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“So, is that a lifestyle? I think it’s a life”: An examination of a climbing lifestyle and how it affects perceptions towards natural environment.

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Abstract

In recent years, the activity of climbing, with its range of types and styles, has become popular. Up to now, it has been often associated with risk and inaccessibility. Nowadays, this association is changing. The perception of climbing is shifting towards a more accessible, and attractive sport/ activity. This thesis explores the attitude of rock climbers towards nature, specifically, environmental protection. The necessity of the research is clear due to the fact that the pure form of climbing takes part in nature. Theory drawn from the fields of climbing and ecology are presented and combined together in connection with qualitative research carried out in Canada. In this thesis I argue that climbers create deep connection between themselves and the nature through embodied practices performed in natural environment. This connection is crucial in understanding climbers' perception towards ecology and protection of natural environment.

Keywords: climbing, nature, environment, ecology, embodiment, outdoor, education, nature, lifestyle, Canada.

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"When I am in the mountains, there is no outside world, no hustle and no rush.

There is only the nature and life together with its rhythm.

Someone may say that this is only my invention, because I cannot escape a life.

It depends what life means to you. "- Piotr Morawski (Translation: own)



Figure 1. Photography of the hike to Mount Temple. (Source: own).

1 Introduction

There has not been any specific research into the number of climbers, who participate in this activity around the world. The lack of organisation, institutions and additional supportive environments for the sport results in difficulty in measuring the numbers of people engaged. Another challenge for measuring the number of climbers and their activity, and, even more so the touristic potential of climbing comes from difficulties in dividing those who are systematically involved in the sport and those who have sporadic involvement. In Europe, Taupin (survey 1/1999) estimated between 300,000 regular climbers (not less than once per

month) and 700,000 sporadic climbers (not less than once per year). United States statistics seem to be much more precise. In 1993, an estimated 500,000 climbers were using over 500 cliff areas across the United States (Hanemann, 2000). In the twentieth century, climbing was extremely popular in the United States. At Devil's Tower National Monument in Wyoming, the annual number of climbers increased from 290 in 1973 to 6,035 in 1994, a change of 2,100% in 21 years (U.S. Department of Interior, 1995). Yosemite National Park, which is a "mecca" for big wall climbers, experienced between 25,000 and 50,000 climbers per year (Dill, 1998). In 2001, the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of America (ORCA) report stated that 4.1% of Americans, that is, 8.8 million people, were involved in some form of climbing. At the end of the twentieth century, the numbers of people participating in rock climbing activities were increasing steadily (Attarian & Pyke, 2000; Cordell et al., 1997; Heath, 1997).

In the recent past, back to the 1970s or even earlier, climbing, or rather practicing mountaineering was an elitist activity, mainly involving people from intellectual circles who followed specific ethical principles (Wilczkowski, 1983).

Today, many researchers (Gilchrist, Osborn, 2017; Caber, 2016; Adeleke, 2015; Ewert, 2015) argue that climbing is part of a *lifestyle of risk, challenge or self-achievement*. Such a lifestyle is a central driver and motivation for climbing. Climbing is, therefore, becoming more accessible, thanks to infrastructure and fast communication, financial possibilities and definitely better-quality climbing equipment. Numbers of those willing to try a rock adventure are still growing. Is the next stage after mountain tourism, a desire to practice sports in the beautiful surroundings of nature? To gain peaks that are inaccessible on foot? Or maybe there is a need for adrenaline or a desire to experience risk and adrenalin-driven impressions? Are these increasingly numerous groups directed by similar values and life goals dictated by climbing? How important is the sport that they do? Is it more of a fun character, an interesting way of spending time, or is it becoming the focal point according to which rhythm of life is running? Whatever the motivation is, the growing number of rock climbers is a fact.

Even though climbing is one of my own passions in life, all of the previous questions and more motivated me to conduct research on climbing. Although I knew the activity personally, I wanted to learn more about current developments of and trends in this sport. I also wanted to find possible connections between climbing and another interest of mine, namely, ecology.

Recently, a transformation in climbing has been seen. Previously, as already mentioned, climbing was an elitist activity, available to young and athletic people, with a high physical ability. More and more, climbing is becoming a popular activity, even massive, as evidenced by numerous climbing walls even in small towns. The phenomenon of climbing can be explained by its multiple influence on people. First, the possibility of the impact of the natural environment in which the climber can admire the beauty of nature, as well as find peace and quiet. Second, the issue of planning and belaying. Every climb is a process of learning mutual support and mutual responsibility for yourself and others. Given this, is there an awakened responsibility for climbers to respond to the cliffs they climb and to the nature through which they travel and stay? This is one of the questions I want to address in this thesis.

Wolski (2008) claims that: "climbing is an excellent form of experiencing one's abilities without special support and pressure" (Wolski, 2008, p. 7). The specificity of this form of activity means that the climber should be obliged to observe the "partner system". The person who goes up must watch his or her partner, communicate with him/her, give him/her help if necessary, but also control so that you do not become a threat to your partner. A social factor is also important in climbing: climbing competencies are gained by the number of routes travelled and by increasing their level of difficulty. A person who raises his/her technical qualifications simultaneously raises his/her position in the climber's environment, gaining greater recognition and prestige. An important feature of climbing is also the community creation within which true personality of climbers are revealed. A person who overcomes routes of increasing difficulty, in a sense overcomes him/herself and thus shapes his/her personality. Overcoming fear and limitations as well as learning responsibility and planning make climbing a very valuable field of educational activity. All those factors would not be possible without certain tools, which in the case of a climber is his or her body. Each climb and climbing-related activity are experienced through the body beginning with the physicality of climbing-moves finishing-up with sensing nature. Embodiment is clearly visible in climbing and will be examined in detail later in this thesis.

Climbing is a specific form of physical activity, classified as "lifestyle" sports. This view is not always shared by all practitioners in this field. Wolski (2008) claims that climbing can be adapted to individual people, regardless of age, sex, weight or fitness, so that they do not feel, for example, fear and danger.

In recent years, the above-mentioned factors make climbing a type of sport that is recreational, a tourist activity as well as a lifestyle (Nyka, 2003). Apart from that, Nyka (1988), in his article “Współczesny Alpinizm”, listed several main trends associated with the development of climbing, such as widespread massification, athleticism combined with professionalism, multifaceted commercialisation, unfavorable changes in morality and ethics of climbers and newcomers (Nyka, 1988). Taking into consideration that climbing takes place in natural settings, those trends together with growing numbers of participants may be harmful for the environment in given circumstances. Undoubtedly, the necessity for investigating resultant problems requires the address of two contradictory phenomena. First, the growing number of climbers with new pejorative trends and ethics, and, second, the environmental awareness performed by many others. These two phenomena make it a complicated and complex issue.

Scope and research goals

The aim of this research project is to examine the attitude of rock climbers towards nature, specifically, environmental protection. Environmentally, climbing as all tourist activity involves movement over long distances, the presence of people in pristine areas and the frequent transition of the people to popular climbing destinations. Climbing creates a demand for synthetic petroleum-based and metal gear as well as is responsible for permanently changing rock surfaces as a result of the attachment of fixed protections. And these are just a few of the environmental aspects related to climbing, there are more. Still, most climbers embrace and follow ecological behaviours and promote environmental awareness. How can this be? In this thesis, I unpack this dilemma and argue that although climbing by definition is not ecological, it can have an educational role with respect to ecology. Moreover, I reveal some of the tendencies in modern climbing regarding the previously described topics. The main research questions were:

- What is the attitude of climbers towards nature, specifically, environmental protection?
- How the connection between climbers and nature is created?
- What role does climbing play in a climber’s life?

Responding to those questions my research statements are:

- Climbers have a high awareness towards protection of the environment.

- High awareness towards ecological issues has its roots in the lifestyle of rock climbers.
- Climbing is a practise through which the materiality of the rocks become embodied; which makes the nature become present in climbers' lives.
- Climbing is not only a lifestyle for some climbers, it becomes more than that, it becomes central point of life or life itself.

Due to ecological awareness, an additional objective of the study was to determine the educational role, which climbing might perform. This thesis aims to unravel some of the mysteries surrounding the educational and self-actualisation sites of climbing.

Brief overview of the history of climbing

The history of climbing is overlaid by the history of mountain themes in literature. It is not enough to apply historical literary criteria and organise their manifestations on the basis of classical themes related to climbing, as the importance of the knowledge of mountains plays an significant role in this process. Regard to the latter reveals not only the artistic sensitivity of the author who writes about them, but also the level of his/her cognitive competence in the realities of the reality he/she presents. Hence, in the description of the history of mountain motifs in literature, one should take into account not only literary elements, but also the degree of knowledge of mountains in a given period as well as the attitude and connection to them. The cognitive history of mountains is inextricably linked with the history of mountaineering and tourism. From this perspective, climbing can be distinguished in several major stages that are not adequate to the subsequent phases of the history of culture and literature even in general history. Insight to these stages is necessary in order to understand modern understandings and classification of climbing, which have developed throughout the years of the ascent of mountains.

The first period of climbing history is from antiquity until the ascent to the top of Mount Blanc in 1786. The climbing of Mount Aguille in the Pre Delphi Alps by Antoine Ville in 1492 is often considered as the climb that initiated mountaineering (Kolbuszewski, 2015). In this long period, literary manifestations of interest in mountains were occasional. Another short but factogenic period occurs between 1787-1865. This is known as the "golden age of mountaineering." Following the cognitive scientism of this time, along with the romantic discovery of the various values of mountain landscapes, and, the growing popularity of travel fashion, almost all the highest peaks were ascended during this time in Europe, especially in

the Alps. The end date of this period is marked by the ascent of the Matterhorn by Edward Whymper's team, which also evidenced the first major mountain tragedy - the death of four people (Whymper, 1880). The Matterhorn was the last great Alpine summit ascended, and it was the first time that alpine politics was involved. However, in this case, it did not lead to conflict between the main actors of the whole affair.

At that time, alpine climbs were undertaken by English climbers, who seconded local leaders. Whereas mountain tourism, both in the Swiss Alps and in the Chamonix area, drew on the specific romantic style was cultivated with the use of guides, usually local highlanders. Though at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, the new romantic views discovered, were most often seen from easily accessible places. The views were extremely attractive and quickly entered the canon of tourism at that time, simultaneously, becoming the typical literary motif often used in painting.

The increasingly visible diversion between mountaineering and tourism as well as the spread of this type of tourism in all European mountain ranges has contributed to mountaineering becoming a specialised form of commune with mountains, requiring specific qualification and equipment preparation. At the same time, mountain tourism in all its forms has become a multilayered phenomenon. Within its framework, next to the "classic", so-called qualified tourism, hiking and resort tourism of a walking character arose. These latter played an important role in generating socialising and behavioural styles that were completely different from the models, which were characteristic of tourism in the first half of the nineteenth century. Thus, characteristic styles of practicing this tourism were created, becoming an important element of bourgeois popular culture.

The next step for mountaineering was to search for more difficult lines on the tops or a trip to higher mountains such as the Caucasus, the Hindu Kush, the Himalayas. The so-called "expedition mountaineering" era began lasting until 1960, when all the most outstanding tops of all regions of the globe had been captured. The progress of climbing techniques and the improvement of climbing equipment made it possible to overcome ever greater difficulties on ever higher walls (Popko, 1971). To improve their skills, climbers found the optimal form of training: climbing in rocks, whose short but difficult walls allowed for more effective climbing than in the mountains (less time is lost to commute, weather conditions do not play such an important role) (Kubien, 1988). Climbing has continued to evolve, creating various

branches of climbing disciplines, such as rock climbing, bouldering, dry-tooling. I will explore these concepts further in the following section.

Styles of climbing

Despite its simplicity, climbing is a very complex field, covering several different disciplines, which differ significantly. Meritum essentialises it as "moving in the terrain steep enough that it requires the use of hands, at least to maintain balance" (Drozd, 2001, 45). However, depending on the area in which climbing takes place, the season and a climber's preferences, the methods and techniques are varied. That being said, types of climbing can be organised into certain categories. In this section, it is important to note that I do not follow any academic classification of climbing nor can any be found in the literature. Bearing in mind my research focus, I have tried to classify and describe it in a way that helps the reader to gain a better understanding of climbing.

Climbing is based on overcoming steep walls (rock, ice, rock and ice) with specific climbing routes. These routes precisely define the place where the climber should go and have different levels of difficulty determined on special scales.

The most basic division of climbing is the division into free or aid climbing in which:

- free climbing - only hands and legs are used for movement; the equipment is used only passively - for protection;
- aid climbing- climbing using the artificial facilitation technique - climbing with active use of climbing equipment. This includes hanging on to ropes as belaying points, using ropes as steps and grips, hanging on special "benches" (small ladders with several rungs), after which the climber climbs higher and deposits further belay points.

Climbing on artificial objects

Climbing on artificial objects includes climbing in climbing gyms, that is, facilities adapted to the requirements of climbing, such as a water tower, lift shaft or building wall or facilities specifically built for this purpose. The building must be preferably tall. After fixing plastic holds imitating natural, rock holds and protection points it is ready to use. Increasingly popular nowadays, they allow people without any possibility of climbing in natural settings or during bad weather to practice climbing. Climbing gyms spread this activity to the low land regions encouraging more and more people to try this activity in rock environments.

Although, it was mainly aimed for training purposes, in recent years, indoor climbing has become an activity itself.

Another type of climbing on artificial objects is adapting outdoor buildings as a climbing playground, such as brick walls, bridges etc. These are used as a sort of desperation response by climbers living in a region without natural climbing areas.

Bouldering

Bouldering is climbing without belaying on low rocks, stones so-called boulders (up to several meters in height). Due to the short distance of routes, bouldering has a more powerful character than rock climbing. Because of their specificity, technical boulder routes are often called problems to be solved. Protection is made using padded mattresses (so-called crash-pads) or "spotting" people (in case of a fall they try to grab the climber so that he or she falls on his/her feet). A differentiation in bouldering is the use of high balls, boulders that are tall enough to create a sport climbing route. Apart from a high level of athleticism, climbers climbing highballs must have a low-level fear of falling.

Sport climbing

Sport climbing involves climbing in rocks, in which the single pitch is usually between 10-50 m. Depending on the type of rock (granite, sandstone, limestone etc.), there can be a different type or style of climbing. There are fixed protection points in the rock (bolts, rings). The holes in the rock used for inserting these points are made with a drill with a special drill part or plitter. The latter is a pipe, which is part of the embedded ring or bolt, and is used as a drill. A climber going up the rock is tied to a rope and s/he carries quickdraws (two carabiners connected by a short, stiffened loop from the sling), which s/he puts into fixed protection points followed by a rope. If a climber falls, s/he falls to the last quickdraw he or she placed. Most of the time, routes have a fixed anchor from which a climber can be lowered or he or she can rappel him or herself.

Sport climbing is usually a single pitch but there are more and more established multi-pitched sport climbs as well.

Traditional climbing

Traditional climbing is a type of climbing, which involves the use of a climber's own, self-installed protection points. This is in direct contrast to the fixed protection points permanently installed in the rock described above.

When using traditional climbing routes, a climber places pieces of gear and attaches rope to the gear via quickdraws. At the end of the climb, these pieces are taken back - either by the second climber or during the rappel.

In climbing jargon or language, rocks covered entirely with this type of protection are called trads (from Trad., Traditional). A compromise between traditional and sport routes is a mixed climb, consisting of placing fixed points only in traditionally uninsured places - the remaining points should be placed traditionally.

Traditional climbing requires much more experience than sport climbing. Apart from climbing skills, knowledge about the correct placement of protection points is required. Pieces of gear used during traditional climbing can be passively or mechanically embedded in crevices and rock openings. Additionally, loops may be placed on little triangle peaks or large blocks of rock or dragged through rock holes. In the event of a fall, correctly placed gear should withstand the impact of a high force from a certain direction, and should not fall out with slight pulls in a wider range of directions related to rope movement when climbing over the protection point. This type of climbing is most often multi-pitch but a single pitch climbs can be easily found.

There is considerable debate about the relationship between sports and traditional climbing (see, for example, Heywood, 1994). The climbing community is also divided on the issue of placing permanent protection points on routes. Some climbers are opposed to using it in areas where it is possible to climb traditionally. Climbing traditionally interferes with the appearance of the rock to a lesser extent, so it can be considered more pro-ecological. A partial compromise between supporters of sport and supporters of traditional climbing is the statement that fixed protection can be set up in the places where it is impossible to climb traditionally (or it is too dangerous). Another solution is to manage usage, maintaining places known for traditional climbing for traditional climbing where sport climbs have not been established and vice versa. Usually, the type of rock also dictates the type of protection. For example, limestone climbing is steep and powerful, therefore, fixed points are needed whereas, granite climbing is often technical, vertical, and abundant in cracks where protection gear can be placed easily. Inter-group conflict between groups of climbers is further developed in the next chapters.

Mountain climbing

Mountain climbing is multi-pitch climbing done in mountain terrain. The features that distinguish mountain climbing are long approaches and descents, complicated return routes and the existence of objective threats. Depending on the mountain range in which climbing takes place, the names for mountain climbing can be different. Due to history and popularity of some places, the most commonly known alternate names are alpinism and mountaineering.

Ice climbing and dry-tooling

Ice climbing involves winter climbing on walls covered with ice, icefalls (frozen waterfalls) and various formations of icicles. To overcome the ice formations, hands are equipped with short ice axes and crampons attached to shoes. The anchor points are ice screws (steel or titanium) screwed in by the climber.

Dry tooling is rock climbing with equipment that is used in ice climbing (crampons, ice axes). Started by ice climbers, who were looking for new goals, they had to get to the ice sections by beating sections of the rock in the wall.

Structure of the thesis

In the next chapter I will present methodology focusing on research design I implemented during conducting fieldwork in Canada. I will point out which methods and research techniques were used as well as my views on the role of the researcher. I will already start analysing my action as a researcher using the concept of embodiment which will be one of the main theories later in the thesis. Description of ethics will be done at the end of the chapter.

Next, the theoretical framework of the thesis will be introduced. I will reflect upon existing literature in regards to the subject of this paper. Academic dispute on climbing overall, as well as, focusing on ecology, lifestyle, management and land relation. Moreover, embodiment theory and recreational ecology will be discussed.

Following, there will be the two analytical chapter in which I will show my research outcome together with deep and broad analysis on them. Given climbing forums together with climbing and mountaineering literature will be the subject of analysis as well. In the first of analytical chapters, climbers' reflection on their primary activity (climbing) as well as activities around in connection to the environment in which they are taking place will be followed, consequently, by educational role of climbing which is deriving from them. Second

of chapters will contain different spheres of embodiment in climbing. Conclusion in the last chapter will sum up this thesis.

2 Methodology

In this chapter, I draw attention to the research design I prepared prior to undertaking my fieldwork. I consider the lessons I learned during the conduct of my research amongst climbers as well as offer methodological reflections regarding how my research contributes to the existing body of knowledge. Through my research, I have learnt that methodology and research design (methods) are a crucial part of producing new knowledge. I also address my research design plan and compare it with what I learned in the field. In addition, I offer a theoretical overview of methods I used as well as justifications for their usage. Penultimately, I consider fieldwork before providing a short conclusion at the end of the chapter.

Tourist studies may look easy on paper, but I realised, as do many Master's students doing their first independent research project, this is not the case. Very clearly from the beginning, I learned that conducting fieldwork is 'messy' and hard to organise. Moreover, this mess was needed and there was no way to avoid it because, as Law (2004) argued "(...) it needs to be messy because that is the way the largest part of the world is – messy, unknowable in a regular and routinised way" (p. 2). The real challenge then is not to avoid it but to cope with it. Consequently, I also learned that having a well worked-out research design is important for the successful conduct of an individual academic research project. During my first individual research project, the main problems and difficulties encountered were how to relate to the complexity of tourism. Due to the large variety of conditions (environmental, social, economic) and the spontaneity of tourism, it presents many difficulties and uncertainties as a research subject. This relates to both source materials and methodology. Coming back to Law (2004), disciplining this lack of clarity is better than avoiding it for scientific purposes.

Methodology is the study of how research is done, how we find out about things, and how knowledge is gained. In other words, methodology is about the principles that guide our research practices. Methodology therefore explains why we are using certain methods or tools in our research.

McGregor and Murname (2010, p. 2) wrote:

“The word methodology comprises two nouns: method and ology, which means a branch of knowledge; hence, methodology is a branch of knowledge that deals with the general principles or axioms of the generation of new knowledge. It refers to the rationale and the philosophical assumptions that underlie any natural, social or human science study, whether articulated or not. Simply put, methodology refers to how each of logic, reality, values and what counts as knowledge inform research.”

The method of conducting research depends to a large extent on the practical possibilities of data collection under given circumstances, which then determines the selection of appropriate research techniques. Lutyński (2000) commented that the method-techniques of research are determined by the complexity and characteristics of the research topic chosen for investigation with respect to a project’s research objectives and questions.

This research is based on qualitative methods due to the characteristics of the topic. Climbing is the performance of embedded knowledge that climbers seem to have difficulties translating into stories. This requires reaching the place where such climbing events take place and to observe them.

As soon as I started my research, I commenced writing my research diary. According to Lofland (2006), observations and ethnographic interviewing go together and a lot of useful content comes from informal conversations in the field. It turned out to be most appropriate when taking into consideration the informal features of the activity of climbing and its participants. A lot of data that I processed later were gathered during casual chats with climbers at the cliff during climbing or camping after climbs or rest days. However, to learn more about the event, observing specific behaviours is not always enough. By direct observation we can only say "how it is" but we cannot explain "why is it like this" (Stocking, 1983).

In order to investigate hidden motives, decisions, goals, experiences and their interplay, I had planned to use an in-depth method, which unstructured interviews provide. This type of interview is a personal interview conducted according to a plan that defines topics relevant to the research hypothesis. Respondents taking part in it have specific experiences related to the research goal on which the conversation is focused. It refers to situations that were already analysed before the interview began. The interview with the respondent is partly structured, however, the respondent has freedom of speech. The interviewer should be prepared for the

lack of data consistency and be sensitive to the capture of relevant information pertaining to the research point (Nachmias, 2014).

Characteristics of my target group made it convenient and natural for me to perform group interviews, which brought another dimension of information that would not have been possible, or very hard to achieve during individual interviews (Fontana, Frey, 1994). Through conversation, participants stimulated each other into giving new ideas and thoughts about the research aims.

Additionally, I incorporated wide textual analysis and internet forum analysis to obtain a broader understanding of the topic. According to my findings, nothing exactly the same has been written in the academic field although, climbing as a topic for research was touched many times. The methods applied by these studies were primarily used to develop theories or to directly strengthen or weaken my thesis. All of the users were anonymous on the portals gripped.com and ontarioclimbing.com.

Taking my climbing experience and observations from Europe into consideration, I noticed that a majority of climbers were concerned with environmental and ecological issues. I decided to conduct my research in Canada because in many ways (electricity, water consumption, greenhouse gases emission), Canada can be considered one of the least ecological countries within developed economies (Dearden, Mitchell, 2016). Investigating the objective of the research in the extremes of a Canada population pattern could provide interesting results. Applying participant observation in conjunction with interviews then created a complementary framework useful for investigating variation between words and actions—between what people *say* and what they *do*.

Theoretical reflection on methodology

In recent years we have been observing the development of qualitative research in various fields and disciplines. This situation highlights new tendencies in the field of practicing science, with particular emphasis on humanities and social sciences. Namely, these may be symptoms of a revolution, and, a consequence of changes in the prevailing paradigms in science (Kuhn, 1962). The variety of research approaches and the accompanying tendency to have complete freedom in their cultivation, consistent with the Feyerabendian term "anything goes" (Feyerabend, 2010), may also be a sign of the coming of a "new methodology" (Malewski, 2012, p. 43). An important feature is reflexivity, which is expressed as

strengthening the position of the researcher while weakening the scientific method. Such positioning of the researcher gives him or her completely new and non-standard possibilities of studying the social world. Nevertheless, as Malewski observed, it is a consequence of the technicalisation of the methodology of social research, which means detaching from philosophical sources contained in specific paradigms and bringing them to the level of just tools (Malewski, 2012, p. 34).

Participants observation and ethnography

Usually, when we perceive the reality that surrounds us, we do not pay attention to many things, we do not concentrate on their meaning and essence – we just pass by them. However, some elements of the environment may clearly interest us, and then we think about their essence, try to get to know and explain their source or consequences. A plan for getting to know the subject or phenomenon arises and our perception is transformed into observation. Observation is the most elementary method in empirical cognition and should be understood as intentional (targeted and intended) and a systematic perception of the studied subject, process or phenomenon (Wilson, Hollinshead, 2015). The observer perceives the object with his or her senses, and above all: s/he looks, listens, and records. Silverman (2004) stated that social researchers are doing something more with their observations: they write ethnography. Ethnography consists of two parts: "ethno" meaning "people", and "graphy" meaning "writing." Ethnography is therefore writing about a specific social group from a social sciences perspective. Ethnographic research has the following four characteristics:

- strong emphasis on in-depth study of the mainstream of individual social phenomena, not on testing hypotheses about them;
- the tendency to work primarily with "unstructured" data, i.e. with data that at the time of collection was not coded according to a closed set of analytical categories;
- examining a small number of cases, possibly even one, but in detail;
- Analysing data that includes explicit interpretations of the meanings and functions of human activities in the form of verbal descriptions and explanations, where numeracy and statistical analysis play a subordinate role (Sztumski, 2005).

Autoethnography is a special type of ethnography, which consists of generating an ethnographic description, the object and object of the researcher, which in my case is himself

- his feelings, experiences, emotions, his subjective perception and experience of the world. The description itself is constructed from an introspective perspective - it flows from the side of experiencing the world of the subject and presenting their subjective perception of the world. However, the researcher is also interested in the social context of his own actions and personal references. He perceives them and tries to embed them in the field of social interaction. He tries to understand the socio-cultural conditions of his subjective experience (Beddie, 2018). Therefore, autoethnography goes a bit further - beyond the exclusive interest in yourself and the area of one's own experiences. Autoethnography aims to take advantage of the researcher as an embodied person in social situations, who participates in making ethnographic material using all the senses, in addition to bringing these experiences into an analytical text.

Although, autoethnography is accepted as a legitimate scientific method, criticism also appears, which is derived from the different positions people hold regarding its application. Thus, the discourse of autoethnography depends on whether the texts are generated outside the world of academics practicing autoethnography or within it, wherein the academics are supporters of evocative or analytical approaches (Ellis, Bochner, 2000). When engaging with such criticism, it is also important to know whether autoethnography is perceived as an auxiliary technique for obtaining materials, a developed research method, or as a new way of generating knowledge. To keep my work as unbiased and objective as possible, I decided not to include autoethnographical content in this work. I used it only for formulating a research problem and questions, topic and framework. None of the direct, analysed data in this thesis come from my personal experience.

Unstructured interview

In informal and unstructured interviews, the interaction between the researcher and the participant is smooth. The researcher always sets the frame: even when being present in the situation as a researcher. For those that became engaged in my research, they knew that I was both a climber and a Master's student doing research on climbing, a situation to which they related. Still, in interview situations I had to rework questions, in addition to letting the dialog flow between questions. This informality of a formal situation let the participants lead but I asked occasional questions to focus the topic or to clarify points (DeWalt, DeWalt, 2002). At their core, interviews are a form of conversation. However, Oakley (1981) considers interviews as a conversation with a purpose with certain rules to follow. Participants and

researcher need to establish mutual trust and sincerity otherwise the results will be ‘particularly dismal’ (Oakley, 1981).

Conversations like this took place mostly at the climbing sites, whether at the crag or camping sites, any time of the day with random climbers, who were met during climbing. Most of interviews had not been arranged and were kept in a rather spontaneous form. Consequently, my multi-tasking at the time might have affected some interviews. That being said, the informal and spontaneous characteristic of such interviews brought many unbiased and “first thought” kind of replies to the research. I wrote these down usually at the end of the day or earlier if I had opportunity to do so. I did not give my opinion about a topic unless I was asked or if it was needed to keep the conversation flowing in order to not affect the answers of participant.

Semi structured interview

In a semi structured interview, sometimes also known as an in-depth ethnographic interview, the interviewer is free to arrange the sequence of questions and the way of formulating questions depending on the situation of the interview (Veal, 2011). The researcher prepares a list of wanted information before interviewing, because for some reason they are important to him/her because of the problem being investigated. However, during the interview he or she must be open to new emerging circumstances as well as information. The interviewer may change the order of questions, as well as their form and content, adapting to the respondent. The language of an interview is similar to colloquial language, it is not formalised, or unified for all respondents (Jennings, 2010). Semi- structured interviews are more topic-oriented and generally make use of an interview guide (DeWalt, 2002; Dunn, 2005).

Interviews used in my research were based on 15 questions, which can be found in the appendix. Depending on the interview dynamic, I followed more or less the content of the questionnaire and its order. On occasion, I was restricted by the time that a respondent could spent on it. Sometimes asking particular questions was pointless for the outcome. To be more specific, in the situation in which I knew the participant had spent all of the time climbing I transformed the question “Would you say climbing is your lifestyle?” to “What does climbing mean for you?”. In the opposite situation with an inexperienced climber instead of asking about travelling experiences connected to climbing, I would ask how the person had transitioned from gym climbing to climbing in natural settings and if this had influenced his or her attitude towards nature. The shortest interview lasted 45 minutes whereas the longest

one continued for almost two hours with the average interview being one hour and 15 minutes. I recorded interviews on a recording device and then saved them without any personal information onto my personal computer, which was and is password protected. Names were replaced with pseudonyms, which reflected only the gender of the person. It can be said that the questionnaire was very helpful during interviews with inexperienced climbers, who did not have so much information to share. The meetings took place mostly in cafes or camping zones. I tried to separate participants from other activities so that participants could put all of their attention into the conversation. Although, one interview took place in the house of the climber who hosted me for a night, due to lack of the time, we conducted the interview while cooking, which could have slightly affected the content. The method of analysing data from interviews consisted of coding the written text of interviews - the so-called transcription. After that, all of the voice recorded files were deleted and text files did not provide any information that allowed recognition of any participant.

Fieldwork

My research took place in Squamish and Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Bow Valley and Jasper in Alberta; and several climbing areas around Thunder Bay in Ontario. Focusing on many climbing areas was a big challenge but it gave rich data due to the diversity of climbing communities in these various locations in Canada. Fieldwork began at the beginning of July and lasted until mid-November following the climbing season in Canada.

Characteristics of the research were different between west Canada and Ontario. Western climbing areas are world known and therefore attract significant numbers of climbers to the crags. The number of climbers classified as a lifestyle climber were the largest group in the climbing community in that region. Whereas, in the North of Ontario, around Thunder Bay, the community was small and constituted of local climbers. The majority of them treated climbing as an activity rather than a lifestyle.



Figure 2. Photography of climbing area in Squamish. (Source: own).

I spent almost three months of travelling driving from one climbing site to another with the campervan I purchased in which to live and travel in order to follow a climbers' lifestyle. Together with my partner, we drove almost 5,000 km across Canada visiting different places and living inside the van. We were mostly climbing and camping together with other climbers with some breaks for typical "rest days activities" like hiking, kayaking or simply sightseeing. This process, which Nairn (2007) would describe as "embodied fieldwork" lasted until we came to Thunder Bay where we lived in the van for the first one and half months. I tried to continue this research but I encountered some problems described in the next paragraph.



Figure 3. Photography of typical climbing campsite. (Source: own).

The role of the researcher demands working in a specific environment in a specific socio-cultural context. I belong to the social reality that I am studying. I am part of the processes that take place in it. My research activity is undertaken in the social environment of climbers, with whom I enter into relations (watching them, listening, asking questions), but in itself it belongs to the social activities of the scientific community. My study is a kind of basic activity in my social world of researchers-ethnographers. As a researcher, I try to reconstruct the image of the world of climbing, following the methodological rules of studying social activities and interactions. My efforts are aimed at highlighting the key elements of the phenomenon being studied and understanding the relations between its parts. Although it was anticipated that as a climber it will be easy to get an “insider” position in each community, it was only partially achieved. The communities at the west of Canada were very friendly and welcoming therefore it was not a problem to be accepted. Most of climbers there were mainly, what I will label in chapter four, serious or lifestyle climbers. What I later discovered, a lot of them actually treat climbing more than lifestyle, climbing is their life literally. Opposite to that the Thunder Bay area community was harder to approach due to a large number of climbing sites and small number of climbers. An unexpected end to the season was caused by cold and rainy weather in Thunder Bay, which prevented all of the dedicated climbers from

climbing outside. Most of them just waited for the winter in order to start ice climbing. The rest that I met at the local climbing gym, “Boulder Bear”, were mostly not experienced climbers and treated climbing more like a hobby than a lifestyle.

Personal experience gives a researcher more opportunities to see certain things. To be "experienced" means to operate using a greater range of concepts (cognitive schemas), seeing and recognizing more subtle and detailed aspects of the studied world. It also enables the researcher to appreciate the difficulty of the activity that is studied. As a climber, I had some degree of "insider" knowledge shared with other participants of climbing. It has been helpful at many levels in terms of access, common language, specialist knowledge, relationships and so on. I also avoided some physical restrictions that Nairn (2007) described in her article about the impossibility of conducting some demanding research due to a weak body condition. In climbing community, access arose not in terms of the visual side of a body (Nairn, 2007) but rather in the skills and ability to catch up with climbers on the long approaches or when making hard climbs together with them.

However, this might have led me to make assumptions on both sides, which means that points that can usually be expressed or explained were not. To have this personal experience can also influence the interpretations and extrapolations made by researchers, and thus influences the direction of data collection and storage (Twine, 2000). These complications required a particularly reflective approach, with a vigilant focus on how the data is inevitably affected and produced under these different circumstances. The embodied researcher is always a person with embodied tools (Okely, 2007) through which the narrative structure develops. Therefore, the researcher should be engaged in "the activities of the world and insights about how this knowledge came about" (Berg, 2007). In an ethnographic research context, the purpose of which is to examine in-depth motives and hidden answers, these factors are undoubtedly bigger and particularly important.

I gathered 11 in-depth interviews during the described time in three states in Canada. The participants were mostly Canadian with one Italian immigrant, who had lived in Canada since childhood. There was one Polish immigrant, who had been living in Canada for 30 years, and there were two French Canadians from Quebec City. All of the participants spoke fluent English, therefore, there was no problem with communication at any level. American culture was significantly different from European culture but it was a topic source with respondents when talking about climbing rather than the source of any misunderstanding.

The role of the researcher

As an empirical science, sociology describes and explains social reality. It has a tendency to present the results of investigations in a way that overlooks the real presence of the researcher as a cognisant subject involved in the process of knowledge production. The results of sociological research are often presented in a way that suggests the researcher was a transparent tool that did not have a fundamental impact on the final conclusions and the process of the study itself. Additionally, it represents that words did not flow from a specific person, but were an ahistorical and impersonal statement, wherein the object is reported as tangible facts.

There are numerous publications indicating the active participation of the researcher's cognitive, emotional and behavioural processes into the knowledge he or she produces, and his or her socio-cultural rooting and the fact that he or she has a body, and that it is the researcher's body that is his/her basic cognitive tool. Clarke (1987) emphasises that the researcher is always embodied and situated in a specific social context, which cannot be without effect on the results of his or her research.

A social researcher selects research methods in accordance with the purpose of his or her undertaking. However, whatever he or she does, whatever decision he or she makes regarding the techniques of receiving and analysing data, he or she always operates only with what he or she is able to perceive and register with his or her own senses: what s/he sees, hears, feels, notes, what s/he can read, touch, taste, smell, collect. His/her own body becomes a tool of perception. This means that the researcher's body as a cognitive instrument participates actively in the process of data generation and analysis. Not only through its physical presence in the field of the study, but at the most basic level of receiving signals and information coming from the area, by looking, listening, touching and feeling with the help of the senses (Kasperczyk, 2012).

“Knowing others through the instrument of the field worker’s own body involves deconstructing the body as a cultural, biographical construction through a lived and interactive encounter with others’ cultural constructions and bodily experiences. This is not merely verbal, nor merely cerebral, but a kinetic and sensual process both conscious and unconscious which occurs in unpredictable, uncontrollable ways” (Okely, 2007, 77). As Okely pointed out, realising the body as a tool in ethnographic research has a great impact for the whole fieldwork of the researcher. Deconstruction and encoding of the body can help

researchers for the more unbiased and complex use of methods during the interaction with the participants.

My general approach is constructivist (Clarke 1987; Charmaz 2006) in the sense that I understand knowledge production in an ethnographic study is a (re) constructive activity. The choice of the area or the research problem by its indication or the cognitive marking that the researcher assigns it, calls the subject of his/her interest, and introduces the element of the construction of research. The researcher creates an idea of what s/he would like to explore, what attracts his/her attention, what interests him/her and following this original choice, reflects on his/her concretisation, gathering of information, which he/she grants as data, and produces the image of the world as that researcher sees it..

Ethics

Research was self-funded with the scholarship from North2North program. A practical implementation of the research could be later used for better understanding of rock climber behaviour and, subsequently improving rock climbing' areas, improving facilities, climbing products and helping in understanding customer behaviour in climbing related businesses.

In addition to all mentioned above, ethical treatment of the researched units will be assured. Research will respect anonymity, human dignity, privacy and autonomy as well as it will not be discriminative in regards to gender, race or any other attribute other than preferences connected to climbing. Good research practise was performed at all steps of research according to guidelines published by the National Research Ethics Committees. Research was accepted by my thesis supervisor and the description of it was sent to NSD ethical commission.

Participants took part in the survey voluntarily with offer to omit any question if they find it inappropriate to answer. Answers were audio taped or/and written down depending on place of the interview. Questions of interviews concerned general preferences and habits within climbing and travelling, ecology and environment protection and the interplay between climbing and the nature. All personal data were treated confidentially. I was the only person who had access to personal data. Moreover, data with personal information were protected by storing them in protected file with list of names placed separately. Personal data that could lead to recognition of participants were not used in the publication. All of the names used to present participants' statements were changed to nicknames only referring to gender or

nationality. The project is scheduled for completion by June 2019. After completion of the project personal data will be deleted to protect participants' personal data.

Conclusions

Data collection in an ethnographic study is not a mechanical process. It requires the researcher to be fluent in the techniques of obtaining information, elementary orientation in the field, the ability to find significant connections in the studied world, how to reach informants and appearing in the right place and time in interesting situations from the point of view of research (Prus, 1997). Personally, data collection gave me insights into my favorite activity and taught me how complex and important “the gathering of data” or fieldwork is. Following a climbers' lifestyle, I learned that this was not a style of life but more a way of life, that had an existential effect upon experience outside of the cliff. Before I started my research, I was looking at climbing only as part of the activity. I was looking at climbing with my climbers' eyes. It was very helpful in understanding other climbers but it was important for me to learn to go beyond that view and be a climber and researcher at the same time. After this experience, I have looked for more detailed data in coded images: how a particular aspect of climbing can affect a person's understanding of nature or how climbing can affect personal development. Those experiences enrich this research in an unexpected way and slightly changed its direction, as it is still changing my way of approaching writing and talking about climbing and its effects.

3 Theoretical insight concerning climbing

In this chapter, I introduce and reflect upon previous studies conducted on climbing and/or tourism in order to embed my own research within ongoing academic dialogue. I start with an overview of academic literature that focusses on climbing as a subject and follow this with sections, which group the literature into the main theories that I used to perform and analyse my own data.

In comparison to other sports/activities, rock climbing as an academic subject has received sporadic attention. Within the extant literature, the predominant themes have been mostly associated with risk and risk perception (Heywood, 2006; Fave and Massinimi, 2003; Robinson, 1985), effectiveness and performance (Hardy and Hutchinson, 2007; Watts and Gallagher, 2000), motivations (Caber and Albayrak, 2016; Woratschek, Hannich and Ritchie,

2007; Adeleke, 2015; Evert, 1994;) ecology (Camp and Knight, 1998; Farris, 1998; Hanemann, 2000; Couper and Porter, 2016), and development of sport (Westaway, 2010; Kulczycki and Hinch, 2015; Marek and Lewandowski, 2011; Bourdeau, Corneloup and Mao, 2002). Additionally, Beedie and Hudson (2003) studied the sports of climbing and mountaineering within an adventure tourism context. In the following sections, I provide a short introduction to these studies in order to situate my own research with regard to my thesis objectives and research problems.

An early work that focussed on recreation specialisation theory in rock climbing contexts was a study carried out by Hollenhorst (1987). This study used a substitute measure of specialisation comparing it with neutral variables such as ecological, environmental, social, personal, and material. Hollenhorst's study showed that climbers were more concerned about the quality of rock and the difficulty of the route than the environmental setting of the climbing area. The sample selection was based on top rope climbers. This was a main limitation of the study due to the fact that top roping climbers are usually beginners with little climbing knowledge and skill. Recreation specialisation theory is helpful in understanding basic behaviours of climbers. However, in view of current research, focussing only on one group of climbers, who practice a discipline, which is not accepted by everyone as an actual climbing discipline, limits the application of the research findings. In some places, where protection is very doubtful or rocks are not allowed to be bolted or traditionally protected for any reason, top roping is allowed. Otherwise, top-roping is used by beginners too inexperienced to lead or experienced climbers to practise hard sections of a route with an aim to lead it after.

Scarpa and Thiene (2005) reflect on the population structure of recreational values of rock-climbing destinations and land management policies contributing to further understanding of climbers and their segmentation. The sample used was based on an Italian alpine club whose participants, as in any other club, shared similar preferences and values which could create the limitation and misinterpretation of the research. Even if the outcomes of that study based on the club's participants are interesting, the authors made the mistake of considering a sport climbing destination as a substitute for or as being comparable to gym climbing. In my study, I tried to avoid any such limitation by taking into consideration every group of climbers regardless of their favourite type of climbing or level of experience. This way every hidden factor was able to possibly be revealed.

For several decades, the human-alpine environment relationship has been struggling not only with the natural but also social and economic transformations caused by tourist movements (Apollo, 2014). A number of studies consider disturbances in the ecological balance of the natural environment are caused by the destruction of natural vegetation, disturbance of fauna development, pollution with waste and faeces, disruption of the natural landscape with tourism infrastructure, environmental pollution with exhaust fumes, noise etc. (Kielkowska and Kielkowski, 2003; Myga-Piątek, Jankowski 2009; Ptaszycka-Jackowska, 2007). Purity in the high mountains depends mainly on climbers. Unfortunately many of them, especially those from the group of tourists overfilled with ambition, do not apply to the principle of non-invasive tourism (not leaving anything behind), instead they leave behind garbage in high-mountainous areas (Apollo, 2010; 2010a; 2011; 2011a;).

Thus far, several studies have studied the effects of climbing on flora and fauna habitats. Due to its rock habitat, *arctostaphylos uva-ursi* is a very common plant often investigated in numerous research studies. An important threat to this plant is excessive and unscathed tourist traffic (Szelaąg, 1992). In some cases, rock climbing may also be a threat to other local habitats of animals, birds, plants, and the rocks themselves, which are also affected by climbers. Mountain climbers often clean the rock edges from vegetation in order to improve grip and/or to obtain knot tying points (Jodłowski 2011). Such cleaning poses a threat primarily to residual populations composed of individual entities. The problem of unfavourable impacts of rock climbing on rock vegetation has also been discussed by Kryścińska et al. (2011). These researchers argued that climbing routes protected with permanent belay points have a poorer flora compared to routes without this type of protection. This is mainly due to the intensity of their usage by beginner climbers. Thanks to the permanent anchor for descent on such routes, climbers do not have to create their own anchor. In this way, rocks covered with belay points make it easier for climbers to use top rope, which is climbing with the upper belaying (Sonelski 1994). As a consequence, a climber obtains a larger range of rock without having to stick to the pattern of the designated climbing route. Thanks to this method, climbers can quickly and easily get onto neighbouring roads, or they can patent these more difficult ones. This method is easier, faster and does not require the climber to possess the knowledge and equipment needed to build their own descent. This is why these routes are often chosen by beginner climbers, and used by instructors when teaching new climbers. Consequently, the level of slipping on this part of rock increases from

the friction of the rope to the rock as well as increased climber numbers. As a result, this increases the destruction of rock vegetation.

Comparing the species composition of easy routes with the flora of more difficult routes, Kryściska (2007) noted that the higher the difficulty of the rock, the poorer its species composition. The high valued rock is not very porous, and its surface is almost smooth and often resembles a sheet of ice. It causes a lot of difficulties for climbers to reach the summit but also hinders plant settlement and growth. In general, those routes are more interesting to climbers but not manageable for most (Kryściska et al. 2007). It can be said then that rock climbing exerts the greatest impact on rocks with bolted routes within an easy grade. The same conclusion was made by Farris (1998) on the base of his research on major plants in three distinct cliffs in Minnesota, USA. He argued that less steep slopes with bigger ledges attract more vegetation while climbers prefer steep walls without ledges in sport climbing. Camp et al. (1998) proved by comparing several plant communities in the popular climbing site, Joshua Tree National Park, that climbing might not exactly harm the environment but instead slightly change its characteristics. “Species that are tolerant to disturbance survive and may establish proportionally more individuals, whereas species sensitive to trampling may disappear or show reduced number of individuals” (Parikesit, 1995). Camp did not exclude climbing as a solution, by using different management strategies, such as spatial or temporal closures, and monitoring programmes; climbing can co-exist with plant communities in that region.

All of the studies, focussed on the environment with climbing as a direct, ecological threat, are crucial to understanding the problem identified for this thesis. In an ecological sense, climbing is a threat as much as any other activity taking place in nature, especially in very remote destinations. The question here is how to manage climbing destinations to make climbing possible with minimal or nil impact on the environment?

Bolting and management of the climbing destination

The on-going conflict between two, main groups of climbers is similar to every inter-group visible in lifestyle sport. Conflicts occur, for example, in snow sport between skiers and snowboarders (Williams, 1994; Vaske et al., 2000) or wind surfers and kite surfers (Tynon, Gomez, 2012). These conflicts have their origin in the participants’ assumed possession of place and their ambitions in terms of competitive behaviour. In climbing though, one of the

user groups has to interfere with the rock structure by placing and fixing bolts, which makes it impossible or unattractive to climb for another group.

Bogardus (2012) examined inter-group conflict between traditional climbers, who do not use bolts in rocks and sport climbers who needed them to climb. The problem of ethics, climbing styles and authenticity were the main considerations in her work. Seventeen in-depth interviews demonstrated how participants actually used their status and power in specific situations. The construction of a climbing world society was considered as well as discourse about the different kinds of climbing within this society. Bogardus wrote about the activity of “retro-bolting”, which means bolting the existing traditional route. That behaviour is widely regarded as unethical and not acceptable in the climbing world apart from some exceptions (bolting old traditional routes in a destination known for sport climbing). "Retro-bolting" is not such an issue anymore. Different areas are suitable for traditional climbing, others for sport climbing. Climbers in sites covering both types of climbing mostly respect each other and the routes of their different styles. However, the perception about bolt placing still remains a contested case within environmental preservation.

Schuster et al (2001) conducted a quantitative study of the perceptions of rock climbers towards bolt placement in natural climbing areas. Their study was based on 5 factors: bolt placement/use, need for management, reservations about management, appropriateness of bolts, and climbers' self-perception. The sample selection contained both sport and traditional climbers within which group answers were significantly different. The results showed a lack of understanding between climbers and management of the rock-climbing places and underlined a general micro-management of rock-climbing places. From its origin, climbing has never been managed by any form of organised body and only recently some disciplines of it are taking it into official sports. Lifestyle climbers prefer to cultivate the purest form of climbing and continue to strongly reject any form of supervision towards their sport. However, popularity of this sport and growing numbers of participants demonstrates the necessity for some form of management. Recently, ‘trad’ climbers presented a stronger eagerness towards management than sport climbers (Schuster, 2001). It is crucial to involve climbers as participants in the process of developing and managing climbing areas. Although some researchers found climbers held negative attitudes towards participation (Gager et al., 1998).

A good example of successful involvement is in Poland. There organisations (wspinka, nasze skaly), created by climbers, cooperate with local administrations in order to achieve positive conditions embracing technical, ecological and safety knowledge as well as taking into consideration the local population. In this example, organisations are also responsible for sustainable development of the activity and facilities. An ecological instance of this, is the partial or total ban of climbing in certain areas due to a breeding period for a given species of birds or creating toilets and trash bins in popular crags. Educating people is another task of “Wspinka”, which together with a good understanding of climbers results in partial restrictions of the area instead of complete closures. As a consequence of education, cooperating climbers put a special note at the beginning of a route, which they can prepare beforehand, informing others about a birds’ nest at a particular point. Consequently, climbers avoid the route and often neighbouring ones as well.

The study over bolt war brings up an important fact about the visible distinction between different inter-groups of climbers. Due to the amount of knowledge required on how to protect oneself in rock areas, route-reading, and necessary gear for a particular climb, the older heritage of traditional climbing has been very exclusive—only available to a few people at the time. Whereas, sport climbing that is a relatively young type of climbing activity demands minimum technical knowledge and more attention towards athleticism. This differentiation might reflect in understanding of and respect for the environment in which climbing takes place and, consequently, pro-ecological behaviours.

Recreation ecology

For over 70 years, within academic studies, recreation ecology has been studied and has attracted a huge international audience of scientists. Modern recreation ecology literature contains studies of camping impacts (Cole & Monz 2004a, b), research on determinants that limit natural recovery of campsites (Zabinski & Cole 2000) as well as justifications of the effectiveness of alternative recovery techniques (Zabinski, Wojtowicz & Cole 2000, Zabinski et al. 2002). Recently, authors have also synthesised recreation ecology knowledge, including the works of Hampton and Cole (2003), Cole (2004 a, b). This framework is appealing in an overview of my study as recreational ecology is part of outdoor education within which place-based attachment will be investigated in the next paragraph and later in the thesis.

Although their settings are different, to some extent, climbers follow the paths and patterns of other users of the natural environment such as hikers, mountain bikers, canyonsers or normal

tourists. In the winter season, ice climbers can also share the place with skiers or snowboarders (Buckley, 2002). Cliffs are located in very different places, which could be accessible from a road whereas others demand a couple of days' approach. Making a big generalisation, it could be said that most of the sport climbing areas as well as bouldering are more accessible than those used for traditional, multipitch, alpine and ice climbing. Schuster (2001) made a division between front country and backcountry environments with the first one being more accessible to reach. Front country climbing areas would be more connected with various types of infrastructure or facilities, and consequently, other people using the space. Climbers would be sharing the place with different groups of users, and subsequently, would share the same ecological problems. Prior experience of users of a given region can lead to gaining local ecological knowledge, which may contribute to environmental protection or reductions in impacts. D'Antonio (2012) proved in his research that most of the hikers in Rocky Mountains National park had very good knowledge about minimum impact behaviour although it is worth noting such knowledge was not reflected in actions taken in every situation (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975; Leung & Attarian, 2003).

Bott (2014) used ethnographic research to conduct individual narratives of adventure in the small and undeveloped Ton Sai bay in Thailand. The research focussed on the need of some groups of tourists for a true, authentic, underdeveloped activity destination. Namely, this little part of Thailand abundant in limestone cliffs with a direct connection to the jungle and a beach. This location first attracted mainly climbers then base-jumpers and backpackers. The alternative and adventuresome characteristics of the place and lack of basics in terms of facilities keeps this place away from the main tourism investors or luxury tourists, who focus more on nearby Railay beach—full of resorts and white sand beaches. Ton Sai is changing, however, among climbers and other tourists, it is starting to become a 'tourist' attraction in its own right. Conflicts between climbers and the 'rest' do occur. While climbers treat Ton Sai as something special and secret, backpackers come in larger numbers because of a note in the "Lonely Planet" guidebook. Participants (climbers) expressed their fears about the transition of Ton Sai into another "Railay" (symbolic meaning of any touristic resort) in a couple of years when the developers start to come to the place with their investments. Local entrepreneurs like owners of beach bars or bungalows understand the needs of climbers and try to keep buildings simple, undeveloped and cheap in consequence but upcoming tourists obviously may make the prices higher. Although, big investors are not wanted by the climbers sometimes overall management of such a place is needed as Bott (2014) describes:

“Sewage and other wastewater run directly into Ton Sai bay. Rubbish builds up into large piles before being periodically transported away by long-tail boats. Flies and vermin are a problem, and the coral reef on the shoreline is predominantly dead as a result of the 2004 tsunami, ongoing dynamite fishing, long-tail boat taxis, pollution and underfoot damage.”

The example of Ton Sai reflects the problems of many climbing destinations all over the world. This is exaggerated in developing countries in terms of economy as well as remote places, especially islands geographically. Bott (2014) paid little attention to the ecological issues appearing in Ton Sai. Although, it was not the main topic of the article, it is important to point out questions associated with the possible development of the place.

North and Haraschymuk (2012) conducted research about a place-based approach towards sustainability in Castle Hill, New Zealand. Castle Hill is a world class bouldering destination, bolting now is banned in the region. In some terms, bouldering in certain forms could be used as an argument in the “bolt wars” disputes already mentioned, while it neither uses any bolts (sport) nor fixed anchors (trad). It is worth mentioning, despite eliminating one of the anti-ecological factors, there are still plenty left and this was not the point of the argument in the article. The two authors used climbing as an illustration of a place-based means of promoting sustainability. One initiative of this approach is the reconnection of people with their immediate environment and the promotion of the wellbeing of both. This has been present in indigenous communities for centuries. Their article tries to introduce bicultural—western and indigenous—understanding. A place-based approach is one of the theories showing the importance in the outdoor education in climbing, therefore the work of North et al. (2012) contribute greatly to the connection between nature and climbers.

However, regardless of how important it is in the view of my thesis, this approach is opposite to the view presented by some of the climbers, who perceived that climbing is an obstacle to creating a connection to a place. “What is cliff? It is a climb or climbs waiting to happen” (Rossiter, 2007). This undoubtedly is shared by many climbers. The approach of “conquering” mountains has its origins in history when mountains were the last area of competition between world empires. Nowadays, most climbers do not fight the mountains but challenge themselves. They want to fight down their own fears and the mountains are just the place to do that. Therefore, most climbers show great respect and connection to the place of their activity. Rossiter (2007) noted that research undertaken to examine the human-nature connection has strengthened this argument by identifying a lack of culture, geological or

ecological problems of given regions in climbing guidebooks. Again, I think this is an issue of past when climbing was a niche activity and climbing guidebooks were not printed in large quantities. Additionally, climbers have not been the wealthiest of people. Consequently, older pre-1990 climbing books that I have read restrict their texts to climbing information. Current climbing guidebooks tend to contain information about local culture, flora and fauna, geology, “rest days” activities, etc; together with any ecological issues if these occur in the climbing region. It is important to remember what Merrill et al. (1998) noticed, namely that, climbing is a dynamic phenomenon and so too are the participants of that activity dynamic and changing continuously.

Lifestyle sports

One of the main theoretical concepts introduced to analyses of climbing and tourism is the use of lifestyle as a central analytical concept. Many works have been devoted to the subject of lifestyle and its determinants (see among others, Hodan, 2002; Żukowscy, 2001; Krawczyk, 1995). Jawłowska (1976) adopts the definition of lifestyle as a "certain whole, comprising choices in three mutually interrelated spheres: in the sphere of recognized [sic] and felt values, in the sphere of behaviours (most often carried out in free time) and in the sphere of objects that surround people in their nearest surroundings " (Jawłowska, 1976; p. 207). Using this approach to develop the theme, lifestyle becomes not the sum of vital activities, but gives them form. From such a definition of lifestyle, the question arises whether physical activity, and more specifically, climbing, can become an important element that influences a change of lifestyle. Wheaton described lifestyle sports as “sports that have been labelled as 'extreme' or 'lifestyle' and which embody 'alternative' sporting values such as anti-competitiveness, anti-regulation, high risk and personal freedom” (Wheaton, 2004). Lifestyle is related to liminality in tourism studies, as a given spatio-temporal experience from the everyday (Wang, 1999; Graburn, 1983). The modern world dictates pressures on how a person behaves, reacts and looks, while the liminality of tourism enables a person to be more spontaneous, have free experiences and, consequently, the possibility of expressing an authentic self (Wang, 1999; Kim & Jamal, 2007). Lifestyle climbers experience numerous liminal moments, from experiences on the rock, which many describe as ‘timeless’ moments of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) to their constant mobility (Ricky-Boyd, 2012; Varley, 2011). The reflection of climbing as a flow that creates the opportunity to experience the value of yourself is valuable in terms of lifestyle. According to Ingarden (1971), it is important to experience the world in order to convince yourself that every moment of human life is

potentially new, given this approach, this is why life is a kind of creativity (Dobrołowicz et al., 2006). Csikszentmihalyi (1990) termed this, 'flow', an optimal experience, a 'state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter' (1990, p. 4). Amongst others, climbing offered the participants in his 1977 study, the experience of "timelessness," "one-pointedness of mind," "integration of mind and body," as well as "sense of man's [sic] place in the universe; oneness with nature; congruence of psychological and environmental ecology" (pp. 96-97).

A qualitative study of lifestyle climbers by Rickly-Boyd (2012) was not strictly written in connection to ecological issues, nevertheless, it can contribute greatly to the dimension of lifestyle climbing. The study considered climbing a life-style sport with a hyper-mobile community forced to travel because of the seasonality of climbing areas. The author introduced the term "dirtbag" into the article to describe a full-time, non-professional climber living most often in a car or camper van following climbing destinations where the proper weather condition occurs at a given time. This study provided one simple fact that was important in terms of ecology, namely the aforementioned hyper-mobility of the climbing community.

This, and other papers written by Rickly-Boyd contribute greatly to understanding climbers' features, characteristics and behaviours. Therefore, it provides appealing background for my research with respect to pre-understanding climbers' attitudes. The problem of hyper-mobility as well as the idea of framing climbing as a lifestyle will be the main topic in following chapters of this thesis. Rickly-Boyd (2012) described lifestyle climbing as framed by frequent travel, and enacted within a community necessitates of the 'bodily' practice of rock climbing. Within this definition it will be easier to delve into next section.

Embodiment

One of the most fascinating hypotheses in cognitive science is the theory that cognition is embodied. Like other good ideas in cognitive science, "embodiment" can simultaneously have at least six different meanings (Wilson, 2002). The most popular definitions of this concept are based on the simple assumption that "states of the body affect the states of the mind"; however, the implications of the embodiment hypothesis lead to more radical conclusions. If cognition concerns the brain, body and environment, then "states of mind" do not exist in deviated cognitive science, so they cannot be modified. Therefore, cognition appears as an

extended system composed of many resources, and a serious reflection on embodiment requires new methods and a new theory.

Those theories encouraged social scientists to look into the realm of bodily movements and mundane practices (Lorimer, 2005; McCormack, 2008; Thrift, 2000, 2001, 2008; Wylie, 2005, 2006, 2013). Embodiment has become an important concept for many areas of cognitive sciences, but it is variously defined with respect to what exactly it is and what kind of activities are required for a particular type of embodied cognition. Therefore, although many people would agree today that people are incarnate subjects, there is no full agreement as to what kind of action can be considered an embodiment of cognitive science.

Due to the “performance turn”, tourism studies research has generated an understanding that tourism is an activity of experiencing something through bodily involvement (see, for instance, Edensor, 2000, 2001; Everett, 2009; Haldrup and Larsen, 2006, 2010; Larsen, 2008, 2012; Tucker, 2007; Weaver, 2005). Some of the researchers argue that the main motives for tourism are recreation, relaxation, and rejuvenation, which place the body, and bodily feelings, in the middle of the tourism experience (Veijola & Jokinen, 1994; Wang, 1999). Following that, the body is central to the experience of sport as well, the body is both sensual and symbolic (Featherstone et al., 1991; Wellard, 2009). Tourism then, including that related to sport, is a social performance of doing, touching, and being, which when considered together create tourist destinations (Coleman and Crang, 2002).

Everyday embodied practices such as walking, eating, looking, and playing takes the focus away from what Larsen (2008) calls “travelling eyes” (p. 26). Research that has focussed on tourist travel as a mundane performance is increasing (Crouch, 2000; Edensor, 2001; Franklin, 2003; Franklin and Crang, 2001; Larsen, 2008; Obrador-Pons, 2003). However, as Prince (2016) noticed, there is lack of a “non-representational approach that focuses on the experience of those who dwell within a tourist landscape and who, through their everyday practices and embodied movements, incur and fashion its emergence over time” (p. 64). Mundane practices were one of the subjects in my research when I was trying to investigate climbers’ daily routines, camping and eating habits, training programmes etc. Through those answers, some of which just scraped the surface, others revealed outcomes that unexpectedly led me as a researcher to focus on the embodiment of climbing.

Embodiment and climbing have been mentioned several times in academic literature though not always is 'embodied' climbing labelled as embodiment. Rossiter (2007) reflects on humans and nature connections through a focus on the cultures, practices, and representations of rock climbing. She discovered non dichotomous moments in the exchanges between human and nonhuman natural bodies in order that they come across each other, provocatively intervene on each other, and find form through each other.

Rickly-Boys (2012) noted that although a majority of participants in climbing look for physicality in bodily experience some might focus on a spiritual side. A participant in that research reflected:

“It feels like a practice. Maybe a philosophical practice with physical applications. [. . .] You have the mental factors that are brought about through a physical practice and that’s kind of what climbing feels like to me. The physical part with the intent of bringing about a specific mental concept is kind of the idea. The Zen quote, punish your body to purify your mind, type of deal, it’s that sort of idea. (Male, late 20s – climbing 15 years, dirtbagging 9 years)” (p. 92)

I think what Rickly-Boys missed in this interpretation is that the spirituality in climbing might be connected with physicality in the same way yoga practitioners combine those two dimensions within the same activity. Thomas (1967) in an introduction to an Australian climbing guidebook went even further suggesting something similar to an embodiment of the rock itself:

“After all, we do not know what it is like to be a rock because we are only human. The most we can do is project our minds into the rock so as to try and imagine the feelings experienced by a rock. For surely, there is no reason why a rock cannot have a mind of its own. Though not of the human kind, nevertheless a feeling, a sensitivity to its surroundings. Mountains differ in their reactions towards different people, just as the reverse is true; thus, it issues its challenge to the human race.” (p. 85)

There is no logic behind that suggestion but taking into consideration that those are the words of a climber, not a scholar, we can treat this text as a very interesting approach in a climber’s world. Especially, that this kind of anthropomorphism of the nature, maybe not as strong, can be frequently heard or read from climbers: “I was feeling strong but the rock didn’t give me enough friction this time”. Or “Acclimatisation went good but the mountain didn’t let us top it” (Porter, 2016). It shows that the shape in which the climbers are is one thing but the

“mood” of the mountain reflected mostly in weather conditions is another thing. In alpine expeditions, the case of “if the mountain lets us” or “if it will go” is even more extreme in the case of avalanches of rocks falling from the top when the mountain does not “want” climbers to top the peak. Surprisingly, we can find those kinds of poetic comparison within scholars as well. In 2004, Howett wrote:

“The rock is a canvas painted by the fingers, thumbs and toes of the climber as they brush across the surface, sometimes flowing, sometimes staccato (...) Sometimes the whole body leans against the rock, the canvas and the artist sensuously entwined” (p. 62)

Therefore, the connection that climbers create with their habitat is significant, full of respect that also has its reflection within an environmental approach. Embodiment theory became the main framework for this thesis due to the large unexpected content revealed during my investigation of the mundane practices of climbers.

*Mountains - depressed by the foot,
plants - destroyed by it have met the fulfilment,
animals - poisoned with your sweat.
The backbones of grasses break
they moan in pain,
flower bloomed - hit
in the same
Heart
(Jagiello, translation: own)*



Figure 4. Photography of rappelling down after a climb. (Source: own).

4 Climbers towards ecological awareness

In this chapter, I analyse research outcomes which are based upon ethnographic data gathered during four months of fieldwork. The fieldwork was undertaken among the climbing community of Canada, as well as participant observation conducted in Canada during the same period. The main question that I address is the following: what are the attitudes of climbers towards nature in regard to environmental protection? In addition, I was interested in

how climbers relate to the ecology, not only while climbing, but also in relation to their own travelling, consumption and lifestyle practices. I incorporate outdoor education theory to highlight the educational role of climbing.

Unlike previous research conducted regarding climbing as a choice of lifestyle (see among others: Ricky-Boyd, 2012, 2014; Gagnon et al., 2016; Wheaton, 2004); my research tells a partly different story. The fieldwork that I conducted in Canada embraced a lot of ecological-related content. This content informed the focus of my research question and research design and continued to inform my research including knowledge I gained myself by jumping into a climber's shoes. Based on my own research and experience, I argue that climbers have a high awareness towards ecology and that climbing, as well as actions around climbing, has an influence upon this awareness. I also propose a subjective classification of climbers in regard to their experience and environment awareness levels. Since, in this type of research, it is necessary to present the fieldwork data in a realistic way, the subjects' answers are presented in their original unedited forms, including quotes from interviews, which serve to scientifically justify the text (Kostera, 2014, p. 27). According to Kostera (2014), this is probably the only method that is simultaneously scientifically based as well as provides an impression of personal experiences. Therefore, this chapter also includes selected statements from interviewees, who participated in my research.

Pejorative impacts on the environment are an inevitable consequence of any activity that is performed in nature. Even the most careful visitor will leave footprints and unintentionally disturb wildlife. Outdoor activities can generate impacts on each of the elements in an environmental ecosystem. Soil, vegetation, wildlife and water are four primary components that are affected (Leung, 2003). Impacts on one of the elements might have flow-on influences on multiple components since all ecological components are interdependent. The nature-human dichotomy is elementary to discourses of nature conservation in which pristine nature has to be preserved from human contamination. As a result of human activity and contamination, environmental protection strategies and management have been introduced (Adams, 2003; Brockington et al., 2008; Castree, 2003; 2011; Tonge et al., 2015).

Already for a long time literature has demonstrated the interest of climbers in the preservation of mountains, in which their activity takes place. In 1930, the International Conference of Alpine and Tourist Societies in Zakopane stressed: "[t]he ideology of mountaineering and the idea of nature protection are in close relation with each other [...]" (Chwaścinski, 1979). The

conference considers it necessary to protect the special beauty of mountaineering regions whose existence is threatened by exploitation, industrialisation and civilisation. In this sense, nature protection is not only a natural function, but the very reason for the state of alpinism" (Wójcik, 1997). The content of this record was accepted by the elites of climbing and high-altitude tourists, but that did not mean that everyone using a rope and climbing gear did it.

Valery Goetel published on the subject of mountain protection both in journalistic articles and scientific papers, including subjects, such as "On the use of granite in the area of the Polish Tatras", "Creating mountain national parks in Poland", and "The importance of the Tatra Mountains and the Pieniny for the global development of nature conservation". As an activist in mountain organisations, and president of the Polish Tatra Society (PTT), he had to resolve numerous ethical dilemmas. Such dilemmas also concerned nature protection issues. In September, 1930, prominent mountaineers, Bolesław Chwaściński, Antoni Kenar, Tadeusz Pawłowski and Justyn Wojsznis removed a plaque bearing the name of Adam Mickiewicz from the Valley of the Rybi Potok. This act met with the silent approval of the older generation. Chwaściski published an extremely diplomatic comment: "We have always been of the opinion, that putting up commemorative plaques in the mountains and of any kind is nonsense ... evidence of the irrationality of the plaques in the mountains is the history of Mickiewicz's plaque, embedded around Morskie Oko years ago ... Let the fate of this plaque be a warning, not to multiply this kind of "ventures" in mountains " (Chwaściski, 1979, 187).

The Sokołowski brothers, Adam and Marian, were similarly-minded supporters of nature conservation. The first of them set clear boundaries in making the mountains accessible: "The accessibility of tourist mountains is acceptable for any purpose or sense, as long as it does not cause major damage to the original nature or cause distortions to the landscape" (Sokołowski, 1998, 177). Whereas Marian wrote: "Mountains cannot be thoughtlessly shared, let alone civilised and exploited by tourism. Further works in this direction cause mindless destruction and devastation of the most beautiful seclusions in our highland nature." (Sokołowski, 1998, 177).

In 1973, a Norwegian mountaineer Arne Naess introduced the term "deep ecology" in which he argued that every living being has an inner value, regardless of whether in a narrow sense this creature is useful to man[/woman], whether it seems necessary to him[/her] or not. There is a part of ourselves in every living being so when we talk about environmental protection, we introduce a division in us and something outside us - the environment. That is why it is

better to say "ecology" than "environment". When we think and speak in terms of ecology, we are talking about one, indivisible system, of which we are a part, and we do not set ourselves as an observer or overseer as it often happens with regard to environmental protection. Our impact on the ecosystem is too big, we interfere too much in the natural environment and this interference must be reduced.”

It can be concluded that climbing and exploring high mountains occupied a whole range of environmental ethics positions. Inspired by aesthetic considerations, as well as the philosophy of the Far East, ecophilosophy, and the ethics of veneration for life, climbers and mountaineers have been inspired by ecologic activities. Although the range of positions is wide, climbers and mountaineers are united by the conviction that one is not allowed to "overcome" nature.

Climbers interviewed in my research showed at least a minimum understanding of ecology and an awareness of the problems we are facing nowadays concerning environmental protection. According to various commentators (see, for example, Capra, 1996; Griffin, 1985; Kahn, 2010; Orr, 1992, 1994), the reason for the continued deterioration of the environment is the schism between scientific evidence of environmental impacts and societies' willingness to change destructive practices. Due to the informants' answers on how this awareness and practical implication differ among them, I grouped them into the following categories. Beginning from the least experienced, for the sake of nomenclature, I labelled these as 'beginners'. Climbers in this group had just begun to climb and had not yet been climbing outside or had only completed a couple of climbs outside. The next group was the 'involved climbers', who had started climbing at a climbing gym but were already starting to climb outside. Most of them had 2-3 years of experience in climbing. The third group, the 'serious' climbers, contained climbers with a long climbing story and strong engagement in climbing yet still maintained their professional career, family and permanent housing. The last group contains the 'lifestyle' climbers, which have already been described by Ricky-Boyd (2012) thus: "these climbers are driven by their reverence for the sport, pursuing it full-time for years of their lives" (p. 86).

Beginners and involved climbers

In most cases, 'beginners' and 'involved climbers' live in the bigger cities and started climbing at climbing gyms, which have increased in popularity because the gyms provided access to artificial climbing for people, who had had nothing in common with outdoor sports

earlier in their lives. The first comments regarding the existence of such a group arose in conversations with older climbers. One of these climbers stated;

“For me I’m not sure if it was directly climbing that shaped my perception, I also ski, I sail, just being outside experiencing a different kind of nature by the activity made that. But if you are from the city, if somebody is from the city and you start climbing in the gym and then you go climb in the rock, those kind of people would possibly become more aware of nature. But I started with my family hiking so it was always there for me but for city people going to the climbing gym is a good step. Bringing them to the natural cliff probably does raise their awareness I would say. The climbing wall connection would be important. I know people, they are quite good climbers, strong at least and they never climb outside. That must be the way of experiencing you know, a kind of path. So, the climbing wall is maybe a big factory of this. Maybe? Not here, there they are already living so they just go when it's raining to stay strong but maybe in Calgary or Toronto? There has to be a lot of people that went that route. People who started up by going on a school trip to the climbing gym, who started liking climbing and then moved to the mountains and becoming more conscious about things we're talking about. (Chris, mid-80s).

As a very experienced ‘lifestyle’ climber, Chris made some observations about the activity of climbing and the climbing community itself, especially with respect to its changing nature. He shared his opinion about people climbing in the past and nowadays and he generalised that people in the past started their climbing story mostly because of an interest in the outdoors. First, they began with more approachable activities like hiking in most cases. And then, looking for a challenge, through scrambling, they felt the need for rope protection. Climbing was not that obvious an activity as it is in modern times. Climbing gyms now can be found almost in every bigger city and, most frequently, this is the first venue for beginning climbers. In my research, the seven climbers, who had up to three years of experience in climbing, all of them had started climbing at a gym.

“(…) then this venue opened and I thought it will be great opportunity to meet new people, the climbing community is pretty friendly so they saw a new face and they wanted to introduce me to the sport so I got in there, I got my harness, people to climb with and so on.”
(Mary, mid-50s)

Tim, one of the ‘beginners’ who started climbing this year and is mainly top roping a maximum of once per week has only climbed a couple of times outside. His answers were

very blurry when it came to the ecology or connection to the nature. The understanding of the ecology that he showed during the whole interview was constrained to leaving garbage or polluting by transportation.



Figure 5. Photography of the base of the most popular climb at Pass Lake, Ontario. The only trace of climbers are chalk marks and the name of the route painted on the stone. (Source: own).

“I definitely have consideration; I just think I don’t have this motivation to follow it. Like my work is within walking distance and I still drive to work every day. But for example, when I am at the climbing area, I definitely want to grab my garbage back ‘cause I don’t

want the area to shut down. Even if I find some other people's garbage, I would take that out of the area." (Tim, 25 years old)

Whereas, climbers with 2/3 years' experience in climbing shared a much bigger connection to nature and knowledge about ecology. John was asked if he saw climbing impacts on the terrain he knows. He responded:

"Oh yes. When you climb outdoors you see how people can impact nature. Climbing does have an impact on the paths that you make, while going to the crag or climbing. Especially with bouldering, you always have to have a nice landing so you always have to clear something. I find also it also brought out a more important sense of preserving your climbing areas and everything. You are not letting them become a garbage pit. You can see it everywhere; all of the climbers are very respectful. The whole environment they are in, the community wants to preserve the land for themselves and for the others".

It can be noticed that climbers are not taking their presence uncritically. They easily notice their footprints and make conclusions. After all, a more important action is performed when they try to minimise this inevitable impact by the little steps that they can do. Later, John reflected about the same issue related to the whole of the climbing community:

"I guess it's not kind of a cliché but most of them are kind of hippies so they care more about surroundings when they are among nature and the environment. A lot of them are very environmentally oriented. I think that goes hand to hand with climbing, it's a very outdoorsy thing. You know you don't want to degrade rock in any sense neither the nature around it because if you do that, you're ruining climbs for yourself and for others, you are kind of ruining the sport. So, you definitely have to be respectful of it."

At least of note is that climbers are conscious of the basic challenges we are facing nowadays. Climber-geologist Stefan Kozłowski, considered as a great environmentalist, stated that a process cannot be labelled as sustainable if it is not based on ethical development. In order to talk about sustainability, there must be a change in values, lifestyles, patterns of thinking, namely: consciousness (Kozłowski, 1997). Here is the reflection on everyday ecological steps performed by Martin:

"I don't do too many things. I do basic stuff like I recycle, I'm definitely conscious of these kind of things like you know, not wasting stuff, as little plastic as possible, trying to eat

everything I have, I am not vegetarian or anything like that but I try to cut down on the meat I eat. I don't eat processed food and then energy-wise I'm not turning up the heater very often 'cause it's also expensive in the winter so that's maybe more a financial thing or actually there is probably some economic motive standing behind everything I'd say anyways."

Those routines which Joey named as "basic stuff" are normal things to do for him but he probably does not realise he is doing much more than most of society. In his answer to everyday ecological steps, we can see greater understanding of the problem. For example, he has knowledge how meat production works and that by removing meat from meals everyday he can diminish degradation of land that is needed to feed the cultivated cattle. At this level, climbers also start noticing the given 'ethics' of climbing. Due to very fragile rocks, some areas do not accept bolts, whereas in others, people do not use chalk or are trying to minimalise its usage.

'Serious' climbers

The idea for starting climbing was not that straight forward amongst 'serious' and 'lifestyle' climbers. They started climbing at the time when climbing gyms had not been that accessible and people from the lowlands had to travel long distances in order to do any climbing. The dedication for the sport is the same within these two groups, however, at some point in life, their lifestyle approaches changed. 'Serious' climbers stayed 'serious' in life keeping their careers and permanent place of living, which in most cases, is in one of the climbing areas.

"I was always attracted to the mountains, I grew up in the mountains, in Bielsko- Biala, you know, Polish mountains, hills. I skied when I was quite young. When I moved to the Canada, I had this sort of discovery but it started with hiking. My cousins introduced me to hiking in Canada, which turned into scrambling. So, scrambling become a little intense. We lived in Edmonton, I asked my wife to maybe enrol us in a course to learn how to use ropes. I noticed that it had little to do with climbing that time. It was more to stay safe in the mountains, which turned into walking into the indoor gym, meeting friends and getting hooked on sport climbing". (Jacek, mid-40s)

An interesting phenomenon in this group is that a lot of climbers pay their attention towards management and development of climbing areas. Jacek was the first person to notice and started to develop the crag called Echo Canyon. In the climbing guidebook "Bow Valley Sport", we can read: "Although it's been 15 years since I first walked into Echo Canyon, I

still remember looking up at the rock perched above the ACC (Alpine Club of Canada) clubhouse for the first time. Back then, I didn't imagine that this place would ever attract more than a handful of motivated climbers". Together with this change, Jacek observed also the changing deterioration of the landscape that was progressing in the area. It pushed him into action and as a single person he decided to join CASA (Canadian Access Society of Alberta) and TABVAR (The Association of Bow Valley Rock Climbers) groups (Canadian land access and environment protection organisations). Any sort of anarchistic attitude of climbers, who do not join any kind of organisations can easily get changed if those organisations help with ecological problems.

"(...) being involved with the access groups maybe made it a little easier to come up with the solution. One of it will be that this spring, we're gonna install a kind of doggy bag for humans. We gonna install them at Echo Canyon, actually, but it is more wide spread. It's gonna be a pilot project for them and for us. We'll see if we can get climbers to become more conscious. Leave no trace kinda attitude. So, in a sense, I guess I may not think too much about fuel. I'm not gonna stop travelling because I don't wanna make my footprint bigger but on the smaller scale, I do care about our environment and to leave a better place for the future for the future climbers, cleaner areas to climb. I've seen how soiled it can be, just because of being there so I think we gonna work hard at it. The good news, also, is that we have good financial support from the community, the climbing community. Everybody is conscious about the problem we have; the community needs just a bit of an organisation, like CASA, to spread those small projects. In most situations, I've noticed that climbers are conscious of their impact".



Figure 6. Photography of Echo Canyon. (Source: own).

As Jacek later explained, he is aware of the little steps that he can do in order to pollute less but he prefers to use more resources to help on the broader scale. He would rather use his car than a bike to get to the places to save time and energy, which he can then consume on making the whole climbing area more sustainable. That is an interesting approach into ecology in climbing as from a later response of his, it turns out that he and his family are actually doing a lot of “small steps” during their everyday routines. Despite that fact, Jacek looks for more, less obvious paths to make climbing more sustainable using the process of development. Human waste is a sort of ‘inglorious’ topic that has been described in the literature and the numbers are terrifying. The problem is most visible in the base camps of the most popular mountains, such as Everest, Aconcagua or Kilimanjaro. However, the same scale can be applied to any nature destination, which is poorly managed. The issue is closely related to the growing interest in mountaineering, mainly due to its commercialisation, as well as the change of the climbing profile and the climber itself. Keeping the areas of climbing clean depends mainly on the principle of ‘Leave No Trace’ type of climbing. However, if

there is no proper sanitation system, you cannot blame the person for contamination of the environment with faeces and urine, as exclusion processes cannot be fully controlled.

The disbursement of fossil fuels and mined resources that is required in order to travel to a climbing destination as well as the production, purchase and use of equipment is not sustainable. According to the WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development) definition, this is because these resources are not renewable. Travelling in cars/vans to reach climbing destinations and usage of metal-based climbing gear such as carabiners, bolts, cams or friends; synthetic petroleum-based equipment such as ropes, webbing and harnesses are not environmentally sustainable. Presented as such, from the beginning, the activity of rock climbing is truly unsustainable which is problematic for addressing sustainability (North et al., 2012). As travelling is mostly associated with 'lifestyle' climbers it will be discussed in the next section. Whereas, due to better economic situations, 'serious' climbers often purchase large amounts of gear. Climbing itself demands a large amount of equipment, such as technical apparel, protection gear, ropes, harnesses, shoes, crash pads. The list is long. Teresa reflected on this:

“It's really easy for your family when it's come to the gifts as well. Everything related to climbing will please you. And it's great that you have this obsession. There is no such thing as too much gear, you know? “

Although producing climbing-related products is not sustainable, a large percentage of climbing-related brands are actually trying to make some change. Founded in 1973 by Yvon Chouinard, (Let My People Go Surfing, Outside magazine), the company named Patagonia strives to maintain an environmentally friendly profile and actively engages in environmental protection. In 1996, the company started using only organic cotton to make its clothes. Since 1985, the company has been giving 1% of its revenues to nature conservation. From 1985 to 2007, the company donated over \$ 29 million to these goals. Black Diamond, for example, made the statement "recycle as much waste as possible", make substantial use of wind and solar power, and support environmental non-profit bodies (*Sustainability*". Black Diamond. Retrieved 2016-03-05.). Like the already mentioned Patagonia, every bigger outdoor brand, Mountain Hardwear, North Face, Marmot have at least one eco-friendly product in the catalogue for each season. Among others, the German company, Vaude, rebuilt its headquarters in Tett nang, Germany to be climate neutral whereas, the Spanish brand, Ternua,

is recognisable for its sustainable innovative approach in their red-cycle project in which they created products from old, worn out fishing nets left by fishers floating in the ocean.

‘Lifestyle climbers’

Most of the climbers camp near the crag on the climbing trip. Some of the most dedicated climbers, ‘lifestyle’ climbers or so-called ‘dirtbags’ spend all their life climbing and do not bother with permanent housing. This makes them connected with nature even more than just during the time spent climbing. Following a climber’s ‘lifestyle’, I resigned from permanent housing for the research duration. I used a campervan, a tent or just a sleeping mattress and sleeping bag as my accommodation. People living in this manner have to be much more conscious about what is happening around them. They keep track of the weather, wildlife and relationships much more than a person living in a house. In some ways, it is harder as we see in answer from Chris (mid-80s), when asked if he sometimes lives in a “normal” house besides camping while climbing:

“Sometimes. Depends on the time of the year. Now, when I’m older I don’t like camping in winter so much. So, you see you’re getting just one end, my answers would be different 20 years ago and 40 years ago.”

Besides just spending the time living in nature, the activity of climbing pushes the participants towards a very close physical contact with different kinds of environment. Some of the climbing destinations can be reached from parking areas. In these areas, climbers can probably deduce the ecological problem of garbage left behind by any group of place-users. Whereas other remote places, which are more demand to reach drastic changes in nature can be noticed.

Steve who has been living in his van for last 8 years described the ecological problem like that:

“People are very careful not to damage the environment that way. It’s hard for me to relate to ‘cause I’ve always stuck with the people that do care about the environment but I always stuck with climbers as well or some kind of outdoor-related people so maybe that can be some evaluation. Climbers are always worried they can see that the glaciers that we climb are melting, things are changing. Ice climbs becoming rock climbs, you know. We can’t ski in the usual places when other places where normally there is no snow are getting it. They see it, they can see it. So, they care yeah. “



Figure 7. Photography. Some lifestyle climbers literally sleep in the rocks. (Source: own).

Following the hypermobility pace of their life, most dedicated climbers buy a car or campervan instead of a house to provide them with transportation from one climbing area to another as well as accommodation. Often, they follow seasons to climb all the time. Especially in America, the continent and community are so large that there is always a good rock to be climbed. Nevertheless, Europeans do the same, for example, in Spain, which recently became a centre for sport climbing.

“I moved to Spain almost 20 years ago because the weather and rock is so good. In spring and autumn, you can climb in the centre and in Catalonia. In winter, you go south to El Chorro, for example, but in the summer, it’s getting too hot there so after driving a couple of hours, you are in Pais Vasquo in the North. And the climbing community is so huge and welcoming. And it’s cheap. I feel like it’s just a country created for climbers. Though, I still like to go somewhere else like you see. “(Tom, 40 year old)



Figure 8. Photography of typical lifestyle climber' accommodation. (Source: own).

A climbing lifestyle demands moving a lot, which consequently results in emissions due to the means of transportation that climbers use. Although, climbers tend to drive to a climbing destination and stay for the season, in most cases, transportation is still one of the biggest challenges regarding ecology and climbing. The community prefers using a car than any other form of transportation due to the advantages that a car can offer. It would be hard if not impossible to reach some climbing destinations by bus or train. Additionally, a car is relatively cheap and could be used as accommodation as well. Albeit, budget is the main reason why climbers try to minimise driving, although some of them have ecology in mind. Tom later added:

“Well, I'm worried about it but doing something about it it's different. I used to drive quite a lot and I fly quite a lot. That's not good, it's not sustainable in the long term. So, I think people are becoming more and more aware of it, maybe climbers particularly. But everybody is becoming more and more aware of global warming with wild forest fires and hurricanes. And I am up for reducing anything in any possible way, electric cars, trying not to drive too much. Climbers drive a lot to reach climbing destinations. Yes. But they don't work so they don't

use fuel to drive to work, I mean I don't, maybe that's kind of a justification but I am actually sometimes feeling guilty when I am flying. There are not that many people on the plane and you have this huge consumption of fuel. So probably, a bigger issue is global tourism rather than climbers. When the climbers reach the climbing destination, they stick to it for the season. They tend to stay there at least for a couple of weeks. And global tourism, to my mind, is like fly here have a look, fly there look at that, that must be contributing quite a lot to global warming etc.”

Different climbers' groups are on various ecological understanding levels both due to their climbing experience and other determinants. Many newcomers to the activity included information about the learning process regarding climbing and ecology in their answers, whereas more experienced climbers mostly answered that 'it has always been there'. Therefore, in the next part of this chapter, I reflect further about those newcomers but not only because 'there is always something new to learn, each day is different' but also in regard to what veterans said. As an activity performed outdoors, climbing is embraced in outdoor education theory mainly as described within university programmes or school curricula. In this section, I argue that climbing can be an educational form itself without any structure and that one of the outcomes is increased awareness towards ecology.

A need of outdoor education

A characteristic and relatively new need of a postmodern society is the need for ecological knowledge and education, which is an integral part of nature education at all its levels. The daily interaction of modern civilisation and science with the surrounding environment together with soaring populations generating growing demand for food, clothing, medicines, construction materials, fuel and other resources result in new problems for the environment: acid rain, air pollution, greenhouse effect, smog, water contamination, destruction of tropical forests; the list is long. The specificity of the present times requires acquiring both purely theoretical knowledge of nature and practical skills to use the properties of surrounding matter, as well as the ecological culture shaped in contact with nature. Therefore, the goal of nature education should not be formed as a school model but should instead create awareness, in which current and future, more and more technologically advanced generations treat nature as a valuable good. Where appropriate, rational exploitation and protection should ensure harmonious functioning in the surrounding world. Such knowledge can be obtained mainly through nature education. An early start with nature education increases the chances of

forming permanent pro-environmental attitudes, characterised not only by a well-developed cognitive component, but also by a positive emotional attitude and readiness for behaviours beneficial to all nature.

Outdoor education literature has a short, but rich, history of using philosophical (e.g. Hunt, 1990; Wurdinger, 1997; Allison, 2002), anthropological (e.g. Andrews, 1999; Bell, 2003; Venable, 1997), and sociological (among others: Beames, 2005; Zink, Burrows, 2006; Pike, Beames, 2007) approaches to determine the field. Despite the attention given to traditional lines of enquiry, there remains much scope for new theoretical interpretations of the day-to-day issues faced by outdoor centre managers, instructors, and teachers. According to Taboń (2015), learning about the closest environment should be discovering its roots, it should enable the acquisition of a cultural identity, as well as enable men and women to be citizens of country and a citizen of the world. It concerns areas such as: history and policy of the region, culture- traditions, customs, folklore, language, natural environment - ecology, nature, geography and the economy of one's own place (Taboń, 2015, 91).

Chodkowska et al. (2016) argued that the theoretical assumptions of modern educational systems generally appreciate the importance of early natural education including pro-environmental education. However, the program assumptions themselves are not sufficient to solve environmental problems, it is important to implement them in everyday school practice. This applies not only to the transfer of strictly theoretical and technical knowledge in nature lessons but it is also necessary to create education oriented towards building a specific bond with the surrounding environment and an understanding of the mutual dependence of humans and nature. The consequence of such education should be the application of natural science in everyday life. It is about an application in which humans would not only be a nature user, but also an entity making conscious choices for its protection. Early natural education should stimulate the need for direct contact with the environment, making experiments, observations and drawing conclusions from them. That is because, only such direct contact can be created in the unit that recognises the sense of belonging to the surrounding nature and responsibility for its condition.

Modern teaching methods do not replace the child's interaction with nature, they can only complement it. The goal of modern nature education is the formation of an individual with environmental knowledge and the ability to use it appropriately with regard to the needs and threats posed by modern civilisation. In other words, one should be integrated with the

environment based on understanding its meaning both in the local and global dimensions. Although in the last decades, the level of ecological awareness has clearly increased, still many threats are generated by people through their individual and collective behaviour. This poses very difficult challenges for education. This particularly applies to early natural education that is most important for the formation of pro-health and pro-ecological attitudes of future generations.

Educational role of climbing

While there are many definitions of outdoor education, the most comprehensive one seems to be the one proposed by Phyllis (2004, p. 2), "outdoor education is education in, about, and or, the out of doors." This definition tells where the learning takes place, the topic to be taught, and the purpose of the activity. The definition suits any outdoor sport, however, it is not that obvious in the outdoor activity performed in school programmes. Place is the easiest part of these puzzles, in the case of climbing, the activity takes place in the mountains for a majority of time. That is not a rule though, because climbing can be done even on lowlands or sea cliffs (deep water soloing) so, generally speaking, every place where the rock or ice exists. Topics that would be taught are similar to the one Gaworecki (2000) points for, within the broad term, mountain activity, to which most refer to hiking or trekking. Climbing, however, is a carrier of similar values with some extra ones added by me. Respectively, those extra values of climbing are:

- physical, which causes bodily and psychomotor changes, this is the most visible and obvious, main motive for most climbers (Caber, 2016);
- social, which facilitates and accelerates socialisation;
- health, which facilitates the protection of physical and mental health and its improvement;
- polytechnic, which allows you to acquire technical knowledge, i.e. competent skills and effective use of tourist equipment and devices in accordance with their instructions and function, while respecting the principles of personal safety. In terms of climbing, this topic is extraordinarily important as climbers rely on their climbing gear for their life;
- aesthetic, which shapes sensitivity to the beauty of nature and human works;

- moral, which helps in assimilating the ability to subordinate one's own behaviour to mass struggle and satisfaction of one's own needs in harmony with the general interest;

During the climb, humans and nature are confronted, and various aspects of human existence are exposed. This is confirmed by the varied opinions of mountaineers on the topic, which determines the success of the climber: strong psyche, endurance and a resistance to suffering, the innate predisposition of the organism, and intellect. A further series of elements appear between the rock and the human; the basic opposition between culture and nature gradually undergoes further mediation, articulating both spheres of human existence. In relation to nature, a human's "nature" is revealed, which turns out to be a polyphony of many components. The sphere of a climber's civilisation involves creations (climbing techniques and artificial facilitations used by mountaineers), and finally the sphere of cultural and social conditions (the problem of partnership, ethics and intercultural relations). It is extremely important that each of these elements provokes discussions displaying further oppositions, still mediating the basic nature-culture opposition and making it less obvious.

I argue in this paragraph that one of the purposes of climbing within that definition is long-lasting rising ecological awareness. Previous studies have revealed that contact with nature can affect environmental concern (Dunlap, Heffernan, 1975; Geisler, Martinson, Wilkening, 1977; Hungerford, 1978). Climbing as an activity taken outdoors demands a lot of time spent in nature. Crompton and Sellar (1981) claimed that outdoor education provides a stimulating learning environment if they are of sufficient duration. Indeed, duration of the performed activity is crucial also in terms of climbing. The classification of climbers that I made in the previous sections help to demonstrate that more experienced climbers have significantly deeper knowledge of ecology than newcomers to this activity. This could be a result of newcomers spending more time training inside on artificial objects.

Climbers show a great appreciation for the environment in which climbing takes place. According to a study conducted by Caber (2016), the biggest push motivation for rock climbers is the physical settings of the climbing area. However, climbers experience this differently, for example, from tourists or backpackers who experience it broadly rather than deeply. This is mainly a consequence of the difficult terrain and movement of climbing. The movement of going up is very different from the movement of going horizontal while walking or down while skiing. The easy level of movement plays its role in the first example while

speed in the second case pushes one to pass the environment so quickly that a deeper connection is impossible to be created.

"So, your awareness, you know, you have time for absorption. It's the same thing with climbing. Climbers as they progress up the face, they are moving very slowly compared to someone that would drive the car on a nice road." (Pablo)

A deep experience with a place creates a specific connection between climbers and nature about which they gladly and frequently like to mention. In every interview, I conducted during my research, every climber mentioned his or her connection to nature apart from one climber just at the beginning of his climbing path. Nevertheless, he did mention that climbing taught him to 'see' things in another way.

"So when you always think about climbing, you can't think about going climbing and pursuing whatever it is that you have chosen to pursue; whether it is chasing a certain grade or chasing a certain type of climb or traditional climb or sport climb, whatever your climb is, you can't think about that without thinking about the environment in which you are doing it. And so, if you didn't have that environment to do it in, you can't do what you want to do. I think having, if you have that pursuit, it's inevitable that you think about the environment that you are doing it in and preserving it. But I found for myself, probably that after a second decade of climbing, it wasn't about a grade, I was never really serious about following, trying to reach certain grades, but I found it is more about the connection to nature and the connection to the mountain, rock." (Andrew, mid 30ties)

Conclusions

In this chapter I analysed the interviews I made during fieldwork in Canada. A lot of interviews were presented in quotations in order to connect the reader with the climbing world more than only through my words. Investigating mundane practises afforded me to classify climbers into four categories in regards to their level of climbing involvement which covers with the level of ecological involvement at the same time. It is important to note that despite all of the climbers have some level of knowledge in terms of ecology, they react to different problems and solutions within that topic. Starting from the least experienced climbers, their focus is mainly directed towards garbage near the climbing crag, not polluting and monitoring if someone else is polluting. Involved climbers analyse more their everyday steps in wider view i.e. plastic usage or energy consumption. Some of them note the problem in food

production and try vegetarian or vegan diet due to their sensitivity whether towards environment or/and empathy towards animals. Lifestyle climbers start seeing problems at larger scale. They are part of the community for many years therefore, they notice problems connected to pattern of climbers. As those climbers move most emission from transport is the most spoken obstacle. Whereas, serious climbers outside transportation try to cope with management of the climbing areas that usually is very primitive if exists. The co-increment of the linear application between the level of experience in climbing and the ecological knowledge allows to draw conclusions about the significant impact of climbing on ecology in the mind of a climber. Next chapter will touch the other side of the climber which will be his/her body and its interconnection with nature within climbing.

*"Climbing is going beyond the circle of repetitive and afflicted situations,
it is an escape from the monotonous mechanisms of logic and reason,
which do not allow the man to see the sky above climber's head,
which is why the climb opens climber's eyes -
it touches many diversified and dormant levels of sensitivity."*

Wojciech Kurtyka (translation: own)



Figure 9. Photography on the way to the top of Mt. Temple. (Source: own).

5 Embodiment of climbing experience

In this chapter, drawing upon ethnographic material, I address climbing not only as a lifestyle but as an embodied activity. Specifically, the chapter examines climbing as an embodied experience. Embodiment is used to analyse the way in which learning and engagement are experienced through embodied activities and incorporation of knowledge. In this case, embodiment includes mobility, hearing, vision, cognitive learning, sensitivity and the way a responsible relationship toward nature is built through climbing a cliff. I will argue that

climbing is a practise through which the materiality of the rocks become embodied which, consequently, makes the nature become present in climbers' lives. Apart from my own research data, I analyse a wide variety of text-based articulations most of which is mountain literature written by climbers.

Climbing movement

The basic action in the world I studied, and, at the same time, the central category in my study was "climbing" as both a movement and a movement of the body on a rock or other formation. In this chapter, I focus mainly on free rock climbing, because that was the activity in which most of my informants engaged. Free climbing is based solely on the strength of the climber's muscles and his or her technical skills. Equipment can be used only for protection purposes - to protect the climber in the event of falling off the rock but not actively to help with climbing. The climber cannot put his or her weight on the elements of the protection system during climbing (otherwise the attempt does not count). This is the essence of free climbing: moving up is done only on your own - without any artificial facilities, and practice is a way of embodying the skills needed.

The essence of climbing is movement, moving upwards through more or less overhanging formations. This activity is multidimensional. First, climbing means engaging with physical objects. The climbing activity itself has a completely physical and kinetic character. The climber's body generates energy to move up. It encounters gravity and friction forces. The formation, on which a climber climbs, has physical features that allow a climber to move, such as small concavities, protrusions, edges, forms to hold, giving support for the feet, texture providing good friction and other affordances. Both the human body and the rock formation, upon which a human moves, are material elements of the world subjected to the influence of physical forces (gravity, friction). A climber's activities are focused on specific physical objects, such as rock formation, ice or artificial facilities. The physical aspect of climbing is visible not only in the massive movements of the body, when the climber generates kinetic energy and uses his or her own strength to move up, but in numerous minor and less-important activities, such as touching hands with rocks, cleaning holds from excess chalk, touching and installing protection points. In all these activities, the purely physical dimension of climbing is visible (West, Allin, 2010; Feher et al. 1998; Booth et al. 1999).

Secondly, I examine a phenomenon that has an embodied character. The act of climbing is performed with the help of the body using muscle strength and kinaesthetic work. The work is

performed by the body through movement, recognition of its own centre of gravity, balancing, gripping and jumping. The climber must learn how to place his or her feet and hands on steps to hold the rocks and maintain balance, how to balance and move his or her body on the rock, so as not to fall off. Learning these skills takes the form of an embodied experience, it is not knowledge that can be passed on in words only. The long-term skills acquired and accumulated in the body are remembrances of effective methods of movement. Although at the beginning, every climber climbs similarly and similar rules of technique can be applied over time, each climber generates physical knowledge to create his or her own climbing style best suited to their body and physical abilities. This stage is utterly connected with the embodiment of the mind that expresses movements through the body projecting on the rock patterns invented in the brain. Despite motion memory that helps to solve the climbing problems, every new route requires a new learning process. This task is achieved as a result of subsequent attempts (Dutkiewicz, 2015).

John who had been climbing for 15 years, describes this in the following way;

“So, if you are on-sighting you don't have much of a choice, right? Only what you can do is look at the holds and try to imagine body positions, possible movement of the body. Then maybe visualising those would be good idea and trying to move your body imitating those moves. That is really helpful. And when you are flashing, you are allowed to see somebody already doing a certain route so you have a ready kind of tutorial but it might not always suit you 'cause everybody's body features are different right? So maybe I would trust to put my toes on sketchy friction whereas you would prefer to put your feet high up to the next good step. And that's a very good point in red-pointing style where you can have as many tries as you want so sometimes you are hanging a couple of days at the same part repeating the crux again and again till the moment your body is ready and achieves equilibrium with the mind that also has to be ready”

Repeating a given route or its fragments several times makes it possible not only to remember the sequence of moves, but it is a way to force the body to move in the right way. Climbing is therefore working on your own body and using your own body, which requires constant practice. (Watts, 2004)

Climbing is a social activity. Above all, this is because the climber's activities are based on socially constructed ideas about how to climb and the rules of action imposed by the social

world with which the climber feels bound. This makes the climber's embodiment change as he or she is a representative of that social world. In other words, a climber would climb differently, his or her style would change, depending on the group of climbers with whom he or she is part of. The reason could be the same as that we behave differently with changing social groups, also because of comments given by other climbers or trust in a belayer. In addition, climbing itself takes place in specific social situations and very often takes the form of collective activities.

Igor (27 years old), who had been climbing for three years reflected on the social side of climbing in this way: "When I'm sport climbing with a partner or bouldering on my own it's just me versus the wall and myself like there is no competition there is nothing. It's just my own world, having in mind my line. Bouldering is a bit more different, I find it a bit more competitive, like everyone is supporting you but you know you obviously want to be the first one to solve the boulder problem. It's getting a bit more aggressive, but it can be just my own thing."

Climbing situations reveal the complexity of the social organisation of this activity, the various forms of cooperation between participants and the social ties that emerge between them. The simplest form of cooperation between climbers is the above-mentioned belaying of a climbing partner and their protection against the consequences of falling off. There are, of course, situations of solitary climbing in various styles, but the most common form observed is cooperation and operation in at least two-person teams.

Therefore, in the situation of climbing, there are three distinct dimensions related to its physical, embodied and social character (Kacperczyk, 2012). A climber interacts with:

- physical objects, such as boulders, rock, artificial panel, with which he or she has constant physical contact during the entire climbing activity;
- the climber's own body which results from the fully embodied character of the activity of climbing. The climber performs the body work, but also works on the body, treating it as a matter to shape during training, negotiating with it, separating cognitively from it when his or her own physical limitations restrict him or her, checking the limits of movement allowed by the body or forcing its own bodily capabilities;
- other climbers: partner, belayer, spotters - which result from the social and collective nature of the activity of climbing.

Climbing is seen as a voluntarily-undertaken activity that threatens and poses a risk to health and life. This threat is of a physical nature and is related to the simple fact that moving up is tantamount to acquiring kinetic energy, which in the event of a fall can damage the body of the climber. Also, this aspect of climbing activity is associated with embodied sensations and emotions. But above all, climbing is basically related to the experiences of the living body, body movement, effort, pain, touching and use of physical objects, such as rock or climbing equipment, with the technical skills of making specific movements on the rock and the possibilities and limitations of the body.

Climbers develop their own theories on how to use their own body, how to treat them in the sense of training and climbing. In the type of activity itself and in the accompanying explanations, their own ideas about the limits of their own actions, their bodily possibilities, ways of operating the body, its potential, strength and skills are clearly visible (Kacperczyk, 2014). Therefore, the body of a climber can be treated by him/her as an object of work or training, as an instrument for climbing a climbing route, a tool to achieve a goal, as a source of pleasant or unpleasant experiences while climbing.

Climbing skills have their basic foundation in performance, strength and body parameters. Some of the physical characteristics of the climber, such as the strength of the fingers, the length of the hands or the general dimensions of the body, are important here and can determine success. For example, the shoulder spread extends the range of a climber's movements and makes it possible or impossible to reach grips. A climber of lower height has to make a dynamic movement (dyno) and jump to a hold - the taller reaches it from his or her position statically. This means that the same path may have a completely unmatched difficulty for climbers with different body parameters. This does not mean, however, that the higher clutches are favoured because on the sequence of movements where the footsteps and hand holds are close to each other and the climber is 'compressed', the higher climber must generate more power to continue the climb. Climbers act according to their own concept of the body, which is the effect of theorising about its capabilities. During climbing, participants often verbalise and exchange their beliefs about how to use the body. The situation of acting in a group is therefore a moment of clashing various concepts of the body and advocating certain ways of perceiving and understanding it.

Although climbing as a bodily experience is difficult to describe in the form of words, however, for some of the embodied experiences, climbers have their own names, functioning in a climbing dictionary (Samet, 2011).

Climbing language

Recognisable in the environment is a specific bodily language experienced during climbing. For example, duck leg is called involuntary and difficult to control vibrations of leg muscles caused by fatigue or fear that happen during climbing. Climbers are defined and define their level of fitness by means of their own bodies verified, each time by a grade, that is, the difficulty of the route they are able to climb. That would be, as an example, when new climber is asked what kind of climber he or she is, the answer could be: "I'm 6" (As the climber can climb routes within the 6 grade).

Below John (45 years old) advises about a route he had just climbed with another climber. In the conversation, we also have a third climber, who gave his variation of the route:

“- Great route, you start practically without any footsteps and you have these little slopers for your hands, you have to engage the core so that your legs do not come off. Then you come to this robin hood (a hold that demands a body position set up in the manner of an archer) you move the body to the left to make it work better and you can make a knee bar (blocking knee in the rock, which allow the hands to rest) to rest.

-Anyway, I have not seen this knee bar up there. I just climbed that tufa all the time putting my feet on friction.

-There is a hold in this tufa, it's coming through so you can put your whole hand in. Without it and the knee bar you had to pump yourself up. As you go beyond the roof, you have a 15-metre technical climb with mono-pockets for the fingers and tiny steps.”

As it can be noticed, embodiment in climbing has its place in the language of the community. Climbers share a distinctive type of language and although some communities' lexical units migrate between sociolects (especially in case of sport), the communities of mountaineers, cave speleologists and rock climbers - in addition to the language elements created directly by these environments - has in its lexical resources also words borrowed from other environmental buzz (Markowski, 1992, 112) This applies both to environmental elements in the expressive function and to specialized words in the nominative function. First from those

two is the subject in this thesis and despite all of the examples of embodiment in climbers' language already mentioned I would like to look at the language itself. Most of the words describing nature in the climbing world are borrowed or shared with the scientific language of geography and geology. This contains a large group of neo-semantics together with their meanings. These meanings have not been modified in any way (in contrast to the meanings of words taken from other sports in case of describing activity.) Neo-semantics taken from geographic and geological lexis were needed to label mountain and rock formations and types of terrain, i.e. elements of the reality with which rock climber or alpine climber encounters every day in his/her activity. I will present examples of such neo-semanticisms in quotes from climbing literature.

“A north-western ridge was attacked (from the Savoie pass), a southern pillar, a southern wall and a south-eastern rib.” (Czerwińska, 1990, p. 135); or

“The rustle of icy crumbs gliding through the gutter gouge disrupted the returning silence of the sunny morning.” (McDonald, 2017, p. 45)

As it can be noticed, those elements of nature are not changed in case of their naming but they are getting into deep interaction with climbers sometimes receiving anthropomorphic features. At the face of it, it would seem that the alpine environment uses so much specialized and less understood vocabulary that linguistic contacts with other environmental dialects must be limited. The stereotype of a specific "closure" of the climber's environment leads us to suppose that their language also has hermetic features. (Niepytalska- Osiecka, 2016). This was also reflected in my research for example when I asked Alice about different climbing areas in the region:

“(…) it's only like 3 hours away. It's America versus Canada pretty similar culture but it's a new place you don't know any people but in those three hour I meet people, we were trying boulders together. It's kind of a language that you all speak and as long as you do this activity you make a bond cause it's something you share.”

She, in turn, compared climbing itself as type of language shared by everybody involved in the activity. As climbing areas demand crossing many borders with the countries with different cultures and language groups it is well said climbing is a language itself. Yet demonstrative nature of this activity allows the climbers who do not speak the same language

to communicate with expressive gesticulation, imitation of climbing movements and imitation of holds and steps encountered on the climbing route.

Connection to nature

In the second part of this chapter, I discuss the theme of embodiment in climbing from a different, more abstract perspective. The above-described forms of embodiment in climbing are purely physical or social in nature, whereas embodiment may take a more abstract form. According to Allen-Collinson and Leledaki (2014), embodiment in outdoor sport can be experienced by all five senses, so besides the obvious senses of touch and vision, there are hearing, smell and taste. Furthermore, an extremely important element in this puzzle is also the movement experienced by these senses. The difficult terrain forces climbers to carefully observe and study the environment from the beginning of planning a given expedition. If it is an exploratory expedition, even the approach to the given climb creates the first contact with nature with which climbers must co-exist, learn about it and from it, and sometimes fight with it. Some approaches require the use of other forms of land exploration, such as the use of canoes or sailing ships, while others require advanced planning at an organisational level when weeks are taken to get through a jungle or into mountains.



Figure 10. Photography of the remote approach to climb in Yoho National Park. (Source: own).

The next stage begins when climbers can see the mountain or the rock, which is the target of their trip. There an analysis of the potential route is processed, which is verified when the climbers are on it. The whole process is a test of a climbers' body not only on the physical level, but also, or mainly, on the senses. When climbers start climbing in the thicket of rock formations, the route looks completely different and it is quite a challenge to find it. Weather analysis is important, forecasting it is another factor checked by climbers using their senses and the body as well as other potential threats such as falling stones or avalanches. Collinson and Svann, after interviewing 19 high-attitudes climbers, argued that most experienced of them have a 'feel for' the changing weather. "(...) mountaineers initially felt, pre-reflectively, at a 'gut level' small, nuanced changes in weather and atmospheric conditions." (Collinson, Svann, 2019, p. 24) which can be treated almost like a sixth sense developed in climbers' body by harsh shaping of climbing practise in mountain terrain.



Figure 11. Photography of the sport climbing in Sunshine Slabs. (Source: own).

In the case of sport climbing, the situation changes a little; sport climbing is more demanding at an athletic level rather than a knowledge or mountain skills level. Nevertheless, here embodiment plays a crucial role as well, again, not only in the physical side of it. This athleticism of sport climbing pushes climbers to examine the smaller surface of terrain in an even more precise and watchful manner. While alpine climbs can sometimes be a couple of thousands metres of difficulty, sport climbs are usually up to 30m of condensed difficulty. In the extreme case of bouldering, a boulder has only a couple of metres where difficulty is squeezed in. These types of climbing demand finding every weakness of a rock, which can be a friction hold or a crack in the surface.

Pablo, a 'lifestyle' climber in his mid-fifties, passionately described climbing by accompanying his words with imitations of each climbing move, which he made in the air: "Climbers as they progress up the face, they are moving very slowly compared to someone that would be skiing down a slope. Then, you are studying the environment, you make movements, you are finding the holds; ice climbers are looking for a position for their tools, the consistency of the ice etc. So yeah, I think you become more aware, you have to be more aware, you start to notice things. A good example, I give to you, today, on that very first climb that we climb together when you pulled up to this slab and it's limestone, I don't know if you noticed but there were a couple of spots where there were bedded rocks of limestone and those are the key holds that you have to hold on to, 'cause you couldn't just grab the prickles. There was one that was maybe about the size of half of your 'pinky' and there was a little thin rock-like pebble like a long pebble and that was a pretty key hold. So, you wouldn't notice that if you move fast. If you are climbing and studying to figure out on this slab where to put your hand or put your feet on those small edges, you can do it. You wouldn't see those things 'cause you're not looking for them. So, I think when you get to that point of examining something that closely, it is inevitable to not be more connected to the environment 'cause you are looking for things that are on a much more microscopic level."



Figure 12. Photography. Alicja analysing the rock terrain looking for the possible holds and steps. (Source: own).

From a scientific point of view, a climber's relationship with nature can be so deep that their description of it may seem to be irrational, but the embodiment described here is of an abstract nature. Many climbers treat climbing as a kind of meditation that allows them to develop spiritually and emotionally, it helps to cope with problems and connect with nature as well. Many respondents mentioned in their statements something that could be called the 'embodiment of nature'. They often compared themselves to parts of nature, gave it human characteristics and vice versa. Some statements suggested the unity between a climber and a part of nature.

"It's not any longer just an activity, you and the mountain become the same. You know when you look at animals, when you see a gecko, salamander or even an ant climbing on the rock face or even a squirrel climbing up a tree, it's just amazing how those animals can hold on. Some of them have very specialised things on their feet that allow that but at the same time they are using holds and they are utilising those micro holds at their level like we utilise our holds at our level. We have a specialised thing too; we have sticky rubber on our feet"



Figure 13. Photography. Chipmunk climbed simultaneously with us but they liked trees more than rocks. (Source: own).

Embodiment in climbing literature

Ontological experience, open to non-standard situations and disciplined by a specific technique, created in climber's mind, but also in the way of interpreting the climbing world with the body and an appropriate model of action, becomes the foundation of modern climbing. Starting from the nineteenth century, mountain climbers increasingly re-evaluated existing aesthetics, ethics and personality patterns under the influence of the direct experience of the mountains. As a result, ontological experiences create a new ethos that makes climbers not only overcome mountains, but also experience them.

At the centre of this experience is a specific, separate being, both materially and structurally: mountains, rocks and other parts of the climbing environment are different in a given world of other sensations. It should be emphasised, however, that this entity has no metaphysical status, but it becomes a clear ontological structure: the approach path, the route, and finally a series of crags, chimneys, a ridge. Climbing is becoming increasingly complicated, which not only opens up the diversity of the mountain environment, but also thickens the simplified

division of this vertical world into peaks and valleys. In this way, the nature of the mountains is re-evaluated.

I would like to quote the words of the great Himalayan climber, George H. L. Mallory on the question of why he wants to get Mount Everest: "Because it is." Apparently, nothing has changed: the same silent nature passively lays in the discourse waiting to be conquered. However, is that true? It is worth noting that this time there can be no question of free juggling or disdaining mountains and rocks: Everest simply "is". Mallory speaks on the side of being, and his statement at the same time seems to be the beginning and the end of all discursiveness created around mountains and climbing. Although seemingly, we are dealing with a totalising conception of the generality of nature and becoming more like nature. In fact, it was the chronicler's statement, seemingly referring to the diversity of mountains and rocks, that generalised them. Nevertheless, in my opinion, Mallory is a continuator of the nineteenth-century declaration of Albert Frederic Mummery: "The essence of mountaineering is not to climb to the top, but to struggle with difficulties" (Kurczab, 1990) - a climber is the creator of a sport style of climbing in high mountains. At the same time, climbers often emphasise, as Walter Bonatti did, that one should not pay attention only to the "least eloquent external aspects of the climber's activity", but also to take into account the whole "psychotechnical process that shaped the climber" (Bonatti, 2010). Climbing cannot be a fulfilment if it is not an effect and a part of the educational process that a climber is living in his or her life, accumulating experience. Hence, I want to argue the statement that mountaineering is a "type of creativity", an "intellectual adventure", with the only difference being, as Al Alvarez states, that it "forces you to think with your body, not your mind" (Matuszyk, 2010). The goal of climbing is not only transgression - exceeding the existing limits of human abilities, defeating nature; the mountain also appears to the alpinist as a complicated creation that must be thoroughly known and experienced to complete the goals that had been set. This ontology is knowable as experience and through experience. My intention is not to suggest that the mountaineer has touched the nature "in itself": "Mountains and everything that happens in them are always a metaphor that people explain. On ones bigger or small scale, " says Władysław Krygowski (2010, p. 1). I would like to emphasize that if the mountains were earlier constructed as an allegorical image based on cultural archetypes or a complex discourse on the borderline of natural sciences and aesthetics describing human nature, now they appeared in the mountaineering experience, which of course is not a "pure" experience". But it becomes the foundation of cognition. Climbing is

therefore learning about nature by interacting with it; it is a dialogue of experience, not a trial of discursive subjugation. As Wojciech Kurtyka says, an outstanding mountain climber and Polish climber,

“The mountains are first and foremost a special place because the environment is the concentration of all-natural phenomena and forms. They are a kind of concentration of the truth about nature, or even its quintessence. At first glance, you can see that the mountains rise above the low lands, and that only in the mountains you can be in the clouds. But this elevation is accompanied by culminations and a rich diversity of all other phenomena. The consistency of rock, scree, earth, dust, ice, snow and water is within reach” (Kurtyka, 1988).

It should be emphasised that, according to Kurtyka, on a wide spectrum of climbing states and experiences that involve "almost all kinds of human energy", a wide range of knowledge is being developed that is a comprehensive insight into the phenomena of the modern world and a specific mountain path including among others: the requirement of courage, the pursuit of physical and mental perfection, and finally the concept of bodied skills" (Kurtyka, 1988). In the texts of mountaineers, the term "climbing" and "mountaineering" is repeatedly referred to as "lifestyle"; it is commonly interpreted as an alternative to "everyday life", an expression of escapism (into the world of nature) in relation to "ordinary" life. In the case of modern climbing, the basis of ethos is not so much the style of culture as the style of climbing; there is a cultural model occurring based on the climbing experience model. Of course, in the background, there is always nature interpreted in a certain way. According to Zaruski, it is "the essence of being deep in the mountains" (Zaruski, 2007). Pawlikowski indicated that during a climb "the body experiences atavistic memories of animal fitness" (Kurzab, 2010). Alternately, for Michał Jagiełło, the mountains are a great "laboratory," but not in a scientific way, because the object and subject of research is in them a man or woman and their body (Jagiełło, 1981).

However, men and women not only discover the various dimensions of nature, but also act against it. Jerzy Kukuczka states that in the mountains the only rival of man is nature (Matuszyk, 2010); very often, alpinism is one of the sports of space in which there is no direct competition, and the struggle with the element prevails. Despite the complexity of experience and climbing knowledge, it can be assumed that these struggles are one of the reasons for the admiration of the power of nature which in the mountains is intensified and, consequently, the deep bond of a man or woman and nature is forming.

Coming back to the abstract embodiment of nature that climbers present in their opinions it can be often read in the climbing literature. Ryszard Wiktor Schramm on the description of Zbigniew Bromowicz wrote: "He fit the mountains like a boulder, like a chamois" (Matuszyk, 2010). Reinhold Messner, in turn, looking for yeti in the Himalayas, finally admitted that he himself can seem to be one of them for the inhabitants of villages in the Tibetan wilderness, not only because of his beard and deformed feet, but also because of his mountain exploration. Often, the conviction is that the climber is somewhat outside of culture: "Social issues are pushed aside. The truth about human nature begins to emerge when instinct shows its forgotten face" (Matuszyk, 2010). Those extreme examples of embodiment are presented by extreme lifestyle climbers. Though, getting to this point in my thesis, the term 'lifestyle' climber lost its meaning for the sake of the argument. The most engaged climbers I investigate in my research treat climbing as something far more than lifestyle. Climbing is their life and despite they appreciate style of climbing within it, it is not only lifestyle. They constantly live with the climbing in their mind, with climbing as the end goal; as many climbers say: "sometimes it is not about destination, it is about the journey", for many not even the mountain that is climbed is the prey but climbing itself.

This is something that Csikszentmihalyi (1997) described in his research under the label of 'flow'. Climbers in his research mentioned the sense of blurring between subject and object, the bodies of humans and the bodies of rocks: "You're climbing yourself as much as the rock (...) If you're flowing with something, it's totally still (...) So you're not quite sure whether you are moving or the rock is" (p. 93). Csikszentmihalyi (1997) described flow as a "state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter" (1990, p. 4). I think what the author missed in his interpretation was the way in which climbers reach this level of engagement. This state of mind can be accessed by deep connection to the environment in which the activity is taking place with embodiment as a tool. Climbers I described now aim for this state of mind all their life and at every point of their self.

Conclusions

Being a climber helps me in understanding the subject of my thesis but it stated some challenges also. As a researcher I cannot forget that for the participant of the social world the body itself is a source of individual impressions and sensations. It is a matter of bodily

sensations, information flowing from one's own body, perceived by a climber's embodied experiences, which are only available in personal experience and are not always translatable into the language of concepts and names. The experiential body of the subject under study is no longer readily available to the researcher as a person observing from the outside of a given physical activity. According to Rudie (1994) the understanding is a creative process which can be approached in two ways. First of them is practical in which understanding is demonstrated through the action. This is a more obvious way in terms of climbing embodiment when most of the primary content is about moves. Although, at this stage the practice become the common place between me and my respondents and “it becomes internalized so that practitioner was able to regenerate practice which is in tune with certain conventions” (Rudie, 1994, 41), the problem of interpreting it in verbal way occurred. This is due to the difficulty of verbalizing embodiment practise which body knows how to do but not necessarily know how to explain it. The first part of this is an attempt of this interpretation by analysing in details embodiment in climbing at three dimensions: contact with objects, body itself and contact with other bodies (climbers). Each of them influences the perception of climber towards the surrounding environment. Men, while trying to understand the nature put a composition of analogies (Fiske, 1982), that can be understood due to feelings, connections, moves and flow of climbing process. This understanding varies from person to person like climbing beta (solution for given climbing route) depends solely on climber. In the second part of this chapter I tried to omit this step and investigate deeper by looking into written verbalized reflections. Examining literature of the most involved climbers and mountaineers which I wanted to label as ultra-lifestyle ones I realised that a lot of them do not suit into that term. That is due to the fact that climbers do not have to treat that sport as lifestyle to be involved. I understood that for big number of climbers, also those that I interviewed, climbing is simply life as one of them said ‘(...) you breathing it in and breathing it out at every second of your life. No matter if you are in your job or in school the only thing you want to do or talk about is climbing’.



Figure 14. Photography of the view from the second pitch of “Traffic Route” at Lake Louise, Alberta. (Source: own).

6 Conclusions

In every dimension, climbing is a complex and complicated activity and involves interplay among others, between people, and nature as well as travelling practices and mobility. Subsequently, a strong interdependence between all of these ‘actors’ occurs. This thesis engaged with the question: how does climbing as a embodied activity influence climber views towards nature. Environmental awareness is an important part of the concern of climbers. I unpacked the patterns of mundane practices of climbers: how climbers talk about and organise their own travelling practices in relation to this issue. It has also been pointed out that one of the issue related to climbing is that the most devoted climbers often enter in a lifestyle that is based upon this activity and therefore, engage in a hyper-mobility scheme. Climbing on a regular basis often involves commuting to different places in search for the best climbing crag and this transportation to and from the crag is most likely the highest impact of climbers on their environment. Though, through practising climbing there is a phase that puts the climber into an embodied interaction with its surroundings and engages him or her in an educational process.

Nowadays, anthropocentrism is not a bigger threat to humanity than the fear of nature generated by ignorance. Therefore, a further way is necessary. However not to subordinate the world of nature, but to a harmonious coexistence with it. Concern to challenge the commonly held understanding of humans as separate from nature moved further from an egocentric/anthropocentric orientation to ecocentric. It is important to acquire knowledge on this way, but in an integrated process with pro-environmental education, with shaping the ecological culture and ecocentric awareness that determines a man's optimal place in the

natural system. These can be rather rarely achieved through outdoor education in the form schools perform it. Braun (1983) stated that relevant education programs could foster environmental attitudes of students but not actual commitment. This transition of knowledge about human-environment relationships into the action is not the main goal of an outdoor ecology education programs, although they provide a fundamental cognitive basis which is already very important. One of the core ideas in climbing is that the climber gains through climbing pieces of knowledge that are not directly connected to climbing itself. Climbers are evolving in a different way and discovering different areas through this process. This directly leads to educational role of climbing within which full commitment for the nature and ecology can be reach by deep connection to the nature. Climbing with its use of the climbers' body can be a tool or catalyst for this process.

The concept of embodiment was used in this thesis already from carrying out the research. In ethnographic field studies, the body remains the basic instrument and resource that the researcher uses and through which he performs cognitive tasks. We should not forget that the research project is carried out by a living and embodied human subject. The study of physical activity of people - as is the case with research on the world of climbing - generates a number of specific research situations in which the body is involved. The body that appears in various roles and functions, and which due to the methodological problems that it entails to its appearance - should at least be noticed in the research process. In what aspects of the embodiment is the body the tool in ethnographic examination of physical activity such as climbing? First of all, the embodiment of the central action itself, which is the subject of this thesis. Climbing as primary activity and consistently all other activities accompanying it - are physical in nature. This means that the object of the researcher interest as an embodied action taking place in a specific physical space is performed using the body and through the body.

Secondly, climbing is a practice through which the materiality of the nature become embodied. The embodied characteristic of climbing is an important factor that deeply links the climber, not only to the rock, but to the nature in general. That creates empathic relationship in which the climbers perceive nature as an entity that should be protected and taken care of. Through this embodiment, an awareness and responsibility for the rocks that climbers climb, and the nature in which they move become an environmental engagement in climbers' lives. This specific relation that climbers create between them and the nature sometimes lead to abstract embodiment of nature in which climbers can feel the 'self' of the nature.

Further, it turned out that the definition of lifestyle climber that I had been basing on during my research is not sufficient or at least not relevant. Big number of climbers show greater involvement to the concept of climbing and they not necessarily suit to the definition of lifestyle climbers. For those, climbing is life and this is the fact that make them so ecologically aware. I argue that due to the commitment those climbers have to the climbing activity which takes place outdoors, in the nature. Consequently, climbers want to take care of the environment in which climbing, which is the most valued aspect of their 'self', happen.

These assumptions might be addressed in future studies. Further research of the variation of the definition of this group of climbers would be worthwhile. It should consider the potential usage of embodiment more carefully within the aspect of climbing process. This, therefore, also raises questions of the around climbing activities that contribute to the creation of the deep boundary between a climber and the nature. Future investigations are necessary to validate the kinds of conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

The results also provide a better understanding for tourism industry players with regard to creating, developing, managing and/or maintaining climbing sites. Knowledge of climbers' ecological approach which in most cases is probably transformable to preferences allow a tourism industry to adjust better to this target group. I believe those results are important within the tourism industry and that they can be used fruitfully.

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Appendix

Glossary of terms

- Belaying points – anchors: it is a point at the end of a pitch where the climber can secure himself and belay from. It is usually made by placing two bolts next to each other and using them both simultaneously to have higher safety. It can also be a natural anchor point such as a tree or boulder.
- Belaying: in sport and traditional climbing the climber moving up needs a person to secure him by using a belaying device. The person belaying has this device in which the rope is going through and is tied into the belayers's harness. This device is protecting the climber from falling all the way to the ground in case of a fall. When falling the climber will only fall up to the point where his last piece of protection was placed.
- Beta: solution for climbing problem (body position, hidden hold)
- Crag: name given to a place where climbing routes can be found.
- Crux: the hardest move on the climbing route
- Deep water soloing: climbing overhanging cliffs near seashore without protection, potential falls are cushioned by water
- Flash: topping the route with some information about it but without trying it before
- Lowering: in the case of a climber not rappelling down a route the person belaying can use the belaying device to lower the climber back to the ground.
- Multi-pitch: climbs involving using more than one rope length
- On-sight: topping the route in first attempt without prior knowledge of it
- Pitch: a pitch is a section of climbing. It is usually in between 7 and 50 meters. In some case a route is a single pitch where there is only one length of climbing. In other case a route can be called a multi-pitch. Then a first climber gets up to the first anchor and belays his/her partner from there, once the second partner has reached the first anchor they move and to the second anchor and so on until they have reached the top.
- Projecting: working on a hard route to red-point it, climbing it many times to practise to climb hard grade at once.
- Protection points: points in the rock where climbers put protection to prevent falling. In case of sport climbing points are permanent made from metal rings glued in the rock. In case of traditional climbing climbers put protection points themselves using cracks in the rock and special blocking gear.
- Rappelling: rappelling is a technique a climber can use to lower himself back to the ground by using its own rappelling device. The rappelling device is fixed to the climber's harness and ties him to the rope from which he can lower himself.
- Red-point: topping the route after trying before it at least once.

Appendix 1: Glossary of terms

Questionnaire:

Age, nationality, profession.

1. How long have you been climbing?
2. How often do you climb?
3. What is your preferable type of climbing and why?
4. What is your favorite climbing destination and why?
5. Can you tell your best memory connected to climbing?
6. Do you travel a lot to reach climbing destination? How do you travel?
7. Is ecological consideration part of how you organize these journeys?
8. Please describe me your typical climbing day.
9. What do you usually do on your “rest days”?
10. What do you usually eat? Do you have special diet due to climbing?
11. Can you point three other, apart of climbing, main interests/ hobbies in your life?
12. Would you say that climbing changed your lifestyle? In what way?
13. Would you say that climbing is your lifestyle?
14. Do you think climbing changed your attitude towards nature?
15. Do you think nature and natural environment is endangered? And can you reflect upon how climbing relates to protecting or exposing of endangered environmental sites?
16. Do you take any steps in your everyday life to prevent it?
17. Do you think climbing is harming or rather protecting the environment near the cliffs?
18. Do you think climbers are harming or protecting the nature?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire