

## SOLIDARITY ECONOMY AS A COUNTERPOINT TO CLASSICAL ECONOMICS: POSSIBILITIES OF CHANGES

**Coriolano, Luzianeide Menezes Teixeira.**

*Postdoctoral in Tourism – Universidade Regional de  
Blumenau – Santa Catarina/ Brazil*

*Professor at the Universidade Estadual do Ceará - Brazil*

**Tavares, Jean Max.**

*Postdoctoral in Economics – Universidade Nova de Lisboa*

**Ateljevic, Irena.**

*PhD Department of Geography, The University of Auckland,  
New Zealand*

*Institute for tourism, Zagreb (Researcher) and Wageningen  
University (visiting scholar)*

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*In the current context of social arrhythmia promoted by the culture of excess, consumerism and individualism the purpose of this article is to discuss the need to promote changes in tourism and society towards a more human development, based on the pillars of the solidarity economy. The article extends discussions on the solidarity economy into the context of classical economics, with new offers and demands that are focused not on capital accumulation only, but on the rights and development of human beings. To achieve this goal, we analyse four key foundations of the solidarity economy - solidarity, social equality, cooperation and sharing. The original contribution of the paper is to present cutting-edge ideas that show a counterpoint to capitalism and consumerism; one that is excluded from global tourism's contradictory path by a form of production that values social relations, and quality of life in community experiences and community tourism.*

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**Keywords:** *solidarity economy; tourism; transmodernsociety, human development.*



## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary society, while extending the ability of science and technology, accelerates the time needed to configure social rhythms and destroys human rights in a complex social arrhythmia promoted by the culture of excess, consumerism and individualism. Many countries' development has been guided by the Eurocentric modernist thesis of profitability, focused on financial results for governments and businesses, and on benefiting elites while turning us all into consumers with branded identity (Klein, 2000). The global expansion of capitalism evidences the logic of exploitation and accumulation which serves the concentration of corporate capital, while impoverishing the general population, particularly in so-called developing countries. We are sickeningly aware that the phrase 'the development of under-development' still retains as much analytical and heuristic value today as it did when it became a popular slogan 40 years ago. This phrase related to simultaneous underdevelopment (or what we call 'overexploitation') in the so-called Third World, accompanied by massive social exclusion (Harvey, 2003). The reality of this is a questioning of the promotion of development that has a central focus on the individual emancipation (Rich, 1995; Cornwall, 2000; Bell, 2004) ; it should not just be a way of fighting inequality, but a means of personal achievement, enabling actions for conducting collective lives and supplying the real needs of the human condition (Sen, 2000).

The promotion of human scale development means finding paths that enable the transformation of an excessively consumerist and individualistic society, in order to put humankind as the centre of action and human happiness at its core. Increasingly complex social lives – mechanized and divided into classes and interest groups – raise uncomfortable issues, and make emerging movements a counterpoint to this culture. The modernity mantra of the 'survival of the fittest' makes each person independent of the lives of others, and forgetful of what completes and unites human beings and that is the collective spirit.

One of the ways to promote human development and meet at least some of the concerns of society is through a solidarity economy, which proposes making the economy an integral means of people's development, and not an end in itself lacking the need for

direct government intervention (Nuñez, 1998). The market economy, competition and relations of domination may give place to relations of association, cooperation and solidarity. In principle, almost all economic activities are involved in the context of intense competition, where large groups determine trends and prevent the emergence of new small or medium-sized businesses. Among these activities is global tourism, which represents 9 per cent of the gross domestic product, is responsible for 1 in each 11 jobs and \$ 1.3 trillion in exports (UNWTO, 2013). According to Higgins-Desbiolles (2006), tourism has succumbed to the effects of marketing, and has been dominated in popular destinations by neoliberal values. These decrease the power of tourism, while social forces act as promoters of peace and understanding between people. Although the majority of tourism literature promotes its role as a creator of employment and income, it still seems to be inconclusive about its ability to promote social development through inclusive actions that go far beyond economics.

The economic model that is configured in tourist regions (mainly in developing countries) is a kind of “illusion of inclusion”, where the large enterprises make use of economies of scale to increase profitability, while the local community feels just a few benefits of contributions from this activity. The individual is part of the tourism supply chain, but only as a constitutive element away from decision-making and the positive externalities generated by it. For example, Steck, Wood and Bishop (2010) estimate that only 10.2% of the total tourism income in Zanzibar, Tanzania is directed to the poorest people.

The impact of the tourism development model encourages reflections on the need to make logical changes to improve development and society (Scheyvens&Momsen, 2008). In searching for the identification of problems (as well as any possible solutions), this work discusses progress that is geared to people seeking economic development, with reference to human rights, the solidarity economy and human scale development. Therefore, the rising question in this work is how to reconcile the demands of society – such as dignity, employment, fair wages and environmental protection, among others – with the interests of capitalism already so inherent in tourism activities. In addition,

another issue to be discussed is how the solidarity economy can contribute to the promotion of reconciling the interests mentioned above. Thus, the objective of this work is to discuss the need to promote changes in tourism and society towards a more human development, which can be based on the pillars of economic solidarity. A methodological and multidisciplinary character approach is used, covering areas of tourism, economy, sociology and geography.

The present work aims to provide two key contributions to the theoretical field of tourism studies. The first contribution is to point out new paths for the development of tourism and society from parameters that focus on the human being in all its dimensions. In doing so, it builds upon the latest debates of critical tourism studies and hopeful tourism efforts towards value transformations in our tourism education, research and critical practice (Pritchard, Morgan and Ateljevic, 2011; Ateljevic, Pritchard and Morgan, 2012). In the course of connecting with those critical social and human development debates, the second contribution of this paper is aimed to speak to tourism economics audience that still seems to be driven by the conceptual pillars of neoclassical economics and its modern, market economy model. These theoretical efforts are then directed towards the promotion of the shift towards transmodern society in which values of sharing, caring, collaborating and respecting (oneself, the others as well as all living beings on the planet) represent foundations of all our economic, social and political actions (Ateljevic, 2009; 2013). In the words of a key writer on transmodernity, Enrique Dussel (1996; 2004; 2006): ‘The three malaises of modernity (individualism, the primacy of instrumental reason or technological capitalism, and the despotism of the system), produce a loss of meaning, an eclipse of ends, and a loss of freedom in bureaucratised societies’ [1996, p. 142], and the capitalistic emphasis on ‘profit, private appropriations and personal benefits’ [2006, p. 491] needs to be replaced with transmodern planetary interconnectedness and mutuality.

We begin our paper by a critical overview of neoclassical economics perspective in relation to tourism industry, followed by a discussion on human rights and cultural diversity as a basis for human development. The third section represents the crux of the

article in which the association between solidarity economy and tourism is established.

## **NEOCLASSICAL ECONOMICS AND TOURISM MARKET ECONOMY**

While the paradigm of neoclassical economics is admittedly a complex field it can be argued that there are three key assumptions on which it is based. Firstly, that humans have primarily rational preferences, which implies that individuals do not make systematic errors and generally do not exhibit inconsistent behavior. Secondly, it is assumed that people maximize their well being which is translated into the utmost satisfaction welfare through consumption of goods and services and the formation of businesses maximizing their profits. Finally, there is the assumption that individuals act independently, based on information distributed equally among all which entails that no information asymmetry exists (Dewan, 1995).

While we have somewhat moved forward from these basic assumptions, they remain deeply embedded in our collective psyche and business practices of many sectors, including tourism. Indeed, despite its many (positive and negative) socio-cultural impacts, the contribution of tourism to economic growth has been so heavily stressed that it still overshadows the whole field (Wilson, 1998; Balaguer and Cantavella-Jorda, 2002; Dritsakis, 2004; Oh, 2005; Song et al. 2012). Yet, on the ground, challenges are many and they keep on rising.

Environmentally, tourism activities affect and are affected by the quality of environmental resources (Tribe, 2011). While in the manufacturing industries, the environment is mainly viewed as an input factor of production (Song et al. 2012), the environment is a key component of 'tourism output', such as national parks and agritourism (Razumova, Lozano, & Rey-Maqueira, 2009). Economically, the main problem faced by developing countries is the structure of the hotel chains - overall oligopolies and, in many cases, with all-inclusive system (Baum and Mudambi, 1995; Tung, Lin & Wang, 2010) - and in this structure, there is a relentless search for profit maximization. Given this, the tourism firms still are

still in the need of economic incentives to undertake voluntary environmental management (Blanco, Rey-Maqueira and Lozano, 2009). Socially, the main issues that neoclassical economics is associated with tourism are the lack of property rights, public goods, and externalities. These problems are common explanations of the market failure associated with the environmental impacts of tourism (Rigall-I-Torrent & Fluvia, 2007; Dwyer et al., 2010; Rigall-I-Torrent & Fluvia, 2011).

## **CRITICAL VIEWS**

The tourist activity disassociation of any element of social character has been widely discussed since the early years of its development to this date (Turner & Ash, 1975; Leiper, 1995; Cohen & Kennedy, 2000; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006; Hall, 2007; Deery et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2013). According to Turner and Ash (1976), conventional tourism has proven to be ineffective in promoting equality, or in positioning itself as an ally of the oppressed. For Wearing (2001), “tourism in a market economy could exploit natural resources as a means of accumulation of profit and the notion of unlimited gains has led to exploitation of communities, cultures and the environment” (p. 16). For Llewellyn, Watson and Kopachevsky (1994), “tourism as cultural complex dimension of modernity is subject to the same general principles of capitalist consumer culture” (p. 643). If all economic activities are primarily concerned with the accumulation of profit, why should tourism be different?

The effect of capitalism on the tourism development model is “inseparable of the spaces and places where the same is created, imagined, perceived and experienced” (Ateljevic, 2000). In this respect, Llewellyn, Watson and Kopachevsky (1994) claim that tourism promoters should take care not to make it an “extension of the commodification of modern social life under capitalism” which potentially could discourage de-characterization for immediate profits making the conditions for sustainability (Swarbrooke, 2000). Therefore, the relationship between the characteristics of capitalism and the development of tourism – with an emphasis on human and cultural diversity – are thought-provoking themes, which are discussed below.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT BASE**

Education and knowledge are the pillars of development that confirm the productive transformation of equity and respect for human rights in society. In the view of modern economic theories, it is claimed that the value of cultural diversity increases when organized populations discover and become protagonists of the change process, which can occur through a community organization or by the formation of social capital (Turner, 1998; Fine, 2010; Shen, 2013). Social capital (Bourdieu, 1979) is attributed to individual and collective means of distinction, and of the members of privileged categories. It is supported by economic capital and material security in cultural capital. On the other hand, human scale development theory rejects the concept of social capital (Max-Neef, 1991), as well as of its ability to empower, seeing them as an elitist product of modern economic theories. When we know that power can corrupt and has the power to exercise authority and take over the other, it is understood that empowerment cannot be a guideline, nor can it be a socioeconomic development strategy (Labonte, 1990; Withmore, 1998).

Human-oriented development must focus on the human being, and makes the unfolding of potentialities of the subject to ensure subsistence, work, education and dignified living conditions for the citizens. Unlike the economy driven, human-oriented development must create a culture of cooperation, solidarity and partnership. In the light of Foucault (1979) and Bourdieu (1979) thoughts, it turns out that there is a play of forces in society between political, economic, social and military powers, when governments, entrepreneurs, militaries and organized social groups formulate differentiated conceptions of development that require them to give new meaning to expressions. Thus, culture becomes a dynamic array of ways of being, relating and realizing in the world. This would be a reason why development does not mean just generating wealth or increasing a country's gross domestic product (GDP), although growth and less unequal distribution of material wealth are decisive for individuals' quality of life.

With respect to the existing cultural policies, many of them do not have their own definition and agenda, but have an association with the implementation of the agendas of economic and social public policies. These associations may be detrimental to cultural policies, mitigating what would be the biggest contribution of culture: training for individuals who possess a critical conscience capable of proposing changes. Cultural policies increasingly establish actions based on the target audience, without concern for the human formation. When the new cultural policy agents are marketing and advertising departments, or large, private cultural foundations, this can represent a distant vision of culture as a means for development or as an instrument of democracy. In this case, a lack of public spirit and a critical view of government bureaucrats expand access policies that have a restricted vision. There should be a promotion of dialogue between social actors, valuing diversity and multiculturalism (Groschl and Doherty, 1999).

To understand the complex web of social processes, especially those of large scale, interests, institutions, agencies and subjects of various social fields should be considered (Arizpe, 2004). The networks on which we build relationships between culture and development have particular complexity in so-called developing countries of Asia, South America and Africa, where pré-modern and modern fusion occurs. While historically it is subject to developments in the economic matrix, an underestimation of the role of culture's scope of production – myths, symbols and metaphors capable of producing categories – plays a strategic role in the re-signification of development. Therefore, it “is necessary to join the memory of culture with the most advanced science theories (...) to join the science of modernity with traditional knowledge” (Rocha Pitta, 2005, p. 62).

In this outlook, the respect and protection of human rights are essential bases for the promotion of social development; they are necessary for building a humane society that ensures a decent life, tranquil social relationships, the possibility of people exchange, and the building of reliable bases for promoting a social and sustainable society. These conditions are indispensable for the preservation of human dignity, and provide a solid foundation for developing an acceptance of the right to be, the right to work, to leisure, to a decent standard of living, to education, to freedom and to participation.

International legal standards are basic requirements for the respect of people, and states are responsible for ensuring these conditions. The idea of the state in the human community is to be at the service of human rights (Hemingway, 2004).

Any possibility of developing an economic policy for people refers to the need to respect the individual and social rights of the person. As such, directing human scale development is crucial. In this same logic, Dowbor (1998) admits that “the humanization of development, or their re-humanization, passes through the reconstitution of community spaces [...] re-construction of the ethical dimension of development requirement going as for the other human being is a human being” (p. 44). Human rights have a historical composition; this means that, depending on the historical moment, the provisions are differentiated. So, since the historical changes generate a strong impact on understanding human rights (with regard to new technologies), it also extends this concept in the form of social inclusion via digital media, freedom of expression and possibilities of communication between cultures.

## **HUMAN SCALE DEVELOPMENT**

Redirecting human scale development means adopting policies that initiate work, social protection and occupation for all, as well as activities that revalue place and people. When activities turn to social and cultural development, economic activities play a part in implementing this. Tourism can be a feasible way of reconciling the growth of labour and social welfare. Before examining the development of the human scale, Max-Neef (1994) states that the starting point for this question is not to be confused with the concept of a salaried job; ignoring the peasants, informal cooperatives and voluntary workers whose difficult statistical measurement could make them “invisible” (p. 10). However, what most often occurs is the distortion of the cooperatives and the corruption of voluntary community work, which belittles the tradition of solidarity (Boff, 1999).

For technical scientific rationality, human is a rational being; for economic development, she/he is a consumer; for development on a human scale, she/he is a historical subject endowed with inalienable

rights and duties, and a social subject capable of changing daily life and history. Thus, each development proposal has interjected a vision of man and society. Therefore there must be a change of mentality, in which the economy should be at the service of people and not the other way around, so as to return to one of its dimensions; namely, the narrowing of the social reality in politics, culture and education. Social development based on fundamental human needs generates increasing levels of individual independence, and the organic joining of humans with nature and technology in order to integrate them into global processes while respecting local values and behaviours (Max Neef, 1994). Social development needs should be geared toward human needs in order to make people independent and empowered to work. This implies the development of people as individuals and as a group, organized as a civil society so as to become an aspect of its development and place.

In relation to the development of the human scale, this means the growth of economic activities through ensuring that all work meets the needs and promotion of social welfare. It must be mentioned that the hegemonic economy and the development of economic activities do not depend on personal or collective decisions, but assume the relationship between basic components of social relations of production; namely, capital, labour and state. Thus, the development of the human scale demonstrates that social relations are more important than the relations of production, no matter the accumulation, distribution and wellbeing of all people. Even considering the utility of the qualitative growth indicators and not just economic ones, it is necessary to differentiate the “human scale development as economic growth by all individuals” (Gramsci, 2012, p. 21). The human scale would not be back to primitivism post overrun, but the break with the most capitalism perverse face, focusing on human needs and not just the surplus and profit.

Therefore, it requires the creation of indexes related to the realization of desires, of education, of solidarity, and of human achievement as the subject of history; this is because – despite people worldwide being led to believe that human needs are endless, ranging from one culture to another and every historical period (Max-Neef, 1994) – the basic needs are common to all and finite. The ways and means of satisfying these needs changes within time

and cultures. What is culturally determined is the way to meet these needs. Human needs are existential – to have, to do and to be; they are also axiological, such as the need for subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity, freedom and spirituality (Max-Neef, 1994). Cultures are defined by how they comply with these requirements. What is culturally determined is not required, but it does contribute to satisfaction. Poverty produces and feeds individual and collective pathologies such as anxiety, depression, violence, marginality, fear and isolation. Satisfaction of needs corresponds to the biological/psychological perspectives that seek to find the universal justifications of human behaviour.

The theory and discourse of satisfaction are linear and simplistic, with needs constructed out of the design of social actors, and without taking into account interests, dreams, utopias or strategies. It is true that there are people who do not reach the minimum level of satisfaction with their basic needs, or are “alienated” and against situations that social scientists must mobilize; but it is also true that it is not up to social scientists to define the minimum and maximum reasonable satisfaction of specific people or realities (Boff, 1999).

## **SOLIDARITY ECONOMY AND TOURISM**

At the same time, many tourist regions – especially in developing countries – model themselves on urban, industrial ways of life, and quickly realign their economy to globalised capital; this usually causes adverse consequences for the poorest social strata (e.g. unemployment, poverty and violence). This scenario has certainly contributed to the genesis of the solidarity economy, which arose as one of the possible ways to mitigate social exclusion – not simply opposed to the dominant economic model, but creating its own space. The solidarity economy has attracted the attention of several researchers over the last decade (Laville&FrançaFilho, 2004; Retolaza et al., 2008; Gutberlet, 2009; Lemaître&Helmsing, 2012), because it conciliates their theoretical marks with the human scale development theory, with strong emphasis on collective work and well-being of all (Buzek&Surde, 2012; Dacheux&Goujon, 2012).

Dacheux and Goujon (2012) state that “the solidarity economy is, initially, a way to bring people together in a specific place, once nature of the social fabric varies according to the location [...] the solidarity economy encourages the development of the individual through the development of community of which he is part” (p. 207). The “solidarity economy” (Vainer, 2000) is an attempt to add things that repel and oppose the economy and solidarity. To think of solidarity in a capitalist society would appear to be a contradiction, but it can also be an emblem of the postmodern world; a means of revolutionary design that injects subversion into the current economic model. What if the solidarity economy is not a defined and unique mode of organizing economic units, but a multifaceted process which can incorporate solidarity? The philosophy that animates and directs this vision of economic solidarity is the development of the human scale; one that focuses on capital without ignoring people.

Inhabitants of small towns, villages, neighbourhoods and communities may be able to interfere in economic reality, acquire increasingly strong roles in political, economic, social and cultural life, and create a mentality of collaboration and cooperation. As such, they organize themselves into groups active in forming socio-political movements in search of solutions to local issues, such as lack of work, residences, schools and environmental defence, and improvements to the local culture and livelihoods of local families (Fortunato, 2013; Hung Lee, 2013).

The solidarity economy is organized by friendly relations and based on companionship. It favours social relations of reciprocity, and adopts forms of community production and distribution. “Community experiences” (Gaiger, 1998) are similar to those of peasant economies or ancient communities. Although the legal formats and degrees of content innovation are variable and subject to reversal, self-management practices and cooperation give enterprises a unique nature, as they modify the principle and purpose of extracting surplus labour.

Therefore, the key differentiator of the solidarity economy is the collective search for solutions. According to Gadotti (2009), the “solidarity economy is a non-competitive and cooperative way to produce and reproduce our existence has an extraordinary educational component” (p. 35). Joint ventures are driven by

communities for the benefit of the collective. Zaoual (2008) adopts the concept of a “place of belonging”, showing that every person is territorialised, because they are allocated to places that are either urban, coastal or rural sites. Communities are places where humans exist more easily, because it is possible to achieve space knowledge and a coexistence with all people; however, there are citizens who exist in global spaces without major problems.

Community participation projects are aware that those involved are responsible for the success of many enterprises. People participate effectively, and engage with and make happen what is thought to be the collective good. Communities grow as they find ways of developing actions that affect the growth of the group, such as increasing purchasing power and raising the local welfare level. Solidarity initiatives have expanded with the maturation of understanding processes and the conception of the solidarity economy – even as the economic model and the current political system try to co-opt the leaders of these initiatives – with various groups on the outskirts of cities, in the rural areas and coastlines.

The relationship between tourism and economic solidarity has been studied by several authors (Brohman, 1996; Ateljevic, 2000; Blackman, 2004; Dantas et al., 2010; Gard McGehee et al., 2012; Deery, 2012; Wu et al., 2013). Dan et al. (2010) state that “the insertion of solidarity economy in tourism can be a valuable tool to combat poverty, particularly through the craft, in so far as it is able to serve as a link between the benefits from tourism and the local community” (p. 67). The solidarity economy in tourism, in particular, is a different way of facing the contradictions of a hegemonic economy; that is, rather than to seek the maximum profit, it seeks to distribute what is produced, and improve the livelihoods of poorer groups by focusing on the human, cultural and environmental values. The collective understanding is that it mobilizes social groups who are able to change reality. Table 1. below provides an overview of published research in the area of solidarity tourism around the world (Table 1).

**Table 1: Experiences with the solidarity economy**

| <i>Author(s)</i>               | <i>Experiences</i>  | <i>Country</i>    |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <i>Marques (2009)</i>          | <i>Project of community-based solidarity tourism</i>                          | <i>Cape Verde</i> |
| <i>Silva et al., (2011)</i>    | <i>Tourism, economic solidarity and social inclusion in Porto de Galinhas</i> | <i>Brazil</i>     |
| <i>Wang et al. (2010)</i>      | <i>Local tourism participation</i>  | <i>China</i>      |
| <i>Hung Lee (2013)</i>         | <i>Project for sustainable tourism development</i>                            | <i>Taiwan</i>     |
| <i>Fortunato (2013)</i>        | <i>Project for solidarity tourism in Vale do Jequitinhonha</i>                | <i>Brazil</i>     |
| <i>Iorio &amp; Wall (2012)</i> | <i>Project for locals' participation in tourism development</i>               | <i>Italy</i>      |
| <i>Coriolano et al. (2009)</i> | <i>Solidarity Economy Project - ConjuntoPalmeira, in Ceará</i>                | <i>Brazil</i>     |
| <i>Singer, P. (2002)</i>       | <i>Grameen Bank</i>   | <i>Bangladesh</i> |
| <i>Sampaio (2004)</i>          | <i>Complexo Cooperativo de Mondragón</i>                                      | <i>Spain</i>      |

Source: Authors' desk research.

Obviously, there are already good practices of tourist activities, with the most popular features aimed at social development and a greater distribution of wealth. They come under a variety of names: “community tourism”, “local tourism”, experiences of the “solidarity economy”, “alternative” tourism, and “tourism based on solidarity”, among others. But the important aspect of the experiment is to envision possibilities of learning and communication, and the inclusion of individuals and communities in positive actions that can boost more just tourism.

These several positive examples of enterprises, initiatives and developments linked to the tourist trade that have developed socially responsible actions and measures that not only promote tourism and their businesses, but also contribute to the human development of the population.

The community-based tourism presents evidence of changes in the tourism as a purely economic activity, becoming also sociocultural. The production of solidarity tourism is not an end in itself, but they are political practices beyond tourism, because the communities want ultimately is a fair society, equal opportunities and equal rights for all.

Beside the conventional tourism, the community tourism act in several countries - especially in Brazil - with the specificity of to be supportive (Silva et al., 2011). These communities try to fight for solidarity and cooperation among agents of the environmental protection and preservation of cultural identities.

Tourism allocated in communities deploys firms, produces territories tourist service with the logic of solidarity economy. So they adopt principles of flexible, solidarity economy and fair trade (Coriolano et al., 2009). These examples (table 1) are focused in the culture, environmental advocacy with not purely economic motivations and also in the integrated development with other economic sectors. Besides this, these experiences has great capacity promote or create local clusters such as handicrafts, agriculture, regional products, confections, beverages, candy, all that matters to tourists.

These experiences (table 1) are important, therefore, because its occurs through systematic exchanges of information, integration of skills in joint projects between social actors, economic, political, participating and interacting in the community, businesses, universities, research institutions, advisory bodies, technical assistance.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The discussion presented in this article helps to demonstrate that the solidarity economy can provide new ways to establish relationships between people's self-esteem and production and consumption of tourism. Such relationships are visible through the organization of the social fabric, the formation of new networks and the establishment of relationships with the potential for self-management. The practice of human development (Max-Neef, 1994) is supported in human needs, in self-independency, in the organic

articulation of human beings with nature and technology, and civil society's interaction with the state. The development of tourism is potentially beneficial to all areas around the world as a result of direct and indirect job creation and the expansion of income circuits. It has been possible to see growing tax revenues and a greater volume of resources transferred to municipalities, or even by the investments made during the initiative. Tourism can stimulate preservation recognition initiatives and the dissemination of historical, artistic, cultural and environmental heritage to produce a positive impact on the quality of life of residents. Utmost, it allows us to argue that the solidarity economy is supported by the satisfaction of basic human needs, generating increasing levels of individual independence, an organic connection of humans with nature and technology, and the integration of respect for local values and behaviours in global processes.

By providing an overview of the general human development theories and solidarity economy concept as applied to tourism, this article hopes to open up many new research possibilities to identify – through an analysis of diverse experiences with the solidarity economy in the tourism sector – the common factors present in the successful and failed examples, which are important for our understanding of the subject and its further promotion in the practice.

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