** I think I would give it a go because you realise too it’s employment. The mahout or whatever is doing a job. So although the elephants are not very happy, somebody is going to be sitting on them. And if I didn’t somebody else would. So it wouldn’t make a whole lot of difference. Because that’s the way they’ve chosen to earn their living.

June was prepared to overlook the fact that the “*elephants are not very happy*”, as, in her eyes, it was irrelevant whether (or not) she boycotted the excursion. She was perceptive to the extreme likelihood that another tourist would simply take her place, and therefore felt that she might as well be the one to ‘enjoy’ the experience. She did, however, attempt to balance and/or offset her (inner-oriented) unwillingness to sacrifice her elephant ride with the (outer-oriented) benefits to local employment; suggesting that her decision served to support the

“chosen [...] living” of the mahout, which to her was, in itself, an ethical practice. Overall, therefore, this case highlights how when tourists want to participate in an unethical experience, they often: (i) attempt to lessen any negative side effects by seeking positive aspects, and (ii) absolve their participation by highlighting that their involvement is somewhat immaterial.

#### **6.3.4 Summary of Reflexive Inertia**

This theme has demonstrated that the locus of ethical agency is not always experienced as being with the individual tourist, but often with attributes of the holiday product. As evidenced in the above cases, all of the responsible tourists were aware of the contradictions involved in engaging in specific tourism experiences and were cognisant to how this subsequently stimulated ethical dilemmas and trade-offs. For some tourists, silencing their ethical tensions was deemed a preferred alternative to relinquishing unique holiday experiences (such as helicopter rides (Sam), boat rides (Maria), and elephant rides (June)), even in situations wherein consumers felt significant distress (Maria). For other tourists, reflexive inertia was a form of identity maintenance, with consumers silencing their ethical anxieties – and internal conflicts – in order to protect their sense of self (Lina) *or* protect the regional practices of the other (Josh).

This section has also uncovered the ways in which some consumers attempted to repair their reflexive inertia through post-hoc ethical work. This is evident in the excerpts of Sam, who retrospectively ascribed ethical attributes to his experience; Maria, who researched into more ethical alternatives to increase her (and others’) knowledge base; Lina, who altered the degree to which she

considered herself a responsible consumer; and June, who extracted ethical tenets of an unethical product. This ignites important insights into the self-care techniques that consumers employ to (re)construct their identity as a responsible tourist in instances where ethical actions and behaviours were (to varying degrees) absent.

Overall, the empirical findings of this theme predominantly contribute to literature examining the attitude-behaviour gap (e.g. Carrington et al, 2010 ('Why Ethical Consumers Don't Walk their Talk'); Govind et al, 2017 ('Not Walking the Walk')). Within this, it has specifically contributed by providing a sociological, discursive insight into previous psychological research into retrospective dissonance (Shalvi et al, 2015), showing how there is an argument to be made for *retrospective* moral licensing (e.g. Casico & Plant, 2015).

#### **6.4 Pragmatic Utility**

While reflexive inertia examined the ways in which tourists were *unwilling* to walk the talk, pragmatic utility highlights the impedances that affect the extent to which responsible tourists *could* walk the talk. In this regard, pragmatic utility is concerned with the practical factors upon which consumers' ethics were contingent. This section demarcates the micro (finance; fellow travellers), macro (infrastructural availability; weather) and micro-macro (guest-host language barrier) influences that consumers problematise as limiting their agency and considers the ways in which they seek to rationalise or resolve them.

### 6.4.1 (Infrastructural) Availability

Mirroring findings elsewhere (e.g. Papaoikonomou et al, 2011), the most frequently cited impedance was a lack of infrastructure and/or services that facilitated ethical practice. Infrastructural availability was problematised in three (sometimes interrelated) ways: (i) *unavailability*, (ii) hard or *difficult* to ‘do’/‘find’, and (3) ‘home’ and ‘away’ *differences* in availability (see Table 3.2). In this vein, the locus of ethical agency resided with specific destination-level or product-level characteristics as opposed to with the responsible tourists themselves. This subsection shows how lack of availability was exclusively problematised in reference to three main areas – vegetarianism/veganism, public transport networks, and recycling facilities – and highlights the strategies consumers employed to resolve or rationalise their resultant struggle.

***Vegetarianism/veganism: Locate or make:*** Freddie and Edward spoke of how sourcing vegetarian cuisine was particularly problematic on their current holiday. For example, Freddie recorded that “*the 2 veggies in [his] party did not fare so well with the menu*” (F6\_A) in Lanzarote, and Edward highlighted that “*because [they’re] vegetarian [they] struggled to find decent places to eat*” (E2\_R) in France. Knowing from the Prospective Phase that Edward’s vegetarianism was constructed as a “*moral*” practice that he had engaged in for thirty-five years, the researcher specifically asked him to focus on his experience of finding vegetarian food after reading that he had only been able to find “*a (sort of) vegetarian restaurant*” (E2\_A) in La Rochelle. Here, Edward reflected that locating vegetarian food was particularly difficult when travelling off the beaten track, a key tenet of responsible tourism (see 5.4):

**Extract 37 (E2\_R):** I mean it's not necessarily typical of France – I mean a lot of European countries it's quite difficult. And it's just something we're used to and have just adapted, you know. We know it's going to be difficult. It's less difficult when you go to larger towns because they've obviously got potentially a larger audience, and therefore the chances are there's going to be a few more vegetarians than there would be in say a smaller town. But they – you know, in France for instance – they quite like their offal [laughter] and things like that. Which I... just a complete turn off – just a complete turn off. Even if they served vegetarian food and served offal I just couldn't cope with it – the smell and things like that.

Edward recognised (and accepted) that, as he was staying outside of a tourist hotspot, his gastronomic options would be limited. Therefore, following from Extract 37, Edward recounted how, in situations such as this, he attempted to resolve his ethical tension in one of two ways. First, he tried to locate a vegetarian restaurant upon his arrival at a new destination (“*So one of the priorities as soon as we get anywhere is just to seek out vegetarian restaurants*”); even when successful, however, it appears that different (host) constructions as to what constitutes vegetarian food can be challenging (“*I've been to France before and, you know, I've ended up eating a plate of lettuce because that's what they consider to be vegetarian food*”). Second, he purchased supplies from the local supermarket and cooked for himself (“*eat a lot at home*”). While he deemed cooking at home to be less preferable than going out to a restaurant (“*it's nice not to have to think about food and go out and have certain different delicacies*”), he jokingly rationalised that it eventually reaches the point where, if a variety of vegetarian food isn't available, “*there's only so many pizzas you can eat [laughter], and there's only so much pasta you can eat*”. In sum, therefore, Edward's case evidences how vegetarian food was not common place in France (i.e. *difficult*), making it harder to source vegetarian food than when in the UK (i.e. *differences*).

**Public transport networks: Drive or don't see:** Half of the participants who had use of a car on holiday justified their driving by problematising the lack of public transport available in the holiday destination. In the Prospective Phase, Sam projected that while driving “*doesn't feel the best thing to do*”, he didn't feel that he would be “*cheating [himself] from an environmental point of view*” because he had read that the outer-city public transport system in New Zealand “*isn't great*”. He later affirmed his position in the Reflective Phase, claiming that tourists such as himself would “*struggle to see anywhere properly without [their] own independent transport*” (i.e. *difficult*). Sam's case is interesting, therefore, as it is evident that his problematisation of the lack of infrastructure did not induce ethical tension, but instead served to absolve him from feeling anxiety given the lack of a feasible alternative. In contrast, Anne expressed severe disappointment regarding the amount of driving she and her family did in Devon (UK), claiming that it was “*probably the only thing that [they] compromised ethically on*”. In the Prospective Phase, Anne projected that driving would be a “*necessary evil*” because you “*can't really always rely on the local services*” (i.e. *difficult*), a position which she too affirmed in the Reflective Phase. When the researcher asked her whether there was a strong public transport network in place, Anne stated:

**Extract 38 (A10\_R):** We were thinking of catching a bus. But actually it didn't look – we didn't see a bus at all – it didn't look [laughter] like it was very regular. It looked like you had to be really on the ball. And, you know, it was probably once an hour or something.

Anne's case highlights how some responsible tourists still attempt to engage in ethical practices (“*we were thinking of catching a bus*”), even in instances where they know that – in reality – the likelihood of them being able to do so is minimal. It is particularly interesting, therefore, that Anne felt so disappointed

in herself for driving when, in the Prospective Phase, she was already highly aware that it was likely her only option for seeing the sites and sights in the more rural areas. To this end, Anne recounted how she attempted to compensate by planning her week in Devon in a way which reduced unnecessary mileage; ensuring that they still tried to lessen their environmental impact by grouping their activities by area (“*oh, while we’re here we’ll do that’, kind of thing*”). Overall, this shows how tourists construct the same impedance in different ways; with some tourists happily rationalising that the lack of infrastructure excused – or even necessitated – their driving (i.e. Sam), while others strived to re-work their driving in a way which still signalled an ethical approach (i.e. Anne).

***Recycling: Waste not want not:*** Participants commonly problematised the lack of recycling facilities in the holiday destination. In the Prospective Phase, Anne recognised that “*the only trouble is sometimes when you’re on holiday it’s not very easy to recycle things*”; something which was corroborated by Connor, who claimed that the way in which other local governments “*deal with waste and that sort of thing is often much worse than home. So it’s more a case of getting there and not feeling necessarily comfortable that you can’t recycle*” (i.e. *differences*). Given their projected ethical tension, both Anne (Image 7) and Connor (Image 8) captured photographs in order to show the researcher how glad they were to find that there were (“*excellent*” (C8\_R)) recycling facilities in Devon and Peru; particularly because it meant that they would be able to transfer their ‘home’ ethics to their ‘away’ environment (Barr et al, 2010) (e.g. “*Because we do recycle stuff at home. And I do try and do that as much as I can. So, yeah, yeah, great. So I was pleased about that*” (A10\_R)).



**Image 7** Recycling facilities at self-catering cottage, Devon (A10\_A)



**Image 8** Recycling facilities in Peru (C8\_A)

In contrast to Anne and Connor, Giovanna problematised the fact that she had no control over depositing her recyclable waste (herself) on her road-trip around northern Spain as there were no facilities available (i.e. *unavailable*). To this end, Giovanna wrote in her diary that she had resolved to temporarily store the plastic in the boot of her car until she could locate a recycling point (“*go around with this big full bag of bottle[s] looking for one*”), something which she was asked to expand upon in the Reflective Phase. Giovanna reflected:

**Extract 39 (G1\_R):** When you see them altogether you really think ‘I shouldn’t put them in the general waste, because that is a huge amount’. It is ten days’ worth of plastic bottles [laughter] – it’s a lot. And you think ‘oh that should definitely go into recycling, this is making a difference’. I truly believe in that. That can be something in the future [laughter]. And but we never find it. Never. Every time we are in a big town I always look for recycling point – never find it. The last day I found one, but it was just for glass. So no, not useful. And so I thought that it could have been a good idea to throw them away at the airport. Because they do have the plastic bins where you can throw away the plastic bottles. But they were really heavy, and I didn’t want to carry them around. So yes, I did trust the company that said ‘oh don’t worry, we will sort it out’. But I’m not ok with that.

[...] Because I don’t know if they actually cared that much that they are going to do that. Maybe there was a bin just there, and I couldn’t see it, and they told me that because there was one [laughter]. But I can’t trust, I can’t know it. And yes this is something that really makes me upset – at the end of each holiday I can’t find where to recycle these things and I don’t know what I should do. And most of the time I just decide to trust whoever is saying that they will do it, because I have not much choice.

Giovanna’s narrative not only reveals the angst she experienced when confronted with the sheer amount of plastic, but the way in which the sheer volume of plastic reinforced (to her) the importance of recycling. Consequently, while she would have preferred to recycle the plastic herself, she unwillingly apportioned her responsibility on to the car-company as it appeared the best option for increasing the chances of the plastic being recycled.

Nonetheless, Giovanna was aware of the relations of power between herself and the local car-hire company; recognising that the (non)enactment of her ethical will was subject to whether or not the employees did in fact recycle the bottles. In this regard, devolving her responsibility still induced anxiety, as she neither had the knowledge of whether they were committed to ratifying their offer (“*I don’t know if they actually cared that much that they are going to do that*”), nor the knowledge as to whether (or not) they did “*sort it out*” (“*I can’t know it*”).

While Giovanna was pragmatic in her comprehension that she had “*not much choice*”, she felt considerable distress by the conditions that her situation enforced (“*really makes me upset*”).

In this regard, the data of all three participants, but especially Giovanna’s, exposes the practical need for local governments to increase the recycling facilities available. While this might be harder to execute in areas off the beaten track – where ‘responsible’ tourists commonly holiday (5.4) – it would still be expedient for local governments to implement good recycling facilities in tourism hotspots, or hubs (i.e. airports), increasing the opportunity for tourists to dispose of their waste in an ethical manner.

#### **6.4.2 Language Barriers**

The second most frequently cited impediment to consumers’ ethical agency was the language barrier between tourists and the local population. Table 6.2 evidences how participants reported that a shared language (or language proficiency) enabled tourists to interact with locals on the host’s terms (Alex; Maisie); allowed them to make themselves understood (Barbara) while having the capacity to understand others (Edward; Giovanna; Sam); and bolstered their confidence to ‘go it alone’ away from the support of the tourism industry (Connor; Mabel). While the language barrier was recognised as an impedance by volunteer tourists in the work of Coren and Gray (2012), it is interesting to note that half of the participants of this thesis – who stayed in the holiday destination for less time than the length of a volunteer tourism project – also reported its role in affecting guest-host interaction. This subsection demonstrates

Alex (A5_R)	If you want to have the kind of ethical approach to tourism that I wanted to, is you actually need to speak to the people and be able to like talk to them in their language. And that's such an important thing and something I missed out on.
Barbara (B16_P)	But the thing I find when I'm abroad is the language. That's the only thing that bothers me. Because I can't explain. [...]But that language barrier is a... it's frustrating.
Connor (C8_R)	I did feel quite confident, and I think it's the language issue. So for me, if it had been a country where they didn't speak English [laughter], and didn't speak Spanish, then it would have been different maybe. I would have probably been a bit more reluctant to do things on our own.
Edward (E2_P)	If you don't speak the language, which, well fortunately I can. I can speak French so it's maybe not such as issue, but if you get... I mean some of the places you've been to and you really don't know what you should or shouldn't be doing.
Giovanna (G1_R)	Sometimes it's not that easy because the accent can be different, and when you don't understand you might just want to give up. So it's not always that easy.
Maisie (M3_P)	But because I have a background in foreign languages, and I can talk [laughter], I always like to learn something of a foreign language if I go anywhere. Even if it's just 'please' and 'thank you'. If they're the only two words I can speak I feel like it balances up the relationship.
Mabel (M7_R)	And it depends on language differences as well. I mean I've been to Croatia and Bulgaria and Vienna, and I don't have those languages, so it's easier to go with an organised group.
Sam (S15_P)	And I think we've not felt the same spirit of adventure if we went to say India or China. That doesn't really appeal to us, because I think we'd struggle to sort of, you know, connect with it all simply from language barrier point of view and the cultural point of view. I don't think it's necessarily xenophobia it's just that it doesn't feel... I think we'd be too stressed by the need to communicate and to understand how things work. Whereas one of the things when you are places that are predominantly English speaking is you can make yourself understood, you can ask.

**Table 6.2** The problematisation of language

how some participants resolved to learn the language as a practice of self-care, while others problematised the difficulties associated with speaking the (non-native) language.

**Learning the language:** Learning basic phrases of the local language was inevitably constructed as the best means of overcoming the language barrier. When discussing the unfamiliarity of Borneo in the Prospective Phase, Alex mentioned that he had learnt some key “*courtesies*” as he thought it would allow him to communicate with locals in a way which didn’t make him appear “*a complete idiot*” (A5\_P). In light of this comment, the researcher asked him if learning the language was first and foremost a means of protecting his own self-image, to which he replied that while it was “*a bit about not being embarrassed*”, it was primarily about being “*respectful*” and not regarding himself as superior in any way. He stated:

**Extract 40a (A4\_P):** If you sort of turn up as kind of this European with no idea of what’s going on, you know, it’s not particularly... you’re not really doing it justice. You can’t interact with the culture, you can’t be friendly to the people, you’re just kind of another...it’s like I was saying you sort of see yourself as better than the place that you’re going.

In the Active Phase, Alex subsequently noted how – when having breakfast at a local café – he “*said ‘thank you’ in Malay and the staff seemed delighted*”.

Expanding on this in the Reflective Phase, he recalled:

**Extract 40b (A5\_R):** I spent like a good hour on the plane with my Malay phrasebook like desperately trying to learn the... like the phrases that I needed [...]. I was like ‘oh God, I’ve got to get it right’ – because I was really like being aware that I didn’t want to come across like just pointing slowly. And then in sort of contrast to that, when I’d done this – and it was really easy, because they were very friendly – there was this like elderly British couple on the table next to me that ordered the western breakfast and like [laughter] just did the whole pointing. And I was like, ‘hmm...’. I felt like, I kind of felt sort of like – what’s the right word – kind of like I’d been doing the right thing. I was like ‘yeah, that’s what it could be like’, which was nice.

In this instance, it is apparent through the ethical work Alex conducted (“*a good hour on the plane with my Malay Phrasebook*”) that he was intent on making a

considerable effort (“*desperately trying*”) to speak basic Malay. Moreover, by contrasting his behaviour to that of other British tourists, he felt that his efforts had been fruitful. However, in other contexts, Alex was less satisfied with the way in which the language barrier meant he was presenting himself. He mentioned in his diary how his inability to speak the language proficiently presented an issue after he accidentally broke an ashtray. He wrote:

**Extract 40c (A5\_A):** I gesticulated and knocked an ashtray off the balcony, which slid down an awning and shattered on the street below. This caused immense confusion as we tried to explain what had happened, and one member of staff thought it was a sign that we didn’t like the table, and offered us somewhere else to sit. [...] Also I felt like I was tiresome to the staff, as we didn’t [speak] much Malay to them and the slowness of service meant I had to go and ask several times. I hope I didn’t come across as an ignorant Westerner demanding alcohol and jabbing my fingers at the menu. We did smile and say ‘telima kasih’ a lot, and left good feedback on the form, so I hope that we repaired whatever impression we may have left.

This excerpt demonstrates how – in environments where he spoke less Malay – Alex feared he came across as an “*ignorant Westerner*”. His inability to communicate the “*slowness of service*” in any way other than to speak English and point served to significantly influence his (previously positive) self-image as a responsible tourist. Alex was affected by this ethical tension to the point where he conducted ‘repair’ work in situ, namely by speaking the Malay phrases he did know – i.e. expressions of thanks such as ‘telima kasih’ – and leaving positive customer satisfaction feedback. To this end, one of Alex’s conclusions from the Reflective Phase was that his agency as an ethical consumer was most impacted by the language barrier, in that it was the “*kind of the sort of ceiling of how far [he] could go*”. He conceded that “*it’s a really hard thing to do, but you need to speak the language if you’re going to these places because I think*

*otherwise, literally there's no way you can get sort of on the same level as local people".*

**Talking the language:** In contrast to Alex, who had to learn basic Malay phrases from scratch, Connor, Edward and Giovanna were more comfortable on their holiday as they were able to speak the language relatively fluently. However, this in itself was not sufficient to completely eliminate tensions. For example, Giovanna capitulated that *"sometimes it's not that easy because the accent can be different, and when you don't understand you might just want to give up"* (G1\_R), while Edward joked that *"it's probably worse now because the older I get, they all... all the languages seem to merge, you know, and I'll be speaking Spanish in French, I mean France"* (E2\_P). Edward also problematised how his identity as an English tourist impeded his freedom to speak French. When steering the opening of the Reflective interview, Edward claimed that his *"memory kicked in"* and that he was able to remember French. He commented that while he improved as the holiday went on, there were times when French people started speaking to him in English:

**Extract 41 (E2\_R):** It's made difficult I guess by the fact that some – certainly La Rochelle where we went to – was quite touristy and they automatically, as soon as you start struggling, they start speaking English. Yeah. Which is a bit frustrating I guess. But it's just par for the course.

As English is widely spoken, it could be that service providers take pleasure in assisting tourists in a language in which both parties are well-versed, and/or that English tourists present locals with the opportunity to 'practice' their own second-languages (e.g. June commented in her diary that the local children in India *"were thrilled to practice speaking English"*). In either case, Edward's

remarks intimate that, as much as responsible tourists wish to integrate with the host by speaking their language, tourists' inevitable 'distinctness' appears to impede the extent to which this is always practicable.

### **6.4.3 Finance**

Mirroring papers aligning with the psychological strand of the ethical consumer literature (e.g. McEachern & McLean, 2002; Szmigin et al, 2009; Ritch & Schroder, 2012) (1.2.3), finance (or price) was found to be a key problematisation in the context of responsible tourism. Unlike Bray et al's (2011) research into the 'Ethical Purchasing Gap', price sensitivity was not the most frequently cited impedance, yet it did (similarly) serve to induce personal annoyances and/or dissonance (e.g. "*Bit miffed with the Rainbow Cafe...very popular...VERY EXPENSIVE...why do we have to pay through the nose for eating ethically?*" (B16\_A)). On the main, price was primarily constructed as something which influenced the extent of tourists' ethical choices ("*the price factor is also a big part of my choice*" (M9\_R)) and incited the need for ethical attributes to be compromised in favour of cheaper alternatives ("*But then it's a trade-off*" (W13\_P)).

Although the cost of ethical products and services was not exclusively problematised by a particular subset or demographic of the sample, it is interesting to note that the four youngest participants projected that their ('home' and 'away') ethics would be balanced alongside financial considerations (Table 6.3). This corroborates the findings of Bucic et al (2012) who found that "price, quality and convenience drive the purchases of everyday products of Australian

Alex 20, Student (A5_P)	When I was camping in the States, like I could have bought sort of local, you know, food from with the area I was staying that was kind of from local produce. And maybe gone to local restaurants. But just because of, you know, sort of financial restrictions and ease of doing it, I instead just bought a Calor gas stove and some Ramen noodles [...]. I kind of bought a branded product, used some gas, and kind of just got on with my life. But that was because it was just kind of necessity really. You know, when you've not got a lot of money or you're in a sort of a more remote region, sometimes you... when you have to get on-brand stuff or stuff that isn't from the local area or whatever, just simply because it's an exigency.
Giovanna 25 (G1_P)	(i) And for the stay, of course I'm going to think about the price first probably. (ii) ...there are some compromises that I have to make. Which is the budget, for example. [...] Right now on a budget and with not a lot of time, sometimes I think there are... you need to compromise with at least travelling and money [laughter].
Lina 24, Student (L4_P)	I was thinking if there was like a few brands of tissue paper, for example, and one was made from like – I don't know – recyclable trees or something I would be more likely to pick that. But then that depends on the price, and like my perception of the quality of it.
William 24, Student (W13_P)	So like, you know, if I look into the trains and I find 'you know what, they're going to take forever and cost way more', then for me the environmental thing kind of goes out of the window because, you know, there's a trade-off.

**Table 6.3** The problematisation of finance/price amongst younger participants

*millennials*” (p.119, emphasis added). It appears that Alex, Giovanna, Lina and William’s ‘home’ subject positions of ‘young person’ and (with the exception of Giovanna) ‘student’ (see Table 3.4) influenced the strength of their ‘away’ identities as responsible tourists; this is perhaps unsurprising given that price is especially significant at a time of life where “*you’ve not got a lot of money*” (A5\_P) and/or you’re likely to be “*on a budget*” (G1\_P).

Sophie presented a unique case, in that she highlighted how the financial injection into her ‘principal’ (McCabe, 2009) tourism service impeded her agency to participate in additional responsible, ‘ancillary’ (ibid.) services. In this

vein, Sophie's responsibility in the Seychelles was contingent on whether the contents of her main tour package (a half-board hotel stay) allowed her to be ethical or not. In the Prospective Phase, Sophie stated that "*part of the enjoyment of going to new places is eating local food and whatever*". However, in contradiction this, Sophie reported that she tended to eat at the hotel's international buffet. This is particularly interesting, as in her diary she recorded her aversion to the buffet concept:

**Extract 42a (S11\_A):** I hate them! And people who overload plates! I don't enjoy it but it also seems very wasteful.

When discussing the content of her diary in the Reflective Phase, Sophie, before explicitly discussing buffets, provided the following pretext in a way which served to reinforce her initial projections in the Prospective Phase:

**Extract 42b (S11\_R):** So I really enjoy food. I love eating out, and I love sort of eating local food and all that kind of stuff. And that again is quite important to me when I go on holiday.

Yet, immediately following from this, Sophie began to reflect on how the conditions of her board basis – i.e. "*I don't think we could stay bed and breakfast – I think you had to do half board*" – meant that "*the options really were this sort of huge buffet type sort of restaurant*". Consequently, the researcher asked Sophie whether, had she have had the option to stay bed and breakfast, she would have done so in order to be able to eat locally instead. The following exchange ensued:

**Extract 42c (S11\_R):**

Sophie: We would definitely have preferred to do bed and breakfast, and then gone out and eaten in... we probably would have tried the hotel restaurants and things. Not the buffet ones, but maybe like the sort of more restaurant, à

la carte-y type ones. But we'd also want to get out and sort of try local sort of stuff as well. Really annoyingly, there was an absolutely brilliant little local sort of restaurant just across the beach [...]. There was lots of kind of like local produce, like fish and local dishes - like creel sort of dishes - that was the local kind of stuff. And it was really frustrating, because I thought 'actually, we'd have probably gone for dinner there every single night' if we could have done. But, you feel like you've paid to be half board, so it feels like...

Interviewer: The money tension again?

Sophie: Money tension again, yeah absolutely. That, you know, if you've paid for one thing, going and spending money elsewhere doesn't feel right.

From Extract 42c, it appears that Sophie's rationale encompassed a 'value for money' logic, suggesting that her pragmatic decision to commit to something she "*really [didn't] want to do*" (S11\_R) was about being an efficient, value-maximising consumer, even if it resulted in her sacrificing one of her initial enjoyments. It is interesting, however, that – viewing Sophie's extracts as a whole – it wasn't until midway through Extract 42c that she implied that it was the financial considerations associated with her half-board basis that rendered eating locally problematic ("*you feel like you've paid to be half board, so it feels like...*"). Up until this point, Sophie had simply focussed on her dislike of buffets and justified that this was the only option available to her. Consequently, it wasn't until the researcher clarified that it was the "*money tension again?*" that she confirmed that price/cost was the main source of anxiety ("*yeah absolutely*"). Put simply, it appears that while she would have preferred to have walked the talk (Extracts 42b and 42c), the financial constraints tied to her tourism product imposed a set of parameters around what she was actually willing to achieve.

#### 6.4.4 Fellow Travellers

Another problematisation centred on and around the wishes and requirements of tourists' travel companions; with Table 6.4 depicting how the presence of others was a key consideration at the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases of the tourism experience. For Alex and Edward, the cultural familiarity of their travel companions served to enhance their holiday; specifically, Alex took comfort in the opportunities for shared decision-making, while Edward found it easier to live like a French local. For others, the presence of fellow travellers meant that elements of their tourism experience were affected, in that it bounded or limited the activities that they participated in (e.g. Lina, Maisie, Maria and June). There were also instances where participants reported engaging in a tourism activity (e.g. Sam), or, more extremely, the entire holiday (e.g. Barbara), alone due to differences in interests between themselves and their loved ones.

For some participants, the *needs* of their travel companions meant that they had to sacrifice certain ethical actions and behaviours. This commonly, although not exclusively, occurred in relation to the needs of young children within the travel party (Lina) or soon-to-be mothers (Anne's daughter):

**Extract 43 (A10\_R):** I was aware that [daughter] – with being pregnant of course – you know, she's tired, and then you've got to wait for a bus. Whereas if you've got the car you can literally take her wherever.

**Extract 44 (L4\_R):** ... we could have walked sometimes. But as we were part of a group – and we actually had a baby with us as well, and the parents had like a pushchair and they just preferred to not walk – and I felt like I didn't, because we came on this together, I didn't want to like split the group up. So that's something that affected how ethical I was, I feel.

	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Alex	My <b>friend</b> , [name], he's another student coming on the course, he's in [place] at the moment, and he's actually joining me on the 4th – sorry, the night of the 3rd rather [laughter]. So, yeah, we'll all be together so we'll do something.	Do feel quite overwhelmed by everything though. The heat is oppressive, and the sheer amount of cultural difference has surprised me. Feel quite bewildered wandering around maybe because I didn't have a map. Jetlag doesn't help either I think. Decided to just relax in my room and maybe sleep a little bit. Put BBC World on the TV for company (and spoken English in the background). Worried that I'm missing out on some cultural experience or something, but it's very difficult to navigate on one's own.  Went for a wander around the night market. So much fun, and the fact that [three friends] showed me round earlier helped me get my bearings, and so I was more comfortable later on. Felt happier talking to the locals.	But [friend] was kind of a lot more... kind of with his 45litre backpack and showed up and was just quite chill about things. So it was a bit like “awh, you know, someone to make decisions with”. Which was quite helpful.
Barbara	If I'm taking [name], my <b>grandson</b> , everything impedes me [laughter].	I could go by train with [grandson] but the hassle?	Feel disappointed that I didn't find a holiday for [grandson] and I
Edward	So we're going to give [friends] a bit of company [...]. And, you know, it will be nice to see them and stuff like that. So as	Ended up taking <b>friends</b> car into local supermarket to get provisions for breakfast.	It was difficult to actually conscientiously be ethical I guess other than I think, you know, we tried to fit in as best we did, we didn't break the law, we tried to respect

Cont'd

	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Edward	well it's a bit of a R and R for [partner's name] and myself.		local people and stuff like that. It's helped by the fact that I think, our <b>friends</b> , they're very much fairly into French way of life.
June	The <b>group</b> of us – as far as where we're visiting – we sat down together and we picked out the places that we each thought it would be nice to see. For example, the official tourist places in the Golden Triangle, like the Taj Mahal and some of the temples. And then we're going to the south, where we have a chance to have a more rural time.	Skipped AM safari – [husband has] been drinking the local water - with obvious results.	My <b>husband</b> had been drinking the local water so wasn't able to do anything at all [laughter]. [...] The kids have always teased him about drinking the local water when he goes to places and him ending up with digestive problems [laughter]. But that does bring a point, there is absolutely no way anybody could drink anything but [plastic] bottled water.
Lina	I think sometimes I might experience tension between... seeing as I'm going with my <b>family</b> and like a few <b>friends</b> , in terms of like what they want to do.	We took a long trip to Essaouira, a nearby town. Along the way the roads were congested and I thought about pollution and how I was contributing to it. It would have been nice to walk around more but I couldn't because I wasn't familiar with the area.	Sometimes I felt like I wanted to walk, and just kind of explore a bit the area, but sometimes I didn't think it was safe doing that because I'd never been there before. So I just, I just said "ok, I'll just stick to the bus, and stick to like everyone else".
Maisie	I'm going with my <b>partner</b> and he doesn't do nature or anything green.	At times, on the way up, I felt irritated to have to turn off the car engine, but kept saying "Idiot! You ARE the traffic!". Looking at the ragwort's little yellow dancing flowers, I thought about the effect of all this on the green fields that have	We planned on going to Martin Mere but actually we ended up changing our plans, and we didn't go, and that's up here as well. Because my <b>partner</b> didn't really want to go, he wanted to see his parents. Because he's not really a nature lover. So

Cont'd

	Prospective	Active	Reflective
Maisie		been cleaved by this road, and every day, by us – by me. “Do you think we should have taken the train?” I ask [partner]. He just looks at me. He’s tired. In my mind, I think of Martin Mere and how, if I’d taken the train, I wouldn’t be able to go. The irony of using my car, to drive on roads which have been built destroying nature to go to visit nature – is not lost on me.	I thought, “well if I’d have known we weren’t going to go to Martin Mere, we would have just gone straight there and back again, we could have taken the train”.
Sam	So beach holidays wouldn’t really be our cup of tea. They’re just not enough to do. I think [wife] probably would spend more time relaxing than me.	I did go on a Kiwi night spotting thing where we were taken into the forest by a local guide who is part of the intensive preservation programme of these rare and endangered birds. My tourist bucks will go towards funding this valuable work and so I did something that I really wanted to do and contributed to the conservation effort, but again my main motivation for doing it was that I am a keen birdwatcher and that seeing these birds is one of the things I wanted to see when I came to NZ.	To see one in the wild was a real thrill. And that was one of my, you know targets. [...] So it was well worth the effort of that sort of standing around two hours [laughter]. So other people – [wife], she wasn’t interested at all – which is fine. That’s the way it is. She was quite happy for me to go off and do that.

**Table 6.4** Impact of fellow travellers on the tourism experience as constructed at the Prospective, Active and Reflective phases

In the majority of cases, however, it was the ‘*wants*’ of fellow travel companions that necessitated not only a compromise with ethics, but a compromise with one another. Table 6.5 exemplifies how the (dis)likes of fellow travellers posed threats to tourists’ agency to self-determine specific responsible elements of the tourism experience, such as accommodation type (“*small hotel*” vs “*corporate scene*” (Freddie and his wife)), sites visited (“*nature trips*” vs “*Madame Tussauds*” (Maisie and her partner); “*national park*” vs “*stroll through the city*” (Lina and her family)), and frequency of travel (“*limit it*” vs “*lives for it*” (Anne and her husband)). These conflicts necessitated that participants compromise, namely by: flitting in (for ‘principal’ services (McCabe, 2009)) and out (for ‘ancillary’ services (*ibid.*)) of the corporate scene (i.e. Freddie); balancing ethical and mainstream activities (i.e. Maisie; Lina); and participating in holidays both in the UK and abroad (i.e. Anne).

Overall, the conflict-and-compromise evident in Table 6.5 reinforces the fact that each and every tourist has a diverse set of motivations for travel. Both responsible and mainstream tourists go on holiday for a host of reasons (e.g. culture, geography, new activities, rest and relaxation (Gilbert, 1992, as in Cooper and Gilbert, 2008)), and it is possible that, in some instances, responsible tourism may contravene with, or be superseded by, these other motivators. Thus, when travelling with others, and having to (potentially) combine a diverse interest-set, it inevitably becomes unpragmatic for responsible tourists to ‘be ethical’ across the totality of the tourism experience without at least an element of compromise within the travel party.

Participant	Problematization (Conflict)	Resolution (Compromise)
Anne (A10_P)	I mean I love travelling abroad, but I do worry about the amount of flying and stuff. Because I know it's not good for the environment. So I try and limit it to some extent. It's really hard because my <b>husband</b> is a real keen... you know, he loves to travel abroad, he sort of lives for it really.	I try and limit [flying] to once a year if I can, and go on holiday in England in the summer.
Freddie (F6_P)	[In Vietnam] Unfortunately my <b>wife</b> wouldn't stay in what I call some of the small hotels. Because she just won't accept it. So we compromised on that. [...] A nice hotel, and a nice place, and eating nice is more... that is... I mean corporate scene is more her bag.	But I like to try some of the local places to eat more, so she goes along with me on that one but may not really eat very much food [laughter] when we go there because it's just not her, it's just not her thing.
Maisie (M3_P)	It's a bit of a compromise because I'm going with my <b>partner</b> and he doesn't do nature or anything green. He's kind of really keen to see Madame Tussauds, and the rock museum [laughter] and play on the rides.	So we'll be playing on some of the rides as well, but I've kind of managed to lasso in some other types of things to do as well, which is the sort of thing that I kind of more enjoy.
Maria (M9_P)	I don't have big expectations because we're visiting <b>family</b> . So it's going to be up to them, you know, for the plans. But if I wasn't visiting family, and I went there, I will go for example to the National Park.	If I'm lucky I will convince them to do a one day trip to visit something but I'm not sure about that. Yeah [laughter]. Yeah, hope for me please [laughter].

**Table 6.5** Envisaged conflicts and compromises between tourists and their fellow travellers (Prospective Phase)

### 6.4.5 Weather

An interesting problematisation, which was not initially accounted for in the conceptual framing (2.4.1), was the role of weather. This impedance was predominantly a concern for, but not exclusive to, the tourists travelling within the UK. For example, Anne reflected that as (at times) the weather in Devon was “grim”, she and her family had to resort to driving more than she would have liked. She stated “*everything was positive except the fact that we drove around quite a lot. [...] But I think we were responding a lot to the weather*” as realistically “*you can only spend so much time in a pub [laughter], or a restaurant, or the cottage*”. It is also interesting to note that, as part of her pre-holiday research, Anne had actively investigated into local restaurants in Devon “*because [she] was aware that [they] might not have very good weather*” and “*wanted to make sure that [they] could go somewhere to eat and drink and have some shelter*”. Like Anne, Maisie had also accounted for the likelihood of bad weather when travelling in England, and joked that poor weather might reconstruct the way in which she enjoyed nature in Blackpool:

#### **Extract 45a (M3\_P):**

- Maisie: So it’s all about... for me it’s about – this particular holiday is about – yeah, really just want to sort of connect with nature really
- Interviewer: Great, that sounds lovely [laughter]
- Maisie: Hopefully it won’t rain all weekend [M/I: laughter]. I’m imagining nature went a different way to what I think [laughter]. Again [M/I: laughter]
- Interviewer: Well that’s a tension we can discuss next time [laughter]
- Maisie: Again it might be like not what I think. I’ll have pie and chips, that’s nature, I’ll be like “oh God” [M/I: laughter]

In the Active Phase, Maisie wrote a poem to express how her initial intention to “connect with nature” on the beach was – as predicted – impeded by bad weather:

**Extract 45b (M3\_A)**

*The last ride was Vainalla-  
We got soaking wet!  
Outside it was pouring down-  
The mack I didn't get!*

*The sky was grey, the rain set in  
The wind a howling gale  
The tide was in – sea battered the walls  
No hope of a spade & pail!*

*I'd wanted to 'connect with nature'  
And feel water around my toes  
Battling rain and blustery winds  
I'd got what I'd asked for I suppose!*

*We forged on to the Tower  
Brollies inside out  
And dripping seaside ponies pulled  
people, trying to dry out.*

*By the time we arrived at the tower  
It was shut up tight,  
So we turned around and straight away  
Re-resumed the flight.*

*At length, we dived into a pub  
And dripping on the floor,  
[Partner] got a beer and me a hot choc –  
I needed something warm.*

*Back in the warm hotel room  
I thawed out in a swirling bath  
Watching Polar Bears on TV  
Made the whole thing a bit of a laugh.*

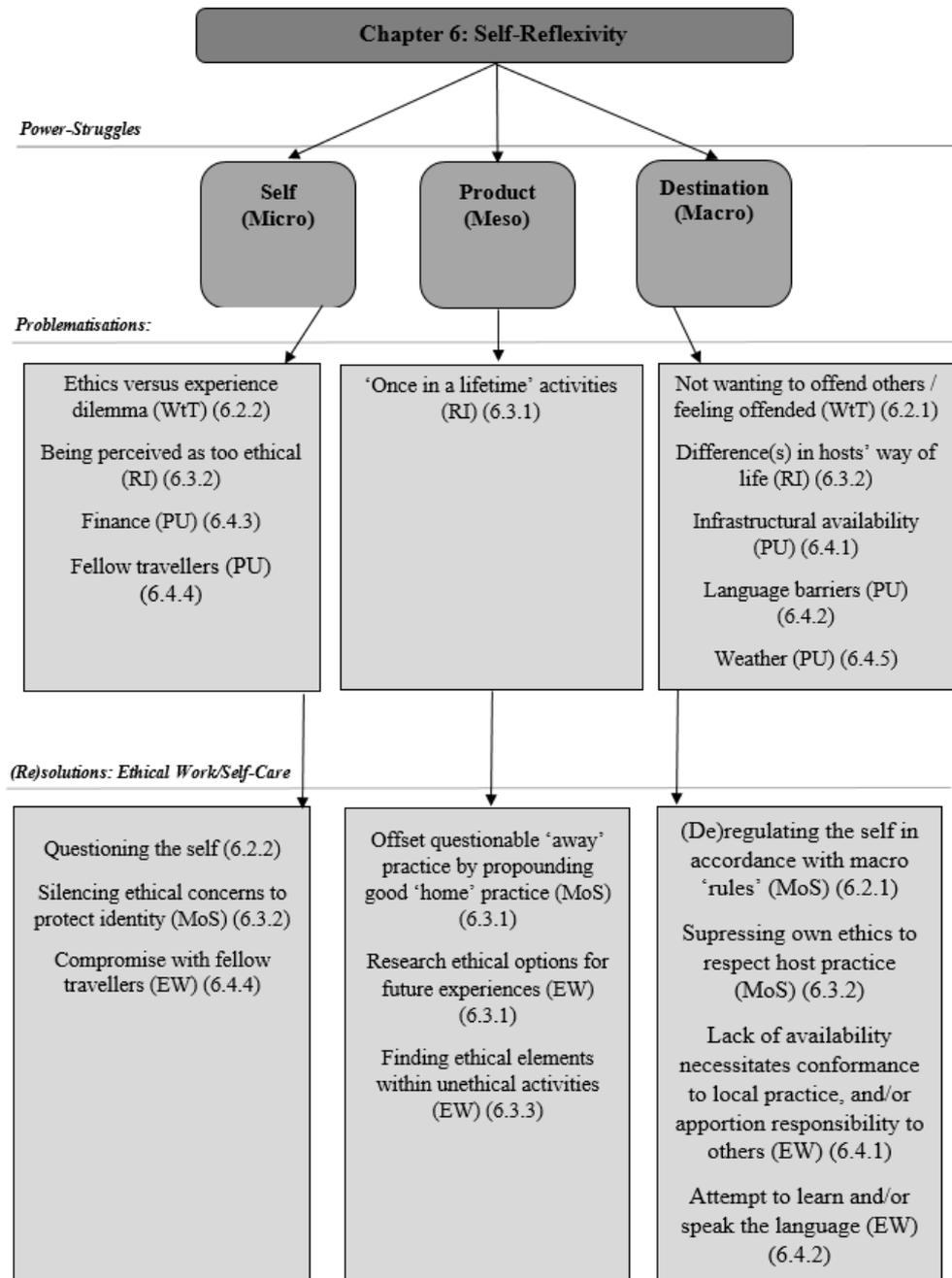
*A perfect July summer's day  
But I wish the rain had stayed away!*

Nevertheless, while the weather did prevent Maisie from engaging in the types of responsible activities she desired, unlike Anne, she attempted to retain an element of control over her ethics by still “*refusing to use the car [laughter] because we’d got there and the car was parked, and that was it*” and remaining “*determined to walk everywhere*”. Overall, therefore, this problematisation presents an interesting topic of discussion, as while it has been found that tourists travel to holiday destinations in search of ‘improved weather’ (Gilbert, 1992, as in Cooper and Gilbert, 2008), less (if anything) is known about how responsible tourists manage their ethics in adverse weather.

#### **6.4.6 Summary of Pragmatic Utility**

This theme has depicted how consumers’ ethical agency is incumbered by a host of micro, meso and macro pragmatic considerations; highlighting that, even in instances where individuals project their desire to walk the talk, practical factors can disempower them from transforming their projections into practice. This theme has been particularly important in terms of examining issues which contribute to the attitude-behaviour gap within ‘away’ environments. It has revealed novel reasons (i.e. language; weather) for consumers not walking the talk, while also supporting the presence of other factors which are consistent with the (non)purchasing of ethical products at ‘home’ (i.e. price (McEachern & McLean, 2002; Szmigin et al, 2009; Ritch & Schroder, 2012)).

## 6.5 Conclusion of Chapter



**Figure 6.1** Visual summary of key findings from Chapter 6

This chapter has highlighted how consumers are highly self-reflexive over their agency as responsible tourists, both in terms of the practices and subjectivities that they do (i.e. walk the talk), do not (i.e. reflexive inertia) and cannot (i.e.

pragmatic utility) engage in. Figure 6.1 serves to encapsulate the main findings of this chapter by extracting and interrelating the key power struggles, problematisations, and subsequent practices of self-care (i.e. ethical work (EW) and modes of subjectivation (MoS)) (see also Appendix 8).

Section 6.2.1, walking the talk, showed how participants constructed the locus of ethics as residing with the individual, with tourists actively choosing to (de)regulate the self in accordance with the socio-cultural expectations of the destination, primarily so as not to offend the local population. Section 6.2.2 further highlighted how tourists also questioned the self, most often when confronted with the ‘ethics versus experience’ dilemma. Here, in the most extreme case, one tourist (Barbara) was prepared to re-work her holiday in order to ensure that it conformed to her ethical ideals, while, more commonly, tourists were simply cognisant of the limits bounding the degree to which they could be ‘responsible’ without some level of trade-off. In sum, the ‘ethics versus experience’ predicament propounds the importance of studying consumers’ ethics and agency within an experiential setting, as it served to reveal a new dilemma to those previous encapsulated within the traditional purchasing criteria for products (e.g. Papaoikonomou et al, 2011).

Section 6.3, reflexive inertia, demonstrated how in other situations consumers constructed the locus of ethics as residing with certain features of the tourism product. It showed how consumers are prepared to participate in an unethical activity if: they subsequently received a novel experience (6.3.1); if they resultantly protected their own and others’ self-image (6.3.2); and/or if they could excuse their participation by finding ethical features (6.3.3). Above all, this section elucidates how consumers devolve a sense of control over their

ethics in situations wherein they feel they have something to lose (i.e. ‘once in a lifetime experience’ (e.g. Sam); loss of positive identity (e.g. Lina)).

Lastly, pragmatic utility revealed how consumers’ ethical actions, behaviours and choices are influenced or impeded by a host of micro (finance; fellow travellers) and macro (infrastructural availability; weather; language) factors. In this sense, the locus of ethics was also constructed as at least partially residing at the destination level. Overall, section 6.4 demonstrated new reasons (i.e. language; weather) for consumers not walking the talk while ‘away’, while also supporting the presence of other factors that are consistent with the purchasing of products at ‘home’, such as availability, price and other individuals (e.g. McEachern & McLean, 2002; Szmigin et al, 2009; Papaoikonomou et al, 2011; Ritch & Schroder, 2012).

This following chapter serves to link the main findings from the three empirical chapters to the research questions and broader literature (7.2) while simultaneously evidencing how these findings specifically arose in light of the methodology adopted (7.3).

## CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

### *Responsible Tourists' Projections, Actions and Reflections*

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#### **7.1 Introduction to Chapter**

This chapter provides an overview of the key findings of this thesis, illustrating the ways in which consumers' ethical agency is represented within the responsible tourism experience. It starts by discussing the main empirical findings from Chapters 4 through 6, situating these findings in response to the research questions and wider literature presented in Chapter 2 (7.2). It then discusses how certain empirical findings arose as a result of the participative methodology outlined in Chapter 3; focussing on how PARTICipative inquiry revealed (in)consistencies in narrative, uncovered otherwise hidden compromises, increased participant input, and enhanced the quality of data (7.3). The chapter concludes by presenting the revised conceptual framework (7.4).

#### **7.2 Discussion of Key Findings**

The findings of this thesis indicate that consumers' ethical agency is represented in three primary ways. Chapter 4 illustrated how agency is represented through tourists' *critical awareness* of the rhetorical construction of 'responsibility' within three forms of market-consumer interface: ethical tourism spaces, ethical policies, and marketing texts. Chapter 5 demonstrated how agency is represented through tourists' *resistance* towards three central aspects of the tourism industry, namely large corporations, the tourism 'package', and tourist 'hotspots'; with

responsible consumers generally preferring to frequent local businesses, engage in independent travel, and holiday off the beaten track. Chapter 6 depicted how agency is represented through tourists' *self-reflexivity* over: (i) the extent to which they transform ethical reflection into action (i.e. 'walk the talk'); (ii) the extent to which they reflect on ethics but take no corresponding action (i.e. 'reflexive inertia'); and (iii) the extent to which ethical action is impeded by practical considerations at the individual, product, and destination level ('i.e. pragmatic utility').

This section seeks to pinpoint and elaborate upon the key findings of this thesis by discussing them in relation to the research questions and the wider field of study (see Chapter 2). It ends with a brief summary in which the key findings are tabulated by each phase of the tourism experience (7.2.4).

### **7.2.1 Responsible Tourists' Projections: The Prospective Phase**

This subsection focusses on the first research question, which seeks to ascertain participants' projections for their upcoming responsible holiday:

***RQ1) How do tourists envisage the responsible tourism product prior to travel?***

- i) What types of ethical actions, behaviours and choices do consumers project to undertake?*
- ii) What types of (non)market discourses do consumers draw on to shape their projections?*

Participants highlighted the importance of 'going local' in light of their power struggle with, and consequent resistance toward, the tourism industry. As

evidenced in Chapter 5, particularly Table 5.1, participants envisaged that they would avoid the corporate scene and instead frequent local eateries and businesses. Similar to Valor et al (2017), this was framed as a means of subverting the pecuniary motives of large, international organisations (such as chain hotels and franchise restaurants), with participants constructing themselves as being empowered to redirect money from ‘big’ business to smaller companies who (they believed) most needed tourists’ custom (5.2.1). Participants also projected that subverting big business would engender a more culturally authentic experience. Here, the responsible tourists constructed subverting big business as a strategy of self-care, presuming that they would get a ‘real’ insight into the holiday destination by avoiding the homogeneity of the corporate scene, travelling off the beaten track, and living like a local (5.2.2). This concurs with the findings of Noy (2004), who found that backpacking tourists reported self-change after visiting authentic locations that were off the beaten track and non-institutionalised by the organised tourism industry.

Chapter 4 focussed on the types of (non)marketing materials that participants read to shape their projections prior to their holiday. It showed how responsible tourists typically read guidebooks, most commonly (if not exclusively) the Lonely Planet. Nevertheless, in contradiction to Luh Sin (2017), this thesis suggests that the (projected) actions and behaviours of responsible tourists were not heavily influenced by, or self-regulated against, the content of the guidebook. The findings suggest that this is for three main reasons. First, participants were critical of the ‘timeliness’ of content, with several recounting previous instances where they had found the subject matter to be obsolete or outdated. Second, they were critical of the ‘accuracy’ of content, with

participants suggesting that they had previously found the subject matter to be ‘romanticised’ or embellished in a way which: (i) made the destination and/or activity sound more idyllic than perhaps was the case; and (ii) served to gloss over the ease of participating in certain activities. Third, and perhaps most important in terms of encouraging sustainable behaviour and ensuring the sustainability of tourism destinations, participants were critical of the general lack of information pertaining to ‘responsible tourism’ and the ‘responsible tourist’ (4.4.2). This latter empirical finding validates previous literature which questions the likelihood that consumers always have sufficient information on ethical practice – i.e. refuting the idea of the (continuously) well-informed consumer’ (Strong, 1996) – and considers the impact that this has on their self-efficacy, or sovereignty, to act ethically (Shaw et al, 2006; Valor, 2008; Crane & Matten, 2010). Overall, while some promotional texts (i.e. responsible tour operators’ websites) may encourage ethical consumers to ‘experiment with subjectivity’ (Hanna, 2013), this thesis indicates that guidebooks – one of the most commonly drawn on market materials – generally do not.

To this end, as depicted in Table 4.4, participants called for more information on the socio-cultural differences between the ‘home’ and ‘away’ destination so that they would be better able to (de)regulate the self (and thereby walk the talk). This finding thus fortifies Pickett-Baker and Ozaki’s (2008: 290) claim that ‘exposure’ is key when it comes to social marketing discourses (see section 2.2.2.2). Tourists suggested that increased information on ethical issues would not only be beneficial in terms of choosing which activities they would or would not engage in on ethical grounds, but better enable them to understand and/or

(re)shape their own 'responsible' approach in light of the country's main social and environmental issues.

Given their concerns relating to the content within market materials, participants also frequently read non-market materials to construct (or corroborate) their projections, such as consumer-review sites, blogs, government websites, and/or the internet in general. This supports the findings of Xiang and Gretzel (2010: 186), who anticipate that social media websites that "can be considered more comprehensive and travel-specific sites, are becoming increasingly popular and are likely to evolve into primary online travel information sources". While not read by all of the tourists, Trip Advisor was by far the most common source, with participants actively drawing on the experiences of other tourists to shape their own views. Nonetheless, much in the same way that market materials were problematised, tourists were still wary of the accuracy of consumer-to-consumer websites, recognising that some of the content should be taken with a 'pinch of salt'. This substantiates the research of Ayeh et al (2013), who found that tourists are inclined to draw on user-generated content in the planning stages of their holiday so long as they believe in the credibility of the travellers' reviews (or content). As an aside, it is noted that the advice, recommendations and/or general behaviour of locals was also deemed beneficial in shaping participants' constructions of how to 'be' and 'act' – however, tourists, unless having visited the tourism destination before, inevitably did not have the benefit of this information until they were on the holiday itself.

A final insight from the Prospective data was that tourists were occasionally critical of, or cynical toward, whether aspects of their purportedly responsible

tourism experience would in fact be 'ethical'. Although Bray et al (2011) report that cynicism is a factor which helps explain the attitude-behaviour gap, in this thesis participants tended only to report their cynicism towards the ethicality of market spaces and did not use this as an explicit justification for why their behaviour would, in turn, be 'unethical'. For example, Alex (4.2) and Connor (4.3.2) were both sceptical as to whether their eco-lodges in Borneo and Peru would be sustainable forms of accommodation, or merely named as such as a 'marketing ploy' (Lansing & De Vries, 2007). Central to both cases was the importance of 'luxury', with Alex projecting that often an 'eco' approach was adopted as a means of attracting the "*crème de la crème*" (Extract 1a), while Connor projected that the presence of any inexact features at his lodge would be incompatible with his 'responsible' approach (e.g. "*If I get there and it's kind of, you know, it's like staying at the Hilton, I'm going to think 'hmm, this isn't what I expected' [laughter]*" (C8\_P)). The construction of what appears to be an 'ethics-luxury dichotomy' educates an important insight in that, while previous literature has suggested that consumers consider ethics less when purchasing luxury goods (Davies et al, 2012), this thesis suggests that luxury consumption is considered to be at odds with ethical consumption. More specifically, the findings indicate that consumers *are* highly aware of ethics when engaging in luxury consumption, and that the presence of luxury in itself leads them to view their consumption as unethical (or less ethical).

At the same time, it is interesting to note that this 'loosening of rhetoric' (Extract 1a) was not necessarily constructed pejoratively, nor did it always stop responsible tourists from wanting to participate in the (ostensibly) ethical tourism space. Although still critical, Alex in particular presumed that – in his

case – the eco-lodge’s (albeit weaker) approach to sustainability still resulted in tourist revenue which would, in turn, feed back into rainforest conservation. This, therefore, shows how tourists find caveats which justify their decision to participate in a ‘responsible’ form of tourism, even when they are uncertain as to whether the ethical substance behind the product will fully live up to their personal ethical ideals. If anything, it appears that tourists’ critical awareness of the (potentially weak) ethical substance allows them to position themselves as morally superior, in that they construct themselves as discerning to, or cognisant of, the presence of marketing spin.

### **7.2.2 Responsible Tourists’ Actions: The Active Phase**

This subsection focusses on the second research question, which seeks to ascertain how participants experience ‘responsibility’ on holiday:

#### ***RQ2) How do tourists experience responsibility whilst on holiday?***

- i) How do tourists frame, rationalise and resolve their (un)ethical actions, behaviours and choices (and why)?*
- ii) What types of ethical dilemmas do consumers encounter (and why)?*
- iii) How are ethical actions, behaviours and choices – alongside any tensions, contradictions and compromises – influenced by the tourists’ broader context at the individual (micro), market-consumer (meso) and destination (macro) levels?*

With regard to RQ2ii, Chapter 6 presented how responsible tourists framed their (ir)responsible actions, behaviours and choices in three main ways: walking the talk, reflexive inertia, and pragmatic utility. Starting with walking the talk, responsible tourists (de)regulated their actions, behaviours and choices against

best practice within the destination in order to translate ethical reflection into action (6.2.1). In this sense, tourists rationalised their decision to self-regulate against the hosts' ways of life on the grounds that it was part of their 'responsibility', as guests in the tourism destination, to conform to socio-cultural expectations and not offend the local population. While this (de)regulation generally occurred in relation to actions necessitating minor behavioural modifications (i.e. change in dress), there were cases – such as William's (Extract 28a) – where tourists were prepared to majorly relax their personal views on certain practices (i.e. vegetarianism) in order to still fulfil their other 'responsibilities' (i.e. to respect others' way of life). The implication here is that walking the talk is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that requires consumers to work their way through a series of compromises, balances and trade-offs within and amongst their own (internal) 'responsibility set'.

Secondly, and less frequently, tourists chose not to engage in (what they constructed as) ethical actions and behaviours (i.e. 'reflexive inertia'), either because they wanted to prioritise 'once in a lifetime' experiences, wanted to protect their own identity, or wanted to respect the (unethical) practices of the host. This finding upholds Moisander's (2007: 407) assertion that ethical consumption can be affected by motivational conflicts between 'individual' (personal) and 'collective' (societal) goals. It is with regard to these 'collective' goals – i.e. respecting the unethical practices of the host – that the conceptual boundaries between 'reflexive inertia' and 'walking the talk' appear somewhat blurred. Taking Josh's example (Extracts 35a and 35b), although he was reflexive of the ethical conditions of his boat-trip on a previous holiday to Indonesia (i.e. ethical reflection), he decided to silence his anxiety and continue

with the boat trip (i.e. unethical action) in order to respect the host's way of life. This finding exemplifies Chatzidakis et al's (2004) neutralisation technique, 'appealing to higher loyalties', in that Josh went against his personal ethical norm so as to engage in another highly-valued behaviour, respect. Thus, in many ways, he exhibited reflexive inertia as a means of (de)regulating the self in relation to local practice, a key tenet of walking the talk. In this regard, while previous literature has considered instances of *not* walking the talk as simply indicative of the 'ethical consumption gap' (Carrington et al, 2016; Govind et al, 2017), this thesis shows how reflexive inertia can in itself be occasionally, albeit infrequently, constructed as an ethical practice.

It is noted that an unexpected finding of this thesis was the amount of emotional weight and self-questioning that resulted from consumers knowingly waiving their ethical ideals on holiday. For example, Maria felt "*really bad*" when deciding to go on her boat-trip (Extract 33a), while Sam concluded that he did "*not make 'ethically correct' choices while being a tourist as much as [he] hoped [he] would*" (Extract 32b). In this regard, it appears that tourists are prepared to endure a significant amount of inner-tension rather than sacrifice a unique, albeit 'unethical', holiday experience. Yet, at the same time, they somewhat conflictingly remain cognisant of the negative impact that this prioritisation (or 'reflexive inertia') has on the degree to which they feel like – or can construct themselves as – a responsible tourist. It was at this point that 'post-violation justifications' for transgressive behaviours were most evident, with this thesis providing empirical examples of Shalvi et al's (2015) notion of 'cleansing' (e.g. Maria: researching for a more sustainable alternative for "*next time*" (Extract 33b)). As purported by Barkan et al (2015), it is the view of this

thesis that such justifications arose as a means of reducing perceived dissonance between participants' ethical attitudes and unethical behaviours.

Thirdly, and combining with RQ2iii, tourists framed their agency to engage in certain responsible actions, behaviours and choices as being impeded by a multitude of practical factors at the individual, product, and destination level ('pragmatic utility'). Mirroring the ethical consumption literature more broadly, traditional purchasing criteria (e.g. Papaoikonomou et al, 2011) such as price and availability were key considerations. Unlike Bray et al (2011), price was not constructed as the most common impediment, yet it was found to influence the extent to which ethical reflection was translated into action (e.g. McEachern & McLean, 2002; Szmigin et al, 2009; Ritch & Schröder, 2012). Echoing Bucic et al (2012), this was particularly the case for the younger participants, especially the students who had restricted budgets (see Table 6.3). Lack of (infrastructural) availability was also problematic, specifically in regard to vegetarian/vegan foods, public transport networks and recycling facilities. Consequently, participants deployed multiple strategies of self-care to overcome, compensate, or apportion their responsibility in light of their (externally imposed) inability to be 'responsible'; with tourists cooking their own food, reducing unnecessary mileage, and giving their recycling to others (rather than disposing it in landfill) respectively.

Mirroring literature into the ethical consumption of products, the findings suggest that the personal desire to engage in ethical behaviours is influenced or moderated by an individual's consideration of others. In this sense, it appears that a tourist's ethics are influenced by their broader lifestyles (Connolly & Prothero, 2003) or 'life politics' (Giddens, 1991) as a family member, partner or

friend – leading to instances of conflict and compromise with fellow travellers, primarily as a means of reaching ‘household agreement’ (Aschemann-Witzel and Aagaard, 2014) (see Table 6.5). For example, in the same way that Ritch and Schröder (2012) highlighted that parents relaxed their ethics to purchase cheaper, less sustainable clothing for fast-growing children, Freddie highlighted how on previous holidays he was prepared to relax his ethical ideals and stay in local accommodation because his wife preferred staying at chain hotels (i.e. “*corporate scene is more her bag*” (F6\_P)). Overall, therefore, this reflects May’s (2008: 470) work on “clashing ethical norms”, with responsible tourists having to choose between engaging in personally desired responsible practice as a means of self-care, or being responsible by caring for the needs and wants of others.

Lastly, the findings of this thesis offer novel impedances affecting consumers’ responsible behaviour, namely language barriers and weather. More specifically, this thesis finds several new ‘barriers to change’, addressing Hindley & Font’s (2017: 81-83) challenges to ethical consumer behaviour (see Table 2.3). The language barrier, in particular, reinforces the importance of viewing ethical consumption within a highly performative experiential context that is different to the ‘home’ environment. Chapter 6 showed how half of the participants emphasised the importance of being able to speak (at least basic phrases of) the local language for four primary reasons: (i) it allowed them to converse with locals on the host’s terms (e.g. akin to Muzaini (2006)); (ii) it enabled them to make themselves understood; (iii) it increased their ability to understand others; and (iv) it bolstered their confidence to travel independently away from the corporate scene and tourist ‘hotspots’. In this sense, it is clear that removing or

lessening the language barrier is key for tourists to navigate or negotiate their way around a new environment both independently and responsibly. It is interesting to note that while language was captured in the conceptual framework (2.4.1), the importance of weather was not. It appears, however, that wet weather – especially for, but not limited to, the tourists travelling within the United Kingdom – served to limit the outdoor, nature-based activities available to tourists (e.g. Maisie), while further necessitating that they drove more often than walked (e.g. Anne). While the weather was still viewed as disappointing, it was one of the few (if not sole) impedances whereby tourists did not feel too much anxiety at having relaxed their ethics, as inevitably it was out of their control and much harder to compensate for.

Finally, with regards to RQ2ii, the biggest ethical dilemma responsible tourists encountered on holiday was that pertaining to ‘ethics versus experience’. This finding also propounds the importance of situating an examination of ethical agency within an experiential context, as it evokes new insights into the balances and trade-offs consumers experience outside of those relating to traditional purchasing criteria. As mentioned above, the majority of tourists tended to prioritise their experience over their ethics, allowing them to participate in novel activities (e.g. Sam’s helicopter ride in New Zealand; Maria’s boat trip in Vietnam). However, there were multiple instances where tourists started to evaluate whether they were balancing their ethics and experience in a way which lived up to their ideals (6.2.2). While for Maisie, the ‘ethics versus experience’ dilemma impelled her to reflect on how *any* experience necessitated some compromise with ethics (Image 6), Barbara was reflexive as to how prioritising her ethics led to a negative (emotional) experience. In this sense, while Maisie

was attuned to the parameters that demarcated the scope of her responsibility, Barbara was aware of how her non-compromising ethical practice served to bound the strength of her experience. Overall, the construction of the ‘ethics versus experience dilemma’ indicates how tourists are mindful that tourism cannot be fully ‘responsible’ without some form of personal sacrifice, and, in the main, it appears that it is tourists’ ethics that tend to be forfeited in favour of the experience.

### **7.2.3 Responsible Tourists’ Reflections: The Reflective Phase**

This subsection focusses on the third research question, which seeks to ascertain how participants reflected on their responsible holiday upon their return:

***RQ3) How do tourists reflect on their responsible tourism experience as being shaped (or not) by market influences?***

- i) How do tourists reflect on the tourism industry’s products and communications?*
- ii) How do tourists maintain, protect or devolve a sense of freedom over their practices and subjectivities?*
- iii) How do tourists recount, rationalise and resolve any struggles between promulgated and personal constructions of responsible practice?*

Starting with the tourism industry’s communications, Chapter 4 showed how participants evaluated and responded to ethical policies (RQ3i). Tourists reflected that, while ethical policies served to (at least partially) absolve them of a sense of responsibility (4.3.1), they were generally cynical towards the motives

behind policy implementation (4.3.2), and problematised the ease with which they could establish (non)enforcement (4.3.3).

With regards to absolved responsibility, section 4.3.1 demonstrated how tourists reflected on the ways in which they protected or devolved a sense of personal freedom over their ethical conduct when conforming to policies (RQ3ii). For example, Maisie reflected that she was happy to relinquish control over the bigger ethical considerations, and share her responsibility with her B&B owner, knowing that, so long as she self-regulated her behaviour against the code (i.e. walked the talk), she would be participating in a responsible mode of tourism. In contrast, Josh attempted to retain an element of personal accountability for his ethical practices, claiming that it was important that he still felt personally culpable for any actions that conformed to or deviated from the code. Only William reflected on how he had previously attempted to resolve a power struggle between his own construction of responsibility and that of his hotel (RQ3iii), recalling how, in instances where he felt that the code was lacking, he had engaged in ethical practices that fell outside of the policy's remit yet aligned with his personal ideals. Josh and William, therefore, show how tourists still constructed themselves as taking ownership of their ethical conduct even in situations where they conceded that their responsibility had been (at least partly) absolved.

In regard to consumer cynicism, it appeared that consumers viewed ethical policies as a cost-cutting device, pragmatic device, and marketing device. This finding demonstrates that consumers are discerning of the reasons hoteliers implement voluntary codes and policies, such as financial rewards and

reputation management (Ayuso, 2007). In reference to concerns over (non)enforcement, tourists were especially critical over hotels' towel policies; the focus on this policy is perhaps unsurprising, given that it is perhaps one of, if not the most, commonly found policies in hotel rooms. The hotel's failure to implement towel policies was a key source of ethical tension, especially for Josh, who reflected that hotels likely flouted their own code on the presumption that customers prefer a clean towel every day, when responsible tourists such as himself are prepared to use the same towel throughout their stay (Extract 10). In this sense, Josh's narrative intimates that consumers construct hotels' non-enforcement, rather than tourists' non-conformance (Cvelbar et al, 2016), as the key concern when seeking to reduce the tourism industry's ecological footprint. It is evident throughout the discussion of cynicism and non-enforcement that participants did not simply limit their reflections to the *consequences* of marketing communications for the demand side (i.e. the impact of policies on tourists' behaviour), but considered the *motivations* and *actions* of the supply-side. Put simply, participants tended to position their own obedient (morally superior) behaviour against the sometimes deviant (morally inferior) behaviour of the tourism industry (i.e. their non-ethical motives and lack of execution).

Conflicting findings across the Prospective, Active and Reflective datasets were particularly evident in relation to resisting big business (see section 5.2.3), with tourists' intention to avoid the corporate scene not always translating into practice (RQi). For instance, in the Reflective Phase, Edward (Extract 21) and Giovanna (Extract 22a) were particularly reflexive of their stay in a hotel chain; with Edward rationalising that the booking was made by his travel companions, and Giovanna rationalising that local hotels were inferior in quality. This,

therefore, provides support for Carrington et al's (2010) argumentation that consumers' ethics can be affected by their (lack of) 'actual behavioural control' (e.g. Freddie) and 'situational context' (e.g. Giovanna).

Chapter 5 also spotlighted how consumers reflected on their resistance towards the tourism 'package' (RQ3i). Here, the general consensus was that the package holiday or tour served to direct the tourists' 'gaze' "towards selectively celebrated sites and sights" (Hollinshead, 1999: 11), or staged certain 'performances' (Edensor, 2001), in a way which hampered their freedom to engage in their own responsible activities and behaviours. In this vein, participants commonly reported ethical anxiety over the 'rules' that the tourism package imposed, often making them uncomfortable regarding the resulting implications for their subject position as a 'responsible tourist'. Consequently, some tourists chose to evade either elements of the tourism package, or the package entirely, as a means of *protecting* their autonomy, while others reflected on how they re-worked, or would have liked to re-work, elements of their tourism package in order to *retain a sense* of autonomy (RQ3ii). For example, Maisie reflected on how, as it was considered deviant to book her own excursions through local businesses rather than her travel company, she had previously learnt some Turkish in order to ensure that she was still engaging in a form of exchange with the local population (Extract 23a). Even then, however, participants were aware that their conditions of freedom were marginal, with certain destination-level characteristics (e.g. socio-cultural differences; safety) serving to impede the extent to which they could re-work or evade the tourism package (Extract 23b).

Lastly, tourists also reflected on their resistance towards ‘hotspots’, with participants wanting to distance themselves from mainstream tourism locations and activities and instead travel off the beaten track (RQ3i). The finding that responsible tourism is constructed as occurring off the beaten track is well known (e.g. Caruana et al, 2008), however data exposing consumers’ associated problematisations is new. To this end, this thesis showed how, while consumers generally felt that they received a more authentic experience from travelling outside of tourism ‘hotspots’ (e.g. Noy, 2004), they problematised (i) the ease of knowing whether a location or activity was a ‘hotspot’ or not, and (ii) whether or not it was more ethical to limit their impact to a location specifically designed to entertain (and/or separate) tourists. This last point in particular demonstrates how participants were critical as to whether certain activities that are purportedly constitutive of the ‘responsible tourism’ experience are in fact responsible (RQ3iii).

#### **7.2.4 Summary of Key Findings**

This section has discussed the findings arising from this thesis in relation to the research questions, demonstrating how there are important implications for consumers’ ethical agency at the three phases of the tourism experience. These findings are succinctly encapsulated in Table 7.1.

Phase	Key Findings Relating to Consumers' Ethical Agency
Prospective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible tourists constructed themselves as being in an empowered position to subvert big businesses, namely by projecting resistance towards their products and services. Responsible tourists preferred to frequent local businesses on the assumption that this will enable them to 'live like a local'.</li> <li>• Responsible tourists were critical of the lack of information in marketing communications (especially guidebooks) regarding the socio-cultural and environmental issues facing a destination, alongside what this lack of knowledge means in terms of shaping and/or self-regulating their responsible practices and subjectivities. Responsible tourists thus tended to corroborate (the minimal) information found in marketing communications with non-market sources such as consumer review sites, government websites, and internet searches.</li> <li>• Responsible tourists were sometimes critical as to whether certain elements of their responsible tourism 'product' would be 'ethical', or conform to personal ethical ideals.</li> </ul>
Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible tourists walked the talk by: (de)regulating the self against host practice so as not to offend the local population; and questioning the self to ensure that they were conforming to their personal ethical ideals.</li> <li>• Tourists exhibited reflexive inertia when wanting to engage in 'once in a lifetime' experiences, as well as when wanting to protect the identity of the self and the other. Reflexive inertia can in itself be constructed as an ethical practice.</li> <li>• Responsible tourists' ethics were impeded by practical considerations such as availability, price and fellow travellers – but also previously unconsidered factors such as the language barrier and poor weather. These impedances prompted tourists to engage in compensatory behaviours.</li> </ul>
Reflective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible tourists were cynical towards marketing communications, particularly the motivations behind ethical policies. They conceded that ethical policies absolved a degree of responsibility, but problematised the way in which codes were often not enforced.</li> <li>• Tourists reflected on their resistance towards the tourism 'package' – preferring to fully or partially evade it, or re-work its boundaries, in order to retain a degree of freedom over their experiences.</li> <li>• Tourists reflected on their resistance towards tourist 'hotspots' in order to get a more authentic experience. However, knowing what was a hotspot, or whether avoiding hotspots was 'responsible', remained ethically problematic.</li> </ul>

**Table 7.1** Summary of key findings

### **7.3 Implications of Conducting a PARTicipative Inquiry**

Chapter 3 presented justifications for adopting a participative methodology as a means of examining participants as they transitioned through the total tourism experience. It particularly emphasised the importance of conducting a PARTicipative inquiry, arguing that this was an effective approach for triangulating participants' 'prospective', 'active' and 'reflective' data (3.4.2). It claimed that examining tourists' experience within the specific phase in which they were positioned would enable the researcher to map any deviations between projected and actual behaviour, as well as simultaneously capture any tensions, rationalisations and resolutions.

This section selects data extracts from Chapters 4-6 to better demonstrate the benefits of conducting a PARTicipative inquiry in the context of this research. It highlights how PARTicipative inquiry elicited unique empirical insights into issues relating to consumers' ethical agency that would not have been so effectively captured via an alternative methodology. More specifically, it focusses on how PARTicipative inquiry served to reveal (in)consistencies between ethical ideals and actual behaviour; spotlighted hidden compromises to tourists' ethics; encouraged tourists' role as (co)researchers; and increased the quality of resulting data. While the following subsections discuss only selected examples in detail, Table 7.2 evidences how the numbered data extracts within this thesis also offer a novel or enhanced finding in light of (at least) one of the above four areas.

<b>(In)consistencies between Ethical Ideals and Actual Behaviour</b>	<b>(Otherwise) Hidden Compromises/Tensions</b>	<b>Tourists as (Co)Researchers</b>	<b>Quality of Data</b>
<p><b>Consistencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alex’s initial construction of the ‘woolly’ eco-lodge (Extract 1a: A5_P) mirrored his ‘gimmicky’ reflections (Extract 1b: A5_R)</li> <li>• Connor’s cynicism towards the sustainability of his eco-lodge was realised (see discussion around Extract 8: C8_A)</li> <li>• Anne’s projections regarding the lack of public transport in Devon were consistent with her reflections (see discussion around Extract 38: A10_R)</li> </ul> <p><b>Inconsistencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edward hoped to subvert big business (Extract 14: E2_P) but stayed in a chain hotel (Extract 21: E2_R)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edward’s inability to subvert big business (Extract 14: E2_P) was smoothed over in the Active Phase, but was rationalised to have been influenced by the wants/needs of his fellow travellers (Extract 21: E2_R)</li> <li>• In the Active Phase, Giovanna simply recorded price and personal enjoyment as impeding factors to staying at local accommodation, but later expanded on how this led to a sense of self-tension (i.e. made her ‘feel bad’) in the Reflective Phase (Extract 22b: G1_R)</li> <li>• Mabel initially highlighted her resistance to the tourism package as it meant she had no control over where she stayed (for example) (Extract 19: M7_P). Yet,</li> </ul>	<p><b>Steering the direction of the interview:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract 2b: M3_P – Maisie asked if she could provide another example of a cultural-heritage visit to demonstrate how she adopts compensatory behaviours when participating in ethical tourism sites</li> <li>• Extract 24a: S11_R – Sophie steered discussion on the ‘rules’ of her package holiday</li> <li>• Extract 26a: A5_R – Alex steered discussion on how he felt he had a more authentic experience from travelling off the beaten track</li> <li>• Extract 34b: L4_R – Lina steered discussion on the plastic she accumulated during her in-flight meal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elaboration of data across phases (‘thick descriptions’):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract 27b: G1_R – Giovanna was asked to elaborate on the tension she wrote in her diary regarding the ethicality of her canoeing excursion</li> <li>• Extract 39: G1_R – Giovanna was asked to expand on the tension she wrote concerning the plastic she accumulated</li> <li>• Extract 42c: S11_R – Sophie was able to elaborate on the main tension behind eating at buffets which was not captured in her brief diary entry (Extract 42a)</li> </ul> <p><b>Double reflexivity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract 1b: A5_R – Alex was reflexive in the Reflective Phase over the way in which he reflected on</li> </ul>

Cont'd

<b>(In)consistencies between Ethical Ideals and Actual Behaviour</b>	<b>(Otherwise) Hidden Compromises/Tensions</b>	<b>Tourists as (Co)Researchers</b>	<b>Quality of Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freddie hoped to support the local population by frequenting local businesses, yet visited a restaurant owned by a British expatriate (see Extract 15: F6_P and Section 6.2.3, minor deviations)</li> <li>• Sophie described herself as 'rule-abiding' in the Prospective Phase, but highlighted her dislike of the 'rules' of her package holiday (Extract 24b: S11_R)</li> <li>• Mabel highlighted her resistance to the tourism package (e.g. Extract 19: M7_P) but travelled via a package tour on her holiday to Northumbria (see end of section 6.3)</li> <li>• Inconsistencies between Sam's purported love of</li> </ul>	<p>when asked to reflect on her autonomy in the Reflective Phase, Mabel recounted that she was prepared to 'compromise' her freedom and travel to Northumbria on an organised tour as she felt that certain aspects of the trip (i.e. coach travel) were very ethical (see end of section 6.3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had the researcher only conducted a post-hoc interview with Barbara, the importance of family would have been overlooked – both in terms of how family members impeded her from engaging in certain ethical practices (Extract 30a: B16_P), as well the emotional upset she experienced when holidaying without her</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Making explicit links to photographs/diagrams:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract 1b/Image 1 – Alex's eco-lodge</li> <li>• Footnote 6 – the ethical policy at Maisie's accommodation</li> <li>• Image 6 – Maisie's ethics versus experience dilemma</li> </ul>	<p>the eco-lodge in the Active Phase</p> <p><b><i>Confirmability:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extracts 29a, 29b, 29c – Following June's reflections on the discrimination she experienced, and the attention she was getting, the researcher – making a link between the two – asked her to confirm whether she thought that western tourists were asked to cover up due to the attention that they attracted. June confirmed that this was 'quite possible'</li> </ul>

Cont'd

<b>(In)consistencies between Ethical Ideals and Actual Behaviour</b>	<b>(Otherwise) Hidden Compromises/Tensions</b>	<b>Tourists as (Co)Researchers</b>	<b>Quality of Data</b>
<p>the environment in the Prospective Phase – and the Reflective Phase Extract 32c: S15_R) – juxtaposed his environmentally damaging helicopter ride in the Active Phase (Extract 32a: S15_A)</p>	<p>grandson (Extract 30b: B16_A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sam became aware that he did not make as many ‘ethically correct choices as he had hoped (Extract 32b: S15_A)</li> </ul>		

**Table 7.2** Empirical data supporting the methodological benefits of conducting a PARTicipative inquiry

*(In)consistencies between ethical projections and actual behaviour:*

PARTicipative inquiry enabled the researcher and participants to reflect on inconsistencies between desired and actual behaviour. Inconsistencies in narratives were evidenced across the findings within all three chapters, but are perhaps best illustrated in Table 5.1, which highlights several cases where tourists were unable to avoid the corporate scene and thereby act as ethically as they had initially hoped.

For example, focussing on Edward, he claimed that he intended to “*bring trade to the locality*” (E2\_P) of La Rochelle, yet reported how he stayed in a “*(French) chain*” (E2\_A). Had the researcher not known the weight that Edward had originally placed on subverting big business (Extract 14: E2\_P), and ‘going local’, she would likely not have questioned him as to why he selected a chain hotel, nor, as a result, uncovered the pragmatic considerations (e.g. fellow travellers) that impeded him from staying at a local bed and breakfast (Extract 21: E2\_R). As Edward had not reported any ethical anxiety in his diary, it was the role of the researcher to question in the Reflective Phase whether he had experienced any tension from his inconsistent behaviour; to which Edward simply responded that his decision was “*out of [his] control*” (E2\_R) given that it was his friends who were in charge of booking the accommodation. This shows how data elicited in the Prospective Phase can serve as a discursive template against which actual behaviour can be monitored and compared, both in the Active and Reflective phases. It illustrates how this assists the researcher to spot any divergences in narrative (and behaviour), and thereby ask questions, or stimulate discussion, in a way which focusses on these inconsistencies accordingly.

In contrast, PARTicipative inquiry also enabled the researcher to examine the consistency of narrative across the three phases of the tourism experience. For example, in Chapter 4, it is clear that Alex's critical awareness of the rhetorical construction of 'responsibility' at his eco-lodge was consistent throughout his Prospective, Active and Reflective data. Extract 1a demonstrated how, prior to travelling to Borneo, Alex envisaged that his eco-lodge would adopt a "woolly" approach to conservation, while on holiday he was reflexive over the 'gimmicky' nature of the tourism site (Extract 1b). It is interesting that, again in Extract 1b, Alex was reflective over the extent to which his initial assumptions were realised, conceding that the luxury trappings at the eco-lodge were "*far and away more extreme than [he] thought it would be*". Consequently, Alex's case demonstrates how PARTicipative inquiry enables the researcher (and participant) to uncover the otherwise hidden convergences across tourists' projections, actions and reflections. Put simply, while Edward's case (above) demonstrates how Prospective data can provide a discursive template to measure the *scope* of (in)consistency, Alex's case reveals how it can also be deployed as a discursive barometer to measure the *strength* of consistency.

***Hidden compromises:*** Having access to three independent yet interrelated datasets exposed hidden compromises which would have otherwise remained overlooked had only a post-hoc interview been conducted. For example, concentrating on Barbara, had she only participated in a post-holiday interview, it is likely that the researcher would not have fully understood the importance of family, both in terms of: (i) the way in which she initially constructed travelling with her young grandson as an impedance to her agency to engage in certain ethical practices (i.e. regarding train travel) (Extract 30a: B16\_P); and (ii) the

way in which she reflected that travelling without her grandson lessened the enjoyability of her experience, thereby engendering a trade-off between emotions and ethics (Extract 30c: B16\_A). This signifies how PARTicipative inquiry enabled the researcher to extract how one source of tension – in this case, family – was constructed differently across the tourism experience. In the Prospective Phase, Barbara felt that her *ethics* were being compromised, leading her to travel without her grandson; while, at the close of the Active Phase, Barbara felt that her *enjoyment* had been compromised, leading her to resolve to find a different way for her and her grandson to travel together more sustainably in the future.

Moreover, the diary enabled Barbara to record her self-reflexivity after the Prospective interview, but before her trip to Cambridge. In this vein, the diary provided space for her to capture her reasoning for re-arranging her holiday in a way which prevented any data from being forgotten and/or distorted. This is particularly important, as her diary data alone demonstrates how tourists can undergo a substantial transition in thinking; with Barbara starting it by self-questioning her ethics and eagerly planning a holiday to Cambridge (Extract 30b), and ending it by recounting the disappointment she experienced from travelling alone when she could have found an eco-holiday for both her and her grandson (Extract 30c). Overall, this example emphasises the importance of ensuring that data is recorded within the specific context in which the tourist is situated at a given point in time, otherwise intricate nuances of the tourist experience are likely to be lost. Put simply, recording the compromises that she experienced as and when she encountered them meant that she could more accurately elaborate on them in the Reflective Phase, ultimately enhancing the

credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings (e.g. Guba & Lincoln, 1982).

***Tourists as (co)researchers:*** This subsection elucidates how important empirical insights were garnered in light of the active engagement of participants across the tourism experience. As emphasised in Chapter 3, a central tenet of participative methodologies is that it reduces the power-imbalances between the researcher and researched by increasing participants' input (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Bowd et al, 2010) (3.3.1). Thus, as shown in Table 7.2, participants were generally given the opportunity to steer the (opening) direction of the Reflective interview by discussing the content of their diary and photographs. This allowed participants to spend as much or as little time (at first) on what they constructed as the most (un)important aspects of their responsible holiday, signalling to the researcher what they found most ethically problematic (for example), and in need of more/less attention over the course of the interview. Moreover, it also meant that participants had the opportunity to make their own direct linkages between their datasets. Firstly, this allowed participants to provide visual evidence which substantiated their reflections, with Alex, for instance, showing the researcher an example of a (perceived) contrivance at his eco-lodge (Image 1, a treetop canopy walk). Secondly, it provided participants with a prompt against which they could better elaborate on their reflections, with Maisie showing the researcher her 'ethics versus experience' drawing (Image 6).

There were also instances where participants asked if they could elaborate on certain elements of their answers, and/or provide additional examples to those already given. For example, after discussing the ethical anxiety she experienced

on a cultural-heritage trip (Extract 2a), Maisie asked if she could also provide another example of a similar trip she had participated in (Extract 2b). This enabled her to highlight to the researcher how, from the first experience, she had since employed compensatory behaviours in subsequent experiences as a strategy of self-care (i.e. in order to reduce her feelings of “awkwardness” and “guilt” (Extract 2c)). In this regard, having the opportunity to steer the direction of the interview enabled Maisie to ensure that her ‘full’ experiential narrative was communicated to the researcher, allowing a more comprehensive presentation of her moral self (i.e. akin to the written life stories of the ‘good’ mother (May, 2008)).

***Quality of data:*** Lastly, PARTicipative inquiry served to increase the quality of the data. Drawing on Guba’s (1981) qualitative criteria, the ‘credibility’ of findings was enriched, as the participants’ increased input in the data elicitation process acted as a form of ‘member checking’. The ‘confirmability’ of findings was also enhanced, as the researcher was able to ask clarificatory questions regarding Active data in the Reflective Phase. This was particularly helpful in areas where certain diary entries were somewhat light (e.g. Sophie, Extract 42a), or where the researcher wanted participants to elaborate on their recordings further (e.g. Giovanna, Extract 27b). This in itself was beneficial as it facilitated the elicitation of ‘thick descriptions’ of issues relating to responsible tourists’ agency.

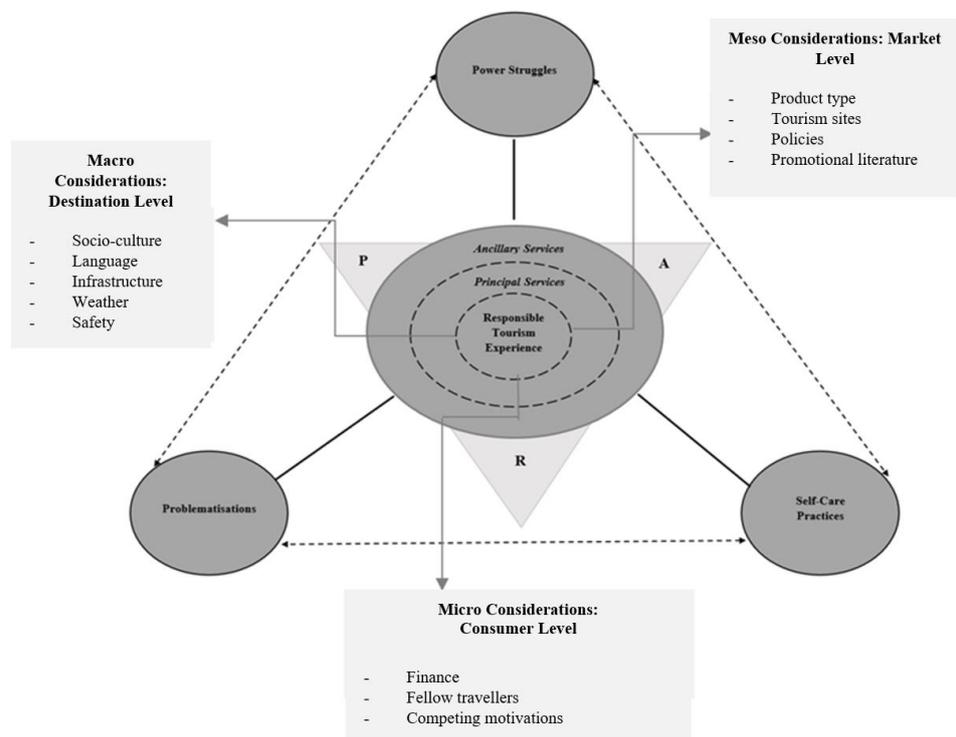
It is also noted that PARTicipative inquiry facilitated what could be called a ‘double-reflexivity’. For example, Extract 1b illustrates how, in the Reflective Phase, Alex was able to be reflexive over the ways in which he and his friends

had reflected on the eco-lodge in the Active Phase: stating, “*we were sort of sat there [... and] I said ‘you know, it’s like someone came up here, looked around, and went this would be perfect to make as much money out of American tourists as possible’*”. Instances such as this again resulted in ‘thick descriptions’, in that PARTicipative inquiry provided space for tourists to consider and/or map how they constructed their responsible tourism experience at different points in time.

#### **7.4 Conclusion of Chapter**

This chapter collated the main findings from Chapters 4-6 and discussed them in light of the three research questions (see Table 7.1). Here, the findings were further embedded within a discussion of some of the key literature identified in Chapter 2, demonstrating how the thesis builds upon the work of previous academic study. The chapter also considered how PARTicipative inquiry revealed novel insights into issues relating to consumer agency, providing empirical examples to reinforce the benefits of participative methodologies propounded in Chapter 3.

The discussion concludes with the revised conceptual framework (Figure 7.1), proffering a visual summarisation of the key findings of the thesis. As in the initial framework (2.4.1), the highly performative nature of responsible tourism is recognised through the layers of ‘principal’ and ‘ancillary’ services that tourists encounter (McCabe, 2009), while responsible tourism itself is viewed against a backdrop of micro, meso and macro considerations. Here, and as supported by the findings, several considerations have been added, namely:



**Figure 7.1** Revised conceptual framework

‘tourism sites’ (meso), ‘weather’ and ‘safety’ (macro). Moreover, the interrelationships between the three theoretical constructs have again been captured, with the findings supporting the link between power struggles, problematisations and self-care practices.

The next and final chapter offers the conclusions of this research. It provides a summary of the entire thesis, discusses its main contributions, considers its limitations, and offers directions for future study.

## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

### *Concluding Remarks on Ethical Agency*

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#### **8.1 Introduction to Chapter**

The final chapter presents the conclusions of this thesis into consumers' ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. It starts by summarising the content of previous chapters, providing an overview of the thesis' narrative (8.2). In so doing, it shows how the methodology (Chapter 3) elicited new findings into tourists' ethical agency (Chapters 4-6) in a way which builds upon extant literature (Chapter 2). The chapter then considers the main contributions of the research (8.3), several limitations, and how the thesis provides several avenues for further study (8.4). The chapter, and thesis, ends with the researcher's concluding remarks and personal reflections (8.5).

#### **8.2 Thesis Summary**

The thesis examined issues relating to consumers' ethical agency within the responsible tourism experience. Chapter 2, Part I, presented previous research into the ethical consumer. It showed how literature has primarily aligned with three main disciplinary perspectives (economics, psychology and sociology), as well as how each of these paradigmatic positions have certain implications for how consumer responsibility and consumer agency are viewed (Table 2.2). It showed that the economic and psychology literature predominantly spotlight the actions and behaviours of the individual (in isolation): with the former

traditionally viewing ethical consumption as an individual's 'vote' (Dickinson & Hollander, 1991); and the latter tending to seek causal relationships between ethical purchases and an individual's personality (e.g. Akehurst et al, 2012; Weeden, 2013) and motivations (e.g. Bucic et al, 2012). It showed that the sociological literature was more attuned to the *relationship* between the market and consumer, but that it was yet to adopt more of a 'middle-out perspective' (Cherrier, 2006: 516) in the structure-agency debate. Therefore, this thesis advocated aligning with a post-structuralist, late Foucauldian lens to better examine the market-consumer interface through the concepts of 'power struggles' (1982), 'problematizations' (1984a) and 'self-care practices' (1984c). It was argued that this would advance the limited research into Foucauldian ethics (Crane et al, 2008), while simultaneously reversing the current lack of consumer narratives in the ethical consumption literature.

Chapter 2, Part II, presented previous research into responsible tourism. It contended that responsible tourism was a well-suited empirical context for examining ethical consumption as it moved away from the study of low-value, generic products (Davies et al, 2012: 37), such as organic foods (e.g. Honkanen et al, 2006; van Doorn & Verhoef, 2011) and sustainable fashion (e.g. Shaw et al, 2006; Ritch & Schröder, 2012), to expand upon the minimal literature into experiential consumption (e.g. Ulusoy, 2016). It highlighted how tourism was a highly performative mode of consumption that often occurs in a socio-culturally disparate setting to the 'home' environment (e.g. Jamal, 2004). To this end, it was argued that the tourism experience allowed for an examination of how ethics transposed across, or were different within, the 'home' and 'away' context (e.g. Barr et al, 2010). Part II ended by demonstrating how there was a lack of

literature into responsible tourism that attended to all phases of the holiday experience, with research most commonly analysing post-hoc reflections (e.g. Caruana et al, 2014). While the broader tourism literature has examined the holiday from two angles – i.e. before and during (e.g. Gyimóthy, 2000), during and after (e.g. Markwell, 1997) – it showed that there is a dearth of research examining the total experience (i.e. before, during and after (e.g. Heimtun, 2011)).

Chapter 3 presented PARTicipative inquiry (Ingram et al, 2017) as an appropriate methodology for examining the research topic. It argued that a participative methodology was congruent to the theoretical lens, in that it recognised the agency of subjects throughout the research process (e.g. Heron, 1996). Further, it maintained that PARTicipative inquiry enabled an assessment of consumer agency across the total tourism experience; facilitating Prospective, Active and Reflective Triangulation (PART). The chapter presented the ‘participatory’ philosophical underpinnings (e.g. Heron & Reason, 1997; Lincoln et al, 2011); the visual (photographs), written (diaries), and verbal (interviews) methods employed; and the thesis’ approach to Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (e.g. Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine, 2008).

Chapters 4-6 relayed the empirical findings, demonstrating how consumers’ ethical agency is represented through the responsible tourism experience. The first two empirical chapters concentrated on the market-consumer interface. Chapter 4 illustrated how consumers were *critically aware* of the way in which ‘responsibility’ is communicated within ethical tourism spaces, ethical policies, and market materials (namely guidebooks); while Chapter 5 elucidated how consumers expressed or exhibited *resistance* towards the tourism industry,

particularly big business, the tourism ‘package’, and tourist ‘hotspots’. Finally, Chapter 6 attended to the ways in which consumers were *self-reflexive* over their agency. It outlined the self-care practices that consumers engaged in as a means of turning ethical reflection into action (i.e. ‘walking the talk’); the rationalisations (and subsequent resolutions) consumers employed in instances where they were aware of ethics but unwilling to alter their actions and behaviours (i.e. ‘reflexive inertia’); and the practical factors that impeded the extent to which consumers could transform their ethical ideals into actual practice (i.e. ‘pragmatic utility’).

Finally, Chapter 7 discussed the research findings in relation to the thesis’ research questions and broader literature, while showing how undertaking a PARTicipative inquiry was particularly beneficial in eliciting these empirical insights.

### **8.2.1 Fulfilling the Research Aims Arising from the Research Gaps**

In introducing this thesis, section 1.1.1 demarcated four research aims in light of the current research gaps in the ethical consumption and responsible tourism literatures. This section, 8.2.1, serves to succinctly capture how the four research aims have been fulfilled by this thesis.

First, the thesis has applied Foucauldian ethics to the consumer responsibility and responsible tourism literature. The thesis has shown how ethical consumers problematise certain aspects of the responsible tourism experience – often in light of power struggles with specific subjects and objects in (or associated with)

the tourism industry – compelling them to engage in practices of self-care to protect their identity as a ‘responsible tourist’.

Second, as a result of the above, the thesis has spotlighted the narratives and experiences of ethical *consumers*. It has shown how consumers conform to, critique or resist the tourism industry’s ways of being a ‘responsible tourist’; demonstrated how consumers (re)construct what it means to be ethical; considered what this reveals about the ways in which consumers retain, apportion or relinquish a sense of autonomy over their ethicality; and examined the tensions, struggles and dilemmas that consumers face.

Third, it has examined ethical consumption in a highly experiential and often unfamiliar context. This has revealed new tensions (i.e. weather; safety; language) that impede tourists’ ethical agency on holiday, while also providing evidence of how other previously considered tensions (i.e. price, availability, the needs of others) are consistent across the consumption of products and experiences when both ‘home’ and ‘away’.

Lastly, the thesis has examined consumer behaviour throughout the total tourism experience, as opposed to simply providing a post-hoc reflection. This has incited new insights into ethical agency at each phase of the responsible tourism experience while concurrently facilitated triangulation of the three datasets.

### **8.3 Contributions of Thesis**

This section seeks to extract the main contributions of the thesis in light of the above key findings. It starts with an examination of the theoretical contributions

from aligning with a late Foucauldian lens, before considering the empirical contributions resulting from examining ethical agency within the context of responsible tourism. It then considers the implications for practitioners of the tourism industry.

***Theoretical contributions:*** Through the proposed theoretical sharpening and advancement from Foucault's earlier to later works, the main contribution of this research lies in the improved understanding of ethical agency within responsible consumption. The thesis progresses from the current view of a disempowered, passive and acquiescent consumer to instead regard the responsible individual as an empowered moral agent who, albeit within certain conditions of freedom, has the autonomy to engage in alternative practices and subjectivities to those proffered by the market. More specifically, it moves away from literature which views tourists as being subjected to the panoptic surveillance of the tourism industry (Hollinshead, 1999), and instead builds upon research that views tourists' ethics as an 'experimentation with subjectivity' in the context of specific power/knowledge structures (Hanna, 2013). In this regard, the research offers a more fluid view of consumer responsibility, wherein the consumer is presumed free to contest, critique, resist and/or deviate from the tourism industry's purported best practice in order to (re)construct alternative meanings and possibilities on how to be ethical and act ethically. Put simply, this thesis engenders a (bottom-up) understanding of: (1) how consumers (at least partially) take ownership of their responsible practices and subjectivities; (ii) how consumers discursively frame their agency to abide by or diverge from the preferred ways of 'being responsible'; and (3) what this reveals in terms of the

ethical anxieties, contradictions and compromises that consumers subsequently face.

A further theoretical contribution is that – as depicted by the conceptual framing (see Figures 7.1), the thesis views ‘power struggles’ (Foucault, 1982), ‘problematizations’ (Foucault, 1984a) and ‘self-care practices’ (Foucault, 1984c) as conceptually distinct but interrelated phenomena. In this regard, the thesis is attuned to the ways in which certain problematisations may transpire from power struggles between themselves and (non)market actors, necessitating that tourists engage in certain practices of self-care. At this point, building upon Figures 4.1, 5.1 and 6.1, Appendix 8 demarcates the data by chapter to better illustrate how the three theoretical constructs often interconnect. For example, Sophie faced a power struggle with the ethical tourism space (column 1, row 1) after problematising the money-making nature of the conservation project and the lack of visible control mechanisms (column 2, row 1, bullet points 2 and 3). This, in turn, impelled her to remove herself from the space as a practice of self-care (column 3, row 1, bullet point 4). In summary, therefore, it is evident that the theoretical framing of this thesis proffers a richer and more holistic application of (later) Foucauldian thought. It is argued that whilst the thesis contributes to the consumer responsibility literature more broadly, it specifically contributes to the literature attending to Foucauldian ethics (e.g. Crane et al, 2008).

The thesis has also contributed to theory on the challenges that ethical consumers face. Table 2.3 outlined the six challenges to ethical consumer behaviour that Hindley and Font (2017) suggest require more attention: (i)

barriers to change; (ii) ignorance, confusion and lack of motivation; (iii) intentions and behaviour; (iv) cognitive dissonance; (v) moral disengagement; and (vi) diffusion of responsibility. Addressing each relevant challenge in turn, this thesis has first offered new destination-level considerations (e.g. weather, language) that impede – or act as a barrier towards – tourists’ ‘responsibility’; demonstrating that the locus of ethics does not always reside with the individual consumer, but with macro factors in the country or region visited.

Second, it has shown how consumers’ ethical projections (i.e. intentions) do not always translate into ethical actions (i.e. behaviour), often due to reasons of ‘reflexive inertia’, but more commonly due to considerations associated with ‘pragmatic utility’. Third, it has highlighted instances of and responses to tourists’ dissonance. This was particularly evident in Chapter 4, with tourists ‘critiquing and compensating’ and ‘critiquing and cutting loose’ in order to reduce their angst from participating in a paradoxically ethical space (4.2); as well as in Chapter 5, with tourists attempting to re-work the tourism package in order to better conform to their personal constructions of ‘responsibility’ (5.3.1).

Fourthly, the thesis highlighted instances of moral disengagement, showing that tourists (often candidly) rationalised their unethical actions by emphasising the ‘once in a lifetime’ nature of the activity (‘reflexive inertia’) (6.3). Lastly, it highlighted instances wherein tourists diffused their responsibility. This occurred both willingly, with Maisie happily sharing her responsibility with the owner of her B&B (4.3.1), and unwillingly, with Giovanna unhappily relinquishing her responsibility over her recycling and apportioning it on to her car-hire company (6.4.1).

A final contribution relates to the way in which this thesis builds upon current understanding of how consumers rationalise or resolve the attitude-behaviour gap. As highlighted in Chapter 2, Chatzidakis et al (2007) suggest that research should examine at which stage(s) of consumption consumers justify (or neutralise) their unethical behaviours. In this regard, this thesis has supported the psychological literature that highlights the presence of ‘prospective moral licensing’ (e.g. Casico & Plant, 2015) and ‘post-violation justifications’ (e.g. Shalvi et al, 2015; Barkan et al, 2015), while further showing how consumers rationalise deviations between intended and actual behaviour during the act of consumption itself (i.e. as captured in diary entries in the Active Phase).

***Empirical contributions:*** By situating this project within the empirical setting of responsible tourism, this research has started to uncover how consumers’ ethical agency – or indeed ethical practice in general – plays out in a highly performative and often unfamiliar socio-cultural setting compared to the relatively low-involvement and mundane contexts previously studied. It is evident that this setting has elicited new insights into a novel set of impedances (e.g. language barriers; weather) that affect tourists’ ethical agency, while demonstrating the ways in which other tensions (e.g. price, availability, the needs of other individuals) are consistent across the ethical consumption of products *and* experiences in the ‘home’ and ‘away’ environment. In addition, the empirical context has also served to educe insights into the ‘ethics versus experience’ dilemma, exposing how consumers recognise that *consistent* responsible practice results in some form of compromise with the enjoyment of certain aspects of the holiday. In the majority of cases, it appears that tourists

are willing to sacrifice or relax their ethics when it comes to ‘once in a lifetime’ experiences.

Furthermore, in applying the Foucauldian concepts of self-practices, power struggles, and problematisations within the context of responsible tourism, it is argued that this project also contributes to the responsible tourism literature by sharpening the theoretical conditions through which ethical agency is viewed.

***Practical contributions: (i) Contributions to industry:*** This thesis has offered insights into how consumers experience responsible tourism spaces and communications, informing the tourism industry as to how it can better tailor its products, services and texts to more effectively match tourists’ ethical ideals. For example, section 4.2 highlighted the need for the tourism industry to take a less ‘gimmicky’ approach to eco-tourism sites, alongside the need for it to implement stronger control mechanisms to better regulate and/or maximise the responsible conduct of tourists within these spaces; section 4.3.3 highlighted the need for the tourism industry to visibly enforce their ethical policies to physically demonstrate that such codes are not simply a form of ‘lip-service’; section 4.4.2 highlighted the need for more information on responsible tourism and the responsible tourist identity within guidebooks; and section 6.4.1 highlighted the importance of increasing the amount of recycling facilities, especially in tourism hotspots. Put simply, this thesis has provided the tourism industry with a more detailed understanding of the key areas which consumers render most problematic, enabling practitioners to better design and manage responsible tourism sites and marketing messages accordingly.

**(ii) Contributions to guests and hosts:** In assisting the tourism industry to better meet the needs and wants of ethical consumers, the findings of this research further benefit responsible tourists via improved holiday experiences. Likewise, through establishing the types of responsible practices that tourists do or do not – or even can and cannot – currently undertake, this research enables the tourism industry to encourage ethical conduct more effectively in the future. This ultimately benefits host populations and environments, in that the more tourists are responsible, the more sustainable holiday destinations (and thereby home nations) become.

**(iii) Contributions to policy:** Global tourist numbers are forecasted to double between 2011-2030 from 980m to 1.8bn (UNWTO, 2011), rendering tourism the fastest growing industry financially (Fuller, 2013). Hence, maintaining this financial contribution whilst minimising the associated negative sustainability implications is of significant concern, and an area that an emerging and improved responsible tourism industry can address. Thus, whilst current policy focuses on the supply-side of the market equation – i.e. Global Sustainable Tourism Council's criteria (GSTC, 2014) – an improved awareness of how consumers experience responsible tourism will inform policymakers as to how to extend similar criteria (or equivalents) to the demand-side.

***Methodological contributions:*** This thesis has shown how PARTicipative inquiry proffers a novel and effective platform for collaborating with research subjects throughout the three phases of the tourism experience. The methodology has engendered new insights into consumer ethics and agency relative to the specific context in which the tourist is situated at any given point,

rather than relying on traditional single, static methods such as post-hoc interviews (Ingram et al, 2017). Moreover, it has allowed the researcher to triangulate the Prospective, Active and Reflective data in a way which better highlights (in)consistencies between – and subsequent tensions, rationalisations and resolutions for – projected and actual ethical actions, behaviours and choices.

#### **8.4 Research Limitations and Avenues for Further Study**

There are several limitations of this thesis, the first of which relates to the research sample. Although Chapter 3 justified the small sample *size* on the grounds that it was equal to (e.g. Caruana et al, 2014; Small, 2016), or greater than (Malone et al, 2014 (n=13); Brown & Osman, 2017 (n=14)) other research into the tourist experience (see 3.5.3), the *scope* of the sample was fairly narrow.

When attempting to form a research sample in April-July 2015, the researcher contacted thirteen travel companies who marketed themselves as specialising in responsible (and/or sustainable, eco, green etc.) tourism, politely asking for their assistance in disseminating the Participant Information Sheet to current or prospective clients (3.5.3). To this end, two travel companies suggested that the researcher alternatively post a request for assistance on their social media pages and/or in the Responsible Travel & Tourism group on LinkedIn; six replied that they were unable to assist with the research; and four declined to respond. While one participant (Maria) was subsequently recruited from the LinkedIn group, no participants were recruited who had specifically selected their holiday on the basis of the ‘responsible’ credentials of a travel company.

It is possible that tourists who book their holiday through a responsible travel company construct the market-consumer interface in different ways. As an example, it might be that they exhibit less resistance towards the tourism ‘package’ than the participants of this thesis who had bought their (current or previous) package via a mainstream travel company (e.g. Maisie; Maria; Sam), part of which often meant staying at a large hotel or resort (Sophie; Sam). As responsible travel companies market their holidays (for example) as a “low-impact and small-scale alternative to standard commercial (mass) tourism” (Tribes Tailormade Travel, 2017), it is possible that tourists are less likely to deploy strategies of evasion on ethical grounds (5.3.2). On the other hand, given that the participants of this thesis often negatively reflected on the weak substance behind ethical tourism spaces and marketing messages, it is equally possible that customers of responsible travel companies similarly construct their approach to ‘responsibility’ as – to use Alex and Josh’s words – ‘gimmicky’ (4.2) or a form of ‘lip-service’ (4.3.3). In short, therefore, it is argued that future research could examine the experiences of tourists who have specifically purchased a holiday that is marketed as ‘responsible’. While it is recognised that access to these tourists continues to remain problematic, this avenue of research would provide important – and potentially new – insights into the types of power struggles, problematisations and self-care practices that a broader set of ethical consumers face in regard to the market-consumer interface.

A second research limitation is perhaps the restricted transferability (e.g. Guba, 1981) of the research context. One of the main aims of this thesis was to advance current study by following the lead of Ulusoy (2016) and examining the ethical consumption of experiences rather than every-day products (e.g. Pecoraro &

Uusitalo, 2014), such as organic foods (e.g. Doorn & Verhoef, 2011; Cairns et al, 2013), Fair Trade produce (e.g. DePelsmacker et al, 2006; Doran, 2010) and clothing (e.g. Ritch & Schröder, 2012; McNeil & Moore, 2015). To this end, it has been reiterated throughout this thesis that responsible tourism is a particularly well-suited empirical context for examining ethical agency as it is a highly-performative form of ethical consumption situated within an often unfamiliar environment. While this remains the case, and the research findings have elicited new insights, it is equally true that there are few other types of experiential consumption that are *as* highly-performative and also occur in a socio-culturally disparate ‘away’ environment. In this sense, it could be argued that the transferability of findings to other experiential contexts is possible, but limited.

In this vein, it is suggested that future research could continue to examine other types of experiential consumption. Sticking with tourism, research could perhaps explore how consumers construct their ethical agency when participating in day tourism; whether this be at sites that specifically champion environmental sustainability (e.g. National Trust) and the preservation of national heritage (e.g. English Heritage), or other visitor attractions and theme parks that consumers may construct as (un)ethical (e.g. safari parks; sea-life centres). This would be particularly interesting as, if consumers are ‘tourists’ for a smaller period of time, they may conceive of their agency, ethics and impact in a different way to when holidaying at a destination for (most commonly) one or two weeks.

Stepping away from tourism, research could also examine issues relating to agency within other – comparatively less performative – forms of experiences,

such as ethical consumption at restaurants. This suggested empirical context stems from instances in this research where multiple participants (e.g. Barbara, Edward, Freddie and William) highlighted the difficulties – and associated tensions and resolutions – they experienced while attempting to source vegetarian, vegan and/or sustainable foods when eating out. Although this is somewhat similar to the ethical consumption of food as a ‘product’ (e.g. Doorn & Verhoef, 2011; Cairns et al, 2013), the distinction is that it is the ‘experience’ of negotiating the challenge of eating the desired foods at the restaurant that is the main focus.

A third challenge relates to the participative methodology, in that some participants may have exhibited ‘reactivity’ or the Hawthorne Effect (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Put simply, it is possible that participants may have adapted or modified their projections, actions and reflections in order to better conform to or align with what they believed to be the expectations of the researcher. That said, the researcher made it clear throughout the research process that it was not for her to judge how ethical or unethical the participant had been, but to understand how responsible tourists made sense of their ethics before, during and after the holiday. In this sense, attempts were made to reduce the possibility of the Hawthorne Effect by emphasising that the researcher had no preconceptions or ideals against which participants’ behaviour was subsequently ‘monitored’.

The one instance of (reported) reactivity derived from Sam, who recorded in his diary that he had become methodologically reflexive. As discussed in Ingram et al (2017), Sam contemplated whether he had become overly aware of his ethics and agency while on holiday (“*[My wife] thinks I could be exhibiting the*

*'Hawthorne Effect' as I am reflecting on ethical issues which I don't think I would have done so (as much) if I had not been a part of [the] study"* (S15\_A)), something which he again reflected on unprompted in the post-holiday interview:

**(S15\_R):** The Hawthorne effect stuff was quite interesting, because I did feel at points where I was looking out for things that I wouldn't have looked out for before if I hadn't of done this. But then I sort of stepped back a little bit from that. And we sort of thought "well, no, let's just do what we were going to do. And then reflect on whether that was, you know, whether those choices, or what we saw – or whatever it was – was influencing what we would have done anyway.

Nevertheless, this extract shows how, even in instances where participants (themselves) felt that the Hawthorne Effect was present, they had the space and freedom to reflect on it (both in their diaries and with the researcher) and subsequently report on how they overcame this methodological challenge (i.e. by 'stepping back', 'behaving as normal', and reflecting on the 'influence'). Some might argue that another instance where the Hawthorne Effect may have (less obviously) manifested was in the case of Barbara. As evidenced in Extract 30b, Barbara wrote: "*After speaking with Claire, I really wondered about myself, mostly my ethics*". Here, however, it is maintained by the researcher that it was not her input in the Prospective Phase that provoked Barbara to later re-organise her holiday – i.e. travel to Cambridge rather than Snowdonia – but that the Prospective Phase itself provided space for Barbara to be reflexive over her ethical ideals in a way which compelled her to change her plans and eliminate the perceived attitude-behaviour gap.

In light of the above, it is advised that future researchers conducting a PARTicipative inquiry specifically, or adopting a participative methodology more generally, are mindful of the potential for the Hawthorne Effect. While

Sam reflected on the Hawthorne Effect unprompted in his post-holiday interview, it would be beneficial for researchers to make a point of asking participants in the Reflective Phase as to whether there were any instances where they believed that their behaviour was influenced by the research design. On top of this, as in this thesis, researchers should perhaps also ensure that they repeatedly articulate that it is not their intention to judge participants' behaviour, but to understand how or why their behaviour arose.

## **8.5 Concluding Remarks and Reflections**

This thesis has provided new insights into how consumers construct their agency to be ethical when participating in a responsible form of tourism. It has shown how tourists are often critical of the tourism industry, particularly in regard to the way that it propounds a certain paradoxical – and often luxurious – ‘version’ of ‘responsibility’ through its spaces and communications. It appears that, to be ‘responsible’, consumers want to determine their own actions, behaviours and choices in accordance with their own ethical ideals. Although not without its problems, tourists primarily want to isolate themselves from the organised tourism industry, travel off the beaten track, and live like a local.

Tourists are, however, aware that the degree to which they can be ‘responsible’ in this way is often outside of their control. The locus of ethics is frequently constructed as residing with specific conditions associated with the tourism product, or with certain characteristics of the holiday destination, as opposed to solely with the individual tourist. That said, it is clear that tourists attempt to compensate for this loss of moral autonomy, or seek to minimise any ethical

tensions and anxieties, by employing compensatory strategies as a means of self-care. To this end, it appears that tourists have the agency to be and act with certain conditions of freedom; allowing them to maintain a sense of ownership over their actions and identities.

It is becoming increasingly important to address the sustainability of tourism, and, in so doing, examine the (ir)responsible practices and subjectivities of the holidaymakers themselves. As the researcher, it is my hope that this thesis has taken a small step on this long journey by providing a rich insight into the *total* tourism experience of sixteen tourists. The way in which the participants helped weave a thread across the three phases of the PARTicipative inquiry led to much deeper insights than I could ever have wished for. Their level of commitment to the research was truly heart-warming, and it is because of them, their words and experiences, that this thesis was made possible.

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## *Appendices*

### **Appendix 1 – Interview Schedule: Prospective Phase**

The Prospective interviews followed the semi-structured schedule below. It is noted that additional questions were added in light of participants' responses.

1. What does responsible tourism mean to you?
2. How would you describe yourself as a responsible tourist?
3. What has shaped your understanding of responsible tourism / the responsible tourist?
  - i. Do you read guidebooks, brochures, websites, codes of conduct, responsibility policies etc?
  - ii. What are your opinions on the above sources of information?
  - iii. Would you use one (or more) source in preference to others?
4. What are you hoping to get from this holiday / what are your motivations for going on holiday? (i.e. relaxation, new experiences etc)
5. Why did you choose your holiday destination?
6. What types of activities have you planned for your upcoming holiday?
7. How do you think 'ethics' feature within your holiday?
8. What kinds of ethical activities do you engage in within your day-to-day 'home' life?
9. Have these ethical practices been influenced by external sources? (e.g. recycling can be enforced through government policy; purchasing habits can be influenced by corporate advertising and/or the media)?
10. Would you say you are more/less/equally ethical in your home life or on holiday?

## Appendix 2: Example Diary by Day – Lina (L4\_A)

<p><b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b></p>	<p>On the plane, the foods they served were all packaged for safety reasons and we had plastic cups too. After my meal I had a tray full of food wrappers and I noticed they were all put into one bin bag. I wonder if they will be recycled.</p>
<p><b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July</b></p>	<p>We took a long trip to Essaouira, a nearby town. Along the way the roads were congested and I thought about pollution and how I was contributing to it. It would have been nice to walk around more but I couldn't because I wasn't familiar with the area.</p>
<p><b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July</b></p>	<p>I bought some ice cream and whilst walking through the market I tried to look for bins to throw the ice cream wrapper away but couldn't find any. I saw a little girl blow her nose then throw the tissue on the floor which made me uncomfortable but I think it's the norm over here. I didn't find a bin so I had to do the same which made me feel guilty as I wouldn't normally do that in the UK.</p>
<p><b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July</b></p>	<p>I saw some really sad donkeys around the leather market. I assume they are used to transport the workers' goods but these donkeys looked exhausted. I was more aware of the way they were treated mostly because I saw one with missing flesh around its back and some bones jutting out with flies all around it. I wanted to do something but felt helpless. I chose not to go camel-riding (which is stereotypically touristy) for that reason.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b></p>	<p>I don't think recycling is a big thing here. Even our hotel room didn't have any recycling facilities. I feel that although not everyone recycles, it's nice to have the option to or to inform people about it.</p>
<p><b>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July</b></p>	<p>I hardly visited any commercial/chain stores which was good as I felt like I was helping the community by buying food or jewelry from locals.</p>

### Appendix 3: Example Diary by Activity/Location – Giovanna (G1\_A)

#### DIARY

Hotels: local businesses, but one night in a chain in a big city. Decision made because it offered better services at cheaper price- choosing local businesses is sometimes difficult when you perceive that the pleasure of your stay might be compromised by low quality of service.

Food: Never been to chains, always had meals at local restaurants and tried traditional specialties. Went to markets and small groceries to buy fruit and bread.

Village festival in Haro! Traditional dancing and music.

Visited local winery in san Asensio , a small scale producer that makes wine in a traditional way. So glad we skipped the touristic wine tasting attractions and got an authentic experience. They also haven't asked a fee for the visit, but we bought some wine because it felt right but really because it was good!

Asturia: did some walks, but nothing in particular to record

Avoided Pamplona and bull racing

Never felt ethics and responsibility compromised but in these occasions:

Descenso Ribadesella: canoeing along the river Sella. Nice experience, but when I noticed there where many people doing it I got worried that it would have been one of those mainstream activities that leave the river dirty with food waste and disturb the animals. But luckily I have noticed that the river was quite clean and people were respectful. Didn't notice any animal activity compromised. However I would have liked the organisation to stress out more the problem of waste as they give you lunch to eat during the activity (including plastic bottles of water).

Playa as Catedrais: this beach used to be easily accessible to the public, but since 1 July 2015 only pass holders can enter (I assume there is a limit of people a day, but I am not sure how many). We had to go by bus as the car pass could only be purchased the day before and we didn't know this.

I wasn't aware that this beach experienced a problem with number of people visiting it every day, so it was quite surprising the measures that they had to take. Although I am in favour of limiting the number of people entering an endangered area, I still think there were too many and maybe the pass wasn't working as hoped but seems more some kind of commercial manoeuvre to make more money out of it (obviously you had to pay to get the pass or the bus)... There were guards checking people's activity (probably to prevent them taking away things, damaging the rocks or simply for safety reason). Although the beach and the "cathedrals" rocks were stunning, I thought there were too many people. On the other hand, I could have never visited them if there had been a stricter number of people allowed in. This is a common dilemma, do I really want such strict limits when it is clearly not a good thing for the type of holiday I have, because I plan everything the day before? If there is a long waiting list and activities need to be planned weeks in advance, I certainly cannot do the things I want to do.

Illas Cies : Island Cies is a national park and protected natural reserve. Same situation as in Playa as Catedrais. The island is protected so a limited number of people can get there every day (around 2200). Particularly liked the billboards about respecting the islands and also the ferry company gives

you some tips on your trip and a plastic bag to put your waste in while on the island as there is no waste collection service. I haven't noticed any waste around or any other damaging activities, but again I felt there were too many people on such a tiny island. But again, if the limit had been lower, we couldn't have been able to visit it as we booked the ferry the day before. The island was so beautiful that it would have been a pity to miss it. There are rules and suggestions about how to make the trip to the island as less impactful as possible, but there is nothing that I perceived different from my usual behaviour. No shells collected (although the temptation was high). There were lots of seagulls nesting, but they didn't see the tourists as a distraction I think, maybe they got used to it...

I remember this really nice motto (I translate it from Spanish)

Leave nothing but your prints, take nothing but pictures, (last one I don't remember, but it was about the sun)!

Last remark: waste. We had many empty plastic bottles of water in the car, difficult to find recycling point, so had to travel with them in the car. I really wanted to throw them in the plastic bin...the car hire company said they would have done it, don't know if they actually did. I would have rather done it myself...always hate this part of the holiday, when I can't find the plastic bin and go around with this big full bag of bottle looking for one...but I feel bad throwing them in the general waste!

## Appendix 4: Example Diary by Positives and Negatives – Josh (J12\_A)

### Seychelles – October 2015

**Constance Ephelia hotel,  
Mahé, Seychelles**  
*16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October*

**Constance Lemuria hotel,  
Praslin, Seychelles**  
*22<sup>nd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> October*

#### Positives

- The Seychelles bills itself as an ecotourism destination and has lots of nature reserves and marine parks (50% of the country), including the bay in which we stayed at the Ephelia (**Figure 1**), and tourism projects are strictly regulated. Apparently there is a law that guarantees citizens a clean environment, who are also obliged to protect this environment (check out The Ecotourism Society of the Seychelles: [www.sey-tess.com](http://www.sey-tess.com); and the Seychelles Sustainable Tourism label: [www.sstl.sc](http://www.sstl.sc)). **Figure 2** shows the example of the Sustainable Tourism label at the Ephelia, and it seems like they even have a ‘tourism week’ to highlight what they are doing to promote sustainability (**Figure 3**).
- Our first impression of the Seychelles when we arrived was that it seemed quite well off, and was more developed than other African countries I have visited. I understand it has one of the highest GDPs in Africa. There was a large holiday home development called Eden Island ([www.edenland.sc](http://www.edenland.sc)) just outside Mahé airport to draw in wealthy tourists. It was a gated community separate from the rest of the island, and will presumably create jobs and hopefully draw in further investment.
- About 30% of the population of the Seychelles is employed in tourism and the hotels had around 500-600 members of staff (more in the Ephelia than the Lemuria), many more than the number of guests (**Figure 4** and **5**, which shows the size of the hotels).
- The Ephelia produces a green guide in each room to tell guests about the local environment and the hotel’s role in preserving it (**Figure 6**).
- At the Ephelia, we were walking back from breakfast one day and there were loads of kids who looked like they were going to school in the hotel. After asking one of the staff members, I found out that they had a school in the hotel complex for the children of those employed there. In fact it seemed like there was a whole community of people, like a small village, for the staff who lived on site.

- The members of staff at both hotels were good, but interestingly they were noticeably friendlier at the Lemuria than the Ephelia. The Lemuria was the more luxurious and expensive of the two hotels, perhaps with a more demanding level of guest requiring more attentive staff, and the people who worked there seemed to be a cut above those at the Ephelia.
- There were bicycles on hand at both hotels for guests to get around easily (**Figure 7**), although most people, including us in the end, still used the electric carts.
- There was the usual towel policy that you see in a lot of hotels today (**Figure 8**), although I am sure they just replaced them anyway on some days.
- We tried not to leave the air conditioning on when we were not in the room, when on previous holidays we would have done so to make sure the room was cool when we returned. However the cleaners would often turn it back on when they made up the room while we were out.
- Giant tortoises, which are native to the Aldabra coral atoll of the Seychelles, were kept at both hotels (three or more in the Ephelia and two in the Lemuria) as part of a turtle preservation programme (**Figures 9 and 10**). In fact the Lemuria even had a turtle manager to look after them. However the enclosure in the Ephelia was more of a cage whereas the Lemuria seemed more like a recreation of the tortoises' natural habitat. (See negatives below for the tortoises kept in a tiny pen outside the Lemuria below).
- Periodically a 'gas cart' would drive around both hotel resorts, which emitted a fog to kill mosquitoes (**Figure 11**). They were more discreet at the Lemuria than the Ephelia as they did it later at night when everyone was at dinner. I initially thought this was a negative but I could not think of any redeeming features of mosquitoes, so I decided it was a good thing, especially after getting a few bites. Although I hope the fog only killed mosquitoes and not anything else.
- There was a lovely waterfall just outside the Ephelia (**Figure 12**), which one of the locals pointed out to us. However you have to pay £5 each to pass through a gate manned by one of the villagers to access the path. I guess this is good for the village's economy, but it is a double edged sword given that it is easy exploitation of tourists who are trying to visit somewhere that is not necessarily owned, or maintained, by the people governing admission to it. Someone had also started to build some sort of viewing platform just down stream from the waterfall but it looked they had given up half way through, and so it had become an unnecessary eyesore (**Figure 13**)

### Negatives

- Big planes for such a small country, with a population of 95,000, but how else are you supposed to get there (**Figure 14**). However, with big planes comes big money, which are good for the local economy. Transport between the islands is by small aircraft operated by Air Seychelles (**Figure 15**), but this is probably a good thing as it connects otherwise separated communities.
- At the Epheila large swathes of mangrove forest were cut down to make way for the hotel. If you look at **Figure 16**, which are before and after photos from when the resort was built, you can see that the sea has silted up in the bay following construction. However the information board with the before and after photos on it do explain how they are trying to protect the mangrove forest.
- Following on from the point above, the mangrove swamp around the Ephelia did not look as healthy as we were led to believe with a lot of rubbish dumped into it from the side of the road (**Figure 17**), and bear in mind this drained directly into the sea by the hotel.
- Within most of the Seychelles the coral has been bleached, where it loses most of its colour. It is the coral's response to stress and has been in that state since the 1990s due to some changes in the local climate, possibly El Nino. I read online that it is recovering in places, and actually of the people I saw swimming and snorkelling they all seemed to treat it with respect.
- At the Lemuria the majority of the resort area was occupied by a huge 18-hole golf course (**Figure 18**). I only ever saw two people playing on it, yet it was constantly watered and maintained by a small army of people. Although they are still green spaces, golf courses are not the natural environment of the Seychelles. I guess it boils down to whether you like golf or not.
- I could not get hold of the local currency (Seychelles rupee) before we left the UK, but both hotels would accept euros to pay for any extras (food, drink, activities, etc.). However they manipulated the exchange rate to reduce the number of rupees to the euro by 15-20%, effectively further taxing their guests by this amount for each transaction. This really annoyed me to the point where I avoided buying anything extra, and instead took extra food from breakfast back to the room for later in the day. At the Ephelia there was a local restaurant at the end of the beach, unconnected to the hotel, which we went to instead for lunch and a drink. It was cheaper, had a sensible exchange rate and the food was probably better.
- The breakfast and dinner at the Ephelia, and the breakfast at the Lemuria were buffets, which I always think wastes an awful lot of food. You tend to eat way too much as you want to make the most of it but the food just keeps on coming. Hopefully the workers eat any remaining edible food?

- The representatives from the holiday company (Mason's) who looked after us in both hotels were not that helpful and verged on having a bad attitude towards the guests. I suspect they felt that we were unable to manage to do anything for ourselves without their intervention. It did not affect our holiday but we were not inclined to go to them for help and did not organise any excursions. It may just be the culture in the Seychelles, and perhaps we should not expect British customer service in another country.
- Just outside the Lemuria hotel was a small precinct which a few shops. In the corner was a pen only a few meters wide with two giant tortoises in it. It just had sand on the floor, and the locals used it as a tourist attraction. Given the large enclosures for the tortoises in the two hotels, it was sad to see such magnificent animals in such conditions. I purposefully did not take a photo when our taxi driver stopped to show us. ([wife] has forwarded a passing photo we took of the pen on the way home).
- From the point of view of our own behaviour we did not leave either hotel to explore the surrounding area or see what the country is actually like outside the confines of a resort. This was partly because we just wanted to relax but it is often the case that tourists and the locals do not mix together on this type of holiday. On the one occasion we did venture out to the waterfall near the Ephelia we were hassled intermittently by people who wanted to show us around or take us on a boat trip for a fee of course. Given their persistence it makes you reluctant to explore beyond the locality of the hotel.

**Appendix 5: Newspaper Cutting – June (J14\_A)**

**Elephant rides  
top cruelty list**

After a British tourist was gored to death by an elephant in Thailand, the London-based World Animal Protection released research that names elephant rides as the world's cruellest wildlife tourist attraction.

Watching performing monkeys and dolphins, and posing with lions and tigers also make the list.



## Appendix 6: Tailored Interview Schedule: Reflective Phase

Interviews in the Reflective Phase commenced with the participant steering discussion, allowing them to relay and reflect on their Active data. The researcher also had multiple questions stemming from the Prospective Phase; these were either asked following the participant's self-led reflections or interjected throughout the discussion where relevant. The interview schedule below belongs to Josh (J12).

1. Please can you steer the interview by discussing the content that you recorded within your diary (and/or photographs, additional materials etc.)?
2. In the Prospective Phase, you spoke of 'rules' or 'codes of conduct' when visiting the Inca trail, the turtle conservation sanctuary and orangutan sanctuary in Borneo, and ski resorts. You said that you were:  
*"...quite keen to stick to them, because it doesn't have any detrimental effect on my holiday. So yeah, and they're only small things to adhere to normally from your point of view, but they... if you were to break them they can have a potentially disastrous effect"*  
Were you equally happy to stick to the 'rules' or 'codes' in the Seychelles? Did you ever feel that the rules absolved you of a sense of responsibility so long as you abided by them? Did you ever feel that the 'boundaries' were limiting/wrong?
3. Previously you recalled how you felt tension when locals were "*throwing stuff overboard into the sea*" when on a ferryboat in Indonesia. You stated that you kept this tension to yourself, because "*the locals don't know any better because that's what they've always done*". Did you experience any differences between 'home' and away' ethics in the Seychelles?
4. We spoke about what factors impeded how ethical you were on holiday, such as how time constraints meant that flying was the only option. Did any factors impede how ethical you were on this holiday?
5. Before we talked about offsetting – such as how you have occasionally "*paid the extra pound or two to offset your carbon footprint when you book the flight*". You also spoke about how to "*combat*" the behaviour of other tourists, who were squashing the unhatched turtles at the conservation sanctuary, you "*had a go*" at them and "*withdrew yourselves*" from the space. Were there any instances in the Seychelles where you felt like you had left a mark by participating in a particular activity, and subsequently felt like you had to offset it in some way?

## Appendix 7: NVivo Coding Summary by Node for ‘Lack of Alternative’

May 2018					
Coding Summary By Node					
<u>Lack of Alternative</u>					
(Pragmatic Utility\\Infrastructure-availability\\Lack of alternative)					
	Coverage of Data	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Source
<b>Node</b>					
<b>Nodes\\Infrastructure-availability\\Lack of alternative</b>					
<b>Document</b>					
<b>Internals\\Pragmatic Utility</b>					
	<b>4.08%</b>	<b>8</b>			
			<b>1</b>	CI	C8_A
<p>- Needed 3 internal flights (each of about 40-45 min) to get to some of the places like Machu Picchu and the rainforest. Bus / car would have taken 12-20 hours for some of these locations. I felt a bit uneasy about my carbon footprint but the alternative was not feasible. I don't even know which would be worse... an inefficient old bus for 12 hours or a 40 minute flight on a jet.</p>					
			<b>2</b>	CI	C8_R
<p>I think this was the, I think for me – I put in the email to you – which is that the roads are so poor between these various regions, that the only way to really get there is just fly. And so went on these like internal flights on like, you know, ordinary airliners for like 45 minutes at a time. And I did kind of think, you know, what is... about the carbon footprint and the impact on the environment from all these, all the flying. I didn't... I don't know what I sort of think about it really, because I don't know enough about it to know it is any different to driving on a, you know, clapped out bus [P/I: laughter] for twelve hours. You know, actually maybe that's worse [laughter]. Because some of the older cars they've got there and stuff probably have quite poor emissions, so. So yeah, I wasn't really happy about the number of flights, certainly from a carbon footprint point of view, but I didn't really know what the alternative was. So I just went along with it.</p>					
			<b>3</b>	CI	G1_R
<p>Because we were booking the hotel two or three hours before checking in, so there was also this rush for find a place where to sleep. But I felt that tension after, when I thought 'hmm, maybe I should have looked for a local bed and breakfast – it would have been better'. But then when you are in the city, and you have a walk around, you realise that it is difficult. Because big cities are organised and being organised also means that you can't let a small business have just few rooms, for example, you need more rooms to welcome all the tourists [laughter]. So, yes, I felt a bit bad, but not so bad because it happened just when there wasn't much of a choice. In all the other situations it was almost natural for us to go to a local business.</p>					
			<b>4</b>	CI	J12_P
<p>Once or twice when I've booked a flight I have paid the extra pound or two, you know, to offset your carbon footprint – when you book the flight. So I guess that means subconsciously, or consciously even, I have considered it. But it's only a very low level guilt, it would never stop me from booking a flight. Or it certainly wouldn't make me consider taking a different method, because if – method of transport – because if you go on a twelve hour flight then in order to do that on any other way – by driving or on a boat – then you're talking weeks of travel time which just isn't feasible with the amount of time off that we get.</p>					
			<b>5</b>	CI	J12_A
<p>Big planes for such a small country, with a population of 95,000, but how else are you supposed to get there (Figure 14). However, with big planes comes big money, which are good for the local economy. Transport between the islands is by small aircraft operated by Air Seychelles (Figure 15), but this is probably a good thing as it connects otherwise separated communities.</p>					

Coverage of Data	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Source
		6	CI	J12_R
<p>But then you think that the Seychelles is a group of islands about an hour's flight northeast of Madagascar, there's <b>no other way of getting there for a two week or one week holiday than flying in.</b> If you took a boat, as soon as you got there you'd have to turn around and go back. And it seemed like there were some either private jets or helicopters or something coming in as well. And so, you know, unfortunately we <b>don't have a better way</b> of getting people from A to B quickly other than on a big plane. And I probably imagine with the population of the Seychelles only being 95,000 or something, a number of tourists comes in easily eclipses the population. And so with the number of tourists coming in with all the money they bring, you know, that I guess that's good for the local economy.</p>				
		7	CI	J14_R
<p>Then I commented about only having <b>air-conditioning in the room with no windows opening.</b> <b>I personally hate that.</b> But then with the pollution outside perhaps it wouldn't be much better had I had the window open anyway. So there's sort of a <b>no-win situation</b> there.</p>				
		8	CI	J14_R
<p>I suppose the only thing that I could think of was the fact that all the time we had to buy bottles of water. So the whole time we were <b>contributing to this heap of plastic,</b> because there was absolutely no way to obtain water that was safe for us to drink unless we bought bottles. But <b>if there was some sort of water purification, or something where we could have filled up bottles, we would have happily done that.</b> But there just wasn't the opportunity.</p>				

N.B. Blue denotes a 'problematisation'; pink denotes a 'power struggle'; and yellow and green denote a 'subject position' and 'subjectification' respectively (i.e. 'self-care').

**Appendix 8: Instances of Power Struggles, Problematizations and Self-Care Practices**

POWER STRUGGLES	PROBLEMATISATIONS	SELF-CARE PRACTICES (Mode of Subjectivation (MoS); Ethical Work (EW))
<i>Ethical Tourism Spaces and Marketing Messages (Chapter 4)</i>		
Self – Ethical Tourism Spaces (4.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Gimmicky’ approach to conservation (4.2)</li> <li>• Money-making (4.2)</li> <li>• Lack of control mechanisms (4.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making comparisons between the ethical self and other (supposedly) ethical tourists (MoS) (4.2)</li> <li>• Compensating for participation (e.g. increasing economic contribution through local purchases) (EW) (4.2)</li> <li>• Removing oneself from the ethically-mediated space (EW) (4.2)</li> <li>• Voicing concerns to management/fellow tourists (EW) (4.2)</li> </ul>
Self – Ethical Policies (4.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absolved responsibility (4.3.1)</li> <li>• Non-enforcement led to concerns regarding marketing spin (4.3.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conforming to ethical codes, and, where necessary, going above and beyond the parameters of the code (EW) (4.3.1)</li> <li>• Maintained accountability (4.3.1)</li> </ul>
Self – Market Materials (4.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns regarding timeliness and accuracy (4.4.1)</li> <li>• Lack of information on the ethical subjectivity (4.4.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-checking market materials with non-market sources/materials (EW) (4.4.1)</li> </ul>

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POWER STRUGGLES	PROBLEMATISATIONS	SELF-CARE PRACTICES (Mode of Subjectivation (MoS); Ethical Work (EW))
<b><i>Resistance Practices (Chapter 5)</i></b>		
Self – Big Business (5.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big/chain hotels are driven by pecuniary motivations (5.2.1) and offer homogeneous experiences (5.2.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resisting big business by frequenting smaller/local sellers (EW) (5.2.1)</li> <li>• Living like a local (MoS) (5.2.2)</li> </ul>
Self – Tourism ‘Package’ (5.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of freedom associated with purchasing an organised tourism package (5.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repairing loss of freedom by (re)working parameters imposed by the package (5.3.1)</li> <li>• Evading elements of the tourism package, or evading the package entirely (EW) (5.3.2)</li> </ul>
Self – Tourist ‘Hotspots’ (5.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent travel induces tensions regarding (i) the possibility of environmental/socio-cultural damage when travelling <i>outside</i> of tourism hotspots, and (ii) distinguishing between activities which are ‘on’ and ‘off’ the beaten track (5.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging in independent travel in order to travel off the beaten track and increase opportunities for guest-host interaction (EW) (5.4)</li> </ul>
<b><i>Self-Reflexivity (Chapter 6)</i></b>		
Self – Self (Micro)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics versus experience dilemma (WtT) (6.2.2)</li> <li>• Being perceived as too ethical (RI) (6.3.2)</li> <li>• Personal finance (PU) (6.4.3)</li> <li>• Fellow travellers (PU) (6.4.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questioning the self to ensure they are living up to personal ethical ideals (EW) (6.2.2)</li> <li>• Silencing ethical concerns to protect one’s identity from being externally perceived as too ethical (MoS) (6.3.2)</li> <li>• Compromise with fellow travellers (EW) (6.4.4)</li> </ul>
Self – Product (Meso)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to prioritise ‘once in a lifetime’ tourism activities (RI) (6.3.1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offset questionable ‘away’ practice by propounding good ‘home’ practice (MoS) (6.3.1)</li> <li>• Research ethical options for future experiences (EW) (6.3.1)</li> </ul>

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POWER STRUGGLES	PROBLEMATISATIONS	SELF-CARE PRACTICES (Mode of Subjectivation (MoS); Ethical Work (EW))
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding ethical elements within unethical activities (EW) (6.3.3)</li> </ul>
Self – Destination (Macro)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not wanting to offend others (WtT) (6.2.1)</li> <li>Tourists occasionally felt discriminated against and/or the offended party (WtT) (6.2.1)</li> <li>Difference(s) in hosts' way of life (RI) (6.3.2)</li> <li>Infrastructural availability (PU) (6.4.1)</li> <li>Language barriers (PU) (6.4.2)</li> <li>Weather (PU) (6.4.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(De)regulating the self in accordance with macro 'rules' (MoS) (6.2.1)</li> <li>Supressing own ethics to respect host practice (MoS) (6.2.1)</li> <li>Lack of availability necessitates conformance to local practice, and/or apportion responsibility to others (EW) (6.4.1)</li> <li>Attempt to learn and/or speak the language (EW) (6.4.2)</li> </ul>

(Key: WtT – Walking the Talk; RI – Reflexive Inertia; PU – Pragmatic Utility)