



GENTRIFICATION AND TOURISM

OVERALL AIM:

Understanding gentrification trends due to the promotion of cultural tourism in cities as a critical example of gentrification in historic cities



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Tourism and cities

- Over the last few decades urban tourism has undergone huge growth and has become an extremely important activity in many cities,
- People are affected by crowds of tourists pursuing diverse activities.
- We are speaking about Urban tourism, which is not like other adjectival tourisms.
- The additional adjectives 'cultural' (including festival or art), 'historic' ('gem') and even 'congress', 'sporting', 'gastronomic', 'night-life', and 'shopping' could all precede 'city tourism'

Tourism and cities

- The relationship between tourists and the city is complex. Cities benefit from tourism.
- All cities stress the importance of tourism for the local economy
- The growing demands from tourists, particularly in historic cities, have brought about a reactive response to the problems of coping with increased visitation, a situation perhaps most commonly experienced in Europe
- Pressure from tourism is particularly intense in the central areas of historical cities
- The first visible sign of excessive tourism growth is saturation of the central supply of facilities.

Pressures of tourism

- City centres are transformed by tourism. The very nature of tourism - its intensive use of central space, its seasonal pattern, its “transversality” across industries-can greatly affect sensitive urban areas.
- Its pressure on the value of urban facilities and premises creates an incentive for citizens and firms to abandon central locations

Tourism gentrification

- These processes are known as tourism gentrification, which, in extreme cases, can be understood as the transformation of a middle-class neighbourhood into a relatively affluent and exclusive enclave marked by a proliferation of corporate entertainment and tourism venues
- Most tourists seek hotels that are within walking distance of major attractions in the city
- it possible to identify a hierarchy of hotels based on location, from luxury hotels (4/5-star quality located in the city centre) to budget hotels located at the edge of the city
- The concentration of hotels in the city centre leads to an increase in tourist pressure and is a decisive factor in the transformation of the surrounding urban area

Tourism gentrification

- hotels present patterns of spatial concentration in city centers thereby forming a hotel district.
- It is therefore to be expected that this variable will show a positive global spatial autocorrelation and that the hotel district can be identified locally as a hot spot.
- Hotels benefit from the economics of location by being concentrated in city centers.
- a certain dispersion of hotels in peripheral areas of the city is recognized, where land prices are lower and there may be other relevant determining factors, such as proximity to motorways or suburban business parks

Peer2peer platforms

- Pressure from tourism is intensified in city centres by the availability of accommodation offered through the new peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms
- The exchange of accommodation between private individuals has historically developed informally, but the Internet, and more specifically Web 2.0, has allowed it to grow exponentially and take on new characteristics
- P2P platforms in the field of accommodation go well beyond marketing and advertising the properties.
- Airbnb is the most successful P2P platform in the field of accommodation. It connects people who have space to spare (hosts) with those who are looking for a place to stay (guests).

Peer2peer platforms

- As a disruptive innovation in the field of tourism accommodation, Airbnb proposed a novel business model, built around modern Internet technologies and Airbnb's distinct appeal, centred on cost-savings, household amenities and the potential for more authentic local experiences.
- Most importantly, Airbnb's relatively low costs appear to be a major draw
- Airbnb that its listings are more scattered than hotels, so Airbnb guests may be especially likely to disperse their spending in neighbourhoods that do not typically receive many tourists

Airbnb and urban effects.

- Airbnb can potentially expand supply wherever houses and apartment buildings already exist, in contrast to hotels, which must be built at locations in accordance with local zoning requirements
- Therefore, expanding in historic centres would be easier for Airbnb than for hotels, which not only requires whole buildings to be available but also the relevant permits from the authorities
- If Airbnb shows a clear tendency towards expansion in historic centres, then this could aggravate the problems of crowding and tourism gentrification that some of these areas have to support in certain heritage cities

Airbnb and urban effects.

- With respect to location patterns of P2P companies, the assertion of companies like Airbnb that their offer tends to be spread over more of the city than that of hotels suggests a lower degree of univariate and bivariate global spatial autocorrelation for Airbnb accommodation (with relation to sight-seeing spots) than for hotels.
- Nevertheless, the news from different tourist cities does not appear to confirm this fact; rather, it points in the opposite direction.

The case of Barcelona.

- In 2014, Barcelona was the fifth city in Europe in terms of the number of international tourists, behind only London, Paris, Berlin and Rome (European Cities Marketing, 2015).
- On a global scale, it is among the twenty-five favourite city destinations for international tourism (Top Cities Destination Ranking 2013)
- Its popularity rose considerably after it hosted the 1992 Olympic Games. In 1990 the number of overnight stays totalled 3.8 million, involving 1.7 million tourists.
- In 2000, there were 7.9 million overnight stays and 3.1 million tourists.
- By 2014 this total had reached almost 17 million overnight stays, with 7.8 million tourists (79.5% of them international tourists).

The case of Barcelona.

- This huge influx of visitors has an enormous economic and social impact on the city, generating more than 26 million euros a day and more than 120,000 jobs in tourism
- It also producing a high pressure on the city centre that led to a significant gentrification process
- The distribution of the Airbnb accommodations shows a clear concentration of points in the city centre. This spatial pattern is the result of an explosive growth,
- Types of accommodation: 54% were entire homes/apartments, 45% were private rooms and only 1% were shared rooms,
- There are 670 hotels in Barcelona offering more than 70,000 beds. In the case of Airbnb, the number of lodgings is 14,500, with an offering of approximately 51,000 places

The case of Barcelona.

- Airbnb is clearly linked to areas in the city centre that attract tourism. The offer decreases with distance from the centre and from the beach (negative B coefficients) and the presence of industrial activity but increases with the proximity of sightseeing spots, and land use associated with the leisure, hospitality and entertainment industries.
- The presence of Airbnb is positively related to the existence of residential areas
- P2P and tourism in general are generating many pressures on the city residents
- Last year Barceloneta erupted in spontaneous protests as thousands of furious residents organized protests against the “drunken tourism” they claimed was making life in the once-peaceful neighborhood impossible.

The case of Bologna

- Bologna has experienced an important growth in tourism, public facilities, dehor and shared apartments, with particular reference to the AirBnB platform.
- In the history of the city these factors represented a signal of strong innovation, a liveliness that was also reflected in the recently presented employment data.
- The permanent and temporary pedestrianizations of important parts of the historic center have contributed to affirming a new and more livable conception of urban space, greater usability of the historical city and cultural contexts.

The case of Bologna

- Every change, however, brings challenges and opportunities, problems that need to be managed at an urban level with an immediate and long look at the same time, in order not to affect the future.
- Bologna has to face these changes:
 - Bars and restaurants: from 471 in 2011 to 931 in 2016.
 - Total commercial authorizations from 1891 to 2871.
 - Dehors occupation: 7,840 sqm in 2016 with a revenue for the Municipality of 230,000 euros/year.
 - The real estate values of residential sector throughout the city, have leveled and lowered significantly from 2005 to 2015.
 - Airbnb units in the historic center of Bologna: 2567 [equal to 50.2% of the total dwellings in the city], 307 hosts that rent 2 or more apartments.
 - overrun of the noise limits on the street due to night activities outside the premises.
 - Around 52 thousand people live inside the avenues of the center and there are also many social housing developments.

The case of Bologna

- a progressive replacement of traditional shops and neighborhood services with restaurants and bars is ongoing.
- Which means, in certain areas of the center, less services for the resident community, less supervision, less neighborhood and civic relations, more space for temporary residences and for the consumption of the urban environment (eg waste, dirt, noise), conflicts between day and night, between residents, students and workers, therefore also between generations, people, categories and income.
- Moreover, tourist and commercial flows are not equally distributed throughout the historical center but are characterized by some polarities that concentrate their positive fallout, causing desertification in other areas.

How to tackle the challenge?

- The main cities affected by the explosion of short term rentals around the world have adopted different approaches: Berlin has limited tourist accommodation to just one room per home, Amsterdam fixed a 90-day limit for the short-term rental of residential properties.
- Yet the nature of the platform, which has data updated in real time on all the rooms and homes offered, occupied and free would allow to experiment planning techniques that could serve to extend the benefits of tourism to areas and social categories that would be excluded .
- Some visionary proposals have been put forward for the city of London. Quattrone et al. propose the introduction of "sharing" rights assigned and dynamically revoked by the city administration to those interested in offering their space to tourists.

How to tackle the challenge?

- By collaborating with the platform, the administration would be able to direct the flows by moving the sharing rights from one area of the city to another, so as to avoid the concentration of tourist rentals in the same areas, and address a certain number of tourists (and related economic benefits) in areas that they would seldom choose.
- In short, possibilities to explore would be there, trying to put the technology at the service of urban planning.



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