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## **‘Destination’ Berlin Revisited. From (New) Tourism towards a Pentagon of Mobility and Place Consumption**

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**Abstract:** This article is concerned with the increasing role and relevance of tourism in processes of urban change as well as its overlap and interplay with other mobilities and place consumption practices. It responds to recent debates surrounding the extension and intensification of ‘touristification’ processes in urban areas and uses the case of Berlin to draw attention to a number of intricacies and complexities that complicate their interpretation. The main argument the article advances is that developments in Berlin which are currently discussed under the rubric of ‘touristification’ can by no means be exclusively attributed to tourism, however conceived, and instead illustrate the need to adopt new ways of approaching and understanding what is perceived as tourism-induced urban change. To this end the article will present a preliminary heuristic portrayal of (tourism) mobility and place consumption as a pentagon with five interrelated but distinct dimensions and present a number of salient issues and questions that warrant further investigation. The paper will conclude with some brief reflections concerning the wider implications of the increased centrality of mobility flows and place consumption practices in today’s cities. These, it will be argued, not only challenge the way we think about tourism. Rather, they also raise fundamental questions concerning our understanding of cities and neighborhoods, the ‘legitimacy’ of particular claims over them, as well as several traditional precepts of modern urban planning and management.

**Keywords:** urban tourism, gentrification, touristification, post tourism, new tourism, Berlin, place consumption, mobility turn.

## 1. Introduction

This article is concerned with the increasing role and relevance of tourism in processes of urban change as well as its overlap and interplay with other mobilities and place consumption practices. It responds to recent debates surrounding the extension and intensification of ‘touristification’ processes in urban areas and uses the case of Berlin to draw attention to a number of intricacies and complexities that complicate their interpretation and make the consequences of tourism and other mobilities as well as place consumption practices impacting cities an important research frontier. The main argument the article advances is that developments in Berlin which are currently discussed under the rubric of ‘touristification’ can by no means be exclusively attributed to tourism, however conceived, and instead illustrate the need to deessentialise tourism and adopt new ways of approaching and understanding what is perceived as tourism-induced urban change.

To this end and drawing on a mix of empirical and conceptual findings in the literature as well as fieldwork by the author,<sup>1</sup> the article will first introduce the chosen case study of Berlin and discuss relevant (mis-)conceptions and reconceptions pertaining to tourism and processes of urban and neighborhood change. Subsequently the article will present a preliminary heuristic portrayal of (tourism) mobility and place consumption as a pentagon with five interrelated but distinct dimensions. This portrayal is intended to provide an initial basis for further conceptual and empirical investigations into the interconnectedness of different expressions of mobility and place consumption as well as their role in transforming city spaces. The paper then will present a number of salient issues and questions that warrant further analysis and conclude with some brief reflections concerning the wider implications of the increased centrality of mobility flows and place consumption practices in today’s cities. These, it will be argued, not only challenge the way we think about tourism and processes of tourism-induced urban change. Rather, they also raise fundamental questions concerning our understanding of cities and neighborhoods, the ‘legitimacy’ of particular claims over them, as well as several established precepts of modern urban planning and management.

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<sup>1</sup> Fieldwork was carried out on an on-and-off basis over a period of several years from 2005 onwards, involving semi-structured interviews, archival research, as well as ethnographic observations.

## 2. Setting the context. Berlin – a ‘conquered city’?

For those scholars - myself included - who have long advocated for a greater recognition of tourism’s role and relevance in processes of urban change recent years were, by all accounts, exciting times. Long considered a rather negligible area of research and hardly a raging topic in public debates, tourism in cities eventually began in a variety of contexts to receive substantial scholarly and public attention. Berlin is one of these contexts. Tourism in Germany’s capital has grown considerably in recent decades. Since its reunification in 1989 the city has recorded one of the highest tourism growth rates of all major European cities, making it the continent’s third most visited urban tourism destination, after London and Paris (see table 1). According to official statistics overnight guests and bednights have more than quadrupled since the early 1990s to a record-breaking 12.73 million annual visitors and more than 31.06 million overnight stays in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

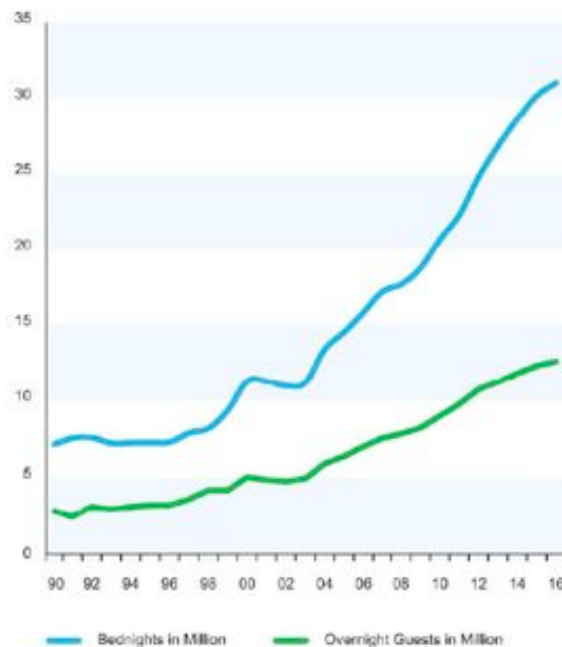


Figure 1: Total Number of overnight guests and bednights in official accommodation establishments in Berlin from 1993-2016 (in million). Source: SenWEB, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Official statistics only account for overnight guests and stays in accommodation establishments with more than ten beds, excluding smaller lodging operations, vacation rentals and home accommodation. The latter accounted according to estimates for an additional 33,2 million bednights in 2014, the latest year for which data is available (see dwif e.V., 2017), while Airbnb - by far the biggest internet site dealing in vacation rentals - recorded an estimated 1,735,000 overnight stays in 2016 (Hotelschool The Hague, 2017).

	2003	2016	Change in %
London	48,05	56,80	+18,2
Paris	30,88	43,40	+40,5
Berlin	11,33	31,10	+174,2
Rome	14,47	26,90	+86,0
Barcelona	9,10	19,20	+110,9

Table 1: Total bednights in official accommodation establishments in Europe's top 5 city destinations in 2003 and 2016 (in million). Source: ECM, 2016.

Along with this growth has come a concomitant increase in attention – and controversy – surrounding tourism (see Novy, 2016; Füller and Michel, 2014). In 2010, one of the city's major newspapers described Berlin as a city 'conquered' by tourism (Bartels 2010) and the latter, hitherto essentially a non-issue in political debates and struggles, became in the years that followed increasingly problematized and politicized.

In this context and closely linked to wider debates surrounding Berlin's changing socio-spatial landscape (Mayer, 2006), particularly tourism's geographical spread across urban space as well as the variegated effects resulting from its growth became a source of substantial fascination and contestation (Novy, 2016). Paralleled by similar developments elsewhere, e.g. London's East End (Maitland and Newman, 2004; Shaw et al., 2004; Maitland, 2006; Shaw, 2011); the area surrounding Canal Saint Martin in Paris (Gravari-Barbas and Jacquot, 2016), or Gracia in Barcelona (Fava and Rubio, 2017), especially former working-class and post-industrial districts at the inner-city's fringe have since the late 1990s experienced significant increases in tourism activity: places like Kreuzberg and Neukölln in former West Berlin and former East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg or Friedrichshain. Initially largely devoid of 'mainstream' attractions and neither planned nor marketed as tourist zones, these neighborhoods are today firmly integrated into the city's tourism trade. They are not only experiencing a rocketing presence – and prevalence – of tourists. Rather, they have also seen rapid developments in terms of

accommodation and other tourism establishments and are aggressively promoted by the city's tourism agency, travel guidebooks and online travel media (see Novy and Huning, 2009; Colomb, 2011). The number of hotels and hostels in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, the smallest of Berlin's twelve semi-autonomous boroughs by area, has for example more than quadrupled since the turn of the millennium and the number of overnight stays in them increased more than in any other of the city's boroughs. From 2003 to 2016 alone the number of overnight stays grew by 345 percent – more than twice as much as the citywide average - from 884.000 to 3.94 million bednights (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg, 2017).

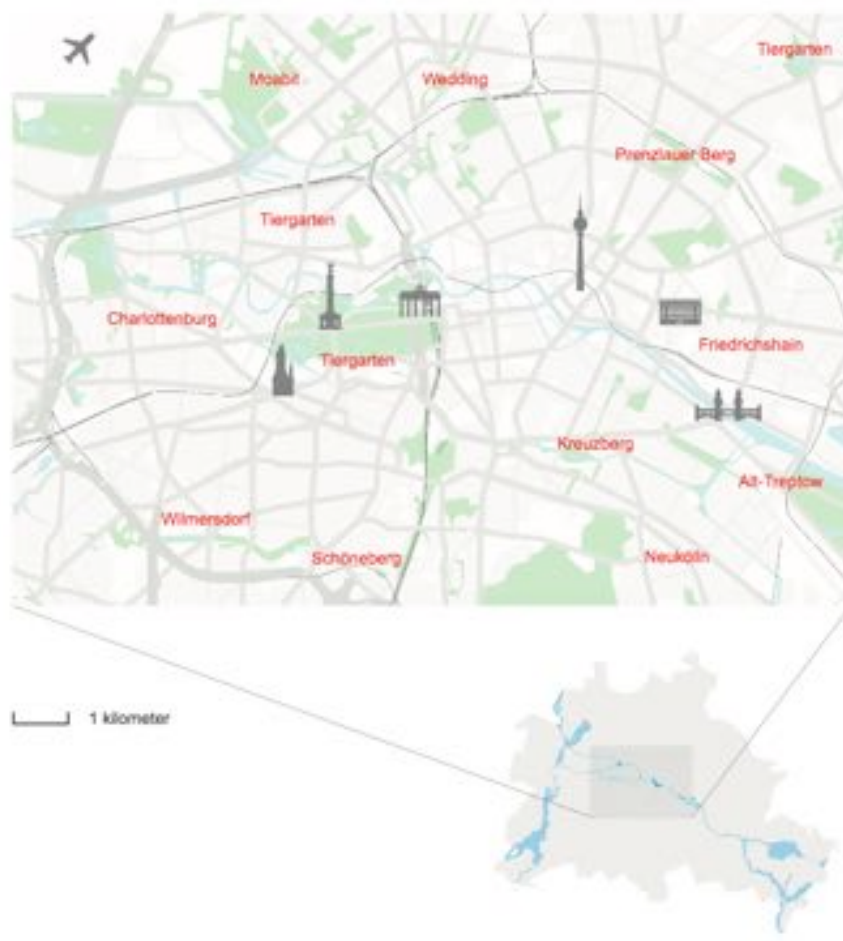


Figure 2: Localities (Ortsteile) of Berlin. Source: Transformier Communications

The effects caused by - or at least assumed to be caused by - tourism's growth have meanwhile become a real issue of concern for many residents. This is evidenced by a survey conducted by

the Senate Department for Economic Development on the acceptance of tourism in Berlin according to which 17% of Neukölln's residents, 24 % of Prenzlauer Berg's residents, 29% of Kreuzberg's residents and 38% of Friedrichshain's residents feel that their lives are (rather) disturbed by the impacts tourism is having on their communities (Visit Berlin 2015; see also BZ 2016). It is reasonable to assume that a more spatially disaggregated analysis would have revealed significantly higher figures among those living in – or close to – ‘hotspots’ of tourism activity within these districts. These hotspots include areas like the southeastern section of Kreuzberg, known, after its old postcode, as ‘SO36’ (see figure 3), and the adjacent Reuterkiez in the neighbouring district of Neukölln or the neighborhoods around Simon-Dach, Warschauer and Revaler Strasse in Friedrichshain. The local media refers to these areas as being ‘touristified’ or being at least subject to a process of ‘touristification’ and it is within them that most manifestations of protest and discontent in response to tourism can be observed.



Figure 3: Street scene in the SO36 section of Kreuzberg – an area that occupies a central place in debates about the *touristification* of Berlin's centrally located residential neighborhoods. Source: visitBerlin/Günter Steffen, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Neither uniform in their message or goals nor in their 'repertoires of contention' (Tilly, 2008)

and ranging from micro-practices of resistance such as graffiti reading ‘*No more rolling suitcases*’ to organised forms of collective mobilization, these manifestations have received extensive media attention, both nationally (e.g. Hollersen and Kurbjeweit, 2011) and internationally (e.g. Stallwood, 2012).<sup>3</sup> And they have triggered heated debates about different adverse externalities associated with tourism’s growth such as the proliferation of vacation rentals or conflicts over the use of public space, as well as tourism’s role in urban transformation processes more generally (Novy, 2016; Füller and Michel, 2014).

As regards the latter, a clear verdict is difficult to reach. Arriving at a clear verdict is not only thwarted by difficulties in establishing causal links between tourism and the manifold changes the neighborhoods are experiencing. Instead, there is another, even more fundamental problem and that is the difficulty to come to terms with the notion of tourism itself and distinguish the latter from other forms of mobility and place consumption.

### **3. Tourism and processes of urban and neighborhood change. (Mis-)Conceptions and reconceptions**

In Berlin – and not only there – the term touristification - *Touristifizierung* in German - is increasingly commonly used. It is not only referred to in the media but has also found its way into the everyday parlance of many Berliners – as well as policy makers - to describe urban transformation processes that are caused by, or at least associated with, increases in tourism activity. However, from a scholarly point of view, the concept is still in its infancy and lacks a solid anchoring in extant theory as well as a traceable integration in well-established research fields. To some, touristification simply refers to the ‘coming into being of a touristic place’ (Stock, 2007, p.3) or the appropriation of ‘urban, as well as natural and cultural forms, as objects of (tourism) consumption (Bianchi, 2003, p.18). Others refer to it as a ‘(re)qualification of space’ to meet the interests of the tourist industry (Vasconcelos, 2005) and still others use the term to

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<sup>3</sup> As regards the actors behind the described developments it is in addition worth noting that there is no readily identifiable core, let alone single coordinating body that directs the patterns of resistance that have occurred (see Novy, 2016, p. 61). Instead, different groups and individuals with different backgrounds, motives and methods problematize tourism independently of one another and many of them have far less in common with one another than the media’s generalizing portrayals of Berlin’s alleged ‘tourist hate’ (Huffington Post, 2012) make it appear.



refer to an increasing dominance of tourism-related activities at the expense of other urban functions and resulting emergence of a tourism monoculture, negatively impacting both: the integrity of host destination's 'tourism product' as well as the lives of residents (Jansen-Verbeke and Lievois, 1999; Russo, 2002). As regards tourism in cities, the term was popularised in the 1980s and 1990s, primarily with reference to heritage towns - places such as Bruges or Venice, which to this day most clearly demonstrate the impacts of tourism-related activity on urban environments and urban life. Today, touristification is observed and discussed in a variety of urban environments and particularly touristification processes in world and emerging world cities have become an important focus of research and debate (see Novy and Colomb, 2016; Bellini and Pasquinelli, 2016; Gravari-Barbas and Guinand, 2017). In these settings, touristification processes are often found to be closely intertwined with broader processes of urban change and especially the ways gentrification and touristification processes are linked to one another is intensively discussed (see Opillard, 2016; Gravari-Barbas and Guinand, 2017). While there is evidence that the relationship between the two is not as straightforward as sometimes assumed (see Chapuis et al., 2015), research has found that 'touristification' and 'gentrification' processes often, though by no means always, occur hand in hand and mutually reinforce each other. Developments in Berlin provide ample evidence for this. The geographical spread of tourism in the city has occurred in parallel with a spatial expansion and intensification of gentrification processes and virtually all neighborhoods confronted with significant increases in tourism are have also experienced varying stages of gentrification (Holm, 2013).

The overlap and interplay between 'touristification' and 'gentrification' is perhaps best illustrated by the profound changes these neighborhoods have experienced in terms of their commercial landscapes. In all of them new bars, restaurants, shops and galleries targeted at typically more affluent and younger consumers have proliferated - typically at the expense of businesses selling everyday goods and catering to other clienteles, including especially low-income groups. Precise figures are hard to come by, but a continuously updated 'map of displacement' covering the southeastern section of Kreuzberg provides at least some indication of the scale of the developments that are occurring. It was conceived by Bizim Kiez, a neighborhood group that came together in 2015 in defense of a Turkish family-owned grocery store threatened by eviction, and highlighted at the time of writing more than 50 local businesses

that were either facing displacement or had already been displaced in Kreuzberg's SO36 area alone (<http://www.bizim-kiez.de/blog/2015/06/24/karte-der-verdraengung-in-so36-map-of-displacement/>). The area's changing commercial landscape reflects a heightened demand by both gentrifiers and tourists but also fosters the same. In fact, the sheer number of new businesses sprouting up within them would hardly be imaginable without increases in tourism activity and gentrification occurring in tandem with one another.

Another line of debate concerning the connections between tourism and gentrification revolves the transformation of rental housing into boarding houses and holiday flats. The precise impacts of these patterns of 'tourism gentrification' (Gotham, 2010) on Berlin's housing market as a whole remain a matter of debate (see Stors and Kagermeier, 2017) but many commentators argue that especially the success of online rental platforms such as Airbnb or Wimdu adds to the displacement pressures several of the city's neighborhoods face (Holm, 2016; Hildenstab, 2015). In 2015, Airbnb alone was estimated to have 'somewhere between 10.000 and 15.000 apartments' available (Varas Arribas et al., 2016), of which a disproportionate large quantity was located in 'epicenters of gentrification' (Holm, 2013, p. 197) such as Prenzlauer Berg, Friedrichshain, Kreuzberg and Neukölln (Skowronnek et al., 2015; see figure 4).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In 2016 Berlin enacted a new law to curb the number of short-stay rentals in the city but there is growing evidence that it has had little effect on the popularity of platforms like Airbnb. In fact, one study found that the number of available properties increased despite the new law by as much as 20 percent from 2015 to 2016 while bookings were up by 68 percent during the same time period (Hotelschool The Hague, 2017; see also Schönball, 2017).

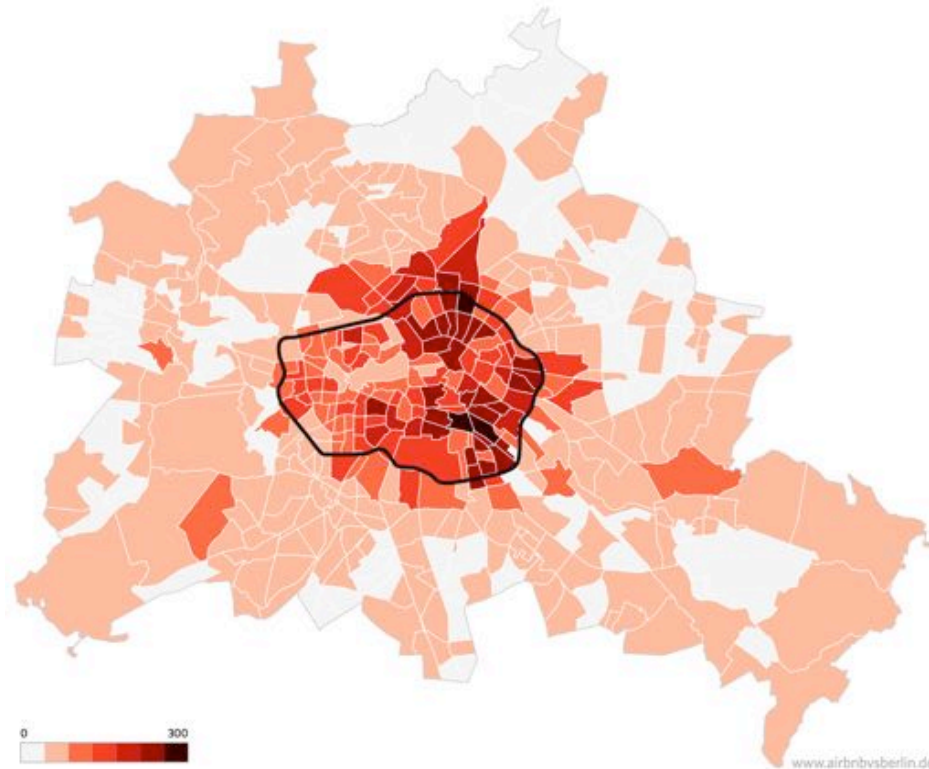


Figure 4: AirBnb concentrations by ‘Lebensweltlich orientierte Räume’ [Living Environment Areas]. Source: AirBnB vs. Berlin ([www.airbnbvsberlin.com](http://www.airbnbvsberlin.com)), CC BY 4.0

The recent problematisation and politicisation of tourism on the neighborhood level, albeit involving different actors with different motives and agendas, is not least owed to the widespread perception that tourism constitutes a contributing and accelerating factor in processes of gentrification. Often they reflect wider struggles over the changing socio-spatial landscape of the city and the exclusionary dynamics - economically, socially, symbolically and otherwise – they entail. Yet while it may safely be assumed that tourism wields a powerful influence on the development dynamics of Berlin, as well as numerous other cities, it is also important to engage with a number of conceptual and empirical problems that the recent emphasis on tourism as a force of urban change gives rise to. Some of these problems are far and wide acknowledged to be sure. It is for instance widely established that it is especially in urban environments extremely difficult to separate the effects of tourism from other influences or effectively discern workings of cause and effect (Ashworth, 2015; Pearce, 2005). Other problems are meanwhile less often and, significantly, less systematically reflected upon, at least in the relevant literature on tourism and urban change. One concerns the difficulties involved in establishing a definitive argument

for what tourism actually is and how it should be made sense of in an (urban) world that is increasingly defined by all sorts of mobility flows and place consumption practices.

Scholars in tourism sociology, tourism geography and related fields such as Urry (1990, 1995, 2007) or Munt (1994) have long argued that the broader processes of societal change that have greatly elevated tourism's influence as a social force in recent decades paradoxically also call the very notion of tourism as a distinct social phenomenon into question. They argue that tourism has become so complex and so pervasive that it has lost its 'specificity' (Urry, 1990, p. 82), point to a progressive blurring of boundaries between tourism and daily life, and along with it challenge many related binaries such as the traditional distinctions between home and away, the ordinary and the extraordinary, or 'hosts' and 'guests' on which tourism has traditionally been defined and theorized (Jóhannesson et al., 2015).

Whether or not it makes sense to talk about an 'end of tourism', as suggested by John Urry (1995, p.147), or whether one should subscribe to Munt's assertion that we are living in a world in which 'tourism is everything and everything is tourism' (1994, p.104) is certainly a matter of debate. What is clear, however, is that conventional ways of understanding and making sense of tourism are increasingly called into question by the actual realities of contemporary travel and the world from which it emerges and in which it unfolds. Some scholars working on tourism in cities have recognized this for quite some time to be sure. Their work remained mostly on the margins of academic and popular debates, however, and it was only recently that theoretical advances and insights from tourism sociology, tourism geography and the wider literature on what has become known as the 'mobility turn' in the social sciences (Sheller and Urry, 2006) began to exert greater influence and disrupt conventional thinking about tourism in cities.

#### **4. From 'new tourism' to 'post-tourism' to a pentagon of mobility and place consumption**

An early and seminal contribution to the literature concerning the changing face of tourism as well as the implications the latter holds for urban development was made by Robert Maitland. Concerned with the changing micro geographies of tourism in London, his work stressed the qualitative transformation of visitor flows as well as the 'conviviality' amongst different groups

of ‘city users’ as crucial factors contributing to the development of ‘new tourism areas’ in and across London (Maitland, 2008, see also 2007, 2010 and Maitland and Newman, 2004). A key premise underlying his work is that tourism in ‘world tourism cities’ (Maitland and Newman, 2009) like London or, indeed, Berlin, ‘cannot any longer be bounded off as a separate activity, distinguished from other mobilities, and [that] tourist demands cannot be clearly separated from those of residents and other users of cities’ (Maitland, 2010, p. 177). Growing shares of tourists, he argues, form part of what Fainstein et al. (2003, p. 243) have called the ‘cosmopolitan consuming class’: they are experienced travellers, search for sophisticated experiences away from established tourism zones, and share many of the amenity demands and preferences of city dwellers and commuters.

Maitland’s work draws on numerous insights from tourism sociology and geography concerning the changing and increasingly complex realities that have come to characterize contemporary tourism. These realities are maybe best described as a continuously ongoing differentiation or segmentation of tourism, as well as a simultaneously occurring process of de-differentiation (see Uriely, 2005; Urry, 1990; Hall, et al., 2004; Hall und Page, 2006): differentiation or segmentation due a shift away from standardised mass tourism to more individualistic patterns of tourism consumption and the constant development of new niches and trends which have led various authors to postulate the emergence of a *new tourism* (see Poon, 1993; Voase, 2007). And de-differentiation because of wider changes in leisure, consumption, and mobility patterns in advanced capitalist societies that make it increasingly difficult to distinguish between tourism and other forms of migration and mobility, as well as other forms of leisure and (place) consumption (Urry 2001; Hall, Williams und Lew, 2004; Hall und Page, 2006).

Frequently discussed with reference to a broader shift from Fordist to post-Fordist consumption and production, the shift from mass tourism towards more individuated patterns of tourism consumption has been described by Poon (1993) as a move from ‘old’ tourism dominated by packaging, standardisation and homogeneous, predictable holiday experiences, towards a ‘new tourism’ that is characterised by more experienced, independent and flexible travellers, high degrees of segmentation within tourism markets, and, along with it, highly flexible patterns of provision. It constitutes a trend that has been discussed in the scholarly literature since the mid-

1980s but that has been greatly accentuated by recent technological developments, including, in particular, the advent of the internet and mobile and social technologies. The latter are redefining the 'contours of tourism' (Hannam et al., 2014, p. 178) in numerous ways. Amongst other things such technologies have facilitated flows of information about particular places and the organisation of individual trips, leading to sharp increases in 'the number and types of experience options a tourist can choose from' (Bock, 2015, p. 3), a flexibilization of 'tourist's paths through time and space' (Hannam et al., 2014, p. 179), as well a dissolving of the 'information divide' (Bock, 2015, p.14) that traditionally put tourists at a disadvantage against locals when searching for information about activities, amenities, and events. Information about Berlin's techno music and club scene, which is major draw for tourists (Rapp, 2009; Garcia, 2016), were for example until the 1990s mainly spread through word of mouth, leaflets, and posters and consequently rather difficult to access for tourists prior to their visit. Today most information about upcoming events and new venues are available online and can be accessed regardless of one's location.

Likewise, the rise of information and communication technologies obviously also plays an important role in the seemingly ever-increasing mobility characterising contemporary societies. In today's world, people travel ever more and for ever more reasons and for growing shares of people tourism has long 'ceased to be a temporary and unusual state of existence in a world otherwise organised by life at home and life' (Dujmović and Vitasović, 2015, p.193). Especially research on tourism in cities has for a long time struggled to account for this as most studies either refrained from engaging with tourists' backgrounds, experiences and preferences altogether or stuck to traditional 'conceptualizations of the tourist experience [which] emphasize[d] its distinctiveness from everyday life' (Uriely, 2005, p.203; see also Selby, 2004). Conceptualisations that divide tourism from other forms of mobility and treat tourism in opposition to everyday life were, especially in the context of larger cities, always problematic but appear even more inadequate today in light of the changing and increasingly complex realities that have come to characterize tourism and contemporary cities. The latter involve, as mentioned before, not only a growth in tourism mobility but also a multiplication of tourism-related practices. Many visitors stay longer or shorter than conventional wisdom about urban tourism has it; come with expectations and demands that have only little to do with what tourists

according to common storylines are supposed to expect and want, and differ in their choice of activities and experiences from what established notions of tourist behavior suggest. Frequent visitors or those travelling to visit friends or relatives are cases in point and conventional understandings of tourism are moreover challenged by the growing presence and prevalence of other 'temporary city users' (Martinotti, 1999): workers in professional managerial occupations on secondments, artists in residence, academics on sabbaticals, second homers, 'global nomads' (Kannisto, 2016) whose identities and lives are structured around not one but several places, or students on exchange to name but a few. Berlin's universities have for instance seen a consistent growth of foreign students - in 2013 they welcomed more than 3.200 international exchange students under the European Union's Erasmus programme alone (DAAD, 2015, p.20) - while an emerging trend of urban second home ownership has also been noted (O'Sullivan, 2012). Neither readily identified as 'tourists' nor as permanent 'residents', these groups illustrate the difficulty of drawing clear-cut distinctions between tourism and other forms of mobility on the one hand as well as tourism and everyday life on the other hand particularly well. In fact, while tourism has typically been associated with rather limited periods of movement or displacement, growing numbers of commentators now recognise that clear defining lines between (more) temporary and (more) permanent moves are becoming increasingly untenable and consequently have come to accept that there is a continuum between tourism and permanent migration, along which roles and outlooks overlap and intertwine (see Bell and Ward, 2000; Williams and Hall, 2002).

What complicates matters further is what Franklin referred to as the 'touristification of everyday life' (2003, p. 206). There is overwhelming evidence that especially middle- and upper class urban dwellers increasingly display attitudes and behavioral patterns that are hard to distinguish – and sometimes indistinguishable - from those of visitors. They act 'as if tourists' (Lloyd and Clark 2001, p. 357; see also Clark et al., 2003) when exploring and consuming urban neighborhoods in the cities they reside in. And they have been found to use urban spaces and resources in ways that are not radically different from those of visitors when going after their daily lives in their own communities.

#### **4.1. A conflict up close: the Admiralbrücke**

A recent controversy surrounding the Admiralbrücke in Kreuzberg helps to illustrate this perhaps obvious but sometimes overlooked point: built at the end of nineteenth century the Admiralbrücke is a wrought-iron arch bridge that crosses Berlin's Landwehrkanal in the heart of the SO36 section of Kreuzberg. Free of car traffic, it became during the first decade of the 2000s a popular spot to hang out, enjoy al fresco drinks and listen to - or make - street music. On some summer nights more than five hundred people could be located on the bridge during peak-times (Hansen, 2010). This led to a string of complaints about noise disturbances and other nuisances (Kögel, 2009; Heiser, 2010) and – after several unsuccessful mediation attempts – the decision by the local borough government to enforce a curfew, requiring the bridge to be vacated after 10pm. Noteworthy was the way the conflict was framed in the local media. A few exceptions notwithstanding (e.g. Kalwa, 2010), it was overwhelmingly depicted as a dispute between visitors and locals and sparked along with similar conflicts elsewhere headlines like 'Overwhelmed by visitors' (von Törne, 2011), 'Party tourists annoy neighborhood residents' (BZ, 2014) and the like. Some of the measures the local borough government adopted to resolve the conflict such as its decision to urge the publishers of travel guides to stop advertising the bridge (Hansen, 2010) illustrate that it too framed the conflict in this way.



Figure 5: An example of Berlin's 'new' micro geographies of tourism and place consumption: The Admiralbrücke in Berlin Kreuzberg. Source: Uli Herrmann, CC BY-SA 2.0



Site visits by the author meanwhile make clear that there is more to conflicts surrounding places like the Admiralbrücke than the often-told-story of tensions between locals and visitors suggests. Interviews not only revealed that nearby residents too spend time on the Admiralbrücke. Rather they also showed that the bridge is also popular among a lot of people who described themselves neither as a tourist nor as a local.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the case in many ways lends support to Maitland's emphasis on conviviality among different groups of city users characterising many 'new' micro geographies of tourism and place consumption. Most interviewees, regardless of their background, described the appeal of the bridge in similar terms, a recurring theme being that it epitomised the city's 'laid-back' and - due to the diverse crowds it attracted - cosmopolitan atmosphere.

At the same time, however, the case of the Admiralbrücke also calls some elements of the burgeoning literature on the dissolving boundaries between tourists, residents and other city users, and between touristic and non-touristic behaviors into questions. Many of these, as is evidenced by the frequently insinuated notion of an emerging 'cosmopolitan consuming class' (Fainstein et al., 2003) focus on a convergence of activities, behaviors, and amenity demands on part of the relatively affluent and privileged. Although it might not always be explicitly stated, the emphasis rests predominately on 'well-off, well-educated consumers' (Maitland, 2008, p.17) and the role they play in what is variously referred to as a 'touristification' of urban space or, alternatively, as a 'recreational turn' (Stock, 2007) in processes of urbanization. Discussions surrounding 'temporary city users' - in Berlin variously referred to as YUKIS - 'Young Urban Creative Internationals' - (Knight et al., 2010), or, in a strange departure from the original conceptualisation of the term by Feifer (1985), as 'post-tourists' (Rogers, 2015) - focus for instance primarily on 'mobile' or 'transnational elites' (Bauman 1998; Rofe, 2003), middle-class lifestyles and consumption practices or at least groups who are voluntarily on the move. What these discussions usually fail to consider is that peoples' reasons to move from one place to another are often complex and difficult to classify and that less voluntary forms of mobility too might have a role to play in what is perceived as a touristification of urban areas. This is, in the case of Berlin, a city recently termed the 'post-tourist capital of Europe' (Rogers, 2015), perhaps

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<sup>5</sup> This perception is confirmed by a survey by the third-party mediation team called in by the district government which also found that a majority of visitors of the bridge were indeed 'locals' (see Kalwa, 2010).

best illustrated by the significant influx of young EU citizens who flocked into the city in growing numbers during and after the financial and economic crises that engulfed Southern Europe in 2008. Their precise number is difficult to pin down as many don't comply with the duty to register their move or are not staying permanently, but statistics provide at least some indication: from 2008 to 2014 alone, the number of Spaniards, Italians, Greeks and Portuguese registered in Berlin has grown by 39 percent to 55.957, the majority of which are young and well educated, with 57 percent at the age between 20 and 40 and 52,3 percent of them possessing a university degree (Animento, 2015, p. 2-3).

Individually and as groups, many of them display – in part out of need and in part out of choice - behavioural characteristics that resemble those of tourists and other more privileged city users. Many live and socialise in the same neighborhoods (Animento, 2015, p.18; Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg, 2015), take – often due to a lack of alternatives – advantage of temporary accommodation, and are – again often due to the absence of other options - compelled to spend large amounts of time in bars, pubs or public spaces like the Admiralbrücke. Public spaces like the latter are in fact particularly important as places to socialise, because many cannot afford – or at least tend not to want - to spend an entire evening drinking in commercial premises. Especially when moreover taking into account that most of these newcomers hail from countries that even at the height of the Euro-crisis belonged to the biggest markets for inbound Berlin tourism, e.g. Italy and Spain (SenStadt, 2012, p.26), it is not surprising that they are often mistaken as 'yuppies' (Animento, 2015) or as (post-)tourists. Ultimately, however, such labels appear misrepresentative. These city users might have first become acquainted with Berlin as tourists, for example when trying out what it might be like to spend an extended amount of time in the city. In addition, there is some evidence that suggests that not only the search for employment but also other motives – e.g. Berlin's liberal, Bohemian and hedonistic atmosphere and the pursuit of enhanced life experiences – motivated many of them to come to Berlin (see O'Brien, 2014; Animento, 2015). We may hence – particular when a permanent change of residence is not pursued - speak of a form of mobility that falls in between the categories of migration and tourism. Contrary to what is commonly associated with the latter or other lifestyle-led voluntary movements, these people's mobility needs to be understood against the backdrop of a strong element of 'coercion', however: it is less the product of modern societies' affluence than the

result of the impact of Southern European countries' financial and economic crises, and austerity measures imposed in response thereto.

#### **4.2. Rethinking current patterns of (tourism) mobility and place consumption**

Facilitated by the European Union's freedom of movement rules, the removal of labour-market barriers between EU member states, as well as the growth of relatively cheap air travel, the described influx of young EU citizens is only one of several contemporary mobilities that combine aspects of both migration and tourism and challenge us to develop more refined analyses of the multiple human mobility flows and place consumption practices impacting processes of urban and neighborhood change. But what might such analyses look like and how could the intricacies and complexities laid out here be approached?

Inspired by Hall and Williams (2002) and Bell and Ward (2002) who situate tourism within the wider context of temporary and permanent population movements ranging from home-based activities to permanent migration, I suggest that it might be useful to think of current patterns of (tourism) mobility and place consumption as a pentagon with five interrelated but distinct dimensions (see figure 6): (1) (urban) tourism<sup>6</sup>; (2) (temporary) 'lifestyle' migration; (3) (temporary) migration for work/education; (4) 'as if tourism' and, (5), leisure and place consumption as a practice of everyday life.

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<sup>6</sup> The term 'urban tourism' is here used to refer to those activities that dominant conceptualisations of tourism in cities until recently most revolved around, namely 'usually short (one to three days) (...) trips taken by travellers to cities or places of high population density (UNWTO, 2012, p. 8).

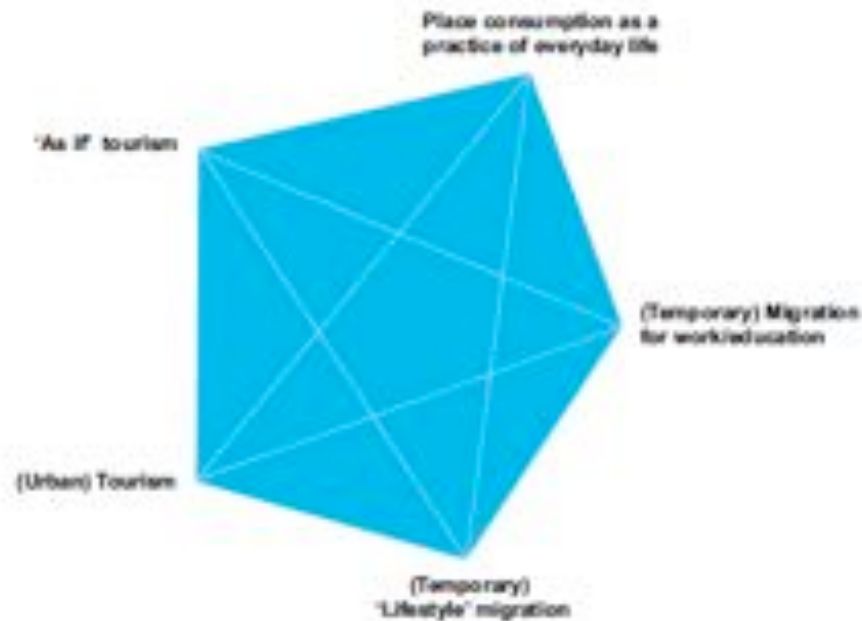


Figure 6: Current patterns of (tourism) mobility and place consumption as a pentagon with five interrelated but distinct dimensions.

It describes processes and phenomena with substantial overlap and no clear boundaries between them that – not always and necessarily, but frequently – appear to cross-fertilise and reinforce one another in a variety of ways. This can be illustrated by a few examples:

- leisure and place consumption as a practice of everyday life for instance demands and helps produce place-based amenities – e.g. arts, entertainment, shopping, and food – that are also of interest to tourists while increases in tourism activity by the same token may result in 'qualities of amenity' (Maitland, 2007, p.77) that are also appreciated by urban dwellers.
- residents exploring places in their own cities 'as if tourists' may act as vanguards for other types of visitors but may also be inspired by the latter's itineraries;
- tourism can generate migration flows, e.g. when visitors due to their experience as tourists decide to become migrants themselves, and migration can generate additional tourism activity, e.g. by encouraging VFR (visiting friends and relatives) travel (Larsen et al, 2007; Williams and Hall, 2002); and

- migration can add to the 'cosmopolitan mix' (Zukin et al., 2009) and cultural diversity (Rath, 2007) of urban localities that growing shares of (place) consumers are said to seek and enjoy.

What is suggested here is crudely sketched but the essence of the argument should be clear: rather than relying on essentialist conceptualizations of tourists and locals or limiting analyses to the convergence of behaviors and amenity demands on part of the affluent and privileged, scholarship should devote more attention to the overlap and interplay of varying mobility flows and place consumption practices contributing to processes of urban and neighborhood change. Significantly, however, the pentagon model is not meant to provide a full representation of reality or serve as framework for definitive classification or conclusive diagnosis. It is proposed as a preliminary heuristic device and, at this point, remains largely conceptual. The remainder of this article will present a number of preliminary hypotheses to flesh out the argument and its implications further and discuss salient avenues for further research that follow from our discussion.

## **5. Preliminary hypotheses and emerging research questions**

### **5.1. Consolidating and comparing empirical findings**

The notion of a pentagon of mobilities and place consumption brings about numerous implications for researching processes of tourism-related urban change and, indeed, urban change more generally. At this point, however, it is merely proposed to stimulate debate and further research and much work is needed to strengthen our understanding of the processes and phenomena it describes, their interplay and overlap, as well as their role in transforming city spaces. This implies for one that the processes and phenomena the different parts of the pentagon describe merit additional scrutiny and research, which, in turn, necessitates more conceptual and empirical engagement with the subjects and practices involved. Which should be included in the model and which may be left out and how far should, for instance, the analysis of place consumption as a practice of everyday life extend? These questions should be studied with an open mind to allow accumulating data to 'make sense' and prevent over-hasty judgments or premature conclusions.

In addition, further research at both the individual and aggregate levels of analysis is necessary to more fully explore the interrelationships and interdependencies of the pentagon's different parts. When discussing pentagons, geometry textbooks usually focus on what are also known as 'regular pentagons' – polygons that have equal straight sides and angles. The processes and phenomena described here with the help of the pentagon model are not assumed to have equal 'weight' or 'relevance'. Nor are they expected to have a symmetrical relationship with one another. Rather, it is assumed that the described processes play out differently across space and time in terms of their extent and impact and that their interaction and interdependencies also vary depending on the contexts in which they unfold. It is hence a matter of empirical research to explore, first, the extent and significance of phenomena and processes the pentagon describes as well as their interactions and interdependencies in particular contexts, and, second, to assess similarities and differences across different contexts.

As regards the first point, one may assume that developments in Berlin are more pronounced than what is experienced in many other cities. One reason for this is the enormous 'pull' of Berlin as a destination in recent decades, another being that the role of tourism and place consumption in processes of urban change has been amplified by the relative weakness of other development dynamics due to Berlin's languishing economy in the 1990s and early 2000s (Krätke, 2004). The current dynamics unfolding in present-day Berlin clearly are the product of a complex confluence of factors, of which many are deeply embedded in the city's particular history and culture. Neither all the contributing factors nor their interactions and interdependencies are fully understood and the same also applies to the impacts the current dynamics involve. It remains for future research to explore these in more depth and establish the degree to which the introduced framework and the ideas described therein are indeed applicable and relevant to other contexts than Berlin. Despite the enduring idea of the city's supposed exceptionalism (Merrill and Jasper, 2014), there seems to be no reason of principle why this should not be the case - even if Berlin may, for the reasons described above, perhaps be deemed an extreme case. To shed light on these and related issues, we need more research in different contexts – research that must, of course, examine mobility flows and place consumption practices not in isolation from, but in the context of wider social relations. This involves, to name

but a few examples, political structures and institutions as well as other locally contingent factors facilitating or constraining different forms and expressions of mobility (or favoring some over others); the role of the local state in reorganising urban landscapes for tourism and place consumption; as well as the ways by which structurings of space and place shape and are shaped by particular social formations.

## **5.2. Coming to terms with the tourism-migration nexus**

As regards the different parts of the described pentagon and their relationships and interactions, it is probably the 'tourism-migration nexus' (Williams and Hall, 2000) that is in need of most research. In migration and tourism studies, the relationship between tourism and migration has been the subject of debates for quite some time, but there is to this day relatively little research on the way these two types of movements interact in creating and re-creating urban environments. In addition, scholarship struggles to come to terms with the increasingly variegated forms of migration in today's increasingly mobile societies. Especially the European migration context has changed drastically in recent decades and numerous questions remain regarding the characteristics and consequences of emergent trends of intra-EU mobility such as the above discussed (post)-crisis migration flows or the increasing number of so-called 'semigrants' or 'Eurocommuters' (Ralph, 2014) who divide their time between different countries to name just a few examples. As regards the motivations and behaviour of (temporarily) mobile individuals, most research thus far has focused on the complementary, symbiotic interplay between tourism and forms of voluntary mobility, such as second home ownership or migration driven by 'lifestyle aspirations' (Dredge and Jenkins 2007, p. 309). The relationship of these flows of mobility and especially their interplay and overlap in processes of urban and neighborhood change are clearly worthwhile investigating further but research should at the same time consider other types of migration as well. Perhaps most importantly, it should also attend to the blurred boundaries between different migration types – e.g. between migration for work and other kinds of migration – on the one hand as well as tourist and migrant behaviours and motivations on the other hand. In the case of Berlin, more ethnographic research concerning the post-crisis flows of young EU citizens from Southern Europe discussed above could for instance provide us with valuable insights not only pertaining to their motives, backgrounds, and behaviours but also regarding the degree to which they intersect with other

transient city users. Multi-locale investigations could meanwhile illuminate the qualitatively different nature of developments across spaces and places, e.g. concerning the impacts of both tourism and other mobility and place consumption patterns on urban environments, e.g. when putting pressure on already stressed housing markets by creating new demand for (short-term) accommodation.

### **5.3. Unpacking local culture and identity**

A recurring theme in debates over urban tourism are concerns about a commodification and potential homogenization or destruction of cultures and places. These concerns also rank high in Berlin. Anonymous posters quoting German author Hans Magnus Enzensberger's famous words '*the tourist destroys what he seeks by finding it*' (1996 [1958]), which appeared on sidewalks and buildings in the summer of 2010, convey a sentiment that is regularly evoked: tourism is alleged to distort, commodify and ultimately destroy the character and cultural attributes of the places in which it occurs and along with it, ironically, also the very assets on which it relies. That tourism involves processes of commodification and may adversely impact a destination's (socio-)cultural identity in manifold other ways is beyond dispute. Tourism is not *sui generis* antagonistic to local culture(s), however. In fact, it would be a fallacy to conceptualise the latter, as is often the case, in opposition to – or as being formed in isolation from – extra-local conditions and forces, such as visitor flows. Local culture works through interaction and the implications of tourism-related development trends on local cultures and identities require a more nuanced analysis than what analytical frameworks resting on binary classifications such as such as host/guest, insider/outsider and related 'tired distinctions' (Jóhannesson et al., 2015, p. 2) are able to offer. The blurring, overlaps and links between tourism and other forms of mobility and uses of urban space, if anything, reinforces this point.

The neighborhood of Kreuzberg is a particularly good example to illustrate this: the emergence of its particular blend of multi- as well as counter- and subcultural scenes - which is now regularly described as being threatened tourism and gentrification - would have been inconceivable without a constant influx of people passing through, staying for a while or making the neighborhood their home in the course of the second half of the twentieth century (Lang 1998; see also Novy, 2012). Many protagonists of its variegated political and artistic movements



were in essence ‘temporary city users’ or first came to the area as visitors before deciding to return and settle while consumer demand on part of tourists from other parts of Berlin, Germany, and abroad contributed to the development of the area’s infrastructure of bars, music venues, and shops that came to underpin its appeal. This is, under admittedly ‘different’ circumstances, no less the case today, as is perhaps best illustrated by Kreuzberg’s increasingly cosmopolitan and transnational culinary scenes. They have not only come to serve as an important draw for all kinds of mobility flows. Nor is it only economically sustained by the demand of the latter. Instead, Kreuzberg’s emergence as one of Berlin’s ‘most exciting foodie district[s]’ (Schulte-Peevers et al., 2009, p.208) also needs to be seen against the backdrop of a proliferation of new businesses set up by newcomers, who were often initially attracted to Berlin as tourists, as well as ‘new mobiles’ (Pichler, 2002) who regularly move back and forth between two or more different places (Martin, 2006). The rise of ‘expat-preneurs’ (Vance et al., 2016) is only one among many examples that show how erstwhile or even current transients don’t only consume the neighborhood’s amenities, atmospheres and services but are rather actively and directly involved in their production. All of this is, as hinted at above, not entirely new. In fact, it is not least the historicity of the described developments that illustrates the problem inherent in accounts that conceptualise mobility flows, including tourism, and local culture and identity as opposites or even adversaries. Future research should move beyond such essentializing portrayals. In other words: it is not local culture as such that is being eroded, displaced, or gutted. Particular cherished characteristics of a locality may be adversely impacted while others may indeed be the product of flows of ‘foreign’ people, ideas, cultures and lifestyles, that is, the translocal and transnational interconnectedness characterising contemporary societies and particular places within them.

#### **5.4. New issues for understanding conflicts**

The notion of the pentagon with its emphasis on overlaps, interplays and, indeed, ‘conviviality’ is not meant to brush aside or downplay conflicts in particular situations – for example due to overcrowding and over commercialization. These conflicts are real - real enough for several cities to begin to up their efforts to respond to them – and the processes and phenomena described with the help of the pentagon, of course, don’t always coexist peacefully. They can

also clash with one another, for example when tourism flows become so pervasive that other place consumers feel compelled to adapt their consumption or mobility practices or when parochial sentiments run high and residents metaphorically pull-up the drawbridge to keep 'their' neighborhoods to themselves. With regard to the pentagon's different parts as well as the urban spaces in which the processes and phenomena it describes materialise we may hence speak of co-existence of relations of conviviality *and* conflict – both of which need to be investigated empirically.

For more nuanced insights, it is important to consider the prevailing modes of accumulation and complex articulations of power that underlie locally distinct patterns of socio-spatial transformations as well as specific aspects of them such as the appropriation and commodification of people and places tourism and place consumption involves. At the same time, it is equally important to attend to the complex and stratified nature of both host communities and mobility flows, the difficulties involved in drawing clear-cut boundaries between them, as well as the fact that not all conflicts can be sufficiently explained with reference to imbalances of power, whether economic, cultural, political, or otherwise. Many can, to be sure – especially when they involve the 'competition for and consumption of scarce resources' (Hall, 1994, p. 195). In fact, there is no doubt that the described processes do not only occur in a divided and dividing world but also often reinforce existing power structures and inequalities. An evident example for this are processes of displacement resulting from gentrification which frequently serves simultaneously as cause, context, and consequence of neighborhoods' revalorisation as destinations. To focus exclusively on these overt conflicts, however, would imply to ignore other tensions and struggles: clashes over the use of public spaces that cross-cut and supplement those produced by class and social status, for instance, or conflicts between different types of place consumers seeking and appreciating different forms of place consumption.

## **6. Conclusions**

Recent years have witnessed a proliferation of manifestations of protest and resistance surrounding tourism in cities. This 'problematization and politicization from below' of what

hitherto had been a non- or minor issue in urban politics and political struggles (Novy and Colomb, 2016) needs to be seen against the backdrop of formidable growth of urban tourism in recent decades, its geographical spread of across urban space, as well as its increasingly powerful role in processes of urban change and frequently ambiguous and unevenly distributed impacts. Significantly, however, processes of ‘touristification’, as they are often referred to, need to be examined not in isolation but as part of, and embedded in, wider forces and processes driving urban and neighborhood change. The latter involves, amongst other things, to attend to the way tourism overlaps and interacts with other forms of migration and mobility, as well as other forms of leisure and (place) consumption and the way the boundaries between these have become increasingly blurred. Doing so means to break away from crude storylines that pit tourists against locals and has all sorts of repercussions for thinking about, as well as researching urban tourism and tourism-induced change, as the penultimate chapter of this contribution revealed. At the same time, the discussed dynamics and developments also raise several more fundamental questions – for example regarding our understanding of cities and neighborhoods, as well as the ‘legitimacy’ of particular claims over them. Gregory Ashworth observed not to long ago that ‘local residents are generally accorded primacy in the claim to the city, and [that] this assumption underlies much local management policy’ (2009, p. 217). Yet who qualifies as a ‘local’ in today’s increasingly mobile and inter-connected world and should they, however defined, be afforded a greater ‘right to the city’ than other city users? These are only a few of the questions that merit further investigation and illustrate that contextualising tourism within wider mobility and place consumption practices has not only profound consequences for the way we think about what is perceived as tourism-induced urban change. Especially when also considering other implications of today’s era of mobilities (e.g. Hannam et al., 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007; Creswell, 2006), it should instead also give us cause to critically reconsider several key ideas and assumptions underpinning urban planning and management. This involves particularly planning and management’s continuous reliance on sedentarist conceptualisations of belonging, community and citizenship as well as their treatment of being settled as the norm and mobility as the exception.

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