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Burrai, E and Buda, D-M and Stevenson, E (2022) Tourism and refugee-crisis intersections: co-creating tour guide experiences in Leeds, England. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. pp. 1-18. ISSN 0966-9582 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2022.2072851>

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To cite this article: Elisa Burrai, Dorina-Maria Buda & Emily Stevenson (2022): Tourism and refugee-crisis intersections: co-creating tour guide experiences in Leeds, England, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, DOI: [10.1080/09669582.2022.2072851](https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2022.2072851)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2022.2072851>



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Published online: 05 May 2022.



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Tourism and refugee-crisis intersections: co-creating tour guide experiences in Leeds, England

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ABSTRACT

Forcibly displaced people like refugees and asylum-seekers can be socio-culturally integrated in receiving societies through tourism. Our poststructuralist approach to ethics explains this potential as we combine three concepts: Zygmunt Bauman's "strangerhood", Emmanuel Levinas' "ethical responsibility", and Jacques Derrida's "hospitality". We draw on the initiative of a social enterprise in the English city of Leeds which encourages displaced people to contribute as tour-guides. During 2017 and 2019 we conducted in-depth individual and focus-group interviews with refugees, asylum-seekers, and public sector stakeholders to examine integration of displaced people via tourism. Findings highlight that contributing to the tourism sector, individual refugees and asylum-seekers are provided with a meaningful platform for self-representation moving beyond tokenistic notions of participation, and become co-creators of diverse and inclusive societies.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 20 September 2021
Accepted 7 April 2022

KEYWORDS

Asylum-seekers; hospitality; ethical responsibility; refugees; strangerhood; tour guide

1. Introduction

There were 82.4 million forcibly displaced people worldwide in 2021 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, and human rights violations. In 2019 there were 79.5 million forcibly displaced people around the world, an increase of 8.7 million people from 2018; this includes 26.0 million refugees, 45.7 million internally displaced people, and 4.2 million asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2020). Worldwide, one person becomes displaced every three seconds. The Institute for Economics and Peace (2020) estimates that climate change crisis will displace 1.2 billion people by 2050. Additionally, major geopolitical changes across the globe, such as the Syrian war, or the more recent Ukrainian crisis, lead to an exponential increase in forcibly displaced people migrating to Europe. In their vulnerable situation, forcibly displaced people are most at risk during times of political, environmental and health crises (Darling, 2017). Since 2015, images and narratives about distressed refugees, especially those fleeing the Syrian civil war continue to make headline news in what is considered to be "the worst humanitarian crisis in Europe since 1945" (Karakoulaki et al., 2018, p. iv). Similar images reoccurred in February 2022 when Russia invaded Ukraine. Since then, more than 2 million refugees fled Ukraine with an expectation that there will be more than 4 million displaced Ukrainians by July 2022 (UNHCR, 2022). Thus, in this paper we examine the intersection between this major challenge, the so-called "refugee-crisis" with the tourism phenomenon, and offer insights about meaningful integration of refugees in receiving countries.

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Refugee status is defined by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees as a person who flees their country “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” [Chapter 1, Article 1, A (2)]. During the refugee status determination which includes registration, and admissibility processes, as well as *prima facie* and group determination, the intermediary step of asylum-seeking is given until the refugee claim is decided by the receiving country. Thus, not all asylum-seekers will eventually be recognised as refugees, but every refugee was initially an asylum-seeker (UNHCR, 2019, p. 64). For the UNHCR, these two categories of forcibly displaced people are different to “migrants”, who move from their native country to another, unrelated to the refugee definition (UNHCR, 2019, p. 64). It should be noted that there is not universally or legally accepted definition of the migrant. The International Organisation for Migration (para. 1) defines migrants as persons “who move away from their place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons”. The UNHCR regard international migrants as those crossing borders to improve their life via work or study, or family reunification, or other such reasons. There are, however, some recent debates in refugee and migration studies that “refugees are migrants” (Refmig.org, para. 1; Costello et al., 2020). For clarity and purpose of this study we use the legally accepted UNHCR definitions for refugees and asylum-seekers since the United Kingdom is signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The inextricable connections between tourism and forced migration have been signalled within schools of thought in tourism studies such as the critical turn and new mobilities paradigm (Hannam et al., 2006; McRae, 2003; Russell, 2003; Sheller & Urry, 2006). In a century of “increased movement of people both in tourism and through less attractive social contexts like those involved in the relocation of refugees” (McRae, 2003, p. 243) it is crucial to meaningfully unpack the complex interrelation between “obligatory as well as voluntary forms of travel” (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 10). This also resonates with questions posed by scholars in forced migration studies about the scope of their research field, namely “how (or indeed whether) the contours of this field can be defined in light of the continuum of “forced” to “voluntary” forms of movement, mobility, and immobility” (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014, p. 1). As such there is recent increased academic attention to the link between tourism, refugees, and forced displacement (Alrawadieh et al., 2019; Ormond & Vietti, 2021), with recent research focusing mainly on Greece (Trihas & Tsilimpokos, 2018; Pappas & Papatheodorou, 2017).

To contribute to this body of knowledge on tourism and forced displacement, we analyse intersections between the refugee-crisis and tour-guiding through the involvement of refugees in the tourism sector offering tour-guide experiences. We do so via the lens of poststructuralist ethics which enables us to reflect upon contemporary geopolitical changes, and to deconstruct ethics and responsibility in the hope of opening up possibilities for more support of refugees in the tourism sector. Thus, we propose a novel theoretical approach which combines three concepts – strangerhood (Bauman, 1991), ethical responsibility (Levinas, 1991) and hospitality (Derrida, 2001)¹ – so as to offer a more humanistic approach to the socio-cultural integration and welcome of refugees and asylum-seekers via tourism. We argue that actively involving refugees and asylum-seekers in creating and delivering tourism services such as guiding city-tours can contribute to fostering societal change and acceptance for the *other-than-us*.

Since 2015, about 400+ tours have been conducted by one unique tour-operator in Berlin *Refugee Voices Tours* (2021) which offers walking tours guided by a Syrian refugee, and presents parallels between the history of Berlin and the current situation in Syria. In the Netherlands, *Pocket Stories* invites visitors to engage with this question when touring around the country: “how are you connected to migration and what are your roots?” (Pocket Stories, 2021). At a European level, the European Union co-funds *Migrantour* in 16 European cities from Valencia to Bologna, Paris to Ljubljana, and Lisbon to Cagliari to “offer intercultural urban walks, a form of responsible tourism at kilometre zero, which sees as protagonists fellow citizens also coming

from distant worlds" (Migrantour, 2021, para. 1). The only organisation of this type in England is *Tales of a City Tours* which provides a unique perspective on the city of Leeds through cultural walking tours led by tour guides with a refugee background (Do It Org, 2021, para. 1).

Tales of a City Tours social entrepreneurship is at the centre of our study for which we gathered research material in Leeds between 2017-2019 from 20 individual in-depth interviews and one group interview, with refugees, asylum-seekers, and support workers in the public sector who work with refugees. In 2018 one of the authors founded the *Tales of City Tours* with the aim to involve refugees and asylum-seekers in designing and leading walking-tours around the city centre of Leeds. Refugees and asylum-seekers are first approached by the social entrepreneur to understand whether they are interested in getting involved in guiding city-tours. Those interested meet regularly with the founder to design the walking tours, and to share personal stories related to parts of the city. Financially, the social enterprise had different source of funding. These were European Union training funds which aimed specifically at the development of the business idea to support vulnerable people, a small start-up grant from UnLtd the Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs (a charity in the United Kingdom) that supports social entrepreneurship (UnLtd, 2020), and a levy £10 per person paid by each visitor taking the guided city tours.

By designing and leading their own city-tours of Leeds, refugees have both complete autonomy in designing the tours, as well as the chance to create their own narratives during the tours, based upon their own background, interpretation and personal connection to their receiving city. In such city-tour experiences, the tour-guide with a refugee background facilitates connections between visitors, places and refugees. This allows for a deconstruction of hospitality – hospitality/hostility – attitudes and stereotypes that perceive refugees as “strangers” within our societies (Bauman, 1991; Derrida, 2000). Additionally, this offers further opportunity to redefine and reorient tourism through more just and inclusive ways of designing and experiencing it (Higgins Desbiolles, 2020).

2. Conceptual borromean connections: strangerhood, ethical responsibility, and hospitality in tourism

Borromean connections refer to intersections found in a Borromean Knot whereby three elements are tied together topologically – that is, if one element is removed the other two are left unconnected. The Borromean Knot is not a Venn diagram, even though a representation in plane resembles one, because the three simple closed curves are knotted in three-dimensional space that are topologically linked. Originating in the Italian aristocratic House of Borromeo in the 1300s, the Borromean Knot has been used in sciences from mathematics to Lacanian psychoanalysis, but not in tourism studies.

We use the Borromean Knot image to bring together, explore and expand three philosophical and socio-cultural concepts: Zygmunt Bauman’s notion of “strangerhood”, Emmanuel Levinas’s ideas on “ethical responsibility”, and Jacques Derrida’s theorisations of “hospitality”. In this way we bring a novel lens to analyse tourism in relation to the refugee crisis. These three concepts are held together by the background of forced displacement and tourism, and complement one another as if tied in a Borromean knot (Figure 1). Understanding how strangerhood is framed around strangers as “refugees and chaos”, we identify a need for ethical responsibility towards “the other” which becomes meaningful only if we engage with and dismantle established socio-political structures of unwelcome and hostility in order to recreate more inclusive ones. Interlinking the concepts allows us to understand refugees in relation to travel and tourism. Thus, through the interconnected pattern of the rings, integration and participation in tourism can develop.

Bauman’s Bauman (1991) notion of ‘strangerhood’ offers insights into uncertainty and chaos as part of the social world. Chaos is symbolised by ‘the other’, the stranger who dismantles the

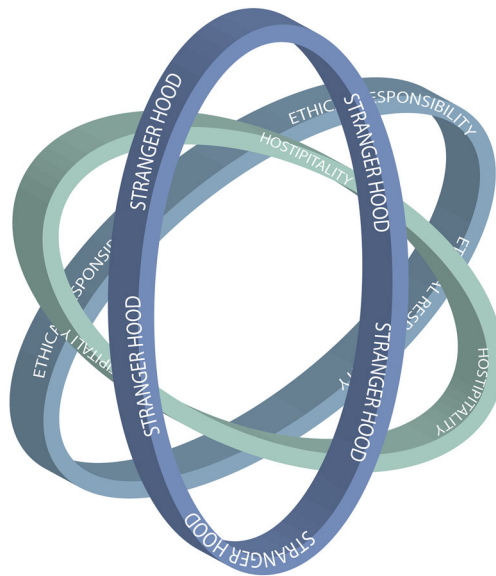


Figure 1. Borromean rings showcasing the three concepts knotted together.

“stable and fixed boundaries modernity has established” (Marotta, 2002, p. 39). Within Bauman’s liquid conceptualisation of modern societies, social relationships and identities are subject to fluidity and changes too. At this point, the explanation of Levinas (1991) on the responsibility towards ‘the other’ assumes its relevance in regard to refugees considered as ‘others’ via their negotiated identities and relationships within the new societies they enter. The stranger becomes an ethical problem because “the stranger is ... someone who refuses to remain confined to the ‘far away’ land or go away from own and hence ... defies the easy expedient of spatial or temporal segregation” (Bauman, 1991, p. 59). Hence, the spatial boundaries which frame the identities of ‘the self’ and ‘the other’ become an ethical problem (Bauman, 1991). In this regard, Levinas understands ‘the self’ in relation to ‘the other’ both as social interaction, and also through a role of responsibility towards ‘the other’. Ethics, therefore, takes shape of the individual responsibility for ‘the other’. This ethical responsibility is unconditional and unbounded from specific political and socio-geographical contexts (Levinas & Kearney, 1986).

Drawing on Levinas’ understanding of ethical responsibility towards “the other – the stranger” we acknowledge the limitations of Levinas’ ethics. Levinas proposes an ethical approach to “the other” confined within the relationship and interaction of two individuals. This fails to acknowledge a broader, communal sense of ethical responsibility mediated by “the political world of the impersonal “third” – the world of government, institutions, tribunals, schools, committees” (Levinas & Kearney, 1986, p. 29). Thus, we interject Derrida’s thinking on hospitality to address an individual’s responsibility towards “the other” within well-defined political boundaries of welcome.

In this context, hospitality refers to “the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility” when they arrive on someone else’s territory (Derrida, 2000, p. 4). In line with a postmodern view of “the other”, Derrida, like Bauman and Levinas, proposes that “the other” “the stranger” “the foreigner” is someone different from “the self” or “the guest”. Thus, our responsibility towards “the other” implies sacrifices towards the “other others”, such as the wider socio-political context in which we operate. Ethical responsibility towards a “collective other” can open up inclusive and more just avenues otherwise suppressed by totalitarian and populist regimes. Via a hospitality-hostility/hostipitality lens we deconstruct the very meaning of hospitality as welcome

to reveal new meanings of justice. Although not in opposition, Derrida adds to Levinas' thinking on ethical responsibility towards "the other", a responsibility that moves away from individual encounters. This is a collective responsibility which works from within established socio-political structures to re-create more inclusive and just ones.

2.1. Strangerhood and tourism

"Strangerhood" highlights the need for an inclusive understanding of "refugee-ness", which relating to tourism has the potential to foster tolerance and openness within increasingly complex and unwelcoming societies. Anchoring these debates in literature on tourism and marginalised communities, it can be highlighted that such groups tend to be "exploited" for their cultural capital, used to promote an area and provide diverse visitor experiences, yet often without them benefitting directly (Mackenzie & Raymond, 2020). Although, tourism has been regarded as the "interpretive vehicle of "othering" par excellence" (Hollinshead, 1998, p. 121; the importance of encouraging migrants and refugees to interpret and utilise their cultural heritage through tourism experiences is emphasised (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Tourism can foster "participatory cultural self-expression" meant to support the inclusion of refugees, by helping to develop mutual understanding between refugees and their receiving society (Ntaltagianni & Dimas, 2016, p. 24). Encounters between different cultures generate hybrid spaces which can become centres of cultural production and "emergent belonging" for marginalised people (Amoamo, 2011, p. 1255).

To harmoniously integrate diverse cultural identities of refugees it is essential we take into account their intangible aspects such as their traditions and cultural heritage which they carry with them from their places of origin (Mackenzie & Raymond, 2020). Engaging in tourism and hospitality sectors, these forcibly displaced migrants can become an integrative part of the receiving societies instead of further suffering from socio-cultural exclusions (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Indeed, it is argued that in order to forge more inclusive and just tourism, migrants and such marginalised groups should be involved in the production and consumption of tourism. Inclusivity entails self-representation, it challenges prevalent power relations, involves a wider range of people in the decision-making process and provides opportunities to include new places on tourism maps (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Inclusivity of those deemed "strangers" means also learning from different cultures and meaningful exchanges between hosts and guests (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Strangerhood in tourism, means addressing inequality; challenging stereotypes or generalised histories and fostering awareness of situation of minorities. Nonetheless, inclusion/exclusion of migrants or "strangers" in tourism occurs differently depending on the scale considered. This means that although at a macro scale (i.e. national level), those with a migrant background are more likely to face exclusion and hostility, at a micro level (i.e. local or regional) inclusive (bottom-up, grassroots) practices are more likely to develop (Darling & Bauder, 2019).

In contemporary western European societies, immigrants are often subject to exclusionary and oppressive practices which dominate public discourses on migration (Darling, 2017). To unpack the challenges for forcibly displaced people, the concept of "strangerhood" proves helpful (Bauman, 1991). We are offered a postmodern explanation on how the political, socio-cultural changes in western European societies have impacted the way that "the stranger comes to symbolise the very ambivalence that modernity's will-to-order is attempting to suppress" (Pietsch & Marotta, 2009, p. 188). The stranger is socially constructed as a permanent other. The stranger cannot ever become an insider in the host country, and they will always be the persons to blame for disrupting the social system of order they enter. It is maintained that the relation between "us and them" is socially constructed underlying a form of collective identity (Bauman, 1991). Identity is as it acquires meaning through its opposition to another. This opposition takes

shape in formation of boundaries where collective identities are bounded in convergent “we-ness” and “they-ness” (Bauman, 1992). This opposition can also be read in terms of *friends – us, the host, and enemies – them, the strangers* (Bauman, 1992; Derrida, 2000).

In acknowledging Bauman’s view on socially constructed identities that are often shaped into collectivities, we contest the idea of a single refugee community. Instead, we recognise that the diverse nature of ethnic minority groups in many tourism destinations creates rich, multifaceted and individualised narratives (Higgins Desbiolles, 2020). We, therefore, acknowledge this variety of subjectivities, rather than assuming the existence of a monolithic collective identity held together by a uniform “refugee-ness”.

Additionally, strangers, within the context of our project, are mainly refugees who escape persecution, war and violence. Tourism literature remains sporadic on the conceptualisation of “strangers” as a socio-culturally distant “Other” as it is the case of refugees. There is, however, acknowledgement of the importance of “the Other” for sustainable planning (Lacey et al., 2012), and to partake in encounters between hosts (others) and guests (strangers) (Aramberri, 2001).

2.2. Ethical responsibility in tourism

Responsibility towards “the other”, according to Levinas, specifically towards refugees, explains “that there is not circumstance under which we could declare that it was not our concern” (Campbell, 1994, p. 462). The ways most western European countries treat refugees show a lack of ethical humanism (Bauman, 2016). Taking this ethical dimension of responsibility into consideration allows us to challenge contemporary discourses on refugees. “The other”, we contend, is the stranger identified by Bauman (1991) who disrupts the harmonious being of western European societies.

In tourism there is recent attention on voluntary and forced mobilities in connection with justice in ways that shared urban spaces of inclusion and justice are being reconsidered to make the transition to more environmentally sustainable and socially just societies (Sheller, 2018). Tourism is characterised by a landscape of uneven (im)mobilities. Privileged mobilities include tourists, expatriates and second homeowners whereas migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers are part of precarious mobilities. Unequal movements are not only the result of global economic disparities, but they are also products of socio-political discourses on inclusion/exclusion through which different types of mobility are legitimised (Bianchi et al., 2020).

Bringing together mobility, ethical responsibility and justice makes poignant the need to “develop a deeper understanding of how uneven mobility relates not only to how we move around cities, but also gendered and racialized colonial histories and neocolonial presents” (Sheller, 2018, p. 18; Tomassini et al., 2021). Thus, tourism literature on justice, fairness and ethics is becoming more prominent in spite of the argument that “theoretical links to justice and ethics have been slow to emerge at the destination level, especially about fairness, equity and justice for disadvantaged local groups, including poor, minority and indigenous populations” (Jamal & Camargo, 2014, p. 11).

Ethics is “the putting into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other (Autrui)” (Levinas, 1991, p. 43). The ethical is the identification of a point of alterity or exteriority, in opposition to the Same. This exterior being is named “face” and it is defined as: “the way in which the other [l’Autre] presents himself (sic), exceeding the idea of the other in me” (Levinas, 1991, p. 50). The face is the condition of possibility for ethics and “the ethical relation is one in which I am related to the face of the Other, where the French word “autrui” refers to the other human being, whom I cannot evade, comprehend, or kill and before whom I am called to justice, to justify myself” (Critchley, 1999, p. 5). In simpler terms, ethics is responsibility towards the other, and this responsibility is pre-ontological and unconditional (Levinas, 1991). Ethics is a requisite for the self to exist. Without recognition of the other person and their ethical

responsibility, there cannot be a self. Hence, “the self cannot be defined without the other and it is in ethical relationship to this other that the self is bestowed” (Goodman, 2012, pp. 16–17).

Responsibility is not impacted by any political, cultural or social factors. It is, instead, natural and independent from our geographical location. As Levinas (1991, p. 96) explains: “the other is not simply close to me in space, or close like a parent, but he [sic] approaches me essentially insofar as I feel myself – insofar as I am – responsible for him [sic]”. Such an approach presents some limitations regarding the lack of acknowledgment of the complex surrounding of social interactions. Indeed, Levinas (1991) interprets ethics as responsibility for “the other” without problematising the role of justice and the State. The ethical relationship between two subjects is defined as “the political world of the impersonal “third” – the world of government, institutions, tribunals, schools, committees” (Levinas & Kearney, 1986, p. 29). Responsibility for the other is, also, part of “a deconstructionist politics that would open us to the other’s appeal” (Popke, 2003, p. 308). Such a view complements Levinas’ thinking adding scrutiny of the role and the importance of “the impersonal third”. The acceptance and involvement of migrants and refugees in receiving countries is part of the ethical responsibility individuals have for others (Levinas, 1991).

Engaging in the tourism industry, such as becoming tour-guides, represents an opportunity for refugees to connect with their receiving country. This enables refugees to cultivate a sense of belonging in a new society, through gradual comprehension of a new socio-cultural environment (Ntaltagianni & Dimas, 2016). Being involved as tour-guides, becomes a means for cultural creativity and new configurations of diversity (Amoamo, 2011). Refugees can retain their identities through provisions of tourism services, such as guiding city-tours, whilst the host society becomes connected to refugees through an understanding of their origins.

Through refugees’ involvement in tourism, we argue that mutual respect, acceptance and inclusivity can be achieved. Involvement unfolds through a process of co-creation, although perhaps even more so when working with individuals with different ethnic backgrounds. The importance of bonding and bridging social networks should therefore not be underestimated. This is particularly pertinent when working with refugees who are less likely to trust due to previous traumatic experiences. Furthermore, when interacting with newly arrived refugees whose access to social capital is minimal, the collaborative process can be a way of facilitating inclusion by creating intercultural connections (Zetter et al., 2006). Refugees’ participation in tourism can be a positive force to redefine the boundaries set by mainstream patriotic discourses favouring hybrid communities.

2.3. Hospitality and deconstruction in the creation of city-tours guided by refugees

For Derrida, the concept of hospitality needs to be deconstructed to be understood and exercised. Hospitality is “at once timeless, archaic, modern, current, and future ... the single word “hospitality” magnetizes – the historical, ethical, juridical, political, and economic questions” that societies face (Derrida, 2000, p. 3). Deriving from Latin *hospitalitas*, the concept of hospitality is argued to be a human right rather than philanthropy, and carries its own opposition “hostility” incorporated into it. Hospitality “is parasitized by its opposite, “hostility”” (Derrida, 2000, p. 3) shown towards the undesirable guest, the other, the stranger, the foreigner. Within the context of welcome, this coexistence of *hospitality-hostility* generates for Derrida a portmanteau word combining their meaning and sounds into *hostipitality*.

We anchor debates about Derrida’s hospitality in literature on tour-guiding and migration. Tour guides can enhance visitors’ knowledge and experiences, yet their role goes beyond their knowledge and skills in that they play a crucial part in creating safe, memorable and hospitable environments for their guests (Alazaizeh et al., 2019; Farkić et al., 2020). When discussing tour-guiding in relation to migration, it is argued that in their guiding work, migrants have the

potential to “transcend strangerhood” and “acquire localhood” breaking through those oppressive walls of cultural and political not acceptance of the Other (Mellino & Vietti, 2019; Ormond & Vietti, 2021, p. 6). Migrants through their tour narratives and routes can give a more just and even shape to the relationships with their guests. In 2010, Migrantour was founded to provide guided tours of different European cities by intercultural guides with a migration background (Ormond & Vietti, 2021). Ormond and Vietti (2021) discuss how two European-based initiatives, Migrantour and the Roots Guide, can become pedagogical tools to combat xenophobia and exploitation. In particular, the focus on co-created guided walking tours by first- and second-generation migrants resonates with our work. Thus, tourism researchers begin to interrogate the possibility for tourism to forge another kind of ethics necessary to “temper growing xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment” (Ormond & Vietti, 2021, p. 2).

The refugee crisis painfully highlights that societies live in times whereby hostility rather than hospitality is extended to others, strangers, foreigners such as refugees and asylum-seekers. Hostipitality stems from a positive response to calls for change which then becomes openness to others. It refers to dismantling and transforming the law of the state which governs cities. In this view of reformed laws that make states and cities more welcoming for refugees, Derrida refers to a new cosmopolitics that takes shape into autonomous cities supportive of each other, yet independent from the state. Cosmopolitics and hospitality are about opening cities to refugees reorienting the politics of the state through transformation of:

membership by which the city belongs to the state, as in a developing Europe or in international juridical structures still dominated by the inviolable rule of the state sovereignty - an intangible rule, or one at least supposed such, which is becoming increasingly precarious and problematic nonetheless. (Derrida, 2001, p. 4)

Cosmopolitics depends on open spaces in which hospitality towards the other can exist. Within these open spaces, tolerance and inclusivity can be fostered through the development of tourist experiences which bring together refugees, local visitors, and international tourists.

Yet, socio-cultural barriers exist when working with displaced people and other marginalised communities in tourism, which often prevents any sort of meaningful engagement with these groups considered unknowledgeable and unskilled to develop tourism strategies (Ormond & Vietti, 2021). Yet actively involving refugees and asylum-seekers in tourism services via creation of city-tours guided by refugees, a process of social and institutional deconstruction can unfold. This deconstructive process helps to create open, interactive and meaningful spaces where different social values merge.

3. Interviewing forcibly displaced people and local support workers

Research material for this project was collected between June 2017 and September 2019 in the city of Leeds where the social enterprise *Tales of a City Tours* is located. We conducted 20 semi-structured interviews with seven refugees, three asylum seekers (see Table 1), and 10 local support workers from the public, non-governmental, and not-for-profit sectors (see Table 2). In the 10 interviews conducted with both refugee and asylum-seekers in Leeds (Table 1), participants shared their understanding of tourism and its potential to foster inclusivity, tolerance and participation in the socio-economic fabric of Leeds. To complement the narratives collected from asylum-seekers and refugees, we interviewed 10 support workers who have direct contact with refugees and asylum-seekers, in their roles as volunteers, administrators, head or curator of cultural events in Leeds (Table 2). Interviewees were recruited mainly using snowball technique or through the researchers’ personal contacts.

Additionally, a group interview with refugees and asylum-seekers was organised shortly after the initial individual interviews conducted in June 2017 whereby 4 out of 10 participants attended. This provided an opportunity to share ideas, knowledge and perspectives, facilitating

Table 1. Refugees and asylum-seekers^a.

	Pseudonym	Status	Ethnicity	Age	Length of stay in England
1.	Sandra	Refugee	Lebanese	42	17 years
2.	Salma	Refugee	Syrian	Not disclosed	2 years
3.	Gaani	Refugee	Somalian	30	6 years
4.	Kael	Asylum seeker	Iranian	32	10 months
5.	Royar	Asylum seeker	Kurdish	27	7 months
6.	Konjit	Refugee	Ethiopian	35	2 years
7.	Sajan	Refugee	Indian	48	8 years
8.	Leila	Refugee	South African	47	16 years
9.	Marius	Asylum seeker	Guinean	31	10 years
10.	Mabel	Refugee	Iranian	33	2 years

Source: Authors.

^aDetails as at September 2019 when last interviews were conducted.

Table 2. Local support workers in public and non-governmental sectors.

No.	Name	Role
1.	Laura	Curator of exhibitions at a Leeds museum
2.	Jim	Charity founder helping the homeless integrate into society through guided tours
3.	Chloe	Charity trustee & volunteer helping refugees/asylum-seekers settle in Leeds
4.	Malia	Charity administrator helping refugees/asylum-seekers settle in Leeds
5.	Emma	Account Manager for governmental organisation
6.	Marie	Charity worker helping refugees/asylum seekers settle in Leeds
7.	Vera	Head of Creative Engagement at a theatre
8.	Luke	Volunteer at a charity for refugees/asylum-seekers
9.	Fiona	Charity worker for refugees/asylum-seekers settling in Leeds
10.	Louise	Head of community partnership in a Leeds theatre

Source: Authors.

an environment of collective learning between individuals of different ethnic backgrounds in a community-based setting. The group interview lasted 90 minutes, and collaborative activities in the tourism industry were discussed, with a focus on guided city-tours in Leeds.

Individual interviews took place at participants' homes, workplaces, having food together or while meeting their families. During the interviews, and indeed throughout the research process we remained aware of our positionalities of two migrant academics and one local practitioner, all three of us women. There are similarities in our migrant backgrounds with some of our participants, yet significant differences between the forced migrants' precarious socio-economic conditions and our privileged academic or practitioner status. Throughout the process, one of the authors, both a practitioner and a researcher, reflected on her perceived position of "power". She reflected on issues such as conducting interviews in English her first language, the setting of these interviews, as sometimes these were conducted on the University campus which could have been intimidating for some participants.

Reflecting on our positionalities and how we had to mediate between our own beliefs, values and socio-cultural backgrounds, we acknowledge that "ethical research is produced through negotiated spaces and practices of reflexivity that is crucial about issues of positionality and power relations at multiple scales" (Sultana, 2007, p. 375). Our responsibility throughout the research process was to be particularly aware of the context in which we moved and of the knowledge which we were representing and co-creating with our participants. Thus, during this project we reflected on how our words and actions could result in establishing power hierarchies rather than deconstructing them; and, therefore, we emphasised to our participants the co-creation nature of this project.

Discussions with participants revolved around three key thematic areas: involvement in the broader socio-cultural fabric of Leeds; participation in activities around the city; and perceptions

of tourism experiences (as tourists and/or as tour-guides) as potential tools to deconstruct the socio-political discourses on refugee-ness. The topics discussed in the individual and group interviews included: heritage, identity, participation, inclusion, sense of belonging and tourism. All individual interviews lasted between 22 and 81 minutes, were tape-recorded, and then transcribed. Pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of participants, and throughout the interviewing process strict ethical guidelines were followed.

To analyse our material, we draw on critical qualitative methodological approaches whereby we take an interpretivist epistemological stance to investigate the multiple subjectivities at play in such sensitive matters pertaining to forced migrants. Thus, the interview transcriptions were deductively analysed through theoretical links and thematic coding with the concepts discussed in previous sections. The themes identified were grouped under the broad categories of strangerhood (Bauman, 1991) ethical responsibility (Levinas, 1991) and hospitality (Derrida, 2001) which enabled to identify the informants' articulations of *participative strangerhood*, *inclusion through ethical responsibility* and *deconstructive tourist experiences*. These are discussed in the following sections of the paper.

To better understand and analyse the emotional space formed between the interviewer and the interviewee the concepts of empathy and identification are useful as they explain the intersubjective relationship between researchers and participants. Empathy allows space to manoeuvre while oscillating between observation, characterised by an awareness of the differences and similarities within the "researcher-researched" relationship (Bondi, 2003). Emotions of care, compassion, and empathy are known to be emotional pre-requisites for engaging in positive dialogue with "the other". This empathetic space of sharing thoughts, ideas, and emotions was achieved by being open with participants about the researcher's background.

By striving for "affective interchanges" and "caring encounters", it was not intended to remain "objective" towards our participants. Instead, our aim was to create an empathetic space whereby each participant's worldview could be safely discussed. Yet, we were aware of the sort of empathic pain which serves to "draw attention to social difference, and the ways some bodies remain privileged" over others (Frazer & Waitt, 2016, p. 177). It was important, in situations like this, to avoid indulging in what is called "narcissistic emotion" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 23), and simply easing our discomfort by overstating our ability to help the participants through this research, allowing ourselves some form of "moral redemption" (Frazer & Waitt, 2016, p. 184).

3.1. The context: English city of Leeds

We collected research material in Leeds, a city in the North of England. Leeds was chosen for three reasons. First, the city in 2017 hosted 29.01 million tourists and tourism is worth around 1.75 billion to the local economy (Visit Leeds, 2021). In 2019, Leeds hosted 30.42 million day and night visitors worth £1.89 billion to the local economy (Leeds City Council, 2020). Second, Leeds has over 170 different ethnic groups and the number of refugees and asylum-seekers in the Yorkshire and Humber region as a whole was 5,693 in March 2018 (Uppal & Bhabra, 2018). The diverse cultural landscape of Leeds makes it a vibrant and rich destination that aims at being a compassionate city with a strong economy. Migrant communities are valuable contributors to the city's economy, culture and diversity, and Leeds aspires to ensure people are welcomed and supported. Yet, this local narrative seems to be in tension with increasingly hostile national policy discourses towards forced migrants and against local responses of compassion, tolerance and inclusivity proposed at localised grassroots levels. Third, the authors are familiar with and emotionally connected to Leeds as they work and reside in the city.

Regarding the city's refugee population, at the beginning of April 2019, Home Office figures show that 3,087 people were supported in Leeds City Region while awaiting a decision on their claims (Mahmood et al., 2019). The Local Migration Profile report (Mahmood et al., 2019) shows

that in 2019 there were also around 125 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children being looked after by Leeds City Region local authorities. The high number of refugee support organisations operating in Leeds indicates the need for hands-on technical and emotional support for refugees needing to integrate.

To challenge the increasingly hostile narrative and policy debates at national level towards refugees and asylum-seekers, one of the authors, a British citizen from Leeds, started in January 2018 the *Tales of a City Tours* social enterprise. As part of this tourism venture, refugees are involved as tour-guides in the process of creating, designing and leading walking tours in Leeds. Refugees and asylum-seekers have complete autonomy designing these city-tours, but only refugees are legally allowed to guide as such, given their legal status and permission for employment. Asylum seekers equally have total autonomy to decide to which extent they want to be involved designing the tours, and have the opportunity to voice their preferences in regards to points of interest of the tours as well as to develop their knowledge on tourism-related issues. Once asylum-seekers become recognised refugees they can be then legally employed. For example, Leila, a South African refugee tour-guide, decided to include in her tours the main post-office building in the city centre as, when she first arrived in Leeds in 2000, she went there once per week to collect her cash allowance to which refugees are entitled. The tours welcome a variety of regional and international tourists, as well as local visitors. Tour groups have a refugee tour-guide, and lead between 8 and 12 visitors. The tours last an hour and take place in Leeds city centre. The refugee tour-guide explains why certain parts of the city centre were chosen to visit and how those relate to their personal socio-cultural background.

4. Refugee-crisis and tourism intersections

4.1. Tourism experiences of “participative strangerhood”

The “strangerhood” concept (Bauman, 1991) helps us unpack ideals of socio-cultural integration of asylum-seekers and refugees within the spatio-political boundaries of unfamiliar, often unwelcoming, countries. Drawing on “strangerhood” and the fluidity of human identities we better understand the ways in which asylum-seekers and refugees can be socio-culturally integrated. Providing tourism services such as tour-guiding, the ethnically diverse refugees in our project enrich tourism provisions through unique stories to share with visitors. Yet, this variety can also be perceived as a threat to the “stable and fixed boundaries modernity has established” (Marotta, 2002, p. 39). The concept of “strangerhood” addresses the intersubjective and relational nature of identities.

Some participants, despite being forcibly removed from their native countries, claim a collective “territorial identity” based on their geographical origins (Ntaltagianni & Dimas, 2016). Participants in our project focused on the importance of their nationality or ethnicity: “*being Ethiopian*”, or “*being Arabic*”. They demonstrate pride in their cultural heritage, particularly intangible aspects like cultural and religious festivals, traditional dances, history and cultural systems. Leila, a South Africa woman in her forties, and a refugee tour-guide refers to the collective memories of an annual traditional ethnic ceremony in South Africa: “it’s something that we all shared, and all grew up looking forward to” (Interview, July 17, 2017).

Often, the self’s identity is opposed to the other’s, and shapes a collective identity characterised by “us/them” or “familiar/unfamiliar”. Identity is socially and discursively constructed, thus it gains meaning in opposition to “the other”. Having refugee/asylum-seeker status defines our informants as “strangers” because of their exposure to social exclusion and suppression (Bauman, 2016). To illustrate this, Sandra, a Lebanese woman in her forties, admits that being a refugee is “something which makes you feel smaller” (Interview, July 3, 2017). Mabel, too, an Iranian woman in her early thirties, explains: “I had to leave my country, my family, my home, my job ... So, I’m really not happy to be a refugee. It was not my choice” (Interview, July 17, 2017). Those

still awaiting their asylum-seeker status spoke about having a “temporary identity” (Marius, interview, July 17, 2017), since their future is entirely in the hands of the authorities. As Royar, a Kurdish man in his late twenties explains:

People always ask me, what are your plans for the future, will you be an engineer again? ... But because I am waiting, I cannot have any plans, maybe this country will throw me out ... so I am not sure of what kind of life I will live and what I will do. (Interview, July 11, 2017)

Leaving home determines being strangers. Refugees are “the ones who, in leaving the home of their nation, are the bodies out of place in the everyday world they inhabit, and in the communities they come to live” (Ahmed, 2000, p. 78). This becomes clear in Chloe’s words who states that, at first the refugees she knows liked UK, but after a while they experience a less pleasant reality, such as racism or complicated bureaucratic processes:

There’s always a pattern, they come over and, ‘the U.K.’s great, I love the U.K.’, ‘the U.K.’s lovely, I’m here, I’m home’, you know, ‘praise Allah’, they’re here, they’re happy. Then there’s always a dip where they encounter racism, a little bit of racism, they will encounter the bureaucracy of the Home Office. (Interview, June 13, 2019)

Being forcibly displaced, involves travel, movement, and crossing borders, amongst other aspects. It constrains those forcibly displaced to question their “self”. These travels shape the fluid constructions of identities throughout their journeys. For some refugees crossing borders and moving away from home reinforces a sense of belonging. Gaani and Royar, for example, strongly believe that their status is part of their history, and that it constitutes their identities. Gaani, a Somali man in his thirties, says: “Once you deny where you come from, and your history, you also deny where you are” (Interview, July 5, 2017). Involving refugees as tour-guides is intended to allow individuals to assert and reform their identity by choosing which parts of their story they wish to tell. This means that there will be some who want to avoid any stigma associated with being a “refugee” and have no desire to provide such details.

For others moving away from home reinforces a sense of freedom. Being a refugee in a new country has empowered some to assert their identity without fear of oppression. Sajan, in his forties, argues that in England, he feels valued as a human being and is able to express his true identity, unlike in India: “They did not respect me and my gender ... that was my big problem, there they put me down” (Interview, July 14, 2017).

Refugees’ narratives help us understand the importance of individual and collective identities, and the potential to deconstruct socio-cultural practices (Derrida, 2001) so as to enable the development of an ethical humanism (Levinas, 1991) towards strangers (Bauman, 2016). In explaining her involvement with helping refugees, Marie, a British charity worker of Pakistani heritage, says:

I started [working in charities] because I always wanted to help people but I always was going to help people in the U.K. and Pakistan, because I didn’t [...] know anything about it, but you know, one of my brothers was killed by a bunch of drunken youths. My faith also tells me that you help everyone, regardless of religion, culture ...” (Interview, September 12, 2019).

For Marie, ethical humanism is unconditional and goes beyond fixed socio-cultural boundaries (Levinas, 1991). Some refugees are motivated to get involved in the creation of city-tours by the opportunity to connect with people from all over the world suggesting that, for refugees who may lack support networks, building social capital is important (Zetter et al., 2006; Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Leila, the South African mother, also notes that working in tourism would increase a refugee’s sense of belonging to a place, by showing there are people who are “kind and genuine and show interest to you as a person” (Interview, July 17, 2017).

Potential barriers for the development and delivery of city-tours were discussed in the interviews. These include knowledge of English to guide tourists around Leeds, and the worry of not feeling emotionally ready to share personal experiences throughout the tours. During the

interviews, our participants believe that tourism is a vehicle to encourage differences to coexist. Luke, academic and volunteer for a charity helping forcibly displaced people to settle in Leeds, having taken a refugee-led city-tour says:

because I do the walks for the students and for friends who come to visit Leeds for the first time [...], I didn't hear anything about Leeds that I didn't already know, but what was interesting for me was what different bits in the centre meant to the guy leading the walk, you know. So he [the refugee tour-guide] says: *«you might wonder why we've stopped here, that's because over the road there, is the Post Office where I had to come and get my money each week, I didn't know what a Post Office was before I came here, there are no Post Offices in Iraq»*, it never occurred to me (Interview, July 15, 2019).

People's identities shape the concept of strangerhood. This concept is understood differently depending on the context and whether it is used by individuals or collectivities. Often, strangers are linked to fear, chaos, and instability (Bauman, 1991). They are usually people who do not share common or familiar socio-cultural patterns to locals already living in a place. For some refugees, being strangers is feeling excluded from forms of belonging and identity (Ahmed, 2000). Yet, tourism can enable the reconciliation of differences. It is possible to balance the tensions between "order, strangerhood and freedom when we accept our moral condition" (Marotta, 2002, p. 52). Yet, while balancing this tension we should still be responsible towards the other.

4.2. Meaningful integration through ethical responsibility in tourism

In our interviews, participants referred to the challenges of integrating in Leeds, explaining that they were victims of discrimination and experienced isolation. These challenges of strangerhood in digitalised societies symbolise chaos and uncertainty. Being perceived as a "disturbing" stranger affects the ability of refugees to express their true identities (Bauman, 2016). Thus, being a tour-guide could facilitate socio-cultural connections between ethnically, culturally or religiously different groups. Such connections help address problems around integration experienced by displaced people living in the U.K. (Zetter et al., 2006). Displaced people's involvement in delivering tourism experiences can create positive societal changes through communicating with tourists' different cultures.

Interviewees explain that connecting to other refugees with similar experiences made them feel part of a community. Gaani confirms: "Leeds is such a diverse city... walking side by side with other migrant communities helped me to feel at home" (Interview, July 5, 2017). Leila explains how she relates to newly arrived refugees, and uses her experiences to support and empower them, something which she believes is much needed in a society which becomes increasingly individualised. All participants agreed that interaction with the other, can help refugees cope in the outside world, where different ethnicities often co-exist.

Participants referred to barriers when working with people from different ethnic backgrounds, including having to "concentrate to understand other speaking styles" (Sajan, interview, July 14, 2017). The sense of ethical responsibility is addressed by Gaani who states that "humanity can only be upheld by humans". Luke echoes similar thoughts:

I believe we all have a responsibility to do our best to make people's lives better if we can, and so, if people who have come to live here, they should have the right to expect that when they are here [England], they're going to be treated with respect and made to feel comfortable, so they do feel able to belong and to contribute, and so I want them to know about the place that they're in (Interview, July 15, 2019).

As Levinas explains: "we will say that since the Other looks at me, I am responsible for him [sic], without even having taken on responsibilities in his regard; his [sic] responsibility is incumbent on me" (1986, p. 96). Hence, Luke's individual felt responsibility towards refugees as "the other" shapes the ethical relation within a society.

Involving refugees in tourism can be instrumental in improving cross-cultural understanding. This cultural understanding and acceptance of diversity is achieved through structural deconstruction at a societal level (Derrida, 1997). That is, connecting to “the other” through tourism experiences shaped by a multitude of voices and backgrounds. Fiona, a charity worker, explains that through tourism, Leeds welcomes:

people from all over the world ... we know that Leeds is really cool and welcoming city, we're a very multi-cultural city. We're such a diverse city [...] all being different cultures together and it benefits us. It's such a lovely thing to have so many wonderful, interesting cultures side by side, but I think bringing in people who potentially need support and love and have come from various different backgrounds ... is a good city for that (Interview, June 28, 2019).

Sandra, Marius and Gaani all suggest that their multicultural background, multilingual ability and open-mindedness would make them more approachable to different people, who may want to connect with them on city-tours. This is in line with the idea of a tour-guide's unique identity, in which their intercultural competence allows for a greater understanding of others (Ormond & Vietti, 2021).

Furthermore, Marius, resonating with Levinas's ethical responsibility, highlights how societal and cultural connections can be created by emphasising a common humanity amongst the tour-guide and tour-guests: “We can talk about our differences, but I believe what we have in common is far larger” (Interview, July 17, 2017). Indeed, a city-tour, according to Marius, could spark a debate on universal topics like music, or love, bringing refugees and tourists together. As Marius says: “music doesn't have any boundaries” and “love is universal ... nobody rejects love” (Interview, July 17, 2017). Emphasising commonalities was something which both Konjit and Royar believe helps with the inclusion process: “For me as a Christian, I believe that England is blessed ... when I see the crosses, I feel at home” (Konjit, interview, July 11, 2017).

4.3. Co-creative hospitable tourist experiences

Discussing with Sajan about tourism being culturally defined, and how each participants' social reality differs due their diverse geographical origins, amongst others, he observes that tourism in England is pervasive and welcoming, whilst in India tourism is reserved only for the rich. Participants in our project stressed that city-tours must be “affordable”, visiting the city's less expensive sites. The elitist character of tourism, often profit driven, is highlighted by Chloe, a volunteer for a charity which helps forcibly displaced people to settle in Leeds:

tourism is worth £9 Billion to Yorkshire economy, it's the second biggest industry in Yorkshire ... Why do people do tourism? To make money. People don't get involved in tourism to give asylum-seekers nice days out. They get involved in tourism to make money, whether it's running a café, running a tea shop, running an event, why do they do it? To make money ... Tourism is not a charity, tourism is a business, a massive business. (Interview, June 13, 2019)

Chloe explains that asylum-seekers live on £7 per day, hence they lack the financial resources to experience tourism. However, for refugees being involved in the delivery of tourism experiences in Leeds means raising awareness of different cultures and cultural exchanges between tourists and tour-guides. Meaningful city-tours can, according to Salma, a Syrian mother of two, positively impact all parties involved by facilitating deeper welcoming connections between tour groups and refugees, who have a genuine desire to learn through offering authentic hospitable engagements with their guests (Ormond & Vietti, 2021). The development of city-tours led by refugees could produce meaningful societal change by deconstructing the apparent socio-political order of Leeds.

This is echoed by Laura, an exhibitions curator at Leeds City Museum, who emphasises the importance of creating refugee-led tours to have positive impacts on citizens' attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers:

I'm in awe of people and the things that they've experienced and kind of their story and how they've come to be in Leeds and it really makes me reflect on things that I just never consider ... about how I can move around the world and the choices that are open to me that aren't to other people or the difficult decisions that people have had to make that I've been in the fortunate position of never having to make those. And then personal and sort of professional level, I'm just really gaining so much, learning so much about people and the world from just talking to people, which sounds stupid, but again, just looking beyond ... my own experience and what I know and think (Interview, June 04, 2019).

There are good intentions coming from Leeds regarding integration and welcoming of refugees. Particularly, the non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations engage in alternative ways of deconstructing less welcoming approaches to hosting refugees. Malia, a charity administrator who helps refugees and asylum-seekers in Leeds, explains:

the way you might promote [events/activities] to engage refugee communities would be very different to the way you might promote to engage British communities, other communities. So, there's a real challenge in that, like we've had some organisations try and do boxing, a great initiative I think. I think it's fabulous, great stress relief, all of this stuff, but for some in a refugee community, fighting is a trigger and so actually that's not a helpful thing. So, what we would see as a great stress release, something to get rid of built-up anxiety and whatever, anger or all that kind of stuff, but how do you cross that? (Interview, June 28, 2019).

Certain activities sincerely aiming to integrate refugees, like boxing, are institutionally bounded and regarded as being "right". Destabilising fixed and accepted categories of understanding would be part of deconstruction as a process of questioning how ideas and arguments come into being. This is particularly relevant concerning some governmental discourses on migration and refugee-ness which are often disparaging. It is not suggested that state institutions be rejected or dismantled, but to deconstruct structures within institutions that have become too rigid or that remain unquestioned and unchallenged (Derrida, 2001). This is aligned with Marie's efforts to make refugees feel welcome in the receiving country:

they [refugees/asylum seekers] talk about their home that they have left and they are looking for a home, so this is how I see refugees, but they're on the road and they always live temporary lives and they tell me, we always live temporary lives, we never feel settled, so for us, the biggest thing is to feel settled. So, like in Europe, the least we can do is make them feel settled (Interview, September 12, 2019)

Marie's welcoming hospitality ought to become a mode of socio-political action and a means for ongoing questioning to open alternative views on the meaning of ethics and justice. This adds to previous hopeful calls to reframe travel, tourism and hospitality sectors, their hierarchies and practices which should become more resistant to mainstream socio-political attacks on diversity and inclusivity.

5. Conclusion

The refugee-crisis despite its hideousness, has generated opportunities for refugees to partake in provision of tourism services by offering guided city-tours in Leeds. Thus, ideas of strangerhood and ethical responsibility are brought to the fore so as to understand how forcibly displaced people can be meaningfully integrated in the receiving country through ways of rethinking, reorienting and redesigning tourism. Engaging with the tourism sector facilitates the emergence of cosmopolitics – as a tool to deconstruct socio-cultural barriers often existent in current societies between "westerners"/locals and "strangers"/refugees (Derrida, 2001). Tourism experiences in cities like Leeds can give "rise to a place (lieu) for reflection on the questions of asylum and hospitality – and for a new order of law and democracy to come to be put to the test" (Derrida, 2001, p. 23).

Here we contributed to tourism debates on the intersection between the global refugee-crises, responsibility in tourism, and injustices that refugees and asylum-seekers face. Our contribution stems from the need of interlinking "research and praxis" to pave just and inclusive tourism futures (Jamal & Higham, 2021). We do so by combining ideas of strangerhood (Bauman, 1991),

ethical responsibility (Levinas, 1991) and hospitality (Derrida, 2001). This enables us to further critical understandings on ways for tourism to overcome societal challenges, like exclusion, hostility, and intolerance towards forcibly displaced people. Interviews conducted for this project highlight sensitivities around refugee identities to be considered when integrating forcibly displaced people via tourism. A refugee guided city-tour mirrors the dynamism of ever-shifting refugee identities, thus allowing individual stories to become a new part of the (shared) intangible cultural heritage of the city (Ntaltagianni & Dimas, 2016). A re-identification with this intangible heritage in the host city has the potential to bridge the gap between “us” and “them”. Our study chips away at hegemonic tourism sector structures to strive towards collaboration and meaningful integration of forced migrants in receiving countries via the tourism sector. Presenting ways in which forced migrants can contribute to the tourism sector and be part of participatory spaces enables the development of stronger social ties with other ethnic groups. To this end we stressed the importance of collaborating and co-creating with refugees spaces for sharing knowledge where each participant’s worldview is valued.

However, an intervention such as the guided tours can only be effective if it is part of a long-term dynamic process where current socio-political discourses are challenged and dismantled by the emergence of powerful participatory (grassroots) approaches. It should be remembered that although this participatory approach is designed to be beneficial in other contexts too, it might not generate the exact same findings. Thus, further research would help to understand how refugees and asylum-seekers co-create tourism experiences in other destinations. Additionally, the focus on Leeds and on this tourism venture has to be acknowledged in relation to the wider socio-political landscape where tourism develops. Whereas sentiments of hostility towards migrants are more evident at a macro-scale/national government, there is an increasing devolution of mechanisms of security and border enforcement at a micro-scale of local councils (Darling, 2017). This fosters the growth of sanctuary movements across Leeds and other UK cities. Albeit the political dynamics that underpin the formation of certain tourism experiences is not the main focus on this paper, we recommend that future studies look into how political structures shape ways of doing tourism with and for ethnic minorities. There is great potential for further research on how refugee-led tours impact the lives and attitudes of tourists and citizens. Such a focus would complement the findings of our study by demonstrating how other stakeholders are impacted by the inclusion of ethnic minorities in tourism experiences.

Notes

1. British-Polish philosopher Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Modernity and Ambivalence* (1991) identifies strangerhood as the condition of individuals not statically being part of a single societal subsystem, instead becoming part of a mobile, complex socially displaced system. Strangerhood, thus, intersects with ethical responsibility advocated by French-Lithuanian philosopher Emmanuel Levinas in *Totality and Infinity* (1991), who invokes ethics in relation to the other. Levinas explains ethics to be connected with moral responsibility, which becomes a political act through a form of semiotic analysis known as deconstruction, and advanced by Algerian-French philosopher Jacques Derrida in his thesis on *Hostipitality* first delivered at Bosphorus University, 9–10 May 1997 in Istanbul.

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