

City tourism: reason to cheer or protest?



2015 Debating Development series
Antwerp, December 7 2015



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Ysgol Cynllunio a Daearyddiaeth



Barcelona, Spain



jobs dating more ▾ UK edition ▾

theguardian
Winner of the Pulitzer prize 2014

Mass tourism can kill a city – just ask Barcelona's residents

Ada Colau

We've all been a tourist at some point, but citizens of this great city are fighting for a way of life as they are sidelined by the authorities



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Berlin, Germany



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Kerala



New York



Lissabon

STORIES

Angry Shanghai Residents Dump Water on Noisy Foreigners

by Li on Thursday, March 21, 2013

comments



The Revolt Against Tourism

By ELIZABETH BECKER JULY 17, 2015



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The rise of 'anti-tourism' mobilizations around the globe...



...involves instances of 'othering', scapegoating, and demonization...

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

hello! buenos dias!

**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 sideeffects 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

→ 4pm Kottbusser Tor/Admiralstraße

**I ♥
Berlin**

Berlin

JUNTA DE VECINOS PARQUE FORESTAL

INVITA A TODOS LOS VECINOS RESIDENTES
Y COMERCIANTES 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!**

MIÉRCOLES 11 A LAS 15:00 HRS.

**CAFE DEL BIOGRAFO
VILLA VICENCIO Y LASTARRIA
JVPARQUEFORESTAL@GMAIL.COM**

Santiago de Chile

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Tourist overcrowding: are (some) cities approaching a saturation point ?

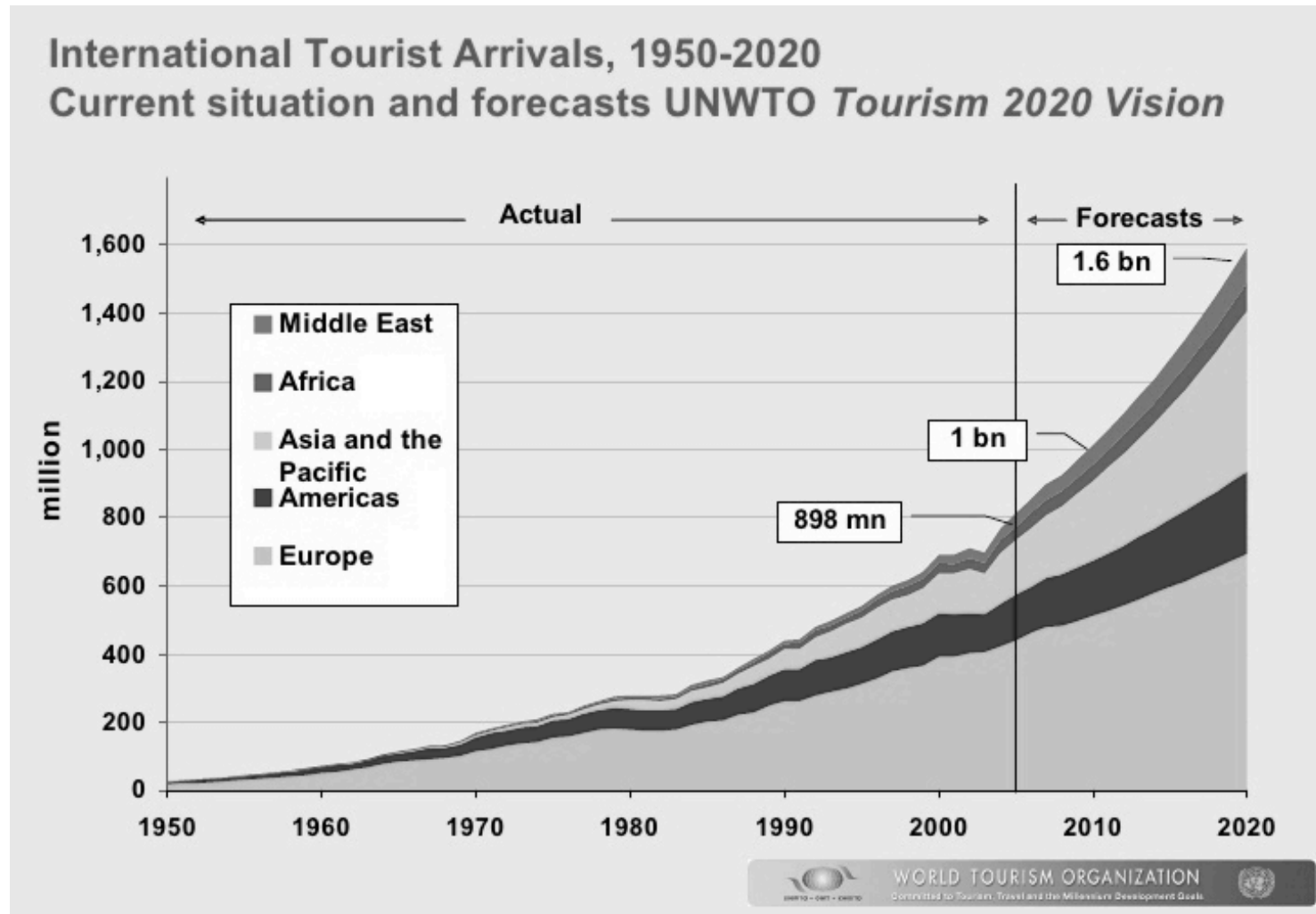


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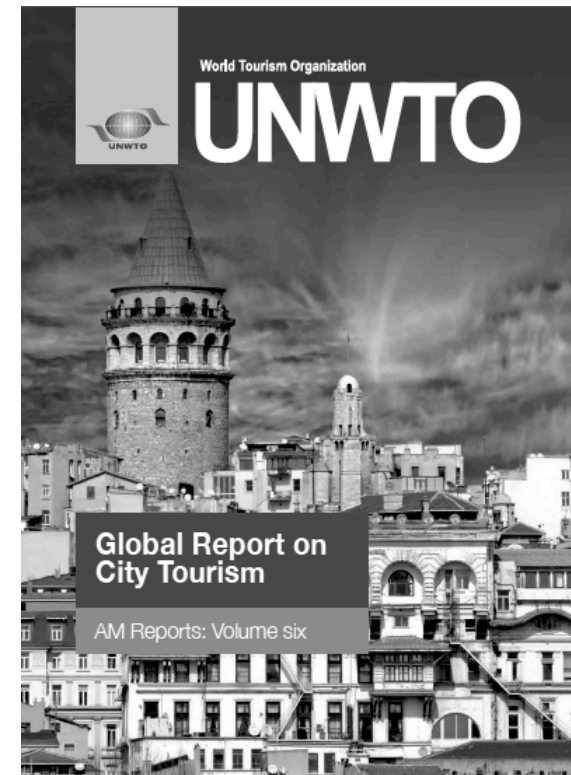
International Tourist Arrivals, 1950-2020. Current situation and forecasts (UNWTO Tourism 2020 Vision)



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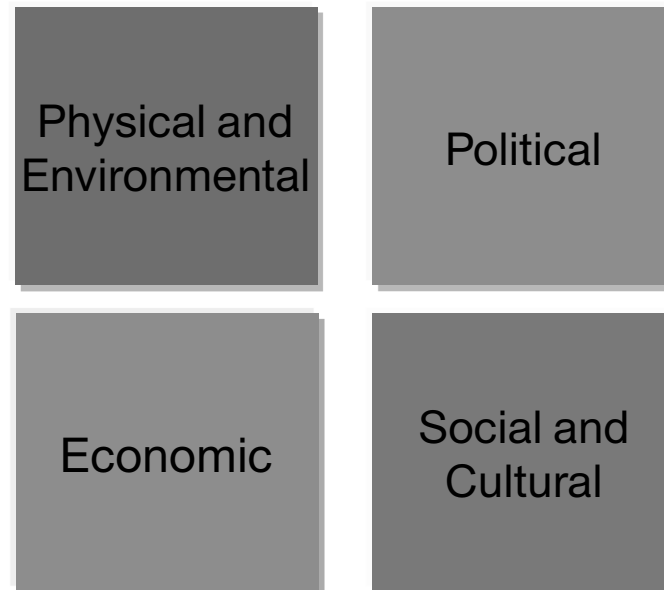
Urban Tourism Redux

- Urban tourism said to be main contributor to tourism's growth
- Today, cities are estimated to account for 30 - 40% of all inbound tourism arrivals globally
- In addition the share of urban tourism is said to have increased substantially
- Key factors
 - Heightened mobility in terms of number of trips per person.
 - More short term breaks
 - Increase in business and VFR travel
 - Low cost air travel
 - Urban regeneration & marketing
 - etc.
- Recent economic crises slowed down year-on growth but medium and long-term growth prospects remain strong.



Urban Tourism Impacts

- Tourism has manifold implications for host destinations;
- The net impacts of tourism activity are usually – and rightly so - regarded as being overwhelmingly positive but this has not kept scholars from pointing out that
 - there are also negative externalities (that frequently become more serious as tourism increases) and that there is no simple linear relationship between the growth of tourism and the benefits it is said to bring
 - that investments into tourism involve opportunity costs and displacement effects
 - that different groups are affected differently by tourism development



Urban Tourism as a course of conflict: a taxonomy of negative effects

ECONOMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased costs of living• Changes to destinations' commercial landscapes (homogenization of retail, displacement of businesses serving local needs)
PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overcrowding, traffic congestion, noise, litter,• Environmental damage• Architectural pollution• Development pressure, and land-use conflicts• Displacement of lower socio-economic groups
SOCIO-CULTURAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commodification and commercialisation• Potential for intercultural misunderstanding/conflicts• Social problems such as crime, prostitution and 'uncivil' behavior
PSYCHO-LOGICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feelings of alienation, and the loss of a sense of belonging or attachment to the community

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Tourism as a contributing/causal factor of gentrification





A key bone of contention: Huge growth of vacation rentals:

Available vacation rentals in Mitte, Kreuzberg, P'Berg and Friedrichshain: **2397**

Available regular apartment rentals: **1595** (all figures for March 2015, Source: Plusforta)

Inside Airbnb

Adding data to the debate

INDEPENDENT, NON-COMMERCIAL,
OPEN SOURCE DATA TOOL

How is Airbnb really
being used in and affecting
your neighborhood?

Airbnb IN NYC

OUT OF MORE THAN
27,000 LISTINGS:

16K are for the
entire home (58%)

87% highly available
(more than 60 days/year)

29% multi-listings
(where the host has other listings)

**FILTER by
Neighborhood**

Chelsea

**50+
data points
per listing**

The data
Airbnb
doesn't want
you to see!

SEE Airbnb ACTIVITY OVER TIME IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



**HOST
"JOHN D"
17 listings**

**VIEW
TOP
HOSTS'
MULTIPLE
LISTINGS**

NEXT...

- **VISIT** insideairbnb.com
- **SHARE** it widely
  #insideairbnb #illegalhotels
#affordablehousing #nyc
- **DOWNLOAD** the data
(open source; 50+ data points per listing)

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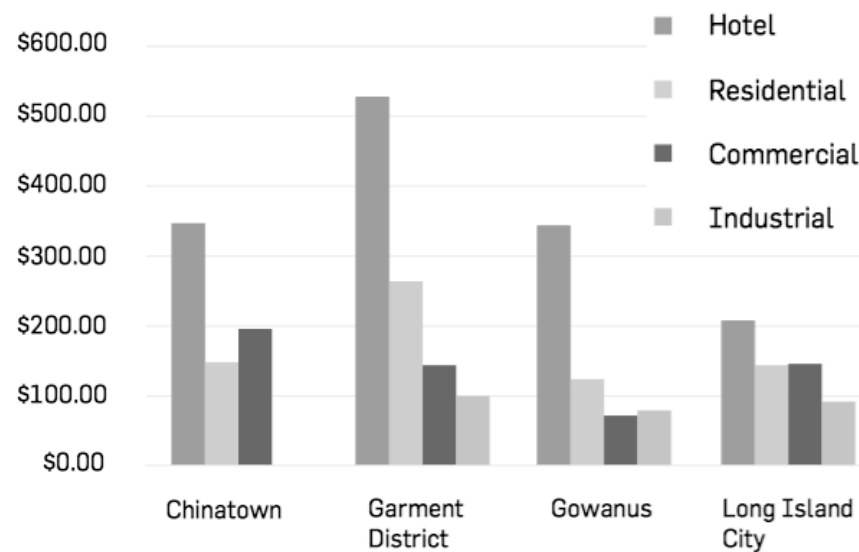


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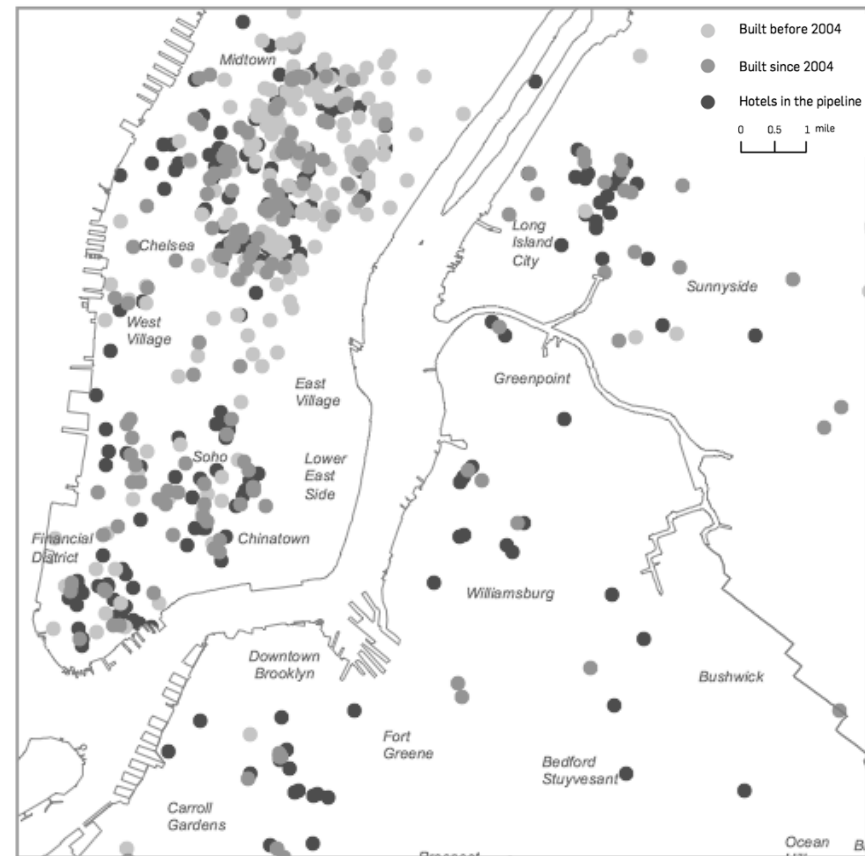


‘Hotelification’ - Hotel development is transforming the character of many communities & competing against other land use priorities, from affordable housing to manufacturing and cheap office space required by start-ups etc.

Hotel Development in NYC: 'Room for Improvement' (Pratt 2015)...



Hotels Yield Significantly Greater Average Net Operating Income per Square Foot



Hotel Proliferation Since 2004

Pratt Center for Community Development (2015): *Hotel Development in NYC: Room for Improvement*. New York

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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)

Changes to destinations' commercial landscapes

- (Tourism-induced) commercial gentrification can lead to displacement:
 - Displacement of traders
 - Displacement of produce
 - Displacement of consumers
 - Displacement of a kind of social relation and a community (Gonzales 2014)
 - And, in some cases: Displacement of destinations' original appeal



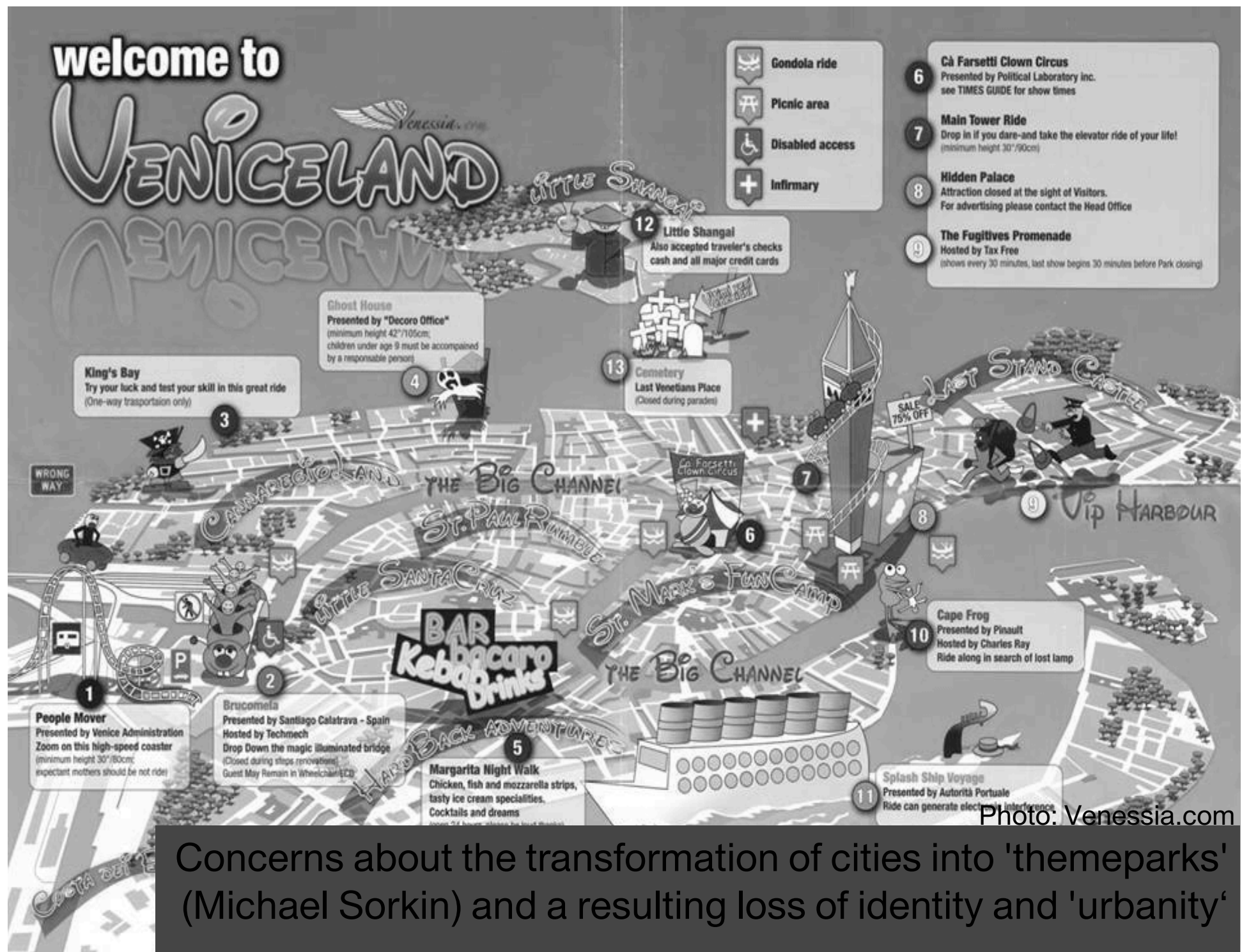
See: Gonzalez, S. and Waley, P. (2003) Traditional retail Markets, the new gentrification frontier, *Antipode*, 45; Gonzales, S. (2014): What sort of markets do we want, and who are they for? Integrating interests: future-proofing city centre retail economies? 31 March 2014 and 1 April 2014, Sheffield

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Concerns about the transformation of cities into 'themeparks' (Michael Sorkin) and a resulting loss of identity and 'urbanity'



Concerns about the transformation of cities into 'themeparks' (Michael Sorkin) and a resulting loss of identity and 'urbanity'

Cable Street museum which promised to celebrate East End women now devoted to Jack the Ripper

What was meant to be "the first women's museum in the UK" now explores the brutal, unsolved murders of prostitutes



"Sick joke": the museum was originally planned to celebrate women in the East End (Picture: Glenn Copus)



'For whom are we saving the cities?' (Squires 1989:9); What – and whose – culture/history is 'celebrated'/remembered and how? (see Zukin 1995)

Urban Tourism *Politicized*

- Tourism has evolved into a powerful force of urban change (so much that there is talk about a 'touristification' of urban space or, alternatively, as a 'recreational turn' in processes of urbanization (Gotham 2005; Stock 2007))
- The heightened impacts of tourism – as well as what is perceived as a skewed civic agenda in favour of the 'visitor class' – has led to a *politicization* of what had hitherto been a largely non-controversial issue
- Issues of contention include (but are not limited to):
 - tensions between development for use value vs. development for exchange value (and cities as a place to call home and as a place to visit respectively)
 - equity impacts (*who bears the costs and benefits from the visitor economy?*) but also...
 - detrimental impacts for the visitor economy itself (e.g. acceptance problems as well as an erosion of tourism's resource base)!



'Touristification' –

We know it when we see it, but what is it, exactly?

Berlin, Germany



"The tourist destroys what he seeks by finding it"
(Hans Magnus Enzensberger)

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...neither and both, but surely a reason for more attention on part of planners, researchers and policy makers!

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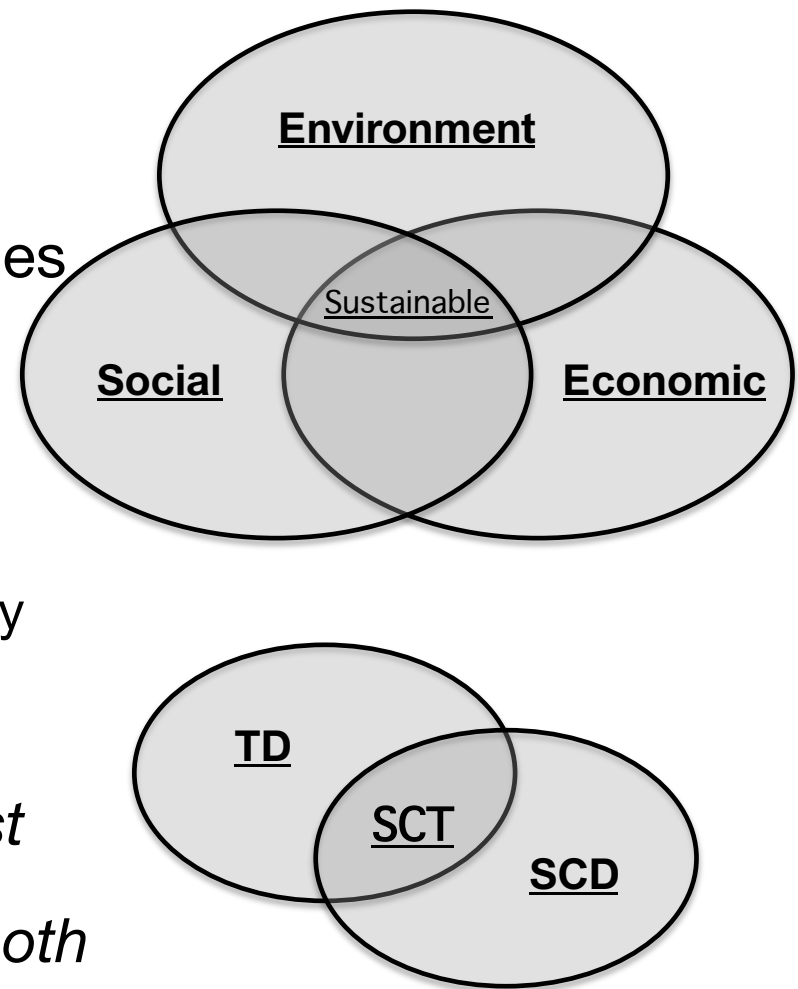
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Tourism and City Sustainability

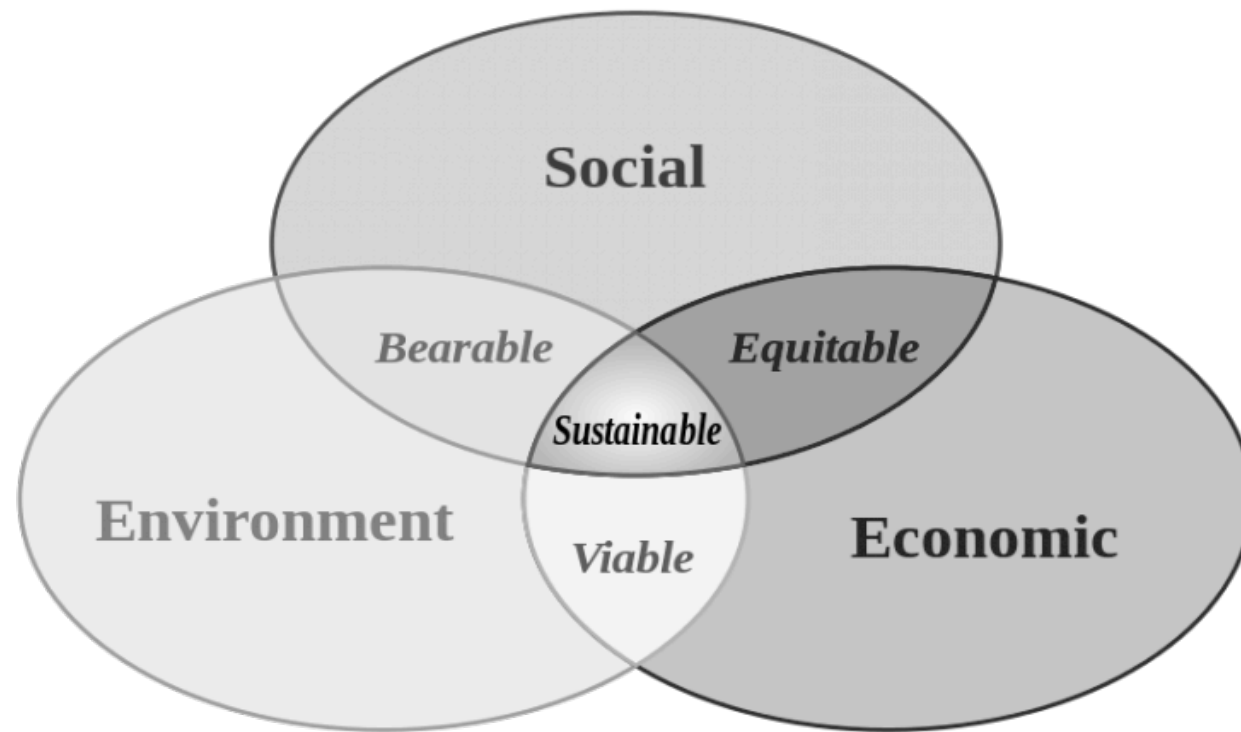
- SCD – Sustainable City Development Policies
- TD – Tourism Development Approaches
- SCT – Sustainable City Tourism
 1. City Sustainability Policies that Impact Tourism
 2. Tourism Development that Impacts City Sustainability (Lew 2011)

Sustainably managing increasing tourist numbers (...) while ensuring the city is developed to respond to the needs of both visitors and local communities is key.

Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General,
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)



“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...



Burns, P. M., & Novelli, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Tourism and politics: Global frameworks and local realities*. Elsevier

Politicizing tourism necessitates...

berlin, brooklyn, barcelona:
— ✂ — — — — —
**tourists & hipsters
against gentrification!**

Photo: Blörn Kietzmann

....to rise above simplistic critiques of tourists and engage with the way tourism flows are produced and planned for against the backdrop of broader processes of social, political and economic change