Urban Tourism – The End of the Honeymoon?

3rd Global Summit on City Tourism
Barcelona, 9 and 10 December 2014
Barcelona, Spain

Naked Italians spark protests against antics of drunken tourists in Barcelona
Locals take to the streets demanding that authorities do more to combat antisocial behaviour of visitors to the city

Ashifa Kassam in Madrid
The Guardian, Thursday 21 August 2014 18.51 BST
Berlin, Germany

Hilfe, die Touris kommen!
Welche Auswirkungen hat der Tourismus auf die Wohngemeinde?


am Montag, den 28. Februar 2011
um 19.00 Uhr
Grüne, Gumpendorfer Straße 33-34

The Passport blog

Berlin versus tourists
15 August 2011 | By Stephen Evans

Tourists take a photo with the Buddy Bear sculptures on Berlin's Kuferstrasse Boulevard. The bears are an anniversary of the city's most famous shopping street. (Reuters)

3rd Global Summit on City Tourism
Barcelona, 9 and 10 December 2014
Kerala

New York

Lissabon

Shanghai

STORIES

Angry Shanghai Residents Dump Water on Noisy Foreigners

by Li on Thursday, March 21, 2013

540 comments
Protest and Resistance in the Tourist City

An International Symposium

27-30 November 2014

Center for Metropolitan Studies
Hardenbergstr. 16-18 | D - 10623 Berlin
The rise of ‘anti-tourism’ mobilizations around the globe...

...involves instances of ‘othering’, scapegoating, and demonization...

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...but must not be reduced to the same!

Dear new Berliners and short term visitors (tourists),

we invite you to join us in our struggle against the exploding rents here in Berlin.

As you might have noticed Berlin is quite a place to be these days. We, who have been living here for decades, are facing the side effects of this international attention: our rent is rising rapidly and a lot of people are being displaced. Our neighborhoods are being transformed into superficial entertainment parks with an infrastructure which only to a minimum fulfills the needs of old Berliners.

We believe that visitors and new Berliners could themselves do something against these processes that they are part of. They could raise their voice against the city government, its failed city development and the tourism industry. City marketing which treats the city and its inhabitants as a brand is not in our interest. "be Berlin", the city's marketing slogan, has a bitter side effect for a lot of people. We invite you to join us in our upcoming demonstrations.

Show your solidarity! Let's struggle together for a good life for everyone - without displacement, low wages and racist discrimination! Spread the word and come with your friends!

Saturday / August 18th 2012
Saturday / September 1st 2012
Saturday / September 15th 2012

I ❤️ Berlin

JUNTA DE VECINOS PARQUE FORESTAL

INVITA A TODOS LOS VECINOS RESIDENTES Y COMERCANTES A UNA CHARLA IMPARTIDA POR SERNATUR

CONCIENCIA TURISTICA

EL TURISMO PUEDE CAMBIAR NUESTRA VIDA DE BARRIO, ASPECTOS POSITIVOS Y NEGATIVOS DE ESTA ACTIVIDAD EN LOS VECINOS Y COMERCIO.

PARTICIPA, INFORMATE ¡TE ESPERAMOS!

MIERCOLES 11 A LAS 15:00 HRS.
CAFÉ DEL BIOGRAFO
VILLA VICENCIO Y LASTARRIA
JVPARQUEFORESTAL@GMAIL.COM

Berlin

Santiago de Chile

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The struggle surrounding tourism - key sources of contention:

1) Immediate ‘nuisances’

- Traffic congestion (buses, bikes, pedestrians)
- Noise in areas of high concentration of bars, clubs, outdoor spaces etc. patroned by tourists
- Overcrowding and deterioration of public spaces used by locals
- Litter
- Homogenization and/or privatization of public spaces (café terraces)
- Uncivil behaviour’: urinating in public, nudity, drunken assault
- Prostitution, drugs and illegal alcohol sales
The struggle surrounding tourism - key sources of contention:

2) Structural

- Transformation of retail and commercial uses to cater for the visitor economy via rent increases, land use changes, building conversions:
  
  • closure or displacement of businesses serving local needs or productive businesses
  
  • replacement by tourist stores, upmarket, “trendy” bars…
  
  • rise in consumer prices for certain goods

  ➔ “Retail gentrification” through touristification (for mass market or for top end of market)

  ➔ Emblematic of that process: Las Ramblas, Barcelona / Oranienburgerstrasse, Berlin
Oranienburgerstrasse, Berlin Mitte - an extreme example of “commercial gentrification”: proportion of tourist and entertainment-related uses from 10 to 80 % of the ground floor space (Richter 2010: 106–107)
The struggle surrounding tourism - key sources of contention:

2) Structural

- Opening of hotels and hostels: potential for displacement effects
“Hotelification” - (Affordable) housing is needed but hotel and hostel development is in many parts of Berlin where highest profits are to be made...
The struggle surrounding tourism - key sources of contention:

2) Structural

- Opening of hotels and hostels: potential for displacement effects

- In many cities: huge increase in tourist apartments, both legal and illegal: conversion of residential apartments into short-term holiday rentals by local / foreign owners

  • + additional rooms/apartments offered on an occasional basis to visitors on websites like AirBnB

  • A lucrative and attractive investment strategy post-recession… (higher returns)

  • A key bone of contention: immediate nuisances + contribution to increases in rents, housing shortage for locals and gentrification… but also a source of income for locals
A key bone of contention: Huge growth of tourist apartments, both legal and illegal: conversion of residential apartments into short-term holiday rentals by local / foreign buyers
The struggle surrounding tourism - key sources of contention:

3) Cities‘ approach to tourism (development)

- Often little framing of tourism in terms of its
  - contribution to urban development; the impacts of tourism on residents & neighborhoods etc.
  - equity impacts (who bears the costs and benefits from the visitor economy?)

- Few opportunities for public participation and other forms of active citizenship
The city‘s approach to tourism

‘The task of the state is to improve the general conditions for the activities of the private sector as a precondition for employment effects, influx of purchasing power and tax income. The task of the private sector is to initiate and develop self-supporting economic cycles with ideas and capital’ (p. 5)
The struggle surrounding tourism - key sources of contention:

4) ‘Cultural Commodification‘ and detrimental effects for tourism itself ("tourism can kill tourism")

- Concerns about the commodification, and as a result, exploitation, distortion, and, possibly, loss of cultural and public spaces, local identity etc. (⇒ ‘touristification‘)

- A concern about the gradual erosion of precisely those qualities that constituted the original attraction for visiting consumers in the first place (e.g. cities‘ and/or city areas‘ distinctive social and cultural mix, counter- or alternative cultural spaces etc.)
4) ‘Cultural Commodification‘ and detrimental effects for tourism itself ("tourism can kill tourism")

“The tourist destroys what he seeks by finding it”  
(Hans Magnus Enzensberger)
The Life and Death of a 'Cool' City
Which metropolis will Berlin's tourist hordes descend on next?
Urban Tourism – The End of the Honeymoon?

...not necessarily but certainly a call for action!

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1. Tourism is much more than an economic sector; it has also emerged as a key driver of contemporary urban change and needs to be recognized and dealt with as such politically!
2. Recognizing tourism as an important force of contemporary urban change requires to come to terms with increasingly complex realities that have come to characterize contemporary tourism.

- UNWTO refers to urban tourism as “trips taken by travellers to cities or places of high population density. The duration of these trips is usually short (one to three days) therefore it can be said that urban tourism is closely linked to the short – breaks market“ (UNWTO 2012).

- Contemporary tourism involves a lot of other activities than city breaks (that are arguably most relevant to the hotel industry)

- Many visitors, esp. in larger cities, challenge conventional wisdom about who tourists are, what they do, and where they are to be found

- Increasingly blurred boundary between
  - tourism and other forms of temporary migration and mobility
  - tourism and other forms of leisure and place consumption (Selby 2004)

Recognizing tourism as an important force of contemporary urban change requires to come to terms with increasingly complex realities that have come to characterize contemporary tourism.
2. Recognizing tourism as an important force of contemporary urban change requires to come to terms with increasingly complex realities that have come to characterize contemporary tourism.

...visits from a different neighborhood...
...lives around the corner...
...Erasmus student...
...from Barcelona, regularly in Berlin for work & leisure
...lives in London but owns a flat in Kreuzberg...
...here for the weekend...
...here for the weekend...
- Berlin a case in point: some discussed phenomena and trends can be attributed to tourism in the narrow sense (e.g. “hotelification”)…

- Others rather owed to a parallel *differentiation* and *de-differentiation* of tourism activity (cf. i.a. Urry 2001; Hall, Williams und Lew 2004)

- Tourism only one of many mobilities: second homeowners, exchange students, mobile academics (including urban researchers!), ‘yukis‘ (young urban creative internationals) and other ‘migratory elites’; residents behaving ‘*as if tourists*’ (Clark 2001) etc.

- From visitors and hosts to ‘city users’ (see Martinotti 1999)?

- From ‘conventional‘ tourism to ‘post‘ or ‘new‘ tourism?
3. Tourism itself is neither good nor bad, but how it is governed/directed can have positive or negative consequences

- Gap between rhetoric and reality: tourism both priority and afterthought in many cities

  - Evidence of more (government) interference, esp. funding, for tourism promotion and development
  - Evidence of less/stagnant (government) planning, and policy (partially owed to the privatization or corporatisation of tourism agencies and boards)

- Contestations of, and conflicts over tourism also a consequence of lacunae in relation to tourism management/planning?

  ➔ At least in Berlin: the organized tourism industry as troubleshooter with no real mandate – let alone resources – to ‘shoot the troubles‘; discontent on part (of parts) of the tourism industry
‘The City has failed us’ – Andreas Becker (Circus Hostel, Berlin)

Localized conflicts surrounding urban tourism...

*“Our City is not a commodity”*

...arguably also a question of management and administration but must not be reduced to the same!
Localized conflicts surrounding urban tourism should also remind us....

- that ‘selling’ cities is a sensitive business (and cities must not be treated as ordinary ‘products‘)

- that growth for growth’s sake is not a good basis for tourism policy, esp. since
  
  ▪ there is no simple linear relationship between the growth of tourism and the benefits, be they economic, social or environmental, for the whole community and
  
  ▪ different groups will be affected differently by tourism
  
  ▪ tourism has so much more to offer than what can be measured economically

- that residents want – and should have a right to – be involved in conversations surrounding their cities’ development as a destination!
“Above all, tourism is political. The scapes and flows caused by people on the move is hugely significant in terms of environmental, socio-economic, and political implications” (Burns and Novelli 2007) and to deem something political implies that it should be open to public discussion...

Thank you & see you soon in Berlin!

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