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Caring for 'the Other' in Post-Colonial Settings

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TEFI Excellence Award for Early-Career Scholarship in Social Responsibility

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Caring for ‘the Other’ in Post-Colonial Settings

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In recent decades, the idea of community participation has played an important role in the search for sustainability, solidarity, and inclusion in tourism development. The concept of participatory development has evolved in the course of rich and contradictory discussions of the good life, democracy, and colonialism, towards a vision of alternative and small-scale tourism development, especially in the case of economically marginalized communities. In this presentation, Emily Höckert follows the trails of development practitioners, volunteers, and researchers who travel to rural communities with a desire to enhance local participation in tourism development. The journey is driven by curiosity about the ways in which these guests, as well as tourists proper, seem to expect unconditional hospitality in their encounters with local hosts. The study indicates that despite—or actually because of—emancipatory intentions to help ‘the Other,’ tourism experts end up dominating the supposedly participatory spaces of dialogue. Drawing on post-colonial and phenomenological discussions of ethical subjectivity, Höckert draws focus on different ideologies, values, and ontologies underlying the idea of participation as such. She asks whether caring and participating might require a readiness to interrupt one’s own ways of doing, knowing, and being.