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Urban tourism research: Recent progress and current paradoxes

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ABSTRACT

Urban tourism has remained a consistent theme in the expansion of tourism research since the 1980s and several seminal papers (e.g. Ashworth, 1989, 2003) have reviewed the state of research and its progress towards a greater recognition. This *Progress in Tourism Management* review article moves our understanding and knowledge of the research agendas within urban tourism by examining the paradoxes associated with such agendas thereby highlighting the need to adopt a less inward looking approach that interconnects with the wider domain of the social sciences, especially those of urban studies and the notion of world cities. We argue that understanding urban tourism will only progress by embracing these wider social science agendas so that tourism becomes integrated into these academic debates to progress the subject area.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background, objectives and rationale

One of the current challenges for urban tourism research is to rethink many of the assumptions, models and frameworks currently in vogue within the wider domain of Tourism Studies (Jamal & Robinson, 2009) in the light of prevailing theoretical debates in the arena of social science. The most recently published review of urban tourism entitled 'Urban tourism research: developing an agenda' (Edwards, Griffin, & Hayllar, 2008) is in fact a study of Australia and treads the well-worn path of concepts of urban tourism, defining urban tourism and methods of analysing that phenomenon. Predictably it argues that 'Prior to the 80s, research on urban tourism was fragmented and not recognised as a distinct field' (Edwards et al., 2008: 1034). It also points to Ashworth's seminal review of the field in 1989 stating that 'Eleven years later, there is a growing volume of published work. In particular there has been an increase in the number of books, mostly edited collections' (Edwards et al., 2008: 1034). Indeed, a current review of *Leisuretourism.com* using the generic term *Urban Tourism* generates over 800 pieces of literature and *Scopus* over 1300 references as a sign of its intellectual health. Yet somewhat strangely, Edwards et al. (2008: 1038) talk about 'the

manifestly complex nature of urban tourism, and the limited scope of research', which seems a somewhat tautological argument in view of the previous admission that the field had expanded. Perhaps, a more valid and critical debate, as opposed to the familiar arguments about the weakness of urban tourism research (Pearce, 2001), is that any review of progress in the study of urban tourism is immediately confronted by a series of paradoxes. These can be stated succinctly as contrasting propositions that characterise urban tourism and provide a focus for scientific investigation.

1. Urban tourism is an extremely important, world-wide form of tourism: It has received a disproportionately small amount of attention from scholars of either tourism or of the city, particularly in linking theoretical research to Tourism Studies more generally. Consequently, despite its significance, urban tourism has remained only imprecisely defined and vaguely demarcated with little development of a systematic structure of understanding.
2. Tourists visit cities for many purposes: The cities that accommodate most tourists are large multifunctional entities into which tourists can be effortlessly absorbed and thus become to a large extent economically and physically invisible.
3. Tourists make an intensive use of many urban facilities and services but little of the city has been created specifically for tourist use.
4. Tourism can contribute substantial economic benefits to cities but the cities whose economies are the most dependent upon tourism are likely to benefit the least. It is the cities with a large and varied economic base that gain the most from tourism but are the least dependent upon it.

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5. Thus ultimately, and from a number of directions, we arrive at the critical asymmetry in the relationship between the tourist and the city, which has many implications for policy and management. The tourism industry clearly needs the varied, flexible and accessible tourism products that cities provide: it is by no means so clear that cities need tourism.

One of the tasks of this review is to examine the extent to which the most recent literature on urban tourism can help us understand and potentially explain some of these paradoxes.

We argue that whilst these paradoxes exist, our understanding of them at a theoretical level has been constrained by the lack of engagement of many tourism researchers with wider debates in urban studies. Such debates transcend the inherently case study nature of much urban tourism research to consider the macro social and economic setting in which most urban tourism activity occurs on the global stage. This paper argues that the existing conceptual and theoretically-informed research does not sufficiently explain the evolving world order of city-based tourism. The validity of such an argument is, as Ashworth (2003) recognised, a function of the *imbalance in attention* resulting from the fact that cities are the origin of most tourists and the destination of many as well as a major focal point in tourist itineraries. Indeed, Ashworth (2003: 143) acknowledged that 'those studying tourism neglected cities while those studying cities neglected tourism'. Examine almost any urban studies or urban geography text and 'Tourism' remains a minor issue in the debates that they address even though Tourism is now seen as worthy of consideration in mainstream social science textbooks in subject areas such as sociology (e.g. see Cohen & Kennedy, 2004, which contains a chapter on Tourism). This neglect has not only impeded our theoretical understanding of how cities are evolving at a global scale in their development of tourism, but is compounded by the covert engagement of geographers, planners and those working in urban studies who theorise and engage in critical debates on cities, but all too often ignore the tourism phenomenon despite the cities significance as gateways and destinations.

What this review article hopes to contribute to our current understanding of urban tourism is a greater engagement with urban theory in order to explain some of the processes and patterns of urban tourism that now dominate the landscape of cities. Alongside this, we seek to generate a critical debate on the extent to which we have now a well-established quantum of urban tourism research to assist in this wider understanding of its development and significance in modern society. In other words, has the 'imbalance in attention' noted by Ashworth (1989, 2003) now been resolved to a point where we can comprehend the range of paradoxes that exist in urban tourism and understand why it is such a pervasive element in contemporary tourism? This review is, by its very nature, selective in the material it examines, seeking to concentrate on peer-reviewed articles (and edited books where relevant), excluding the vast amount of conference proceedings and non-peer reviewed material, (such as, Wöber, 2002; World Tourism Organisation, 2007; World Tourism Organisation and European Travel Commission, 2005; Jamieson, 2008). One dimension of the growing scale of urban tourism research, as Fig. 1 suggests, is that there has been a relative proliferation of sub-themes within the domain of urban tourism research that has emerged since the 1990s in line with the wider development of tourism research. Given the focus in this paper on peer-reviewed material, Fig. 1 provides an overview of the scope and extent of the emergence of sub-themes in urban tourism research from across the spectrum of academic outputs. This highlights the multidisciplinary nature of many research contributions that remain weakly connected by theoretical or conceptual constructs.

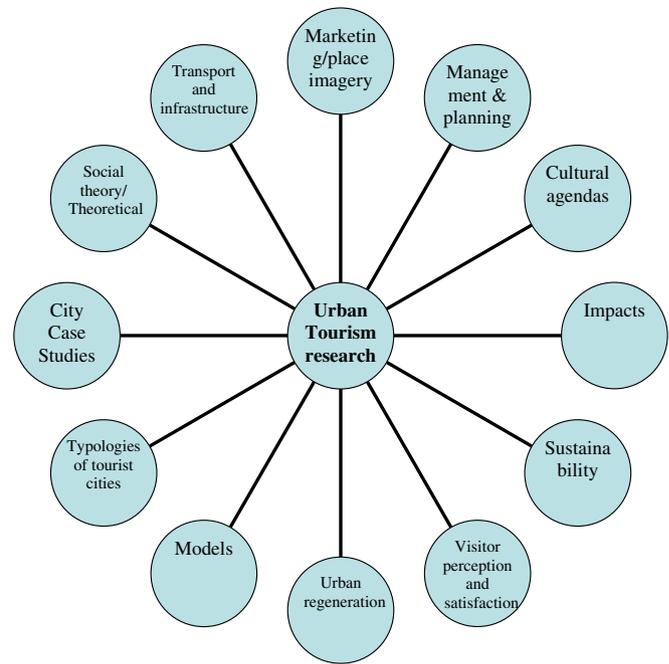


Fig. 1. Sub-themes within the domain of urban tourism research.

This paper traces development of the subject area since 2003 (with a number of notable exceptions) and so logically follows from the classic study by Ashworth (2003). It deliberately omits papers published on the history of urban tourism (e.g. Gilbert & Hancock, 2006; Gotham, 2007) and important historical critiques (e.g. Borsay, 2006), which is a subject in itself that is also emerging as a prominent theme in the historiography of tourism and leisure, though often without the application of the concepts of analysis used by tourism researchers. Such histories are nevertheless an important area for further development, given the urban focus of many resorts as destinations as well as the long experience of towns and cities as holiday destinations. This is most visibly embodied in the role of the hotel (McNeill, 2008) and other reconfigurations of the city into multifaceted spaces for sport, leisure and tourism (Silk, 2007), sometimes creating 'tourist bubbles' (Bailey, 2008). The paper commences with an attempt to demarcate the topic, and then sets the context for urban tourism research by a review of the importance of urbanisation as a global process, which situates urban tourism in a more explicit theoretical context, and thus remedies a persistent weakness in many forms of tourism research that remain case study driven and implicitly descriptive in manner (Pearce, 2001; Pearce & Butler, 1993). There then follows a more in-depth examination of the paradoxes identified at the outset of the paper, from two different perspectives, namely the role of the city in tourism and tourism in the city. Both perspectives emphasise some key studies in the wider social science literature that shed light on these issues. Finally the implications of these paradoxes for urban tourism research are considered.

1.2. What is urban tourism?

A major difficulty that may account in part for the academic neglect of urban tourism has been the lack of a simple definition of a complex phenomenon and a clear demarcation of its diverse and vaguely formulated set of activities, as reviewed by Edwards et al. (2008). Adding the adjective *urban* to the noun *tourism* locates an activity in a spatial context but does not in itself define or delimit that activity. As Edwards et al. (2008: 1038) state, tourism is 'one

among many social and economic forces in the urban environment. It encompasses an industry that manages and markets a variety of products and experiences to people who have a wide range of motivations, preferences and cultural perspectives and are involved in a dialectic engagement with the host community. The outcome of this engagement is a set of consequences for the tourist, the host community and the industry'. Even so, whilst tourism occurs in cities, as in other environments, this in itself does little to elucidate the possible relationships and interactions between tourism and that multifaceted entity, the city. A fundamental issue highlighted by Wall and Mathieson (2005) is how much change can be attributed specifically to tourism rather than non-tourism activity. In other words, the issue of change and the effect of tourism do not help to focus the discussion on the urban nature of urban tourism and how, therefore, it is inherently different from rural, mountain, seaside or many other geographically demarcated tourisms. Is there an urbanicity, which could be contrasted, for example, with its antonym rurality, that gives meaning to a category of tourism and tourist? If so, then what are the distinctive characteristics of all or some cities that shape urban tourisms. The plural is necessary because urban tourism 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' as different clusters of urban features and services are utilised in the service of an array of tourism markets. This diversity lies at the core of the relationship between the city and the tourist but is only one half of the interaction. If tourists make use of almost all urban features, they make an exclusive use of almost none. Therefore understanding urban tourism is dependent upon a prior understanding of the urban context in which it is embedded.

1.3. A rural bias?

An understanding of the urban character of urban tourism may be advanced by considering its antonym and accounting for its relative neglect. The charge that the study of tourism has long had a rural bias was advanced almost from the beginning of the serious academic study of tourism. Stansfield drew attention to this dominant rural focus in 1964 and justification was not hard to find, in spite of examples in American and British Geography from the 1930s, which may be seen as a tentative interest in urban tourism (Brown, 1935; Selke, 1936). Despite these notable studies, the founding father of urban spatial modelling, Christaller (1966), proposed a pioneering spatial model in which tourism was a function of urban peripheries not urban centres. This line of thought continued with the concept of 'pleasure peripheries' (e.g. Miossec, 1976; Yokeno, 1968) in which recreation zones demarcated by travel times were traced around urban centres, whose function was to provide the demand for, not the supply of, leisure space and facilities. The first generation of researchers, and geographers in particular, to take an interest in what was then generally viewed as the trivial and marginal activity of recreation, approached the topic mostly from a background in land-use and land economics and even from agriculture and nature conservation. The founding texts were Clawson and Knetsch (1966) *Economics of outdoor recreation*, in which urban environments are reduced to an afterthought and Patmore 'Land and leisure' (1970), in which the uses of urban space are uncomfortable additions to the much more extensive rural recreation areas.

Economic and urban geographers took little interest in recreation being fixated on the nature of work as being the production, exchange and consumption of still largely physical goods. The long prophesied dawn of a 'leisure-rich society' was evoked by Dower's messianic 'Fourth wave' of 1965 in which the advent of mass leisure was equated as a stage in human development with such advances

as the Neolithic invention of agriculture or the nineteenth century industrial revolution. However this anticipated leisure was to be filled with recreational activities in predominantly rural environments, as described by Coppock and Duffield's (1975) 'Recreation in the countryside'. The reality that the fastest growing leisure pursuits at that time were such home-based activities as watching television or DIY were largely ignored as being less visible, not researchable or indeed being less worthy compared with open-air rural recreation. There is an element here of a deeply rooted anti-urban bias that was especially prevalent in Anglo-American society, perhaps as a romantic reaction to the industrial and urban revolutions of the nineteenth century. Cities had become associated with the serious tasks of work, trade and government, while recreation was to be sought in nature whether in rural areas or their miniature urban facsimile, the urban park. As Page and Connell (2010) argue, even urban leisure remains a poorly understood phenomenon that draws important parallels with the development of tourism. The retreat to the countryside was considered proper and indeed officially encouraged with programmes for National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, allotment gardens, green belts, country parks, nature trails, long distance footpaths and the like, while a retreat to the city for recreation would have been considered bizarre if not disreputable and urban entertainment received little official subsidy or encouragement. A rural ramble was encouraged; an urban flâneur was not. In this way tourism became reduced to being a subcategory of recreation within a wider context of leisure studies (e.g. Cosgrove & Jackson, 1972 *The geography of recreation and leisure*). The failure to separate recreation and tourism, demonstrated in the many courses and textbooks entitled 'a geography of recreation and tourism', caused tourism to be approached as a land-use, most evident in rural areas rather than an economic activity dominantly located in cities. A major exception to this rural bias was the study of the urban geography of seaside resorts (Barrett, 1958; Defert, 1966; Gilbert, 1939, 1954; Lavery, 1972; Pearce, 1978; Pigram, 1977; Racine, 1983) in which tourism was a clearly recognised dominant urban land-use. Subsequent studies of the resort lifecycle model (now Tourism Area Lifecycle, TALC, Butler, 2005) were reviewed by Stansfield (2005). A key challenge that remains in these models is that places do not simply and inevitably pass through a series of easily discernible phases of growth and development. It is becoming increasingly apparent that simple land-use models have been superseded by the development of social theory to explain how the internal geographies of cities have evolved in the postmodern period to create complex patterns and different forms of tourism product with their own specific spatial characteristics, practices and modes of consumption in time and space. The most notable developments, which we will explore further, include the development of urban tourism on the periphery of cities (edge cities – Garreau, 1991) and the growth of cultural districts (e.g. Richards & Wilson, 2007) which are emerging as a new landscape for tourism, leisure and the wider cultural industries. What this suggests is that simple models which propose an evolutionary pattern of lifecycle for an entire destination do not assist in understanding the complexity of change and the depth of development in urban tourism within different areas of cities (i.e. their microgeographies). Indeed urban tourism is far from a simple notion (Smith, A., 2006; Smith, M., 2006) that can be reduced to the TALC.

2. A context for urban tourism research

2.1. Urbanisation

There is widespread recognition among governments and transnational agencies, such as the United Nations, that the world's

population is increasingly urbanising. Whilst estimates of the world's urban population vary, there is a consensus among bodies such as the UN that the world's urban population has risen from 14% of the total in 1900 to 47% in 2000 and is expected to grow to 61% by 2030. This is particularly noticeable in the rise of megacities with populations in excess of 10 million (e.g. Tokyo, Mexico City, New York, Mumbai and Sao Paolo) and we will see the volume of people living in cities rise from 3 billion in 2002 to 5 billion by 2030, dominated by growth in middle and low-income countries, particularly in Asia. This will have significant implications for urban tourism as a key component of the geographies and economies of these expanding cities as well as in the reconfiguration of tourism within national economies. At the same time, these cities will make a disproportionate contribution to national economies as the focus of production of goods and services, and tourism is no exception to this as tourist gateways are predominantly large urban centres. These processes of change, associated with global capital, have proved to be major forces in the emerging landscapes of post-industrial and industrialising cities. Additionally as the leisure economies (which encompass tourism, leisure and the wider cultural industries) are developed they shape new geographies of urban consumption and production, while new forms of urban tourism and leisure activity not yet been anticipated or conceptualised will in turn develop.

2.2. Globalisation and world cities

There is a well developed literature on globalisation and tourism (e.g. see a review by Meethan, 2004), and economic, cultural and political dimensions have been a significant area of research in the social sciences and so need not be reiterated here. One of the most relevant research agendas which helps to understand the significance of urban change associated with globalisation and cities has emerged from urban studies, much of it focused on the notion of world cities, a concept first advanced by Hall (1966), as places that dominate world business. However globalisation as a process also impacts upon medium and small cities, and visible signs of that globalisation process may best be seen in the tourism and hospitality sector (e.g. the evolution of ethnic restaurants and non-local cultural events). The concept of world cities has attracted a great deal of research interest, most notably in urban geography and sociology (see Pacione, 2005 for a concise review) where the accumulation of an urban based knowledge economy has meant cities have become the point where knowledge is transformed into productive activities, and for tourism, the creative development of experiences and products. This is particularly the case in the advanced service sector as global service centres like London and New York have emerged. King (1990) identified some of the principal characteristics of these world cities including some that have direct and indirect implications for urban tourism.

From a tourism perspective, the world city hierarchy that has emerged is important in relation to globalisation because it illustrates the linkages that exist between each city and which also link them across geographical borders. Whilst the debates over the functioning of this system contest arguments whether such cities co-exist, cooperate or compete with each other in such a system, nonetheless national tourism economies exist wherever the world city is located. However, although world cities function as gateways to their national tourism system, integration into an international hierarchy may effectively disconnect them from their respective national urban systems to create a system of world cities that is sometimes better connected to other world cities than their own national tourism economy (see Maitland & Ritchie, 2009 for a set of papers on this theme in relation to national capital cities). This

illustrates one of the unusual paradoxes of urban tourism in world cities, namely that world cities are important hubs to generate tourism but their main economic rationale is not tourism. This is reflected in the way that the world city may be relatively disconnected from its local region, and even its national tourism economy, because of the global nature of the tourism linkages that exist. This then poses significant challenges in terms of using tourism as a vehicle for regional development, which emerges from the spatial distribution (or redistribution) of tourists from the world city to other areas of the space economy in more peripheral areas. It is interesting that the recent study by Maitland and Newman (2009) entitled 'world tourism cities' actually addresses some of these issues, especially the microgeographies of neighbourhood development, of which tourism is one instrument powering such change at a district level. Yet there is some debate as to whether the cities chosen as cases are truly world cities in relation to their population size. This highlights the lack of conceptual clarity among researchers across the social sciences on agreeing specific criteria for world cities and their identification, particularly in relation to tourism. One important indicator of this concentration of tourism activity into world city regions is a greater concentration of business travel between world cities and the predisposition of Expos and conference organisers to target world cities due to their appeal, vibrant cultural industries and heritage (e.g. see Coles, 2003 and the case study of Leipzig). Indeed, Pacione, (2005) argues that the cultural industries blur the distinction between production and consumption in the functioning of cities in that they may be positioned somewhere in between, moving towards the arguments of Toffler (1980) on the merging of production and consumption and the rise of prosumers in the postmodern society. Therefore, the emergence of world cities has, as this paper argues, the potential to create a new series of geographies and social patterns of consumption of urban tourism based not just on the world city hierarchy and concept, but on a changing internal structure of the postmodern city in terms of tourism as Page and Hall (2003) explored.

Davis (1999) observed one important dimension, which is the rise of the privatisation of public space in the city, as tourism is becoming a privatised product in what Sorkin (1991) has called the end of public space in the city (see Lew, 2007 for a discussion of this in relation to China). This is one of the key debates spanning many areas of social science embedded firmly in urban studies, yet rarely discussed in urban tourism and leisure with a number of exceptions (e.g. Hall & Page, 2006; Page & Connell, 2010; Page & Hall, 2003). The new private space, created from redevelopment and investment by the public and private sector has created cities as places of entertainment (Davis, 1999), where the media and entertainment promoted by transnational corporations create new leisure and tourism opportunities (often in privatised spaces). McNeill (1999) reiterated the 'need for more nuanced and detailed analysis of the effects of globalisation on the world's cities', within the discussion of globalisation as a process, which is uneven in its effects in time and space. This also challenged the homogenisation thesis of Ritzer (1996) 'Whether through a straight forward penetration of local markets by "global products", the proliferation of out-of-centre shopping malls, the edge cities, or the "Disneyfication" of historic city centres, there are grounds for believing that this is an urban corollary to the 'McDonaldisation' thesis' (McNeill, 1999: 145). However we also suggest that the homogenisation thesis is clearly only part of the argument. Of course developers and investors replicate success in order to minimise risk but contradictorily success depends on exploiting and promoting the uniqueness of places that is termed 'globalisation'. Within the tourism literature, geographers have examined cities and places to develop models that integrate tourism into other patterns of

economic activity. The dominant paradigm has been shaped by the urban ecological model of the Chicago School from the 1920s to which tourism has been added to an evolving urban region. The 1920s model was supplemented much later by the interest of tourism researchers, especially by European geographers (e.g. Ashworth, 1989; Jansen-Verbeke, 1986; Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois, 1999) in relation to the historic city. If one builds on these studies, and develops many of the elements of the postmodern city, particularly the emergence of tourism and leisure as activities that co-exist in juxtaposition to other productive activities, then a number of spatially-specific forms of consumption can be identified. Whilst critics of models may well argue that the postmodern city is too complex to disaggregate, simplify and reduce to a number of consumption-specific elements, it is a starting point for a more spatially-informed analysis of the city. What makes the modelling process useful is that the static impression, which a two-dimensional hypothetical model presents, has to be viewed against the following characteristics:

- the postmodern city is in a constant state of flux as capital redefines the nature, form and extent of consumption experiences for residents, workers, day trippers and tourists and specific segments within the wider tourism market (e.g. see Hughes, 2003 and the case of marketing gay tourism in Manchester. The postmodern urban landscape is one undergoing a constant re-evaluation (Cartier & Lew, 2005), redevelopment and re-imaging to compete for consumption expenditure (Murphy & Boyle, 2006).
- the tourism and leisure landscapes in the postmodern city are only one facet of a mosaic of social and cultural forms that have been created through time and illustrate diversity and co-existence with a range of other activities (e.g. housing and employment).
- the tourist city is not necessarily a distinct spatial entity that the visitor can easily recognise: it is a patchwork of consumption experiences, spatially-dispersed and often grouped into districts and zones (e.g. the entertainment zone) with symbols, a unique language and range of icons to differentiate the experience of place consumption. In this respect the tourist city is a series of sub-systems interconnected by the pursuit of pleasure, the consumption experience and a defining characteristic – the discretionary use of leisure time.
- in time and space, capital competes within and between cities so that the tourism sector is constantly evolving, with a complex set of interactions between the processes of globalisation and localised expressions of local identity (including ethnicity – see Rath (2007) edited collection entitled *Tourism, Ethnic Diversity and the City*), culture and constructions of place, for which heritage is an important instrument (Middleton, 2007). Heritage is used instrumentally in such constructions of urban tourism. The use of heritage both emphasises the local (our unique pasts) and creates the global – the ‘catalogue heritage’ of ubiquitous hanging baskets and cobbled streets.
- the tourist city is predicated on a series of primary attractions and an infrastructure that is also utilised by non-tourists.
- traditional concepts in urban ecological models that were spatially contingent upon the socio-economic structure of the city have been replaced by a mosaic of new socio-geographic forms such as the middle class and gentrification, the reuse of inner city and waterfront areas, the development of the ‘edge city’ (Garreau, 1991), the rise of the ‘Fantasy City’ (Hannigan, 1998), entertainment cities based upon gambling such as Las Vegas (Douglass & Raiento, 2004) and a spatial reconstruction of the city to accommodate these new elements.

- in highlighting the tourism elements of the postmodern city, any model has to suppress many of the other dynamic elements of the postmodern city so that the tourism and leisure elements dominate. In reality, tourism is subsumed and integrated into the postmodern city and whilst it may be a dominant element in those localities actively promoting its virtues, it is only one aspect of the form and function of the city (from Page & Hall, 2003).

Thrift (1997) argued that in postmodern cities the range of locally differing consumption and lifestyle cultures have increased. Thrift (1997: 141) concluded that globalisation has thickened rather than thinned our experience of place as people seek deeper and more meaningful experiences of urban tourism. Whilst the changing internal geographies of these cities have provided new tourism opportunities within world city regions, this does highlight the role of globalisation as a process driving such changes and providing cities with new product opportunities.

As Page and Connell (2009: 479) argue, a consequence of globalisation and global capital, explored by Castells (1996, 1998) is the rise of a globally networked capitalism. One of the underlying principles is Castells’ argument surrounding the networked society, regarding the importance of connectivity for global capital to function, part of which is the transport network necessary for world cities to exist and function. Whilst there are many critiques and rejections of Castells and other theoretical explanations of why world cities have emerged, researchers such as Short, Breitbach, Buckman, and Essex (2000) point to the ‘explosion of interest in world cities’ (e.g. Short & Kim, 1999). However, with the exception of Maitland and Newman (2009), tourism research on world cities has been noticeable by its absence. For this reason, we are well served by Castells’ (1996) spatial analytical framework on world cities, with nodes and hubs between which finance and business flows. This has profound implications for urban tourism at a number of levels.

The dominance of world cities in the transport infrastructure and location of airline hubs raises issues of the connected and disconnected city destination in relation to accessibility (Page, 2006). The world city, which is highly connected and linked to other world cities, provides a major nucleus for business travel, as already discussed, as the high yielding sector of the tourism industry. Politically derived analyses point to the control function that this may exercise over tourism, with transnational corporations (TNCs) and other investors seeking to strengthen a market position in these world cities with their expanding markets, similar to the arguments initially developed by Britton (1982) on TNCs and the Pacific Island’s tourism sector. Globalisation has extended these arguments to a much greater scale in relation to the control function exercised by world cities as the generator, receiver and arbiter of certain types of international tourism flows (i.e. the higher yielding business travel market).

Tourism is assuming a growing political and cultural importance indirectly in relation to the ranking of world cities as places to live, work and do business. Alongside these changes are a growing multicultural population and ethnic mix in world cities derived from international migration that has also impacted upon non-residential areas (e.g. restaurants and cafes) with the emergence of ethnically distinct districts (e.g. Little India in Singapore and London’s Brick Lane and Chinatown in Chicago, see Santos, Belhassen, and Caton (2008) for a discussion of the use of such urban enclaves) and tourist precincts (Hallyar, Griffin, & Edwards, 2008). Short et al. (2000) also highlight some of the main themes shaping world cities that are directly impacting upon the evolution and development of urban tourism, to which our attention now turns.

2.3. Re-globalisation and urban tourism

As Short et al. (2000) suggest, complex relationships occur during globalisation waves, where the 'local' is not passive, but an active component in influencing globalisation processes. They prefer to use the term re-globalisation, as globalisation has been occurring for over 2000 years and it is a series of re-globalisations that we have experienced through economic colonisation during imperial eras, through decolonisation and the shift to global trading. From a tourism standpoint it is the use of visitor attractions and the infrastructure of cities in repackaging and re-presenting the accessibility of world cities and their new found tourism and leisure economies which is of significance to theoretical analyses of urban tourism. Conventional explanations have argued that this was both a necessity in order to replace the loss of manufacturing and a response to the wider political debate on the quality of life and attractiveness of world cities. The logic of such political intervention to foster urban tourism and leisure has been the use of image as an instrument to attract further investment by global capital, which is a circular process about enhancing the competitive position of these cities as a desired outcome (Smith, 2005). One vivid example of this process is evident in the global competition among world or aspirant world cities for hallmark events, notably the Olympic Games. Even within countries, cities are competing for what Short et al. (2000) identify as primacy status. Also, through time, improvements to global connections and the position of cities can give rise to changing patterns and hierarchies of world cities. A topic connected to this process has been the increased focus on place-marketing to compete internationally for global capital as part of the ongoing re-globalisation of places.

Commentators have long highlighted the impact of globalisation on how cities are represented and promoted (e.g. Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2002; Short et al., 2000). At its most simplistic level, public and private sector bodies have engaged in city marketing to attract mobile global capital as a former welfare-oriented public sector has adopted more entrepreneurial traits to attract inward investment, most notably in tourism. Consumerism is now ensconced in contemporary society as a cultural form and as Mullins (1999: 253) argued:

Tourism presents itself as a major avenue for people to satisfy the cultural imperative to consume... Of course, not everyone has the financial means to become a tourist, but for those who can afford it, an international network of cities is emerging to satisfy their demands. The globalised middle class has played a central role in establishing the relationship between consumerism and tourism. The high disposable incomes of middle-class men and women and their predisposition to consume a variety of goods and services set them apart as major players in domestic and international travel.

Yet even Mullins's arguments have been superseded by new trends with the young working classes seeking a wider range of global experiences for entertainment such as the UK-Europe stag and hen party and clubbing trends (Page, 2009a, 2009b). This not only illustrates the complexity of the forces affecting tourism within cities, but is the application of marketing principles to places, viewing the urban setting and its different elements as products and experiences to be commodified to seduce the tourist as a consumer to visit, spend and consume the place as an experience. Hall (2005) highlights just how cities seek to seduce global capital through attracting investment, employers and tourists. Here specific marketing strategies are used to attract inward investment and mirror the use of tourism and culture in the quality of life debates on why global capital should locate in certain world cities.

This competitive pursuit of investment related to tourism has even permeated communist states such as Cuba (Colantonio & Potter, 2006) and is being actively pursued in former communist states (see the special issue: Tourism in Transition economies, *Tourism Geographies* 10 (4) 2008). One visible extension of this increased focus on place-marketing is the use of branding techniques (Merrilees, Miller, Herington, & Smith, 2007 and see the special issue of *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* vol 22 3/4 2007). Research by Woodside, Cruickshank, and Dehuang (2007) interestingly used netnography (i.e. the application of an ethnographic research tool to understand internet users and groups as a community) to evaluate how visitors experienced Italian cities as brands. All this is part of a growing interest among councils and governments vying for their competitive position (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003) as witnessed by global competitive monitors (e.g. World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index) and a use of place promotion (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007) and place branding (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005) as instruments of destination management, all supported by different stakeholders (Sheehan, Ritchie, & Band Hudson, 2007).

2.4. Rescaling and globalisation

Short et al. (2000) have also suggested that globalisation has led to debates on the demise of the nation state and the process of rescaling in political processes, so local and regional governments can much more readily take advantage of globalisation benefits. This in itself can intensify competition between cities as the new entrepreneurial culture pervades the public sector. At its most extreme, some urban researchers have observed certain world cities separating from their national economies, as almost individual economies in their own right, measured in terms of interconnections. A similar process can also be observed in terms of marketing, where cities may consciously distance themselves from their regional or national context. Vienna, for example, does not market itself as part of Austria, a quite different product and tourism market, but profiles itself with other 'Habsburg cities' such as Budapest, Prague or Krakow. In terms of tourism, Witlox, Vereecken, and Derudder (2004) examined global air traffic data to examine the spatial elements of the networked economy in relation to world cities and noted the interconnections between these cities. They found that air transport as the enabling infrastructure in a global economy and tourism is a key element of world city interactions, and this implies, from an urban tourism perspective, that globalisation is certainly polarising destinations into a new urban metageography ranging from full service world cities to those with only minimal evidence of world city formation.

In terms of tourism, this illustrates the continued concentration of investment and infrastructure into these areas as major tourism generating and receiving areas. It also has a more profound knock-on effect for accessibility where business travel and even some forms of leisure travel are routed spatially. Two competing arguments on the implications for tourism characterise this position. First, that non-business travel is more footloose and able to select the urban destinations to travel to, and this may be enabled by the future travel patterns envisaged by the Boeing Commercial Aeroplane Company (Boeing, 2003). This assumes that major gateways and trunk routes will not necessarily hold the key to long and medium haul travel, removing much of the emphasis from world cities with congested infrastructure, overcrowded airspace and traveller preferences. Instead, regional airports using medium range, smaller aircraft on point to point routes will assume a greater role in future air travel, challenging the existing global patterns of travel. In contrast, arguments associated with world cities as

a growing network of strategic locations (Sassen, 1991) suggests this network (as opposed to individual cities) will create these new metageographies where the conventional nation state will be transcended in a networked society. Future air access will be an important determinant of a destination's status and accessibility. A considerable body of research has been developed on this theme as low cost airlines have selected smaller regional airports, which are cheaper and can be cajoled into reducing landing fees in return for the development of an urban tourism economy. Equally, this has led to the rise of a new tourism geography, where previously unknown tourism destinations (e.g. Charleroi) have emerged (see Graham, 2008; Page, 2009b).

3. Paradoxes inherent in urban tourism

3.1. *The city in tourism*

3.1.1. *Why are tourists attracted to cities?/who is the urban tourist?*

The questions 'Why do tourists visit cities?' and 'Who are the urban tourists?' are of course closely related. Answers to the first should produce the market typologies that answer the second.

There are three major difficulties that have hampered attempts to answer these two clearly quite fundamental questions. First, to echo a point already made in a different context, visiting a city and being attracted by its urban features may not be the same. Simply, travel has grown enormously and continuously over the past 30 years and much of this has inevitably involved cities if only because they contain the major concentrations of transport, accommodation and other travel related infrastructure that supports that travel, as highlighted in the hierarchical distinction between world and non-world cities. We just travel more, and not only for tourism, and a visitor attracted by non-urban tourism experiences will nevertheless inevitably spend some time in cities: the reverse is not necessarily the case. Thus it cannot be assumed that all tourists in cities are, in any meaningful sense, urban tourists. Here it may be useful to distinguish between tourism in cities, that is tourism to facilities that happen to be located in urban areas but would be equally satisfying to the visitor in a non-urban milieu, and urban tourism *sui generis* in which it is some aspect of urbanicity itself that is the primary motive of the tourist.

Secondly, the range of answers to the question 'why visit cities?' is likely to encompass a wide range of human motivations. Cities are characterised by density and diversity, whether of functions, facilities, built forms, cultures or peoples: it is this that distinguishes the urban from the rural and characterizes the 'urban way of life' (Wirth, 1938). Visitors are likely to be attracted by any or all of these urban features, which does not help to refine answers to the question. It is this diversity of motives and activities, as well as the density and compactness of their locations, that is encouraged by the urban character of cities. It is worth noting here that visitor surveys asking tourists in cities about what they actually do, consistently reveal the popularity of rather vaguely articulated activities such as 'sightseeing', 'wandering about', 'taking in the city', 'getting among the people'. This seemingly serendipitous behaviour may reflect some key elements of the urban in urban tourism motives and activities.

Thirdly, cities are accumulations and concentrations of economic and political power (Church & Coles, 2006), organisations and activity, as well as of cultural, entertainment and leisure pursuits. Thus a high proportion of travel to cities is primarily motivated by the first rather than the second set of attributes. Thus major cultural tourism cities such as Florence or Salzburg do not attract more travelers than cities with more modest cultural pretensions, such as Hamburg, Lyon or Zurich (van den Berg, van der Borg, & van der Meer, 1995; van den Berg, Costa, & Gotti,

1996). Equally the trip often cannot be assigned completely to one set of motives or the traveller be assigned exclusively to the tourism or non-tourism category. Indeed, Hwang, Gretzel, and Fesenmaier (2006) identify the multicity trip patterns of international tourist behaviour, which confirms the issue of shortened stay where the city is not the sole destination and a more complex urban sightseeing itinerary exists.

The assumption that we can distinguish, isolate and examine a distinctive urban tourist must be questioned. In many other locations the economic, social, cultural and thus behavioural differences between tourist and resident are clear but it is difficult to distinguish between tourist and non-tourist uses of the city. First, the tourist and the local resident cannot usefully be distinguished in terms of motivation or behaviour. Urban tourism is a 'special interest' activity, which is by definition only a continuance on holiday of accustomed interests and activities. The tourist is just the resident on holiday: the resident just the tourist between trips. Secondly, tourists and residents make use of much the same urban facilities whether shops, catering establishments, cultural attractions and performances and even transport facilities. There is an interactive creolisation and social convergence between local and tourist consumption (Ashworth, 2003). Thirdly, the management of cities involves inevitably an inextricable multiplicity of objectives, stakeholders and actors, which generally precludes any distinctive and separate urban cultural or heritage tourism policy or management being shaped and applied. Thus it is likely that the urban tourist cannot be defined by motivation, use of discrete resources, types of activity or separate field of management policy. The tourist is too embedded in other, much wider considerations to be successfully identified and isolated. This makes a distinction between visitor and local more difficult and less relevant than with many other forms of tourism. This has a number of important implications considered below.

3.1.2. *How do tourists use cities?*

Given the quantitative importance of urban tourism, it is curious that very little attention has been given to questions about how tourists actually use cities. It may be that the question is rarely posed because the answers are assumed to be either more or less self-evident or of less importance than the wider questions about motives and impacts. Once the visitor has been attracted to the city and their impacts, whether positive or negative have been experienced, the finer details of the encounter between tourist and place may seem less relevant. The attention of place planners and managers is generally focused on the detailed marketing and management of tourism destinations rather than on the broader assumptions, upon which it is based, guided by little more than conventional wisdom and the results of often very small scale individual case studies (see for example Pearce, 2005). In the case of China Pearce, Wu, and Son (2008) have developed a framework to assess visitors' responses to cities using a diverse range of research methods including surveys, sketch maps, collecting stories and experience of critical incidents. Within cities, there is also a growing research activity among geographers (e.g. McKercher & Lau, 2008; Shoval & Issacson, 2009) to track urban tourists using enhanced technology. Furthermore, studies of market segments (e.g. McKercher, 2008) suggests that these change according to distance decay: the further away from the origin you go, older, more affluent and better educated visitors emerge as urban tourists. What should never be underestimated for the urban tourist is the adventure and excitement experienced with a first visit to a destination (Suh & Gartner, 2004) alongside a detailed understanding of the flows and demand for tourism at a city level.

However the existing academic research into the conduct of the tourist in the urban destination can be grouped into four, often

assumed, behavioural characteristics, namely, selectivity, rapidity, infrequency and capriciousness.

3.1.2.1. Selectivity. The tourist makes use of only a very small portion of all that the city has on offer. This would be the case for all users of the city, most of whom are selective rather than omnivorous consumers, but it could be argued that the tourist making the decisions about what, when, where and how to use the array of urban resources available, has more limited time, knowledge and pre-marked expectations (in a MacCannell, 1976, sense) than most other users. The individual space-time budgets of tourists can be assumed to be restricted more severely than local users, which limits their action space, which in turn results in a distinctive urban regionalisation of tourism. For example, Modsching, Kramer, Ten Hagen, and Gretzel (2008) used Global Positioning System technology to map the spatial distribution of visitors, noting the diversity of walking speeds to understand the amount of time tourists spend clustered in areas and their network behaviour as a refinement of the time-space budget method. Other studies of tourist tracking (Shoval & Raveh, 2004) identify the well-worn paths used by tourists and the geography of site use. Further research by McKercher and Lau (2008) depicted 11 movement styles of tourist movements in a destination, using GIS, explained by six key factors: territoriality, number of journeys made each day, number of stops made, participation in commercial day tours and participation in extra-destination travel as well as multi-stop travel patterns (also see Hwang et al., 2006) with immediate application to city management (Maitland, 2006) and analysis of visitor responses to cities (Pearce et al., 2008) and their behaviour (Espelt & Donaire Benito, 2006) as well as the effect of distance on city visiting (McKercher, 2008; Shoval & Issacson, 2007). Such modes of analysis also allow researchers to study the microgeographies of urban areas with the effect of individual factors on satisfaction such as the redevelopment of the streetscape (Litvin, 2005) and development of precincts (Hayllar & Griffin, 2005). Such precise spatial measurement also permits policy-makers to assess the role of megaprojects on city regeneration and reconfiguration (see Orueta & Fainstein, 2008).

Research into urban functional regions, based upon spatial selectivity, was a strand of geographical thought almost as old as urban geography itself. The idea of recognising, mapping and explaining distinctive functional spatial patterns within cities originated with the demarcation of US Central Business Districts (Murphy & Vance, 1954) and subsequently many other such districts (industrial, office, shopping, night-life, and many sub-categories.). The attempt to add leisure activities to this urban functional mix led to the discovery of the 'Recreational Business District' (Stansfield & Rickert, 1970), and compact and spatially delimited tourist urban regions such as 'Central Tourism District' (Burtenshaw et al., 1991) and Tourist-Historic city (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990). Most of these early research studies were case study applications, seeking to demarcate the CBD usually based on supply facilities, as being easier to recognise and map, rather than on tourist demand. It is much more difficult to collect data on the behaviour of the individual tourist. Techniques range from questionnaires on past behaviour, which tend to unreliability, diaries to reveal space-time activities, which are labour intensive and result in very small samples (see Dietvorst's mapping of tourists activity space in small towns, 1994, 1995) to aerial photography and more recently global positioning systems and satellite tracking (Shoval & Issacson, 2009).

3.1.2.2. Rapidity. Tourists consume urban tourism products rapidly. Cities are by their very nature places of high levels of people-activity, compounded by the growth of the 24 hour society

(Moor-Ede, 1993; Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, 2005). The length of stay at any one urban tourism destination is much shorter than in beach or winter sports resorts. This is in part because the motives for travel to cities are more varied than to non-urban tourism places and include many short stays not primarily motivated by holidaymaking (van den Berg et al., 1995). However, even holidaymakers rarely stay in even the most world-renowned tourist cities for longer than two days (van den Borg et al., 1996). In smaller cities the stay is better measured in hours and any single urban feature, however well-known as a 'must-see' attraction, will often generate stays measured in minutes. This behavioural characteristic is difficult to manage. Additional attractions, catering facilities and the like may extend the stay by a few hours but only an overnight stay will substantially increase the tourist spend. Sites and attractions need to be combined within larger packages within a city and with other cities, especially in cities such as Venice that endure the high impact day-trip market, which is difficult to both manage and make profitable (van der Borg et al., 2004).

3.1.2.3. Repetition. Tourists to urban destinations are less likely than visitors to non-urban destinations to return repeatedly to the same city. It is the very place-specific nature (see Selby & Morgan, 1996; Selby, 2004a, 2004b) of the urban tourism product in contrast to the more generic character of beach or winter sports destinations that discourages such repeat visits. Many urban tourists are engaging in a form of collecting of pre-marked sites and artefacts that must be visited if the place is to be authentically experienced so as to add to the cultural collateral of the holiday or visit. Once the expectations have been fulfilled a repeat visit is superfluous and the place collection will be expanded elsewhere. The paradox is that the more unique the urban attraction, the less likely is the visit to be repeated. Luxor, Pisa, or Niagara Falls will tend to be a once-in-a-life-time experience. Conversely more generalised place products selling an ambiance or way of life (Paris, Vienna, New York) rather than a specific attraction are more likely to generate repeat visits.

Cities therefore have two strategies for dealing with this, either constantly seek out new markets to replace the old or continually reinvent the urban tourism products on offer to satisfy existing markets (Mordue, 2007). Again it is the cities with a more varied and diffuse range of possible niche products (see McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus, 2008 for the example of food tourism), such as London or Paris, that have fewer difficulties in extending or changing the product line, while cities strongly focused on specific products in the imagination and expectation of visitors such as Bath, Florence or Weimar will find change more difficult and an attempt to sell industrial Bath, modernist Florence or medieval Weimar would be hazardous. Cities can become imprisoned in their perceived immutable uniqueness and their marketing success as expressed through the unvarying but stringent expectations of visitors and regeneration may in fact compromise tourism's relationship with culture and cultural development (see Smith, A., 2006; Smith, M., 2006 and the collection of papers in *Tourism, Culture and Regeneration*).

3.1.2.4. Capriciousness. The urban tourist is essentially capricious. All tourism, being a discretionary activity deeply embedded in the psychological and social contexts of the tourist (Pearce, 2005), will be susceptible to changes in these contexts. However it can be argued that urban tourism is especially vulnerable to shifts in fashion and in consumer tastes and life-styles. The popularity of historical periods, artistic styles and personalities waxes and wanes. This needs to be considered in relation to the product life-cycle of many purpose-built visitor attractions that need constant

investment and redevelopment so as to retain consumer interests and to follow tastes (Lennon, 2002). The consumption of urban tourism experiences is a fashion activity and, like all consumption of culture, part of contemporary life-styles. Urban tourism thus becomes a lifestyle accessory as particular cities are 'in' or 'passé'.

Two tensions may arise. First, those responsible for the supply of cultural and heritage tourism attractions often assume that these are in essence timeless, universal and imbued with immutable values which assures the city of a permanent enduring tourist allure. This is far from the case. Second, the more successful a city is in establishing celebrity status, the shorter duration this will last and the sharper will be the inevitable fall in popularity.

This need not be a serious problem so long as its existence is appreciated and appropriate policy implemented. Rapid shifts in fashionable tastes need a response in an equally rapid continuous extension and differentiation of the urban product line (García, 2004; Smith, A., 2006; Smith, M., 2006). Some cities are well endowed with cultural and heritage diversity to react to this capriciousness by constantly reinventing themselves, highlighting the link between tourism and creativity (Richards & Wilson, 2006). The paradox is that the more unique, important and complete the urban attraction and the stronger the perception of its aesthetic or historic perfection, the more difficult it will be to extend the product. Also the resistance to such change from both the visitors, with their pre-structured expectations, and the managers of the cultural facilities with their different valuation of the purposes of culture, is likely to be greater. It is worth noting in passing that the conveying of World Heritage status to a city could be a straight-jacket creating specific expectations and preventing change. Even so, as Hall and Page (2009) argue, tourism has become part of the infrastructure of urban regeneration rather than the driver of economic change. This has meant that mixed developments rather than tourism per se, have become the norm in cities, as the public sector promotes new agendas such as cultural quarters (e.g. Bayliss, 2004; Gibson & Connell, 2003, 2007). This new strategy by global capital and city managers has shifted the role of tourism from that initially conceptualised by Law (1992) to a supporting role in some settings.

3.2. *Tourism in the city*

3.2.1. *Is there a tourist city?*

Tourism is generally a poor delineator of types of city or even districts within cities. It is not always possible to use the label 'tourist city' or even 'tourist district' in the same sense as 'industrial' or 'residential' city. The tourism activity is too varied and, with few exceptions, too minor an addition to the urban scene to justify such labelling. All cities are multifunctional, or they would not qualify as cities. The exclusively tourist city or even tourist urban precinct (Hallyar et al., 2008), does not exist for if it did it would lack the diversity that is an essential urban characteristic. The seaside resort complex or exclusively heritage tourism theme park is not a city. Although tempting, it is also not possible to establish an absolute dichotomy of resort and non-resort city or even 'tourist district'/'non-tourist district'. Some cities and districts attract more tourists than others but nowhere is tourism an exclusive use and nowhere is it actually or potentially excluded.

In part, derived from the above arguments about the invisibility of urban tourism and the near impossibility of demarcating it, is the notion that it is just too difficult to study. As early as 1964 Stansfield argued, reflecting the then current geographical fashion for quantification, that tourism was not quantifiable in cities as it was more readily in rural areas. Thus there was the unspoken assumption that if you cannot count it, measure it and map it then it does not exist, or at least is not a suitable object for scientific study. If tourism

could not be isolated as a function or set of facilities, the tourist not identified as a distinctly behaving and motivated individual and the 'tourism industry' was clearly not identifiable and located in space in the same way as many other industries, then the neglect by urban studies becomes explainable if not excusable. Tourism in cities whether analysed from the side of uses or users was so embedded in the city as a whole that the 'tourist city' could only be conceived alongside and overlapping with, other 'cities' as illustrated in Fig. 2. Indeed, many of the studies of urban tourists (e.g. Wöber, 1997, 2002) reveal that it is a sense of place that creates elements within the city that attract tourist interest (Maitland, 2008) with each group of visitors displaying their interests and needs (Espelt & Donaire Benito, 2006), often expressed around notions of ambience.

Similarly it is obvious and easily demonstrated that tourist cities are not homogeneous but exist in many forms. These are best described as a large number of different but overlapping tourism cities (such as entertainment, festival and events, cultural showcase, tourist-historic and many other cities) that are easy to identify but difficult to demarcate.

3.2.2. *Tourism impacts upon cities*

Tourism impacts upon cities in general is almost certainly over-estimated and extrapolated from a few well-known and often over-publicised cases (Venice's Lagoon city or the tourist 'islands' of world cities such as London or Paris). It is salutary to remember that even in such world-class premier tourism centres as these, only a small fraction of the city's physical extent, facilities and services and indeed residents are actually affected by tourism to any significant degree. Equally, it should be remembered that although tourism as a whole is one of the world's most important economic activities, its economic significance to particular cities may be relatively less important than many other economic sectors. London, Paris, New York, Sydney and Berlin may have been designated by Maitland and Newman (2009) as 'World Tourism Cities' but in none of these places does tourism even approach the economic importance in terms of employment or incomes of such other economic activities as financial services, media and communications or education. Governments first became aware of tourism in their jurisdictions when its actual or potential economic benefits and costs became apparent. The economic impacts of tourism upon the city, whether positive or negative, still dominate other more recently considered, social, political or environmental impacts. In the postmodern city with the agenda of new urban governance (Connelly, 2007; Mordue, 2007) everything is about quantification (e.g. see Murillo Viu, Román Fernández, & Suriñach Caralt, 2008 on the evaluation of Granada, the Alhambra and Generalife complex as a World Heritage Site), particularly among public agencies investing in tourism in cities. This is part of a public sector culture of evidence-based investment (i.e. using consultants to provide an answer to a problem to justify a major investment in a tourism project) followed by evaluation to assess whether the investment has its intended effect. This may seem somewhat straight forward with the in vogue use of Gross Added Value measures of the benefits derived, particularly employment and economic impact (with new economic evaluation tools such as CGE modelling, Burnett, Cutler, & Thresher, 2007). However these evaluations and analyses need to be prefaced by the paradox of the economic role of urban tourism. Urban tourists spend more per head than seaside visitors, partly as a consequence of their higher dependence upon catered accommodation. This advantage must be offset by the consequences of the behavioural factors noted above, especially the short stays, lack of repeat visits and unreliability. Urban tourists may spend more but they are harder to attract, retain, and induce to return.

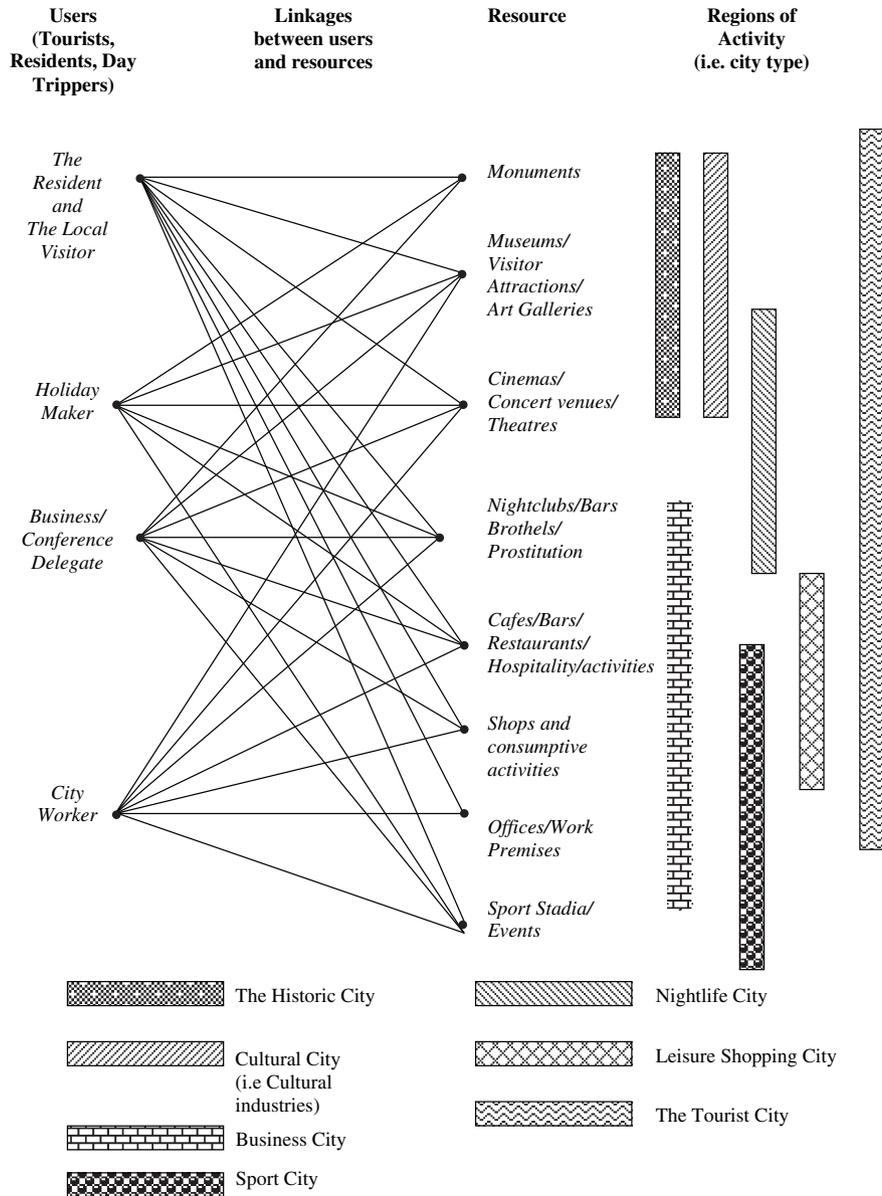


Fig. 2. Areas in the tourist city, modified and developed from Burtenshaw et al. (1991). Source: © Page and Hall (2003), reproduced with permission from Pearson Education.

To the tourist, and indeed the tourism industry, much of the urban tourism experience appears to be a zero-priced, freely accessible public good. The markets, monuments, museums and general atmosphere of the city are either free public space or provided well below cost as a public service. Thus the tourist as tourist can be seen as a parasitical free-rider on the facilities someone else is paying for, although of course the tourist as citizen and tax payer, let alone the commercial tourism industry, may well be contributing here or elsewhere. The opposite situation is also possible, namely the resident may reap benefits from the presence of tourists and tourism services. These may ‘free-ride’ upon tourism facilities, enjoy an urban atmosphere of animation or just gain psychic profits of pride and self-esteem. The problem is the very familiar one of reconciling public costs with private benefits, in economic terms, internalising the externalities, and in spatial terms, balancing costs and benefits at different spatial scale jurisdictions (see Haley, Snaith, & Miller, 2005 on the social impacts of urban tourism). In extreme cases, the investment in private spaces for urban tourism, may socially and spatially concentrate the nature

of tourism, although the benefits to the urban economy may be less apparent as the main beneficiaries are global capital. The two most prevalent economic models in urban tourism are the ‘windfall-gain model’ and the ‘turnstile model’, each of which is supported by a number of assumptions. The first assumes that the tourist is an addition to an existing market that can be serviced at no extra cost: the second ignores differences between tourist and non-tourist consumers who are all served alike. Both models assume that the tourist consumes the same products, in the same way, for the same reasons, as non-tourist users. They also assume that the addition of the tourism use does not diminish or deplete the experience, nor the resource upon which it is based, which is assumed to be, at least in the short run, inexhaustible. The tourist use is assumed not to disadvantage or supplant other uses and users and it is assumed that it does not impose marginal costs higher than the marginal benefits obtained. None of these assumptions are likely to be sustainable in most cities over the long run, a feature highlighted by Riganti and Nijkamp (2008) in terms of the willingness of tourists to accept tourism related congestion in a city such as Amsterdam. In

practice the tourist use of the city will not only be marginal in an economic sense but also marginal in the value placed upon it compared with other prioritised local uses. The consequence of a windfall-gain assumption is to marginalize tourism as a reluctantly tolerated but ultimately disposable option. In addition the potential for reaping a windfall-gain is an attractive urban development option. It seems to offer the possibility of producing a continuous range of products from existing flexible and near ubiquitous urban resources. Entry costs in terms of skills or capital investment are relatively low compared to many other development options. Consequently almost anywhere has the capability of competing for urban tourists with almost everywhere else. These assessments are rarely evaluated in any public sector studies of urban tourism investment projects, least of all in feasibility studies since much of the economic analysis assumes a controlled and closed tourism system where the worse case scenario of investing in place X may be to displace a market from place Y. Urban tourism and its economic measurement and analysis, particularly where benefits and impacts can be spatially attributed and evaluated within the city remains an almost elusive goal, despite advances in GIS and the blending of economic and geographical analyses of tourism.

3.2.3. Management of tourism in cities

An examination of the management of tourism in cities is a topic so wide and so diverse as to render generalisation all but impossible (Jurdana & Sušilovic, 2006; Russo & van der Borg, 2002). As argued above, there is such a multiplicity of tourisms and tourists, embedded in so many aspects of the functioning of cities, which are themselves so diverse that urban tourism management merges imperceptibly with a wider urban management. Although tourism plays a major role in the management of cities as both instrument and outcome of policy, it is thus doubtful if an urban tourism planning exists in the same discrete sense as other sectoral planning, such as for transport or housing. There is certainly a multiplicity of public and semi-public agencies engaged with tourism in the city, but it is this very multiplicity, combined with the resulting variety of objectives and instruments, that negates the notion of an urban tourism planning and management as a coherent sub-discipline with its own terminology, techniques and profession. The initial attraction of visitors to the city and the provision of information to them is generally handled as a branch of marketing, promotion and communication. The planning of tourism services and the use of tourism in urban regeneration and revitalisation is generally a task of urban planners and managers alongside other urban functions and facilities. Cultural agencies provide and manage the performances, collections and urban heritage structures that have attracted the visitors but are not primarily provided for them (DeBord, 1994). Thus possible answers to the question, 'who plans and manages urban tourism?' include almost everyone and no one.

It should also be reiterated that local authorities have little or no control upon the most important aspects of tourism in their jurisdictions. Critically the number, timing, objectives and spatial behaviour of tourists are beyond all but a very marginal influence of local governments (Connell & Page, 2005). The tendency for the direct benefits of tourism to be concentrated in specific economic sectors, while the costs tend to be more diffuse has a number of consequences. Much local urban tourism planning by public authorities tends to be defensive in response to local electors and taxpayers, focussing on the mitigation of the perceived undesirable local impacts of tourism and the tourist. It is a management of tourists rather than tourism. They are powerless to do more than attempt to enhance some desirable characteristics and mitigate some undesirable, through relatively crude instruments ranging

from land-use zoning, traffic and circulation measures to communication of information, promotion and even just exhortations. Among such defensive policies can be included the idea of 'community tourism' (or a 'community-based approach to tourism management') proposed particularly by Murphy (1985) and Murphy and Murphy (2005). Such policies aim to foster those types of tourism that maximise local involvement and benefits while minimising or excluding tourisms that confer few local benefits or have negative local impacts. The difficulty of implementing such policies, however locally desirable, is simply that not only are the local costs and benefits almost impossible to predict, it is largely beyond the power of local communities to influence them.

There is an assumption that urban tourism is not only place-bound, it is inherently bound to local places. It is place-specific in a way that many other forms of tourism, especially beach tourism, are not. The 'unique value proposition', that advantages one location over another is assumed to relate to the character of the unique locality rather than any placeless functional benefits and ubiquitous attributes. The London, Paris or Bangkok tourism experience stems directly from the particular place and is not replicable elsewhere: it is the place itself that is sold not just a product that inevitably exists in space. Therefore it could be assumed that the creation and management of the urban tourism product will be essentially unique to each city.

The difficulty with this proposition, is that although the tourism product is consumed locally, tourism, as an activity, industry and investment is inherently global rather than local. The investors, developers, entrepreneurs and promoters are dominantly global organisations, or if local are still embedded in global trends and circumstances. Even local urban politicians and officials who might be expected to purvey a localism are conscious of wider trends, fashions and 'best practice'. They will all therefore have a bias towards duplication of what has succeeded elsewhere rather than a more risky innovation.

In consequence urban planning and development has a tendency towards the replication of off-the-shelf spatial planning clichés. These include among many others the 'festival market', the 'Mediterranean fishing harbour', the 'Rambla', the tourist-historic waterfront (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1992), the 'medieval shopping street', and even the add-on 'ethnic entertainment quarter' are now to be found in continents far from their historical origins. The paradox is thus that a tourism product that strives to be locally unique and differentiate itself from its competitors often results in a planning and development that is itself global, serving tourists that are also global in their preferences and choices. Neither the piazza nor the pizza now belong exclusively to the Italian city. The tourist-historic city has been an important vehicle for both the localisation of the global and the globalisation of the local (Graham, Ashworth, & Tunbridge, 2000). This is no more than a reflection of the society that produced it and consumes it.

4. Implications for urban tourism research

We argue here that any analysis of urban tourism needs to explain and understand the dynamics of urban change and evolution arising from the implications of new theoretical insights in urban studies. Whilst a few examples exist that begin to frame explanations of urban change associated with globalisation, a more spatial and theoretical analysis is needed to understand how international changes have shaped the evolution of urban tourism places. In particular the notion of world cities and its evolution into a global system is central to the spatial restructuring of places in the late twentieth century.

4.1. The theoretical literature shaping the development of urban tourism research

From Table 1, it is apparent that there are a number of key studies that emanate from a sociological tradition (Beedie, 2005; Garreau, 1991; Hannigan, 1998; Mommaas, 2004; Mullins, 1991, 1994; Roche, 1992), from cultural studies (Zukin, 1996) or from geography (Ashworth, 1989, 2003; Burtenshaw, Bateman, & Ashworth, 1991; Dear, 1994; Dear & Flusty, 1999; Jansen-Verbeke, 1986; Law, 1992, 2002; Page, 1995; Page & Hall, 2003; Thrift, 1997) and urban studies (Gladstone, 1998; Mordue, 2007). A preliminary review of any recent journal article, book or text on urban tourism will confirm that these narrowly defined contributions from these disciplines remain weakly integrated and consequently theoretical developments are confined to specifically targeted academic disciplines. Pearce (2001) provided an integrative framework for urban tourism based on space, subject cells and a matrix of themes. It highlighted the need for a larger, coherent, more macro analysis that transcends case study description to focus more fully on processes, which this paper seeks to understand. Within the wider area of Tourism Studies, however, there has been a splintering of research activity informed by individual disciplines that frame research questions in a narrow disciplinary

manner, making coherent theoretical analysis on big issues like urban tourism problematic. For example, many geographical analyses of urban tourism have developed models and theoretical explanations predicated on the notion of space, resulting in the idea of the tourist city as a series of spatially clustered activities with functional associations that are geographically located in the urban environment. Researchers wishing to address these more profound theoretical issues need to broadly engage with literature that is non-tourism related, especially within the wider sociology and urban studies domain in order to recognise how global patterns and processes of urban change are affecting the nature and development of tourism in cities. One such theoretical engagement, namely with the concept of world cities, has already been highlighted.

4.2. Is there a distinct urban geography of tourism?

Some evidence that urban tourism exists as an academic field of study is provided by the literature that has appeared in the past 20 years. The most prolific authors have an academic background in human geography, whether or not writing for a specifically geographical readership. It is the spatial setting and characteristics that have been the defining variable. The most encompassing of these is Page (1995), which is straightforwardly entitled 'urban tourism' and which attempts to review all important aspects of tourism in a wide range of types of cities and other studies (e.g. Selby, 2002 have closely mirrored that model). Law's (1993, 1996, 2002) books were more modest being confined to large cities and focussing upon the roles of tourism in urban economic development. Both however, find it all but impossible to analyse the urban tourism industry or the urban tourist other than in the wider context of the functioning and management of cities as a whole. They both therefore become inevitably studies of urban planning and management in general and thus become focused upon the application of policy in the urban setting as much as upon the tourism activity (Tyler, Guerrier, & Robertson, 1998; Page & Hall, 2003). More numerous have been studies comparing tourism in a selection of cities chosen as representative of population size, continental location or more rarely the nature of the tourism attraction (van den Borg, 1994; Costa & van den Borg, 1993; English Historic Towns Forum, 1992; Law, 1993, 1996; Page, 1995). There have been many studies by academics and official agencies of tourism in individual cities, only some of which attempt to draw wider conclusions about urban tourism (van den Berg et al., 1995; van den Borg, 1998; van den Borg et al., 1996; Page, 1992).

A question related to this is, 'is there an urban tourism industry?' If defined as, all facilities producing any aspect of the tourism product, then although such an industry clearly does exist, the idea is unhelpful as tourists make some use of almost everything and exclusive use of almost nothing. Leiper (2008) has argued that the term 'the tourism industry' is misleading as a generic expression and the notion of 'tourism industries', in the plural, is more accurate. This has not hampered many researchers from mapping spatial clusters of the more easily recognised tourism services, whether accommodation (e.g. Warnken, Russell, & Faulkner, 2003), attractions (Rätz, Smith, & Michalkó, 2008), catering facilities (Bull & Church, 1994) or tourist orientated retailing. Although such spatial patterns, and the functional associations that underlie them, may reveal much about the functioning of the city, they do not amount to an urban geography of the tourism industry as such. Urban services and space is too multifunctional to admit of a readily identifiable, spatially clustered tourism industry as our discussion earlier of the postmodern city indicates.

Table 1
Selected theoretical and conceptual contributions to the study of urban tourism.

Author (s)	Year	Contribution
Ashworth	1989	Urban tourism: imbalance in attention
	2003	Urban tourism: still an imbalance in attention
Ashworth and Tunbridge	1990	The Tourist-Historic City
Beedie	2005	The adventure of urban tourism
Burtenshaw et al.	1991	Users of the city (tourists, residents and leisure visitors)
Castells	1996	The rise of the Network City
Dear	1994	Postmodern human geography: a preliminary assessment
Dear and Flusty	1999	Engaging postmodern urbanism
Edwards, Griffin and Hallyar	2008	Research agenda for Australian urban tourism
Gibson and Kong	2005	Cultural economy
Gladstone	1998	Tourism urbanisation in the USA
Garreau	1991	Edge Cities as centres for services consumption
Hannigan	1998	Fantasy City
Law	1992	Urban tourism and its contribution to economic regeneration
	2002	Urban Tourism synthesis
Mazanec and Wöber	1997, 2009	Management of cities for tourism
McNeill	2008	The hotel and the city
Mommaas	2004	Cultural clusters and the post-industrial city
Mordue	2007	Tourism, urban governance, public space and the city
Mullins	1991	Tourism Urbanization
	1994	Class relations and tourism urbanisation
Page	1995	Urban tourism as a system
Page and Hall	2002	Modelling tourism in the postmodern city
Roche	1992	Mega-events and micro-modernization: on the sociology of a new urban tourism
Thrift	1997	Cities without modernity, cities with magic
Zukin	1996	The culture of cities and postmodern environments

Source: Page and Hall (2003), Page and Connell (2009); other sources.

5. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that to begin to understand tourism in the city we must embrace urban studies and its theoretical critiques. Many of the critiques in urban studies acknowledge the very significant role of tourism in both economies and place imagery. There are new concepts emerging within Tourism Studies, such as the world city concept (Maitland & Newman, 2009), which begins to help understand some of the emerging interconnections between Tourism Studies borrowed from urban geography and sociology, but to date these have not been adequately integrated and debated from a tourism perspective with any degree of rigour or theoretical critique. The notion of world cities promises to add some coherence to the problem of urban tourism research, which currently lacks a theoretical research agenda and is predominantly focused on individual places and case studies. A more global approach and perspective of urban tourism starts to raise important research issues that we need to frame if we are to attempt to explain what is happening at a world scale. Global change and capital is altering the landscape and rationale of many cities but the emergence of world cities also has profound implications for tourism as both an industry, support for world city status and as a tool used by the public and private sectors to competitively raise the global position of a world city. The scale of world cities and their built environment gives rise to a complex mosaic of microgeographies of tourism, in part, based on notions such as cultural quarters, districts and areas with common characteristics for consumption by specific user groups, sometimes blurring the distinction between tourist, day tripper and resident. In fact, theoretical debates may highlight the inadequacy of technical definitions such as user or tourist, day tripper and resident when they are unified by their hedonistic consumption of the same urban product.

Arguably, non-world cities may choose to boost and invest in consumer services such as tourism and leisure to counterbalance the competitive disadvantage of not having highly developed producer services. Whatever the outcome, most urban destinations have embraced more entrepreneurial characteristics in order to ensure they are not left behind in the pursuit of global capital and the need to restructure changing urban economies and landscapes. There are noteworthy gaps in the pursuit of such a research agenda, most evidently in the continuing dominance of the case of the Western city. Cities such as Bangkok, Shanghai, Dubai, Seoul and many others are emerging as not only competitors in tourism markets with London, Paris, San Francisco and Sydney but as cities with a global recognition whose tourism is not necessarily emulating the practice of the traditional centres that dominated the tourism scene in the twentieth century. The new sprawling world cities of today and tomorrow in developing economies will create internal geographies and areas of leisure consumption. These microgeographies are still developing as the interconnections between place, culture, space and consumption unfold in an ever-changing built environment. What is different is that as the city grows, there are scenes of affluence and poverty juxtaposed in stark contrast almost side by side, unlike the conventional land-use models of many western cities. Important studies such as Burdett and Sujdic's (2008) *The Endless City* epitomise this continually growing cityscape and constant state of change in the production and consumption of the place experiences that tourists and other interested groups consume. These experiences are in a continuous state of evolution as globalisation affects the way the place experiences emerge (Gu & Wall, 2007).

This counterweight to globalisation, and in some senses a reaction to it, could be termed localisation or the more blended term globalisation which is now an important area for research in urban

tourism. As cities have become increasingly engaged in profiling themselves within global competitive arenas, so they have simultaneously attempted to redefine themselves as specific localities with distinctive identifiable characteristics. This reveals a number of inherent paradoxes. The local is explored and exploited in search of the unique global competitive advantage by a tourism industry that is itself global with a strong tendency towards a risk-averse replication of products and their delivery. Local place-managers seek to enhance the heterogeneous distinctiveness of diverse local place-identities using approaches and methods gleaned from global practice, resulting in homogenous outcomes. The answer to the increasingly posed question, 'whose city is it, the world tourist or the local resident?' is both to some indeterminate extent.

This type of research agenda, however pursued and validated, can only bring a greater understanding of why urban tourism is developing in specific directions in given localities while beginning to redress the imbalance in attention observed by Ashworth (1989, 2003) which needs to understand the prevailing paradoxes and inter-relationships between the city and tourism.

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