In Search of the Sense of Finnish Lakes

A Geographical Approach to
Lake Tourism Marketing

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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Contents

Abstract

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Keywords: Lake, lake tourism, space, place, landscape, sense of place, marketing, image, triangulation, photo-elicitation, Finland

The initial recognition of the Finnish natural landscape took place during the first half of the 19th century, and the lake landscape was chosen as the symbol of Finland due to its geographical exceptionality, but also due to the fulfilment of the picturesque requirements of beauty and variety. By the end of the 1800s, Finland had already been acknowledged as the land of a thousand lakes, and from the early 1900s to the 1980s, lakes were Finland's international marketing trump card.

Although lakes are one of the key attraction factors of Finnish tourism, the basic knowledge of the specificity of the country's lake resource among tourism operators is surprisingly thin. Despite the fact that in recent years the role of lakes has been recognised, Finland's great lake resource is still in many respects a dormant tourism opportunity.

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute an understanding of Finnish lake tourism and to evidence how a geographical approach can contribute new ideas to lake tourism development and especially to the marketing of lakes. While a more traditional holistic approach interprets the landscape as a measurable part of the physical environment, humanistic geography presents a multi-layered view that goes beyond what we see, interpreting the landscape as a more comprehensive visual and experiential phenomenon that is created through our mind, in addition to sensory observations. The main focus of this thesis is in seeing and experiencing a [lake]landscape. Introducing the concept of 'sense of place' into the mental landscapes connected with the lake allows the development of lakes as a tourism resource and the touristic development of a region. Raising the 'sense of place' to the ranks of traditional tourism images increases the value of lake tourism and lake landscapes.

The methodological approach taken was built-in triangulation with a series of separate data gathering sessions from 2001 to 2008. The selected research methods were mainly qualitative, in order to draw on respondents' verbatim descriptions of the lakes. The lake as a place and space was studied from the perspective of the consumption of space by studying the organic images of potential visitors in Finnish Lakeland and the production of space by presenting the concept of Lake Wellness.

This study clearly shows that the marketing of lakes has to start from a more complex viewpoint. In other words, the lake should be seen as a landscape and place that does not leave the observer outside, as do the ideals of the traditional objective landscape. The lake landscape is construed not only on the basis of personal experience, but also on the social and cultural interpretation of the lake. The lake has to be made a significant rather than a neutral natural landscape. Experiencing a lake landscape or a lake environment can be seen as part of 'doing' tourism. There is not necessarily a need to be physically present in the landscape. A similar experience to doing tourism can be achieved by gazing at touristic photographs. However, without any introduction to Finnish culture, the meanings remained rather irrational and even artificial in the mental images of a non-Finnish audience.

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Article I   Tuohino, A. & K. Pitkänen* (2004a). The transformation of a neutral lake landscape into a meaningful experience. The interpretation of touristic photos. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 2: 2, 77–93.

Article II   Tuohino, A. (2006). Lakes as an opportunity for tourism marketing: In search of the spirit of the lake. *In* Hall, C.M. & T. Härkönen (Eds.): *Lake Tourism. An Intergrated Approach to Lacustrine Tourism Systems*, 101–118. Channel View Publications, Clevedon.

Article III   Tuohino, A.& K. Pitkänen** (2004b). Selling waterscapes. *In* Saarinen, J. & C.M. Hall (Eds.): *Nature-Based Tourism Research in Finland: Local Contexts, Global Issues*, 129–150. Finnish Forest Institute, Research Papers 916.

Article IV   Konu H., Tuohino, A. & R. Komppula*** (2010). Lake Wellness – a practical example of a new service development (NSD) concept in tourism industries. *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 16: 2, 125–139.

*The author was responsible for research planning, data gathering and publication process. Coding of data and the writing of the article was done in cooperation with Kati Pitkänen.

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*** The author was responsible for the theory of lake tourism, and together with Henna Konu the theory of well-being tourism. The author gathered and analysed the data together with Henna Konu. The introduction and conclusions were written in collaboration with Henna Konu and Raija Komppula.

Foreword

1 Introduction

"'The lake is powerful, catching the eye of the landscape, its gaze."
F.E. Sillanpää

1.1 Background and starting point of the research

Lakes are essential elements for some of the world's most popular tourism destinations (Cooper 2006; Hall & Härkönen 2006). This is the case also in Finland. Generally, Finland is the richest country in terms of water areas and one of the most numerous in islands in Europe (Island Committee 2005). In Finland there are 187,888 lakes, the largest of which is Lake Saimaa (Hemmi 2005).

The initial recognition of Finnish natural landscape took place during the first half of the 19th century and the lake landscape was chosen as the symbol of Finland due to its geographical exceptionality, but also due to the fulfilment of the picturesque requirements of beauty and variety. In the Finnish lake landscape, all three basic elements of Finnish nature, namely water, forest and an undulating terrain, are present (Häyrynen 1994). By the end of 1800s, Finland had already been acknowledged as the land of a thousand lakes and from the early 1900s to the 1980s, lakes were Finland's international marketing trump card (Hirn & Markkanen 1987). In the early 1980s there was an increase in winter and off-season marketing alongside lake tourism marketing, followed later by winter tourism in Lapland and the capital area. In addition, driving tours came into focus. At the end of the 1990s, nature-based tourism, winter and cultural tourism and Christmas were in focus, while in 2004 a special lake tourism campaign was launched (Suni 2014).

In the development of a tourism destination, marketing and its related elements have played an important role in analysing the wishes and preferences of tourists. In order to understand customers, marketing people have to know who their customers are and what they want. All too often, marketing strategies are created without proper knowledge of what the tourist really wants. Demand and supply do not meet if they are dealt with independently of each other, i.e. if marketing organisations create their own strategies and the tourism providers their own products without co-operating with one another (see Vanhove 2011). Marketing based on special products or special interests (e.g. lakes) in particular has developed on the basis of individualised destination marketing (Walsh *et al.* 2001). Although lakes are one of the key attraction factors of Finnish tourism, the basic knowledge of the specificity of the country's lake resource among tourism operators is surprisingly thin (see Ryhänen 2001, 2003). In recent years the situation has changed and the role of lakes has been recognised. Despite this, Finland's great lake resource is still in many respects a dormant tourism opportunity. In terms of lake tourism, destination marketing has only barely restarted. The minor emphasis on the marketing of Finnish

Lakeland was also mentioned by Vuoristo and Vesterinen (2001, 170) who argue that '*so far the factual demand of tourism has not been for the Lake District.*'

The established position of Finnish natural landscape representations in tourism imagery also has a negative side: promotional pictures have, year after year, repeated the same established angles and motifs which emphasise the large number of lakes, the magnificent views and the spirit of the wilderness, neglecting the influence and involvement of culture and people to the landscape. The dominance of national symbolism and nature has been strikingly clear in visual tourism marketing material. It can be critically stated that the Finnish tourism marketing of lakes has focused on quantity instead of quality at the cost of the needs of foreign tourists in particular (Tuohino & Pitkänen, 2003a, 2003b, 2004a; Tuohino 2008; see also Vuoristo & Vesterinen 2001). Therefore, we can reasonably ask, using the words of Professor Emeritus Kai-Veikko Vuoristo (2003), if Finland has become a prisoner of its thousand lakes. The comment by Vuoristo can also be justified by the fact that the traveller can scarcely quantify the thousands of lakes to get his travel experience. Maybe the marketing mantra of the country of a thousand lakes is more about our own identity to highlight the historical values of our lakes and its role in underpinning tourism marketing with the importance of the quantity of lakes as a special resource (Tuohino & Pitkänen 2003a).

Based on above-mentioned ideas, lake tourism research was recognised in Savonlinna when the *Lake Tourism project* was implemented at the University of Eastern Finland in 2001–2003. The aim of the project was to study and develop Finnish lakes as a special tourism resource but also as a tourism destination. The project consisted of three parts, with Lakes and Images focusing on the marketing of lakes. Articles I, II and III are the outcome of this research. The fourth article was produced as part of a project called *eGOOD - a cooperation network of the well-being services in Eastern Finland,* which was implemented between June 2006 and March 2008 in Eastern Finland. The project was funded by the Innovative Actions of Eastern Finland programme. The five businesses (fitness centres, hotels and holiday centres) involved in the project were committed to developing their services in a more customer-oriented way. They were also interested in positioning themselves in the well-being and wellness tourism sector, within a national and international context.

The present doctoral thesis approaches lake tourism from the viewpoint of geography, including specific conceptual approaches that are typical to humanistic geography. While a more traditional holistic approach interprets the landscape as a measurable part of the physical environment, humanistic geography presents a multi-layered view that goes beyond what we see, interpreting the landscape as a more comprehensive visual and experiential phenomenon created through our mind in addition to sensory observations. The landscape, therefore, is the totality of the knowledge and feelings particular to each observer (Hubbard *et al.* 2002).

1.2 Research aim and objectives

This thesis aims to focus on the meanings and content of lake tourism as a concept. A further aim is to bring geographical dimensions to [lake] tourism, not only to increase my own understanding of lake tourism and its elements, but also to seek how a human geographical approach can contribute new ideas to lake tourism development and especially to the marketing of lakes. This is done by seeking an answer to the following main research question:

What kinds of contents and meanings can Finnish lakes offer, and how can Finnish lake tourism be defined and conceptualised?

This question will be scrutinised by discussing diverse elements linked to lakes. In order to gain my main research aim, I am adapting different angles to increase more in-depth information about the topic. The diverse perspectives are studied in four individual articles, each presenting a case study example related to lake tourism and looking for an answer to the following sub-questions;

A. *What kind of images (via contemporary marketing) of Finnish Lakeland are evoked among potential tourists, and how does the marketing of lakes respond to the modern tourist's need for self-fulfilment, active participation and experience?*

B. *Can the tourist find or experience the spirit of the lake through photos used in marketing without direct on-site personal interaction with it?*

C. *In relation to the previous question, can an unfamiliar lake be full of meanings and awaken a sense of familiarity without direct personal on-site interaction?*

D. *How can the Finnish lake landscape be utilised in the core content of tourism product development?*

As the research process was a continuum for several years, the importance of each article is in producing new information and added value about lake tourism from different angles of approach. Therefore, no single answers are given by the questions; conversely, the results and findings can be seen as a summary of the whole research process. Articles I and II are responding to sub questions from A to C, while article IV is responding to D, but also utilizing the results of the previous articles. Article III is responding to the modified question A without a link to marketing. The focus of the thesis is strongly on mental images and experiencing a lake environment.

The research process was at first strongly focused on Finnish materials, as the whole research topic was new, and the usage of term lake tourism was not much used in that time. As the work progressed the international literature rose to a stronger position, especially in the writing processes of the separate articles. After the first International

Lake Tourism Conference in Savonlinna 2003 the significance of lake tourism research was moreover recognized at international level.

The research is deemed multidiscipline with geographical emphasis. Multidiscipline approach is challenging, as the theoretical base varies according to the discipline (see Jenkins 2003). Due to the fact that the approach of this synopsis is in geography, the other scientific approaches, e.g. marketing literature, are shortly presented to give a reader a base understanding of the angle of arrow. However I would like to highlight, that other scientific approaches have had the central roles in literature reviews and frameworks of the each article.

The novelty value of my doctoral thesis is potentially significant, as a similar kind of research has not been done earlier in Finland. There are also several arguments which justify the need of the present research. The importance of this kind of research was firstly based the well-established slogan 'Finland – the Land of a Thousand Lakes' which highlights strongly the numeric amount of Finnish lakes instead of content and meanings of the lakes. Secondly, the need of the research in the beginning of 2000s was supported by the argument of MacKay & Fesenmeier (1997) that the image research has mainly focused on the associations connected to the destination name instead of visual representations. At that time only very few empirical studies of tourists' landscape perception and preferences had been conducted, and even fewer consisting of visualization of landscapes through representational options like photos (see Squire 1994). Finally the most important factor was to find out, what lake tourism really means, as in that time it was a novelty concept. Recently the novelty value of the research is still topical, as official report of the country brand delegation raised lakes one of the key attractions in Finland to be marketed abroad.

1.3 Structure and the framework of the thesis

The thesis consists of a synopsis, one appendix and four individual research articles. The synopsis aims to bring together, discuss and contextualise the results of the articles. The synopsis consists of six sections with subsections. The introduction presents the background and the starting point of the research and the structure of the thesis. The section entitled *Towards an understanding of lake tourism* explores lake tourism research. The third section, *A geographical approach to lake tourism*, focuses on lake tourism in geographical research within the frameworks of destination, space, place, landscape and sense of place, and the positioning of the research. The fourth section, *Research methods and data*, presents the multiple methods and data used during the research process for the realisation of the objectives set in the articles. The fifth section, *A transformative approach to understanding lake tourism*, summarizes the findings of the research articles and responses to the research questions. Finally, the *Conclusion and discussion* section summarises the results of the research and discusses their significance in relation to the research objectives set in the introduction

and the framework presented in the section *Towards an understanding of lake tourism*. In the subsections, the relevance and validity of the research is discussed. Finally, I would like to highlight some managerial and research implications, practical implementations, as well as future research interests and topics.

The four attached articles present and discuss the findings of each part of the research. In Articles I (Tuohino & Pitkänen 2004a) and II (Tuohino 2006), answers are sought to research questions such as 'Can the tourist find or experience the spirit of a place through photos used in marketing without direct personal interaction or attachment to it?' 'Can the familiar be found in a unfamiliar place?' 'Can an unfamiliar place be full of meanings? In other words, could a strange place in a photograph feel familiar? Can the *genius loci*, the various associations connected with a place, be captured in the pictorial communication of tourism marketing? Can a mere mental image of a place limited by the sense of vision and the angle of view of the photographer arouse the motivation to travel to a destination that can be experienced more fully through all senses? (These are subquestions A to C). Article III (Tuohino & Pitkänen 2004b) uncovers new information on water-related human values as well as on people's relationships with waterscapes by asking how the meanings attached to water are similar and how they differ. How do people create personal bonds with a landscape? Do people have strong personal attachments to waterscapes? (Subquestion A). Article IV (Konu *et al.* 2010) in turn approaches lake tourism development from the point of view of product development, and discusses how a lake landscape can be used as a core resource of well-being tourism development by introducing the product concept for the Lake Wellness experience product (subquestion D).

The summary of the articles is given in Table 1 and the whole research framework is presented in Figure 1, which shows the integration and relations of the different articles in the framework of the research.

Table 1. Summary of the articles.

Research theme	Article	Purpose of the study	Main conclusions
Transformation of a lake landscape	The transformation of a neutral lake landscape into a meaningful experience. The interpretation of touristic photos	To present the (mental) images of Finnish Lakeland held by potential Italian and German tourists	A neutral lake landscape can be turned into a meaningful place through the experiences of the tourist. It became evident that the experience does not necessarily require a personal visit to a place, as respondents interpret photographic images as indicators of 'real'. Cultural differences also raised.
Sense and spirit of the lake	Lakes as an opportunity for tourism marketing. In search of the spirit of the lake	To find the sense and spirit of the lake	The respondents approached the photographs both as outsiders and as participating actors. The transformation of a neutral lake landscape into a meaningful experience depended on the aesthetic content of the photograph and its internal elements. The familiarity of the landscape acted as a catalyst for the topophilic sensations.
Landscape experiences	Selling Waterscapes	To identify how a landscape can be translated into a memorable experience	The ambiguity of landscape was raised. The attachment of all kinds of waterscapes was relatively strong. The meanings attached to water and waterscapes in general highlighted the importance of emotions. Waterscapes were perceived very personally. The semiotic approach highlighted the importance of language as the transmitter/originator. Cultural issues also came up.

Research theme	Article	Purpose of the study	Main conclusions
The lake as a resource for well-being	Lake Wellness – a practical example of a new service development (NSD) concept in tourism industries.	to discuss if the experiential environment of the lakes and lake landscape can act as a potential resource for the core content of a 'Lake Wellness' experience product.	The content of the Lake Wellness experience product is based on the unique features and resources of Eastern Finland. As such, the Lake Wellness products can help Eastern Finland to differentiate itself from other parts of Finland and raise the profile of the area as a well-being and wellness tourism destination in a national and international context. Lakes have to be brought 'alive' by giving them a meaning, which is understandable for the target audiences.
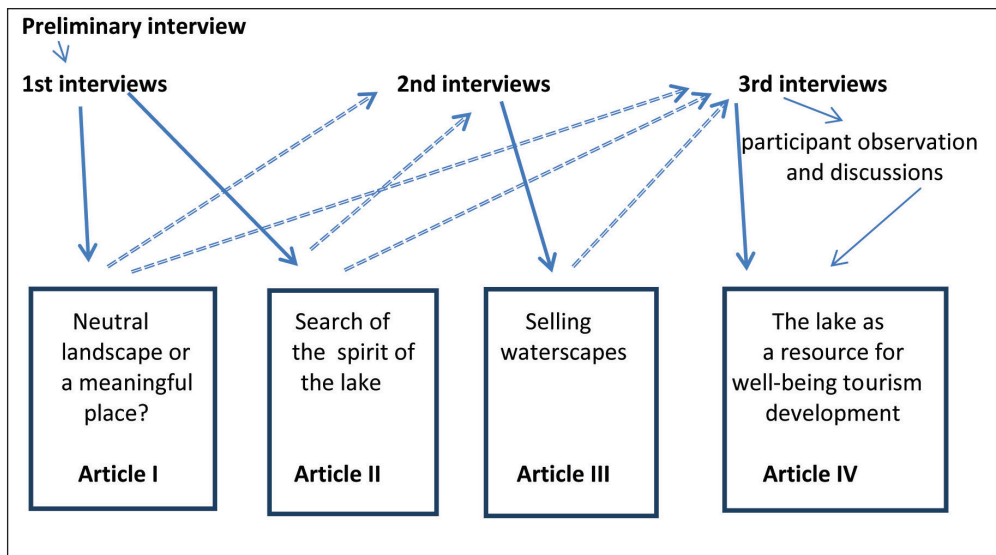
Figure 1. The integration and relations of the different articles in the framework of the research.

2 Towards an understanding of lake tourism

"'Water – the ace of elements. Water dives from the clouds without parachute, wings or safety net. Water runs over the steepest precipice and blinks not a lash. Water is buried and rises again: water walks on fire and fire get the blisters. Stylishly composed in any situation – solid, gas or liquid – speaking in penetrating dialects understood by all things – animal, vegetable or mineral – water travels intrepidly through four dimensions, sustaining, destroying and creating. Always in motion, ever-flowing, rhythmic, dynamic, ubiquitous, changing and working its changes, a mathematics turned wrong side out, a philosophy in reverse, the ongoing odyssey of water is virtually irresistible."

Robbins, 1976

Water, as one of the most powerful symbolic resources mobilized by the human imagination, is an essential element for life and the main component of all living existence (Brito-Henriques *et al.* 2010a; Shi & Tang 2013). Water plays a central symbolic role in many forms of spiritual and social practices (Burmil *et al.* 1999). As Hadwen (2007, 555) said, 'Being near, on, or in water is an appealing component of many tourism and recreational pursuits.' More importantly, water acts as a powerful magnet for tourists by providing the scenery for leisure and recreation activities (Gonçalves 2010), and water features in a landscape play a significant role in the decision-making to travel to a certain destination (Burmil *et al.* 1999: Moreira & Santos 2010; Shi & Tang 2013). As Shi and Tang (2013) argue, water-based tourism mainly relies on aesthetic values. It is also well documented that many destinations and attractions rely on a consistent supply of fresh water in order to maintain a viable tourism sector (Lehmann 2010).

Lakes are normally perceived by people as natural spaces, and even as 'wild', despite having been used and transformed by humans throughout history (Brito-Henriques *et al.* 2010a). The utilisation of lakes in tourism has a long history. Early on, European explorers understood the value of lake destinations. The first references can be found as early as the 15th century, when lakes were more passageways than destinations (Aitchison *et al.* 2000). In the Romantic period, the touristic value of lakes was publicised by visual artists and poets inspired by lake environments (Aitchison *et al.* 2000). The English Lake District was also characterised by Urry (1990) as the object of the romantic gaze due to

its apparent authenticity and historical aspects. In tourism literature, the earliest examples and the most noteworthy in the lake context were *A Description of the Lake at Keswick in Cumberland* (1770), *Journal in the Lakes* (1775), and Exc*ursion to the Lakes in Westmorland and Cumberland* (1773, 1774, 1776). Later, the title *Guide to the Lakes* was used as a common name for lake tourism guidebooks, as Wordsworth, for example, mentioned in 1835 in his *Guide to the Lakes* book, that there were already books with the same name in 1778 and 1780, as well as books by Thomas West in 1778, 1779, 1784, 1789 and Green's in 1818 (Wordsworth 1977; see also Scott 2010).

The earliest travel literature on the Finnish lakes was published in the 1800s, including Saint Julien 1833/1854 (Hirn & Markkanen 1987; Tweedie 1995). In Finland, Lakeland has always had a central role in national imagery and lakes have also served as a source of inspiration for poets (e.g. Topelius 1872-1874/1998) and painters (see Häyrynen 1994). The Lakeland landscape was chosen as a national symbol at the beginning of 20th century because it fulfilled the aesthetic preferences of that time. The landscape was also a geographically important glacial monument with a strong Finnish culture, in contrast to the surrounding Swedish and Russian-speaking areas. Thereby, the lake landscape had an important influence on the development of the Finnish national spirit in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Finland was profiled as the country of a thousand lakes and the Finnish lake landscape as a romanticised national landscape. At the same time, the attractiveness of the exotic wilderness of Eastern and Northern Finland also created a basis for tourism. During the first period of tourism (1837-1856), Finnish Lakeland and the inland archipelago began to attract more and more visitors. In the late 1800s, Finland was promoted as a country of nightless nights, a thousand lakes and a sunny archipelago (Hirn & Markkanen 1987; Häyrynen 1994, 2000; see also Pitkänen & Vepsäläinen 2006). Ever since, Finland has been promoted as 'the land of a thousand lakes', and lakes are still considered to be one of the main tourist attractions in Finland. Finnish Lakeland was also defined as one of the five macro regions for tourism development in Finland (Artman *et al.* 1978; Vuoristo & Vesterinen 2001; Vuoristo 2002; Leinonen *et al.* 2007). The Finnish lake landscape became a part of our identity (Vuoristo 2002; Tuohino & Pitkänen 2003b; Article I).

As a consequence, a demand arose for tourism services in lake destinations which, together with rapidly developing travel in the modern period, led to the large-scale commercial exploitation of lake environments (see e.g. Ryhänen 2001; Tuohino 2008; Tuohino & Dávid 2012). Against this historical background, it may be quite difficult to understand that research literature on lake destinations as a touristic phenomenon is still relatively hard to find (Tuohino 2008; Tuohino & Dávid, 2012; Article I). As mentioned in the introduction, a minor emphasis on Finnish Lakeland was also mentioned by Vuoristo and Vesterinen (2001), who based their argument on the point that because of Finland's topography and winter-time attractions, the country's image needs to be more versatile.

2.1 Towards lake tourism as a research topic

Due to the multidimensional nature of tourism, new typologies of tourism have come into existence and many different forms of tourism have co-existed over the last decade (Rodrigues *et al.* 2015). Several terms have also been used when talking about water-related tourism resources, including marine tourism, river tourism, canal tourism, coastal tourism, marina-based tourism, and more recently lake tourism (Goossen 2006; Hall & Härkönen 2006b; Brito-Henriques *et al.* 2010; Moreira & Santos 2010; Rodrigues *et al.* 2015). As an alternative, in Canada lake tourism is often seen as a synonym for 'cottage country', due to the lakeside cottages (Smith 2003). Hunt (2009) correspondingly spoke about remote tourism due to the remote location of lakes not accessible by car. Gartner (2006) in turn stated that lake tourism is rural tourism. He justified his statement by saying that lake tourism is strongly linked with rural activities (fishing, boating and shoreline home development) and hence rural areas act as gateways or service centres for lake tourism.

Although lakes have long been a central focus of leisure and tourism activities, lakes became foci of international tourism research at the beginning of the 2000s. (Hall & Härkönen 2006b; see also Hadwell 2007). Good examples of this are the International Lake Tourism Conferences and the first lake tourism-focused book '*An Integrated Approach to Lacustrine Tourism Systems*' (Hall & Härkönen 2006). Notwithstanding what we will see later, the concept of lake tourism is not straightforward. According to Hall (2009), the increase in and significance of lake tourism research can be explained by three reasons, namely i) the commoditisation of lakes and lake communities via tourism and place marketing, ii) the increase in visitor numbers as well as the development of seasonal and permanent leisure and amenity migration, and iii) increased concern over the environmental and social impacts of tourism and amenity migration on lake systems.

The Lake Tourism project (2001–2003) can be considered as a starting point for lake tourism research and the subsequent sequence of lake tourism conferences (Tuohino & Dávid 2012; see also Hall & Härkönen 2006). One of the main aims of the project developed by the University of Joensuu (since 2010 the University of Eastern Finland) was to create a network of international lake tourism researchers and to arrange the first international conference. At that time, 'Lake tourism' as a term or a concept was not commonly used among researchers. *Concept* can be used and defined in various ways, such as interchangeably with *construct* (Pearce 2012), as a general representation of the phenomena to be studied (Veal 2006) or as an idea originating from a given model (Finn *et al.* 2000). I understand and use *a lake tourism concept* as a bundle of meanings or characteristics associated or connected with lakes, i.e. resources available, services and products produced, circumstances of an operational environment, customer needs, values and behaviours.

Lake tourism as a concept is multifaceted (Tuohino 2008; Tuohino & Dávid 2012; Rodrigues *et al.* 2015). Hall and Härkönen stated (2006b, 5) that '*The idea of lake tourism reinforces the idea that there are certain geographical entities that, because of their particular environmental*

characteristics, are often designated as a separate type of tourism in which the specific environment serves to attract particular activities and which serve to convey certain environmental images as a part of destination promotion.' In Finland, the concept of lake tourism was probably used for the first time in an official context by the Lake Tourism Committee, appointed by the government in 1970, which submitted its report at the end of March 1972 (Ryhänen 2001). Today the concept is used in a general way when discussing tourism in the context of lakes. To give an example, Vuoristo and Vesterinen (2001, 170) used the general concept by saying: '… *the image of Finland as a promised land of lake tourism.'*

Research on lakes or other aquatic landscapes as a human experience was relatively scarce in the early 2000s (Hall & Härkönen 2006; Hadwen 2007), especially in the field of geography and tourism studies. To give a few examples, Schroeder (1996) and Bricker and Kerstetter (2002) have focused on the meanings tourists give to the environment when they use it, and Kerstetter and Bricker (2009) on examining the sense of place of local residents in a Fijian village. Hudson (2002) has examined the fulfilment of tourist expectations of a waterfall from a historical perspective, and Sharpley and Jepson (2011) the personal experiences of the English Lake District in searching for spiritual fulfilment. In Finland, the first human geographic research papers in the lake and tourism contexts were published in early 2000. Finnish lake tourism research has focused among others on lake representations from cartographical (Kokkonen & Peltonen 1999; Kokkonen 2001) and marketing (Pitkänen & Vepsäläinen 2006) perspectives, on the touristic image of Finland (Tuohino 2001; see also Tuohino *et al.* 2004), the environmental images of rowers and non-rowers during Sulkava Rowing Event (Tuohino 2003b), tour skating innovation processes among small and medium-sized tourism enterprises (Kokkonen & Tuohino 2007), and the impact of (environmental) lake quality on human perception and sense of place (Stedman *et al.* 2003).

As lake tourism is a specific theme and was raised significantly during the Lake Tourism project, it makes sense to briefly present the outcomes of the conferences, as this helps to better understand the topics related to lake tourism research during the last decade. The First International Lake Tourism Conference in June 2003 looked at the dilemma of lakes in tourism within four themes: lakes as a tourism destination (e.g. Gardiner 2003; Goossen 2003), nature and culture as a resource in lake tourism development (e.g. Cooper 2003), the planning and management of lake destination development (e.g. Gartner 2003), and value added services and marketing of lake destinations (e.g. Erkkila 2003; Tuohino 2003a). Within the above-mentioned themes, environmental issues also came up (e.g. Dávid 2003; Furgala-Selezniow *et al.* 2003; Stedman *et al.* 2003, see also Tuohino & Dávid 2012). The first lake tourism conference was closely linked to the meeting of the International Association of Tourism (IAST). The key issues that came up in the IAST workshop focused on the operational environment and its challenges, business models and the measurement of successful business, and knowledge management and the transfer of knowledge and innovations as a builder for success (Tuohino & Härkönen 2003b). The concluding message from the international experts was that both the local operational

environment and local culture must act as catalysts in innovation-creating processes and especially in image marketing strategies. After the conference and the end of the Lake Tourism project, the ten proposals for lake tourism development were presented (Tuohino & Härkönen 2003a; Tuohino & Dávid 2012). The subsequent conferences in China in 2007, Hungary in 2009, Canada in 2009 and Poland in 2012 continued the discussions of lake tourism development, communication and the functions of lakes. Higher priorities were focused on the sustainability and protection of lakes. Attachment I presents more detail on all the results and concluding declarations of the conferences. All five conferences also gave a good overview of lake tourism development on both natural lakes (Finland, Canada and Poland) as well as on artificial lakes or reservoirs (China and Hungary). In a nutshell, it can be said that lake tourism development faces global problems but the solutions should be identified and resolved locally (see also Tuohino & Dávid 2012). Another significant notion is that the current lake tourism research does not observe lakes at all from the perspective of its contents and offerings or as a human experience.

In addition to the above-mentioned platforms, there has been a growing number of lake-related tourism research done outside the conferences within geographical and regional studies. The Great Lakes in North America are arguably the most researched lake systems in the world, especially from the viewpoint of recreation and tourism (Hall & Härkönen 2006). Until the 1980s, lake research in Canada and the United States was strongly focused on the recreational use of lakes instead of tourism. This is explained by Butler (2004) by stating that leisure studies have been a major area of research in North America and therefore an immense amount of research on recreation done by geographers has been categorised under leisure studies. However, in recent decades tourism research has become more common.

In China, lake tourism has become '*an important component of China's tourism industry*' (Fuhua 2010, 102). Ecological issues are highlighted. To give some examples, Zhang *et al.* (2009) indicated that the renovation of urban wetlands helped to cultivate the ecological resources and urban landscape in Suzhou Taihu Lake, Wang and Yang (2009) analysed the Kanasi Lake tourism industry and it impacts on the water environment, Na (2010) defined the basic diagnostic method and index to study ecological security in the Dongting Lake Tourism Area, Li & Zhang (2011) focused on ecological tourism and community participation at Dongqian Lake, and Yang (2013) on ethnic tourism and minority identity on Lugu Lake. In Heilongjian Province, Shi and Tang (2013) have studied the economic value of ecosystem services of water-based tourism resources, and Fuhua (2010) studied the sustainable development of lake tourism. In Hungary, Lake Balaton was studied e.g. by Löcsei (2008), who discussed the challenges in regional development, whereas Puczkó and Rátz (2000) focused on how both residential and touristic perceptions of the physical impacts of tourism affect the sustainability of tourism at Balaton. In Ghana, Amuquandoh (2010) studied the perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism in Lake Bosomtwe Basin, whereas Mangan *et al.* (2013) estimated the recreational value of Keenjhar Lake by putting a monetary value on the recreational benefits provided by

this, Pakistan's largest freshwater lake. Ranade (2008) studied the future challenges of lake tourism in India from a managerial point of view. The climatic impacts on lakes were studied by Soja *et al.* (2013), who showed the significant risk of hydrological deficits in Austria, and Dávid *et al.* (2012), who focused on climate change and its possible effects in Hungarian and Finnish lakes. Tervo-Kankare (2012) also touched on this topic in Finland. Truly (2002) presented a conceptual matrix to better understand international retirement migration to Mexico's Lake Chapala Riviera. In the United Kingdom, Bramwell (2007) studied the organisational complexity at Windermere in the Lake District National Park and Scott (2010) the cultural economy of the landscape in relation to three critical social groups, namely local producers of goods and services, residents and visitors/tourists in the English Lake District.

Second home research (e.g. Pitkänen & Kokki 2005; Hiltunen 2007; Moss 2009; Otero *et al.* 2009; Pitkänen 2011; Borsdorf *et al.* 2012; Lipkina 2013) is strongly linked to the recreational use of lakes, but also to lake tourism. Furthermore, there are special journals for research on lakes with an emphasis on sustainability. *The Journal of Great Lakes Research* is a multidisciplinary publication with topics in the fields of biology, chemistry, physics and geology of the world's large lakes and their watersheds, while *Lakes and Reservoirs: Research and Management* is the official publication of the International Lake Environment Committee, with an emphasis on environmentally sound management of natural and artificial lakes, consistent with sustainable development policies. An extensive body of literature adjoining the biological, hydrological and environmental topics in the lake context is beyond the scope of this thesis.

As I have already argued, lake tourism as a concept is multifaceted and immensely problematic. While summarising the above-mentioned review of lake tourism literature, it is easy to say that the concept of lake tourism as such is rarely used or defined. Hadwen (2007) supported this by declaring that Hall and Härkönen (2006) failed to define not only what the lake environment is but also lake tourism. Furthermore, Hadwen continued by saying that lake tourism is too narrow a concept for the range of various aquatic ecosystem cases presented in the Hall's and Härkönen's book.

Table 2 shows the selected descriptions of lake tourism and lake destinations identified through the literature review. As we can see, lake tourism definitions are diverse in the reviewed literature and there is no common definition for the concept. According to Smith (2003), lake tourism does not only create and communicate knowledge; it also applies knowledge as an involved and ethical element of the larger tourism community. Fuhua's (2010) definition is the most comprehensive with its aesthetic and sensory values. When I started my research process I followed the definition of Ryhänen (2001), but his viewpoint excludes the experiential perspective proposed by Fuhua. In addition, Hemmi (2005), while defining lake tourism in his book *Tourism, Environment, Nature,* used the definition put forward by Ryhänen (2001). Lake tourism is commonly described from the destination perspective without defining lake tourism per se.

Table 2. Selected descriptions of lake tourism and lake destinations.

Author	Description of lake tourism and lake destinations
(Ryhänen, 2001, 4)	'Lake tourism is tourism that knowingly takes advantage of various physical, operational and symbolic resources of Finnish lakes in generating attractive, experiential and profitable tourism business and…is involved in complying with the principles of sustainability.' 'From the viewpoint of the tourist, a lake as a destination is a place with a definite location situated away from home, and having a number of services for the tourist. Before making a travel decision, the tourist has formed an image of the lake destination when studying the promotional material of the destination, such as on a website.' 'A lake as tourist destination is ultimately constituted only when tourists come to it from somewhere else. Before that, every lake destination is an unknown blue spot on the map, which is only significant as a piece of the physical environment and as a social and cultural dimension of the local community unconnected to tourism structures elsewhere.'
(Hall & Härkönen, 2006, 4, 5)	'… lake tourism is tourism that occurs not only on the lake itself, but also in the surrounding area. Lacustrine tourism systems therefore include the lake, the foreshore, and those amenities, facilities and infrastructure in the surrounding region that support the role of the lake as a tourist destination.' '… the idea of lake tourism reinforces the idea that there are certain geographical entities that, because of their particular environmental characteristics are often designated as a separate type of tourism, in which the specific environment serves to attract particular activities and which serve to convey certain environmental images as part of destination promotion.'
(Cooper, 2006, 27, 28)	'As well as natural features, lakes are also critical in supporting human life and have a social significance dating back thousands of years; indeed, lakeshores are significant archaeological resources, having supported settlements for centuries.' 'In terms of analysis of tourism destinations, lakes are significant.' 'Lakes represent resource-based tourism attractions.' 'Taking the lead of the WTO, we can think of lake destinations as being (1) cultural appraisals, comprised of images and perceptions; (2) perishable and vulnerable to change; (3) used by multiple users or stakeholders; (4) complex amalgams in need of management.'
(Erkkilä, 2006, 207)	'In the case of lake-destination tourism, other influential groups frequently come into play, suggesting that the successful development and marketing of lake-destination areas may be more complicated, requiring careful attention to all stakeholders' needs and obtaining adequate information to make sound decisions.'

(Ranade, 2008,.543)	'A lake as a tourist destination is generally a functionally compact regional whole with clear geographical limits. A single lake destination is sometimes surrounded by a compact cluster of tourism activities. A lake destination in some cases is a part of a larger region (lake district destination) inside which there are several small lakes, and the whole region is connected.'
Fuhua, 2010, 102	'Lake tourism is a kind of tourism which provides a full range of tourism services and products related to hydrological changes of lakes, enchanting landscapes, a harmonious ecological environment, a rich cultural heritage and complete recreational equipment and facilities.'
	'Lake tourism is also a travel experience for the purpose of viewing the special features of the environment and taking part in various activities.'
	'Lake tourism includes three levels of content. The core layer is touring the lake, including sightseeing on islands, taking part in water sports and recreational activities and water agriculture tourism; the surrounding layer is a tour on the shore of the lake, including watching migrant birds, visiting aquariums, playing on the lake beach, etc.; and the diffusion layer is touring around the lake, including sightseeing, leisure, recuperation, conferences and investigation on a larger scale.'
Wang & Chen, 2011, 1750	'Lake tourist resources are the basic premise of lake tourism development – how the lake is able to appeal to tourists, stimulate tourist travel motivations, be used for tourism development, and bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the local community.'
Gartner, 2006, 169	'Lake tourism is rural tourism.'
	'Referring to Gunn's (1979) original schematic of tourism development, there must be some type of gateway or service centre for lake tourism to flourish.'
Smith, 2003, 15	'Lake tourism is tourism activity for which a lake is either a motivator or a significant resource that contributes to the experience of that activity.'
	'Lake tourism is not only creating land communicating knowledge but also applying knowledge as involved and ethical members of larger tourism community.'
	'Lake tourism has the following perspectives; lake tourism as a human experience, as a social phenomenon, as a geographical phenomenon, as a resource user and as a resource.'

In order to learn more comprehensively about lake tourism and lakes as destinations, in the following section I will study them in more depth by taking a geographical approach. The framework of the thesis will follow the ideas of the tourist experience model of Holden (2001). The framework is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The tourist experience model in the lake context (Adapted by author from Holden 2001, Table 1.1).

	The lake as a setting for action	The lake as a social system	The lake as emotional territory	The lake as self
Interpretation	Primarily interpreted in a functional way as a place for hedonism, relaxation and recuperation	A place to interact with family and friends	Strong emotional feelings associated with, or invoked by, the environment, which provide a sense of well-being	The merging of the physical and cultural environment with the self
Behaviour	A conscious or subconscious disregard for the environment	A focus of experience centres on social relationships	Sense of well-being	Strong attachment to landscape and cultures
Environmental attitudes	A lack of interest in learning more about its natural or cultural history	Physical setting irrelevant	Wonder at being in a different environment	Destination is perceived as being better than that of home environment

3 A geographical approach to lake tourism

3.1 Tourism and human geography

Tourism is generally recognised as the world's largest industry (see e.g. Hall & Page 2006), which continued its upward trajectory with a 5% growth in 2013, or 52 million more tourists crossing international borders (UWNTO 2014). As tourism is a form of temporary, leisure-oriented mobility with both spatial and temporal dimensions (Hall & Page 2006), tourism is in essence a geographic phenomenon (Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993; Hall & Page 2006) that human geographers should not ignore (Williams 2009). Tourism is also recognised as a dynamic process (Saarinen, 2004a) and as a part of wider regional structures, scales and processes (Saarinen 2013).

The roots of geographical tourism research are in North America in the 1920s (Hall & Lew 1998; Hall & Page 2006). However, it wasn't until the turn of the 1960s and 1970s when geographic tourism research started to accelerate with publications on tourism and recreation (Hall & Lew 1998; Butler 2004; Hall & Page 2006; Gibson 2008; Pearce 2011). Mitchell (1979, 235) stated at the end of the 1970s that '*the geography of tourism is limited by a dearth of published research in geographical journals, the relatively few individuals who actively participate in the sub-discipline, and the lack of prestige the subject matter specialty has in geography.*' The growth in tourism geography occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s as human geography itself diversified (Gibson 2008). However, the dialogue between tourism researchers and social and human geographers was still relatively weak in the 1990s, and tourism research positioning within the discipline of geography was independent of scientific mainstreams (Squire 1994). However, in the early 2000s tourism and leisure and recreation research still had a negative image and a rather weak position and significance within geography. Tourism geographers were seen as a sub-community of the geographic community in the wider academic communities (Butler 2004; Coles 2004; Hall & Page 2006; Gibson 2008). In addition, tourism research has always been multidisciplinary (Squire 1994). In the Nordic countries, geographical tourism studies were initially focused on regional structures, the economics of tourism and supply-demand patterns in a spatial context. The first regional case-oriented pioneering studies in Finland were carried out in the 1960s and 1970s. At that time, tourism was seen as an industry because of its economic contribution and its regional context (Saarinen 2013). In the 1980s and early 1990s, the behavioural approach became more common and was characterised by individual and human preferences, decision-making processes and behaviour in natural environments (Saarinen 2013). The methodological approach towards qualitative research also appeared. Within the last two decades, geographical studies on tourism have increased in the Nordic countries and have become more versatile and internationalised (Saarinen 2013).

Tourism is a complex phenomenon with geographically disconnected actors on the demand and supply side, but on the other hand, consumption (demand) and production (supply) occur in the same place (Vanhove 2011). An essential epistemology of human geography is that people structure their experiences of the world through the creation of places (Lew 2003). However, despite of the humanistic viewpoint, place experiences have received fewer attention among geographers until 1990s (Squire 1994). From the human geographical viewpoint, tourism refers to the movement of people and their physical and sociocultural stay in a place (Saarinen 2001; Gómez Martín 2005). Being a tourist is to experience tourism in places (see e.g. Bærenholdt *et al.* 2004). Tourism also has a significant social and cultural implication on people and places. Hence, as the world of tourism in certain places, (or in this case lakes), as venues for tourism is a rapidly expanding one, this provides a wealth of information on the human–place phenomenon (Lew 2003, Bærenholdt *et al.* 2004.)

Tourism as a concept is strongly linked to leisure and recreation, as all three concepts are seen as a set of interrelated and overlapped (Williams 2009; Hall & Page 2006; Vanhove 2011). Tourism and recreation are deemed part of the wider concept of leisure (Williams 2009; Hall & Page 2006). In this thesis, the main focus is on tourism, while even the link to recreation and leisure cannot be excluded as lake tourism is strongly connected to the recreational and leisure use of lakes. I am following on from the early definitions of Burkart and Medlik (1974, 1981), in which tourism is described as the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside their normal everyday life. Tourism is a leisure activity which involves the use of time and money, and recreation is often the main purpose for participation in tourism. The above does not exclude business travel, which also has links to the use of leisure and recreational activities.

3.2 The lake as a destination

In understanding lake tourism, it is also necessary to recognise lakes as a tourism destination, as the destination is a central feature of tourism research (Kozak *et al.* 2004; Pearce 2014) due to its significant constructs for the examination of tourism with a geographically bounded locality, in which both economic and social interactions occur (Tinsley & Lynch 2007). Despite this, *destination* is by nature a challenging concept because its spatial approach is often from a technical and static viewpoint (Saarinen 2004a). For example, in the context of lakes, the water surface is a compact, well-distinguished area of a known landscape, while the lacustrial milieu is the objective projection of the experience of space used by tourism (Saarinen 2001; Michalkó & Rátz (2006; Jenkins *et al.* 2011; Tuohino & Dávid 2012: article III). According to Jenkins *et al.* (2011), the question is also about who defines a destination and why.

Destinations are traditionally defined as geographical areas, such as a country, an island or a town (Burkart & Medlik 1974; Davidson & Maitland 1997), or as a unit of action

where different private and public stakeholders, e.g. companies and public organisations, interact and provide all the facilities, infrastructure and services needed for a holiday, which are distinct from the visitors' usual place (Cooper *et al.* 1998; Buhalis 2000; Ryan & Cave 2005; Pechlaner *et al.* 2009; Jenkins *et al.* 2011; Saraniemi &Kylänen 2011; Vanhove 2011; Bregoli & Del Chiappa 2013), although Pearce (2014) argued that destination is a commonly-used term without definition. Tuohino and Konu (2014) correspondingly defined destination as a geographical area including various tourism products and services and the prerequisites needed for realising them, while Flognfeldt (2005) stated that tourism destinations include features that inherently contribute to the attraction. Buhalis (2000, 97) in turn highlights that '…*it is increasingly recognized that a destination can also be a perceptual concept, which can be interpreted subjectively by consumers, depending on their travel itinerary, cultural background, purpose of visit, educational level and past experience*'. Saarinen (2001, 2004) proposed that a tourism destination is a dynamic and historical-spatial unit that evolves over time and space through certain discourses and discursive practices. Thus, destinations are produced and reproduced through combinations of social, cultural, political and economic relationships. Bærenholdt *et al.* (2004) approached tourism as a social and cultural practice by stating that places receive their meaning only through concrete production and consumption processes that connect people to the realm by contextualising their experiences (see also Saraniemi & Kylänen 2011), while Ritchie and Crouch (2000) stated that the destination experience is the fundamental product of tourism. Special destinations, like lakes, are characterised by their distinct, often unique, resource base for their tourism development (Kokkonen 2003).

Lakes have come to be recognised as a significant resource for tourism and leisure (Hall 2009). The built-up and natural physical environment of a destination, its local culture and its community spirit can be considered as core resources in tourism. From the resource point of view, attractions are of vital importance, as without them there is no tourism (Ritchie & Crouch 2000, 2003/2005, 2011: Sheldon & Park 2009; Vanhove 2011) Itkonen and Kortelainen (1998) divide lake resources into physical, functional and symbolic resources. From the tourism point of view, the lake resource forms a physical framework for the detection and experience setting manifested as a visual experience and a sensory-based landscape experience. As a functional resource, a lake provides opportunities for versatile recreational and leisure activities. The lake as water and a water system provides a comprehensive frame for a variety of independent or guided activities and tourism products or services built by local tourism entrepreneurs. As a symbolic resource, a lake has many subjective experienced meanings, e.g. as a lake landscape.

The attractiveness of a destination as a marketing resource can be considered from different angles, such as those of nature and landscape, climate, culture, history, the possibility of engaging in various activities, and accessibility. However, the resource itself is not a product. Rather, existing resources are the necessary precondition for the creation of a travel experience that can be turned into a saleable tourism product (Järviluoma 1994; Middleton 1997; Middleton & Clarke 2001; see also Bærenholdt *et al.*

2004). In the development of a customer-oriented tourism destination, an important role has long been played by marketing, which probes the wishes and likings of tourists. As mentioned earlier, marketing strategies are too often created without proper knowledge of what the tourist really wants. Marketing organisations create their own strategies and the tourism providers their own products without cooperating with one another (see also Vanhove 2011). From the marketing management viewpoint, destinations are considered to be a traditional commodity product and therefore agglomerations of both public and private facilities and services designed to meet the needs of tourists (e.g. Kotler *et al.* 1999; Pavlovich 2003; Dredge & Jenkins 2003; Cooper *et al.* 2005; Saraniemi & Kylänen 2011). As for lake tourism, destination marketing has barely even started (Tuohino & Pitkänen 2003b), even though lakes are significant tourism destinations (Cooper 2006). As mentioned in the introduction, the marketing of the Finnish lake regions has mainly rested on nature and landscapes, since our lakes are mainly sold with an emphasis on virgin forest. In the Western world, the wilderness is historically part of 'otherness' to us. It is *terra incognita*, a strange region outside the sphere of Western civilisation. In the last few years, however, it has quickly come into public awareness as a tourism resource and has attracted a growing amount of research (see e.g. Hall & Page 2002, 2006; Saarinen 2005). In particular, marketing based on special products or interests (e.g. island tourism, alpine tourism, or in this case lake tourism) has developed on the basis of individualised destination marketing (Walsh *et al.* 2001; Tuohino & Pitkänen 2003b).

Tourists frequently seek locations and activities that are transcendent (Smith & Kelly 2006); places that influence the quality of experience (Sheldon & Park 2009). De Botton (2002) described how travellers are attracted to landscapes that benefit their soul by making them feel small, yet part of an infinite and universal cycle (see also Smith 2003; Smith & Kelly 2006). Therefore, it is no coincidence then that many wellness centres are located beside the ocean or on a mountain top. For instance, Pechlaner and Fischer (2006) note the importance of location in the context of Alpine wellness. To follow this idea, the positioning of Finnish well-being and wellness tourism should inevitably be based on the best natural resources that Finnish Lakeland in particular has, namely the lakes (see Article IV).

The *image* of the destination is undoubtedly one of the most important motivations for travel (Gartner 1997: Komppula *et.al.* 2006; Hsu & Song 2013). The importance of destination image is universally acknowledged, since it affects the individual's subjective perception, behaviour and destination choice (Jenkins 1999; Gallarza *et al.* 2002). Image is of paramount significance in tourism where primary resources (climate, monuments, traditions, ecology) and secondary resources (accommodation, transport, catering and activities) are the basis for the production of services (Rodrigues *et al.* 2011). The term 'image' appears in connection with places in English geographical literature as far back as 1912 (Shields 1991), but actual image research started in the 1960s (e.g. Reynolds 1965 cited by Fakeye & Crompton 1991). In tourism research the importance of image increased

during the 1970s, and Gunn (1972) and Crompton (1979) can be seen as the pioneers of image research. Since then, destination image has been one of the most popular topics and image formation is widely discussed in tourism literature (e.g. Gartner 1989, 1993, 1996; Echtner & Ritchie 1991, 1993, 2003; Dann 1996; Pritchard & Morgan 1995: Selby & Morgan 1996: Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Jenkins 1999; Kozak *et al.* 1999; Miller *et al.* 2000; Walsh *et al.* 2001: Gallarza *et al.* 2002; Pike 2002; Beerli & Martín 2004; Prentice 2004: Tasci *et al.* 2007; Navrátil *et al.* 2012; Elliot *et al.* 2013; Hammett 2014; Rodrigues *et al.* 2015), yet even in the late 1990s there was criticism of image research because of its lack of frameworks (Fakeye & Crompton cited by Gallarza *et al.* 2002) or theoretical basis (Gartner 1986). In the lake tourism context, Erkkilä (2006), for example, identified the need for an integrated approach towards marketing and lake destination development, Carr (2006) examined the cultural significance of lakes in comparisons between Maori and non-Maori values in association with national park lakes in New Zealand, Rodrigues *et al.* (2012) applied the life-cycle model in the Umbrella Constructs, and Rodrigues *et al.* (2015) explored the cognitive image of lakes on the Lakelubbers website (www.lakelubbers.com).

Pearce (1988, 162) stated that '*image is one of those terms that will not go away, a term with vague and shifting meanings*'. However, the term is problematic due to its use in a variety of contexts. It can project the destination image built by the place marketers, the publicly held or stereotypical image or the image held by individuals (Morgan & Pritchard 1998; Jenkins 1999; Gartner 2000; Hammett 2014). Especially in Finland, the English term *image* raises problems in its interpretation as the word describes both the image created by marketing and mental image created by a person (Karvonen 1999; Äikäs 2001; Tuohino 2001; Kauppila & Äikäs 2002). Today, image is an elusive concept, a single word with different ideas or meanings. As Rodrigues *et al.* (2011) argued, there might not even be a single image of image (see also Gallarza *et al.* 2002). Gunn (1972) suggested that destination image falls on a continuum that starts with an organic image based on an actual experience of or a visit to a place, followed by an induced image because of external information. The induced images are created on the basis of publicity materials as well as non-tourism sources such as the media and the arts (Tuan 1977; Crompton 1979; Uzzell 1984; Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993; Walsh *et al.* 2001). Gartner (1993) developed Gunn's idea further by stating that a cognitive image refers to intellectual evaluations of known attributes of a destination, affective images are emotional and related to motives in destination choice, and conative images are analogous to behaviour and evolve from cognitive and affective images. Echtner and Ritchie (1991, 1993, 2003) in turn gave the idea of the holistic functional (tangible) and psychological (intangible) components of a destination image. Selby (2004) reinforced the discussion of image by adding that *naïve image* would be a useful concept while studying potential visitors without first-hand experience of the destination. While modifying the Integrated Model of Place Image (IMPI) after Elliot *et al.* (2013), I could summarise the following four image constructs: (i) a cognitive (beliefs) and affective (feelings) lake image; (ii) beliefs about a lake's products and about a lake as

a tourism destination; (iii) familiarity with the lake as a producer and a destination; and (iv) receptivity towards a lake as a source of products and a destination. The country image affects beliefs, familiarity affects to beliefs and beliefs to behaviour (receptivity).

As Urry (1990) stated, the basic motivation for consumption is the search of pleasure instead of materialism. Pine and Gilmore (1999) also declared that the movement towards an experience-based economy occurs. This leads to a situation where people are looking for new stages of development for their activities and their mental images replace the reality. Products and services are no longer sufficient. Quite the contrary, there is a need for experience offerings (Shaw & Williams 2004; Vanhove 2011). Creating a tourist experience has become a new form of tourism (Vanhove 2011). The choice of destination is guided by values, attitudes, experiences, motivations, beliefs and social groups (Tuohino 2001; Prentice 2014). Since personal interpretation plays an important role in the acquisition of information, it becomes the target for place-marketing (Schellhorn & Perkins 2004). According to Shields (1991, 60) place images are '*the various discrete meanings associated with real places or regions regardless of their character in reality.*' Against this viewpoint it is also important to know what potential customers really want, as they are not often used as a target group for image studies. It is also important to recognise the cultural backgrounds of target groups, as destination image varies according to one's national or racial/ethnic origin, and cultural difference is often used to account for the differences in how people from diverse backgrounds perceive a destination. The destination may also appear in a totally different way in terms of shape, content and relationships to a visitor because of the various cultural approaches (MacKay & Fesenmaier 2000; Kozak *et al.* 2004: Saraniemi & Kylänen 2011; Mendoza & Morén-Alegret 2012).

3.3 The lake as a space, place and landscape

The main focus of this thesis is in seeing and experiencing a [lake]landscape. The key concepts of the research are the basic concepts of geography – space, place, [lake] landscape and sense of place (Tuan 1977, 1979a, 1979b; Karjalainen 1986; Haarni *et al.* 1997; Häkli 1999; Aitchison 1999; Hall & Page 2002; Saarinen 2004a) – linked with the image. In human geography, the landscape, space and place refer correspondingly to '*an environment felt to be important in human life, which is loved, admired and rejected, an environment which is interpreted and "read"*' (Porteus 1990, cited by Häkli 1999:82). In the tourism context, this implies the examination of place as a social space and from the perspective of the offering of tourist destinations (production of space) and touristic demand (consumption of space) (Gottdiener 2000; Saarinen 2004a; Williams 2009, see also Vanhove 2011).

Space as an umbrella term refers to the geographical nature of the phenomena of nature and culture. In practice, space takes the form of a landscape, a place and an environment (Tuan 1975: Häkli 1999: see also Mendoza & Morén-Alegret 2012). Space is a key element in terms of how meanings and values are produced. Tourism happens in space or in

relation to space (Crouch 2007; see also MacCannell 1973). Along with its elements, geographical space can act as a factor that influences the location of tourism, as a resource supporting a wide range of activities, and as an attraction in its own right. The elements become resources and form the basis for tourism development (Gómez Martín 2005). Crouch (2010) even flirts with space, as for him 'out there' space comes to be imagined, thus participation in relation to and in space can be assumed to be flirtatious in character.

Place has become one of the central organising concepts in human geography (Cresswell 1996, 2004; Williams 2009) with several meanings (Jacobsen 1997) and definitions. The term's ambiguity comes from its dual meanings, the general recognition of certain areas as places, and a personal sense of place, where the first is public concept and the latter a personal one (Jackson *et al.* 1979). In the early stages, place was understood as a physical location (Williams 2009) or a definite area (Jackson *et al.* 1979) and was understood as a region, a locality, a city, a town or village, or a particular spot (Collins Concise Dictionary 1978:571 cited by Jacobsen 1997; Jackson *et al.* 1979). In the 1970s, the humanistic approach reaffirmed and Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977) extended the understanding of place more towards social constructs instead of physical entities. For Relph (1976), place is a setting comprised of physical location, human activities and the psychological processes related to it. According to Tuan (1977), a place is a centre of meaning constructed by human experience, social relationships, emotions and thoughts, or (1979, 387) '*place is not only a fact to be explained in the broader framework of space, but it is also a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning.*' First and foremost, place should be distinguished from the general environment. Tuan (1977) states that places involve meanings and values that facilitate close connections with particular geographical areas, while for Cresswell (1996) place is a social space. Farnum *et al.* (2005) argued that the environment refers to the biophysical components of landscapes; components that exist regardless of the types of human connections to them. It is also essential to recognise that places are dynamic rather than fixed (Hall & Page 2002; Williams 2009). As Hall and Page (2002, 41) said '*space, place and landscape – including landscapes of leisure and tourism – are not fixed but are in a constant state of transition as a result of continuous, dialectical struggles of power and resistance among and between the diversity of landscape providers, users and midators*'.

Due to this dynamic nature of tourism, destinations are in a state of flux, and the transformation of tourist destinations (Saarinen 2001, 2004; Barbini & Presutti 2014), tourist landscapes (Chrenka & Ira 2011) and destination networks (Pavlovich 2003) has been well documented. In addition, the need for transformative service research is recognised (Anderson *et al.* 2013). In the Finnish lake context, transformation means that lakes which were previously passageways for local people and industries have over recent decades been transformed into new places for consumption, with new identities and new activities, tourism being one example (see also Gottdiener 2000). As part of the transformation process, the understanding of place as a lived experience has taken a turn to become more performance-based. According to Rickly-Boyd (2013), the performance-based approach to tourism experience argues that meanings are now made

in the doing of tourism. Despite the fact that Rickly-Boyd links the performance-based approach to the authenticity of the place, in the same way that the experiencing of the lake landscape or the lake environment can be seen as a part of doing of tourism, I would ask whether this performance-based experience can be achieved without a bodily experience of the place, or without doing tourism in a certain place. Correspondingly, Keller (2005) adds a space-based view with a geographical perspective, which stresses the external accessibility of a destination as a relevant factor of competitiveness and includes the resource space. These views play an important role in linking tourism development to the spatial development of lakes.

Landscape is one of the most important elements of location in contemporary tourism, and impressive natural areas are typical landscapes for tourism sightseeing (Jakobsen 1997). It plays an important role in the tourist experience (Fairweather & Swaffield 2003). The word 'landscape' is polysemous, and as Crouch (2010, 105) claimed *'Landscape is a word that has considerable popular purchase'.* Jackson *et al.* (1979, 1) in turn stated that *'Landscape is an attractive, important and ambiguous term; attractive because of the various elements, e.g. the setting of memorable place or a piece of countryside; important because of all the connotations and its involvement in both professional interests and public concern; ambiguous because of its various ways of uses for various purposes.'* Landscapes are defined in different ways. Geographical landscape research has studied both traditional entities based on area classification and on the physical and cultural essence of the landscape, as well as our experience and interpretation of the landscape. Landscapes are open to multiple interpretations (Knudsen *et al.* 2007). They become tourist places through meanings ascribed to them by visitors and promotional agencies (Squire 1994). The routines of our daily lives concentrate in the space surrounding us and the originally neutral environment becomes a meaningful place (Relph 1976; Tuan 1977, 1979; Karjalainen 1986; Haarni *et al.* 1997: Stedman 2002). Outsiders and participants experience the same landscape differently. To the participant, the landscape is a place, while the outsider looks at the landscape from a distance. The outsider pays attention to the visually prominent aspects of the landscape without a personal relationship with what she sees. What is important in the interpretation of a landscape experience is how the elements of the landscape are seen, not what particular elements a given landscape contains (Relph 1976; Gesler 1992; Raivo 1995; Tani 1996; Jakobsen 2007; see also Knudsen *et al.* 2007; Minca 2007). The observed landscape is based on what is seen, heard and smelled (Karjalainen 1995). An observation cannot, however, be a mere physical, objective experience; it is rather created through our interpretation of what is observed and is therefore inseparable from subjectivity. Similarly, all interpretation is arguably not only individual but also cultural (Karjalainen 1995). The representative landscape is one that contains signs of a given communicative system referring to space. *How* we see the elements of the landscape, not *what* elements the landscape contains, is important to the interpretation of a cultural landscape. What we see in the landscape or how we appreciate it is often a reflection of our own values reflected through landscape tastes, i.e. people interpret landscapes in a variety of ways and ascribe different meanings to the same

landscape (Egoz *et al.* 2001; Kerstetter & Bricker 2009). Therefore, tourism forms part of larger processes of cultural transformation (Squire 1994).

Impressive natural landscapes are typical sights (Jacobsen 2007). Water in the landscape can be both a source of aesthetic or scenic attraction and a key support for recreational activities (Burmil *et al.* 1999; Ranade 2008; Navrátil *et al.* 2012, 2013). However, despite a rather long history of research in landscape perception and scenic beauty, very few studies have encompassed perceptions of and preferences for landscapes through photographs (Jakobsen 2007). A lake landscape becomes concrete in action through bodily experience or sensory observations in boating or swimming, for instance. As an experienced space, a lake landscape is defined as forest, shores and trees, and it is spoken about through experiences, memories, feelings and activities. Every landscape is a scene, but landscape is not synonymous with scenery (see Jackson *et al.* 1979). In traditional tourism marketing, the lake environment has been simplified as wilderness – a wild and free natural landscape (see Saarinen 1998). This point of view, however, ignores the landscape as an object of experience and subjective interpretation. A neutral lake environment becomes a meaningful place after the tourist links mental images and feelings formed through experience to it. A given place becomes part of the person when she feels she belongs to it and makes it her home.

3.4 The sense of place and experiencing it

In addition to space, place and landscape, *sense of place* is an important concept in humanistic geography. Since the 1970s, sense of place has been interpreted as a social concept and as an individual value or phenomenon, and it includes the physical setting, human activities and social and psychological processes (Relph 1976; Stedman 2002; Amsden *et al.* 2011). The concept of 'sense of place' has gained ground in tourism research in recent years. It refers to a positive sense of oneness of a person with a place he interacts with. To quote Tuan (1974, 235), *'people demonstrate their sense of place when they apply their moral and aesthetic discernment to sites and locations.'* A place is a piece of reality exemplified and interpreted through meanings given to it, while 'sense of place' can be equated with the identity of a place (Tuan 1974, 1979a, 1979b; Relph 1976; Eyles 1985; Shamai 1991; Gesler 1992; Aitchison 1999; Meyer 2001; Moisey & McCool 2001; Walsh *et al.* 2001; Stokowski 2002: Stedman *et al.*, 2004; Amsden *et al.* 2011; see also Kerstetter & Bricker 2002, 2009). A sense of place is built while experiencing the places in which people play, work and live. Thus, a sense of place is a setting-based representation of actual places and is built upon the meanings people create from their natural amenities, social interactions, subjective values and symbolic perceptions from their everyday life (Tuan 1977; Stokowski 2002; Stedman *et al.* 2004; Farnum *et al.* 2005; Amsden *et al.* 2011; Mendosa & Morén-Alegret 2012).

A sense of place as a collection of symbolic meanings with a spatial setting is important for the development of tourism for more than one reason, as it can be translated into cognitions or beliefs (Jakobsen 1997; Stedman 2002). Forgetting the local element in a marketing strategy may lead to a distortion of the images used, and the reality may not meet the expectations of the tourist (Meyer 2001; Walsh *et al.* 2001; Mendoza & Morén-Alegret 2012). For Relph (1985, 26), the experience of a place is different from landscape or space in that *'place experiences are necessarily time-deepened and memory-qualified. In geographical experiences, a place is an origin'*. Williams (2009) argues that a sense of place is formed in a complex way and relates to the unique qualities that places acquire in a person's mind. He believes that a sense of place is both a product of the physical attributes of the setting, like local landscapes, but also a product of a personal attachment to place, e.g. the place represents emotions and feelings (Williams 2009). According to Walsh *et al.* (2001), a sense of place is akin to an organic image, as both concepts arise from direct personal interaction with a place.

The concept of sense of place has also been criticised. Stokowski (2002) argues that places are more than simply geographic sites with physical and textual characteristics. According to her, places are also changeable, dynamic contexts of social interaction. According to Shamai (1991), the challenge in explaining and researching the topic is that the essence of sense of place lies in the perceiver's mind. Jakobsen (1997) in turn brings a new dimension of time into the discussion of sense of place by questioning how long is long enough in sensing a place? His point of view is in transient tourists experiencing a place as a part of their holiday tours. Farnum *et al.* (2005) correspondingly see that there is a need to view sense of place as a critical concept, both in terms of understanding how to provide optimal recreation experiences and in appreciating the public's reaction to and their proper role in management decisions in a destination.

Hence, the lake environment is structured as a lake landscape, comprehended through our thinking that utilises its historical forms and deeper individual and cultural meanings. Sensing the landscape imbues it with a sense of familiarity that in turn reinforces the experience. As an experienced space, the lake landscape is defined as sensual perceptions and their interpretation as water, shores and forests. In the same way, the landscape is talked about not only through experiences, memories, feelings and activities, but also through the cultural interpretations, meanings and sign systems connected with them. Through human interaction with nature, the lake landscape becomes a 'lived world' full of values and meanings, placing it somewhere between culture and wild nature (Article I). The present research aims to find the sense and spirit of the lake from another viewpoint. Answers are sought to questions such as 'Can the tourist find or experience the spirit of the lake through photographs used in marketing without direct personal interaction or attachment to a place?' 'Can the familiar be found in an unfamiliar place?' 'Can an unfamiliar place be full of meanings?' As Kerstetter & Bricker (2009) said, less attention has been paid to the meanings of a place. Walsh *et al.* (2001) argued that the development and utilisation of a destination image rarely relies on a local sense of place.

This may lead to unfulfilled expectations and dissatisfied lake experiences for tourists. In addition, Stedman (2002) argues that sense of place should be taken into account in research related to humans and environment as a predisposing action. The approach to the sense of place in this thesis is in phenomenology, as it better emphasises the nature of the place than positivistic research, for example. Introducing the concept of 'sense of place' into the mental landscapes connected with the lake allows the development of lakes as a tourism resource and the touristic development of a region. Raising the 'sense of place' to the ranks of traditional tourism images increases the value of lake tourism and lake landscape (see Article II).

In the context of sense of place, the term 'place attachment' has also been raised (see e.g. Stedman 2002; Stedman *et al.* 2004; Budruk & Wilhelm Stanis 2013). Both human-place bond concepts measure the intangible values of places. The concepts are empirically separate, but have not been treated as such in research (Stedman 2002; Budruk & Wilhelm Stanis 2013). In this paper, place attachment is seen as a strong positive bond between a person and a place based on his/her own cognition and affect, following the ideas of Williams *et al.* (1992) and Budruk and Wilhelm Stanis (2013). Due to the effective lake tourism management and marketing, there is a need to understand the relationship between human experiences and the settings within which tourism occurs.

The suffix 'scape', according to Hall (2008, 236), refers '*to a view or a scene as well as to realist and abstract representations of a view.*' As landscape plays an important role in tourism and tourists' experiences, the concepts servicescape, experiencescape and waterscape are strongly related to the topic of this thesis. *Servicescape* refers to a physical facility or a place in which a service is delivered and in which the service provider and the customer interact, and may have a strong impact on the perceptions of the service experience (Bitner 1992; Hall 2008). As Bitner (1992) said, the consumer is 'in the factory', experiencing the total service within the physical facility. According to Hall (2008), a broader spatial understanding of servicescape can also be found in the concept of *experiencescape*, which are physical spaces of production and consumption and spaces of pleasure, enjoyment and entertainment. *Waterscape* respectively can be comprehended through our thinking that utilises historical forms and deeper meanings of lakes (Article III). Thus waterscape is more than just a way of seeing. Waterscape is a place image, a dreamwork or even an ideology (see Waitt 2006). To broaden this view, Selby (2004) highlighted the importance of senses in a landscape experience, and therefore landscape should also be understood as soundscape, smellscape, tastescape and touchscape.

3.5 Lake tourism and its positioning in the research field

Nature-based tourism is tourism based on activities taking place in the natural environment, and even often occurs in remote areas with high natural and aesthetic amenity values, which can be referred as wilderness (see Saarinen 1998, 2013). Natural landscapes are

deemed to be one of the main driving forces behind nature-based tourism, too (Uusitalo 2011). Nature as a landscape and as an environment are entities whose components vary in importance in different parts of our country (Saarinen 2004a; Koivula *et al.* 2005). In Finland lakes, for example, create a mostly harmonious natural landscape that attracts both domestic and foreign tourists (Condit 1995; Koivula *et al.* 2005). A lake environment can offer both 'wilderness' and solitude in remote areas but also more urban nature experiences, such as in the city centre.

Defining *nature-based tourism* is not easy, as there are no scientifically and universally agreed definitions (Fredman & Tyrväinen 2011; Rønningen 2011). One reason for this, according to Fredman and Tyrväinen (2011), is that it is difficult to separate tourists from outdoor recreationists or a specific activity from the broader services associated with that certain activity. On the supply side, nature-based tourism can be defined as tourism enterprises offering experiences and services based on wilderness and relatively unmodified natural environments (Pouta *et al.* 2006; Rønningen 2011). Anyhow, a large number of definitions of nature-based tourism have focused on tourism activities and practices based on wilderness and unmodified natural environments (Hall *et al.* 2009).

Reminding us of the stance of Hall & Härkönen (2006), lake tourism could be valued and understood as a subfield of tourism. On the other hand, Hemmi (2005) and Goossen (2006) said that lake tourism can be seen as a part of a broader water-based tourism concept. Lakes are a significant element of nature; therefore, lake tourism can be categorised as a subfield of nature-based tourism. I understand lake tourism as a subfield of nature-based tourism in this phase. However, it could also be positioned another way. I will return to this later.

4 Research methods and data

*"Doing research is fascinating and interesting, but
also problematic in many ways."*
Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara, 2002

4.1 Research theories, triangulation and research design

The multi-layered research questions set in this thesis require examinations of multiple conceptual approaches and methods of analysis. Methodologically, tourism research is generally considered as quantitative, qualitative or mixed (Xin *et al.* 2013). Qualitative methods have been commonly used as part of triangulation or multiple methods, for example, to verify, analyse, interpret and/or understand human behaviour (see Mendoza & Morén-Alegret 2012). The qualitative method as a phenomenological approach is more descriptive for interpreting how a person subjectively interprets a landscape (e.g. Egoz *et al.* 2001), despite the fact that most of the landscape studies have been performed using quantitative methods from a positivist viewpoint. In positivism, reality is considered to be objective, tangible and single. On the other hand, interpretivist researchers also sometimes fail to explain and justify their qualitative approaches. In addition, qualitative methods can be used as a forerunner to quantitative techniques. Qualitative research is emic (insider perspective) and inductive (Decrop 1999; Ohta 2001: Ruddel 2011) and suits the understanding of senses of place well (Mendoza & Morén-Alegret 2012; see also Schroeder 1996; Bricker & Kerstetter 2002).

The methodological approach of this research was built in triangulation. Triangulation is a good way of enhancing the trustworthiness of the research findings and the credibility of the researcher (Decrop 1999). Triangulation can be used in cases using either a variety of data sources, more than one method to study the problem, more than one researcher to interpret the data, or multiple perspectives for interpreting a single data set. Data triangulation involves the use of a variety of data sources, method triangulation entails the use of multiple methods to study a single problem, investigator triangulation uses several different researchers in the interpretation of certain data, while theoretical triangulation uses multiple perspectives (Eskola & Suoranta 1998; Decrop 1999; Finn *et al.* 2000; Hirsjärvi *et al.* 2002, Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002; Veal 2006). On the other hand, triangulation, in cases where there is different data or methods, tends to respond to the same question (Veal 2006). Method triangulation has been criticised and its suitability for scientific research has been questioned (Decrop 1999; Eskola & Suoranta 1998; Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002). The use of triangulation has been seen to lead to '*conceptual confusions, abuse of conflicts and speculative knowledge*' (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 71), among other things. In practice, however, writers have conversely stated that triangulation is '*a good idea*' (ibid 72).

According to Decrop, triangulation is an acceptable method in tourism research (1999, 160) *'If we accept the principle that science is not a question of numbers but of reasoning, a qualitative study can be as sound as a quantitative one. The tourist researcher must not only be conscious of the criteria which make a qualitative study trustworthy, but she has to implement them. Triangulation can help this.'* It is not, however, regarded as the sole criterion of good qualitative research. Davies (2003) stated that methodological triangulation may not improve validity. Hirsjärvi *et al.* (2002, 215) saw the use of triangulation as positive because '…*in qualitative research the validity of the research can be sharpened by using several research methods.*'

Photographs have been used for defining the visual attractiveness of leisure environments since the early 1980s (Stewart & Floyd 2004). The significance of the photograph as an object of social sciences research is justified (Seppänen 1997). As a societal phenomenon, the photograph has become one of mankind's main ways of depicting reality. Photographic representations do not merely present the object pictured, but also the images to be pursued or excluded and those meanings and values which the photographer and the viewer consider to belong to the pictures. Touristic representations are based on the symbols of places, cultures, activities and attractions, and on meanings. These representations of space may be based on 'reality' without being real or irrefutable on an objective level. The messages conveyed by the representations may contain various meanings and they can be interpreted in different ways using different interpretation strategies (Crang 1997; Mackay 1997; Miller 1997; Morgan & Pritchard 1998; Saarinen 1998; Lüthje 2001). Photography enhances tourists' way of seeing touristic spaces, creating a series for gazes (see Urry 1990; Crang 1997) as images ignite tourists' senses to feel, touch, taste, smell and see what is shown (Scarlet 2004). Therefore, it is imperative that marketers also include non-visitors in image research, comparing naive images to the experiences of actual visitors (Selby & Morgan 1996: Selby 2004). Thus, photographs are vital in creating and communicating images of a destination (MacKay & Couldwell 2004). In social sciences and tourism research, the photograph has previously meant a new and more unbiased way of capturing reality. The photograph is not problematised as a representation, but is seen as a tool for the acquisition of knowledge (see e.g. Äikäs 2001). Only with the so-called linguistic turn in social sciences in the late 1990s has attention been paid to the role of the photograph in the construction of reality. In tourism research, the significance of the photograph has increased since the 1990s (e.g. Dann 1996; Echtner 1999; Timothy & Groves 2001; Fairweather & Swaffield 2002; Jenkins 2003; Loeffler 2004: Tuohino 2008; Garrod 2008; Tuohino & Pesonen 2011: Andersson Cederholm, 2012; Hunter 2012; Scarles, 2004, 2012; Hsu & Song 2013).

In recreation and landscape research, visual techniques are used in an abundance of destination image research (e.g. Scarles 2004, 2012; MacKay & Couldwell 2004; Hsu & Song 2013). The old cliché 'a picture tells a thousand words' is true for the promotion of places as tourism destinations (Jenkins 2003). As Scarlet (2012: 72) specified, the visual is *more-than-can-be-seen.* Therefore, it is obvious that visual research is gaining more significance in tourism research (Rakić & Chambers 2012) and photo-elicitation is becoming more

common as a method (Andersson Cederholm 2012). Harper (2002, 13) defined photo-elicitation as '*the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview*.' According to him, the first photographer and researcher to use the word photo-elicitation was John Collier in 1957, while studying mental health in Canada (Harper 2002). Since the late 1960s, photo-elicitation has been used as a research method in anthropology, community health, psychology, sociology and education (Harper 2002; Loeffler 2004). In tourism research it became more common in the 2000s (Scarlet 2012: Andersson Cederholm 2012). In photo-elicitation the researcher becomes the listener as the interviewee interprets the photograph and the interview focuses more on the photographs rather than the research participant (Loeffler 2004; Harper 2002). The use of photo-elicitation helps respondents remember deeper elements of their experiences than words can. Thus it can be considered a useful tool in empirical studies, as it may add reliability and validity to a word-based survey (Harper 2002; Loeffler 2004).

The measurement of multidimensional definition, like an image, is challenging and difficult. Shields (1991) saw mental images as kind of hypothetical definitions, with behaviour being far from a simple causal relationship. The majority of the existing results of image research were collected using a structured questionnaire, whose popularity is justified by its flexibility, ease of use and suitability for coding the responses. Thus the classification and comparability of the results is easier. Researchers have particularly favoured standardised attributes–based questionnaires and semantic differential or Likert scales. The combinations are often associated with the researcher's own views and with literature reviews (Crompton 1979; Gartner 1989; Echtner & Ritchie 1993; Selby & Morgan 1996; Gallarza *et al.* 2002; Ryan & Cave 2004). In contrast with semantic differentials favoured by behaviouristic geography, human geography favours more qualitative research methods (Robinson 1998). Selby and Morgan (1996) argue that the richest and most useful data in place image research is produced by a combination of techniques, or a form of methodological pluralism. Non-quantifiable factors, like opinions, attitudes and values, reflect subjective images of a single respondent and are strongly personal, and therefore are not directly comparable to the responses of others. In addition, the interpretation can vary greatly depending on the situation on the same day. The numerical results, along with aesthetic and qualitative aspects, such as the spirit of the place, are challenging. There are many unstructured ways of gathering this kind of research data. This includes content analyses and both visual and written information, interactive individual or group interviews, free elicitation, triad elicitation and photo elicitation (Jenkins 1999; Harper 2002; Shani & Wang 2011; Andersson Cederholm 2012). As an exception to the frequently used Visitor-Employed-Photography (VEP) method (see e.g. Stedman *et al.* 2004; MacKay & Couldwell 2004; Garrod 2008; Shani & Wang 2011), I used researcher-led photo-elicitation (see e.g. Scarlet 2012).

4.2 Continuum of the study and empirical data collection

My longitudinal data gathering took eight years, in a series of eight separate data gathering sessions from 2001 to 2008. Initial input and inspiration came from discussions with Professor Graham Dann who visited Savonlinna in the early 2000s. The research formed a continuum consisting of different phases. I allocated the research so that each research section served the following phase in order to maintain the continuum. The research combines interviews, which is one of the most popular qualitative methods used in tourism research (Ruddell 2011), photo-elicitation, content analysis, participant observation, as well structured and unstructured questionnaires (see Echter & Ritchie 1993, 2003; Bell 2001). By doing this, my presumption was that different methodological options would provide a more wide-ranging picture of the subject. Secondly, by using different methods, the aim was to diversify the data sampling but also to react to any deficiencies or inadequacies. Finally, my intention was to ensure the reliability of the study and the validity of the attributes used. All the data was analysed using content analysis.

Upon starting the design of the larger three-year research project 'Lakes and Images' in 2001, the preliminary study (Tuohino 2001) was planned to gather attributes for the future use. Data gathering was performed at the ITB Fair in March 2001 by survey. The sample was systematic, including all European stands at the fair. A total of 67 responses were gathered using a one-page, self-administered, structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using the SPSS statistical program. As the aim of the survey was to test the method but also to gather attributes for future use, the questions included attributes and activities related to lakes, and asked about recognition of European lakes. In addition, one question was designed to map the connotations related to the concept of the Land of a Thousand Lakes. In this case, there was a list of countries and the respondent had to name which of them uses this slogan. In the analysis phase, it was easy to recognise the weakness of the survey. The questionnaire was built based on the mental images and opinions of research staff from the Lake Tourism project. Therefore, in subsequent studies, the change was more about mapping the mental images of potential visitors in Finland by utilising the attributes gathered.

In the next phase, the main focus was on the attractiveness of Finnish lakes and on image research. To gain a deeper understanding of the induced image of Finland created by marketing, but also of the mental images of potential visitors to Finland, cooperation with the Finnish Tourist Board (FTB) was started. The FTB assigned 25 lake-related marketing pictures in research use and started to support the research, as this was the first of its kind in Finland. The selection of pictures had a two-step process. Firstly the staff from the Lake Tourism project selected ten potential photographs for research purposes. The selection criteria were as follows; the photos should represent typical features of Finnish landscapes (forest and lakes) with and without people, and the pictures must include activities but also simply the landscape without any man-made features. In addition, the photographs had to show a large variety of the tourist potential offered by

the lake resource, and features of Finnish identity had to be found in the pictures. The pictures were part of Summer Motives [Sommermotive] series and were intended to be used in marketing abroad. Water was shown prominently in all the pictures. Ultimately, ten pictures were chosen. In the next phase the ten selected pictures were presented to the representatives of the Finnish Tourist Board. Those pictures that the representatives agreed on were selected for the research. In cooperation with the FTB, the remaining photos were selected to make up a total of ten pictures.

The first and second articles utilise the same set of data. Researcher-led photo-elicitation (see e.g. Scarlet 2012: Andersson Cederholm 2012) was used. However, photographs are reflections of the photographer's point of view. At the same time, when used for marketing purposes photographs also reflect the view of those person(s), who chose the picture from others. By doing this, both bring their social position, personality and personal history to the process (Loeffler 2004). As mentioned above, the photographs used in Articles I and II came from the Finnish Tourist Board. The purpose was to find the mental images of Finnish Lakeland held by potential tourists from Italy and Germany. A total of 110 interviews were carried out at international tourism fairs in February 2002 in Milan, Italy and in March 2002 in Berlin, Germany. Interviews were carried out individually and in the respondents' native language. In Germany, 60 respondents were selected by random sampling from visitors at the fair, while in Italy the 50 interviewees were tourism professionals working at the stands. In Italy the interviews were made on 'pros-only' days, and in Germany on 'open public' days.

The answers to the mental image question were analysed using the normal classification and categorisation methods used in qualitative research. The NVivo program was used to examine the data as suitable for the analysis of qualitative data. The data was analysed using inductive analysis and only unequivocal messages of the responses were taken into account. The answers were classified and assigned to groups. Before classification, the data was checked several times in order to form a general opinion. Classification proceeded in a bottom-up direction, i.e. each word or expression was coded, after which the groups were defined as functional-social, physical, aesthetic, symbolic and cultural images. Attributes connected with activities and socialising were assigned to the 'functional-social' category, those connected to landscape forms to the 'physical' category, while all attributes connected with the layout, colours or composition of the photographs were assigned to the 'aesthetic' category. Attributes referring to traditions and culture were assigned to the 'cultural' category and attributes with a symbolic content to the 'symbolic' category. The five parent categories were applied using the four-field model of Echtner & Ritchie (1993), which is used in image research.

In the third article, the aim was to identify how a landscape can be transformed into a memorable place. The empirical data was gathered in Italy, on the streets of Milan, Rome and Bologna in March 2003. The survey instrument was a self-administered, four-page questionnaire with 35 questions. The questionnaire utilised the attributes gathered in previous phases. The theoretical framework originated from Schroeder (1996). A total of

152 interviews were carried out. As one of the objectives was to achieve a representative cross-section of respondents, the surveys were completed at different times and at different places within the cities during the interview period. Systematic sampling was used, which meant that every third person was asked. In Article III, only those responses of one Likert-scale question and two open-ended questions are presented. The rest of the questions were utilised in conference presentations, such as in Lake Tourism conferences. The interview responses were fed into a computer, where they were colour-coded using Excel and grouped according to background variables. No special software was used as the data was manageable in Excel because of the rather small size. These responses were quantified, that is, the frequencies were calculated to describe the structure of the data more precisely and to facilitate data analysis.

In the fourth article, the empirical data was collected in three phases. To answer challenges arising in the field of wellness tourism in Eastern Finland, the main purpose of the paper is to introduce a product concept for a Lake Wellness experience and to discuss the content and design of it. In phase 1, interviews were carried out to find out well-being and wellness companies' thoughts and ideas of wellness tourism and wellness tourism development in eastern Finland. Altogether, 12 unstructured interviews were conducted during the winter of 2006/2007 among managerial staff and leading entrepreneurs of tourism companies operating in Eastern Finland. Phase 2 included discussions at two workshops with the business network. Participatory observation was used to gather the information from the workshops, the first held in January 2007 and the second in March 2007. In phase 3, the results and conclusions from the interviews and workshops were presented in interviews with five leading experts in well-being, wellness and the tourism field in Finland. In addition to the empirical research, an electronic customer survey was implemented to find out the needs and wants of potential well-being tourists. Data was collected mainly at Nordic Travel Fairs in 2007 and 2008. A total of 1,012 answers were analysed. The results of the customer research were also utilised in the New Service Development (NSD) process in Article IV (Konu 2010; Tuohino *et al.* 2013). In Table 4 the summary of research questions and in Table 5 the summary of the empirical data is presented. Previous Figure 1 shows the links between the research phases and results.

The selected research methods were mainly qualitative, in order to draw on respondents' verbatim descriptions of the lakes. I justify my choice by the fact that to capture broader images of lakes, the frank comments and associations of respondents helped me to better understand their views. The shortcoming of the sample size can be deemed a weakness for a qualitative analysis, especially from the positivistic point of view (Mendoza & Morén-Alegret 2012). For me, this is an irrelevant question, as my aim was to explore the mental images related to lake environments of potential visitors to Finland. In this case, what was more important was high-quality and useful responses than the number of respondents. However, I also realise that the mental images of German and Italian respondents in this thesis only represent samples and should therefore not be generalised.

In retrospect it is good to note that I was on the right path. That is to say, according to Mendoza and Morén-Alegret (2012), to overcome locational restrictions associated with sampling, the new mobilities paradigm has proposed creative ways of selecting when and where to gather data, rather than focusing on the number of respondents. This new paradigm proposes that research methods must be *on the move,* and communication hubs, for example, can be such non-places for capturing the senses of place of individuals. Even though Mendoza and Morén-Alegret's approach was in migration, I underline the benefits of my way of data gathering, as the aim was to collect mental images of potential visitors, and therefore it was also relevant to catch locals on the streets of Germany and Italy, but also at tourism fairs during public and pros-only days.

Table 4. Summary of the research questions.

Research themes	Research questions
Article I Transformation of a lake landscape	Interview A One open question:
Article II Sense and spirit of the lake	*What kind of impressions do you get from these pictures?*
Article III Landscape experiences	Interview B
	Open-ended question: Please describe in a few words what water means to you. You can describe the thoughts, feelings, memories and associations which come to your mind when you think of water near your home/ permanent place of residence.
	2nd open-ended question: Please, specify the type of landscape you attached to your thoughts, feelings, memories and associations.
	3rd open-ended question: "locate the responses on the map"
Article IV The lake as a resource for well-being	3rd interviews
	Unstructured interviews:
	How do you define wellness tourism in the context of Eastern Finland?
	How do you perceive the content of a Lake Wellness concept?
	More detailed sub-questions:
	What are the profiling elements of wellness tourism in Eastern Finland
	How can wellness tourism be developed in Eastern Finland?

Table 5. Summary of the empirical data.

Type of data	Source and use of data
Interview A	50 interviewees in Italy/BIT Tourism Fair, 'Pros only days'/Tourism professionals
	60 interviewees in Germany/ITB Tourism Fair, 'Open to public days'
	Released in February 2002 BIT, March 2002 ITB
	Random sample; 10 promotional photos of Finnish Tourist Board
	Methods of analysis:
	- Photo-elicitation
	- Nvivo
	Raported and utilized in articles I and II
Interview B	152 interviewees/ordinary people, potential visitors to Finland
	Released in March 2003, on the streets of Rome, Bologna and Milan
	Systematic sample (every third)
	Self-administrative, four-page questionnaire with 35 questions, of which only one Likert-scale question.
	Methods of analysis:
	- content analysis by coding the words
	- Nvivo
	Raported and utilized in article III
Interview C	Companies operating in Eastern Finland and participating in the eGOOD network.
	Released: The first workshop in January 2007 in Helsinki
	Released: The second at the premises of one of the eGOOD companies in Punkaharju in March 2007.
	12 interviews among managerial staff and leading entrepreneurs in the eGOOD network companies
	Methods of analysis:
	- content analysis
	Raported and utilized in article IV, Tuohino *et al.*, 2013
	Companies operating in Eastern Finland and participating in the eGOOD network.

Participant observation	Released Winter 2006/2007
	Viewing and discussing results of the 3rd interviews together with businesses
	Raported and utilized in article IV, Tuohino *et al.*, 2013
	Tourism experts
Discussions	Released Winter 2006/2007
	5 tourism experts from Finnish Tourist Board, persons responsible for marketing and development of tourism in Eastern Finland and the Jyväskylä Wellbeing node of the Centre of Expertise in Tourism
	Raported and utilized in article IV, Tuohino *et al.*, 2013
	Nordic Tourism Fair visitors
Questionnaire	Released in January 2007 and January 2008 in Helsinki Fair Center
	1012 sufficient responses
	Methods of analysis:
	Potential tourists segmented based on activities, interests and opinions (AIO-segmentation). Self-administered electronic questionnaire. Analyzed by using factor-cluster method.
	Raported and utilized in article IV, Henna Konu, (2010) "Identifying potential wellbeing tourism segments in Finland", Tourism Review, Vol. 65 Iss: 2, pp.41 - 51

5 A transformative approach to understanding lake tourism

*"Understanding the different images which visitors and non-visitors
have of a destination is invaluable, enabling the salient attributes of the
naïve image and the re-evaluated image to be incorporated into tourism
marketing planning."*
Selby and Morgan, 1996

5.1 Increasing awareness of lake tourism

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute an understanding of lake tourism from the Finnish perspective and to evidence how a geographical approach can contribute new ideas to lake tourism development and especially to the marketing of lakes. The four empirical studies focused on examining Finnish lake tourism marketing and development from various perspectives in the German and Italian markets. These countries were chosen together with the Finnish Tourist Board, as in the early 2000s Germany was one of the main market areas for the Finnish Tourist Board, while Italy was a potential emerging market area. As lake tourism as a whole at that time was a new phenomenon, it was important to produce a new awareness and knowledge of the concept. In addition, the geographical approach to marketing was then new. In practice, the starting point for the research was zero. The following paragraphs summarise the main findings of each paper by responding to the research questions presented.

Articles I, II and III were all focused on mental images of potential visitors to Finland from different approaches. Articles I and II used the same data and presented how the mental images evoked by the pictures were individual and social at the same time, but also conflicting in some cases. Although the individual nature of the mental images became prominent in the analyses, there were identifiable similarities in both of them. The pictures used and analysed in the articles were different.

In *Article I* responses are given to the following sub-questions: A: *What kind of images (via contemporary marketing) of Finnish Lakeland are evoked among potential tourists, and how does the marketing of lakes respond to the modern tourist's need for self-fulfilment, active participation and experience? B. Can the tourist find or experience the spirit of the lake through photos used in marketing without direct on-site personal interaction with it? C. In relation to the previous question can an unfamiliar lake be full of meanings and awaken a sense of familiarity without direct personal on-site interaction?* In the analysis of Article I, each picture proved to be functional from the marketing point of view, in relation to the given country and the cultural background. The outsider perspective of the two groups of respondents was also different in relation to nature and nature experiences. Values and responses related to observing and perceiving nature,

such as cleanness, wilderness and nature-based activities, were distinctive to the German respondents, whereas for Italian participants, nature meant first and foremost a special engagement, a spiritual connection to nature, finding inner peace and self-fulfilment. In the 'aerial picture of Kolovesi', the lake landscape of the photo was interpreted on its own terms, due to the lack of objects of identification. Whereas the aerial view represented the magnificence of the natural landscape for Germans, and even for some the objective of romantic gaze, for Italians the same landscape was more about the elusiveness of the water world, even a portal for fairytales, which also evoked conflicting feelings. For Germans, the landscapes portrayed in the pictures represented a distinguishable destination. For Italians, the landscapes also represented a number of other things: being together with family and friends, a special way of life, or even a strange planet. To sum up, the German respondents seemed more tempted to travel to Finland than the Italians. All in all, the cues to culture and nature-based experiences were afforded a different emphasis by the Germans and the Italians. The Germans interpreted berry-picking, for example, as a nature-based activity and a possible holiday destination, whereas the Italians regarded it as a cultural tradition and concentrated on empathising with the young couple in the picture instead of imagining themselves picking berries. For the Italian respondents, the photo of people berry-picking awaked both memories and curiosity.

The relative differences between countries were small. As an example, a higher proportion of German responses were coded into the functional category, while the 'aesthetic' images related to the appearance of the picture and especially to the personal feelings of the respondent were more important for the Italians. The respondents approached the pictures both as outside observers and as participating actors. The familiarity of the landscape acted as a catalyst for pleasant sensations. Correspondingly, the lack of familiarity often aroused negative feelings. The Germans were tempted by new and exotic places and were ready to travel to the landscape, for example, even though they were sceptical about the tourism potential of the area. Meanwhile, the Italians seemed to want to make sure of the comfort levels, that is, the activities and services available in the area, before making any travel decisions.

Finnish culture, however, was not linked to impressive scenery and it remained isolated and detached from the context of tourism. The different images evoked in the two groups of respondents by the berry-picking picture was linked to the respective cultural interpretations of the topic of the picture. Berry-picking was a more familiar activity to the Germans and aroused positive feelings of enjoyment, while for the Italians, again, the activity was unfamiliar and the respondents mainly linked it to the local traditions of the country in the picture.

Accordingly, the feelings evoked in them were mostly linked to compositional and functional features. For example, when thinking about berry-picking as a travel experience, the Germans stressed the activity and its results. The confused reaction of the Italians probably decreased the promotional value of the picture, and there was no experiential value linked to a berry-picking scene. For the Italians, the experiences attached to the

activity were more holistic and sense-based when the bilberries were seen as ready-made pies and jam. An examination of the relative distribution of images in the two groups of respondents revealed a number of trends. The higher frequency of physical images was a sign of a detached relationship to the environment in the picture among both groups. The aerial picture elicited something strange from the respondents; it alienated them, turning them from participants into observers of the landscape. There was also a trade-off between the aesthetic and the functional category of images. It seemed that if the picture did not offer functional or social points of identification, they were sought for in the aesthetic qualities of the picture or even in cultural cues. Hence, the assumption here is that for Italians, due to their cultural background, it was easier to pay attention to the relationship of the young couple rather than to an activity which is not a natural part of their lives.

The analyses indicate how a neutral lake is turned into a place through the experiences of the tourist in a lake landscape. The experience, however, does not necessarily require a person's physical attendance at the said place. As the Italian and German participants' responses show, a pictorial image of a landscape can start a process that leads to an experience equivalent to that created by direct physical sensations. People seem to interpret photographic images as indicators of reality, despite their interpretative nature. Similarly, the lake landscape presented in a marketing picture does not leave the observer outside – he or she can be absorbed into the landscape through various forms of action and experience portrayed or (at least) intimated in the picture. A lake can be a landscape, an object of strong emotions, memories or images, a holiday experience construed through the company of fellow tourists, or a functional environment for various activities.

To summarise, this study clearly showed that the marketing of lakes has to start from a more complex viewpoint. To answer sub-questions A to C; especially for the Italian respondents, nature meant a special engagement, almost a spiritual connection to nature, finding inner peace and self-fulfilment, while the Germans were more outsiders in the landscapes. The spirit of the lake was nevertheless found without personal interaction with a landscape shown in the photographs. The lake should be seen as a landscape and a place which does not leave the observer outside, as do the ideals of the traditional objective landscape. The formation of mental images is a complex process rooted in the cultural background and subjective preferences of the individual. The lake landscape is construed not only on the basis of personal experience but also of the social and cultural interpretation of the lake. The lake has to be made a meaningful 'place' instead of a neutral natural landscape. The respondents' cultural backgrounds explained the level of familiarity, as seen in berry-picking, for example. Familiarity with the landscape or features in the photographs acted as a catalyst for topophilic (Tuan 1974) sensations within the respondents.

In Article II, the approach differed as it aimed at finding the sense and spirit of the lake from a new viewpoint. Traditionally, sense of place refers to a positive sense of oneness of a person with a place he interacts with (see Tuan 1974). In this case the sense

and spirit of the lake were sought in the opposite way, without any direct interaction or attachment to a lake, which in this case was a photographic representation of a certain place. The research questions here were similar to those in Article I: A: *What kinds of images (via contemporary marketing) of Finnish Lakeland are evoked among potential tourists and how does the marketing of the lakes respond to the modern tourist's need for self-fulfilment, active participation and experience? B. Can the tourist find or experience the spirit of the lake through photos used in marketing without direct on-site personal interaction with it? C. In relation to the previous question, can an unfamiliar lake be full of meanings and awaken a sense of familiarity without direct personal on-site interaction?* In generally I could argue that there are similarities between the findings in Article I. In the analysis, each picture proved to be functional from a marketing point of view. Italians sensed the pictures more, while Germans looked at them. Again, the Italians were more insiders, and Germans outsiders in the landscapes of the photographs. Italians found their respective images through their emotions, while Germans through the experience created by activity and observation. However, for some in both groups, the landscapes were also stressful, difficult and uneasy. Picture 3 (Midsummer Bonfire) was the most controversial among the Italians and Germans. As the Italians gazed at the picture as insiders, for them man-made fire was regarded as a dangerous element out of place in a natural landscape. The photo 'Cyclist' emphasised the cultural differences, as for Germans the cycling experience was imagined through activity and observation, while the Italians imagined it through emotions. The photo 'Angling' was in turn seen through value-related feelings among Germans, while Italians linked it to place-related feelings.

Again there was a cultural bias for Finns, as the iconic meanings of the lake landscape are only obvious to Finns or those who are familiar with Finnish cultural particularities. Similar to the findings in Article I, there is a need to develop a Finnish culture that is more to open to the irrational mental image of the non-Finnish audience. In addition, the outsider-insider perspective became evident. Italians were more insiders, Germans outsiders.

To summarise, lakes must be brought 'alive' by giving them a meaning that is understandable to the target group. In addition, there is a need to provide a reason to come to the lake – such as what a person can do there. As was noted in Article II, for some it would be difficult to understand or settle in the landscape if they do not know how to be in the landscape or what to do there. The transformation of a neutral lake landscape into a meaningful experience depended on both the aesthetic content of the pictures and its internal elements. Similar to Article I, familiarity with the landscape acted as a catalyst for the topophilic (see Tuan 1974) sensations of the respondents. Correspondingly, a lack of familiarity aroused negative feelings. To respond to sub-questions A to C, a lake can be a complex landscape, an object of strong feelings, and a holiday experience constructed by being with friends and family, or an environment for various activities. An unfamiliar lake becomes alive through the meanings given to it. The sense and spirit of the lake can thus be found without an on-site connection to the place.

The purpose of Article III was to identify how a landscape can be transformed into a memorable experience for Italians. The article responds to the modified questions: A: *What kind of images of Finnish Lakeland are evoked among potential tourists and how do the lakes respond to the modern tourist's need for self-fulfilment, active participation and experience? B. Can the tourist find or experience the spirit of the lake without direct on-site personal interaction with it? C. In relation to the previous question, can an unfamiliar lake be full of meanings and awaken a sense of familiarity without direct personal on-site interaction?* The analyses indicated that the meanings attached to water were complex, and even the relationship with water was personal. The relationship was that of a participant rather than an outsider. Water was seen as a very important element of human surroundings and the attachment to waterscapes was relatively strong among Italians. The ways in which these attachments were developed were diverse; e.g. through feelings, sensory perceptions and memories. For most, the bond was emotional and waterscape experiences were translated into emotions if they were experienced through other senses. Obviously, waterscape for the Italians meant sea landscapes, and the connection was more emotional. Connotations to lakes had more abstract intellectual meanings. Waterscapes were seen as a place for tranquillity and relaxation. Only the way of behaving was different in different waterscapes. Lakes were seen mysterious clean and harmonious, as a natural landscape perceived rationally. The sea correspondingly meant a place of special memories from holidays and personal history. The sensory perception of sea landscapes was also strong.

From the marketing point of view, the meanings that the Italians who participated in the study attached to lakes can be seen as a two-fold challenge. First, Italians' understanding of lake landscapes supports the traditional marketing image of wilderness. However, this perspective can be seen as an outsider's view and the bond is weak. Second, contrary to lake images, meanings attached to water and waterscapes highlighted the importance of emotions. Waterscapes were perceived personally, from a participant's (insider) point of view. The attachment to the sea landscape was particularly deep.

To summarise, people create their personal attachments and bonds to waterscapes through their senses and values. Emotional senses were highlighted. The meanings differed, depending on the type of waterscape. The familiarity of the sea landscape means that it is perceived in a more sensory way. The more familiar the waterscape is, the stronger the bond is. As an outsider the bond is weak in the case of a lake landscape, for example.

One noteworthy issue here is the theoretical approach, or more precisely the semiotic approach. The original questionnaire was first developed in Finnish, and then translated into Italian. Responses were given in Italian and later translated into Finnish. As a consequence, the analysis, or its interpretation, was based on translated versions. It follows that there could be some linguistic differences in nuances. But this is always the fact in this kind of case study where translated versions are used.

Where Articles I to III discussed the mental images of potential visitors to lakes, *Article IV* gives a more practical example of local, innovative product development that utilises

lakes. In tourism, the use of the term 'innovation' has increased over the last few years (Guia *et al.* 2006; Hjalager & Flagestad 2011; Hjalager *et al.* 2011). However, few innovation studies have been carried out at a local level, even though local knowledge can play a major role in tourism development processes (Guia *et al.* 2006). In Finland, the lake regions have been applied as laboratory areas for innovation tourism research (e.g. Kokkonen & Tuohino 2007; Kangas & Tuohino 2008; Tuohino & Kangas 2009; Hjalager *et al.* 2011; Tuohino 2012), and therefore it was natural to develop a new innovative concept utilising lakes. The well-being theme was chosen as it is booming in Finland and is one of the strategic focuses of tourism marketing (Tuohino 2012; Konu *et al.* 2013). From the process perspective, it is understood in the wider sense to also cover new forms of resource utilisation, new (improved) methods and forms of social organisation, as well as the recognition and creation of new customer needs. This is particularly relevant to innovation in tourism which produces services or tourist products that offer experiences (Kokkonen & Tuohino 2007; Hjalager *et al.* 2011; see also Tuohino *et al.* 2013).

Article IV discussed whether the experiential environment of the lakes and lake landscape can act as a potential resource of the core content of a Lake Wellness experience product. The main aim of Article IV is to present the product content and design of a new concept, so the article is responding to a sub-question set in the introduction: D: *How can the Finnish lake landscape be utilised in the core content of tourism product development*? The concept of the Lake Wellness experience product put the theory into practice by providing a realistic example of a new service development concept (NSD) (Alam & Perry 2002; Stevens & Dimitriadis 2005; Veflen Olsem & Sallis 2006). The Lake Wellness experience product is based on six fundamental pillars (see Article IV) and designed and planned to be implemented in lake environments. The core of the product is a subjective customer experience: sensing the lake. The service concept is developed to give a response to the customer's need to sense the lake and feel relaxation and comfort. This can be realised by different service components (the fundamental pillars of spirit, mind and self-development; health promoting services; healthy cuisine; accommodation; of inner and external beauty treatments and services; activities aimed at relaxation and comfort; and tailor-made movement/fitness services) that are part of the service process. These are realised, for instance, by internal and external resources that are part of a service system. In the Lake Wellness experience product, the service system include lakes and nature, a network of entrepreneurs providing well-being services, hospitality, professional staff, the positive image of the company/business network, and Eastern Finland's developing profile as a Lake Wellness destination. The content of the Lake Wellness experience product is based on the unique features and resources of Eastern Finland and can thus help the region to differentiate itself from other parts of Finland and raise its profile as a well-being and wellness tourism destination in a national and international context. As a result of the first phase of the new service development process, the content of the Lake Wellness experience product is defined. From the marketing point of view, the marketing message of Lake Wellness must be made attractive for the desired target groups.

5.2 Transformation of a neutral lake landscape into a meaningful place and sense of place

Articles I, II, III and IV examined the Finnish lake landscape as a space and place from different perspectives. The lake as a place and space was studied from the perspective of the production of space by presenting a concept of Lake Wellness (Article IV) and consumption of space (Articles I, II and III) by studying the organic images of potential visitors in Finnish Lakeland (see Gottdiener 2000; Saarinen 2004a; Vanhove 2011). Could we even talk about *naïve images* while studying potential visitors without first-hand experience of the destination (see Selby 2004)? All four articles contributed information, particularly about mental images connected to lakes but also about the utilisation of lakes. Thus the short response to the question *What kind of contents and meanings can Finnish lakes offer and how can lake tourism be defined and conceptualised?* is that during the last decade, the increasing levels of awareness of lake tourism can be perceived, and the concept is now internationally recognised and used, particularly among those researchers networked and involved in lake tourism conferences. However, as stated earlier, the content of the lake tourism concept and the definition of lake tourism are various and multifaceted. Furthermore, the viewpoint in the thesis gave a new perspective to lake tourism by producing information about the spirit and sense of the lake and the experiences a lake can offer.

The photo analyses indicate how a neutral lake is turned into a meaningful place through the experiences of the tourist in a lake landscape. The experience, however, does not necessarily require a person's physical attendance at the place. As the Italian and German respondents' responses show, a pictorial image of a landscape can originate a process that leads to an experience equivalent to that created by direct physical sensations. People seem to interpret photographic images as indicators of 'real', notwithstanding the interpretative nature of them. Similarly, the lake landscape presented in a marketing picture does not leave the observer outside, as the observer can be absorbed into the landscape through various forms of action and experience portrayed or (at least) intimated in the picture. A lake can be a landscape, an object of strong emotions, memories or images, a holiday experience construed through the company of tourists, or a functional environment for various activities. A picture of the mosaic of water and islands fading into the horizon, no matter its picturesque merits, is however not enough for the modern tourist who is eager for experiences.

Without any introduction to Finnish culture, the meanings remain rather irrational and even artificial in the mental images of a non-Finnish audience. What remains unclear on the basis of this study, however, is where these cultural differences arise from. Moreover, how are they supposed to be responded to by the tourism marketing authorities? The cultural background of the marketing pictures raises questions of how their interpretation would have been different among a group of Finnish respondents. What do the marketing pictures tell about Finnish culture? Whatever the case may be, this study clearly shows that

the marketing of lakes has to start from a more complex viewpoint. In other words, the lake should be seen as a landscape and place that does not leave the observer outside, as do the ideals of the traditional objective landscape. The lake landscape is construed not only on the basis of personal experience but also of the social and cultural interpretation of the lake. The lake has to be made significant instead of a neutral natural landscape. As mentioned earlier, the understanding of place as a lived experience has changed to become more performance-based (Rickly-Boyd 2013). Experiencing a lake landscape or lake environment can be seen as a part of 'doing' tourism. As seen above, there is not necessarily a need to be physically present in the landscape. A similar experience to doing tourism can be achieved by gazing at touristic photographs.

The importance of sense of place must be appreciated both by the tourist and the developer of tourism, since it represents what is unique and worth preserving about a place. First, if we understand the sense of the lake, we can adopt the lake and locality as the core marketing points and pay less attention to general features. Second, this approach recognises the destination as a node in the network of neighbouring regions, thus giving rise to a more holistic sensation of the lake. Third, understanding this concept brings the marketing effort to the local level and commits the local population to experience the destination through commercialisation and development. Although the physical resources are the starting point of tourism, the importance of social and cultural resources should not be neglected, since it is the latter that represents the identity and meanings of the lake. Through its local knowledge and expertise, the population of the place is a potential resource that can create the spirit of the lake (e.g. Stokowski 2002: Stedman *et al.*, 2004; Amsden *et al.* 2011, see also Kerstetter & Bricker 2009).

To summarise, a neutral Finnish lake landscape can be transformed into a meaningful place and space. It became evident that this kind of transformation is not inevitably connected to personal visit or a perceived experience. By using visual techniques without direct contact or familiarity to a certain lake, the sense and spirit of a lake can be found. As previously noted, the concept is complex and difficult to define because of its many elements and angles of approach. In addition, in the thesis, only a small part of entirety of the lake tourism concept has been considered, as the focus has been mainly on the mental images of potential lake tourists. Despite these recognised challenges I will present my vision of Lake Tourism concept which is based on the research findings and inspired by Getz (2008), Fuhua (2010) and Ryhänen (2001), but also the Lake Wellness concept presented in Article IV. Figure 2 summarises the findings and presents the concept of lake tourism. At the centre of the lake tourism concept is the customer experience with the sense of lake (waterscape), including physical, social, aesthetic and cultural aspects as well as memories and meanings attached to lake tourism. The personal background of an individual and the choices made reflect the nature of tourism experiences. The experience is linked to space and is achieved by using customer-oriented products and services with a sense of hospitality (experiencescapes). Experiencescapes are physical spaces of production and consumption, spaces of pleasure, and enjoyment of a lake. A

LAKE AS A PLACE, SPACE AND LANDSCAPE (EXPERIENCESCAPE)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND AND CHOICES
- o Needs, motives, preferences
- o Leisure, recreation and work context
- o Cultural and community influences

PLANNING AND MANAGING LAKE TOURISM (SERVICESCAPE)
- o Stakeholders and organisations
- o Goals and strategies
- o Tangible and intangible resources
- o Professionalism and hospitality
- o Customer-oriented hospitality

NATURE AND MEANINGS OF LAKE TOURISM EXPERIENCE SPIRIT OF THE LAKE (WATERSCAPE)
- o Travel and lake experience, including physical, mental, social, aesthetic and cultural aspects and memories
- o Meanings attached to lake tourism

OUTCOMES AND THE IMPACTS
- o Personal
- o Societal
- o Cultural
- o Economic
- o Environmental

PATTERNS AND PROCESSES
- o Spatial and temporal patterns
- o Policy
- o Knowledge creation

Figure 2. Concept of lake tourism.

broader spatial understanding of servicescapes can be found in waterscapes, which is a place image. Tangible and intangible resources with customer-oriented hospitality and staff professionalism are required in service production, and all these happen in the lake landscape (experiencescape). Destination management with stakeholders' visions and goals are also part of the servicescape structures.

The concept of lake tourism also has potential connections with the idea of sustainability in tourism. Generally, when talking about sustainability, ecological, economic and sociocultural issues are underlined. To broaden this approach from a tourism destination perspective, Ritchie and Crouch (2011) presented four pillars of sustainability, namely ecological, economic, sociocultural and political/governance environments. Furthermore, they added that managerial and appropriate policy solutions must be found

for each of the pillars in order to achieve sustainability (Ritchie & Crouch 2011). Coles and Church (2007) raised the question of power in the context of building partnerships and stakeholder networks in destinations. Therefore, sustainability is also becoming more important in corporate environments, stakeholder cooperation and business practices (Gill 2007; Saarinen 2014).

As experiensescapes, lakes are physical facilities or places in which a service is delivered and in which the service provider and the customer interact. By citing Bitner (1992), the consumer is 'in the factory', experiencing the total service within the physical facility. A neutral lake environment becomes meaningful once the tourist links images and feelings born from sensory-based experience of waterscapes. As a whole, lake tourism can be seen as a subcategory of tourism with its own features, like mountain tourism. It is also evident that until now the lake tourism concept as such is not used very much; it is more common to talk about tourism in lakes. Hopefully in the future lake tourism will also be more recognised as a concept.

5.3 Managerial implications

Articles I, II, III and IV also provided some managerial proposals and implications. A picture, no matter its picturesque merits, is not enough for the modern tourist who is eager for experiences. As presented above, lakes have to be brought back to consciousness by giving them a sense that is understandable to the target audiences.

The two-fold bias of culture is a big question. As the findings indicate, the iconic meanings of a lake landscape are obvious to Finns or those familiar with Finnish cultural particularities. Without any introduction to Finnish culture, these meanings remain rather irrational and even artificial in the mental images of the non-Finnish audience. The cultural background of the marketing pictures raises questions of how their interpretation would have been different among a group of Finnish respondents. What do the marketing pictures tell about Finnish culture? What kind of messages were behind the picture, the message that the marketing professionals want to send to a potential customer? It became obvious that that there is a need for special target marketing. However, what remained unclear on the basis of the study is where these cultural differences arise from. Moreover, how are they supposed to be responded to by the tourism marketing authorities? However, this is a big multidimensional research question and deserves research of its own.

It also became evident that cultural bias is related not only to the customer's culture, but also that of the marketer. The challenge for marketing is how the meanings that foreigners attach to lakes can be seen and understood. For example, Italians' understanding of a lake landscape supports the traditional marketing image of the wilderness. However, this perspective can be seen from an outsider's view and the bond with a landscape is weak. Second, contrary to lake images, meanings attached to water and waterscapes

highlight the importance of emotions. Waterscapes were perceived personally, from the participant's point of view. Both place attachment and sense of place can be seen as useful and important tools in lake resource marketing and management by increasing the understanding regarding the intangible values of natural places, e.g. lakes and the motivations for visiting these settings (see also Budruk & Wilhelm Stanis 2013).

A further questions is how are place attachment and sense of place supposed to be responded to by the tourism marketing authorities? Whatever the case may be, this case study clearly showed that the marketing of lakes has to start from a more complex perspective. In other words, the lake should be seen as a landscape and a place that does not leave the observer outside, as do the ideals of the traditional objective landscape. The formation of mental images is an intricate process rooted in the cultural background and subjective preferences of the individual. The lake landscape is construed not only on the basis of personal experience but also of the social and cultural interpretation of the lake. However, at this stage, I would like to remind the reader that my study is based on case studies and the results are interpretations of the responses. Therefore, no generalisations can be made.

Finally, I would like to propose that in light of increasingly complex management issues and questions, the lake and especially the lake experience might be better sustained by including the concept of sense of place in developing management options. Managers concerned with protecting the sense of place may be more sensitive to the environment as well as the experiential consequences of management decisions.

6 Discussion and conclusions

6.1 The emerging understanding of lake tourism

The main aim of the thesis is to focus on the meanings and content of lake tourism as a concept. A further aim is to bring up the geographical dimensions of (lake) tourism and to seek how a human geographical approach can contribute new ideas to lake tourism development and especially for the marketing of lakes.

The photo analyses indicated that a neutral lake could be turned into a meaningful place through experiences in a lake landscape. As pointed out, the doing of tourism or experiencing a lake do not necessarily require personal, physical on-site attendance. It also became noticeable that pictorial images of landscapes can act as catalysts for experiences equivalent to those created by direct physical sensations. People seem to interpret photographic representations as indicators of 'real', too. Similarly, the observer becomes as insider in the landscape when he can be engaged into the landscape through various forms of action and experience portrayed or (at least) intimated in the picture. A lake can be a landscape, an object of strong emotions, memories or images, a holiday experience construed through the company of tourists, or a functional environment for various activities. By applying the model of Elliot *et al.* (2013) the following four images were found; (i) cognitive and affective images of lakes created through beliefs and feelings, (ii) beliefs about the lake as a destination and about the products offered, (iii) familiarity with a lake as a destination, and (iv) a lake as a source of products.

It became clear that in general the concept of lake tourism is challenging and unidentified. Currently it is more common to talk about tourism in or near lakes than to talk about the term and the specific idea of lake tourism. In addition, the contents of lake tourism are still undefined. To respond to these challenges, the concept of Lake Tourism is presented (see Figure 2).

Looking at the results of the study within Holden's (2001) framework, the interpretation of a lake as a social system was described as a place for interaction and being with family and friends. As an emotional territory, a lake was described through emotional and sensory feelings, and the sense of place was identified as well as the wonder of a different environment, such as the fairy tale world as described by the Italian respondents. The lake itself was interpreted through physical forms, such as forests, islands and the use of colours in the landscape. In addition, the strong attachment with water and waterscapes was found. The lake was also seen in some cases as an escape from everyday routines (see also Smith 2003).

Three perspectives of the lake landscape were presented concurrently (see also Karjalainen 1995). Objective scenery was described in the concrete forms, elements and colours of a landscape. The landscape was seen intrinsically, as a sort of picture that was gazed upon. As a subjective landscape, a lake landscape is conveyed through

visually sensed and subjective [topophilic] experiences, memories and interpretations as an experiential landscape image. The representational landscape image accordingly appeared with different landscape characters and structures of meanings.

As mentioned earlier, photographs are vital for creating and communicating images of a destination (MacKay & Couldwell 2004) and photographs can be seen as a tool for the acquisition of knowledge (see e.g. Äikäs 2001). From a marketing point of view, instead of being a static landscape, the starting point is a multi-layered understanding of a lake in which the lake is deemed a place and a landscape with its special features and spirit. A tourist entering into the deepest essence of a lake consistently happens through emotional-, sensory- and memory-based images. Tourists become insiders in a lake landscape and the landscape can be seen as part of them. The question is how abstract images are taken into account in marketing communications, which is a matter and a challenge for marketing professionals.

The touristic transformation of a lake landscape (see Saarinen 2001, 2004) into an experiential place began in practice when the Finnish Tourist Board launched their summer campaign *Refreshing Journey* in 2004, by highlighting the water element. In recent years the promotion of lakes has achieved a bigger role in international marketing activity. Well-being tourism is one of the main strategic lines and its linking to waterscapes is in its early days. A tangible example of this is the new Lake Spa, which will be opened in 2016 in Rantasalmi in south-east Finland.

The culture of the customer but also the culture of the marketer was defined as an issue. Therefore, it is important to recognise the cultural backgrounds of potential target groups (see e.g. Mackay & Fesenemaier 2000; Kozak *et al.* 2004). As the findings indicate, some iconic meanings of the lake landscape were obvious only to Finns or those familiar with Finnish cultural particularities. Therefore, without any introduction to Finnish culture, these meanings remain rather irrational and even artificial for a non-Finnish audience. The cultural background of the marketing pictures raises several questions, and their interpretation would have been different among a group of Finnish respondents. What do the marketing pictures tell about Finnish culture? What kind of message was behind the picture, the message that the marketing professionals want to send to potential customers? From a managerial point of view, it became evident that that there is a need for special target marketing. However, what remained unclear on the basis of the study is where these cultural differences arise from. Moreover, how are they supposed to be responded to by the tourism marketing authorities? To answer these follow-up questions, there is a need for further research in the future.

As we saw earlier, lakes have several meanings that attract visitors. I would like to raise a new approach in lake tourism development in search of the spirit of the lake, namely curiosity: how we can find and make lakes spaces for curiosity? To take the idea of Phillips (2014), a more obvious and sustained engagement with curiosity could be fruitful in lake tourism development by bringing new perspectives not only to the development and management of lakes, but also to lake tourism research. Curiosity also acts as an innovator.

According to Phillips (2014), in designing curiosity there is a need for an effort to fashion extraordinary spaces removed from the demands and routines of the everyday. These everyday spaces can also act as catalysts for curiosity. From a marketing perspective, there is a need to reimagine the destination or the site, disrupt the normal flow of experience and create moments or contents that are predominantly encouraging to curiosity. The *Take Notice* scheme presented by Phillips (2014) encourages people to be curious about their everyday environment and about new places to visit from the viewpoint of health and well-being, but it also applies to leisure, recreation and tourism. Maybe the Saimaa Moments photography competition http://www.saimaamoments.fi can act as a catalyst for curiosity to travel to Lake Saimaa? In the future, Saimaa could be an attractive lake tourism and well-being destination, where interaction between tourists and locals and the sense of curiosity evolve together.

6.2 Evaluation of the study

"The research may be exploratory, descriptive, explanatory or predictive."
Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara, 1997

'*Reliability refers to several aspects of measurement, all focused on consistency*' (Hammitt *et al.* 2011). In this work, the reliability of the studies can be evaluated through the methods used, but also through the whole longitudinal research process (see Veal 2006). Prior the actual start of the research, a pilot study with relatively light preparation and groundwork was conducted (Tuohino 2001) for the development of the questionnaire. The interviewees were selected at random among staff members at ITB trade fair stands. The sample size was low, due to the available resources. The study resulted in a rather expected result. In generalising the results, we can say that the results were relatively accurate, since similar results have also been obtained in later studies (e.g., Tuohino *et al.* 2004) and comments (Härkönen *et al.* 2002). In addition, the results could be used in the design of the following questionnaires.

With regards to photo analysis (Articles I and II), there are several open questions about reliability related to the materials used. Were the selected photographs the most suitable for this purpose? Did the respondents represent the right target group? What about if the sample size had been higher? Is the interpretation of the received responses accurate? The photographs used in the photo analysis were selected as part of a process, which was attended by a number of individuals in two stages. It was decided to choose the photographs of the Finnish Tourist Board, because they are the official Finnish pictures used in international marketing. In the first stage, photographs were reviewed by the Lake Tourism project group. The choice was made with awareness of the fact that the pictures taken represent summer with a dominant water landscape. The reason

for choosing summer was that the season was strongly emphasised in Finnish Lakeland marketing in that time. In addition, it was decided together with the Finnish Tourist Board that the data would be gathered at travel fairs in Germany and Italy, as at the time Germany represented one of the main market areas, while Italy was identified as an emerging potential new primary market country. The open questions here are whether the photos used were right or not, and if the visual image of Finnish lake landscapes in the photos were realistic or not.

The biggest barrier in data gathering was the resources in use (see Jacobsen 2007). The aim of the researcher-led photo elicitation was primarily to collect the mental images respondents attached to the selected photos. Secondly, the aim was to gather attributes used by the potential visitors for the design process of the questionnaire. Based on these aims, I could argue now that the research carried out represents a reliable approach as such attributes were found that would never have even been considered in the questionnaire design without a survey. In addition, it was valuable to also get some negative perceptions attached to photos. This is supported by Harper (2002), who stated that photo-elicitation can increase reliability and validity compared to interviews without photos.

Interpretation is the most problematic phase in qualitative research (Eskola & Suoranta 1998). In the coding process, the problem areas in the coded data were checked by a native speaker in order to eliminate the errors in translation and nuances (see Bell 2001). The validity of the data respectively reflects the accuracy of the data, i.e. the successfulness in measuring exactly what was supposed to be studied (Hammitt *et al.* 2011). In tourism research, validity means that the data analysed includes issues related to human behaviour and values (Finn *et al.* 2000; Veal 2006; Jacobsen 2007). The important role in measuring the validity of interviews and surveys is the quality of questions (Heikkilä 2001). External validity refers to the extent to which the results can be generalised, while internal validity refers the research's own credibility, the truthfulness of the results (Finn *et al.* 2000; Hammitt *et al.* 2011). Hirsjärvi *et al.* (2002) and Decrop (1999) also argued that triangulation, which was used in this study, is a good way of enhancing the trustworthiness of research findings.

As a whole, the results increased the understanding of lake tourism from the perspective of the customers and therefore the reliability and validity are good. In addition, the photographs used in interviews can act as stimulators and thus the validity could be better than without pictures (Jacobsen 2007). On the other hand, I could ask whether two similar kinds of interpretation of the images would exist among Germans and Italians if a new similar study were to be carried out. According to Heikkilä (2001), validity means the lack of systematic error. In this thesis, we have attempted to eliminate this error during the research process and also through the methodological choices. The research proceeded in stages, and each next step always utilised the results of the previous phase. In each step the most suitable method was chosen. In addition, during the research progresses, the problems encountered have been used to learn and the research focus has been

refined. In addition, the results of the previous studies have been utilised. For example, the attributes grouped in photo elicitation were used in designing the questionnaire. This confirmed the validity of the questionnaire, as the attributes used were chosen by potential visitors to Finland – they were not given by researchers. From a data perspective, there is always a question of whether people were honest in their responses. On the other hand, data processing and coding was an interpretation of the researchers. The reliability of the coding was verified by the fact that two or three people went through the material, and in cases of doubt the encoding outcome was specified. As a whole, the triangulation with various phases of the research supported each other and no remarkable exceptions occurred (see also Bell 2001).

Interviews in tourism businesses in turn reflect the values and views of that time. If the interviews were to be repeated, the responses may differ. Also the commitment level of businesses is relevant in this kind of development work – do they naturally go to where the challenges are weakest, or do they invest plenty of time on innovations, the outcome of which no one is able to say? However, the reliability and validity of the research can be considered good, as similar results have been obtained in other research focused on the image of Finland (e.g..Tuohino *et al.* 2004; Komppula *et al.* 2006). Without the views and attributes of respondents, the questionnaire would not have been as diverse as it was in this study.

6.3 Future research

"When I see the infinity of the lake in front of my eye I feel the desire to dive…"

Lake tourism is a growing sector of tourism and tourism research. From the root level development of lake tourism, several new perspectives have been noted. The potentiality and resources of lakes could be utilised in rural and well-being tourism with a special focus on the potentiality of lakes and lake landscapes (e.g. Hjalager *et al.* 2011), such as how Pechlaner and Fischer (2006) approached an Alpine Wellness concept. In forthcoming research activities, the utilisation of lakes could be highlighted with the aim of focusing on customer profiling and customer-oriented product development (see Pesonen *et al.* 2011; Pesonen 2013). By doing this, the meanings attached to lakes bring the added value that the customer expects to receive. Another future aspect is the increased interest that Russians have in Finnish lakes (see Lipkina 2013).

At the academic level, the research raised several new research questions: particularly those topics related to the cultural and value-loaded questions behind the mental images associated with lakes, experiencing the landscape and attachment to places. Another interesting topic in the future would be to explore the conceptual frameworks between lake tourism, well-being and ecosystems. This work is being developed in the COST action

IS1204 Tourism Well-being and Ecosystem Services (TObeWELL). This will link research on well-being provided by ecosystems and their use to tourism, leisure and recreation activities. The first research reports will be published at the end of 2015 or early 2016.

The links between landscape and health are increasingly recognised as essential both at research and policy levels (Velarde *et al.* 2007). There is also evidence that a link to the natural environment can promote good health (Völker & Kistemann, 2011). In addition, the links between human health and well-being have been studied by examining their relationship with green (e.g. Barbosa *et al.* 2007) and blue spaces, which can be summarised as '*All visible surface waters in space as an analogy to green space, not as a sub-category*' (Völker and Kistemann 2011, 449). However, less attention is paid to other natural resources e.g. lakes, fjords, countryside landscape, etc. In some cases, water has even be seen as a part of green space (e.g. Han 2003). According to Völker and Kistemann (2011), it has already been stated that water as an aspect of landscape is less recognised in research in landscape ecology, toxicology and microbiology, but not in the research fields of blue space and human well-being.

Health and medical tourism is currently one emerging topic of academic research in tourism (Hall, 2011) and the search for subjective well-being is a growing trend. Therefore, one of my interesting research lines for the future is the study of therapeutic landscapes, which is one of the latest conceptual approaches to study the relationship between nature, well-being and health (Fleuret & Atkinson, 2007; see also Moscardo 2011). In future research, the aim is to broaden the perspective on lakes and discuss whether they can be seen as therapeutic landscapes. Maybe the development of the Lake Wellness Concept can be seen as the first step towards therapeutic landscapes. In respect to these future research possibilities, the current study and the analysed idea of lake tourism provide fruitful avenues to work with destination management issues in the future.

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Savonlinna, Finland 2003 Source: Tuohino & Härkönen 2003a	**Ten theses of Lake tourism development** 1. The basis of lake tourism development (LTD) is in recognition and identification of specific features of one's own lake area, its natural and cultural history. It is time to dive deeper into own lakes to gain new perspectives and new experiences. 2. LTD calls for fading out the administrative borders. Tourists are not interested in geographical, administrative or organisational borders but the destination itself is the issue. We need only one first mate on the boat! 3. LTD must be based on research. Sailing on the ocean of research requires criticism, open social interaction and sharing of knowledge. 4. LTD requires daring to be different. The world is full of similar lakes and lake environments. There is a need for profiling and differentiating between lakes. 5. LTD demands openness and curiosity. Sharing information and benchmarking on a national and international level is an investment for one's own competence. To see close, you have to go far. 6. Lake tourism product/service must be readily available for purchasing and easy accessed. Even an excellent product or service means nothing if the customer cannot find it or get it. 7. Lake tourism is a combination of various things. There is a need for service chains, service centres, routes and rowing in the same boat to get service nets to prey on customers. 8. Lake tourism is not only scenic, beautiful landscapes, but also learning new things and activities. It is time to let go of the old ways of thinking. It is time to blow the spirit of the lakes. 9. Lakes are not only for tourists, but also for locals and leisure-time residents. Why go further to fish? Locals and leisure-time residents are more stable users of the lakes and have greater potential, but on the other hand, they are also blind to the offering of their home lakes. 10. LTD must be a year-round activity, bring added value to a customer and be aprofitable business. The wintry lake has its own magic. Lake waters must be deployed in tourism seriously, but with a smile. Riding on the crest of a wave can only be possible with great skills and quality.

| Thousand Island Lake, China 2005

Source:
2005 China International Lake Tourism Forum. Thousand Island Lake Consensus | **The functions and protection of lakes**
1. Lakes are important and complex resources of mankind: they perform an irreplaceable role in work and in life; serving as a source of drinking water, playing a role in flood prevention, irrigation, power generation, transportation, aquaculture and tourism.
2. The lake ecosystem is comparatively brittle, so the natural resources are not renewable. Nowadays, many lake resources in the world have been polluted in different degrees. Therefore lake resources need urgent protection.
3. Lakes are an important tourism resource, especially for leisure and holidays. They provide a leisure, entertainment and holiday-making environment and location for people.
4. We should strongly advocate environmental protection awareness, and civilised and green tourism, to reduce the negative influence of human activity on the environment.

Lake tourism development
5. Moderate tourism development will benefit the protection of lakes. Lake tourism development should be sustainable development as it is of great value to environmental protection.
6. Tourism development has great significance in pushing the economic development and social progress of undeveloped area, and promoting the harmonised development between rural and urban areas. We should endeavour to turn environmental advantage into economic advantage, take tourism exploration as the economic growth points of eliminating poverty and increasing income, and promote regional economic development.
7. We should stick to four principles in lake tourism development, i.e. strict protection, rational exploration, uniform management and sustainable utilisation, plan scientifically, follow the plan for the tourism development, and prevent constructive damage from inappropriate development
8. We should develop the leisure holiday industry, accelerate the transformation of lake tourism from sightseeing to leisure holiday, and develop unique products in accordance with local characteristics to increase the market's competitive power.
9. Lake managers and travel operators should strengthen environmental protection, balance the relationship between environmental, resources protection and rational resource utilisation, and minimise the environmental pollution and ecological imbalance caused by tourism development. |

	Communication and cooperation 10. Lake tourism of our country is in its initial development stage and under transformation. Due to its unbalanced development, we should increase the exchanges in the protection and tourism development of great lakes, expand the discussion about management and development models, make a connection to international lake tourism and learn from the advanced tourism development experience abroad. 11. We will plan to set up a Lake Tourism Association. Lake tourism management units should exchange their management experience with each other every year, and establish a long-term training system, speed up the review of tourism management experience and the development of lake tourism. 12. Federation relationship should be established among lake tourism units. When any member lake holds a grant celebration, the other lakes should provide their support, making efforts to create a favourable environment for domestic lake tourism.
Gyöngyös, Hungary, 2007 Source: Németh and Dávid, 2007	**Results** Water is an essential tourist attraction, whether it is an ocean, a river, or a lake. Though coastal tourism represents a considerable share of the market, lakes and reservoirs are increasingly considered as important resources, too. The role of lakes as tourism motivators or assets has a rather broad spectrum. As research in the field of limnology and hydrogeography are getting broader, tourism experts are also showing increasing interest in the utilisation of lakes as resources of tourism. The role of lakes as tourism motivators or assets has a rather broad spectrum, and developments often raise environmental issues, too. International discussion and sharing practices, experiences were necessary for a long time. The main conference themes were formed around the challenges for tourism management at reservoirs, as well as around special tasks in tourism and the sustainable development of the resources (ecotourism, conservation). **2. Conclusion** As a conclusion of the conference in 2007, future lake tourism developments must be considered from the aspect of environmental protection and should take into account the possible hazards of global warming, too.

Thunder Bay, Canada, 2009 Source: McIntyre et al, 2009	**Key points raised by the research panel** 1. Unique nature and its importance as a tourism attraction 2. First Nations culture 3. Large area of public land for outdoor recreation/tourism activities 4. Need to provide packaging of tourist opportunities 5. Ecotourism opportunities and sustainability 6. As a target group people with similar interests (nature, culture, lifestyle preferences) 7. Remote area and its attractiveness 8. Need to think value-added products, amenity migration 9. Winter as a new potential 10. Change from resource to service industry **Focus points of management raised by the research panel** 1. Developing a vision for communities and the region 2. Engaging the whole community 3. Enhancing communication among local tourism/economic planners, resource agencies, tourism associations, government departments 4. Developing partnerships and networks across the region 5. Developing a strategic and adaptive approach to tourism marketing 6. Having realistic expectations about the degree of involvement and support from local people and the outcomes of tourism development **Community panel** 1. Lake Superior NMCA was seen by all as a potential major tourism attraction, because of its international significance as a world-class conservation area and its unique natural and cultural heritage. Also the importance as an economic developer and partner was recognised. 2. Secondly the key issues like product development, the needs for communication and education as well as for strategic development were raised. 3. Thirdly the vision for the next five and 20 years was focused on. **World Café** Mostly the same areas as in the previous panels.

in Poland in July 2012 Source: Programme and Abstracts of the 5th International Lake Tourism Conference	**Results** The conference continued the themes of the previous conferences, with environmental issues playing a central role in many of the presentations. Several presentations continued the theme of sustainability, conservation, and protection of lakes. Health and wellness/well-being aspects of lake recreation and tourism, gastronomy in the lake context, tourist activities at lakes and lakelands, water quality, lake conservation and renovation versus lake recreational potential and tourism in the concept of sustainable development or management of lakes and lake districts were also discussed in the sessions **Conclusions** The current condition and concepts for the future development of water tourism and recreation, on a global and regional scale, depend on the availability of water resources, their origin and concentration and on geopolitical circumstances. That notwithstanding, most of the problems related to the use of the water environment for tourism and recreation of people in different geographical locations focus on the conflict of interests between different users of waters and on the search for solutions to ensure successful protection of water resources. The questions raised during the 2012 conference reflect the complex character of problems connected to the use of water resources for tourism and recreation in different parts of the world. For example, concept and system solutions were discussed concerning the functioning of water bodies as an element of the tourism industry and of an environment in which people's complex needs can be satisfied. Considering the diversity and specific characteristics of lakes and water reservoirs, the latter mostly created by using the potential of rivers, multifaceted problems of the assessment of their appeal and potential use for tourism and recreation were analysed. The conference participants also discussed the intricate questions of risks created by the use of surface waters for the developing tourism industry, and presented examples of how water resources can be protected and how they can be used in areas of high natural quality.