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**TOWARD TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING
DURING SHORT-TERM INTERNATIONAL
STUDY TOURS: IMPLICATIONS FOR
INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN**

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**SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
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**University
of Glasgow**

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ABSTRACT

Short-term international study tours are increasingly available as an elective academic credit course at Canadian universities and seminaries. My research examined the pedagogy of such study tours to ascertain whether a study tour that encourages critical reflection assists students to synthesise learning to the extent that their pre-existing conceptual framework is modified or transformed. Since all the tours had a spiritual or religious theme, I also investigated the extent to which these study tours encouraged transcendent experiences and spiritual learning.

I investigated four study tours, two of which went to Spain and included a pilgrimage along El Camino de Santiago, another to Israel/Palestine exploring both historical sites and contemporary issues, and the fourth to Cyprus, Malta, and Rome, exploring the history and legacy of Paul, the Christian apostle. In addition, I participated in a local Ontario, Canada, pilgrimage and a service learning trip to an orphanage in Mexico as comparatives to the study tours. Adopting an interpretivist methodology, data was gathered from students and professors through questionnaires and interviews, and from my observations as a participant researcher. The data were interpreted to map how learning is occurring using Kolb's experiential learning cycle and Illeris' three-dimensional learning model, and to identify what contributes to learning.

The research discovered that the student's localised conceptual framework associated with the home context can be modified or transformed by the experience on-the-ground at the tour destination, resulting in transformative learning or moving students toward transformative learning. To encourage student learning, pre-tour preparatory studies should address the potential gap in student's background knowledge and their existing meaning schemes, and should prepare the students for experiential learning. Reflective time and space should be provided during the tour to allow students to process their experiences, including emotional responses. And, post-tour assignments should encourage critical reflection that integrates and consolidates learning. To encourage spiritual learning requires accommodating students' diverse

interpretations of spirituality, and allowing students similar space and time, particularly at sacred places, to process spiritual experiences.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	viii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	ix
DEFINITIONS	x
ABBREVIATIONS	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
SHORT-TERM INTERNATIONAL STUDY TOURS.....	1
FOCUS OF THE ENQUIRY	2
PURPOSE.....	3
SECONDARY INVESTIGATION	3
CONCEPTUAL TOOLS AND ASSUMPTIONS.....	4
NARRATIVE SIGNATURE	5
PLAN OF PRESENTATION.....	6
CHAPTER 2: REFLECTION AND LEARNING.....	7
REFLECTION	13
TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING	18
INTERCULTURAL LEARNING	24
CHAPTER 3: SPIRITUALITY	29
SPIRITUALITY.....	29
CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY	31
SPIRITUALITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION	33
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS	37
METHODOLOGY	37
METHODS	38
Participant observation	39
Journal	42
Questionnaire.....	42
Interviews	43

Data Analysis	44
SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	45
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF STUDY TOURS	48
TOUR 1: THE WAY OF ST. JAMES LEADERSHIP PILGRIMAGE (SPAIN).....	48
The Students' View	49
Motivations and Expectations.....	50
Participant Learning.....	50
Pre-Tour Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments	52
Reflection and Transformative Learning	52
Spiritual Experience and Learning	53
Additional Student Assessment	55
The Professors' View	57
Mapping Learning	62
TOUR 2: HOLY LAND STUDY TOUR (ISRAEL/PALESTINE)	66
The Students' View	67
Motivations and Expectations.....	67
Participant Learning.....	68
Pre-Tour Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments	72
Reflection and Transformative Learning	73
Spiritual Experience and Learning	75
Additional Student Assessment	76
The Professors' View	78
Mapping Learning	82
TOUR 3: EDUCATOR'S SEARCH FOR PURPOSE AND MEANING (SPAIN)	85
The Students' View	86
Motivation and Expectations	86
Participant Learning.....	87
Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments.....	89
Reflection and Transformative Learning	90
Spiritual Experience and Learning	92
Additional Student Assessment	93
The Professors' View	95
Mapping Learning	100
TOUR 4: IN THE STEPS OF PAUL (CYPRUS, MALTA, ITALY)	103
The Students' View	104

Motivations and Expectations.....	105
Participant Learning.....	106
Pre-Tour Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments	107
Reflection and Transformative Learning	108
Spiritual Experience and Learning	110
Additional Student Assessment	111
The Professors' View	113
Mapping Learning	118
COMPARATIVE ACTIVITIES	120
Guelph–Midland Walking Pilgrimage	120
Mexico Service Learning Trip.....	126
Mapping Learning	129
CHAPTER 6: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	132
ADOPTING AN APPROPRIATE MENTAL MODEL	132
PRE-TOUR PREPARATION AND STUDY.....	135
ON-THE-GROUND DURING THE TOUR.....	140
Content	141
Incentive	143
Interaction.....	146
Transformative Learning and Reflection	147
Teaching	150
POST-TOUR REFLECTION AND CONSOLIDATION	152
OTHER FACTORS.....	156
Community	157
Spirituality.....	157
Logistical Challenges.....	159
ETHICAL QUESTIONS	160
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	164
CONCLUSION	164
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE.....	167
Pre-Tour.....	167
During the Tour	167
Post-Tour.....	169
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	169
List of References	172

Appendix A: Ethics Committee Approval.....	181
Appendix B: Questionnaires.....	184
Appendix C: Interview Themes	186
Appendix D: Interview Schedule	187
Appendix E: The Way of St. James Leadership Pilgrimage	189
Appendix F: Holy Land Study Tour	191
Appendix G: Educator’s Search for Purpose and Meaning	197
Appendix H: In the Steps of Paul.....	200

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle	8
Figure 2: Learning Processes	9
Figure 3: Dimensions of Learning	9
Figure 4: First Camino Study Tour Learning Map	63
Figure 5: Israel/Palestine Study Tour Learning Map	83
Figure 6: Second Camino Study Tour Learning Map	101
Figure 7: Cyprus, Malta, and Rome Study Tour Learning Map	119
Figure 8: Individual Filtering	130
Figure 9: Study Tour Learning Map	133

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I also acknowledge the support and inspiration of my classmates. During our Glasgow study weekends you demonstrated how to add an element of fun to scholarly pursuits. I especially acknowledge and thank my friend and colleague, Dean, with whom I have now journeyed through three academic degrees.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature: _____

A black rectangular box redacting the author's signature.

Name: _____

Uriah Pond

DEFINITIONS

Intercultural competence is ‘the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes’ (Deardorff, 2008:33). Selby (2008) notes: ‘*International* education leads students to learn about the objective, material culture of others – their political and social institutions, their language, art, and literature – while *intercultural* education leads students to learn about the subjective meaning people ascribe to events and relationships with institutions and other people, and ultimately to themselves’ (4).

Learning is defined by Kolb (2015) as ‘the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience’ (49). Illeris (2006) claims ‘learning implies a change that is permanent to some extent or other ... until it is overlaid by new learning or gradually forgotten’ (3).

Modernism is ‘largely about order and rationalism. ... [It is] founded on a belief that there was an objective reality existing independently from one’s thought and appearing almost in the same way to anyone, and such a reality could be expressed objectively through truth, science and knowledge’ (Nguyen, 2010:90).

Postmodernism is described succinctly by Lyotard (1979) as ‘incredulity toward metanarratives’ (xxiv). Nguyen (2010) elaborates: ‘It is a discontinuity with the modern era which celebrated technological successes from the Enlightenment, and it connotes an escape from the legacy of Euro-centric metaphysics, authoritarianism and domination. ... The main theoretical avowal of postmodernity is its rejection of grand theories of Western culture due to their lost credibility and its disdain in its different shapes and forms’ (88-9).

Spirituality is defined by Perrin (2007): ‘Spirituality refers to a fundamental capacity in human beings. It is expressed within human experience before people identify that experience with a particular religious or spiritual set of beliefs, rituals, or ethics. Spirituality as an innate human characteristic, involves the capacity for self-transcendence: being meaningfully involved

in, and personally committed to, the world beyond an individual's personal boundaries' (20).

A **study tour** is a course offered by a university or seminary for academic credit, and includes travel to a destination related to the subject being studied.

Transcendent is defined by Hick (2004): 'Experience of the transcendent is structured either by the concept of deity, which presides over the theistic traditions, or by the concept of absolute, which presides over the non-theistic traditions' (14).

Transformative learning is defined by Mezirow (1990a): 'The process of learning through critical self-reflection, which results in the reformulation of a meaning perspective to allow a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative understanding of one's experience. Learning includes acting on these insights.' (xvi)

ABBREVIATIONS

AQ	Additional Qualification
MSU	Montana State University
OCT	Ontario College of Teachers
PHC	Possibilities House for Children
WLS	Waterloo Lutheran Seminary
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
sv	<i>sub verbo</i> (under the word)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Increasing globalisation and ease of travel have increased the demand for international study options at the tertiary level. In addition to studying internationally for a semester, a year, or a full degree, many students are opting for short-term study tours, lasting only a few days or weeks, to complete a unit of study for academic credit. The subject of study may be any academic discipline, and destination options are limited only by imagination and security risks. A brief non-exhaustive, online search found 50 Canadian universities and seminaries, or their partnering institutions, offering study tour, summer abroad, or student exchange opportunities going to approximately 120 different countries, either for academic credit or as continuing education. Both the opportunity and demand for international study experiences appear unprecedented. About international learning programmes in the Canadian context, Desjardins (2013) claims they ‘are here to stay ... and they offer marvelous opportunities for innovative forms of pedagogy and learning’ (230). Higher education’s readiness to accommodate international learning is summarised by Benham Rennick and Desjardins (2013):

The relevant scholarship on teaching and learning is predominantly US[United States]-centred, and it is also not extensive. The turn to “global” is so recent, and learning abroad programs are increasing at such a rate, that the literature lacks a broad base and simply cannot keep up with the realities on-the-ground. (5)

Short-term international study tours, one type of international learning experience being pursued by Canadian higher education students, is reasonably accessible to most students and is the subject of this study.

SHORT-TERM INTERNATIONAL STUDY TOURS

A study tour, also called study trip, travel study, and learning tour, is a course offered by a university or seminary for academic credit, and includes travel to a destination related to the subject area. A study tour may be offered as an undergraduate or postgraduate elective course within a degree programme. In some cases, the same course may be taken for either an undergraduate or a postgraduate credit based on assignment requirements, or two or more credit

courses may be offered concurrently for the same tour. Study tour courses may be in almost any subject area, including fashion design, but more common themes are history, geography, culture, religion, business, education, environment, art, and tourism. Study tours often have prerequisite requirements, so students may have completed a portion of a degree programme before participating in a study tour course. Pre-tour preparation often includes readings and lectures, and may also require researching tour sites or other activities, and completing assignments before departure. The tour is led by one or more professors and often employs local guides at the destination. The study tours investigated here went to international destinations, but study tours may also be to destinations within the institution's country. Students submit their final academic assignments post-tour, based wholly or in part on the tour experience.

Study tours are similar to study abroad programmes in which a student studies at an international academic institution for a semester or a year. But, unlike study abroad programmes, the students are accompanied by one or more professors from their home institution, and travel to the tour destination with a group of about ten to thirty students, for typically no more than two weeks. The group may include continuing education students who are auditing the course rather than seeking academic credit. Unlike service learning trips, students are usually not providing relief or care, constructing facilities, or providing support to local groups. Study tours are typically less localised and less embedded in a host community. So, while sharing commonalities, such as a cross-cultural experience, study tours differ from study abroad programmes and service learning trips. International study has increased significantly in recent years, but research has focused on study abroad semesters or years, and on service learning trips. My research is investigating the pedagogy of short-term international study tours to help fill a gap in the literature.

FOCUS OF THE ENQUIRY

My research investigated the extent to which four short-term study tours encouraged critical reflection pre-tour, during the tour, and post-tour. Illeris (2006) suggests reflection has the sense of '*afterthought*: one reflects on or gives further thought to ... an event or problem' (65). I am interested in the

extent to which students engaged in reflection or ‘afterthought’ about the pre-tour study content in preparation for the tour, and about the tour events and activities both during the tour and post-tour. In particular, I am interested in how instructional design motivated the students to engage in critical reflection about their experiences, such that they understood the tour experiences or events in context, at least in part, and adjusted, corrected, or modified their pre-existing concepts or paradigms about the destination and/or the subject being studied. Interview discussions with students also enquired about whether they experienced transformative learning during the tour or post tour. As all the study tours had a spiritual or religious component and went to sacred places, I was also curious about whether students had spiritual experiences that they would describe as transcendent.

PURPOSE

The purpose of my enquiry is to explore how the design of study tours encourages learning. In particular, the research investigated whether a *study tour that encourages critical reflection will help students synthesise learning to the extent that their pre-existing meaning schemes are modified or transformed*. Identifying factors that promote learning will inform a more effective design strategy to promote deeper, more extensive learning in association with short-term study tours, and to increase the probability of students experiencing transformative learning.

SECONDARY INVESTIGATION

While the four study tours explored different subjects, including leadership, political ethics, cross-cultural relationships, and meaning and purpose, the intended learning outcomes for all tours included a spiritual or religious component. The spiritual or religious experiences included pilgrimage, visits to Jewish, Christian, and Muslim historical and archaeological sites, and religious rituals and celebrations. McGrath (2001) claims that in contrast to a ‘purely academic, objective, or detached approach to religion ... [spirituality deals] with the manner in which individual adherents of the religion experience and practice their faith’ (147). Since the tours went to destinations of particular religious or spiritual significance, I also enquired about the extent of the students’ spiritual

experiences at these locations and whether they considered such experiences to be transcendent. Since religious and spiritual beliefs are often learned experientially through ritual and community practice, I was interested in the extent to which visits to sacred places prompted spiritual experiences, especially transcendent experiences, and the extent of learning about spiritual or religious interests and subjects.

CONCEPTUAL TOOLS AND ASSUMPTIONS

To facilitate analysis of the data, I initially used Kolb's (2015) experiential learning cycle to create a descriptive map of how study tour participants may be processing tour experiences and activities to assign meaning to these experiences in terms of what was already *known* to them and what was *learned* through the study tour experience. As the research progressed, I switched to Illeris' (2006) three-dimensional model of learning as the primary descriptor, since it incorporates both the internal learning process and the external interaction with the environment. The broader scope of Illeris' model was more useful for illustrating the complexity of learning associated with study tours since Kolb's model addresses only the cognitive or internal process of learning. Accepting Dewey's (1910) contention that 'reflective thought ... alone is truly educative in value' (2), I assumed reflection was likely to be the most important contributor to learning, whether pre-tour, during the tour, or post-tour. Additionally, I accepted that Mezirow's (1991) description of levels of reflection are adequate for describing students' depth of reflection, and that participants engaging in premise reflection could achieve transformative learning by adjusting meaning perspectives. These conceptual tools guided my interpretation of the extent of critical reflection associated with the study tours and the significance of reflection to participants' learning, especially as it relates to potentially transformative learning.

With respect to the research, I assumed that the participants' and professors' accounts of study tour experiences and associated learning are an adequate basis for interpretative conclusions about effective study tour design.

Consistencies in student responses and assessments suggest that my claims are plausible and probable, as neither students nor professors had any incentive to misrepresent information or opinions. When students' claims are corroborated

by professor comments and/or my own observations, it can be argued that the data has sufficient validity and reliability to be accepted as a basis for my research conclusions, provided such conclusions are not contrary to accepted scholarship.

NARRATIVE SIGNATURE

Having previously participated in four international study tours, two for academic credit and two as a continuing education student, I appreciate the value of study tours as a learning experience. So, because of my previous student experience with study tours, I decided to research study tour pedagogy. As a participant researcher in the study tours, I read and reviewed the curriculum materials, attended pre-tour meetings, participated in all activities and events during the tour observing instructional activities and student participation, and participated in post-tour activities. Unlike the students taking the courses for academic credit, I did not complete the post-tour assignments, typically reflective and research papers. So, I was not looking at the academic activities as preparation to write final assignments. Consequently, while students may have kept final assignments in the back of their mind, my research was in the back of my mind. Otherwise, my experience was similar to that of the student participants, providing an *insider* perspective in that I experienced the tour and activities as did the students. My insider experience allowed me to gather data first-hand, rather than only through the accounts of students and professors. On the other hand, as a researcher not a student at the respective institution, it could be argued that I remained an outsider. In reality, I was in a dual insider-outsider role (participant-researcher role), an excellent position from which to conduct this research.

Academically, my undergraduate study was in science. My postgraduate study includes master's degrees in adult education, theology, and religion and culture. I am a Christian following a Protestant tradition, with an interest in contemplative spiritual practices. I have taught supervisory and instructor training in a corporate setting for about two decades, and taught undergraduate courses as part of a ministry training program as an adjunct faculty member at a Protestant denominational college for about one decade. While these are undoubtedly filters through which I processed these study tours and the

associated research, experience and previous studies have taught me to maintain *academic distance* while engaged in research.

PLAN OF PRESENTATION

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 reviews existing scholarship about learning, in particular, theories and models offered by Kolb, Illeris, and Mezirow. It also discusses critical reflection and cross-cultural learning. Chapter 3 provides a brief introduction to spirituality, which was a secondary question in this study. Chapter 4 discusses the research methodology and methods employed, including my role as a participant researcher. It also discusses the limitations of the research. In Chapter 5, the study tours are discussed individually. Following a brief description of the study tour, I present both the students' view and the professors' view found in the data, before providing an analysis of the individual tour. The chapter also includes a description of two comparative activities. In Chapter 6, I analyse and integrate the data from all of the tours and activities to craft a strategy for instructional design of short-term international study tours. Chapter 7, the final chapter, summarises my conclusions and makes recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 2: REFLECTION AND LEARNING

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary (1998) defines learning as both ‘knowledge acquired by study’ and ‘the act or process of learning’ (sv). Exploring learning associated with short-term international study tours, I am concerned primarily with the process by which students are learning. I also give attention to the knowledge that is being acquired in order to identify the extent and nature of their learning. However, isolating what was learned and how it was learned in association with a given study tour is a challenging task, as learning is a dynamic process and continues beyond the tour itself. To facilitate my analysis, I have relied on Kolb’s (2015) experiential learning model and Illeris’ (2006) three-dimensional model of learning, as these models provide explanatory visuals for analysing and mapping the learning process.

Kolb (2015) defines learning as ‘*the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience*’ (49). He describes an experiential model consisting of ‘a four-stage cycle involving four adaptive learning modes - concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation’ (66). To be an effective learner, Kolb argues, individuals must be able to:

Involve themselves fully, openly, and without bias in new experiences
... reflect on and observe their experiences from many perspectives ...
create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound
theories, and ... use these theories to make decisions and solve
problems. (42)

His cyclical experiential model, illustrated in Figure 1, has two dimensions. The prehension dimension describes ‘two dialectically opposed modes of grasping experience, one via direct apprehension of immediate concrete experience, the other through indirect comprehension of symbolic representations of experience’ (85). The transformation dimension describes ‘two dialectically opposed modes of transforming experience, one via intentional reflection, the other through extensional action’ (85). Kolb insists that ‘knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it’ (67), and emphasises that experiential learning, unlike behavioral theories, is focused on the learning

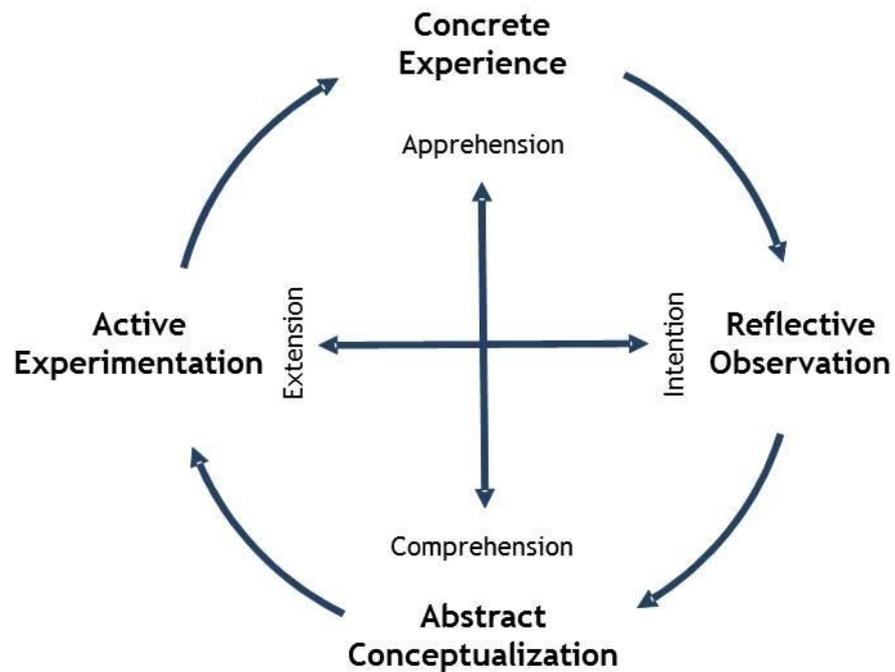


Figure 1: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle
(Adapted from Kolb, 2015:68)

process not learning outcomes. Arguing that learning is 'a continuous process grounded in experience' (39), Kolb concludes that:

Learning, the creation of knowledge and meaning, occurs through the active extension and grounding of ideas *and* experiences in the external world and through internal reflection about the attributes of these experiences and ideas. (78)

Kolb's model relates the internal process of meaning making to experiences within an environment.

Illeris takes a more holistic view of learning than the cognitive focus of Kolb's model. Defining learning broadly, Illeris (2006) insists that 'learning implies a change that is permanent to some extent or other ... until it is overlaid by new learning or gradually forgotten' (3). He also insists there are two active processes involved in learning. As Figure 2 shows, one process is the '*interaction* between the individual and his or her environment' (22), and the other is 'the psychological processing and acquisition taking place in the individual of the impulses and influences that interaction implies' (22). Using these two processes, Illeris describes three dimensions of learning, illustrated in Figure 3. The content dimension is about knowledge, understanding and skills, and

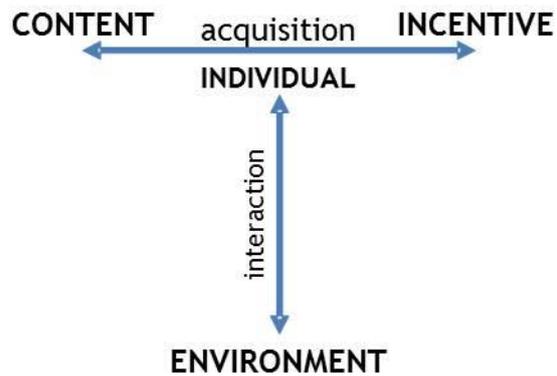


Figure 2: Learning Processes (Adapted from Illeris, 2006:23)

increases functionality by creating meaning and ability. The incentive dimension includes motivation, emotion and volition, and develops sensitivity by maintaining mental and bodily balance. The interaction dimension promotes social and societal integration through action, communication and cooperation. While both Kolb and Illeris have two-axis models, Illeris (2006) explains that ‘according to Kolb learning as a whole also becomes a completely internal phenomenon, while ... [Illeris’ model] is, at the same time, both an internal and an interactive process’ (55). In his phased description of learning, Kolb is focused on the internal process of interpreting and applying the meaning

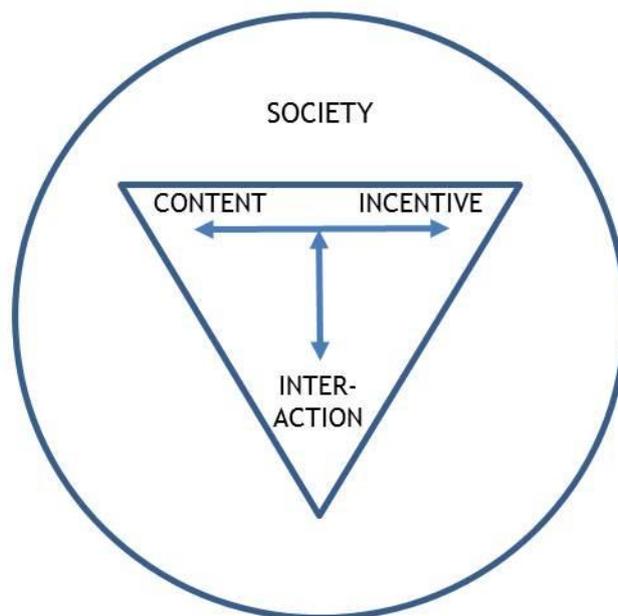


Figure 3: Dimensions of Learning (Adapted from Illeris, 2006:26)

assigned to an experience, whereas Illeris more holistic view does not compartmentalise learning into sequential phases, thereby acknowledging its dynamic nature.

The interactive component of learning should not be ignored or underestimated, and is particularly significant when interacting with a challenging environment, such as may be encountered during international study tours. Knowles (1980) emphasises that the 'central dynamic of the learning process is ... the experience of the learners; experience being defined as the interaction between individuals and their environment' (56). Learning is contingent on whether interaction with the environment prompts an internal response and whether the individual is incited by that response to search for the meaning of the experience. Rogers (1996) summarises the dynamic nature of learning:

- learning is active, not the passive receipt of knowledge and skills;
- learning is personal, individual: we can learn from and in association with others, but in the end, all learning changes are made individually;
- learning is voluntary, we do it ourselves; it is not compulsory. (77)

As educators, we create an environment for learning by establishing conditions and providing opportunity for experiences and interactions within a social context, but it is ultimately the student's choice to learn, even when students invest the time, effort and money to participate in an international study tour. But, while incentive creates a desire for and pursuit of learning, it is experience and interaction that prompts the reflective and educative process.

Illeris (2006) categorises learning into four general types: cumulative, assimilative, accommodative, and transformative. Cumulative learning is the addition of knowledge for which the learner does not have an existing scheme, so the new knowledge is memorised rather than integrated into the learner's existing conceptual framework. Illeris (2011) says:

Its weakness is that it is isolated in terms of content, it can itself only be learned not understood, and therefore is difficult to remember and can be used only in situations that psychologically recall the learning situation. (16)

While retaining or accessing cumulative learning may be difficult at times, there are many specific facts and details that we are required to learn with supporting

cues. Consider, for example, the street address of the guesthouse where your study group is staying at the international destination. Learning is integrated into meaning schemes in the next two types of learning, assimilative and accommodative. Kolb (2015) notes that Piaget describes the 'learning process as a dialectic between assimilating experience into concepts and accommodating concepts to experience' (17). Illeris (2011) claims assimilative learning could be called ordinary as it is used throughout our daily lives:

... when we encounter new impressions and add the new impulses to what has previously been learned in the area in question. ... We encounter something new, do not reflect much on it, but merely take it in by adding it to the scheme to which we 'think' it belongs. (16)

In contrast to assimilative learning, accommodative learning 'is typically activated when we find ourselves in a situation which we cannot immediately comprehend or experience events to which we are unable to relate' (Illeris, 2011:17). Illeris (2006) notes that accommodative learning 'concerns whole or partial restructuring of already established mental schemes', adding that it 'implies a qualitative going beyond, or a transcendence of, the readiness already developed, and can be characterized as *transcendent learning*' (41). While assimilation tends to reinforce the learner's conceptual framework, accommodation can modify or expand one's conceptual framework. Finally, the fourth type of learning is transformative learning, which Illeris (2011) describes as 'the decomposition of several schemes in a coherent process and their restructuring into a new coherent understanding and experience in relation to one or more significant areas of life' (18). The profound change associated with transformative learning is less common than the other types of learning, and is discussed more fully later. The four types illustrate that learning is varied, so careful analysis is required to accurately describe a particular learning experience.

The complexity of learning also relates to the social context. Lave and Wenger (1991) shift the focus from 'the individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world' (43), thereby viewing learning as 'situated activity', and describing it as '*legitimate peripheral participation*' (29). They theorise that:

Situated learning ... [is] a transitory concept, a bridge, between a view according to which cognitive processes (and thus learning) are primary

and a view according to which social practice is the primary, generative phenomenon, and learning is one of its characteristics. (34)

They further insist that ‘abstract representations are meaningless unless they can be made specific to the situation at hand’ (33). They view learning as a movement from legitimate peripheral participation to ‘*full participation*’ (37). For Lave and Wenger, ‘learning ... is not seen as the acquisition of knowledge by individuals; rather it can be viewed as a process of *social* participation’ (Palmer, 2016:224). Jordan, Carlile, & Stack (2008) argue that for social constructivists:

Culture and social communities shape the manner in which individuals perceive, interpret and attach meanings ... Knowledge is constructed in the context of the environment in which it is encountered. ... knowledge is the result of social interaction and language use. (59)

The importance of the social context clearly cannot be denied, when learning is described as a combination of internal processes and external interaction as the Illeris’ model illustrates. Further, interpretation of experiences within a social or societal context also differs depending whether an individual or group subscribes to a modern or postmodern perspective. In the briefest definition, Lyotard (1979) says ‘postmodern is incredulity toward metanarratives’ (xxiv). Usher and Edwards (1994) suggest that ‘there is no single definition to be tied down which everyone ... will agree on ad infinitum’ (201). Nguyen (2010) claims ‘postmodernism is a complicated term which denotes an ideological system popularly deployed in the 1980s’ (89). Usher and Edwards (1994) insist that because of the ideological shift, ‘at the surface level, people may appear to be agreeing in their use of concepts, but underneath there are conflicting values, assumptions and strategies at work’ (201). Individually, the rejection of an overarching metanarrative in favor of a multiplicity of possible narratives changes the individual’s interpretation of experience, and collectively, the relative number of modern and postmodern thinkers within a given setting may shape the social context in which learning is situated. Whether learning is best described by Kolb’s experiential learning cycle or Illeris’ three-dimensional model, the significance of the social context should not be underestimated, and context may be particularly significant when the learning experience is situated in the unfamiliar context of a study tour destination. Further, even though postmodernism may have emerged as a popular ideological system in the 1980s, age does not determine whether one holds to a modern or postmodern

perspective. But, since study tours typically have a generational and diverse mix of participants, each tour will likely have individuals adhering to both perspectives, resulting in differing interpretations of experiences, and perhaps especially so for religious spirituality.

REFLECTION

For these descriptions or models of learning, reflection is central to the learning process. Dewey (1938) says, 'To reflect is to look back over what has been done so as to extract the net meanings which are the capital stock for intelligent dealing with further experiences' (87). Dewey (1910) explained that reflective thought consists of:

Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends. (6)

Smith (2008) asserts that: '*reflection is a meaning-making process that involves participation in a systematic inquiry that contributes to the interpretation of experience in order to learn from that experience*' (76). Experience or information is not learning until it is given meaning in terms of what is already known. Meaning making is achieved through the process of reflection, which may require a significant amount of time. Reflection occurs during or after the experience, and involves linking the experience to similar experiences and explanatory theories, or the construction of new interpretative explanations. Student reflection on pre-tour study may result in new interpretative explanations that are useful for meaning making when reflecting on tour experiences and activities during or post-tour. Familiar or repeat experiences may be quickly interpreted whereas unfamiliar experiences may require a period of inductive reasoning to derive meaning. Dewey (1910) notes:

Reflective thinking is always more or less troublesome because it involves overcoming the inertia that inclines one to accept suggestions at their face value; it involves willingness to endure a condition of mental unrest and disturbance. (13)

Sometimes, enduring the 'mental unrest and disturbance' may be unsettling, but it is an essential element of the learning process, and prerequisite to breakthrough insights.

We reflect for several purposes – to recall experiences, to find meaning, to solve problems, to seek truth. Kemmis and Smith (2008) describe three kinds of reasoning that were distinguished by Aristotle. The first, *epistēmē* is the pursuit of truth for its own sake. The resulting action is ‘*theoria* or contemplation, involving theoretical reasoning about the nature of things’ (15). The contemplation of spiritual themes and the interpretation of spiritual experience offer opportunity for *epistēmē* during the study tours examined here. The second is *technē* or ‘the disposition to act in a true and reasoned way according to the rules of a craft’ (15). The action associated with *technē* is *poiēsis*, which is action ‘involving means-ends or instrumental reasoning to make something that achieves a known objective or outcome’ (15). The third, *phronēsis*, ‘which is the moral disposition to act wisely and prudently’ (15), is associated with *praxis*, or ‘action that is *morally-committed, and oriented and informed by traditions in the field*’ (4). Undoubtedly, questions of means-ends or instrumental actions, and questions of morally-committed actions arise as part of the experience of international travel and study, particularly when students are exploring history, culture, and religious practices in the context of the tour destination. In processing the learning associated with these experiences, students engage in the different types of reasoning, sometimes accentuated by emotional responses.

Mezirow (1991) associates reflection with intentional learning:

Reflection is the central dynamic in intentional learning, problem solving, and validity testing through rational discourse. Intentional learning centrally involves either the explication of the meaning of an experience, reinterpretation of that meaning, or application of it in thoughtful action. (99)

Additionally, he describes three different forms or depths of reflection – content, process, and premise. Content reflection, the shallowest level, focuses on the details of the experience itself, the narrative of what happened and reconciling the details of the narrative. A level deeper, process reflection seeks to resolve the uncertainties and problems inherent to or associated with the experience. It is asking *why* questions and searching for explanations. At the deepest level, premise reflection examines longstanding beliefs, values, and attitudes, seeking to review, refine, or revise the foundational underpinnings of the experience or event. Mezirow (1991) summarises:

Reflection is more than simple awareness of our experiencing or of being aware of our awareness; process reflection involves both reflection and critique of how we are perceiving, thinking, judging, feeling, and acting, and premise reflection involves awareness and critique of the reasons why we have done so. (106)

By describing reflection as an intentional and layered process, Mezirow shows its complexity. Of course, it is the individual's choice whether to drill deeper into the meaning of experiences or events to resolve ambiguities and examine the underlying assumptions and presuppositions underpinning one's thinking and interpretations.

Exercising the discipline to drill down to the premise level is important to acquiring a full understanding of experiences and situations. Forde et al (2006) claim reflective practice can 'promote analysis of underlying beliefs and assumptions that practitioners might hold without having a full appreciation of why they hold them and what alternative beliefs might have equal credence' (67). Reflection on the unfamiliar experiences and encounters during international study tours may provide experiences that are impetus for critical reflection that uncovers these hidden beliefs and premises. Clearly, critical reflection is an essential part of the internal learning process. Noting that critical reflection is traditionally viewed as important when applying 'a generalized theory to specific practices in a ... *deductive* ... manner', Fook and Gardner (2007) argue that it is equally important 'to knowledge formed in an *inductive* manner, in which a broader theory might in fact be developed from specific experiences, allowing for theory development and creation' (25). In fact, Saltiel (2010) suggests 'knowledge ... is primarily derived from experience and problem solving rather than the application of deductive theory' (132). The experiences and encounters occurring during international study tours provide opportunities to test the application of generalised theories and to inductively create new explanations. Study tours are rich opportunities for learning, if the students are prepared to reflect deeply on the meaning of such experiences and encounters.

Fook (2010) identified a pattern in her analysis of student learning during academic and workplace activities. First, the students identified acceptable assumptions that more or less fit their stated theory. Second, if they were

willing to reflect deeper, other assumptions were uncovered which may not appear related to the experience or problem. Next, breakthrough connections may be made as assumptions are connected to meaning making with respect to the experience or to problem resolution. In many cases, this involves working through the emotions associated with past experiences. Fourth, new assumptions are evaluated against accepted assumptions, values and experiences, and may be accepted especially in relation to different contexts. This reflection and rethinking may come at an emotional price. Next, the adoption of new assumptions and values can prompt rethinking of old assumptions, resulting in a different theory of practice. And finally, practice is changed to align with the new assumptions, values and perspectives, often accepting a wider range of practice options. Summarising, Fook says the process involves:

A complex interplay of reflecting on specific personal experiences, filtering our different sets of assumptions, and again using the prism of personal experiences, particularly the emotional element, to distil some fundamental meaning (theory in practice) which connects the disparate assumptions. (46-7)

Engaging in reflection, especially reflecting critically and deeply, can be challenging and emotional, but it offers the potential for a more informed perspective that may alter or improve practice.

Contrasting technical rationality and reflection-in-action, Schön (1983) introduces another dimension to reflection. He notes that technical rationality 'consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique' (21). In contrast to the rigid application of science that produces a 'means to ends' (33) approach to practical knowledge, reflection-in-action responds in the dynamic of the moment:

In each instance, the practitioner allows himself [*sic*] to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomena before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behavior. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomena and a change in the situation. (68)

Schön argues for a thoughtful response to the situation at hand utilising both the theoretical and tacit knowledge that one has accumulated. He suggests that when a practitioner sees an unfamiliar situation, he or she is able to see it in

light of situations already within his or her repertoire, such that the familiar situation can function as an exemplar or metaphor for interpreting and responding to the unfamiliar. He claims the practitioner can ‘see the unfamiliar, unique situation as both similar and different from the familiar one, without first being able to say similar or different with respect to what’ (138). Reflection-in-action challenges the individual to give immediate, reflective attention to the situation, and to act with an action research response. To ensure continued learning, Schön also encourages reflection-on-action as a follow-up to their actions. He insists that ‘when the practitioner becomes aware of his [*sic*] frames [meaning schemes], he also becomes aware of the possibility of alternative ways of framing the reality of his practice’ (310). Schön recognises the possibility that reflection can be more than a long-term contemplative exercise that eventually generates a theoretical or scientific insight that is then translated into practice. The dynamic of reflection-in-action is useful in the unfamiliar context of an international study tour destination when unfamiliar or puzzling experiences occur.

Another factor shaping reflection is whether the individual adheres to a modern or postmodern worldview. Usher and Edwards (1994) suggest that ‘experiential learning can be said to sit comfortably within the postmodern moment; experiential learning is a crucial component of postmodern culture and sensibility’ (198). Similar to Schön’s challenge of technical rationality, Usher and Edwards argue that ‘the universal rationality, knowledge and truth of modernity are brought into question’ (198) by the postmodern challenge of modernity’s absolutes. Fook and Gardner (2007) claim postmodern thinking is questioning the modernist view of knowledge, especially, ‘the ‘linear’ idea is that knowledge must be arrived at in a progressive way, with the successive accumulation of better knowledge through subsequent research efforts’ (31). Study tour participants often include both affluent young students and later career adults who have the flexibility and means to participate, resulting in a generational mix of both modern and postmodern thinkers, which can clearly set the stage for interesting debates. Usher and Edwards (1994) claim that, for the postmodern, ‘meaning is constructed through experience rather than simply being conveyed by it’ (199). For example, while the modern may be reflecting on a study tour experience to add to or apply existing knowledge or paradigms, the postmodern

may be reflecting on the same experience to construct meaning, resulting in differing interpretations of experience. And, they may be debating interpretations without being self-consciously modern or postmodern.

Finally, as Edwards-Grove and Gray (2008) note, making reflection part of the assessment agenda may encourage:

A *technē* disposition where reflection is an activity to be ‘done’ rather than a more desirable disposition of *praxis* where reflection takes on a moral character as an integral foundation stone for informing future action. (100)

Setting assignment requirements that prompt deeper reflection helps students probe the meaning of and underlying assumptions beneath their experiences at the destination. The interviews indicated many students were seeking to actualise their learning from the study tour, indicating a significant depth of reflection. The reflection prompted by the international study tour experience should ultimately provoke the learner to seek the wise and prudent choices of a *phronēsis* disposition and the morally-committed actions of *praxis*.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

Critical reflection on the study tour experience has the potential to transform the thinking of the tour participants. Mezirow (1990a) describes transformative learning as ‘the process of learning through critical self-reflection, which results in the reformulation of a meaning perspective to allow a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative understanding of one’s experience’ (xvi). He also insists that the learning includes acting on the insights gained. Essential to transformative learning is re-evaluation of the underlying assumptions through premise reflection. Mezirow (1991) elaborates:

Perspective transformation is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings. (167)

Mezirow (2000) further elaborates perspective transformation as a linear process with some variation of 10 distinct phases:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt and shame
3. A critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisional trying of new rules
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective (22)

Transformative learning goes beyond the assimilation of additional knowledge, requiring accommodation to new meaning schemes and an active response to the learning. Mezirow (2012) insists that we make meaning through a frame of reference or 'the structure of assumptions and expectations through which we filter sense impressions' (82). When we experience transformative learning, we transform 'a problematic frame of reference to make it more dependable ... by generating opinions and interpretations that are more justified' (85). The critical reflection and insight that trigger transformative learning are profound. Of course, whether transformative learning consistently follows Mezirow's linear model is debatable. For example, are triggering emotions always as negative as guilt and shame? Noting that emotions have a homeostatic function, Mälkki (2010), argues that:

The act of interpreting in the light of previous experiences whilst staying on the comfort zone appears to be supported by emotions, ultimately aiming to ensure the consistency of the structures of consciousness necessary for survival. ... unpleasant and uncomfortable emotions emerge when the comfort zone (and also meaning perspective) become challenged and questioned. (54)

Experiences may trigger *edge emotions* at the boundary of one's comfort zone, as was evident in some of the study tours, but these emotions were not necessarily negative. Even though we may critique Mezirow's model, it is still a useful conceptual tool for analysing transformative learning.

Mezirow (2012) describes transformation as 'a movement through time of reformulating reified structures of meaning by reconstructing dominant narratives' (84). Reformulation is dependent on the initial construction of

meaning and the mechanisms by which such meanings change. Mezirow (1991) notes that 'meaning is an interpretation, and to make meaning is to construe or interpret experience' (4). Elaborating on meanings as social constructions, Novak and Gowin (1984) claim that they 'allow us on the one hand to exercise powers of inference, self-understanding, and thoughtful action and on the other, to tie things together and connect part to part to whole' (110). Meanings are formulated into meaning schemes and meaning perspectives. Meaning schemes are 'sets of related and habitual expectations governing if-then, cause-effect, and category relationships, as well as event sequences', and meaning perspectives are 'made up of higher-order schemata, theories, propositions, beliefs, prototypes, goal orientations and evaluations' (Mezirow, 1990b:2). Mezirow continues, noting that 'perspectives provide *principles* for interpreting' (3). As such, meaning perspectives, often acquired uncritically through socialisation, are the principles by which experiences are interpreted and meaning is assigned, thereby constructing frames of reference. Transformative learning occurs when problematic frames of reference are transformed.

Mezirow (1991) insists that:

Meaning exists within ourselves rather than in external forms such as books and that the personal meanings that we attribute to our experience are acquired and validated through human interaction and communication. (xiv)

So, transformative learning is premised on the notion that we assign meaning to our experiences based on meaning schemes and frames of reference. Not surprising then, Taylor (2000) argues that 'most transformation deals with subjective reframing ... as opposed to objective reframing [of one's assumptions]' (298). Mezirow (1998) describes critical self-reflection on assumptions as:

Critical analysis of the psychological or cultural assumptions that are the specific reasons for one's conceptual and psychological limitations, the constitutive processes or conditions of formation of one's experience and belief. (193)

In contrast to objective reframing, which is 'a critical analysis of the concepts, beliefs, feelings, or actions communicated to them, or pausing to examine assumptions about the way problems of action have been framed' (Brookfield,

2000:131), subjective reframing is about the individual's internal processing of the experience or analysis of the problem. While critical self-reflection on assumptions is associated with the acquisition process of learning in Illeris' model, reflection is triggered by a dilemma experienced during the interaction process. The resulting reframing of assumptions will guide future interactions and redefine the assumptions by which future experiences are interpreted and problems resolved. Transformative learning, then, is personal learning with a personal paradigm shift, even though the individual may later be able to convince the community to accept his or her new insight.

Acting on new meaning schemes typically involves affective learning as well. Sveinunggaard (1993) reports that participants in her study 'would revert to old ways of being and acting until they were able to work through the emotions and feelings associated with an old meaning perspective' (293). After cognitively assenting to the learned beliefs, they were still unable to act according to the new beliefs until the affective learning was complete. So, it is important to recognise the holistic nature of learning. Understanding or ascribing meaning to an experience includes dealing with the emotions and feelings it evokes, whether emotions at the edge of one's comfort zone, or the strong negative emotions Mezirow identifies. Feelings are an integral part of an experience, so the associated emotions are clearly part of the internal processing of that experience. Parrott and Schulkin (1993) conclude that 'emotions include certain cognitive properties as part of their very nature' (56). They insist that 'emotions entail cognition and prepare the organism for actions that are sensible only within the context of such cognition' (56). Reflecting Parrott and Schulkin, Taylor (2009) suggests that 'affective knowing – developing an awareness of feelings and emotions in the reflective process – is inherent in critical reflection' (10). Likely, much of what makes an experience disorienting is affective learning, so the significance of the affective component of the learning should not be underestimated.

Of course, meaning is also subject to the mindset of the individual, with moderns and postmoderns differing in the manner they ascribe meaning. Kegan (2000) notes that modernism requires the individual to 'develop the internal authority to look at and make judgments about the expectations and claims that bombard us from all directions' (68). In contrast, he insists that postmodernism:

... calls us to win some distance even from our internal authorities so that we are not complete captive to our own theories, so that we can recognize their incompleteness ... [and] even embrace contradictory systems simultaneously. (68)

So, a modern thinker's tendency is to assign meaning to experiences according to his or her existing conceptual framework such that the learning is integrated into a larger coherent narrative. Transforming perspective requires overcoming the inertia of pre-existing paradigms to redefine meaning schemes. Cranton (1996) argues that for the postmodern there is 'a fragmentation of meaning, one in which there is no overall coherence but rather coexisting contradictions' (170). Arguably, since postmodern thinkers do not subscribe to an overarching narrative, they are less likely to hold tightly to defined paradigms through which they interpret experience. Consequently, adopting a new meaning perspective may be perceived as the expected progression of learning rather than a transformation of meaning schemes, especially when viewed as the linear process described by Mezirow. Or alternatively, since postmoderns hold loosely to particular paradigms or meaning schemes within a larger coherent narrative, they may be more willing to lock in a particular perspective based on their experience and thereby transform their conceptual framework. Since a typical study tour includes both modern and postmodern thinkers, their transformative learning experiences are likely to be different. But, since participants were not asked to self-identify as a modern or postmodern, I am unable to determine in what manner the learning they described as transformative may have differed.

Finally, teachers and study tour leaders must be mindful of the ethical implications of their teaching if it is likely to result in transformative learning. Typically, study tours are elective courses, so students volunteer to participate. They are obviously expecting a rich learning experience, but not necessarily expecting to have their fundamental beliefs and assumptions challenged. However, as Mezirow (1991) insists, we should not deny learners opportunity to acquire a 'full understanding of his or her situation, feelings, and resources, even if it is impractical to act upon that understanding' (203). He further insists that:

The essence of adult education is to help learners construe experience in a way that allows them to understand more clearly the reasons for

the problems and the action options open to them so that they can improve the quality of their decision making. (203)

But, does a teacher cross an ethical line by provoking a disorienting dilemma to trigger transformative learning? Ettlting (2012) insists that ‘practitioners of transformative learning theory have a predisposition to educate for change’ (536). However, it must be ethical change, even when the educator is strongly committed to the change objective. Mezirow (2000) notes that:

Adult educators are never neutral. They are cultural activists committed to support and extend those canon, social practices, institutions, and systems that foster fuller freer participation in reflective discourse, transformative learning, reflective actions, and a greater realization of agency for all learners. (30)

Educators must be ever mindful of the influence they exert whether in a local classroom or at an international study tour destination. Gravett and Petersen (2009) suggest that ‘to facilitate transformative learning, educators need to create the conditions under which learners are pushed toward their learning edge, where they are challenged and encouraged toward critical reflection’ (107). While it is important to create the conditions for learning, Mezirow (1990c) cautions that education becomes indoctrination when:

... educators try to influence specific actions as extensions of their will, or perhaps when they blindly help students to blindly follow the dictates of an unexamined set of culturally assimilated assumptions that determine how the learners perceive, think, and feel about themselves, their relationships, and their world. (362)

Because educators may be in a position of power relative to their students, there is potential for educators to manipulate or push students toward a particular understanding. Any deliberate attempt to influence or manipulate students toward the educator’s ends, whether it becomes indoctrination or not, raises questions of ethical conduct and respect for students’ autonomy. Noting that ‘intensive experiences in the classroom are not always initiated by design’, Ettlting (2012) points out that ‘transformative learning often deals with material that evokes powerful feelings’ (542). The emotional response may increase the probability that the student will be strongly influenced. This may be even more likely when the student is isolated in the foreign context of an international destination. However, students are not defenseless. Mezirow (1990c) adds that ‘the adult learner is often appropriately skeptical of authority and able to

differentiate between education and efforts to indoctrinate' (362). Such skepticism helps provide a healthy tension between educator and student, and ensures inappropriate teaching strategies and activities are kept in check. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on educators engaging in teaching activities with a potentially transformative outcome to be mindful of the ethical implications of their efforts.

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Study tours to international destinations bring specific challenges because of the nature of cross-cultural experience. Selby (2008) makes a useful distinction:

International education leads students to learn about the objective, material culture of others – their political and social institutions, their language, art, and literature – while *intercultural* education leads students to learn about the subjective meaning people ascribe to events and relationships with institutions and other people, and ultimately to themselves. (4)

Although students are at the international destination for only a brief period, they experience or are immersed in the culture of the host community. Being socially adept in one's home environment does not mean one is *culturally intelligent*, and able to correctly interpret behaviors and events at the destination. Earley and Ang (2003) define cultural intelligence as:

A form of situated intelligence ... that is a function of the interaction of intraindividual cognitive mental abilities and motivation, with the specific environmental context in which the individual is situated, such that individuals with cultural intelligence will adapt performances to culturally specific behaviors demanded or required of the cultural values and beliefs of the specific environment. (29-30)

Correct interpretation of experiences is dependent upon culturally appropriate meaning schemes. Students arrive at the tour destination with meaning schemes acquired and validated in their home environment. Such meaning schemes may be inappropriate or even invalid for the international tour destination. Dewey (1938) claims that 'all genuine education comes about through experience' (25) elaborating further that 'every experience enacted and undergone modifies the one who acts and undergoes, while this modification affects ... the quality of subsequent experiences' (35). In the context of Dewey's comment, the experiences are set in a similar environment. If familiar experiences and

environments ‘modify the one who acts or undergoes’, we can expect the unfamiliar experiences and environment of the tour destination to be even more challenging and impactful.

Cultural knowledge is acquired through one’s life experience within a particular context, including both the formal learning acquired through, say, a school or institutional curriculum and the informal learning acquired through life within a family and community setting. Through these experiences, students acquire a largely uncontested set of beliefs, presuppositions, community values, social norms and attitudes, from which they have constructed the meaning schemes through which they interpret experience. In fact, many of these cultural constructs are so normal and natural that individuals may not be consciously aware of them. Commenting on the complexity of culture, Earley, Ang and Tan (2006) note that ‘some ideas are so rich and subtle that they can only be understood by someone who is from a certain culture or who has spent extensive time learning about it’ (21). Such in-depth cultural understanding helps the individual create richly nuanced meaning schemes suited to the individual’s cultural context. However, the resulting conceptual framework is unlikely to include the meaning schemes necessary to interpret experiences in a different cultural context, especially to the same nuanced level of understanding. But, these are the meaning schemes available to the student, so they will be the ones used to interpret the cross-cultural experiences even though they may not always be appropriate to the tour context. As noted earlier, Dewey (1938) emphasises that reflection is retrospective; looking back ‘to extract the net meanings’. That retrospective nature of reflection which assists in assigning meaning to experience may hinder the correct interpretation of experience in a different cultural situation requiring different meaning schemes. For students to correctly understand these new experiences, a less retrospective approach may be necessary to achieve the paradigm shift or paradigm substitution necessary to construct a more appropriate conceptual framework to correctly interpret the new cultural experience. Deardorff (2008) insists that ‘intercultural competence development is central to the students’ education abroad experiences’ (32).

Dewey (1938) asserts that ‘successive portions of the reflective thought grow out of one another and support one another’ (3), suggesting that learning progresses in a somewhat laminar flow. Echoing Dewey’s notion of continuity, Kolb (2015)

claims that ‘knowledge is continuously derived from and tested out in the experiences of the learner’ (38). Cultural experiences at an international tour destination can interrupt the smooth flow of learning, or at least introduce some turbulence, since students are relying on meaning schemes that may fail to correctly interpret such experiences contextually. Recognizing how disequilibrium or disorientation is a catalyst for change, Brewer and Cunningham (2009) note that:

The change process involves moving from alienation or disequilibrium through a time of questioning assumptions and testing new habits to a stage characterized by integration of new and old assumptions, and the outcome is a change in frame of reference or worldview. (10)

They continue, claiming that ‘the dissonance-filled, cross-cultural [intercultural] experiences students encounter while abroad are ripe with potential for transformative learning’ (10). Reflecting Mezirow’s contention that transformative learning begins with a disorienting dilemma, Difruscio and Benham Rennick (2013) claim that cognitive dissonance ‘is the foundational element from which transformative learning develops ... [and] is inextricably linked to the process of intellectual development’ (77). If the intensity of the disequilibrium or dissonance is sufficiently strong, it can be the trigger for transformative learning. Kiely (2005) notes that the ‘type and level of intensity of their dissonance has to do with the gap or incongruence that students experience between their contextual baggage and elements of the new cultural context’ (10). Acknowledging that transformational learning depends on the dissonance that students experience, he claims that ‘whereas low intensity forms of dissonance fade and/or are resolved, ... experiencing high intensity dissonance creates permanent markers in students’ frame of reference’ (11). In part, this is because of the nature of high intensity dissonance experiences, which Kiely says ‘causes powerful emotions and confusion and leads ... [individuals] to reexamine their existing knowledge and assumptions regarding the causes and solutions to ambiguous and ill-structured problems’ (11). International study introduces multiple gaps – cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and ideological. The cultural experience is an integral part of the international experience, even if it adds an element of challenge or stress. Hunter (2008) claims the disorienting dilemmas of the cultural shock associated with international study may be stressful, but they can trigger transformative

learning. Whether the experience promotes transformative learning depends on the student's willingness to critically reflect on the experience, and openness to modifying pre-existing conceptual paradigms. Further, the critical reflection that resolves the dissonance may not be immediate but extend for a period after the student has returned home.

To encourage student success in intercultural learning, Reid and Spencer-Oatey (2013) recommend locating intercultural activity 'in a context of experiential learning where the participants are properly prepared and where they have [an] opportunity to reflect on their experiences and consciously develop new knowledge and skills' (126). Anderson and Cunningham (2009) note that 'students are far more accustomed to thinking from books and texts than thinking about what they are doing off campus' (70). Laurillard (2002) contends that 'academic knowledge relates to the experience of the world it describes, but it requires a great deal of contemplative reflection on that experience' (45). Not surprising then, Anderson and Cunningham (2009) argue that 'students need to be taught how to learn experientially, and ... they need a great deal of practice doing it before they become proficient experiential learners' (81). Recognizing the need for higher education to be transformative, Biggs and Tang (2011) offer the following critique:

Originally, universities and their teachers were repositories of knowledge and learners were there to obtain some of that knowledge, and so teaching methods were correspondingly expository. While universities today are increasingly concerned with professional education ... curricula in many universities remain overwhelmingly declarative. (82)

They argue that 'education is *conceptual change*, not just the acquisition of information', so they encourage '*transformative reflection* ... [which] tells you what you *might be*' (23, 45). Declarative lecturing and rote memorization will not promote the transformative learning that is essential to success during international study, but an experiential approach based on the tour experience can. For longer-term international students, Brewer and Solberg (2009) argue that a curriculum must integrate three kinds of learning: content, intercultural, and experiential. Study tours achieve the integration of such learning in a condensed timeframe in that the courses are experiential, have a prescribed content, and cross cultural borders. Illustrating the importance of experiential learning, Usher (1992) claims:

It can thus provide the space for a freedom of manoeuvre and a site for resistance where powerful discursive practices can be contested. Alternative discourses can be constructed and tested, totalising explanations problematised and the desire for certainty and control questioned. (212)

Experiential learning provides an opportunity to challenge existing paradigms and allows students space to explore alternative discourses. That is the experience of study tour students. It is not just assimilative learning in which students expand what they already know, but accommodative learning requiring the students to embrace new ideas, which may even be transformative. Biggs and Tang (2011) promote using a 'deep approach' that engages students to the extent that they employ various cognitive activities to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Consideration should also be given to the incentive and interactive dimensions of learning described by Illeris. While the international experience affords opportunity for 'deep learning', instructional design should consider the students' learning incentive especially if the complexity of the experience requires continued processing post-tour because of the type and intensity of interactions that the students are likely to encounter. In fact, it is the complexity and challenge of interpreting experiences that make international study tours rich learning experiences.

CHAPTER 3: SPIRITUALITY

Since the intended learning outcomes for the four tours had a religious or spiritual theme, I was also interested in exploring the students' spiritual experience and learning. As background, this chapter reviews spirituality and Christian spirituality in particular, since the tours were associated with spirituality in the Christian tradition. I also discuss spirituality and higher education.

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is a complex concept that is difficult to define, with the intended meaning dependent on the user and the context. Noting that spirituality is 'often contrasted favorably with "religion"' (3), Sheldrake (2013) elaborates the contemporary concept of spirituality:

First, spirituality concerns what is holistic – that is, a fully integrated approach to life. ... Second, ... spirituality is also engaged with a quest for the "sacred." The "sacred" in religious spiritualities such as Christianity is closely related to beliefs about God but in wider culture also nowadays refers to rather broad understandings of the numinous (sometimes embodied in nature or in the arts). ... Third, spirituality is frequently understood to involve a quest for meaning, including the purpose of life, and for a sense of life direction. ... Finally, contemporary definitions of spirituality often relate it to the quest for ultimate values in contrast to an instrumentalized or purely materialistic approach to life. (3-4)

Using a broad definition of spirituality, Shushok and Perillo (2015) note that 'a third of the American population ... define themselves as spiritual but not religious' (141). Edwards (2006) claims that, for many, 'spirituality is an alternative to organized, institutional religion' (34). This concept of spirituality is potentially significant to this study in that many participants are likely making a similar distinction between spirituality and religion, even though many of the participants engage in traditional Christian rituals and practices.

Drawing from other authors, Siner (2015) distinguishes between faith, spirituality and religion:

Faith refers to a process of making meaning ... which may comprise a trust in some truth, a “dynamic, composing, multi-faceted activity” (Parks, 1986, p. 26) ... Spirituality and religion, by contrast, involve a belief in something larger than the self. *Spirituality* refers to the beliefs in something sacred, and *religion* refers to the actions surrounding those beliefs (Small, 2011). (19)

While Siner makes important distinctions, he associates spirituality with religion, but many are inclined to place religion at a distance from spirituality. Edwards (2006) suggests spiritual practices include:

Devotional practices, such as prayer or meditation; practices aimed at enriching a person’s spiritual life, such as reading spiritual literature or attending a retreat; practices aimed at expressing one’s spirituality, such as singing or art; and practices that derive from one’s relation to the sacred, such as hospitality or support for the poor or disenfranchised. (34)

Many of these are religious spiritual practices. Aiming for a precise definition of spirituality, Perrin (2007) describes ‘authentic’ spirituality by first noting what spirituality is not, claiming authentic spirituality is not ‘the interior and private life of the individual, as reflected in either exterior practices and rituals or interior meditations and reflections’ (17). He contends:

Authentic spiritualities involve the integration of all aspects of life in a unified whole. Authentic life refers to living in an overall spirit of goodwill; it refers to a commitment to look critically at oneself and one’s relationships as well as an openness to question objectively and regularly all aspects of living. (18)

He also asserts that ‘spirituality is not necessarily associated with belief in a God or some other supernatural being. ... But, spirituality does not exclude such a belief’ (18). Endorsing the idea that spirituality is not necessarily associated with religion, Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011) associate spirituality with existential questions, such as the meaning and purpose of life. Summarising other scholars’ descriptions of spirituality, they suggest that the answers to such spiritual questions are:

Rooted in a lifelong, internal process of seeking personal authenticity; developing a greater sense of connectedness to self and others through relationship and community; deriving meaning, purpose, and direction in life; being open to exploring a relationship with a higher power that transcends human experience and knowing and valuing the sacred. (27)

Like Perrin, they allow for spirituality outside of belief in a ‘higher power’, continuing their summary of scholars’ claims:

Spirituality can also be thought of as an animating, creative, energizing, and meaning-making force – a “dynamic expression” of who we are. ... Some contend that although it may be manifest through highly variable personal mechanisms, spirituality is a biologically integral component of being human. ... It is the impetus that compels us to ask why we do what we do, pushes us to seek fundamentally better ways of doing it, and propels us to make a difference in the world. (28)

So, while spirituality is often associated with belief in a god or higher power, in practice, spirituality is more broadly associated with the individual pursuit of meaning and purpose, sense of connectedness, and desire to be benevolently supportive.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

While the study tours examined did not explicitly (overtly) promote a specific spirituality or theology, thereby allowing students significant freedom to *construct* their own concepts of spirituality and practice, the tours were associated with the study of Christianity and/or visits to Christian sites. So, there was a prominence of Christian spirituality. Consequently, spirituality associated with the Christian God¹ was a significant element, even though many study tour participants clearly had a broader interpretation of spirituality.

McGrath (1999) defines Christian spirituality:

Christian spirituality concerns the quest for a fulfilled and authentic Christian existence, involving the bringing together of the fundamental ideas of Christianity and the whole experience of living on the basis of and within the scope of the Christian faith. (2)

He adds that the following themes are important to spirituality:

- Knowing God, not just knowing about God.
- Experiencing God to the full.
- Transformation of existence on the basis of the Christian faith.

¹ References to the Christian ‘God’ are capitalised.

- Attaining Christian authenticity in life and thought. (4)

While his definition and themes reflect the pursuit of meaning, purpose, and right living typically associated with spirituality, it links the authenticity of spiritual pursuits to Christian beliefs and theology. Smith (2007) emphatically argues that ‘belief in God is a foundational element of Christian spirituality’ (22). Similarly, Howard (2008) claims that Christian spirituality is ‘systematic reflection on the character of lived relationship with God through Christ’ (23). Christian spirituality is clearly premised on the individual’s theology and practice of Christianity, a major component of which is spiritual formation. For example, Howard (2008) says:

Christian spiritual formation, responding to the gracious work of God and requiring both perseverance and progress, is the intentional and God-ward reorientation and rehabilitation of the human experience. It aims at mature harmony with Christ and is expressed in the concrete realities of everyday life. (269)

Achieving ‘mature harmony with Christ’ implies a mystical dimension to Christian spiritual formation. But Christian spirituality also has a practical side, with the faith community also being significant in Christian spiritual formation. Again, Howard summarises:

The community of the faithful is *context*, *agent*, *aim*, and *means*: context, insofar as we live *in* community and become who we are within the communities of our lives; agent, insofar as others within our communities exercise intention regarding our growth and maturity; aim, insofar as the purpose of God is to restore an embodied community of the Spirit; and means, insofar as the community of God’s people mediate the things of God to one another. (289)

While one’s faith community is a major mediator of an individual’s spiritual formation, the expression of Christian spirituality in the ‘concrete realities of everyday life’ extends to the individual’s broad social context, which may or may not be affirming. So, perhaps a cross-border experience is a revealing test of spiritual maturity. McGrath (1999) insists that being a Christian ‘is not just about beliefs and values; it is about real life, in which those ideas and values are expressed and embodied in a definite way of living’ (3). So, it is the practical expression of spirituality that may be the most affirming or instructive as it is evident in the routine of daily life.

However, the practical experience of lived spirituality does not negate the mystical dimension. McGrath (1999) explains that the use of the word mysticism within the Christian faith:

Places particular emphasis upon the relational, spiritual, or experiential aspects of the faith, as opposed to the more cognitive or intellectual aspects, which are traditionally assigned to the field of theology. (6)

McGrath (2001) notes that ‘belief in an “almighty” or omnipotent God is ... an essential element of traditional Christian faith’ (281). So, it is not surprising that personal encounters with the Christian God are given precedence over theology authored by humans. Hughes (2012) emphasises that ‘God is always transcendent, greater than anything we can think or imagine’ (152). Hick (2004) argues that:

It is entirely reasonable for the religious person, experiencing life in relation to the transcendent – whether encountered beyond oneself or in the depths of one’s own being –, to believe in the reality of that which is thus apparently experienced. (235)

So logically, we can expect that individuals who have moments of transcendent encounter to give such experiences overriding authority in terms of shaping their spirituality and beliefs. To the extent that pilgrimage to holy sites and sacred places prompts such transcendent moments, we can anticipate that individuals participating in the study tours examined here are likely to have experienced moments of spiritual formation and maybe transcendence.

SPIRITUALITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Even though the origin of the university is rooted in monastic schools, the relationship between spirituality and higher education has experienced pendulum swings in acceptance. Tisdell (2003) claims that ‘typically higher education has focused on knowing through rationality’ (ix) and further argues that ‘there have been mainstream cultural taboos that have kept them [educators] silent about their spirituality’ (3). The pendulum swing away from religion and spirituality in favor of rationality led to the idea that higher education opposed spirituality. Smith and Snell (2009) note that ‘the idea that higher education is corrosive to religious faith and practice is widely believed,

and an older body of sociological research substantiates it' (248). However, it should be noted that faith-based or religiously affiliated colleges have always and continue to exist, offering options for students. Further, Smith and Snell (2009) acknowledge the findings of recent research, indicating that 'higher education no longer seems to diminish the religion of emerging adults' (248). They attribute this change to factors such as the influence of on-campus religious and para-church groups, colleges and universities adopting more supportive attitudes toward and programs for students' religious and spiritual interests, increased number of faculty role models who demonstrate ways of combining learning and faith, and the growth of religious colleges and universities. They suggest another relevant factor is:

The influence of postmodern relativism in the academy, especially in the 1990s, which undercut the authority of positivism, epistemological foundationalism, and scientism, all of which historically have tended strongly to marginalize and disparage religion. (249)

In fact, Smith and Snell claim that 'American culture and perhaps Western culture seems to have shifted from a secular to a postsecular era in which secularist assumptions are no longer taken for granted' (249-51). Astin, Astin and Lindholm (2011) claim that there is evidence of experiences during college contributing to students' growth, specifically 'study abroad, interdisciplinary studies, and service learning ... appear to be effective because they expose students to new and diverse people, cultures, and ideas' (10). If these conclusions are correct, the higher education campus may be more receptive to spiritual learning today than it has been for decades. And, that may be especially true if we accept a broad interpretation and expression of spirituality. However, Smith and Snell (2009) contend that 'little evidence supports the idea that emerging adults who decline in regular external religious practice nonetheless retain over time high levels of subjectively important, privately committed internal religious faith' (252). Seifert (2015) notes that the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11th, 2001 'forever changes how U.S. postsecondary educators viewed issues related to religion, spirituality, and worldview' (61). So, the most recent pendulum swing may be toward a greater acceptance of religion and spirituality, often expressed as embracing diversity. The willingness of higher education to recognise and support the spiritual dimension of students' learning may be more significant

than previously acknowledged, and may validate the trend toward a greater embrace of student spirituality.

Tisdell's (2003) advocacy for the acknowledgement and accommodation of spirituality in higher education illustrates the complexity of the issue and a potential strategy. She argues that:

If education is going to be culturally relevant and transformative on the individual or social level, it must engage learners on a variety of levels: the cognitive or rational, the affective, the sociocultural, and the symbolic or spiritual level. (xiii)

Additionally, she offers seven assumptions about the nature of spirituality in relation to education:

Spirituality is (1) about wholeness and connection through the mystery of a Life-force or divine presence, (2) about meaning making, (3) about moving toward greater authenticity, (4) different from religion, though sometimes interrelated, (5) about symbolic and often unconscious processes ... that are culturally manifested, (6) always present (though often unacknowledged) in the learning environment, and (7) connected to significant peak experiences of a Life-force or divine presence that most often happen by surprise. (190-1)

As a result, Tisdell insists that 'the spiritual dimension of adult learning does *not* mean pushing a religious agenda ... [but] *does* mean drawing in the affective domain' (204). She argues that the elements and principles of a spiritually grounded and culturally relevant pedagogy include:

(1) an emphasis on authenticity, (2) an environment that allows for the exploration of the cognitive, affective and symbolic dimensions of learning, (3) culturally relevant readings, (4) exploration of cultural identity, (5) collaborative work and presentations that deal with strategies of change and multiple-dimensions of learning, (6) celebration, and (7) a recognition of the possibilities and limitations of emancipatory learning potential in higher education environments.

She also acknowledges that 'whether or not a learning experience is experienced as "spiritual" depends on the learner' (232). Tisdell makes a case for including spirituality in higher education in a manner that precludes religious advocacy or proselytization while at the same time allowing for exploration of the symbolic or spiritual dimension.

In fact, Astin, Astin and Lindholm (2011) argue:

To ignore the spiritual side of students' and faculty's lives is to encourage a kind of fragmentation and a lack of authenticity, where students and faculty act either as if they are not spiritual beings, or as if their spiritual side is irrelevant to their vocation or work. (7)

Further, they point to research indicating that only about half as many faculty members believe they should support students' spiritual development as believe it is important to assist students with the development of personal values and enhancing students' self-understanding, 'underscoring the discomfort many of them feel with the term 'spiritual' in connection with higher education' (141). Higher education is still influenced by the Enlightenment legacy of reason and positivist thinking. Not surprising then, some academics resist engagement with students beyond their subject expertise. For example, Fish (2008) insists that the teacher's job is to:

(1) introduce students to bodies of knowledge and traditions of inquiry they didn't know much about before; and (2) equip those same students with the analytical skills that will enable them to move confidently within those traditions and to engage in independent research should they choose to do so. (18)

He further argues that teachers 'don't or shouldn't do a lot of other things – like produce active citizens, inculcate the virtue of tolerance, redress injustices, and bring about political change' (66). However, while teachers may not have an obligation to teach beyond their contract requirements and their discipline's body of knowledge, they do have an ethical responsibility not to ignore or suppress student's development in all areas of learning, even the spiritual dimension. Even if higher education does not actively support student spiritual development, it has an obligation to respect students' autonomy, which includes maintaining a climate in which they are allowed to develop spiritually. Astin, Astin and Lindholm (2011) identify experiences that promote students' spiritual development, specifically 'study abroad, interdisciplinary studies, service learning, philanthropic giving, interracial interaction, leadership training, and contemplative practices' (145). By including such options in the curriculum, higher education institutions are supporting student spiritual development. So, in terms of student spiritual development, the significance of short-term international study tours may be greater than the institutions, professors, or students realise.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This study, approved by the College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee, (see Appendix A), examined student learning on four short-term international study tours, offered for academic credit by four Canadian universities/seminaries, one with an American university. I also participated in a local walking pilgrimage and an international service learning trip as comparative activities. My research was opportunistic in that I joined study tours being offered by these institutions. I had no part in the design of the course curriculum or any teaching role in the study tours. The search for study tours in which I could participate was time consuming as many professors were reluctant to accept a participant researcher on their tour. However, all the professors associated with the tours examined here indicated that my presence as a researcher did not impact on the tour in any way.

METHODOLOGY

This research project used an interpretivist approach. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) describe interpretive research as ‘a phenomenological hermeneutics that privileges local, situated knowledge and situated knowers’ (5-6). Morehouse (2012) insists the interpretation should be ‘contextual, creative, conceptually aware, coherent, and critically reflective’ (4). In contrast to the hypothesis testing and deductive methods of quantitative research, interpretivist research typically employs qualitative methods which inductively derive or construct knowledge from the data. Kiely and Hartman (2011) summarise:

Qualitative research does not follow a process of deduction by testing a set of predetermined hypotheses but rather attempts to discover, explore, develop, analyze, and uncover the themes, categories, patterns, tentative hypotheses, causal relationships, and theories that emerge from research with participants and/or in the field. (295-6)

Consequently, as Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) suggest, ‘interpretive research design plans for concept “development” to take place during fieldwork, not before it’ (50), and its design should ‘reflect and make space for its iterative, recursive, and adaptive character’ (55). The ‘iterative, recursive, and

adaptive character' of interpretive research is well suited to investigating study tours. The dynamic and emotional nature of the tour experience makes learning associated with a study tour less predictable and broader ranging than the intended learning outcomes. Since study tours are not simply a structured sequence of activities in which students participate, they are less suited to an approach in which data are gathered and a hypothesis is confirmed or refuted. Instead, the complexity and unpredictability of the study tour experience is better examined through gathering first-hand data, and extracting insights through careful analysis. So, employing an interpretivist approach, I gathered data from the study tour students who consented to participating, from the professors who led the study tours, and through my own participation in the study tour and its related activities. The research data were interpreted to determine which aspects of the study tour design contributed most to learning. Then, I extrapolated how instructional design can encourage learning pre-tour, during the tour, and post-tour. Since all the study tours included a religious or spiritual component, I was also able to use data shared by the research participants to make a judgement about the impact of such experiences in achieving intended religious or spiritual outcomes.

METHODS

The integrity of research is dependent on the research methods employed, since the methods provide the foundational data on which research findings are based. The appropriateness of the methods used determines the validity of the data for the methodology and ultimately the claims based on the research. For this project, I used the following research methods:

- I joined the study tours as a participant researcher to gain first-hand data about the tour experience, student activities and participation, and the professors' teaching and leadership.
- I kept a journal of my personal observations and reflections during the tours, which supplemented the data provided by the students and professors.

- I had participants complete a brief questionnaire at the beginning of the tour to identify expectations, and a second questionnaire at the end of the tour to ascertain students' assessments of learning.
- To obtain more in-depth information, I interviewed a number of students some weeks to months post-tour in order to ascertain their long-term appreciation of the study tour and gain a sense of the learning that endured. After the student interviews, I interviewed the professors to obtain their perspective on study tours and the students' learning.

Participant observation

De Munck (2009) describes the method of participant observation as one of hanging out to 'gain access into the **backstage** life of a society or group' (184), and claims that it 'allows for thick description of a society or group, and it provides opportunities and a means for reporting on unscheduled sorts of behaviors and events' (188). Hanging out has three stages: the stranger stage, which is 'characterized by showing up, when appropriate', the acquaintance stage, in which the researcher and study group 'become familiar with each other', and the intimate stage, when researcher and group 'have accumulated a mutual history and a repertoire of experiences, and where they think of each other as individuals rather than social identities' (185-7). Because participant observation allows closer access to the study participants and their experiences, it was an appropriate choice for this research. As a participant researcher, I completed the required readings, participated in many pre-tour activities, traveled with the tour group, and participated in tour activities at the destination.

Observing student activities during the tour allowed me to record the experiences in which they participated and to judge the extent of their engagement. Merriam and Simpson (1989) recognise that 'because participants are frequently unaware of their behavior, having to recall or recount the past is not as productive as observing their behavior directly' (136). My participation allowed me to make qualitative observations of student participation, and to know first-hand the events and activities that the students experienced, always being cautious to ensure that my behavior and participation remained

unobtrusive so that I was ‘not inducing response or reaction from the participants’ (141). Merriam and Simpson (1989) note that ‘the researcher participates but does not become totally absorbed in the activity because he or she must simultaneously stay conscious of how the act of observation may change what is being observed’ (141). Gay and Airasian (1992) caution:

Each researcher brings to a setting a highly individual background, set of experiences, preferences, attitudes, and the like, which in turn, affect not only how she or he observes, but also her or his personal reflections and interpretations. (213)

I kept a personal journal to record my observations and reflections, so that I could critically review my thoughts and reactions when analysing the data.

Kiely and Hartman (2011) claim that ‘a fundamental distinguishing characteristic of all types of qualitative research is that the researcher is the main instrument for data gathering, analysis, interpretation, and representation’ (293). In fact, because I was a participant researcher, I can validate the descriptions and claims of the research participants from my first-hand experience rather than merely correlating the claims of students for validation. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) argue that a participant researcher learns more about ‘participants and their relationships to the subject matter of the project, including their activities and ways of thinking about all of these’ (64), because:

The researcher is potentially able, physically, emotionally, and verbally, to access participants’ experiences ... and the local knowledge that is embedded and carried in these, including the tacit knowledge underlying embodied practices. (64-5)

It is only through my participation in the study tours that I was able to gain ‘physical, emotional, and verbal access to the participants’ experiences’, and be positioned to make an informed assessment of the data. While participation is essential in qualitative research, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow also raise concerns, noting that ‘within the research setting, power is relational, and the power of the researcher, the researched individuals, and the types of research relationships they develop can vary considerably’ (60). While the potential obviously exists to exert unintended influence as a doctoral researcher, my extensive experience as an educator in both corporate and academic settings and my years as a student through four master’s degrees and this doctorate have

taught me the discipline of maintaining *academic distance* during research activities. At no time during the tours or related activities did I assume or imply a lead role other than sharing in roles assigned to other participants as well. I also restrained my comments or responses to students' and professors' questions about my research until I had first completed their individual interviews, in order to level the *power relationship*. Moreover, in addition to the professors, many of my research participants were master or doctoral students actively pursuing research projects in their fields, so they were personally familiar with research practices. I noted no evidence that the study participants were intimidated or distracted by my presence as a researcher, and all the professors and leaders confirmed that my presence as a researcher did not influence or impact the group.

Morehouse (2012) notes that 'interpretive inquiry ... sees humans as agents who act with others in a social and cultural context' (22). Aware of my role as a researcher, I maintained the reflexive attitude, described by Fook and Gardner (2007), as recognizing:

That all aspects of ourselves and our contexts influence the way we research ... and the actual knowledge we create ... [and] that knowledge creation is influenced by our physicality and material contexts; our social and historical contexts; interaction; and the tools we use to create knowledge. (71)

So even though, as a participant researcher, I am at the core of interpretation that does not compromise the trustworthiness of the research. Kiely and Hartman (2011) insist that trustworthiness requires four criteria: 'credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability' (300), which they associate with empiricist criteria. Credibility parallels internal validity, which indicates how well the interpretations reflect the students' experience and reality. Transferability parallels external validity which indicates how well knowledge claims align with existing scholarship and may be generalised to similar scenarios. Dependability parallels reliability which indicates the likelihood of similar research reinforcing the claims. And, confirmability parallels objectivity indicating that the data is not subjectively interpreted to support intended results.

Journal

In my personal journal I documented my experience, reflections, and reactions, as well as my observations of student activities and engagement during the tour. Reviewing my journal notes helped me to recall tour experiences and activities, and to identify the filters through which I was evaluating the participation and activities of the students, enabling me to be more critical of my interpretations. Janesick (1999) asserts that ‘because the researcher is the research instrument, keeping a journal is a check and balance in the entire course of a qualitative research project’ (521). The data collected through the questionnaires and through my journal reflections informed the questions asked during the post-tour interviews of students and professors.

Questionnaire

In addition to experiencing the study tour with the students, I had the students participating in my research complete brief questionnaires pre- and post-tour, in order to capture their perspectives before and after experiencing the tour itself. (A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B.) Students completed the pre-tour questionnaire before the tour or en route to the tour destination. In addition to individual details, such as educational institution and academic programme, the pre-tour questionnaire asked open-ended questions to gather information about the students’ motivation for participating in the study tour and what they expected to learn through the experience. The post-tour questionnaire completed at the end of the tour asked students to briefly describe their learning, rate how well the experience met their expectations, and speculate on the lasting value of the learning. From the perspective of Kirkpatrick’s (1998) levels of evaluation, the questionnaires provided *reaction level* evaluation and anecdotal evidence of *learning level* evaluation. The questionnaires used open-ended questions, since the goal was not to collect statistical data, but to gather information to evaluate the effectiveness of the study tour design based, in part, on the students’ assessments of their experiences. The questionnaire data was interpreted in conjunction with the post-tour interview data.

Interviews

Student participants in the study tours were interviewed between two to twenty-nine months post-tour to explore their assessment of the learning experience. After all or most of the student interviews were complete, I interviewed the professors for the respective study tour to explore their assessment of student learning and of the study tour design. (Appendix C summarises the interview themes, and Appendix D is the interview schedule.) Interview questions were informed by the questionnaire data, my journal record, and my ongoing reflections on the successive study tours. Through this iterative process, I was able to increase the validity and reliability of the conclusions drawn from the data. In particular, I explored the student's assessment of learning during and post-tour, what they liked, and their suggestions for improving tour design. I also enquired whether they experienced learning that could be described as transformative and whether they had any transcendent spiritual experiences. Because some of the interviews were several months post-tour, it also provided an indication of the longevity of their learning. During the professor interviews, I explored their experience with leading study tours, and if they employed any particular design strategy for their respective tour. I also discussed their assessment of student learning and what they would do differently if they were to repeat the tour, including their assumptions about how to improve the effectiveness of study tour design. The 40- to 60-minute semi-structured interviews used open-ended questions so that student and professor responses were not constrained.

Brinkmann & Kvale (2015) describe an interview as:

A conversation that has a structure and a purpose ... [that] goes beyond the spontaneous exchange in everyday conversations and becomes a careful questioning and listening. (5-6)

Brinkmann and Kvale further describe interviewing as 'an active process where the interviewer and interviewee through their relationship produce knowledge' (21), and insist that interview knowledge is 'contextual, linguistic, narrative, and pragmatic' (21). They recognise that 'the process of knowing through conversations is intersubjective and social, involving interviewer and interviewee as coconstructors of knowledge' (22). Through interviews with

individual students and professors from each study tour, I was able to *coconstruct* knowledge because of my familiarity with the tour, and later collate that knowledge with knowledge from the other tours to identify patterns and themes.

Noting the value of the face-to-face encounter with the research participant, Merriam and Simpson (1989) insist that the interview has the advantage of adaptability and ‘permits greater depth than other techniques’ (135). This quality of interviews makes them an appropriate method for data gathering post-tour, as the interviews allowed students and professors to share without the constraining parameters of the predicted responses characteristic of a questionnaire. Additionally, even though transcription of open-ended discussions is time-consuming, Lapadat and Lindsay (1999) conclude that transcribing ‘facilitates the close attention and the interpretive thinking that is needed to make sense of the data’ (82). Brinkmann & Kvale (2015) caution that ‘a transcript is a translation from one narrative mode – oral discourse – into another narrative mode – written discourse’ (204). They further explain that:

An interview is a live social interaction where the pace of the temporal unfolding, the tone of voice, and the bodily expressions are immediately available to the participants in the face-to-face conversation, but are not accessible to the out-of-context reader of the transcript. (204)

Transcribing the interviews facilitated detailed analysis of the responses by allowing me to compare answers across the interviews for agreements, disagreements, and variation in responses to the same or similar questions. I also noted the themes and concepts that emerged, especially if I had not said anything that might have prompted the thought.

Data Analysis

For interpretive research, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) explain that ‘initial research expectations are treated as educated provisional inferences that will be considered and explored rather than formal hypotheses that will be “tested”’ (53). So, in analysing the data, I was not seeking to confirm or reject a hypothesis, but rather to inductively construct the knowledge that was in the data. To analyse the data, I used thematic analysis, which Guest, MacQueen, &

Namey (2012) describe as an ‘inductive analysis of qualitative data’ (4), that focuses on ‘identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data’ (10). Boyatzis (1998) adds that for qualitative research, thematic analysis helps the researcher ‘more easily communicate his or her observations, findings, and interpretations of meaning’ (6). For each study tour, I compared the questionnaire data and interview transcripts to identify the themes that emerged from similarities and agreements within the student and professor responses. If responses were mixed or conflicting, I also compared the data to my own observations and journal notes to assess alignment with my impressions on-the-ground at the tour destination. Outlying data were examined to determine if extenuating factors, such as homesickness, were influencing the student’s response. Kiely and Hartman (2011) note that ‘although all qualitative data analysis is inductive and begins once data gathering has been initiated, the most common data analysis strategy is the constant comparative approach’ (299). As the discussion of the study tour data in Chapter 5 shows, data for each study tour were analysed to identify emerging themes and patterns. Inferences from the data were scrutinised and refined as additional data were accumulated through the successive tours. The results were also compared to the analysis of data from the two comparative activities to determine differences and similarities that could provide insight into the unique character of learning associated with short-term international study tours. The final conclusions were critiqued in light of current scholarship, with attention to the similarities and differences between tours. According to Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012), trustworthiness is achieved through ‘(1) the consistency of evidence from different sources ... (2) the ways in which conflicting interpretations have been engaged, and (3) the logic with which the argument has been developed’ (109). By examining four different study tours from different institutions, participating in two comparative research activities, interviewing multiple participants, maintaining a reflexive attitude, and examining the consistency of evidence within the data from the different sources, my research and interpretations meet the criteria for trustworthiness.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Eraut (1994) argues that ‘the understanding of a concept lies not in its definition but in knowledge of a range of examples and non-examples’ (28), adding that

‘practical knowledge is used interpretatively to modify theory’ (29). This study provided four practical examples that are being interpreted to inform theory.

Gay and Airasian (1992) explain:

Interpreting is the reflective, integrative, and explanatory aspect of dealing with a study’s data. ... Data interpretation is based heavily on the connections, common aspects, and linkages among the data, especially the identified categories and patterns. ... interpretation involves identifying and abstracting important understandings from the detail and complexity of the data (245)

In interpreting the data, I have sought to uncover those ‘important understandings’ that are revealed in the common themes and patterns that emerged during my data analysis and in the gaps that were identified through the analysis, and I am using these understandings to inform theory and practice.

The generalisability of the findings is limited to the extent that the four selected study tours are representative of learning through short-term international study tours in general. For example, since the study tours dealt with subject areas in arts and social sciences, the students’ experience may not be totally congruent with students who are doing science research within the confines of a laboratory or limited field location, as they would likely have considerably less dynamic, interactive, and intensely emotional experiences. So, while the findings may have a limited applicability to any student crossing borders internationally, the applicability is clearly more relevant to students engaged in similar areas of study travelling to similar cross-border destinations. The study tours were offered by Canadian universities and seminaries, with an American university included for one tour. Since all the tours had a religious or spiritual component, they catered to students of similar interests. Given the cost of the study tours, ranging from £2000 to £4500, they also catered to economically privileged students, who are not necessarily a representative sample of the Canadian and American tertiary student population. Since the participants were more affluent students, it is likely that they have previously travelled internationally and have had previous cross-cultural experiences, although not necessarily for academic study. The professors and students shared a Western, predominantly Christian worldview, even though, individually, they have varied backgrounds in terms of academic studies, religious affiliations, and life experience. Therefore, it cannot be argued that the study sample and data is representative of all students.

Brinkmann & Kvale (2015) challenge the generalisability of interview findings:

In postmodern conceptions of social sciences the goal of global generalization is replaced by a transferability of knowledge from one situation to another, taking into account the contextuality and heterogeneity of social knowledge. (199)

Eraut (1994) further argues that ‘an interpretation is influenced by existing conceptual frameworks that may derive from prior experience and not be at all explicit’ (64). Indeed, since I conducted the research as a single researcher, interpretations may be complicated by my own potential biases, which were discussed in Chapter 1. Undoubtedly, I interpreted the data through the filters of my personal study and experience, and a Christian worldview, even though I have endeavored to be mindful of them. That said, throughout the research, I have searched for the general principles of practice that inform effective design of short-term international study tours, and to the extent that I have found good practices applicable to study tours, this research has transferability within the limits of ‘the contextuality and heterogeneity of social knowledge’.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF STUDY TOURS

The field portion of my research consisted of participation in four short-term international study tours. The first study tour went to Spain and included a Camino pilgrimage, the second went to Israel/Palestine and included both historical/religious sites and contemporary issues, the third was again to Spain and included the Camino, and the final study tour went to Cyprus, Malta, and Rome, visiting historical sites associated with the Christian apostle, Paul. The study tours were for academic credit at Canadian universities or seminaries, and one American university. After describing each tour, I summarise the data from both students and professors, and map how learning may be occurring. As a comparative to the study tours, I also participated in a local Canadian walking pilgrimage and a service learning trip to a Mexican orphanage. These comparative activities are also described and the research summarised.

TOUR 1: THE WAY OF ST. JAMES LEADERSHIP PILGRIMAGE (SPAIN)

The first tour, conducted by Tyndale Seminary, a Canadian multi-denominational Christian seminary, included an eight-day walking pilgrimage along the traditional El Camino de Santiago² route in northern Spain. The intended learning outcomes are included in the syllabus excerpt in Appendix E. Students walked about 115 kilometres from Sarria to Santiago, following the popular *Camino Francés* or French Way route. Arriving in Sarria mid-afternoon, the group purchased their pilgrim's passports or *credenciales*³, and walked about five

² The Catedral de Santiago de Compostela (2013) describes El Camino de Santiago: 'The Way of Saint James, First European Cultural Itinerary and World Heritage Site, is one the oldest and most important Christian pilgrimage routes. Since the discovery of the sepulchre of the Apostle Saint James, countless pilgrims have set off towards Compostela to worship his relics. This has given way to a whole Saint James culture throughout Europe.

Pilgrimage is a common rite in most religions. Santiago is one of the three important pilgrimage cities of Christianity, alongside Jerusalem and Rome. ...

The French Way: The route that is most used today and which enters the Peninsula through Roncesvalles, passing through Pamplona, Logroño, Burgos, León, Astorga, Ponferrada, and entering Galicia through O Cebreiro.' (Cathedral de Santiago de Compostela, 2013)

³ To be awarded the Compostela:

- You need to have made the pilgrimage for religious reasons or for a similar motivation such as a vow.

kilometres before settling into the albergue for the evening. For the next seven days, we were on ‘the Way’ by 8:00am, walked about 16 kilometres, following the yellow arrow markers to the next overnight stop. During the evenings we stayed at pilgrim *albergues*, hostels specifically for pilgrims, offering inexpensive dormitory accommodations with limited amenities. On arriving at the destination, designated small teams of three or four students purchased food for the following day’s breakfast and lunch. If cooking facilities were available, we also purchased food and prepared dinner. The shared responsibility of chores and meal preparation combined with daily devotional discussions and conversations along the Way quickly encouraged a sense of community and comradery within the group, even though the participants were largely unknown to each other before the study tour. Conversations with other pilgrims along the Way, and with local residents, were a regular part of the day. These conversations typically opened with questions like: ‘Where are you from?’ and ‘Why are you here?’ The exchange of such personal information with strangers illustrates the different social rules of engagement in effect on the Camino, but it is this willingness to be open and vulnerable that provokes the deep reflection and contemplative experience of the Camino pilgrimage.

The Students’ View

Fourteen of the sixteen students completed the pre-tour and post-tour questionnaires. Three students provided follow-up interviews about two and one-half years post-tour. After the student interviews, I interviewed the two professors co-leading the tour. For eleven of the students, this was their first study tour. Seven of eleven participants indicated they would definitely or likely participate in another study tour; four were unsure.

-
- You need to have walked or travelled on horseback at least the last 100kms, or cycled the last 200kms, to arrive at the tomb of the Apostle in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. (Oficina de Acogida al Peregrino, 2014)

Motivations and Expectations

The data indicated that students' motivations for joining the study tour ranged from practical to personal, including experiencing the Camino (Sidney⁴), experiencing God (Robbie), and spending time in nature (Remy). For some, the pilgrimage was associated with major transitions or changes in their personal lives (Aubrey). Others were interested in an academic credit, travel, or just 'curiosity' (Sandeep). All were participating by choice, so it is not surprising that they had different motivations, or that their interest areas and learning expectations varied. Most expected or desired a spiritual encounter with the God of their faith belief (Ahn, Alex, Dale). The anticipated value of the God encounters was 'input from God and clarity of mind and will' (Leslie), 'joy, peace, strength' (Robbie), and 'guidance ... growth ... increased spiritual, emotional and physical strength' (Quinn). The pilgrimage was expected to be a spiritual retreat, and an escape from social and technological *noise*. Others had no specific expectations (Ashton), and were open to whatever learning the adventure brought. Ahn expected to learn from others' 'experiences and journeys', and Rory expected to learn 'more about St. James'. There was a clear expectation for learning, particularly at the personal level.

Participant Learning

The data showed individual learning varied, reflecting the uniqueness of the pilgrimage experience and the diverse interests and motivations of the group. Like Quinn, many claimed to have 'learned a lot from the devotionals, readings, and fellow pilgrims'. Some individuals experienced surprises or had their preconceptions about pilgrimage challenged, which may be expected as participants were engaged in a demanding physical activity combined with spiritual activities (meditation, prayer, discussion) in an unfamiliar environment while interacting with strangers and living communally. The breadth of learning ranged from practical lessons to personal spiritual learning. Sorting the questionnaire responses into categories highlighted the extent of learning:

⁴ Gender neutral pseudonyms are randomly assigned to all study tour participants in order to minimise the probability of identifying research participants.

- Academic: ‘academic learning regarding St. James, the history of the Camino, the structures that have developed’ (Sidney), and ‘James’ role in the bible, Spanish culture, Catholicism, leadership, teamwork, Spanish (the language), and the list goes on’ (Dale)
- Practical challenges: ‘time to organise ourselves, ... dealing with weather conditions’ (Jamie), and ‘be more observant – small things’ (Sandeep)
- Interpersonal: ‘learning to cooperate with other pilgrims’ (Jamie), ‘learning about group/group process’ (Ashton), and ‘community amidst a diverse group; caring, sharing, loving God’ (Alex)
- Historical/geographical: ‘God, in history and in the present, especially in the ... [Roman Catholic] church’ (Alex), and ‘knowledge of Spain – geography and culture’ (Ashton)
- Metaphorical: ‘Walking up and down hills is like life – ups and downs. The parable of walking had many applications.’ (Rory)
- Spiritual: ‘to be a servant of Christ does not require perfection, and that even his disciples were not perfect – they were obedient’ (Quinn), ‘the spiritual learning and development ... [which] is difficult to quantify, but I was given incredible space and ability to grow more deeply, get into God’s word, and experience God in fresh ways’ (Sidney), and ‘listen to God through creation, his Word, and fellow pilgrims’ (Ahn)
- Leadership: ‘leadership and mentorship in a Christian perspective’ (Aubrey), ‘a leader in a priestly role’ (Alex), and ‘James – his life, character and leadership qualities’ (Ashton)
- Emotional: ‘emotional learning, which ... was probably the most significant piece’ (Sidney)
- Personal: ‘reinforced learning ... [to] take time to walk, pray, and meditate alone, ... place value on the meaningful elements of my life’ (Leslie), and ‘learned I need time to grow’ (Quinn).

One respondent reported not learning anything new, but Dale’s comment is more typical: ‘at all times ... one was ... learning something whether or not they were intending to do so’.

Even though the course centred around ‘life leadership lessons of James’, the extended contemplations while walking were clearly more focused on personal needs and issues. Sidney described layers of learning beginning with ‘historical learning’ which explored the history, geography and culture of Spain and the church, deepening to ‘experiential learning’ which uncovered insights and leadership lessons from James, and penetrating to ‘spiritual learning’, which included ‘talking to God ... listening, and learning to hear from God’. While learning about the history, geography and culture, and about James and

leadership was expected, students seemed surprised by the learning about self, personal issues, and spirituality, describing it as profound. They emphasised the personal learning, such as what it means ‘to live out your Christianity’ (Dale), rather than leadership lessons, and attributed the depth of learning to extended reflection prompted by the long periods of walking and conversations among students and with other pilgrims.

Pre-Tour Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments

The pre-tour preparations and video conference call were described as ‘helpful’ and ‘practical’ with respect to travel preparations, but not considered particularly relevant to the actual learning on the Camino. The pre-tour reading was credited with adding ‘an air of ... intrigue to the trip’ (Sidney), but not considered essential prerequisite learning for the pilgrimage itself. Similarly, while the post-tour assignments and activities helped to ‘process and flesh out’ (Sidney) the learning, students insisted that the ‘majority of the learning was on the Camino’ (Dale), and post-tour reflections summarised and consolidated the learning.

Reflection and Transformative Learning

Arriving in Spain after experiencing travel delays, we were forced to arrange alternative accommodations. After years of wrestling with anxiety associated with a medical condition, Ahn’s anxieties were triggered by the communal living arrangements. Confronted with a panic attack and the associated stress, Ahn described having a ‘real conversation with God’ and asking him to provide ‘a different perspective’, prompting recall of Jesus’ declaration:

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.’ (John 14:27 NIV)

Concluding that Jesus’ gift of peace had not been accepted, Ahn explained, ‘Beginning that night, I began to see that I always thought of anxiety as something that happened to me, but for the first time I saw that it was a choice I made.’ The interview was about two and one-half years later, and Ahn reported that the ‘really major shift in ... mindset around anxiety’ at the

beginning of the Camino pilgrimage has continued by ‘constantly ... [choosing] the gift of peace over ... anxiety’. Ahn’s perspective was transformed. While the other interviewees did not describe such dramatically transformative learning, they emphasised self-reflection and personal learning beyond the formal course curriculum.

In terms of Mezirow’s levels of reflection, all interviewees claimed to have penetrated to the premise level. Acknowledging the value of group discussions, Dale noted that ‘preconceived ideas ... were really challenged’. Group devotional discussions, which included *examen*⁵, and pilgrimage as a metaphor for ‘our entire journey as Christ-followers’ (Sidney), prompted reflections about personal practices. Having specific subjects or questions for reflection was suggested and would have kept the reflections more focused and aligned, but no one was unhappy with the freedom to reflect on any topic or issue they chose, personal or otherwise. Instead, they emphasised the extensive, often deep, periods of reflection which occasionally modified or transformed perspectives, and that these insights have persisted post-tour: ‘really changes how I process life’ (Ahn).

Spiritual Experience and Learning

The syllabus described the Camino pilgrimage as ‘encountering God in unexpected ways; walking by faith’ (Boers, 2013). Described as having a ‘huge spiritual impact’ (Ahn), and making the timeline of another’s spiritual journey, the pilgrimage experience did not disappoint. Conversations with God were a consistent theme in student descriptions of the experience. Sidney described ‘a heaven meets earth moment ... [when] it sounded like God had turned up the volume all around me’ and nature was accentuated. Then, another moment when:

I felt like I heard ... an audible voice from God, and it was something that has since echoed in my head in regard to my relationship with my

⁵ Foster explains ‘the rather unfamiliar word *examen*. It is, of course, immediately identifiable with the commonly used word *examination*, and it carries much the same meaning minus the academic context. *Examen* comes from the Latin and refers to the tongue, or weight indicator, on a balance scale, hence conveying the idea of an accurate assessment of the true situation.’ (Foster, 1992:27)

[spouse] ..., and it had literally continued, well it has been two and one-half years ...

Students consistently represented such experiences as more than just contemplative moments, describing them as genuine encounters with a real and personal God with whom they could dialogue. While there is no evidence that their God concept was modified or transformed, they clearly indicated intimate interactions with their God during the pilgrimage. The experience was clearly a matter of faith and belief. Being at the Cathedral de Santiago for pilgrim's mass and seeing the *botafuneiro*⁶ swung was described as 'profound', and the cathedral was described as a 'thin place' (Ahn), a concept in Celtic Christian tradition that conveys the idea 'of the thin dividing line between the physical and the spiritual and the need to establish earth places which speak of heaven' (Bradley, 2000:x-xi). Although this speaks to the importance of place, Sidney questioned whether it was the 'posture of pilgrimage' rather than a *thin place* that was most conducive to such spiritual experiences. Likely, it is not either-or, but that the *thin* or sacred place encourages the posture.

Even though the study tour was intended for academic credit and subject to the rigor of academic standards, a major component of the learning was personal and spiritual, not surprising since the course was based on experiencing a religious pilgrimage and the intended learning outcomes included 'biblical, theological, and imaginative reflection on pilgrimage' (Boers, 2013). Perrin (2007) contends that:

All spirituality is particular. It takes place in a particular context in a particular location (including its own geography and climate) a particular historic setting (including its political, economic, and social elements), and a particular culture (including its language, symbols, myths, and values). (58)

So, arguably, the Camino context exposed students to a *particular spirituality*, which occurred while cross-border in a different culture and geography. Inge

⁶ The *botafuneiro* is a large silver-plated brass censer that is swung during the Eucharist rite to purify the air.

(2003) argues that pilgrimage is ‘much more than an exclusively educational journey’ (94). Taylor (1993) notes:

A pilgrim goes to a specific “holy” site in order to recall events that took place there and pray. The experience is much more emotional than intellectual, and lays great store on the site’s imbued aura of sanctity and importance. (310-1)

Likely, it is that unique character of pilgrimage that prompted the profound learning that participants described. Illeris (2006) claims recent research indicates ‘that in a normal healthy brain, what we usually term ‘reason’ cannot function independently of what we call ‘emotions’ (13). Willingham (2009) insists that while emotion is not essential for learning, ‘things that create an emotional reaction will be better remembered’ (58). It is not unimaginable then that the Camino pilgrimage provided the educative and spiritual experience necessary to prompt the depth of reflection and emotion necessary to modify or transform perspectives.

In contrast to postmodern thinkers, modern thinkers are typically individualistic and autonomous, schooled in rational thought and scientific method. For moderns, ‘spirituality and the religious view in general were privatized and removed from public discourse in the community’ (Illeris, 2006:79). Postmoderns challenge metanarratives as ‘barriers to exploring the new, the imaginative, and the creative edges developing in the world in so many areas of life’ (Illeris, 2006:81). Their diverse worldviews undoubtedly enriched the discussions, which students assessed as valuable to their learning. Interestingly, Inge (2003) argues that ‘a consequence of the postmodern suspicion of grand narratives is an attempt to recover a sense of the importance of the *particular*’ (24). So, whether a modern viewing the pilgrimage as an expression of a grand narrative, or a postmodern viewing the pilgrimage as a *particular* narrative, the Camino appears to appeal to both. When they dialogue together, the potential for significant educative experiences is increased.

Additional Student Assessment

Overwhelmingly, the data indicated the group’s satisfaction with the tour: ‘exceeded expectations’ (Sydney, Ahn and Dale). Leslie said:

It met my expectations of being an excellent beginning Camino experience, as it was just long enough to overcome the tourist mentality and engage in the life of a pilgrim. It exceeded my expectations in terms of the quality of relationships with members of our group.

Dale claimed 'it allowed me to learn more about God, myself, and human interaction'; Robbie said it was 'therapeutic and spiritually stimulating'. Many appreciated the sense of community, claiming the group was exceptionally supportive and understood 'church dynamics' (Ashton). All appreciated the escape from the busyness of everyday life. But, Rory claimed it 'did not meet my fancy', Aubrey expected more 'thinking/processing time', and Ashton wanted more 'alone time'. Even though all expectations were not met, overall the tour experience definitely received a positive review.

Students indicated that their insights and spiritual learning would be the lasting value of the tour experience, including: 'reprioritization'(Leslie), 'simplicity' (Alex), 'how important a daily "walk" with God is' (Dale), 'the value of rest/Sabbath' (Ashton), and 'more comfortable with my spiritual beliefs' (Quinn). Sidney predicted 'the experience, relationships, [and] renewal will echo in my soul and life for years'. Dale reported that most of the learning has 'held pretty solid', not changing significantly since the Camino, and Sidney, claiming 'it really stuck', recalls or reflects on the Camino 'maybe every other week ... intentionally or unintentionally'. Clearly, obedience to their God's instructions as articulated in sacred writings and church teachings, and interpreted through reflection, was considered important learning, tantamount to life rules, and indicates the value they ascribed to their spiritual learning and their commitment to preserving and applying such learning. For some students, the result appears to be a closer relationship with and loving obedience to their God.

Disconnection from the routine and *noise* of life, especially technology, was important to the uniqueness and nature of the experience. Dale 'liked how it was experiential and how it forced you to link "knowledge" or "facts" with reality and everyday life'. The 'combination of structured group time and personal time alone was effective' (Sidney), and provided 'a forum for hermeneutic reflection, thereby developing increased self-understanding'

(Leslie). Clearly, the freedom to engage in extended reflection, without any obligation to contemplate a particular subject or issue, was important to the students' learning. In fact, in the Camino context, it is the expected behavior. Given the extent and depth of learning, it is not surprising that students insisted that a study tour is more effective in prompting learning than an on-campus course. The intense, immersive pilgrimage experience – physical, spiritual, and emotional – and the absence of distractions were believed to be more stimulating and intense than a classroom course. Insisting 'I have learning and life experiences that will forever be entrenched in my soul', Sidney noted that it is much easier to understand the 'almost myth' of James when one sees the symbolism of the pilgrim and the representations of James in various art forms along the Camino, than merely hearing about him in a classroom or watching a video account. Suggesting the 'quantity of information learned appeared to be less' than a classroom course, Dale insisted that 'the quality of the information in its ability to be formative and to promote critical thought was much higher'. For some students, the experience clearly went beyond simply accumulating or assimilating more information and prompted accommodative and transformative learning.

Most students had no dislikes, but a couple suggested more structured teaching and a tighter adherence to a schedule. In contrast, another felt there was too much hurry to finish the walk each day. Everyone appreciated the extent of community that developed. Something about the character of pilgrimage – or the Camino in particular – seems to promote a sense of community. Individuals were very willing to participate in personal discussion and to collaborate with tasks. Minor complaints, such as too few bathrooms at the albergues, appear not to have distracted from a learning experience that was 'focused and sacred' (Sidney).

The Professors' View

Both professors had previously led study tours, and brought subsequent study tours to the Camino. Professor Fran has led wilderness and canoeing tours; Professor Mackenzie has led study tours to the United States, Central America and Europe. Describing travel as a 'learning tool for me', Professor Mackenzie recalled 'learning coming from the students about God's community in the

broader world and just understanding the Christian community in a different way because of the experiences'. The professors brought insight into organizing and leading tours, particularly with a spiritual theme.

International travel is rarely smooth, so it is not surprising that the professors described being anxious before departing. But, good study tour design is more than logistics; it keeps the focus on learning. Professor Mackenzie described a study tour to Taizé⁷, France, which included a stopover in Paris. It attracted participants more interested in shopping in Paris than contemplative worship at Taizé, thereby introducing distraction. Adding a stopover to overcome jetlag proved counterproductive and distracted from the intended learning, illustrating how logistics enhance or detract from the learning opportunity. Professor Mackenzie insists that daily devotional discussions and 'having that sense of reflection built into the practices' is essential to success, adding that when students 'have these experiences ... if you don't reflect on them ... you miss some transformational opportunities'. But, good planning and design does not ensure all students will be engaged or satisfied. One professor noted that every time at least one student struggles through the experience. The struggles vary, ranging from simply being homesick to being humbled by the physical challenge of the Camino and having to sacrifice one's independence to accept the help of the community to finish. And, tensions sometimes occur between participants, and did occur during other study tours. Professor Mackenzie also talked about the challenge of leading, especially when required to take charge of situations or change schedules to accommodate circumstances or tired students. Students can become resistant to and frustrated by such changes and challenge the decision, even though they were informed of such possibilities at the outset and accepted the leaders' responsibility to act in the best interest of the learning community. However, such challenges clearly have not dampened the professors' enthusiasm for study tours.

Noting that it is difficult to 'quantify how much they did or did not learn', Professor Fran claims 'these kind of courses really linger in people's memories and affect them quite deeply for a long period of time' compared to an on-

⁷ Taizé Community is an ecumenical Christian monastic order (Taizé, 2016).

campus course. Professor Mackenzie concurs, and expressed fascination at ‘how often students reflect back the power of the experience’, noting that whether the experience was struggle or joy students ‘learn some beautiful, beautiful things’. Suggesting that the spiritual dimension makes the learning particularly profound, it was attributed to:

Giving people the space to have their own journey ... [because] student learning comes when they can embrace the journey they are on and reflect on that. Giving students the space to have that experience ... without judgment and then find a path through it.

Professor Mackenzie also likened the time apart to the practice of Jesus withdrawing for periods ‘to reflect and to pray’⁸. Unlike an on-campus course during which you are ‘in the everyday’, during study tours students are ‘out of the everyday’, and its experiential character provides a monastic-like experience that promotes a Celtic-style spirituality, which is an ‘embodied ... and reflective approach to spirituality’ (Professor Mackenzie). Arguing that the transfer of personal learning to academic study enriches and grounds the learning, Professor Mackenzie said, ‘What I love about the trips is that somehow the academic and the personal seem to combine in a very meaningful and powerful way.’ Professor Fran added that this study tour ‘reinforced my conviction that this is worthwhile’.

Not surprisingly, after leading several study tours, the professors described occurrences of transformative learning, both personally and for their students. Professor Mackenzie claims the ‘transformational opportunity’ is the result of two factors: travel, which is ‘a powerful learning tool’, and the destination, which is ‘a Christian reflection place’. This aligns with Professor Fran’s claim that, for students describing transformative learning, ‘it mostly had to do with their relationship with God’. Other learning concerned dealing with the ‘stress and busyness of their own life’ (Professor Fran) and seeking balance. Professor Fran noted that going to a place of reflection allowed the students to get away from their ‘normal schedules of life ... and normal distractions’ and provided a ‘good balance between ... pre-determined reflection and then personal’, adding that the retreat-like experience offered ‘experiences of silence and solitude ...

⁸ ‘But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed’ (Luke 5:16 NIV)

and an opportunity to reorient'. Professor Mackenzie claimed that the location, the particular group, and the sense of community contributed to the learning, adding that intentionality is also a determining factor. The professors agreed that students' typically described the 'Camino experience as the most transformational experience of their lives' (Professor Mackenzie). Professor Fran added that the learning has 'to be applied ... to be integrated, so it's not enough to get the insights there ... you have to figure out how to live them out'.

Consistent with experiencing transformative learning, Professor Mackenzie indicated that 'conversations with many of the people as we were walking and after ... was a lot of conversation around premise [reflection]', adding that many of these conversations were about 'personally sorting through values'. Professor Mackenzie claims that such deep reflection occurs because participants feel they have permission:

Places like the Camino and Taizé and Iona⁹ have already established that they're there for premise concerns. Then people feel that's a place they can work out of as opposed to a context where you're not sure.

Professor Fran agreed that being on the Camino and having freedom from a strictly imposed agenda were critical, adding that 'being in community is really, really important ... having that rhythm of solitude and community is important'. Exposure to people outside the community was also instructive. For example, shortly after beginning the pilgrimage, we encountered a pilgrim from Australia who became a significant part of our experience. She walked with various members of our group on different days, and we slowly learned her story. In fact, on arriving in Santiago, she changed her pre-arranged accommodations to stay at the *hospedería* with us. Her openness in dialoguing about her personal needs 'figured really largely in several people's experience' (Professor Fran) and became a part of their meditations and prayers. Such experiences gave the group licence to explore our own needs and converse with others about them. Clearly, the Camino *mindset* of contemplation and the openness that the environment encourages, combined with practicing 'a kind of consciousness

⁹ Located on Iona, an island in the Inner Hebrides, the Iona Community is 'a dispersed Christian ecumenical community working for peace and social justice, rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship' (Iona, 2016).

examen every night' (Professor Fran), created space for deep and critical reflection.

Even though students enrolled in an academic course, they expected it to be a spiritual experience. Professor Fran commented that they had 'prepared themselves spiritually before they went', adding:

The priority was not that they learn ... certain ideas, certain historical facts, or principles of leadership ... it was about fostering the possibility for them to encounter God or reflect deeply on their own life.

The strong spiritual focus is consistent with the intended learning outcomes and with the students' reported learning. Both professors agree that 'quite a big proportion' (Professor Fran) of students experienced transcendent moments on the Camino and that the Camino pilgrimage was a significant event along their spiritual journey. Professor Mackenzie also spoke about an element of mystery that is difficult to articulate, but integral to the experience: 'It's challenging; it's a bit mysterious'. Maybe that mysteriousness relates to the mystical dimension of Christianity, the experiential rather than the theological. And, perhaps that is the quality that engages students in such deep reflection – their desire to solve the mysteries of the Camino and of their lives.

The professors also expressed satisfaction with the study tour as an academic experience, even though Professor Fran described the academic component as 'almost the means ... [to] the end', which was spiritual formation. So, rather than placing the teaching emphasis on Christian history or theology, they adopted a constructivist approach, allowing the students to derive meaning from the experience. Their final critique of the course was positive, even though they made some changes when the same course was offered two years later. For example, they were more detailed and specific about the logistics, and they compiled a booklet that provided 'historical, contextual, religious comments about what to look out for, and lots of stuff about food, language, some basic vocabulary' (Professor Fran). They were also more specific and demanding regarding assignment requirements. As a result, the journal submissions for the subsequent study tour were reflective interpretations of the experience rather

than the travelogues they received for the first tour. However, that is not an indication of failure, just improvements going forward.

Finally, the professors also shared their personal experience. Self-described as 'quite an introvert', Professor Fran talked about pre-tour anxiety anticipating the challenge of being 'exposed to people so intensely for that period of time', but quickly confessed no desire to change anything because it was about 'trying to foster an experience, a spiritual experience, in the context of community'. Professor Mackenzie talked about the difficulty of 'letting the group go at its own pace ... you don't always know exactly where everybody is and if they are OK'. With sixteen students making individual journeys averaging 15 kilometres per day, there were significant gaps as we walked. Add unpredictable encounters, attractions, and distractions while crossing varied terrain for the first time, and it is not surprising that safety concerns crept into the day. Managing sixteen separate journeys, even along the well-marked Way, is certainly more challenging than corralling a group back onto the tour bus. And, this happened as professors engaged in personal and emotional conversations with students and others. Although aware of safety concerns, I had not appreciated the extent of the professors' concern until they stated it. Professor Mackenzie suggested that smaller groups are easier to manage, and 'a group ethos emerges rather than subgroup ethoses', but added 'if people want to go to the Camino ... I'd rather have a large group there than no group experience it'. Study tours are not simple field trips, coach tours, or vacations; they are serious and challenging teaching assignments. Nevertheless, the professors' enthusiasm and delight in giving students an enduring learning experience was evident. It's not surprising that Professor Mackenzie said, 'It's a place that calls to me!'

Mapping Learning

Reflecting on the Camino experience, I mapped how learning may be occurring using Kolb's learning cycle. Setting aside the question of whether such a model is reductionist, I presupposed that his learning cycle adequately describes learning for the purpose of this discussion. Johnston et al (2013) affirm the usefulness of Kolb's model, claiming 'the nature of international experiential learning is very much a part of this cycle of concrete experiences, reflection, meaning making, and subsequent testing of that meaning in a new experience'

Mediated learning in the home setting shapes a conceptual framework of localised meaning schemes.

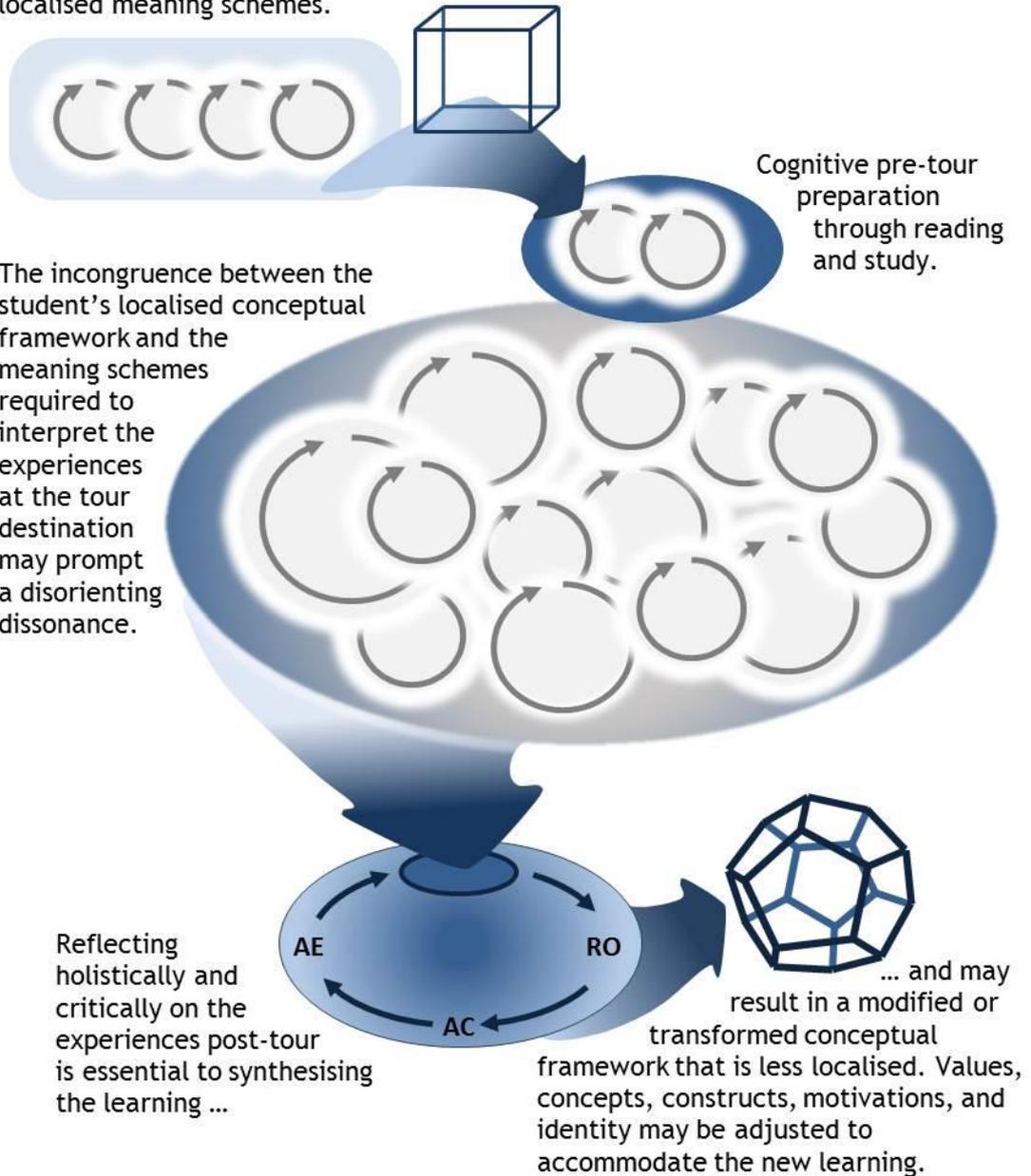


Figure 4: First Camino Study Tour Learning Map

(49). Shaules (2010) claims that ‘in a new environment, this meaning-making process is more difficult’ (71). And, Fink (2003) argues:

For learning to occur, there has to be some kind of change in the learner. No change, no learning. And significant learning requires that there be some kind of lasting change that is important in terms of the learner's life. (30)

The cross-border experience of the study tour offered rich and diverse stimuli for such learning. Adding to the complexity, participants, of necessity, utilised

their previously held meaning schemes to give meaning to the tour experiences, thereby attempting to integrate the learning associated with the new experiences into their pre-existing conceptual framework, even when those experiences do not fit well into such pre-existing paradigms. As shown in Figure 4, previous formal learning would generally have been well-structured, mediated learning, often consisting of a linear sequence of learning cycles, which shaped the localised conceptual framework necessary to develop competency in navigating the social, cultural, and employment context of the home environment. This localised conceptual framework does not necessarily provide the knowledge and skills required to navigate well through the tour experiences. Since students crossed multiple borders, the preparation required to navigate the messy maze of learning during the study tour extends beyond the logistical matters of travel. Johnston et al (2013) claim students' previous learning often does not include 'preparation for ways in which the learning environment will change' and argue for 'a curriculum that allows them to know themselves better as learners, to appreciate other ways of knowing, and to develop some flexibility to adapt their learning behaviors' (58). The pre-tour design should help students assess their existing conceptual framework in terms of gaps that could hinder *meaning making* in the tour context, and provide the knowledge and skills necessary to address the identified gaps. That may require group sessions before travelling abroad to discuss readings and research, challenge preconceptions, prompt individual reflection, and supplement pre-tour study.

During formal learning in the familiar home context, it is possible to maintain an orderly and structured delivery of course content, at least most of the time. In the unfamiliar context and foreign environment of Spain, students experienced different and varying stimuli, were unaware of certain cultural norms, navigated new territory, communicated in or across a different language, and occasionally experienced intense emotions, while engaging in the spiritual practice of meditation. It was not possible to arrange a neat sequence of learning experiences with scheduled time for reflection and concept testing as is typical of formal instruction in the home context. Study tours are adventures with messy pedagogy. Unlike a typical vacation tour, they are not just photo stops at tourist sites. Claiming 'the quality of the insight gained by touristic experience

has been criticized as less than profound', MacCannell (1976) insists that 'the touristic experience that comes out of the tourist setting is based on inauthenticity and as such it is superficial when compared with careful study' (102). Study tours are 'careful study', even though they are exploratory, random, off-script, opportunistic ... messy! The Camino study tour was loosely structured, but rich in experience. While the tourist enjoys the superficial view and leaves with beautiful travel photographs, study tour students gain a sense of place – its history, culture, geography, spirituality, society, economy, etc.

Unlike the orderly sequence of learning cycles that prevail in formal learning in the home context, mapping the learning cycles occurring during the tour reveals an unstructured jumbo of learning cycles: interrupted, truncated, overlapping, random, and unpredictable. Students had different experiences, the same experience at different times, reflected more or less at different periods, may or may not have applied various theories, and so on. Students relied on their pre-existing conceptual framework to interpret their experiences even though they had crossed cultural borders, and the context of the experience was often significantly different than the home context. Earley, Ang and Tan (2006) claim cultural intelligence or the ability to adapt to new cultures:

Consists of three parts, including what you think and how you solve problems (cultural strategic thinking); whether or not you are reenergized and persistent in your actions (motivation); and whether or not you can act in certain ways (behavior). (5)

If pre-tour preparation does not adequately develop a minimum level of cultural intelligence, students are challenged during the tour. In the cross-border context of Spain, students are *peripheral participants*. To give meaning to their experiences it was necessary for the students to reconcile their situated learning with their pre-existing knowledge and conceptual framework. In certain situations, it may have been necessary for them to modify their existing paradigms to process the experience and derive the potential learning. Processing requires time, but given the rapid-fire experiences during the tour, time to reflect and process experiences was likely insufficient or interrupted, so students lack sufficient time to become *full participants*. Students who diligently kept a journal are more likely to have preserved details for later reflection, thereby distilling increased learning from the tour experiences. Eyer

and Giles (1999) found that ‘writing was in fact a consistent predictor of self-knowledge, spiritual growth, and finding reward’ (40). Clearly, depth and extent of reflection determines the depth and extent of learning during and after a study tour. While students are unlikely to acquire in-depth knowledge and understanding of the destination from a single, short visit, the brief exposure is adequate to modify or even transform pre-existing meaning schemes.

My next study tour, which went to Israel/Palestine, quickly taught me that learning on a study tour is more complex than can be easily depicted by a cluster of learning cycles. I will discuss this in the next section.

TOUR 2: HOLY LAND STUDY TOUR (ISRAEL/PALESTINE)

My second study tour, conducted by Waterloo Lutheran Seminary (WLS)¹⁰, went to Israel/Palestine and blended the field portion of three courses into a single tour. The courses included biblical studies, political ethics, and cross-cultural studies, and were available as undergraduate or postgraduate credits. The intended learning outcomes for the three courses are included in the syllabus excerpt in Appendix F.

For the first nine days, the group stayed at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute guesthouse in Jerusalem, and then travelled to Nazareth for four days, staying at St. Margaret’s Guesthouse. While in Jerusalem, we visited historical Jewish, Christian, and Muslim sites, including the Mount of Olives, Pater Noster Church, Garden of Gethsemane, Via Dolorosa, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Western Wall (or Wailing Wall), and Temple Mount. We also visited contemporary sites, such as Yad Vashem (Holocaust Museum). We took day trips to Bethlehem, Qumran, and Masada, and on Friday evening attended Kabbalat Shabbat¹¹ at Kehilat Kol HaNeshama, a progressive Jewish synagogue. We also visited a Lutheran school and church in Beth Sahour, the Aida Refugee Camp, Augusta Victoria Hospital, and the Environmental Education Center at Beit Jala. Returning to Tantur after our daytime activities, we usually had guest speakers, who provided scholarly insight into the history, culture, religions, and politics of

¹⁰ Waterloo Lutheran Seminary is a Wilfrid Laurier University federated college.

¹¹ Kabbalat Shabbat is the Friday evening worship service to welcome Shabbat (Sabbath).

Israel/Palestine. Following dinner, we often had group discussions or devotions. Leaving Jerusalem early morning, we stopped at St. George's Monastery in Wadi Qelt. From there, we walked ten kilometres through the Judean Desert to Jericho, visited the Jordan River, and continued to Nazareth. While in Nazareth, we visited Nazareth Village, a historical recreation, Capernaum, Megiddo, and Caesarea Maritima, and sailed on the Sea of Galilee. In addition to visits to holy sites and interaction with contemporary scholars and activists, the itinerary allowed the group to interact socially over meals and during evenings at the guesthouses.

The Students' View

Thirteen of the nineteen participants completed pre- and post-tour questionnaires and eleven students provided interviews about six months post-tour. The three professors provided interviews about two months later. More than two-thirds of the respondents indicated it was their first tour; all but two indicated they would definitely or likely participate in another study tour. Cost is the reason one participant thinks another study tour is unlikely.

Motivations and Expectations

Similar to the Camino study tour, motivations for joining the Israel/Palestine study tour ranged from practical to personal. It was an opportunity to experience the history, culture, and geography of the Holy Land itself, to increase biblical literacy, and to inform theology (Noel, Casey, Bailey, Cary, Regan, Blair). Additionally, there was interest in the current conflict situations (Regan), and finding 'some integration between senses of Christians as persecuted and persecutor' (Paris). For Devon, it was 'to further process my own spiritual journey', but fewer participants described it as a spiritual retreat or pilgrimage compared to the Camino study tour. Undoubtedly, the *marketing* of study tours and their intended learning outcomes influenced participation. It is reasonable to assume that students registering for a *Holy Land Study Tour* expected it to have spiritual significance, even though it was not marketed as a pilgrimage, and the seminary clearly identified both the historical and contemporary components in its promotions. In fact, McCannell (1976) argues that the Holy Land tour 'has followed in the path of the religious pilgrimage and

is replacing it' (43). Academic credit was another motivation (Robin, Rene, and Devon). Others saw a travel opportunity (Harper, Devon), perhaps because the tour included continuing education students. Expanding participation increases affordability through economy of scale, but the study tour must then accommodate participants not seeking academic credit. Balancing economics with the role of short-term international study tours in the academy poses an important discussion, but is without the scope of my research.

With differing motivations, it is not surprising that students' expectations for learning differed. The most common expectation was insight into the current situation in Israel/Palestine: 'gaining more in-depth knowledge of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict from local sources instead of news and books' (Robin), and 'first-hand talking to people within the conflict' (Casey). However, the initial motivation for participation in a *Holy Land* tour may have been faith-based, as Blair indicated:

I expected to learn from meeting people, seeing places, experiencing the country, ... the roots and background of my faith, and how it is expressed. Once I saw the reading list my expectations changed to finding out more about the socio-political atmosphere of the Holy Land.

Predictable learning expectations, such as history, culture, and geography, Jesus in historical context, and the interaction of different faiths were articulated. The combined contemporary and traditional emphasis may explain why fewer participants expected significant spiritual moments or encounters than for the Camino pilgrimage. Whatever their individual expectations, their desire to learn was evident.

Participant Learning

Predictably, two major themes emerged from the data concerning what was actually learned: knowledge of history, culture, and biblical archaeology, and knowledge of the contemporary sociopolitical situation, with learning about contemporary issues possibly exceeding the historical. Blair insists contemporary issues were emphasised, but is content with that emphasis:

I feel like I got duped. I don't mind it, but I think they advertised that we could take a land of the people of ancient times course, but ...

they were going to be teaching us about stuff today. ... I don't mind, for sure I don't. ... [I] was actually glad that the focus shifted to the present day conflict because of the depth of understanding of the leaders and presenters.

The data provided no indication that satisfaction was lessened because of the contemporary focus. In fact, Regan claimed, 'I did not expect to engage with/become very interested in the modern cultural and political circumstances, but this was one of the most interesting topics for me.' The data indicate that students realised significant learning, and that it was more narrowly focused than for the Camino students. Applying the categories adopted in the previous section:

- Academic: 'The biblical explanations were also very helpful, but it was the modern-day perspective that was most enlightening' (Robin), 'This tour got at the complexities, the people, the history, the 'today and now' (Cary), and 'learned about specific bible contexts, that stories have specific details relative to a time and place, and they are best understood by living in the place and walking the geography' (Noel)
- Practical challenges: Not identified in the questionnaire responses, but items surfaced during the post-tour interviews, such as long, busy days.
- Interpersonal: Intragroup relationships were not discussed, but the interactions with local people were: 'The most significant learning experiences were the ones where we actually engaged in dialogue with those living in Israel and Palestine' (Regan)
- Historical/geographical: 'lots of history; connections between Jesus' life and his stories – the bible coming alive' (Harper), and 'a lot of knowledge of archaeology and successive ruling dynasties; a lot more connection of bible history to place and first century CE culture' (Paris)
- Metaphorical: No metaphors discussed
- Spiritual: 'my faith practices are less rooted in specific places and are rooted in learned rituals and specific experiences – I must take the time to maintain and perform these practices' (Noel)
- Leadership: Personal leadership was not discussed, but political leadership was referenced in student interviews
- Emotional: Not discussed in the questionnaire responses, but several references were made to emotional responses elsewhere
- Personal: Not identified in the questionnaire responses, but the interviews indicated individuals are responding differently to the situation in Israel/Palestine

Additionally, another major category emerged:

- Contemporary issues: ‘a lot more sensitivity to the plight, hope, and contribution of occupied people’ (Paris), ‘understanding of Israel, its people and the effort to achieve a two-state nation’ (Casey), ‘mostly I learned about the complexity of the political/ethnic/religious situation in the land’ (Lee)

The learning was clearly more focused on historical, political, and social issues, than personal questions and self-reflection. Many discovered that their previous understanding was incomplete and largely shaped by media reports: ‘I had this North American attitude’ (Casey), and ‘the media ... doesn’t necessarily give us a balanced picture’ (Blair). Bailey said, ‘I did not know that there was so little of Palestine¹² left.’ But, it was the people that left the greatest impact: ‘exposure to the plight of the Palestinian people was quite powerful’ (Devon). While learning about the Palestinian perspective is more prominent in the data, one student’s key learning was ‘to understand better the Jewish position ... in the creation of Israel ... how deeply connected the land is to their identity’ (Robin). Another student noted how the discussion ‘approached the conflict from a lot of different angles ... [including the] environmental aspects of the conflict’ (Regan), (referencing the impact of the security wall on wildlife migration patterns). The students are clearly more informed about the complexities of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the ‘many complex layers there are in the situation’ (Rene).

Conversations with local people and the visual evidence of conflict evoked emotional responses and had a powerful impact. Since most students had not previously studied the situation, but relied on media and opinion to inform their understanding, it challenged and changed many preconceptions. But, that does not diminish the impact of historical and holy sites, and the intrigue of the archaeology which provided context and fresh interpretation for church and

¹² Palestine is not a globally recognised state, so defining Palestine tends to imply an agenda or position. Readings provided before the study tour included discussion of the League of Nations granted British Mandate to administer the territory of Palestine, the Balfour Declaration recommending the establishment of a ‘national home’ for Jewish people, and the United Nations Partition Plan (1947). With respect to the current situation in Israel/Palestine, Canadian Government policy states: ‘Canada recognizes the Palestinian right to self-determination and supports the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic and territorially contiguous Palestinian state, as part of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement. ... Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over territories occupied in 1967 (the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip).’ (Government of Canada, 2015)

biblical history. Paris said the people, the land, and the book ‘consolidated beautifully.’ Casey emphasised how knowledge of the geography allows one to conceptualise, even identify with rather than imagine, many places in Christian scripture. Blair appreciated the recreated first-century village in Nazareth and what it taught about the historical period, astutely noting how archaeology is ‘interpreted’ through the beliefs or biases of the archaeologists, eg Israeli state, Franciscan, Muslim, etc. There was also the experience of being in the *Holy Land* because of its significance to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Cary described a ‘feeling of awe that I might be in the same place as Jesus’. Describing it as a ‘faith journey or ... faith experience’, Noel said:

Whether it was the locals who lived there who were ... deeply convinced or deeply rooted in their faith, or the tourists who were just so profoundly moved by the experience of being there really ... shed a light for me on my own need to figure out what my expression of spirituality or faith would be when I got back.’

Students learned much about historical and contemporary Israel/Palestine, and many were impacted by the experience.

The study tour was critiqued for being ‘more extensive, more survey than depth’ (Paris). Blair claimed, ‘We went to a great number of sites and learned about the archaeology at a tourist level, ... formal learning was up to our own study.’ In contrast, Rene declared, ‘it was definitely the single most powerful learning experience I’ve ever had’. The learning was attributed to a number of items. First, the tour guide was ‘very fantastic’ (Bailey), even though one student was impatient with long explanations at times. The guides’ credibility was attributed to extensive first-hand knowledge. Since they grew up in the area, they were accepted as reliable experts. A second factor was ‘the quality of the [evening] speakers’ (Blair). Perhaps the most impactful speakers were representatives of the Parents Circle¹³. Their accounts of losing close family members to violence evoked strong emotional responses from many participants. Even though it was emotionally disturbing, Regan commented, ‘It offered me a little bit of hope ... that ... a lot of these people are willing to work together towards peace even

¹³ ‘The Parents Circle – Families Forum (PCFF) is a joint Palestinian Israeli organization of over 600 families, all of whom have lost a close family member as a result of the prolonged conflict’ (The Parents Circle, 2016).

when they've been hurt'. The credibility and knowledge of the guides and guest speakers enhanced the experience on-the-ground. Another significant and instructive factor was 'experiencing the people' (Devon). The 'authenticity of the people' (Paris) who were living their lives in spite of the conflict, tourists, and politics, impressed the students. Casey appreciated 'listening to the people ... learning their stories ... [because] stories are important'. Regan noted their 'personal commitment to the stories'. The importance of interactions with local residents should not be underestimated, as was also emphasised in the Camino student accounts of learning.

Pre-Tour Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments

With three courses on offer, the syllabus listed twelve textbooks and several online readings, providing ample resources to acquire basic historical and contemporary knowledge of Israel/Palestine, but with no pre-tour deliverables, most students read few, if any, of the textbooks or readings. One student had difficulty playing a large video on the course website, further discouraging students already not strongly motivated to study pre-tour materials. Students who completed readings described them as helpful, creating awareness of the situation on-the-ground and what to expect. The pre-tour class session provided additional information and discussed travel preparations, even though it was critiqued as being geared toward inexperienced travelers. Busyness was the common reason for not completing pre-tour study. On the other hand, Rene suggested that any preparation would be 'inadequate ... because nothing could prepare you for actually being there'. Another student appreciated 'trying to ease you into the experience because it is such a jolting experience ... [but] there needs to be some kind of shock element' (Noel) for students to appreciate the challenges and complexities of the situation. Pre-tour preparations clearly have value, such as reassuring students that we were 'going to safe parts' (Bailey), but students require incentive to complete pre-tour study.

Post-tour assignments, an annotated bibliography and an academic paper, were described as 'a really, really good way to synthesise things ... a way of tying academic research ... with things I had seen', since during the tour 'your mind is spinning, you're tired ... you're having fun and you're distracted' (Blair). Devon described the learning as experiential and being processed 'almost at an

emotional level’, whereas researching an academic paper requires a ‘more cerebral process [that] pushed the learning into a different place’. Regan described being immersed in experiences that were ‘emotional and personal’, whereas an academic paper deals ‘with facts and objective academic language’, noting that one does not feel as inspired to put academic learning into practice as one does experiential learning. Cary now reads news items more analytically, questions the backstory, and believes ‘even more ... of the learning was afterwards,’ having further researched sites and events post-tour and explored the layers of complexity, particularly those associated with interrelationships among people of different faiths. Clearly, learning continued post-tour, but post-tour, it was more analytical and academic than emotional.

Reflection and Transformative Learning

Asked whether the experience transformed their thinking or changed preconceptions, responses ranged from ‘yes, absolutely’ (Casey), to ‘shifted it a little bit’ (Regan), with most indicating a ‘deepening’ of their knowledge and understanding. Casey reported no previous interest in traveling to the Middle East, but now supports the peace advocacy group and views media and governments with skepticism and questioning, claiming, ‘It just transformed me.’ Robin had a ‘tendency to blame the Jews for all the suffering of the Palestinians’, but the tour helped to humanise the Jews and ‘realise that these people also have the right to have their own land’. Recognizing how strongly the people ‘were very assured that they were Christian or Muslim or Jewish’, Noel claimed ‘it confronted me with what ... is my identity?’ Harper, a self-declared non-believer¹⁴, said, ‘I think what I saw basically was a lot of man’s inhumanity to man,’ and insisted, ‘It actually made me more a non-believer.’ In contrast, Rene claims the experience ‘erased all doubt’ about Christian ministry as a career path. Others were cautious in describing transformed ideas or understanding. Paris said, ‘I don’t think it transformed them ... but it certainly solidified it.’ The data indicated that students were integrating knowledge gained from different experiences, events, or people into a more holistic understanding. Brookfield (2000) suggests there is ‘misuse of the word

¹⁴ Although raised in the Christian faith, Harper rejects it.

transformative to refer to any instance in which reflection leads to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of assumptions' (139). While I am hesitant to suggest that all students experienced transformative learning as described by Mezirow, it is clear learning was deepened and nuanced, and for some students, paradigms were clearly modified and perspectives transformed. While less dramatic accounts than some Camino tour students provided, the data suggests that the Israel/Palestine experience has transformed or at least modified thinking for some students.

The Israel/Palestine tour included the curriculum for three courses and was densely packed with information, so it is not surprising that students focused on different subject areas and reflected at different depths. Most students reported process and premise level reflection, with the students who indicated transformed thinking also indicating premise level reflection. While premise reflection by itself does not prove perspective transformation, it allows for the possibility. Casey claimed that meeting the people prompted process reflection and led to a more critical view of media and government reports, and ultimately to supporting peace activism. The reflection that solidified Rene's commitment to a Christian ministry career, was 'definitely groundbreaking, and disrupted my assumptions and values', possibly penetrating to premise level. At the premise level, Regan puzzled about applying Christian ideology to resolve 'conflict in a way of forgiveness, in the way of non-violence', acknowledging that it would require 'a strong theology of self-sacrifice and forgiveness' as people could die as a result of such a stance. Students were indeed wrestling with premise level questions.

With ongoing 'competition between keeping moving and actually ... being allowed to stop and reflect on things' (Devon), most sites did not prompt deep reflection, but places like Yad Vashem clearly evoked emotion and contemplation. Blair claimed the guest speakers 'really challenged us', illustrating how the tour was designed to 'grapple with some of the complexity of it ... we move into premise [reflection]'. Consistently, students reported their deepest reflection occurring post-tour when writing final assignment papers. Continuing education students also reported deeper reflection post-tour. Confessing to initially having an 'almost simplistic understanding ... of the situation', Cary gained deeper understanding through post-tour reflections that

penetrated through the layers. No one suggested periods of extended or deep reflection while in Israel/Palestine because of the busy schedule, but they did appreciate moments of reflection with other students. More down time, increased reflection time, and a reduced itinerary was suggested, but not broadly endorsed: 'I'm glad they stuffed as much into it as they could ... I'd rather have the stuff and do the reflecting later' (Rene). The Israel/Palestine tour highlighted the challenge of balancing activity and reflection. It appears students prefer to have the activity during the tour (at least in retrospect), so tour leaders have to strategically incorporate reflection activities and instructive post-tour assignments that prompt deep reflection.

Spiritual Experience and Learning

Expecting significant spiritual moments as Christians tour the birthplace of Christianity is not unreasonable. In fact, psychiatrists have reported visitors to Israel/Palestine experiencing episodes of a psychotic illness 'related to religious excitement induced by proximity to the holy places of Jerusalem', called Jerusalem Syndrome (Bar-el et al, 2000:86). It did not happen during or after this tour, but illustrates how intense the experience can be. Considering Camino students reported 'talking to' and 'hearing from' God, I expected similar experiences to be reported for the Israel/Palestine tour, but most students reported less dramatic spiritual experiences. Responses ranged from essentially no spiritual experience to very profound moments for others. A number of factors could explain this, including the student's motivation for participating, the academic character and the dual historical and contemporary focus of the tour, interviewing fewer Camino students, and individual concepts of spirituality. Several students spoke of the 'connection to the people' or 'encountering the people' as the spiritual component. Recognizing they were 'walking in the footsteps of Jesus' (Regan), several students spoke about 'moments of awe' at the Mount of Olives, Gethsemane, Shepherd's Field, or walking to Jericho, which one described as 'a really spiritual moment, a really holy moment' (Noel). Students described transcendent moments at particular sites, such as viewing the Old City of Jerusalem from Dominus Flevit Church on the Mount of Olives (Rene). Devon described being 'completely overwhelmed by emotion' at the Yad Vashem children's memorial as a 'transcendent experience because ... of sharing in grief for the children'. Robin claimed that we 'created

that spiritual space for ourselves' through our devotional prayers, singing, and shared time. While individual responses varied, it is clear that most students pondered spiritual questions, and reflected on personal spirituality and practices.

Additional Student Assessment

Illustrating the students' level of satisfaction, Robin said: 'It was very well organised; all the seminars and the people, the sites were informative, helpful, inspiring ... guide was excellent'. In terms of its lasting value, students indicated a changed and deepened understanding of Israel/Palestine (Blair, Paris, Casey, Regan). Robin will 'never ... forget the pain and suffering of others; to keep in mind that my daily life is to help who is in need'. During the interviews students recalled many facts and details about sites visited, but emphasised the plight of people in a conflict area. 'I am scared for the people I met' (Bailey); 'These are people; it's not statistics' (Paris). They emphasised the importance of meeting local people, especially the families that hosted us for lunch after Sunday morning worship¹⁵. They also indicated an ongoing interest in news about the area, but have increased skepticism about media reporting. For example, they expressed alarm and concern about the arson attack on the Church of Multiplication shortly after we returned (The Times of Israel, 2015). The data suggest that students have retained a lot of memorable details, but the enduring learning is an altered perspective of the contemporary situation and concern for the people.

¹⁵ On the Sunday in Israel/Palestine, we divided into four groups of five or six each, and attended morning worship at a church in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, or Ramallah. Each group's experience was different. My group of six went to The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hope in Ramallah. After morning worship, we were hosted, in pairs, by families from the congregation in their homes for lunch. Regan and I visited with a young family, with three young children. We helped prepare barbequed kabobs for lunch, played games with their children, and talked with the couple about everyday life in Ramallah, especially since the security wall was erected.

To access Ramallah from our guesthouse in Jerusalem, we took a taxi to a checkpoint in the security wall. Crossed through the checkpoint on foot and took a second taxi to the Ramallah church. Later, we reversed the steps to return to our guesthouse. The experience gave us a sense of everyday life in Ramallah.

Consistently, students insisted the immersion experience made the study tour more impactful than on-campus courses in similar subject areas. Noel summarised:

The intensity of ... the experience means that my mind is occupied by the issues and teachings of this only. On campus, as I juggle many courses, I don't have time to really ponder and debrief issues and contexts as they are relevant to me. ... As challenging as the bombardment of information is, we ... experience it and have the time and the place to let it sink in, and make us think critically about it.

Blair insisted that 'context is critical. ... It's just impossible to describe the emotional impact of it', but suggested the accommodation of continuing education students 'diluted the academic part'. Rene commented, 'It's just so visceral. It would be a disservice ... to reduce it to the intellectual exercise'. Students, who were teachers by profession, commented on the pedagogy noting that the variety of 'kinesthetic, auditory, [and] reading' (Bailey) activities appealed to different learning preferences. Devon noted how the 'sense of community' encouraged learning. A third teacher noted that broad intended learning outcomes are required to accommodate the learning, and mused about the professors' 'sensitivity to the surprising and unintended outcome' (Cary) because of the unmediated nature of the tour experience. Noting the layers of learning, another teacher participant mused about sequencing of a study tour in the broader curriculum – first a study tour followed by theory, theology and history, or theory, theology and history first to provide an interpretive basis for the experience? Wherever it is positioned in the curriculum, the students clearly valued the first-hand, immersive experience as a significant academic and personal learning experience.

Students critiqued the study tour, suggesting longer stops at certain locations, such as Yad Vashem, to settle emotions and to help process the experience. Noting that not all participants are aural learners, one student would prefer more written content material or posts to the course website. Students completing the course for academic credit would have preferred discussions about coursework and final assignments earlier in the tour. Perhaps the biggest disappointment was that 'we talked to almost no Muslims' (Paris); 'the Muslim

voice was almost non-existent in the study tour and that was a major disappointment; it needs to be included'¹⁶ (Robin). But, critiquing does not mean dissatisfaction, as students consistently reported extensive learning related to the contemporary situation, spiritual experiences, and a more nuanced understanding of biblical history and archaeology. Noel said it was a 'powerful, powerful experience', declaring, 'I'm so grateful that I got to go.'

The Professors' View

All three of the professors brought significant previous experience to their role, each having previously led up to six study tours to Israel/Palestine. Professor Riley is:

... convinced of the power of immersive experiences and the formative influence of giving students the opportunity to experience first-hand encounters and conversations with realities, particularly of the Israel/Palestine experience, and the conundrum of the experience. ... The experience holds more power than putting an enormous amount of weight on a didactic approach to teaching about the issues.

Echoing this view, Professor Spencer noted 'these are very important learning moments, and the learning isn't didactic in the sense that it's the presentations, it's the whole context, the experiential, emotional, psychological, spiritual dimensions'. Professor Micki emphasised the importance of 'the planning of the tour to hear diverse voices'. The leaders' experience has clearly convinced them of the importance of 'immersive experience' as a key pedagogical element of study tour design. So, the design focused largely on creating an instructive experience even though the itinerary did include didactic presentations.

Professor Riley explained that the aim was for:

An experience and opportunity, not only to walk through the landscape ... but also to meet a variety of people representing a good cross-section of the ... middle part of the spectrum, both from the Palestinian and the Israeli side.

¹⁶ Many of the connections in Israel/Palestine were through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, so this influenced some of the site selections. One of the professors also noted that they had scheduled meetings with Muslims leaders on previous tours, but travel and other constraints within Israel/Palestine made it difficult to actually meet with them.

That was largely achieved, although as students noted, the Muslim voice was mostly silent. Since the tour blended three courses, there was intentionality in balancing student experiences between the historical, geographical, and archaeological experience of the holy sites, and the contemporary situation on-the-ground, so that students ‘have a sense of the complexity of the varied viewpoints’ and process the experience through ‘different lenses’ (Professor Riley). The immersive experience was expected to help participants ‘connect their faith and life’ (Professor Spencer), and review their assumptions as a result of the dislocating nature of the experience. To facilitate learning, reflective space was intentionally included, in part, through planned worship and devotional activities, which included ‘a number of contemplative songs’, and by ‘everybody having an opportunity to bring their voice into the prayers’ (Professor Micki). That involvement by the participants was intended to facilitate learning and to build community among a group of participants who were largely unknown to each other before the tour.

The professors’ satisfaction with the study tour indicates that their intentionality in the design of this pedagogically challenging course achieved the intended learning outcomes. Professor Micki noted that the experience provided an opportunity to go beyond teaching ‘basic information ... [and] be transformative’, adding that it ‘disrupts the comfortable idea that Christianity is all about me ... [and] problematises simple answers’. Consistent with students’ accounts, all three professors agreed, based on post-tour conversations with students, that the experience is so profound that students continued to process the learning post-tour. This was also evident through the post-tour assignments, which Professor Riley explains are intended to go beyond simply showing what they learned to ‘write ... [their] way into understanding and make sense of the experience’. Professor Spencer was ‘positive about all the submissions’, adding that requiring students to maintain a journal on this tour was a ‘very good assignment’. Professor Riley attributed the success to a design strategy, which is intentional in its selection of sites and activities, and even the accommodations, which provided ‘a refuge away from the intensity of the experience’. ‘Refuge’ is important because occasionally students were disturbed by aspects of the experience or perceived challenges to their faith. They also agreed that students were not necessarily prepared for the experience. One professor commented

that ‘the on-the-ground experience is so powerful and visceral’ (Professor Riley) that pre-tour discussions do not and perhaps cannot prepare the students for it. They recognised the cross-border dimension of the experience and the importance of leaders being prepared to provide support to the students, if required while at the tour destination.

In terms of whether the learning was transformative, the professors agree it depends on the individual student. Professor Spencer suggested that it often hinges on the student’s depth of piety, noting that for students who approach the tour with a ‘deeply pious orientation ... it may not be as transformative’ as for students with a more open mindset. They all agree that some students who ‘go into this trip with strong convictions ... come away ... significantly transformed by the experience ... [having] their whole understanding ... turned a hundred and eighty degrees’ (Professor Riley). Professor Micki suggested it is not a ‘short-term transformation ... [but] keeps working in people’ for an extended period post-tour, consistent with students’ comments about learning post-tour. Beyond the layered complexity of ‘faith and politics and justice being intersected’ (Professor Micki), it is encountering the people that the professors suggest is most transformative for students. Professor Spencer also insists that another important and transforming dimension is that:

We are people of faith doing this, that the Spirit¹⁷ moves among us in this moment in ways that does affect the learning and how we understand ... not only how God is resident, but who our neighbors are, and what role creation plays in this space. ... What changes people is God’s action through ... these secondary causes or sources that they experience.

Whether their experience of transformative learning is associated with ‘secondary causes’, is a question of belief or theology, not pedagogy, and therefore, not part of this discussion.

The pre-readings, site visits and tour activities, and the post-tour assignments ensure that the students receive the curriculum content and engage in some amount of discussion. It would be difficult for a student to participate in the activities and discussions and not ponder questions and debate ambiguities, so

¹⁷ Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Christian godhead.

the professors agree that content and process reflection are somewhat built-in. Professor Riley suggested that all his post-tour conversations with students were at the premise level because the tour experience had ‘prompted them to re-examine their own underlying assumptions ... understanding of faith and expression of Christianity’, noting that it was primarily about ‘contemporary issues ... [and] contemporary theological issues’ rather than historical theological issues. Of course, the depth and extent of such reflection depends on the ‘degree of effort’ the student applies, as Professor Micki added. Concerning students being people of faith, Professor Spencer argues that ‘people of faith essentially have a different worldview ... [and] an experience like this does ultimately impact that worldview’, and thereby prompts premise reflection. Clearly, there was agreement that most students engage in significant amounts of reflection, likely including premise reflection. They also agreed that finding the balance between activity and reflective periods is a struggle, and they are still experimenting with the best mix of activities and reflection, and their positioning relative to each other, including post-tour assignments.

While for many students, the study tour prompted critical reflections about their theology and practice of Christianity, as well as contemporary issues of justice and peace in the Middle East, the professors emphasised that it was a *study tour* not a *spiritual pilgrimage*. While that may be a reflection of the academic intent of the course, they concede that many students join the tour because they are seeking a spiritual pilgrimage, and many students experience significant, even transcendent, spiritual moments during the tour. One professor described it as a *thin place*, and visiting it ‘is a spiritual moment in people’s lives’ (Professor Spencer). It was also described as ‘both disruptive and enriching spiritually’ (Professor Micki), perhaps explaining why it prompts such deep reflection. Professor Riley said that ‘academically the experience is exponentially rich in ways that the classroom simply cannot offer’, describing the classroom as ‘an impoverished substitute for walking there, for tasting the air, for feeling the heat, for seeing the situation, and for feeling the water’. Clearly, the professors feel it is experiential learning at its best, spiritually and especially academically.

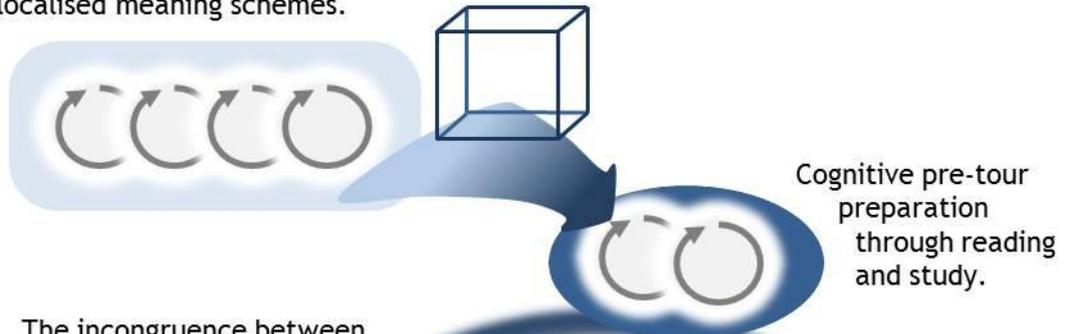
Overall, the professors were positive about the study tour, but also willing to critically review the curriculum and itinerary before its next offering. They noted that circumstances beyond their control resulted in unexpected changes,

such as the biblical scholar's last minute cancellation from the tour. During the tour, security issues prevented planned visits to sites in the Golan Heights. But, that is the nature of study tours. They often require prompt adjustments in response to changing circumstances. The professors also indicated the importance of pre-tour preparation for the kind of border crossing that occurs, and will consider additional pre-course readings about cross-cultural experiences for subsequent study tours.

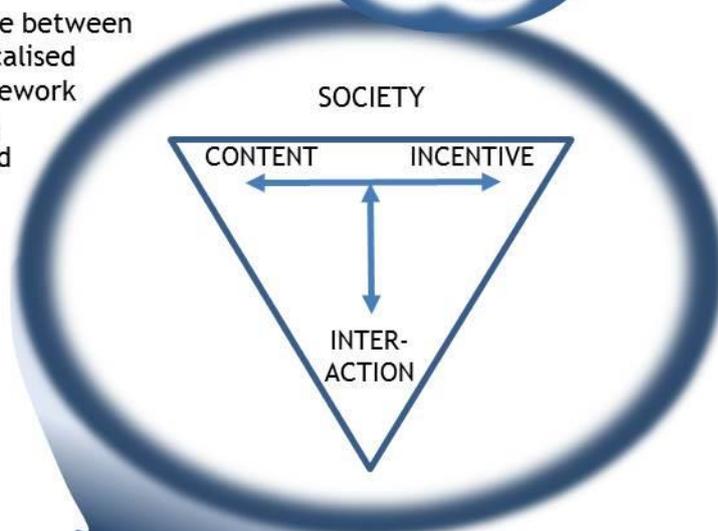
Mapping Learning

The contemplative calm of the Camino study tour contrasts with the busyness of the Israel/Palestine study tour, and highlights the difference between tours that are contemplative and less anchored in the destination location and tours that are exploratory and clearly anchored in the destination sites and activities. Encounters and interactions on the Camino were largely random, supplemented by group discussions, with students engaging in extended personal reflection. The Israel/Palestine itinerary included site visits, guest speakers, class sessions, and devotional services, resulting in full days. In contrast to the Camino, the students experienced the itinerary as a group. Pedagogically, it included mediated learning; experientially, it was unpredictable. Some students described definite and profound spiritual experiences, which cannot be scripted into the course curriculum. Like the Camino, there was also an unpredictable component to the experience, often including intense emotional responses. Just the presence of the security wall evoked a reaction. It was disturbing to walk through the Aida refugee camp in Bethlehem and see a graffiti titled *WHEN OUR CHILDREN ARE KILLED: Children killed during Israeli massacre in Palestine, July 2014*, listing, in Arabic, the names of more than 250 children killed in Gaza. Perhaps most emotionally impactful was the Parents Circle presentation. A Muslim woman shared how a family member had been shot by an Israeli soldier. His brother was unable to deal with the loss, and committed suicide a few months later. She was accompanied by a young Jewish man who then shared how his teenager sister was killed and a second sister seriously injured when a Palestinian suicide bomber detonated while they were shopping. Asking, 'What is the difference between the tears of both sides?' the woman said she is involved with the peace advocacy group to prevent her children from dying because they became so angry they would fight back. The emotional intensity of experiencing

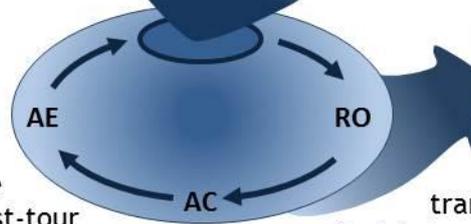
Mediated learning in the home setting shapes a conceptual framework of localised meaning schemes.



The incongruence between the student's localised conceptual framework and the meaning schemes required to interpret the experiences at the tour destination may prompt a disorienting dissonance.



Reflecting holistically and critically on the experiences post-tour is essential to synthesising the learning ...



... and may result in a modified or transformed conceptual framework that is less localised. Values, concepts, constructs, motivations, and identity may be adjusted to accommodate the new learning.

Figure 5: Israel/Palestine Study Tour Learning Map

their presentation may have been accentuated by the fact that we had visited Yad Vashem earlier in the day. The intense personal and spiritual experiences on the Camino were typically individual, whereas in Israel/Palestine many experiences, though perhaps received differently individually, were typically within group settings.

Whether the excitement of being in a historical setting, tension during security checks, relaxation floating on the Dead Sea, agony listening to the peace activists, or awe at a sacred place, emotions were everywhere throughout the tour. Even the readings evoked emotional responses through the personal stories and questions of justice. Learning is rooted in experience, and in Israel/Palestine, experience included emotion. As noted earlier, emotional reactions support remembering and reason is not independent of emotions. Damasio (1999) argues that ‘consciousness and emotion are not separable’ (16). Examining research on transformative learning theory, Taylor (2000) concludes that ‘without the expression and recognition of feelings participants will not engage their new reality, leave behind past resentment, and begin critical reflection’ (291). Our Muslim guest speaker told how after a period of withdrawal she joined the Parents Circle and now she no longer thinks of the other as enemies. She has clearly worked through a lot of hurt and emotion to arrive at her new perspective. The student now actively supporting the peace advocacy group and engaging in other activism was moved, in part, by the emotions associated with encountering the Parents Circle representatives. On the Camino tour, we were moved and saddened by the Australian pilgrim’s struggle with a debilitating illness. Emotion was a part of the learning, even though my attempt to map learning on the Camino study tour did not include it.

Not surprisingly, there were engaging group discussions following activities such as the Parents Circle presentation, Yad Vashem, and lunch with church families. Questions of justice and peace often entered such discussions. But, whose justice or peace? Justice is not necessarily equal shares as individuals may be deserving of different portions. Peace is not just behaving calmly, for the fear of oppression may force peaceful behavior without peace. Justice and peace are complex cognitive constructs that have to be understood in order to act justly or promote peace. To wrestle with issues of justice and peace in the context of the Israel/Palestine tour requires a prerequisite understanding of such concepts. As Laurillard (2002) claims, ‘Meaning is given through structure. ... The same information structured differently has a different meaning.’ (43). Attempting to map learning by focusing on the cognitive interpretation of experience, does not always capture all aspects of learning, such as creating cognitive constructs and building the structural relationships between these concepts. So, building on the

earlier map of learning, I am suggesting the messy collection of learning cycles shown in Figure 4 relates primarily to the content dimension of Illeris' model. As the Israel/Palestine tour demonstrates, learning includes more complexity so I have substituted Illeris' three-dimensional model into Figure 5 to also capture the interactive and social context of the learning.

TOUR 3: EDUCATOR'S SEARCH FOR PURPOSE AND MEANING (SPAIN)

My third study tour was a Montana State University course for student services staff, and included walking El Camino de Santiago for about 240 kilometres from Foncebadon to Santiago in eleven days. The intended learning outcomes are included in the syllabus excerpt in Appendix G. During the four webinars before departing for Spain, the group of eleven students discussed logistics and the intended learning outcomes with the two professors leading the study tour. The group flew to Porto, Portugal, and departed immediately by bus to Foncebadon. The following morning, we began walking along the Camino Francés route to Santiago, travelling an average of twenty-one kilometres per day. The early portion of the route was mountainous, providing splendid views, but also resulting in foot problems and challenges for some participants. In fact, for a couple of days, two students opted to take a taxi to the next stop rather than walk because of blisters and injuries. Similar to the previous Camino study tour, we stayed in albergues, purchased groceries to prepare breakfast and lunches, and occasionally prepared the evening meal together. Sharing chores and meal preparations, and supporting those who were injured, added to the sense of community within the group. Shared conversations with each other and with other pilgrims along the Way were common. Each evening the group participated in a debriefing session with the professors, sharing reflections and observations from the day, as well as the questions they were pondering. Unlike the first Camino study tour, this study tour was described as non-faith based even though it was following a traditional Christian pilgrimage route. Of course, questions and discussions about spirituality in general and Christianity in particular arose as spirituality and religion are components of the students' worldview. At the end of the walk, the group spent two days in Santiago before travelling by bus to Porto. After overnight in Porto, we returned to Canada.

The Students' View

All ten participants completed the pre-tour questionnaire, and eight participants completed the post-tour questionnaire. Seven students and both professors provided follow-up interviews about two months later. Four students had completed a previous study tour. Six students indicated they would definitely do another study tour; two indicated they are likely to do another.

Motivation and Expectations

Like the previous study tours, students identified personal and practical motivations for joining the tour, with the personal motivations predominating. Several desired an escape from the routine and busyness to reflect on personal issues and questions: 'step out of my normal routine and duties, and reflect on my practices' (Rae), and 'slow down, step away ... and have space and time to reflect and think' (Tory). Other motivations included 'personal reflection on life purpose and meaning' (Adal), and 'explore my beliefs, values, and purpose as an educator and professional' (Sam). For many, the desire to reflect was prompted by major career or life changes. For others, it was an opportunity to reflect on teaching and practice in light of the course content (Mischa, Shannon).

Metaphorically, Shannon spoke of 'conceptualizing the student experience in college is a *journey or adventure*', suggesting that the study tour 'makes that conceptualization literal – an exciting intersection of immersive personal experience and pedagogical models'. Students expected valuable periods of contemplation and reflection, even though they were wrestling with personal or life questions, rather than the spiritual or theological questions one might associate with the Way. Of course, there were other motivations, such as travel and hiking, and connecting with nature (Tory, Jess), walking in community (Caelan), and academic achievement (Adal). They recognised the potential learning opportunity, even though the tour was physically challenging.

A major expectation was to learn about self, including personal values, beliefs, and purpose (Sam, Jess, Brook, Jordan, Adal, Tory), and to reflect on the future, including as an educator (Mischa, Shannon). But, not all the expectations were related to soul-searching. There was also an interest in the culture and place (Tory, Jess). Others were curious about their ability to meet the challenge.

Caelan wondered 'if I am physically up to it', and Mischa expected 'to learn the benefits of persevering through a difficult task to find the deep rewards that come from fully engaging with myself, others, and the world around me'. Others deliberately resisted setting expectations. Rae 'set an intention that I will not have expectations ... [but] take each day as it comes and let the journey unfold ... I just have no idea what that may be'. Shannon hoped for 'an experience beyond my expectations (the unknown)' adding:

I am seeking adventure and new ideas. I would like to develop a challenging cohort of scholars. Travel allows me the creativity to challenge my assumptions, synthesise new concepts, and see relationships between theory and praxis.

Finally, even though this Camino experience was described as non-faith based, a search for meaning and purpose not a spiritual pilgrimage, Adal indicated 'I also hope to think a little more deeply about my spirituality'. However, the intentional course focus was on life purpose and meaning, not spirituality per se.

Participant Learning

During the post-tour interviews, several participants spoke of learning more about themselves and the importance of caring for themselves, not just for self-benefit, but to enhance relationships and support others. Most emphasised how the walk allowed them 'time and space' to deepen thinking and convictions about beliefs, values, and interests they previously held, rather than discovering new revelations. Others capitalised on the opportunity to think through transitions and challenges in their personal and professional lives. In terms of the categories used to summarise learning on the two previous study tours, the learning was less broad for this tour:

- Academic: Academic learning was not discussed in the questionnaires, but the application of lessons learned to academics and individual's academic practice was evident in the interviews
- Practical challenges: 'to trust my inner self, oftentimes this was manifested by my physical pain or discomfort, other times by my emotional state, but either way when I listened and paid attention to my body/mind, I found I had better days than when I didn't' (Brook)
- Interpersonal: 'I've watched myself "at a distance" and tried to reflect on how I interact with others, where my pressure points are,

when I engage and withdraw' (Rae), and 'we tend to live rather separate lives and need something like this to remind us of our connected nature' (Jess)

- Historical/geographical: 'lot about the history of the Camino, some Spanish, plant names, architectural structures' (Rae), and 'Spain, the language, and the culture' (Mischa)
- Metaphorical: 'on the Camino the metaphors you have heard your whole life become physically manifested, and you know them as truth in a whole different way' (Brook)
- Spiritual: 'Catholicism, and Camino de Santiago culture' (Jordan)
- Leadership: Not discussed in the data
- Emotional: 'what I need to be happy' (Jess)
- Personal: 'a lot about myself both through others and through introspection in nature' (Mischa), 'leverage the Camino to explore further and test my new assumptions about my life purpose' (Caelan), and 'I want to live a more authentic, less frantic life; ... sort out my core values (relationships, vitality and work) and ways I can capitalise on these values in the future' (Adai)
- Contemporary issues: Not discussed in the data

During the post-tour interviews, many discussed how the learning would be actualised, indicating the extent to which students valued the learning and desired to preserve and apply it.

Students were quite consistent about the extent to which the walking contributed to the learning: 'It was all about the walking ... to physically participate ... personal sense of accomplishments' (Caelan), and 'the physical space, the temporal space, the mental space, the emotional space to actually reflect' (Tory). Walking at their own pace, students experienced the Camino differently, and pursued their own journey. Rae noted that 'the lack of being in a familiar context gets you to think about things differently'. While walking provided space for creative reflection, the nightly debriefings, in which the group shared the insights and challenges of their day, provided opportunity to exchange and integrate learning. These evening sessions were 'super important' (Tory), 'super helpful' (Brook), even though there was initial discomfort with personal sharing. The group quickly adapted and appreciated the utility of the discussion to prompt further insights, to integrate ideas, and to learn from each other. Rae confessed to 'thinking a lot about how my own narrative is the true narrative' and noted how hearing about other's experience resulted in 'breaking down your own ego as well as seeing the world through other people's lives'.

Appreciating the freedom within the daily routine, Adal noted that there was ‘structure to the reflection’, which provided both the flexibility to explore and the discipline to process the learning. Journaling was also identified as important to processing and preserving the learning.

Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments

With participants from Ontario, Montana, British Columbia, Washington, and elsewhere, the pre-tour meetings were webinars¹⁸ and were helpful in providing practical information about logistics, packing, expectations, etc. They also served to introduce participants, discuss personality types,¹⁹ and what individuals expected from the experience and from other students. Several also indicated a level of physical preparation, including walking and hiking. Caelan credits the physical preparation with the ability to ‘physically do the trip and ... [have] the space and time to think about what I wanted to get out of the Camino experience, and also what I want beyond Camino’. Most participants felt reasonably prepared even though the pilgrimage experience was largely an unknown until the actual walk. Initially feeling prepared, Brook claimed to actually not be prepared ‘physically, emotionally, spiritually’, because it was more intense than expected. Preparation requirements are difficult to communicate before individuals actually experience the Camino. Jordan, who felt prepared, lacked a ‘conceptual framework’ for processing experiential learning and suggested that teaching on ‘how to be introspective’ would have been helpful. Only students completing the study tour for credit completed the pre-tour readings.

Caelan emphasised that ‘the post activity [and] reflection is incredibly important to capitalise on the gains from the educational outcomes’. For many, their Camino journals were reread, reflected upon, and added to, post-tour. Tory posted reflections and ‘Camino lessons’ to social media. Adal had posed ‘questions to myself in a document before I went ... [and took] time each day to write answers to those different questions’; post-tour, it was all synthesised.

¹⁸ A seminar conducted via the internet.

¹⁹ Specifically, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

Brook claimed post-tour reflection was important to ‘ground me ... to bring me back to reality’, and Jordan insisted that ‘reflections post-tour were more important ... than my reflections on the tour’ since it helped clarify and solidify things; ‘it definitely helped actualise it’. Indicating increased depth of learning through post-tour reflection, Rae noted that ‘it’s more ... in my actions since I got back’. Clearly, much of the learning and the actualising of that learning resulted from post-tour reflections. Jess wants it ‘to keep influencing my life’.

Reflection and Transformative Learning

When asked if the study tour transformed any previous thinking or ideas, the students indicated significant learning, including:

- One of the greatest things I have learned about is around fear, and courage, and tenacity, and that I am capable of way more than I ever thought I was and that I don’t have to be limited by my fears. ... my actions have started to change. (Tory)
- You are heavily socialised to become a faculty member in the research world university. ... the Camino gave me permission to push against that. ... you can do your work without having to follow the traditional script. (Adal)
- It’s transformed how I think about my kids, ... the way I am viewing their next few years, and I’m encouraging them to think about other things. ... It’s transformed how I go through my days ... I’ve built more space into my days. (Rae)
- It was perspective changing ... it gives you a sense of empowerment. You can be mindful about how you live your life. (Brook)
- It definitely helped crystalised [that] I was heading in a good direction for me personally and professionally ... this was just a ramp up like no other. (Caelan)
- I wanted to go [to church] ... it was a reminder you don’t have to have ... certain forms or certain beliefs to experience ... the peace, the connection with, I guess, the people around you and your own thoughts, and that feeling of calm and peace and goodness. (Jess)

While they may not be articulating transformative learning as described by Mezirow, they certainly experienced the deepening and expansion of understanding described by Brookfield. Arguably, for some, the changes in behavior post-tour are indicative of transformative learning. Rae described a ‘different way of going about my day ... on the Camino’. And, Brook claims the physical experience of walking impacted contemplations on the Camino,

concluding that ‘it was the cumulative effect of many little things along the way that caused you to think differently’. Walking provided essential time and space to process experiences, individually and within community, to reflect on previous questions, and to observe one’s response to challenges. It was an opportunity to critically assess assumptions, recognise and share personal discernment, explore options, and plan new actions – all phases in Mezirow’s description of transformative learning.

Students reported reflecting at all three levels, including significant amounts of time in process and premise reflections. Adal claimed ‘the length, physical activity, independent time, and structured reflection created a very unique space for such reflective work,’ describing the environment as ‘an atmosphere free of judgment ... there’s this kind of communal understanding’. Jordan reported spending more time pondering the why of behaviors rather than revisiting values and beliefs, while Tory, Brook, Jess, and Adal claimed to have spent more time in premise reflection. Not all their reflection was focused on creating new ideas or beliefs. Caelan spent:

... a lot more time in that third level of beliefs and values and practices that I want to understand ... it was definitely reconnecting with practices and activities and values and beliefs that I had held — had either experienced earlier in my life, or was currently holding’.

Everyone agreed that there was adequate reflection, both individually and corporately, with the nightly debriefings providing structure. Several students took time each day to consolidate their thoughts for sharing during the evening sessions. Rae claimed the daily debriefing ‘was imperative because it compelled a certain type of integration and reflection, a "noticing" not always possible in the midst of walking, eating, and conversing’. It also assisted their journaling, by organizing their thoughts and reflections, and by generating new information during the discussions. Adal felt there was ‘just enough’ reflection, and appreciated that the format ‘was consistent’. Rae concurred, noting that ‘people can get a little exhausted by continual reflection’. Caelan claimed ‘the consistency of the prompts and debriefs ... was generative ... an important support.’ The routine of walking and debriefing provided the time, space, and structure necessary to enhance and deepen reflection.

Spiritual Experience and Learning

Individual religious beliefs and practices ranged from no religious practice to regular involvement and expressions of Christianity according to a particular denominational tradition. So, experiences of spirituality varied, ranging from 'elements of a spiritual experience ... in certain moments' (Jordan) to 'definitely a spiritual experience' (Jess). The interconnectedness of humanity was a clear theme during the interviews: 'how beautiful they can be to each other, seeing the support that was offered to people, the encouragement, the connections, the patience' (Tory). Adal appreciated 'people ... helping me along the way' describing them as 'angels appearing at times ... [when I was] the most confused'. Rae described 'connections, spiritual I guess, to just all the pilgrims that had gone before'. Caelan described going down a steep, scary descent:

... being very powerful to actually physically put my feet in those same foot beds ... [and feeling] the magnitude of it, of why people had journeyed all those years, generations ... and connecting in that way.

There was also connection with nature: 'that cathedral of nature ... it's pretty profound ... it's a strongly felt sense that there's a connection to something bigger' (Rae). There was definitely more interest in spirituality than religious spirituality and religious practice: 'it's just too structured for me ... there's a rigidity to it' (Adal). But, religion and religious spirituality was a significant part of the experience. Rae admitted to:

Being surprised at how much time I wanted to spend in the Cathedral when we got to Santiago. ... There was something that felt very sacred about that space, and about what it symbolised for people finishing their journeys for hundreds and hundreds of years.

Caelan described the 'extremely moving' moments at the Cruz de Ferro²⁰ being bookended by feelings in Santiago:

Being in the church for the service, I was just in awe at the power, that spiritual, that being part of something much bigger, kind of a hopeful, palpable, hopeful sense of a higher power.

²⁰ Cruz de Ferro, or Iron Cross, is an iron cross mounted on a wooden mast about 10 metres high. It is located about 2 kilometres west of Foncebadon.

Even individuals who had no prior association with Catholicism reported strong spiritual feelings during visits to the Cathedral de Santiago.

Even though they described spiritual moments, some students were hesitant to classify experiences as transcendent. Some moments in sacred places, such as church buildings, were described as transcendent, but walking in nature was most frequently described as transcendent:

When you wake up to that fog over the land, and you're walking and seeing mountains in the background, just feeling the environment around you ... experiencing that beauty would be the times that were the most transcendent and the most spiritual. (Jordan)

Some students eagerly suggested the Camino experience was a significant event along their personal spiritual journey, but others did not see it as significant, or considered it a minor event. While this contrasts with the two previous study tours, it is consistent with the emphasis on purpose and meaning for this study tour. But, pondering questions of meaning and purpose while walking a traditional Christian pilgrimage route clearly raised questions of spirituality and prompted spiritual reflections.

Additional Student Assessment

Students liked the adventure of Spain and the Camino. Mischa beamed:

I loved the opportunity to be immersed in a new culture. I also extremely valued the opportunity to completely remove myself from "normal life" and take time to reflect, process, and ponder life in the past, present, and future.

In spite of physically demanding days, it offered a unique learning experience in the context of community. Adal liked the 'combination of physical challenge with both independent and group reflective work'. And, Caelan was delighted to:

... participate as a learning community. To take an individual journey with a close group of colleagues with shared purpose shifts the profound meaning of the Camino to a level, possibly unparalleled, that probably wouldn't occur as an individual journey.

Jordan appreciated ‘learning from life, reflection, and peers as opposed to a teacher or book ... Working through problems or questions as a dialogue rather than a lecture’. Except for the MSU students, many of the participants were unknown to each other before the study tour. Nevertheless, the group quickly gelled into a valued community: ‘this kind of communal understanding that people are there for reflective purposes ... and who are respectful of each other’ (Adal). Caelan liked that ‘it was a group of educators ... this underlying scholarly, academic [interest]’. They liked time in Santiago before returning home (Rae, Jess), no digital technology (Tory), and alone time, and appreciated how the professors addressed the logistics, providing freedom to give attention to the walking (Rae, Adal, Jess). The greatest dislike was the pain of foot blisters and injuries, although that was not everyone’s experience. Brook wants ‘to take the things that may have been "undesirable" as part of the learning experience.’

The study tour was compared favorably to on-campus courses. Brook emphasised that:

You are physically in a situation where you’re removed from the safety of the distractions we use to "numb" ourselves from really asking those hard questions and having to struggle to find the answers.

Rae felt:

The “class” itself was broader than the 13 of us, as we joined along with other pilgrims. So ... it was a rich, authentic learning environment. ... The nature of moving through space means that there are things that an instructor – or constructor – of that learning experience can’t anticipate ... [whereas] an on-campus course is much more tightly constrained in ways that are somewhat artificial.

While appreciating the experiential learning, Jordan noted that ‘experiential [learning] is hard to pass on without bringing someone to experience the same thing’, but claimed that ‘the things you learn there and you put into practice are more transformative’. Adal claimed it shapes you even though you may be unaware of the shaping, noting that ‘I have witnessed behaviors that I am doing that are different because of it’. A number of students return to their journals regularly, indicating a desire to retain and to actualise the learning. Rae prefers not to ‘go back into my writing too much ... [but rather] just stop every now and again to look around for the arrow and not sort of trundle forward’. Whatever the individual approach, each student carries forward a legacy of the Camino

experience that is clearly influencing their journey beyond the Camino. In terms of lasting value, adjusting the pace of daily life was a shared hope: ‘habits of slowing down, being more attentive, being more fully present’ (Mischa), and ‘hoping that my appreciation for slow, simple, deliberate approach to each day’s journey will be a value I carry forward ... Need to ... keep looking for yellow arrows’ (Rae). Being more self-reliant and confident, and committing to personal values were also post-tour objectives: ‘align my actions with my values’ (Mischa), and ‘keep my core values at the center of my life’ (Adal). It is clear from the data that all the students intended to hold to the learning and actualise it as time and opportunity permit. Many expect walking and reflecting to become habitual, indicating the lasting impact of the study tour.

Days of walking through the Spanish countryside as a small community of pilgrims was clearly a rich learning experience. Given the overall satisfaction, there were few suggestions for changes or improvements. Caelan would like more teaching about ‘the act of a pilgrimage, how to carry that forward to more contemporary [application]’. Its value as an academic experience was both enthusiastically endorsed and cautiously challenged. Jess felt it was ‘more spiritual than academic’. Caelan described it as ‘definitely one of the most positive experiences I have had as an academic’. There was strong endorsement of the study tour, even though the constraints imposed by MSU had forced the professor to require students to complete the academic work before the field portion. Consequently, students were not completing post-tour assignments, which may have truncated post-tour learning, if the individual student was not sufficiently motivated to engage in reflection without the facilitative prodding of academic assignments. Nevertheless, there was consensus that study tours are rich and valid learning experiences.

The Professors’ View

Both professors came to the Camino with experience leading different types of education tours. Professor Dana has led a number of study tours to local, national, and international destinations, including South America and Europe. Professor Jo has led outdoor adventure tours, including backpacking into wilderness locations. As mentioned earlier, the tour became an optional activity because of the constraints imposed by the institutional bureaucracy MSU

implemented following tragic events that occurred on previous fieldtrips. Expressing a little frustration – ‘I came up against so many limitations and barriers’ – Professor Jo lamented:

The intention was for it to be very tied in as much as possible for the people on the tour who were [MSU] students, and really connected back into the course. That design pedagogy went out the window due to logistical constraints, and so it became literally just a walk.

But, when not commenting on the bureaucratic challenges, she beamed: ‘It was better than fine. I was surprised. I think people came with their best selves ... that was really exciting.’ The institutional pressure accentuated concern for safety and security, especially since students were often walking alone for large portions of the day, up to 30 kilometres. In spite of these constraints, the data indicate that the study tour provided an engaging learning experience for all participants. Professor Dana noted that the study tour demonstrated ‘ways of integrating the academic and the practical’. Observing another Camino study tour group expending an excessive amount of time on academic presentations, she noted that balance is achieved by focusing on ‘the main outcome being sought, and intentionally putting forth efforts that support that outcome’, adding that reviewing and tweaking activities based on the unfolding experience is essential. Our professors’ attention to the students’ responses and learning, and their willingness to adapt the agenda, definitely helped facilitate learning.

With respect to student learning, Professor Jo believes ‘everyone left that experience in a very transformed state, where business couldn’t be the same as usual’, but noted that it will ‘require a real diligence and effort’ to actualise the Camino lessons against the pressures of their busy lives. This was evidenced by ‘a buzz and a community connection that was maintained when we first got back’, but faded as students and professors returned to the busyness of a new academic year. Professor Dana noted how the students enrolled for credit exhibited an evident level of engagement and interaction as pre-tour group study ‘builds a connection and a sense of empathy because the people who were writing clearly were processing a lot of content and that makes for some good learning environments’. In terms of pre-tour preparation, Professor Jo claimed they ‘were quite logistically prepared’, but acknowledged that ‘very few availed themselves of Camino literature ahead of time’. For some, that may have been

intentional in order for the experience to be one of discovery. Certainly, those who saw the Camino as an opportunity to be contemplative were more prepared for extended or deeper contemplation, but we were 'all at different points in our life where levels of contemplation varies' (Professor Jo). While 'people thought that there would be more contemplative time' (Professor Jo), it may have been a matter of personal choice. Further, Professor Dana noted that while there was significant 'formative, engaging intellectual thought', it was also evident that 'people struggle with the concept of time ... different senses of time, and time and space'. Even though it would not have significantly impeded learning, it may have nuanced individual learning experiences according to individual perceptions.

Whether their learning was transformative became a fine point of debate. Suggesting that 'there are things about the Camino that shook your approach to life', Professor Dana explained how the students felt 'it wasn't life changing ... but it changed the perspective of life'. For example, she described conversations that contrasted the fiercely competitive academic environment with the Camino environment in which 'people were trying to help you, not compete against you', adding that people 'just weren't quite sure what to do with that ... [but] found it so healing'. Similarly, Professor Jo described a science student's apprehension about requesting time away from studies for the Camino and subsequent surprise at the professor's enthusiastic endorsement, adding that it resulted in 'seeing people who are in real positions of power ... and positions of authority in their lives ... as humans and as people'. In terms of future professor-student interactions, it 'transforms what that conversation and what that relationship can be'. She echoed Professor Dana's contention, saying that the Camino experience 'was transformative in that I'm going to return to my work with a different sense ... It's transformed how I do my job, but it hasn't changed my job'. While no one is describing transformative learning as defined by Mezirow, several clearly described new or modified meaning schemes.

As to whether students achieved premise reflection, Professor Dana commented, based on conversations while walking with students:

I would characterise that, on the whole, people got to that space, and maybe in some unusual ways or unexpected, surprising ways at times

... I think most people got there, and I think that's part of the appeal of the Camino ... people are looking for that and trying to find it.

While private contemplations evidently went deep, there was some reluctance to openly share personal meditations. During the evening debriefings students were hesitant to reveal their deeper reflections. So, the professors changed the questions, inviting students to begin with what they learned from others. Students 'were very quick to point out something that they noticed in someone else' (Professor Jo). While no one was expected to share personal learning or details that would cause discomfort, there was a reluctance to share deeper personal reflections. As Professor Jo suggested, this may have resulted from the 'newness of the group', but the professors felt that the 'only way to normalise sharing deeper things about one's self was to actually make it the norm, and not just the norm but the expectation'. As the tour progressed, sharing became more open until 'there were moments when I think it got down to that very core piece' (Professor Jo). The professors' astute assessment of student behavior allowed them to adapt the discussion to encourage supportive dialogue and inspire deeper reflection, which enabled premise reflection and, potentially, transformative learning. Professor Dana talked about the realization that 'some of the people in those reflection circles actually hadn't done that before', and how inviting their affirmations of other people was 'an interesting way forward into reflection ... to reflect on other people first and kind of circle down'. Professor Jo suggested that it might have been helpful to provide more structure by offering daily prompts for reflection, or 'set the stage for some more reflective space by having a sort of precursor conversation before we departed'. Professor Dana considered the importance of not taking for granted the background of the individuals in the group and 'what the reflective group could look like and how to lead it'. I suspect that because it was a group of educators, there was probably an unusual amount of attention paid to meta-learning rather than simply participating in the learning as a student rather than an educator.

Since the study tour was part of a course at a public university, and because students were 'really varied in their faith and spiritual and existential belief system', Professor Jo was 'hesitant about grounding the Camino experience as one that was either religious or spiritual ... [preferring] to talk about it as a place for reflection and worldview and existential contemplation'. However, the

context of the Camino as a traditional Christian pilgrimage made questions of faith and spirituality inevitable. Professor Dana's assessment was that 'some people were definitely talking about it that way, other people definitely not'. Professor Jo affirmed that 'it was spiritual for some, absolutely', adding:

We had people on the walk who started fairly hostile towards faith. ... What I feel I noticed ... a lessening ... a softening, and a greater sort of opening to the role that faith and spirituality and existential belief serves.

Even though students had described some spiritual moments as transcendent, Professor Jo was cautious about pointing to experiences which students had described as transcendent: 'I don't feel like I heard anyone talk about a moment with such an epiphany that it would be labeled as transcendent'. On the other hand, Professor Dana insisted, 'Yes, I do', and pointed to conversations with students about moments along the way, such as the Cruz de Ferro and the Monastery of San Xulián de Samos.²¹ While the study tour was promoted as a search for meaning and purpose, it is clear that questions of religion and spirituality were a part of that pursuit. So, in many respects it became a spiritual experience, but that did not lessen its value and validity as an academic experience. Professor Jo insists:

There is definitely a valid academic experience. ... I feel like people learned things they will use in their professional lives. It wasn't all just a personal journey. ... They saw this class and the Camino as beneficial [for their role] as an instructor.

Evidently, the combination of in-class readings and discussions combined with the contemplative walk gave the students permission to explore both spiritual and existential questions, and questions of professional practice, as they wrestled with meaning and purpose. That may have been an ideal experiential combination to propel their search.

While both professors acknowledge that the study tour was a profound experience for the students, they expect that students would view the experience differently today than they did on arriving home since the demands of everyday life hinder actualising the learning. But, similar to their own

²¹ The Monastery of San Xulián de Samos is an active Benedictine monastery in Samos, Galicia.

experiences, they expect that students are still wrestling with ‘whatever left the most imprint’ (Professor Jo). Professor Dana reflected:

You experience different things about life, and you reflect on it from a different point of view and it feels different as time goes on. ... When you talk about life as a journey that metaphor is consistent, but ... it doesn't stay stuck in a moment ... it does kind of shift as you experience different things.

Undoubtedly, the professors were satisfied with the learning experience that the study tour afforded, both professionally and personally. Perhaps that freedom to explore is because ‘there's such space available for a variety of experiences within the same category; there's just a lot of spaciousness’ (Professor Dana). Professor Jo mused about the advantage of reconvening the group for a follow-up discussion some months later, but it did not happen. The data strongly suggest that the students rate the Camino study tour as a rich learning experience.

Mapping Learning

While initially conceived as a typical contemplative study tour with the tour following initial preparatory study and followed by post-tour assignments, this study tour was unusual because the tour was the final activity. So, the learning map for this study tour has a different sequence than the two previous tours, with the complete course content being presented before the Camino walk, as opposed to the previous study tours, for which the tour experience was an integral and major part of the course content. So, students participating in the study tour for academic credit came to this tour having studied textbooks and readings, discussed the materials in class sessions, and written assignment papers. Contemplations on the Camino supplemented the learning by further refining it and figuring out how to actualise the learning going forward. These contemplations were supplemented by discussions with classmates and other pilgrims along the Way, and by insights and challenges shared during the evening debriefings. So, while the tour carried the learning along, there was no formal mechanism, such as post-tour assignments, to ensure that any new learning on the Camino was reviewed and fully integrated. However, the data indicate that students reflected on the learning and its actualization post-tour even without a formal requirement to do so. This may simply relate to the importance students

Mediated learning in the home setting shapes a conceptual framework of localised meaning schemes.

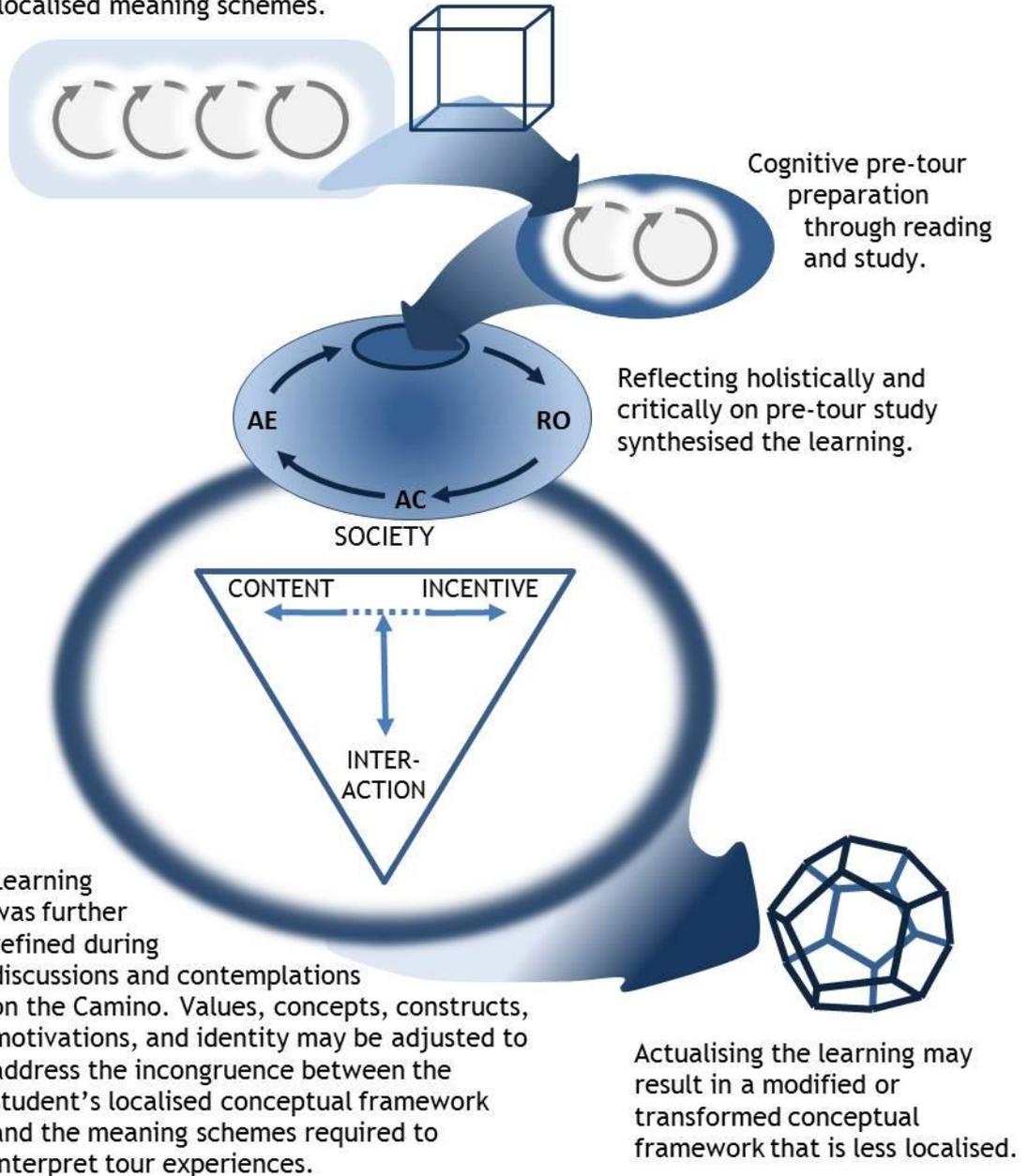


Figure 6: Second Camino Learning Map

ascribe to the learning. However, it is consistent with most students' post-tour desire to deepen and apply the learning for all the study tours examined.

While both Camino study tours had a contemplative character, they differed in more than the sequencing of activities. By comparison, the first tour was gentler. We walked shorter distances per day for fewer days, and apart from dealing with missing luggage, there were no evident stresses. Having led

different Camino tours, Professor Dana talked about the challenge of finding the right pace, indicating that 'I loved starting further back ... I actually liked the pace of this one'. I personally agree, as I felt the pace was challenging but doable. However, the level of fitness and readiness varied within the group, meaning it was not an ideal pace for everyone. While those who felt most challenged also felt the strongest support from the group, they also experienced moments of fear, failure, guilt, and embarrassment because they were unable to sustain the established pace. However, if everyone's performance had been consistent, that homogeneity may have encouraged routine and boredom. The variety of individual performance promoted community as we responded to individual needs, and community promoted learning because it created a safe environment in which to share and to explore. From the perspective of Illeris' learning model, community encouraged individual interaction within the study group, and ultimately the confidence to interact with locals and other pilgrims. For some, internal processing, the content-incentive axis, was likely disturbed or interrupted at times by the negative emotions, (which I have shown by an interrupted line in Figure 6). While there is no evidence that it significantly hindered learning for any individual, it again highlights the complexity of the learning environment.

Since most of the tour participants were educators, another interesting dimension of this study tour was meta-learning, which Illeris (2006) describes as 'thinking critically and analytically about one's own learning, i.e. placing one's own learning in a personally and societally general perspective' (67). As academics who design instruction and coach students to develop study skills, it is not surprising that their attention occasionally turned to how learning was occurring during the study tour. Comments about the learning space, the community, the social context, and the physical component indicate their reflections included analysis of the learning experience itself. So, I suspect that at times individual's private analytical thoughts were about the way in which learning was occurring rather than the specific learning content. I am not suggesting that meta-learning analysis is a bad thing. In fact, it may have broadened the scope of learning for some individuals. For example, in addition to the personal learning about the questions being pondered on the Camino, Caelan is now exploring the option of including walking in a future on-campus

course, a product of meta-learning from the Camino. The interests and backgrounds of participants clearly shaped the nature and extent of their learning.

TOUR 4: IN THE STEPS OF PAUL (CYPRUS, MALTA, ITALY)

My fourth study tour, conducted by Regis College²², went to Cyprus, Malta, and Rome. Postgraduate theology students took the tour for academic credit as an independent reading and research course; for continuing education students it was a non-credit course. Additionally, teachers could take the tour as one of three courses required for an Additional Qualification (AQ) in Religious Education in Catholic Schools, which is an Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certification requirement to teach religious education courses in Roman Catholic schools in Ontario. For the research course, students established their learning outcomes individually with the professor. For the AQ credit, students were required to meet the OCT requirements. An excerpt of the guideline is included in Appendix H. Whether participants were taking the course as a theology credit, an AQ course, or continuing education, they could attend four pre-tour sessions, each of which included a discussion of logistics and preparation, and a lecture on Paul.

The study tour went to three countries during the two weeks, and visited sites significant to the biblical accounts of Paul's journeys and to early church history. Stopping first in Cyprus, we established our daily routine, beginning with a celebration of Roman Catholic mass at 6:30am, usually attended by about two-thirds of the group. After breakfast, we boarded a bus for a day of touring at local sites of historical significance, returning to the hotel late afternoon. While in Larnaca, we crossed the *green line* into Turkish administered territory to access the archaeological site at Salamis, which was visited by Paul on his 'first "missionary journey" out of Antioch ... probably in 46 AD' (Walker, 2011:54). After visiting other local sites, such as the Church of St. Lazarus, we relocated to Limassol, stopping en route in the capital Nicosia, where we toured the old city and crossed the green line again to visit the Selimiye Mosque, formerly the

²² Regis College is the Jesuit Faculty of Theology at the University of Toronto.

Roman Catholic Cathedral of Saint Sophia. While in Limassol, we toured through the Troodos Mountains, and visited the Greek Orthodox Monastery of the Holy Cross, which has a relic believed to be a piece of the rope that held Jesus to the cross. We also spent a day in Paphos, visiting the House of Dionysus with its mosaic floors, Saint Neophytus Monastery near the mountainside cave cell of St. Neophytus, and the Church of Agia Kuriaki, which is near St. Paul's Pillar, 'the supposed site of Paul's flogging' (Walker, 2011:63-4).

Leaving Cyprus, we flew to Malta where Paul was shipwrecked on his journey to Rome. Staying in Sliema for the next four days, we explored sites associated with Paul, including, St. Paul's Grotto, St. Paul's Catacombs, and the Church of St. Paul's Shipwreck, and visited other sites important to Christianity and history in Malta, including the Cathedral of Saint John, which has an important Caravaggio painting, the Maritime Museum, the Tarxien Temple complex, and Ghar Dalam. We also took a Sliema harbor cruise, and visited Marsaxlokk, a small fishing village. Several participants made an evening trip into Valletta to experience the celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, one of Malta's many Christian street festivals, which include elaborate street decorations and processions. From Malta, we flew to Rome for the final portion of the study tour. Driving into Rome, we visited Ostia, the harbor city of ancient Rome. Site visits included the Basilica of St. Paul, where Paul was beheaded, Archbasilica of St. John in Lateran, Catacombs of St. Callixtus, Basilica of San Clemente, Basilica of Santa Prassede, which has the relic of the flagellation of Jesus, Basilica of Saint Mary Major, and the Basilica of St. Agnese. In addition to viewing the Colosseum, Trevi Fountain and other landmarks, we visited the town of Tivoli, stopping first at the sprawling estate of Hadrian's Villa (Villa Adriana), before visiting Villa d'Este with its splendid fountains and terraced Renaissance gardens. Our final visit was to Vatican City, including the Vatican Museums, the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, and the excavations under St. Peter's. Many of these visits were short, so most days ended by 4:00pm, allowing free time during the evenings.

The Students' View

Seventeen students completed the pre-tour questionnaire and fifteen students completed the post-tour questionnaire. Ten students and the two professors

provided interviews two to three months after the tour. Only three respondents indicated it was their first study tour. All but one respondent indicated they will definitely or are likely to participate in a future study tour.

Motivations and Expectations

Similar to the previous study tours, motivations were varied, again ranging from practical to personal. Predictably, there was interest in Paul's history and theology (Shae, Teagan, Corey). Other interests included 'archaeology in these countries, earlier than St. Paul's times' (Corey), and 'connecting theology and learning with the actual environment' (Marley). Opportunity to complete an AQ or academic credit was motivation for others (Amal, Issy, Jules, Akira).

Endorsing the instructional method, Brodie wanted to:

See and experience with all five senses, cities, cultures, etc ... I truly believe that seeing, touching, smelling, tasting the information being thrown at you sticks with you throughout your whole life.

The spiritual component of the tour also had appeal. Amal commented, 'I am interested in participating in a "live spiritual journey" while earning this credit.' Issy said, 'I love being a Catholic and this tour fits my needs. I want to go on a spiritual journey.' For several, participation in previous Regis College study tours was strong motivation to join this tour. And, Max was motivated by his interest in and enjoyment of travel. Participant motivation ranged from personal to practical, from academic to spiritual, from study to recreational travel.

Learning expectations reflected the varied motivations, including gaining in-depth knowledge of Paul, his travels and theology (Teagan, Kelly, Corey). Jodie expected to learn about 'Paul ... and how his influence has shaped the church today.' Brodie expected to learn about:

The antiquity and history of the countries and its people, and about the lives of those who influenced the cities we are visiting, and why we talk about them and remember their name to this day.

Similarly, Tracy expected to learn about 'historical, biblical, and cultural/religious underpinnings of Paul's evangelization efforts, as well as local belief connected to these stories.' Other students were interested in early Christian art (Marley, Akira). Beyond academic learning, several students expected the study

tour to be a personal spiritual experience: (Tony, Issy, Stevie, Marley, Jules, Amal). Others wanted to learn about the countries visited (Manjeet, Max). And, they expected to cultivate interpersonal relationships with other participants: ‘make new friends’ (Tony), and ‘be enriched by the presence of my fellow companions’ (Bobbie). Friendship building may be linked to repeat participation in Regis College study tours. However, the social dimension of the tour did not detract from the academic and spiritual expectations.

Participant Learning

In addition to local history and culture, and the history and mission of Paul, students gleaned other learning that was somewhat random. For example, learning about group tours and tour group behavior was ‘actually a big learning curve for me’ (Jodie), the influence of the ‘personality of the tour guide, the suitability of the tour guide to the people’ (Stevie), and, ‘the culinary exposure was quite interesting and quite appreciated’ (Tony). Using the same categories as for the previous tours, participants’ learning included:

- Academic: ‘insight into the social, economic, political life of St. Paul’ (Tony), and ‘early Christian art is basically funeral art’ (Marley)
- Practical challenges: Not discussed in the data
- Interpersonal: ‘getting along with people and respecting other people’s boundaries’ (Jodie), and ‘how people form subgroups within the group’ (Max)
- Historical/geographical: ‘troubled history of Cyprus ... wealth and power of high clergy that was misused to build opulent residences’ (Bobbie), ‘how the Christians brought much of their own culture into their new faith experience’ (Teagan), ‘history, reinforced by archaeological evidence’ (Kelly), and ‘personalise and humanise historical and religious figures by seeing and walking where they may have walked’ (Tracey)
- Metaphorical: Not discussed in the data
- Spiritual: ‘learned about my faith’ (Manjeet), ‘St. Paul’s contribution to Christianity’ (Issy), and ‘the presence of St. Paul, in a spiritual sense’ (Brodie)
- Leadership: Not discussed in the data
- Emotional: ‘the feeling of being occupied and not having a voice’ (Stevie); several described moments at sacred places as emotional
- Personal: ‘how I’m interacting with people, and how people are interacting with me, and how that evolved over the trip’ (Max)

- Contemporary issues: ‘political situation in Cyprus’ (Teagan)

Learning about various sites, such as the Vatican Museums, cathedrals, and other holy sites, from both a contemporary and historical perspective, was a major component of the learning. Certain sites, such as St. Paul’s Grotto in Malta, and the catacombs in both Malta and Rome, had particularly strong impact on certain students.

While students expressed delight with the extent of learning, some expressed disappointment that the tour lost the close connection to Paul, about whom the itinerary was built. So, the extent and depth of learning may have been compromised somewhat for reasons I will discuss later. Nevertheless, ‘a big part of the learning was the experience, just being there’ (Jodie). Shae talked about ‘the physical locations like Salamis; it’s the history, it feels history, it feels antiquities.’ Another contributor to learning was the tour guides, often supplemented by local experts, who expounded the history and significance of particular sites. The professors were also major contributors to learning, and one of the reasons former students joined this study tour. Discussions and interactions within the group also contributed to learning: ‘exchanging information with other group members; the level of education, academic level, in our group was very high ... group interests are similar’ (Akira). Finally, ‘being away from the rigors of everyday life’ (Manjeet) provided space for learning without unnecessary distractions.

Pre-Tour Preparations and Post-Tour Assignments

Pre-tour preparation reflected the usual pattern of student behaviors. Akira, who claimed ‘preparation ... [is] pretty important, sometimes I think more important than the trip itself’, described extensive study beforehand, including researching the sites visited. Those who attended the pre-tour sessions claimed they were very valuable. While both Max and Manjeet claimed to be ‘reasonably well prepared’, others felt they could have done more, including simply reading the textbooks and articles (Stevie, Jodie). Marley noted that the pre-tour lectures were about Paul, so those studying early Christian art were truly doing independent study. Students completing the AQ credit completed specific pre-

tour readings and assignments. While there was opportunity for extensive preparation, the actual amount of preparation depended on the student.

Students' post-tour reflection depended on the course options they were pursuing. Teachers completing the AQ credit prepared lesson plans and wrote reflective papers for their final assignments. Brodie described how the observations and notes from the tour 'helped me write a much better reflection ... and that knowledge ... will help me become a better Catholic teacher'. The post-tour assignments were more laborious for the reading and research course. Students reported rereading the textbooks since there were no lectures on early Christian art, but described the assignment as very helpful for personal and professional development (Marley, Akira). For continuing education students, the focus and purpose of post-tour reflections varied. Acknowledging that 'reflecting on what you have done is definitely important' (Stevie), there was a sense that, at least for some students, the trip was not as theologically or spiritually inspiring as expected. On the other hand, Manjeet claims to have a 'greater appreciation, greater interest in St. Paul', and pays more attention to Paul's writings. Shae, a theology student who is planning to write a thesis on Philemon²³, gained a deeper appreciation for the role of slaves in the early Christian period. Similar to the previous study tours, it is evident that the experience and learning lingers, and lessons are being actualised. For some, the depth of learning was greater on-the-ground (Jodie, Shae), but for others, it was post-tour (Marley), while Stevie claims 'both are important'. Clearly, extensive learning occurs when the tour experience is richly instructive and there is space and prompts for additional reflection post-tour.

Reflection and Transformative Learning

The Turkish occupation of Cyprus was previously unknown to some students, so crossing into Turkish occupied Cyprus was unexpected and one of the more intense moments. Akira described the experience as 'an awakening ... because of that additional political tone of the visit'. Stevie described insights gained from a conversation with our bus driver, a Romanian living and working in Cyprus, and

²³ Paul's letter to Philemon is included in the Christian New Testament.

his description of life as a non-Cypriot among Greek Cypriots. Rather than transformative learning as described by Mezirow, the learning described by these students is better characterised as the ‘deeper, more nuanced understanding’ described by Brookfield. For most students, that deeper learning was associated with Paul and early Christianity. Marley was surprised by ‘that pagan influence on early Christianity and early Christian art ... they brought many of the pagan cultural aspects to their new faith’. Shae was amazed by the perseverance of Paul and the early church: ‘statues of the saints with their throats slit ... where did the courage come from?’ For others, the learning was personal. Observing the congregation at the Church of Panagia Angeloktisti²⁴, Jodie was ‘touched by them as a community.’ Bobbie described how the ‘experiential part ... [deepened] appreciation for Paul’s passionate commitment to spreading the good news’. Reacting to the magnificence of Vatican City, Tony commented:

This is awesome architecturally, sculpturally, artistically. It’s just amazing, but there was a part of me that said, ‘I don’t think this is what Christ intended for us to spend our time and energy and money on. He wants us to love one another, he wants us to help our fellowman [*sic*], and he wants us to show mercy and compassion.

Individual students experienced profound learning, as a result of the experiential nature of the study tour and their personal reflections, and for some meaning schemes were modified or transformed.

About half of the interviewees expressed disappointment at what they considered a missed opportunity during the tour. They felt the itinerary should have included regular debriefings or periods of discussion, so that students could share insights and pose questions about uncertainties and ambiguities. Consequently, they felt there was little process and premise reflection. The other half of the group appear unaffected by the absence of group discussions and believe they achieved all three levels of reflection at varying times, with the deeper levels being post-tour. For example, Tony’s reflection on the opulence of Vatican City included assessing the underlying values and beliefs that endorsed the construction and maintenance of structures and adornments. While some individuals achieved deep levels of reflection, opportunities seem to

²⁴ The Church of Panagia Angeloktisti is located in Kiti, Cyprus.

have been lost. Even though some students indicated the amount of reflection was 'quite adequate for me' (Brodie), many students felt more discussions were required, and could even have been optional. Discussions were also seen as an opportunity for the professors to situate Paul more prominently in the historical context of the sites. Similarly, some felt that relocating mass to or reading related Christian scriptures at the churches or historic sites, such as St. Paul's Grotto, would have helped contextualise the mass or scripture to the site and promoted deeper reflection. Certainly, reflection opportunities can be incorporated into instructional design, but as Marley noted, it is the individual who integrates 'spirituality and our faith' into the experience.

Spiritual Experience and Learning

As a spiritual experience, the study tour received mixed reviews for reasons discussed above. Yet, particular sites and sacred places were definitely spiritual experiences for individual students. Stevie was moved by the Sistine Chapel, and fascinated by Caravaggio's *Beheading of St. John the Baptist* at St. John's Co-Cathedral. Akira described visiting the tomb of Pope John Paul II as 'an extremely important and valuable spiritual experience ... very emotional'. Bobbie marveled at the 'magnificence' of the Pieta, while Brodie described 'really feeling that spirituality' at the excavations under St. Peter's. Max claims the spiritual moments were the quiet, private moments at churches and sacred places, not shared activity or worship. Brodie claims a shared spirituality 'connected us, those masses in the morning connected us ... there was that spiritual connection and feeling within all of us.' The disappointment expressed by some students was not due to the absence of spiritual moments, but a feeling that richer, deeper spiritual experiences were possible.

Nevertheless, students categorised many of these spiritual moments as transcendent. Students described the Vatican, the catacombs in both Rome and Malta, the Selimiye Mosque, many pieces of art and sculpture, and the cave cell at St. Neophytus Monastery as prompting transcendent moments. One student described spontaneously singing a song that was learned in childhood while in the St. Paul's Grotto. Other students described being moved to tears at particular churches, with one student saying it was difficult to 'absorb all the holiness of the place [Vatican]'. In addition to sacred places, another student

suggested walking along the shoreline near Paphos, 'felt transcendent'. The community experience was also described as possibly transcendent. While most students felt that it was spiritually significant, not everyone experienced transcendent moments nor would describe the study tour as important to their personal spiritual journey. Possibly some individuals expected a life-changing spiritual experience, since it included sacred places like the Vatican, which Akira described as 'one of the most sacred places for Catholics'. If so, disappointment is explained.

Additional Student Assessment

Most students indicated that their expectations were met. For example, Bobbie acquired a 'deeper appreciation for the perseverance of Paul in his mission, and the physical rigors of his journeys', and Marley appreciated 'an exceptional study tour for the spiritual pilgrim ... effectively combines history, archaeology, scripture, faith, and community'. Shae insisted, 'The Vatican was a spirited and a spectacular experience. It was an education in what Paul and Peter faced following Christ.' Gaps in expectations included 'more info about St. Paul at the sites linked to him' (Tracey) and a 'more pilgrimage feel to the study tour' (Tony). But, in spite of the critique, there was certainly evidence of satisfaction: 'exceeded my expectations on all levels' (Marley). Students expect the learning will endure: 'I will be able to situate selected scripture passages' (Shae), and:

I appreciate my Catholic faith much more now knowing all of the hardships St. Paul faced when he first began his missionary journeys. Also, ending our trip seeing the bones of St. Peter will be an experience to remember! (Issy)

More surprising is the extent to which community is expected to endure through new, renewed, and lasting friendships (Shae, Kelly, Marley, Max). Reflecting this comradery, one student organised a reunion dinner about four months post-tour.

During the interviews, students reported retaining much of the learning. Jodie talked about how revisiting journal notes and sorting photographs had kept the memories alive. Max said many places and details have merged, while others stand out because of their uniqueness, such as the mosaic of a female bishop in

the Chapel of St. Zeno²⁵. Tony expects ‘a deeper respect for the marginalised and the poor ... [of Paul’s] time’ to endure. Brodie claimed:

We were learning in a friendly, positive environment, and I think that’s what helped me to retain all this information. ... this environment ... seeing, experiencing and listening, and touching, I think you just learn so much better and I think you retain so much more, because it is such a memorable, lovely experience.

Stevie insisted ‘there isn’t any comparison’ to similar on-campus courses, because of ‘all those great friendships and all that richness of being with a group’. Akira claims ‘there’s so much more going on when you see the place ... all the senses are being used ... It creates an image that you will never achieve by being in a classroom’. Marley agrees that the experience ‘enhances learning at a greater level than just in a lecture ... you’re walking the streets ... and buildings built by the Romans, and you’re seeing the actual art’. Tracey added:

Study tours are far more enjoyable, interesting, challenging, and immediate in their impact. Students are immersing themselves in the culture, food, art, architecture, politics, and religious elements. Seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting allows complete absorption.

And Issy enthused, ‘There is no way I could have appreciated all the risks and challenges the apostles took to spread Christianity by just hearing about it!’ There is enthusiasm for the study tour option and it is clearly valued as legitimate academic study.

Busy days (Kelly) and the summer heat (Bobby and Manjeet) were challenges, but most students were hesitant to offer anything as a dislike. Manjeet also noted that ‘the cost for this type of learning can be expensive’ limiting access for some students. Brodie captures students’ enthusiasm for the study tour:

I was very tired, but I loved just experiencing everything ... we were really immersed, and taking in as much as possible, even if it meant sacrificing a few hours [sleep] in the morning ... I loved the fact that we were able to learn so much in a very dense situation. (Brodie)

²⁵ The Chapel of St. Zeno is at the Basilica of Santa Prassede, Rome.

Max liked that ‘there is a nice balance between seeing stuff and having some down time’. Others acknowledged the quality of the tour: ‘it wasn’t a cookie cutter approach’ (Tony), and ‘top-notch in terms of the organization, in terms of structure’ (Marley). They especially liked the experience of history and culture and meeting and talking to the people who live there (Corey, Kelly, Brodie). As an academic experience, there was no disappointment, even though balancing the needs of continuing education, independent study, and teacher training certainly added complexity to the course design. In fact, ‘the cognitive piece was challenging ... that’s what got me out of my comfort zone’ (Marley). As academic study, Tony declared:

Absolutely, totally support the process ... take it out of the classroom, take it out of the institution and have people live it, breathe it, talk about it, experience it. I think it is absolutely excellent.

Clearly, study tours are appreciated as a teaching method. Because of a busy itinerary, students returned home ‘feeling overwhelmed, jetlagged, and ... with three assignments to finish’ (Brodie), and appreciated time to ‘decompress and rest’ (Marley). But, they also valued their post-tour reflections: ‘how much more I appreciate the spirituality ... being able to thank St. Paul for everything that he’s done ... to reflect and understand and think, and be more thankful’ (Brodie). It is evident that students critiqued the study tour, and that in spite of some disappointments, the overall reaction was satisfaction.

The Professors’ View

This tour was the third tour for which the professors had collaborated, but both had previous experience leading tours for academic credit and as continuing education. About designing study tours in general and this tour in particular, Professor Wynne emphasised that they are adult learners, so it is difficult to predict how they will receive the material: ‘I’ve learned it’s adult learning and not to have an expectation’. From a practical viewpoint, adult students do not like to be rushed, so content choices have to make space for free time: ‘like teaching in a classroom ... it’s all great stuff, but we only have this amount of time to do this’. It was also noted that continuing education students are sometimes ‘more receptive to the academic side of it than the people who are doing it for academic [credit]’, because academic credits are sometimes taken

to meet salary progression criteria or for reasons other than academic interest. Viewing learning through Illeris' model, it is evident how a weak motivation (incentive) can impede learning. Designing for learning is also constrained by regulations. The AQ course must meet the regulations of the OCT, and the research and reading course is governed by Regis' academic regulations, so flexibility can be limited. Another constraint is the format itself. Scheduling study tours outside of the academic year to avoid interrupting on-campus courses often places them in a hot Mediterranean summer or similar temporal, spatial settings. Consequently, students are often tired at the end of the day, making it challenging to 'create an atmosphere where we can talk about things' (Professor Terry). Different interests and interest levels mean students' participation in pre-tour sessions or completion of reading assignments is varied: 'a good student is going to be a good student on a study tour or in a classroom' (Professor Wynne), and 'some ... come along as just a tourist' (Professor Terry). Another constraint that is difficult to manage is talkative tour guides who do not leave space for professors or guests to provide input. Speaking to the challenges of balancing itinerary and managing constraints, Professor Terry said, '... the sweet spot, I haven't found yet.' Not only is finding the 'sweet spot' challenging, it is situational to each study tour.

Professor Terry indicated that student learning through the study tour was equivalent to an on-campus course, again depending on student motivation. In this case, most students were highly motivated and submitted creative papers for their final assignments. As Professor Terry explained, student motivation was important because of the difficulty of capturing teaching moments on-the-ground:

It was a bit frustrating ... to talk in front of some of these things we saw ... [because] a lot of them were inaccessible, wouldn't let you take pictures, and the guide was trying to hustle you on ... probably the most frustrating thing is how managed and handled people are on the trips. It kind of stifles a lot of the interaction that you might have.

Managing the situation on-the-ground is a challenge, especially when tour guides are less than cooperative, which speaks to the importance of the group being a supportive and flexible community. However, motivation is shaped from the outset. Pre-tour preparation must address the logistics so attention can be turned to the curriculum. But, as Professor Terry pointed out, some participants

are ‘a little afraid ... [and require] time to voice fears in the form of questions’. Since the pre-tour sessions were divided between discussion of logistics and lectures about Paul, students were prepared to the extent they were personally motivated. The extent to which their preparation and participation prompted transformative learning is indeterminate from the professors’ perspective, as they had not conversed extensively with students after returning. But, both professors suggested transformative learning is a common outcome from study tours, referencing the experiences of students on their previous tours. Professor Wynne described the pedagogical strength of study tours:

You’ve seen hunger, terrorism, poverty, oppression, so you cannot ‘unsee’ it once you’ve seen it. ... Because it’s experiential, it takes the whole body, it takes you into the place, you learn about a culture ... When you break bread with somebody, it changes everything forever. You may not like them still, but it changes things, right? It’s the Eucharist.

Except possibly the tension in Cyprus, most of this tour did not expose the group to emotionally charged experiences, so the impact may have been less than some previous tours the students and professors have experienced. But, that certainly does not preclude the possibility of transformative learning. And, we have students’ accounts indicating significant impact. Further, as Professor Wynne noted, some learning is not realised until future events or experiences connect back to tour experiences and the full meaning of a moment or experience during the study tour is realised.

Discussing the depth of reflection, Professor Wynne remarked, ‘I fight against the content reflection.’ The post-tour assignments are intended to challenge the students to think deeply about their experiences, so deeper reflection is expected. Yet, prompting reflection during the tour can be challenging, as Professor Terry noted:

It was very hot, very crowded, we were always on the move ... It might have been beneficial to see more in a smaller area where you have a base to go to ... because always being on the move is the enemy of a lot of reflection.

But, study tours can be effective in promoting deep reflection either immediately or some time into the future, as Professor Wynne summarised:

It ignited an interest in them, so they wanted to continue, and not just academically. ... it's fairly holistic, people overcome fear, they often come out of themselves in a way they have not been able to before ... they can share their learning, feel very comfortable with what they know and what they don't know ... it allows people to be relaxed.

For this tour in particular, one of the professors felt that opportunities for reflection were lost because of the busyness. In future tours, Professor Terry would like to 'build into the structure a time for meeting and discussing every day', suggesting that it may be advantageous to have students do some pre-tour writing before journaling during the tour, including 'what they are looking for, what they expect to see or learn, what they want to see or learn, and what are their presuppositions'. Without keeping a journal, there is 'a lot of impression that does not get processed' (Professor Terry). These are sound pedagogical additions, and given student feedback, most students would welcome them. Professor Wynne concurs and would prefer to have an Ignatian reflection or examen every evening, but acknowledges the challenges, such as adult students' desire for free time, and their tendency not to participate in optional activities. 'Some trips offer a better environment for doing [reflection]' (Professor Wynne), so it is an elusive balance.

Professor Terry liked the places we visited and the casual time when people just walked and explored things they wanted to see. Professor Wynne was pleased that we visited all of the 'must sees'. Professor Terry expressed frustration with 'the lack of control over what we saw', because the travel service through which the tour was organised 'told us where we were going ... this standard package stuff'. As a result, there were missed opportunities, such as the paleo-Christian exhibits at the Vatican Museums. At times, tour guides maneuvered to maintain their intended agenda. So, going forward Professor Terry will take 'more stewardship or control over where we go and what we do, rather than the package thing'. Professor Wynne would like more time for discussion and to schedule guest speakers, especially those who would present a counterpoint to the standard tour package. But, of course, it is always a challenge to balance the economics of travel against assembling the optimal tour.

From a spiritual perspective, Professor Terry conceded it is difficult to determine 'how much of a spiritual experience it really was for people'.

Professor Wynne indicated that some assignments revealed students were:

Very moved in a spiritual way ... by the grotto in Malta, extremely moved, by the street festival in Valetta ... the Sistine Chapel, no matter how noisy and busy and chaotic it is, it is the Sistine Chapel. ... people were spiritually moved, deeply moved.

Professor Terry noted that 'there's already so much emotion built into the different places'. But, not everyone is moved spiritually or every place spiritually moving. For example, and especially so for a cynic, the pillar at which Paul is reported to have been flogged may 'not be a spiritual experience, [but it is] fascinating historically, academically, scripturally', so it is important to recognise what traditions and beliefs mean to individuals. We 'can't judge these things' (Professor Wynne). The spiritual dimension is about individual experience, and that experience is enhanced by activities, such as daily mass, and could have been further enhanced by celebrating mass at some of the historical sites or sacred places. However, as Professor Terry noted, many of these sites were 'controlled and roped off, and you couldn't really wander among the ruins in these places'. Ironically, the controls and mechanisms that manage tourists and generate the revenue that helps preserve such sites may in fact be constraining the pilgrim's experience and reducing the spiritual impact of sacred places. In a sense, spirituality is a business.

Clearly, the professors have taken a critical look at the study tour and have identified possible improvements. Overall they are not disappointed with the result given the challenges of the itinerary. They both commented on the importance of community and acknowledged the strong sense of community within this group, even though it did not come without challenges. Professor Wynne noted that on every tour 'people come from different backgrounds, various social strata, various educational, cultural backgrounds and yet they come together and build a community of faith'. Nevertheless, 'every tour has one or two problems with the human factor, with relationships' (Professor Wynne). And, while I am not privy to any accounts, there was likely such incidents on this study tour. Professor Wynne insists that more often, the holistic, experiential dynamic of study tours and the shared interests of the

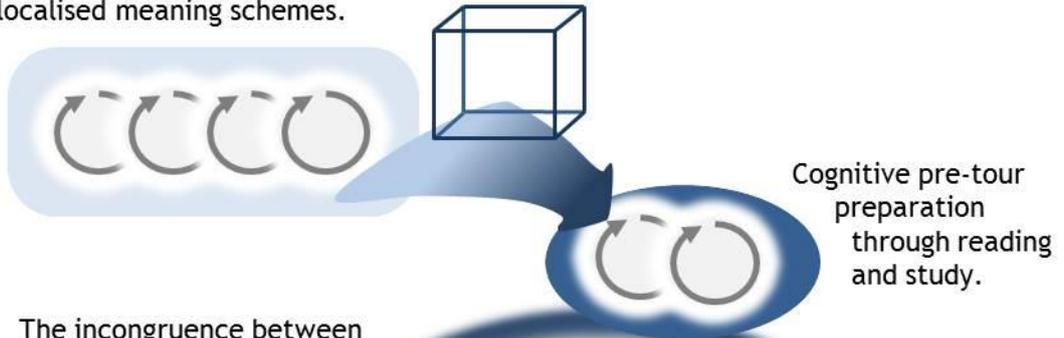
group result in a healing experience for those who are willing to confess their fears and challenges within the safe and supportive environment of newfound friends. Study tours offer an experience typically not available in a classroom course.

Mapping Learning

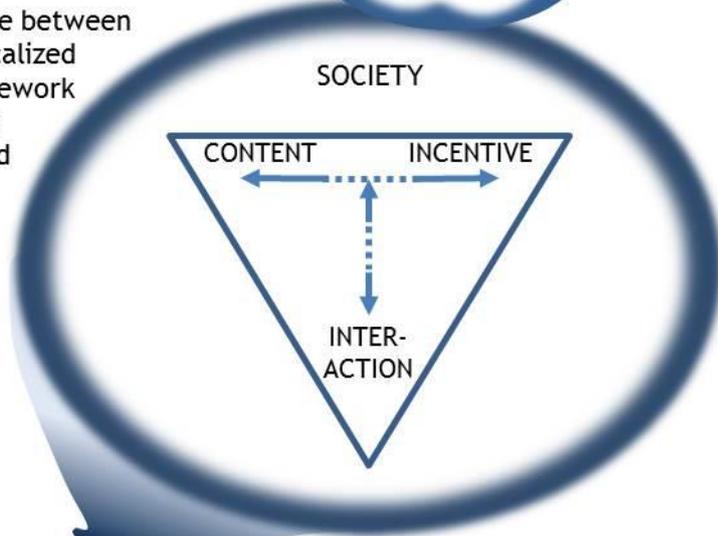
This study tour is more comparable to the Israel/Palestine tour than the Camino study tours, with similarities such as visits to sacred places. For Christians and especially for Roman Catholics, pilgrimages to the Vatican are akin to a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. So, it is not unreasonable that participants would have expected a significant spiritual, as well as educational, experience. When they lost the expected strong connection to Paul and when the desired discussions did not materialise, likely certain students felt their expectations of the study tour would not be realised. Consequently, their desire for and anticipation of the next day's events may have waned. In terms of Illeris' model, the change in motivation would have created disturbance or interruption on the content-incentive axis. Moreover, since one's motivation impacts the level of participation in activities, it is also possible that it resulted in disruptions to patterns of interactions within the group and within the societal context. I have illustrated this with interrupted lines in Figure 7, to show that the reality of the experience may have been different than the designed intent of the learning experience. Highlighting that challenge is not to suggest the study tour was unsuccessful, but rather to recognise a potential obstacle to optimizing the learning experience.

The obstacles or challenges to learning are perhaps rooted much deeper than any day-by-day frustrations that may have occurred. I have already mentioned how the travel service defaults toward off-the-shelf packaged tours. Even if the professors are able to override the travel service and customise the tour, they still have to contend with the situation on-the-ground. In Cyprus, our tour guide was very knowledgeable, but as a Greek Cypriot was strongly biased in favor of the Greek position. The Turkish viewpoint was not presented, so students did not receive all the information required to make an informed assessment of the situation. Moreover, the tour guide filled all the time with commentary or visits. In Malta, the tour guide was also very knowledgeable, and more cooperative. My

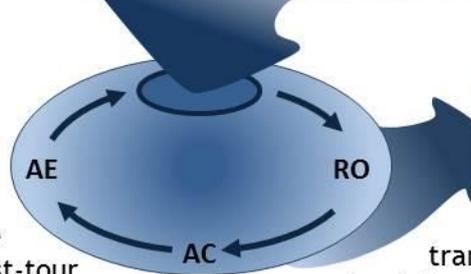
Mediated learning in the home setting shapes a conceptual framework of localised meaning schemes.



The incongruence between the student's localized conceptual framework and the meaning schemes required to interpret the experiences at the tour destination may prompt a disorienting dissonance.



Reflecting holistically and critically on the experiences post-tour is essential to synthesizing the learning ...



... and may result in a modified or transformed conceptual framework that is less localised. Values, concepts, constructs, motivations, and identity may be adjusted to accommodate the new learning.

Figure 7: Cyprus, Malta, and Rome Study Tour Learning Map

impression of the tour guides in Rome is less complimentary. While knowledgeable, much of the commentary was personal or trivial, not specific to the study tour curriculum. It was also evident that the guides were intent on controlling every moment. In an earlier conversation with the bus driver in Cyprus, he indicated that tour guides dominate, to the extent that drivers may not even be permitted to post a local map on their bus. No doubt, tour guides have to be assertive in order to move groups efficiently, including time at sites,

extent of access, acceptable conduct, etc. Groups and leaders quickly learn not to challenge tour guides. However, my personal, unconfirmed suspicion is that a Rome tour guide was also doing personal business. After a longer than usual site visit, the guide drew attention to her hair. She had been to a hairstylist while we roamed the site unguided. While I fully appreciated the time I spent at that site, I also feel that we were abandoned while the guide attended to personal business. Neither the professors, nor myself, will ever know whether my suspicion is correct, but it certainly had the appearance of personal business taking precedence and being dismissed as filling wait time. Professors' best efforts can be sabotaged by unscrupulous tour guides, guest presenters, or hosts. So, a successful study tour demands more than attention to logistical details beforehand. It also includes a critical analysis of activities on-the-ground and assertive control of the itinerary, recognizing that legitimate changes are sometimes required.

COMPARATIVE ACTIVITIES

To further assess the effectiveness of international study tours designed for formal instruction and academic credit, I also participated in two one-week activities which offered experiences similar to the study tours, but which were not designed as academic courses. The first was a local walking pilgrimage from Guelph, Ontario, to Midland, Ontario; the second was a one-week service learning trip to Mexico.

Guelph–Midland Walking Pilgrimage

Since 2002, the Ignatius Jesuit Centre has organised a Walking Pilgrimage from its Guelph retreat centre to the Jesuit Martyrs' Shrine in Midland. It claims the walking pilgrimage is about 'nourishing your spirituality; enjoying the great outdoors; ... having fun and enjoying good company' (Ignatius Jesuit Centre, 2016). During eight days, 80 to 90 participants walked 188 kilometres from Guelph to Midland, tent camping at night. A support vehicle and team assisted with moving tents and equipment, and ensuring catered meals were available. Unlike the Camino, we travelled as a single group so there was more intra-group interaction while walking. A different pilgrimage group, walking to Midland at the same time, shared the campsite on three evenings. Otherwise interaction

with outsiders was limited. A typical day began with celebration of Roman Catholic mass, which was led by the Jesuit priest who walked with the group. Following mass, we broke camp and began walking, travelling 20 to 28 kilometres per day. While walking, we followed a schedule of activities that included prayers, periods of silence, and praying the rosary²⁶. A midday stop at a monastery on the third day included the Stations of the Cross²⁷. At the campsites, we assisted with any final setup, shared dinner, and participated in *sacred circle*, a daily examen. On the morning of the final day, a local historian gave a presentation on the history of the St. Ignace II²⁸ site, where we had camped. We then walked the final 13 kilometres to the Martyrs' Shrine. Pilgrims entered through a holy door²⁹ and prayed at the Stations of the Cross, before celebrating mass at the Martyrs' Shrine.

I interviewed three participants and a leader, Payton, between one to five months after the walk. It was the ninth consecutive year that Payton completed the pilgrimage, assuming increasing leadership responsibilities over the years. He indicated that the pilgrimage has evolved based on observations and feedback, rather than following a particular design strategy. Changes were intended to eliminate disharmonious behaviors, and include activities that prompt reflection, as encouraged by Ignatian spirituality³⁰. Because of feedback from this pilgrimage, more detailed guidelines about logistics will be provided next year, as the pilgrimage continues to evolve.

²⁶ 'The rosary is a [Roman Catholic] devotion in honor of the Virgin Mary. It consists of a set number of specific prayers.' (Catholic Answers, 2004)

²⁷ 'A series of pictures or tableaux representing certain scenes in the Passion of Christ, each corresponding to a particular incident, or the special form of devotion connected with such representations ... It is carried out by passing from Station to Station, with certain prayers at each and devout meditation on the various incidents in turn.' (Alston, 2016)

²⁸ St Ignace II is the site where Jean de Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalemant, Jesuit missionaries to the Huron-Wendat native peoples, were martyred on 16 March 1649. (Parks Canada, 2016)

²⁹ A holy door was opened at the Martyrs' Shrine for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. (Martyrs' Shrine, 2016)

³⁰ 'The goal of the spiritual life, as Ignatius conceived it, is to "choose what better leads to God's deepening life in me." This is a dynamic goal. ...

This active life rests on a foundation of reflection. Ignatian spirituality teaches us to discern the footprints of God in our own experience. It shows us how to look back on our lives, to sift through our memories in order to see the way God has been dealing with us over the years. It teaches us how to find God in the present moment – in the relationships, challenges, frustrations, and feelings that we are experiencing today.' (Fleming, 2016:19-20).

Payton insists that the pilgrimage is about the experience and challenge of walking in community, not the peripheral things like meals, hospitality, tenting, and wayside attractions. For most, the walk is demanding and they are sometimes fatigued, which was especially true during the record hot temperatures during this pilgrimage. Payton claims people learn about themselves, their behavior when their body is challenged, and their behavior within community, suggesting that it is through that 'shared experience ... we open up in different ways to each other in the development of community ... we have a certain trust between each other'. Illustrating how learning occurs through experiencing self and experiencing community, Logan learned 'the ability to cope ... deal with the conditions presented to you', and 'to be compassionate to others'. Charlie discovered 'what a community can be like when they are working together'. For Dion, it prompted self-reflection that 'encompasses both the secular part of yourself and the spiritual part ... you come face-to-face with your strengths and your weaknesses.' Because it was a 'Catholic pilgrimage', Dion learned more about 'the Catholic religion ... the superficial and ... the substantive'. Learning fell broadly into three categories: learning about self, learning about people and community, and learning about spirituality, particularly from a Catholic perspective. Dion insists that learning was prompted by the daily rhythm which created the space necessary for both individual and group reflections, and for participation in religious rituals. It facilitated learning about the physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of self and of community. Learning was also prompted by the reflective questions posed in the daily readings, which included brief biographies of the Canadian martyrs, and prayers in response to the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission³¹ (TRC), adding a social justice component. Conversations while walking indicated that pilgrims pondered different personal, theological, social justice, and spiritual questions and issues. Commenting on the

³¹ The TRC summarises the history: 'For over 100 years, Aboriginal children were removed from their families and sent to institutions called residential schools. The government-funded, church-run schools were located across Canada and established with the purpose to eliminate parental involvement in the spiritual, cultural and intellectual development of Aboriginal children. The last residential schools closed in the mid-1990s.' (Truth and Reconciliation, 2016a)

The Commission's mandate is 'to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools (IRS). The Commission will document the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience. This includes First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School students, their families, communities, the Churches, former school employees, Government and other Canadians.' (Truth and Reconciliation, 2016b)

extent of learning and how it varied, Charlie noted how individual pilgrims derived different meaning from the experience. Walking provided the contemplative space and yielded many results individuals were seeking: 'A lot of us went into it for different reasons, and came out with things we were looking for and things we weren't looking for. ... it was a very abstract experience' (Charlie).

Discussing preparation, Payton said:

They are not ready ... [for] what they actually experience, because they don't know what their body is like, what their mind is like after three days of walking ... or [after] dwelling on a situation in their lives for a few days.

While preparation is important, Payton confessed to liking 'the surprise aspect' as their unpreparedness for the 'intellectual or spiritual experience' contributes to the learning. A regular runner, Logan felt physically ready; Charlie 'just showed up ... hoped for the best!' Dion acknowledged the need for both physical and spiritual preparation, but confessed to little preparation because of busyness. Unlike a study tour with its academic requirements, it is not surprising that pilgrims do little preparation, except maybe physical. But even with minimal preparation, pilgrims 'were allowed to reflect on their lives for several days ... a kind of microcosm of their life' (Payton), so undoubtedly many leave with significant personal insights, often further enhanced through reflection post-pilgrimage. Dion echoed Payton's comment, confessing:

You look at a microcosm of your life, you are on a journey, get your act together, take advantage of opportunities ... the way I did the pilgrimage ... reflected how I live my life.

Dion described the retrospective view of the pilgrimage as probably more instructive because one has time to organise thoughts into a more meaningful structure. Payton indicated that for some pilgrims 'the prayers and reflections of the TRC findings were transformational for them'. Although not providing details, Charlie said, 'The experience helped connect me with another part of myself ... it was pretty surprising.' As with study tours, some participants approached or experienced transformative learning. That possibility is reinforced by Payton's assessment that many pilgrims reach premise level reflection, noting that 'they have an experience that exposes them to understanding themselves

more deeply ... [and they have] humbled themselves in the experience' either by discovering limitations or 'by doing something they didn't think they were capable of doing'. Additionally, personal sharing in sacred circle can be 'pretty profound, emotional ... not unusual to have tears in the reflections' (Payton). Logan claimed reflection reached process and possibly premise level. Enjoying the distraction-free periods of silence, Charlie reported 'adding some more layers ... more questions', eventually getting to 'values and attitudes ... it's pretty core'. Describing the pilgrimage as an oasis away from a 'highly secular, competitive, violent world', Dion described reflecting at process and premise levels: 'it just reminded me of the stark difference, the big chasm between what we were trying to live for those seven or eight days and the social reality of humanity'. Clearly space was available to reflect as deeply as incentive required.

Feedback from pilgrims identified a busy schedule, rushed sacred circle, and impatience at times, but the record heat slowed progress, causing fatigue and increasingly squeezing the daily schedule. Pilgrims could have taken a ride for stages, which would have provided relaxed time to reflect and journal. On the other hand, Dion described just wanting 'the physicality of it', so the walking was an important part. Dion also emphasised the importance of accommodating different personality types, indicating a personal preference for more silence and reverence, describing the pilgrimage as 'time now for the soul, time for the spirit ... it's almost like time out'. It is important for individuals in leadership and support roles to be sensitive to pilgrims' needs, frustrations, and preferences, and to be cognizant of their own fatigue and abruptness, in order to maintain group harmony even when conditions are challenging. However, that is a part of the human experience and in this case was the pilgrim experience, which raises the question of balancing the natural unfolding of the pilgrim experience with the artificiality of managing the circumstances to make the experience more pleasant. The leadership team continues to review options going forward.

Payton summarised the spiritual experience:

The ecumenical aspect is a big part of the spiritual experience ... there is a spiritual growth to see a different aspect of Christianity. ... We hear people talk about where they see God, in a vista, in an

experience, in a helping hand, in the eyes of someone else who is walking, a willing listener.

As a result, ‘you become more familiar with yourself, you’re seeing different sides of yourself’ (Payton). Charlie confirmed that ‘it helped me connect with myself a bit more ... to add layers’, adding that the rituals and the symbolism of the holy door impacted individuals according to the meaning they derived from these experiences. Logan said it was ‘spiritual nourishment’. Payton claims that pilgrims have described transcendent moments during the pilgrimage. Charlie astutely noted that transcendent moments were less likely on certain days during this pilgrimage, as the heat increased, water supply declined, and behavioral patterns shifted towards physical needs. To facilitate spiritual experiences, Dion explained that:

You always create a space first and then you spark the space ... you speak into it, sing, dance, or whatever you want to do, but creating the space is very, very important.

Adding that ‘a person is responsible for how they use that opportunity’, Dion claimed the pilgrimage was ‘a spiritual opportunity ... it is a service that enables you, if you are so inclined, to focus on the spiritual aspects of yourself’. The Guelph–Midland walking pilgrimage certainly created the environment or space for participants to have spiritual experiences, and for some pilgrims to experience transcendent spirituality. Payton emphasised that while ‘this walking pilgrimage is a group event’ and the group dynamics are a significant aspect of the experience, it is always a personal journey, but ‘we have to do it at times in our lives when we are ready for it, when you get the most benefit out of it’. Indeed, while designed as a group activity, learning about self was a major part of the pilgrimage experience.

Finally, my interview with Dion raised several interesting questions about the *business* of pilgrimages, religious study tours, and spirituality. As Dion noted, this pilgrimage has ‘working class’ affordability, which is significant in an era when spirituality has been commodified and is in the marketplace, with spiritual products having a wide range of affordability. Pilgrimages and short-term international study tours are situated in that product mix, but only accessible to participants with the discretionary resources to avail of them. The questions of fairness, poverty versus privilege, and social justice that were raised in the

interview go beyond the scope of this research project, but are certainly relevant to the place of study tours within the education and spirituality economies.

Mexico Service Learning Trip

An Ontario charity supports an orphanage in Linares, Mexico, to which a small Ontario church sends a work team annually. I joined a small group of five travelling to Linares for one week to construct a building annex. The directors of the orphanage greeted us at the airport in Monterrey, and took us to the headquarters of Back2Back Ministries³² for a presentation about the child development model they employ, before continuing to Linares. The following morning we received a briefing on the construction project and on expectations regarding interactions with the orphanage children, before proceeding to the orphanage, Possibilities House for Children (PHC). Construction of the annex was impeded by rain, so we did not achieve the intended construction goals, but we did complete other maintenance work. We interacted with the children through conversations (through a translator) and play. On Sunday, we travelled with the directors and orphanage children to two small villages in the mountains near Linares. We attended morning worship service at a church in the first village, and gifted winter clothing for children there. At the second village, we entertained local children and gave them toys. The directors shared their long-term expansion plan to accommodate more children before we returned to Canada.

Aiden, who led the trip, and two participants, Jaden and Reese, provided interviews three to five weeks post-trip. Aiden has led a previous service learning trip to the orphanage; Jaden and Reese had participated in previous service learning trips to other locations. While this trip was primarily about the work project, it was also a learning experience. Claiming it challenges materialistic culture, Jaden said it was ‘a good refresher of how so many things that appear to matter ... a great deal don’t really have any real value in the grand scheme of things’. Both Jaden and Reese learned how the orphanage

³² Back2Back Ministries is the Christian non-profit organization under which the Mexican orphanage operates.

program is ‘rescuing, redeeming, and restoring these kids’ (Jaden) and about ‘the growth that had taken place in each of the kids ... emotionally and spiritually’ (Reese). Reese described ‘being overwhelmed by the load that ... [the directors] carry and ... the sacrifice that their family has made’ in relocating from Canada. Both Reese and Jaden claimed the ‘emotional attachment to the kids’ was a major contributor to their learning, indicating the experiential nature of the learning. Through post-trip conversations, Aiden confirmed that participants’ expectations were met, including learning ‘about the culture and about how to deal with children ... in that position’. He also suggests that a major factor in the team’s learning was ‘the relationships that were built with the kids’. Clearly, the experiential nature of the trip created a rich learning opportunity.

Learning also had a personal reflective dimension, provoking deep reflection on core values. Jaden said, ‘I’ve just questioned what I’m placing value on.’ Observing the children ‘sitting at the table sharing’ reinforced the value of organising the orphanage by family units, and prompted Reese to question the independent lifestyle of individuals within families in Canada. Aiden noted that participants’ reflections went deeper than just aspects of the culture and details of the orphanage operation, to explore underlying causes, such as corruption, gang wars, and poverty, and suggested that the majority probably reflected at premise level sometime during the trip. Reese said reflections were ‘definitely process’ level and at premise level when comparing value systems. Jaden pondered ‘what can I do to change it, why do I want to change it,’ and suggested he was likely at premise level. Both reported reflections continued after returning. They also reported adequate space for reflection while on-the-ground in Mexico, but noted that adding some structured reflection times and keeping a journal would have been helpful. The lack of structure may have contributed to Aiden’s comment that:

It’s amazing the things that got to different people or what different people learned. It seems everybody took away something different rather than being a conformed learning where they all learned the same thing.

However, he insists this was not problematic, but related more to individual’s interests and past experience. While individual learning may have differed, the

learning was of particular significance or importance to the respective individual.

Aiden noted that another key learning was to 'prepare people beforehand for what they are going to do', indicating that preparations had been abbreviated for this particular trip. He suggested this limited participants' readiness for work on-the-ground. He also observed that 'local people will stand and watch ... you do the work' because they perceive you are giving them a gift. Finding a way to engage the locals in the project would enhance the experience for both, and will be explored for future service learning trips. Jaden suggested a lack of pre-trip preparation due to busyness contributed to frustrations experienced mid-trip. Lacking construction experience, Reese was anxious and felt inadequate as the trip approached, but these feelings were resolved during a morning worship service before leaving, through the realization that God supports willing servants. Even though the anxiety was resolved, Reese believes that more extensive group preparation would have been helpful. However, there was no indication during the trip that limited preparation hindered the group's performance on-the-ground.

The trip received a positive review, especially the interactions with the orphanage children, but not having an interpreter available occasionally introduced frustration. The challenges of cross-cultural living was emphasised when our hosts challenged us to shop for food and prepare dinner with a shopping list and instructions in Spanish, demonstrating how routine activities can be challenges and effective teaching moments when cross-border. The trip was a positive experience even though the building project did not advance as far as expected. From Jaden's perspective, it was a spiritual act because the group was practising the behavior and generosity God expects of Christians, and the act of service was instructive to the children as an example of God's care for them. Citing 'Religion ... pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows' (James 1:27 NIV), Aiden claimed the act of service was both spiritual and benevolent, as it reflects the attitude of charity common to many religions. Acknowledging that spirituality is individualised and not always a 'religious spirituality', Aiden argued that most would view the trip as spiritual service and some would view it as religious, adding that 'it brings a sense of connection to something bigger than yourself'. A connection to 'something bigger' is how

Reese feels about the church experience before departing. Both Jaden and Reese described their experiences as having an element of transcendence. Aiden described the moment when the orphanage children prayed for the team as having an element of transcendence, and also claimed that connectedness and community were experienced during our visit to the mountain villages:

What we experienced there was a genuine community, a genuine faith, a genuine spiritual community operating in very poor circumstances and being happy, and happy to serve us ... in their poverty.

While these are subjective assessments of the spiritual nature of the experience, they are the legitimate views of these individuals, recognizing that spirituality is often perceived individually. While the details and vividness have faded, Reese indicated that the experience has lingered, and reflections are focused on how to stay involved with PHC. Even though experiences always move from ‘a familiar experience to a nostalgic experience’ and over time ‘experience becomes romanticised’, Aiden expects the impact of this service learning trip to linger with the participants.

Mapping Learning

Both the Guelph–Midland pilgrimage and the Mexico service learning trip were assessed because of similarities to the study tours being investigated. The Guelph–Midland pilgrimage was a contemplative walk to a sacred place similar to the Camino pilgrimage, but without the challenging international context. The Mexico service learning trip was an international, cross-cultural experience, but designed to serve the host community rather than explore and research locations for academic purposes. For both the pilgrimage and the service learning trip, there was significant learning even though it was not documented in final assignment papers. The learning was no less profound and may be particularly profound because the focus was a personal area of interest not just the requirements of an academic programme. On the other hand, learning was much less focused than for a study tour because there were no defined learning outcomes to place boundaries around participants’ learning. That is not problematic for informal learning, but clearly parameters are required to meet the rigor of academic standards.

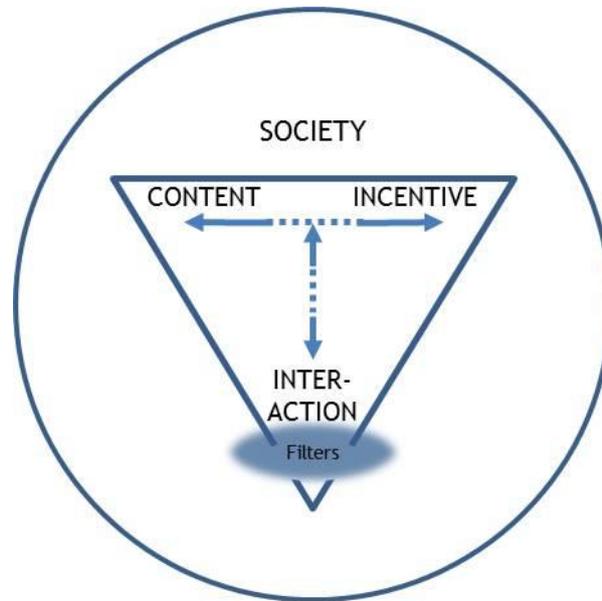


Figure 8: Individual Filtering

How individual filters affect learning became apparent on the Guelph–Midland pilgrimage. While most participants were Roman Catholic, others were associated with Protestant Christian denominations, and a small number were not associated with the Christian faith. The Jesuit sponsored pilgrimage had a Roman Catholic curriculum, so some of the ritual practices were not necessarily as significant for Protestant Christians, but we may assume they were generally understood even though viewed through a Protestant lens. The filters through which an agnostic viewed these rituals are unknown, but would have differed from practising Christians, or practitioners of other religions. Learning is clearly mediated by the individual’s filters. In terms of Illeris’ model, this impacts how the learner views the context, how interactions may be interpreted or distorted, and potentially how information is processed internally, as I have illustrated in Figure 8. When the study tour groups were in Europe, they were filtering the experience through a broad Canadian or American filter, which is different than the cultural context of, say, Cyprus, Israel/Palestine, or Spain. Moreover, each individual had personal filters, again individualising the learning, even though the professors had defined specific learning outcomes. These filters further complicate the challenge of interpreting their experiences contextually in a cross-cultural, cross-border context.

It is important not to underestimate the challenges of cross-border, cross-cultural learning. In Mexico, language was an obvious challenge. On the study tours, we had less interaction with local populations, and such interactions were typically in a setting in which the local person had some fluency in English. In Mexico, the team's desire to interact with the children was impeded by language. Inappropriate behavior is another potential cross-border challenge. For example, the orphanage directors recognise the need to manage volunteer groups, since individuals feel sympathetic toward orphans and often want to hug them and give gifts. During the pre-visit briefing, the directors instructed us to shake their hands, not hug, and to deposit any gifts with the house parents, who would distribute them as and when appropriate. Clearly, it is important to manage enthusiastic volunteers, with their emotions and ignorance. In the manner that a naturalist or ecologist would insist that we stay on marked trails when hiking through a pristine environment, it is important to navigate carefully through the service learning and study tour environments so that our visits leave only welcomed footprints.

Finally, how the hosts, leaders, and group respond when things go awry can have significant impact. One participant missed the flight to Mexico, and rebooked for the following day, requiring our hosts to make a second two-hour trip to Monterrey. Since the return flight had not been confirmed when rebooking, it was cancelled by the airline, again requiring the individual to make alternative arrangements on the return to Canada. Another participant returned to Canada a day early because of a death in his family, necessitating further changes to the travel itinerary. Whether traffic congestion in Rome, a pilgrim lost for a few hours on the Camino, or missed flights, professors and leaders have to manage delays and disruptions promptly, but in a manner that minimises the impact on the group and on learning.

CHAPTER 6: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Even though there are differences in the short-term international study tours investigated here, themes and patterns in the research data suggest the benefit of certain design strategies to encourage learning. Further, well-designed study tours that prompt critical reflection can potentially change, modify, or transform an individual's conceptual framework by altering, adding, or negating previously held meaning schemes. In Figure 9, I have integrated the learning maps for the study tours to prepare a general map of learning associated with a typical short-term international study tour, and will use it as a backdrop to this discussion.

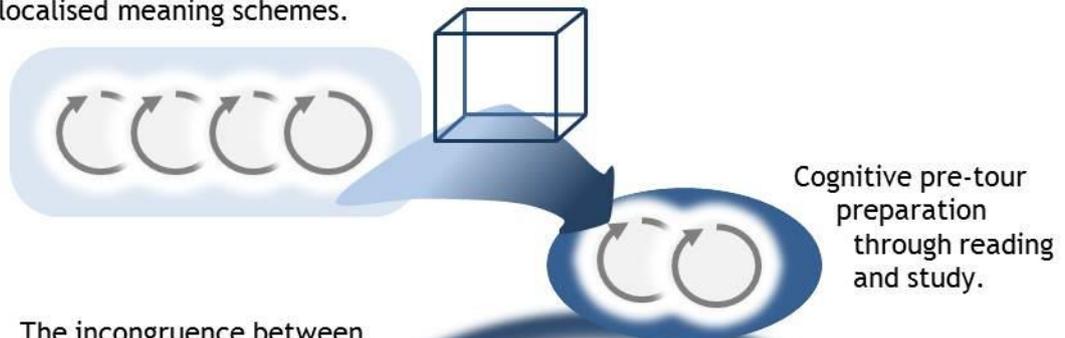
ADOPTING AN APPROPRIATE MENTAL MODEL

Challenging the traditional approach to higher education and supporting Biggs and Tang's contention that many universities remain overwhelmingly declarative, Palmer and Zajonc (2010) argue:

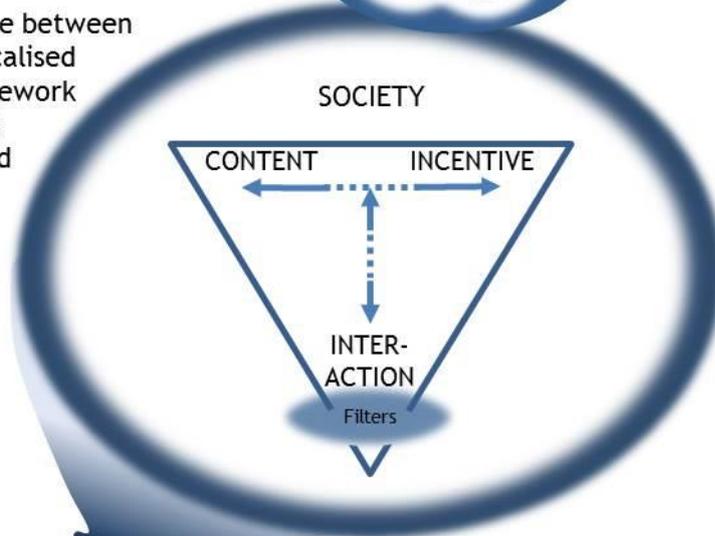
The kind of knowledge most valued in the academy is that which can be dealt with in a rational, linear, and controlled manner, words such as those define the comfort zone in academic culture. (36)

They are suggesting that the academy prefers to continue the mediated learning that shapes the individual's localised conceptual framework shown in Figure 9. They further argue that the academy is uncomfortable with 'questions involving relational knowledge, bodily knowledge, intuitive knowledge, or emotional knowledge' (36). Their claims support Tisdell's argument that the academy must engage students at the affective level. Traditional practices of the academy have conditioned professors and students to cultivate, even excel in, the skills necessary to function efficiently and effectively within traditional academic curricula. In fact, Laurillard (2002) acknowledges that 'there is no professional training requirement for university academics in terms of their teaching competence, as there is for school teaching' (12). While the skills they acquire through their academic and teaching experience may have broad applicability, they are not the only skills required to function effectively in a less-mediated environment like a study tour destination.

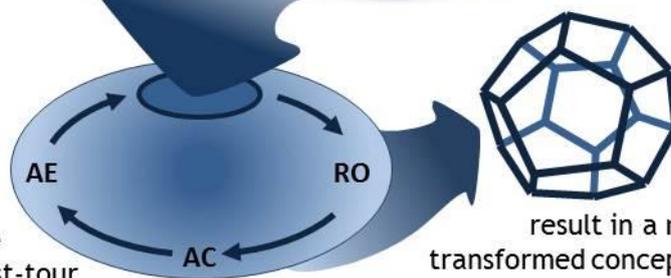
Mediated learning in the home setting shapes a conceptual framework of localised meaning schemes.



The incongruence between the student's localised conceptual framework and the meaning schemes required to interpret the experiences at the tour destination may prompt a disorienting dissonance.



Reflecting holistically and critically on the experiences post-tour is essential to synthesising the learning ...



... and may result in a modified or transformed conceptual framework that is less localised. Values, concepts, constructs, motivations, and identity may be adjusted to accommodate the new learning.

Figure 9: Study Tour Learning Map

Unlike most on-campus courses, study tours are experiential learning, which Beard (2010) describes as:

A sense making process involving significant experiences that, to varying degrees, act as the source of learning. These experiences actively immerse and reflectively engage the inner world of the learner, as a whole person (including physical-bodily, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually) with their intricate 'outer world' of the learning environment (including being and doing – in places, spaces,

within social, cultural, political context, etc) to create memorable, rich, and effective experiences for and of learning. (17)

Experiential learning associated with international study tours is not the linear, declarative, and controlled experience most valued by the academy. So, to take full advantage of the learning potential associated with short-term international study tours, professors and students have to adjust their mental model for learning from that commonly held within the higher education context. As the study tours and comparative activities discussed in the preceding chapter illustrate, it is *messy pedagogy*, not linear, controlled, mediated learning. And, it can be emotional – not a cherished characteristic of academic learning. Palmer and Zajonc (2010) further insist that ‘academic culture needs to embrace the simple fact that cognition ... is intimately linked to affect, no matter how much we think emotions are not our business’ (41). And, that is true for both professors and students. The international experience is multifaceted, with differing cultural, social, religious, ethnic, economic, and political elements evoking the students’ and professors’ responses to the experience. Unlike the managed classroom experience, study tours are often unpredictable, and participants may differ significantly in their reaction to and understanding of experiences or circumstances during the tour. On-campus courses can and sometimes do provoke differing reactions, even emotional responses. But, as Laurillard (2002) notes, the link is ‘rarely explicit’ and often ‘tenuous’ (45). She insists, ‘Academic knowledge relates to the experience of the world it describes, but it requires also a great deal of contemplative reflection on that experience’ (45). Because of that tenuous link between ‘academic knowledge’ and ‘experience of the world’, neither professors nor students may be adequately prepared through previous academic experience to fully capitalise on the rich learning opportunity international study tours offer. I was surprised by the extent of emotion expressed during the tours and that I heard about in the student interviews. Students were clearly unprepared for the emotional intensity of the experience, and I suspect professors were also unprepared unless their experience extended beyond traditional teaching in the academy. Professor Riley’s insistence on accommodations that provided students with a ‘refuge’ to which they could return likely indicates learning from leading previous tours, not experience in the academy. Anderson and Cunningham’s (2009) claim that students should be ‘taught how to learn experientially’ is reinforced by Jordan’s

perceived lack of a conceptual framework for processing experiential learning. The need to prepare for experiential learning may be equally applicable to the professors leading the tour, if their teaching is limited to the on-campus classroom. Adopting an appropriate mental model for learning during short-term international study tours is an important prerequisite to success.

PRE-TOUR PREPARATION AND STUDY

Professors initiate study tours to international destinations about which they are familiar because of their studies and/or previous visits to the location. In the study tours examined here, all but one of the professors had visited the locations previously, and at least one had lived for a number of years in one of the cities visited. Professors typically bring a familiarity with the destination that most students do not possess. For students, international study tours cross borders – linguistic, cultural, economic, political, social, or religious. Consequently, while professors may have familiarity with the destination, for students, the destinations are likely *foreign*. Additionally, professors are familiar with the material being studied, whereas it may be a new subject area for some students. Without careful attention to the background knowledge and meaning schemes students are likely to possess, professors may not recognise the gap students have to bridge in order to correctly contextualise the experiences on-the-ground at the destination. Of course, determining students' meaning schemes is difficult, especially when professors may have little choice as to who subscribes to a given study tour. Establishing academic prerequisites can ensure at least introductory-level knowledge of the subject material, but this is not always an option for study tours accepting continuing education students, who may have a greater interest in travel than the destination or the intended learning outcomes. While difficult to assess existing student knowledge, and while student knowledge will likely be quite varied, it is important to establish a baseline requirement in order to identify the knowledge gap to be bridged through prerequisite study, through the tour itself, and through post-tour assignments.

While professors may have flexibility in establishing the intended learning outcomes for standalone study tours, study tours embedded within a broader curriculum must meet programme requirements. Study tours that are part of a

broader curriculum may be positioned such that the student has already acquired the prerequisite knowledge; for standalone study tours, pre-tour study may be required. Students may not appreciate the importance of pre-tour readings and lectures, given that many students in this research project indicated that they did not attend pre-tour sessions or complete all assigned readings. For continuing education students, omitting pre-tour study may limit learning in an interest area; for students seeking academic credit it could mean a gap in the learning required to meet curriculum requirements. Further, the pre-tour study requirements should encourage students to examine their existing meaning schemes and to create any new meaning schemes that may be required. As Illeris explains, accommodative learning involves restructuring of meaning schemes. Mezirow describes transformative learning as reformulation of meaning perspectives. So, assisting students in clarifying and creating meaning schemes is essential pre-tour preparation. In that respect, the selection of textbooks and journal articles has more importance than simply providing background information. For example, pre-readings for the three course options associated with the Israel/Palestine tour included twelve required or recommended textbooks, of which all but one had Protestant Christian authors, mostly American or Palestinian professors or Lutheran ministers. Given that the course was sponsored by a Lutheran seminary, that is not surprising, but there may have been a missed opportunity to provide students with a broader perspective. One required textbook was by an American rabbi and psychologist, who, commenting on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, argued that 'the inability to see the Other's point of view is best-understood in terms of ... a social form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' (Lerner, 2012:256). He argues for a two-state solution to the conflict and maintains that for an area so conflicted as Israel/Palestine, 'a true peace agreement achieved through nonviolent strategies will depend on healing the trauma in the psychological and spiritual life of both peoples who live in that land' (255). He goes on to make the sobering claim that 'we are not fully human until we are able to humanize the Other' (255). Lerner's intriguing perspective on the conflict and the road to peace was a useful pre-tour reading. However, had the readings and other resources, such as recommended websites, included Palestinian Muslim contributors, students may have been less likely to say the Muslim voice was weak or silent. I am not suggesting that the professors intentionally presented a biased perspective on the Israeli/Palestinian situation.

In fact, they were diligent in discussing both Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints, from varied perspectives. The question is always whether the pre-tour resources and activities provide requisite background knowledge and help students adjust existing meaning schemes or acquire the new or modified meaning schemes required to optimise learning through the study tour.

Of course, selecting resources and planning pre-tour activities that best prepare the students does not mean students will avail themselves of the learning opportunity. As indicated, students often do not complete readings or they do so while on the tour, and many do not attend pre-tour sessions. Consequently, some incentive is required to encourage students to complete the pre-work. For example, my undergraduate studies at a Canadian university included a four-week geography fieldtrip to the United Kingdom (UK). The field course had a prerequisite on-campus research course for which each student researched and presented a paper on four UK sites. As students, we were the *tour guide* at the respective sites while in the UK. Our final assignment for the field course required us to resubmit an updated version of our original research papers to include additional knowledge gained through the site visits. The integration of the research and field assignments ensured that both pre- and post-tour assignments were completed. A similar strategy may not be suited to continuing education students, but it may be useful in motivating students seeking academic credit. While professors tend to rely on post-tour assignments to assess whether students have integrated the learning and for grading, the value of including pre-tour assignments to ensure readiness should not be underestimated.

It is possible to focus on the intended learning outcomes at the expense of how students will learn. Attention to the learning process is important to pedagogical design, and students should be made aware of what is necessary for learning. As illustrated by the two axes of Illeris' model, helping students discover how well their existing meaning schemes align with the destination context is important to acquisition, and making students aware of the filters through which they will experience the destination is important for interaction. Simply providing background information does not mean that students have been taught to learn experientially. The study tour professors' expertise and experience position them to identify to students the meaning gaps that they are likely to experience

when they cross borders to the tour destination, and of which they are likely to be unaware. Students will have to tolerate a level of ambiguity in order to reconcile knowledge about the destination with their existing meaning schemes, and that will require critical reflection. Hunter (2008) says that ‘the purpose of critical reflection is to increase learners’ sense of self-awareness, while also engendering a desire to think dialectically about the world around them’ (98). Using Mezirow’s depths of reflection, she goes on to explain that process reflection is required to resolve ‘the feelings of uncertainty in a new experience’ and that ‘for transformation to occur, the most essential type of reflection is premise reflection’ (98). And, premise reflection often introduces the challenges of affective learning. Savicki and Selby (2008) note that when students’ beliefs are challenged or when students are challenged at an emotional level, they exercise their values by either reasserting or questioning their worldview. They insist that to be an interculturally competent person:

It is less important that the values change in specific ways than that students come to recognize that there are viable alternative worldviews that are supported by distinct alternate values. (344)

While some international study tours may be casual, going to familiar contexts to extend knowledge in a familiar subject area, other study tours challenge a student’s worldview. From a pedagogical perspective, professors leading such study tours should create appropriate space for students to critically reflect before departing to ensure appropriate preparation, including affective preparation. Moreover, deep reflection to resolve ambiguities and construct the required meaning schemes takes time and effort, and can be supported through group sessions pre-tour. It may be less demanding for both students and professors if a blended learning approach is employed so students and professors interact online, but whatever the approach pre-tour preparation should not be ignored or truncated.

As discussed earlier, students must be aware of the logistics and have opportunity to allay their fears. This is important because students require pre-tour time and space for reflections focused on learning, rather than being distracted by logistics or dealing with fears rooted in ignorance. Unaddressed logistical matters consume time and space that would otherwise be devoted to learning. It is important to help students understand that they are expected to

function in a different environment and sociocultural context while at the tour destination. Consider tacit knowledge, which Sternberg et al (2000) describe as:

The knowledge gained from everyday experience that has an implicit, unarticulated quality. ... tacit knowledge has an aspect of practical intelligence. It is knowledge that reflects the ability to learn from experience and to apply that knowledge in pursuit of personally valued goals. (104)

Since tacit knowledge is often acquired implicitly, we know what to do procedurally in many circumstances throughout our day, even though there was little if any support to acquire that knowledge. To illustrate, I know how to cross a street safely. During the geography fieldtrip mentioned earlier, we spent one week in London, England. Every time we crossed a London street, our professor said, 'Do not be the first or last to cross the street.' He understood that our tacit understanding of crossing a street was based on traffic driving on the right side of the road in Canada. He kept us in the middle of the crowd because our tacit knowledge placed us in an error-likely situation. He was caring for our safety. While that is one small detail, albeit an important one, to which we needed to attend, there are clearly many details about which professors need to be cognizant and to which they must give attention when taking students to international locations. Of course, students' tacit knowledge extends far beyond safety practices to include sociocultural norms as well. When students are unprepared because they lack appropriate tacit knowledge, they may misinterpret social cues and cultural practices, resulting in behaviors or errors that range from funny to rude and offensive. At the destination, such errors may range from trivial to consequential errors, and may result in mislearning from the study tour experience itself. In terms of Illeris' model, both interaction and acquisition may be impeded when tacit knowledge is errant. International study tours are not just travel opportunities; they are learning opportunities. So, pre-tour preparation is essential even though it may be difficult to engage students pre-tour because many believe the learning occurs at the destination and pre-work is merely a *nice-to-do*. If students are not convinced to engage in requisite learning pre-tour, they will enter the tour with an inadequate mental model about both the destination and learning in the international context of the destination. Paying attention to meta-learning is important to understanding the overall pedagogy of study tours.

ON-THE-GROUND DURING THE TOUR

In contrast to the essentially cognitive, pre-tour learning, which is typically mediated through readings, lectures, and group discussions, possibly online, learning during the tour is experiential. It is a stimulus-rich environment in which learning can be holistic, as students are continuously exposed to learning stimuli, including the culture, geography, climate, social norms, language, food, etc. With senses being bombarded with sounds, smells, tastes, and images, it is a challenge to ensure student attention is given to stimuli and information that support the intended learning, and to prevent students becoming too distracted by interest in other things. Unless the student chooses to disengage, becomes bored because the itinerary is uninteresting or includes too much travel between sites or activities, or is overwhelmed by the extent and intensity of the content, extensive learning is possible. The challenge for the professor is to guide the experience in a manner that encourages the intended learning in a dynamic and often challenging environment, and helps the student interpret experiences in context, while not stifling students' freedom to learn broadly, even beyond the intended learning.

As indicated, I initially assumed Kolb's experiential learning cycle would be adequate to describe learning at the tour destination, since Kolb insists learning is grounded in experience. However, through my observations of students during the Israel/Palestine tour and their interview descriptions of experiences, it became apparent that a broader model was required to describe learning on-the-ground. So, I adopted Illeris' three-dimensional model, as shown in Figure 9. While Kolb's experiential learning cycle, with its sequential steps, provides a logical and orderly description of how cognitive learning may be occurring, its logical structure suggests that learning is compartmentalised into neat phases. However, students' description of their experiences and the reality of my own experience indicate that learning is less-structured and sometimes driven by emotional reaction as much as logic and reason. In fact, I still feel an emotional reaction whenever I recount the Parent's Circle presentation and the orphan child's prayer. Similarly, student accounts during the interviews suggest they continue to be moved by specific experiences and moments during the tours – sacred places, art, the poor, a vista, a personal reflection. Since commitment is affective, ie in the emotions, it is likely that Casey's continued support of the

peace advocacy group is rooted, at least in part, in both the initial and the lingering emotional reaction to their presentation. These were not just *concrete* experiences that were reflected on in the next phase to progress the learning. Emotions happen quickly and are part of the experience, and these emotions carry through the ensuing reflections on that experience. While the itinerary offers an orderly and logical sequence of activities and experiences, a map of associated learning cycles would often show the cycles to be random, interrupted, overlapping, truncated, and incomplete. Even a *messy* sequence of learning cycles was inadequate to capture the dynamics and interrelationships of experiences happening on-the-ground at the tour destination – it can be puzzling, emotional, surprising, unpredictable, and sometimes even boring. Moreover, the challenge and emotion carry forward to become as much a part of post-tour reflection as is rational association of these experiences with similar experiences, subject matter knowledge, and one’s values and beliefs. As noted earlier, Rogers (1996) insists learning is active, personal and voluntary. Students’ experience on-the-ground can be dynamic, complex, and intense.

Content

Illeris’ model, with its three-dimensions, content, incentive, and interaction, provided a useful and informative description of learning at the tour destination. Illeris (2011) notes that ‘content is essential because there is no learning without some content: learning always means learning *something*’ (13). He adds that the ‘acquisition of learning content ... refers to a constructivist learning approach’ (15). Jordan, Carlile, & Stack (2008) explain that:

Constructivism holds that people actively build knowledge and understanding by synthesizing the knowledge they already possess with new information. For constructivists, learning is an active process through which learners ‘construct’ new meaning. (55)

On-the-ground, the professors certainly encouraged students to construct meaning individually, especially on the contemplative Camino tours, but also on the exploratory tours. Jordan, Carlile, & Stack (2008) further explain that in social constructivism, ‘knowledge is constructed in the context of the environment in which it is encountered’ (59). In the stimulus-rich environment at the destination, students are challenged to construct knowledge rapidly to

keep up with the inflow of new information, and in a context in which their conceptual framework (meaning schemes) may not be contextually appropriate. While the content or ‘something learned’ occurred in the context of the tour destination, it is not only ‘situated learning’ as described by Lave and Wenger. No doubt some of the learning related to events and experiences within the destination context and was ‘situated’, but much of the learning was also interpreted within pre-existing meaning schemes associated with the home context and related to personal beliefs and values, and thereby extended beyond the situational context. And, sometimes the learning was transformative in that pre-existing perspectives and paradigms were modified or replaced.

There is time pressure as students move from site to site, the flow of information is continuous, and jetlag lingers, so content is acquired quickly or potentially missed. As Schön (1983) contends, reflection-in-action is essential. He argues that ‘our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing’ (49). For professional practitioners, he claims that as practice becomes repetitive and routine, practitioners think less critically about what they are doing as ‘knowing-in-practice becomes increasingly tacit and spontaneous’ (61). To correct these errors of omission, Schön insists that:

Through reflection, he [*sic*] can surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness. (61)

A student at an international study tour destination is in a situation similar to the professional practitioner. The students’ assumptions and interpretations are being driven, at least in part, by their tacit knowledge, even though it is often incongruent with the cross-border context. One method of enquiry and problem solving recommended by Schön is ‘frame analysis’, through which the individual gains awareness of the frames (meaning schemes) through which he or she is interpreting a situation or experience, and the possibility of alternative frames. Schön insists that frame analysis enables the practitioner to take ‘note of the values and norms to which he [*sic*] has given priority, and those he has given less importance, or left out of the account altogether’ (310). Similarly, students who critique their conceptual framework to assess its congruity with the destination

context can facilitate the construction of an accurate interpretation of the tour experiences and the *learned content*.

Incentive

As Illeris insists, the internal processing of content is dependent on the student's incentive. While professors have selected sites and activities to support specific learning outcomes, the students' experience is much broader and potentially much less focused, which highlights the importance of the incentive dimension. Noting that incentive is 'concerned with the dynamics of learning' (81), Illeris (2006) elaborates:

Through the cognitive processes, content structures and schemes are developed, while emotional experience develops incentive patterns of a relatively stable nature. Both content structures and the incentive patterns change and develop through an interaction of assimilative (additive, consolidating) and accommodative (transcendent, restructuring) processes. In assimilation, the incentive aspect typically functions unconsciously for the most part, while in accommodation it typically becomes more conscious. (81).

Incentive dynamics add to the complexities that the professor must help students navigate in order to learn what is intended. The background pressure of a post-tour assignment paper may have some influence on where the students focus their attention, but it is equally probable they are driven by the experience itself and the emotions aroused. Hart (2015) argues that emotion is integral to the learning process because it drives learning and memory by focusing one's attention, adding that:

Without the emotional pull of interest, learning often becomes inefficient and tiresome ... once interest is engaged, intrinsic motivation and even inspiration may follow. Interest is cultivated through relevance and resonance. (22)

Damasio (1999) clarifies the distinction between emotion and feeling, insisting that '*feeling* should be reserved for the private, mental experience of an emotion', whereas emotion is 'the collection of responses, many of which are publicly observable' (42). Emotions, then, can make feelings visible. Further, Hart (2015) claims that 'communities allow the freedom to feel and express emotion' (51). So, given the intensity of certain tour experiences, it is not surprising that emotions are evoked, and given the safety of an interested and

supportive community, it is not surprising that feelings are confessed and expressed rather than suppressed.

Damasio (1999) further argues that ‘we do not need to be conscious of the inducer of an emotion and often are not, and we cannot control emotions willfully’ (47). So, while professors may expect emotional reactions to certain study tour activities, experiences, or places, they obviously cannot predict such responses with certainty nor predict emotional responses to otherwise benign activities or experiences. In fact, Damasio argues that since emotions can be induced unconsciously, they may ‘appear to the conscious self as seemingly unmotivated’ (48). But, the feelings associated with such emotions are no less real, and therefore no less impactful on the individual’s experience of a particular place or activity. Damasio claims that ‘the pervasiveness of emotion in ... our daily experience connects virtually every object or situation in our experience ... to the fundamental values of homeostatic regulation’ (58). He further argues that our means of controlling ‘the pervasive tyranny of emotion’ is reason, adding that ‘the engines of reason still require emotion, which means that the controlling power of reason is often modest’ (58). So, while students’ incentive likely began with interest in the subject area expressed in the intended learning outcomes or interest in the destination, incentive for what is actually learned on-the-ground may be significantly reshaped by the emotions associated with the experience. Arguably, Casey’s activism today is a result of emotion-driven learning in Israel/Palestine, not a result of the initial incentive for joining the study tour. Clearly, the reality of the student’s experience on-the-ground may be somewhat different than the course syllabus describes, which introduces the question of changing incentives and the professors’ flexibility and readiness to respond to students’ needs associated with such changing circumstances.

Dirkx and Smith (2009) note that students initially seek to reduce emotional responses during interactions because of cultural norms, reflecting ‘the broader tendency within our culture to regard emotions as potentially disruptive of rational and reasonable thought and action’ (62-3). So, it is essential that professors reassure students that appropriately expressing and discussing emotions and feelings is an acceptable and welcome component of learning during study tours. Study tours are experiential and experiential learning

includes emotions and feelings. Rogers (1996) notes that when students have already invested emotional capital in acquiring their knowledge and experience, ‘they will expend much more in defending the integrity of this knowledge, so new learning changes will sometimes be strenuously resisted’ (207). While expended emotional capital can block future learning, there may be a similar investment of emotional capital in the learning associated with study tour experiences, so part of the challenge is to ensure that students’ learning is not biased by their emotional investment. Beard and Wilson (2013) recommend capitalising on the emotional dimension of experiential learning by creating an ‘emotional wave’, with the following six stages:

1. **Create conditions for pre-contemplation** – reading, thinking, imagining.
2. **Awakening participant enthusiasm** – ice-breakers and energizers.
3. **Start to focus attention and concentration** – medium-sized activities, narrow skills.
4. **Direct and challenge the personal experience** – larger, broader skills.
5. **Share participant enthusiasm** – using reviewing activities.
6. **Encourage quiet personal reflection.** (201)

Even though Beard and Wilson are focused on experiential learning in the context of classroom or adventure courses, not international study tours, their idea of capitalising on the emotional energy of the experience is useful. Note that they encourage both preparatory study and critical reflection. Professors have to navigate the delicate balance of allowing students to embrace the emotional component while at the same time not permitting emotions and feelings to override more critical and reasoned reflection. If students are prepared for their experiences and provided time and space for reflection, which may be facilitated through journaling and digital records such as photographs and online blogs, it will influence the extent and depth of experiential learning, whether on an outdoor adventure or an international study tour. Illeris’ description of incentive as a ‘dimension’ of learning indicates the significance of the emotional and motivational elements. Clearly, it is an important factor in how students process learning on-the-ground, and a significant element of student learning that professors must guide students through during the destination experience.

Interaction

While the internal learning process churns with information and emotions from the tour experiences and activities, the student is also interacting with the environment and society in which the experience is set. Again, Illeris (2006) elaborates:

The learning situation always, and at one and the same time, can be regarded as both the immediate situation that the learner or learners find themselves in ... and as a societal situation that is more generally influenced by the norms and structures of the society in question in the widest possible sense. (97)

In addition to the duality of the 'immediate situation' and the 'societal situation', students are also relying on their existing meaning schemes to process the experience, adding complexity to student learning on-the-ground. While some students may simply enjoy their *peripheral participation*, and situate the learning in the destination context so that it is compartmentalised and isolated, my research suggests that others are inclined to integrate the learning into academic studies and actualise it in their academic and personal lives. Students will amend their meaning schemes to accommodate these experiences and societal norms, but amending or creating meaning schemes can take more time and critical reflection than is available during a short-term study tour. And, there is also the question of the student's readiness to engage in modifying or transforming perspectives. Illeris (2006) points out that 'we can learn at different levels, from quite unconscious reflexes over more or less automatic patterns of thinking and acting to quite conscious and targeted controlled learning processes' (16). Since we are often unaware of our tacit knowledge, we are not consciously attending to how it is shaping our response to experiences on-the-ground. All of that creates an opportunity for mislearning or 'learning that does not correspond to what was intended or what was communicated as to content' (Illeris, 2006:158). Moreover, many of the gaps and disconnects with which students are wrestling result from the filters through which they are interpreting experiences at the destination. The dynamic experience at the tour destination can result in sensory and information overload, denying students the necessary processing time to carefully interpret experiences. As noted earlier, Fook (2010) contends that deep reflection resulting in the adoption of new assumptions and values requires working through one's emotions. Additionally,

students may resist learning because it does not align with expectations, is disturbingly contradictory of existing assumptions and beliefs, or they do not want to invest the effort to reconcile experience and presuppositions. While not all learning is necessarily contributing to the intended learning outcomes, a lot is happening to stimulate learning while students are on-the-ground. And, it is this interactive dimension of learning on-the-ground that elevates the learning associated with international study tours beyond the declarative level that Biggs and Tang challenge.

Transformative Learning and Reflection

Even though many stimuli will be discarded as students focus on interests and things believed to be important, all the stimuli have to be dealt with and dealt with promptly (or intentionally ignored) as the study tour itinerary often moves rapidly. While Kolb provides a rational description of the cognitive phases of experiential learning, Mezirow describes the more complex process of transformative learning. Because study tours are stimulus-rich experiences, learning does occur, and may even be transformative, as my research indicates. Illeris (2004) argues that transformative learning is ‘the structurally most comprehensive kind of learning that includes simultaneous restructuring in all three learning dimensions’ (84-5). He further adds that transformative learning is:

A very demanding process for the learner, and there must be a strong subjective reason for involving oneself in this type of learning. Correspondingly, it is psychologically natural to find ways to avoid such demanding learning if there is no strong subjective motivation to drive it. (87-8)

Mezirow’s description of the phases of transformative learning also illustrates its complexity. An academic credit is likely insufficient motivation for transformative learning, so students require additional incentive. Consequently, while students may have experienced the deepened and expanded understanding that Brookfield describes, few would actually experience transformative learning as additional incentive is required. However, that was the case for Ahn, who was motivated to overcome the medical issue, and Casey, who views peace advocacy as a justice issue. The motivation that drives transformative learning may be prompted by what students experience at the tour destination or by pre-existing

motivations that are actuated, strengthened, or modified by the tour experience. Whatever the driver, the study tour can provide the impetus for transformative learning, provided students are allowed the time to interpret their experiences in terms of both the immediate situation and the broader societal context.

No matter how stimulus-rich the tour experience may be, learning and transformative learning will not occur without reflection. Dewey (1910) insists that reflection has:

Five logically distinct steps: (i) a felt difficulty; (ii) its location and definition; (iii) suggestion of possible solution; (iv) development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestion; (v) further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection; that is, the conclusion of belief or disbelief. (72).

He further insists that the ‘The essence of critical thinking is suspended judgment; and the essence of this suspense is inquiry to determine the nature of the problem before proceeding to attempts at its solutions’ (74). All of that clearly takes time and space that is not always built into the itinerary of the tour. Time and space is particularly significant in light of Kahneman’s (2011) description of our thinking systems. He insists that our fast-thinking System 1 runs automatically and ‘continuously generates suggestions for System 2: impressions, intuitions, intentions, and feelings. If endorsed by System 2, impressions and intuitions turn into beliefs, and impulses turn into voluntary actions’ (24). When System 1 is challenged with a difficult situation, it engages System 2 to resolve the ambiguity, or problem. System 2 involves ‘effortful mental activities ... the conscious, reasoning self that has beliefs, makes choices, and decides what to think about and what to do’ (21). Since critical reflection is complex, it requires System 2 to be activated, since ‘System 2 is the only one that can follow rules, compare objects on several attributes, and make deliberate choices between options’ (36). At a study tour destination, the unfamiliar will often trigger System 2 thinking, but System 2 is slow thinking. Kahneman notes that ‘System 1 is impulsive and intuitive; System 2 is capable of reasoning, and it is cautious, but at least for most people it is also lazy’ (48). Not surprising then, Willingham (2009) claims that ‘people’s minds are not especially suited to thinking; thinking is slow, effortful, and uncertain’ (18). He insists that ‘unless the cognitive conditions are right, we will avoid thinking’ (3).

Effort is required to engage and utilise System 2, requiring time and space for adequate reflection at the study tour destination.

Reflecting Kahneman's claims about slow-thinking System 2, Schön (1983) insists that 'a practitioner's reflection-in-action may not be very rapid' (62). Unlike the duality of technical rationality or means-end reasoning, reflection-in-action may require reframing the ambiguous or problematic situation to explore possibilities or explanations not previously considered and incongruous with one's current mental model. Further, while reflection-in-action is important to understanding the situation at hand, as Schön indicates, it may require weeks or months to resolve the ambiguity, obviously extending beyond the time a student would spend at a specific site or with a specific activity on-the-ground. So, allowing the reflection to carry forward into the post-tour period is necessary to obtain resolution to the ambiguity, but sufficient time must be allowed during the initiating experience to glean the information necessary to process the learning. Beard and Wilson (2013) insist that 'once we have become aware of ... [a] stimulus at a conscious and/or unconscious level it is "filtered" and interpreted' (30). If the stimulus aligns with our meaning schemes, it is assimilated; if it is misaligned or conflicts, we are challenged to revisit our meaning schemes and System 2 will be triggered. Not surprising, Kahneman (2011) claims that 'emotional learning may be quick, but what we consider as "expertise" usually takes a long time to develop' (238). My research clearly indicates study tours can be stimulus-rich experiences that often provide experiences that are incongruous with students' preconceptions and pre-existing conceptual framework. To truly capitalise on the learning potential offered by study tours requires a deliberate effort to provide the time and space for adequate amounts of reflection. Not surprising then, Professor Wynne insists that some learning is not realised until future events or experiences trigger further processing and perhaps transformed perspectives.

As indicated, students like Ahn and Casey described transformative learning and provided interview accounts of actualising their learning post-tour. Other students provided accounts of transformed perspectives but with less evidence of having actualised the learning. However, that does not mean they are not progressing through the process of transformative learning. Recall that Mezirow's model includes self-examination of feelings, assessment of

assumptions, exploration of options, planning actions, and integration of the new perspective. All of these phases involve reflection to sufficient depth and extent to effect the perspective transformation. It is not surprising that many students require considerable time post-tour to conceptualise and actualise the learning prompted by the tour experience or post-tour research and reflection. Reformulating meaning perspectives to achieve a 'more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative understanding of one's experience' for transformative learning as described by Mezirow is a lengthier process than one can expect during a short-term study tour. So, while an international study tour can be, and sometimes is, the catalyst for the transformative learning, the completion and actualization of that learning will likely require a more extended period post-tour.

Teaching

Teaching in the context of this dynamic and complex experience is the challenge professors assume when they elect to offer an international study tour. In the controlled environment of an on-campus classroom, professors easily manage course content, can maintain students' attention and focus (more or less), and are not controlled or contradicted by contracted staff, such as tour guides. Going from a classroom-based course to a study tour can sometimes be as dramatic as going from a two-dimensional world to a three-dimensional world. While professors can essentially control students' experience in a classroom, at the tour destination they are often relegated to the background by tour guides, guest speakers, and the nature of some activities and sites. That is not to suggest that professors have no influence, but they can become lost in the overpowering experience on-the-ground. If professors deliver few or no lectures, but the authoritative voices of tour guides and guests continue according to their agenda, professors have to work with the itinerary and tour experience aware that their influence will have limitations on-the-ground. What professors can control are the pre-tour preparations and the post-tour assignments. So, it is important for professors to anticipate the students' experience and include the appropriate background information in the pre-tour component to ready the students for the tour experience. Students are not easily fooled by gaps or errors in preparation or in the experience on-the-ground, and will quickly recognise a professor's discomfort with the curriculum. They also recognise when tour

guides and others are derailing the agenda, so it is important for professors to gently manage the experience to the extent possible without destroying its authenticity. There is a lot at stake in how the tour experience is shaped. It has the potential to be a rich learning experience for students, but it is challenging to manage on-the-ground. Of course, on-the-ground learning will happen, but it may not be the intended learning. Recall Dewey's (1938) claim that 'all genuine education comes through experience'; he added that it does not mean:

All experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. (25)

It is also important to recognise the components that make up the tour curriculum. Eisner (2002) contends that three curricula are always present: the explicit curriculum, which is expressly stated or shown (eg the selection of sites visited), the implicit curriculum, which is implied by the experience and presentations (eg the sometimes not-so-hidden agenda of a tour guide's commentary), and the null curriculum, which is in the significance of what is omitted (eg specific sites or activities). All three curricula comprise the students' experience, and it is in the integrated nature of these curricula that students' understanding is constructed.

Beard and Wilson (2013) insist that 'all learning experiences are personal and unique to us' (30), so arguably each student experiences his or her own tour. As my categorisation of student learning demonstrates, the scope of learning on short-term international study tours is extensive, often extending well beyond the intended learning outcomes of the respective tour. In comparison to an on-campus course with a three-hour class per week for a semester, a two-week study tour is consecutive days of experiential learning. Undoubtedly, there is a significant amount of assimilative learning – learning that is added to the meaning schemes students already hold. Equally, there will be significant accommodative learning, requiring a whole or partial restructuring of the student's conceptual framework to resolve the ambiguities and incongruities of the on-the-ground experiences. The extent to which accommodative learning exceeds learning during a similar on-campus course highlights the richness of short-term international study tours. Moreover, study tours also offer the

potential for transformative learning as my data indicates. Given the experiential nature of the tour experience, it is not surprising that transformative learning is more likely to occur during study tours than during a less intense on-campus course in the same or similar subject area. And, it is not surprising that short-term international study tours present professors with exciting but challenging teaching opportunities.

POST-TOUR REFLECTION AND CONSOLIDATION

At study tour destinations, students engage in reflection-in-action, whereas post-tour they have opportunity to engage in reflection-on-action. The advantage of the retrospective, according to Beard and Wilson, is that ‘an event can be reinterpreted in the light of subsequent experiences and there is potential for its meaning to be considerably different to that at the time’ (45). Learning during the tour is assimilative and accommodative, and possibly transformative, if students adjust meaning schemes. Hart (2015) laments that modernist learning favors assimilation, with its categorization of knowledge, over accommodation, arguing that ‘the cost to our understanding, our meaning-making, our empathy, and our educational vitality has been great’ (88). He continues, arguing that:

Postmodern deconstruction, critical questioning, and creative and divergent thinking ... help us to reconsider and break down some of our compartments. In so doing, they threaten the authority of knowledge and of those who claim to hold it. They challenge textbook, theory, and teacher as the primary sources of knowledge. (88)

As noted earlier, study tours often include a mixture of modern and postmodern thinkers, so it is interesting to speculate about how they process the learning both on-the-ground and post-tour. Whether a modern or postmodern thinker, it is important that students recognise the opportunity experiential learning provides. Unlike a classroom course that relies heavily on textbooks, lectures, and library research, study tour students have their first-hand experience as a mediating factor in their learning. Hart (2015) contrasts assimilative learning, that encourages categorisation by ‘demanding one right answer, dependence on external authority, extrinsic motivation, and distance and alleged objectivity from the object of inquiry’ (89), with accommodative learning, that is:

Nurtured through flexibility and expectations of multiple perspectives, open-mindedness, valuing the authority of direct experience over the authority of a theory or an expert, practicing individual expression and interpretation, seeking personal relevance, and achieving a fundamental attitude of appreciation' (89).

New and exhilarating experiences at the study tour destination are rich with opportunities for accommodative learning. And, as my research shows, learning may even be transformative, resulting in a restructuring of a series of meaning schemes. Again, Hart elaborates on the level of achievement embedded in transformative learning:

When education taps the current of transformation it takes us beyond the “facts” and categories of our lives, the limits of social structure, the pull of cultural conditioning, and the box of self-definition. In this way, we gain the capacity not only to gather the facts of our life but also to transcend and transform them; this is where the deepest moments in education lead. (12).

The tour experience is fertile ground for the creative thinking that prompts transformative learning, but may not provide adequate time and space. Beard and Wilson (2013) note that ‘often when we are undergoing an experience there is insufficient time and/or we are too close – physically, chronologically, or emotionally – to have the ability to make sense of what is happening’ (45). So, post-tour reflection is critical for processing the learning associated with experiences on-the-ground and for tapping into the possibilities for creative thinking that reveals new, more holistic insights.

In terms of Illeris’ model, post-tour, students may carry forward incentive to pursue further learning, they may add to the content through further research and reflection, but interactions with the environment or societal context of the destination are limited to mediated sources or reminiscing. Professors can again be significant contributors to the learning, as they regain control of the learning experience through the assignments and activities they set post-tour. No doubt much of the learning is situated in the context of the tour destination, but that does not mean it is completely disconnected from the student’s field of study. In fact, the student would have chosen the particular study tour because it is within their discipline or at least within an interest area. As a result, the tour experience creates an opportunity for the student to gain knowledge and understanding of a subject-related destination, including its culture, history,

geography, society, spirituality, etc, and also to further knowledge within a discipline of study not limited to the destination. Well-designed post-tour activities will continue to engage the students, and prompt the reflection that is essential to knowledge creation. For service learning, Bradant (2011) notes that service learning ‘integrates curricular academic learning and reflection with relevant community service’ (109). Consequently, she claims service learning typically involves:

Critical reflection exercises designed to help them deepen their understanding of disciplinarily-based concepts and theories while strengthening their ability to compare, contextualize, and comprehend classroom instruction with lessons acquired in community-based environments. (109)

Bradant further insists that the reflective exercises should ‘intentionally focus students’ attention upon the methods and purpose of their educational experience and the cognitive dissonance that is often stimulated by novel and unfamiliar situations’ (110). She argues that the importance of including such exercises is that they are ‘associated with the development of more complex thinking and moral reasoning’ (110). Reflective activities planned into the tour and the reflective components of the final assignments, when there is more time and space to reflect critically, should challenge students to expand their analysis of the experience and integrate new learning into both the curricular program and into their own conceptual framework and values system.

Stewart (2011) argues that reflection should have the characteristics articulated by Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede³³ for learning associated with service learning:

Effective reflection has five characteristics ... (1) *continuous* over a learner’s education and service involvement; (2) *connected* to the academic and real-life needs of learners; (3) *challenging* to learners so that they are provoked to think more critically; (4) *contextualized* in terms of design and setting so as to add to the linkage between thinking about content and applying it; and (5) *communication* with peers and community organizations. (38).

33 Eyler, J., Giles, D. E., & Schmiede, (1998) *A practitioner’s guide to reflection in service-learning*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University

While students can, and it is important that they do, reflect during the tour itself, professors should capitalise on post-tour assignments and activities to encourage critical reflection. As shown in Figure 9, post-tour reflection offers opportunity for students to reflect on the complete tour experience. Looking at the legacy of Paul on Cyprus, Malta and Rome yields a different perspective than reflecting specifically on Paul's visit to Salamis or his residency in a grotto on Malta. Reflecting on the 240-kilometre walk from Foncebadon to Santiago is different than pondering the mountain walk west of Villafranca del Bierzo. In fact, the whole pilgrimage was not complete until we arrived in Santiago, so it was not until the last day of the tour that we were able to reflect holistically on the pilgrimage. On that last day we were tired, touring Santiago, preparing for the return flight, and just relaxing, so it was not an ideal time for reflection characterised as Stewart recommends. Undoubtedly, life gets busy and memories fade on returning home, as Professor Jo emphasised. But, with journal notes and photographs, critical reflection is achievable. To that end, the questions posed by the final assignments can encourage deep reflection. If professors ask for a travelogue, students will oblige, but learning may be compromised. So, posing deep questions for post-tour assignments is important. Additionally, students from all the study tours indicated that they would like to have reconvened as a class post-tour to share learnings and memories. In part, that reflects the community that developed during the tour itself. The opportunity to enhance learning and add to what can be achieved through post-tour assignments is so significant that the post-tour sessions should not be dismissed lightly.

Ultimately, students' learning and extent of learning depend on individual interest and effort, and in particular, the extent to which the experience on-the-ground is synthesised with curricular content and with what the student already knew or believed. How the learning was processed depends to some extent on the type of reasoning employed – *epistēmē*, *technē*, or *phronēsis*. It is not unreasonable to imagine a Christian theology student engaging in *epistēmē* while pursuing Biblical truth (*theoria*) in Israel/Palestine, or a cultural studies student engaging in *technē* reflection while weighing ends versus means issues (*poiēsis*) in peace negotiations in Cyprus, or a political ethics student engaging in *phronēsis* to evaluate a just strategy (*praxis*) for Palestinian refugees and Israeli

settlements. Clearly, the potential exists for students to engage in complex debate and reflection during and post exploratory study tours. The extent and depth of reasoning and reflection associated with the contemplative study tours is often private, but equally profound according to interview accounts. It is evident from interviews associated with all the tours that many students were concerned with actualising their learning, suggesting both *poiēsis* and *praxis* results. And, that also indicates the degree of balance among the explicit, implicit, and null curricula.

As noted earlier, Kolb argues that effective learning requires students to be fully and openly engaged in new experiences, to reflect, and to integrate their observations into logically sound theories. Well-designed study tours can challenge the increasing MacDonalidization³⁴ of higher education, which seems to focus ‘on how many students (the customers) can be herded through the system and what grades they can earn rather than the quality of what they have learned and of the educational experience’ (Ritzer, 2015:77). Even though the study tour itself may have elements of MacDonalidization, as indicated by Professor Terry’s description of how the travel service insisted on following its packaged tour or by the *packaged* commentary of the tour guides, the study tour breaks with the routine of tertiary curricula to provide students with a more engaging and creative learning opportunity. Students’ interest in actualising the learning indicates its transformative potential and its potential longevity, as was evident through the student interviews. Short-term international study tours are clearly rich learning opportunities with possibilities that extend beyond the intended learning outcomes, and a teaching opportunity that can both challenge and delight professors.

OTHER FACTORS

Several factors emerged that contributed to the success of the study tours. I have already discussed the impact of emotion and the importance of recognizing

³⁴ Ritzer (2015) defines MacDonalidization as ‘the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world’ (1). He argues that the key elements of MacDonalidization are efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control.

and accommodating the emotional dimension. Other significant factors include community, the spiritual dimension, and addressing logistical challenges.

Community

I have already discussed community, but its importance cannot be overstated. Obviously, the study tour groups were not idyllic. As professors noted, there is sometimes conflict or tension during the tour. There was also a little frustration and tension on the Guelph–Midland pilgrimage and the Mexico service learning trip. But these were not significant enough to hinder learning. In fact, overall, community was a treasured aspect of the study tours. In contrast to accessing information from a book or a website, Hart (2015) insists:

It is in a community that those ideas have a chance of being challenged, tested, played out, and discussed; and these are precisely the activities that help grow information into knowledge. Community is so central because it enables dialogue and creates a dynamic tension; we never know quite where the conversation will lead. (48)

He further insists that ‘community not only serves the learning process but also is its own lesson’ (48). To capitalise on the advantages of community, consideration should be given to recruiting and selecting students to ensure the group is reasonably harmonious, recognizing that constraints such as minimum enrollment may limit flexibility. Including introductions and teambuilding in the pre-tour sessions could be helpful in establishing a learning community before the group is on-the-ground at the destination, where that learning community is an important support to individual learning. As noted earlier, Howard (2008) lists life in community as an important element of spiritual formation. So, community is potentially more significant for study tours with a religious or spiritual theme. Similarly, the learning community, which may be sustained through social media, can be a support to individuals post-tour by continuing dialogues started during the tour or assisting each other with actualising the learning.

Spirituality

Accepting expressions of emotion within a community having shared interests also facilitated exploration of spirituality, whether it was interpreted broadly as general connectedness or defined more narrowly as religious spirituality. The

study tours did not relegate spirituality to a private matter not to be confessed or discussed openly. Consequently, there was comfortable space and time to explore aspects and questions of spirituality in a non-threatening environment. Three of the items Fox (1999) recommends to encourage spiritual experiences are to allow time for relaxation, time for solitude, including personal reflection, and time to explore and interrelate with nature alone. The interviews confirm the importance of these ingredients for spiritual experiences during study tours. Students appreciate personal quiet time and reflection at sacred places, in solitude, and in nature. And, it was during these times that they reported experiencing transcendent moments. As discussed earlier, Tisdell claims peak spiritual experiences include a 'divine presence', and McGrath insists that knowing and experiencing an 'omnipotent God' is a part of Christian spirituality. The pilgrimage character of these tours, even though not all of them were designed to be pilgrimages, helped create the space for transcendent moments. Consistent with Taylor's contention that pilgrims go to holy sites to recall events and pray, several students spoke of *thin places* during the tours. Others, like Sidney, are reluctant to embrace the idea of thin places, but feel these places encourage the 'posture of pilgrimage'. Professor Spencer claimed 'the Spirit' moves among people in these places and changes them. Perrin's contention that all spirituality is particular to a context and location seems to be affirmed in that the particularity of the place appears significant to the spiritual moments, especially transcendent moments. That may be endorsement for Dion's claim that one facilitates spiritual experiences by first creating the space and then sparking it. It is clear that the study tours facilitated spiritual and transcendent moments by providing appropriate space within a busy agenda, and that spiritual space was often situated in the sacred places visited. Spiritual and transcendent moments were also facilitated by accepting them as normal rather than extraordinary, even though there was no overt effort to promote such experiences. Since spiritual experiences are individual and personal, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to design such experiences into the itinerary, but pedagogically, one can provide the space for such experiences. Other theological or spiritual requirements for transcendent moments go beyond pedagogical practices and this discussion. If spiritual experiences are part of the tour, adequate time and space should be provided to fully engage in these experiences, and the space provided should include individual private time.

The busyness of the study tour itineraries limited the amount of time at sacred places, and the amount of reflective time. But, other opportunities did exist if students were willing to capitalise on them. Journaling experiences and reflections and/or keeping a digital record during the tour and following up with reflective periods on returning home could offer an opportunity to further process the spiritual learning. While the content of the learning may be quite different and specific, viewing spiritual learning through Illeris' model, the processing of spiritual experiences as learning is not different than processing other learning experiences. In other ways, spiritual experiences are unique, such as their association with sacred places or rituals. So, professors should be cognizant of the varied ways in which students interpret and experience spirituality, and ensure that the group understands and respects individual expressions and interpretations of spirituality, if the respective study tour has a spiritual or religious theme, or if spiritual or religious experiences are optional or sidebar activities for the study tour. Similar to other subject areas, another vehicle for facilitating spiritual learning may be the assignments that professors set post-tour. When spirituality and religion are part of the study tour curriculum, attention should be given to the three 'tasks' discussed by Sullivan (2011). The first is plasticity or 'adapting to the needs of the students', the second is piety or 'displaying the virtues required, epistemologically as well as morally, by the religious tradition', and the third is polemics or 'rendering this tradition problematical and controversial in order to show that an engagement with it can be intellectually serious and at the same time a contribution to its ongoing development' (185). Religion and spirituality were not just an incidental cultural component of the study tours examined here. Spirituality and religious spirituality were an added dimension of these study tours because it was acknowledged and integrated into the itinerary. So, for some students there was significant spiritual learning.

Logistical Challenges

Designing in time and space for reflection is essential to learning, but flexibility may determine whether any opportunity for learning ever happens. As the study tours and comparative activities examined here prove, things go wrong in spite of the best planning, and professors and students have to accommodate the fallout. Building in contingency time and alternative options makes it easier to

respond when things go awry to minimise the impact on student learning. Clearly, it is important for professors to remain calm and take prompt action, to demonstrate to the students that the matter is being addressed. Cooperation and patience on the students' part is also essential. Often, travel does not go smoothly, so delays and disruptions should be expected and must be dealt with decisively and promptly. Assessing potential problems and informing students of potential obstacles and glitches will help prepare the group ahead of time. While I was vacationing in Australia, the road to Uluru was flooded by a heavy rain, unusual for the Outback. I have photographs of a rainbow in the desert and a unique story. It did not ruin our vacation; rather it gave us a unique experience. Similarly, the delayed flight to Spain and lost luggage gave us opportunity to share resources in the context of community, which contributed to our learning on the Camino. Challenges and adversities do not necessarily undermine the experience, if we respond promptly to resolve the situation and minimise the impact on students. When things go wrong, we have a unique learning opportunity if we respond well.

ETHICAL QUESTIONS

Consideration must be given to the ethics of study tours and the experiences to which students are being exposed. Selection of a study destination is not a neutral choice. Every location makes a political, social, and religious statement. There is significance in our study tour going to Israel/Palestine rather than to Israel or to Palestine. The selection of readings, content of lectures, allowed discussions, accepted assignment topics, tour guide and guest presentations, all have a bias, intended or unintended – recall the explicit, implicit, and null curricula. The selection of sites and activities at the tour destination has a similar bias. Neutrality is not a choice available to professors as every choice becomes part of a curriculum – explicit, implicit, or null. Instead, they must seek balance in the material and travel content of the study tour. Similarly, the intended learning outcomes must be ethical. As shown, study tours can prompt perspective transformation, but it may not be ethical to deliberately pursue transformation of a student's perspective. Again, it is a question of balance. If the student's perspective is transformed through the experience because of her or his own choice, that is a different consequence than professors – or students or guest speakers for that matter – deliberately manipulating toward such a

perspective change. But, because there is a potential for perspective transformation does not mean we omit study tours from the programme curriculum. It means that we are obligated to be mindful of the potential for crossing ethical lines. Similar ethical questions arise regarding the activities in which we allow students to participate, even when they opt to do so during free time. Activities that are unsafe should obviously be prohibited. Decisions about participation in, say, political activism are more complicated in that prohibiting participation may impinge on the individual student's freedom and autonomy, whereas permitting participation may result in the whole group being associated with a political point of view. Ethical choices are not easy or uncomplicated choices, but professors must ensure that the study tours they lead adhere to ethical standards, which could mean each study tour should undergo the scrutiny of the institution's ethical review process.

During our interview, Professor Wynne repeatedly emphasised, 'They are adults.' Respecting their choices and decisions as adults is essential to respecting students' autonomy. Winch (2006) contends that education must be concerned with the 'exercise of autonomy ... [since] the exercise of autonomy is a central feature of a worthwhile life for an adult in ... society' (6). Autonomy incorporates the Kantian idea of thinking and acting freely, that is to act autonomously or according to a law that I give myself, rather than heteronomously or according to a desire I have not chosen. Defining autonomy in terms of 'categorical imperatives', Kant (1948) claims 'I ought never to act except in such a way *that I can also will that my maxim become a universal law*' (70). His second imperative is to:

Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end. (96)

The altruistic quality of Kant's philosophy is that the autonomous individual ought to choose based on pure reason rather than desires and pleasure, and that such choices serve the common good. Smith (1997) claims that Kant defines autonomy as 'consisting in the cultivation of reason, our capacity for rationality' (129). Similarly, Winch (2006) argues that 'autonomy requires one to be able to engage in a form of practical reasoning concerning one's own ends in life' (74). And, Dearden (1972) contends that:

A person is autonomous, then, to the degree that what he [sic] thinks and does in important areas of his life cannot be explained without reference to his own activity of mind. ... [Autonomy includes] choices, deliberations, decisions, reflections, judgments, plannings or reasonings ... [so the individual is not] passive or submissive towards compulsion, conditioning, indoctrination, expectations or authority unfounded on his own recognition of its entitlement. (453-4)

Autonomous individuals are not oblivious to society, but act autonomously only when their 'activity of mind' is not subservient to or unduly influenced by the pressures and dictates of an authority, such as society, an institution, a professor, or subject matter expert. However, as Winch (2006) argues, 'one can only be critically rational concerning those matters about which one is thoroughly informed' adding that '*self-knowledge* is a component of being autonomous' (75). Winch (2006) further argues that:

A society's education system is one of the key means through which individuals become autonomous. Education is ... concerned ... not just with the transmission of knowledge and skill, but with the development of particular kinds of people and the conditions for that development' (1).

As part of society's education system, higher education has significant ethical responsibilities. From a utilitarian perspective, education replenishes and perpetuates a society by equipping its members with the requisite knowledge, skills, and values to function as contributing members of that society. But, a society that does not offer freedom of thought and choice is oppressive. The challenge for higher education in general and study tours in particular is balancing teaching that is of utilitarian value to society while at the same time respecting the autonomy of the individual. That challenge is further complicated when the education on offer is transposed to an international destination during a study tour. Unless students are allowed to make reasoned choices, they are denied the 'activity of mind' that facilitates their learning as an individual. It may inhibit their pursuit of truth (*theoria*), instrumental reasoning (*poiēsis*), or moral judgment (*praxis*), as students process and actualise the learning. But, balance is not only about the individual student. It is also a question of the common good, and the common good includes what is reasonable for the institution, its professors, and society, which for study tours includes both the home and destination context. Maybe, as Rawls (1999) argues, these choices are rightly made 'behind a veil of ignorance' (118). While the ethical and

philosophical debate about study tours is beyond the scope of this research project, introducing the question of ethical choices facing students, professors, and higher education institutions is important to understanding the challenges associated with pedagogical choices. In spite of the challenges, study tours are rich learning opportunities that are worth the effort and planning required to achieve excellence in instructional design and ethical compliance.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Short-term international study tours that take students across cultural, political, geographic, and religious borders offer a potentially transformative learning experience resulting in a modified or transformed conceptual framework if an adequate amount of critical reflection is prompted pre-tour, during the tour, and post-tour.

CONCLUSION

Designing effective short-term international study tours begins with the recognition that there are three distinct phases, pre-tour, tour, and post-tour. Since the tour will take students across borders, the pre-tour preparation should provide students with the foundational knowledge required to interpret the tour experience in context. Through life experience and the mediated learning of previous studies, students have acquired a conceptual framework consisting of meaning schemes that rightly interpret experiences within their particular home context. However, there will almost certainly be disconnects between the home context and the destination context, so students should be aware of potential gaps and encouraged to rethink tour experiences in light of their evolving understanding of the destination context rather than quickly jumping to conclusions based on their pre-existing conceptual framework. The challenge of bridging that gap is therefore a factor in determining reasonable intended learning outcomes for the study tour and the pre-tour study required to prepare students for the tour experience. Students are inclined to focus on travel and logistical questions associated with travel and adventure rather than the academic work. While that is important, the focus of pre-tour preparation should support the intended learning outcomes. In fact, whether the study tour is intended to be contemplative or exploratory, students should be encouraged to give consideration to what they want to learn from the experience individually, within the parameters of the itinerary and the intended learning outcomes. Further, since students tend to neglect preparation assignments, incentive should be provided to ensure the preparatory work is completed, as it is important for students to be prepared for learning at the tour destination.

Arriving at the tour destination continues and accelerates the learning journey. Students are subjected to a continuous barrage of stimuli, both through the planned site visits and activities, and through simply being in an international setting. Attention should be paid to the three dimensions of learning that Illeris describes. The selection of sites and activities, and their presentation, is obviously a major part of the course content, but the interpretation of these sites and activities is also influenced by the students' pre-existing conceptual framework and by the commentaries of professors and/or guides. Ensuring that students interpret the content in context requires identifying the differences between the home and destination contexts and allowing sufficient time for critical reflection. While students' incentive is largely individual, it is influenced by the intended learning outcomes and assignment requirements. It is also influenced by what students experience and how these experiences align or conflict with their existing values and beliefs. Further, the extent to which tour experiences evoke emotional responses will significantly influence students' interpretations of their experiences, so allowance has to be made for the emotional component, given individual student reaction is unpredictable. Meanwhile, students are interacting with each other, which is facilitated by the sense of community that tends to develop quickly within the group, and sometimes with the host group or groups. Intragroup interaction and community is undoubtedly due to common interests and the fact that they are each other's support mechanism in an unfamiliar setting. Their interaction with the local population is filtered through their pre-existing conceptual framework and any individual preconceptions, biases, or expectations they may have of the destination sites and activities. These filters can serve to relate the learning to one's home context, or they can block learning by encouraging misinterpretations of or inattention to significant aspects of their experiences. The mismatch of meaning schemes or the absence of appropriate meaning schemes may impede correct interpretation of experiences and cause mis-learning. So, it is important for professors to provide appropriate guidance through discussions and lectures, and to allow the students time for critical reflection. The tendency to fill all available time and space with a busy itinerary may in fact be counterproductive in that it robs the students of time to process the learning. Encouraging journaling and having daily debriefings are helpful. Additionally, when students experience disrupting emotions, tensions, conflict,

and fatigue, both the internal processing and the interactive components of their learning may be challenged. The tour experience is dynamic and stimulus-rich, so professors should be diligent in managing the experience to best meet students' learning needs.

The learning journey does not end when the tour ends; the final phase is post-tour. Students may be a little overwhelmed by the flood of information during the tour, and may still be trying to make sense of it all when they return home. Coursework required post-tour will seem anticlimatic compared to the exhilarating experience on-the-ground, but post-tour reflections are essential to consolidating the learning. Critical reflection post-tour is necessary for students to reflect holistically on the tour experience to process the learning and construct a more integrated interpretation and understanding of the experience. Such critical reflection and learning may be facilitated through the post-tour assignments, and may result in changes to individual's meaning schemes. These changed or modified meaning schemes may result in changes to the individual's pre-existing conceptual framework, and be significant enough to transform perspectives. While not all study tours result in transformative learning, individual students have provided accounts that indicate transformative learning experiences.

Study tours that have a religious or spiritual theme should make provision to accommodate students' broad understanding of spirituality and to allow for associated practices and rituals. Students subscribing to a religious spirituality will desire to engage in the associated rituals or to spend time at sacred places, and they may prefer to engage in religious rituals at the sacred places. Students pursuing a more general expression of spirituality will desire space and time to connect with others and/or with nature. While there is a contemplative side to spiritual learning, it is also experiential, so appropriate experiences should be built into the tour itinerary, making allowance for both individual and group expressions of spirituality. When adequate space and time are provided, particularly at sacred places, students may even experience transcendent moments. And, to the extent that the experience transforms spiritual meaning schemes, the students' spiritual learning may be transformative.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Based on my research, I recommend that the following items are given consideration by professors and others designing and leading short-term international study tours, especially if the tour has a spiritual or religious component.

Pre-Tour

1. Establish intended learning outcomes that are achievable given that the students will be crossing borders (geographic, cultural, social, political, economic, spiritual, etc), and their existing meaning schemes (conceptual framework) may not be suited to interpreting tour experiences in context.
2. Select readings and pre-tour activities that will help the student gain the requisite foundational knowledge necessary to interpret tour experiences contextually, and to ensure that students will be aware of the potential gaps in their conceptual framework (meaning schemes) when they cross borders.
3. Ensure students are aware of the travel and other logistics associated with the study tour, and provide a venue through which their concerns and fears may be allayed before departing, so that their focus is on the intended learning.
4. Provide an incentive for students to complete pre-tour study, such as making it part of the graded assignment requirements, and encourage students to critically reflect on pre-tour content.
5. Encourage students to think individually about what they want to learn through the study tour, so that their attention is more focused while at the destination.

During the Tour

6. Establish an itinerary that is comprehensive and balances the explicit, implicit, and null curricula, such that it includes the major sites or activities relevant to the destination and to the intended learning

outcomes. Allow space for flexibility, and inform students that the itinerary is tentative and changeable if changes are likely to occur.

7. Facilitate community-building within the tour group through team activities and encouraging everyone to recognise the contribution of others.
8. Include time for critical reflection throughout the itinerary, including at specific locations and times throughout the tour. End-of-day debriefings should be included as often as practical, and especially on days that include particularly intense or emotional experiences.
9. Encourage students to journal throughout the tour, capitalising on digital technology to capture photographs and recordings that will supplement journal entries and document experiences and places.
10. If required, professors and tour leaders should complete pre-tour study or training to be equipped to support students who may be experiencing intense emotions because of circumstances at the destination, such as poverty, violence, oppression, disease, etc.
11. Similarly, professors or tour leaders leading tours with a religious or spiritual component should be equipped to support students who may have intense spiritual experiences at destination sites, especially sacred places.
12. Manage the tour experience by promptly addressing any situations that interrupt the tour or cause disturbance.
13. Ensure support and contract staff understand their role as *teaching assistants*, by giving them clear expectations and holding them accountable. For example, guides are not just *tourist guides*; they are assuming a teaching role. Guest speakers should also understand that their presentation is required to contribute to the intended learning outcomes, not present a personal agenda.
14. Include free time so that students and professors do not become fatigued by a demanding itinerary or the intensity of tour experiences.
15. Since most students bring computers and other electronic devices, capitalise on technology options, such as creating a website with the

itinerary, maps, site information, and other resources that students can access while on-the-ground at the tour destination.

Post-Tour

16. Set final assignments that encourage critical reflection and integration of the learning.
17. If feasible, reassemble the group to share memories and learning, and to maintain the relationships and community established during the tour.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While my research contributes to understanding of learning during short-term international study tours, there is still much research required to gain a comprehensive understanding of study tour pedagogy. To that end, I offer the following suggestions for future research.

1. Explore methods of encouraging development of community within the context of a study tour group, including factors that encourage community and hinder community.
2. Investigate the role of emotions in learning, including the extent to which it adds incentive, challenges meaning schemes, and hinders learning during the study tour.
3. Explore options to manage the behavior and contribution of guides and guests, to ensure they function as *teaching assistants*.
4. Explore the impact of evaluation options, such as pre-tour assignments to encourage preparation, journal reviews, integrative assignments post-tour, and possible group projects, which could capitalise on shared interests and community.
5. Investigate the impact of mixing for-credit and not-for-credit students on the same tour and the affect they have on each other's learning.

6. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of offering multiple course options for the same tour. Explore how course options can supplement each other and ways in which they hinder learning.
7. Compare the effectiveness of a study tour as a teaching strategy to an on-campus course offering the same or similar content, including retention of learning.
8. Consider a longitudinal study that investigates how students retain and apply the learning going forward. The evidence for transformative learning in this study suggests that longer term impacts are possible.
9. Examine the role of short-term international study tours in the academy both in terms of curriculum and availability, and in terms of their role relative to study abroad terms or years.
10. Examine the position of short-term international study tours in the education economy, with a particular focus on questions of accessibility to study tours for less privileged students.
11. As spirituality becomes increasingly commodified, examine the role of study tours in the spirituality business, and the implications for the academy.
12. Examine the impact and advantages of having a mix of modern and postmodern thinkers on a study tour, and strategies for capitalising on the mix.
13. Examine the challenges of correctly interpreting cross-border experiences that are situated in the local context (eg a multicultural environment), given that students may not recognize the extent to which meaning schemes are culturally constructed.
14. Investigate how students can learn to recognise the filters through which they are interpreting experiences, especially when there are no prompts to draw attention to meaning schemes that the student is utilizing.
15. Examine the use of technology for journaling during study tours. While digital photography and recording can ensure an instant and extensive

record and experiences can be blogged and shared online, digital records are easily edited and deleted. While digital technologies may facilitate journaling, the resulting record may be an impermanent and changeable, thereby reshaping or compromising learning going forward.

16. Investigate the optimum class size for short-term international study tours. Gladwell (2013) claims that the relationship between class size and academic achievement is an inverted-U curve. Small classes may fail to protect student autonomy or lack diversity of thought, while large classes can be difficult to manage because of the number of potential interactions. Other factors, such as economics, travel, accommodation facilities, safety considerations, and the incongruence of meaning schemes, will also contribute to determining optimal class size.

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Appendix A: Ethics Committee Approval



CSS Jan 2013

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Staff Research Ethics Application Outcome

Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application Outcome

Application Details

Application Number: 400120048

Application Type New Resubmission

Applicant's Name Uriah Pond

Project Title Assessment of Student Engagement and Learning during a Camino Study Tour

Date application reviewed (d.m.yr) 09/05/13

Application Outcome **Approved**

Start Date of Approval (d.m.yr) 09/05/13

(blank if not approved)

End Date of Approval (d.m.yr) 31/05/13

If the applicant has been given approval this means they can proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval.

Recommendations (where application is Not Approved)

Please note the comments below and provide further information where requested. All resubmitted application documents should then be sent to the College Office via email to Terri.Hume@glasgow.ac.uk. You must include a covering letter to explain the changes you have made to the application.

Major

Minor

Comments (other than specific recommendations)

Reviewers happy with the changes made

Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Terri Hume, Ethics Secretary.

End of Notification.

University of Glasgow
College of Social Sciences
Florentine House, 53 Hillhead Street, Glasgow G12 8QF
The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401

Tel: 0141-330-3007
E-mail: Terri.Hume@glasgow.ac.uk

Page 1 of 1

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Staff Research Ethics Application

Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application

Application Details

Application Number: 400140101

Applicant's Name Uriah Pond

Project Title Learning on Higher Education Study Tours

Application Status **Approved**

Start Date of Approval (d.m.yr) 20/2/15

(blank if Changes Required/ Rejected)

End Date of Approval of Research Project (d.m.yr) 31/12/2018

Only if the applicant has been given **approval** can they proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval.

Recommendations (where Changes are Required)

- **Where changes are required all applicants must respond** in the relevant boxes to the recommendations of the Committee and upload this as the **Resubmission Document** online to explain the changes you have made to the application. All resubmitted application documents should then be uploaded.
- **If application is Rejected** a full new application must be submitted via the online system. Where recommendations are provided, they should be responded to and this document uploaded as part of the new application. A new reference number will be generated.

(Shaded areas will expand as text is added)

MAJOR RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPLICANT RESPONSE TO MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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MINOR RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPLICANT RESPONSE TO MINOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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REVIEWER COMMENTS

APPLICANT RESPONSE TO REVIEWER COMMENTS

(OTHER THAN SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS)

All minor recommendations now implemented.	
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Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the College Ethics Administration, email address: socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk

End of Notification.

Appendix B: Questionnaires



Study Tour Pre-Tour Questionnaire

Thank you for your participation. Please answer the questions below.

Name: _____

Institution: _____

Programme: _____

Year: _____

What is your motivation for participating in this study tour?

What do you expect to learn from the experience?

Is this your first study tour? Yes No

Study Tour Post-Tour Questionnaire

Name: _____

1. Briefly describe your learning during the study tour.
2. Briefly describe how the study tour experience met your expectations.
3. Briefly describe how the study tour experience did not meet your expectations.
4. What do you expect to be the lasting value of this experience?
5. Discuss the effectiveness of the study tour compared to any on-campus courses you have completed in the same or similar subject areas.
6. What did you like most about the study tour as a learning experience?
7. What did you like least about the study tour as a learning experience?
8. If an opportunity arose, would you participate in another study tour? a. <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely yes b. <input type="checkbox"/> Likely yes c. <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure d. <input type="checkbox"/> Likely no e. <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely no

Appendix C: Interview Themes



Study Tour Interviews

Student Participant

Student interviews will be structured around the following themes:

- Extent of learning on the study tour; extent to which the study tour met expectations
- Retention of learning from the tour
- Effectiveness of the study tour compared to on-campus courses
- Liked most/least about the study tour
- Suggested changes/improvements to enhance learning

Professor/Tour Leader

Professor/tour Leader interviews will be structured around the following themes:

- Experience with leading study tours
- Design strategy for the tour
- Extent of learning demonstrated by the students
- Liked most/least about the study tour
- Changes/improvements that would be incorporated into future study tours

Appendix D: Interview Schedule

Tour 1: The Way of St. James Leadership Pilgrimage, May 2013

03 September 2015	Dale
05 November 2015	Sidney
21 November 2015	Ahn
18 January 2016	Professor Mackenzie
22 February 2016	Professor Fran

Tour 2: Holy Land Study Tour, May 2015

24 October 2015	Bailey
24 October 2015	Cary
26 October 2015	Devon
26 October 2015	Rene
14 November 2015	Paris
20 November 2015	Robin
28 November 2015	Regan
30 November 2015	Noel
02 December 2015	Casey
09 December 2015	Blair
20 December 2015	Harper
11 February 2016	Professor Spencer
11 February 2016	Professor Micki
11 February 2016	Professor Riley

Tour 3: Educator`s Search for Purpose and Meaning, May 2016

27 August 2016	Tory
28 August 2016	Adal
01 September 2016	Rae
06 September 2016	Brook
19 September 2016	Caelan
27 September 2016	Jess
27 September 2016	Jordan
21 September 2016	Professor Dana
29 September 2016	Professor Jo

Tour 4: In the Steps of Paul, July 2016

19 September 2016	Stevie
26 September 2016	Jodie
28 September 2016	Max
01 October 2016	Akira
03 October 2016	Manjeet
03 October 2016	Marley
05 October 2016	Shae
13 October 2016	Brodie
16 October 2016	Tony
04 November 2016	Bobbie
20 October 2016	Professor Wynne
20 October 2016	Professor Terry

Guelph–Midland Walking Pilgrimage, August 2016

18 October 2016	Logan
27 October 2016	Charlie
22 September 2016	Payton (leader)
26 January 2017	Dion

Mexico Service Learning Trip, November 2016

30 November 2016	Jaden
20 December 2016	Reese
11 December 2016	Aiden (leader)

Appendix E: The Way of St. James Leadership Pilgrimage

Excerpt from: Boers, A. (2013) *Leadership pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago*. Toronto: Tyndale Seminary, unpublished course syllabus

Course Syllabus

Spring/Summer 2013

LEADERSHIP PILGRIMAGE ON THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO LEAD 0670

MAY 12 - 24

...

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Way of St. James (Camino de Santiago) pilgrimage route in Spain is integrally related to leadership. James (one of the sons of Zebedee) was in the inner circle of disciples and an apostle credited with bringing the Gospel to Spain. During the last millennium, numerous leaders walked this route (including Francis of Assisi, Dante Alighieri, Brigid of Sweden). People find their callings to be leaders on this path and learn invaluable lessons of leadership too: listening to the journey of others; sharing leadership; challenging oneself physically, mentally and emotionally; encountering God in unexpected ways; walking by faith; staying focused on a goal while working with others; building community and trust; and working collaboratively.

Over eight days, students will walk the last 120 kilometers of the Camino de Santiago and be eligible for the much-coveted Compostela certificate offered by the Santiago Cathedral.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course the student will demonstrate:

- I. biblical, theological, and imaginative reflection on pilgrimage as a literal and metaphorical theme for Christian leadership formation.
- II. biblical reflection on the life leadership lessons of James (Santiago)
- III. listening to other pilgrims: classmates, pilgrims along the way, and historical pilgrims.
- IV. collaboration with others in a team setting.
- V. leadership in a new, challenging, unpredictable, and unfamiliar context.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Boers, Arthur Paul. *The Way is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago*. Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity, 2007. ISBN 978-0-8308-3507-2

Wright, Tom. *The Way of the Lord: Christian Pilgrimage Today*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.

IV. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Reading Texts Prior to Class: 10% of final grade.

Students read the required texts, both in preparation for the pilgrimage and to be able to reflect on the texts as we journey.

2. Class Participation: 30% of final grade.

All students participate fully in discussions, experiential exercises, corporate worship, and the chores of making such a pilgrimage a success (e.g., sharing tasks related to meals).

3. Journals: Due 60 days after our return; 30% of grade.

Students keep a journal every day of the pilgrimage, writing in it for approximately thirty minutes per day. These journals are intended for reflection and integration. They are not meant to be a day-by-day description or listing of what occurred. Rather students reflect on the themes of the day – either as posed by the professor or what emerges from their own prayers or conversations with others. Write one final entry after completing the book analyses (see next assignment). It will be 3 to 5 pages of integration summarizing: what one learned from the course as a whole, what one found challenging, what one hopes to remember well, how this course may impact one's future ministry and leadership.

4. Analyze Two Approved Books from the Selected Bibliography: Due 60 days after our return; 30% of grade.

Students choose one approved book ... each from two of the following areas: [Book list 1; Book list 2] ... Write a three-page double-spaced analysis of each book.

Your paper will include the following elements:

- up to one fourth is a careful and objective summary of the book
- up to one fourth delineates strengths and weaknesses of the book and its theory
- up to one fourth reflects on theological and biblical perspectives that are sparked by this book.
- up to one fourth reflects on how you would like what you have learned to inform your own developing ministry/leadership.

Appendix F: Holy Land Study Tour

Excerpt from: Pfrimmer, D. & Harris, M. (2015) *The people, the land and the book: Faith to faith program in Jerusalem*. Waterloo: Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, unpublished course syllabus

The People, the Land and the Book

Face to Faith Program in Jerusalem

Spring Term 2015

Holy Land Study Program

Undergraduate Courses

GC201 Public Faith and Public
Theology

GC380G The People, The Land, The
Book

GC398 Cross-Cultural Encounter

Graduate Courses

TH608N The People, The Land, The
Book in Ancient Times (Bible)

TH608P The People, The Land, The
Book Today (Ethics)

TH640H Cross-Cultural Encounter

...

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Palestine and Israel are often called the Holy Land. As the birthplace of the three Abrahamic faiths it is rich with history, meaning, and spirituality of Semitic peoples. It is here that sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which inspire and guide the faithful, find their origins in the encounter with God. This Holy Land is also a land shaped by politics, by conflict, and by great passions. It is a land divided in many ways. The courses that comprise the Face to Faith program will be an opportunity for more detailed reflection of these themes and their implications for the faithful and the community of nations.

COURSES FORMAT

These are *blended* partially online credit courses (0.5). The central feature of these courses will be the two-week study component in the Holy Land. Prior to departure students are expected to do some reading as assigned. During the study tour in addition to the general sessions for the entire delegation, students will meet for discussion with instructors. Upon return, students will be expected to complete the required readings and complete the course assignments.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM AND PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for these courses at either the undergraduate or graduate level. Some understanding of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam is helpful. Students will also need to have or be able to develop some familiarity with the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. The instructor might suggest additional readings for students with limited experience in the respective fields

of study. Students can also meet with the instructor for suggested readings if they feel it is necessary.

COURSE OUTCOMES

<i>Undergraduate Courses</i>	<i>Graduate Courses</i>
GC201 Public Faith and Public Theology ❖	TH608N The People, The Land, The Book in Ancient Times (Bible) ✕
GC380G The People, The Land, The Book ✕	TH608P The People, The Land, The Book Today (Ethics) ❖
GC398 Cross-Cultural Encounter ✓	TH640H Cross-Cultural Encounter ✓
<p><i>Outcomes for Undergraduate and Graduate Courses</i></p> <p>The symbols (✕❖✓) indicate where there may be more of an emphasis in particular course streams. Those studying at the Graduate Level will be expected to have a more comprehensive and integrated understanding of the expected outcomes.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✕❖✓ Meet the people of the Holy Land; ✕❖✓ Appreciate the important of the Holy Land Context and the differences compared to Canada; ✕❖✓ Develop an appreciation for the contribution and challenges of multi-faith relationships; ✕❖✓ Recognize the complexity of issues of land, settlements, security and the Wall for Israelis and Palestinians; ❖ Understand the role of public theology in making public policies and addressing social issues; ❖ Understand the contribution of “citizen diplomacy,” non-governmental organizations and faith communities to peace process; ✕ Understand the use of biblical method(s) for comprehending the meanings in the bible; ✕ Develop a more detailed appreciation and understanding of the significance of biblical places and their connection to Hebrew and Christian scriptures generally and specific Christian texts in particular; ✕ Develop some ability to identify some of the biblical, theological, and ethical questions in the Holy Land; ✓ Review various church-partner and ecumenical responses and alternatives to the current situation in the Holy Land; ✓ Identify theological and ethical issues and implications between and across cultures and faiths; ✓ Develop research and social analysis skills. 	

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The *Face to Faith Program* and these courses will be a mutual introductory journey into the dynamic and dramatically changing realities resulting from continuing divisions and conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. The program

will also look for the places where Israelis and Palestinians are working together to build bridges, cross cultural and religious borders and build peace with justice.

The courses in this program will involve dialogue with Israelis and Palestinians, with non-governmental organizations, and visits to various religious and historic sites. The aim will be to develop critical social analytical skills to effectively explore the biblical record and its implications for people today. The courses in this program will undertake a critical examination of biblical, historical, geo-political realities, their ethical implications, and possibilities and implications for building peace in the Holy Land.

READING LIST

Required Reading:

- ❖*✓ The Gospel of Mark, Matthew and Luke in the New Revised Standard Version (1989), or The Revised English Bible (1989), the New Jerusalem Bible (1985) or the New International Version (1973-78). Other versions are not suitable for academic use.
- ❖*✓ Jonathan L. Reed, *The Harper Collins Visual Guide to the New Testament: What Archeology Reveals about the First Christians* (New York, Harper Collins, 2007)
- ❖* Charles P. Lutz and Robert O. Smith, *Christians and a Land Called Holy, How We Can Foster Justice, Peace and Hope* (Augsburg Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2006)

Recommended Reading:

- ❖ Naim Stifan Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice, A Palestinian Theology of Liberation* (Orbis Press, Maryknoll, NY, 1989)
- ❖ Naim Stifan Ateek, *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation* (Orbis Press, Maryknoll, New York, 2008)
- * Laurel K. Cobb, *Mark and Empire, Feminist Reflections* (Orbis Press, Maryknoll, New York, 2013)
- ❖ Marc H. Ellis, *O Jerusalem The Contested Future of the Jewish Covenant* (Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis MN, 1999)
- * Marc H Ellis, *Reading the Torah Out Loud, A Journey of Lament and Hope* (Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN, 2007)
- ❖* Rabbi Michael Lerner, *Embracing Israel/Palestine, A Strategy to Heal and Transform the Middle East* (Tikkun Books, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, California, 2012);
- ❖ Mitri Rahib, *I Am A Palestinian Christian* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN., 1995)
- ❖* Jonathan L. Reed, *The Harper Collins Visual Guide to the New Testament: What Archaeology Reveals about the First Christians* (New York, Harper Collins, 2007)
- ❖ Munib Younan, *Witnessing for Peace In Jerusalem and the World* (Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN, 2003)

Available Resources on the Internet:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land at <http://www.elcjh.org/>

The New Internationalist Magazine at <http://www.newint.org/>

ELCA Peace Not Walls Campaign at <http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Publicly-Engaged-Church/Peace-Not-Walls>

Rabbis for Human Rights at <http://rhr.israel.net/>

B'Tselem The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories at <http://www.btselem.org/English/index.asp>

The Israeli Committee against Housing Demolitions at <http://www.icahd.org>

Tikkun - To Heal, Repair and Transform the World at <http://www.tikkun.org>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Given that this course is in an intensive study tour format, each student is expected to have read as much of the reading prior to departure as possible. All reading however, must be completed by the end of the term.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All registered students will be expected to maintain a day-by-day journal during the study tour. The journal will include notes on meetings and site visits as well as daily reflections of what was experienced. (30%).

Students will be expected to complete the following written assignments in their respective courses in which they are registered:

GC201 Public Faith and Public Theology

- Each student will be expected to read three of the recommended readings or other readings as agreed upon with the instructor and provide a short book review on each. (10% each)
- A written 10–15 page ethical paper on the following question: “What is a Christian Contribution to Building Peace in the Holy Land?” (40%)

GC380G The People, The Land, The Book

- Each student will be expected to research and read six articles on a biblical theme relevant to their paper. They should develop a short annotated bibliography that includes a brief one-paragraph annotation for each article. (5% each or 30%)
- Each student will be expected to write an eight to ten page paper describing the history, geographical significance and relevance to the faithful of one of the biblical locations visited. (40%). The sites can include any of the following; The Western Wall (the last remaining wall of the Temple), the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, Bethsaida, the Sea of Galilee, Caesarea Philippi (modern Banyas), Meggido, Mt. Carmel, or Caesarea Maritima.

GC398 Cross-Cultural Encounter

- Each student will be expected research and develop an annotated bibliography comprised of six articles on cross-cultural encounter and enculturation (5% each or 30%).
- Utilizing their research and appropriate sources, each student will write a 5-10 page paper identifying the significant insights they discovered and what they may mean for their studies and vocation.

TH608N The People, The Land, The Book in Ancient Times (Bible)

- Each student will be expected develop an annotated bibliography comprised of six books and six articles on a biblical theme relevant to the their paper. They should develop a short annotated bibliography that includes a brief one-paragraph annotation for each article. (5% each or 30%).
- Each student will be expected to write a 15–20 page paper on a significant event in the life of Jesus (40%). The paper should development a line of argumentation that addresses a central biblical theme and employs scholarship, exegetical methods and archeological evidence.

TH608P The People, The Land, The Book Today (Ethics)

- Each student will develop annotated bibliography that includes four of the recommended readings above and six additional articles (30% each).
- A written 15–20 page paper on one of the following theme: “What is a Christian Contribution to Building Peace in the Holy Land?” (40%)

TH640H Cross-Cultural Encounter

- Each student will be expected research and develop an annotated bibliography comprised of twelve articles on cross-cultural encounter and enculturation (30%).
- Utilizing their research, scholarship and appropriate sources, each student will write a 15–20 page self-reflective paper identifying the key themes, important insights and how they will be integrated into the student’s worldview. What did you notice about the cultural differences? What were the narratives and sources of meaning that were different or similar? What are the important biblical and theological insights that you discerned? What might they mean for your work in the future?

...

Written assignments will be evaluated on the following basis;

- Understanding and/or use of appropriate methodology;
- Identifying or articulating a central thesis or theme;
- Comprehension and utilization of the research, scholarship and sources to address the question or theme;
- Explanation of the technical elements of the area of focus;
- Recognizing and proposing appropriate pastoral strategies;
- Proposing concrete and implementable strategies for ecumenical and multi-faith partnerships;
- Integration of source materials;
- Appropriate grammar and style.

...

OTHER

Participation is assumed as necessary to the successful completion of these course(s). No grade will be assigned for participation. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful and conducive to a positive learning environment.

Appendix G: Educator's Search for Purpose and Meaning

Excerpt from: Seifert, T. A. (2016) *Educators' search for purpose and meaning*. Bozeman: Montana State University, unpublished course syllabus

Educators' Search for Purpose and Meaning (EDLD 591) Spring 2016

...

Delivery Format:

This course is a blended course, which means we will meet asynchronously using the D2L platform. However, we will also meet virtually in synchronous form using WebEx several times with a final face-to-face meeting at the end of the term.

The course has two sections. The first section is a traditional blended course with standard semester start and end dates. The second section includes a travel component to hike a portion of the Camino de Santiago in Spain (May 14-29). The travel section provides students an opportunity to reflect on course material while engaging in a focal practice, as reflection and focal practice are key concepts interwoven throughout the course. More information on the travel section of the course, including cost, is available from the instructor.

Purpose

The purpose of this course is for students to reflect critically on their role as educators and how they bring their authentic selves to create the most efficacious learning environments for their students, particularly with respect to fostering students' inner development.

...

Course Objectives:

Knowledge:

Students will:

- Articulate the key milestones in the history of developing students' religious, spiritual, existential understanding and worldview as a key component of liberal education within the American context.
- Comment critically on the role of educators in promoting students' inner exploration and development.

Skills and Abilities:

Students will:

- Create an educator's statement of purpose.

- Find, select, read, and interpret relevant articles. These will then be shared into a compendium of resources for the class.
- Reflect and journal with respect to the interface between key points within the readings and experience as an educator.

...

Dispositions:

Students will:

- Value reflection as a pedagogical tool in educational practice.
- Appreciate the role of community in developing an authentic educational practice.

...

Expectations for the Class

- **Be prepared**
Not just an often-heard motto but also a key to success. For this class, being prepared means completing the readings and homework assignments and coming to class (in person and virtually) with questions, thoughts, and comments to share. I recognize most students work full time and focus on completing their class commitments on the weekends. With that in mind, I expect you to have completed the assignments and commented on our discussion forums by Sunday 11:59 pm (mountain time) of that week. That way, we can begin fresh the following Monday with the reading and assignments for the coming week.
- **Engage**
Engaging is far more than being physically present in the class. It also includes virtual engagement in our online discussion forums. To engage in class means coming to class (in person and virtually) with a readiness to contribute to the conversation and dialogue.
- **Turn in your best work on time**
This means taking the time to think, write, and revise before turning something in. I recognize that sometimes “life happens” and it seems impossible to complete an assignment. I strongly urge you, however, to plan accordingly to get your work done on time. It is a critical attribute for your professional success. I WILL NOT accept any late assignments.

Instructor Responsibilities

I also have high expectations for myself. You can expect that I will:

- Come to class prepared and organized, provide you with timely feedback on your work, and be interested and engaged in your learning
- Respect, honor, and value the background, experience, and perspective you bring
- Learn from you
- Be available (by e-mail and in person) to meet with you either individually or in groups to discuss the course

- Share openly as a means to model authenticity, courage and community within our learning circle

Readings

Required:

- Palmer, P. (2004). *A hidden wholeness: The journey toward an undivided life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Small, J. L. (2015). *Making meaning: Embracing, spirituality, faith, religion and life purpose in student affairs*. Washington, DC: ACPA Books & Media.

Other readings as assigned.

Major Topics

- Role of higher education in educating students for lives of purpose, reflecting on the civic mandate in American higher education
- Students' interest in discussing "big questions"; existential exploration
- Critiques levied against civic and existential exploration as part of American higher education, recognizing the neo-liberal paradigm
- Educators' preparation to be "good company" on students' journeys toward purpose discovery and meaning making
- Identifying and committing to a focal practice

Assignments

- Educator's Statement of Purpose - 30%. This assignment is one that is scaffolded in that you will submit a statement at the beginning and end of course.
- Reflection on Statement Development - 20%. This assignment invites you to draw on the readings and discussions from the course in reflecting on the process by which your statement changed over time. What contributed to that change? OR why did it not change?
- Resource Compendium - 30%. You will find, select, read, and interpret/abstract 6 course-related articles/book chapters.
- Educators' Role Roundtable - 10%. Our final class session will include a spirited roundtable discussion of educators' role in promoting students' religious, spiritual, existential understanding and worldview (inner development) as a key component of liberal education within the American context.
- Class participation - 10%.

Appendix H: In the Steps of Paul

Excerpt from: Ontario College of Teachers (2014) *Additional Qualification Course Guideline Religious Education in Catholic Schools Specialist Part I* at https://www.oct.ca/-/media/PDF/Additional%20Qualifications/EN/Schedule%20D/Part%20I/i_religious_ed_e.pdf (last accessed 12 December 2016)

Additional Qualification Course Guideline Religious Education in Catholic Schools PART I

1. Introduction

Three-session specialist Additional Qualification courses identified in Schedule D (Teachers' Qualifications Regulation 176/10) are intended for the purposes of:

- enhancing professional practice and extending knowledge and skills through critical reflection and inquiry (Religious Education in Catholic Schools: Part I)
- enhancing professional practice, design and teaching of programs through critical reflection and inquiry (Religious Education in Catholic Schools: Part II)
- enhancing professional leadership practice through the facilitation of collective critical reflection and inquiry (Religious Education in Catholic Schools: Specialist).

The Additional Qualification Course: Religious Education in Catholic Schools, Part I employs a critical pedagogical lens to explore in a holistic and integrated manner the following:

- mission of Catholic schools
- sacred scriptures
- spiritual, sacramental and liturgical life
- the Church and a post-modern world
- faith in action
- ethics and morality
- pedagogical practices for religious education
- school ministry
- the faith journey related to teaching and learning across the divisions.

The Ontario College of Teachers recognizes that candidates working in the publicly funded school system, independent/private institutions or First Nations schools will have a need to explore topics and issues of particular relevance to the context in which they work or may work.

Critical to the implementation of this course is the modeling of a positive learning environment that reflects care, diversity and equity. This course supports the enhancement of professional knowledge, ethical practice, leadership and ongoing professional learning.

The French Language and the English Language communities will also need to implement these guidelines to reflect the unique contextual dimensions and needs of each community. Each of these language communities will explore the guideline content from distinct perspectives and areas of emphasis. This flexibility will enable both language communities to implement religious education as understood from a variety of contexts.

The Religious Education in Catholic Schools Part I additional qualification course guideline provides a conceptual framework for providers and instructors to develop and facilitate the Religious Education in Catholic Schools Part I course. The guideline framework is intended to be a fluid, holistic and integrated representation of key concepts associated with religious education and will be interpreted through the unique needs and realities of each language community.

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B) A Framework for Inquiry

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession are embedded throughout the Additional Qualification course guideline.

This Additional Qualification course supports critical reflective inquiry and dialogue. The following concepts will inform the professional inquiries that will be facilitated within the AQ course:

- understanding the fundamental pedagogical foundations, curriculum guidelines and expectations related to religious education for Catholic schools in Ontario
- understanding and interpreting Ontario's curriculum, policies, frameworks, strategies and guidelines, through the perspective of Catholic education
- understanding and interpreting the mission of Catholic schools and Catholic school board policies, guidelines and programs
- reflecting on the ethical standards and standards of practice as embodied within the context of the Catholic school
- inquiring into professional practice through reflection, questioning, active engagement and collaboration
- exploring professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection
- understanding that the Bible as Sacred Scriptures is God's revelation to humanity, the story of God's relationship with the Jewish people and the early Christian communities, and encouraging critical reflection on personal and social realities
- understanding the meaning of creation and our ecological co-responsibilities as conveyed in the Bible and theology
- identifying gospel values in curriculum and in school experiences
- reflecting on the meaning of the Church as expressed throughout history, official church documents, curriculum and pedagogy
- understanding the contribution of Catholic schools to society
- reflecting on the meaning and the expression of faith (spiritual, sacramental and liturgical life, celebration of faith) in the Christian journey

- explaining similarities and differences between the basic tenets of Christianity and those of other world religions, while emphasizing the importance attributed by the Catholic Church to the ecumenical movement and interreligious dialogue
- developing awareness of First Nations, Métis and Inuit ways of knowing, spirituality and perspectives in teaching practice
- understanding the meaning of ethics and morality informed by Catholic faith and reflecting on the issues involved in ethical practices
- collaboratively developing and sustaining professional learning communities for enhancing professional knowledge and supporting student learning
- exploring innovative strategies to create and sustain safe, healthy, equitable and inclusive learning environments that honour the worth and dignity of each person
- understanding how to use, integrate, accommodate and modify expectations and strategies in response to the journey and individual needs of all students
- enhancing awareness of holistic learning environments (physical, spiritual and moral, intellectual, social, emotional, environmental, linguistic and cultural)
- applying the theoretical understandings necessary to develop teaching and learning tools and practices for religious education and pastoral school ministry
- becoming aware of a variety of appropriate resources, including technological and communication resources, to enhance professional knowledge in support of student learning
- exploring pedagogical approaches that support living out one's faith through religious education and pastoral experiences
- exploring the integration of expectations, strategies and assessment practices in response to the individual needs of students
- exploring strategies for collaborating with school personnel, parents/guardians, parish and the community
- exploring the integration of theory into practice within a perspective of living out one's faith.

...

D) The Bible as Sacred Scripture

- understanding the origins, structures and elements of the Bible
- exploring appropriate exegetical methods and processes to critically interpret biblical texts
- discovering the significance and relevance of the Bible as the Word of God
- exploring the relationship between biblical texts, core beliefs of the Catholic faith and the faith journey
- understanding through the Bible the revelation of God, the meaning of creation and the ability of God to reveal one's destiny.

E) Spiritual, Sacramental and Liturgical Life

- understanding the importance of the sacraments in the Church and in Catholic life
- understanding the importance and role of the Word of God, prayer and liturgy in the expression of faith

- becoming familiar with components of liturgy
- understanding how one's relationship with Jesus Christ is at the core of Catholic teacher spirituality
- critically reflecting on different spiritualities as reflected in Scripture, Tradition and the world
- critically reflecting on experiences connected to a quest for meaning.

F) The Church: Past, Present and Future

- exploring the history of Catholic Education in Ontario in the recognition of the action of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church and the world
- becoming familiar with the main phases of Church history, from the early Christian communities to the present, emphasizing the significance and implications of Vatican II recognizing the action of the Holy Spirit
- understanding the significance of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith through the history of the Church
- exploring official Church documents
- exploring the links between biblical texts and the doctrines in the Apostles' Creed and recognizing that the Creed is a summary of Catholic faith
- understanding the importance of religious education curriculum documents to support teaching and learning
- understanding the challenges facing the Catholic Church in a secular, pluralistic and diverse society through post-modern perspectives
- critically exploring actions initiated by the Catholic Church with other Christian denominations and world religions through post-modern perspectives
- understanding how a personal vision of God, the Catholic worldview and the sacredness of each person contributes to society
- exploring the influences which create or enhance identity as a Catholic in the post-modern world
- engaging in experiences related to the quest for meaning grounded in theological perspectives.

G) Ethics and Morality

- exploring the meaning of ethics and morality from biblical and theological perspectives
- exploring moral discernment processes through biblical and theological lenses
- exploring the evolution of moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church
- exploring the ethical and moral contributions that Catholic social teachings make to society
- exploring Catholic social teachings throughout the curriculum and educational experiences
- exploring current moral and ethical issues in authentic situations
- identifying ecological practices from the perspective of Catholic social teachings
- understanding ways to create a relational and inclusive school climate based on the inherent dignity of the human being and the principles of Catholic social teachings

- exploring the integration of the ethical standards and the standards of practice within the mission of Catholic education
- exploring the use of social media and other technology through the lens of Catholic moral, ethical and social teachings.

H) Faith in Action

- developing the theoretical understandings necessary to develop teaching and learning tools and practices for religious education and pastoral experiences
- experiencing faith in action through Christian leadership
- understanding the importance of shared responsibility, partnerships and leadership in the community as conveyed in the Foundations of Professional Practice
- exploring shared responsibility and partnerships involving family, school, parish and the community in the expression of faith and the Catholic journey Faith in Action
- understanding the key components and principles associated with the mission of Catholic schools and exploring ways of integrating them across the curriculum and in educational experiences
- understanding the principles and significance of pastoral service for Catholic education.

I) Pedagogical Practices within Catholic Education

- developing an understanding of the religious education program in Catholic schools and links to the curriculum for other subjects
- developing an understanding of government policies, guidelines and new approaches in education, as well as the policies and documents of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario and the Catholic district school boards
- developing a critical approach to the selection and use of instructional resources and practices to support Catholic education
- exploring various forms of prayer in professional practice
- exploring processes for the creation of collaborative, positive, equitable, accepting, and safe learning communities that nurture holistic formation
- exploring a range of approaches, methods, strategies, instructional resources and information and communication technologies to support student learning and formation in Catholic schools
- exploring pedagogical practices that respond to the individual needs and developmental levels of all students
- critically exploring how faith is a personally lived reality that is intimately linked to one's own culture
- reflecting on personal teaching practice and engaging in dialogue on the relationship of theory and practice in religious education in Catholic schools
- fostering a learning and living environment that nourishes knowledge, skills and interpersonal qualities through the light of the Gospel values
- exploring fair and equitable assessment and evaluation methods that promote student learning and support the dignity, emotional wellness and development of all students in religious education and across the curriculum

- integrating the theoretical understanding and knowledge necessary to design and assess programs and practices within the context of Catholic schools
- understanding the importance of questioning, innovation and collaboration to enhance teaching practice
- understanding the stages and processes associated with personal development and formation within faith education
- understanding pedagogies that reflect the professional identity of educators as described in the ethical standards, the standards of practice and in the Foundations of Professional Practice
- becoming familiar with the principles of adult education and group facilitation.

J) The Faith Journey

- exploring the joys, processes, challenges and responsibilities of the spiritual journey for the Catholic educator
- reflecting on how one's relationship with Jesus Christ is at the core of Catholic teacher spirituality
- exploring insights related to spirituality from Scripture, Tradition, experiences with other faiths and post-modern perspectives
- exploring different forms of prayer that nurture the vocation of the Catholic educator
- reflecting and engaging in dialogue regarding the faith journey of teachers, students, parish and the Christian community
- exploring the importance of lifelong learning and the faith journey for Catholic educators
- understanding the importance of being a conscious and living witness of faith for realizing the transformational mission of Catholic education
- understanding that Catholic faith journey is an invitation to believe that Christians are "clothed with the life of Christ himself" (Galatians 3.27) and The Faith Journey called to be faithful witnesses by inspiring others in the Catholic school environment to also become "salt of all mankind and light for the whole world" (Matthew 5.13-14).

5. Instructional Practice in the Additional Qualification Course Religious Education in Catholic Schools PART I

Candidates will collaboratively develop with course instructors the specific learning inquiries, learning experiences, and forms of assessment and evaluation that will be used throughout the course.

In the implementation of this Additional Qualification course, instructors use strategies that are relevant, meaningful and practical in providing candidates with learning experiences about instruction, pedagogy and assessment and evaluation. These include but are not limited to: experiential learning; small group interaction; action research; presentations; independent inquiry; problem solving; collaborative learning and direct instruction.

Instructors model the Ethical Standards of the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession, honour the principles of adult learning, recognize candidates' experience and prior learning and respond to

individual needs. Important to the course are opportunities for candidates to create support networks and receive feedback from colleagues and instructors and share the products of their learning with others. Opportunities for professional reading, reflection, dialogue and expression are also integral parts of the course.

Instructors model effective instructional and assessment strategies that can be replicated or adapted in a variety of classroom and learning settings.

A. Experiential Learning

Candidates will be provided with opportunities to engage in experiential learning related to key concepts and aspects of Religious Education in Catholic Schools as collaboratively determined by both the instructor and course candidates. The intent of the experiential learning opportunities is to support the application and integration of practice and theory within the authentic context of teaching and learning. Candidates will also engage in critical reflection and analysis of their engagement in experiential learning opportunities related to Religious Education in Catholic Schools. The professional judgment, knowledge and pedagogy of candidates will be enhanced and refined through experiential learning and inquiry.

The College's standards resources help to support experiential learning through various forms of professional inquiry.

6. Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates

At the beginning of the course, candidates will collaboratively develop with course instructors the specific learning inquiries, learning experiences, and forms of assessment and evaluation that will be used throughout the course. Instructors will provide opportunities for regular feedback regarding candidates' progress throughout the course.

A balanced approach to candidate assessment and evaluation is used. It includes the combination of candidate self and peer assessment, as well as instructor evaluation. The assessment and evaluation strategies reflect effective, collaborative and inquiry-based practices. A variety of assessment approaches will be used that enable candidates to convey their learning related to course inquiries. The course provides opportunities for both formative and summative assessment and evaluation.

Central to candidates enrolled in Additional Qualification courses is the opportunity to be engaged in relevant and meaningful inquiries. Assignments, artefacts and projects enable candidates to make connections between theory and practice. At the same time, assignments must allow candidates flexibility, choice, and individual inquiry opportunities.

Part of the evaluation process may include a major independent project or action research component over the duration of the course. This project is an opportunity for candidates to illustrate a high level of professional knowledge,

communication skills, pedagogy, ethical practices and instructional leadership. Similarly, if a portfolio assignment is used it will also include reflections and analysis of a candidate's learning over time.

A final culminating experience in the course is recommended. This experience may take the form of a written assessment, a research paper, a performance, an inquiry project or a product that is original, meaningful and practical.

The following list of assessment strategies which are reflective of experiential learning is not exhaustive; it is intended to serve as a guide only.

- a) Performance assessment: designing a sample unit which includes a culminating activity, appropriate assessment and evaluation tools, a variety of technologies and resources relevant to the study of religious education and is based on curriculum expectations for religious education
- b) Written assignment: critically reflecting on issues arising from articles, publications, research and/or other resources related to the teaching or practice of Religious Education in Catholic Schools
- c) Presentation: developing a digital story or presenting an issue related to the teaching and learning of Religious Education in Catholic Schools
- d) Portfolio: creating a portfolio of practical resources, artefacts, photographs and recording critical reflections for one or many components of teaching in religious education in a Catholic setting
- e) Action research: engaging in action research by reflecting and acting upon a specific inquiry into teaching practice related to religious education
- f) Instructional resource: developing a meaningful resource that will support religious education instruction and pedagogy
- g) Reflective writing: reflecting on professional practice through journal writing, or writing a case or vignette that explores teaching and learning of Religious Education in Catholic Schools
- h) Case inquiry: writing or exploring a case related to collaboration and shared partnerships, with parents, colleagues, and community organizations
- i) IEP development: collaboratively develop an IEP related to religious education with the family, student and school team
- j) Facilitating a Learning Experience: developing and implementing an engaging learning experience that reflects differentiated instruction, universal design and the tiered approach in the Catholic school setting
- k) Independent project: addressing any aspect of the course that is approved by the instructor.