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Mountaineering Adventures on the African continent

Mountaineering Adventures to Africa's High Summits: Why do Norwegian Tourists Travel to Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and Mt. Margherita in Uganda?

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Abstract

This master thesis is a qualitative study of Norwegian people, and why they wanted to travel to Tanzania or Uganda, to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro or Mt. Margherita. My main research question has been: “Why do Norwegian people want to climb Mt. Margherita in Uganda and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania?” The following questions have supported my main research question: “How are they reflecting upon the trip they have been participating on, and how can these journeys contribute to formation of self?” Research on the field has previously been undertaken in adventure education, leisure science and recreation fields. There has been limited research on adventure tourism, and mountaineering has been studied in the form of adventure recreation.

I was guiding two trips in 2011/12, which I used in my project. Qualitative interviews were conducted with seven of the participants. All of my participants live in, or in proximity of Oslo. They have good jobs and older- to grown up kids, if they have any. The age is spread from 31 to 63 years old, and there are four women and three men in the group.

Several motives for participation were identified. They wanted a challenge, an exotic experience, a new adventure, and climb a summit, all within a safe setting. The participant’s reflections indicate that they are taking part of an adventure, even though some literature questions this. In this context they are part of mountaineering adventure tourism, and they had the opportunity to bypass the once normal way to reach a summit. This also opens up for emotional feelings that normally are connected to “hard”, or “real” mountaineers. Another motive for travelling to Tanzania and Uganda among my participant’s is the interest for people and culture, and a contribution to social equalization. It’s a big business around tourism, but it doesn’t necessarily contribute to intercultural knowledge, or social equalization.

My participant’s had some, according to themselves, great experiences. Some experiences are felt on the body, for example the physical challenge of reaching the summit. This was a new experience to 6 of 7 participants. How the experiences contribute to formation of self depends on their previous background, how they will interpret their experiences, and how these can be developed in the future.

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Acknowledgments

My project is coming to an end. I got the first idea back in 2009, when I was studying the tourism around Kilimanjaro together with friends at the International Development Studies, Oslo University College. From that point, it has been a long and intriguing journey to the point where I am now. I've had several ideas, some unsuccessful ones, but I managed to find a solution after all. The whole process has been inspiring and educational on all areas, but I'm still happy to end this project and move on to new adventurous explorations.

First I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt at the department for physical education, Norwegian School of Sport Science. She has been supporting my ideas from day one, helped me realize my limitations, and taken these ideas into a scientific frame that has made it possible to conduct.

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Magnus Hendis

1. Introduction

1.1 Background



Figure 1: Map of Africa (Maps of World 2013).

This master thesis is about Norwegian mountain tourists that are travelling to Uganda or Tanzania to trek and climb mountains in one of these countries. Mountains have been in peoples mind for a long period of time. It has been a fascination, they have been, and still are, central in religions, they have also been an obstruction for some, and they are a place for recreation, physical challenge and adventure for many (Svensen 2011; Mcfarlane 2003). Tourism is increasing, and developing countries are in focus of industrial countries travellers (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 1-4). The way people travel influence the local society at the destinations they are travelling to (Meethan 2001, p. 143-147; Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002). Travellers can make a country, a culture, or a group of people look like they are living on another planet or travellers can be open

mind, interested, eager to learn about other cultures, and tell their friends back home about these fascinating places. Each person interprets common experiences, and the stories they tell from the same trip might have different perspectives from person to person (Steen Jacobsen & Eide, p. 159-187). So, what are actually in today's mountain tourists' mind, having African higher peaks as their destination?

1.1.1 A short history of tourism

The first appearance of world tourism, describing travel as a leisure activity, was in the Oxford English Dictionary from 1811. The concept of tourism goes further back than 1811. The ancient Greeks and Romans vacationed at thermal baths and explored places around Europe and the Mediterranean region, and from the beginning travellers also sought out places of natural beauty. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the "grand tours" of the Continent's natural and cultural features started, and with the industrial revolution the first paid holidays combined with cheaper travel by railroads created an annual mass exodus to seaside resorts in Europe. In 1841, Thomas Cook organized the first tourist excursion, but the mass international tourism didn't take off before the opening of commercial airplane routes between the United States and Europe. In the 1970s the Third World destinations came within reach of many people, and after 2000, Asia, Africa and the American continent continued to grow more rapidly than mature markets in Europe. Over the past four decades, mass tourism has become synonymous with sun, sea, sand, and sex, "the four S's". Host countries, as well as tourists, are growing disappointed with this type of tourism, when evidence showed that its economic benefits were marginal and its social and environmental costs high. At the same time that a variety of natural wonders were being degraded and threatened because of too many tourists, there was a trend towards holidays that included nature-based activities. In 1998 nearly half of the U.S. households had included nature-based activities in their last holiday. Nature, and the kind of authentic experience that nature seems to provide, had now become a key ingredient in the tourist industry (Honey 2008, p. 9-11).

An overall technical definition of *tourism*, has been proposed by the UK Tourism Society (in Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 5):

Tourism is the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the place where they normally live and work, and their activities during their stay at these places; it includes movement for all purposes, as well as day visits or excursions.

Conceptual definitions emphasize the nature of tourism as a leisure activity that is in contrast to everyday life (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 5). In my study the main object for the tourist is to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro (5859m) in Tanzania, or trek/climb to Mt. Margeritha (5109m) in Uganda. Few attempts have been made to define mountain adventure tourism. Whitlock, Romer and Becker (Cited in: Beedie & Hudson 2003) suggest that it's a sector of nature-based tourism: "an encompassing term that refers to all the myriad forms of tourism that originate as a result of the natural appeal of an area" (p. 631).

1.1.2 Mountains and their fascinations

In science, there is almost no other question that has made so much hassle for the scientists than the question of how mountains are created (Svensen 2011, p. 21). The Italian monk Ristoro d'Arezzo came up with the theory in 1282 that mountains were hauled up from the earth by the stars. He also came up with other theories on how mountains were created, and shows us how it was several ideas about the creation already around year 1200. An unconfirmed story from the western part of Norway at the end of the 19th century says that the British climber William C. Slingsby told that Satan created the mountains, and that God made the countryside liveable by sprinkle soil between them. But it was first in the 20th century that we figured out that the creation of mountains comes from the movements by the tectonic plates (Svensen 2011, p. 17-33).

More interesting than theories about the creation of the mountains, are the histories about their meaning. The bible contains a lot of histories that reflects the attitude to mountains at that time. In the Greek civilization mountains were holy, and we can find temples or religious symbols on several mountains around the world. Mountains were home to the gods, or they could be barriers for invasion. Our own Olav Tryggvason (963-1000) climbed the mountain Hornelen in Bremanger and showed his power and strength by helping one of his own men back down. The Chinese poet Chia Tao (779-

843) walked around in the Chinese mountain areas and philosophized about mountains, religions and life. In his poems he tells us about climbing, the view of the summits in the north, the peaceful atmosphere and the dreams of reaching even higher up to admire the world below. Olav Tryggvason and Chia Tao represented timeless experiences. One example is Jack Kerouac who almost 1200 years later spent 63 days as a ranger in the Cascades, on the summit of Desolation Peak. After this experience, he wrote the book "*The Dharma Bums*", where he is telling about his search for meaning and truth in life. He is telling us that his life on the mountain really did something with him and his life (Svensen 2011, p. 36-39).

The mountains and especially the summits were so much in focus from the 19th century that the explorers didn't care much about the consequences that a summit attempt could lead to. The human being was in a way obsessed by the idea of conquering unexplored summits. It may be the view from the summit, the overwhelming nature, the feeling of conquering something, or other factors that created this passion. The mountains are in an everlasting process of change and development, but continue to exist throughout human generations (Mcfarlane 2003, p. 19).

Wild places represent escape locations that offers potential adventure, stimulation and excitement. This dislocation of self from everyday life to the wild places is central in tourism. As mentioned above, tourism is an activity in contrast to everyday life, and mountains have long been a sought after destination, albeit they have for a long time remained in the preserve of mountaineers. They are independent people who actively seek adventure and would not consider themselves as tourists. But, times are changing. Tourism is now embracing adventure settings and mountains feature prominently in this development. The boundaries between tourists and mountaineers are blurred, and people buy an experience normally packed for maximum efficiency (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 625-626).

1.1.3 Africa's Snow-capped Mountains

Both Mt. Kilimanjaro and the Rwenzori's have been affected by this passion. Mt. Kilimanjaro had its first summit attempts from 1847 when the German missionary Johan Rebman told about the snow-capped mountain (Wikipedia 2011). Hemingway (1953) immortalized the same mountain in his novel "The Snows of Kilimanjaro". The

passion for the Rwenzori Mountains has been there even longer. The mountains are thought to have been the source of the legend of the Mountains of the Moon, and around 150AD the Alexandrine geographer Ptolemy cited the snow-capped range as the source of the Nile. Arthur Jephson and Thomas Parke were the first Europeans to see these legendary mountains, when they were part of Stanley's cross-continental expedition to rescue the Emin Pasha in the end of the 19th century (Briggs 2010, p. 300).

1.1.4 A short introduction to Uganda



Figure 2: Map of Uganda (Lonely Planet 2013a).

Uganda is situated in Eastern Africa between the Democratic Republic of Congo in west and Kenya in east. The country also share border with Rwanda, South Sudan and Tanzania. The Republic of Uganda got its independency in 1962 from Britain. It has a population of 34.6 million people and the climate is tropical, generally rainy, but with two dry seasons. It has substantial natural resources and agriculture is the most important sector of the economy (CIA 2011a). Compared to other recognized African safari destinations, Uganda has a relatively high proportion of closed canopy forest. In Uganda you will find a wide variety of vertebrate and other species absent elsewhere in east and southern Africa. What makes it an unbeatable destination for viewing African forest creatures is the accessibility of its major forests. Uganda's savannah reserves are recovering from the heavy poaching during the civil war, and today Queen Elizabeth

and Murchison Falls national parks offer a good chance of seeing safari favourites, with the added bonus of having some of the best forest primate viewing in Africa on the same circuit (Briggs 2010, p. 29). Tourism in Uganda can be described as a rebirth more than a birth. Queen Elisabeth and Murchison Falls was established in 1952 and Uganda received a big amount of tourists per year in the early 1960s. But the tourism came to a stop under Idi Amin's regime between 1972 and 1986. The tourism industry began to slowly rebuild itself when President Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986, and by 2001 tourism was a leading earner of foreign exchange in Uganda (Lepp 2004, p. 2-4).

Most of Uganda is not very dramatic when it comes to nature, but it is bordered by some of the continent's most impressive mountains. The Rwenzori Mountains follow the Congolese border in the west, and are topped by the third-highest peak in Africa, behind Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Kenya. Unlike the two higher peaks, the 5109m Margherita Peak on Mt. Stanley is part of a mountain range. The higher reaches of the Rwenzori are covered in Afro-alpine moorland. It is a habitat noted for its gigantic plants such as groundsel, lobelias and heather (Briggs 2010, p. 29-30). The Rwenzori is not only famous for its gigantic plants, but the park also contains a diversity of animals and it's the only national park in Uganda where you can find the monkey Angola Colobus. Rwenzori, like other large east African mountains, is divided into different altitude zones. Each zone has its own distinct microclimate, flora and fauna. This nature combined with a challenging hike and climbing to the peaks attracts tourists to the park every year (Briggs 2010, p. 300-301).

The Rwenzori National Park covers an area of 996 km² and protects the upper slopes of the mountain range. The mountains in the park are the highest mountain range in Africa. They are unique in the way that they are not volcanic in origin, but they do rise directly from the Rift Valley floor and, like Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Kenya, their formation are linked to the geological upheaval that created the Rift (Briggs 2010, p. 300-301).

1.1.5 A short introduction to Tanzania



Figure 3: Map of Tanzania (Lonely Planet 2013b).

Tanzania is situated on the east coast of Africa, south of Uganda. It shares border with Kenya and Uganda in the north, Burundi, Rwanda and DRC in the west, and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique in the south. The country got its independence from Britain in 1961. The population is 42.7 million people where 30% is Christian, 35% Muslims and 35% have indigenous beliefs. Natural resources are tin, iron ore, diamonds, gold, natural gas and more (CIA 2011b). Over 40% of the national budget comes from foreign aid, but tourism is also important revenue for Tanzania (Globalis 2011a). It's the second largest foreign revenue and in 2008 tourism gave 0.9 billion USD directly to the economy. Tourists brought 1.1 billion USD in foreign currency into Tanzania in 2008 (Mitchell, J., Keane J. & Laidlaw, J. 2008). Climatically it's tropical along the coast and varies to temperate in the highlands (CIA 2011b). The landscape is varied with big mountain ranges, savannahs, lakes, and a shoreline with coral reefs and mangrove forest. Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa, and the largest lake in Africa, Lake Victoria, is on the border to Uganda. The country has a rich flora and fauna, and is famous for the Black Rhinos (Globalis 2011a).

Mt. Kilimanjaro is actually three volcanoes; Kibo (with Uhuru peak, 5859m), Mawenzi (5149m) and Shira (3962m). When people talk about Mt. Kilimanjaro they usually mean Uhuru Peak, which the German Professor Hans Meyer was the first to ascend in 1889, in a team with the Austrian mountaineer Ludwig Purtscheller and an Army Scout from Marangu named Kinyala Lauwo (Wikipedia 2011). Mt. Kilimanjaro still has a glacier on the summit plateau, but it's decreasing. The mountain is covered with a belt of woodland between 1600 to 3100 meters above sea level. The variation in altitude and annual rainfall creates several ecosystems inside the national park. You can find about 140 mammals and more than 900 different species of plants in the area (Globalis 2011b).

As mentioned above tourism contributes with huge amounts of foreign exchange for Tanzania each year. Kilimanjaro National Park is one of the main contributors with almost 40.000 tourists visiting the park each year. This number of tourists will give relative full time jobs to about 400 local guides, 10.000 porters and 500 cooks (Mitchell, J., Keane J. & Laidlaw, J. 2008).

2. Theoretical Approaches

In this chapter I will present the theoretical approaches I will use in my analysis of the empirical data. First I will present a theoretical view on the commercialization and commodification of the outdoors. Second I will go deeper into mountain adventure tourism before ending the chapter with a discussion about adventure tourism as educational journeys or self-realisation.

By presenting my interpretations and theoretical standpoint I will clarify my base of thoughts that underlies my project.

2.1 **Commercialization and commodification of the outdoors**

Watson & Kopachevsky (1994) says that tourism is a process undergoing commodification:

“With the growing commodification of modern life, “leisure time”, which is proclaimed and expected to be an escape from routine work, in turn often becomes another routinized, packaged commodity, thereby failing to be anything like a carefree, relaxed alternative to work” (p. 645)

This process is when activities and objects, for example a mountain, is evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value, in addition to use-value (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 634). On Kilimanjaro and in Rwenzori this is done through administrative control and permits for entry in the national parks. Then the adventure companies are selling the object to people abroad. The commodification is taking place pretty much all over the globe, also here in Norway. Teknologirådet (2006) argues that there are several reasons for expecting an increased commercialization of nature here in Norway and that today the tourism industry in Norway has a turnover of 80 billion Norwegian Kroner, more than the farming and fishing industry together (p. 12).

2.1.1 **The tourism demand process**

There have been several attempts to describe tourists. Gray (Cited in: Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 150) was one of the first to put tourists into different typologies and he used the two terms “sunlust” and “wanderlust” to explain the different tourists. Sunlust tourism were resort-based and based on the desire for sun, sea and sand, while wanderlust tourism were recognised by the desire to experience different places, people and

cultures. The distinction was expanded by Cohen (Cited in: Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 150-151) and his typology of tourists are widely cited:

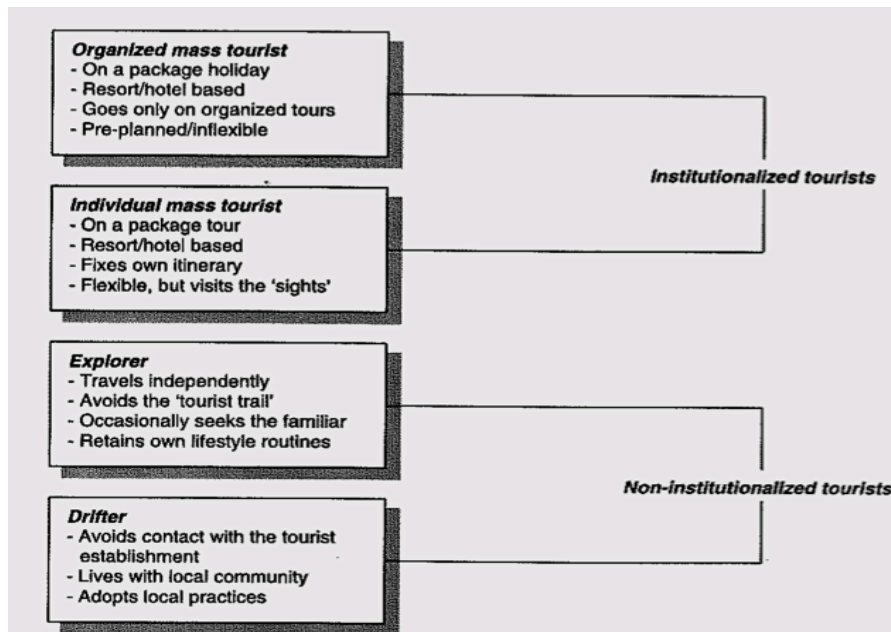


Figure 4: Cohen's typology of tourists (Cited in: Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 151).

Plog attempted to link personality with destination choice and Smith linked tourist types and numbers to impacts on the destination (Cited in: Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 152). Yiannakis & Gibson (Cited in: Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 152) identified 15 tourist roles, from “sun lovers” to “educational tourists”. Telfer & Sharpley (2008) asks to which extent these attempts to typology tourists remains relevant in today’s contemporary international tourism (p. 151). Niche products like adventure tourism represent opportunities for developing countries with rich natural and cultural heritage. Styles of tourism consumption has undergone significant transformation and represent a shift from the standardized two-week, sun-sea-sand holidays, to more participatory forms that provide a wider variety of experiences (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 151-163).

The demand for tourism is a complex process and involves choices about how to spend leisure time. Not only how and why people participate, but what these journeys means to them, how tourists behave, and why their taste in travelling may change. The figure below tries to simplify this process. Each stage may be influenced by external or personal variables. Time and money constraints, media influences, perceptions of the destination, social stimuli, or marketing can all influence the different stages, and each

consumption experience is followed by a process of decision-making (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 148-149).

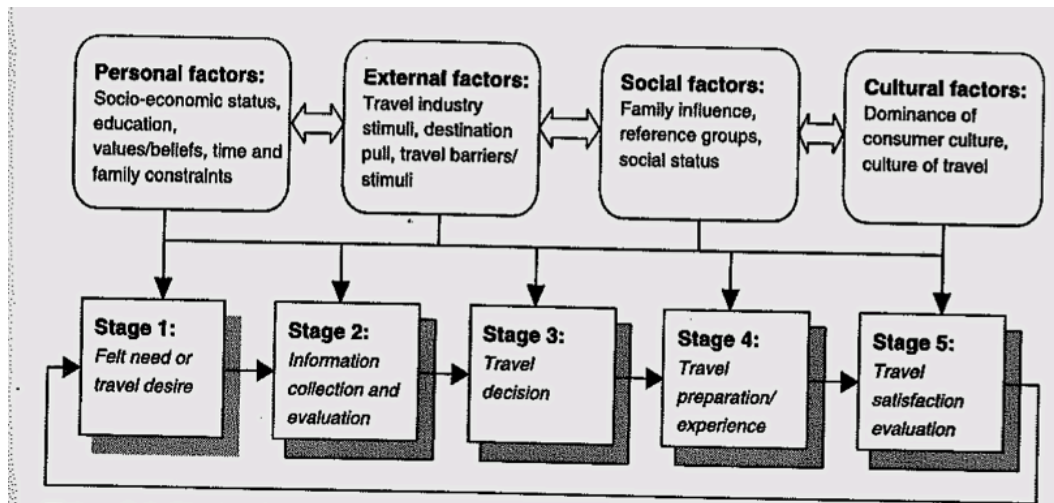


Figure 5: The tourism demand process (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 149).

Tourism is not a one-time experience, but people consume tourism during their whole life and they may become more experienced tourists on a “travel career ladder”. This leads to changing needs and expectations over time. An almost endless combination of variables may influence where, when and how tourism is consumed, in fact, some studies says that many tourists struggle to explain themselves why they are participating in a particular type of tourism, while some suggest that tourism is irrational (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 148-150).

Tourist motivation is fundamental in the way that it kick-starts the process of tourism demand and influence the way tourists behave. Albeit there is no generally accepted theory on tourism motivation, but there are a number of key points in evidence. One important point is that tourism consumption or demand is the outcome of motivation. Motivation can be intrinsic and/or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is about people’s needs and desires, and often Maslow’s hierarchy of needs are referred to in many tourism texts. But tourism is not only about intrinsic motivation; social factors are significant influences on why people consume tourism (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 152-154). I will not focus on intrinsic motivation in this project since that’s too much into psychology, which is not my field. Extrinsic motivation however is more relevant.

Several forces in the individual's social and cultural environment influence people's needs, desire or motivations to consume tourism. Basic motivations can be relaxation, rest, or simply a need to get away from the routines back home, a change from everyday life. For most people this may be the normal "excuse" for a holiday or travel, but tourism also offers opportunities to explore something beyond the physical, geographic boundaries of daily life, also social boundaries are explored. Tourists may seek authenticity through tourism, compensating for the lack of it in western societies, and some see this is a form of modern pilgrimage. Other social influences may also work on the tourist motivations. Relationship between work and leisure, general social and cultural factors like reference groups, social class, and family roles may also influence the behaviour and motivation of tourists (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 154-155).

To identify the specific factors that dominates the motivation among tourists may be a difficult task, but there are two features that are generally accepted: Tourism as escape, and tourism as ego-enhancement. Tourism as escape predominates relevant literature and is about the desire to travel away from something rather than to travel to something. Factors included in the term "ego-enhancement" is interpersonal, personal, physical or psychological, and is a form of compensation for the pressures or deficiencies in everyday life (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 155).

2.1.2 Tourism, culture and society

Tourism doesn't necessarily contribute to intercultural knowledge. It can create conflicts. International tourism contributes with over 10 % of the worlds GDP and is one of the biggest industries in the world. A big group of people makes use of natural- and cultural resources and with a still growing international tourism it's easier to understand that conflicts may appear. In this project I define culture in the anthropological view of culture. This includes pretty much all aspects of human activities, including visits to other countries, ethnical groups, and native people (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 159-164). Hvitserk (2013) includes culture when they are describing their trip to Kilimanjaro: "We mean this is our most complete experience. It has culture, it has nature, it has warm and cold weather, and it has a summit you can be proud of afterwards."

Robinsons conflict model gives us an idea of how dynamic and complex the conflicts in tourism industry can be, and it can be used to show the necessity of looking at the whole picture in the tourism industry (Cited in Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 165):

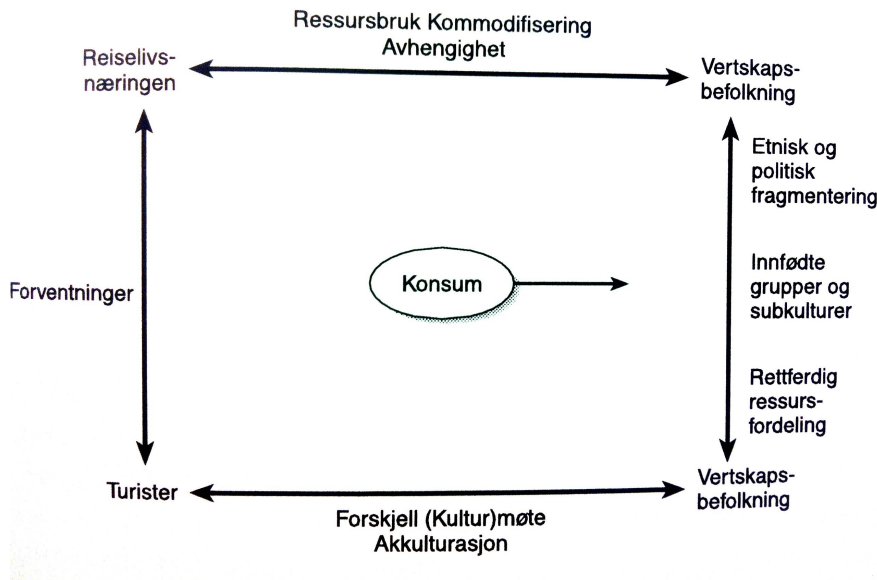


Figure 6: (Own translation from Norwegian). Robinsons conflict model (Cited in: Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 165). Upper left: Tourism Industry. Upper side: Use of resources, Commodification, Dependency. Upper Right: Host Population. Right Side: Ethnical and Political fragmenting, Native groups and Subcultures, Fair allocation of resources. Lower right: Host Population. Lower side: Differences (cultural) meetings, acculturation. Lower left: Tourists. Left side: Expectations. Middle: Consumption.

As we can see there are several areas of conflicts. Robinson model also tries to show that conflicts cannot be considered isolated, but have to be seen in a greater context. Between the tourism industry and the tourists there are different expectations. Tourists have expectations when they book a trip with a company. They expect to discover what the adventure company has advertised, but the advertisements can often be distanced from reality. One problem is that today's expectations can often be based on depictions from the past. We are travelling to developing countries, but they are, as the title says, actually developing. Our conceptions about a primitive people are not necessarily correct. They probably live different from us, but they may have access to consumables like in the western world. The same conflicts can be found between the tourism industry and the host population. Commodification of local culture to marketable products can be problematic. This is a "strong commodification" and can for example result in that local people customize their traditions to tourism since this leads to income and employment. One paradox is that the tourism industry sometimes builds up expectations

that they later have problems to meet (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 165-176, 186). Clients often pay huge amount of money for an adventure holiday and their expectations are therefore likely to be high. Adventure companies are selling adventures as an idea, and tread a careful line when they are trying to deliver the same as an experience. As we have seen, everything will be determined for the trekkers. The route, the views and photo opportunities, and this may correspond to how the guidebooks describe the trek. Highlights are signalled and sign-posted, and exchange of information among trekkers plus personal photos are mechanisms through which the need for a wilderness experience is generated (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 627-629).

To travel is to go through a process of leaving and coming back home. To go from the ordinary to the extraordinary, and back again. For most of the people of the developed world, a life in comfort is their daily habit. As a reaction against this, adventures and activities in wild places attract them (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 629-631). But one thing is travelling with us always, our “habitus” (Wilken 2008, p. 35-38). Bourdieu's concept of habitus refers to culture, but in a more dynamic and less massive way. It's about people's behaviour on a basis of their understanding of the situation they are in (Wilken 2008, p. 35-38). Greenway (Cited In: Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 627) suggests that tourists rarely leave their frame of an urban lifestyle behind when they travel in the wild. You may find people on safaris in Tanzania, Kenya, or other destinations expecting the same level of comfort in the camp as they can get back home. This may lead to conflicts in some situations.

The relation between tourists and the host population are normally added positive values. It can increase cultural understanding both ways and hence reduce prejudices. It can also lead to misunderstanding and insults when people from two different cultures meet. Another aspect is acculturation. The host population strive for the same living standard as they can see among the tourists. They are always comparing their own lifestyle with the guests and might see their own situation as inferior to the western. Relations are temporary and affected by limited time at the location or in the country. Tourists have to take choices and often wants to see as much as possible in a short period of time (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 177-181).

Last point is between people in the host country or at the destination. Disagreements occur and not everyone at a destination is benefiting from the tourism industry. Conflicts can be political, between ethnical groups, or between businesses. Robinsons model can be a theoretical background for different conflicts that may occur in tourism no matter what destination we are discussing (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 181-183).

2.2 Mountain Adventure Tourism

I presented one attempt to define mountain adventure tourism in the introduction chapter, but it encompasses several ideas. It has a practical engagement that includes physical effort to a certain extent. This may have positive image spin-offs that also reflect a changing lifestyle. Mountain tourism is also a business, and like in other industries it's characterized by competition where big companies have a tendency to dominate. Both broad and narrow activities, from trekking to abseiling, are embraced by mountain adventure tourism and therefore maximize the appeal to a full range of clientele. Trekking has been the commercial foundation for adventure tourism, but even mountaineering is now available to anyone who wants to pay (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 631-632).

A complexity of economic, social and cultural factors is operating in commodification of adventure experiences. A melting pot of development includes emerging tourism and established forms of mountain recreation. The frames are not fixed between mountaineering, adventure and tourism (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 633).

What appeals to adventure tourists is normally the effortlessness of booking a holiday through an adventure company. Adventure tourists do normally have the economy to travel, but not the time to plan an expedition. They also want to squeeze as many experiences as possible into the short period of time they are travelling. When they are booking holidays they are paying for an expectation that are presented through brochures and electronic media as a commodity. Sport industry are also benefiting from these trips, when people buy the latest equipment that may make them more accomplished trekkers or climbers (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 634).

Adventure companies have created a possibility of bypassing the once normal way of climbing a high mountain: You had to start with walking and climbing in lower hills

with tutelage from experienced people, and in that way build up competence to be allowed into more challenging terrain. Today you can move directly on to climb a high altitude mountain through an adventure company. This brakes with the traditional social requirements and paying for being guided to the summit of Everest is now an accepted way to reach the world's highest mountain. This is an example of the social impacts, and commodification of nature and adventure tourism (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 635).

Bauman (1996) uses the terms pilgrim and tourist to look at the cultural changes that have occurred when we talk about central issues of identity (p. 18-26). He argues that the pilgrims always strived for the future and never lived in the present, and they had a clear sense of place. In contrast, the modern social world is complex, fragmented and ambivalent, which makes it impossible to conceive a future with any sense of conviction and certainty. Tourists, as such, live for the present. This conceptualisation explains the desire for thrill and instant gratification (Bauman 1996, p. 18-26). Beedie & Hudson (2003) uses Bauman's work to explore the dynamic process between mountaineering and adventure tourism (p. 636). They put mountaineers in the pilgrim context since they possess a clear sense of what they want to achieve. Adventure tourists experiences appear to be different from the "true" mountaineers. Mountaineers rely on their own skills and experiences that they have built up carefully during the years. They are closer to the historical ideals of explorers, and have something of a free roving spirit. They refuse to pay for a guide and use their experience to explore the mountains and simultaneously avoid objective dangers (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 636). Cooley (Cited in: Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 636) found the same opposition against the commodification of tourism with backpackers, which construct their travels as a rejection of commodification. In contrast to the mountaineers the adventure tourists depend on guides, existing sources of information, and protection such as mountain rescue possibilities, to define their experiences (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 636).

Pomfret (2006) has made a conceptual framework, based on earlier research on mountaineering, mountaineers, adventure, recreation and tourism, to increase the theoretical understanding of mountaineer adventure tourists (p. 114). The intention was to add knowledge about mountaineering participants within an adventure tourism setting. While the customary approach mainly focuses on motivation or personality, Pomfret's framework recognises that inter-related elements influence participation in

the activity and the participant's actual experience of it. It also differs from other conceptualisations in that it recognises the convergence of tourism and recreation in an adventure setting. Mountaineering demands active engagement, and it is suggested that mountaineers experience different emotional states during the time they are mountaineering. Recreational adventurers can, through participation, experience flow and peak experience that generates emotions leading to intense satisfaction and happiness (Pomfret 2006, p. 113-115).

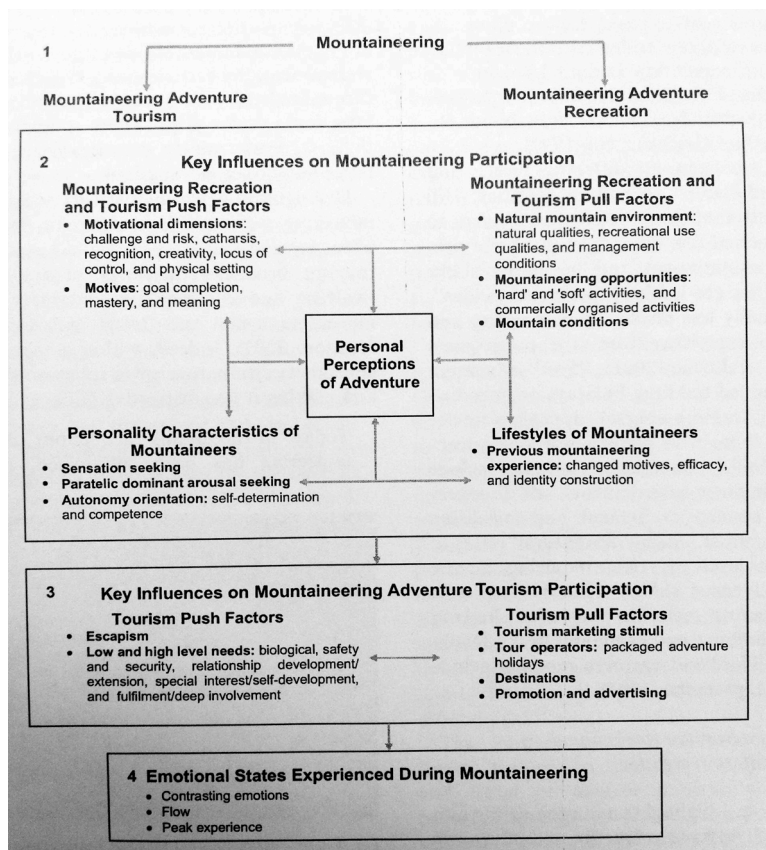


Figure 7: Conceptual framework: key influences on people's participation in mountaineering and experiences during involvement (Pomfret 2006, p. 115).

2.2.1 What is it in the Adventure term?

The adventure term can be interpreted in several ways. Inspired by Becker (2004, 2008), Gurholt (2010) writes that the term *adventure* has its roots in the Latin word *aventure*, which means, "What is happening or going to happen" (p. 179). Connected to the adventure term is risk, and there is a broad acceptance that adventures has an uncertain outcome. Therefore Price (Cited in: Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 627) suggests that adventure by numbers cannot exist, and outdoors activities that is commercialized and planned cannot be an adventure. But as we have seen earlier in this chapter, that's

exactly how adventure tourism is marketed. Thus there exists a paradox whereby the more planned, logistically organized and detailed itinerary becomes the further we are from the notion of adventure. To which extent we really engage in an adventure is perhaps the most significant factor in development of adventure tourism (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 627).

In the pedagogical debates we can find two sides that reflects the adventure term and its two etymological traditions. On one side we have the already mentioned risk and the unknown, on the other side we find the concept of following the curiosity and travel on the road of life, handling the situations that appears on the go as best as you can (Gurholt 2010, p. 183). As Mortlock (1994) describes it, “to adventure in the natural environment is to take up a challenge that will demand the best of our capabilities – physically, mentally and emotionally” (p. 19). An adventure will face us with unpleasant feelings, also of fear, discomfort, uncertainty, and the need for luck. If we succeed in the adventure these feelings will be counterbalanced by joy and exhilaration, and you may have had one of your greatest experiences of your life (Mortlock 1994, p. 19).

As I have outlined the original term of adventure has moved far away from its origin in today's adventure tourism, and may need a reinterpretation to give meaning in this context.

2.3 *How can experiences from mountaineering adventure trips contribute to formation of self?*

Gurholt (2010) has dived deep into the adventure metaphor and her article “...discuss the relations between outdoor activities and formation by looking at how the adventure metaphor has been, and still is, connected to pedagogical thoughts in adventure education, and what meaning this can give us” (p. 178). As I discussed earlier in this chapter, the adventure term has several interpretations and may need a new interpretation to fit into the adventure tourism context. In the English language adventure is often used without any further explanations. A certain critique can be directed to for example Mortlock (1994), since he doesn't (or to a limited extent) clarify the term adventure, it's history, method of use, understanding and interpretation (Gurholt 2010, p. 178).

Gurholt (2010) understand and interpret formation inspired by Gadamer (2006) and his approach called hermeneutic experience theory. Gadamer's approach sees understanding, interpretation and practice as a historical creative process. Gurholt tries to understand relations between humans, nature and culture as indissoluble unities. New interpretations of the adventure education term have been discussed by tracing its origin and relations in a theoretical formation context. Nature opens up for curios exploration, predictable challenges, amazement and discoveries, and that things can just happen. The adventure and formation in pedagogy is not limited to certain challenges, dangers or activities including risk, with Gurholt's interpretation and exploration around the adventure and formation terms. The article has several aims, and they are in a context of pedagogical situations with young peoples meetings with nature. Nevertheless it may be interesting to use her perspectives when analysing my data, and try to see if mountain adventure tourism can be put into a context of formation of self (Gurholt 2010, p. 175-178).

Adventure metaphors have a long tradition in European story telling from Greek mythology to French knight culture, and as mentioned earlier the origin of "adventure" can be found in the Latin word *aventure* or *abventure* which means what's going to happen. Its main dimensions have been connected to unplanned, sudden and surprising actions that need to be handled in the moment. In the Middle Ages adventure got new areas of use, for example it was used about long distance travels, to exploration, and expansion. In a growing commercial world in the 1500's it was connected to business and seaborne trading, and adventure merchants took a big risk on their travels. The term risk is coming from *risciare*, which in Latin is connected to the risk of sailing around a steep spur of rock. The origin of the idea that connects adventure to personal changes and formation can be found in the Middle Ages. By following their curiosity, by seeing, asking and listening, people could change themselves; they could see a new reality. This curiosity was not, by all, a pure way of living; Curiosity could lead your attention away from God. Adventure was connected to an intrinsic motivation to brake up from your home place, go travel and explore the world. Upon arrival back home you might have been facing dangerous situations, storm, or crisis, but it had lead to a personal change. These journeys were the contemporary educational journeys. In Norway the adventure term is developing further and is after a while more connected to story telling about

people and livestock. This give it a meaning that are far from the English meaning, and the Norwegian term of adventure is therefore different (Gurholt (2010, p. 179-181).

Together the English and Norwegian term of adventure can, with Gurholt's interpretation of Gadamer (2006), expand to include much more than risk and dangerous activities. As discussed above Gurholt opens up for curiosity, unpredictability, challenges, interaction with others, experiences, exploration, and coping with the unknown. The main force is the intrinsic motivation of curious exploration, not the risk or danger of death. Experience is a keyword. It can be illustrated through departure and arrival. When returning home, people have new experiences with them that will be interpreted and understood in relation to what he or she knew before the travel. In this way the experiences will be transformed to personal knowledge. When you have changed your knowledge you will look at the former knowledge in a different or new way. Experiences builds upon former experience that is going through a transformation. People are going through a (trans) formation process, a formation of self (Gurholt 2010, p. 181-184). The trips my participants are joining may be seen in this context. It's a trip with a departure and homecoming. They will have new experiences with them that can build upon their former experience. Can these experiences contribute to formation of self?

2.4 Research question

In this master thesis I investigate why Norwegian people travel to an African country to trek or climb a high mountain, and how their reflections on the experience are. The destinations visited by my participants are Mt. Margherita in Rwenzori National Park, Uganda, and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania. The research question is as followed:

“Why do Norwegian people want to climb Mt. Margherita in Uganda and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania?”

The following questions will support my main research question:

- ***“How are they reflecting upon the trip they have been participating on?”***
- ***“How can these journeys contribute to formation of self?”***

2.4.1 Why write about this topic?

Tourism is a social activity with a broad spectre of influences. Tourism is about people and their interactions and meetings with other people and places. Millions are travelling within their own countries or abroad, and their product is “consumed” on site. It’s one of the world’s largest economic sectors and provides employment for up to 10 per cent of the global workforce (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 146). Adventure tourism has had a small share of the global tourism, but as I will outline later in this paper, it has grown rapidly in recent years and outdoor activities has now become commercialized. It is also predicted to grow fast during the next years. Research on the field has been undertaken in adventure education, leisure science and recreation fields. There have also been some contributions to the research of adventure tourism. Few studies have been done into behaviour patterns of adventure tourists though. Pomfret (2006) supports the view of limited research on adventure tourism and says that mountaineering for example, has been studied in the form of adventure recreation (p. 113). My study explores, supports, and can add knowledge to the tourist dimension and the mountaineering/adventure context of tourism. The project explores why tourists are travelling to destinations abroad, and how they reflect upon their travels. It does not explore how it is working in numbers and dollars, or the environmental impacts of tourism.

3. Research methods

In this chapter I will clarify my position in scientific research, my choice of method, my own position as a researcher, discuss ethical perspectives and the research process. This will make a background for how my empirical material has been developed.

3.1 Scientific approach

The research process starts with a research question or observation that the researcher would like to answer (Chalmers 1995). The purpose of my study is to find out more about why western tourists are going on organized trips to Mt. Kilimanjaro or Rwenzori, their reflections upon the experience, and what they gain from these trips. Since I'm interested in people's experiences I will have to take into account their reflections and thoughts. They will have their own interpretations about the trip and their thoughts are put into a context. To understand the background for people's drive to travel and climb mountains, the descriptions they give, have to be interpreted with the context that the participants and the trip are part of, in mind. Based on this, my study will be part of the hermeneutical and phenomenological approach in social science. Phenomenology is a philosophical perspective based upon careful descriptions and analyses of consciousness and the life world. It also includes openness to the experiences of the subjects I'm interviewing, attempts to bracket my foreknowledge and a search for essential meanings in the descriptions my subjects give me (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p. 14, 52, 326). I will have to interpret my interviews and put my data in a context that also put my study in the hermeneutical school. Føllesdal & Walløe (2004) defines hermeneutics as: "The study of what meaning is and how we can work to achieve understanding" (p. 89). Hermeneutics are about meaningful phenomena's and how they are interpreted. This is something that is going on in our daily lives. Social actors are interpreting phenomena's all the time to be able to interact with other social actors (Gilje & Grimen 2009, p. 142).

A key aspect in hermeneutics is *understanding*. The process of trying to understand a phenomenon is often referred to as the *hermeneutical circle*. This circle shows the connections between what we are going to interpret, our pre-understanding and the context our data have to be interpreted in (Gilje & Grimen 2009, p. 153). There are actually four different circles that are all called hermeneutical circles. In general we talk

about a dynamical process that continually moves between parts of a topic, and the whole perspective (Føllesdal & Walløe 2004, p. 101). As scientists we are moving between experiences, theory, methods, empiricism and conceptions, in a continuous process, or dancing around in the hermeneutical circle. This thesis also has to be understood within the context of my interviews, my interview texts, my insight in the topic, and the process of change in knowledge and understanding during the work with the thesis.

My own experiences are important when it comes to methods and interpretation. The concept of preconception is the main difference between traditional hermeneutists and new-hermeneutists. Traditionally the idea was that we could free ourselves from our preconception while we are doing research (Føllesdal & Walløe 2004, p. 102-109). Gadamer (2006) is indicating that we can never conduct ourselves neutral to our preconception (p. 268-306). He is using the term *prejudice*, which are including all our opinions and attitudes that we are bringing into our work. This will affect what we are adding value and what we are focusing on in our research (Gadamer 2006, p. 268-306). Prejudice is something we will always bring into our analysis and search for understanding (Føllesdal & Walløe 2004, p. 102-109). We can use hermeneutics to analyse interviews as texts, and pay attention to the contextual interpretive horizon provided by history and tradition by looking beyond the here and now in the interview situation (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p. 51). I will discuss more about my own role and prejudice later in this chapter.

I was focusing on qualitative methods when I was working with my project. My objects were seven people that have been participating on two different trips organized by Hvitserk. I used interviews of those people, and some observations from the trips, as my way of collecting data. Their descriptions and reflections made a background for my understanding of the research questions.

3.2 Qualitative Research and Interviews

Qualitative methods are normally used when the project wants to go deep into a subject. In contrast to quantitative methods, I will focus on a smaller group of people and try to get more detailed and nuanced information about my research questions (Johannesen, Tufte & Kristoffersen 2008, p. 36). Thagaard (2009) highlights that *qualitative* is about emphasizing processes and meanings that can't be measured in quantity or frequencies p. 17). The focus in qualitative methods is to analyse the material in the context where the data is collected. What is characterizing qualitative methods is that we are searching for an understanding of a social phenomenon (Thagaard 2009, p. 17).

Knowledge is in a qualitative research interview produced socially in the interaction of the interviewer and interviewee. The quality of the data produced in such interviews depends on the skills and subject matter knowledge of the interviewer (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p. 82-83). The qualitative research interview can be explained as a conversation with a structure and an intention. There are some obvious reasons for collecting data through qualitative research interviews, for example the view in human beings, which entail that people's knowledge, experiences and cooperation with others, gives meaning to the topic of investigation. In my master thesis, I was interested in people's experiences and reflections around their trip to Rwenzori or Kilimanjaro. This is best illustrated through conversations with the people in person (Johannesen, Tufte & Kristoffersen 2008, p. 135-137).

Another reason for using qualitative research interviews is that social phenomenon's are complex. Since I would like to know more about what the tourists think about their trip, and not the numbers of tourists and how much money they bring into the economy, I used qualitative research interviews to find out more about how tourists are thinking about the trek or climb they are doing. To get this information I chose to use semi structural interviews with an interview guide as an instrument to collect the data (Johannesen, Tufte & Kristoffersen 2008, p. 136-139). With an interview guide as a tool I let the conversation open for new/other topics than my question were leading to. The interviewee could speak more freely and hopefully bring valuable information into the conversation that could be missed out if I had a structured interview with set questions (Thagaard 2009, p. 88-90).

I made an interview guide based on my research questions (Appendix 3). My guide is based on the different topics in my research questions and the main purpose of my guide is to get as much information as possible on the topic, but still keep the interview inside some frames so the conversation still focused on the questions I would like to answer.

3.3 *Research in my own field*

Between my Bachelor Degree and Master Degree in Outdoor Education, I've been studying International Development Studies at the Oslo University College. In 2007-2008 I did a trip of 8 months around South America. In 2009 I conducted a fieldwork (Lausund, Thagichu, Holmsen & Hendis 2009) and travel in Tanzania/Kenya with the International Development Studies, where we wrote about the tourism on Mt. Kilimanjaro and the impacts on the local society. In 2010 I was back in Bolivia for 6 weeks with the main goal of climbing a few mountains. In September 2011 I started working for an adventure and expedition company. With this company I have been leading groups to Uganda, Tanzania and Nepal so far. Participants from two of these trips were my interview objects. On one of them I was the main, and only, Norwegian leader. On the other trip I was an assistant guide and one of two Norwegian guides. During summer 2012 I passed ten years of experience from the sports industry, working in sport shops. The last years in shops specialized on outdoor activity equipment.

My background and experiences has introduced me to almost all parts of modern adventure tourism. As a salesman selling clients gear prior to their trips, as a tour leader taking people on trips, as becoming a researcher studying impacts of tourism in developing countries, and last, a personal interest for travelling, and for the topic. My background made this project a *research in my own field* type of project. As mentioned in chapter 3.1, Gadamer (2006) indicates that we never can free ourselves from our experiences when working with a research project (p. 268-306). I will bring my own experiences and prejudices into my project. On one side this means I will have valuable information that I can use in the work, but on the other hand I need to reflect on if my prejudice can influence my work in a certain direction. This needs to be an on-going process through the period of work with the project. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) highlights that experiences and knowledge about a research field is a requirement for valuable interpretations.

In general, my experiences are an advantage when working on my project. First of all my contacts were useful from the early start of this project, and without them I would struggle more to get this work done. Through my travels I have gained valuable experience and knowledge. This contributed in conduct of my observations and in the interview process. My experiences also make it easier to understand and recognise the data developed through this study. The interpretation is done in connection with my own experiences. Having personal experience from the area of study is positive in the way that it's easier to understand the world of my participants, and my own experiences can contribute to confirm the understanding that is developed. On the other hand, I can also easier ignore nuances that don't match my own experiences (Thagaard 2009, p. 203). One factor that may contribute to reduce this risk is my knowledge from the international development studies, where I learned to keep a critical view on international development processes. I will hopefully bring this critical view into study around tourism. By also having a continuous critical perspective on my own travels and activities, I try to keep open about nuances that may appear in the project.

3.4 The Research Process

In September 2011 I flew over to Tanzania from Uganda to join the first trip with the Norwegian adventure company, Hvitserk. In December the same year I was guiding my own trip to Rwenzori. These trips ended up being the background for my research.

3.4.1 Selection of the participants

Finding people that will join a research project is a challenge, and a situation that can make some problems. Different approaches can be used, but all of them have some challenges that the researcher needs to reflect on. Qualitative research often includes personal and sensitive information and not everyone wants to open up for a researcher, hence we need to use a method of selection that make sure we get a selection of people that would like to join the project. My selection is a convenience sample with a strategic selection based on finding people that have relevant information about my project (Thagaard 2009, p. 55-56).

There are some problems concerning convenience samples. People that are comfortable with science, or people that don't mind open up for the researcher tend to represent the selection. Highly educated people over represent people with lower education and may

be a result of people's ability to reflect on their own life situations. The challenge is to reflect upon what kind of information could be missing when certain groups of people normally don't participate in qualitative research projects. Another case is that the people who participate may feel that they are handling their lives very well and this may bias the answers in a certain direction. This is important to take into account by discussing the composition of informants in relation to the research and conclusions (Thagaard 2009, p. 55-57). Ethical issues are discussed in chapter 3.6.

My selection of informants was based on two trips I was part of myself, one trip to Mt. Kilimanjaro in September 2011 and one trip to Rwenzori and Mt. Margherita from December 2011. On the first trip I was an assistant guide, on the second trip I was the main guide. The participants on the trips were presented with my project and the purpose of it. Every participant was given an information letter (appendix 1) and a "declaration of agreement on collection and use of data for research purpose" (appendix 2). Everyone was asked if it was OK that I contacted him or her later for a possible interview. Since no one regretted at that point I initially had the whole two groups of 26 people in total to choose from.

After finishing both trips and some more work on my project, I was ready to choose participants. E-mails were sent to relevant participants and a few were answering back pretty quick. Some of the persons that joined the trip were at this point not applicable for participation because of logistical challenges. Other people did not finish the whole trip, hence they were not first priority for this project. In the end I had seven participants, four women and three men. Five persons had been on the trip to Kilimanjaro, two persons on the Rwenzori trip. One interview was done as a group interview with a couple. A further presentation of the participants will follow in chapter 4.2.

3.4.2 Observations

I did not actively use fieldwork in my master thesis. But I did participative observations during the trips I have been to. Some of these observations were used in the work with this master thesis, not as a foundation for analysing the data, but as a background in my interviews and in some comments through this thesis.

Participative observations is when a researcher is taking part in the situations where the participants are. The researcher systematically observes the participants and their behaviour. In projects where participative observations and fieldwork is used actively, there are several methods of observations (Thagaard 2009, p. 65-85). I will not include my project in any of them since I didn't systematically observe the participants during the trips, but used some of the topics or comments from participants as inspiration for my project, and ideas for my interview guide. My main role on the two trips was not being a researcher, but a guide for the group. Having this in mind I cannot count my observations as an active part of my studies.

3.4.3 Interview guide

I made an interview guide (Appendix 3) for my interviews. I chose to do semi structural interviews, with open questions. The reason for choosing an interview guide were to make sure I would get information about relevant topics in my research. In the same time I would let the informants speak freely around the topics so they could come up with valuable information I didn't think about before the interviews.

3.4.4 The Interviews

The interviews were done in spring/summer 2012. I let the informants choose a place to meet, both for practical considerations and to let them have the freedom of choosing a place they felt comfortable in. All the participants chose to meet in a café or restaurant. Before the interview I informed again about the research process, the aspect of voluntarily participation in this project, that the interviews were being recorded, and that all the information would be handled confidentially. The interviews lasted for forty minutes to one and a half hour. I ended the interviews by informing about the possibility to take contact later if they had some more information they would like to share, or if they regretted their participation and wanted to have their interviews deleted.

3.5 Transcription, Analysis and presentation

The next step in the research process is to transcribe, analyse and present my data. This is a big and important part of the project. On the way from oral language from the interviewees to my finished projects, there were several issues to have in mind.

3.5.1 Transcribing the interviews

After the interviews I transcribed all of them, fully, word-by-word as said on the recordings. All the informants were given new names to keep them anonymous. According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) “a transcript is a translation from one narrative mode – oral discourse – into another narrative mode – written discourse” (p. 178). When we transform something from one mode to another it involves a series of judgments and decisions when oral speech and written texts are two different cultures. In the interviews I had a live interaction where I could observe the tone of the voice and bodily expressions. These factors are difficult to read out of a transcript. First you have an abstraction from live interviews to the recordings, then you will lose even more details when going from recordings to written texts (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p. 177-178). Another abstraction in my project is that I have done all my interviews and transcriptions in Norwegian, and then I translate what I use into English in this finished project. All these factors were important to have in mind when I was analysing my data and working with my project.

3.5.2 Analysing the data

After the transcription process I read through all the interviews again and did a meaning condensation, which Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) explains as “an abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations” (p. 205). This process is to get main sense out of the big picture in the interview. Next step was to go through the meaning condensations and do the coding. I did it in the way of attaching keywords to the meaning condensations. I put all the keywords into a sheet including all the informants and all the keywords to make it easier for later identification of a statement (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p. 201-205). I now had three different papers of the interviews. All of them with an own purpose and I could go back and forth in search for meanings, keywords or new perspectives that I hadn't seen on an early stage.

3.5.3 Presentation

I have chosen to present my empirical data in chapter 4. Here you will find a presentation of all the participants and my data presented in chapters thematically organized after the research questions. In chapter 5 I have interpreted my data connected to relevant theory and other empirical data.

3.6 *Ethical Issues*

Ethics are, in short terms, how we should or should not act and respond in different situations. Ethical issues have to be taken into account from the very start of an investigation to the final report or end of a project (Kvale & Brinkman 2009, p. 62). The way we through our scientific work can either directly or indirectly affect other people will raise ethical questions. The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Science and the Humanities (NESH) has made some guidelines for scientific work (NESH 2011), which I will follow in my project. This is because I have to reflect on my own role when I'm doing observations and when I'm working with the data and report. But most important, if my project can be used in a way that change people's perception of themselves dramatically, it can lead to serious consequences for the people involved. Therefore I have to reflect on how topics in my work can be discussed so that there will be no negative ethical consequences for the specific people or group I will interview and observe in my research (Johannesen, Tufte & Kristoffersen 2008, p. 91-93).

My project was reported to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) and approved by the data protection officers (Appendix 4). All the informants are anonymous and the project is conducted under the guidelines given by NSD.

3.7 *Reflections and critics of methods*

In all science it's important to ask yourself whether your data, analysis and interpretations are valid and reliable. It's important to keep in mind during the process from start of the project to the final result. The questions are if the project is trustworthy and have a strength and transferability of knowledge (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009 p. 241).

Reliability is connected to whether another researcher would find the same results using the same methods as I did in this project. In this context reliability is connected to replicability. Replicability is connected to the positivistic research logic and it

highlights that neutrality is an important factor. Can the results be seen independently from relations between interview objects and the interviewer? (Thagaard 2009, p. 198). With this interpretation it's hard to argue that my research is reliable. By using alternative research logic based on a constructivistic standpoint I can still defend my research. Based on this research logic qualitative data developed in cooperation between the researcher and the participant is highlighted. The question about replicability is not relevant, and instead I have to argue for reliability by describing how my data has been developed through the research process (Thagaard 2009, p. 198). By having openness to methods I used, and how my data has been developed and presented, I will say that my project has an acceptable level of reliability. Even though I have an open process that in the theory can be copied and conducted by other researchers, it's difficult to repeat my study. This is again connected to the replicability. Other researchers may go and interview people that have been to these same trips, but they can never reconstruct the same situations as the ones I was in. Even I would have problems copying my own project, or studying the situation on different occasion. I would probably react differently on different participants from time to time. By using voice recording of my interviews I have more solid data than I would get by taking notes that already at that stage would be interpreted by me. During this thesis I have tried to distinguish between my own interpretations and my participants reflections and comments (Thagaard 2009, p. 198-200). The delimitation is that a qualitative research is based on words and interpretations of them. This will not have the same level of reliability as big quantitative research studies.

The validity of my interpretations is connected to reality. Are my interpretations valid in context with the reality I have been studying? The term transparency implies how the researcher show the reader how he or she have used the analyzes as a background for his or her conclusions. Transparency in the project will strengthen the conclusions. Another point that will strengthen the project is the transferability of my interpretations and conclusions. Can my interpretations be relevant in other settings? Can my interpretations be tested and developed in new research studies (Thagaard 2009, p. 201 & 207)? By being a tour leader on both trips used in this project I got valuable insight I would not get by just interviewing people. I also have an insight in the environment of tourism, the local conditions, the culture and history, and outdoor activities in general.

My own background has given me a presence to the field I'm studying that has been valuable during the work with this project. I've done a study earlier on tourism and impacts on the local societies around Kilimanjaro, been travelling myself in the relevant countries, and I have background as an outdoor activities guide/teacher. I will say that this background enhanced my work on the project. It helped me to easier understand the participant's situations and reflections, I could easily get access to the field of study, I had a physical surplus when doing the trips that made it easier to do my observations.

There may be a conflict when working for a company, joining their trip, and then interviewing their customers. I'm not a direct employee at Hvitserk, since I work freelance for them. I still have a professional loyalty to the company. But, Hvitserk are very open for critique and improvements, and we evaluate each and every trip that we as freelance guides do for them. They also ask for feedback from all the participants. Hvitserk has not given me any guidelines for what I can do, or not do, or tried to affect my study during the whole period of working with this project. My research questions are not directly connected to how the company do their business, although some of the answers can point in that direction. With all this in mind, I don't find it a problem to conduct such a study in this setting and still be as objective as I possibly can.

I chose participants from trips I had been to myself. This may have made the choice easier for the participants when I asked them to join the study, since they knew me already. I also got both words, in the interview, and actions, on the trip; hence I could easier "trust" what they said in the interviews. It's difficult to say if the interview situation itself would be much different by interviewing people I hadn't met before. I think my participants felt more comfortable because we had joined the same trip, and they therefore knew me already. I did all the interviews a while after the trip. This gave the participants time to reflect upon the adventure they had been doing. Some reflections were new to me. Other answers confirmed some of the impressions I got during these trips, and other trips I have been guiding. I also let them choose a place to meet, to help them feel comfortable in the situation. Whether interviewing people that I didn't have any relation to would have done my project more objective is hard to say. As I have discussed earlier this could have led both ways. My relation to the participants is still very open, and no one has regretted their participation. I have met a few of them after the interviews were done, and they are solely exited and interested in

the progress of my study. I don't feel that any of the data produced has been "hiding" because of controversy etc., but this may also be a question of the depth of my data. Has my participants been giving me only superficial thoughts and reflections? I can only hope and believe that they trusted me enough to tell me as much as they had in mind during the interviews. That's also my impression from the different interview situations. I felt that the interviews really came to an end when there was nothing more to get out of my questions at that time.

3.7.1 Delimitations and limitations

I have not focused on gender differences in my study. I have a small selection of participants and wanted to focus on "Norwegian people", not similarities or differences between women and men. 16 out of 26 participants on both trips were women. 4 out of 7 informants were women. There are more women participating on the trips, and as informants. When it comes to age, I had people from 31 to 63 years old. I could also have chosen to ask people from other trips, that I had not been participating on myself. This would have given me a bigger group of selection. As mentioned in chapter 3.4.1 there are a few problems concerning convenience samples that may affect my study, and aspects around selection of participants are a limitation in general. The results may have been different with another gender selection, with another method for selecting participants or with another focus on age. These factors are limitations for how the results can be used in the future. Whether my study is relevant for all Norwegian people is doubtful. One of these trips cost about 6000-6800 USD, plus all the gear needed and other expenses at the trip. It's possible to do it cheaper, but it's still not a budget holiday. In that case I will say that this study is limited to people with a special interest for these destinations, or people with good economy in general.

Another factor concerning the selection of participants is that I have people from two different trips. The level of these trips is different, and this may also affect my study. I did not do a comparative study between these two trips, but use all the data to answer the same questions. Since my questions are more into why people travel to African mountains, than which mountain they are travelling to and why, I felt I had to do some limitations. Nevertheless it would be interesting to do this comparison in a future study.

To get a more exact picture on peoples expectations and preparations before the trip it would have been a perfect situation to interview all the informants both before and after the trip. In this study it was not practical to do so because of time and the way my project developed from start to finish. This would be an interesting way to do a later research, to maybe get a bigger and more exact picture. I have chosen a theoretical approach to use when analysing the data. Since there could be other approaches used my choice excludes others.

This study is delimited to a few Norwegian tourists going to Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania or the Rwenzori Mountains in Uganda, on an organized trip through the Norwegian adventure and expedition company Hvitserk AS. Therefore, the empirical data developed in this master thesis is limited to these locations and cannot directly be used as a generalization for other mountain tourist destinations or for other travel agencies organizing similar trips. It's also limited to my interview objects, which means that not all tourists going on these trips necessarily have the same experiences and reflections around their adventure as informants in this master thesis. I can discuss exactly these participants' reflections and interpret it in a way that can point on why people join these trips. This master thesis is part of a topic that has broader relevance, and my interpretations may be used as a contribution to the discussion around global tourism.

A last limitation is that I have chosen some perspectives and theories as a base for my interpretations. It can be approaches that will give other answers, but my choice of perspectives has omitted possibilities for other interpretations and answers. This is a limitation, but can also strengthen my project. By choosing a few perspectives I can focus on these areas and try to go deeper into the data, instead of trying to cover all various possibilities.

4. Going to Africa!

4.1 Introduction

I'm waiting for the group in Hotel Aishi, which is situated on the slopes below Mt. Kilimanjaro. It's late evening so there is no view of the mountain at this time of the day. The group arrives around 9 pm. They are tired after a long day on the plane from Norway, but enthusiastic about starting the trek next day. "It's going to be really nice to get started tomorrow", says one person. "I have never had this big of a lump in my stomach before", says another.

We use the time around the table for dinner to prepare for the trek. People ask about all kinds of things they want to confirm or need to know about the first day. Most of the people are experienced trekkers, but this trip is new to them, and we are on a totally different continent. "How warm is it?" "How much water should we bring?" "How many hours is it tomorrow?" "What is the altitude we start at?" Everyone wants to be prepared.

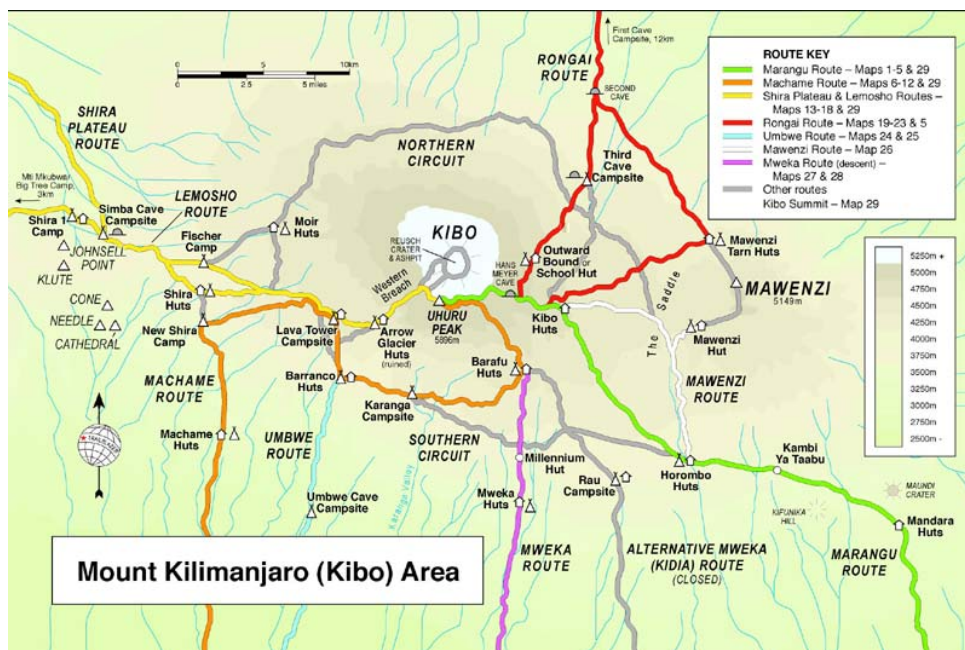


Figure 8: The different routes on Kilimanjaro (Climb Mount Kilimanjaro 2013).

The next day we are heading off for the mountain. When the bus do a short stop at a local grocery we get the first view of the summit, and the excitement in the group grows

high. Mt. Kilimanjaro; Africa's most famous mountain is just in front of us, and it's as beautiful as people had hoped it to be.

We have a three-hour drive in front of us, and the road takes us along the south-eastern side of the mountain. The local people have started their daily work and the roadside is teeming with people. Upon arrival at the gate we meet our guides for the first time, and some of the porters that are carrying our bags. After some small preparations and some snacks, we are slowly moving up the track that is going to bring us to the summit in 5-6 days from now.

For the Rwenzori group it was slightly different. We arrived in the middle of the night in Entebbe, and drove in to Kampala for the first night. The day after we spent the day organizing the last logistics and try to see a bit of the capital in Uganda. For people who have never been to eastern Africa before this is a new experience in itself. A city here is totally different from what we are used to back home.

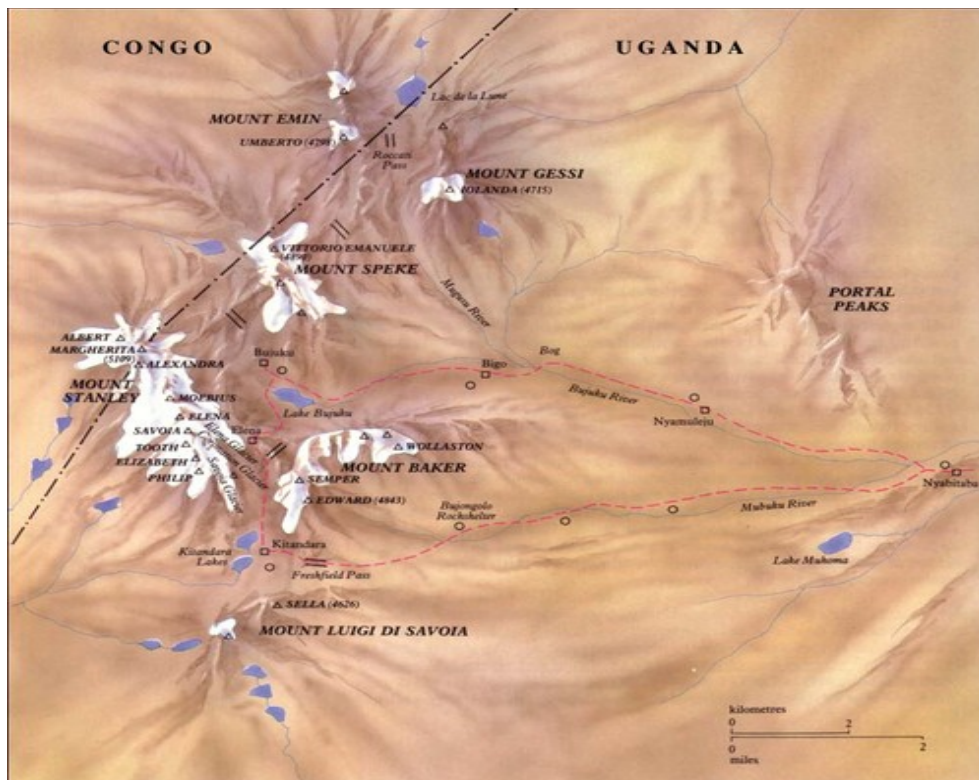


Figure 9: Map of Rwenzori Mountains (Summitpost 2013).

Day number two in Uganda we had an eight-hour bus drive in front of us. Now we were finally getting close to our goal for this trip, the Rwenzori Mountains. The adventure started already on the way to Fort Portal, a small town where we had our lunch. The engine stopped working properly, and suddenly we were having an involuntary meeting with another small town along the way. We were guided in the direction of a hotel for something to drink or eat. I've never been here before, and it seemed to be a bad try on building a fancy hotel for tourists in the middle of nowhere. One question hit me; "why do they send us here when there are several small places in town that could need our money in change for a cup of tea?" Is it because we are tourist and they assume that we expect higher standards?

The afternoon we spend driving along the north-eastern side of the Rwenzori mountain range. Now the group are finally starting to see some of the terrain we will spend the next eight days in. Dinnertime is spent almost in the same way as with the Kilimanjaro-group, questions are being asked about the next day, the track, what to bring and how to pack. But most of the attention is taken care of by our hosts in the hotel...

After two long days in Uganda we are finally ready to start our trek the next morning. And of course it starts with heavy rain in the morning. What a start!

In this chapter I will first present you for the participants in this project. Second we will get more information about why people are joining these trips, before we explore the reflections they have around the trip itself. A short chapter about future dreams and travels follows, before I have made a summary with some key words for discussion.

4.2 Presentation of the participants

The participants are all grown up people between 31 and 63 years old. They live in Oslo or in proximity of Oslo. They have good jobs and older- to grown up kids, if they have any. There are four women and three men participating in the survey. I will now give you a short introduction to each of them, and a little bit of their former experience related to outdoor and adventure activities and travels. I'm not using their real names.

Elisabeth

Elisabeth is 57 years old and married to Mike. She has a degree from a trade school, and is now working with artificial flowers. Elisabeth was raised in a family with special interest for the sea, and with here two brothers and sisters plus parents, they spent the summer holidays in the family's boat. The interest for nature and mountains came later. In the 70's she started more actively to trek in the mountains of Norway. After this the interest has increased and Elisabeth and her husband has been "all over" Norway to trek for a weekend, or weeks. When they got kids this didn't prevent them from getting out. They simply brought their kids along. She has been to South Africa once and this is her second time travelling to an African country.

Mike

Mike is 63 years old and married to Elisabeth. He is originally educated within craft work, but he is now working as a nursing assistant. Together with Elisabeth he has been trekking in the Norwegian mountains for many years, but they have also been a few trips abroad. Among them he can mention Thailand as an interesting place to visit. They are always interested in getting closer to the local society and culture when they are visiting other countries. Normally none of them are big fans of group travels like this trip, but these trips has come after some friends got an idea of going somewhere. Mike and Elisabeth lives in the proximity of Oslo.

Elisabeth and Mikes former experience

Mike and Elisabeth had years of experience in the back when they decided to go to Kilimanjaro. For many years they had been trekking in the Norwegian mountains. Besides that they also had experience from trekking in European mountains and travels to other parts of the world. Some of the challenges that meet them in the wilderness are long routes, big variations in terrain, peaks or passes, and heavy backpacks. The only

aspect they didn't have experience from prior to the trip was altitude. 14 days to 3 weeks are fairly normal length of the treks they have done.

But it wasn't always like this from their childhood. Elisabeth's family was more interested in the sea and owned a 21ft. wooden boat. Every summer was spent at the sea. Not until she met Mike the trekking got interesting. "It was me that pulled you with me!" says Mike. "Yes, but it was a colleague of you, who was a mountain person, that picked the route for us", replies Elisabeth quickly. 1974 was the year, and Rondane National Park was newly opened. The year after they did an 11 days trek with their own tent and food. After a short break when the kids were too small to join trekking, they started up again when the youngest one was 4 years old and ready for easy trips in the nature.

"Henrik had a small backpack with a teddy bear inside, and we had the pockets full of things that we had to give away when we reached that rock, and the next rock and, and so on. But it worked! And it was good fun. And they experienced things. Animal traps in Rondane National Park. It was great!"

Kilimanjaro wasn't their first trip to African countries. When a friend was celebrating her 50 years she wanted to go to South Africa. After 11 days travelling with the birthday party group, they added another 11 days on they're own and headed right up in the Drakensberg Mountains nearby Lesotho. After a couple of days there they went for a safari.

We can see a red line in these trips abroad. Mike and Elisabeth have not planned them, and they have been in conjunction with some ones birthday. Mike explains:

We started travelling abroad because I was celebrating my 50 years birthday and I was dragging my brother in law up in the mountains. It was kind of a volunteer work in the middle of February. It was freezing cold and we had to go 7 kilometres on skis to get there. When we arrived he said: Mike, when you have dragged me up here you have to join me when I'm celebrating my 50 years birthday. And that ended up being Tenerife.

"That's why we've been to Tenerife, cause that wasn't voluntarily!" laughs Elisabeth. And when Mike's brother in law turned 60 they ended up in Thailand. After that celebration they added some extra days again, brought their backpacks and experienced Thailand with another view. "When we go that far we need to take 3 weeks off. Then

we can enjoy the country. Travel around, because that's more interesting than walking on a beach where you see people from Norway, England, France and Finland..." says Elisabeth.

Tom

Tom is 50 years old and married. They have two kids and are living in proximity of Oslo. He is operations manager for a bigger office building in Oslo. His wife started the idea about trekking Kilimanjaro. He shares the passion for outdoors with his wife, and they normally spend some holiday time in the Norwegian mountains every summer. After many years here they finally decided to experience the nature abroad.

Tom really enjoys being out in the nature. He and his wife have been trekking in the Norwegian wilderness for many years, since before the kids got born. They could easily take a week or two in the mountains every summer. "I simply love the view," he says. Tom is also a hunter, and normally spends much time in the outdoors from August to go hunting. He goes into why he likes it so much in the nature:

"It gives me everything! You recover. You gather strength. You can walk for days by yourself and think. Do some fishing in the evening. Read a book. You can... you enjoy your life. It's like... when I'm really tired, run down from all the work, I escape into the woods. That's the best medicine I can get. I think it's like that for my wife too. We've been enjoying the nature since we were 14-15 years old both of us. We really like it there!"

Altitude is not something he got experience from, neither similar trips like this. "I'm also a little bit interested in... nature... How things are growing... And how people are living." Tom stresses that he's also interested in other people, and their home place/country.

Helen

Helen is a 31 years old economist who lives in Oslo. She is working in a bank in the capital of Norway. She is living with her boyfriend but they are not married. They have no kids. Helen has always been dreaming about going to Africa, and when some friends asked if they should go to Kilimanjaro she said yes immediately. She has been travelling in both North- and South America, and also been living in Australia for a period of time. For Helen, trekking is not an "obsession", hence she prefers to be out when the weather is nice and predictable.

She has been travelling quite a lot in Asia, lived in Australia, been backpacking in both north and south America, but never travelled to Africa before. Except for a holiday in Egypt. She hadn't been to any trips like Kilimanjaro before she joined this time. "It has been mostly family holidays and backpacking, and mostly holidays different from this one. Or, I've been to a desert in Australia. One week in a tent, but that's not quite the same." She is physical active in daily life, but not anything extreme. "I wasn't afraid of not being in shape. I'm used to do activities like training." But the trip didn't have positive effects on Helens outdoor activities in general.

"I've been walking in some mountains, but I'm kind of a good weather camper, and that summer it was a lot of rain so I didn't want to do any trekking. I was also planning to sleep a little bit in tent, because I don't like that, so I was thinking that I should prepare a little bit for it. But in the end I figured out it was better to save that tolerance for sleeping in a tent until the trip."

Helen laughs, and also adds that she didn't think it was much she could do anyway that would have changed the trip. Actually she was afraid her biggest challenge would be to walk slowly (like you have to do in the altitude, to acclimatize properly), that she was going to think it was terrible.

Alexander

Alexander is 51 years old. He is from the western part of Norway but lives in Oslo. He is educated in economy and accounting, and works as an accountant for a company in town. He is married. He is active in his leisure time, and likes to use the nature as a place to unwind from daily life.

When I ask Alexander if he always had a passion for mountains he answers: "I'm from the west-coast and there it's mountains, mountains and mountains... so mountains have always fascinated me, it has!" He doesn't really talk much about former trips or experience but some of his descriptions around why he likes to be out gives us a little impression anyways: "The trek can be really nice in itself, but the main goal is the summit." I ask him if it's always like that and he says: "Yes! Because... when you get up there and see that beautiful view then... it's priceless!" He also mention the recreational side of being outdoors: "Walking in the mountains is very relaxing, and peaceful. It's no hassle. You have a goal, and if you reach it in three or five hours is insignificant."

Alice

Alice is a 50 years old economist. She is married and has three kids. At the moment she is in between jobs. Alice is living in proximity of Oslo. She is impulsive and curious, and booked the trip only a month before the departure date. Summits are not her main interests back home, but she is interested in nature, flora and fauna. They recently bought kayaks so this will now be in focus.

Alice has been to South Africa earlier, on a family holiday, on a horse-riding holiday in Wadi Rum, but never on a high altitude mountain. She is active and in good shape according to her own statement. The family cabin in the mountains of Norway is a good base for trekking and keep active. Recently they bought kayaks and this is now her main activity and interest.

Christina

Christina is 34 years old. She lives by herself in Oslo and work as a lawyer. She likes travelling in developing countries and if that can be combined with some nature experiences it's close to perfect. Christina likes to get challenges but has never had a special interest in summits. She likes to trek for a week or so in the wilderness. There is normally a goal for the different trips, either see a new area or do a new activity. She describes herself as "an outdoors activity junkie."

Christina has previously been to Ethiopia, Tanzania, Pakistan and a few countries in Central-America. She is comfortable with longer trekking trips but has not been a "summit person" as she explains: "In Norway I haven't been a typical summit person. I've mostly done trekking for a week or so, but not been running up and down mountains." Despite she already has gained a lot of experience she is thirsty for more:

"I like the challenge it gives me, both physical and mental. I would like to join a climbing course to be able to reach the summits I can't get to without the necessary skills. One thing is the mountains, but I would also like to do other things like crossing Greenland and... I'm kind of an outdoor activities junkie! I want to see new places, not travel to the same place twice. But I can also bring my tent and spend a night out in the woodlands around Oslo"

Christina then explains why she likes being in the nature:

“I completely unwind from the daily life. I do some of the treks all by myself and it’s incredibly nice. Not have to care about others. Take some pictures. Bring the tent. Sleep outdoors. Enjoy the silence and peace in nature. I could easily take a year off from work and just do trekking, kayaking, some kind of a big project. To retire when I’m sixty something and find out that I’m too old to do the things I want... That’s my fear in life!”

She is curious, adventurous, and a person that wants to follow her dreams while her body still works.

As you can see it’s a varied group of people, but all with a certain level of interest for outdoor activities and nature. Let’s see what they say about why they joined a trip to Tanzania or Uganda.

4.3 Why trek a summit in Africa? Dreams, expectations and preparations

Kilimanjaro is a non-technical peak but a challenge for many because of the altitude. That also makes it an attractive summit for thousands of people to attempt each year. It helps that it’s one of the most famous mountains in the world¹ too. To reach the summit you don’t necessarily need to be an active sportsman or in top shape in general. It’s a benefit if you are used to the outdoors, but everyone in a normal physical condition can reach Uhuru peak when acclimatizing properly. Margherita Peak in Rwenzori is a more desolate summit in a not so accessible mountain range. Rwenzori also has a unique flora and fauna that you will not find in other mountains. You will need some technical equipment to reach the summit, but it’s not difficult for people used to the outdoors. The challenge is still the same as on Kilimanjaro, the altitude.

On the question why people booked their trip to either Tanzania or Uganda I got several different answers. Keywords are: exotic, special, summit, altitude, challenge, people, culture, nature and mountains. The background can be pretty different so let’s have a closer look on people’s reasons, dreams, expectations and preparations.

Helen started thinking about Kilimanjaro when she was 18 years old. She read about it and it caught her attention right away. From that moment she always wanted to visit

¹ A quick search in Google on *most famous mountains in the world* shows that pretty much all links you

Tanzania and climb Kilimanjaro one day. Another factor was that it was the mountain that seemed most manageable among the high altitude ones, and in the same way a proper challenge to climb. That aspect combined with a safari afterwards tempted Helen. When a friend asked her many years later if she wanted to join them travelling to Tanzania she immediately said yes. “I think I needed three seconds to say yes, I’m in.” They ended up being three friends travelling together. Alexander and his wife had been thinking about Africa as a tempting destination for a little while, and they also enjoy trekking in the Norwegian mountains. Since Kilimanjaro is a non-technical mountain and fairly high, they figured out they could combine the Africa idea with a mountain. Their goal was to reach the summit.

Tom’s wife decided to trek Kilimanjaro before she turned 50 and started inviting friends in her 40 years birthday party. He doesn’t have a clear idea of why it was Kilimanjaro, but she had always been dreaming about summiting that mountain. “I was thinking about the nature and the new experience with being in the altitude. I was also excited about the summit because I love the view from those places”

Impulsive Choices

“It was actually a bit random, that it ended up being Uganda,” starts Christina. She had been to Kilimanjaro the year before and wanted to try more high altitude mountains. When she was looking around for something exciting she came over an ad for that trip through Hvitserk in the Norwegian outdoor magazine *Ute*. “I remember I was thinking: Wow, that looks exciting, and it’s a mountain I’ve never heard about. It’s not a mountain everyone is visiting and more exotic than other places I had in mind.” Christina tells me that she was thinking about Nepal and South America but since this seemed really exciting and matched with an extended Christmas holiday, she went for this adventure.

Alice had almost the same experience when she booked her trip to Rwenzori.

“I had decided to go for a proper trip, not just another charter holiday. Then I started looking around for organized adventures because I still like it to be organized. I wasn’t thinking about organizing a whole expedition myself. I knew that Hvitserk had many good trips and a friend of mine had been travelling with them to Nepal. The most important was the time of departure. I was ready to go pretty soon and saw that Rwenzori still had available places. I decided to join in the end of November and the departure was in the end of December! Of course

the place itself looked interesting too. It was a really special place that didn't have as many visitors as other destinations. It was a choice from the upper class, not only because of the time!"

She further explains me that it was a combination between high mountains, but not too high to reach, and the flora and fauna that caught her attention. Alice also underline the importance of a good presentation on the website. Her great trip to South Africa earlier may also have been a factor for choosing an African destination again.

Elisabeth and Mike impulsively said "YES!" to join, when a friend threw out the question ten years before the trip. She was 40 years old and said in her party: "Shall we trek Kilimanjaro in ten years time?" Mike and Elisabeth didn't think at all, but said yes right away. The planning started later on. They also have a niece that had been to Kilimanjaro three years before their trip, and she had been pushing them for a little while; "aren't you going to join one of the trips, to South America or to other countries? That would be something for aunt Elisabeth and uncle Mike, since you are trekking so much in the mountains!" The only problem was that the trip was an organized group trek: "We have always been trekking in the mountains by ourselves, we feel more free in that way, and we meet people underway, on the huts, and then we split up again. But we joined!" So why did you say yes, I ask them. Mike has to think properly. It's over ten years ago and the memory is not fine-tuned on that happening right now, but he finally answer: "We actually said yes because we like to take challenges as it comes. It doesn't affect us much."

Wilderness, The exotic, and something different

Many people are happy with a comfortable charter holiday to a familiar place in their vacation, but some people are searching for the unknown when they are planning their holidays. It's more about adventure and experiences than recreation. Could your trip to Kilimanjaro have affected your choice, I asked Christina:

"I think Kilimanjaro was a quite easy trek, and I did it mostly to check if I could cope with the altitude. But it wasn't exactly wild or exotic. You are kind of walking in a queue on a dirt track. I found Rwenzori more tempting because it was wilder. And you also had the glacier part."

Since Christina has been to Ethiopia and Tanzania earlier I ask her what it is that fascinates her to travel to countries like this. “It’s totally... different! It’s probably comfortable to travel around in western countries, but it’s not the most interesting.”

People, Culture and Social Responsibility

When I ask if it’s primarily the nature they travel for, or if they have some cultural perspectives also, Elisabeth replies; “It’s absolutely culture and people and... I think that when you are going to other countries you have to meet people who are from these areas.” Christina tells me why she thinks it’s important to travel to developing countries:

“It’s good to see how people lives in other parts of the world. It’s good to travel there and leave some money behind. Why spend your money in countries where they already have everything? It’s my small contribution to social equalization. Maybe it’s just an excuse for travelling around the globe, but unless otherwise it may contribute to that.”

Tom tells me that he loves people in general and he’s looking forward to meet the local people.

Travel inspiration

“Knut Risnæs was in the Norwegian Radio Broadcasting on Saturdays. We sat there almost glued to the radio, because he had such a personality. We felt we were almost there with him, and he knew everything! Unbelievable!” Mike remembers the good times when they listened to Knut Risnæs and his travel magazine on radio. He gave advises to people who wrote in with questions, and new tips on where to go next. They also got some of their inspiration through *Fjell og Vidde*, the membership magazine for The Norwegian Trekking Association. Helen has always been reading a lot about all the continents, but when it came to mountains Kilimanjaro was always the one.

4.3.1 Knowledge about the destination

“We didn’t know anything at that time!” said Mike about the time when they said yes to join over ten years ago. “Didn’t even know the altitude... Knew roughly where it was.” Elisabeth contributes by saying that; “we hadn’t put any effort into what it meant to trek to the summit of Kilimanjaro at that time.” But they gradually gained more information during the long period before they actually went. They didn’t know that a safari was

included either, before it got closer to departure day. In that case you can say that Kilimanjaro was the main object, but safari was a great bonus since they had experienced that in South Africa earlier and really enjoyed it.

Alice didn't have much knowledge about Uganda before the trip. "The only thing that strikes me when I think about Uganda is that hijacking of the airplane in Entebbe². And its sharing border with DRC and it's not exactly the most pleasant news in media from that place either." When you know about all the trouble Uganda has been facing it's hard to believe that people would like to travel there at all. "The experience is that when you go there it's working out anyway. And it wouldn't be organized trips there if it weren't safe.

"I didn't really do much research. Not beyond where the trip is going, what is the program, what do I need?" So you take it as it comes? I ask Christina. She simply answers yes on that question. Helen had always been engaged in Africa and what's going on there, but in more general terms. "I didn't know much about the mountain before I left," says Helen. Alexander read books about Kilimanjaro, that was written by people who had been there earlier, and the expectations grow more and more closer to departure. Tom bought some books about Africa from an African man who drove around selling books to support his studies. By reading those books Tom and his wife weren't totally out of knowledge before the departure.

Cecilie Skog is a famous adventurer from Norway. She has completed The Seven Summits along with several ski expeditions to Greenland, the South Pole and the North Pole. A few months before the trip it was a program on TV about her guiding some friends up Kilimanjaro. This program was referred to by many of the participants on Kilimanjaro, both in the interviews and during the trek. "We saw that program on TV... That's when we really got the focus," said Mike. Tom and Alexander viewed the program too, and found it interesting to watch before the trip.

4.3.2 Preparations

"No," is the quick answer from Mike when I ask if they did any special preparations before Kilimanjaro. They were on a 14 days trekking trip last summer. And with all the

² Read more about the Entebbe hijacking here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Entebbe

background from long trekking expeditions in Norway during the years they felt like they had a good base. Some quick searches about altitude was done, but with no other results than; “You either handle it, or you don’t! There is no guarantee,” says Mike. Alexander didn’t really do much preparation either. He did some trekking with backpack to get used to that, and he had to buy some new gear for the trip, which ended up being a proper investment. “I joined some training Hvitserk are arranging every Wednesday or so. We were carrying backpacks while trekking to get used to that,” says Alice. She is in a good shape and didn’t feel she had to do much more than normal training to cope with the challenges on the trek. “Then I had to do a round of investigating to find out what kind of equipment I needed. Now I have everything I need and can easily join other similar trips!” She also did a proper research on the route and even found a detail description of a Norwegian man being down there the year before. He had been measuring oxygen levels and pulse and kept a record of it, so Alice was well prepared on what to expect from the altitude.

“I didn’t really do that... or, I was thinking that the trip is going to work out ok,” laughs Christina. “I feel comfortable when it comes to heavy trekking, I’m used to that. I bought some new gear for the technical part, but figured out that it can’t be more tricky than something I can do on the fly.” Helen prepared herself for a physical and mental challenge. Or, she wasn’t really afraid that she was not going to handle the trekking, but the altitude, and actually the challenge of walking slowly all the way. “I bought myself a new sleeping bag, except for that I didn’t really prepared much.” She has the same thoughts as Mike when she says: “it’s not really much more you can do. I don’t think I would get anything more out of the trip by walking one week in the mountains this summer.”

Tom thought he had everything when it comes to equipment, but he was wrong. He says that he needed to think about the weight and replaced a few things to pack lighter. He is in good shape and didn’t really need to train more for the trip, but he got his wife out to join some specific training. He has been on many trips with his wife and their kids and he knows that sometimes they will meet some adversity. “When my wife is in a hard physical period on the trek she says that now she is down in her third basement and from here it can only be better!” Tom is laughing and continues to tell me that as long

as you take into account other peoples needs you will fix most of the challenges on a trek.

When it comes to culture some of the participants also try to do some preparations on that topic, while others are interested in general and likes to travel with an open mind and open arms. “If you follow the normal news and discussions you already know quite a bit.” Alice bought herself a guidebook in advance to get a little insight in the country and the mountain range.

4.3.3 The safety of booking a trip with Hvitserk

The headline of this part reflects the main thoughts from the participants on the question why they booked with Hvitserk. Words like serious and safety often came in. “It is more important to do this trek with a serious company than saving a few dollar” is one of the comments. Another one talks about the local responsibility; “The people who works down there was guaranteed the salary they are entitled, and they are treated properly.”

Christina did some research when she used Hvitserk in the first place:

“I did some research and found several alternatives. I also found some that I didn’t really trust, or I felt that they were... you see? I don’t remember exactly why I ended up with Hvitserk, but I did some background check at that time.”

“We did some research,” Helen tells me, “it was connected to how Hvitserk do things. When you book a trip like this you depend on the people around you.” She surprises me when she continues and mentions the word egoistic:

“You are travelling to a continent that are poor and there is plenty of exploitation of natural resources. So when you do something that in fact is incredible egoistic... it’s good to know that the people helping us up get proper payment.”

She explains the idea of egoistic and says that it’s quite a special thing to do... to climb an altitude where it’s not normal for human beings to be. And not only that, but you need help from other people to reach that altitude. You have people cooking your food and carrying your bag.

Alexander was looking at the summit rate that Hvitserk had. And that they had been there many times and therefore had the necessary experience to reach the summit. He also had a friend who had been there earlier with Hvitserk and was satisfied with the program. That influenced their choice of tour operator. Since Alice had a friend too that had been travelling with them, she didn't do any other research than browsing their homepage. "I had heard about them from earlier and I think they seem to be serious, and they have a broad range of trips that are outside the normal charter schedules." Since she found something in her interest there she didn't spend more time looking around.

Mike is happy with the whole program:

"The program was really good. I was a bit worried about other groups down there, which didn't have the same crew as we had, and a different program. Hvitserk is a really professional company, very thorough, they have good agreements and work very well with the local company. I would recommend Hvitserk to other people. Absolutely!"

The well known

Christina had been with Hvitserk to Kilimanjaro the year before and was satisfied with that program. She had also been to Greenland with the same company. "I think they are professional. I just know that things are organized and well done, so I didn't check other options for Uganda." Tom had been looking a little bit around for companies organizing this trip, but he knew one person working in Hvitserk and ended up booking with them. This person wasn't the only reason for booking with them: "We also got really good information from others working there, and I must say that they are really skilled at the office, they deserve some good feedback." He tells me that they didn't care about price in the end. They chose the company they felt had the best program, guides and partners.

4.3.4 Expectations

"It started building up more and more," says Mike. "We started to understand that this could be a tough one to cope with. Because of the altitude," Elisabeth throws in. They had decided before the challenge started that they should continue if one of them had to turn around; "cause this was a once in a life time experience!" According to Mike. Alexander was looking forward to: "see how my body would handle the altitude," since he hadn't been in the altitude before. Elisabeth is not the one that builds up too many expectations before an adventure. She is afraid that she easily can be disappointed in

that way. “The only thing I think was exciting was to walk in a group, that’s a new experience to us.”

Christina says that she: “...wanted a challenging trip. And I liked the mountain range. It looked really interesting. Some people thought it was harder than they had been envisioned, but I think it was completely by my expectations.” “After I said yes to join I started thinking; what have I gotten myself into? What is this, really?” Helen is probably not the only one thinking like this after they have booked an adventure they’ve never done anything like. “In the same time it was difficult to have any expectations because I hadn’t done anything similar to this before. How would I react in the thin air? How were the conditions up there?”

Alexander is not only interested in claiming the summit: “We were trekking through several climate zones and that was interesting in itself. I had high expectations to the whole trek up the mountain because that’s an experience we can’t get in Norway.” He also looked forward to see some animals on the way up, something we actually did when we spotted some black and white colobus monkeys already the first day in the mountain.

For Alice it was connected to several aspect of the trip: “One part is how I will cope with the altitude and the terrain. Another is about the country and how close we get to the local culture and people. Last thing is about the group I’m travelling with.” She has already told me she likes flora and fauna and has expectations on those topics too. She is looking forward to see what they will encounter in the mountains. The trek had two aspects, the trek in to the base of the mountain and the summit day in itself.

“To actually be in the nature over a longer period is an experience. You really immerse yourself into the atmosphere and the environment, and that may be more important than the summit, but when you have the summit on the program it’s important to reach it! It’s still two different things. It’s a spectacular part of the trip coming up in the altitude and see things in a different perspective. Still, to be in it over a longer period is maybe the greatest part of being on a trip!”

The composition of a group will have a great influence on how the trip will be. If it’s a big group inside the group that know each other it may be difficult to come as a single person and fit into the group. If the people are very different it may affect the social

setting in the group. But on a trip like this everyone normally have the same goal and that may help a lot!

4.4 Reflections around the trip

Both trips are building up from day one to the summit day. We get closer to the mountain each day, on Kilimanjaro we can see it from day one, in Rwenzori we get the first view in the afternoon the second day in the park. Every day is different, different from the other days and different from nature back home, and that makes it an exciting overall experience. Because of the altitude we walk slowly and that gives us time to enjoy the nature and the view. For people used to outdoors the altitude adds a new dimension to the nature experience. Home in Norway it's normally only really bad weather that turns around people on a summit day. Here it can be your own body not coping with the lack of oxygen.

“Really good!” is Helens first response when I ask her how her over all experience from the trip was. “It exceeded my expectations in many ways, even tough they were high. It was a totally new experience, and it was really, really good!” She continues. “For my own sake I think the trip was really in line with the way I had expected it to be in advance. It was a good program really, and in general I was really satisfied,” says Christina. Time seems to be something we in the western world always are in short of. Christina also talks about this and says that she would like to have more time in the country when she first travels that far. “You arrive in the country, go to the mountains, and end up in a safari lodge enjoying cocktails. It's limited what knowledge you actually get about the country. But it's like... you have a limited vacation when you work.”

“I'm left with only fantastic memories. I can't remember any negative episodes. I didn't get sick on the way up so... I'm left with the memories, and when I'm looking at the pictures some details may occur, something I had forgot. The trip in total was just amazing. One of the reasons for that experience is probably the weather! We would go for the summit anyway, but the overall experience from the trip would have been different”

This is Alexander reflecting around the experiences from the trip to Kilimanjaro.

Expectations vs. Reality

Not everyone on adventure trips like these trips have a realistic view on what they will meet in these countries. For people that have never been travelling outside western countries it's probably difficult to predict and understand what the real life is like in developing countries. "I get frustrated by people that by no means understand what they actually have signed up for. And then they complain because they haven't understood it. Is it possible?" Asks Christina. We discuss the program vs. the reality and agree that the program could be adjusted slightly to reflect the reality in a better way. Or as Christina explain it: "Not everyone understand that *simple hut* in Uganda has a lower standard than a cabin in the Norwegian mountains. And when you are climbing a 5000 meter peak, it may be quite steep some places." Alice has a view on how thing can develop:

"It was an amazing trip! You can have a lot of expectations about how it's going to be or how it looks like and what is happening, but when you are in the middle of it, it will always pop up some other things, new things, and something will be different from what you thought."

But it can also turn the other way: "I thought it was going to be more rugged. I think it was extremely easy terrain, until the last hill up to the summit," says Tom. "It's only the 30 hours before and under the summit push it's hard. Then it's in the head."

Fascination

"When I woke up this morning and saw that view out over Tanzania and Kenya, and after I turned around and saw the summit of Kilimanjaro bathing in sun, then I almost got tears in my eyes! It's fantastic that I can experience this!" One of the participants is really happy about being in the mountains, and expresses these feelings on day two. This day we start trekking towards Mawenzi. We are not trekking straight up to Kilimanjaro, but follow a loop to the bottom of Mawenzi. The landscape is changing from day to day, and new nature experiences reveals around next corner. After lunch Mawenzi is showing her whole beauty and people starts to talk about their fascination for mountains, again. "Isn't it strange that we are so fascinated by mountains?" says Elisabeth. "Which mountain back home can we compare Kilimanjaro with?" says another.

People and culture – from the bus windows?

Elisabeth and Mike said that they were interested in the cultural perspective and the local people when they travelled to other countries. How was this on the trip to Tanzania? Did they manage to dig into the culture in this country? “No, we didn’t really do that. Since this wasn’t a trip on our own... we had a program. The information we got was mainly through our local crew.” Helen supports this view by saying: “We didn’t really get insight of neither society or culture... we were separated from that... all the way.” And she doesn’t think the impression she got through our local crew gave a representative picture of the situation in Tanzania. “It wasn’t that much we got to see... We did see something on the buss ride and it was a lot of poverty, it was,” Alexander explains. “But the people who worked for us in the mountains gave me a good impression. They were really service minded!” Tom supports the view of service minded people and continues:

“The people we met in the hotel were really hospitable. Even the people we met walking in the street in the local village were hospitable, they almost invited us in to their homes! The only thing I regret is that I didn’t join you to Moshi that day. Then we would see more of the local life.”

We had one day off after the mountain. Some people chose to join me on a trip to Moshi to experience some of the local life in town, while others spent the day by the pool or went for a short walk in the neighbourhood.

Christina has some thoughts about the same topic, but on the Rwenzori trip:

“If I had some more time in Uganda I would have liked to visit some projects, a school or something, to get a better insight of what kind of life they live. On the trip like ours you are inside a tourist bubble all the time. You don’t get to see the authentic life. When you do the trekking you get to know our guides and learn from them, but you are still far from the society.”

From the impressions she got, Christina think that Uganda was better off than for example Ethiopia. She emphasizes that of course its poverty in Uganda, but not as desperate as in Ethiopia. The mood seems better in Uganda and it doesn’t seem completely hopeless. The area we travelled through in Uganda is one of the better areas. It’s plenty of farming and people also have the tourist industry as a support for their income. Northern parts of Uganda are more undeveloped mainly because of guerrilla wars going on for many years in that area.

Alice supports the view of not really getting to know the locals except for the ones working for us in the mountain. She found it a difficult part of travelling because you know how poor they are, and they try to get some extra support from the clients. When it was full booked in the huts for us it was even worse for the local crew. “It’s a difficult part of the trip, that we are just flying down there, enjoy our lives and get everything served, and then you see how they are struggling with their existence.” She reflects around the topic and continues: “In another way we create business for them. In that way its good that we are travelling, and its better to do it like we do, than like backpackers trying to get everything as cheap as possible.” Its tricky to do a lot as a single person on a trip, but one thing she suggest is to bring more gear on other trips to make sure our local crew has proper gear in the mountain.

Since Alice didn’t know much about the country in advance she thinks it’s tricky to tell about here view on the country, but she says that in general the impression was positive. “Its good to have been there because I have a totally different impression of the country now. It looked extremely fertile and beautiful as a country, and it looks like people is ok.” Again this may be to the fact that this part of the country is in another condition than the rest, and the participants only see “the good sides” of the country. “The women dress up really elegant too, but of course its tricky with our base to get the right impression.”

4.4.1 Highlights

The Summit

On trips like these the summit will always be a highlight on the trip. From the company side they are selling the summit, not a trekking trip. I remember a comment from a person in Nepal once: “I’m not interested in the trekking, or, trekking is nice but the summit is the goal. I can do trekking at my cabin back home!”



Figure 10: The last few steps before reaching the summit of Uhuru Peak, Kilimanjaro. (Photo: © Magnus Hendis 2013)

When I ask people what the highlight of the trip was, reaching the summit is often the first answer. “I’ve never been that exhausted!” “I’m glad I had the poles for support. Wouldn’t get to the summit without.” “And Pauli’s finger pushing me in my back.” “The guides were incredible!” “What patience!” These are words from Mike and Elisabeth about the summit day. When I ask them why it was that special they continue: “I’ve never been that high up before!” “You felt that you had managed the challenge.” “It was almost 6000 meter!” When you reach a goal like this it’s with mixed feelings. Of course people are happy to have made it, but it’s also like: “Damn, no it’s over, what’s next?” laughs Elisabeth and Mike together.

“I will never forget when you were pushing me the last 50 meters to the summit, when I was close to turn around because I was so tired,” Tom laughs and remember the highlight on the trip. “The joy of being on the summit was an incredible feeling!” He tells me he was sure about reaching the summit, but the experience was still great. It’s about the whole process from starting in the middle of the night to the long trek during the night and into the morning and sunrise, but also all the camps on the way up before then. “The popcorn, bananas, the good times and the cohesion in the group all contributed to the great experience the trip was.”

Christina’s first answer is also reaching the summit. “The whole trek, the whole week was really nice, but I think the summit was the highlight. It just got better and better the higher up we reached.” Why this is her best experience is more difficult to answer.

“I haven’t been distinctly a summit person here in Norway. I’ve been trekking for a week or so, but never really been running up and down mountains. Maybe it’s more about the challenge. Test my body, and my psyche. Get a sense of achievement. And now I would like to go higher. Higher than I’ve been so far!”

She tells me that it’s primarily the mental challenge that drives her to do these things.

Alice describes the summit day as spectacular, with the sunrise when we were crossing the glacier, the rough climbing with headlamps on up in the darkness without being able to see what we actually did. It was a clear morning with stars shining. And then the ice climbing that for many was the first time encountering steep ice with crampons and ice axes. “It was good fun with the climbing, and then we reached the summit to that view! It was great! Actually pretty funny to look back where we had been trekking the days before.” The good weather helped on the positive experience for Alice.



Figure 11: Crossing the glacier in beautiful sunrise, below Margherita Peak, Rwenzori. (Photo: © Magnus Hendis 2013)

The group

“The group was really friendly and nice,” says Christina. “We didn’t have any conflicts in the group,” says Alexander. “I don’t know if it could be any on trips like these, but you are together the whole time so... Everyone on this trip was part of forming it in a good way.” Tom tells me that the trip lived up to his expectations and that the people in

the group should be credited for that. They were a big part of making the trip a great success.

Coping with the unknown

The summit push starts around 11.30 pm. Its dark, clear sky, not too cold, and the excitement are all over the camp. “It was now, or never,” says Mike. We have a long continues uphill in front of us. The track we are following is mainly sand/grit or rocks. Some groups are in front and we can see the light from the headlamps forming a snake of moving light in the hill. Mike enjoyed this part; “It was a great sight, and I walked without my headlamp on now and then, the moon lit up enough to see.”

The physical and mental part is of course a big challenge for many: Mike describes some of the challenge:

“I was thinking over and over again that this is not going to work. We are going back down again also. It was no end on that hill. When you thought you were finally there, then it was another hill, and another! I think it was a few hundred meters more uphill. But then we could leave our backpacks, and I got a small pep talk with you. After that point I think I just went for it! I suddenly felt lighter... and then I was there! I sat down on a small rock and had problems balancing on it. I was exhausted, but it was great!”

“I’ve been trekking this kind of hills many times before, with heavy packs, but I was ten times as tired after this hill. It have to be the altitude,” thinks Elisabeth.

Helen wants to say that the summit was the highlight, but it was actually the total experience of the summit day that has burnt into her mind:

“It’s like how the body worked at that time. How you switch off everything and only focus on what’s important there and then... and that’s reaching the summit. When I was really, really tired I never thought about turning around. I focused on getting up there, so I could get down again from that mountain. But it was never an alternative to turn around. It was really fascinating how the body just adjusted to the task of getting up there.”

Some unexpected problems also occurred during the summit night. “I got quite a lot of gravel in my mouth!” laughs Mike. “I was so focused on breathing properly, and when 40 people walk in front of you and almost shamle their legs behind them, then you breath in a lot of dust.” Alice were facing other problems and had her own way of solving it:

“We reach John Matte hut and it turned out it was full, and it started raining, and it was like; what do we do now? But then they showed up with a tent and you reset your brain to the new situation and then you think that this is working fine! And it was a beautiful place! I went for a walk by myself that evening and looked at the totally untouched nature with small biotopes, and the sunbirds were playing around. I had clear view to the Portal Peaks in the sunset. It was just amazing. And then you get over that episode with the tent pretty quick. You think that this is super nice, it doesn't really matter.”

Nature

But not only the summit is part of the highlights when people get time to think a little bit more. The route itself is mentioned as a beautiful nature experience. “It must be the best route!” “It's a beautiful route, and we got to see a lot on the way. I really liked that,” says Mike.

“Also the last day was amazing, on the way down to the gate. That was a really nice part of the trek, through that rainforest, the changing landscape, first the burning sun and the giant lobelias, then into the rainforest where all were soaking wet. That was special, it was wonderful,”

Elisabeth smiles when she thinks back on the last day of the trek. “And we were really lucky with the weather,” replies Mike. This is actually something many of the participants were reflecting on. Elisabeth and Mike agree that it would be a totally different trip if the weather were bad all the time. “We woke up in the mornings to bright sunshine above the clouds and the summit always there, in a distance. It was amazing! I think this is what made the biggest impression on me.” Helen explains that she thinks it's about the whole experience, that she was overwhelmed. Normally she thinks that Norwegian nature is the most beautiful, that the Norwegian mountains are the greatest. “Kilimanjaro is just gravel, rocks... nothing special. But when you see it you get totally overwhelmed by how fantastic it is.”

This pictures says everything Alexander tells me when I ask him what his main experience was:



Figure 12: Trekking from Mawenzi Tarn Camp to Kibo Hut day before the summit day (Photo: © Magnus Hendis 2013).

“The route we did was really nice because we didn’t meet too many people. We got the feeling of trekking alone in our own group.” He tells me that he normally likes trekking in areas with few people. “You don’t get the same feeling when you trek with a group, because the mountains are supposed to be quiet and peaceful.” The safari in the end was a mega bonus for the experience in total, Alexander tells me in the end of the interview.

4.4.2 Backsides and/or bad experiences

Helen laughs when I ask her if she has any bad experience on the trip. “Yes, the summit! It’s both the best and the worst experience.” She answers. “It was the best because I managed to reach it, despite feeling sick, but also the worst because on the way down I was so tired. I was sure I never would get back down.” In the end she actually ended up running down anyway, so she had more power than she thought. But she wasn’t alone having mixed feelings about the summit. Tom’s nightmare was the trek back down from the summit when he faced some knee problems. He had to be assisted down to the camp. From there to the next camp he was put on a stretcher with wheels. Luckily it was only a minor problem and he was able to walk by himself the next day down to the gate. Alice’s bad experience was the one described earlier with the tent, but she had a good way of coping with that and quickly got over it. She tells me

she was prepared for those kind of situations: “I was prepared that Uganda is a developing country and those things can happen, but it’s ok, it’s always a solution so...”

Others had a bad experience with western people treating locals in a bad way:

“When we lived in the hostel that the Austrian couple was running, I actually felt even more white and rich. They were not treating the employees very well, and they had racist attitude. I felt uncomfortable living there. I normally try to not think like that, because you should be able to travel to Uganda and not feel ashamed. But when you are in a situation like that you don’t feel very well. It was a bad feeling. That experience was my worst on the trip.”

This is Christina’s experience with one hostel³ we used just before and after the mountain, and the Austrian couple who ran the place. Alice also tells me about this experience: “That was special. The attitude they had, and how they treated their employees. They had been to South Africa for 12 years and probably learned how to treat people like slaves. It wasn’t that nice.”

Tom is worried about the effects on the nature. The animals can be affected by increased tourism, the soil, erosion on the paths, use of land and so on. “We have to keep these topics in mind when we travel, then it may work also in the future. It’s a paradox that we are using more than we are protecting. Consumption for our own happiness.”

Corruption

“Something I’ve been thinking about when I’ve been travelling in these countries is that there is plenty of corruption,” says Mike. “It also seems like nothing is reaching the people outside the gates around the hotel.” Elisabeth and Mike chose to visit Zanzibar after the organized trip to Kilimanjaro and safari in Kenya. They felt that this part of the trip was another side of life in Tanzania that they didn’t see in the same way while travelling with the group. They hadn’t heard much about Zanzibar either, but had some friends that were visiting about 10 years ago and; “I had a feeling that nothing had happened since then. No development. The same level of corruption” says Elisabeth.

³ Hvitserk is no longer using this hostel.

They tell me that they experienced this on Zanzibar because they more easily could walk around on their own, they were not part of a set program like on the organized trip. What they saw on the organized part was limited to what happened along the road from the airport to the hotel, or from the hotel to the gate. You don't have time to stop and talk to all the people. Since they normally like to get in touch with the local people and culture they spend some time on Zanzibar walking around in the local village, talking to fishermen on the beach, and get fascinated by the talented craftsmen building boats or furniture's. Elisabeth explains: "We don't like getting stuck in a hotel in the middle of nowhere so we tried to get out to see people, to experience the genuine." Except for these reflections they didn't have any negative experiences from the trip, not other than the suspension in the bus: "That was an own chapter, but we survived," says Mike and laughs. Tom has the same experience from Zanzibar. He thinks the whole trip was perfect except from that place:

"It's probably a nice place but I think it was too much corruption there, and extremely dirty. As soon as you put your head outside the gate it was begging and all that follows with it. But we had a really nice day visiting some fields growing spices. The driver we had was really nice."

4.5 Future dreams and travels

4.5.1 Did it change your way of travelling?

Elisabeth and Mike are already experienced travellers and trekkers. They don't think this trip in general have changed their way of travelling. "We have never been typical beach resort tourists. When we are travelling it's because we want to do something special," Mike explains. "...Or experience other cultures, and countries," says Elisabeth. Mike continues:

"Santiago de Compostella for example, that's initially a religious route but we did it to see the culture around the trail, and meet the people. We try to go behind the scenes to meet the people that are contributing to do this trip enjoyable for us. The maids, the waiter... it's always someone there, who make sure we are having a good time."

Christina has already told about her views on travelling and social responsibility. She didn't feel that this trip changed her in any particular way as a tourist.

“You can always discuss to which extend the tourism contributes to local development. It’s a big industry around tourism so I think it depend on how you do it. If you are conscious about how you act and that you pay people sufficient money for the job. Tourism invades some local societies and in those cases there is probably some negative impacts. And the environmental aspects are also something you have to consider. There’s a balance between using the nature as a way of income, and in the same way protect valuable areas so they can be attractive in the future.”

Alexander hasn’t really got inspiration to follow news or history from Tanzania after the trip. He has not actively searched for more information about the destination or local culture, but he has read some that has been in Norwegian newspapers. He admits that he may stop and read those articles now after been there himself. Maybe he didn’t do that before planning the trip. When it comes to poverty, work and local responsibility he has some mixed feelings.

“When we got back down and had this ceremony with our crew and saw the big group that actually had been working for us... It was an odd feeling. But then you think that it’s a job for them and they get some income. If no one had been here trekking they hadn’t had anything to do. My feelings around such a trip is a bit mixed, but in general I think it’s positive.”

He tells me that some of his reason for doing such a trip now is to experience something different now before it’s too late. Too late for him, or for the place he would like to visit. “I’ve passed 50 years old now and I start thinking about doing things, not postpone them for later. You don’t know what tomorrow will bring, but I don’t want to become hysterical either.” Of course it’s easier now when his economy is good, he tells me, and he can start spending money on adventures like this.

4.5.2 Did you get inspiration for new adventures?

“Yes, I would love to do that!” says Helen when I ask her if she would like to do a similar trip again. “It’s almost a self-reinforcing effect. The more you travel, the more you want to see. The more you understand that you haven’t seen. But I like being in Norway too,” says Christina. Tom would like to get out travelling again as soon as possible, but don’t think it will be before in a year or so. Elisabeth describe how she can push herself again and again on challenging treks:

“When we got to the summit, Mike said; I’m never going to do this again! I told him; Wait a few days and you have totally forgot the whole thing. You really do that, if we hadn’t done that we would never do this kind of things!”

Alexander says that Himalaya may be his next adventure. He is tempted to try something even higher.

“My focus is on mountains and it would be good fun to reach above 6000 meter. When you go even higher it’s other factors that can be negative. Many people don’t come back down when they try higher summits, so the feeling is that you risk something extra by doing that.”

He admits that if he reach 6000 meter he may put up a new limit for himself. As he says: “That’s how humans are.” But he is not interested in doing the same trip again. If he hadn’t reached the summit he don’t know if he would try again either. Alice got inspiration to do more travels like the one to Rwenzori because she thinks its more fun and exciting. But first she will spend more time kayaking, maybe in the northern parts of Norway.

4.5.3 What’s next?

“I would like to climb Teide, the third highest volcano in the world on 3718 meter,” says Mike. But what is the motivation for climbing exactly that mountain, I ask him. “I read about it in Aftenposten⁴. It’s pretty close, and that part of Tenerife was really nice,” he answers. “But I could also travel to India, Nepal, or Tibet, to see how people lives, combined with the massive mountain formations around”

Some participants highlight our own country: Elisabeth tells me that:

“The best trips we’ve had are in Norway. You can just walk and walk, and the scenery changes every day. And it’s a fantastic network of paths, and you can sleep in the cabins. You don’t need to plan a long time in advance. But I also think it’s nice to travel a bit now and then. I think it’s good for you”

When I ask her why she thinks its good for her to travel now and then she continues: “Because maybe we can see how good our lives are here in this country. It’s a lot of complaining here. We are good at that. But when you travel you get to see how good it actually is!” “Actually I would like to go to Argentina,” Mike throws in. “Down to Patagonia, and across the mountains to Chile. South America seems really interesting.” “I would like to see more of Europe,” contributes Elisabeth. “We have a bad habit of travelling away from Europe and forget the areas that are closer, or the areas nearby

⁴ Aftenposten (“The Evening Post”) is Norway’s biggest newspaper and has a long tradition of serious journalism. It’s considered by many to be the leading Norwegian newspaper.

where we live. We haven't been to all the places around our own house either," finish Elisabeth off and laughs. Tom told me he really enjoyed the safari and definitely is going back for more.

4.6 Summary

There are some similarities among the participants. Everyone lives in, or in proximity of Oslo. They have good jobs and older- to grown up kids, if they have any. This may be one reason for the opportunity and flexibility to join a trip like this. They all have a special interest for the outdoors and nature, but the outdoors can mean different things to them from person to person. Some people have more experience from trekking in the Norwegian nature, while others have plenty of travel experience. Some of the informants have a focus on mountains while others are interested in flora and fauna.

Four women and three men are participating in this project, which means I will have a good selection of data from both genders. Certainly not everything is similar. Five of the participants joined the trip to Kilimanjaro and two to Rwenzori. One of the two to Rwenzori had been to Kilimanjaro earlier. The age is spread from 31 to 63 years old, and people have jobs and education in different categories. The last point means that my participants don't represent one class or group in the society. I cannot say anything about the distribution between men and women in general on these trips. My own experience from a relatively short career so far is that it's mixed, but maybe a slightly predominance of women. It also seems that people in all ages participates and they are from all kind of classes of the society. But to say anything about these data I would need quantitative data that I don't have for this project.

Why travel to African Mountains?

The reasons for why people wanted to go to one of these places are different. Everyone was having one topic in common, the summit. But the summit wasn't the always the main reason for booking in the first place. A few people had been dreaming about Kilimanjaro for many years. Some just joined when they were asked to participate, and the two going to Rwenzori booked that trip randomly when they were searching for a new adventure abroad. For them the exotic character of the place was important, but when they first booked, they both wanted to summit Mt. Margherita. 5 out of 7 participants are talking about the interest for people and culture as a motive for

travelling, and 6 out of 7 wanted a challenge. It seems like all my participants have a special interest for something different or exotic, something that gives them a challenge unlike what you get on a charter holiday, or for nature and people.

Friends, Internet, travel programs on the radio, TV-programs, magazines and books have all been sources of inspiration for the informants. Two informants has been following programs and magazines for a long period of time for general travel inspiration while the two travelling to Rwenzori found their trip using internet or randomly found an add in a outdoor magazine. It's obvious that information and inspiration for adventures today is easy accessible through all sorts of media. This may influence people's choices of holiday together with a good infrastructure to travel over long distances.

What surprises me is the knowledge people had about the destination when they decided to book the trip. It wasn't much. But they gained some more information closer to departure. This, sometimes impulsive needs for travel, but lack of knowledge on the destination may be one factor that people book such trips through an adventure company. They want an experience with uncertain factors and a level of challenge, but they don't want to risk anything or get into serious problems, therefore they booked it through what they felt was a safe company. 6 of 7 informants emphasized that seriousness and safety were the main factor for booking with Hvitserk. The last person knew about the company through a friend that was satisfied with them.

Reflections around the trip

The first point that everyone agreed on was that they had a really great trip all in all. For a few it also exceeded their expectations. Some explain the success with good planning and organizing from the company, the good weather, the group, and the local crew. This is of course important factors, but could it also be because everyone summited? When asked about highlights from the trip 6 of 7 mentioned that summiting, or the summit day was the highlight. A few would like to have more time when they first travelled that far, but in the same time they must admit that their limited vacation doesn't match that dream.

Peoples expectations versus the reality they meet on a travel like this is not always two things that match very well. Companies like Hvitserk have to describe their trips in some kind of way, but this description may be interpreted in different ways from person to person. Sometimes clients' interpretation and expectation may be far from what they actually are going to meet at the destination. Maybe the companies' descriptions are wrong, or maybe the clients' expectations are too high, or far from what's realistic in a country like the one they are visiting. Christina was really frustrated by this on here trip to Uganda. "I get frustrated by people that by no means understand what they actually have signed up for. And then they complain because they haven't understood it." Alice confirms that not everything is going exactly by the program on adventures like these. It will always pop up some other things, new things, and some things will be different from what you thought.

Interest for, or in, culture and people is another subject that may have problems matching expectations and reality. I said earlier that 5 of 7 had interest for people and culture as one of the factors behind why they wanted to travel. 5 of 7, but not the same two talking about it this time, said that they think they didn't have enough time, or was able to dig into the local culture on the trip. That means everyone had some kind of interest for local culture and people.

Why they didn't get more knowledge and insight in the local culture is explained with different arguments. One is that this was an organized trip with a set program. The opportunities to explore on their own is limited, or completely lost. Tourist groups are separated from the local society and culture and put into fancy hotels and luxury services on the mountain. The information people got was mainly through the local crew. The question is if that's a representative view? The authentic life in Uganda and Tanzania was seen mainly through the bus window on the way to and from the mountain. Alice reflects around the topic too, and she's talking about the, maybe we can say moral, difficulties that appears when western people travel to a poor developing country. But she highlights that she thinks its good business for them and in that case a positive contribution to their normal income.

Highlights on the trip are many but one thing is in common, the summit. The summit is the main goal of the trip, it's the object that is in focus when companies are selling the

trip, it's the object people talk about before, on, and after the trip, and it's the source of inspiration and discussions for both travellers and people back home. There is not only joy connected to the summit day. People have mixed feelings about the day, from total exhaustion to dreams that come true. It's about managing a challenge, reaching new levels, the sunrise, the local crew, and the happiness of standing on the top. Alice describes the summit day as a complete experience that was spectacular. Sunrise, glacier crossing, scrambling, and the good weather all made a top experience for Alice. The physical aspect is part of why the summit day is mentioned as a highlight. It can be the strenuous activity in itself, or the relief of being able to cope with the physical challenge. And of course it's a mental challenge connected to the physical. Helen reflected on how her body worked in the situation, and her own focus. She was fascinated by how the body adjusted to the task she met.

The physical aspect is part of coping with the unknown for many of the participants. They have never experienced how their bodies work in the altitude, and maybe they don't know how they will react mentally. But also different situations can occur on trips like these and that's part of the positive experience that for example Mike, and Alice is talking about. Nature in her own beauty is highlighted too. Kilimanjaro is a busy destination, but Alexander felt that he had the mountain by himself and could enjoy the beautiful nature. The safari in the end was an extra bonus.

Not everything was positive on the two trips. Helen laughs when asked about bad experiences and answers that the summit day was the worst, and the best. As mentioned above this is connected to the physical aspect of the summit day. People are really tired and may have to put their own mental barriers on a test to withstand the physical challenge they feel on their body. But when they succeed, they feel a great relief and pleasure.

Other negative aspects people talk about are corruption, which is mentioned by Tom, Mike and Elisabeth, local services, and influences on the nature and local society. Especially Christina and Alice had a bad experience with the managers at a hostel they stayed at in Uganda. Elisabeth and Mike were reflecting on how much of their money spent on their holiday was going back to the local society.

Future dreams and travels

None of the participants says that this trip changed their way of travelling in a significant way. Elisabeth and Mike have never been typical beach resort tourists, and Christina had already been travelling in African countries before. She also had experience from Kilimanjaro before she joined this trip to Uganda.

“The more you travel, the more you want to see,” said Christina. This trip did inspire to travel more for all of the participants. They have different dreams and destinations in their mind, but no one wants to stop travelling after these trips. It seem like travelling is self-reinforcing.

5. Mountaineering adventures in Tanzania and Uganda

In chapter 2 I presented the theories from tourism to adventure tourism that I will use in my discussion. The knowledge is developing, and the nature of tourism is changing, maybe quicker than the knowledge? People in the developed world are changing travel habits, but why are Norwegian people travelling to the African continent to climb a mountain, and how do they reflect around these trips. By shedding light on my data in an adventure tourism and educational context, I will try to get a deeper understanding of why contemporary Norwegian adventure tourists are hiking abroad, how they reflect upon their experiences, and if these experiences can lead to a formation of self. All interpretations are limited to information I got through my participants reflections.

People have several reasons for why they joined this trip. The summit, and the challenge of reaching it are in focus. I will discuss if my participants can be recognised as a certain kind of types, using Cohen's (Cited in: Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 151) figure for tourist typologies. After that I will use Pomfret's (2006) model and article to have a closer look at the reasons for why people participate on these trips, and how they reflect upon it. Some of my participants did some reflections upon local society, culture, and problems connected to tourism. Steen Jacobsen & Eide (2002) will be used to discuss these reflections. In the end I have used Gurholt (2006) to discuss whether these trips can contribute to formation of self among the participants.

5.1 ***"I had decided to go for a proper trip, not just another charter holiday."***

5.1.1 **Can we typology the people who goes for "proper trips"...?**

The commercialization of tourism has reached new levels and the choices are enormous. Gray's (1970), Cohen's (1972), Plog's (1977), Smith's (1989), and Yiannakis & Gibson's (1992) efforts to typology tourists may not be relevant in today's contemporary tourism according to Telfer & Sharpley (2008, p. 151). My data also supports this assumption. For example, I find it hard to put my participants into one of the four boxes in Cohen's figure, which is a widely cited model for typology of tourists (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 151). He put tourists into to main parts: *Institutionalized*

and *non-institutionalized* tourists. Under each part he have two new boxes: *Organized mass tourists*, and *individual mass tourist* under institutionalized, and *explorer* plus *drifter* under non-institutionalized tourists. People on the two trips in my context would be put into “organized mass tourist” since its pre-planned and pretty inflexible, resort/hotel based (except for in the mountains), and it can be seen as a kind of a package holiday. The main problem is that my participants don’t only go on organized tours, which is one of the criteria’s. They could easily fit into one or more of the other categories; at least identify themselves in these categories. Another problem is that I guess Cohen’s model are based on typical resort based holidays and independent travelling. It doesn’t include today’s broad variety of holiday options.

Take for example Mike and Elisabeth that have been travelling a lot on their own, exploring big parts of Norwegian mountains, but they have also been to typical tourist destinations abroad with friends and family, often adding a week or two on their own afterwards. This was their first completely pre-planned/organized group trip. Mike said that they didn’t travel to Tenerife voluntarily, but after been there he actually mentions the volcano Teide (on Tenerife) as a future goal of a holiday, because he liked that part of the island. Mike and Elisabeth are kind of non-institutionalized tourists that have, on some occasions, joined typically institutionalized programmes according to Cohen’s model. Helen would fit into the same description as Mike and Elisabeth. She had been backpacking and travelling in Latin America and Asia, and she lived in Australia for a while. It seems to me that today’s tourists have a broad spectre of travelling destinations and ways of travelling on the shoulders when they take choices about new adventures. The terms “typical charter tourists” or “typical backpackers” were common earlier, but it may now be time to redefine these stereotypes. I guess a big part of today’s tourism is still dominated by “typical charter tourists”, but the variety of activities and people who stand for the rest of the tourism may be tricky to put into “typical” boxes. My participants show, as I will outline later, some common motives for joining the trip, but they have a variety of backgrounds and travel experiences that don’t necessarily put them into the same “box” when it comes to tourist typologies. From interpretation of my data, and my own experience with tourism I will suggest that the typologies should be explored further, and redefined to be more valid in today’s contemporary adventure tourism context. For example, it could be interesting to see if the media have a dominant position on people’s travel behaviour, and choice of leisure activities/destination.

5.1.2 Need for a new challenge or experience... an adventure?

Telfer & Sharpley (2008) describes the tourism demand process as complex (p. 148). However, how complex it seems to be, they've made a simple figure that summarize the process as a sequential set of stages. The five stages goes from problem identification/felt need, to experience evaluation. In between is information search and evaluation, purchase (travel) decision, and travel experience. Each stage may be influenced by personal and external variables. It's not a one-time experience. Tourism is consumed over a lifetime, and the travel needs and expectations may change and evolve (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 148-149). The reason I brought this model into my project is that the trip they have been participating on can represent one "round" in the tourism demand process. Let's have this model in mind and I will come back to it in the end of this chapter.

If we go deeper into the mountaineering context we can find coinciding motives for participation. Pomfret (2006) has explored this topic and made a conceptual framework to identify and organize these factors (p. 115). While customary research has been focusing on motivation or personality, her framework recognises that important inter-related elements influence both participation and the actual experience of mountaineering. It also recognises the convergence of recreation and tourism in the adventure setting and in a mountaineering context, since the inter-relationship between these leisure forms has been identified, but not acknowledged. In the first part of the framework we find that there is risk involved in mountaineering. It doesn't necessarily mean that a big risk is part of all kind of mountaineering. The "soft" adventure activities like organised trips to Kilimanjaro or Rwenzori do have a low level of real risk, but participants can perceive risk in a personal way depending on their former experience. Motives for participation in soft adventures can be escapism, experiencing new environments, self-discovery, excitement, and novelty. "Hard" adventure practitioners are mostly experienced persons who actively seek risk and challenges, and the activities do include a high level of risk that requires advanced skills and commitment (Pomfret 2006, p. 114-115).

As I have outlined in chapter 2, there are different ways to interpret the adventure term. There has been suggested that commercialized and planned activities cannot be an adventure, and Beedie & Hudson (2003) asks to which extent we really take part in an

adventure in today's adventure tourism (p. 627). The adventure term has an old origin and is still developing. Pomfret's use of the adventure term, as shown above, does include my participant's activities, and their organized holiday to Kilimanjaro and Rwenzori. Specifically why my participants wanted to join these trips do have motives that we can recognise in the theoretical approaches. Helen wanted a challenge, but still something that was manageable. Alexander enjoys trekking in the mountains and had been thinking about Africa as a travel destination. Kilimanjaro as a high, but non-technical mountain, was the perfect combination between those two. Alice, who joined the Rwenzori group, wanted a proper trip, not just another charter holiday. She liked the combination between a high mountain, within a reachable limit, and the flora and fauna. She also underlined the importance of a good presentation on the company's website. Tom was thinking about the new experience by being in the altitude, and he was excited about the view he would be able to enjoy from the summit of Kilimanjaro, if he managed to summit. Even though Alice wanted a proper trip, she wanted it to be organized because she wasn't thinking about organizing a whole expedition herself.

Are these factors part of Mortlock's (1994, p. 19) description of an adventure in the natural environment? To take up a challenge that will demand the best of their capabilities, face them with unpleasant feelings, discomfort and uncertainty? I would say yes, or at least maybe? I think we can see some of it in the participants' motives for doing such a trip. They are talking about a challenge, maybe not so clear if they mean physical or mental, but we will see this later in the discussion. Alice put her trip in opposite to a charter holiday that we agree doesn't really include any high levels of risk or uncertainty. Later I will discuss that they, by facing this challenge, can achieve a pleasant feeling or exhilaration by reaching the summit, the goal of the challenge. This is something Mortlock (1994) describes as outcomes of succeeding in the adventure (p.19). Telfer & Sharpley (2008, p. 154-155) and Pomfret (2006, p. 115) also have the motives above in their descriptions on motives for participating in adventure tourism.

My participants do have the characteristics of mountaineers in a tourism context, not in a recreational context as "real mountaineers". But Weber (Cited in: Pomfret 2006, p. 116) says that when we are assessing adventure tourism we also need to refer to the recreation side, because the latter is at the heart of the former. All types of tourism have some characteristics in common with recreation since they often use the same facilities

and resources, and it can evoke the same social and psychological responses. When I'm leading groups of mountaineering tourists in the Khumbu region in Nepal, we use the same paths, the same teahouses and the same shops, as the recreational mountaineers going on independent climbing expeditions in the region. On Kilimanjaro and in Rwenzori this is more problematic since the activities there are regulated, and stricter when it comes to independent travelling. But the paths used on our trek in Rwenzori are the same as the first real mountaineering expedition in the mountain, lead by Duke of the Abruzzi, used in 1906⁵. Recreational mountaineering can act as a precursor to mountaineering tourism as Pomfret (2006) indicates in her model (p. 115-116). It is also becoming more problematic to distinguish mountaineering tourism from mountaineering recreation because the nature of mountaineering is changing. Mountain adventure tourism has developed from walking and climbing, to complete expeditions to Everest. The traditional mountaineering has become more fragmented, and is now fusing with tourism (Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 626-).

Escapism is one of the most cited motives for tourists according to Iso-Ahola (Cited in: Pomfret 2006, p. 120), an escape from everyday life, routines, responsibility and environment, and it's also one of the push factors in Pomfret's model, under *key influences on Mountaineering Adventure Tourism Participation*. Telfer & Sharpley (2008) confirm this view and says that tourism as a form of escape is an accepted motive in the literature, and that it's more about travel away from something than travel to something (p. 155). Tom describes he's passion for nature as an escape from the daily life, and Christina said that she completely unwinds from the daily life when she's out in the nature. We can use this interpretation on Tom and Christina's description on why they like to use the nature in their leisure time. They really enjoy the nature itself, but in some way it's also an escape from the daily hustle they might experience through for example work. Tom's quote confirms this: "It's like... when I'm really tired, run down from all the work, I escape into the woods. That's the best medicine I can get." The problem with this interpretation when it comes to my project is that no one really talks about his or her trip in this way. Tom and Christina mentioned it, but in another context. They like to use the nature as an escape from daily life, but they don't mention it as a motive for travelling abroad on holidays. My data shows that escapism is not a valid

⁵ More about the Rwenzori history here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwenzori_Mountains

push factor among my participants for taking part on a mountaineering adventure holiday.

As I now have discussed, the borders between mountaineers in a recreational context and in a tourism context are gradually becoming more blurred. My participants clearly fit into the tourism context at some points. None of them have any previous mountaineering background, and they mentioned security as one of the main reasons for booking a trip through an adventure company. Alexander for example said that he would like to try even higher mountains after this, but not as high that it will include a risk of not coming back alive. He has the same motive as “hard adventure mountaineers”, but only to a certain extent. He is not willing to risk his life and would, with that in mind, fit under the category of “soft adventure mountaineers”. My participants have not mentioned escapism as a motive for doing this trip, and have more in common with traditional mountaineering recreational motives at some points. My data confirm that the borders are becoming blurred. It’s tricky to place my participants under one category: Tourism or recreational mountaineers. They seem to have motives and reflections that could fit under both categories.

The participants on the two trips I have been studying are talking about motives for participation that at many points match with existing literature, even though it’s tricky to “place them” some times. One underlying motive that they don’t mention, but that could be valid is the adventure dimension as motive in itself. I said in chapter 2 that I was not going to discuss intrinsic motives, but I guess I will do one exception. The different motives mentioned are concrete motives that are easy to measure. But one thing that they all seem to share is a love for nature and exploration of it. I also mentioned Mortlock’s (1994) interpretation of adventure, together with Gurholt (2010) that talks about the concept of following the curiosity and travel on the road of life, handling the situations that appear as best as you can. When talking about an adventure dimension in this context I’m thinking about a “traditional” interpretation. An underlying drive to go out and explore. Venture into the unknown, into the adventure, by travelling to new destinations. This motive has a long tradition and history for explorers in foreign countries, but also for trekkers and among storytellers in Norway (Gurholt 2006, p. 179).

Could it be that this adventure dimension is lying in bottom when they decide to go on trips like these, an intrinsic curiosity for new experiences, moving into unknown terrain? Earlier I have discussed whether they take part in an adventure, and to what extent. But Alice said in the interview that, “You really immerse yourself into the atmosphere and the environment, and this may be more important than the summit.” Later on she continued with; “... when you are in the middle of it, it will always pop up some other things, new things, and something will be different from what you thought.” Alexander had expectations about the whole trek up the mountain since that natural experience is nothing like what we can get in Norway, and Alice end her reflection with: “...to be in it over a longer period is maybe the greatest part of being on a trip!” To me it seems like they have an adventure dimension in mind when they do these reflections. Maybe the dimension is not obvious in the sense that they mention it as a motive, but I will assert that they have a fundamental adventure feeling in bottom as a driving force to go trekking in remote areas. All the other factors may be the ones that kick-starts the process, but I would say that they would not join such a trip without this fundamental, curious, adventure feeling inside.

5.1.3 “Why spend your money in countries where they already have everything?”

Another motive that are talked about among the participants is people and culture. Not many elaborate on the topic, only mention that this is something they are interested in and would like to learn more about when they go travelling. Christina tried to explain it:

“It’s good to see how people lives in other parts of the world. It’s good to travel there and leave some money behind. Why spend your money in countries where they already have everything? It’s my small contribution to social equalization. Maybe it’s just an excuse for travelling around the globe, but unless otherwise it may contribute to that.”

As she describes it, it could only be an excuse for her to go travelling, but it could also contribute to social equalization. In my opinion interest for other cultures and people in the country you visit should be mandatory if you go travelling to countries with significant different culture than your own, but it isn’t necessarily so for everyone. Robinson (Cited in: Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002) is discussing this issue in his conflict model, and he says that tourism doesn’t necessarily contribute to intercultural knowledge (p.160). It can create conflicts when a big group of people make use of

natural- and cultural resources (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 160). This issue is actually something that a few participants are mentioning as a reason for booking with Hvitserk. They seem to be concerned about the local partner and crew, and they feel safe that they get treated and paid well. Helen commented on how she felt about the issue in this way:

“You are travelling to a continent that are poor and there is plenty of exploitation of natural resources. So when you do something that in fact is incredible egoistic... it’s good to know that the people helping us up get proper payment.”

It is clear that the participants are concerned about and interested in local culture and people, at least when they are talking about motives for doing such a trip. But Christina’s thoughts cannot be seen as confirming data in my context. If her travels really contribute to social equalization is not possible to say in this project. Anyway, the fact that they actually do the reflections is a good base for taking active choices when travelling later, if it’s not only excuses for travelling around the globe. She do a few more reflections upon this topic that shows she will take it into account on future travels: “It’s a big industry around tourism so I think it depend on how you do it. If you are conscious about how you act and that you pay people sufficient money for the job.” To get a wider view I will come back to this topic when I discuss people’s experiences and reflections around the trip.

5.2 “I was exhausted, but it was great!”

The first response from pretty much all participants were that the overall experience was great. After a short pause for reflection, most of them have a more broad perspective on the whole trip and their experiences from it. Or, as Alice is saying, problems or challenges will occur during a journey:

“We reach John Matte hut and it turned out it was full, and it started raining, and it was like; what do we do now? But then they showed up with a tent and you reset you brain to the new situation and then you think that this is working fine! And it was a beautiful place! I went for a walk by myself that evening and looked at the totally untouched nature with small biotopes, and the sunbirds were playing around. I had clear view to the Portal Peaks in the sunset. It was just amazing. And then you get over that episode with the tent pretty quick. You think that this is super nice, it doesn’t really matter.”

This can be exactly how an adventure is taking form. Even a pre-planned trip can take new directions during the journey, or it can always pop up some unexpected situations that have to be solved on the spot. This is the essence in an adventure, as discussed earlier in the project. But not everyone handles unexpected situations in the same way. It may be because they do not have the experience from travelling in countries like this, or that they have misunderstood how the real life is down there. It may be because of their habitus, which are travelling with us all the time. As Greenway (Cited in: Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 627) suggested, we rarely leave our frame of an urban lifestyle behind when travelling in the wild, therefore you can find people who expect the same level of comfort as back home.

Christina commented on the topic and said: “I get frustrated by people that by no means understand what they actually have signed up for. And then they complain because they haven’t understood it. Is it possible?” Perceptions of an adventure are personal.

Different people can view the same adventure in different ways. Mountaineering push and pull factors, lifestyles and personality characteristics can all contribute to these perceptions. Some people can even experience non-conventional forms of adventure as adventurous (Pomfret 2006, p. 119).

From my participant’s comments and my own experience I will say that Rwenzori was more exposed for a wide variety of perceptions than Kilimanjaro. The landscape and terrain in Rwenzori is further from what you find in Norway, than the terrain on Kilimanjaro. With significantly less traffic in the mountain too, the comfort level on a trip to Rwenzori is lower. As Alice and Christina’s comments shows, people handle challenges in different ways. Unfortunately I haven’t interviewed the participant Christina is frustrated about, but I’m pretty sure that her or his perception of the trip had been different from Alice’s perceptions, and her unique ability to adapt to new situations. Both Christina and Alice have former experience from travels to African countries and they are both active persons on their leisure time. To me they have some kind of the same personality and attitude to explore new, unknown things. Therefore it’s not a surprise that they have similar perceptions from the same trip. Yet it would be interesting to go deeper into people’s perceptions based on people’s personalities and travel background in a future study. As Weber (Cited in: Pomfret 2006) says, “it has not yet entered the discussion on adventure tourism (p. 119).

The adventure is, for someone, supported by a fascination for mountains itself; “When I woke up this morning and saw that view out over Tanzania and Kenya, and after I turned around and saw the summit of Kilimanjaro bathing in sun, then I almost got tears in my eyes! It’s fantastic that I can experience this!” Elisabeth found it strange that we are so fascinated by mountains, and others try to compare Kilimanjaro with Norwegian mountains. But the highlight for everyone was the summit/summit day, and/or the view from the summit. Why is that the highlight for people? “I’ve never been that high up before!” “You felt that you had managed the challenge.” “It was almost 6000 meter!” Christina explains why she likes high summits:

“I haven’t been distinctly a summit person here in Norway. I’ve been trekking for a week or so, but never really been running up and down mountains. Maybe it’s more about the challenge. Test my body, and my psyche. Get a sense of achievement. And now I would like to go higher. Higher than I’ve been so far!”

People and local culture, nature, physical and mental challenges, and the summit are all doing this trip to a great experience for all the participants. When reflecting upon the trip different episodes are getting back in mind, highlights and downsides are going hand in hand, and people have been tested to their limits. As we have seen earlier, all within safe frames, and with successful outcomes. As Beedie & Hudson (2003) were discussing my participants has got this opportunity to explore high mountains through an adventure company. They are not experienced climbers, but had the opportunity to bypass the once normal way to reach higher summits, through today’s accepted methods of booking an adventure and let a guide lead them to the top (p. 635).

Earlier in the discussion I said that I would come back to how the participants can achieve a pleasant feeling or exhilaration by reaching the summit, the goal of the challenge. If we go back to Pomfret’s (2006) model, the fourth part of the figure discusses emotional states experienced during mountaineering. Every participant will experience contrasting emotions during an adventure. For example, it is suggested that novice mountaineers can experience emotional turbulence during the activity, but yet feel relief and elation when reaching the top (p. 121). Jo Simpson (1993), a well-known mountaineer, describes one of his climbs in the Alps where the conditions were:

“Harshly uncomfortable, miserable and exhausting. Yet on the summit my memory edited out the anxiety and tension and fed me happy recollections of the superb climbing, the spectacular positions we had been in, feeling confident and safe, knowing we were going to succeed” (In. Pomfret 2006, p. 121).

These emotions are associated with flow in the literature. It is the state in which people are really involved in the activity and the experience itself is so enjoyable that nothing else seems to matter. A similar emotional state is peak experience, a moment of highest happiness and fulfilment. It's represented by several characterisations including effortlessness, loss of fear, total attention, no consciousness of time and space, and awe and reverence of the experience. It is suggested that mountaineer adventure tourists may enjoy this state when involved in mountaineering (Pomfret 2006, p. 121). I said that all the participants had the summit as a highlight. The interesting thing is that many also mentioned the summit day when talking about worst/bad experiences: “I was exhausted, but it was great” said Mike, “...I was ten times as tired after this hill” is Elisabeth's comparison with similar hills back home. Helen said that the summit was “...the best and the worst experience”. It was great because she reached the top, but also the worst because she felt sick on the way up and really tired on the way back down. For her it's the total experience of the summit day that she wants to highlight:

“It's like how the body worked at that time. How you switch off everything and only focus on what's important there and then... and that's reaching the summit. When I was really, really tired I never thought about turning around. I focused on getting up there, so I could get down again from that mountain. But it was never an alternative to turn around. It was really fascinating how the body just adjusted to the task of getting up there.”

When looking at the participant's reflections above we can see that they are corresponding with many of the characteristics recognized as flow and/or peak experience. People goes through levels of focus, exhausting feeling, uncomfortable situations and mental challenges over to fascination, happiness, and sense of achievement and enjoyment of braking new barriers. In many cases we can see the same as in Jo Simpson's memories. Pomfret (2006) says “it is suggested that mountaineer adventure tourists potentially enjoy peak experience during mountaineering involvement” (p. 121). Previous research has been focusing mainly on hard mountaineers. On these two trips we are on a level of soft mountaineering with participants lacking advanced skills. But it is obvious that these participants feel a form of flow or peak experience anyway. It is possible because the adventure company

facilitate for a low real risk experience that still provide an intense emotional component. The mountaineer adventure tourist can therefore have a positive experience although they undergo a variety of emotions (Pomfret 2006, p. 122). In the context of my thesis it seems clear that participants have reached a level of flow or peak experience through this organized mountain adventure holiday, despite Beedie & Hudson's (2003) question if it can be counted as an adventure when it reach a high level of detailed, planned and smooth itineraries (p. 627).

Pomfret (2006) encouraged future research to focus on mountaineers in an adventure tourism context to extend understanding of mountaineers from recreation to tourism contexts. She also asks whether there exist fundamental differences between mountaineer adventure tourists and recreationists (p. 122). My data shows that on several points there is no difference between them. My participants seem to experience the same feelings as we normally associate with hard mountaineer participants. They also seem to have some of the same motives for doing this activity. It's definitely voluntarily for all participants, just as with hard mountaineers. Of course there will still be a great difference when it comes to the level of difficulty, but it seems like the differences between hard and soft mountaineers, recreationalists and tourists are getting more and more diffuse and unclear on many points.

5.2.1 "If I had more time I would like to experience more of the local culture"

Time is an ever-lasting issue for western people. This seems to influence holidays too. People wants to do and experience as much as possible in a limited period of time. "You arrive in a country, go to the mountains, and end up in a safari lodge enjoying cocktails. It's limited what knowledge you actually get about the country. But it's like... you have limited vacation when you work," is Christina's explanatory sentence about the topic. I affected the topic about local culture and people earlier, but let's now have a deeper dive into it. There were a few comments on it when people reflected around their experiences, and I will try to shed light on it using Robinson's conflict model (Cited in: Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 165). In their description Hvitserk (2013) says that their trip to Kilimanjaro is their "...most complete experience. It has culture, it has nature, it has warm and cold weather, and it has a summit you can be proud of afterwards." But how do the participants feel that this was integrated in their trip?

If we go back to Robinson's conflict model we can see that there are several areas open to conflict situations in a tourism setting. Not all of them are related to my data and therefore not going to be discussed here. All participants had some comments, either around conflicts, situations or the lack of meeting with local culture. The relation between host population and tourists are normally added positive values and can increase cultural understanding both ways, but the relations are temporary and affected by limited time at the location or in the country (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 177-181).

Did this limited time lead to deeper understanding of the local culture? "We didn't really got insight of neither society or culture... we were separated from that... all the way," said Helen when I asked if they managed to dig into the local culture. Mike and Elisabeth supports this view and said; "No, we didn't really do that. Since this wasn't a trip on our own... we had a program. The information we got was mainly through our local crew."

Here we can see a common problem, namely expectations between tourists and the adventure companies. People may think that they will learn a lot about the culture, and Hvitserk are also using culture in their description of the trip, but if you read the day-to-day program you will see that there is not much room for getting to know the local culture very well, except for the interaction with our local crew. The way I interpret Mike and Elisabeth's (who had varied travel background before this trip) comment above is that they actually put cultural experiences and organized trips as two separated things that cannot be united. Of course this doesn't necessarily have to be true in all occasions, but from my own experience too, I find it hard to include any serious understanding and meeting with local cultures in such a strict program that these trips normally have. It doesn't mean that adventure companies are lying either, but it's the expectations and interpretations of their programs that can lead to misunderstanding, disappointment or, in worst case, conflicts.

When Mike and Elisabeth went to Zanzibar after the organised part was over, they got more insight in how it really was in the country. They experienced a different part of life in the country, a part they didn't see in the same way while travelling with the group. Earlier we could see that Beedie & Hudson (2003) asked to which extent one

really took part in an adventure. Maybe we can take this question into this topic too, and ask to which extent tourists really get to know the local culture when they climb Kilimanjaro or Mt. Margherita through organized treks? Christina may have a good point:

“If I had some more time in Uganda I would have liked to visit some projects, a school or something, to get a better insight of what kind of life they live. On the trip like ours you are inside a tourist bubble all the time. You don’t get to see the authentic life. When you do the trekking you get to know our guides and learn from them, but you are still far from the society.”

Authenticity is a keyword in this setting. The participants are happy with the local crew and used them as a source of knowledge, but can this crew show tourists the authentic life in Tanzania or Uganda? It’s going to be tricky in many ways. They are educated to work with tourists and do have a great knowledge about their own countries and cultures. This first hand conversations between tourists and the crew are valuable in gaining more knowledge, but to gain an understanding is difficult in such a limited time as Steen Jacobsen & Eide (2002, p. 177-181) are discussing. The tourists are in a bubble, as Christina says above, and in many occasions far from the real society in these countries. The question is also whether these people are trained to give the “right impression” to the tourists.

The problems concerning “staged authenticity” are discussed by Steen Jacobsen & Eide (2002), who says that in some cases the local people are told to adjust the “reality” to fit tourists expectations (171-176). On Kilimanjaro and in Rwenzori this doesn’t have to be the case. Personally I feel that it has some relevance in Masai Mara, on the Safari after Kilimanjaro. When I led a group there last summer, I joined a visit to a nearby “village” to see how the Masai people were living. This experience gave me only one feeling; That this “village” was constructed only to satisfy tourists expectations about how they traditionally were living, and that this was an opportunity for them to sell us more souvenirs and make some extra profit. Tourists can be exploited economically, and Steen Jacobsen & Eide (2002) points at the fact that most of the interactions between tourists and locals are done through economical transactions (p. 180). A classic picture is a Masai dressed in his traditional clothing, walking around talking in a mobile phone. The development is taking part also here, and tourists can’t expect to see a totally authentic, traditional life.

“It’s a difficult part of the trip, that we are just flying down there, enjoying our lives and get everything served, and then you see how they are struggling with their existence.” Alice is reflecting around the tourist – local relation. “In another way we create business for them. In that way its good that we are travelling, and its better to do it like we do, than like backpackers trying to get everything as cheap as possible.” Alice brings up another topic that several participants are mentioning, that it’s positive with tourism in the way that it brings money into the societies. That was also one of Christina’s motives for travelling as we could see in chapter 5.1.3. One part of Alice’s reflection that is interesting is when she put her group and way of travelling in opposition to backpackers. Cooley (Cited in: Beedie & Hudson 2003, p. 636) found that backpackers had similarities to mountaineers who reject to pay for a guide and rely upon their own skill and experience to explore mountains. Backpackers have a rebellion against commodification of tourism and construct their travel lives in opposition to commodification. I personally recognise this feeling from when I have been backpacking myself. I tried to use my money wisely and as much as possible not “waste” them on guides or organized trips. But, as Alice is saying, this way of travelling doesn’t really contribute to the local society. Is organized tourism always better in this case?

Mike and Elisabeth chose to visit Zanzibar after Kilimanjaro and Masai Mara. Here they got a little more insight in the local society than on the organised part of their holiday. What Mike sensed was that it seemed to be a lot of corruption around, and that “...it also seems like nothing is reaching the people outside the gates around the hotel.” This problem is not discussed directly by Steen Jacobsen & Eide (2002), but it can fit into the Tourism Industry – Local Society, or the Local Society – Local Society conflict dimension of Robinson’s model. Many places the tourism industry, as Mike observed, seems to take the big part of the income from tourism. And many places the tourism industry is not even run by the local people. A research done in Kenya showed that only 10 % of the total income from tourists benefited Kenya (Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002, p. 176). My data doesn’t show signs of economical benefits, or conflicts in the local society on these to specific trips, but it’s definitely a topic that can create conflict in a tourism context, and therefore worth mentioning.

One conflict that did find place on the trip to Rwenzori was the one that appeared on the hostel we used right before and after the trekking. Christina had this description of the Austrian people who run the hostel:

“They were not treating the employees very well, and they had racist attitude. I felt uncomfortable living there. I normally try to not think like that, because you should be able to travel to Uganda and not feel ashamed. But when you are in a situation like that you don’t feel very well. It was a bad feeling. That experience was my worst on the trip.”

Alice felt the same and assumed that the couple had been learning to treat people “like slaves” during their 12 years in South Africa. This hostel was actually run by a local living in Kampala the couple told me, but they were hired to run the place. In this case I’m not exactly sure where to put this “conflict” in Robinson’s model, but it’s not really important. The important thing here is that you have a relation between people working for the tourists that are not good at all, and it show the attitude that may appear when people from outside are owning or running a local place. The main concern for the Chinese owners, in Eide’s study (Cited in: Steen Jacobsen & Eide 2002), was that the locals not longer acted as primitive as they should in a tourist setting (p. 182). In this case it seemed more like the Austrian couple found the locals as primitive they needed to be supervised and bossed around continuously to do a proper job. It may create conflicts at work or in the local society, but this was not possible for the group to see directly. It certainly did create a bad feeling for the participants on the trip, and ruined some of their experience. This can lead to a bad reputation or publicity for the local industry, which in worst case can lead to lost income for the locals. Again, this is another example of the complexity of tourism.

5.3 “It’s nice to travel a bit now and then. I think it’s good for you.”

Can experiences from these mountaineering adventure trips contribute to formation of self? Gurholt (2006) has been looking at the adventure metaphor and how this can relate to outdoor activities and formation. Her article is in a context of pedagogical situations, but it may be interesting to analyse my data in a context of self-formation. Can these adventure holidays be educational journeys?

Gurholt's (2006) interpretation of formation has its background from phenomenology, pragmatism, experience-based hermeneutics, and recent cultural studies (p. 184). The theories have in common that human development happens in interaction with other people, and with things that are different or alien to people. Formation is to brake up from established habits and going through transformational processes where experiences have a central place. As mentioned earlier can this be shown through travels and arrivals, or as in this case, adventure holidays. The arrival includes an understanding and interpretation of the experiences from the journey, put in a context of previous knowledge. In this way people can use the experiences to develop new, personal knowledge. Experiences is always integrated and interpreted with previous experiences and knowledge, and when we are going through this transformation we will see what we left in a different view.

The experience here represents how people are formed, developed and changed in an interactive relation to the world around. It also represents knowledge, wisdom and skills that are only achievable through living the life. You actively have to go out and search for new knowledge and wisdom. Through bodily action and participation in different situations we will *be experienced*. This is etymological connected to be, or to being versed in the world (Gurholt 2006, p. 184).

Hohr (2009) interpret Dewey's theory on aesthetic experience and recognition on that the origin of experiences is outside our oral language and inside the organism's interaction with the world (In: Gurholt 2006, p. 185). With this interpretation we can say that experiences presupposes some kind of silent bodily perception and incorporation of nature and culture as an inseparable whole. Nature, culture and society are engraved in your body (Gurholt 2006, p. 185). A normal quote that can explain it is: *When you've first learned how to ride a bike, you never forget it!* After you have forgot what you learned in school it's one thing left: The formation of self, all the experiences and knowledge that has been embodied.

My participant's have definitely had some, according to themselves, great experiences. But, are any of these experiences related to formation of self in any way? Many of my participants are experienced hikers and outdoor enthusiasts, and all have some kind of relation to nature and outdoor activities. Is it possible for them to add new experiences

on a trip like this to their previous experiences, and gain new perspectives that will be embodied? I interviewed my participants a few months after they came home from Tanzania or Uganda. When I asked them about their experiences from the trip, most of the answers were about experiences as episodes, or happenings. No one is really mentioning that they have gone through a formation. They actually say that this trip didn't changed their way of travelling, or their life. But some, for example Alice, has got some new impressions: "Its good to have been there because I have a totally different impression of the country now. It looked extremely fertile and beautiful as a country, and it looks like people is ok." Her experiences and observations are something she felt on her body, nothing she just saw in the news, or read about in the newspaper. In that way it's a good chance that her experiences from the trip will "stay in her body" and not be forgotten. It's not sure that it's a natural part of her yet, but it's definitely experiences that have been added to her previous knowledge, and it may contribute in a further formation of her as a person.

Although people don't seem to have gone through any big transformations, they may all have gone through a process of change. Since people normally have the experience of moving in terrain, get dressed for the environment and camp outdoors, this wasn't added experiences on a trip like this. What was added for almost everyone was the feeling of moving in altitude. This is something that they really felt on their bodies, and something almost everyone has commented on in some way. As mentioned earlier people were exhausted, maybe as they never been before, but in the same way they describe the feeling of reaching the summit as great. It seems to be easier to explain their experiences in an oral way, through actual, "real" experiences than embodied experiences. It may be hard to explain, but it may also have not been part of their body yet. Maybe they haven't got into any situation were they think: "this is exactly how I experienced it on Kilimanjaro! Or, I recognize this experience, from the trip to Uganda." When it comes to physical experiences I'm sure these will be embodied in some kind of way. It was totally different from what they had experienced earlier, except for Christina that had been to a high altitude mountain the year before.

A few questions are hitting me when it comes to formation of self: Did people actually change? Did they actually learn anything about the local people and culture that they can use in a sensible way? Did they get more interested in following these countries

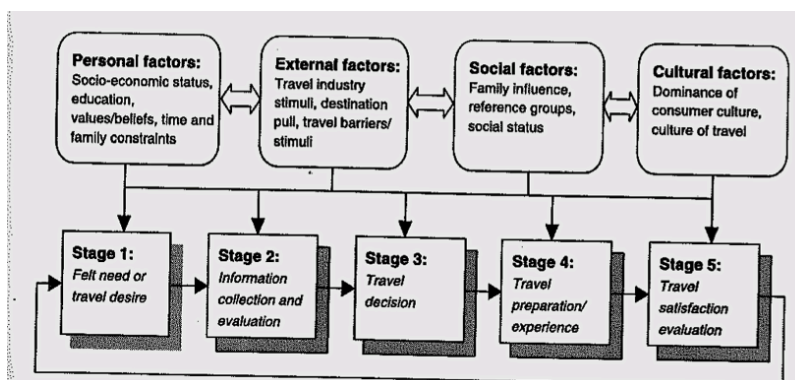
after the trip? Or, are all superficial reflections and what they learned was that they have now achieved something that others haven't. Something they can put on a CV, or mention in social settings... When I did my first "big adventure", the travel to South-America for 8 months, I didn't have any travelling experience except for family holidays and organized school trips. My knowledge about the countries, people, politics and culture was on a limited level. I had in mind what I learned in school, but that's basic compared to what's real life is about. In many ways that trip was my "grand tour", my first educational journey. Upon arrival back home I had so many new experiences that it was hard to explain. Many experiences had already become embodied, but many was interpreted, shaped, reinterpreted and taken into my "hard drive for long term storage. I started on the International Development Studies and could connect much of the studies to my practice from the travel. Before the trip, I wasn't really engaged in what happened in South-America, now, 5 years later I follow politics, history, stories and people every week, sometimes every day.

A few participants had similar experiences from this trip, of course in a smaller scale. Mike and Elisabeth have gone through many travels and experiences. They seem to travel for the interest in other people and culture, and trek for the love of nature. "Santiago de Compostella for example, that's initially a religious route but we did it to see the culture around the trail, and meet the people," said Mike. He could also travel to India, Nepal or Tibet in the future, to see how people lives combined with the massive mountain formations around. But Alexander didn't really got inspiration to follow news or history from Tanzania the next years. Of course he probably will stop easier and have a look at the stories in the news now, but he has not actively searched for more information about Tanzania or the local people and culture.

My research data doesn't clarify if these travels do lead to a formation of self among the participants. My interpretations indicate that some of their experiences can lead to a formation. They definitely have had experiences that can be interpreted in this way; the question is if they have earlier experiences to build upon when they do their future reflections, and if these experiences together can lead to a formation of self. My suggestion is that an adventure like the one they have been participating on, can lead to formation of self, if the participants play an active role in it. A few weeks organized trekking in another country doesn't necessarily lead to formation of self if the

participant passively goes through the trip, focus on the summit, and travel home with a new trophy on their list. The summit will be so much in focus that there is not room for experiences that can lead to formation of self. Even though some participants have the adventure feeling and dimension in bottom; the tight schedule of an organized trip can put these feelings in the shade. Mark and Elisabeth who normally like to dig into the local culture and get to know the local people said that they didn't really get to do that on this trip, and explain it with the reason of being an organized one. In the introduction chapter I presented Jack Kerouac who spent 63 days as a ranger in the Cascades, on the summit of Desolation Peak. After this experience, he wrote the book *"The Dharma Bums"*, where he was telling about his search for meaning and truth in life. His life on the mountain really did something with him and his life (Svensen 2011, p. 36-39). This may be an extreme version on the opposite side of organized two weeks adventures, but he definitely had time to reflect upon his experiences, and as he says; it really did something with him.

When people reached their goal, to get to the summit, they had mixed feelings, but it was also like: "Damn, no it's over, what's next?" These were Elisabeth and Mike's words on finishing the challenge. As they say, it's over for this time, but there will be another travel. Tourism is not a one-time experience, and most of my participants will probably go travelling again. They have done an evaluation of this trip, their experiences and satisfaction, and maybe some negative sides. These experiences, along with the other factors in the tourism demand model, will influence their decision process in front of their next journeys, and if this is going to be an adventurous one.



The tourism demand process (Telfer & Sharpley 2008, p. 149).

My participants have gone through the five stages, from first thinking about this trip, to now be evaluating it, and for someone already started to plan new adventures and a new round in the circle. Stage one started for someone over ten years ago, while it started just a few months before for others. Personal factors will decide whether they start planning a new trip. Maybe they will see advertisements that kick-start a travel to a new destination. Maybe they will go with Hvitserk again, or do an independent explore this time. Social factors and economy will play a part in the planning. Some people may never go on a trip like this again, while others plan for even bigger adventures. Christina mentioned that travelling have “almost a self-reinforcing effect” on her. The more she travel, the more she want to see, or the more she understand that she haven’t seen yet. Alexander think it would be good fun to reach above 6000 meter, and admit that if he reach that, he may put up a new limit for himself. “That’s how humans are,” he says. My participants seem to be on an endless road, going round after round through the tourism demand process, climbing the travel career ladder, or stay comfortably on a certain level. They may take new experiences into account and get even more versed in the world, or just travel to “tick” another summit.

6. Final reflections and further studies

All of my participants live in, or in proximity of Oslo. They have good jobs and older-to grown up kids, if they have any. The age is spread from 31 to 63 years old, and there are four women and three men in the group. People have jobs and education in different categories, which means that my participants don't represent one class or group in the society. They all have a special interest for the outdoors and nature. Some people have more experience from trekking in the Norwegian nature, while others have plenty of travel experience. Some of the informants have a focus on mountains while others are interested in flora and fauna. Five of the participants joined the trip to Kilimanjaro and two to Rwenzori. One of the two to Rwenzori had been to Kilimanjaro earlier. My data cannot be used to generalize participation in mountaineering adventure tourism when it comes to, gender, age, or social class.

Previous studies have tried to typology tourists, but the commercialization of tourism has reached new levels, and earlier attempts may not be relevant in today's contemporary tourism. My data supports this assumption. My participants show some common motives for participation on this trip, but they have a variety of backgrounds and travel experiences that don't necessarily put them into the same "box" when it comes to tourist typologies.

In a mountaineering context there are several motives for participation. Borders between recreation and tourism seems to slowly fade away. Traditional mountaineering has become more fragmented, and is now fusing with tourism. There are different ways of interpreting the adventure term, and there has been questioned whether commercialized and planned activities can be an adventure. Specifically why my participants wanted to join these trips do have motives that we can recognise in the theoretical approaches. They wanted a challenge, an exotic experience, a new adventure, and climb a summit, all within a safe setting. The participant's reflections indicate that they are taking part of and adventure. In this context they are part of mountaineering adventure tourism. Escapism, one of the most cited motives for tourist participation, is not a valid push factor among my participants. They have more in common with traditional mountaineering recreation at some points. I have suggested that they have a fundamental adventure feeling in bottom as a driving force to go trekking. Along with

motives that match existing literature in a tourist and recreation context, my research confirms that the borders are becoming blurred between tourism and recreation.

One more factor is contributing to blur the borders between mountaineering recreation and tourism. My participant's had the opportunity to bypass the once normal way to reach a summit, through today's accepted methods of booking the adventure, and let a guide lead them to the top. This also opens up for emotional feelings that normally are connected to "hard", or "real" mountaineers. These emotions are associated with flow, and are a state where people are really involved in the activity, and the experience itself is so enjoyable that nothing else seems to matter. My participant's reflections correspond with many of the characteristics, and it's obvious that they feel a form of flow, or peak experience. This is possible because the adventure company facilitates for a low, real risk experience, but it still provides an intense emotional component.

Another motive for travelling to Tanzania and Uganda among my participant's is the interest for people and culture, and a contribution to social equalization. It's a big business around tourism, but it doesn't necessarily contribute to intercultural knowledge, or social equalization. My data confirm this. Reflections around this topic reveal that they didn't manage to dig into the local culture. Limited time is an excuse, but some participant's even put organized trips and cultural experiences as two separated things that cannot be united. One of them is using the word "tourist bubble", where the contact is mainly through our local crew. The problem can be seen as "staged authenticity", where reality is adjusted to fit tourists expectations. My data doesn't show signs of economical benefits on these trips. Literature indicates that tourism contributes with income, but not all of it necessarily benefits the local society. My participant's motives do not, in this case, seem to match with the reality on the trip.

People's perception of a trip is different, based on mountaineering push and pull factors, lifestyle, and personality characteristics. Reflections around the trip confirm that some people's expectations are not even possible to meet, maybe because they have not understood what they have actually signed up for. They perceive the adventure differently, and their background may not have "prepared" them for the unexpected situations that can occur on adventures. Personality and habitus is keywords, but I cannot use my data to confirm how these factors affect my participant.

My participant's had some, according to themselves, great experiences. Can any of these experiences contribute to formation of self? Experiences can be interpreted with previous experiences and knowledge in mind. The experience here represents how people are formed, developed and changed, in an interactive relation to the world around. Most of my participant's talked about experiences as episodes or happenings, and said that this trip didn't really change their way of travelling, or their life. They did not mention any formation either, but some people have definitely got some new impression. Some experiences are felt on the body, for example the physical challenge of reaching the summit. This was a new experience to 6 of 7 participants. Many of their experiences can contribute to formation of self, but they may not have been embodied yet. The physical experience is so different from previous experience that I'm sure this will be embodied in some way. How, and if the experiences contribute to formation of self depends on their previous background, how they will interpret their experiences, and how these can be developed in the future. A few participants have extensive travel backgrounds and can definitely use experiences from this trip to build upon their previous experiences.

Research data doesn't clarify if these travels do lead to a formation of self, but my interpretations indicate that some of their experiences can lead to a formation. My suggestion is that an adventure like the one they have been participating on, can lead to formation of self, if the participants play an active role in it. A few weeks organized trekking in another country doesn't necessarily lead to formation of self if the participant passively goes through the trip, focus on the summit, and travel home with a new trophy on their list.

My participants have gone through a tourism demand process. Personal factors will decide whether they start planning a new trip. Social factors and economy will play a part in the planning. Some people may never go on a trip like this again, while others plan for even bigger adventures. For some, travelling has an "almost a self-reinforcing effect", while others wants to reach even higher: "That's how humans are", one participant says. My participants seem to be on an endless road, going round after round through the tourism demand process, climbing the travel career ladder, or stay comfortably on a certain level. They may take new experiences into account and get even more versed in the world, or just travel to "tick" another summit.

My project investigates several areas it would be interesting to explore further. It can be meaningful to redefine the tourist typologies, to fit today's contemporary tourism. Are the tourists dreaming about reaching the same heights as "hard" mountaineers, only without the factor of risking their own life? It would be interesting to investigate this question further, to strengthen the theories that tourism and recreation is melting together. It would definitely be interesting to go deeper into people's perceptions based on their personalities and travel background. As Weber (Cited in: Pomfret 2006) says: "It has not yet entered the discussion on adventure tourism" (p. 119). When studying people's perceptions of experiences, it could also be interesting to investigate any possible differences between genders.

Another possible interpretation is self-realization. The Norwegian playwright, theatre director and poet Henrik Ibsen writes to another Norwegian writer and nobel prize winner in literature, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, in a letter 4th of august 1882⁶ "Det, i sin livsførelse at realisere sig selv, mener jeg, er det højeste et menneske kan naa til" (That, in its way of life to realize himself, is the highest a person can reach). Self-realization is not a new thing that has arrived in our modern society, although it's quite popular nowadays to talk about realizing ourselves. Maybe these mountaineering adventure trips are part of a self-realization process to a smaller or bigger extent? That question could also be interesting to research in future studies.

⁶ The letter can be retrieved here: http://ibsen.uio.no/BREV_B1880-1889ht%7CB18820804BB.pdf

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Information to the informants

Appendix 2: Declaration of Agreement

Appendix 3: Interview guide

Appendix 4: Letter from Norwegian Social Science Data Services

Appendix 1: Information to the informants

I would like to invite you to take part in my Master Degree project about the mountain tourists that are going to Rwenzori National Park, Uganda and Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania.

What is the project about?

My project is about Norwegian tourists and their experiences around a trip to Kilimanjaro or Rwenzori.

Information about the interviews and observation:

- The interviews will take part between you and me. I will ask you questions about the topic I am studying. The interviews will be recorded and later on transcribed.
- All the data and sound recordings will be stored confidentially, and no one will be able to recognise persons in the material that will be published.
- The place and time for an interview will be decided after what wishes you have.
- All the data will be stored safely and following Norwegian standards for security of personal information.
- You are free to leave the project whenever you would like, and without any special reason.
- I will use this trip to do observations as a background for my further research
- The project will be finished in June 2013, and all data material with personal information will be deleted. All recording of interviews will also be deleted at this time.

You can write me on magnus_hendis@hotmail.com or call +47 99 73 41 41.

The project is supervised by:

Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt, Professor
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Regards,
Magnus Hendis
Master Degree Student
The Norwegian School of Sport Science
Department of Physical Education, Outdoors Studies

Appendix 2: Declaration of agreement on collection and use of data for research purpose

Master degree project, at the Norwegian School of Sport Science, on the topic
“Mountain Tourists in developing countries”.

Project name: “Spellbound by Mountains? African mountains in a Norwegian perspective. A study of the Norwegian Mountain Tourists that travel to Rwenzori National Park, Uganda and Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania – Their experiences from the travel to one of these locations.”

Project leader: Magnus Hendis

Project supervisor:

Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt, Professor
The Norwegian School of Sport Science
Department of Physical Education, Outdoors Studies
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I confirm that I have read and understand the information in the letter “Information to the informants”

I do know that participation in the study is voluntarily, and that I at any time can request to get the information about myself deleted.

All the data collected will be stored confidentially, and all publications will be kept anonym.

.....
Place	Date	Participant

Appendix 3: Interview guide

Introduction:

- Information about the project and the topic.
- You don't have to answer the questions if you prefer not to do so.
- The interview will be in an informal and semi-structured way, and we can pick up loose ends from earlier questions and reflections.
- All the information will be handled confidentially, and in presentations personal information will be anonymous so that this interview not can be traced back to you.
- You can tell whatever you want about Hvitserk, and about me as a tour leader!
- You are free to leave the interview at any time without giving any further information.
- I will take notes and record this interview. Later on the interview will be transcribed.

Notes:

- Start with some talk about the trip we did to loosen up a bit.
- Don't ask questions that are not relevant for my master thesis! It will save me for extra work...!
- I can take in topics from earlier interviews (contrasting).
- Make people tell you the whole answer, even if I already know it, to elaborate their views.
- Go deeper into conflicts, if there are any...

1. Why Africa – Dreams and preparations?

- How did you start dreaming/thinking about going?
 - Why Africa?
 - What made you start thinking about it?
 - Inspirations (People, tv, magazines)?
 - Literature?
 - Conversations with friends?
 - Have you been on similar trips earlier?
 - Where and when?
 - With who, and/or which company?
 - Any experiences you would like to highlight from this/these trips?
 - What did you know about Tanzania/Uganda before the trip?
- What made you take the final decision and book a trip like this?
 - Claiming the summit? Going to a new and “exotic” destination? Learning about a new country and culture? Or other reasons...?
 - What kind of “dreams” did you have about the trip in advance?
 - What did you want to experience with this trip
- How did you do your research around companies that arranged these trips, and how did you end up with the one you chose?

- What did you know about Hvitserk before you booked?
- Why did you booked your trip through Hvitserk?
 - Paying for a good experience?
 - Reputation?
 - References like friends or other?
- How did you prepare yourself for the trip?
- What kind of expectations about the trip did you have before you went?

2. Reflections around the trip:

- How would you describe your overall experience from the trip?
 - Make the person talk about the trip, and how he/she experienced it!
- How is your main experience from your trip?
 - What do you tell your friends about from the trip?
- What is your worst experience from the trip, and why?
 - Would you do the same trip again?
- What kind of reflections do you do about the country you visited?
 - What kind of experiences did you have in meeting with the local people and culture?
 - Have your knowledge, attitude and interest for Tanzania/Uganda changed after the trip?

3. Future dreams/travels

- How do you see your role as a tourist in future trips?
- Did this trip inspire you to travel more (to similar locations)?
- Do you have any other destinations you are fascinated by and want to visit?
 - Which destinations and why?
- Why didn't this trip inspire you to go on similar trips?

4. Background questions:

- Name & Age:
- Gender:
- Civil status:
- Kids:
- Home:
- Education:
- Work & Income:
- Other relevant information:

5. Ending the interview

- Is there anything you think I should have been asking you about, anything you would like to say?
- Repeat the information about the process
- Whistle-blower
- Ask if it is ok that I get in touch later if there are anything I am wondering about
- Thanks for the patience and willingness to be interviewed

Appendix 4: Letter from Norwegian Social Science Data Services

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagres gate 29
N-5007 Bergen
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Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
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Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt
Seksjon for kroppsoving og pedagogikk
Norges idrettshøgskole
Postboks 4042, Ullevål stadion
0806 OSLO

Vår dato: 08.09.2011

Vår ref: 27558 / 3 / AH

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

KVITTERING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 04.07.2011. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 07.09.2011. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

27558

Mountain Tourists in developing countries - A study of the Mountain Tourists that travel to Rwenzori National Park, Uganda and Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania - Their motivations for visiting a national park in an developing country"

Behandlingsansvarlig
Daglig ansvarlig
Student

Norges idrettshøgskole, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt
Magnus Hendis

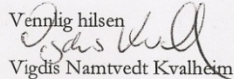
Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

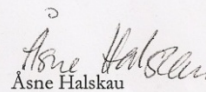
Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/-helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.06.2012, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim


Åsne Halskau

Kontaktperson: Åsne Halskau tlf: 55 58 89 26
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Magnus Hendis, Deichmansgate 27 B, 0178 OSLO

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uia.no

TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no

TROMSØ: NSD, HSL, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. martin-arne.andersen@uit.no



Prosjektets formål er å se på hvorfor nordmenn drar på tur til Killimanjaro og Rwenzori. Hvem drar på slike turer og hvordan opplever de det? Det vil gjennomføres personlige intervju samt observasjon. Førstegangskontakt opprettes av studenten, eventuelt via studentens nettverk.

Gjennom de personlige intervjuene vil det samles inn opplysninger om informantens relasjon til natur og friluftsliv, samt turisme og lokal kultur. Det vil samles inn direkte og indirekte personidentifiserende data. Navn, og de andre direkte personidentifiserende variablene vil oppbevares separat fra resten av datamaterialet i form av en koblingsnøkkel. Det vil gjøres lydopptak. Data og lydopptak lagres på privat PC. Ombudet legger til grunn at bruk av privat PC er i tråd med Norges idrettshøgskole sine rutiner for datasikkerhet.

Student opplyser at observasjon kun skal fokusere på generelle holdninger og gi ideer til spørsmål og temaer som kan være sentrale i oppgaven. Ombudet forstår det derfor slik at observasjon skal gjennomføres anonymt. Dvs. at det ikke skal registreres opplysninger om enkeltpersoner gjennom observasjonen.

Det gis informasjon skriftlig og muntlig, og det innhentes skriftlig samtykke. Ombudet har mottatt oppdatert informasjons- og samtykkesskriv 22.08.2011 og finner dem tilfredstillende. Personvernombudet finner at behandlingen kan hjemles i personopplysningsloven § 8 (samtykke).

Prosjektslutt er angitt til 30.06.2012, jf. informasjonsskriv. Senest ved prosjektslutt må selve datamaterialet slettes eller anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer for det første at lydfilen og navnelisten (koblingsnøkkelen) slettes. For det andre at det skriftlige materialet anonymiseres ved at eventuelle indirekte identifiserbare opplysninger som framgår av intervjuutskriftene og observasjonsnotater, slettes eller omskrives på en slik måte at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes.