

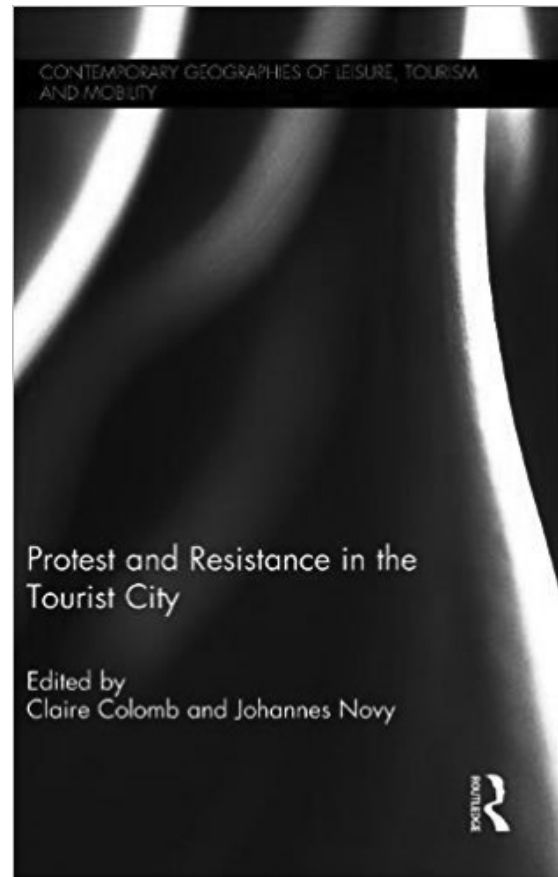
book review

Protest and Resistance in the Tourist City

Claire Colomb and Johannes Novy, eds.

The book *Protest and Resistance in the Tourist City*, edited by Claire Colomb and Johannes Novy, aims to analyse and better understand what types of conflicts and contestations appear around urban tourism in contemporary cities across Europe, North & South America and Asia, and to explore the various ways in which community groups, residents, and other important actors respond to and challenge tourism development. The key questions behind this book are as follows: Where and at what scale do conflicts and protests occur? What do they revolve around? Who are the actors involved? What are their motives and demands, and how do they articulate them? Who are the target(s) of their demands or protests – the state, the tourism industry/the market, tourists? What impacts and consequences do manifestations of protest and resistance have? In particular, how do the local state and the tourism industry respond to them? What kinds of alternative approaches to tourism development are being proposed? The fundamental premise of this book is as simple as it is frequently overlooked, namely that tourism is fundamentally political. Its political nature stems from the environment and circumstances in which it is taking place, decisions and fundamental interests and the structures of power that shape it, as well as the profound, often social and spatially uneven outcomes it involves. Since the issues of urban tourism as a source of conflict and contestations haven't received a systematic, deep, interdisciplinary, and international approach until now, this book brings together a collection of theoretically and empirically rich contributions by scholars from around the world and draws on approaches from urban sociology, urban policy and politics, urban geography, urban anthropology, cultural studies, urban design and planning, tourism studies and tourism management.

The appearance of conflicts and contestations around urban tourism is primarily connected to increasing tourist flows that affect the daily lives of the city's residents in a more visible way. The most common causes of conflicts surrounding urban tourism



are the negative impact of tourism on people and places, equity impacts, and the politics of urban tourism. Conflicts and contestations are manifested in different ways and on different (spatial) levels. In some cases, different forms of collective mobilizations specifically set up around tourism-related issues have emerged, either at the city-wide scale (e.g. in Berlin, Chapter 3; in Hong Kong, Chapter 6; in Venice, Chapter 9) or in particular neighbourhoods or sites (e.g. in Barcelona's Park Güell, Chapter 13). In other cases, existing forms of community activism (e.g. residents' or neighbourhood associations) or existing urban social movements have increasingly turned their attention towards tourism related issues and incorporated them into their agenda as part of broader claims about: the defence of quality of life and public space management (e.g. in Paris, Chapter 3); neighbourhood restructuring, heritage protection and the 'right

to stay put' in historic city centres (e.g. in Prague, Chapter 4 and in Valparaíso, Chapter 7); housing shortages, tenants' rights and rapid gentrification (e.g. San Francisco, Chapter 7); new urban projects desirability and questions of urban density (e.g. Santa Monica, Chapter 5); or the social impacts of mega-events (e.g. Belo Horizonte, Chapter 12 and more generally in many cities which were candidates for hosting the Olympic Games, Chapter 11). In some cases, there are no structured or visible forms of collective mobilizations surrounding urban tourism, but there are micro-practices of resistance (e.g. in the use of space by locals) and micro-politics (e.g. in Paris, Chapter 2 and in Singapore, Chapter 16). Therefore it is evident that there is no such thing, as it might seem at first, as a global resistance against tourism. Instead, we can conclude that there are certain forms of conflict around tourism.

Apart from the negative consequences of urban tourism, the causes of conflicts and contestations may also lie in the potential benefits of urban tourism (and its costs), whereby the following issues are usually drawn: who can and who should reap the positive benefits and profits generated by the tourist economy (e.g. in Shanghai, Chapter 15 and in Buenos Aires, Chapter 14); which type of tourism is desirable in a certain space (e.g. in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, Chapter 10 or in a squatted building complex and alternative social-cultural centre in Hamburg, Chapter 17); the political, symbolic and economic use of tourism in societies marked by ethno nationalist conflicts (e.g. in Belfast, Chapter 8 and to an extent in Hong Kong, Chapter 6).

Tourism has the capacity to exacerbate or mitigate existing or latent urban conflicts (between social groups and between individual groups and states) seemingly unrelated to tourism in the first place (e.g. Belfast, Chapter 8). All mobilization activities, therefore, can not be considered progressive. Tensions surrounding tourism involve different actors with different motives and agendas, and mobilizations can be defensive, reactionary, exclusionary or even racist.

Given the current trends in the tourism market, further growth in demand for urban tourism is expected so, as the editors point out, critical rethinking and challenging the ways tourism functions and how it is dealt with in the political arenas of cities is of extreme importance. This book is the first attempt of a systematic approach to the research of conflicts and contestations surrounding urban tourism. It offers a fresh and different perspective on the important role of urban tourism in many contemporary cities, and on the actual "urban moment" in general, its conflicts and contradictions. As such, this book is of great value for students, researchers, and academics in the fields of tourism, geography, planning, urban studies, development studies, anthropology, politics and sociology.

Claire Colomb and Johannes Novy, eds.

Pub. Date: 04-Jul-2016

Publisher: Routledge

ISBN-10: 1138856711

ISBN-13: 9781138856714

L. Dukić