Maria Cristina Paganoni

THE WORDS AND ROUTES OF PEACE-SENSITIVE TOURISM

Abstract

In a world ravaged by conflict, the tourism sector's alleged involvement in peacebuilding might seem to be trivial and almost cynical in exploiting mankind's loftiest ideals. In response, this article highlights its constructive potential and explores discourses, practices and contexts where tourism strives to embody the myriad meanings of peace. To this end, three European case studies of peace-oriented tourism are examined through the critical lens of Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA), illustrating the power of language in resisting violence and fostering transformation. The focus is placed on the web communication of a hiking walk, a virtual route and seven urban trails that are interpreted as an expression of peace activism, a form of peace education and a catalyst for social change within the framework of tourism discourse.

Keywords: peacebuilding, nonkilling linguistics, tourism discourse, activism, Positive Discourse Analysis

1. Introduction

The catchphrase that tourism fosters peace and intercultural dialogue recurs in the narratives of international institutions and tourism authorities. At the World Economic Forum in Davos in May 2022 – after a one-year suspension and a postponement due to uncertainty about the Omicron variant – Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), declared that «the return of tourism offers a chance to reassert the values that define the sector, namely peace, solidarity and international cooperation»[1]. The values reasserted in his words are those spelt out in the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16[2], particularly as regards the commitment to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.

As has been observed, however, the relationship between peace and tourism is questionable despite «an implicit if not explicit assumption in much of the national rhetoric of developed nations and their tourism industries that there is a basic relationship between the freedom to travel, the welcome of visitors from abroad and democracy»[3]. Contrary to this, tourism is frequently influenced by narrow perspectives and driven by instrumental economic interests that go against the collective good, and even the sector's long-term prosperity[4]. In fact, dispossession, escapism and the exploitation of natural resources aggravating climate injustice are a reality in tourism and little is still done to address these issues.

For this reason, the following analysis privileges the concept of peace-sensitive tourism over the untested simplification of tourists as ambassadors of peace, «placing tourism in the context of

---

[1] Z. Pololikashvili, «Tourism is not just about travel, it's also about peace», in *World Economic Forum*, 24 May 2022, <https://www.weforum.org/>, (25 September 2023).

[2] SDG16 recites: «Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels», in *United Nations*, «The 17 goals», 2015, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/>, (25 September 2023).

[3] L.K. Richter, «Democracy and tourism: exploring the nature of an inconsistent relationship», in P.M. Burns and M. Novelli (eds.), *Tourism and politics: global frameworks and local realities*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2007, pp. 5-16.

[4] R. Isaac, «Responsible tourism and development in the context of peace-building», in C. Wohlmuther and W. Wintersteiner (eds.), *International handbook on tourism and peace*, Klagenfurt, Drava, 2014, p. 92.

other peace-promoting activities and designs»[5]. Given that tourism and peace are not inherently synergistic, the underlying research question aims to discuss the discourse of those tourism practices that actively engage in promoting peace, transnational understanding, sustainability, inclusion and active participation.

The analysis of peace-sensitive tourism will address the linguistic choices, discourse topics, and representational strategies of tourist destinations and experiences to observe how they can enhance non-warring values by actively pursuing a project of «nonkilling linguistics»[6], a responsible use of language and its full peace-making potential within the framework of tourism discourse.

2. Selected case studies and methodology

Establishing a comprehensive overview of all forms of peacebuilding in tourism is beyond the heuristic scope of this article. For example, the role of museums in fostering peaceful intercultural dialogue, of spiritual retreats to meditate and seek inner peace, of natural sanctuaries as instances of peace with nature, will not be discussed. Additionally, despite the presence of iconic destinations worldwide, including the peace cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Dandi Kutir Gandhi Museum, and natural Parks for Peace in transboundary protected areas, just to name a few, this analysis focuses exclusively on Europe, with its history, heritage and ecosystems. More specifically, it gives priority to a pedagogy of peace as the foundation for deeper integration of the European Union around its core values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights[7].

The EU's mainstream peace narrative has inaugurated a revisitation of heritage for identity purposes. One of these initiatives is the establishment of the European Heritage Label (EHL)[8]. A few of these EHL sites, such as the Peace Palace in The Hague, explicitly emphasise peace and are discursively framed at the convergence of two concepts to serve as «symbols of peace and of the idea of Europe»[9]. Arguably, this approach could potentially be extended to tourist destinations, recognising that the processes of discursive construction in tourism only partially align with those in heritage politics.

In light of these premises, attention is given to sites of conflict and war in Europe that have been reframed as peace destinations after having experienced the effects of social unrest and man-made violence at the collective level. The aim is to reflect on how peace-sensitive tourism may enhance a shared feeling of communality and strengthen civil society's commitment to peace through discourse and specific activities. Distributed as they are across continental Europe, at least a few of these places are within reach of ordinary citizens.

The case studies selected for this analysis are described on their respective websites. Each one promotes a sustainable project of peace-sensitive tourism. The first one is the Walk of Peace, a transnational hiking trail in a protected natural environment, from the Julian Alps (the Slovenian

[5] W. Wintersteiner and C. Wohlmuther, «Peace sensitive tourism: how tourism can contribute to peace», in C. Wohlmuther and W. Wintersteiner (eds.), cit., p. 31. See also G. A. Alamineh, «The nexus between coronavirus and tourism: tourism as peace sensitive industry», in *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 2022, vol. 9, n. 1, p. 3: «Peace-sensitive tourism – both from the supplier's and from the consumer's side – is conceived not as an isolated peace strategy, but as part of a huge and historical social transformation towards a culture of peace. Peace-sensitive tourism is aware of its economic and social power and thus of its social responsibility».

[6] P. Friedrich and F. Gomes de Matos, «Toward a nonkilling linguistics», in P. Friedrich (ed.), *English for diplomatic purposes*, Bristol and Buffalo, Multilingual Matters, 2016, pp. 1-19.

[7] European Union, «Aims and values», n.d., <https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values_en>, (25 September 2023).

[8] K. Mäkinen, «Interconceptualizing Europe and peace: identity building under the European Heritage Label», in T. Lähdesmäki, L. Passerini, S. Kaasik-Krogerus, I. van Huis (eds.), *Dissonant heritages and memories in contemporary Europe*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, 2019, pp. 51-78.

[9] *Ivi*, p. 66.

municipality of Log Pod Margantom, in Italian Bretto) to the Adriatic sea (Trieste). Financed by the EU's Interreg cross-border cooperation programme, it was inaugurated in 2015. Its vision is «to bring together partners in Slovenia and other European countries in the mission of joining the former World War I front lines into a unified European Walk of Peace»[10].

The second one, the Places of Peace Route, is run by the European Network of Places of Peace (ENPP), a non-profit association with its headquarters in Evoramonte, Portugal. Developed since 2012, it is «a virtual route stretching from Portugal to Bulgaria, linking the places in Europe where peace treaties were signed»[11]. The website draws attention to the often neglected history of the destinations it connects and provides essential tourist information. Currently, the locations highlighted in the route are thirteen across ten countries and include Edirne in Turkey's European portion and Kothyn in Ukraine, which joined the network in December 2021 before the outbreak of war.

The third one, Discover Peace, is an outreach activity of the EU-financed Discover Peace project that was launched in 2014. It advertises peace trails in seven European cities – The Hague, Vienna, Manchester, Paris, Berlin, Budapest and Turin. The trails «promote a complex understanding of peace and generate reflections on a concept that presents itself as active engagement in civil society»[12]. The urban itineraries connect and illustrate places where history unfolded, at times through tragic events, but where sites, monuments and buildings now stand as emblems of civil societies committed to the promotion of peace, human rights and democratic participation.

The qualitative methodology espoused for the interpretation of peace-sensitive tourism discourse draws insights from peace studies and heritage studies and employs Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA) as a complement to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)[13]. Whereas CDA primarily aims to unveil ambiguities and contradictions inherent in dominant discourses (with tourism in affluent societies being one of them), PDA contests the mainstream with the adoption of reframing strategies that strive to open up new discursive spaces in the media and public debate[14], as well as in education[15]. PDA leverages the power of language to bring about positive change in society. In terms of topic selection, it centres on discourses of hope, transformation, and liberation to establish the conditions to promote social justice, equality and peace[16]. For these reasons, PDA is here applied as an appropriate critical framework to examine the interplay between the communication strategies of peace-sensitive tourism, the conventional repertoire of tourism and the identity politics embedded in EU official narrative.

3.   Walking in the footsteps of peace

The three case studies under analysis promote peace-oriented tourist experiences in the form of hikes, (virtual) routes and trails within EU borders, with the inclusion of the neighbouring countries of Ukraine and Turkey in one case. These itineraries in space and time create connections between heritage sites, actively engage with memory culture, and gain persuasive power from the journey metaphor frame, a journey leading to peace, as can be seen below.

---

[10] The Walk of Peace, «Vision», 2015, <https://www.thewalkofpeace.com/>, (25 September 2023).
[11] Places of Peace, «The route», 2012, <https://placesofpeace.eu/>, (25 September 2023).
[12] Discover Peace, «About», 2014, <https://discoverpeace.eu/en/>, (25 September 2023).
[13] See J.M.F. Hughes, «Progressing Positive Discourse Analysis and/in Critical Discourse Studies: reconstructing resistance through progressive discourse analysis», in *Review of Communication*, 2018, vol. 8, n. 3, pp. 193-221.
[14] F. Macgilchrist, «Positive Discourse Analysis: contesting dominant discourses by reframing the issues», *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines*, 2007, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 74-94.
[15] R. Rogers, *Reclaiming powerful literacies: new horizons for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2018.
[16] *Ibidem*.

> The Walk of Peace is a synonym for coexistence and exploration that brings us to the universal and highest value – PEACE. So, come and join us on the journey[17].

> Discover the route
> We are waiting for your visit. Please come in peace[18].

> Walk exciting peace trails and learn about peace and its long history[19].

It can be observed that the destination is not portrayed as the endpoint; instead, the primary emphasis lies on the emotional and instructive journey of discovery, which unfolds as a «generative, open-ended, processual approach to peace»[20]. Thanks to the support of public stakeholders that embrace this positive perspective (national and regional governments, municipalities and European institutions), the itineraries are designed to be sustainable, inclusive and accessible to a diverse range of people. For these reasons, they are advertised as valuable tools for educating younger generations about the concept of peace.

Whether virtual or physical, the suggested hikes, routes and trails hold historical or cultural significance related to remembrance of the past. However, their primary discursive focus is on peace and reconciliation for the future. Unlike battlefield tourism, which involves «travel to sites that are historically linked with violence, death, suffering, or disaster»[21], the narratives that accompany peace walkers are intentionally designed not to prioritise warfare but to offer a less divisive understanding of heritage in the effort to eschew what unequivocally remains «the problematic morality of war»[22].

The websites

What follows will briefly illustrate how the language of the three websites is used to promote peace-sensitive tourism as a meaningful form of travel and to give prominence to specific topics. To begin with, in all the three excerpts below, we can observe that the emphasis on history aims to transform places of bloodshed and conflict into a common heritage of peace. The peacebuilding stance requires a reframing of the tourist gaze and experience, which is activated by a careful choice of lexical items and discursive strategies.

> A Story of War and Peace
> When you embark on the journey from the Alps to the Adriatic Sea you will be immediately embraced by a feeling of peace which was not always palpable along the banks of the rivers of Soča and Piave on the territory of Slovenia and Italy. The flows of history and these two rivers are turbulent and unpredictable, which makes the war heritage that left a permanent mark on the people, the landscape and the world impossible to ignore. A century after World War I, we link more than 300 monuments into a unique, over 500 kilometres-long the Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic trail. We strive to slow down the pace of time and invite visitors to relaxation or reflection. Places, once marked by the horrors of war, stand today as memorials

---

[17] The Walk of Peace, cit.

[18] Places of Peace, cit.

[19] Discover Peace, «Home», cit.

[20] A. Laban Hinton, G. Shani, J. Alberg, «Rethinking peace studies», in *Rethinking peace: discourse memory, translation, and dialogue*, London and Lanham (MD), Rowman & Littlefield, 2019, p. xiv.

[21] M. Van Alstein, «Memories of war & peace in Flanders Fields», in *European Review of International Studies*, vol. 1, n. 2, p. 34. In his article, Van Alstein discusses the thriving sector of remembrance and battlefield tourism in their connections with national identity construction and also for their economic implications. He nonetheless concludes that «while criticism of certain economic practices is relevant and necessary, scholars should not neglect the educational and ethical possibilities of remembrance tourism» (p. 45).

[22] *Ivi*, p. 34.

and reminders, and with the Walk of Peace, they are spreading the message of peace, collaboration and friendship among nations[23].

United by history and intangible heritage
ENPP is a European network of places where peace treaties or capitulations were signed, represented by its public and private institutions. These places are aware of the historical often tragical events (*sic*) and commemorate them. With the mandate of a past of wars the members of ENPP work together to build a culture of peace and to promote those places based on its common historical and Intangible Heritage – The PEACE[24].

A concept of peace which relies on democracy, civil society, self-confident participation and courage asks for your attention in seven beautiful European cities. Peace-trails that you will find most worthwhile to walk get presented. The website invites you to the experience and leads you to the different stations on the trails.
Interesting articles inform about peace movements, important events and meaningful peace institutions of past and contemporary significance.
[…] We want to draw awareness to peace matters. Since the 19th century peace movements have emerged throughout our cities, but seldom with public attention. In an outdoor learning process facts and stories on the peace trails present an important aspect of the history of our civil society and democracy. Most monuments in our cities display "heroes of wars", but peace and human rights are hardly ever subjects for a memorial culture. This discrepancy will become obvious, thus promoting personal reflections on one's own participation. – Only a change in thinking will bring about change in actions [25].

The Walk of Peace and Discover Peace engage with potential tourists through personal references in the text («*you* will be immediately engaged», «*you* will find most worthwhile», «the website invites *you* to the experience», «*our* civil society and democracy», «most monuments in *our* cities»), putting forth the invitation to reflect, respond affectively and participate in building a culture of peace. In the case of Places of Peace, instead, a third-person narrative is employed, especially in the introduction to each site's history.

The Walk of Peace is ideally constructed as a reflexive revisitation of one of the bloodiest frontlines of the Great War in a cross-border natural setting of remarkable beauty. The contrast between nature and history, timelessness and memory generates a problematic perception of landscapes and their «permanent mark», for example when the rivers Soča (Isonzo in Italian) and Piave are framed as metaphors for the «turbulent and unpredictable […] flows of history». Here and elsewhere on the website, the language is vague and restrained, which inevitably simplifies historic events. However, a positive effect of this kind of memory discourse is its nonviolent tone, which refrains from assigning blame and avoids the war rhetoric of dying for one's country, «inspired by the deep intuition the conflict must necessarily be remembered in an interpretative key able of transcending the exclusivity of national memorial practices»[26]. Instead, mutual knowledge, collaboration and free movement in the Schengen Area are promoted, as illustrated below.

Through mutual exploration, restoration, study, remembrance, exchange of experiences and knowledge, creation, cultural tourism and promotion, the heritage, which more than 100 years ago divided and destroyed people's lives and homes, has become the foundation for getting to know one another and respectfully collaborating with each other[27].

---

[23] The Walk of Peace, «Welcome on the Walk of Peace», cit.
[24] Places of Peace, «The network», cit.
[25] Discover Peace, «About», cit.
[26] A. Pocecco, «Transnationalism and universalism of the memory tourism of the Great War», in *Journal of Mediterranean Knowledge-JMK,* 2020, vol. 5, n. 1, p. 121.
[27] The Walk of Peace, «Vision», cit.

Worthy of note, the success of the Walk of Peace has led to the implementation of an enhanced initiative, referred to as the Walk of Peace+, within the Interreg Italy-Slovenia 21-27 Programme, where economic objectives of the WoP brand in the tourism sector are openly emphasised[28].

The discursive approach of Places of Peace is marked by greater detachment and a factual historiographic reconstruction of the context of peace treaties against the background of «a past of wars». The link to each site opens with a concise historical account, «The reason», as in the following excerpt.

> The reason
> Why is Vasvár a Place of Peace
> On 1st August 1664, Christian armies in European collaboration (mostly with Austrian, German, French, Italian and Hungarian forces) won a major victory near Szentgotthárd-Mogersdorf over the Ottoman-Turkish forces which had occupied a great part of Hungary more than a century before. […] The battle of Szentgotthárd was the first significant victory over the Ottoman-Turkish army forces previously reckoned to be invincible. The victory impressively represented the then emerging supremacy of the European defence technology and military science. The Peace Treaty of Vasvár was principally a treaty between the Ottoman-Turkish and the Habsburg Empire – and Hungary as part of it – but had a significant impact on European political conditions as well. Both the battle and the peace attracted considerable interest in Europe of its day because as a result of a European cooperation it became possible to expel the Turkish troops from Europe[29].

In this introductory section, peace is explained as the strategic result of defeating the Ottoman enemy after over a century of occupation. A major, surprising victory by the «Christian armies» was made possible through the military collaboration of European powers and their superior «technology and military science» in an increasingly polarised world, also on religious grounds. For each of the thirteen locations along the route (a few pages are still under construction), we encounter similar factual accounts of wars, armistices, rivalries and power struggles that peace treaties attempt to suppress, albeit sometimes only temporarily. These treaties provide periods of social and economic development. While we learn the names and war deeds of the rulers, we can only infer the suffering of ordinary people. Conventional features of tourism discourse emerge in the paragraphs below the historical introduction where practical advice is provided and the focus shifts to the present. These linguistic, discursive and multimodal features include photo galleries, promotional videos, ego-targeting lexis, lists of sites as *sights*, and the usual expert suggestions, formulated as imperatives («discover», «visit», «find», «relax»), as conventional noun phrases («things to do»), or as practical information about «where to stay» and «what to eat». It could be surmised that the intertwining of the historian's and expert guide's voices betrays the efforts to harmonise the textual materials unevenly drafted by the network members in Portugal, Spain, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Turkey.

Discover Peace is set in the physical and moral heart of «seven beautiful European cities» that are popular tourist destinations. The initiative seeks to address the imbalance between the celebration of war heroes and the lack, or concealed nature, of monuments dedicated to peace and human rights. By highlighting this disparity, the project underscores that peace and democracy rely on the active involvement of individuals. It provides information and opportunities for reflection, fostering active participation in democratic societies, the protection of human rights and peace-related issues. Each peace trail offers flexibility, allowing visitors to customise their experiences based on personal interests and time constraints. In sum, Discover Peace combines public spaces,

---

[28] Interreg Italia-Slovenjia, «Walk of Peace+», n.d., <https://www.ita-slo.eu/en/walkofpeace>, (25 September 2023): «The capitalisation project has the even more ambitious objective of enhancing the tourist product through actions at a strategic level to make it a lever for the development of the border area and the attraction of tourist flows, including international ones».

[29] Places of Peace, «Vasvár», cit.

historical reflection and active engagement to bring historical aspects related to peace, human rights and civic participation into the public realm of contemporary European cities.

Education to peace

In 2020, the Walk of Peace promotional 1' 46'' video ranked second in the Facebook competition among the finalists of EU interregional projects, with the words below accompanying an emotional sequence of war images, heritage sites, natural beauties and educational activities:

> The Great War / tore Europe apart / War heritage remains / Is this legacy / more than remembrance? / Can we create/ a transnational story/ of respect and coexistence? / An idea / Walk of Peace/ is born / To unite / what frontlines divided / We reached out to / research and protect / educate / develop sustainable tourism / Our results / 420 km cross-border hiking trail / 10 countries committed / UNESCO tentative list / Our vision / Let's make together / Walk of Peace //[30]

Using a consciously measured and nonviolent language, the Walk of Peace project communicates its aim to reshape entrenched border perceptions and cultivate a peace-sensitive transnational historical awareness. The Places of Peace route also shares «the objective of developing the spirit and the culture of peace among European populations, especially young people and to increase the number of visitors around this Intangible Heritage»[31]. As has been seen, the urban trails of Discover Peace integrate the principles and objectives of public history with a peace pedagogy.

Nonetheless, several critical views can be raised regarding the discursive strategies of peace-sensitive tourism, in particular the following ones: 1. memory culture may unduly sustain national identity claims or downplay the tragedies of history in hindsight, while heritage should remain dissonant and plural; 2. in order to promote peace credibly, Europe should not only turn to the past but address the present conditions of conflict and violence in which it is involved, also outside of its borders[32]; 3. peace trails attract regular hikers and common tourists who «may not be consciously aware of the peace-building efforts underlying these routes»[33].

Should these objections, all grounded in facts, nullify the ethical tension of peace-sensitive tourism? If one aligns with Marita Sturken's opinion as stated below, this does not seem to be the case.

> Sadly, the memory boom of the past 30 years has largely not contributed to a deeper understanding of the consequences of violence and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Yet certain modes of memorialization can open up a space for a moving past conflict rather than its perpetuation through cycles of revenge and retaliation. By examining these different modes of cultural memory, we can begin to see this relationship between modes of cultural memory and the social aims of peace. This initiative reflects the belief that how societies remember traumatic events is crucial to how they move forward[34].

---

[30] Walk of Peace, «A transnational story», 3 August 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UN7evq1A4PU> (25 September 2023).

[31] Places of Peace, «The route», cit.

[32] As regards the ambiguities of memory culture and tourism in contemporary Europe, see M. Van Alstein, «From Ypres to Brussels? Europe, peace, and the commemoration of WWI», Brussels, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, European Union, 2014, pp. 1-10, <https://eu.boell.org/en/2014/06/18/ypres-brussels-europe-peace-and-commemoration-wwi>, (25 September 2023). See also M. Van Alstein, «The memory of peace», in D. Praet (ed.), *Philosophy of war and peace*, Brussels, VUB Press, 2017, pp. 187-199.

[33] C. Wohlmuther, W. Wintersteiner, M. Wagner, «Connected by the trails that used to divide us: peace trails in the Alps- Adriatic Region», in in C. Wohlmuther and W. Wintersteiner (eds.), cit., p. 332.

[34] M. Sturken, «Cultural memory in the wake of violence: exceptionalism, vulnerability and the grievable life», in A. Laban Hinton, G. Shani, J. Alberg (eds.), *Rethinking peace: discourse memory, translation, and dialogue,* cit., p. 65.

Along these lines, Europe's violent history, especially as it continues to this day, calls for a renewed commitment to peacebuilding and the invention of new forms of engagement.

It follows that, in tourism discourse as well, the ethical appeal to peace and democracy should give priority to young people, help them to reflect on the human cost of conflict and violence in any present context (e.g. in the streets or stadiums), and urge them to full political participation against current absenteeism. To this purpose, the urban itineraries of the Discover Peace website sometimes end with an open question, triggered by the commentary of a given place on an interactive map. Questions provide tourists with some food for thought and invite them to elaborate a personal opinion on vital questions for civil society.

> What do you think about the relationship between politics and peace activism?
> Can you recall a situation when you put your expectations aside?
> Which other places do you know where cross-cultural dialogue fosters peace?
> Which current places of resistance and civil disobedience do you know?
> What role can the remembrance of past injustice take in our everyday lives?[35]

This communication strategy makes explicit the education of the tourist gaze to non-warring values and norms («peace activism», «cross-cultural dialogue», «civil disobedience») at the school of individual and collective memory («recall», «remembrance»). The strategy seeks to engage both cognitively and affectively with tourists, fostering discussions about peace, democracy, and human rights, while offering an inclusive and sustainable experience of walking through the city.

4.   Concluding remarks

In order to illustrate an active and meaningful relationship between peace and tourism beyond mere marketing, this article has highlighted the web communication of three case studies of peace-sensitive tourism, combining Critical Discourse Analysis with the regenerative perspective of Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA). The aim is to underscore the urgency of peacebuilding in the face of disheartening historical evidence from the past and present, while also providing respectful examples of peace counternarratives.

The case studies, all located in Europe to stress the importance of the European Union in the still ongoing healing process from the traumas of history, focus on peace-oriented hikes, routes and trails that attempt to symbolise the gradual but unstoppable progress of peace. They attempt to use a nonviolent language to describe peace in historically stratified contexts, such as the World War I frontline between Italy and Slovenia, memorable locations where peace treaties were signed across the centuries out of power struggles, and heritage attractions in major European cities that can enliven the passion for democracy and civic engagement. Since peace should not be regarded as a mere feeling (and as such, fleeting and often inconsistent) but should involve a person's totality and best energies, the language of emotion that memory activates gives way to reflection, discussion and critical thinking, though in different degrees and with different outcomes in the analysis.

Although the conventional marketing features of tourism discourse can be identified – from ego-targeting lexis to simplified expert advice that aims to constantly engage and guide potential tourists – the existential and educational levels of peace-walking experiences are given discursive salience.

Whether these case studies with their conceptual limitations and geographical scope could serve as a springboard to develop further occasions and tools for peace-sensitive tourism remains an open question. However, applying the same template to similar experiments might prove detrimental, as peacebuilding demands a surplus of intellectual, affective and linguistic creativity to open ways where none appears possible.

---

[35] Discover Peace, cit. *passim.*

References

G. A. ALAMINEH, «The nexus between coronavirus and tourism: tourism as peace sensitive industry», in *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 2022, vol. 9, n. 1, pp. 1-20.

L-A. BLANCHARD and F. HIGGINS-DESBIOLLES (eds.), *Peace through tourism: promoting human security through international citizenship*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2013.

DISCOVER PEACE, 2014, <https://discoverpeace.eu/en/>, (25 September 2023).

EUROPEAN UNION, «Aims and values», n.d., <https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values_en>, (25 September 2023).

P. FRIEDRICH AND F. GOMES DE MATOS, «Toward a nonkilling linguistics», in P. Friedrich (ed.), *English for diplomatic purposes*, Bristol and Buffalo, Multilingual Matters, 2016, pp. 1-19.

F. HIGGINS-DESBIOLLES, L-A. BLANCHARD, Y. URBAIN, «Peace through tourism: critical reflections on the intersections between peace, justice, sustainable development and tourism», in *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2022, vol. 30, n. 2-3, pp. 335-351.

J.M.F. HUGHES, «Progressing Positive Discourse Analysis and/in Critical Discourse Studies: reconstructing resistance through progressive discourse analysis», in *Review of Communication*, 2018, vol. 8, n. 3, pp. 193-221.

A. LABAN HINTON, G. SHANI, J. ALBERG (eds.), *Rethinking peace: discourse, memory, translation, and dialogue*, London and Lanham (MD), Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

K. MÄKINEN, «Interconceptualizing Europe and peace: identity building under the European Heritage Label», in T. Lähdesmäki, L. Passerini, S. Kaasik-Krogerus, I. van Huis (eds.), *Dissonant heritages and memories in contemporary Europe*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, 2019, pp. 51-78.

F. MACGILCHRIST, «Positive Discourse Analysis: contesting dominant discourses by reframing the issues», *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines*, 2007, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 74-94.

PLACES OF PEACE ROUTE, 2012, <https://placesofpeace.eu/>, (25 September 2023).

A. POCECCO, «Transnationalism and universalism of the memory tourism of the Great War», in *Journal of Mediterranean Knowledge-JMK*, 2020, vol. 5, n. 1, pp.113-123.

Z. POLOLIKASHVILI, «Tourism is not just about travel, it's also about peace», in *World Economic Forum*, 24 May 2022, <https://www.weforum.org/>, (25 September 2023).

L.K. RICHTER, «Democracy and tourism: exploring the nature of an inconsistent relationship», in P.M. Burns and M. Novelli (eds.), *Tourism and politics: global frameworks and local realities*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2007, pp. 5-16.

R. ROGERS, *Reclaiming powerful literacies: new horizons for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2018.

M. STURKEN, «Cultural memory in the wake of violence: exceptionalism, vulnerability and the grievable life», in A. Laban Hinton, G. Shani, J. Alberg (eds.), *Rethinking peace: discourse, memory, translation, and dialogue,* London and Lanham (MD), Rowman & Littlefield, 2019, pp. 63-74.

UNITED NATIONS, «The 17 goals», 2015, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/>, (25 September 2023).

M. VAN ALSTEIN, «From Ypres to Brussels? Europe, peace, and the commemoration of WWI», Brussels, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, European Union, 2014, pp. 1-10, <https://eu.boell.org/en/2014/06/18/ypres-brussels-europe-peace-and-commemoration-wwi>, (25 September 2023).

M. VAN ALSTEIN, «Memories of war & peace in Flanders fields», in *European Review of International Studies*, 2014, vol. 1, n. 2, pp. 31-49.

M. VAN ALSTEIN, «The memory of peace», in D. Praet (ed.), *Philosophy of war and peace*, Brussels, VUB Press, 2017, pp. 187-199.

THE WALK OF PEACE, 2015, <https://www.thewalkofpeace.com/>, (25 September 2023).

THE WALK OF PEACE YOUTUBE CHANNEL, 2017,

W. WINTERSTEINER and C. WOHLMUTHER, «Peace sensitive tourism: how tourism can contribute to peace», in C. Wohlmuther and W. Wintersteiner (eds.), *International handbook on tourism and peace*, Klagenfurt, Drava, 2014, pp. 31-61.

W. WINTERSTEINER, C. WOHLMUTHER, M. WAGNER, «Connected by the trails that used to divide us: peace trails in the Alps-Adriatic region», in C. Wohlmuther and W. Wintersteiner (eds.), *International handbook on tourism and peace*, Klagenfurt, Drava, 2014, pp. 321-334.

C. WOHLMUTHER AND W. WINTERSTEINER (eds.), *International handbook on tourism and peace*, Klagenfurt, Drava, 2014.