

Hiking with donkeys in France

A qualitative analysis of the promotion and reviews of donkey trips in regard to co-creation of slow tourism experiences

Wageningen University

BsC Tourism – BsC Tourism Thesis (GEO 80818)

Student: Verena Stevens – 981030805040

Supervisors: Yulia Kisora, Dr. Clemens Driessen

6/27/2019

Authorship Statement

Thesis title: Hiking with donkeys in France

Subtitle: A qualitative analysis of the promotion and reviews of donkey trips in regard to co-creation of slow tourism experiences

Author name: Verena Stevens

Bachelor degree program: BSc Tourism

Educational Institute: Breda University of Applied Science and Wageningen University & Research

Authorship statement:

I hereby declare that this thesis is wholly the work of Verena Stevens. Any other contributors have either been referenced in the prescribed manner or are listed in the acknowledgements together with the nature and the scope of their contribution.

Where I have consulted the published work of others this is always clearly attributed. Where I have quoted from the work of others the source is always given. A list of the references used, is included. An appropriate referencing style is used throughout. With the exception of such quotations this thesis is entirely my own work. I have read and understand the penalties associated with plagiarism as stated in the Student Charter.

Declaration of Partial Copyright:

I hereby grant to Breda University of Applied Science ("BUAs") and Wageningen University ("WUR") the non-exclusive, royalty-free right to include a digital copy of my thesis and associated supplemental files ("Work") in the Library Catalogue at BUAs. BUAs and WUR may use, reproduce, display, convert, sublicense and distribute the Work for purposes of a scholarly or research nature, in any format and any medium, without prior permission or charge, provided that the Work is not altered in any way and is properly acknowledged, including citing the author, title and full bibliographic details. (Note: this corresponds to the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives, or CC BY-NC-ND Creative Commons license)

I further agree that BUAs and WUR may keep more than one copy of the Work for purposes of back-up and security; and that BUAs and WUR may, without changing the content, translate, if technically possible, the Work to any medium or format for the purpose of preserving the Work and facilitating the exercise of BUAs and WUR's rights under this license. I understand that work deposited in the BUAs Library Catalogue will be accessible to a wide variety of people and institutions - including automated agents - via the World Wide Web. Copying, publication, or public performance of the Work for commercial purposes shall not be allowed without my written permission.

While granting the above uses to BUAs and WUR, I retain copyright ownership and moral rights in the Work, and may deal with the copyright in the Work in any way consistent with the terms of this license, including the right to change the Work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the Work in whole or in part, and licensing the content to other parties as I may desire. I represent and warrant that I have the right to grant the rights contained in this license and that the Work does not, to the best of my knowledge, infringe upon anyone's copyright. I have obtained written copyright permission, where required, for the use of any third-party copyrighted material contained in the Work. I represent and warrant that the Work is my original work and that I have not previously assigned or relinquished the rights conferred in this license.

Date: 27/06/2019

Signature:

Abstract

Human-animal interactions exist in multiple forms and play a role within the tourism industry. While the field of equestrian tourism has a growing body of literature discussing human-horse relationships, literature related to donkey tourism still lags behind. Existing academic literature focuses on the role of the donkey as a passive transport animal. This report analyses the experience of donkey trips in France and the resulting human-animal relationships. A qualitative data analysis has been performed, analysing provider websites as well as reviews and blogs from tourists. Furthermore, the theoretical frameworks of animal co-creation and slow tourism have been used. Results show that there exist multiple dimensions of human-donkey relationships in donkey trips: besides the already studied role of the donkey as a carrier, the donkey is also seen as a friend and companion; a guide; and a social mediator. The donkey plays an active role in the experience since he determines the pace, navigates the tourists and creates social interaction. Donkey trips thus seem to include animal co-creation. Besides, donkey trips can be seen as slow tourism activities since they include several slow tourism elements with regards to time, place, people, travel and the personal.

Prologue

As an animal lover and equestrian, I remember how much I enjoyed the donkey walk I made with my parents during our holiday in France. I was 7 years old and around that time I started with horseriding lessons. We made a one day trip with a donkey that was named *Picotin*. Unfortunately I do not remember the details of the trip we made, but I do remember that my parents sometimes had to deal with our donkey standing still and not wanting to walk further! What I also remember is that I enjoyed walking with a donkey way more than our normal walks. As an only child of parents who loved long walks in the French countryside, I sometimes got sick of walking. Walking with a donkey was a whole new experience and made me enjoy the walk more than our ordinary hikes. It felt more adventurous and as a child, it also felt cool that I was allowed to walk with a donkey without any guide, as was always the case with pony rides. In a way, I also saw the donkey as a friend. Now after all these years, there are still some things I am wondering. Do tourists see the donkey as a companion? And what kind of role does the donkey have in the experience?

Table of contents

Authorship Statement.....	1
Abstract.....	2
Prologue.....	3
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Roles of animals in society and their co-existence with humans.....	6
2.1 Human-animal relationships.....	6
2.2 Animal representation within tourism.....	7
2.3 Gaps in the existing literature.....	9
3. Theoretical framework.....	10
3.1 Tourism experiences.....	10
3.2 Co-creation.....	10
4. Research questions.....	12
5. Methodology.....	13
5.1 Data collection.....	13
5.2 Data analysis.....	13
6. The experience of walking with a donkey – results and analysis.....	14
6.1 The donkey as a carrier.....	14
6.2 The donkey as a friend and hiking companion.....	14
6.3 The donkey as a guide.....	17
6.3.1 Having a leading role.....	17
6.3.2 Walking at a slow pace.....	17
6.4 The donkey as a social mediator.....	18
7. Conclusion and discussion.....	19
7.1 Conclusion.....	19
7.2 Contributions to the literature.....	20
7.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research.....	20
8. References.....	21
9. Appendix I: overview of websites used during data collection.....	25

1. Introduction

Humans interact with animals in different ways. In our modern society, there are many opportunities for these human-animal interactions to happen, such as encounters in zoos or with animals we keep as pets (DeMello, 2012). The difference in those interactions shows the existing paradox in how we relate to animals: some animals we eat, while others we value as our friends that we care for (Serpell, 1996).

In the tourism sector, animals are also included in multiple ways. An example is wildlife tourism, where animals are attractions themselves (Markwell, 2015). By viewing the animals and making pictures, tourists gain pleasure and satisfaction. This form of tourism has gained its popularity since many people nowadays are not familiar with animals different than pet animals (Beardsworth & Bryman, 2001; Mullin, 1999, in Cohen, 2009). Other forms of tourism that include animals have gained popularity as well, such as equestrian tourism. While wildlife tourism is mostly about viewing the animals, a one-way interaction, equestrian tourism involves a two-way human-animal interaction. Tourists view the horses both as means of transport and travel companions (Notzke, 2017). According to Maurstad, Davis, & Cowles (2013), horses and humans feel connected during the act of riding.

Besides horses, donkeys are also being used in the tourism industry, mostly for transporting goods and/or tourists (Blakeway & Cousquer, 2018). These activities do not always ensure donkey wellbeing, since in countries like Greece the maximum carrying weight is often not respected (The Donkey Sanctuary, n.d). A form of donkey tourism that resembles equestrian tourism in terms of focus on resulting human-animal interactions, are donkey trips. During these trips, tourists walk together with a donkey, often in mountainous and remote areas.

While equestrian tourism has gained growing academic attention, donkey tourism still has not been studied extensively. Although some would consider donkey tourism to be comparable with equestrian tourism, the two are absolutely not the same in terms of human-animal interactions. Equestrian tourism often deals with tourists who already have quite a lot of experience with horses and horseriding, while most tourists have no experience in dealing with a donkey. Furthermore, the act of riding can only happen between one horse and one tourist, while donkey tourism often includes one or more donkeys for a group of people, such as a family. Besides differing from equestrian tourism, donkey trips in particular also differ from other animal involved tourism activities, since they are autonomous (i.e. not supervised by a human tourist service provider), last multiple days, require learning a skill and involve children. This makes donkey trips present a case of a tourist experience that is interesting to analyse from a perspective of human-animal relationships.

This report focuses on autonomous multiple day donkey trips in France. During these trips, tourists hike for a few days together with their designated donkey, and spend the nights in small accommodations with facilities available for the donkey. As the organizers of the trips argue, since France has enormous areas with undisturbed nature available for hikers, it is a perfect area to organise donkey trips. Donkeys have been present for a long time in France, and recreational donkey trips already exist multiple years and are provided over the whole country.

Existing literature about donkey tourism mostly includes the forms of donkey tourism where the donkeys are being used as animals of transport, examining their poor welfare or conditions (Burn, Pritchard, Farajat, Twaissi, & Way, 2008; Burn, Dennison, & Whay, 2010). In these forms of tourism, the donkeys are seen as passive participants of the tourism experience. However, from the character of the donkey trips in France another interpretation of the tourism experience seems potentially justified. This study examines to what extent the donkeys can be seen as active participants in the tourism experience of hiking, and which possible human-animal relationships can be defined. This is done by analysing both reviews as well as provider websites of donkey trips using the concepts of slow tourism and animal co-creation of tourism experiences.

The report is structured as follows: first of all, a review of the existing body of literature will be given, concerning the topics of human-animal relationships and animal representation within tourism. Then, the theoretical framework will be introduced, as well as the gaps in the literature. This leads to the main research question of this study. Next, the methods will be explained, after which the results and analysis are given. Finally, this report ends with a conclusion and discussion, in which the answer on the research question is being given. Furthermore, the relevance as well as the limitations of this study are being discussed, and recommendations for future research are given.

2. Roles of animals in society and their co-existence with humans

Animals, either wild or domestic, co-exist with humans and have different roles in our society, which have changed throughout history (Serpell, 1996). These roles can be gathered into four general categories, according to Plous (1993): animals used for consumption of products (food and clothing); animals used for research and education; animals used for recreation; animals used for companionship. With each role fulfilled by animals, there exist certain human-animal relationships.

2.1 Human-animal relationships

Human-animal relationships are complex and have changed over the years. More than 50.000 years ago, human-animal relations already existed (Braje, 2011, in Hosey & Melfi, 2014). In the predomestic era, the hunter-gatherer phase, humans did not distinguish any differences between them and the other animals, and thus saw animals as their equals (Hosey & Melfi, 2014; Serpell, 1996). The following domestic era started with the domestication of plants and animals, whereby the first animal species to be domesticated was the wolf (Serpell, 1996). After this, sheep and goats were domesticated, followed by cattle, pigs, horses, donkeys and camels. Only 3000 to 400 years ago, the cat became a domesticated animal as well (Serpell, 1996). In this domestic era, people's beliefs regarding their superiority towards animals developed (Hosey & Melfi, 2014). The shift from hunting to farming meant that the domestic animal became dependent on its human owner in order to survive (Serpell, 1996). The human-animal relationship has thus changed from viewing each other as equals, to viewing humans as superior to animals.

In our modern, post-domestic era, we view animals in different ways, which can be paradoxical (DeMello, 2012). Keeping animals as pets for companionship is quite popular in our society. More than 63% percent of American households have a pet, according to the APPMA National Pet Owners Survey (2007-2008, in Walsh, 2009a). From this percentage, 95% views their pet as a friend, and 87% (also) views their pet as a family member. People can have multiple reasons for having a pet:

first of all, they value their companionship and the love and affection they offer (Cain, 1983, in Walsh, 2009b). Furthermore, it has been proven that human-animal bonding has health benefits as well (Hosey & Melfi, 2014). Serpell (1996) mentions that pets also have their disadvantages, since they can be dirty, noisy, disobedient, and limit freedom of their owner. However, pet owners seem to be okay with these drawbacks and still want to take the responsibility. This shows that pet owners in general are willing to sacrifice quite a lot for their animal companions. The paradox is, however, that some animals are our companions that we care for, while other animals are being used for consumption and are treated as objects by humans (Serpell, 1996). In countries like China and Korea, it is quite common to consume cats and dogs as well, while this is a taboo in the Western world.

2.2 Animal representation within tourism

Animals are present in society when they fulfil a role within the recreation sector. The tourism industry offers many options for this: animals can be used as attractions themselves; as travel companions; as forms of transportation; as tourist destination icon; and as part of the local food (Markwell, 2015). A popular form of tourism where animals are included as attractions is wildlife tourism (Markwell, 2015). By viewing the animals and making pictures, tourists gain pleasure and satisfaction. Activities like fishing and hunting go beyond the visual and also include the senses of touching and potentially tasting. Wildlife tourism can also be described as encounter tourism, of which examples are birdwatching, whalewatching, and safaris (Beardsworth & Bryman, 2001). Tourists who seek this kind of tourism are looking for authentic and natural experiences. In modern societies, few people are familiar with animals other than pet animals (Mullin, 1999, in Cohen, 2009; Beardsworth & Bryman, 2001). Tourism does offer them the opportunity to engage with wild animals, and therefore wildlife tourism gained popularity (Cohen, 2009). This development has also increased the available literature about wildlife tourism; an example is the study done by Yudina & Grimwood (2015) about polar bear tourism.

Other forms of tourism that include animals are gaining attention as well. Equestrian tourism is a sector that has grown a lot, followed by a growing body of academic literature (Notzke, 2017). This sector cannot clearly be defined as a certain type of tourism. Instead, it can be many of them: adventure tourism, nature based tourism, ecotourism, sport tourism, slow tourism, and cultural tourism. Whereas with wildlife tourism the tourists mostly only view the animals, horseriding is an act in which humans and animals interact with each other. Since equestrian tourism looks behind the view of horses being exclusively means of transport, animals are seen as both a means of transportation, as well as travel companions. According to Notzke (2017), the horses are active players with agency, which gives them the opportunity to co-create tourist experiences. There is a growing body of literature on studies about human-horse relationships. According to Maurstad, Davis, & Cowles (2013), horses and humans feel connected during the act of riding, and both soul and body of the two are strongly synchronised. Both riders and horses seem to have knowledge and understanding of the behaviour of the other species (Birke, 2004). According to riders' experiences that have been used in the study by Birke (2004), humans and horses co-exist as subjects; however, this theme of interaction has hardly been studied (Crowell-Davis, 1992, cited in Birke, 2004, p.180). The existing literature shows that human-horse relationships are comparable with relationships between humans, where personalities sometimes match, and sometimes do not match.

Another type of equine tourism is donkey tourism. Donkeys have been domesticated quite early and were used in different places over the world, mostly as work animals and beasts of burden. This has led to the inclusion of donkeys in literature, culture and myths. The way donkeys are portrayed in literature has changed over time and is above all contradictory; different groups or cultures portray donkeys in different ways (Bough, 2010). Ancient Greek literature generally portrayed donkeys quite negatively, describing them as being stubborn and stupid, and inferior to horses (Gregory, 2007). In the Bible, however, donkeys were being described as useful work and transport animals, whereas horses were only mentioned as being involved in wars (Bough, 2010). Emphasising the differences between horses and donkeys has always been a central theme within both classic and modern donkey literature. Stevenson describes in his book *'Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes'* (1879, p.4) why he chose a donkey to carry his bags instead of a horse:

"It will readily be conceived that I could not carry this huge package on my own, merely human, shoulders. It remained to choose a beast of burden. Now, a horse is a fine lady among animals, flighty, timid, delicate in eating, of tender health; he is too valuable and too restive to be left alone, so that you are chained to your brute as to a fellow galley-slave; a dangerous road puts him out of his wits; in short, he's an uncertain and exacting ally, and adds thirty-fold to the troubles of the voyager. What I required was something cheap and small and hardy, and of a stolid and peaceful temper; and all these requisites pointed to a donkey."

Central in Stevensons comparison is the fact that donkeys are more fight animals, contrary to horses, which are flight animals (Burden & Thiemann, 2015). This might have certain implications for human-animal relationships. Besides Stevenson, other authors also described their journey with a donkey. Examples are Beasley's *'Through Paphlagonia with a Donkey'* (1983) and Jiminez' *'Platero and I'* (1917). These travel journals also portray the donkey in conflicting ways; where Stevenson sees his donkey as nothing more than an animal of burden, Jiminez' portrays the donkey as his companion, who is not inferior to him (Bough, 2010).

Nowadays, donkeys are still used as carrying animals, mostly in the tourism industry. Examples are donkey beach rides in the UK, or donkeys carrying luggage and people on the Greek island Santorini (The Donkey Sanctuary, n.d.). While most of the UK donkey ride providers claim to look after their regulations regarding maximum age, maximum weight and annual vet checks, the situation in Greece is different. There, donkeys are often forced to carry people or luggage far above the maximum weight, while having no access to shade or water (The Donkey Sanctuary, n.d.). The donkeys carry tourists and their luggage 600 steps up, from the harbour to the main city (Lynne, 2009). These donkeys often work around twelve hours per day. As a consequence, the donkeys suffer from injuries, wounds and exhaustion (Smith, 2019). Since the carrying activity is being described as a real, traditional Greek experience, tourists continue to use the donkeys and indeed perceive the experience to be an authentic one. Besides this, the poor situation of the donkeys is not always visible, since donkeys are prey animals and hide their signs of distress (Lynne, 2019). Fortunately, campaigns have been set up to make tourists aware of the bad conditions these donkeys have to work in (Guy, 2019). In October 2018, the Greek government banned tourists with weight above 100 kilograms to ride the donkeys (Guy, 2019).

Besides using donkeys solely to transport people or luggage from one spot to another, there are other forms of donkey tourism where the donkeys are included in a different way. Donkey hikes, for example in France, are trips where tourists walk together with a donkey, often in a mountainous area. These trips can be done with a guide, but are mostly autonomous, i.e. not supervised by a human tourist service provider, in contrary to the majority of animal rides and hikes in the tourism industry. In France, donkeys have been present for a long time already. It is most likely that the Romans have brought the donkeys to France and other parts of Europe. There, the donkeys helped with activities like cultivating vineyards and ploughing fields ("A Brief History of the Domestic Donkey", 2017). Because of the donkey's physical form, a donkey is strong and robust, and has carrying and climbing qualities (La FNAR, n.d.-a). Donkeys have worked primarily as working animal in France in the past, but were replaced by engines over the years. Due to this mechanisation, the donkey suddenly became almost useless, and the number of donkeys dropped rapidly (La FNAR, n.d.-a; Porcher, 2017). Towards the end of the 20th century, the donkey has been rediscovered in a recreational setting. People started including the donkey in tourism hiking and riding activities, using the physical carrying and climbing qualities of the donkey. Recreational donkey trips in France thus already exist multiple years and are provided over the whole country. In total, there are more than 150 places in France where hiking trips with donkeys are provided (France Today, 2006). France even knows a foundation for donkey trips: the FNAR, Federation Nationale Anes et Randonnées (La FNAR, n.d.-b). From the total amount of farms providing the trips, around half are members of the FNAR (France Today, 2006). The FNAR guarantees to respect rules of ethics concerning the donkey, and ensures a good practice of the profession as providing donkey activities. (La FNAR, n.d.-b). Quality and welfare standards are thus ensured, such as making sure the donkeys are healthy; suitable equipment is being used; and that tourists show respectful behaviour towards the donkey, the environment and the locals. Furthermore, the FNAR enables the exchange of knowledge and experience between providers (La FNAR, n.d.-b).

2.3 Gaps in the existing literature

Available literature about donkeys mostly has a medical perspective (such as the study done by Vengust, Wen, & Bienzle, 2008) or a historical perspective, studying the domestication and use of the donkey (Bough, 2006; Rossel, Marshall, Peters, Pilgram, Adams, & O'Connor, 2008). Besides these two perspectives, there is a body of literature discussing donkey welfare, often of working donkeys. Dalla Costa et al. (2015) and Minero et al. (2016) study donkeys in an on-farm environment, while research done by Bereket & Addis (2019) focuses on working donkeys in Ethiopia. Blakeway (2014) studies the welfare of donkeys all over the world and the donkey-human interactions. Also the studies that involve the tourism sector mostly discuss working donkeys and their conditions and welfare (Burn et al., 2008).

Academic literature concerning donkeys thus rarely includes tourism. When tourism is included, the donkey is often being portrayed as a passive working animal, and donkey welfare is being addressed. There is thus a scientific gap related to literature about the use of donkeys within the tourism industry, as well as the human-animal relationships evolving from that. It is therefore interesting to examine the role that donkeys play in a tourism experience other than functioning exclusively as transport animals.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Tourism experiences

Tourists have a certain experience during their travels. Overall, tourists seek authenticity in their experience (MacCannell, 1973; Sternberg, 1997). Besides, tourists are looking for an experience that is different than their everyday lives; according to Cohen (1979, p.181), *“tourism is essentially a temporary reversal of everyday activities - it is a no-work, no-care, no-thrift situation”*. The quest for unfamiliar, novel things is thus central in tourism experiences. The views of Cohen and MacCannell, however, could be seen as somewhat outdated. The concept of tourism experiences has gained more academic attention since it has been linked to the concept of value creation (Cornelisse, 2018). Otto & Richie (1996, cited in Cornelisse, 2018, p.94) define a tourism experience as *“...a subjective mental state felt by participants”*. Tourists seek experiences that are memorable and satisfactory.

Modern tourists, however, want to have more control over their own experiences. This desire started to evolve when more people were able to book their holidays through the internet, and when online platforms where tourists can share their experiences evolved (Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009). Since experiences have such an important role in the tourism industry, which is one of the biggest fields creating experiences, it can be considered strange that tourists themselves are rarely included in creating and designing these experiences (Binkhorst, 2005; Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009).

3.2 Co-creation

Co-creation is a process in which consumers are involved with the producers in generating their experience (Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009). In order for co-creation to work out, a new kind of relationship between producers and consumers has to be established, since consumers will become co-creators of value (Campos, Mendes, Do Valle & Scott, 2017). In order to have co-creation between tourism providers and tourists, tourists have to play an active role in creating an experience, while interacting with other subjects (Campos et al., 2017). A small example of such co-creation is when tourists are able to change the colour of their hotel room lights (Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009). The co-creation process can happen before, during and after the travel (Campos, Mendes, Do Valle, & Scott, 2015). In order to include tourists as active rather than passive participants, the co-creation approach views them as individual human beings instead of tourists. In this way, their daily context can be investigated more extensively, which is needed to explore the tourists' needs and values (Binkhorst, 2005). The tourism experience network, which shows the relationships a person has when entering a certain tourism experience, now puts the human being in the centre. The subjects engaging in the tourism experience are displayed around it. These subjects can include friends, guides, the internet, accommodations and many more. The tourism experience network should be seen as a holistic network that includes all the stakeholders, and thus portrays the tourism sector as a multidisciplinary and transboundary field instead of a separate sector (Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009).

A relatively new idea in the field is the inclusion of animals in the tourism experience network (Carr, 2009; Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009; Bertella, 2014). Viewing animals solely as objects, according to the advocates of this approach, has become outdated. Binkhorst & Den Dekker (2009) state that animals can be included if they play an active role in creating the experience. The co-creation concept thus rejects the view of animals as objects, and views them as subjects instead.

The results from a case study from Bertella (2014) show that tourists establish relationships with animals during their experience. These relationships are seen as relevant for the experience and are thus included in the tourism experience network (Bertella, 2014). Therefore, this study focuses on the human-donkey relationships that are being built during the trips, which are thus central to the resulting tourist experiences.

3.3 Slow tourism

An important element of the experience of donkey trips is the slow walking pace. Slow tourism is a form of tourism that encompasses slow(er) and short(er) travelling, with an emphasis on the travel experience itself rather than the destination reached (Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011). There are no all-embracing definitions for slow tourism, since it can be seen as a framework consisting of multiple elements, varying according to every tourism context (Caffyn, 2012; Oh, Assaf, & Baloglu, 2014). The elements of slow tourism are thus not fixed, and slow tourism does not necessarily need to include all the elements; the more elements that are present, the slower the form of tourism is rated (Caffyn, 2012). When analysing the elements of slow tourism (see table 1), quite a lot of overlap with the elements of donkey tourism can be seen. Nevertheless, literature about slow travel or slow tourism does rarely mention equine tourism (Notzke, 2017).

Place	Exploring the local area
	Enjoying the landscape
	Travelling relatively sustainable
People	Having contact with the local people and their culture
	Consuming local products; giving back to local communities
	Experiencing limited commercialisation
	Experiencing authenticity
Time	Maximising time available for the trip
	Travelling slow
Travel	Minimising travel distance
	Minimising mechanisation and technology
	Travelling relatively sustainable (e.g. trying to avoid aircraft)
The personal	Relaxing; refreshing mind and body
	Learning a new skill
	Creating an opportunity for unstructured play for children
	Seeing slow travel as a state of mind
	Seeking out the unexpected; dealing with something unfamiliar
	Sharing experiences with travel companions
	Using all the five senses (smelling, seeing, hearing, tasting, touching)
	Disconnecting from everyday life

Table 1: Elements of slow tourism (Caffyn, 2012; Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011).

Table 1 shows that slow tourism has elements in 5 different categories, namely place, people, time, travel and the personal. These elements all relate to various sides of the slow tourism experience, which differ from ordinary tourism experiences. First of all, when tourism happens at a slow pace, tourists have more time to enjoy the local area and engage with local people and their culture

(Caffyn, 2012). Slow tourism is furthermore seen as a more authentic experience than ordinary forms of tourism, and authenticity is something that tourists desire to encounter (MacCannell, 1973). Besides travelling slow and minimising technology and mechanisation, also environmental impacts are minimised as good as possible. Lastly, as shown in table 1, a lot of elements from slow tourism deal with 'the personal'. According to a study by Oh et al. (2014), the two main goals of slow tourism could be revitalization and self-enrichment. In other words, the tourists get refreshed and inspired, and expand their own skills and perspectives. Modern definitions of tourism experiences share this focus on a tourist's mental state, according to Otto & Ritchie (1996, in Cornillisse, 2018).

The concept of slow tourism has rarely been included in research about animals in tourism; only Notzke (2017) has introduced the concept of slow tourism linked to equestrian tourism and mentions its potential. Also the concept of co-creation still has a growing body of literature related to the tourism industry. Besides this limited body of research, the tourism field is lagging behind in terms of applying the co-creation concept to the tourism industry, especially in relation to animals (Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009; Campos et al., 2015). Within the field of donkey tourism, it is interesting to analyse the various ways in which the donkeys actively influence the experience. Slow tourism is an example of a form of tourism in which tourists could be seen as co-creators, since one of its key concepts is the interaction tourists have with places and people (Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010, cited in Notzke, 2017, p.949). This connects the two frameworks, co-creation and slow tourism, that are being used in this study.

4. Research questions

After reviewing the existing literature and showing the two theoretical concepts that are used in this report, the research questions have been formed. The main research question of this report is the following:

How to understand the specific experience of donkey trips?

This main research question will be answered by looking at the following three sub questions:

1. How are donkey trips marketed and experienced?
2. Can donkey trips be seen as a form of animal co-creation?
3. Can donkey trips be seen as a form of slow tourism?

5. Methodology

5.1 Data collection

In order to conduct this research, a qualitative data collection method has been used. Online materials have been analysed in order to look at the way the donkey trips are being advertised, as well as well as way the trips are being experienced by the tourists. The online materials include all the websites, reviews, blogs and other relevant online materials that either advertise or review on donkey trips. The choice for online materials has been made because they are easily accessible, since online platforms are familiar places for people to give their opinions on, as well as to advertise for a product or service (in this case donkey trips). Furthermore, websites provide a rich amount of relevant data about a still under-studied tourism sector. The online materials that have been used are either written in Dutch, English or French. Since the research focuses on France, the search has been specified to reviews and advertisements about donkey trips in France.

In order to analyse the marketing and representation of donkey tourism, fourteen different sites advertising donkey trips in France have been used. In order to analyse the experiences of tourists, six different blogs reviewing donkey trips have been used, next to reviews written on Tripadvisor and provider's own sites. Donkey trips can either last one day or multiple days. This research tries to focus on multiple day trips, since the definition of tourism often comes with a time criterion of minimal 24 hours. According to Delambre (2011, as cited in Cernaianu & Sobry, 2019, p.4), the earliest definition of equestrian tourism included the time period of 24 hours or more. This temporal element in the definition was added by le Borgne and Kouchner (2002, as cited in Cernaianu & Sobry, 2019, p.4). Therefore, multiple day trips fit better to the definition of equestrian and donkey tourism. However, relevant data from one day trips or trips with an unclear temporal scale were included as well. Since most people include the duration of the trip in their reviews, the total amount of reviews has been sorted out easily. This resulted in a total of approximately 110 relevant reviews. An overview of the websites can be found in Appendix 1.

The information search does not imply a specific time period, however, the attempt was to use contemporary data from approximately the last ten years. Data had been searched until saturation was reached. This is the case when no new information can be obtained and thus when enough information has been gathered in order to correctly answer the research question. With regards to coding, this means that no more categories and variations for existing categories can be created (McGraw-Hill Education, n.d.).

5.2 Data analysis

A qualitative analysis is chosen to analyse the online data. In order to use the gathered data, it has been coded after data collection. Coding is a way of overviewing data and making sense of it with regards to the research question (Creswell, 2015). Coding moves from raw data to themes and theories in small steps (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). The process of coding is based on grounded theory, which is developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In short, grounded theory is a method to allow a researcher to move from data to theory, to develop new theories (McGraw-Hill Education, n.d.). These theories are then grounded in the data, rather than being pre-existing theories.

There are two ways in which grounded theory can be used (Heath & Cowley, 2004). According to Glaser, inductive coding is the optimal process. Within induction, the researcher develops categories based on general patterns from the data and then develops a theory around this. This method requires the researcher to avoid preconceived ideas and to constantly renew its categories. The approach of Strauss works with deduction, which means that the researcher first develops some ideas and then works with the data in order to verify or not verify his ideas. For this research, mostly inductive coding has been used. However, some ideas about co-creation of experience have already been developed, which means that the process cannot fully be seen as inductive since there is a pre-developed concept. The first step of inductive coding is open coding, when the most important and relevant parts of the data are highlighted. Then focussed coding happens, when multiple categories of patterns are developed, also called themes.

6. The experience of walking with a donkey – results and analysis

By studying the experience of donkey trips, four layers of human-donkey relationships can be defined. These different layers will be described in detail in the following sections.

6.1 The donkey as a carrier

First of all, the donkey offers the opportunity to carry luggage during the trip: *“Moka was carrying two large linen bags, fixed on the pack, hanging on either side of his flanks. In these bags, there was a stove, a pan, a pan, food, three mattresses, three duvets, a part of the clothes, ... The tent was placed on the bags.”* (T10). Walking with a donkey gives the tourists the opportunity to bring their luggage, food and drinks without having to carry it themselves. One way of framing the donkey is thus as a carrier. When mentioning the donkey as a carrier, tourists describe the donkey as strong, brave and having sure feet: *“She carried our bags bravely uphill, downhill, under the sun and in the rain!”* (T10).



6.2 The donkey as a friend and hiking companion

However, the donkey is not merely seen as a transport animal. Besides viewing the donkey as a carrier, tourists also see the donkey as a friend and a travelling companion: *“The donkey is carrying your luggage and is an ideal and affectionate walking companion.”* (T13).

Several providers state that a donkey appreciates the presence of man and likes affection, for instance in the form of cuddling: *“And do not forget, a donkey likes cuddles, gentleness and when you take care of him.”* (P12). Taking care of the donkey is a part of the human-donkey relationship; providers talk about feeding and grooming the donkey, for instance by going to the blacksmith. The providers ensure that the tourists will be given enough information about feeding, grooming, and packing the donkey in such a way that the baggage is evenly distributed over the back of the donkey. Besides talking about grooming the donkey,



several providers emphasise that their donkeys live in semi freedom and have to be balanced in head and body in order to take part in the donkey trips they organise.

Also the tourists themselves are concerned with the wellbeing of the donkeys involved in the trips. In one blog, a tourist expressed his concerns about the space the donkey had during the night, and the fact that he had to be tied up instead of being free: *“There’s not room for him to go on the long chain this evening. I had imagined that he would have his own little field each night and wouldn’t need to be tied up. Fortunately he doesn’t seem to mind too much.”* (T5). Also the feeling of responsibility is being addressed: *“Walking with a donkey is an encounter, an exchange, it is to feel responsible”* (P6).

Tourists mention that during their trip, they build trust between them and the donkey, resulting in a friendship. They start seeing the donkey as a real member of the family and develop a relationship with the donkey that *“stays in their soul”* (T10). Tourists mention the attachment between them and the donkey, and the way their relationship strengthens during the trip. The relationship between donkeys and children, but also between donkeys and the adults, is mentioned a lot, by both providers as well as tourists: *“You will be surprised to see marvellous relationships of complicity and affection between your children and your donkey, as well as a sense of responsibility on the part of your elders.”* (P8).

When looking specifically at the relationship between donkeys and children, there are often traits mentioned to describe why the donkey is a great companion for a child: *“Kaïcha faithful to herself, endearing, beautiful and so docile, causing the greatest happiness of our daughter.”* (T10). Furthermore, the donkey motivates the children to walk and is able to carry them when they are tired. In a way, donkey trips offer an element of play for children, as they enjoy the interactions with the donkey. This is an element of slow tourism, just like the act of sharing the tourism experience with the travel companions a tourist has. This also happens during donkey tourism, since the trips are often made together with family members.



An important part of the human-donkey relationship of seeing the donkey as a friend, seems to be the mutual care. As mentioned before, tourists have a feeling of responsibility and take care of the donkey in multiple ways. In return, they get the feeling that the donkey is also taking care of them. The quotes show that often, the donkey gets a lot of affection in return for the fact that he takes care of the children, or the luggage: *“The children took good care of Grichka, and he looked after them just as conscientiously!”* (T10).

“For 5 days Salsa, Kaïcha, Minos then replaced by Papillotte helped us to carry our luggage and we, we treated and cuddled them.” (T10).

“The 5 year old was carried by the donkey, as long as the adults led him and gave him lots of hugs.” (T12).

While the majority of the remarks about the donkeys are positive, some negative traits are mentioned as well. However, when they are mentioned, it goes together with mentioning positive traits as well: *"He was the ideal companion, always available even if sometimes a little stubborn"*. What is overall emphasised a lot is the fact that donkeys all have their own character and sensitivity:

"All have in general two great qualities: patience and indulgence ... virtues that are hardly honoured these days. Nevertheless, no matter how patient and indulgent they are, they remain living beings with their reactions and their own character." (P2) .

"Nevertheless, it is an animal with its character, its affect, its sensitivity (...) Of course all have their own personality and a well-defined character. If you come walk a small part with them, you will get to know them and if the encounter is over, you will discover how a donkey is sensitive, affectionate, sweet and endearing." (P6).

Besides expressing their feelings about human-donkey relationships and friendship during the trips, many tourists mention as well that the part of leaving and saying goodbye to the donkey is really hard. The children, but also the adults, find it very sad to leave the donkey behind, and many of them mention that they miss the donkey when being back at home:

"At the end of the 13 days, it was very difficult to say goodbye to Salsa and even the problems and inconveniences of the trip became indelible and positive memories." (T10)

"When I had to leave him I realized that I would not see him anymore, but the pictures of him remind me of the good times. It was really a beautiful experience that I will NEVER forget." [From Clemence 10 years.] (T10)

The memories they have of their trip are unforgettable, and many tourists mention that they would like to come back to re-experience their trip. Some reviews are written by tourists who already came back to the same place; some of them also walked with the same donkey as they had walked with before: *"We're joined by a lovely German couple (...) who are also here donkey trekking with their 7-year-old son. They're back for a second time and hiring the same donkey they had last year – Chico."* (T5).

"8 days with Basile in 2013 just like in 2012 for the 'very scenic' and magnificent nature (...)" (T13).

After analysing the dimension of seeing the donkey as a friend and a travel companion, it can be concluded overall that the donkey is seen as a subject instead of an object by the tourists. The tourists take care of the donkey, have a feeling of responsibility and mutual care and develop a relationship with the donkey. Also the providers emphasise that, although the tourists 'lend' a donkey, the donkey is not an object that can be rented: *"Also know that we feel more like "organizers of hikes" with donkeys than as "donkey renters" (a donkey is neither a bike nor a surfboard ...)"* (P2). Since the donkey is seen as a subject by both providers and tourists, animal co-creation can arise.

6.3 The donkey as a guide

Part of the human-donkey relationship is the question of authority. Although humans see the donkeys as their companions, they are also instructed to have soft but firm authority at some moments. Providers advise the tourists to walk in front of the donkey when there are steep hills, in order to protect the donkey from falling. This is thus more of a measure to ensure donkey wellbeing rather than a simple authoritative measure. Tourists also mention that they do not allow the donkey to eat during walking, and that they have to use a strong voice and sometimes even a twig to move the donkey forwards. However, this human authority also fails multiple times: it has been mentioned that sometimes, the donkey still refuses to move or walk over a certain path; in one case, the donkey even ate the twig: *“Jason would plod along quite happily once he got going, but if he got distracted by some tempting dandelions it took a lot of stick-waving and shouting to get him moving again. At one point he actually ate the stick as if to say “Yeah, whatever – you’re not in charge of me.”* (T6).

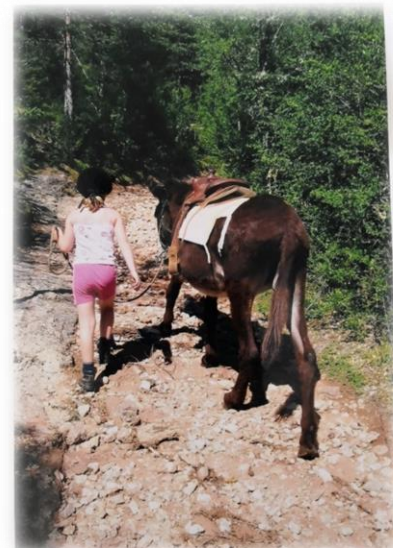
6.3.1 Having a leading role

Also in general, donkeys take the authority during some moments, for instance when the tourists do not know the way. There are several cases in which the tourists talk about the donkey having a leading and guiding role: *“Prune knows the way. Just before Bruzon we have some doubts, but Prune stands her ground: she pulls this way. This happens more often.”* (T1). Words like cooperative, thoughtful, calm and smart are furthermore used to describe the guiding role of the donkey. During these guiding moments, the donkeys have a leading role since they know and show which route to take. In other words, the donkeys are co-creating the tourism experience by leading the tourists in the right direction. Some tourists have even stated that they see the donkey not only as an active participant, but as the main actor of their experience. This statement is also emphasised by the quote of the donkey eating the stick, and thus taking the authority himself. This shows that besides playing a guiding role in navigating, the donkey also guides the pace of the trip.

6.3.2 Walking at a slow pace

According to reviews, walking with a donkey is a really different way of walking, since the donkey adds a new dimension to the routine of walking. Tourists state that walking with a donkey can be called an experience, rather than just a trip or a vacation. Walking with a donkey is thus an experience where tourists have to deal with something unfamiliar, for which they have to learn a new skill. These features correspond with the concept of slow tourism, which states that tourists indeed learn a new skill and seek the unexpected. Besides this, donkey tourism is also being described as *“an authentic experience, where time stands still, to be enjoyed with friends or family.”* (P12).

Moreover, the donkey walks at a slow pace, approximately 3-5 kilometres per hour. Both tourists as well as providers state that this allows tourists to enjoy the nature through and with the donkey. During their trip, tourists can take things slowly and enjoy the scenery around them. This resembles exactly the time and place elements of slow tourism, since travelling happens slowly while the landscape and nature are being explored and enjoyed:



“... At the pace of his step, you will finally take the time to look at what surrounds you: feel the nature, observe the fauna and flora, discover the local heritage ...” (P14)

“It's walking at another pace. It is to see, to listen, to be immersed in every moment, every landscape. It's taking time to rest, to breathe, to be there. (...) It's walking differently.” (P6)

“Walking with a donkey feels like a real back-to nature experience which forces you to take things as they come – the donkey knows there's no great hurry to get where you are going – you will just have to accept it and slow down too.” (T8)

Besides the enjoyment of the nature, the slow pace combined with the surroundings also allows tourists to disconnect and relax. This also resembles slow tourism, where relaxing is one of the elements of slow tourism with regards to the personal. Tourists mention that during the trip, they forget modern civilisation and feel cut off from the world:

“7 days to forget the modern civilization (...)” (T13).

“(...) it was a revelation and a real disconnection: to walk all day, in all calmness and with beautiful weather: goodbye to the Paris region, its cars, the subway, the crowd and hello freedom.” (T10).

Furthermore, the aspect of a technological disconnection has also been mentioned:

“Well-marked walks, varied in nature, ensured the happiness of our two children of 9 and 12 years old, far away from video games and tablets!” (T12). The fact that technology is limited during the donkey trips is another element of slow tourism.

6.4 The donkey as a social mediator

Next to creating this feeling of relaxation and disconnection, walking with donkeys also allows tourists to meet others during their trip. Quite some reviews talk about the way the donkey works like a social mediator; the donkey is the one attracting the attention, which leads to social encounters between humans:

“Walking with Lulu, we become the Kardashians of Conques: people exclaim with delight, and rush to take pictures.” (T4).

“Walking with a donkey is an incredible social vector ... The presence of your companion with long ears will arouse curiosity and sympathy all around you, a climate conducive to beautiful human encounters.” (P8).

“The donkey, as a great social mediator, has also allowed us to make beautiful encounters in the villages or paths that we passed; because everywhere, he awakens a great curiosity, not only with the children, the parents and the other hikers, but also among the elderly, who are very benevolent to meet us.” (T13).

These social encounters, sometimes with the locals, are part of a slow tourism experience in which having contact with (local) people is one of the elements.

7. Conclusion and discussion

7.1 Conclusion

The objective of this study is to analyse whether donkey trips, as marketed and experienced, relate to the concept of animal co-creation of slow tourism experiences. The main research question 'how to understand the specific experience of donkey trips?' can be answered by analysing the human-donkey relationships that arise while walking with a donkey. From these human-donkey relationships, four main layers have been determined. Besides showing how donkey trips are marketed and experienced, these layers also address the co-creation of the donkeys.

First of all, donkeys are being described and seen as carriers, since they carry the things that the tourists want to bring with them. However, donkeys are also seen as friends and hiking companions of the tourists. It has been shown that tourists develop extensive relationships with the donkeys, in a relatively short period of time. Also the specific relationships with children are being described. There exists a mutual care between the tourists and the donkeys and the tourists furthermore develop a feeling of responsibility. Since tourists see the donkey as a companion and develop extensive relationships with them, it can be concluded that the donkeys are viewed as subjects instead of objects. Furthermore, the human-animal relationships that are formed are seen as relevant for the experience. Both are elements of animal co-creation of an experience.

The third layer of human-donkey relationships is the donkey being a guide. The donkey for instance acts as a guide when he shows tourists the route. This emphasises the active role donkeys play in the experience. Besides deciding which way to go, the donkey also decides the pace of walking. Tourists might try to move the donkey forwards, but this often fails. Besides this role of guide, donkeys also act as social mediators, the fourth and last layer of human-donkey relationships. Since the donkey attracts attention, he allows the tourists to have encounters with locals or other tourists.

Overall, it can be concluded that donkey trips include the co-creation of donkeys. The donkey plays an active role in creating the experience since he acts as a guide, determines the pace and works like a social mediator. This means that the donkeys are more than active participants and co-creators: they might be seen as the most important and central players of the tourism experience, since many elements of the tourism experience are being determined by the donkeys. This would imply that they are not only included in the tourism experience network, but that they are in the middle of it.

Since the slow pace is being determined by the donkey, tourists have no other choice than accepting this pace. As a result, tourists have more time to explore the nature and their personal self. Donkey trips can be seen as slow tourism experiences because they have several elements from slow tourism. Besides the slow pace, leading to enjoyment and relaxation, tourists mention that they feel disconnected from their everyday life. The children are especially disconnected from internet and videogames, since donkey trips involve little to no technology. Furthermore, walking with a donkey requires learning a new skill, and is an unfamiliar activity that tourists have to deal with. Tourists value donkey trips as an authentic experience. Also contact with local people happens during the trips, since the donkey acts like a social mediator. Overall, it can be concluded that donkey tourism matches enough elements of slow tourism to identify it as a slow tourism experience.

Different from other forms of slow tourism, the animal is the one that leads the tourists to a slow tourism experience. Without the donkey, the tourists might have walked faster or made less contact with other people, decreasing their engagement with places and people and thus decreasing the degree of slow tourism. Furthermore, tourists might not actively see themselves as slow tourists during donkey trips, since donkey tourism is not specifically being marketed as being a slow tourism activity. While Dickinson & Lumsdon (2010, cited in Notzke, 2017, p.949) have made an attempt at linking slow tourism and co-creation together, other academic literature has not related these two concepts to each other. This study thus shows that the animal co-creation leads to some elements of slow tourism. Because the donkey determines the pace, this results in the tourists being able to enjoy and explore the nature around them. And since the donkey acts as a social mediator, this results in tourists being able to have contact with the locals.

7.2 Contributions to the literature

Existing literature has shown that animals have different roles in our society, which can be paradoxical as well, and that these roles deal with different human-animal relationships (Braje, 2011, in Hosey & Melfi, 2014; Serpell, 1996). This study has shown that donkey tourism involves complex human-donkey relationships that have multiple dimensions: the donkey as a carrier; the donkey as a friend and a hiking companion; the donkey as a guide; and the donkey as a social mediator. During donkey trips, the donkeys are thus seen as subjects by the tourists. This is different from other forms of tourism where animals are involved. Wildlife tourism, for instance, deals with tourists gazing at the animals and making pictures of them (Markwell, 2015). While donkey trips include two-way interaction between tourists and animals, wildlife often only includes one-way interactions since the animals function as attractions for the tourists. Furthermore, the existing literature about donkeys involved in tourism activities shows that donkeys are mostly seen as transport animals (Burn et al. (2008), Burn et al. (2010)). Animals are thus often seen as objects that service or attract tourists. Within donkey trips, however, the transport function is only one of the four dimensions of the donkey-human relationships.

Besides only seeing the donkeys as subjects, donkey trips go one step further: the donkeys can mostly be seen as active participants who co-create tourism experiences via their complex human-animal relationships. Since the donkey acts as a guide, he determines the pace and often determines the route as well. Furthermore, the donkey as a social mediator ensures social interactions between tourists and other tourists or locals. This also means that sometimes, the donkey takes the authority by navigating the tourists or slowing their pace down. This emphasises the fact that the humans during donkey trips are not superior to the donkey. Existing literature has shown that in our modern society, humans often have the feeling of superiority over animals (Hosey & Melfi, 2014). This study however shows that superiority is not present in donkey trips, while humans view the donkey as their companions and agree upon the donkey deciding the pace and route.

7.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research

A weakness of this study is the fact that only online materials have been used. These materials were often in French, which meant that they had to be translated. In order to make sure there are no misinterpretations, this is quite time consuming. Besides this, no further explanation can be asked about the statements that tourists make in blogs and reviews, which can be useful when a statement is not fully understood or when it would be relevant to gain some more information.

For further research, it would therefore be interesting to use observations and interviews as well, in order to create more new data besides the existing blogs and reviews. One could for instance schedule interviews with providers as well as tourists, and observe the way tourists deal with the donkey during their trip.

Because of the before explained relevance of both the concepts of slow tourism, as well as co-creation, further research on those topics combined with donkey tourism would strengthen the existing literature body. Especially the link with slow tourism is still completely new in the field, and thus future studies could make an effort to further reduce this gap.

8. References

- A Brief History of the Domestic Donkey. (2017, October 10). Retrieved June 19, 2019, from <https://donkeywise.org/2017/10/10/a-brief-history-of-the-domestic-donkey/>
- Auerbach, C., & Silverstein, L. B. (2003). Coding 1: The Basic Ideas. In C. Auerbach, & L. B. Silverstein (Eds.), *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis* (pp. 31–42). New York and London, US: New York University Press.
- Beardsworth, A., & Bryman, A. (2001). The wild animal in late modernity. *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), 83–104.
- Beasley, D. R. (1983). *Through Paphlagonia with a Donkey: A Travel Journal*. New York, USA: Davus Publications.
- Bereket, M. T., & Addis, K. G. (2019). The neglected welfare status of working donkeys in Ethiopia: The case of Dale district in Southern Ethiopia. *Journal of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Health*, 11(1), 6–11. <https://doi.org/10.5897/jvmah2018.0717>
- Bertella, G. (2014). The Co-creation of Animal-based Tourism Experience. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 39(1), 115–125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2014.11081330>
- Birke, L. (2004). Animal Performances: An Exploration of Intersections between Feminist Science Studies and Studies of Human/Animal Relationships. *Feminist Theory*, 5(2), 167–183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700104045406>
- Binkhorst, E. (2005). *The co-creation tourism experience* (Paper ESADE). Retrieved from https://www.esade.edu/cedit2006/pdfs2006/papers/esther_binkhorst_paper_esade_may_06.pdf
- Binkhorst, E., & Den Dekker, T. (2009). Agenda for Co-Creation Tourism Experience Research. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 18(2-3), 311–327. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368620802594193>
- Blakeway, S. (2014). The Multi-dimensional Donkey in Landscapes of Donkey-Human Interaction. *Relations. Beyond Anthropocentrism*, 2(1), 59–77. <https://doi.org/10.7358/rela-2014-001-blak>

- Blakeway, S., & Cousquer, G. O. (2018). Donkeys and Mules and Tourism. In N. Carr, & D. M. Broom (Eds.), *Tourism and Animal Welfare* (pp. 126–131). <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781786391858.0126>
- Bough, J. (2006). From value to vermin: a history of the donkey in Australia. *Australian Zoologist*, *33*(3), 388–397. <https://doi.org/10.7882/az.2006.013>
- Bough, J. (2010). The Mirror Has Two Faces: Contradictory Reflections of Donkeys in Western Literature from Lucius to Balthazar. *Animals*, *1*(1), 56–68. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani1010056>
- Burden, F., & Thiemann, A. (2015). Donkeys Are Different. *Journal of Equine Veterinary Science*, *35*(5), 376–382. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jevs.2015.03.005>
- Burn, C. C., Dennison, T. L., & Whay, H. R. (2010). Environmental and demographic risk factors for poor welfare in working horses, donkeys and mules in developing countries. *The Veterinary Journal*, *186*(3), 385–392. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tvjl.2009.09.016>
- Burn, C. C., Pritchard, J. C., Farajat, M., Twaissi, A. A., & Whay, H. R. (2008). Risk factors for strap-related lesions in working donkeys at the World Heritage Site of Petra in Jordan. *The Veterinary Journal*, *178*(2), 263–271. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tvjl.2007.07.014>
- Caffyn, A. (2012). Advocating and Implementing Slow Tourism. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *37*(1), 77–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2012.11081690>
- Campos, A. C., Mendes, J., Do Valle, P. O., & Scott, N. (2015). Co-creation of tourist experiences: a literature review. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *21*(4), 369–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2015.1081158>
- Campos, A. C., Mendes, J., Do Valle, P. O., & Scott, N. (2017). Co-creating animal-based tourist experiences: Attention, involvement and memorability. *Tourism Management*, *63*, 100–114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.06.001>
- Carr, N. (2009). Animals in the tourism and leisure experience. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *12*(5-6), 409–411. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500903132575>
- Cernaianu, S., & Sobry, C. (2019). A Diagnose of Equestrian Tourism: The Case of France and Romania. In A. Artal-Tur, M. Kozak, & N. Kozak (Eds.), *Trends in Tourist Behavior: New Products and Experiences from Europe* (pp. 3–17). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-11160-1>
- Cohen, E. (1979). A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences. *Sociology*, *13*(2), 179–201. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003803857901300203>
- Cohen, E. (2009). The Wild and the Humanized: Animals in Thai Tourism. *Anatolia*, *20*(1), 100–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2009.10518898>
- Cornelisse, M. (2018). Understanding memorable tourism experiences: A case study. *Research in Hospitality Management*, *8*(2), 93–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2018.1553370>
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher*. NY, US: SAGE Publications.

- Dalla Costa, E., Dai, F., Murray, L. A. M., Guazzetti, S., Canali, E., & Minero, M. (2015). A study on validity and reliability of on-farm tests to measure human–animal relationship in horses and donkeys. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, *163*, 110–121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2014.12.007>
- DeMello, M. (2012). *Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-animal Studies*. New York, USA: Columbia University Press.
- France Today. (2006, June 30). Donkey treks in France. Retrieved April 13, 2019, from <https://www.francetoday.com/activity/walking/donkey-treks-france/>
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, US: Aldine Publishing.
- Gregory, J. (2007). Donkeys and the Equine Hierarchy in Archaic Greek Literature. *The Classical Journal*, *102*(3), 193–212. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30037985>
- Guy, J. (2019, April 4). Tourists urged not to strain Greek donkeys. *CNN*. Retrieved May 31, 2019, from <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/santorini-donkey-campaign-scli-intl/index.html>
- Heath, H., & Cowley, S. (2004). Developing a grounded theory approach: a comparison of Glaser and Strauss. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, *41*(2), 141–150. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0020-7489\(03\)00113-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0020-7489(03)00113-5)
- Hosey, G., & Melfi, V. (2014). Human-Animal Interactions, Relationships and Bonds: A Review and Analysis of the Literature. *International Journal of Comparative Psychology*, *27*(1), 117–142. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6955n8kd>
- Jimenez, J.R. (1917). *Platero Y Yo*. Madrid, Spain: Casa Editorial Calleja.
- La FNAR. (n.d.-a). Histoire de l'âne. Retrieved April 13, 2019, from <http://www.ane-et-rando.com/fonction>
- La FNAR. (n.d.-b). Qui sommes nous? Retrieved April 13, 2019, from <http://www.ane-et-rando.com/qui-sommes-nous>
- Lumsdon, L. M., & McGrath, P. (2011). Developing a conceptual framework for slow travel: a grounded theory approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *19*(3), 265–279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2010.519438>
- Lynne, B. (2019, April 9). Campaign urges tourists to think before supporting donkey taxi rides. Retrieved May 31, 2019, from <https://www.earth.com/news/tourists-donkey-taxi-rides/>
- Markwell, K. (2015). Birds, Beasts and Tourists: Human-Animal Relationships in Tourism. In K. Markwell (Ed.), *Animals and Tourism: Understanding Diverse Relationships* (pp. 1–26). Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications.
- Maurstad, A., Davis, D., & Cowles, S. (2013). Co-being and intra-action in horse-human relationships: a multi-species ethnography of be(com)ing human and be(com)ing horse. *Social Anthropology*, *21*(3), 322–335. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12029>

- MacCannell, D. (1973). Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings. *American Journal of Sociology*, 79(3), 589–603. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2776259>
- McGraw-Hill Education. (n.d.). Grounded theory methodology [Educational Chapter]. Retrieved April 13, 2019, from <https://www.mheducation.co.uk/openup/chapters/9780335244492.pdf>
- Minero, M., Dalla Costa, E., Dai, F., Murray, L. A. M., Canali, E., & Wemelsfelder, F. (2016). Use of Qualitative Behaviour Assessment as an indicator of welfare in donkeys. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 174, 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2015.10.010>
- Notzke, C. (2017). Equestrian tourism: animal agency observed. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(8), 948–966. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2017.1349081>
- Oh, H., Assaf, A. G., & Baloglu, S. (2014). Motivations and Goals of Slow Tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55(2), 205–219. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287514546228>
- Plous, S. (1993). Psychological Mechanisms in the Human Use of Animals. *Journal of Social Issues*, 49(1), 11–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1993.tb00907.x>
- Porcher, J. (2017). *The Ethics of Animal Labor: A Collaborative Utopia*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Rossel, S., Marshall, F., Peters, J., Pilgram, T., Adams, M. D., & O'Connor, D. (2008). Domestication of the donkey: Timing, processes, and indicators. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 105(10), 3715–3720. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0709692105>
- Serpell, J. (1996). *In the Company of Animals: A Study of Human-Animal Relationships*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, H. (2019, April 2). Tourists urged to avoid riding donkeys up Santorini's steep steps. *The Guardian*. Retrieved May 31, 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/02/tourists-avoid-riding-donkeys-santorini-steps>
- Sternberg, E. (1997). The iconography of the tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(4), 951–969. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0160-7383\(97\)00053-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0160-7383(97)00053-4)
- Stevenson, R. L. (1879). *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*. Retrieved from <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/535>
- The Donkey Sanctuary. (n.d.). All about donkeys in tourism industries. Retrieved May 31, 2019, from <https://www.thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk/what-we-do/issues/donkeys-in-tourism-and-leisure/about>
- Vengust, M., Wen, X., & Bienzle, D. (2008). Herpesvirus-Associated Neurological Disease in a Donkey. *Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation*, 20(6), 820–823. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104063870802000620>
- Walsh, F. (2009a). Human-Animal Bonds II: The Role of Pets in Family Systems and Family Therapy. *Family Process*, 48(4), 481–499. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2009.01297.x>

Walsh, F. (2009b). Human-Animal Bonds I: The Relational Significance of Companion Animals. *Family Process*, 48(4), 462–480. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2009.01296.x>

Yudina, O., & Grimwood, B. S. R. (2015). Situating the wildlife spectacle: ecofeminism, representation, and polar bear tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 24(5), 715–734. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2015.1083996>

All the images used in this report are my personal property; the rights belong to me.

9. Appendix I: overview of websites used during data collection

	<i>Site</i>	<i>Information</i>
T1 - T2 - T3	https://ezeltjetrokje.nl/reisverslagen-van-ezeltochten	Three reviews about multiple day trips
T4	https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2017/aug/20/donkey-trekking-rural-france-lot-valley-family-holiday	Review about a multiple day trip
T5	https://donkeytime.org/2017/06/30/lost-in-provence-diary-of-a-six-day-donkey-trek/	Review about a multiple day trip (same farm as blog site #2)
T6	https://catherinecooper.wordpress.com/2012/01/11/donkey-trekking-in-france-with-children/	Review about a single day trip

Table 2: blogs that review donkey trips

	<i>Site</i>	<i>Information</i>
P1	http://www.ane-et-rando.com	Site made by the FNAR, advertising donkey trips in general
P2	http://www.balladanes.fr/anes.php	Site advertising multiple day trips
P3	http://www.signoles.com/	Site advertising donkey trips
P4	https://www.provencanes83.com/qui-somme-nous.html	Site advertising donkey trips
P5	http://www.oreilles-luberon.fr/	Site advertising donkey trips
P6	http://www.locdanes.fr/	Site advertising donkey trips

Table 3: websites from providers marketing the trips

P7	http://www.lapetite-ferme.fr/index.html	T7	Site advertising donkey trips Blog site #2 and #5 have written reviews about a multiple day trip provided by this farm
P8	http://en.monadies.fr./Accueil.htm	T8	Site advertising donkey trips Blog site #4 has a written review about this
P9	http://anatole-rando-ane.fr/nos-randonnees/	T9	Single and multiple day trips. 5 reviews from tourists on their own site
P10	http://aneazimut.fr/	T10	Single and multi-day trips. 44 reviews from tourists on their own site
P11	https://ane-et-randonnee.fr/en/your-hike-with-a-donkey/your-hiking-	T11	Multiple day trips. 13 reviews on Tripadvisor.

	compagnon.html		https://www.tripadvisor.nl/Attraction_Review-g482927-d8497599-Reviews-Gentiane-Vialas_Lozere_Occitanie.html
P12	https://www.le-monde-dossyane.com/randonnees-nature-avec-anes-vacances-famille-sologne-val-de-loire/	T12	Single and multiple day trips. 122 reviews on Tripadvisor. https://www.tripadvisor.nl/Attraction_Review-g1792742-d1854786-Reviews-Les_anes_de_Madame-Contres_Loir_et_Cher_Centre_Val_de_Loire.html
P13	http://www.anesdeblore.fr/	T13	Single and multiple day trips. 50 reviews on Tripadvisor. https://www.tripadvisor.fr/Attraction_Review-g1526429-d2055761-Reviews-Anes_De_Blore-Valdeblore_Alpes_Maritimes_Provence_Alpes_Cote_d_Azur.html44
P14	http://www.lesanesdelareverie.com/quand-les-chemins-ont-des-oreilles.html	T14	Single and multiple day trips. 45 reviews on Tripadvisor. https://www.tripadvisor.fr/Attraction_Review-g2052555-d8453802-Reviews-Les_Anes_de_la_Reverie-Saint_Cesaire_Charente_Maritime_Nouvelle_Aquitaine.html

Table 4: websites from providers plus corresponding reviews