

SPREADING TOURISM ANTAGONISM AND THE MYTH OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

International Conference on
"TOURISM VIEWS TRANSITION"

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Overtourism and Tourism Antagonism

Two sides of the same coin?

The new buzzword: „OVERTOURISM“

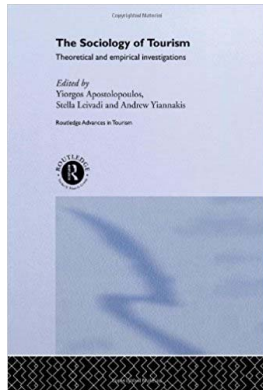


Why we discuss „OVERTOURISM“?



Because we experience tourism antagonism!

Tourism Antagonism: a new Phenomenon?



Antagonism is certainly found in many touristic areas (Noronha 1977: 43-46, Knox 1978: 14-20), **particularly where tourist densities have increased rapidly** (Greenwood 1972: 90; V.L. Smith 1977a: 57), **and the tourist industry has exacerbated the socioeconomic and cultural differences between locals and tourists or engendered competition over scarce local resources** (Jordan 1980: 43; Kent 1975; Knox 1978:14-15).

Source: Eric Cohen: The Sociology of Tourism Approaches, issues and findings, p.58

Tourism Antagonism: a new Phenomenon?



Doxey's Irritation Index

Level of Irritation	Destination Responses to Tourism
Euphoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of excitement and anticipation • Informal contact with tourists
Apathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More formal contact with tourists • Tourism seen as a source of income and investment
Annoyance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents begin to show misgivings about tourism industry due to increasing numbers, external investment and infrastructure
Antagonism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritations: expressed verbally and physically • Tourists: seen as cause of the problem

Antagonism:

The irritations have become more overt. People now see the tourist as the harbinger of all that is bad. ,Taxes have gone up because of the tourists'. ,They have no respect for property'. ,They have corrupted the youth'. ,They are bent on destroying all that is fine in our town'. ,Mutual politness has now given way to antagonism and the tourist is ripped off'. (Doxey 1976,: 26-27)

Tourism Antagonism: a new Phenomenon?



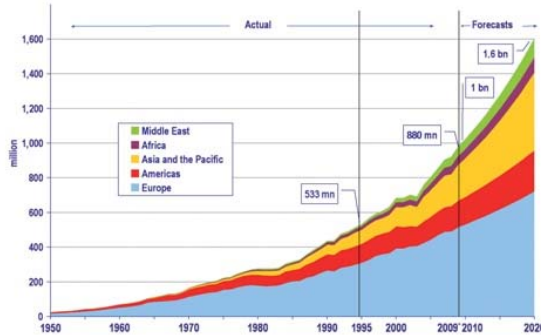
- Already the 70ies and the 80ies have seen a tourism antagonism debate!
- Critical tourism scholars have adressed the topic for around 30 years.
- With the increasing prominence of the sustainable development paradigm in the 90ies, there seems to be a decreasing debate on negative tourism impacts, as well as on tourism antagonism.
- So how has the sustainability paradigm changed the tourism industry?

Tourism Development and the Sustainability Paradigm

A controlled and sustainable development?



„Sustainable“ Tourism Growth



„Sustainable“ Tourism Growth



Since 1990...

- continuing growth in international tourism (2017: 1,322 million)
- continuing emergence of new destinations; more than one third of all nations receive at least 1 million tourists
- emergence of new markets
- growth underpinned by liberalisation, cheaper transport costs and the logic of the market: sustainable development vs. market economy / democratic polity
- increasing dependence on tourism as an agent of economic development
- limited evidence of adoption of ‘responsible’ tourist behaviour

Sustainable (tourism) development is



1. **Ambiguous:** what should be developed? Against what measures? Whose responsibility?

...‘the power of the concept of sustainability lies in the discourses surrounding it, rather than in any shared substantive, or heuristic, value it may have’ (Redcliff 2005: 218)

Sustainable (tourism) development is



1. **Ambiguous:** what should be developed? Against what measures? Whose responsibility?
2. **Hypocritical:** eco-speak, green-washing, assuaging guilt
3. **Delusional:** (a) suggests that sustainability is possible; (b) diverts attention from the ‘real’ issues
4. **Western-centric.....**

‘There is a lot to suggest that, because the origins of ecotourism lie in Western ideology and values, and its practice is frequently dominated by Western interests, the advocacy of ecotourism as a universal template arises from Western hegemony’ (Cater 2006)

The everyday reality of tourism



As a major, global activity, tourism consumes resources, creates waste and requires significant infrastructural development.

- the development of tourism may, potentially, result in the over-exploitation of resources
- in order to survive and grow, the tourism industry has to compete for scarce resources
- the tourism industry is predominantly made up of smaller, private businesses striving for short-term profit maximisation
- as a global, multi-sectoral industry, tourism is impossible to control.
- 'tourists are consumers, not anthropologists'.
- most tourists seek relaxation, fun, escape and entertainment; they do not wish to 'work' at being tourists
- although an export, tourism experiences are produced and consumed 'on site'

Denying the reality



'those who insert the word 'tourism' between 'sustainable' and 'development' . . . [should] . . . ensure that, under all circumstances, the resultant principles of sustainable tourism development are also principles of sustainable development' (Hunter: 1995)

"This suggests that the principles of sustainable development cannot be transposed onto tourism as a specific economic and social activity. In other words, 'true' sustainable tourism development is unachievable." (Sharpley, 2000)

Living and Teaching a Phantom



- keeping the illusion of sustainability in tourism
- teaching generations of students on the compatibility of sustainability and tourism, while knowing better for years
- suggesting remedial management measures to calm down locals and destination while witnessing massive negative impacts of tourism
- supporting microeconomic profit-maximisation of the tourism industry while ignoring macroeconomic losses of destinations
- academia as advocate of critical, objective analysis of everyday tourism reality seem to have failed

Non-sustainable Tourism and Political Activism

Taking tourism industry critics out to streets.



A growing gap....



- While locals and destinations suffer from increasingly unsustainable tourism
- Academia is still insisting on the compatibility of sustainability and tourism
- International Politics (WTO, etc.) and local political decision makers claim tourism as a promising way of development
- Tourism industry announces CSR and sustainability programmes while sticking to a purely quantitative growth strategy.



Decreasing acceptance of negative tourism impacts and increasing mistrust of locals towards political, economic but also academic elites on dealing with negative tourism impacts

Reactions?



- growing Tourism Antagonism
- increasing expression of negative attitudes towards tourism
- formation of pressure groups and NGOs utilizing new strategies of communication to spread their message such as Brandalism, social media campaigning, but also still traditional forms of protest

Riots and protest



Increasing aggressiveness and frustration amongst the political activists about everyday tourism practices:

- activists attacked tour busses in Barcelona
- activists threw smoke bombs and smashed windows at a restaurant popular with tourists in Palma, Majorca
- activists are protesting in Ibiza rolling out a banner “Tourism is Killing Majorca”



Social media campaigning



- The transmission of news, the better connection with the flow of information, the improvement of the interaction amongst the readers, and the encouragement of investigative journalism practices are some of the remarkable changes. (Karyiotakis 2018)
- While user-generated-content tends to reach only a limited audience, it is taken on by journalists and mass-media to spread the message.

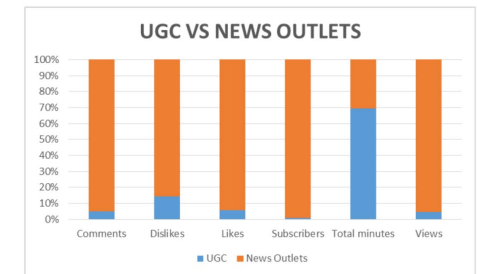
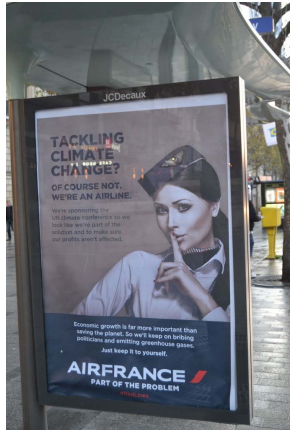


Figure 1. The differences of the UGC's videos from the news outlets' videos. (Source: Karyiotakis 2018)

Brandalism



Brandalism is a revolt against the corporate control of culture and space. We are an international collective of artists that challenge corporate power, greed and corruption around the world. Intervening into ad spaces that usually celebrate consumption, Brandalism use 'subvertising' as a lens through which we can view the intersectional social & environmental justice issues that capitalism creates. Our interventions, exhibitions and workshops aim to agitate, educate and facilitate those who want to challenge corporate power. (www.brandalism.ch)



Conclusion

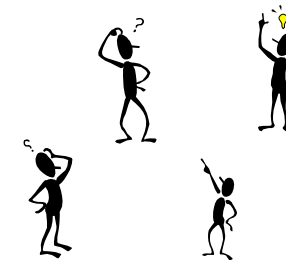
Taking tourism industry critics out to streets

Conclusion

- Tourism antagonism is back on everyday tourism agenda
- The alliance of industry, politics and a large share of academia on claiming „sustainable tourism“, has led to increased mistrust with locals
- The remedial effect of claiming compatibility of the sustainability paradigm and tourism seem to have come to an end
- New forms and strategies of communication provide a broad forum for tourism antagonism
- In future, the tourism system may have to face the consequences of its actions in a much more drastic way



Thank you for your attention



... I am looking forward to a lively discussion!

