

Tourism and Transformation – Regional Development in European History

Veranstalter: Department of History, University of Salzburg

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From September 17th to 19th 2015 the Department of History at the University of Salzburg hosted the international workshop „Tourism and Transformation. Regional Development in European History“. Scholars from all over Europe gathered to discuss regional transformation processes, triggered by tourism, from different angles. The organizers Martin Knoll and Katharina Scharf sought to win speakers and commentators from different scientific fields and a wide variety in perspectives. Not only did representatives of the cultural, social and economic history attend the workshop, but also experts from the fields of architecture, geography, social ecology and tourism business. The lectures were commented by EWALD HIEBL (Salzburg), THOMAS HELLMUTH (Salzburg), MARTIN KNOLL (Salzburg), JON MATHIEU (Luzern) and HASSO SPODE (Berlin).

The very first panel was started by LAURENCE COLE (Salzburg), who researched the transformation and modernization processes in Tyrol during the 19th century. His focus lied on the social and cultural influences that tourism had on the local residents. He pointed out the enormous lack of studies in the history of tourism in the Habsburg monarchy. Cole noticed a „masked transformation“, since traditional societies kept on existing side by side with a touristically formed society. There were contradictions between the force to adjust to trends or infrastructural conditions, and the preservation of the unique aspects of the destination and its society to keep up with the competition.

The follow-up lecture by CÉDRIC HUMAIR (Lausanne) focused on the economic and technical developments in the region around Lake Geneva from the second half of the 19th century to the beginning of the First World War. The aim of the collaborative research project Humair's work is part of, was

the examination of the main causes and consequences of the success story of the region. The four analysed cities around Lake Geneva featured a market for technical innovations earlier than the industrial towns of the time, Basel or Zurich. Eventually the industrialization of the region was a spin-off effect of tourism, after the main actors invested in regional industries like mineral water and the production of watches, jewellery and chocolates.

LAURENT TISSOT (Neuchâtel) in his keynote speech emphasized the long neglected economic significance of tourism. Since tourism is a key-sector of the economy, it is at the same time highly vulnerable, which therefore has to stay flexible and adaptable. For the historic research of tourism Tissot sees a need in the fortification of the theoretic and conceptual foundation. He gave two examples of relevant approaches: the economic cluster theory (industrial district) is analysing relationships and processes of concentration, communication and connection between regional stakeholders, while the path-dependence theory emphasizes the significance of elapsed decisions on the present situation. Tissot started a conceptual debate, that was pursued in the subsequent discussion and has also been taken on by the following lecturers.

The second panel started with LUIGI PICCIONI's (Arcavacata di Rende) report about a pioneering project of ecological and social-economic sustainable tourism in the national parks of the Abruzzi. In the Upper Sangro Valley (Abruzzi) the investments in infrastructure between 1958 and 1968 focused only on one community, so that other villages of the region were strongly neglected. The homeland and nature preservation group „Italia Nostra“ therefore brought in a law proposal to the Italian parliament that would lead to the composition of the Abruzzi National Park. Their aim was both to protect the nature of the region and to restore and revive the socio-economic development of the local communities. The project has become a trailblazer for sustainable national park projects all over Europe.

The paper of ROBERT GROSS (Wien) about winter tourism in Vorarlberg (Austria) re-

searched transformation processes triggered by the erection of ski lifts from 1945 to 1970. The establishing of the winter sports destination in Vorarlberg was made possible by loans from the European Recovery Program (ERP, Marshall Plan) and from commercial banks. To eventually pay back those loans the lift operators had to increase their revenues by expanding the transportation capacities of the lifts, easing and grooming the slopes, and covering them with artificial snow to extend the skiing season. In addition to that the private ownership rights of farmers and agricultural cooperatives were restricted, as they began to protest against lift-building ever since the 1960s.

BERND KREUZER (Linz) presented the outcome of his research regarding the strategies of the Salzkammergut tourism in the interwar period. After the First World War the typical tourists, that usually came for „Sommerfrische“ from Vienna, Munich or Prague, remained absent due to the high inflation. The crisis at the end of the 1920s and the economic sanctions from Nazi-Germany against Austria by the Thousand Mark Ban („Tausend Mark Sperre“) in the early 1930s made it even harder to attract new tourists. Lake resorts were built and highly promoted in the communities around the Salzkammergut lakes. In Gmunden there was a lake resort with a capacity of 4,000 people erected and the Salzkammergut could establish an image as a „Sonnenresort“, since Coco Chanel has made tanned skin popular.

The co-organizer of the workshop, KATHARINA SCHARF (Salzburg), is researching the early history of tourism in Salzburg from 1860 to the First World War in her dissertation project. In addition to this geographical scope Scharf will compare Salzburg with a French alpine region within her research project. The touristic take-off in Salzburg took place around 1860 when the railway reached the city and infrastructure was expanded to the benefits of travellers. The thesis of tourism as a promoter of modernization was exemplified by the Lungau, a peripheral region in the south-east of the federal state of Salzburg that remained economically backward due to the disadvantageous geographic position. In the follow-up

debate the plenum discussed – among other things – what selection criteria and which concept Scharf could considerate in determining another alpine region to compare it with Salzburg.

In the third panel the geographer HANS HOPFINGER (Eichstätt) explained by the project of the New Franconian Lake District how a regional planning project not only transformed the landscape around the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal, but also created an attractive touristic region. Building the canal made it possible to eliminate problems like the frequent and widespread flooding of the Altmühl river and the drought of the Main basin. As a side effect, a surprisingly successful touristic destination was formed. Companies settled down that created new jobs for the people, who until then had migrated to the cities in the search of employment and left abandoned villages that were now revived.

The 1970s and 1980s as a time period of crisis and transitions in the rural periphery of Spain was the topic of MORITZ GLASER's (Kiel) study on tourism and environmental history of the Spanish coastal regions. During the 1960s, tourism was considered a reliable economic strength and development engine. Already a decade later there was a paradigm shift, triggered by the global environmental discourse, and loud criticism by scientists and local environmental groups emerged. Glaser's research focuses on the main actors (who put this altered perception in motion) their motives and intentions, as well as the reasons for their success. In Glaser's core thesis he assumes that the kick-off of environmental awareness was set in motion by tourism. It had also triggered debates on space utilization and thus stimulated the civil participation and democratic practices on a regional level.

As a prelude to the fourth panel, CORD PAGENSTECHER (Berlin) gave an exemplary insight into the local travel habits of 1970 to 2000 by the travel biography of an Albanian family from Kosovo. His aim was to capture developments in the context of political and transnational processes. In the 1970s poorer classes of the population spent their summer holidays in villages in the countryside with friends or relatives. Through orga-

nized trips for workers by the socialist ruling party, for the first time families were able to make cheap beach holidays. After the emigration to Germany, the residence obligation for asylum seekers made travelling difficult for a long time, and the outbreak of the Balkan War of the 1990s prevented the visit to the old country.

OLGA MOATSOU (Lausanne), who is specialized on architecture, urban planning and cultural sociology, showed how tourism can change the structure and the identity of a city on the example of the Cretan town of Rethymno. As tourism reached Rethymno in the 1970s, all major holiday resorts had to move to the outskirts nearby the sea, while in the centre, however, smaller accommodations established. Later than elsewhere, tourism supplied the motivation to make large investments in the abandoned historic city centre to renovate it and design it like a museum. Investments that had not been considered very attractive before, could then be transformed into touristic gold mines.

The research area of HRVOJE PETRIC (Zagreb) focused on the impact of tourism on the landscape of the Brijuni Islands off the coast of Croatia. Since a private investment in the late 19th century and the eradication of malaria, the long neglected islands have been turned into a well visited resort. After the Second World War the islands became the summer residence of the president and did not recognize any tourist activities until the 1980s. Only years after Tito's death the resort was transformed into a national park, opened up for international tourists and became one of the most prestigious destinations in Croatia. As an interesting object for further research, Petric mentioned the way of the development of tourism on the mainland opposite of the islands.

The fifth and last panel was started by the presentation of MATEUSZ HARTWICH (Berlin), who researched the nationalization of the landscape of the Karkonosze Mountains („Riesengebirge“) during the first half of the 20th century. The Czech-Silesian border area has been popularized by authors and artists as the ideal type of untouched landscape during the romantic period. Existing infrastructure was further expanded in the 19th

century and marketing measures by the association of the so called „Riesengebirgsverein“ (1880) attracted more tourists. German nationalization was expressed by giving inns and roads patriotic names, installing correspondent memorial tablets and staging mass events within a national context. The region that was almost unharmed by the war fell to Poland after 1945 and Polish nationalization with similar strategies as exercised before by the Germans was then implemented.

CHRISTIAN NOACK (Amsterdam) studying the example of Sochi between the Soviet era and present could highlight the influence the political environment can have on the development of tourism. Moscow promoted the development of selected peripheral areas in the 1930s – including Sochi, which Noack described as the „Russian Riviera“. After communism, Sochi fell into crisis as public investment failed to appear, which ended social tourism. The Soviet period has left many problems, such as the urban aesthetics, the delayed economic development and environmental impacts. The resumption of Russia under Putin to large-scale planning in the preparation of the Winter Olympic Games 2014 was the starting point of a following discussion in the panel.

The closing plenary of the workshop was determined by the attempt to link issues of historical analysis with the touristic practice of the present time. Its input was delivered by the tourism consultant ANDREA HUEMER (Salzburg), who gave an insight in trends and problems of both Salzburg and international tourism. Huemer brought up many of the theories and hypotheses that had been mentioned in the lectures and discussions before and made a reference to the current situation in tourism.

The workshop „Tourism and Transformation“ at University of Salzburg's Department of History co-funded by the university, city magistrate and federal state of Salzburg, made it possible, not only to gather an interdisciplinary spectrum of scholars, but also to discuss a variety of geographically and periodically diverse case studies. Among the different implemented methods were quantitative, qualitative, biographic approaches and others, which revealed the versatility of

tourism history. The miscellaneous transformation processes that were triggered by tourism in the different regions of Europe and researched by the presenters of the workshop, proved the enormous potential in this field.

Conference Overview:

Panel I – Chair: Katharina Scharf (Salzburg)
Commentator: Thomas Hellmuth (Salzburg)

Laurence Cole (Salzburg), Tourism and Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Tyrol.

Cédric Humair (Lausanne), Tourism and Transformation in Lake Geneva Region. An Economic Approach (1850-1914)

Keynote Speech

Laurent Tissot (Neuchâtel), „The liaisons dangereuses“. European Tourism and Regional Development in a Historical Perspective.

Panel II – Chair: Laurent Tissot (Neuchâtel)
Commentator: Jon Mathieu (Luzern)

Luigi Piccioni (Arcavacata di Rende), Pioneering Sustainable Tourism. The Case of the Abruzzo National Park.

Robert Gross (Wien), Histories of Up- and Downhill. How Winter Tourism Transformed Alpine Regions in Vorarlberg/ Austria.

Bernd Kreuzer (Linz), Golf Courses and Swimming Pools instead of Habsburg Emperors. Tourism Strategies in the Salzkammergut during the Interwar Period.

Katharina Scharf (Salzburg), It's all about Tourism?! Regional Change in Salzburg (19th/20th Century)

Panel III – Chair: Martin Weichbold (Salzburg)

Commentator: Martin Knoll (Salzburg)

Hans Hopfinger (Eichstätt), The „New Franconian Lake District“ in Germany. A Regional Planning and Regional Development Success Story in a Historic Perspective.

Moritz Glaser (Kiel), Touristic Spaces in Spanish Coastal Regions. Perceptions, Adjustments and Opposition, 1970-1980.

Panel IV – Chair: Laurence Cole (Salzburg)
Commentator: Hasso Spode (Berlin)

Cord Pagenstecher (Berlin), The Transformation of Kosovar Holidays between Socialism, War and Migration. A Biographical Approach.

Olga Moatsou (Lausanne), Tourism on Cretan Soil. An Easy Resort.

Hrvoje Petric (Zagreb), The Brijuni Islands (Adriatic). The Long-term Development from 19th Century to the Present.

Panel V – Chair: Martin Knoll (Salzburg)
Commentator: Ewald Hiebl (Salzburg)

Mateusz Hartwich (Berlin), Tourism and the Nationalisation of a Landscape – the Karkonosze Mountains (Riesengebirge). 1900-1950.

Christian Noack (Amsterdam), „Everyone must visit Sochi, if only once in their lives“: Soviet Mass Tourism and the Transformation of the Caucasian Black Sea Coast

Andrea Huemer (Salzburg), Tourism and Transformation – Past and Present.

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