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Disbelief and Welstchmerz: Tourism Implications

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Title: Disbelief and Welstchmerz: Tourism Implications

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Abstract:

The last decade's economic crisis is revealing manifold fissures in the economic/social/value/sense-making system, and this inevitably has an effect on people's psyche, on their beliefs and desires, and even on their perception of needs. Many effects of the present situation are symptoms of a broader type of crisis. The economic crisis may have acted as a catalyst for increasing (social, political, spiritual) awareness, and it could be paradoxically a landmark and a far-reaching impetus to renewal and awakening of humanity, to build a sounder and more sustainable (social, educational, political, economic) system. Disbelief in any type of institution or societal structure is increasingly cited as a central feature of the present time, and some pieces of research aim at measuring it, together with other related conditions such as *welstchmerz*. Whereas the extent to which the current economic crisis has produced a personal or integral crisis remains to be ascertained, it is clear that concepts such as meaning or transcendence—to combat disbelief, meaninglessness, and *welstchmerz*—have become relevant in the discussion on qualitative implications in tourism. Tillich's analysis of existential anxiety and Ausubel's concept of meaningful learning provide a conceptual framework to identify required elements for a particular, desired outcome (coping with the second domain of existential pain/*welstchmerz* and other components of disbelief), whose empirical relevance and practical implications, expectations, needs related to transformation, and new values are examined in this piece of research on tourism experience of different sport tourists in the Balearic Islands. The research first aims, in particular, at measuring the subjective perception of increasing disbelief and *welstchmerz* in a sample of tourists and, secondly, at exploring the consequences of this perception in terms of meaning search through different aspects of the tourism experience.