Journal of Tourism Futures

The Future of City Tourism

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The future of city tourism

Growth of city tourism

Since the rise of mass tourism in the 1960s, city tourism has consistently been one of the fastest growing segments of the travel phenomenon in countries with developed economies (Ashworth, 1989; Jansen-Verbeke, 1986; Law, 2002; Maitland and Ritchie, 2009; Selby, 2004). International transit arrivals worldwide are expected to reach 1.4 million by 2020 and 1.8 billion by 2030 (UNWTO, 2016). Over the period 2007–2014, worldwide the number of city trips increased by 82 per cent and reached a market share of 22 per cent of all holidays, according to the latest official statistics (IPK International, 2015/2016, p. 8). Together with a sustained growth in city tourism, cruise tourism has skyrocketed with 248 per cent, while sun, sand and relaxation holidays increased by 39 per cent, and tours showed a steadier growth pace of 21 per cent during these eight years. The growth of city tourism is experienced both by developed and emerging economies. In 2014 the market share of city holidays was 21 per cent in Europe, 17 per cent in North-America, 25 per cent in Asia-Pacific and 22 per cent in Latin-America (IPK International, 2016).

Drivers of city tourism

The substantial growth of city tourism is driven by spatial, social, economic and technological forces. Worldwide urbanisation processes lead to increasing numbers of people living in cities, and feeling more connected with cities and an urban lifestyle, consequently this means more people seek out to visit other cities (ETOA, 2014). The increased wealth of the middle class in the western economically developed countries, and also in the emerging economies allow people to visit and explore other cities. This is facilitated by several other developments. First, decreasing travel costs, largely fuelled by the fast rise of budget airlines, and the availability of low cost accommodation (Dunne et al., 2010; IPK International, 2013, 2016; UNWTO, 2014; Veille info Tourisme, 2014). Second, advancements in ICT and other such technology, play a role. They support marketing and promotion of cities and facilitate online booking of travel and accommodation (AirBnB). As a consequence of these developments, cities are no longer perceived as mere entry, embarkation- or transit points during a journey, but as attractions and destinations in their own right (ETOA, 2014).

Implications of city tourism for cities, tourists and residents

The growth of city tourism is reflected in four interrelated processes: the presence of tourists; the desire, by local authorities or enterprises to welcome tourists in their territory; the rejection of tourism (i.e. a negative attitude towards tourism); and a tourism “gaze” through which the world is interpreted (Stock, 2007).

Thus, the economic and socio-spatial implications of city tourism are significant. At global, national and regional level city tourism has become an important economic driver. Nationally, it outperforms both tourism to countries as a whole, and GDP growth (Roland Berger, 2012). Regionally and locally, city tourism is considered to be an incubator of innovation and technology (Terzibasoglu, 2016) and a key factor in the urban economy and city development: it creates jobs, stimulates foreign exchange through revenues and taxes, and promotes investment in infrastructure and the provision of public services (UNWTO, 2012). Other researchers stress the
increased awareness for heritage and culture and even the contribution to tolerant and respectful societies (Brooks, 2016; Terzibasoglu, 2016). A study among more than 2,600 residents in Copenhagen, Berlin, Munich, Amsterdam, Barcelona and Lisbon reveals that what residents value most is the positive atmosphere, liveliness and international vibe tourism brings to their city, along with the protection and restoration of historical parts of the city and traditional architecture (Koens and Postma, 2017).

It is crucial, however, to offer constructive critiques: the growth of tourism and the influx of tourists in more and more residential areas, for example (i.e. by AirBnB) impacts upon the spatial quality and the quality of life of the citizens, especially in historic city centres. Historic city centres are the areas that show the densest concentration of tourists (García-Palomares et al., 2015). Research shows that AirBnb can freely expand in historic city centres, where regular hotel and hospitality industry is limited by zoning plans and regulations by authorities (Zervas et al., 2014). This expansion of AirBnB has the potential to aggravate crowding and tourism gentrification (Gutiérrez et al., 2017). Some researchers debate the on-going “festivalisation”, “touristification” of urban space, and the “heritagisation” of city centres that allow tourists to experience the “urban-ness” of a city as a total experience (Stock, 2007). Perspectives of “touristification and disneyization” (Bryman, 2004, p. xx) of cities might question the staged authenticity of urban environments and triggers further debates on suitable capacities of tourism for cities (Vinello, 2017). Gentrification (e.g. Opillard, 2017), lowering housing supply by increasing rents and real estate prices (Gurran and Phibbs, 2017; Peters, 2017) and lowering quality of life for local residents (Gravari-Barbas and Maria Jacquot, 2017) are documented effects of urban tourism. Recently, reports and cases were presented where locals in cities like Barcelona, Salzburg or Venice actively protest against this massive influx of tourists in their cities (such as Kettle, 2017) (Venezia, 2017; ORF, 2017; Rodriguez, 2017). One of their main claims is that increasing numbers of day-trippers generate an unsustainable increase in real estate prices, causing gentrification and displacement of citizens – asking, to whom belongs the city? If certain numerical thresholds are exceeded, tourism can easily turn into a nuisance for residents due to increased prices, improper tourist behaviour, transformation of residential areas into tourist accommodation zones (AirBnB), visitor pressure on carrying capacity of sites, and crowding, such as in Amsterdam, Venice or Barcelona (Koens and Postma, 2017).

Challenges ahead

Overall, globalisation and economic changes have led to a “creative turn” in urban economy (Florida, 2005), demonstrating a shift from manufacturing towards services and knowledge related and “creative-industry” production. Tourism has been a popular agenda in urban policy for a long time, as a sector that was comparatively easy to promote with little public investment necessary apart from reshaping urban spaces and city marketing action (Colomb, 2011). Yet, the change in the urban economy has pushed tourism to the top of the urban policy agenda, city marketing and place marketing have been introduced as urban policy tools to brand cities and places strategically (e.g. Erikkson et al., 2015).

Some authors, however, critique these approaches which ascribe value to cities as monetary generating units (Harvey, 1988), that branding and festivalisation bears the risk for “karaoke architecture” (Evans, 2003), and that these approaches underestimate and oversimplify the complexity of urban planning in its specific policy context (Braun, 2012). Those debates closely relate to a more general discussion, questioning which type of urban development and urban character should be prioritised. Tourism is not a standalone phenomenon that can be separated from its urban context. Its different forms and distinct practises mingle with “regular” urban practises such as housing, leisure, mobility, consumption and productions (Colomb and Novy, 2017b). Hence, the boundaries between touristic and non-touristic urban practises are fuzzy, fluid and overlapping. Moreover, tourism changes and transforms cities and urban spaces and vice versa – these transformations are not always desirable from the residents’ point of view.

It is expected that city tourism will continue grow in the years to come (Bock, 2015; IPK International, 2016) and cities will face enormous challenges to manage the development of tourism and its implications (Inayatullah, 2011). At the 5th Global Summit on City Tourism which took place
in November 2016, Terzibasoglu, director of the Destination Management and Quality Programme at the UNWTO, claimed the following. If tourism is recognised as an important force of urban change, this requires long term policy, planning and good governance in which tourism is integrated and the complex realities of tourism with its possible nuisances in the city and the hinterland are taken into account (Terzibasoglu, 2016). To meet the needs, demands and expectations of residents as well as (future) visitors, cities have to adapt and transform continually, while new challenges and issues emerge (Bock, 2015; UNWTO, 2012). Both opportunities and challenges of city tourism need to be addressed and managed in a collaborative process with the related stakeholders and citizens (Kester, 2016; Terzibasoglu, 2016). Daffara (2011, p. 681) calls cities to actively rethink their future to build capacity to act with foresight, and to co-create resilient and liveable places rather than just react to the “expected tsunamis of change”.

Academic contributions

Despite the major importance of city tourism and the challenges surrounding it, academic research into this area has emerged only recently. Before the 1980s, tourism research appeared to have a strong “rural bias”, but since, the interest has gradually increased (Ashworth, 1989). The growth in the practice of city tourism has been followed by increasing academic interest in this phenomenon and urban tourism has emerged as a multi-disciplinary field of studies whereby tourism researchers focus on development, management and marketing aspects in city tourism (Mattland, 2006; Jansen-Verbeke and Van Rekom, 1996; Koens and Postma, 2017; Page, 1995; Timur and Getz, 2008), and geographers show interest in planning considerations for cultural tourism in cities (Russo and Van der Borg, 2002) as well as paying attention to environmental factors and economic implications of city tourism (Law, 1992, 1993, 2002), and the effects of mega-events on cities (Mehoff and Poynter, 2015).

Although a variety of approaches have been adopted to study city tourism, the academic debate is still claimed to be fragmented and an incipient field of research and practice (Ashworth and Page, 2011; Novy, 2014; Pasquinelli, 2015): “those studying tourism neglect cities while those studying cities neglect tourism” (Ashworth, 2011, p. xx). Stock (2007) thinks that the neglect of tourism in urban studies is an obstacle to adequate thinking about cities. Some scholars address this gap by advocating the role of tourism and place branding as integral part of strategic spatial planning approaches and urban management (Francis and Mathooko, 2015; Oliveira, 2015; Bellini and Pasquinelli, 2016; Zenker and Braun, 2017). More recently, urban researchers started to investigate urban contestations triggered and related to tourism and tourism practices, such as civic protests against tourists and tourism. Those struggles do not often exclusively involve residents against tourists, but question which kind of urban developments and transformations are favourable for whom and who benefits or loses from such developments (Colomb and Novy, 2017a). Due to insufficiently robust academic research in city tourism, it does not come as a surprise that future oriented studies about cities and tourism are scarce (Bock, 2015; Füller and Michel, 2014).

This special issue

In this special issue of the Journal of Tourism Futures on the Future of City Tourism we aim to contribute to bridging the divide between tourism, cities and the future. The three editors of this special issue draw on areas of research in tourism scenario planning, cultural geography and critical tourism studies, as well as planning and urban studies to ignite debates about the future of city tourism. In this special issue our intention is not to propose a novel body of theory for city tourism as this has been proposed and discussed elsewhere (see, e.g. Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007; Pearce, 2001). The editors and authors in this special issue focus on the implications of growth in city tourism for the future wellbeing of cities, tourists and residents. In doing so the editors and authors take a critical approach in exploring and understanding future development of city tourism in the context of economically, socially and environmentally sustainable communities. The particular strength of the collection in this special issue is the inter- and multidisciplinarity bringing together of futurists, scenario planners, tourism researchers, geographers, urban planners and (landscape-) architects to tackle the future importance of city tourism.
This special issue includes four research papers and two viewpoint papers, debating the topic from different angles and methodological approaches. The first two papers illustrate how major external social and economic factors impact upon the development of city tourism. Griffin and Dimanche share their insights in how the hosting of immigrants by cities has a growing impact on how tourism is shaped. The immigrants shape new communities, change the local culture and contribute to an increase of VFR travel. The authors base their discussion on a literature review and a conceptual approach. Brauckmann investigates the potential effect of accommodation provision in the collaborative economy (AirBnB) on city tourism and urban property markets. He makes use of official statistics and geographical information systems to identify concentration processes of overnight visitors and the potential conflicts with other interest groups they generate.

Subsequently, two papers debate the citizens’ and locals’ perception of tourists and tourism in their city on empirical and conceptual level. Based on photo-elicitation interviews, Janusz, Six and Vanneste illustrate with a case study from Bruges (Belgium) how the residents’ perception is affected by their socio-cultural context. Postma and Schmuecker clarify the mechanisms of conflict between residents and tourists. They propose a conceptual model to assess the impact of such conflicts on city tourism and suggest a framework to develop strategies and mitigate negative tourism impacts for the residents. The outcomes could support cities with the management and controlling of tourism development.

Sommer and Helbrecht show how the destination management organisation in Berlin sees conflicts related to tourism in practice. They focus on the political process of how conflict-prone urban tourism is administratively problematised and affects the future development of tourism.

Finally, Bevolo discusses how the experience of a city can be enhanced with the help of design, more specifically the design of spatial concepts and scenarios. By means of grounded theory he demonstrates how editorial products and design concepts were used to envision urban futures by Royal Philips BV for two decades.

References


Pasquinelli, C. (2015), Urban Tourism(s): is There a Case for a Paradigm Shift?, Gran Sasso Science Institute, Cities research Unit, L’Aquila.


Further reading


Dr Jeroen Oskam

I first met Jeroen Oskam on a wintery evening in Leeuwarden in 2010 just before Xmas. Jeroen had accepted the post of Programme Manager at the European Tourism Futures Institute (ETFI). This was the beginning of a friendship and an academic partnership. Jeroen working with Professor Albert Postma would establish the institute as the think tank for futures thinking in Europe, the first such one. Working on EU-funded projects for the Friesland region of the north of the Netherlands and beyond, ETFI created a consensus for futures thinking and scenario planning when sceptics wanted to focus on the present. The drive to change mental models was due to a great part because of Jeroen’s management and leadership within the institution. When the idea of a journal was mooted, it was Jeroen who could see the potential and vision that such a journal could create within the academic and practitioner’s communities of tourism. It was Jeroen with his political astuteness and diplomacy that enabled the journal to begin and provided a platform for its continued success.

Working with Jeroen and Albert resulted in the publication of The Future of European Tourism and guest editing a special issue of the Journal of Vacation Marketing on the future of hotels. In 2015, Jeroen eventually moved further afield to take up a new challenge at the HotelSchool, the Hague, as the Director of Research. This appointment reflected his research interest in the future of hotels and family reasons. Even there, he continued to support the journal and championing the cause. His research paper Airbnb: The Future of Networked Hospitality Businesses is the most downloaded paper from the Journal of Tourism Futures with over 35,000 downloads and 50 citations to date.

Jeroen has worked as the Director of MBA Hotel and Tourism Management at HotelSchool Maastricht and he continued his way to Spain, where he established Zaragoza Hotel Management School. He was part of the Management Team of Centre of Expertise Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality, a collaboration between NHTV Breda, Hogeschool Zeeland and Stenden. He is also a Visiting Professor at the EADA Business School in Barcelona and has a PhD from Universiteit van Amsterdam, reading the Sociology of Literature.

On the downside, I was never able to convince Jeroen about the virtues of Sunderland AFC but he did introduce me to SC Cambuur, who then played in Eredivise. It seemed Sunderland AFC was not quite up to FC Barcelonas’s (Jeroen’s team) standards.

I have enjoyed working with Jeroen as the Co-editor of the Journal of Tourism Futures. Thank you for all the advice, wisdom, academic collegiately and friendship. We wish you well for the future.

Further readings


Urban tourism: the growing role of VFR and immigration

Tom Griffin and Frederic Dimanche

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to offer some insights into the future of urban tourism with particular consideration given to immigration and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travel. The discussion highlights the fact that cities are increasingly home to immigrants and transitory residents who host visitors, blurring resident-visitor distinctions, with implications for cultural and economic development, and tourism practitioners. These trends are highlighted, and discussions relating to the future are offered.

Design/methodology/approach – This discussion is based on a literature review and a conceptual approach.

Findings – The number of immigrants to cities keeps growing. These immigrants are shaping their new communities and changing local culture. They contribute to increased tourism through generating VFR travel and creating new tourist attractions.

Research limitations/implications – The implications of VFR and immigration on urban tourism are most visible in large urban centers that are major points of entry into a country and international magnets. They are not, however, limited to big cities.

Practical implications – There are potential implications for municipal governments and destination marketers to consider how cultural development and the touristic promotion of the city overlap with areas and direction for possible partnerships with community groups.

Social implications – This paper promotes the idea that for immigrants, to experience their communities through hosting VFR has positive social implications in terms of integration and cultural development.

Originality/value – This paper discusses a topic rarely addressed the impact of VFR and immigration on shaping urban tourism.

Keywords Tourism, Immigration, City, Urban, VFR

Paper type Viewpoint

Introduction

Urban centers are now home to the majority of the global population. The forecast is for this trend to continue as increasing immigration drives urban population growth (International Organization for Migration, 2015; World Health Organization, 2016). With diversifying populations, the culture, infrastructure, trade and travel flows of cities are evolving and expanding (Dwyer et al., 2014).

Simply put, the world is becoming more urban, with greater diversity in populations living in the same areas, creating burgeoning and increasingly cosmopolitan metropolises whose residents have expanding ties and networks across the globe.

One tourism-related implication of this rising urbanization and immigration is the increasing demand for travel among disparate friends and family members. This phenomenon is broadly conceptualized as visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travel. Despite global growth, both in volume and market share (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2000, 2016), VFR travel has been largely disregarded by researchers and misunderstood by city tourism organizations. The activity of VFR hosts and their visitors is therefore ever more relevant to urban centers and regions, as more residents arrive from diverse areas, increasing the cumulative social network of the urban population with implications for cultural and economic development.

Large urban centers are therefore already active VFR destinations. However, this paper aims to identify and demonstrate the importance of the links between urban places and VFR activity,
and then argues that this type of travel will become more important for cities in the future. A review of urban tourism literature is followed by a discussion of trends and implications regarding immigration to cities. VFR travel is then discussed as a conceptual framework that helps identify links between resident, guest and community with implications for tourism marketing and business development, immigrant integration, and communal cultural development. Finally, the implications of future immigration patterns, consumption of travel and family demographics are considered regarding the ongoing importance of VFR for urban communities in the decades to come.

Urban tourism

Cities are central to much tourism activity. They are convenient and multi-layered destinations for travelers, and are in turn impacted by visitors in terms of economic, social and cultural development (Edwards et al., 2008). Edwards et al. (2008) suggest the term urban should refer to “busy, interactive built environment[s] purposely developed to meet the needs of many stakeholders” (p. 1035). Urban centers are distinct from rural areas in population, with greater volume and often more diverse residents, who for varying needs and desires live in comparatively close proximity (Page and Hall, 2003). Cities are typically more accessible to visitors than rural areas with better transportation and tourism infrastructure. Further, because of their diversity, cities are hubs that offer a greater variety of reasons for tourists to visit, including business and culture, and as gateways to other regional destinations (Edwards et al., 2008; Page and Hall, 2003).

Scholarly interest in urban tourism has certainly increased in recent years, but is still comparatively limited given its size and significance (Ashworth, 2003; Ashworth and Page, 2011; Page and Hall, 2003; Selby, 2004a). Much urban tourism research has considered visitor activity within specific destinations (Shaw and Williams, 1994), produced within a discourse of marketing and regeneration, marginalizing cultural and social implications (Selby, 2004b). This reflects the political nature of much urban destination marketing that is often influenced by the hotel sector (Ford and Peeper, 2009; Gartrell, 1988; Heeley, 2015; Pike, 2004; Wang, 2011), creating a discourse of “putting heads in beds” as a measure of success for many destination marketing organizations (DMOs) despite the growing diversity of stakeholders (Ford, 2008; Wang, 2011).

Tourism can transform cities, and is often directed by investment and policy development goals. Ioannides and Petridou (2016) argue that the neo-liberal shift in the USA (and experienced elsewhere) since the 1980s, and the subsequent lack of public funds, lead many city governments to pursue tourism as a tool for regeneration. However, there are concerns that the development inspired in this political environment created homogenized manifestations of “waterfront developments, repackaged culture and heritage, and café culture” (Maitland and Newman, 2009, p. 1) undermining local distinctiveness and smothering distinction. Tourism development should enhance resident quality of life through the development of cultural attractions made possible or enhanced by additional visitors, benefitting them psychologically and practically from the outcomes of tourism (Ashworth and Page, 2011). However, development instigated by the desire to attract temporary visitors and the economic benefits they bring risks inauthenticity and avoids genuine resident engagement on how their community should evolve (Heeley, 2015; Ioannides and Petridou, 2016).

Immigration to urban areas

Different countries and regions receive various groups of immigrants for different reasons including existing family connections, historical ties and a common language, immigration policies relating to labor and asylum, and political and economic links between countries (Bell et al., 2010; Rigg et al., 2014; Skeldon, 2013). Historically, urban centers have attracted most of the immigrant population, and this is driving city populations upwards (Edwards et al., 2008; OECD, 2016; Seaton and Palmer, 1997). Globally there are around 3.9 billion people living in cities presently, with 6.3 billion forecast by 2050 (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014). Immigrants are naturally drawn to cities as hubs of transportation, existing diaspora and employment opportunities (International Organization for Migration, 2015). In major
global gateway cities, such as London, Toronto or New York, upwards of a third of the populations are immigrants, with urban centers in Asia and Africa generally showing lower, but ever increasing numbers (International Organization for Migration, 2015; Skeldon, 2013).

Immigrants bring their culture and increase cultural diversity in cities. New traditions, food, festivals and more add to urban vibrancy, producing new hybrid forms of culture that are distinct to the new immigrant community. Immigrant districts are traditional tourism attractions, and reflect the new waves of immigration from different diaspora to new neighborhoods across the city (Griffin and Dimanche, 2016). Most urban areas receive migrants who are seeking a peaceful life and employment opportunities unavailable in their own communities. International events and economic necessity shape immigration flows. For example, the current Syrian crisis has led to an influx of Syrian refugees to European cities. In the 1970s, the political situation in Southeast Asia contributed to heavy flows of Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian immigrants to France and the USA. Host countries can open the door to immigration because they need a larger workforce. For example, fast growing economies in the 1960s such as France, Germany, the UK or Canada and the USA attracted immigrants from poorer countries. The job opportunities were in the urban areas of Europe, North America and other economically powerful regions.

Researchers have long studied the impact of immigration on cities and their labor markets, economy (e.g. James et al., 1998; Saiz, 2003) and crime (Ousey and Kubrin, 2009). Cities that are strategic in managing immigrants can benefit significantly through the provision of skills and labor, and cultural development that diversity brings (International Organization for Migration, 2015; OECD, 2016). As many developed nations’ populations age, communities are competing for highly skilled, healthy and young immigrants to help develop industries and public services, and make contributions to the tax pool (Skeldon, 2013). Although recent political waves may contradict this, the opinion of international organizations remains that broadly speaking immigration brings positive impacts (International Organization for Migration, 2015).

VFR travel

A large number of trips worldwide are initiated by the desire to visit friends and relatives (Backer, 2007, 2010; Seaton, 1994). However, VFR has received comparatively little attention despite its substantial volume and importance to many travelers and communities. This is arguably due to the political nature of much destination marketing discourse (Backer, 2007, 2011; Lee et al., 2005; Morrison and O’Leary, 1995; Poel et al., 2006; Scheyvens, 2007; Seaton and Palmer, 1997; Seaton and Tagg, 1995). The term VFR typically refers to one of four common visitor categories: respondents to visitor surveys are asked for their self-reported trip purpose and ascribed to either VFR, pleasure, business, or other (Seaton, 1994). This conceptualization has been increasingly challenged, however, (Moscardo et al., 2000; Munoz et al., 2017), as trip purpose alone excludes visitors who state alternate reasons (e.g. pleasure and business) but stay with a friend or relative, spend time with a resident they know, or even visit other destinations on route to a friend or relative that would otherwise not be considered.

Backer (2011) argued for the inclusion of accommodation use in conceptualizing VFR travel. Griffin (2013) went further to suggest that VFR should “broadly refer to all tourism experiences that involve a prior personal relationship between a visitor and resident no matter the stated trip purpose, accommodation used, or activities engaged in” (p. 235). These more comprehensive understandings better allow the impact personal relationships between residents and their VFR to be considered. For example, the convention visitor who chooses one event over another because she can catch up with an old friend for dinner, or the vacationers who choose a trip across Canada so they can spend time with their relatives in a town along the way, or the regional benefits of VFR visitors and their hosts in urban centers choosing side trips to downtown and rural areas (Griffin, 2016; Griffin and Nunkoo, 2016); all of these examples, and more, would be excluded from VFR using the traditional trip purpose operationalization.

Not only is the volume of visitation generated through VFR underestimated, but the cultural and economic impacts on a destination are also distinct from other forms of tourism development. VFR is a more stable source of demand, with less seasonality and less significantly impacted by external threats (Griffin, 2013). Further, economic benefits are more widely dispersed across a
community and not concentrated in a tourism core, benefitting a wider range of stakeholders, and creating demand that is more easily subsumed within the routine of a city. VFR is more consistent with local demand and interests as residents guide and interpret their surroundings (Shani and Uriely, 2012; Young et al., 2007), creating greater political and economic capital for residents in the development of their own communities and culture (Griffin, 2013). Residents as hosts also consume and co-create tourism with their guests (Andrades and Dimanche, 2014), taking vacation time to host, keeping their spending in the region, creating demand for cultural infrastructure that enables further tourism promotion (Griffin and Dimanche, 2016). VFR creates a context of leisure where disparate friends and relatives can reconnect affecting identity and well-being (Griffin, 2015; Humbracht, 2015), where visitors can receive an “authentic” experience that creates reliable and influential word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing (Litvin et al., 2008), and residents are more obliged to take a leisure view of their own community that can improve attachment and pride (Griffin, 2016).

The general disregard of VFR is at best a missed marketing opportunity. Worse, it is the exclusion of residents in shaping their community’s image, that otherwise is skewed to attract supposedly high-yield visitors with little connection destination, affecting the direction of investment in related marketing and cultural infrastructure. VFR demand helps to retain a connection with residents and the production and consumption of culture and tourism (Caffyn, 2012; Mundt, 2011), avoiding the homogeneity and superficiality that other types of (urban) tourism development can create (Ioannides and Petridou, 2016).

VFR and immigration

VFR and immigration are closely connected (Williams and Hall, 2000), with implications for both communities and individuals. Cities with a large foreign population are likely to see flows of visitors from countries that were sources of immigration. As demand develops, and travel flows between the two communities are established, opportunities for further cultural connections, increased trade, and additional types of tourism open up (Dwyer et al., 2014). For immigrants who host, the VFR experience can inspire interaction with the new community in a leisure context, but importantly the experience is shared with someone who likely has familiar cultural understandings and mutual history. This has implications for immigrant hosts and their relationships with their visitors and new community.

VFR enables face-to-face interaction between host and guest, who can perform relationship roles, and demonstrate mutual care toward each other (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Cohen and Wills, 1985). For recent immigrants, isolation and culture shock can be an issue (Mainil and Platenkamp, 2010), and the opportunity to spend quality time with a loved one or close friend can positively affect well-being after their guest has left (Griffin, 2015). Hosting can also shift the gaze of the immigrant resident, from newcomer to expert, and of the community as a place of residence to a place of leisure. Leisure participation in general has been found to help immigrant integration (e.g. Horolets, 2012; Lange et al., 2011; Rublee and Shaw, 1991; Stodolska and Livengood, 2006), and the added context of hosting a guest adds context to these experiences. Guiding a guest can help build attachment and pride for the host to the new community which becomes an essential and contextual backdrop to the personal relationship, establishing a sense of home through the collection of stories and souvenirs that bridge old and new worlds that endures beyond the visit itself (Humbracht, 2015; Lange et al., 2011; Larsen, 2008; Larsen et al., 2007). The integration of immigrants, their sense of belonging to the place and culture, and the community’s positive response, adaptations and acceptance of new groups is vital for all of society to prosper (Frideres, 2008; International Organization for Migration, 2015), and hosting is consistent with these goals.

VFR and urban communities

Urban residents have often been viewed as the demand side of tourism (Ashworth and Page, 2011), but they are also an important component of supply for their own communities. Cities are natural VFR destinations because they often have large and diverse populations (e.g. Statistics Canada, 2015).
There is overlap between VFR and the nature of urban populations. As a growing number of people live and work in multiple cities on a rotating basis (International Organization for Migration, 2015; OECD, 2016) and populations are made up of new or temporary residents who, to varying extents, treat their new communities as destinations to explore (Edwards et al., 2008; Griffin, 2016), the dichotomous view of resident and visitor becomes ever more blurred. Cities are therefore a “complex mix of ‘intersecting mobilities’” (Maitland and Newman, 2009, p. 14), and the distinction between visitor and local is, in many cases, uninformed (Cohen and Cohen, 2012). Arbitrary definitions shape binary understandings of tourist and resident. A tourist is technically someone who stays for less than a year (Govers et al., 2008), and an immigrant someone who stays for a year or more (Skeldon, 2013). Although useful for measurement, many individuals will struggle to categorize themselves this simply; for example, international students, temporary workers, those seconded to a satellite office for a period of months, or who visit places on a regular but seldom frequency (Skeldon, 2013). Rigid distinctions between home and away, “extraordinary and ordinary, pleasure and boredom, liminality and rules, exotic others and significant others” (Larsen, 2008, p. 21) limit an appreciation for the lived realities of many. Many transitory and newcomer residents will attract and cause mobility to their cities, whether for short leisure-based trips, or more permanent migration. Mobile residents, of which urban areas are home to, create reason and demand for others to visit.

Ashworth (2003) asked urban tourism researchers to consider “‘what is particularly urban about urban tourism?’ and; ‘Which special characteristics of all or some cities are relevant to which kinds of tourism?’” (p. 147). Arguably the nature of residents’ own mobilities and their relationships with others is a consistent and recognizable phenomenon at varying levels across cities. This three-way relationship between resident-visitor-community in VFR urban travel experiences challenges issues of homogenized neo-liberal tourism development and binary views resident-visitor (Heeley, 2015; Ioannides and Petridou, 2016). This is consistent with a shift in demand for post-fordist experiences (Mowforth and Munt, 2008; Page and Hall, 2003), with individualized and authentic experiences that accrue cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). VFR travel and its confluence with immigration may not strictly be a uniquely urban experience, but is predominantly consumed within and affects urban environments (Page and Hall, 2003).

VFR and urban destinations in the future

The following section draws together some key predictions that have implications for the rising importance of VFR-related travel for urban communities.

Increasing immigration and new political environments

Recent politics in Europe and the USA have seen pushes to slow immigration, but it is difficult to predict to what extent the intent and values that have fueled these political movements will endure and affect global migration into the future. Despite empirical evidence that demonstrates the generally positive impacts of migration on economies, it is vital to note that immigration is experienced differently within a country (OECD, 2016). Urban areas receive more immigrants, and governments are increasingly seeking ways to either encourage or require newcomers to settle away from the large metropolises to smaller urban areas (OECD, 2016). It is likely, therefore, that the overall volume of immigration will not be diminished in the future, but newcomers may be dispersed to a greater number of smaller urban centers. This will see VFR demand to a greater number of urban centers grow, both from source countries, but also between cities as immigrants travel domestically to visit each other.

Nature of demand for VFR travel

This changing political environment is also creating instability for the travel industries. For some, movement is increasingly restricted, and for others the desire for travel is reduced. Political instability within a destination harms the appeal of the place for vacation and convention visitors, and with present uncertainties within many source communities the desire for frivolous travel is also likely to be limited (Frommer, 2017; Rosenbloom, 2016; Sönmez, 1998). However, where demand for other types of travel may decline in times of uncertainty, VFR travel will persist, as “[c]opresent interaction remains […] the fundamental mode of human intercourse
and socialization” (Boden and Molotch, 1994, p. 258). The desire to spend time with loved ones does not dissipate because of the need for belonging, identity, and well-being (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Cohen and Wills, 1985; Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015; Urry, 2002), and VFR demand overrides to a greater extent these issues that affect other more fluctuating types of tourism. Further, knowing a local as a host may help visitors feel extended comfort and security knowing they are being guided by someone they trust. The stronger the attachment to a destination the easier it is to convert potential visitors to actual, and personal connections with resident friends and relatives can be a powerful attraction and reason for repeat visits (Ashworth and Page, 2011). In these increasingly politically uncertain times may prove an important and stable source of demand for urban centers. If current political environments continue, and travel is either restricted or made less appealing, then VFR will become a more important part of urban destinations’ activity.

Evolution of the family

The structure and nature of relationships among families is evolving and forecast to continue, with “most extended families [that] live geographically apart” (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015, p. 142). Family travel is therefore an increasingly important and developing segment (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015). As family members are often distant, it is not just demand for broadly speaking leisure-based travel, but mobility that enables the performance of social roles and exchange of social capital. For example, increasing numbers are living longer and healthier, and for grandparents to provide child care, they must now travel to do so. In many communities the number of people living alone has also increased, and due to advances in medicine and quality of life there are likely to be a growing number of people who will live alone in their older years, another predictor that VFR demand will remain and grow as people seek quality time and interaction with their distant loved ones (Hall and Ogden, 2003; Ortman et al., 2014). Further, family celebrations such as marriage or birthdays are also requiring travel to be made in order for distant friends and family to share milestones together (Backer and King, 2015; Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015). In addition, as the middle classes of many nations grow, particularly India and China, the context of strong family ties and immigration hold particular interest and implications for VFR travel from and within these new economies (Backer and King, 2015). Although not specific for urban areas, as cities expand and become more diverse the demand and opportunities for these types of travel experiences, and the multi-purpose travel opportunities they bring, will rise accordingly.

Changing world order

Looking even further ahead beyond the immediate future and potential impact of current immigration policies and environments is the changing world order. Many countries that are the source for much emigration around the world are also seeing a rising middle class and economic development, which are stimulating outbound tourism (Webster and Ivanov, 2015). Whereas the potential for vacation- and business-related travel has been often considered (Mariani et al., 2014; Smeral, 2010), the cultural and historical connections between countries that send and receive immigrants will influence all future travel flows (Webster and Ivanov, 2015). Cities that have been traditional destinations for immigrants from these developing economies and who already see cultural connections are likely to see a growing demand for VFR-related travel as middle classes increase.

Climate change

As impacts of climate change become more severe and frequent some are predicting that the price of transport will increase, with some calling for carbon rationing and limitations on air travel (Gössling et al., 2008; Higham et al., 2016; Peeters and Dubois, 2010). It is possible that in the future, unless significant changes in technology are made, excessive air travel could become less socially acceptable, more expensive and restricted. If this happens, VFR demand will become a much higher proportion of all travel. Cities with immigrants will likely become hubs for VFR visitors as distant friends and relatives use their limited air travel to see each other. Regions around cities that are accessible by other forms of transport could become more appealing as leisure destinations for urban VFR visitors and their hosts. Visitors in general are increasingly
seeking multi-destination trip experiences for the variety, efficiency, and reduced risk of dissatisfaction (Lue et al., 1993), and immigrant hosts in urban destinations are already taking their guests to regional destinations as side trips (Griffin, 2016; Griffin and Nunkoo, 2016). If long-haul travel becomes limited or restricted, this type of multi-destination trip will become more prevalent.

Implications for practitioners

There are important implications for urban tourism practitioners. Initially, urban DMOs need to view tourism within the context of their communities. Even if the promotion of traditional leisure and convention tourism is the priority, viewing these travel patterns in isolation from other mobility flows is short-sighted. Urban DMOs should engage and work with other agencies that promote the destination reputation and image to other groups, whether this be trade missions, universities seeking international students, or other government agencies with international connections. The role of DMOs is shifting from marketing to communication (Heeley, 2015) and developing long-term awareness among all forms of mobility is vital. As an ever increasing proportion of residents are newcomers, the services, information and experiences they seek will overlap those traditionally provided for tourists. Traditional tourism marketing and services therefore have a substantial role to play in helping attract and integrate new residents. Conversely, engaging new residents has implications for tourism promotion and activity. A community with happy and engaged residents develops culture and a spirit of hospitality making it an appealing place to visit. Helping newcomers feel settled should be of primary interest to many agencies, but should also be important for urban DMOs regarding the image and reputation of their community.

Urban tourism practitioners should therefore be concerned with the quantity and quality of VFR-related experiences that happen in their community, and the actual and potential influence they have in furthering the destination image and awareness through personal and online networks. Policy makers and marketers should consider tourism not just as a promotion and development of experiences for outsiders, but also from a cultural development perspective (Edwards et al., 2008) that attempts to link “local urban social cohesion to economic growth and global competitiveness” (International Organization for Migration, 2015, p. 4). DMOs should partner with settlement agencies and companies, welcoming newcomers, encouraging them to invite and host friends and relatives. Populations are different from one city to another, but identifying the types of relationships that residents have with their distant networks, and who those networks include, will provide valuable insight into how experiences of the destination are produced and disseminated through WOM marketing.

Conclusion

This discussion offers some insights into the future of urban tourism. Simply put, cities are receiving more immigrants, from more places, for varying amounts of time, who are first exploring the city as newcomers, and hosting friends and relatives. When immigrants settle, their collective activity, behavior, and influence in turn affect the culture and tourism offerings made available for other visitors and residents alike. Their neighborhoods, restaurants and festivals, for example, often become tourist attractions. VFR is important for cities; first, it brings more people to the destination. Second, it spreads authentic WOM marketing. Third, it encourages residents to become familiar, engaged with or refresh their attachment and awareness of their community as a place to explore and spend leisure, co-creating experiences and culture that affect the experiences of other tourists. Finally, the long-term impacts of hosting for immigrants are likely to make them feel more comfortable and settled. Adopting binary distinctions between residential and tourism development risks blunting culture and residents’ voice. The future of urban tourism will see the blurring of resident-visitor continue, and immigrant hybrid culture will offer distinct culture and narratives for cities. Urban DMOs need to better identify and feature cultural assets resulting from immigrant populations, but need to remain true to the authentic voice of the local communities; and understanding and engaging VFR and the relationship between residents and visitors will help.
References


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City tourism and the sharing economy – potential effects of online peer-to-peer marketplaces on urban property markets

Stefan Brauckmann

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the potential effects of the so-called sharing economy on growing city tourism as well as on urban property markets.

Design/methodology/approach – Official statistical data and a geo-information system (GIS) are used on a small scale in order to identify concentration processes among overnight visitors and the potential concomitant conflicts with other interest groups.

Findings – Currently, the effects of the sharing economy on housing markets and city tourism are barely measurable and are limited to a few central locations. However, a growing demand can be discerned in housing-like accommodation concepts which can be operated via booking platforms. As there is likely to be strong future growth in this area, continuous market observation (monitoring) is urgently advised.

Research limitations/implications – Official statistics only allow an analysis of overnight guests staying with larger accommodation providers. Booking platforms for holiday homes and other temporary accommodation options have such little interest in data transparency that the overall phenomenon of city tourism can be addressed only in part.

Practical implications – Associating various data within the GIS enables municipal administrators and urban planners to identify potential sources of conflict within the property markets in good time and effectively counteract these where possible.

Social implications – Increases in property prices directly attributable to growing city tourism may lead to the displacement of less financially secure members of the established population as well as businesses.

Originality/value – The sharing economy is a relatively new research topic which will become increasingly important in future. The identification of potential sources of conflict due to tourist accommodation has therefore not yet been comprehensively carried out on a small scale.

Keywords Sharing economy, Hospitality industry, Airbnb, Properties, City tourism, Residential areas

Paper type Research paper

Introduction
Two major developments can currently be observed that are highly likely to have lasting effects on the tourism sector. The first of these is the increasing appeal of cities and city tourism; the second is the new, internet-based booking platforms that facilitate the spread of alternative accommodation offerings.

Whereas urban development and the conventional hospitality industry have produced robust, empirically-based analyses and statistical data, the topics of online marketplaces and the so-called sharing economy are still so new that there is considerable uncertainty regarding their further development as well as their social and economic impact. In terms of urban planning and the property sector, too, the question arises as to what the consequences might be as regards urban property markets if urbanisation and city tourism continue to boom while the so-called
sharing economy simultaneously creates accommodation formats that cannot be neatly
categorised as being either permanent residences or part of the hospitality industry in
accordance with the established criteria and regulatory frameworks.

Urbanisation is an ongoing process. Meanwhile, according to United Nations (2015),
54 per cent of the global population live in cities of more than 300,000 inhabitants. By 2050, it is
predicted to be 66 per cent of the population. As long as there is a secure supply of food, living
space and public infrastructure, cities can develop into centres of culture, commerce and
science. The more concentrated the offering, the greater the demand among people
purposefully moving to such places.

What applies to a resident population can also be related to people’s travel habits. Owing to their
dependence on station-based transport infrastructure such as airports, major railway stations
and ferry ports, many travellers are reliant on cities that feature the requisite infrastructure.
In addition to this, there are sights and institutions, such as museums, theatres, trade fair and
conference centres, shopping and nightlife opportunities, specialist clinics, universities and
research institutes, etc., which are generally found only in larger cities. Given various
technological innovations, further concentration processes are possible, meaning that such
institutions are preferably further developed within the growing major cities. In the remaining
regions, we can already observe a trend of reduction and regression in terms of the offers
available. Against this backdrop, it seems plausible that the interest in city tourism – whether for
day visits or overnight stays – will continue to grow. City tourism in particular is therefore likely to
become increasingly important to the future of the tourism industry. It is likely that established
urban destinations will gain further market share in a market environment that is growing overall,
whereas those regions which are neither urban centres nor peripheral areas of unspoilt nature will
experience an absolute decline in tourism intensity.

On an European scale, one can see the disparate development by the NUTS 2 regions.
City regions like Berlin, Bucharest, Hamburg, Bratislava, Vienna, Stockholm or Madrid were able
to increase the overnight stays more than 50 per cent between 2004 and 2015. On the other
hand, a lot of rural areas had negative rates meanwhile (Eurostat, 2017). This development can
already be discerned in the example of the figures for overnight stays in Germany. In 1995, about
284 million overnight stays were recorded in the hospitality sector. Of these, 11.4 per cent were in
cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants. In 2014, this value had already increased to a total of
417 million overnight stays in Germany and 21 per cent in the greater cities.

The increasing appeal of cities both as places to live and as destinations for business trips and
vacations necessarily leads to increased spatial pressures. These can, in turn, create usage
conflicts between various interest groups; for example, between inhabitants, cultural milieus,
nature conservation, the hospitality sector and other sectors. The general change in household
composition and preferences in living arrangements, as well as new internet-based tourist
information and booking options result in a whole series of questions affecting the future of city
tourism in conjunction with urban property markets. Here, the so-called sharing economy, whose
development presumably is currently only in its infancy and which will continue to gain in
importance, must form a particular focus. As with many innovations, the sharing economy is seen
uncritically by some stakeholders, while others fear it will bring about negative changes.

By analysing current trends in city tourism, with a particular focus on potential spatial effects, the
following key questions are to be addressed:

■ What relevance will the sharing economy assume for city tourism/commercial overnight
accommodation?

■ Which property markets in which local city districts will be influenced in what ways by the
changed and emerging forms of tourism?

■ How will the conventional hospitality industry react to the new offers and changed demand?

To deal with these questions, official statistical data as well as market data from online market
portals are used combined with an analysis based on a geo-information system (GIS). As a result,
it should be possible to identify concentration processes among overnight visitors and the
potential of concomitant conflicts with other interest groups on a small scale. For this purpose, a so-called “fishnet-grid” is used to scale all data on a similar raster. This makes the difference between point cluster or conventional heat maps that were used in other spatial analyses about Airbnb and similar online portals.

City tourism and touristification

Tourism in its various facets is an economic sector experiencing virtually global growth. As a result of a variety of factors, tourism intensity is growing particularly in international economic centres. Owing to its many potential forms, and for the sake of simplification, “tourism” here is to be reduced to the formula of “travel combined with at least one paid overnight stay”. The term “city” is generally synonymous with European economic centres with at least 500,000 inhabitants.

According to this definition, city tourism is therefore shaped not only by leisure travellers. Business travellers, conference visitors, people undergoing specialist medical treatment or visiting family members, house hunters and others all pose a relevant demand on the commercial overnight accommodation market. Aside from obvious tourism-based offers such as souvenir shops and city tours, the “guests”/tourists temporarily residing in this space use the same infrastructure, which, due to the local resident population, is largely running at commercially viable capacity. Offers such as local public transport, cultural institutes, shops and restaurants can therefore be distributed in substantially greater quantities whilst catering to a wide range of individual requirements. Added to this is the fact that many city attractions are not dependent on the weather or season, meaning that visitor numbers can be distributed more evenly and thus more economically advantageously throughout the year than in many “nature-based” destinations.

Thus, in Germany, the average bed occupancy rate in the years 2011-2015 was at 31.9 per cent; in the major cities with up to 500,000 inhabitants, it was 42.6 per cent, and in the even larger cities, 52.6 per cent. In total, the occupancy rate in the very large cities increased from an average of 42.8 per cent in 1995 to 55.3 per cent in 2015, even though bed capacity was massively expanded. In Germany as a whole, it increased by an average 61.6 per cent, in the major cities with up to 500,000 inhabitants by 45.6 per cent, and by 119.5 per cent in the even larger cities (Statistischen Ämter des Bundes und der Länder, 2016a, b).

The main driving forces behind the expansion of offers are above all international hotel chains and investors, as well as new hotel concepts such as budget hotels, apartment hotels and hostels, which must exhibit a minimum commercial size. The number of beds, combined with computer-aided capacity administration (“revenue management”) and internet-based marketing, draws even more customers to the cities. The city’s transport links by road, rail, air and water are crucial in this respect. These links are not only important in the face of growing mobility within Europe and internationally, but also represent a location-specific advantage for certain growth segments within the domestic tourism industry, such as group travel, for example.

In terms of both leisure and business travel, the city centre forms the main focus in the majority of instances, whether that is because this is where most of the popular historical sites are located or because inner cities have established themselves as centres of commerce and service-provision. It is important to engage with the historic transformation processes undergone by inner cities in order to understand the current challenges in terms of city tourism and property markets. The primary focus here is the so-called “city formation” (Schmidt, 1909) employed by European cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, with London serving as the prime example owing to its early and considerable development in this regard. The transformation of inner cities into centres of commerce and service-provision was accompanied by a consistent separation of functions within the city, right down to the level of the buildings themselves. If a townhouse was generally used for production, storage, administration, trade and living, a period of careful planning would be followed by the construction of a property whose design was adapted to the respective function. Once the city walls and its gates fell, dwellings were generally erected outside the city centre. Transport innovations such as the bicycle, local rail-bound public transport (trams, underground and suburban railways) and later the automobile were the prerequisites for the suburbanisation of living. Owing to these processes of migration, many inner cities today have a predominantly
monofunctional, commercial character. Outside of the conventional working and opening hours, some areas feel “lifeless” and thus feature no distinct welcoming qualities. In such locales, hotel guests can contribute to what urban planners might deem a desirable vitalisation process. However, one must here take into account that increased demand for inner-city spaces leads to greater competitive pressure and thus an increase in prices. At the same time, one can assume that in growing cities, the city centre is also expanding. As a result, apartment buildings and the requisite real estate – which, during the early city-formation stage, were created in mixed-use districts built in the style of the “Gründerzeit” (literally “Founders’ Era”, a period of great industrialisation in the mid- to late nineteenth century in Germany) and international comparable quarters – become increasingly appealing in terms of commercial (tourism-based) usage. As long as higher prices can be imposed for commercial properties than for other usage types at a balanced risk-to-reward ratio for investors, and as long as takings from business taxes simultaneously remain as appealing to municipalities as personal taxation, even a sustainable trend of re-urbanisation will be unable to reverse this ongoing trend. On the contrary, it can be assumed that the demand pressure for the few available spaces which can actually be subjected to new usage and planning will increase.

This example allows us to identify potential usage conflicts which might be intensified by the fact that in the course of so-called re-urbanisation, districts close to the inner city are becoming more attractive to more affluent sections of the population as places to live. Such districts, e.g. Berlin-Kreuzberg or Harlem in New York city (see Huning and Novy, 2008), are generally what are being referred to when the topic of current or apparent structural change is addressed. These areas are characterised by great structural density and their original blend of residential, trade and (productive) commercial usage, whereby old factories and smaller stores are frequently used for purposes of culture and service-provision.

Increasing prices for residential and commercial properties, accompanied by structural changes in the population and forms of commerce, is described in the tourist context as “touristification”, which can be seen as part of gentrification (see Friedrichs and Glatter, 2017). In this context, monostructural tourist economies with a growing number of hotels, hostels and holiday apartments are establishing themselves in areas that have hitherto held little appeal for tourists. According to Wöhler (2011), this process is comparable to that of “colonisation” of the “local people’s everyday spaces”, something whereby “places are being made into something different”, namely “touristified third spaces”. Judd goes even further by describing these city districts as “tourist bubbles” (Judd, 1999) and “tourist enclaves” (Judd, 2003). This implies a space in which the local populace spends time only as workers, but where the rest of the time – as in an amusement park – urban life is only imagined and shaped by the behaviour of the tourists. The French Quarter in New Orleans (USA) is used as an example of this development.

However, here the question arises as to whether the focus on tourism as purely an economic sector is too narrow, failing to take account of travelling and freely deciding where to spend time as the universal human rights[1] of every individual. Thus, the discourse surrounding touristification easily runs the danger of devolving into a defensive debate that takes a pessimistic view of the future and of culture – a debate in which the stereotyped “tourist/traveller/foreigner” becomes the “scapegoat” for individual or merely feared negative changes (see Blickhan et al., 2014, p. 169).

Similar to the French Quarter, tourist interest within other districts in the city centre or close to the centre is likely to be limited to individual buildings, streets or places, as Stors and Kagermeier (2013) are able to demonstrate using the example of Norrrebro and Vesterbro, two districts in Denmark’s capital city of Copenhagen. Here, one must also consider that municipal taxation tools and general persistent forces within the property markets mean that a rapid and comprehensive change to entire city districts is rather unlikely. In what follows, touristification is therefore to be considered outside of debates held along ideological lines as an ongoing change process accompanied by a transforming cityscape, local economy and population structure. In this context, the “tourist bubbles” as described by Judd (1999) must be viewed more as theoretically embedded interpretive patterns. If such “bubble formations” as outlined above occur, these must above all be seen as small-scale phenomena and the pending “final stage” of this change process.
The sharing economy and P2P platforms

The debate surrounding so-called touristification shows how difficult it is to incorporate various interests within a rational planning process. While it is certainly possible to record visitor frequency, the number of accommodation providers and catering establishments as well as other offerings used exclusively by tourists, this does not resolve the issue of when a level deemed “too much” has been reached or when change and displacement processes are so strong that regulatory intervention is necessary. This complex initial situation is rendered even more complicated by new types of offering and business models, which are made possible by virtually ubiquitous digitalisation.

For many people, the internet and its virtually ubiquitous availability thanks to smartphones has brought lasting changes to the ways in which they travel and the travel options that are available to them. Along with the dissemination of information, the focus is particularly on booking platforms, without which today’s price calculations and fee quotations of many travel operators, hotels and transport companies would be unthinkable (see Oskam and Zandberg, 2016). It is likely that further market penetration of internet and smartphone technology will make user-friendly booking platforms increasingly important. Alongside conventional so-called “B2C” (business to customer) booking platforms which, for example, enable users to book flights or hotel rooms directly with the provider, recent years have seen the emergence of platforms that can be regarded as part of the sharing economy. Their distribution form is described as P2P, based on the trade between equals (“peers”).

Whether the uniformly positive characterisations of this new and growing market segment can be matched with reality is questionable. Thus, the term “sharing” is exclusively associated with altruistic motives, whereby “economy” – from the perspective of conventional capitalist theories and those theories critical of capitalism, at least – represents actions taken for one’s own advantage. According to this approach, the necessity to act – in the sense of developing activity – only arises from the imbalance between offer and demand. A balance between these two poles – meaning an equal status for market participants (peer status) – would, for example, exist if the provider felt no compulsion to sell their service in order to make a living, and if those on the demand side felt no necessity to use the service in order to fulfil a fundamental need. This would indeed be a completely new economic system.

Yet the term in fact stems from an approach that is rather critical of capitalism as an introduction to an exclusively growth-based economic system (see Meadows et al., 1972). In the property sector, this form of sharing economy can be observed in apartment shares, which, though often formed for financial reasons, also represent the desire for communal living. Such apartment shares, which have been popular in such places as Germany since the 1960s (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung 2013), differ from the even older living arrangement of room sublets, or so-called co-living concepts (Pelzer and Burgard, 2014). Whereas in an apartment share the group rents an apartment and divides the costs, in other instances, it is merely single rooms that are let directly to individual people, which limits the representation of tenants’ interests vis-à-vis the landlord. The term “co-living” is in turn related to “co-working”, which describes the division of office spaces and the attendant infrastructure and facilities, which can sometimes be rented for very short periods as required.

In the context of city tourism, the focus is particularly on online marketplaces, which enable private individuals to rent for the short-term accommodation that is actually intended for permanent occupation. In terms of brokerage, it does not matter whether the advertiser owns the apartment or is only renting it. The most well-known provider in this relatively young segment is the company Airbnb, which was founded 2008 in San Francisco and is currently traded at an estimated value of 30 billion US dollar (Sheppard/Udell, 2016). Though there is a whole series of competitors in this segment, such as Wimdu and 9flats, none of these have enough market penetration to threaten Airbnb’s market leadership. For this reason, the name Airbnb is frequently synonymous with this type of booking platform and/or type of overnight accommodation.

These companies’ marketing strategies involve giving prominence to idealised images, which obscure their commercial objectives in terms of “hyperconnected network capitalism” (Oskam and Boswijk, 2016). Airbnb’s current commercials emphasise, among other things,
the interaction between guest and host, highlighting the advantage of experiencing the city like a “local” (www.airbnb.com). Yet behind the business model of Airbnb and its competitors lies the explicit intent to generate profit. The platform providers present themselves as mere brokers, so that their risk is limited solely to the provision of infrastructure and marketing. Unlike travel operators or property providers or owners, brokers do not have to assume any responsibility for the adherence to safety and hygiene standards and other regulations. The advertisers alone bear the entire responsibility and, from an economic perspective, must establish sufficient reserve funds to cover, for example, maintenance, insurance policies and taxes. Yet it is questionable whether the majority of advertisers take sufficient account of the concomitant risks and all the associated costs. This would mean that turnover or takings are wrongly interpreted as profit by many stakeholders, as jubilant announcements under the banner of “hosts in New York City earned $5,474 on average […] from June 2015 to June 2016” (Farber, 2016) suggest. Thus, if costs and risks are not sufficiently factored in by a majority of providers, one can justifiably assume that prices quoted are below a price level geared towards the long term and shaped by economic factors. This can even apply to more professional advertisers, some of whom earn their living from a variety of sources and can be grouped under the heading of “urban precariat” (Auyero, 2015).

For this reason alone, the offers on these booking platforms are usually cheaper than in the conventional hospitality industry, whereby a greater margin of individual lettings can be accepted with the Airbnb apartments if one takes into account that the average rates are in part above those of the market for low-cost hotel rooms (Guttentag, 2015). Added to this is the fact that certain taxes and fees are not levied in the case of private lettings or micro-enterprises. An additional cost factor is the conditions and regulations which an accommodation provider must fulfill regarding, e.g. staff, fire protection and hygiene, in terms of both insurance and construction. If accommodation originally intended for residential purposes is let via these platforms, then it is often larger, more distinctive and also more intimate than most hotels. The opportunity to self-cater also allows guests to further save costs, and represents an advantage for people who wish to spend several days there, for group travellers and for families. Precisely those target groups are thereby being appealed to who can fundamentally contribute to further growth in city tourism. The great advantage of the business model used by Airbnb and others, however, is to be found in the considerably greater flexibility offered by the fragmented structure of the providers. If one provider should become unavailable, this barely affects the overall range of offers. Furthermore, to the platform operator, this fragmentation means that neither the providers nor the customers as individual stakeholders have sufficient negotiating potential to fundamentally influence the corporate policy of the platform operator. As long as no serious events occur which could lead to a coalition between several individual stakeholders and an effective boycott, there is a state of dependency among market participants with regard to the platform operators, a dependency which is only increased by current concentration processes. It is unlikely that any accommodation provider will be in a position to conduct the same amount of marketing or establish similar sales structures in order to achieve direct sales that are similarly successful.

It is therefore only through companies such as Airbnb that many smaller providers receive the opportunity to operate their (sub)leasing business. The fiduciary function of the platform during transactions and the opportunity for providers and guests to rate one another mean that the platforms imply the kind of security that is necessary for business confidence. Following their self-imposed growth targets, it is essential for the platform operators to have both significant demand as well as a large range of offers. Owing to increased expectations on the part of investors, the target groups must therefore be expanded and supplied with offers adjusted to their respective requirements. Thus, Airbnb has long since moved away from the air bed that inspired its business to the platform offering fully furnished apartments in the majority of instances, which can be used without the presence of the “host”. Some of these apartments are now furnished and let for the sole purpose of providing temporary tourist accommodation. These services are in part provided by people who purchase, rent out or manage on someone else’s behalf several units for this exclusive purpose, and make these available to the market via these platforms. This increases the level of professionalism found among many providers, although one must consider that, even here, one rarely finds a business sizeable enough to justify a full-time venture or noteworthy
staffing levels. Unlike with conventional accommodation providers, where the number of rooms and beds hardly varies and lease agreements must be made with the owner for extended periods of time, the rental agreements governing conventional apartments can be cancelled by the tenant within three months, at least under German law. Thus, if the business model of some providers is based on renting a residential property rather than a commercial property, and on temporarily subletting it in combination with a service package, the offering can be more rapidly adapted to fluctuating demands with less associated financial risk. It is precisely these providers who come in for criticism, first because they are seen as unfair competition to the established hospitality industry (see O’Neill and Ouyang, 2016), and second because they are accused of misusing apartments (see Delgado-Medrano and Lyon, 2016). This situation has led to demands on policy makers and public administrators to draw up appropriate regulations in order to protect the “established” hospitality industry and the resident population against these new forms of city tourism.

For platform operators, however, there are no incentives to block the more professional providers. The latter provide a relatively reliable product that is regularly adapted in terms of its facilities and price level to suit economically promising target groups. Acting on behalf of their own economic interests, the platforms are principally reliant on such providers in order to further expand transaction frequency. This is particularly the case when it comes to adequately supplying, and generating loyalty amongst the growing segment of business travellers working for major companies that place the bookings for their employees.

The dilemma of a platform operator such as Airbnb thereby becomes apparent. Travellers must be presented with a wide range of available options, meaning that, on the basis of seasonal fluctuations in demand alone, there must be requisite excess capacity. However, the providers must have the prospect of lucratively renting out their accommodation. Here, the platform operators’ own economic interests should at least not be foregrounded in the operators’ marketing activities aimed at advertisers and those booking accommodation; yet, the operators must present a diametrically opposing vision to their investors. In addition to this, there are the demands made by policy makers and public administrators with regard to regulation and taxation, which must be fought as early as possible to the benefit of business operations. For this reason, the official statements made by the platform operators are in part contradictory and difficult to verify. Initiatives such as Inside Airbnb (www.insideairbnb.com) and Berlin-vs-Airbnb (www.berlinvsairbnb.de), as well as companies such as Airdna (www.airdna.co), have specialised in using automated routines to continuously record and publish the platform operators’ offers in order to create greater market transparency. The mere fact that various attempts are being made to systematically record these data is a sign of the great interest and lack of certainty surrounding this new and booming market segment.

Potential effects on property markets

From a planning perspective, various questions arise as to the potential effects of the sharing economy specifically with regard to property markets. Does the offered accommodation really involve the sharing of living space? That is to say, is spatial usage optimised because no additional space needs to be created for the growing number of overnight guests? And do the number of apartments and the resident population simultaneously stay the same, or is residential space completely given over to a new form of use, thereby producing substantial seasonal vacancies and thus a greater demand for space? Because only a limited number of properties can be given over to a new form of use in cities in general, and their urban centres in particular, the key issue of how the demand for residential accommodation and city tourism, and the concomitant demand for space will pan out is fundamental (see Gurran and Phibbs, 2017).

Regarding the future of city tourism, two trends seem plausible: first, that the number of overnight stays will increase further, and second, that overnight stays will increasingly occur in accommodation that is more similar to a residential property as offered for bookings on the requisite portals. A decline in city tourism can be expected only if there is a dramatic downturn in the economic and/or security situation on a global scale. The current growth in the sharing economy can probably only be halted by means of very strict legislation and monitoring, which
could in part affect the freedom of the internet and possible other civil liberties as well. Given that the growing demand can in part also be traced back to social change, the question remains as to whether such measures could effectively and sustainably reduce the number of overnight stays outside of conventional hospitality offers.

Therefore, if one assumes a continued stable development, the question arises as to what effects this growth could have on the various property markets. Here, one must consider that depending on the selected method, statistically supported forecasts must be founded on various assumptions that are frequently based on development patterns that have had a past influence on the present. A reliable data set as well as initial empirical values which can stand up to critical scrutiny are therefore essential. Both of these conditions are only insufficiently met when it comes to analysing the accommodation brokered by the respective portals, so that instead of a sound quantitative forecast, one can only present various suppositions and possibilities of processes in future. This highlights the need to conduct continuous monitoring in order to record future developments effectively from as early a stage as possible. Such a small-scale, multivariate analysis is to be presented using the case study of Hamburg, a city with a population of over a million inhabitants. This case study can be used as a description of the situation and as the basis for forecasts. The aim should be to further optimise the modelling of urban development processes (see Daneke, 2013) and to take adequate account of tourism-related aspects as an additional key factor. The question arises here as to what kind of developments are likely in which city districts, and where overlaps might occur in the demand for residential accommodation and the tourism sector.

In order to identify locations that feature current or future potential for conflict amongst the various interests and stakeholders within the property market, a spatial analysis was conducted using a GIS. For this purpose, an evaluation method was used which is, for example, used in the property sector in the context of site analyses in order e.g. to find potential new-build sites in a target-group-specific manner and simultaneously estimate the price level. The aim was to select the most straightforward possible observation model that could also be transferred to other cities with similar indicators.

To conduct the analysis, a random sample of offers was recorded from various property markets. All existing and planned hotels were recorded, together with the number of rooms they offered, as were various residential properties offered for longer-term lets. Within the so-called sharing economy, sublets of entire apartments on Airbnb were recorded, as were the searches for, and offers from, apartment shares. Unlike the short-term lets frequently advertised for purely commercial purposes, most offers for rooms in apartment shares are more geared towards long-term (social) connections. The analysis of the apartment-share market simultaneously reveals a very price-sensitive, younger, internationally orientated, educated and urban target group, of the kind that is said to play a major role in new urban tourism – at least in the marketing speak of Airbnb (Stors and Kagermeier, 2017).

Alongside these point data, a series of spatial data, available, for instance, at the district level, was also entered into the model. These included, for example, official statistical data on the population, spatial usage and structures. Small-scale data on the average rental price for the accommodation offered on Immobilienscout24, one of Germany’s largest online marketplaces for residential properties, were also available. Depending on the effort required and the specific question being addressed, one can of course incorporate additional data sources into the model in order to achieve a greater level of detailed accuracy.

In order to allow all the data to be analysed at the same map level, an even grid (fishnet) was placed over the city with the aid of the GIS. Each of the 750 grid squares has a circumference of one square kilometre. In this way, point data can be correspondingly scaled up to the larger spatial unit; however, the spatial data were accordingly scaled down by linking them to the centroids of the grid squares. Though this process has a strong generalising effect, it does have the advantage of simplifying and therefore accelerating the analytical process. Compared to other so-called hotspot analysis procedures such as that of Getis Ord Gi* (Getis and Ord, 1995), the fishnet method has the advantage that the grid squares always remain of an equal size. This makes it possible to scale the various point data to a reliably equal map level. However, the
drawback to this approach lies in the arbitrary boundary drawing, which can, for example, divide structurally caused accumulations in offerings. The same is true if the geometric centre point of a grid square is situated in an area that is only partially located within the entire grid square.

Once the key offers of the individual sub-segments had been identified, a simplified points-based evaluation was to be used to identify those locations subject to increased demand both on the property market and the overnight accommodation market. To this end, points from one to three were allocated within each of the individual segments. One point was given to grid squares that had fewer offers than should have been the case in a hypothetical equal distribution across all grid squares. For the top-most category, it was initially established how many grid squares featured at least one offer, in order to then establish the average value in an equal allocation of this reduced population mean. Grid squares that exceeded this value were therefore allocated the highest point score.

The cartographical evaluation (see Figure 1) shows that the districts with full points are above all situated in central locations. This particularly applies to districts such as Hamburg Neustadt, St Georg, St Pauli, Sternschanze and Altona/Ottensen, which are characterised as “alternative” and “multicultural” or shaped by a broad range of largely non-commercialised “district culture” (Huning and Novy, 2008). Districts such as Hamm, Harburg, Stellingen and Veddel, which have a different image, feature a significantly narrower range of overnight accommodation as marketed on portals such as Airbnb, despite the urban population density and relatively high density of beds in the conventional hospitality market in these districts. The district of Wilhelmsburg, too, which in the 2010-2015 marketing plan of the Hamburg tourist office (Hamburg Tourismus GmbH, 2009, p. 120) is described as a future “original trendy district”, is still little sought-after among overnight guests, despite its proximity to the city centre.

The status quo established via the spatial analysis matches the predictions and observations previously made in other cities (e.g. Barcelona Gutiérrez et al., 2017; Budapest Dudás and Boros, 2017; Sydney Gurran and Phibbs, 2017). It is interesting to draw on this while following future developments. For example, in terms of the new-build hotels, it becomes apparent that these are being erected either on larger brownfield sites close to the city centre, or continue to be built in predominantly commercial districts. No existing living space is thereby being lost, but merely the space available for alternative usage. However, this affects all other segments of the commercial property sector. In the case of manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, one can here also discern the influence of urban planners and their preference for situating such industries on the city’s periphery.

With regard to residential property, a reduction in the number of apartments available for long-term tenancies as a result of short-term lets to tourists can only be speculated at, given the currently available data. It can be discerned that offers of entire apartments in Hamburg via Airbnb are mainly found in districts that are also popular among people searching for apartments (as tenants) in multi-storey apartment buildings in an urban, mixed-use environment. This includes individuals such as young trainees and students, people who mostly do not have a large budget for living costs, and who therefore live communally in an apartment share.

If one assumes that the demand for residential property in such locations is more likely to rise than decrease, with a simultaneous increase in the desire to find temporary accommodation close to the city centre, one can expect an increase in the areas popular with both long-term and short-term tenants. Potential usage conflicts might therefore also increase.

Conclusion

Unless the global economic and security situation fundamentally changes, it is expected that city tourism will continue to grow as an economic factor. It remains unclear how many guests will stay overnight, since the market for commercial overnight accommodation in private residences offered through internet-based platforms such as Airbnb has developed a reach hitherto unseen. Because it is still in its relative infancy, the so-called sharing economy is leading to some uncertainty in terms of its effects on conventional markets. In relation to urban planning and the property sector, the question arises as to how urban property markets and the hotel industry will change in the face of these new offers. Some fear a state of “touristification” with the concomitant
displacement effects on the local population if apartments are used exclusively for tourism-based purposes and if residential areas become increasingly interesting to the accommodation industry. What has become apparent is that the boundaries between short-term stays with an accommodation provider and more long-term lettings of residential properties are becoming increasingly blurred.

It is currently impossible to predict how the offers on portals such as Airbnb will develop. In the past, providers of private accommodation and operators of conventional hotels could both benefit from a market environment experiencing overall growth. Alongside the growth in tourism, however, there has also been a noticeable increase in the population and the number of households within major cities. This poses questions not only in terms of how these additional overnight guests are to be accommodated, but also with regard to adequate residential space.
In view of the lack of available space, particularly in central locations, permanent monitoring of available spaces seems sensible in order to identify potential conflicts of interest in good time. With the aid of various data from official statistics and the appropriate brokerage platforms, a small-scale, GIS-supported analysis was conducted. The results of the general observations and data analysis allow for the following statements, at least in relation to the case study of Hamburg:

- Tourism-based demand is predominantly concentrated within a few inner-city locations, and the city centre in particular. In many cases, it affects only individual streets, which are also subject to increased demand for residential properties. In this case, the demand is measured according to the searches for, and offers of, rooms in apartment shares, which are especially sought-after by a price-sensitive clientele.

- Whereas new hotels are being built predominantly in purely commercial locations on the edge of the inner city or on brownfield sites, the offers proposed by Airbnb and other portals are above all to be found in locations popular as alternative residential areas close to the city centre. This creates a competitive situation, which could lead to further increases in property prices and rent.

- The platforms included in the study are based on profit-orientated business models that transfer many of the commercial risks onto the individual providers, making the achievable profit margins seem even bigger. Many of the apartments offered for the sole use of guests seem to be let exclusively to tourists, so that the original sharing concept is not being implemented here. This tends to lead to a growth in demand for space.

- However, the reasons for tension in the property markets are manifold and cannot be unilaterally blamed on city tourism. Instead, it is important to consider more intensive use of spaces in order to meet the needs of competing interest groups. Particular attention should be paid to not displacing financially weak members of the established population, as well as businesses.

In terms of the future, it can be assumed that there will be continued growth both in the conventional hospitality market and the portals of the sharing economy within the major, economically strong cities. This will give portals such as Airbnb a relevance that is currently not measurable, at least not with the help of official statistics, and which, in terms of spatial monitoring, can be discerned only on a small scale. Individual hotel operators are trying to use new offers to react to the changed demand for accommodation that is more individualised, cheaper or suitable for longer-term stays. Hostels, budget hotels and serviced apartments/aparthotels, some of which are operated by international chains, represent one solution. On the other end of the spectrum, smaller inns and guesthouses are also beginning to advertise their offers on portals such as Airbnb, thereby increasingly opening themselves to the purely commercial segment. Whereas we can thus observe a change that will likely have few consequences for the commercial property markets, the question must remain open as to how one can counter the anticipated changes to the urban property markets. This will require a paradigm shift in planning to create sufficient space for both long-term and short-term accommodation interests. Overall, it is apparent that we are currently at the beginning of what is set to become a lasting trend, so that many aspects must remain speculative for now. It is therefore all the more important that current change processes are also monitored at the spatial level, in order to be able to take regulatory measures to provide relief to specific stakeholder groups.

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Further reading


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Building tourism-resilient communities by incorporating residents’ perceptions? A photo-elicitation study of tourism development in Bruges

Katarzyna Janusz, Sofie Six and Dominique Vanneste

Abstract
Purpose – In a current trend of a growing amount of short city trips, it becomes crucial to understand how local residents perceive the presence of tourists and tourism in their cities and how their socio-cultural context influences those perceptions. The purpose of this paper is to contribute to this understanding which will enable the city planners to take actions to create the well-balanced and resilient communities in which the needs of residents and tourists are equally met.

Design/methodology/approach – To understand residents’ perceptions about tourism in Bruges, this research applied photo-elicitation interviews with 28 residents who lived in various locations in the historical center to understand socio-cultural background of residents, their tourism-related concerns and whether they are in line with what is commonly perceived as problematic in Bruges.

Findings – Results show that as long as residents can benefit from tourism and tourism-related infrastructure, they support tourism. On the other hand, tourism decreases the liveability of the historical center due to supersession of infrastructure serving the residents by tourist-oriented amenities.

Originality/value – The photo-elicitation method proved to produce rich content and good-quality data by stimulating respondents’ memories and evoking experiences and emotions. Thus, this paper recommends that future research about residents’ attitudes is developed around visual methods as they give voice to the residents and are able to uncover issues which are difficult to capture with other methods.

Keywords Perceptions, Sustainability, Tourism policy, Local residents, Photo-elicitation

Introduction

Tourism can be understood as a phenomenon of encounters which take place in different ways: with other people, places, cultures and environments. However, Colomb and Novy (2016) claim that the whole process of defining, measuring and conceptualizing tourism is deeply political and primarily dominated by tourism-related businesses. A dominance of the tourism sector in decision-making processes and its leading role in reshaping places and localities allows tourism to slowly enter a domain of urban social movements and to become an arena of struggle for local residents (McGehee et al., 2014). Often, conflicts surrounding tourism are not merely about tension between tourists and residents, but rather reflect wider struggles over socio-economic urban transformation, space ownership and the division of costs and benefits related to tourism (Colomb and Novy, 2016).

Ashworth (2001) notices that, in particular, tourists and tourism activities in historic cities have evoked ambiguous reactions which might lead to potential management conflicts.
Therefore, Sandercock (2000) suggests that instead of ignoring such conflicts and marginalizing residents’ protests and claims, urban governments should proactively engage in building a relationship between local residents and policy makers in a way which values positive place identities of local residents. In order to undertake such a lengthy, time-consuming and demanding process, it is important to understand the attitudes of residents toward tourism and tourists. From a significant body of literature, we learn that some authors link the attitudes with the concept of place image and place attachment, claiming that residents have a more comprehensive understanding of a destination, its uniqueness and attributes than visitors. Therefore, they are also more prone to notice changes caused by tourism development (Gallarza et al., 2002; Henkel et al., 2006; Jutla, 2000; Reiser and Crispin, 2009). Researchers have noticed and understood that community inclusion in tourism policy making is essential to guarantee the sustainability of the destination, the well-being of residents (Dyer et al., 2007; Lee, 2013; Nunkoo and Gursoy, 2012) and to minimize potential negative impacts of tourism development (Prayag et al., 2013). As Dowling (2000) noticed, there is still more theory than practice in incorporating residents’ perspectives into tourism planning. Although, in recent years, the discourses on sustainability are gaining more relevance, and local governments apply different levels of participatory planning in tourism, the struggle for sustainable tourism is far from concluded.

This paper aims at contributing to understanding the perceptions of local residents in destinations under considerable tourism pressure related to tourism and tourists, and the socio-spatial and cultural context which defines such perceptions. Bruges (Belgium), being an internationally known tourist destination, experiences a distinct pressure of tourism on its historical center and on the quality of life of its residents. By identifying the main sources of concern of the residents, the authorities of Bruges will be able to design policies to match the needs of residents, build a tourism-resilient community and, as a consequence, minimize the risk of potential conflicts. Before going into this research more in-depth, we elaborate a number of concepts focusing on attitude toward tourists and tourism.

**Attitudes toward tourism development**

Multiple studies have mainly focused on the impact of tourism on local communities using the social exchange theory as a theoretical basis (Bimonte and Punzo, 2016). This theory is concerned with “understanding the exchange of resources between individual and groups in an interaction of situation” where “actors supply one another with valued resources” (Ap, 1992, p. 668). As a result, residents perceive tourism positively if the benefits for their well-being and economic status are higher than costs (Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011). Such residents are willing to support tourism development. On the other hand, residents who experience more costs than benefits will see tourism development as problematic (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003). There are typically three main aspects that social exchange theory takes into account: economic, environmental and socio-cultural.

From the economic point of view, tourism and tourists are mainly favored by residents who can get economic benefits from the development of tourism, for example, landowners, investors, tourism service providers, etc. Positive attitudes are related to: opportunities for employment (Andereck and Nyaupane, 2011; Andereck et al., 2005), leisure activities (Brunt and Courtney, 1999), improvements for the community infrastructure and public facilities (Andereck and Vogt, 2000; Andereck et al., 2005), quality of life of residents (McGehee and Andereck, 2004; Ribeiro et al., 2013) and appearance of the city (Andereck et al., 2005; Korca, 1996; Oviedo et al., 2008). However, sometimes residents can give a priority to the environmental benefits rather than the economic ones such as increased amount of parks and recreation or protection areas (Andereck et al., 2005). Socio-cultural benefits brought by tourism are: the development of cultural activities (Andereck and Vogt, 2000; Brunt and Courtney, 1999; Chen, 2000), the rising interest in maintaining and preserving historic buildings and archeological sites (Akis et al., 1996; Korca, 1996). An increase in pride and cultural identity can be identified (Besculides et al., 2005; Yoon et al., 2001), while this promotes exchange between cultures (Besculides et al., 2005; Dyer et al., 2007; Korca, 1996).

Tourism evokes, on the other hand, negative opinions among residents, as it increases the cost of living (Bestard and Nadal, 2007; McGehee and Andereck, 2004). A higher inflow of visitors...
leads to increased congestion, not only externally with effects as traffic congestion (Andereck et al., 2005) and parking problems (Lindberg and Johnson, 1997) but also internally, as the visited region is overcrowded (Brunt and Courtney, 1999; Johnson et al., 1994). Overcrowding can fluctuate according to seasonality (Bestard and Nadal, 2007). Other negative tourism effects, though less direct, are pollution (Johnson et al., 1994; Yoon et al., 2001), delinquency and vandalism (Haralambous and Pizam, 1996) and feeling of alienation in residents’ own community (McKercher, Shoval, Park, and Kahani, 2015; McKercher, Wang, and Park, 2015). Moreover, overcrowding can lead to a decrease in quality of life for residents, which in turn can negatively affect their attitudes towards tourism development (Johnson et al., 1994). Overcrowding can also lead to a decrease in property values in the affected areas (Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011; Andereck et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 1994; MacKercher, Wang, and Park, 2015).

There are a range of factors influencing the perceptions about tourism which go beyond the social exchange theory (Ward and Berno, 2011; Almeida-Garcia et al., 2016). One of the most important factors is host-guests interactions (Sharpley, 2014) which are characterized as ambiguous. Early research on host-guests interactions (e.g. Pearce, 1980) identified that length of residence influences hosts’ perceptions about tourism, i.e. the longer the residents live in the community, the less positive they are toward tourism development. However, this correlation is not always valid (Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011; Andereck et al., 2005; Sharpley, 2014). Andereck et al. (2005) demonstrated that when residents have more intense contact with tourists, and more knowledge about tourism, the more positive are their attitudes. Nevertheless, some previous studies (e.g. Lankford and Howard, 1994; Brougham and Butler, 1981) did not find any correlation between contact with the tourists and attitudes toward them, and tourism development.

The economic reliance on tourism creates positive attitudes, especially among groups with lower income who see tourism as an easy source of income (Almeida-Garcia et al., 2016). Furthermore, residents positively perceive tourism if they have an opportunity to benefit from the developed tourist infrastructure (Gursoy et al., 2002). However, this attitude may change if the local population loses accessibility to their traditional leisure pursuits. Other aspects mentioned in literature are the socio-demographic characteristics of the population, their gender and age, but no clear line of conclusions has been reached (Brida et al., 2011). Finally, the impact of tourism on the place ownership of residents is getting attention in the recent years (Stylidis, 2016; McKercher, Shoval, Park, and Kahani, 2015; McKercher, Wang, and Park, 2015).

Research points at a correlation between the level of tourism development at the destination and residents’ attitudes (Hunt and Stronza, 2014). Diedrich and Garcia-Buades (2009) confirmed the strong correlation between the development phase of tourism and the attitudes of local residents as mentioned already by Butler (1980). Their study showed that residents are willing to accept tourism to a certain point, after which it generates more costs than benefits, hence tourism activities become a nuisance. This can be linked to the concept of limits of acceptable change presented by McCool and Lime (2001). Research conducted by Dyer et al. (2007) did not prove this correlation to exist. Rather, their study conducted in Sunshine Coast in Australia showed that despite the high level of tourism development, local residents are still positive about tourism and are willing to support further tourism development.

In order to overcome ambiguities related to presence of tourism, especially in the relation between tourists and local residents, many studies (e.g. Tomljenovic, 2010; Reisinger and Turner, 1998; Pratt and Liu, 2016; Luo et al., 2015) use the contact hypothesis proposed by Allport (1954) as a tool to mediate interactions between hosts and guests. According to Allport: “under appropriate conditions interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between two groups.” Consequently, Steiner and Reisinger (2010) pleaded for increased encounters between tourists and locals in order to understand each other and reassess former attitudes and ideas and to open up to differences. Although often proposed, in practice contact stays limited and is not satisfactory when trying to evolve beyond service encounters.

**Case study description**

In this paper, we discuss the central area of Bruges which is located inside thirteenth century ramparts and considered the “historic” town. This area is also known as the Egg because of its elliptical form visible in Figure 1. The majority of tourist activities and tourist presence are concentrated on a very small part of the Egg which is called the Golden Triangle (Figure 2).
Bruges, a city of 120,000 inhabitants, is an established, mature destination. In 2015, Bruges welcomed almost 7.9 million visitors, including 1.3 million recreants (people that came from a zone of 20 kilometers around Bruges), 5.3 million excursionists and 1.3 million overnight tourists (Interview with Visit Bruges, 2016). This leads to a tourist ratio of 403.47. This means that for each citizen in the historical center of Bruges, there are 403 tourists. Even when the recreationists are left out, the ratio of 338 is much larger than the desired 5, as described by Cole (2012). It puts Bruges on the top of the list of cities with a high tourist ratio.

In 2005, Bryon researched the impacts of tourism on the daily life of the citizens of Bruges for the first time. As a result, he divided the local population into four types according to their attitude, as indicated by David et al. (1988): the haters (16 percent), the critical realists (28 percent), the conscious lovers (24 percent) and the passionate lovers (32 percent). The haters and critical realists, who have a rather negative view on tourism, feel disturbed by tourists. These local residents think of the Golden Triangle as a touristic ghetto, and avoid it. However, there are places inside the Golden Triangle of which they took ownership, for example, the Wednesday Market which is a meeting place for the residents of Bruges. The conscious and passionate lovers focus on the economic value of tourism.

Tourism definitely has an impact on the spatial structure of the city and its various functions. Figure 1 shows the use of the buildings in 1972 (a) and in 2011 (b). Comparison of the two maps reveals that especially housing and offices changed into accommodation. Tourist-related amenities (pub/café, chocolates, snack and souvenir) generally increase. In the same period, everyday goods and services largely decline (pharmacy, bakery, bank, flowers, newspaper, hairdresser, clothes, optic, shoe shop, butchers, fish shop and nutrition).

Methodology

The majority of studies on our topic use quantitative data in the form of questionnaires (Sharpley, 2014). It is justified by the fact that most of the studies search for the relation between opinions and personal variables. Nevertheless, some authors call for a more comprehensive
understanding of residents’ perceptions (Woosnam, 2012). In such case, qualitative research which attempts to answer not only “what” residents think but also “why” can provide more information and enhance understanding of residents’ perceptions of tourism and tourists (Deery et al., 2012). Moreover, the majority of studies based on quantitative research a priori categorize tourism impacts (e.g. into negative or positive, socio-cultural or environmental, etc.). The studies do not give freedom to respondents to classify the impacts by themselves but rather state the level of agreement with pre-coded positive or negative statements (Andereck et al., 2005). For example, Ap and Crompton (1998) show that the statement “tourism creates employment opportunities” might not necessarily be positive as the jobs might be low paid, seasonal and targeted mainly at foreigners. In this research, in order to get more in-depth answers from residents, we applied a qualitative research method in the form of photo-elicitation and interviews.

**Photo-elicitation**

Photo-elicitation is a field method to search the meaning attributed to certain visual materials (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009; Pachmayer and Andereck, 2017). The photo-elicitation method is a
rather new one, using photographs to get people talking about several aspects (Vanneste, 2009). There are several advantages of using photo-elicitation. Definitely, visual material facilitates rapport between respondent and researcher, triggers respondent’s memories and emotions linked to a particular experience, evokes, often tacit, knowledge and helps express ideas better (Willson and McIntosh, 2010; Richard and Lahman, 2015). In short, “talking through photographs increases respondent reflexivity as they are able to verbalise their experiences and knowledges” (Scarles, 2010, p. 191). For the researchers, photo-elicitation provides an insight into socio-economic characteristics of the community which is crucial for the development of future sustainability policies (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009).

There are three ways to handle the photo-elicitation method: the researcher takes photographs and chooses which ones are used in the interview; the participant takes the pictures and explains them to the researcher; and a negotiation between the researcher and the participant (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009; Dockett et al., 2017).

Ideally, as many proponents of photo-elicitation state, respondents should be given the cameras to capture their own experiences (Wilson and McIntosh, 2010; Scarles, 2010; Stedman et al., 2004). However, for this research, we used the first way to implement the photo-elicitation method: using the photographs taken by the researcher. Matteucci (2013, p. 191) stated: “the benefit of using researcher-produced photographs lies in that fruitful discussions may arise as interviewees are confronted with taken-for-granted aspects of their life world.” Thus, the reason behind this choice was to get a coherent set of attitudes and perceptions about tourism in Bruges and to confront common stereotypes of tourism in Bruges with the views of local residents. Photo-elicitation in this research allowed not only to give voice to the residents but also to understand their socio-cultural background, their tourism-related concerns and whether they are in line with what is commonly perceived as problematic in Bruges.

The areas presented in the pictures were taken from the USE-it map[2] which combines tourist attractions with places recommended by local residents; other pictures were taken in the areas which were commonly reported by the local press as “problematic” from a tourism point of view, where presence of tourism activities was (is) stereotypically being contested by the residents. The knowledge of local informants and the detailed search through recent news publication was used to identify those places. The themes covered by the pictures were: tourist attractions and residents’ opinions about them; perceptions of impacts of tourism on the daily life of residents; and contested areas which residents would like to (re)claim ownership of. Each picture was supported by a hypothesis regarding a particular topic. The examples of the pictures are shown in Plate 1.

For the purpose of this research, the residents of the historical center of Bruges were interviewed. This covers the area acknowledged as the UNESCO Heritage site (Lievevrouw and Vandekerckhove, 2012) which is widely visited by tourists (VES, 2012). The Golden Triangle is situated inside this area, which is the part of Bruges that is highly touristified and promoted as such. The sample was based on a snowball technique. The snowball technique was used after an attempt to use purposive sampling technique. Due to high amount of tourists which causes an “invisibility” of residents in the historical center and a high rejection rate after random residents were telephoned, we decided to opt for a snowball technique. In total, 28 interviews were conducted in Spring 2016. The average age of the respondents is 67 years. The group between 71 and 80 years old is strongly represented with 12 respondents in that age category. This reflects the general demographic structure of the residents: 28 percent are over the age of 60, and there is a strong decline in the population of under 35-year olds, as well as a fall in the number of families with children (Lievevrouw and Vandekerckhove, 2012). A gender balance was obtained as 15 women and 13 men were interviewed. We kept track of the interviewee’s location as well since we consider it important to have interviewees living inside the Golden Triangle (10) as well as beyond the Golden Triangle (18). Figure 2 presents a detailed location of respondents and location of the pictures.

The interviews were carried out in Flemish and recorded. The average duration was 55 minutes per person. The interviews started with semi-structured questions which concerned the socio-economic status of respondents; opinions about tourists in Bruges; and opinions about local policies, including tourism-related policies. After this initial conversation which allowed us to break the ice, introduce the topic and get the respondent and researcher to know each other, 25 pictures of Bruges were shown.
The photos were used to expand ideas which were discussed earlier during the interview (Cappello, 2005). The photos were stacked randomly and the participants were asked to describe what they see on a photo; if they see a relation with tourism and why; if it has any impacts on their daily life; if they ever had any experiences with the tourists in a given place; and what would they like to change about this particular place/tourist attraction.

The interviews were transcribed and thematically analyzed with NVivo®10 Software. In a first phase, the descriptive nodes were loosely attributed to interview transcripts (Cope, 2010) and were compared with a pre-established coding scheme which was determined by the reasons behind choosing each picture and the hypothesis selected to each picture. In a second phase, the coding scheme was merged with more abstract concepts, organized according to a rather hierarchical scheme (Stoffelen and Vanneste, 2017), while the perceived impacts were categorized as positive or negative (Figure 3).

![Plate 1](Image)
Plate 1 Examples of the pictures shown to the respondents: concert hall, boat tours, horse carriages, Segway tours

![Figure 3](Image)
Figure 3 Analytical scheme
Attitudes of residents toward tourism and tourists

The positive aspects mentioned by residents are economic gains and job creation. Additionally, residents are happy to live in a dynamic cosmopolitan city and they often benefit from the facilities and infrastructure which were originally designed for tourists. Residents also see the link between tourism and heritage preservation. Often, the efforts of the city to remain a well-known destination are translated into heritage preservation efforts. Importantly, the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016 and the consequent drop in the number of tourists made the residents realize how important tourism is for the economy of the city.

Touristification

Residents enumerate a list of negative consequences of tourism in Bruges. They are not directly linked to tourist behavior but rather to the consequences of excessive tourism development in the Golden Triangle. As in many other European cities, residents point at increased rent prices in the city center which result in the outflow of inhabitants. Crowding and pollution are seen as other negative consequences of tourism in Bruges. The Market Square, Beguinage and Katelijnestraat (a street which guides tourists in and out the city) are said to be especially busy. This mass tourism is rejected, as tourists give the impression that they are not really interested in the history and culture of the city and just come to consume the heritage. Linked with mass tourism, the cruise tourists coming from the port of Zeebrugge are said to spend as little time and money as possible in the city, and are therefore best kept out:

They fill Bruges, the city is filled already, but they fill it up even more, with these big groups, because they come with a lot, and they don’t consume anything, as they have everything on their boat. [...] So they come here for 3 to 4 hours (Simon, 72).

Locals do not only look at their own interest, but some of them also care for the tourists. They are concerned with the quality of the supply of tourism offer and even recognize some tourist traps, such as: fake lace, fake buildings, unskilled guides misinforming tourists about the history of the city and commercialization. One of the residents feels sorry for the tourists:

I feel bad that they deceive people like that. There are people that know that they are paying too much, but there are also those that have no idea. I feel bad that those people pay way too much without knowing. It may seem ridiculous that I feel sorry for them. But there are things that are Disney. It really serves to attract visitors (Marie, 21).

There are a variety of tourism activities that provoke ambivalent feelings among the residents. During the research, we had a closer look at different types of tours offered to tourists such as walking tours, bike tours, boat tours, carriage tours, bus tours and Segway tours. Walking tour is the most welcome activity, followed by the bike tour. A boat tour generates already quite a significant discussion. Bruges, the city of canals, offers tourists a possibility to see the city from the perspective of the water. Some inconveniences mentioned by people living alongside these canals are a constant noise and the need of reparations on their water front facades.

One respondent actually, ironically, calls the tourists “boat refugees”:

Yes, the boat refugees (laughs). You see how many of them are waiting, to be transported by those human traffickers as well. At a way too high speed, in a way too full boat, in a way too big boat (Ignace, 73).

The least desired activity by residents is the Segway tours. Their silence is rather dangerous combined with the speed and the lack of skills of the tourists who use it for the first time. Further, it is considered not to fit in a city like Bruges.

Residents’ relation with the city

The attitudes are mediated by the local residents’ relation with the city. First of all, the pride of inhabitants about their city appeared to be the most striking element during the interviews. Inhabitants appreciate the esthetic quality of the city and its rich history:

Almost every evening we go walking in Bruges. The richness of the city is that you always can make a new walk, always interesting, in a beautiful scenery. The canals of course. In the summertime, the back of the Groot Seminarie, the Hemelrijk: No tourists, very quiet in contrast to the crowd in the golden core. Very beautiful, but very quiet, you’re all alone there (Annabel, 63).
The local pride and local identity are strongly rooted in the citizens’ minds who feel the sense of belonging to Bruges. They express their sense of identity by speaking dialect, putting out the local flags during national holidays, and highly valuing the architectural composition of Bruges. The citizens born in Bruges have an especially strong identity and call themselves the “true” citizens.

Such strong identity and local pride make residents feel nostalgic about the past and reluctant to embrace change and modernization. In general, those nostalgic feelings are evoked by the decreasing livability of the center of Bruges due to tourism development. During interviews, many respondents spoke in a nostalgic way, especially when talking about shops and buildings that disappeared and about the times when the city was lively and filled with young people. Especially, older people like to recall old buildings and shops of the past. They speak of a change: the disappearance of beautiful things, which were mainly replaced by less quality establishments. There is a perception that souvenir shops have often taken the place of shops that were actually used by residents. Younger residents who did not know Bruges before it was touristified complain about high rent prices which force them to seek cheaper housing outside of the historical center. In general, respondents living in the city center are less and less likely to find shops which can provide for their daily needs:

That if you go for instance to the Katelijnestraat, all those small shops, that used to do something else than selling chocolate. It all disappeared, and it is replaced with beer and chocolate […] (Ludwine, 76).

Residents’ relation with tourists and tourism

Despite a nostalgic attitude toward the city, respondents show open-mindedness toward newcomers and other cultures. Some believe that many tourists who come to the city contribute to this feeling. One lady expresses this attitude very strongly:

On the contrary, I think a city can only grow by attracting a variety of people as broad as possible. All races and colors and movements and languages […] (Hanne, 61).

This open-mindedness is possibly a cause for the very low number of stereotypes to be gathered from the interviews. The only stereotypes given by a few people are that: Dutch people and people from Antwerp are arrogant; Russians are impolite; and Asians take a lot of pictures.

The most common encounters are the ones where tourists ask residents for directions. Almost everybody who was interviewed talked about it, and nobody disliked giving information. Host-guest encounters, however, almost always take place in crowded circumstances. They see the tourists as one group only to be found in one certain area: the Golden Triangle. Hence, in the mind of the resident, a single tourist loses his/her individuality and is part of a bigger group: the tourists. Another element that is disliked is that tourists stare when residents are doing their daily tasks inside the Golden Triangle, such as driving their car or jogging. This brings the feeling of alienation, as if the resident is the one that does not belong there:

They [tourists] take in the whole street. And if you drive your car out of the street, they look at you as if they want to say: what kind of thing is that? When you have to pass them, it feels like you’re an extra-terrestrial (Samantha, 50).

Nevertheless, tourism is an important economic activity for Bruges, and many residents earn their money from tourism. Encounters with tourists in such circumstances, namely, service exchange, are profitable and therefore perceived as positive. Although there is a positive attitude toward the money making from tourism, respondents enjoy being with tourists without expecting benefits and genuinely have a good time together. One person for instance likes to invite tourists for a drink:

It happens of course that we sit on the terrace in summer, because we are close to the canals, it is pleasant to sit there. Terrace outside, a bottle of wine with the neighbors, and it happens that tourists pass by, they get a glass as well and that can be very pleasant in summer (Gilbert, 65).

On the other hand, it becomes clear from the interviews that some interviewees, inhabitants of the historic center, never get in touch with tourists. This happens because tourism is so concentrated within a very limited area, a few streets further than the Golden Triangle, and one hardly sees visitors. Surprisingly, this is also the group that holds very strong opinions against tourists and tourism.
Discussion

The results show that the characteristics of local residents which are commonly shared, such as nostalgia for the past, open-mindness, local pride, etc., influence respondents’ attitudes toward tourism (McKercher and Ho, 2012; Yen and Kerstetter, 2008). The conservative attitude toward changes makes respondents reluctant to accept tourism-related dynamics in the city and, in particular, decreasing the liveability of the Golden Triangle due to the development of tourism-based services. Similarly, the feeling of alienation in the city makes residents perceive tourism in a negative way (McKercher, Shoval, Park, and Kahani, 2015; McKercher, Wang, and Park, 2015). This alienation can be fostered by the existence of some stereotypes about tourists. Stereotypes and prejudices are one of the obstacles for the intergroup contact, in this case host-guest interactions (Pettigrew, 1998). On the other hand, the open-mindness of respondents for other cultures and tourists and their awareness of economic benefits of tourism influence the positive perception about tourism (Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997; Boley et al., 2014). One cannot forget that Bruges, and its surroundings, is not strongly industrialized which makes tourism an important economic sector and job creator. Thus, following the social exchange theory, respondents see tourism in a positive way as long as the benefits, mainly the economic ones, outweigh the nuisances. Respondents who directly benefit from tourism (six respondents) definitely support tourism.

Colomb and Novy (2016) noticed that conflicts around tourism reflect struggles over socio-economic transformation of the cities rather than a sole dissatisfaction from tourists’ behavior. This thesis is also confirmed by this research. Residents, in general, are positive toward tourism but perceive touristification negatively. Additionally, attitudes toward tourists are positive if the tourists are individualized and a tourist becomes a person rather than part of a larger group called the tourists. In this case, the behavior of tourists is of utmost importance to bring positive perceptions. Often, non-tourism-related characteristics such as residents’ personal relation with the city mediate those attitudes. This is definitely an implication for the policy makers toward a more participatory and comprehensive approaches in order to understand in-depth residents’ relations with tourism and tourists and implement suitable policy measures. As Woosnam (2012, p. 315) noticed: “the present literature on residents’ attitudes does not consider how residents’ feelings toward tourists (on an individual level) may potentially influence their attitudes about tourism.” The terms “tourists” and “tourism” are used interchangeably, while, in fact, the majority of literature discusses attitudes toward tourism development rather than toward tourists (Sharpley, 2014). Consequently, the attitudes toward tourists are rarely discussed. This research has shown that this is a very complex issue.

Regarding a debate in the literature whether the length of living in a place influences tourism perceptions (Pearce, 1980; Andereck et al., 2005), and considering that majority of our respondents have lived in the historical center of Bruges their entire life, it is evident that time does not influence their perceptions about tourism and tourists. Rather, it is a change in the provision of services and decreased quality of life that happens over time which makes respondents reluctant to tourism, as also mentioned by Colomb and Novy (2016). Moreover, residents lose access and ownership to some places which their originally perceived as “theirs” (Gursoy et al., 2002) but this is rather exceptional as they still cultivate their traditions of going to markets or museums, especially because the former is free of charge for them. This can suggest that the limits of acceptable change (McCool and Lime, 2001; McCool, 2012) are still not transgressed in Bruges. On the other hand, given the fact that 28 percent of residents are over 60 and young people keep moving out, once there is a generation change, there might be no one whose limits of acceptable change will be transgressed.

The spatial location of the interviewees results in an interesting differentiation of attitudes (Sharma and Dyer, 2009). All respondents living inside the Golden Triangle, thus having contact with tourists, are positive about tourists and tourism in the city. Respondents living outside of Golden Triangle, hence having very rare encounters with tourists, expressed more negative opinions about tourists and tourism in Bruges. It confirms the contact hypothesis of Allport (1954) which states that contact with other people and cultures is the best way to mediate stereotypes, prejudices, etc. Nevertheless, the fact that so many residents in the Golden Triangle earn their income from tourism fosters this attitude as well (Almeida-Garcia et al., 2016).
The majority of the hypotheses behind each photo were confirmed by the residents. Majority of respondents negatively reacted to the photos showing crowding, some tourists amenities such as Segway tours or tourists boats or souvenir shops. Only 4 hypothesizes out of 25, such as "tourism is perceived to increase filth and pollution; tourism is associated with vandalism; city tours is an activity locals dislike; the Christmas market is an event where locals like to come," were not confirmed during the interviews. Respective photos to discuss those hypotheses were presented to the respondents to discuss those issues such as litter and graffiti on the streets in the historical center, Christmas market or a car with a "City tour" signature. Certain activities shown on the pictures (e.g. horse carriages and local festivals) cause ambiguous feelings. In general, the results prove the existence of problems that have been commonly known and contested in Bruges by the local residents; however, through the in-depth interviews, we understood why certain issues are problematic for them and what emotional values and meanings they attach to Bruges and particular places within the city. Those meanings and values are central to the notion of sustainability (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009).

Preparing for the future and policy making

It was noted in the report by UNESCO (2016) that many European cities have transformed into open-air museums or tourist ghettos. The results of this paper show that this is partially the case for Bruges, at least from the residents’ perspective. Therefore, the report puts mitigation of “museumification” and gentrification as the most pressing issue for the historical cities in Europe. To achieve this, UNESCO encourages cities to promote sustainable tourism practices which include substituting mass tourism with “quality” tourism, development of innovative methods to alleviate negative property trends and replacement of chain shops with local stores.

Therefore, issues of resilience and sustainability become crucial for historical towns as the impacts of a visitor economy can have a long-term influence on a city, region or state (Tyrell and Johnston, 2007). These impacts are quite complex and not necessarily always entirely negative as we have seen in the case of Bruges. Future cities, according to the UNESCO report, should be sustainable, resilient and green. Cities should develop resilience not only to threats from natural hazards or armed conflicts, but also from the effects of socio-economic changes, which include the effects of tourism. The EU guidelines on sustainable tourism elaborated by European Association of Historic Towns and Regions (2009, p. 9) stated that: “sustainability embraces social, environmental and economic matters and cultural tourism involves a consideration of each of the components through the needs of visitors, industry and community.” Thus, resilience and sustainability include managing the city not with a top-down approach, but rather from multi-sector, horizontal and bottom-up approaches which engage local communities and take their culture and needs into account. Finally, to be resilient, there should be a mixed use of the cities, including their historical centers which means that the tourists’ ghettos put resilience at stake.

To build a resilient city according to those recommendations, the authorities of Bruges have launched the program called the “Future of Bruges,” described by the mayor as “the project which means that we start with a white sheet.” It is a participatory project which allows the residents to make the city from scratch. The residents are responsible for bringing the ideas and developing them in coalition with a variety of stakeholders such as city government, civil society organizations and businesses. Among the proposed projects up to now, there are very few directly related to tourism but there are several which aim at strengthening the liveability of the Golden Triangle, including aspects of tourism. For example, one project aims at developing activities for both tourists and residents on the fish market during Sunday afternoon. Another project proposes to make Bruges a sustainable city by linking the needs of local residents and tourists by improving safety, bringing more life to the streets of Bruges via, for example, street performances or preserving Bruges’ heritage.

Moreover, one of the most pressing needs in Bruges is to make the Golden Triangle liveable again. This can be achieved by finding a balance between tourism and residential functions, i.e. providing residents with affordable housing, especially for young families. This would help reverse the negative trend of depopulation of the Golden Triangle. There are already some housing investments at the fringes of the Golden Triangle which indicate city’s efforts to maintain the livability of the historic center. Surprisingly, they cause conflicts with UNESCO (2014) which
reports for Bruges: “the gradual erosion of the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value which threatens the integrity of the property with regards to its overall coherence and originality” (p. 36). The question arises about keeping the balance between protection of heritage and hence, maintaining the UNESCO label and, simultaneously, maintaining residential functions which are desired by the residents. Another possibility would be to offer social housing in the historical buildings as it is done in Porto (Portugal).

Furthermore, in order to break the hegemony of the tourist-oriented activities in the historical city, the land-use mix should be encouraged. This can be potentially done in the form of subsidies for the local shops. Current high rents in the historical center means that only chain shops can afford to open there. Additionally, the type of tourism in Bruges should be rethought to build greater resilience. Limiting the cruise tourism, which is highly disliked by the local residents and opting for more quality tourists, who spend more time in the city and “consume” its cultural attractions in a mindful way could be one of the suggestions (Tyrell and Johnston, 2007).

Finally, this brings a debate about the model of tourism Bruges is currently applying. For many years, Bruges has applied a model of concentration of tourism activities to relieve the pressure of tourism on other neighborhoods beyond the historic center. Tourists, mainly excursionists, have been encouraged to stay within the Golden Triangle. However, according to the results of a recent survey conducted by VisitFlanders (2016) among the residents, the dispersion model of tourist activities should be considered in the future, allowing the tourists to spread around the historical center. In this way, due to contact with tourists, residents will be able accept tourism and tourists. Potentially, it can create a more balanced city (in terms of tourists-local residents’ ratio and tourists-local services) in given areas. A similar model of dispersion is currently being tested in other UNESCO World Heritage Sites, for example, in Krakow (Poland).

Conclusions

Given the impacts tourism can have on a community, it is imperative to gain an understanding of residents’ views if consensus is to be built. Residents are, after all, likely to be impacted by the changes tourism brings along. The identities they ascribe and attachments they have to their communities are likely to be altered for the better or the worse (Williams et al., 1995).

The results partially show how to avoid the “deterioration” of resident’s identities and attachments. The projects suggested by the residents for the Future of Bruges program reflect the residents’ need to ensure the livability of the Golden Triangle. Simultaneously, those projects put emphasis on interactions between residents and tourists and aim at developing the creative spirit in the city. It confirms, at least from the residents’ perspective, the need for increased contact or for the involvement of residents in the process of “co-creation,” i.e. the creative collaboration between tourists, hosts and policy makers in the experience creation and development of tourism policies (Richards, 2011). Participation and learning play a key role in pursuing of the creative tourism following Glaveanu’s (2010) statement that “creativity does not take place in a social vacuum” (p. 59) but is based upon social interaction and interactive dialogs. As a result, not only the “living culture” at the destination is created (Tan et al., 2014) but the destination itself becomes resilient and sustainable.

Participation starts with better understanding the tourism-related needs of residents. The photo-elicitation interview method proved to be a useful tool to achieve this. The photos contributed greatly to stimulating respondents’ memories, evoking experiences and emotions connected to them. It led to extensive interviews which provided rich content and quality data. Those photo-elicitation interviews, compared to other methods such as survey design, generate much more in-depth information, including meanings attached to places and explanations of phenomenon. Most importantly, photo-elicitation interview means giving a voice to the residents, especially when they are given the cameras so they can choose which places to photograph. On the other hand, photos taken by the researcher, as in this study, allow us to confront residents with topics that they often take for granted and perhaps find too obvious to mention. Thus, this paper suggests that future research on attitudes and perceptions is developed around visual methods, which are still highly underused but have proved to provide rich data and uncover issues which are difficult to capture with other methods.
Notes


2. As explained on the USE-IT website: “USE-IT stands for no-nonsense tourist info for young people. USE-IT maps and websites are made by young locals, are not commercial, free, and up-to-date, they are about life and soul of the city.”

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Further reading


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Understanding and overcoming negative impacts of tourism in city destinations: conceptual model and strategic framework

Albert Postma and Dirk Schmuecker

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to clarify the mechanisms of conflict between residents and tourists and to propose a conceptual model to assess the impact of such conflicts on city tourism and to suggest a framework to develop strategies to deal with such conflicts and mitigate negative impacts.

Design/methodology/approach – Based on desk research a conceptual model was developed which describes the drivers of conflicts between residents and visitors. Building blocks of the model are visitors and their attributes, residents and their attributes, conflict mechanisms and critical encounters between residents and visitors, and indicators of the quality and quantity of tourist facilities. Subsequently the model was used to analyse the situation in Hamburg. For this analysis concentration values were calculated based on supply data of hotels and AirBnB, app-data, and expert consultations.

Findings – The study shows that in Hamburg there are two key mechanisms that stimulate conflicts: (1) the number of tourists in relation to the number of residents and its distribution in time and space; (2) the behaviour of visitors measured in the norms that they pose onto themselves and others (indecent behaviour of tourists).

Research limitations/implications – The model that was developed is a conceptual model, not a model with which hypotheses can be tested statistically. Refinement of the model needs further study.

Practical implications – Based on the outcomes of the study concrete strategies were proposed with which Hamburg could manage and control the balance of tourism.

Originality/value – City tourism has been growing in the last decades, in some cases dramatically. As a consequence, conflicts between tourists, tourism suppliers and inhabitants can occur. The rise of the so-called sharing economy has recently added an additional facet to the discussion. The ability to assess and deal with such conflicts is of importance for the way city tourism can develop in the future. This study is an attempt to contribute to the understanding of the mechanism behind and the nature of those conflicts, and the way they can be managed and controlled. Besides it illustrates how data generated by social media (apps) can be used for such purposes.

Keywords City tourism, Conflict mechanisms, Host-guest relations, Overtourism, Tourism impact studies, Visitor management

Paper type Viewpoint

Introduction

Tourism is subject to massive growth. Projections made by the World Tourism Organisation anticipate a growth to 1.8 billion international arrivals worldwide till 2030. Based on its World Tourism Monitor, IPK states that city tourism is the fastest growing market segment in tourism (IPK International, 2016). The direct and indirect effects of this increase in visitor numbers seem to cause an increase in annoyance among residents, which could lead to conflicts between tourists, tourism suppliers and inhabitants. The rise of the so-called sharing economy has recently added an additional facet to the discussion. During the past few years various media have reported on incidents, residents protests and the like. However, the humming-up of media may occasionally obscure the difference between actual conflicts perceived in the population and what the interested actors in the media make of it. Here, only a careful analysis of the actual
situation would help. On the other hand, such conflicts and the discussion about it are neither new nor limited to large cities. Yet, the focus of the discussion has shifted over the last decades: from tourism to developing countries, residents of villages in the Alps which have found themselves into ski-circuses, or greenlanders suffering from the rush of cruise ships. Recently, the discussion has shifted to where a large proportion of tourists go: from and to the European cities. Data from the German Reiseanalyse, an annual survey on holiday travel in Germany (Schnürcker et al., 2016), suggest that in 2014, 31 per cent of the population and 33 per cent of German holiday makers were at home in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. In the cities, holiday travel is more than 80 per cent higher than in the countryside.

Tourism generates income and employment for cities, and thanks to tourism the liveliness and liveability in cities is boosted because many shops, services and facilities would not exist without that additional customer base. However, with an eye on the (social) sustainability of city tourism development, it is important to understand whether and how residents’ annoyance comes about and with which measures residents’ attitude could be kept within the margins of their tolerance level. Postma (2013) studied residents’ experiences with tourism in four tourism destinations. He identified three categories of so called “critical encounters”, four levels of annoyance, four levels on tolerance, and three levels of loyalty towards tourism development. The European Tourism Futures Research Network did a pilot study in Riga, Berlin and Amsterdam to investigate the applicability of Postma’s outcomes in an urban context. When this proved valid, the approach was used by the Dutch Centre of Expertise in Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality (CELTH) in a European study on visitor pressure in the city centres of Copenhagen, Berlin, Munich, Amsterdam, Barcelona and Lisbon. A second phase of this study just started in the Flemish cities of art (Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, Leuven and Mechelen), Tallin and Salzburg. In this study residents were consulted to identify critical encounters and the support for various kinds of strategies to deal with it. Finally, NIT and ETFI conducted a study in Hamburg addressing these issues in 2015/2016.

The domain of tourism impact studies

The study presented here is an example of a tourism impact study. The domain of tourism impact studies has evolved since the second world war, echoing the development of tourism, its characteristics and its perception. During the first phase (1960-1970) the emphasis of tourism impact studies was on the positive economic impacts of tourism. Tourism was mainly seen as a means to strengthen economies. In the 1970s and 1980s, the focus gradually shifted to the negative social, cultural and environmental impacts. This reflected the growing concern of industrialisation, sustainability and quality of life. Ultimately in the 1980s and 1990s the interest of tourism impact studies moved to integrating the economic perspective with the social and environmental one. Tourism had continued to grow, had become more diffuse, and had become more interconnected with societies and economies. The divide in tourism impact studies between economic and social and environmental perspectives, and the emphasis on tourism and destinations as two different worlds impacting upon each other (nicely illustrated in binary terminology such as host and guest) gradually moved to a growing interest into the multidimensional relation between tourism and communities; the process by which tourism is shaped by the interactions between, tourism, host environments, economy and societies; and the meaning of tourism for society (Postma, 2013; Pizam, 1978; Jafari, 1990, 2005, 2007; Butler, 2004; Hudson and Lowe, 2004; Ateljevic, 2000; Crouch, 1999, 2011; Williams, 2009; Sherlock, 2001). This so called cultural turn in tourism impact studies (Milne and Ateljevic, 2001) opened the door to new research areas raising attention on themes and issues that were largely overlooked or marginalised before (Causevic and Lynch, 2009), for instance, “the multiple readings of local residents while working, living, playing or, in other words, consuming and producing their localities through encounter with tourism” (Ateljevic, 2000, pp. 381-382).

According to Deery et al. (2012), tourism impact studies have grown into a massive and mature field of study covering a wide spectrum of economic, social and environmental dimensions. However, Williams asserts that there is still a lack of understanding of the relationship between tourism and destination communities, both because the number of empirical studies, inconclusive or conflicting results of empirical studies, and a contested conceptual basis (Williams, 2009), Postma (2013) confirms that mainstream tourism impact literature does not offer useful theoretical frameworks for tourism impact studies that focus on the tourism community relations.
Sustainable tourism

Although the notion of sustainable development has led to considerable debate since its introduction which in part is due to its vagueness for concrete action, it is incorporated as an important starting point in contemporary policy and planning worldwide. This also applies to tourism, where the basic ideas of sustainable development were gradually translated into the concept of sustainable tourism development. The first ideas were introduced by Krippendorf (1984), and they were elaborated in the Brundtland report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The ideas presented in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and in Agenda 21 guided the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in Lanzarote in 1995, where the core principles were established (France, 1997; Martin, 1995). In line with sustainable development, sustainable tourism development tries to establish a suitable balance between economic, environmental and social aspects of tourism development to guarantee its long-term sustainability (World Tourism Organisation, 2004). The World Tourism Organisation’s core principles of sustainable tourism development are: to improve the quality of life of the host community; to provide high quality experience for visitors; and to maintain the quality of the environment, on which both the host community and the visitors depend (Mill and Morrison, 2002).

Sustainable development and sustainable tourism development do not aim at prosperity and material gains but primarily at well-being and quality of life (Postma, 2001, 2003; Postma and Schilder, 2007; Jackson, 1989; Burns, 1999). In this view residents should be both the starting point and the checkpoint for tourism policy and planning. As the negative perception of tourism affects the way in which residents perceive their quality of community life (Kim, 2002), the long-term sustainability of tourism might be negatively affected by any impacts from tourism causing irritation, annoyance, or anger among local residents. The threshold level at which enthusiasm and support for tourism turns into irritation could be regarded as an indicator of the edge of sustainable development. Therefore, sustainable tourism development requires both greater efforts to incorporate the input of residents in the planning process both in communities exposed to tourism for the first time and in established destinations experiencing increased volumes of tourists (Burns and Holden, 1997; Harrill, 2004), as well as to studying host community attitudes and the antecedents of residents’ reactions (Zhang et al., 2006). As Haywood (1988) states: “Local governments should be more responsible to the local citizens whose lives and communities may be affected by tourism in all its positive and negative manifestations” (in Burns and Holden, 1997).

Thus, understanding current and potential conflicts between residents and tourists is an integral part of the sustainable tourism debate. By definition, sustainable tourism development does have an ecological, economic and social dimension. It may be argued that the inclusion of the needs of the inhabitants stimulates the traditional understanding of a tourism market between buyers and sellers: while consumers look for tourism experiences and providers look for business opportunities, the claims of residents are more extensively focussed on an adequate quality of life (Postma, 2003). The larger the interfaces between these three stakeholder groups, the more conflict-free tourism will be able to develop (Figure 1).

For (city) tourism, it seems advisable to define the concept of sustainability in a broad and comprehensive way. Sustainable tourism thus entails “acceptance by the population”, and the population is clearly a part of the social dimension. The participation of the population and securing/increasing the acceptance of tourism is therefore also one of the objectives for Hamburg’s sustainable tourism development. To develop tourism in a sustainable way, in Hamburg as in other cities, the challenge is to bring the quality of life demands of the inhabitants (social dimension) and the quality-of-opportunity requirements of the providers (economic dimension) as far as possible into line.

The case of Hamburg

The aim of this viewpoint paper is to contribute to the conceptualisation of tourism community relations and to clarify the mechanisms of conflict between residents and tourists and to propose a conceptual model to assess the impact of such conflicts on city tourism and to suggest a
A framework to develop strategies to deal with such conflicts and mitigate negative impacts. This model was developed for a study in Hamburg that addressed the balanced and sustainable growth of tourism in the city. Hamburg is one of the most popular city destinations in Germany. The city, located in the north of the country, is faced with a gradual increase of visitor numbers, especially during the past few years. Internal papers of Hamburg’s Destination Management Organisation, Hamburg Tourismus (HHT, 2015), show that between 2001 and 2015, the number of overnight stays in Hamburg increased with over 150 per cent, which is more than, for example, Barcelona (+112 per cent), Venice (+120 per cent), Amsterdam (+54 per cent) and Berlin (+153 per cent). Although the negative implications of tourism are not as visible as in some other European cities, critiques are getting louder in selected parts of the city, as shown by a regular resident monitoring implemented by HHT. Strategies to distribute tourism flows in time and space could help to prevent or to counteract. The study, commissioned by HHT, is an attempt to contribute to the understanding of the mechanisms behind and the nature of possible conflicts between tourists, tourism suppliers and residents and the way they can be managed and controlled, for example, by making use of data generated by social media. Based on desk research, a conceptual model was developed which describes the drivers of conflict between residents and visitors. Building blocks of the model are visitors and their attributes, residents and their attributes, conflict mechanisms and areas of conflict between both parties, and indicators of quality and quantity of tourist facilities. Subsequently the model was used to analyse the situation in Hamburg.

**Conflict drivers and irritation factors**

To develop a better understanding of the mechanism of conflict between tourists, tourism suppliers and residents, desk research was conducted into potential areas of conflict between locals and tourists, which factors would characterize particularly vulnerable residents and particularly disturbing locals, and what would be strategic options to manage and control the (occurrence) of such conflicts.

There is danger that for a focus on only negative aspects in the interaction between tourists and locals would cause bias. Therefore, it should be stressed that – for the destination – tourism is not an end in itself, but primarily an economic and, second, a social potential. Economically, tourism usually has positive effects for the inhabitants, mainly through the money flowing in from the outside, which tourists spend in the city and for the city. This money leads to tourist turnover, which is reflected in income. This income can be in the form of salaries, income from self-employment, company profits, or from the leasing or sale of land, buildings or flats. Indirectly, tourism revenues also contribute to the creation and maintenance of infrastructures and (tourist) offers which can also be used by residents. This applies to most cultural institutions (from the opera to the zoo), but also for public transport offers, gastronomy, etc. Socially, tourism can lead to desirable effects in the destination as well. This includes the (simple) encounter with others (provided they are “encounters on eye”), a general stimulation and a social enrichment and liveliness of the city.
It is especially in the economic dimension, where the dilemma to which involvement with tourism could sometimes lead, becomes clear. If an apartment is rented as a holiday home rather than as a permanent living space, because the landlord will get a higher income (in some cases at lower costs and lower risk), this is undoubtedly disadvantageous for the regular tenants and landlords of houses undoubtedly advantageous. An assessment of this dilemma is therefore not only possible based on (short-term) economic considerations, but must consider long-term and non-economic aspects. The understanding of such balancing processes and the existence of potentially positive and negative effects of tourism is fundamental to the overall further consideration.

The study of the interaction between tourists and the residents of the destination has already shown a longer academic tradition (see Harrill, 2004; Zhang et al., 2006; Andereck et al., 2005; Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2008). However, Postma notes: “A review of the literature concerning residents’ attitude toward tourism revealed an absence of research exploring factors that specifically contribute or cause irritation development, with the exception of Doxey’s (1975) article and the authors who quote him or elaborated and described his model in more detail, such as Murphy (1985), Fridden (1991), Ryan (1991), Mattheson and Wall (1982), Wall and Mathieson (2006), Vanderwerf (2008) and Milligan (1989). Based on empirical investigations he designed an irritation index, describing four stages in the development of irritation: euphoria, apathy, annoyance, and antagonism. The model of this “irridex” describes the changing attitude of residents ensuing from reciprocal impacts between tourists and residents and varying degrees of compatibility between the residents and outsiders. According to Doxey (1975) irritation differs from person to person: it is affected by various personal characteristics and various characteristics of the tourist destination.

Much literature is devoted to investigating the positive and negative impacts of tourism. Rátz and Puczkó (2002) have summarised these impacts. This overview indicates that irritation might develop along four dimensions: population impacts, transformation of the labour market, changes in community characteristics and community structure, impacts at the individual and family level, and impacts on the natural and cultural resources (Postma, 2013, p. 25) lists the socio-cultural impacts of tourism, which is the focus of this study.

Model construction

The results of the desk research were put together in a conceptual framework to conceptualise the complex issue under study, that has largely been unexplored in this way so far. The model helps to identify and visualise possible irritation points on the part of the inhabitants and their (possibly disturbing) interaction with visitors. Just like other models, this conceptual model is a schematic abstraction of reality. It takes individual, relevant aspects into account, while other aspects might be neglected. The intention is not to be complete, but to visualise reality and identify relevant issues. So, the model presented here is abstract and descriptive. It is not a scientific structure or measurement model from which statistical hypotheses can be derived, but rather a “thinking structure” for further investigation.

The overview of positive and negative possible effects of tourism on the social dimension of tourism by Rátz and Puczkó (2002) is a first starting point for the modelling process. A second starting point is the Tourist Destination Model as developed by NIT, which has been evolved throughout many years (Schmücker, 2011). Further starting points for the modelling process were reports and survey results from cities in which there have already been clearly observed annoyances among the local population because of tourism. A particularly prominent example is Barcelona (even a film was recorded), but also cities like Venice, Vienna, Amsterdam or Berlin are not only reported in the local, national and international press.

For the elaboration of a conceptual model, it is first necessary to clarify which content should be taken into account. First, the key actors: tourists and their characteristics, and residents and their characteristics. Second, attributes of the tourist product because their quantity and quality of the tourism opportunity spectrum are the prerequisite for tourists to visit the city at all. This includes both the specific tourist offer (hotel industry, semi-professional, private and sharing offers, MICE offers) as well as the offers which are aimed at both tourists and locals (cultural offers, gastronomy, mobility, etc.).
With these building blocks, the essential conflict mechanisms and concrete fields of conflict can be described, as well as strategic courses of action against the objectives of sustainable tourism development. The model is displayed in Figure 2.

The model shows the interaction between local residents and tourists, its conditions and consequences. Conditioned by the attributes of both parties, and of conflict mechanisms between the two (sensitivity to) areas of conflict do arise. The model helps to understand how this process works. Based on intensive data collection and data analysis the model was applied in Hamburg to make an analysis of the distribution in time and space of overnight stay accommodation, events and visitor flows, the annoyance tourism caused among local residents, and the strategies that could be taken to manage tourism flows in a sustainable way. In the following sections the components of the model will be described in detail.

Relevant characteristics of tourists
Based on the literature and considerations by the researchers, the following relevant characteristics of tourism can be identified:

- “Adaptivity”: the ability of tourists to adapt to the people in the destination and their habits. “Adaptive” behaviour can be divided into general and specific. General adaptive behaviour is at work in many cultures, for example, general friendliness and restraint. Specific adaptive behaviour can include behaviour accepted by some cultures, but by others (e.g. preparing food in the hotel room or visiting sacred buildings with/without head cover). The larger the cultural distance between the locals and the tourists, the greater their adaptiveness should be to avoid conflicts.

- “Tourism culture”: it seems plausible to attribute a greater potential for irritation to tourists with certain behaviours, travel situations or group sizes than others. In particular tourist trips that are mainly aimed at enjoyment in the city. Eye-catching examples can be actions such as bachelor parties, visits to sporting events and the like. In connection with conspicuous behaviour (e.g. shouting, drinking, etc.) the irritation potential increases significantly. This behaviour is often different from home. “[It] can be labelled as a tourist culture,
a subset of behavioural patterns and values that tend to emerge only when the visitors are travelling but which, when viewed by local people in receiving areas, project a false and misleading image of the visitors and the societies they represent” (Postma, 2013, p. 144). Group size belongs to the same category: it can be assumed that tourists coming in (large) groups, tend to generate irritation easier than individual tourists.

- Other demographic, socio-cultural and personal characteristics: of course there are other characteristics of tourists that could cause irritation or annoyance. However, it seems plausible to consider, for example, purely demographic attributes (such as age, gender, household type and size) as background variables rather than primary features in the model. The same applies to other attributes that contribute to the adaptivity, to socio-cultural attributes (nationality, ethnicity, language, attitude to women), to socio-economic attributes (such as income and consumption patterns) and to the regional origin of the visitors. Regardless of the adaptivity, the regional origin can be a relevant driver of irritation. Even if tourists behave in a very friendly and reserved manner, their appearance may be irritating some inhabitants due to specific characteristics (such as skin colour, language/dialect or clothing). Even if there is no objective cause for complaint, strangeness as such can cause irritation.

It is important to emphasise that these background variables are not directly affecting behaviour in a direct way. Stephen Williams (2009, p. 144) comments: “The behaviour patterns of visitors often divert from their socio-cultural norms and do not accurately represent the host societies from which they originate, with conspicuous increases in levels of expenditure and consumption, or adoption of activities that might be on the margins of social acceptability at home (e.g. drinking, overeating, gambling, atypical dress codes, nudity, semi nudity)”.

**Relevant characteristics of inhabitants**

On the part of the inhabitants, a fairly large number of potential attributes can be identified in the literature which could influence their attitude towards the tourists.

Relevant attributes of local residents:

- **demographic characteristics:** gender, age, education;
- **socio-economic characteristics:** employment and income situation, housing situation (place of residence, duration of residence, property/rented), personal relationship to the city/district, attitude to economic growth;
- **socio-psychological and socio-cultural characteristics:** orientation (new vs traditional) and lifestyle, origin (born and raised or migrant, born in city or country), personality traits such as self-image and group identity; and
- **tourism-specific characteristics:** knowledge about tourism and its effects, income dependence from tourism, spatial distance to tourist hotspots and actual contacts with tourists, involvement in decisions about tourism development.


**Conflict mechanisms**

Investigations into residents’ perceptions of tourism have been approached from several perspectives: the balance between positive and negative perceived impacts (social exchange theory), the shared social representations of tourism with other community members (social representations theory; Moscovici, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1988), the speed and intensity of tourism growth, especially in the early phases of tourism development (social disruption theory; England and Albrecht, 1984; Kang, Long and Perdue, 1996) and increasing investments and associated commodification and destruction of the landscape and idyll (theory of creative destruction (Mitchell, 1998)).
This paper contributes to understanding the (negative) perception of impacts by local residents. Within the framework of the model that is proposed, two central mechanisms can be identified that can explain the irritation of the locals by tourists:

- “Cultural Distance” as a collective term for the cultural difference between tourists and locals. It can take the form of a lack of adaptivity, appearance in (large) groups, disturbing behaviour on the part of the tourists, and a sensitivity on the part of the local (which has its roots in the factors mentioned above). Altogether, cultural distance can be understood as the socio-cultural difference between locals and tourists. The term goes back to Stephen Williams (2009): the larger the cultural distance, the greater the potential for conflict.

- Spatial and temporal distribution. This refers to the crowding (the sheer number of tourists) or the concentration of tourists in space and/or time. This crowding can lead to irritation irrespective of “cultural distance”: even with the highest degree of “correct behaviour” by highly adaptive individual tourists without further disturbing characteristics, crowding can occur.

Each aspect can potentially cause irritation on its own, but in combination the effects become potentially stronger.

Concrete fields of conflict

The components of the model described in the previous section point at conflicts in a more abstract way (which characteristics and features could lead to conflicts and how does this work in general?). This section will focus on the actual (concrete) conflict fields that can occur. The basis for the collection of these fields of conflict is derived from the illustrated antecedents, yet it is mainly about what has been reported by destinations (especially big cities) and survey results.

The numerous arguments, which are mentioned in the literature, but above all in reports and interviews on areas of conflict, can be divided into possible direct restrictions (those which are perceived at the moment of occurrence) and indirect consequences. Table I shows the concrete fields of conflict that were identified in an overview. The fields of conflict are characterised as “potential”, because it is a structured collection without any further statement as to whether and how far these are relevant to Hamburg. Moreover, it is not an overview of fears by the authors, but about fears of local residents as they experienced in their daily lives (e.g. the authors do not believe that the employment of people with an immigration background is a negative consequence of tourism).

It becomes clear that the number of possible conflict fields is large and their structure heterogeneous and not always clearly assignable. In addition, specific developments do not only impact upon the direct interests of the local residents, but also upon the relations between different tourist actors and economic groups. For example, it is not clear yet how the renting through sharing portals has an impact upon the price development in the hotel industry (Zervas et al., 2016), and how much “sharing” (as opposed to businesses) there really is in the sharing economy (O’Neill and Ouyang, 2016; European Commission, 2016).

In the case of Hamburg, conflicts arose from both temporary or seasonal and permanent sources of conflict. Examples of temporary sources of conflict can be large events, but also groups of cruise passengers who flood the city during daytime in the summer season. In the Hamburg case, there are few very large events in the course of the year which can be conflicting with the interests of the inhabitants, although mitigation and management measures have been taken. But also, a permanent area of conflict can be found in the concrete case, e.g. the misbehaviour of groups of drunken or otherwise intoxicated young males (mostly), entering the red-light district around Reeperbahn.

Strategic approaches

Strategic approaches always require a clear objective in order to have any effect. In this study, two objectives are defined:

- For the residents: to secure and increase the acceptance of tourism.
- For tourists and touristic providers: to secure and increase tourist value creation.
Against this background, it is important to ask which measures are appropriate to achieve these goals (see also Figure 1).

Although this project is primarily aimed at the equalisation of tourism flows, further strategies and actions are conceivable that mitigate the perceived negative effects of tourism.

In the CELTH Project on visitor pressure in European cities (Koens and Postma, 2016), desk research was conducted and interviews were held with representatives from various European cities (Berlin, Munich, Lisbon, Barcelona, Copenhagen and Amsterdam). From this, various fields of action were identified and structured:

1. improved spatial distribution of visitors (Spreading visitors around the city and beyond);
2. better time distribution of visitors (time-based rerouting);
3. regulation (regulation);
4. incentives through creating itineraries;
5. improved audience segmentation (visitor segmentation);
6. making the benefit of the inhabitants clearer (make residents benefit from the visitor economy);
7. tourist offers with benefits for the inhabitants (create city experiences);
8. communicating with and involving local stakeholders;
9. communication approaches towards visitors (communicating with and involving visitors); and
10. improvement of infrastructure (Improve city infrastructure and facilities).

Each of those strategies is linked to specific actions (CELTH, 2016).

Conclusions and discussion

Currently tourism is on the rise and city tourism has a large share in this increase. The UN World Tourism Organisation anticipates a further growth during the years to come. Emerging economies play a major role in the vast increase of tourism. Driven by an increase of wealth the middle classes in these economies are discovering the world and for example, in Europe it is evident that this is causing a growing level of annoyance among residents of (urban) destinations. Because of the rise of international tourism it is likely that the situation will worsen if visitor flows are not managed properly. This requires a thorough understanding of the forces, the conditions and mechanisms at work. This paper is an attempt to contribute to this understanding by means of a case study in Hamburg and the construction of a model that could help to manage visitor flows and anticipate possible effects of potential measures. Future studies are needed to refine the model.

The model developed in this paper is a conceptual model. It is based upon desk research on and expert interviews in various European cities and a literature review. As a conceptual model, it’s main value lies in sorting and arranging the many possible aspects of visitor pressure occurring in city tourism. It can be (and in the case of Hamburg has been) used as a working structure to assess possible fields of conflict arising from the conflict mechanisms contained in the model. Furthermore, it is intended to help clarify the relation between stakeholders (i.e. the residents, the tourism suppliers and the visitors) and their respective objectives. Being conceptual, however, it is not intended to serve as a structural model delivering graphical representations of hypotheses or structural relationships.

Obviously, in order to assess the situation in a specific destination, the conceptual model is only one basic tool. For concrete applications, two more steps need to be taken, building on the model.

First, the concrete fields of conflict have to be identified. These fields will differ in their importance from city to city and from destination to destination. While in one city, cruise tourists flooding the city centre impose problems, it might be stag parties or beer bikes in another destination and the rise of housing prices because of increasing numbers of Airbnbs in the next. Typically, public discussion about “visitor pressure” or “overtourism” starts with one publicly visible field of conflict. The conceptual model can then help to embed this problem into a larger framework and thus prevent it from being discussed in isolation. In other cases, cities want to assess their current status and vulnerability to unbalanced tourism development. Then, the conceptual model can help to get a more holistic view to the problem.

Second, indicators and metrics have to be applied to the concrete fields of conflict. If, e.g. crowding is identified as a field of conflict, then indicators and measurement for crowding need to be found. These can be visitor counts or usage data from apps and mobile phones. If shared accommodation seems to be the problem, then the number of hosts, listings and overnights at Airbnb and other platforms can be appropriate metrics. A major drawback, however, in the current situation seems to be the lack of comparable metrics. Each city and destination has to rely on its own assessment of “how much is too much”. In terms of overnight stays in hotels, a reasonably well maintained European database exists (TourMIS). Furthermore, some methodological approaches to assess some fields of visitor pressure have been published by McElroy (2006) or Boley et al. (2014). However, comparable indicators and metrics specific for the field of visitor pressure are not at hand at the moment.

Third, taking action and implementing measures is a logical consequence in cases where the assessment phase has shown problems of visitor pressure. These actions might be in the fields of regulation, visitor management, pricing or communication. The model does not give suggestions as to which actions to take. It can work, however, as a guideline for the strategic objectives of
such actions, namely to secure (and possibly increase) the economic value from tourism for the city and its tourism suppliers on the one hand and to secure (and possibly increase) tourism acceptance on the residents’ side on the other hand.

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Seeing like a tourist city: how administrative constructions of conflictive urban tourism shape its future

Christoph Sommer and Ilse Helbrecht

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to clarify the administrative problematisations of conflict-prone urban tourism (e.g. noise) as political processes predetermining the future of city tourism. It is shaped by today’s administrative ways of knowing increasing visitor pressure as an issue for urban (tourism) development.

Design/methodology/approach – The problematisation of conflictive urban tourism in Berlin is used as case study and lens to analyse how administrative bodies see conflictive tourism like a tourist city. Drawing on Mariana Valverde’s idea of Seeing Like a City (2011), the paper demonstrates how disparate governmental bodies see and reduce the complexity of conflicts resulting from tourism in order to handle it. The authors use policy documents as the basis for the analysis.

Findings – The paper provides empirical insights about how political knowledge on urban tourism conflicts is produced in Berlin. The marginalisation of these conflicts on the federal state level seemingly aces out the calls for action on the borough level (Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg). According to these disparate modes of problematisation, older and younger governmental gazes on conflictive tourism and its future relevance interrelate in contingent combination.

Originality/value – This paper fills a gap in the existing urban tourism literature, by focussing on the definition of policy problems by governmental bodies as powerfully linked to the availability of solutions.

Keywords Tourism policy, Berlin, Seeing Like a City, “Touristification”, Administrative problematizations, Visitor pressure

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Conflicts resulting from the growing intensity of urban tourism are becoming more frequent throughout Europe[1]. Contemporary forms of urban tourism government are increasingly challenged by the increasing number of touristic city users[2] (Martinotti, 1999) and by urbanites who use cities “as if tourists” (Clark, 2003, p. 292, emphasis added). While tourism government often seems to be substantially based on a “numerical visitor competition[3]”, we argue that if tourism is to be sustainable in the future destination managers will increasingly have to integrate strategies to deal with conflicts resulting from urban tourism into their agendas. The way in which tourism conflicts are framed today will have a significant effect on both the future of city tourism and cities more generally. Alone the phenomenon of tourist bashing or “disneyfication” in residential areas raises urgent questions: what do those trends mean for the future of urban life? What do they imply for the future of “urban life seeing[4]” as tourist experience? Are the underlying mechanisms malleable or out of reach for governmental actors (administrations, destination management organisations) involved in tourism governance?

In the literature on sustainable tourism governance authors discuss particular conflicts between different interest groups, such as residents and visitors (Vernon et al., 2005; Del Chiappa, 2012; Lankford, 2001). Conflicts arise, for example, in overcrowded city centres or when inhabitants feel alienated. These conflicts are often simultaneously framed as “something” to be avoided for
the purpose of “good destination governance”. Future-proof tourism growth – so the argument goes – cannot afford to endanger the local consent about the “destination product” (Saretzki and Wöhler, 2013, p. 36). Yet, is avoiding a problem the same as tackling it? We take a step backwards in order to scrutinise specific constructions of conflicts resulting from urban tourism. Our standpoint is that with the construction of a problem, the possible solutions are already implied. At present, governmental processes of defining, conceptualising and measuring tourism are merely tagged as political (see e.g. Colomb and Novy, 2017). This extends to political-administrative processes of defining conflicts that result from tourism. In the field of tourism policy analysis, there is a lack of contributions that analyse the “the definition of policy problems” (Hall, 2011, p. 437) and the future relevance of such problematisations.

Based on our case study in Berlin (detailed later on), we aim to fill part of this research gap. Two aspects guide our analysis. First, we focus on if and how conflicts that result from tourism are constructed as a destination management problem, respectively, as problem of urban development. Second, we ask how this process of problematisation predetermines the future of Berlin as city and destination. Conceptually speaking, we ask: how is “Seeing Like a City” (Valverde, 2011, p. 281) played out by governmental actors dealing with conflicts that result from tourism? Drawing on the notion of Seeing Like a City we focus on how governmental actors frame, simplify and construct conflicts in order to manage them. We argue that there are disparate modes of seeing conflicts that result from tourism. We contrast the non-problematisation or marginalisation of conflicts that result from tourism on federal state level with problematisations on borough level, which in contrast present a pessimistic scenario. The latter declares that “the basis of the touristic recovery and the distinct qualities of the borough will be damaged or even destroyed” (Borough Administration Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (BaFHK), 2015, p. 41) if there are no strategies developed to deal with tourists’ use of cities. Hence, as this is an important objective of Seeing Like a City, we sketch out, how these ways of seeing might react on the city’s future development.

We discuss the future relevance of contemporary governmental views on conflictive tourism on multiple levels. First, we address the fundamental question: are conflicts that result from tourism gaining political relevance and thereby relevance for discussions on the future of cities? Second, we focus on how governmental actors problematise the consequences (which are naturally future-oriented) of city usage that results in conflict. Third, we derive the future relevance of the governmental (non-)problematisations from scientific knowledge about the mutual-constituent nature of city-tourism. With these perspectives in mind, we analyse in how far the growing visitor pressure and conflicts that may arise as a result are defined as a “management problem” for urban (tourism) government – or if they are more likely denied. This is relevant for the malleability of policy frameworks, and particularly the design of the appealing urban surroundings. To give an example, current licensing-practice in respect to bars or tourism-oriented retail businesses in crowded neighbourhoods will have long-term effects on the fabric of these areas. Licencing is an effective planning tool, but its application depends on contemporary perspectives on tourist demands and emerging mono-structures.

In order to scrutinise patterns of “seeing like a tourist city” we build on a case study, focusing on how governmental actors in Berlin (Germany) problematise conflicts that arise from tourism. Berlin is a particularly revealing case for several reasons. Berlin’s appeal as destination relies “heavily on its reputation as a city that is dynamic, tolerant, diverse, experimental – a youthful place where anything goes and where trends are set” (Farias, 2008; Vivant, 2007 quoted from Novy, 2017). In search of such attributes, both tourists and inhabitants acting as if tourists frequent new tourism areas on a daily basis (Maitland and Newman, 2004). Hence, Berlin paradigmatically represents the intensifying New Urban Tourism (see Section 2), whereby visitors aim to experience everyday life – or life seeing – in residential areas. It is in these neighbourhood spaces that most of the conflict potential of tourism is harboured, for example, night-time noise, littering, conversion of rental apartments into holiday flats (Oekam and Boswijk, 2016). A further reason to choose Berlin as a case study is the coincidence of an intensified New Urban Tourism with a rapid demographic growth[6] and growing pressure of gentrification (Helbrecht, 2016): approximately 181,000 additional inhabitants are expected to move to Berlin until 2030 (Senatskanzlei Berlin, 2017). Henceforth, Berlin “is a rather paradigmatic example for the manifold variations that urban upgrading can take” (Lees et al., 2008, p. 129 ff. quoted in Holm, 2013, p. 171). The tourist government will have to tackle that just in the course of population growth the number of VFR-Guests[7] will grow massively[8]. The simultaneity
of demographic growth, urban inner city restructuring and “touristification” qualify Berlin as an ideal case to study the current governance and future conflicts around urban tourism. Additionally, Berlin’s status as city-state in the German federal system makes the municipal government a comparatively “strong state” with legislative power. Against this backdrop we analyse how Berlin’s government deals with (conflicts that arise from) tourism and how it problematises growing visitor pressure. We understand problematisation as a future-oriented aspect of tourism planning, because planning means “preparing in advance” (Abram and Weszkalnys, 2011, p. 3).

Our paper is structured as follows. First, we explain how the issue of conflicts related to urban tourism developed over the last few years in Germany’s capital (Section 2). In Section 3 we elucidate our conceptual approach, drawing on the notion of Seeing Like a City and extending it to the inquiry of urban tourism government in light of conflicts arising from urban tourism. In Section 4 we discuss our methodological approach that is based on document analysis, the results of which we then present in Section 5. Section 6 serves the recapitulation of the results in light of the conceptual questions on “seeing like a tourist city” and its implications for the future of city tourism.

Our aim is to provoke general debate on how constructions of a tourism “problem” impact future tourism policy and development. We show how different governmental bodies envision completely different (if not contradictory) problematisations and solutions for conflicts arising from urban tourism. Furthermore, and this is a normative conclusion, we suggest that tourism governance in the future should be reimagined with respect to the way tourists use the city.

2. Urban tourism conflicts in Berlin – what is it about and is it a policy problem?

In 2010 in Berlin Kreuzberg heated public debate emerged that focussed on the effects of tourism (Füller and Michel, 2014a, p. 11). At stake were loud groups taking part in pub crawls, people gathering in public spaces, noise complaints, and the conversion of apartments into holiday flats, largely catalysed by increased tourism (for a more detailed discussion see Holm, 2014). Accompanying the discussion about the effects of tourism – especially the effects of a tourism labelled as New Urban Tourism by social scientists – was the feeling of alienation by some residents who were affected by growing visitor pressure in “their” neighbourhood. The term New Urban Tourism was “originally used by Roche (1992) to entitle [tourism as] a very significant sector and force in the economic regeneration or micro-modernisation of old industrial cities in western society” (Roche, 1992, p. 563 quoted by Dirksmeier and Helbrecht, 2015, p. 276). Today New Urban Tourists could be understood as tourists who are city users (Martinotti, 1999) interested in urban neighbourhoods off the beaten track. These neighbourhoods can be characterised as edgy, unpolished, creative urban areas (Pappalepore et al., 2014). In other words, in this literature conflicts were discussed mainly referring to heterogeneous places “where tourists […] and locals share the same spaces, rub shoulders and the sensescape is more multi-sensuous and unpredictable” (Edensor, 1998 quoted form Urry and Larsen, 2011, p. 154). The formats people use to articulate discontent with tourists vary, as Johannes Novy (2017) describes: “Graffiti with slogans like “No more rolling suitcases” or “Tourists F*** off” as well as stickers saying “Berlin loves you not” became a regular sight” (p. 60). The paraphrase “The tourist destroys what he seeks by finding it” is not only depicted in posters (Plate 1), but was also debated in the meetings organised by parties, newspapers, the office for economic development in the borough of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg or by district-offices[9].

The debate about urban tourism conflicts is still current[10] – contrary to the offhand remark by the visitBerlin-CEO Burkhard Kieker that Berliners will have to get used to Berlin’s growing popularity as “the place to be” (Kieker, 2010). Initially governmental activities concerning tourism conflicts were seemingly sporadic. This again seemed to suggest that those government actors involved in tourism actually accomplished a status quo-oriented agenda setting. Indeed as Claire Colomb concludes: “tourism […] has been perceived by urban policy-makers and elites as an economic sector easy to promote, requiring little public investment besides promotional campaigns to stimulate the overall growth of the sector and measures supporting the “tourist-friendly” reshaping of the city’s spaces […]” (Colomb, 2011, quoted from Colomb and Novy, 2017, p. 10).
In response, we now ask: how could this alleged gap between public debate and administrative action be explained? Is this mode of tourism government regarding conflicts nothing special, but simply to be understood as muddling through (Lindblom, 1959), or alternatively, as active “non-decision making” (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962, p. 952)? How do the conflicts mentioned above “get into” the administration dealing with tourism? And consequently, how are the conflicts constructed or de-constructed as a problem of tourism governance?

3. “Seeing like a tourist city” – the construction of urban tourism conflicts from a theoretical viewpoint

The literature on tourism governance in Berlin indicates that “the process of defining, conceptualising and measuring tourism is itself [...] deeply political” (Colomb and Novy, 2017, p. 6). Regarding the issue of conflicts arising from urban tourism, existing literature lacks contributions dealing with the way administrative bodies problematise crowding, (party) noise and rubbish-strewn green spaces. With this research gap in mind we aim to conceptualise the construction of conflicts caused by urban tourism as a powerful political process influencing the future of city tourism. Our fundamental conceptual assumption is that problematisations by governmental and administrative bodies (including DMOs) predetermine their solutions. The link between problematisations and solutions is indicated in a broad range of conceptual approaches dealing with government (Luhmann, 2002; Mayntz, 2001; Scott, 1998). On the basis of this general presupposition and regarding the

Plate 1 “The tourist destroys what he seeks”

Source: Christoph sommer
governmental problematisation of conflictive urban tourism, we aim to adopt the idea of Seeing Like a City (Valverde, 2011).

Valverde (2011) offers a conceptual framework to grasp heterogeneous ways of administratively seeing or knowing the city; she speaks of the “dialectic of modern and premodern ways of seeing in urban governance” (p. 277). Drawing on a “genealogy of the category of land use, which is a key if not the key building block of contemporary urban governance in North America” (p. 280), Valverde shows that the rise of hard-and-fast land use categories did not replace premodern ways of seeing and managing urban disorder. The constant stream of exceptions (regarding building permissions) alone produced by planning departments in a routinized manner shows that the modernist “seeing like a state story[11] does not capture the realities of planning” (Valverde, 2011, p. 291). Using the judicial application of nuisance-type municipal regulations as an example, Valverde indicates that “embodied, experiential and relational categories” (premodern categories) represent a “necessary component of contemporary urban governance” (Valverde, 2011). Valverde’s case study shows that nuisance laws define modern numerical standards (e.g. night-time phases in which amplified sound is forbidden), but in judicial practice quite relational “classic” categories are mobilised “depending on the make-up and characteristics of the community residents involved” (Valverde, 2011, p. 303). As a result, Valverde proposes that Seeing Like a City grasps “precisely a combination of heterogeneous ways of governing that may appear to be contradictory when examined philosophically, but which in practice supplement and/or replace each other without any fanfare” (Valverde, 2011, p. 309, emphasis added). Accordingly, the phrase Seeing Like a City indicates a “pragmatic approach that uses both old and new gazes, premodern and modern knowledge formats, in a non-zero-sum manner and in unpredictable and shifting combinations” (Valverde, 2011, p. 281).

With respect to the emerging tourism conflicts in Berlin we assume that currently “rationalities [of government] are undergoing modification in the face of some newly identified problem or solution, while retaining certain styles of thought and technological preferences” (Rose et al., 2006, p. 98). That means we need to be aware of different ways of administratively seeing aspects of tourism that cause conflict. In addition, crucially, we need to keep in mind that “the relationship between particular habits of seeing and political projects has to be documented in each case” (Valverde, 2011, p. 209). This means that certain administrative knowledge practices – for example, the well-established numerical measurement of tourism – are, in principal, compatible with a variety of political projects (defining tourism numerically is not automatically linked to a competitive neoliberal agenda). Hence, we need to consider how the habit of seeing conflicts related to tourism like a city are connected to political projects and especially the future relevance of tourism. We claim that the administrative problematisation of conflicts caused by tourism is “never a purely descriptive or analytical practice, but has performative effects, that is, the capacity to transform the objects and subjects it refers to” (Farías and Blok, 2016, p. 4). It would be too bold to assume that the (subtle) programmes implemented in the documents we analysed form the urban reality par to par (Kessl and Krasmann, 2005 quoted from Dölemeyer and Rodatz, 2010). But it is reasonable to argue that the ways governmental bodies see tourism conflicts influences the future pathways of Berlin’s development as city and visitor destination.

4. Methods

Discourse analysis is a valuable approach for scrutinising institutional knowledge that is presented as objective (Keller, 2011 quoted in Füller, 2014b). Following an interpretative-hermeneutic approach, we explore how governmental bodies construe conflicts connected to tourism within in the documents they publish. We assume that the varying ways of seeing these conflicts like a city find expression within those publicly available documents. We frame the latter as “formative objects” (Scheffer, 2013, p. 90) that mobilise bias; some conflicts are organised into politics, while other topics become a-political by being excluded. The initial practical questions we faced were which documents to analyse, and how to analyse them. The focus was official documents that problematise conflicts related to tourism.

We decided to analyse documents published in the years 2011-2016. In 2011 public debate on urban tourism conflicts picked up speed, perhaps best symbolised by the
“Berlin-loves-you-not-stickers” and a smattering of “no-more-trolley-bags-graffitis”. Another reason to limit the analysis to the years 2011-2016 is that this time period corresponds with the parliamentary legislative period. This means the documents we analyse are not disrupted by elections or political change.

In a second step, we examined which municipal institutions address the conflicts resulting from urban tourism. Bearing in mind that documents are often produced in inter-institutional contexts and to avoid homogenising problematisations of different administrative levels, we defined two comparable and distinct spheres of political-administrative problematisation (see below). This emphasises that Berlin, as a city-state in the German federal system, has a two-tier government system; a citywide administration and 12 local boroughs. The citywide administration consists of a parliament and government departments, such as the Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Research[12] (SenWTF) responsible for tourism and the DMO visitBerlin. The latter, institutionalized as a PPP, employs nearly 200 people and plays a key role in the governance arrangement. The main goals of visitBerlin are to market Berlin as visitor and MICE destination[13], to advise actors within the tourism value chain, and to inform visitors and Berliners how to get to know the city (visitBerlin, 2017). Berlin is also governed by 12 boroughs, which represent semi-autonomous districts. In our case study, we analyse documents produced by visitBerlin/SenWTF and the inner-city borough Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (the borough where the debate about tourism conflicts started).

The documents we collected were drawn from multiple sources. First, we conducted desktop research, examining all the documents found on the websites of the institutions mentioned above, as well as the parliament database and specific tourism-related websites. Second, we analysed documents cited in the literature on urban tourism conflicts in Berlin. Third, we used ethnographic methods during the internship of one author at the DMO visitBerlin for four months in 2016 to ensure that all relevant documents are captured. In addition, we gained insider knowledge of both local conflicts connected to tourism and consequent mediation processes during a scientific monitoring project (conducted 2014 to 2016) on behalf of the borough Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (Helbrecht et al., 2014). In sum we gathered 19 documents and organised them in a MAXQDA-database (see Table I).

We developed codes from the empirical data in order to find and analyse patterns and norms in the political-administrative “construction” of urban tourism conflicts. For this purpose, we conducted qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2000). Since our focus was on how government bodies understand the relevance of conflicts for the future of tourism, the code “consequences” (what consequences resulting from tourism are projected?) was predefined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table I</th>
<th>Documents analysed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>visitBerlin (vB)/SenWTF</td>
<td>Borough administration Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (BaFHK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Concept acceptance management” (vB, strategy paper, 2014)</td>
<td>“Touristic Usage in Residential Areas” (documentation 1st Berlin-wide conferencing, 2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Touristic Usage in Residential Areas” (Press invitation to the 2nd Berlin-wide conferencing, 2016) | “Touristic Usage in Residential Areas” (documentation of the 2nd Berlin-wide conferencing, 2016) |
The other codes (including “characteristics[14]”, “reasons and perpetrators[15]”, “context[16]”, “Berliners’ problem perception[17]”) were developed inductively from the documents (Mayring, 2000).

5. Results

The way tourism conflicts are problematised differs significantly between the two “spheres” of government analysed in our case study. We argue that particular bodies of “political knowledge” (Lenke et al., 2012, p. 20) on conflicts are produced on borough and federal state level. In Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg political-administrative problematisations are articulated in a nuanced manner, with momentum. In comparison, the framing of conflicts by visitBerlin and SenWTF lack vigour. Drawing on the notion of Seeing Like a City, we focus on the way the complexity of urban tourism conflicts is reduced in order to better manage the issues. The political knowledge produced in doing so is “intimately linked to the availability of […] solution[s]” (Li, 2007, p. 7) – where the latter can range from active “non-decision making” (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962, p. 952) to calls for action.

The stakes are high – problematising conflicts in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg

The documents released by the department for economic development of the borough administration contextualise “tourism” as something that not only “tourists” do:

[...] tourism is always understood as ensemble of the realms tourism, recreation and hospitality industry. Tourism refers not only to overnight guests, but also to daytime visitors from other boroughs or the surroundings of the city staying in the boroughs only for a few hours. Tourism also refers to inhabitants of the borough using the amenities and food services which are usually geared towards tourists (BaFHK, 2015, p. 30).

This demonstrates that tourism is no longer understood in diametrically opposed terms “the tourists” and “the locals”, but rather as phenomenon that shapes the borough as a place “in which overlapping activities of tourism and leisure now form part of its [the cities] fabric and life” (Maitland, 2010, p. 176). This does not mean that incoming-tourism from outside Berlin is no longer regarded as an important economic factor. Increasing visitor numbers in the borough of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg are generally depicted as positive with respect to economic growth, jobs and taxes (Borough Administration Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (BaFHK), 2013). At the same time the statements reiterate the negative aspects of increasing visitor numbers. Corresponding with the interpretation of Novy (2017) this contextualisation demonstrates that the federal state lacks awareness of the problem:

Even if the city marketing department is informed about the problems, to date there have been no corresponding measures conducted on-site within the districts. This means that conflicts largely remain on the sidelines (BaFHK, 2014a, p. 25).

Which conflicts are problematised on borough level? Most frequently two sets of problems are depicted in the documents: first noise and second the risk of commercial mono-structures. Noise is described as a night-time disturbance caused by people touring the streets, sitting in front of bars, restaurants and “Spätis[18]”, hanging out in public spaces or recklessly using private holiday apartments (for a more detailed discussion see BaFHK, 2015). The topic of increasing commercial mono-structures is described as an equally important challenge. The perceived problem is that the retail and gastronomy infrastructure homogenises itself according to tourism demands and no longer matches the demands of residents (BaFHK, 2015). In addition to these aspects of tourists’ use of the city, rubbish-strewn public streets, rising rents, drug-related crime are also outlined as problematic.

For our code “reasons and perpetrators” the statements within the documents primarily draw on two main issues. First, there are a growing number of tourists doing tourism off-the-beaten-track (BaFHK, 2015). In the interplay with locals acting as tourists and a growing “outdoor-culture” (BaFHK, 2015) conflicts occur. Second, conflicts arising from urban tourism are interpreted as result of inadequate governance. In its strategy for economic development (“Business location Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg”), the borough department for economic development cites experts who
criticise that there is no strategy on borough level which proactively aims for a peaceful tourism development (BaFHK, 2015). In turn, the depiction of the borough’s inability to act upon conflicts is reasoned by a lack of finance and staff (BaFHK, 2014b). This is why Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg approached the issue on a partnership basis, working together with committed citizens, tradespersons, real estate owners, via subsidised projects (BaFHK, 2014b).

The perception of conflicts resulting from tourism by the inhabitants of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is depicted quite distinctly. The respective statements interpret a survey on acceptance towards tourism (conducted yearly by visitBerlin) in the following way: “the disapproving attitude of the Berliners towards tourism is increasing” (BaFHK, 2014a); “according to a survey conducted by visitBerlin in 2014, every third person living in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg feels disturbed by tourism […]” (BaFHK, 2015).

The possible future for tourism development in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is described drastically. The BaFHK states that if the administration on federal state level does not work on solutions (together with the borough and the various actors involved in tourism development) the borough runs the risk that “the basis of the touristic recovery and the distinct qualities of the borough will be damaged or even destroyed” (BaFHK, 2015, p. 41). Elsewhere the question is raised as to whether Berlin should “develop like Prague or Amsterdam, where the inner-city is largely comprised of offices and tourist infrastructures” (BaFHK, 2014a, p. 2). The BaFHK speculates: “due to scarce finances and staff, and owing to the pressure of residents’ complaints, decisions need to be made which have negative impact on Berlin’s image and the tourism industry” (BaFHK, 2013).

On DMO level there is obviously a sensitivity towards the statements made on borough level:

The German capital is obliged to act as a good host. The aim is to support togetherness in our neighbourhoods, and for that the famous “Berlin mix” of living and going-out is indispensable (visitBerlin 2015).

In the next section we show that this claim, according to our document analysis, hitherto remains rhetoric.

“Tourists, Berlin loves you!” (visitBerlin, 2013, p. 13) – problematisation of conflicts on DMO-level

The DMO visitBerlin and the SenWTF address the issue of urban tourism conflicts by framing them in the context of Berlin’s success as tourist destination. This salient framing builds on the city’s evolution towards a cosmopolitan and “tolerant metropolis” (visitBerlin, 2014, p. 3) with overnight stays “increasing fourfold since 1990” (visitBerlin, 2016, p. 7). The development is qualified as a “catch up process” (visitBerlin, 2014, p. 3), which Berlin is undergoing since the German reunification. An element of this catch up process taking place in “fast motion” (SenWTF, 2014, p. 3) is, according to the documents, a demographic growth paralleled by gentrification. We argue – corresponding with the results of Novy (2017, p. 64) – that an “interpretation of gentrification as “normal” takes place. The severe and intensely debated gentrification processes taking place in Berlin (Holm, 2011; Helbrecht, 2016) are depicted as concomitant of a growing city in which conflicts arise between different forms of city-usage (visitBerlin, 2014). The documents suggest that it is not useful to charge tourism for conflicts triggered by gentrification (visitBerlin, 2014). Regarding “contextualisation” we eventually argue that the constant subsumption of conflictive moments in the successful tourism development implicitly relativizes the relevance of conflictive aspects of tourism. At this point, it is important to consider how conflicts are characterised.

We identified that tourism-related problems are addressed rather unspecifically in multiple passages and elsewhere, by contrast, quite concretely. With respect to the vague characterisation of conflicts as “conflicts of different uses” (visitBerlin, 2014, p. 3) one quotation from the Tourismuskonzept 2011+ is illustrative:

Berliners sense the growing interest of visitors from all over the world – in fact far beyond the inner-city boroughs and the central touristic zones. On the one hand the visitors shape the appearance of the metropolis, on the other hand they influence the everyday reality in the city (SenWTF, 2011, p. 2).
Compared with this, noise and rubbish-strewn public spaces are concretely – and most frequently – named as problems. The range of noise problems encompasses noise caused by open air events in public space, tourists staying in holiday apartments located in residential areas, a growing number of restaurants with outdoor area (in specific places in town) and night-time disturbance in general. Another problem that is often mentioned is coach traffic near the city centre sights. Due to a lack of large parking bays, the number of buses driving around searching for parking is growing – this has a negative impact on “traffic participants, residents and the environment” (SenWTF, 2011, p. 17). Other tourism-related issues discussed as problematic are sporadically quoted in the analysed documents, including an “overcrowded city center” (visitBerlin, 2015b, p. 9). In all, 30 per cent of Berlin’s residents complain about congestion according to a survey on acceptance towards tourism commissioned by visitBerlin in 2015 (visitBerlin, 2015b).

Directly related to the concrete problems we often detected were claims regarding “reasons and perpetrators”. In nearly half of the passages addressing reasons for tourism-related conflicts is the question if and in how far tourism triggered the conflict. This is also a key message in the conclusion of the “concept for acceptance maintenance towards tourism”, published by the SenWTF:

> Related to tourism alone, phenomena of congestion are currently not observable in Berlin, therefore it is not easy to decipher the real reason behind the effects of congestion. For sure, the problems cannot be ascribed one-eyed to tourism (SenWTF, 2014, p. 10).

Another common reason for conflicts quoted is the “party tourism” taking place in Berlin. Further reasons that are noted for causing conflicts emphasise the role of the media in co-producing the issue of acceptance maintenance and of “communication problems” (SenWTF, 2014, p. 4, 2016, p. 4).

The perception of problems by Berlin residents plays a crucial role in the political-administrative narrative of urban tourism conflicts. Consequently, the SenWTF and its subordinated DMO often refer to a survey on acceptance towards tourism (carried out annually by visitBerlin since 2012). The survey results indicate a pattern, which one could synthesise as “zooming in approval towards tourism, zooming out perception of problems”. This conclusion is backed-up, in the first instance, by survey questions that “produce” favourable results and approval of tourism:

> Acceptance towards tourism is – throughout the last four years – predominantly very high [...] The latest figures for 2015 indicate that 88 percent of the Berliners are proud that people from all over the world visit “their” city; 84 percent of the Berliners believe that they are good hosts; 85 percent of the Berliners do not feel aggrieved nor disturbed by tourists (SenWTF, 2016, p. 2).

In total, half of the paragraphs dealing with tourism perception address pride and generally high acceptance towards tourism or negate a fundamental acceptance problem. At the same time negative attitudes towards developments that are the result of tourism are mostly framed within an overall high acceptance towards tourism. Or, negative impacts of tourism are reported as “subjectively felt side effects” (SenWTF, 2014, p. 4) of tourism. Summarizing the way the perception of “problem” by Berliners is depicted, we argue that the political-administrative argument works between the lines. The “warrant” (Toulmin, 1996 (1958) quoted from Felgenhauer, 2009, p. 267) prompted between the lines implicitly suggests that “only a minority of Berlin’s residents are not proud to be part of a cosmopolitan, welcoming city”. This message indicates that “moral categories” are increasingly mobilised even by political-administrative actors intervening in urban development (Niewöhner, 2014).

Possible “consequences” of the debated conflicts resulting from tourism build the last code structuring the problematisation on the level visitBerlin/SenWTF. In this respect – concerning the future of city tourism – there are not many statements to be found in the documents. Sporadically the public debate about conflicts of uses and the “tourist-bashing” (visitBerlin, 2014, p. 5) are assessed as compromising the image of Berlin as destination.

6. Conclusion: future relevance of “seeing like a tourist city”

The (de-)construction of urban tourism conflicts as a tourism policy problem serves as a lens to explore heterogeneous governmental ways of “seeing like a tourist city”. We adopted the notion of Seeing Like a City (Valverde, 2011) in order to explore how administrative bodies, which deal
with tourism quite differently, see and reduce the complexity of conflictive tourism in order to manage the issues. It would fall short to explain these differences accounting for differing administrative levels. The DMO visitBerlin, the Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Research (SenWTF) and the office for economic development of the borough of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg in fact share the same political aim. Namely, to develop tourism as economically important factor. Nevertheless, they see conflictive tourism in quite disparate ways.

On borough level, conflicts are framed as caused by touristic city users; on DMO level conflicts are depicted as allegedly tourism-induced, either linked to “normal” gentrification or narrowed down to the effects of party tourism. We agree with Novy (2017) that an overexposing of problems by highlighting the previous success of the destination takes place. Regarding the perception of “problem” by Berlin residents, visitBerlin and the SenWTF emphasise that a vast majority (“88 per cent of the Berliners”) is proud of Berlin being so popular as destination, and conclude “Tourists, Berlin loves you!” (visitBerlin, 2013, p. 13). On borough level the interpretation of exactly the same survey highlights that “every third person living in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg feels disturbed by tourism” (BaFHK, 2015, p. 32). In addition, the consequences drawn from the conflicts diverge. The administration in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg projects a successful future for tourism, dependent upon urgently needed citywide strategies to deal with growing touristic city usage. In contrast, actors on federal state level do not even specify potential impacts of the problems for the image and future of Berlin as destination. On federal state level, isolated “site-specific interventions for local problems” (SenWTF, 2016, p. 12) are presented as “solutions”, whereas on borough level an urgent demand for citywide and systematic action is repeatedly invoked (BaFHK, 2015).

The idea of “seeing like a tourist city” renders visible how particular and diverse government bodies negotiate the future relevance of conflicts that arise from tourism. This negotiation of urban tourism futures is – as our case study shows – intimately linked to the problematisation of conflicts in the here and now. On federal state level, the “solution” for dealing with urban tourism conflicts was (over the last six years) shaped by an active non-decision making and an active non-problematisation (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962). In contrast, the will to improve on borough level was clearly limited by the de-construction of conflicts as a tourism policy problem on federal state level. The calls for action remained unheard, even if underpinned by scenarios declaring that “the distinct qualities of the borough will be damaged or even destroyed” (BaFHK, 2015, p. 41). But how do these disparate ways of seeing the future relevance of tourism conflicts like a tourist city interrelate? It seems to be reasonable to argue that their relationship is dialectical in an open-ended sense (Valverde, 2011). The differing governmental modes of seeing conflictive tourism, as demonstrated in our case study (which we do not put forward as exhaustive), will not replace each other. Old and new gazes will interrelate in “unpredictable and shifting combinations” (Valverde, 2011, p. 281). In the case of Berlin it seems that new “moral categories” are mobilised by classic surveys declaring “between the figures” that only a small minority of residents are not proud to be part of a cosmopolitan, welcoming city. Due to the creation of a new citywide tourism concept in 2017 there is currently a new debate concerning how tourism can develop sustainably. The question of how the ways of “seeing like a tourist city” will condense in this concept and in practice remains open. Tourism policy research in the future needs further research on the interrelation of well-established ways of understanding tourism numerically (e.g. through surveys, visitor rankings, etc.) and more recent government attention on urban tourism conflicts shaping the future urban fabric.

Notes

1. This is not to say that conflicts resulting from tourism do not occur outside Europe.

2. By “tourists in cities” “touristic city users” we refer to statistically recorded tourists, which must be seen as one group among others.

3. Based on rankings representing a descriptive, normative and appellative way to compare and market cities (Belina and Miggelbrink 2010; Sommer 2016).
4. The visitors aim to experience mundane urban surroundings, atmospheres and sceneries.

5. By “governmental actors” we include semi-governmental actors like DMOs which are often organised as PPP (like in the case of Berlin visitBerlin).


7. Guests visiting friends and relatives.

8. In 2014 there were an estimated 32 million overnight stays in the VFR-Segment (visitBerlin 2015c).


10. Like the coalition agreement of the new government elected in September 2016 reveals; in this programme a “concept for sustainable tourism” is fixed as goal.

11. Valverde refers to James Scott’s (1998) identification of the top-down, expert-driven, bird’s eye-view epistemology typically found in modernist governmental projects.

12. After the change of government in 2016 it was renamed Senate Department for Economics, Energy and Public Enterprises.

13. Meetings Incentives Conventions Events.

14. Which manifestations of conflictive urban tourism are depicted?

15. Which practices and whose practices are defined as conflicts?

16. How is conflictive urban tourism contextualised in Berlin’s overall development?

17. How is the problem perceived by Berliners?

18. Convenience shops, often open 24/7.

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Further reading


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Shine a light

Marco Bevolo

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to report the grounded theory empirical validation on key categories within a design-led methodology to envision urban futures. The paper focuses on the editorial products and the design concepts that constitute the heart of the approach. An original elaboration of trend clusters is presented as an exemplification of the outcome of this trend research approach. Although the approach was not created from the viewpoint of tourism and leisure, bibliographic notes on place-making complement it for this journal.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper presents empirical findings extracted by the means of the grounded theory, with the purpose to empirically validate two key categories (product and process) of an urban futures methodology. The methodology is an application of High Design, the process in use at Royal Philips BV for two decades. This methodology is contextualized within the constructivist epistememe, as defined by the editors of this journal in a separate publication. Bibliographic references to place-making complete the paper.

Findings – The following findings are provided: empirical validation of the city.people.light communication platform (qualitative research); empirical validation of the city.people.light workshop practice (qualitative research); and bibliographic descriptions of the design process governing city.people.light and newly developed urban futures trend clusters, at European level, as an exemplification of the program/approach outcome.

Research limitations/implications – The paper is structured according to a multi-layered editorial focus. Empirical findings were generated at primary research level in a 2013-2015 grounded theory projected by the author. Furthermore, the author directed the research processes and products that are the object of empirical validation. Newly defined elaborations and a discussion thereof is offered, taking into account contemporary place-making issues.

Practical implications – The original design-based methodology is a structured practice in urban futures from applied sciences and corporate innovation viewpoint. In this paper, its key categories are empirically validated through the grounded theory. Additionally, outcome from the original foresight programs is presented and a bibliographic review is provided from the viewpoint of place-making.

Social implications – The co-creative methodology herein empirically validated is socio-cultural centered, with a strong drive to counterbalance the positivist and engineering corporate mindset through a humanistic concern for people. The framework in terms of place-making takes into account postmodern evolutions of the field.

Originality/value – The paper benefits from a unique mix of: epistemic note on tourism, leisure, and the future; original urban futures scenarios and design concepts from a world class corporate innovation program; and the actual empirical core of the grounded theory validation as performed in a dedicated research project. These three separate streams are mutually related.

Keywords Grounded theory, Design concepts, Lighting innovation, Multipurpose strategy, Strategic design, Urban futures

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on a socio-cultural, trend-research-based practice that exists since the mid-1990s, within the portfolio of a lighting manufacturer: city.people.light by Philips Lighting, the Netherlands embracing the socio-cultural complexity of the city as well as its experiential and spatial density. One might essentially describe city.people.light as a multipurpose practice where several activities, including qualitative research and participatory workshops, are complemented by a conscious internal and external networking effort. In the last two decades, such practice has
delivered tangible results at brand innovation and strategic marketing levels through its participatory design principles targeting professionals.

The author aims at reporting on an empirical validation of key categories (editorial products as output, workshops as generative process) within city.people.light by means of a dedicated grounded theory project (Bevolo, 2016). In order to support such validation, city.people.light will be introduced and contextualized as a specific urban futures approach, with an editorial product in the form of a book as key communication output. The city.people.light programs, with their methods, tools and intents, were generated in the context of High Design, the general design management process in use at Philips in the period 1991-2011, and not originally applied to leisure or tourism futures. Therefore, High Design will be introduced as well, as a contextual element in the background of this paper.

In order to clarify the focus of this paper, a main research question was defined:

RQ1. How does a design-driven approach work for the purpose of co-creating and communicating urban futures concepts?

In its full-blown scale city.people.light was first performed (1996-1997) by FutureConceptLab, Milan, also identified as the Trends Lab, and Philips Design. Second time (2006-2007), with a ten year hiatus, this program was globally performed with its natural scope of validity. Furthermore, a number of spin-offs or adapted editions, e.g. by scaling down the format, have been designed and executed through the decades. In total, there have been three editions of city.people.light that might be considered representative of the approach: 1996 (global), 2006 (global), initiated by Philips Lighting and executed by Philips Design, and 2011-2013 (European), initiated by Philips Lighting and delivered without involving Philips Design.

In terms of an editorial structure, the paper will unfold from the preliminary sketching of selected references to place-making. This being the context where the approach is applied to the presentation of the methodology itself, and of the grounded theory project designed to empirically review its communication assets (books) and generative practices as structured process (workshops). A summary of concepts from the 2014 *Create the Livable City* book will be presented. Findings will then be cross-referenced with key issues of place-making, as identified in the bibliographic review, in the “Findings and Conclusions” section.

2. Theoretical note: the notion of urban place

Appearing for the first time, an estimated 10,000 years ago, the city might be defined as: “[…] a densely populated entity within a spatially delimited area […]” (Gotttdiener and Hutchison, 2006, p. 21). On this basis, it can be stated that the city is “a place” in terms of its historical, geographical borders, and material perception, given the sociospatial density of urban nature. This is because a city entails the combination of political power, economic functions, and overarching symbolic meanings expressing the deep belief of inhabitants (Gotttdiener and Hutchison, 2006, p. 21). Furthermore, a city might just exist in people’s minds, in terms of vicarious experiences (e.g. its image in movies, books, media and other communication channels, including face-to-face or mouse-to-mouse exchange) (Govers and Go, 2009). Therefore, the city is actually more than a “place,” since a city might be interpreted both as statically manifested at a given moment in time and dynamically shaped over time, in people’s minds.

Quinlan, Cutler and Carmichael summarize the tourist experience from people’s perspective (Morgan et al., 2010, p. 8), where only two constituencies pertain “places,” namely the “Physical Aspects (Influential Realm)” and the “On-site Activities (Tourist Experience).” Based on the extensive review of definitional sources on the topic, Quinlan, Cutler and Carmichael (Morgan et al., 2010, p. 5) identify 13 categories, from “Phases of Experience” to “Overview of tourist experience research areas,” with only one being focused on places, namely “Places and mobility.” Whilst not totally neglected, spatial considerations might not appear as prominent in the field of tourism studies. However, this is complemented by the rich texture of sources from other fields, e.g. leisure studies, social sciences and of course the domains of place branding or urban design. Here, the “making of places” beyond hardware might be seen as an emerging – or even a central – topic in terms of both intellectual challenges and economic relevance. Exploring notions of “place-making,”
Richards (2017) proposes a theoretical reflection that goes from the American urbanist movement, where “places” were regarded primarily in spatial or architectural sense, to Levebre’s (1974) Production of Space, where symbolic spaces and lived experiences do acquire an important role in the making of places. As stated by Lefevbre (1974/1984): “To produce space: […] Consider the case of a city – a space which is fashioned, shaped and invested by social activities during a finite historical period. Is this city a work or a product?” (p. 73). A city is constantly in the process of (self-)development in history and context, through both its design and its everyday practices. The challenge is, therefore, to identify a conceptual representation of place-making processes that might capture such complexity; however, with the necessary synthesis. Analyzing Lefevbre, Soja (1996) proposes the “Trialetics of Being,” an ontological model encompassing历史性, spatiality and sociality as the constituencies of “being” (Soja, 1996, p. 71). Furthermore, Soja notes the necessity of: “[…] the reassertion of Spatiality […]” (Soja, 1996, p. 71). From this theoretical construct, Soja consequently defines a “Trialetics of Spatiality,” comprising: “Firstspace epistemologies,” referred to: “[…] objectivity and materiality, aiming towards a formal science of space” (Soja, 1996, pp. 74-5); “Secondspace Epistemologies,” referred to: “[…] the interpretative locales of the creative artist and artful architect, visually or literally re-presenting the world […] the utopian urbanist seeking social and spatial justice […]” (Soja, 1996, pp. 74-79); and “Thirdspace Epistemologies,” referred to: “[…] the sympathetic deconstruction and heuristic reconstitution of the Firstspace-Secondspace duality[…].” what Lefevbre once called the city, a “possibilities machine […]” (Soja, 1996, pp. 71-81). Richards (2017) elaborates on Soja’s “Thirdspace” and what clearly emerges is the hypothesis that place-making pertains both a spatial (or static) constituency and a socio-cultural (or dynamic constituency). This is where the tourism and leisure perspectives on “place” might be positioned in the future. This is also where the design-led approach as presented in this paper might be discussed and positioned.

3. Epistemological note: futures research and design

Be it in the form of Delphi oracles or horoscopes “the future” has represented both a tension and a question since the origins of culture. From an epistemological point of view, the future and the past share the indeterminate nature of their being, in the present. Both are based on a reconstruction of events that either did happen or might happen, under context and circumstances that either do not exist any longer or do not exist yet and on the basis of extrapolation from single documental evidences or from detected trends, whereas the study of the past has been codified for centuries in the methodologies and philosophies of history (Staley, 2007). Concurrently an equivalent codification of futures research has only existed since the last century (Bevolo, 2016). Such institutionalization has resulted in a formal codification of the fields of future studies and foresight and ultimately of what a “futurist” is.

Within the context of global corporate enterprises, “foresight” has been adopted as a strategic portfolio competence since the end of the Second World War. This has led to anticipate future change and emerging lifestyles. Topical moments include the availability of alternative scenarios unveiling “wild card” possible – however unlikely – events at Royal Shell. The oil company that uniquely anticipated – before 1973 – the end of abundance in oil supply. Within this paper, a constructivist definition was identified and is adopted from tourism futures literature: “Futurists never present objectivity but a range of alternatives of subjectivity. The research they are involved in presupposes interpretation which Schwandt (1994) labels constructivist interpretation. This is an ontology that is predominantly local and specific in which the creation of knowledge is grounded in practice. This epistemology views knowledge in a subjective and transactional manner as merely suggesting directions along which to look, rather than providing descriptions of what to see […]” (Yeoman, Postma, Oskam, McMahon-Beattie, Findlay, in Postma et al., 2013, p. 60). This definition of “futurist” was crafted by its authors in the context of a major study of European tourism futures. It resonates with the notion of design in the context of history that Flusser proposes, a notion where “[…] all forms are temporal” (Flusser, 1999/2009/2010, p. 61). In Flusser’s work, the relationship between “design” and “future” is embodied in the archetype of the architect/engineer. This is based on their ability to anticipate what the future will bring, to draft solutions accordingly, to plan actions and make it happen, over time, starting from their insights and ideas, captured in concepts and drafted in sketches.
The paramount relevance of sketching within engineering, architectural, and design processes might respond to a historical trait of the architectural profession, going back to its intellectual inception in the 1500s: “The command of drawing – not building – unlocked the status of the architect, establishing the principle that architecture results not from accumulated knowledge of a team of anonymous craftsmen but the artistic creation of an individual […] Asserting their intellectual status, architects made drawings with just a few delicate lines and imagined buildings that were equally immaterial” (Hill, in Fraser, 2013, p. 15). Design sketches are visual representations of concepts that capture experiences and objects yet to come, envisioning possible futures, in the present. Concepts potentially trigger processes of meaning-making that will impact the course of events. The generation of concepts might take place as the output of individual creative processes, or by means of constructivist participation. As opposite to individual “genius forecasting” and as an advanced form of dialogues by co-creation, the workshop format has been historically identified as an eminently participatory methods of generating future visions by means of facilitation (Jungk and Muellert, 1987). In the next paragraph, it will be articulated how the urban futures methodology at the heart of this paper might meet a number of the above generic principles, leveraging its visual output as the outcome of generative workshops.

4. Methodologies: design process and reflexive validation

In order to document outcome and operationalize validation of the above, this “Methodology” section is articulated as a hybrid mix. It combines the design methodology “behind” city.people.light, namely High Design, and the qualitative research methodology that enabled a grounded theory validation “of” city.people.light, as its research object. These two distinctive topics will entail descriptive sub-sections (Sections 4.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3), aimed at presenting the background of city.people.light, while introducing two validation key categories. Concurrently, in Section 4.1.1, operational information will be provided about the grounded theory empirical process. To fulfill its hybrid nature, these methodological paragraphs will be editorially divided in two modules, addressing:

4.1: a bibliographic investigation dissecting the overall High Design process that underpins the approach at hand as a process framework and a discussion of how it was applied to urban futures;

4.1.1: the grounded theory operational references for the empirical (reflexive) validation of city.people.light (Bevolo, 2016), including specification of the key categories;

4.1.2: a bibliographic presentation of the Key Category 1: workshops; and

4.1.3: a bibliographic presentation of the Key Category 2: books.

Within this paragraph, city.people.light plays different functions; in 4.1 High Design clarifies the governing process of city.people.light (therefore, a generic design process is presented, of which city.people.light is one application), whereas in 4.2, grounded theory enables the study of city.people.light as research object. The grounded theory being the key operational reference for this paper in empirical terms.

4.1 Design process framework – High Design: a co-creative approach to envision urban futures

“High Design” is the reference governing principle for city.people.light programs. High Design was in use at Royal Philips NV in the two decades 1991-2011 as a future-oriented corporate design process. It can be defined as follows: “High Design is a human-focused, research based, design management process for repeatable business success. High Design integrates the input from socio-cultural disciplines and people research, and then makes that information and insight the starting point of every design project”. High Design principles were integrated in a universal design process, in order to offer a flexible and scalable mix of creative and strategic competences addressing the wide portfolio of Philips businesses (urban lighting, lighting, consumer electronics, domestic appliances, medical systems, computing devices, semiconductors and components). Such principles are applicable both to innovation processes and challenges (Kusume and Gridley, 2013) as well as brand marketing (Bevolo and Brand, 2003). Hence, offering an optimal...
degree of flexibility and versatility across future-oriented challenges. Its application was then expanded to design-led partnerships with lifestyle brands such as Levi's and Nike (wearable technologies), and other non-Philips non-competitive customers. For example, the Municipality of Eindhoven with their Strip-S lighting experience strategy, directed by Lorna Goulden, published in an award winning book (2008) modeled on the city.people.light format. One peculiar feature of High Design is its ambition to generate “Co-creation Communities” (Kusume and Gridley, 2013, pp. 55-6). This lies in the inclusive recognition of each stakeholder as an acceptable/accepted contributor. Therefore, High Design programs might aspire to create “an open community,” focusing on informal dynamics and knowledge in the “fuzzy front” of innovation (Rameckers and Un, 2005, pp. 11-4).

Shifting from the generic corporate design/foresight description of High Design as a governing principle to the specific city context, its derivative application for urban outdoors is identified as city.people.light. Namely, a future research approach should be with the following qualities: design-led, participatory, visual and socio-cultural-focused. Its purpose is to enable and underpin participatory lighting innovation processes over time. From a formal point of view, one should stress the fact that the nominal validity for city.people.light outcome is conventionally perceived at half a decade to a decade ahead in the future, with industrial innovation processes aligned to this time frame. A typical city.people.light cycle historically may have lasted for five years. This comprises a qualitative research project or a series thereof, based on interviews with thought leaders and decision makers in city management and urban architecture; a number of workshops, involving lighting design professionals at regional level; the processing, editing and publication of outcome in the form of highly visual books and their valorization in conferences and lectures; the analysis, clustering, and activation of specific concepts in the corporate strategic marketing and innovation funnels; the academic valorization and networking exploitation of outcomes, with commercial focus of relationships. Qualitative research is leveraged as a source for the writing of scenarios. Such scenarios are based on prefigured coded insights. The coding is performed by first elaborating insights from qualitative interviews and then filtering them through a dedicated Urban Futures Matrix. Such tool connects socio-cultural drivers, therefore representative of longer term futures, with city strategies and therefore modalities of organizing urban realities. The resulting scenarios are at the same time the formal end deliverable of qualitative research and an ancillary asset to support the abductive processes of future visioning by architects, designers, and other workshop contributors, who lead in this process. Scenarios are fixed as a given narrative asset in the process. They inspire workshop participants to co-create “Design Concepts” by means of facilitated dialog and discussion. Design Concepts are therefore at the heart of the output of participatory practices. An overview of 2014 Design Concepts will be presented in Section 4, summarized in clusters. It must be specified that scenarios do not represent the main focus of this paper. Therefore, a historical or critical discussion thereof will not be presented.

4.1.1 Reflexive validation: grounded theory methodology operationalization. A dedicated grounded theory project (Bevolo, 2016) was designed in 2013 and executed through 2015, with the purpose to validate this urban futures approach. For this purpose, city.people.light communication outcome, in the form of books, and city.people.light generative practices, in the form of workshops (with Design Concepts as output), were identified, described and analyzed as key categories of investigation. First, such workshops were investigated as grounded theory research objects (Bevolo, 2016):

- Creation process of (urban futures) scenarios and concepts, with a key category focusing on the “workshop” as process designed to enable professional stakeholders and members of relevant communities of practice to generate city.people.light findings (grounded theory validation – Key Category 1).
- By “workshop” it is herein specifically identified the stakeholder-focused, co-design aimed, facilitated event (format and execution) as performed in the city.people.light programs performed in 2006 (globally) and 2011-2013 (Europe), based on the overall managerial decision-making.
- Second, the central role in terms of outcome is played by editorial products that regularly report and diffuse research program findings, concepts and all necessary information,
e.g. bibliographies and references. The books were therefore strategically positioned as structural moments in the process. In this respect, their function as communication products were clarified and formulated as a precise grounded theory research object (Bevolo, 2016).

- Communication of (urban futures) scenarios and concepts, with a key category focusing on the “book” as a product designed as a structural moment to channel and communicate city, people.light findings (grounded theory validation – Key Category 2).

Based on the above starting points, the grounded theory analysis (Bevolo, 2016) relied on the following assets:

- 13 interviews with qualified respondents performed in November/December 2013 (not included here: details of qualitative research participants);
- extant documents, as reference examples of concrete managerial practices determining the workshop design and execution;
- photographic records of six published workshops (2014);
- video recordings of city.people.light class events held in 2011-2013 (Bratislava, Turnhout, Dubrovnik, Copenhagen, Glasgow);
- professional memo’s supporting the contribution by the researcher to 2011-2013 workshops, in his capacity of consulting research principal commissioned by Philips Lighting BV;
- personal memories (memoire) and anecdotal evidence from city.people.light 2006 and 2011-2013 workshops, including e-mail transmissions and other company confidential documentation;
- presentations, trade articles and other collateral assets describing the process and its structural or practice-focused constituencies for promotional or other official purposes;
- book as published in 2007 with design sketches and analysis;
- book as published in 2014 with design sketches, photographic materials and analysis, including philology of concepts related to 2007;
- transcripts of 13 thought leader qualitative interviews 2006;
- transcripts of eight thought leader qualitative interviews 2011-2014; and
- presentations, trade articles and other collateral assets, generated between 2006 and 2015.

The 13 interviewees were selected according to the principles of “purposive sampling” in a homogeneous professional culture (Guest et al., 2006, p. 61). Therefore, as verified by accomplishment of saturation, this selection met the validity requirements for satisfactory performance of qualitative research. The interview transcripts were edited by each participant in terms of their review and approval and then framed through a number of analytical steps at various levels of coding aggregation. Key findings (as defined at the stage of Open Coding within the grounded theory project) for this “reflexive” component of this paper will be presented and commented on in the “Findings and Conclusions” section.

4.1.2 Grounded theory validation – Key Category 1: a review of workshops as the heart of the approach. Within High Design, workshop design and management are specific techniques aimed at facilitating teamwork in dedicated sessions, with the objective to generate a shared space of safe dialog and productive exchange for the co-creation of ideas, concepts and solutions through a process of communal understanding and mutual acknowledgment across different and diverse stakeholders. Facilitation entails the creation of optimal enabling conditions for participants to perform. From white sheet to the final concept, they re-connected their work to urban futures hypotheses presented as qualitative research findings. By setting up a non-competitive, non-commercially purposed, communal “space of communication and collaboration,” city, people.light organizers and facilitators historically managed to gather competing architects, competing designers and administrative officers from sometimes competing cities, and enable them all to systematically reflect and co-create as members of temporary teams. A typical city, people.light workshop entails one to two days of communal working sessions, starting from the
presentation of qualitative research findings. Stakeholders are invited to assume a participatory, proactive role, in order to envision and deliver their ideas of future urban lighting in the form of design sketches with the availability of professional illustrators to immediately fix ideas on paper. Ideas and sketches are articulated into concepts with a critically discussed link to scenarios. Scenarios are systematically presented as qualitative research findings. Concepts are then optimized in a narrative form, completed by a specific title.

A crucial probing point for city.people.light concerns the inclusion of ordinary citizens in workshops or other forms of participation. The answer to such point is negative because city.people.light is a Business-to-Business program within a corporate context. Critical elaboration on this point might indicate a fit with what Verganti and Pisano describe as the “Elite Club” modality of co-creation for corporate enterprises (Pisano and Verganti, 2008, pp. 78-86). This is an “open innovation” approach that only entails the involvement of restricted circles of selected professional contributors only. This consideration clarifies the relatively limited scope and non-existing direct impact of the program design from an Action Research viewpoint, especially from the viewpoint of political implications. Simply put, city.people.light programs have not been conceived or designed as “social innovation” opportunities for urban communities. At the same time, however restricted to a specific professional community, one cannot deny the co-creative nature of this approach, its process design and its immediate output.

4.1.3 Grounded theory validation – Key Category 2: a review of the book as communication asset. The process as described above repeatedly led to a selection of “urban futures ideas” visualized in appealing sketches or photographic reproductions, to be collected, edited and presented to the wider public in a book format (Bevolo et al., p. 2007). At the end of every cycle, the outcome of a number of coherent and comparable workshops is analyzed, processed and edited into an appealing publication. In such communication format, the design and editorial lines of city.people.light books privileged sketches and visual assets as a vehicle of representation of future concepts. This conscious editorial choice, and the very selection of the “book” as privileged communication tool, might find their ultimate roots in those cultural discourses rationalizing how architecture historically emerged from craftsmanship as a higher cultural enterprise.

In this paper, references are dual, to both the 2007 and the 2014 books. The editorial architecture of the two products is similar with an opening part related to urban futures: Urban Trends (pp. 8-21, in 2007) and Urban Futures (pp. 11-35, in 2014). The 2007 architectural thought leaders, e.g. ranging from Richard Rogers to Odile Decq, from Hans Hollein to Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown were presented in more prominent fashion than the 2014 European experts. The 2014 European experts covered architectural firms (Piber, Bantal), city management department (Urbanowicz, Johnston), academia (Mommaas) and the field of urban leisure (Mommaas, Verri, Korkman). It might also be relevant to mention that the 2007 book was referenced at the introduction of every 2014 concept. The editorial and research goals were to ground 2014 manifestations in historically antecedent “weak signals,” hence creating a visible degree of continuity and coherence across two different editions of the program, managed by means of equivalent process and formats.

Focusing on the visual sections of the books, where co-created Design Concepts are presented, the 2006 sketches from global workshops (Lyon, Philadelphia, Shanghai, Hamburg) were introduced as “Inspirational.” The editorial section consisted of double-spread pages reconnecting the different regions to the original expert interviews, with unattributed quotes (pp. 28-9, 66-7, 90-1, 122-3, 2007), complete with the lists of workshop participants. The 2011-2013 sketches and their related mock up photographs were introduced with an overview of the six cities involved (Bratislava, Copenhagen, Turnhout, Dubrovnik, Wroclaw, Glasgow) (pp. 38-9, 2014) and by an organic overview of design and organizational issues related to the workshops themselves (pp. 40-1, 2014). At the end of the book, the 2007 conclusions were limited to one page (p. 150, 2007), under the programmatic title: “Open conclusions for a program that will never end”. Thus, deliberately stating the intent not to supply any conclusive remark as a way to interpret its nature of “open platform.” The 2014 conclusions provided, instead, four directions, articulated in 16 questions corresponding to the 16 cells (or scenarios) in the referenced Urban Futures Matrix, adopted throughout the process. Therefore, “wrapping up” the entire book from the perspective of
this specific research and workshop governing tool (pp. 153-5, 2014). These formats adopted to deliver conclusions might be perhaps described as key points of divergence of this approach from the positivist posture, demanding specific findings to answer a specific research question. Whereas the positivist reader might find this indeterminacy unpalatable, the postmodern design research will appreciate it as inspirational.

5. Design concepts as output: a summary by clustering

It was anticipated both in the Notes and in the Methodology above, how Design Concepts are the results of co-creative workshops. Design Concepts could therefore be considered a key product within city.people.light as a High Design application. A presentation of Design Concepts will be herein provided with the goal to illustrate them, namely with the purpose to present the output of workshops as well as get a visual insight into the content of books. Design Concepts are of course not the result of grounded theory validation as conducted by means of qualitative research on the two Key Categories above, workshops and books. The latter will be presented in the final section, “Findings and Conclusions.”

As so far introduced concepts are the outcome of co-creative workshops, where scenarios are presented and shared, to be activated within dialogs as part of a facilitated process where the primary focus is on idea generation by workshop participants. Additionally, it must be specified that concepts were generated by multidisciplinary, multicultural teams with regional focus, as generic and universally applicable. Design Concepts and sketches were therefore only spatially related to any specific location, as they had the main ambition to generate visions of urban futures at the general level. Because of their specific category focus on the night-time and on lighting, city.people.light concepts did extend to mobility, lifestyle, leisure or other domains, both in their actual topics and themes, as well as in their application and valorization.

A key source for this summary is one book, Create the Livable City, published by EMAP/AJ Books in 2014. The book was co-authored by Tapio Rosenius, MSc, and the author of this paper, as valorization of the European program for strategic marketing and innovation commissioned by Philips Lighting EMEA in the triennium 2011-2014. Featured assets include the visual and textual report of six co-creative workshops with professionals. Each concept was visually presented in the context of its specific city event. Every concept was then edited with “Lighting design notes” at the technical level and visualized by means of both sketches and photographs, representing mock up installations co-created during the workshop, each with a specific title. For presentation and synthesis purposes within this paper, concepts were summarized in trend clusters, offering new original aggregations and themes. Each trend cluster will be introduced by means of a reflection on spatial traits shared by individual concepts.

5.1 Trend cluster: natural artificial

Across workshop locations a new sensibility emerged based on reconnecting to nature by means of signs and symbols generated by digital or architectural solutions. From a spatial point of view, the integration of lighting technology and infrastructure enables the creation of visual effects to represent the memory of nature “as it was” before urbanization (e.g. the original grass under the pavements or the water of the sea on the floor of a courtyard divided from the Mediterranean by an ancient wall). One concept proposes the transformation of the green decorative frame around a martial square into the focus of the square itself, whereas the monumental pedestal at its center shifts from a displaying a military statue to focalizing two beams of light in the sky, as a symbolic way to reconnect it to the trees and flowers. Here, a modest urban garden becomes a visual poetic symphony, magnifying the role of nature to requalify this underprivileged square. Just one step further and leisure objects and buildings are giving night-time “pulse” and vibe to the city. For example, discotheques or clubs are repurposed to represent environmental themes through ambient experiences. This might be a major step in terms of integrating the symbolic representation of nature into contemporary lifestyles. According to these references future developments in the city might culturally encompass a deeper drive to reconnect to nature, even in its most primordial form.
5.2 Trend cluster: abstract narratives

From a spatial perspective, within this second aggregation of co-created trend manifestations infrastructural and architectural hardware is elevated to the role of narrative trigger. This is first articulated at the level of minimal/minimalistic esthetic intervention on bridges or mixed programs. Thus, storytelling is enabled as a loose and indefinite intellectual parcour across abstract points, embedded in lighting solutions that enliven what used to be dark infrastructure. Similarly, abstract storytelling is also the creative approach chosen for the concept based on projections on the internal façade of the Rector’s Palace in Dubrovnik, where the story of the city is translated, by music and light, into an abstract sequence of effects and experiences. Concurrently, such narrative approach co-exists with the iconic approach adopted for historical elements such as the stone stairs in the same courtyard of the Rector’s Palace. The workshop participants treated this object in context as a semiotic device enabling access to multipurpose leisure programs to be located on the first floor, from fine arts to a casino. Lastly, wrapping up esthetic themes of the whole trend cluster, an otherwise loose sequence of architectural design elements, becomes the texture of a narrative analogy to Dante’s Divine Comedy, in an elegant Glasgow concept. Completely void of any connection to social or personal sustainability concerns, this trend cluster appears less compact and more nuanced than “Natural Artificial.” Concepts spread across leisure programs and tourism activities with priorities spanning from city beautification to cultural tourism and decorative storytelling to the management of space and place.

5.3 Trend cluster: spatial socialization

This trend cluster entails diverse spatial nuances and executions, with multiple faceted directions in both esthetic terms and design opportunities. First, fine arts are present in terms of objects or lighting solutions. Here triggers stimulate individuals to gather, share and communicate. This is the case of the virtual “orange bonfire” that became the signature visual of the book cover. Next to this artistic direction, advanced technologies play a role in terms of transforming analogue surfaces like windows into contextual social media at local level or in enabling an evolution of the speaker’s corner into new digital opportunities, once again for aggregation and gathering. On a more functional level, in a Silesian vernacular manifestation of both esthetics and urban design, the dynamic lighting treatment applied to a pedestrian underpass transforms a dark tunnel, where citizens do not dare to walk at night, into an informal playground for kids. Here, the social representation of re-appropriation of an otherwise blocked urban corridor is represented by the spontaneous socialization of children in joyful play. Lastly, with a more conventional leisure and tourism approach, the repurposing of industrial stock into communal facilities for migrants or for plain relaxation purposes is also featured, with a particular prominence of communication and exchange as programmatic societal purposes. As a synthesis, in this trend cluster 1 might say that both new and long-term citizens are enabled to exercise the right to self-expression. Publicly, gathering as individuals to learn, exchange or transact, in the context of new forms of leisure experiences.

5.4 Trend cluster: functional planning

This final “minority cluster” groups two concepts that are loosely connected by the functionality focus of their scenarios. One might highlight the eclecticism of postmodern planning, where contemporary forms and materials join ancient esthetics without rejecting them. Lighting plays a more ancillary role, enabling the design or the fruition of urban places for specific purposes and with ease of use. Simplicity of interaction is key, with spatial focus on architectural styles or functional performance. From an experiential point of view, solutions based on this minor socio-cultural cluster might support the design planning of an intuitive city, that will be open and appealing for visitors by design.

6. Findings and conclusions

6.1 Grounded theory validation: preliminary empirical findings

Within the grounded theory empirical validation of city, people, light (Bevolo, 2016), the “workshop” process as practice-based moment of co-creation was empirically described by a
number of items and qualities, including the following preliminary overview capturing interview recurrent topics and themes by means of Open Coding:

1. thought leadership-focused events with multipurpose nature (relationships, innovation);
2. events where insights are generated in order to populate product roadmaps;
3. events conceived and governed by means of a “Design Thinking” mindset;
4. lighting design focused session;
5. events inspired and managed by means of the urban futures matrix;
6. events integrated in an implicit city.people.light brand theme;
7. educational value events, perhaps beyond the internal perception at Philips;
8. sketches maintain a central role in the conversion from theory to concepts;
9. offering the opportunity to perform wild cards and blue-sky concepting; and
10. not based on technology, however depending on the existing technology for mock ups.

The key performance indicators, or equivalent, connected to the workshop format as adopted in this process were identified as follows:

1. measurement of performance mainly assessed by Net Promoter Score (a CRM tool, since 2011) (Reichheld, 2006);
2. conversion of workshop outcome into solution roadmaps (two to three product ranges over five years);
3. generically expected 1-5 percent conversion rate from sketches to product ranges;
4. indirect CRM conversion expected in terms of future commercial opportunities; and
5. financial and commercial value questioned and challenged by internal stakeholders.

The core of the program output and its main communication platform lie in editorial products, visually reporting Design Concepts as related to qualitative research findings and other knowledge assets. Concepts are presented as outcome of workshops within a socio-cultural analysis framework, with bibliographic references and with sketches and photographic depictions of possible urban futures with universal validity, hence non-specific to the city where they were generated. At the level of grounded theory empirical validation, the book as a research object was described in accordance to a number of points extracted by semantically analyzing transcripts and conducting Open Coding; including the following early findings:

1. thought leadership content, focused on future solutions;
2. visualizations based on insights;
3. visualizations aimed at playing an inspirational function;
4. visualizations expressed by means of sketches;
5. content based on critical mass of workshop output;
6. source of functional knowledge and somewhat monitoring;
7. based on structured analytical semi-academic knowledge;
8. technical knowledge;
9. based on research; and
10. falsifiable, as based on the urban futures matrix.

The key performance indicators that implicitly determine the perceived quality of the book as output format of this approach were identified as follows:

1. publication of architect’s interviews;
2. interaction with the target audience;
3. conversion of selected content into solutions roadmaps;
4. PR visibility on a specific brand theme; and
5. leadership in the market.

The general storyline is one of education and inspiration for relevant target audiences, based on critical urban challenges. Visualizations preponderantly lead in the editorial and communication strategies, being perceived as the most relevant feature of the books. The esthetic and sensorial core visual manifestation of both 2007 and 2014 books is based on co-created concepts (sketches and photography) (the latter in 2014 only) and in workshop sessions.

6.2 Conclusions on the program as high design application

The city.people.light approach described in this paper is intrinsically multipurpose. It was born in the industrial context to support corporate processes of design, innovation and strategic marketing. High Design offers the opportunity to deliver multiple assets to product innovation processes, thought leadership profiling and a number of strategic positioning platforms in the company, and beyond. Strategies are implicit statements about preferred futures, whereas future research embodies a range of possibilities yet to come. Furthermore, the future might be influenced by actions taken in the present, including participatory dialogs and communication of potential developments, e.g. in the form of “posits” (or concepts) that “stand for” what might come. In particular, one might speak of this approach as a constructivist approach for an “Elite Club” of selected professionals, who partake in an open innovation process. Here, they are invited to co-create hypotheses deemed to envision the future of a particular field, the city, from a socio-cultural viewpoint, at night and with focus on outdoors environments. Citizens are not directly involved, by managerial choice. The process is based on design research principles, with qualitative research at its basis and workshops as generative moments of practice. The program is executed by means of regional events, in selected cities, with participants from the architectural, city management and lighting design sectors. Given the specific constructivist, co-creative and design-led nature of the approach researched in this paper, it might be important to avoid any misunderstanding possibly generated by any (rigid) interpretations of its content from a positivistic perspective. While the design methodology at hand might be described as business oriented and utilitarian, it was born in the early 1990s as a way to create a formalized substantial juxtaposition to positivist notions of “science,” and their technocratic translations of assets into technological roadmaps for top down deployment into markets. One might say, that the very nature of city.people.light is complementary, if not antagonistic, with respect to positivistic notions of linear forecast and technological road mapping.

In conclusion, without aiming at a validated and calibrated assessment from theoretical or epistemological viewpoints that would exceed the purpose of this paper, a working hypothesis for potential next steps in the analysis of this approach is that city.people.light narratively presents the city (of the future) as a “possibilities-machine” (Soja, 1996, p. 81). As a conclusive framing, according to the categories proposed by Soja in his “Thirdspace” (1996), this approach might be described as a creative reaction again “Firstspace epistemologies.” It was developed and delivered with the ambition to counterbalance scientific positivism and engineering roadmaps as leading business drivers within Philips Lighting. Therefore, it might be tentatively proposed that this approach resonates with “Secondspace epistemologies,” as it delivers visualizations developed through interpretations and insights of architects, designers and other professionals, who re-present possible worlds, in terms of night-time urban futures. Hence, this might comprise of both static and dynamic dimensions of place-making as described by Richards (2017). The future orientation and socio-cultural focus of city.people.light might extend its reach as it addresses spatial challenges from people’s perspective, although through the professional eyes of architects, designers and other selected participants. At least from its specific angle of innovation design, it might find a potential affinity with the tourism studies “experience area” of “Places and mobility,” as previously identified. Furthermore, the socio-cultural angle implicitly acknowledges the relevance of social activities as a shaping force of the city, possibly in line with Lefèvbre’s (1974/1984) considerations on the complexity of the production of space.
It might, therefore, be proposed as a final reflection that city.people.light has traits and characteristics responding to and fulfilling (at least to an extent) what postmodernist place-making theory asserts. Hence, possibly playing a role in addressing research challenges from postmodern viewpoints of tourism, leisure and urban design.

References


Further reading


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Gastronomy, Tourism and the Media

By Warwick Frost, Jennifer Laing, Gary Best, Kim Williams, Paul Strickland and Clare Lade

Channel View Publications
Bristol
2016
(pbk)
242pp.

Keywords Gastronomy, Tourism, Hospitality, Media

Review DOI 10.1108/JTF-09-2017-064

This book is the 74th one to be published by Channel View Publications under their “Aspects of Tourism” theme, by the series Editors of Cooper, Hall and Timothy. The aim of this book series is to “provide readers with the latest thinking on tourism worldwide and push back the frontiers of tourism knowledge”. The aim of this particular book is to consider the “interaction between tourism, gastronomy and the media” so as to “understand their connections and influences upon each other”. The book covers 15 chapters written by six authors who are all based in Melbourne, Australia with all but one from the same university.

The book is divided into three sections, the first covers the foundations and principles of the three core topics: gastronomy, tourism and the media – an ambitious aim in itself, and develops some of the contentious issues and research questions that are explored in the subsequent sections. The second section focuses on the current trends and emerging innovations, such as: slow food, pop-up cafes and farmers markets. Although they are investigated from a gastronomy perspective, the link to tourism is also explored, as is the influence of the media on their development. The final section explores in more detail the role of the media in influencing changing perspectives of tourism and gastronomy. It does this through exploring the influences of: cinema, television cookery shows, restaurant reviewers, social media and well as discussing the impact of individual personalities such as: cooks, restaurateurs and travel writers. The final chapter brings together all the discussions, and outlines possible topics for further research. Each of these three sections has between four and five chapters, all of which can be read by themselves without reference to the other chapters. However, to do so, would be like selecting one course from a 15-course sampling menu, enjoyable, but not fulfilling.

The book concludes with eight ideas for further research drawn from the previous 14 chapters: gastronomy in a digital age; media and trust; food-themed tourist experiences; trends in dining; children as foodies; non-western trends; new foodie destinations and finally placeless gastronomy. While most of these ideas are drawn from the various chapters, they are not necessary discussed within the chapters. For example, there is very little discussion about the role by children in food decisions.

This book fits well into the aims of the “Aspects of Tourism” series, and as such it makes an interesting read. The book should be of interest to many groups, but in particular to hospitality and gastronomy researchers and students, who are looking for both a global overview of the development of hospitality and gastronomy, as well as insights into current issues. Many books written by authors based in the same location, tend to take a narrow perspective of the issues under discussion, this cannot be said of the authors of this book. While the authors try to take a world perspective, the discussions are short of examples from Africa and South America, however they do try to take a world perspective, and this is to be commended.

A number of the chapters start with a short story based around a movie, book, television series or a personal story about a chef, and these are used to set the scene for the discussion in the chapter. While an interesting and different form of introduction, I am unsure as to whether this is successful. Nevertheless, I did enjoy reading such introductions and when they were not included in some chapters, I was disappointed. However, some readers may find them a distraction. The listing of references at the end of the book, rather than in individual chapters is very
helpful. This not only avoids duplication which is common in many multi-author books, but also provides a comprehensive overview of the source material.

Before making some minor criticisms of the book, let me state clearly that this book was a joy to read, and the criticisms should not detract from reading the book. I could argue that the title is slightly misleading, as hospitality should probably be included in the book title, given the many discussions in the book that focus on this subject. In addition, while the book has a number of very useful black and white pictures (many by the authors) especially of different food settings, their reproductions are disappointing. If they had been in colour, this would have helped to show more clearly the issues being highlighted. It is always easy to criticise a book for the topics it does not explore, such as food served on cruise ships and planes, but this must be set against the smorgasbord of ideas it did present.

The book certainly challenges the current somewhat narrow view of gastronomy tourism, and links gastronomy to a wider discussion on its societal importance, and this is to be welcomed. From a perspective of tourism futures, while the book does provide some hints of future research directions, and these are helpful, tourism futures insights is not one the strengths of the book. That said, a number of the chapters do conclude with a discussion about the future of the chapter topic, for example the future of: food festivals; food rituals and etiquette; nutrition. To be fair, developing a tourism futures perspective was not the aim of the book.

Finally, in terms of a recommendation, the book was an enjoyable read, which provided insights into a wide range of topics. On first reading, I was worried that the three topics of gastronomy, tourism and media would be difficult to explore in one book, this was not the case. Perhaps the book is best described as providing both an interesting historic overview and an exploration of current issues concerning the developing and changing relationships between the three topics of gastronomy, tourism and media. As such, it provides a useful starting point for readers who want to explore tourism futures from a number of different perspectives, and through highlighting the interrelationships of these three topics, the book suggests some issues that tourism futurologists may want to explore.

Brian Hay

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Negotiating Place

Reinventing the Local in Tourism: Producing, Consuming and Negotiating Place

Edited by Antonio Paolo Russo and Greg Richards
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This book is aimed to further investigate a long-established topic in tourism studies, namely, the transformation of places through tourism. Derived from the recent development of new research frameworks, tourism platforms, and tourism consumption models, this book attempts to cover the way in which “places” and localities in tourism are restructured and consumed. The book covers 14 studies presented at recent conferences and expert meetings organized by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research, written by academicians from various disciplines of tourism, urban planning, place making, human geography, and sociology, which diversify the contents and approaches of each topic. The authors range from current PhD candidates to senior lecturers and professors who mainly reside on European continent.

In the beginning of this book, the editors mention one, among many, reason why tourism studies are commonly marginalized that is “the struggling to provide models of universal validity to interpret reality and anticipate foreseeable development” (p. 3). To anticipate the challenges, as the editors add, there are growing interests from new generation of scholars to make the “turns,” to raise the questions about the roots of travel and tourism, to understand the next step in the evolution of tourism, and to give more practical solutions for tourism actors. Those movements are fundamental for tourism studies in order to produce new breakthrough developments that are capable of addressing the emerging issues in the contemporary age, but also to take tourism studies to the next level in the social science. For that purposes, some of the authors successfully bring “fresh air” with the exploration on new “local” tourism products such as living with locals or attaining “back door” moments facilitated by online platforms and relational/sharing culture, and also the collaboration of tourism actors in co-creating the local and urban landscapes, while some others redefine the long-known principles in tourism such as the host-guest relationships.

It must be stressed, however, that this book is not written on the future perspective, but rather on geography, anthropology, and cultural perspective, even though the chapters discussing innovative, peer-to-peer products, and new pattern of consumptions can serve as the stepping stone to further investigate the future of localities and collaborative tourism. Therefore, as to those who are seeking the collection of future tourism issues, this book can provide the complimentary resources about current issues and the dynamics of tourism. As well, despite the limitation of topics to be universally applied, this book can be a useful reference for those concerned with tourism planning with focus on social-economic impact and community empowerment, also to tourism academics and to students who are interested in understanding new perspectives in tourism management.

In detail, the book is split into three sections. The first part entitled “New Products and Hospitality Models” unravels new and innovative “local knowledge” products as the result of global mobility, recent development of information platforms, and evolution of consumer’s culture. Rosso and Dominguez begin the chapter with a critical explanation of two-dimensional diagrams demonstrating the classification of hospitality models according to their physical setting and business models. In the diagram, mainstream model of accommodation represented by the traditional form of accommodation like conventional hotels/resorts, and the model based on private lodgings like apartment rentals are currently challenged by the unprecedented growth of peer-to-peer dwelling model with the “every day” character of the surroundings by which guests can freely undergo their daily routines like...
cooking or meeting the neighbors. Following that scheme, Rosso and Dominguez focus on a deeper analysis of the sociocultural and geographical drivers of home exchange, while Bialski examines another “new form of lodging in tourism” phenomenon with focus on authority of Airbnb. Gilli and Ferrari concentrate on the local hospitality initiative for small towns or villages in Italy, known as “The Diffuse Hotel” with emphasis on sustainability concept. Forno and Garibaldi explore the success of AddioPizzo Travel to promote “ethical travel” by not financing the Mafia’s system. While interesting and can inspire duplication, it is safe to say that some case discussed might only be applicable in selected regions, as acknowledged by Rosso and Dominguez, swapping home in the destinations like Asia might involve cultural point of view and complex social dimension.

Second section, “Flow and Communities”, addresses the motives, expectations, and engagements of such new travelers driven by those emerging hospitality models and collaborative and/or sharing principles. Pappalopore and Smith suggest the alteration of traditional role of host and guest where “tourists want to feel and act like locals and locals are encouraged to feel and act like tourists” (p. 97), and also propose co-creation map depicting interlinked interactions made by tourists-residents-workers in an urban tourism setting. Milne, Deuchar, and Peters thoroughly provide a fascinating detail about the Get Local program designed to build cohesive resilient communities and social-cultural capital with the help of ICT and community informatics approach in Auckland, New Zealand. Fundamentally using the real-time social media accounts, Paris and Hannam explore the application of the digital social convergence, defined as collaborative responses and actions toward disasters through various online-based channels: websites, blogs, and social media in the Chilean earthquake and the Bangkok protest. Taking place in an urban ethnic destination in Budapest, Smith and Zatori challenge the traditional understanding between host and guest, instead point out that a complex group of actors of residents, hosts, visitors, guests, domestic, and international tourists intermingle in the process of co-creating urban environments, particularly those with ethnic attribute and alternative experiences.

The last section, “Built Environments and Glocalized Spaces”, discusses the integration of such new global mobilities in local physical landscapes. Ponzini, Fotev, and Mavaracchio highlight the extensive travel of designs and architectural experts, as well as increasing financialization drive similarity of buildings and planning arrangements across cities around the world. Comparing Marina Bay Sands in Singapore to the megastructure project in Chongqing, China, and False Creek with Vancouver to Dubai, similar architectural icons are found despite different local arrangements such as the planning authority. Richards discusses the emerging rise of “megahostels” in the center of major cities, which serve as the catalyst for the redevelopment of degraded areas or the meeting place by youth travelers to engage with local residents, other travelers, or creative communities. Soro analyzes the relationship between different mobility of people and the place formation processes to understand the meaning of places by comparing four different restaurants in Barcelona, particularly in their entire settings (menu, furnishings, and the interaction happen within). Sans and Dominguez use map and quantitative statistical exercise to examine three statements highlighting benefits of Airbnb (revitalization of neighborhoods, increase and diversification of quality tourism, and supporting families) in Barcelona, and explore consequences of the widespread of Airbnb toward urban planning regulations. Ioannides, Leventis, and Petridou highlight the efforts of the alternative tour operator, namely, Alternative Tour of Athens, that actively promotes the spatial consumption of the marginalized Athens such as the soup kitchens, the homeless, and the immigrants, as well as encourages visitors to participate in the transformation of urban landscape by engaging in street art projects or volunteer tourism.

It has to be said that the book has relatively minor criticism. The editors put essential efforts to ensure the audiences, especially those with no tourism or geography background, to be knowledgeably aware of the context discussed. First, the editors provide a constructive introduction to lead the readers getting a grip on the following discussed topics. Second, to conclude the
book, the editors synthesize and bring together key trends from the topics, propose a construction of the new place-making system model, and summarize the direction for future researches. The concluding chapter is, once again, helping the readers not only to draw the connections between topics, but also to engage with critical thinking on “what is the future model of tourism and to what direction the localities of tourism will develop?”

Arya Galih Anindita
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As previous reviewers (cited on the cover) judge, this volume offers a valuable appraisal in English of recent tourism research in China, especially that published in Chinese that is otherwise less easily accessible to foreign researchers and consultants. Certainly, the work, with reservations, is a welcome initial reference for research that complements and extends those by other authors. The study is most useful in terms of its explanation of the institutional minefield in the administrative management hierarchy of tourism, primarily, in rural communities, specifically local participation within government-, enterprise-, and community-dominated tourism development. Equally, the volume describes industry and local marketing strategies, tour operations, and related research. Case studies come mainly from destinations in the south-eastern provinces. The book summarizes the scope of research on these topics and methods and related outstanding topics to be addressed rather than the research findings. Possibly the most illuminating section for an international audience is the substantive effort to clarify the epistemology and philosophical basis of tourism and tourism research in China. This draws contrasts with western approaches, noting “the amorphous and fast-changing nature” of Chinese culture and thought and the mixed influences on current developments. Overall, the commentary and critique by the authors is limited and somewhat bland. Nonetheless, their citing of the observation that “the Chinese government’s endeavor of eliminating the difference between urban and rural regions is in conflict with urban residents ‘reversed’ touristic pursuit of rurality which can only exist by preserving the difference between urban and rural” suggests the underlying intent of the volume. This and my own visits in China since the late 1980s witnessing the dwindling of distinctive historic locales in urban and rural areas translates to a dilemma that tourism in China shares with most nations with respect to domestic and international travel, and, to quote an old postcard adage, “Having a nice holiday in other peoples’ poverty.” That said, and acknowledging the scope of the work as background information, the book has little to say explicitly about tourism futures. There is, for example, almost no attention paid to current tourism trends, prospects, carrying capacity, or questions of longer-term sustainability, or methods employed in futures-oriented research. Another concern here is that the index is incomplete and in some cases misdirects (to incorrect page references) making it difficult to track even these sources. Arguably, with such reference material, a more structured tabulation is essential. Reviewing such a volume exposes another emerging problem: overviews of research, especially of such rapidly evolving themes as Chinese society and tourism rapidly become out of date, suggesting that a regularly updated electronic thesaurus would be preferable to a hard-copy. For data and projections, the Appendix summarizes sources of statistics, such as Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Chinese Tourism Academy. Unreferenced are the somewhat longer-term projections of international organizations (such as UNTWO and OECD). To check whether the near-term emphasis in this volume reflects Chinese tourism research overall, I undertook a limited key-word search of online Chinese tourism journals referenced in the volume (such as Tourism Tribune, Journal of Chinese Tourism research, that provide translated...
abstracts or full text of most articles). This suggests that there is somewhat more speculation about Chinese tourism trends and futures and, in some cases novel empirical and theoretical adaptations that might be adopted by others. In some cases, translated versions of articles may be tracked to library accessible journals. Again, this speaks to the transient value of such anthologies and the need for a more integrated adaptive online system for researching tourism research.

**Sam Cole**

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How to bring national or regional culture nearer to tourists? This is the key question that became the focus of the book *Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa*. The content of the book revolved around several authors who were looking through different lenses at this very topic, to discuss about the problematics in a theoretical dimension, as well as on specific chosen case studies. It is fascinating how this vast variety of cultures and people who are representing southern African cultures, can be explored and examined in one book. The editors of the book did an incredible work trying to display the enormous variety that is in existence in Southern Africa; accompanied with some selections of case studies, stories and background information.

The first part of the book is looking more into the theoretical understanding of cultural tourism in Southern Africa. Cases from South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana were discussed; where the authors looked for basic but crucial answers to this issue. Nearly all articles discussed the originality of culture, their products and their presentation to tourists. This can be especially observed with the recurring question that is intensely discussed of which cultural handcraft should be produced and sold to tourists. Is it good to overflow the market with products? Who should be given the entitlement to produce the products? How to assess the quality that the products should have? Who should sell and benefit from the sale of these products? No matter in which country or region, the answers to these questions are always the same. Cultural handcrafts should be produced and managed by each of their respective local cultural community. The government and local authorities should limit their engagement in the production and trade of these handcrafts. Alternatively, they should take up a mentoring position instead. Besides, big private investors should avoid from interfering with the local handcraft businesses. One example that was pointed out, discussed the quality of the handcrafted cultural goods. The suggestion by the community is that local citizens should craft their own cultural goods to control their quality and quantity.

Also, if the local cultural handcraft is one of the main concerns of local tourism organizations, the developing of regional cultural tourists’ spots is another dilemma. Several authors looked into different regions to analyze their tourist models, plans and struggles. One point, which was always brought up, is that the local community needs to be actively involved in the tourism projects. The involvement can be in two different dimensions.

The first one is that the local community should be given the opportunity to take part in leading, planning and executing these projects. Big private tourism companies or the government should have a minimal role and should only take up the position as an adviser. The discussion was: how authentic lifestyle can be presented, if the local community is not involved in the tourism projects. Local cuisines, crafts and dances can be presented to visitors through homestay projects; where tourists can first-hand experience and immerse in the magic of the cultural experience. In this way, a sustainable cultural tourism can be build up.

The second point is to involve the local community in the day-to-day routine work, which helps the regional development, as well raise the level of education and wealth of each member of the local community.

The second part of the book looked more into specific case studies of cultural tourism and their implementation of the theoretically discussed issues, from the first part of the book. All articles agreed that cultural tourism
is a market with increasing interests of attracting international tourists. However, the development and implementation is not always as simple as its theoretical counterpart. One specific example mentioned was about a region in Botswana that offers nature trips where tourists can experience the culture of local communities. The highlight of this experience is to spend the night at a camping ground. However, the tour guides faced a seemingly simple, but massive problem at the camp site. Ideally, the tour guides’ role is to present tourists the incredible wildlife experiences and bring nature nearer to them. Meanwhile, local agriculture practices impede these tour guides from performing their jobs well. Instead, these tour guides had to adapt and became forced ranchers; who helped to keep the local cowherds away from the tourists. Feedback from the tour guides and tourists are that a cultural experience of this nature trip is nearly impossible, since the local agriculture tradition of free-range holding of cows are established and the local communities do not accept boarding up fences.

Another concern which was discussed in some of the other case studies was the financial support for cultural events. A carnival show in Zimbabwe is the perfect example of it. Despite being promised budgets from the government, these budgets were limited and cut throughout the entire planning process to the day of the event itself. The event committees faced financial difficulties to invite participants and pay performers to attend the cultural carnivals. Another instance is a tourist spot project in Namibia, where a private investor was banned from supporting the tourism project. This is because the financial gains from the project barely benefitted the local community and were rather limited. These investors do not give the local community the opportunity to gain profit out of these projects nor do they offer them leadership and management positions. Furthermore, the promised educational development of hired local staff were frequently delayed or ended up canceled. Moreover, if they earned salaries, which were usually higher than the local standard, the development for a brighter future as a skilled worker was still not provided. Both examples showcased that financial issues are present for running a project. The development and involvement of the local community existed, but strategic plans for improving the situation were not imbedded yet.

An additionally discussed problem is that of cultural differences. Again, the case study of the cultural carnivals in Zimbabwe showcased this dilemma. On the one side, people want to see cultural performances and yearn to experience different and exotic cultures. On the other hand, they tend to have a strong aversion against the unknown and certain unacceptable cultural differences. In this specific case was the discussion whether invited South American (Brazilian) dancers are allowed to dance in their national carnival costumes in a Zimbabwe city. The concern is that the covering of “sensitive” body parts is a must in Zimbabwe culture and nudity cannot be accepted whereas, in the South American culture, nudity is differently defined. I believe that the question of whether or not to be exposed to foreign cultures and the question of accepting exoticism vs eroticism is still an unresolved issue; as well how much change that is made to the local cultures can possibly be accepted, to accommodate the needs of globalization.

One last problem, which was discussed throughout several case studies, was the issue of goods commodification. Different cases followed up the theoretical discussion of the first part of the book of how authentic cultural experiences should be. Two examples from Botswana and South Africa presented their understanding of commodification. Tourists want to experience the authentic lifestyles and be exposed to the local tribes’ cultures of these regions. Hence, the “westernization” of tourism and tourist products is not favored by the local community and by the tourists themselves. In both cases, the point was made really clear, that culture can be only experienced and understood, if it is kept authentic.

Overall, it can be said that the book is a great reference to open people’s eyes on current cultural tourism issues in Southern Africa. The book also discussed on specific cases of how problems were addressed and tried to be solved. Due to that, the book is an extremely important reference for further discussion and development of cultural tourism; especially for the Africans. On top of that, the book can definitely assist in future projects and initiatives, to ensure a higher
rate of success, as it emphasizes on the concept of authenticity.

Throughout the book, cultural tourism issues were theoretically named and discussed, as well as connections were created to reality with samples of case studies. However, the important step of suggesting possible solutions and examples of good case practices that have been successful in resolving similar issues are missing. It would have been better, if the authors did not stop at the point of highlighting the issues; but instead explored additional implementations to resolve their discussed cultural tourism issues. In this way, the book can be taken as a better and more practical guidance for further development of these discussed projects, as well as for future projects, which are in the midst of the planning stages.

Christian Kahl

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One of the recurring themes in tourism studies is the notion that tourism is a vehicle for economic development. This edited book makes a valuable contribution by exploring the important concepts and issues that are linked with the perception that tourism can be a vehicle for leading countries out of poverty. While edited volumes, in my opinion, are not usually the most readable or useful types of books, this edited volume is thorough and extensive, giving anyone who is interested in the issue of tourism and economic development issues a great deal to read through.

The book is divided into three different parts. Part 1 deals with the conceptual perspectives of the relationship between tourism and development. This first part is composed of only two chapters, one exploring the relationship between tourism and development and the other exploring the evolution of development theory and tourism. Part 2 is composed of seven chapters and deals with the relationship between development and tourism. Part 3 is also composed of seven chapters and deals with barriers and challenges to tourism development. In addition, there is an introduction, explaining the intention of the book and explaining the logic of the delineation of the book into three different parts. The last chapter, one chapter in Part 3, is a conclusion authored by the editors, explaining a great deal about the need for this second edition, mentioning the improvements to the new edition, and highlighted how this book contributes to the discussion of tourism and development.

The book has many of the features one would expect, such as biographical information about the 14 contributors to the book as well as an index and extensive reference list. For those who would like an extensive list of resources on the topic of development and tourism, this 71-page long reference list may be in and of itself a helpful resource. The 16 chapters contain 21 figures and 21 tables, adding to the visual information that breaks up the monotony of the prose in the chapters and summarizes a great deal of information or illustrates a point in an easy-to-understand way. In addition, the front cover is attractive, dominated by green and blue with what appears to be a stock photo of several cruise ships.

There are some definite strengths to this book. First, it is a very thorough book that includes the perspectives of many respective researchers in the field. Anyone doing serious research in the field would recognize many of the names that appear as authors, including Richard Sharpley, Dallen Timothy, and C. Michael Hall, just to name a few. To have these respected and accomplished authors contribute to the book is nothing to sneeze at. In addition, by having so many different authors look into the relationship between tourism and development in a very mature and deep way and from different perspectives is quite helpful. For example, the chapter on human rights and tourism development could be used as a good primer on human rights, explaining the concept of human rights and then going on to explain the relationship between human rights and tourism development. There are several of the chapters that contain information that would make the chapter serve as a useful primer for other topics such as international studies or development studies, since it is presume that most of us who research tourism do not have a background in international relations, development, or human rights.

There are some critical comments that could be made about this book but they tend not to be very deep. One thing that seems to be missing is a chapter that would deal with the history of tourism as a vehicle for development. While the book does have chapters that occasionally deal with this, the book mostly looks at tourism and...
development from a theoretical perspective. In addition, I am not sure what the cover photo has to do with the topic of the book and I feel that a more relevant cover photo would have been a better choice. Although it is pleasant to see cruise ships and blue skies, I am not sure what this has to do with the topic and would imagine that there would be a better way to convey the concept of the book in a visual way. Also, the decision to place references at the end of the work in one large reference section rather than have references at the end of each chapter is sometimes a bit inconvenient for readers such as myself, as I prefer to look at a shorter list that is more compact in terms of subject matter covered and is only a few pages long rather than 71 pages long.

All-in-all, the book has a great deal of value, although I would think that it would only be accessible to a fairly limited audience. For those of us interested in the future, it is hard to get a great deal of value out of this book, as the frame of reference is largely historical and theoretical, although the value of this is somewhat rectified by the fact that the content gives thorough and intelligent background information for the many political and ecological things that we are concerned about in the future (poverty, environment, climate change, and sustainability). While many of the chapters are wonderful introductions to subject matter that most people in the field know little to nothing about, the complexity of the language and depth of discussion would make it hard for most people who have not completed a bachelor’s level education to comprehend. As such, though, it would be a very useful and helpful book for those teaching in related issues at the MA level or PhD level. If I were teaching a course at the post-graduate level in tourism and development, I would want this and would use it as a central text, as deals with such issues as human rights, sustainability, and poverty reduction in a sophisticated and intelligent manner, appropriate for that level. However, the language and sophistication of the concepts would likely make the book inaccessible for most people. This is not light reading. But it is a nifty and thorough reference book containing primers on topics/areas of study in which most in the field do not have a strong background.

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Ethnic and Minority Cultures as Tourist Attractions

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Many forms of tourism facilitate engagement with the “other” for both hosts and guests or, more correctly, for service providers and their customers, as well as for residents and other users of destination areas. Sometimes these interactions promote information exchange, understanding and mutual tolerance, but at other times they are uncomfortable and reinforce stereotypes. At the time of writing this review, contentious elections have taken place in both North America and Europe, and hitherto sometimes muted concerns about migration, terrorism, racism, sexism, religion, identity, inequality and power relationships have surfaced and are receiving enormous attention by the media, both traditional and social. Thus, the topic of this book is of immense current concern and the political climate is one in which changes may be anticipated in relationships between majority and minority peoples. The role of tourism in mediating contentious relationships, therefore, should be of substantial current interest.

Urban tourism, in spite of its magnitude, has been slow to gain attention commensurate with its importance. The editors of this work claim that ethnic and minority tourism have attracted more attention in rural as opposed to urban settings. There is some justification for the former claim regarding ethnicity, but less for the latter for gay and lesbian tourism, for example, has received almost no attention outside of urban settings. Some may argue that ethnic clusters, slums and LGBTQ communities are sufficiently different as places and tourist destinations that they merit separate coverage, whereas others may see strong similarities and appreciate the diversity that their inclusion brings to the book. Nevertheless, few will deny that these topics are current and that their discussion is timely with considerable implications for urban landscapes and lives, as well as tourism.

The authors claim justifiably that the book examines “from various perspectives the global phenomenon of ethnic, migrant and minority communities that face or choose tourism development” (p. 215). They also identify 11 key issues that are the focus of attention (p. 13). These range from theoretical developments to past and present models of urban policy and planning, and recommendations that focus upon guiding the development of ethnic and minority communities. These tasks are addressed by academic authors through 11 main chapters plus a brief introduction and conclusion. In the end, the editors admit that there are both similarities and differences, communities are complex and not homogeneous, outcomes are contingent and there is no “grand narrative”.

The work is divided into four main sections: sociocultural developments, community perceptions, visitor experiences and development policies. Inevitably, the contents of these sections are not distinct for, as the editors acknowledge, in reality issues are interrelated and overlap. Each section consists of three and, in one case two, chapters, and is introduced by short but useful sections by the editors. The contents are varied in both topics and locations so that it is likely that even the most well-informed reader will be exposed to new materials. Most chapters introduce topics and illustrate these by case studies. For example, Asian identities are explored in London, followed by a discussion of Roma tourism in Hungary, guided tours in Brussels, intercultural change in multiple locations, place perceptions in a settlement in Israel, slum tourism in Mumbai and also in Rio in India and Brazil, respectively, Chinatowns in Australia, ethnic tourism in China, Jewish culture and tourism in Budapest and, finally, the gay quarter in Cape Town, South Africa.

Most cases provide a brief historical context, with reference to antecedents such as colonialism but the emphasis is on the contemporary and the recent past. Regarding future tourism, the topic is not considered explicitly but is implicit in the discussions of...
planning and policy, where greater involvement of minorities is seen as a widespread requirement.

The work contains no photographs and very little quantitative information. The topics would seem to lend themselves to the former. The latter reflects an emphasis on concepts and ideas, which is a strength of the book, and will mean that it will have a longer life because graphical and statistical information can become dated very quickly. However, it also means that in most cases one does not learn exactly how many business are involved, how many visitors are attracted, how much they spend, or what proportions of residents hold particular views or, indeed, exact definitions of study areas. This is acceptable in a book but would be less so in journal articles. Such precise information is difficult to acquire.

The editors have done an excellent job in ensuring that there is consistency in style among chapters. Their own contributions provide useful conceptual discussions rather than superficial descriptions of the contents of chapters as is common in many edited books.

As I read the book, I identified a number of topics that are glossed over, such as the role festivals and special events, and the documentation and interpretation of landscape change. These and other research needs are identified very briefly in the conclusion.

Overall, I found the book easy to read, free of unnecessary jargon, with a focus on important themes, illustrated by a wide range of examples from many parts of the world. It is a very useful and timely contribution to the literature, could be used as a course text, and provides a foundation on which others can certainly build.

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Demystifying Theories in Tourism Research

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This book published by CABI is designed to explore the theoretical frameworks applied in tourism research. The book is organised in five parts. The editors have included the 15 chapters devoted to theoretical perspectives on tourism planning and management, theoretical perspectives on tourism marketing and communications, theoretical perspectives on host communities and guest, and a variety of other related subjects. Unsurprisingly, the focus of the book is clearly centred on describing and analysing the current state of theories used in a tourism research. In the introduction part, the editors open a debate on the use of the theories in tourism studies and highlight the uncertainties in this field. The opening argument of the book is that due to the complexities of the tourism research field, some researchers believe in the existence of "tourism research theories" and others borrow theories from other disciplines.

At the beginning of the book, the editors elucidate that this book "attempts" to "demystify" theories and models which guide inquiry and analysis in tourism studies through the provision of a range of topics relative to tourism studies that have applied various theories or conceptual frameworks to address tourism problems and issues. Each chapter describes a research project and illustrates the theory(ies) applied to address the issues related to the project. Chapters begin with a real-life scenario, which outlines some of the issues, challenges or ideas that can provide context for developing a research question or idea in the tourism field. Following, underpinned by the theory the research context of the particular project is explained. Then, the author(s) engages in the discussion of theory(ies) relevant for each particular case. Finally, each chapter concludes with a look at the future with respect to the theory or theoretical frameworks discussed in the chapter.

The book provides useful explanations and definitions of the different terminologies and concepts related to theories in tourism research. Individual authors elaborated on many theories from various disciplines throughout the book. This book definitely offers a broad range of theoretical perspectives and frameworks which could be used to study, investigate and research various issues in tourism. This book introduces readers to the theories and helps to establish ways of thinking or lenses for interpretation of what is happening or the issues related to tourism phenomena. Some of the authors suggest that it is important to establish theoretical links to other disciplines as tourism activity has strong ties with economic, socio-cultural and environmental issues in the society. Thus, tourism research can not exist in isolation.

In terms of the focus of this journal, that of future related issues, in each chapter the book provides a comprehensive outlook on the future of the tourism research field with respect to the theory or theoretical frameworks discussed in the chapter. Additionally, Part 5 – Conclusion summarises key themes and findings with a view to the future and the new opportunities for tourism researchers. This book also introduces novel approaches to the tourism industry, such as innovation theory, which may help to address innovation in the context of destinations, sustainability, product development, stakeholder and actor networks as well as visitor behaviour.

The advantage of this book is that it offers a very useful oversight of the complexities of theories in tourism studies and provides a broad category of knowledge domains of the tourism field. Most importantly, this edited text is delivered in a clear and consistent style appropriate for an introductory level. The layout of each chapter is interesting and visually engaging, the uniform layout through...
each chapter makes understanding complex issues easier. In terms of the benefits for students, each chapter of the book starts with the objectives and finishes with thought-provoking questions that make readers feel not bored after reading it. Throughout the book, chapters contain helpful diagrams and pictures, relevant case studies provide concrete examples and a chapter’s suggestion on future use of particular theory, all aid student comprehension. As with many edited books with multiple authors, in order to help the reader understand the connections across the chapters, an index of the topics covered is very helpful. Furthermore, in the appendix, this book offers brief reviews of the additional theories that have been applied in the context of tourism.

The criticisms of the book are all relatively minor. Overall, the book presents separate research projects, and after reading a book as a whole there is an impression of lack of integrity and coherence between chapters. However, depending on the use of the book this disadvantage may not be crucial for a reader. The book also gives the impression that the authors mainly were involved in mainstream business-related tourism research projects and have neglected the critical aspects of tourism, core for tourism studies (Ateljevic et al., 2012; Ateljevic et al., 2007).

Finally, in terms of a final recommendation, the book should prove to be useful for those tourism students who are interested in the understanding tourism research theories in general, but also for those academics and practitioners who are interested in adopting a particular theoretical framework into another context relevant for their tourism project. Including pedagogical features throughout, this book is an accessible approach to a range of controversial and complex issues of tourism theories and an excellent supplementary reading with practical case studies examples for any research methods book.

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References

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“Yellow Tourism” – crime and corruption in tourism

The 1st Yellow Tourism Conference, Corfu, Greece, 27-29 April 2017.

The first International Yellow Tourism Conference was held over three days in Corfu in April 2017 (Katsios, 2016; Gretzel, 2017). Tourism sector growth over the last years has been accompanied with a critical discussion over its economic and developmental potential and the corresponding externalities. Crime and Corruption are not merely holiday themes (e.g. “Dark Tourism”), but also constitute a bitter reality counting many victims.

Tourism is a globalised business sector impacting the livelihood of millions of people in all parts of the world. As any other “big business”, where significant circuits of capital and information, and power imbalances exist, tourism is fertile ground for corruption and economic crime. The globalised scope of the tourism industry renders it into a very challenging field of action for national legislators and law enforcement agencies. Novel tourist experiences, interactions with unknown environments and places, and a sense of freedom from care represent core elements of the holiday experience. For these very reasons, holidays inherently entail a number of dangers for tourists, rendering them vulnerable to crime. Conversely, the anonymity that is combined with the consumerist/hedonistic mindset of many tourists, may well lead to irresponsible and even criminal behaviour towards locals and others.

With tourism’s increasing importance as a strategy for economic development (especially for developing as well as post-industrial economies), countering corruption is becoming an increasingly relevant priority. The impact of corruption on tourist-income distribution and allocation, as well as its role of contemporary mass-tourism supply-chain structures and power balances (i.e. between source markets and destinations), is eroding the justification basis for tourism development altogether. Various media-reported events, namely, anti-tourism sentiments in the Netherlands, anti-cruise protests in Venice and Dubrovnik, value-added tax increases in the Greek islands and legal disputes between local authorities with online tourism intermediaries, are all symptomatic of an increasingly questionable business system. Indeed, corruption is neither unique nor novel to tourism. It is however underresearched, underrepresented and highly fragmented within the scientific tourism literature.

The aim of this inaugural conference was to create an interdisciplinary “research-space” for understanding tourism-related corruption, whilst initiating the formation of a corresponding international network of tourism academics and practitioners. The main theme of the conference was coined as “Yellow Tourism”, symbolically drawing from Dostoevsky’s novel Crime & Punishment, in which the colour yellow is associated with corruption and decay.

Held in the historical Ionian Academy building of the Ionian University, the venue of the oldest modern Greek university, this inaugural conference aimed at initiating and encouraging open discussions between academics of different academic disciplines such as: law, economics, humanities and tourism, and professionals representing anti-corruption and crime-prevention organisations. Each conference day ended with a social activity programme, including local specialty cuisine restaurants and beach-side venues. Those events supported the creation of an informal atmosphere, which, in turn, enabled intense and controversial discussions during the conference tracks.

A total of approximately 60 delegates, representing 19 different universities and institutions, attended the conference’s three tracks:

1. corruption, corporate social responsibility and destination reputation;
2. corruption and the holiday experience; and
3. tourism corruption, crime, heritage and governance.

The track sessions were held successively (i.e. no parallel sessions) in order to avoid “overdispersal” of the audience. Each of the conference’s tracks entailed six to eight paper presentations. Each paper was presented for 15-20 minutes allowing for a 10-minute discussion. The 24 papers presented, by a total of 34 speakers, as well as the enveloping discussion could be summarised under the following themes.

Multi-attribution of tourism corruption

Corruption in the holiday domain has indeed many facets and cannot be reduced to its macro-level interpretation (e.g. tax evasion, money laundering, nepotism, bribery). In tourism, corruption is readily visible in the daily holiday experience, and it directly affects the satisfaction, integrity and even safety of the individuals involved in it (Papathanasis, 2016). Exemplary cases and examples supporting this statement were presented and discussed during the conference and included:

- conflict and fraud during holidays (e.g. sunbed availability disputes, counterfeit products);
- criminal and negligence offences at the expense of tourists (e.g. missing cruise passengers, sexual offences during holidays, tourist substance abuse, misbehaviour and vandalism);
- exploitation and mistreatment of service workers (e.g. guide abuse, cruise staff exploitation);
- deterioration of heritage, cultural and natural resources (e.g. destruction of cultural property, antiquity trafficking, tourism/maritime spatial-(mis)planning); and
- securitisation of tourism (interpretation of security measures, threat/security perception).

Particularly interesting, and partially an explanation for wide scope and variability of the cases and examples reported, was the finding that tourists are very likely attribute various holiday service-encounter failures to corruption. Corruption may or may not be directly related to incompetence, lack of professionalism, expectation failure and/or criminal intent. Nevertheless, it appears that, from an individual tourist perspective, it is a synonym and underlying cause for experienced mishaps during a holiday (e.g. neglected heritage sites). It follows that corruption and its reporting (e.g. corruption perceptions index) have a perhaps underestimated effect on a destination’s reputation and may well play a significant role in tourists’ holiday selection process.

Tourism corrosion 2.0

It being a service bundle, tourism consumption is characterised by intangibility and inseparability (i.e. concurrent consumption and production). This, in addition to its cost and information complexity, render the booking of a risky transaction. In this sense, reputation and brand image are highly relevant for the tourism sector; particularly when it comes to health and safety. The proliferation of the internet and social media has created a new reality for companies who have a vested interest to contain the publicity of crime and corruption incidents. The line between reputation management and unethical/corruption practice is rather thin. Arguably, the “age of transparency” has arrived and victims, as well as non-profit organisations, have now the means to expose malignant practice sand exercise pressure on tourism companies. Yet, there is another side to the coin. The availability of online published statistical data and information on tourism-related crime rates has been criticised as limited and rather inaccurate (i.e. biased) due to methodological and legal classification/definition issues. This, combined with victims’ comparatively limited online presence, may lead to underrepresentation of “yellow tourism phenomena” in the web. In this respect, the financial leverage and digital expertise of tourism/cruise corporations have been characterised as the source of an imbalance of “online visibility” power and “platform bias”.

Institutional weakness and the tourism system

At a macro-level, corruption has been associated with a number of economic indicators related to tourism development (e.g. tourism income, investments in tourism, socio-cultural and environmental
impacts) and the actual influence of corruption levels mainly in terms of weak law and inefficient
government to tourism. In addition, during the conference, an inverse relationship was established
between eTourism indicators and corruption. This suggests that the digitalisation of tourism and its
transparency potential may well be an effective, medium-term counter-measure for corruption.
Yet, the digitalisation of tourism cannot be separated from the general level of “knowledge-based”
economic development. A transformation towards a knowledge-based economy is highly
dependent on political will, incentives/constraints structures and the effectiveness of the overall
institutional matrix. Tourism corruption can be perceived as contributing to a decelerated economic
development, and as symptomatic of it. The globalised nature of tourism and the corresponding
legislative complexity of tourism pose a considerable challenge in this respect.

Corruption “glocality”
The last theme emerging from this conference is related to the previous ones already mentioned.
Countering corruption in tourism requires awareness at a global level and institutionally led counter-
measures at a national/local level. The first aspect is undermined by both the multi-attribution of
corruption and the visibility of the phenomenon (Corruption 2.0) in the context of tourism. The second
precondition is hindered by the institutional challenges facing those economies mostly affected by
corruption and its impact on tourism development potential. An analogy used during the conference
was that of a “broken window in a classroom”. The ones enduring the cold and noise resulting from
the broken window do not have the mandate and means to repair it. Those who do (i.e. in our
analogy, the school authorities) are simply neither aware of a broken window nor of its implications
for those attending the class. In short, the ones who are aware of it cannot fix it, whilst the ones who can
are not aware of it. Raising general awareness on the scope and impact of tourism-related corruption
whilst supporting and enabling national/local tourism authorities to counteract it may well be the most
pragmatic and effective approach. Here, research and academic institutions can play a decisive role.
The aforementioned themes can be readily translated into a number of significant and relevant
questions for the academic community. More importantly, this inaugural conference provided a
thematic framework for synthesising, an otherwise fragmented, “body of tourism knowledge”, and
providing a connection between tourism-related themes such as crime/security, heritage protection,
health and safety, destination reputation, holiday quality, sustainability and economic impact.
The conference’s outcome demonstrated that exploration and further research in “Yellow Tourism”
can significantly benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach, extending beyond the social science
inheritance and “managerialism” of mainstream tourism research. Cross-fertilising tourism research
with academic disciplines, namely, criminology, law, information science, political science, led to
novel and highly relevant research contributions. Concluding, it could be stated that this conference
inspired a number ideas and resulted in unconventional questions, which merit further work in the
area. On this basis, the organisers and the delegates all expressed their intention to pursue the
exploration and establishment of this tourism sub-domain, by transforming it to a conference series
and expanding its inter-disciplinary network of researchers.

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Further reading
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Journal of Tourism Futures

The Future of City Tourism

Guest Editors: Albert Postma, Dorina-Maria Buda and Katharina Gugerell

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Book review - Tourism Research in China: Themes and Issues
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Conference report - “Yellow Tourism” – crime and corruption in tourism
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