



Progress in Tourism Management: Is urban tourism a paradoxical research domain? Progress since 2011 and prospects for the future

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Urbanism
Tourism in cities
Urban Tourism
Paradoxes
Urban Studies
Theorisation
Events
Global South

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews progress in the field of urban tourism, revisiting and challenging the validity of the paradoxes presented in the paper by Ashworth and Page (2011). To do this, the paper examines the expansion of research endeavours in urban tourism in relation to these paradoxes, including the outputs in dedicated journals on city tourism along with the wider range of outputs generated since 2011 in social science. It also revisits the initial proposition set out regarding an imbalance in attention in urban tourism research (Ashworth 1989, 2003) and how this has been addressed through a broader development of thinking at the intersection of urbanism and tourism. It is a selective review of progress in the field, highlighting the challenges of deriving theory from western modes of analysis that need re-thinking in relation to the global south, notably Africa as well as developments in Asia and the Middle East.

1. Introduction: framing the urbanisation of tourism

There has been significant progress in research on tourism in cities since the review of the field by Ashworth and Page (2011) as recent overviews suggest (e.g. Bellini and Pasquinelli, 2016; Morrison & Andres Coca-Stefaniak, 2021; Ba et al., 2021; Borg, 2022), which help us to take stock of the maturation of the field since 2011. Notable changes include the expansion of focus into previously under-researched regions such as Asia (e.g. Dixit, 2020), Africa (e.g. Leonard, Musavengane, & Siakwah, 2020; Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021b) and the emergent interest in the Middle East (Henderson, 2014; Khirfan, 2011; Zaidan, 2016; Timothy, 2018). In contrast to bibliometric reviews, *Tourism Management Progress* paper objectives are designed '(a) to act as a fundamental starting point for researchers seeking to better understand a subject or niche area and (b) to assess the current state of conceptual maturity of the topic in question' (Ryan et al., 2007: 1167). Whilst the route to achieving these objectives of *Progress* papers has never required any specific methodological approach, this paper adopts a three-stage approach. First, it re-examines the five paradoxes outlined by Ashworth and Page (2011) to reconsider whether they are still warranted, based on a selective review of the literature published since 2011. We

assembled the literature since 2011 from various search engines such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and publisher websites (e.g. Routledge, Blackwell, Sage, Wiley and University Presses) considering peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed outputs. This literature was read, reviewed, and selected to represent how knowledge has been advanced, to represent new debates related to the initial five paradoxes. The purpose here was to adopt a more unstructured approach, with material selected to examine a series of generic propositions which remain unchallenged within the published literature to date. The paper does not set out to construct a voluminous review of the entire field or to create a very didactic and pedestrian bibliometric analysis as already highlighted, as this is not the remit of *Progress* papers. Second, the paper re-examines the assumptions associated with all five paradoxes about urban tourism. Lastly, the paper considers the implications for further development of urban tourism research. However, certain papers that pre-date 2011 are also cited throughout the paper because they constitute some of the key building blocks upon which urban tourism research is built. With any review it is important to recognise that classic studies may have been overtaken by subsequent progress in the field, but their contribution was in stimulating thinking and contributing to theoretical progress in the field as illustrated in Table 1.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2023.104737>

Received 21 June 2022; Received in revised form 26 January 2023; Accepted 27 January 2023

Available online 29 March 2023

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1.1. Theory development in tourism: The role of paradoxes

As with any theoretically informed analysis of this nature (see Bricker & Donohoe, 2015 on theory in tourism), the focus is on inquiry to help investigate, analyse, interpret, reflect upon, and provide a degree of informed commentary to explain the phenomena studied, which in this case is urban tourism. Our argument represents a more theoretically informed (as opposed to empirically informed) contribution, which aims to advance thinking by examining a series of paradoxes to help derive generalisations about urban tourism phenomena. To do this, as Jasso

Table 1
Selected foundation studies shaping the development of urban tourism research.

Study	Contribution
Ap, J. and Crompton, J.(1993). Residents' strategies for responding to tourism impacts, <i>Journal of Travel Research</i> , 22 (1): 47–49.	A seminal study of resident impacts with an urban dimension that challenged the existing models of community-based impacts and simplified views that failed to recognise the diversity of opinions and stakeholder views
Ashworth, G. and Voogd, H.(1990). <i>Selling the City: Marketing approaches in public sector urban planning</i> . London: Belhaven.	A key study that blended marketing with urban policy to analyse how cities were being sold as places for leisure and business.
Ashworth, G.(1989).Urban tourism: an imbalance in attention. In C. Cooper (ed) <i>Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management</i> , Volume 1 (pp.33-54). London: Belhaven.	One of the most influential studies of urban tourism based on a detailed literature review of the field. Arguably it meets the criteria of Jasso (1988) for theoretical analysis in terms of being a speculative form of thinking that challenged the status quo and many of the existing tenets of tourism analysis focused on cities. It clearly established the need for urban tourism research that resulted in studies such as Law (1992), Page (1995) and Page and Hall (2002) and numerous edited books on urban tourism.
Ashworth, G.(2003).Urban tourism: Still an imbalance in attention? In C. Cooper (ed) <i>Classic Reviews in Tourism</i> (pp.143-163) Clevedon: Channel View.	A revisiting of the imbalance in attention argument revisiting the progress made since 1989 in research.
Ashworth, G. and Tunbridge, J.(1990). <i>The Tourist-Historic City</i> . London: Belhaven.	An interesting narrative of one category of urban tourism, framed from a heritage perspective, focusing on historic cities
Berg, L. van den, van der Borg, J. and van der Meer, J.(1995). <i>Urban Tourism: Performance and Strategies in Eight European Cities</i> . Aldershot: Avebury.	An important comparative study of historic cities and the problems which urban tourism posed for these cities
Burtenshaw, D., Bateman, M., and Ashworth, G.(1991). <i>The European City: a western perspective</i> . London: David Fulton Publishers.	Whilst not a book devoted to urban tourism, it contained the often quoted chapter by Ashworth in which the conceptualisation of plurality in the existence of different tourism cities
Edwards, D., Griffin, T. Hayllar, B. (2008). <i>Urban tourism research: Developing an agenda</i> . <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i> 35, 4, 1032–1052.	An important review of the field, establishing their perspective of tourist precincts within cities
Maitland, R.(2006).How can we manage the tourist-historic city? <i>Tourism strategy in Cambridge</i> , UK, 1978–2003. <i>Tourism Management</i> , 27 (6), 1262–1273.	A landmark study of tourism public policy and the politics of urban tourism, examining Cambridge in the UK
Mullins, P.(1991).Tourism urbanisation. <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> , 15 (3), 326–42.	Mullins two theoretical studies demonstrate the major contribution that urban sociology makes to urban tourism analysis from both a specialised urbanisation perspective (Mullins, 1991) and from a class relations perspective (Mullins, 1994)
Mullins, P.(1994). Class relations and tourism urbanisation: the regeneration of the petite bourgeoisie and the emergence of a new urban form. <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> , 18(4), 591–607.	

(1988:1) argued, we need to draw upon the desirable features of a theory which are: '(i) that its assumption set is as short as possible; (ii) that its observable implications be as many and varied as possible; and (iii) that its observable implications include phenomena or relationships not yet observed'. Indeed, studies such as Scott (2021: 1105) reinforce the value of theoretical approaches as 'while every individual city represents a uniquely complex combination of social conjunctures, there are nonetheless definite senses in which urban phenomena are susceptible to investigation at the highest levels of theoretical generality'. Thus, this critical review adheres to Jasso's (1988) three precepts by exploring the paradoxical nature of urban tourism through a more narrated approach.

The original five paradoxes are shown in Table 2.

2. Progress in research on urban tourism paradoxes since 2011: an overview

Paradox One posited that there appeared to be a lack of engagement of many tourism researchers with wider debates in urban studies and other disciplines. As Simpson (2016: 30) observed this constitutes an 'impediment to urban tourism scholarship ... [given the] ... peculiar disciplinary parochialism in tourist studies. Scholars of tourism do not engage with the wider literature of urban studies, and have failed to employ the potentially productive resources of urban theory'. The value of urban and social theory applied to urban tourism is demonstrated in Simpson's analysis of tourist utopias (e.g. Las Vegas, Dubai and Macau as urban destinations – also see Hannigan, 1998). Ashworth (2003) recognised that the *imbalance in attention* argument resulted from the proposition that cities are the origin of most tourists and often a central focal point in tourist itineraries – or as a gateway to enter into a destination (Short & Kim, 1999). But as urban tourism was not a dominant feature of tourism research, Ashworth (2003) maintained the imbalance argument was valid. Table 3 selectively illustrates that this imbalance has now begun to be addressed with a greater diversity of themes examined by tourism researchers engaging with new theoretical agendas in a manner not previously seen on this scale before 2011. A considerable degree of 'urbanising' of tourism research has occurred but to what extent has this led to a better understanding of *urbanism and tourism*? The contents of the *International Journal of Tourism Cities (IJTC)* illustrate a significant growth in the volume of regular output within the

Table 2
Urban Tourism paradoxes restated.

- 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 in one subject 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 intensive use of many urban facilities and services but little of the city has been created specifically for tourist use (apart from purposefully-designed resort complexes). Cities have embraced festivals and events as a means to attract visitors embodied in the notion of the *Eventful City* (Richards & Palmer, 2010) but the social, economic, environmental and consequences for cities and their residents with debt and social and cultural marginalisation. For example, residents have begun to protest at the pressures, problems, and lack of management of uncontrolled and overtourism in some urban localities.
- 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 (see Sheng, 2011). It is the cities with a large and varied economic base that gain the most from tourism but are the least dependent upon it.
- 5 Thus ultimately, and from several 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 needs the varied, flexible, and accessible tourism products that cities provide: it is by no means so clear that cities need tourism".

Source: Ashworth and Page (2011: 1–2).

Table 3
Selected key developments in the urban tourism literature since 2011.

Theme/Issue	Examples of indicative publications	Indicative contribution
The global south and developing world and urban tourism	This is dealt with in Tables 4 and 5	Special Issue of the <i>IJTC, Volume 8 (1)</i> : Contemporary trends, issues and challenges in Southeast Asian tourism cities and the <i>Special Issue of IJTC Volume 6 (3), Tourism in Indian Cities</i> .
Governance of cities, the sharing economy and the effects on communities	Over 1100 articles on Scopus on Airbnb with key studies including (Chang, 2020 ; Horn & Merante, 2017 ; Mont, Palgan, Bradley, & Zvolaska, 2020 ; DiNatale, Lewis, & Parker, 2018 ; González, Martín Martín, Martínez, & Khodja, 2022).	Connecting gentrification, housing studies and urban life with the disruptive effects of Airbnb on residents, communities and the availability of affordable housing.
Urban resilience	Interest in natural disasters reflected in the wider urban studies and emergency planning literature on place resilience (e.g. Davidson, Nguyen, Beilin, & Briggs, 2019 ; Sharifi, 2019 ; Calgaro, Lloyd, & Dominey-Howes, 2014 and the work of Amore & Hall, 2021). There has also been an expansion of literature associated with the short-run effects of the covid pandemic (e.g. Parvin, Tavakolinia, Mosammam, & Razavian, 2022 ; Pasquinelli, Trunfio, Bellini, & Rossi, 2022) and climate change as a challenge for city resilience (e.g. Fitchett, 2021 ; Lopes, Remoaldo, Ribeiro, & Martín-Vide, 2022).	The role of disaster and post-disaster recovery in urban tourism research that builds on the emergency planning literature.
Changing technology and tourist infrastructure and travel behaviour	Autonomous vehicles (Cohen & Hopkins, 2019) and walkability (e.g. Hae, 2018 ; Daniels, Harmon, Vese, Park, & Brayley, 2018 ; Gorrini & Bertini, 2018 ; Henderson, 2018 ; Ma, Schraven, de Bruijne, de Jong, & Lu, 2019 ; Muñoz-Mazón, Fuentes-Moraleda, Chantre-Astaiza, & Burbano-Fernandez, 2019 ; Navarro-Ruiz, Casado-Díaz, & Ivars-Baidal, 2019 ; Paananen & Minoia, 2019 ; Sugimoto et al., 2019 ; Zheng, Ji, Lin, Wang, & Yu, 2020) and including low carbon futures for tourism in cities (e.g. Zhang & Zhang, 2019).	With the rise of electric and autonomous vehicles, the travel to cities is changing and a long overdue analysis of the walkability of tourism in cities has emerged to examine new directions in tourist-transport in cities.
Technological innovations in understanding tourist behaviour in cities and the scale of activity	The greatest methodological change since 2011 has been in the availability of larger datasets created by the digital age and the rise of big data, creating a massive expansion in spatial analysis of tourist mobilities associated with tracking visitors (e.g. Racine, 1983) and their itineraries and the impact of Uber (Contreras &	The expansion of eTourism research and the rise of smart tourism (see Gretzel, 2021) has developed as artificial intelligence, and the interaction of tourists with technology, including smart devices, has revolutionised what we can collect as data on the urban tourist

Table 3 (continued)

Theme/Issue	Examples of indicative publications	Indicative contribution
The history of urban tourism	Paz, 2018 ; Kim, Baek, & Lee, 2018). Literature on the history of urban tourism (e.g. Churchill, 2014 ; Coaffee, 2014 ; Gassan, 2015 ; Hill, 2018 ; Moak, 2019 ; Revell, 2021 ; Wall & Mathieson, 2005) builds upon important historical critiques (e.g. Borg, 2004 ; Wall & Mathieson, 2005).	This has remained an area largely detached from mainstream tourism research and has been focused among historians of the city but it has clear contributions to make in conjunction with developments such as historical geography and evolutionary economic geography in relation to city destination development.
Place-based development of urban tourism	The development of further place-based knowledge of festivals and events (e.g. Duignan & Pappalepore, 2021 ; Kádár & Klaniczay, 2022), public space and the public realm (e.g. Fusté-Forné, 2021), cities as spaces for new products (e.g. Susanna, 2022) and the night-time economy (Liu, Wang, Weber, Chan, & Shi, 2022) have emerged as new direction for research.	The use of space within cities and the way it offers multiple interpretations from quantitative and qualitative research methodologies has deepened knowledge on how tourists use space.
SMART tourism	The literature on SMART technology has increased the capacity for research using data from the Internet of Things to assist in data capture of different facets of the urban visitor experience (e.g. Garrett, 2015 ; 2019) using data from sensors.	The opportunity to connect different tourist touchpoints in the city with other sources of big data has provided opportunities for deeper levels of quantitative analysis of tourist activity patterns, flows and how it interconnects with urbanism. The special issue of the <i>IJTC 2(2)</i> examined SMART tourism in cities.
Tourist safety and terrorism and visitor behaviour	Terrorist attacks through to generic issues of visitor safety have continued to see significant development (Borg, 2004) and its threat to visitor behaviour and travel decision-making (Clark, Kearns, & Cleland, 2016 ; Clark, Kearns, and Cleland (2016)).	Visitor safety is an ever present theme in urban tourism research but it has seen a greater development and connection with how it impacts visitor behaviour.
Sustainable tourism, overtourism and resident impacts	Perspectives of sustainability and their application to cities have seen a range of new research directions including the growth of overtourism (e.g. Bailey, 2008) and different facets of overtourism such as resident attitudes (e.g. Coaffee, 2014).	<i>IJTC Special Issue Volume 7 (4)</i> examined sustainable tourism and <i>two special issues of the IJTC examined overtourism, issues 5 (4) and 6 (1)</i> .
City-marketing and branding	The area has seen continued development with studies such as Hae (2018) and Fusté-Forné (2021) with studies focusing more specifically on place-making (Lew, 2017 ; Richards & Duif, 2019) and a significant expansion of studies on	The marketing and branding literature on urban tourism has seen new developments from mainstream marketing permeate research on city tourism to better understand how brands and promotion

(continued on next page)

Table 3 (continued)

Theme/Issue	Examples of indicative publications	Indicative contribution
	destination branding (e.g. Fusté-Forné, 2021).	potentially influences visitor intentions, increasingly through digital channels.
Different forms of visitor motivations and travel type and changing political ideologies	Historic towns (e.g. Wöber, 2002), dark tourism, the legacy of former communist bloc cities and tourism,	The <i>IJTC special issue 4 (1)</i> examined dark tourism and Issue 3 (3) examined <i>Communist legacies and cities: dimensions and tourism opportunities</i>

Sources: Hall, C. M., Ram, Y. and Shoval, N. (eds) (2017) *The Routledge International Handbook of Walking*. Abingdon: Routledge; Gretzel, U. and Collier de Mendonça, M. (2019). Smart destination brands: semiotic analysis of visual and verbal signs. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5(4), 560–580; Barbe, D., Pennington-Gray, L. and Schroeder, A. (2018). Destinations' response to terrorism on Twitter, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 3(3),495–512; Coca-Stefaniak, A. and Morrison, A.(2018), City tourism destinations and terrorism – a worrying trend for now, but could it get worse? *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 4(4), 409–412; Heeley, J. (2015). Urban destination marketing in contemporary Europe – what does “good” look like? *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 1(1),36–49; Florido-Benítez, L. (2022). The impact of tourism promotion in tourist destinations: a bibliometric study, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*; Ford, R., Bowen, J. and Yates, S. (2022) Executing a destination branding strategy: Louisville Tourism's Urban Bourbon Trail, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*; Carvalho, M. (2022), Factors affecting future travel intentions: awareness, image, past visitation and risk perception, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 8(3),761–778; Wu, Y., Wang, F., Mao, W., Xu, S., Xu, S. and Tang, J. (2022). Difference in authenticity perception of old towns among China's various cultural regions, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 8(2),546–566; Charag, A., Fazili, A. and Bashir, I. (2021). Residents' perception towards tourism impacts in Kashmir, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 7(3),741–766; Barbhuiya, M.(2021) Overtourism in Indian cities: a case study of Nainital, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 7 (3),702–724; Raun, J., Shoval, N. and Tiru, M. (2020) Gateways for intra-national tourism flows: Measured using two types of tracking technologies, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 6(2), 261–278.

domain of urban tourism, This has resulted in a greater global coverage of tourism in cities as presented by a selective thematic and geographical review based on a content analysis of the broad themes published in *IJTC* (see Table 3). The question here is whether that body of knowledge, as [McCann \(2017: 312\)](#) argues, represents ‘an attention to urbanism on how the mutually constitutive relationships between the development of built environments and the identities, practices, struggles, and opportunities of everyday social life are governed’ to build a better understanding of urban tourism.

2.1. Urbanism as a construct for tourism research

Urbanism forms a key construct in urban studies and focuses on how people interact with cities as places, their communities, and the built environment irrespective of whether they are visitors, workers, or residents. The concept has transitioned from its early popularisation by [Wirth \(1938\)](#) through to what is now described as a time of *global urbanism* ([Lancione & McFarlane, 2021](#)). Considering the range of topics and extent of the studies published in the *IJTC*, a number of the studies align closely with Wirth's notion of urbanism – from the everyday functioning of the city (e.g. its markers to the everyday life of citizens) as theorised and interpreted by [Mordue \(2017\)](#) and [Frisch, Sommer, Stoltenberg, and Stors \(2019\)](#), through to the most obvious implication: overtourism. The awkward juxtaposition between public and private life and respective damage to local ecosystems ([Duignan et al., 2022](#)) – whether that's social, economic, or environmental - sits at the intersect between urbanism and tourism ([Moreno-Gil & Coca-Stefaniak, 2020](#)). This is featured in several special issues and articles in *IJTC*, several reports and a plethora

of books on the subject with extensive and varied urban examples ([Peeters et al., 2018](#); [Honey, 2021](#) as two notable examples), illustrating the direct and indirect impact tourism has on the everyday functioning and fabric of communities and areas of cities. The analysis of urbanism and urban tourism has begun to show some important strands of research that are selectively illustrated in [Fig. 1](#) connecting the everyday life of cities with tourism and tourists (see [Stock, 2019](#)), a feature also observed in [Thrift's \(1997\)](#) analysis of the magic of cities and their everyday life. This body of knowledge has emerged from sociology, cultural studies and the geography of urban cultures, tourism practices and the tourists' pursuit of the “local” (see [Russo & Richards, 2016](#)), as residents wish to live their daily lives at the same time – and in the same places – as tourists seek out popular attractions on- and indeed increasingly off-the-beaten-track. This shift to a more local form of urbanism and urban cultural experience is what has recently been referred to as the ‘New Urban Tourism’ ([Duignan & Pappalepore, 2021](#); [Novy, 2017](#)), recognising how some tourists – unsatisfied with the mundanity of commercial tourist sites – attempt to generate spontaneous and more authentic cultural interactions with local citizens and inside localities where the masses often tend not to tread ([Gravari-Barbas, Jacquot, & Cominelli, 2019](#)). Other studies such as [Leiper and Park \(2010\)](#) illustrated how the built urban environment in regions such as the Middle East and Asia have evolved and are becoming dominated by skyscrapers. Their interesting analysis highlighted the dominance of skyscrapers as an element of the urban tourist experience of place, dominated by high rise buildings. These landscapes also emerged as a competitive element of promotional campaigns for visitors. Investments in major sky tower projects, like Auckland's NZ\$320 million casino and sky tower complex as attractions, demonstrate how they become key iconic elements of the destination marketing ([Murphy, 2014](#)). Yet these developments have not been without controversy, as [Chan \(2017\)](#) highlighted.

Recognising the plurality of urbanism and tourism has led to a blurring of the boundaries of everyday life and tourism (e.g. as evidenced by walking tourism) marking a significant paradigm shift towards themes associated with urbanism. The foundations of this shift can be seen in research on post-tourism in Urry's (1995) *Consuming Places* and Feifer's (1985) *Going Places*. Perhaps the most important assessment of this position was highlighted by [Gravari-Barbas et al. \(2019: 304\)](#) who claimed ‘we have reached a threshold in terms of our scientific understanding of urban tourism in western metropolises. While the “classic” patterns of urban tourism continue to characterise the bulk of the tourists heading for the “urban sights”, these new urban practices and emerging civil society actors and this enthusiasm for “ordinary” spaces all dramatically challenge the contemporary urban tourism system and call for new theoretical frameworks’. This marks a turning point in tourism research, recognising not only this plurality but how urbanism and urban tourism are interconnected and require a greater theorisation and theoretical analysis. One such theoretical development is the recognition of *eventfulness*, a term used to understand how urbanism has intersected with events and event-based tourism, which relies heavily on the utilisation of public space, urban infrastructure, and recognising everyday disruption to lives and livelihoods albeit temporarily ([Richards, 2014](#)).

In parallel, the urban studies field has embraced new approaches by calling for a science of *citiness* ([Amin & Thrift, 2017](#)) to understand these theoretical shifts, debating cities as complex entities, with global significance, recognising that tourism is embedded in the lives of citizens and the daily life of the city throughout the world. Conceptually this integrates the long-standing debates on the social impact of tourism on communities and its citizens within a more theorised setting as one strand of urbanism. As [Amin and Thrift \(2017:3\)](#) indicate, ‘we see the city as a machine whose surge comes from the liveliness of various bodies, materials, symbols, and intelligences ... we distil ‘citiness’ down to the combined vitality and political economy of urban sociotechnical systems, which we believe define the modern city’. The arguments on urbanism have come full circle, as alongside, Wirth, Jane Jacobs focused

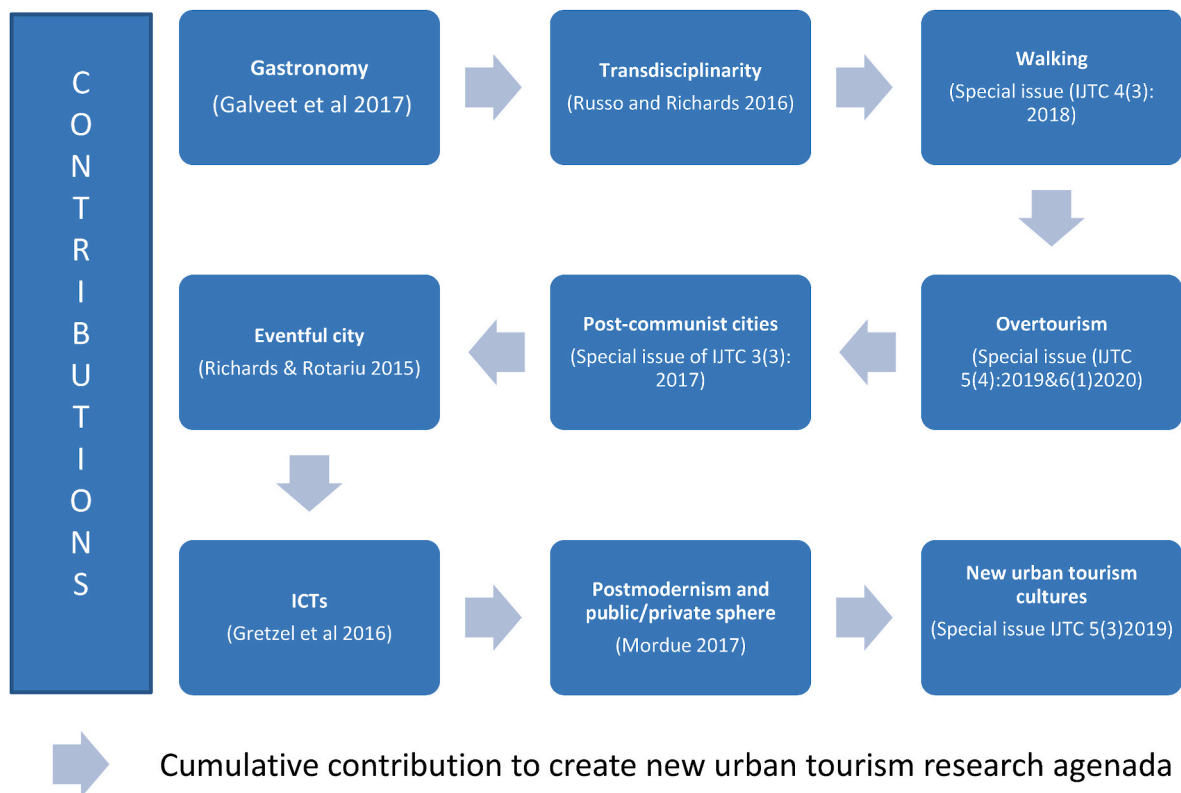


Fig. 1. Post-2011 illustrations of urbanism and urban tourism research.

on the centrality of people and place in defining the city in the 1940s and the significance to economic vibrancy (see [Desrochers & Hospers, 2007](#) for a review). Therefore, this article runs a counter argument to [Ashworth and Page \(2011\)](#) as the general growth in tourism in cities research alongside these new theoretical debates makes it hard to sustain the *imbalance in attention* argument (Paradox One). But this begs a vital question in terms of the degree to which this literature has helped us understand the wider concept of urban tourism and the ongoing validity of Paradox Two. Here the debate focuses on the very nature of urban tourism as a concept and its relationship with cities which also interconnects with urbanism.

3. Rethinking ‘what is urban tourism?’

[Ashworth and Page \(2011: 2\)](#) observed, ‘adding the adjective *urban* to the noun *tourism* may locate activity in a spatial context. Yet this does little to define or delimit that activity’. That proposition needs a deeper examination given the progress in research on cities. We need to, as [Amin and Thrift’s \(2017\)](#) approach advocated, see the city in an expansionist way (inside outwards), rather than through a reductionist lens (looking from the outside in). In this way we may move away from the simplistic definitions of the city as spatially bound and objectively defined, using different metrics. Instead much deeper sociological bound approaches have a greater salience that is apparent from some of the contributions in [Table 3](#). What has also had a profound impact on urban tourism is the effect of covid which has impacted how residents and tourists relate to city space. For example, during lockdowns and in subsequent re-openings, a degree of hesitancy and behaviour change impacted cities. In major cities such as London or New York the effect on business tourism, cultural producers and retailers, with lower footfall on streets, all influenced the tourists’ experience ([Oxford Economics, 2020](#); [Andrade & Martins, 2022](#)). The covid pandemic highlights the issue of urban resilience we will return to later. [Wirth \(1938: 4\)](#) highlighted the logic of recognising urbanism arguing that ‘the peculiar characteristics

of the city as a particular form of human association’ meant that ‘a sociological definition of the city seeks to select those elements of urbanism which mark it as a distinctive mode of human group life’ within which tourism co-exists. As [Paradox Two](#) intimated, it is the type of city and tourist usage that has led to an unbalanced relationship between tourism and the city.

Recent theorisation of urbanism, as [Amin and Thrift \(2017\)](#) suggest, should use metaphors to depict a city’s diverseness, vitality, intimacy, and distinctiveness that encompass its plurality which definitions cannot easily accommodate. Their approach looks at the city from the ground up whereas most tourism research and urban geography research has tended to look at each as a singular phenomenon as opposed to through a plural lens. Interestingly, some studies have begun to advocate plurality in tourism research on cities, as identified by [Pearce and Pearce \(2017\)](#) in terms of methodological weaknesses in tourism research (including that applied to cities). [Pearce and Pearce \(2017\)](#) argued for new research methodologies that moved away from the dominance of surveys and interviews to understand the notion of plurality in understanding the analysis of complex relationships between tourism and individual cities. This was also recognised by [Edwards, Griffin, and Hayllar \(2008: 1038\)](#) as tourism is only ‘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’ (although the term industry is best replaced with ‘industries’ as advocated by [Leiper, 2008](#)).

Studies such as [Verloo and Bertolini \(2020\)](#) also embrace the need to see the city through a different lens, especially how to approach research in an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary manner, with some commentators calling for a city science. A range of dialectical debates on tourism among different stakeholders needs to be better understood through different lenses before seeking a specific stance on Paradox

Two. [Wall and Mathieson \(2005\)](#) highlighted one key debate that a plural approach might seek to address: how much change in a place can be attributed specifically to tourism rather than non-tourism activity? In other words, how much urban change can be attributed to urban tourism? In seeking to understand this perspective, [Ashworth and Page \(2011:3\)](#) framed this debate as ‘what are the distinctive characteristics of all or some cities that shape urban tourism? The plural is necessary because urban tourism is not like other adjectival tourism. 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’ (also see [Kowalczyk-Anioł \(2023\)](#)). This infers that the way urban tourism is constituted is complex and commensurate to the diversity of urban activities that characterise tourism in the city. To better appreciate the continued validity of Paradox Two, several characteristics associated with the ‘urban’ and ‘urbanism’ need to be examined further.

3.1. The urban context

Until recently, cities had predominantly been viewed as sites of capitalist production and Paradox Two suggested that leisure and tourism were a more hidden or neglected feature of urbanism and cities as spaces. More theoretically-informed studies like [Richards’s \(2017\) Eventful City](#) mark an important turning point as these activities are no longer economically or physically invisible. A corollary of that work is a recognition that simple land-use models and the traditional way the city has been planned through urban zoning schemes are static and outdated and do not account for the way the city is dynamically and temporarily transformed to make way for leisure activities. The most obvious way, in our context, is the creation of tourist zones and entertainment districts, but also through the urban practice of ‘event zoning’. This concept is derived from traditional urban zoning and is the one-off demarcation of urban space for event zone parameters ([Walsh et al., 2021](#)). This urban land-use shift reflects the integration between urbanism and tourism (and the eventfulness of cities).

The social analysis of these shifts, such as the eventful city, blend tourism and event enterprise into the very fabric of our cities so they become part of the internal geography of postmodern cities. But more specifically, who belongs and who owns the keys to the city? [Dansero and Mela \(2015\)](#) argue this requires an awkward stitching between ‘context territory’ (existing social economic activity and dependencies) and ‘project territory’ (new often temporary uses). Usually, this is temporary, as with the takeover of a public park for example to stage a new attraction. But sometimes, temporary exceptions are the thin end of the wedge and can become permanent fixtures; and it is this dilemma that is at the centre of the conflict between urbanism and tourism ([Smith, 2006](#)). Therefore, tourism and associated leisure activity like events and the eventful city can be argued to have become new ways urban space can be commodified, chiming back to the earlier critiques of the city as sites of capitalist production that [Jacobs \(1969\)](#) highlighted. [Müller \(2017\)](#) suggests that we should also recognise the inherent paradox in tourism and associated leisure activities have increased access to the city and urban spaces through animating them over the past decades. This animation can simultaneously be highly inclusive as well as highly exclusive (e.g. because they are ticketed and may be a high cost).

Complex patterns and different forms of tourism products have evolved with their specific spatial characteristics, practices, and modes of consumption in time and space (e.g. edge cities – [Garreau, 1991](#); [Page & Hall, 2003](#); cultural districts, [Richards, 2017](#)). Complex microgeographies of urban tourism and new cultural practices in relation to events arise from these processes of urban change. Herein lies the major breakthrough in understanding – the recognition of microgeographies of urban tourism that can be studied qualitatively (e.g. [Biddulph, 2017](#); [Novy, 2017](#)) or using new technology such as big data to focus on

small-scale areas from city-wide datasets ([Mor, Dalyot, & Ram, 2023](#)).

It is increasingly apparent that multifunctional cities, as posited by [Ashworth and Page \(2011\)](#) being able to absorb tourists, needs teasing out further in relation to the urban context. Theoretical developments in human geography and economics around place have begun to show how important contextual factors, such as power, land ownership, class, and local politics are to urban tourism development in time and space. New frames of analysis such as the new economic geography ([Gaspar, 2021](#)) and evolutionary economic geography ([Brouder, 2017](#)) can recognise the complex process shaping urban tourism change. In addition, other studies like [Ong and Smith \(2021\)](#) have constructed evolutionary models of urban tourism in two Asian megacities (Bangkok and Jakarta), informed by the earlier study by [Ashworth and Tunbridge \(1990\)](#). They noted the influence of physical features to the evolution of space within the city, recognising that tourism was an early feature in the development of each megacity (in contrast to the [Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990](#) model). Perhaps these new theoretical agendas and empirical validations, like [Ong and Smith \(2021\)](#), alongside the complexity of new paradigms like overtourism, offer less confirmation of Paradox Two. Instead, each place, its development trajectory, degree of tourist use in time and space (especially site clustering of visits and seasonality) require a much deeper understanding of what tourist-intensive use constitutes and the broad range of impacts running in parallel with the non-tourist use of the city. This plurality tends to blur tourism-leisure and daily life. It leads us back to Wirth’s peculiarity of place argument to try and understand why some places are affected by conflict and a narrative of overtourism and others are not. This may also lead us to examine other contentious concepts such as place personality and more psychological constructs such as place ambiance and the degree of tourist-friendliness in environments where community-visitor interactions are not characterised by conflict. But a parallel theme that has significance about Paradox Two is urbanisation.

3.2. Urbanisation

There is widespread recognition among governments and transnational agencies, such as the United Nations (UN), that the world’s population is increasingly urbanising (and ageing) with the world’s urban population expected to reach 61% by 2030. This has significant implications for revisiting Paradox Two as the whole notion of cities is being called into question as spatially delimited places. It is widely acknowledged that megacities with populations over 10 million are emerging, especially in Asia and South America (e.g. Tokyo, Mexico City, New York, Mumbai, and Sao Paolo). Globally, the volume of people living in cities has risen from 3 billion in 2002 and is expected to reach 5 billion by 2030, dominated by growth in Asia (see [Labbe & Sorensen, 2020](#)), Africa, and the Middle East. These new mega-urban forms have their complexities such as multiple city-regions or systems with their own microgeographic forms. These forms exhibit greater polarisation of affluence and poverty that do not conform to standard urban land use models of ghettos, place, and space due to the complexities mega-urbanisation has created. [Labbe and Sorensen \(2020\)](#) highlight current debates about ‘giga-’ and ‘meta-cities’ for cities with a population of over 20 million as one illustration of these major changes to urban form.

[Brenner and Schmidt \(2015\)](#) also contentiously argued that a flattening of space has occurred, removing the distinction between ‘urban’ and ‘non-urban’, largely due to the process of planetary urbanism marked by the capitalist spread of urbanisation (see [Brooks, 2018](#); [Wakefield, 2021](#)). [Labbe and Sorensen \(2020\)](#) debate the efficacy of such a conclusion, but it is evident that global urbanism is promoting change in these megacity environments, reflected in the greater research efforts now focusing on urban tourism in the global south ([Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021a](#)). [Ashworth and Page’s \(2011\)](#) paradoxes were framed almost entirely from a western perspective and yet since 2011 we now have a richer body of knowledge from the global south, Middle East and

Asia (Table 4). Critically, this does not necessarily align with the paradoxes of western urban tourism as a critical reading of Rogerson's work indicates. Paradox Two is also challenged generically by Scott's (2021: 1105) argument about the changing internal spatial structure of cities where three features now exist: 'an internal dimension (the internal organisation and spatial dynamics of the city), a socially ambient dimension (the relational structure of society at large) and an exogenous dimension (the geographic outside of the city)'. Therefore, assuming that multifunctional cities simply absorb visitors and that they become invisible or a less relevant construct is now an oversimplification. Whilst this may be the case in some contexts, global tourist cities – particularly those that stage large-scale events – are not absorbing but rejecting the presence of tourists (Duignan et al., 2022). Duignan et al. (2022) state that although governments continue to position and legitimise tourism development as a cornerstone of economic development (Nilsson, 2020), we are witnessing a global resistance against excessive tourism, leading to a new 'counter-legitimising identity' forming by urban communities. If we cannot easily delimit the spatial setting of the city, then it is difficult to accept Ashworth and Page's (2011) paradox. In the developing world, for example, research on slum tourism is both a visible and contentious activity and it does not effortlessly absorb tourists, with some interpretations of this as dark tourism, akin to the Victorian gaze of poverty and deprivation (Freire-Medeiros, 2013). Rogerson and Rogerson (2021b) make a powerful case for recognising the north-south differences in urbanism and its impact on urban tourism, due to the existence of an informal economy, low incomes and forms of spectacle such as slum tourism. These facts create very different development trajectories where tourist visits and Africa's National Capital Cities remain poorly understood (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021b), thereby reinforcing the case for more research on African cities (Rogerson and Visser, 2007). Parnell and Pieterse (2014) point to many features that may justify the African urban revolution as exceptional and different to other experiences of urbanisation. This is due to the primacy city status that is a spillover from colonialism, creating a dominant city in the urban hierarchy. The porosity of urban/rural/peri-urban boundaries makes the Africa cityscape a fluid one along with its footloose informal economy.

The global south literature highlights the plurality of the city (Amin & Thrift, 2017) in which tourism is bound up in new concepts, such as the conjectural city (Sayin, Hoyler, & Harrison, 2020) and a greater necessity of 'reading the city'. Sayin et al. (2020) called for a greater plural approach in research, particularly comparative studies of urbanism, to overcome silo approaches where established western models of urbanism do not fit these new urban forms emerging in Asia and the global south. This was reiterated by Shepard et al. (2015), recognising the ongoing challenge of reconceptualising urban theory from the experiences of the global south, proposing a 'southern turn of theorising'. As Sayin et al. (2020: 273) argue "conjunctural cities" – places between established geographies and perspectives in global urban studies ... involves understanding a city by bringing together and blending the different perspectives through the analytical lens of cities ... moving beyond any attempt to understand or explain cities through a singular lens ... but through a conjunctural reading of the city'. Contributing to this fresh approach, studies such as Wise and Jimura (2020) identify how activities localising and clustering within city districts are creating microgeographies of urban consumption and production, expressed as urban tourism and leisure activity. The rise of mega and larger city forms does not necessarily mean that these cities will simply absorb tourists invisibly but may help disperse flows and crowds away from densely packed urban centres. In juxtaposition to this are the growing problems of city liveability and environmental quality (e.g. see Gurjar et al., 2010) which could pose long-term problems for residents and visitors. One obvious problem is climate change, as Fitchett (2021) highlighted, using the Tourism Climate Index in African cities. As Rogerson (2019) demonstrate, whilst city authorities in South Africa embraced action on climate change, it was seen as a 'nice to have' by tourism businesses.

Table 4

Publications demonstrating progress in urban tourism research on the 'global south'.

Output	Indicative contribution
Rogerson and Rogerson (2022a)	The dramatic economic effect of covid-19 on South African cities and urban tourism in relation to drops in visitor volume and short-run effects on long-term development patterns.
Rogerson and Rogerson (2022b)	Highlights the limited nature of capital city tourism scholarship for sub-Saharan Africa and the historical evolution of Pretoria, with development limited by the poor quality of hotels.
Rogerson and Rogerson (2021b)	The extant literature on African capital tourism reviewed to illustrate the scope for future development.
Rogerson and Rogerson (2021c)	The political economy of urban tourism development under Apartheid in Johannesburg illustrating the two divergent markets for urban tourism experiences with the international market focused on gold mining, visits to view game (also see Broitman & Koomen, 2019), and a desire to experience 'Native' mine dancing. In the domestic tourism markets, two attractions dominated – shopping and the night-time economy.
Booyens and Rogerson (2019)	Examining slum tourism and the way in which it can be harnessed for economic development through creative tourism
Historical analysis of accommodation: Rogerson and Rogerson (2021d)	The analysis of urban caravan parks and post-Apartheid expansion akin to western models of development through entrepreneurial growth in the private sector.
Rogerson and Rogerson (2018)	Examines the historical evolution of hotels in Johannesburg
Rogerson and Visser (2007)	A synthesis of urban tourism in South Africa using case studies to give greater voice to the global south and how urban tourism is evolving in that region, building on Rogerson and Visser (2014)
Kyara et al. (2022)	Examining tourism externalities, they highlight the environmental damage posed by urbanisation and infrastructure development whilst tourism is seen as a route to poverty alleviation. Their modelling highlighted a 1% increase in urbanisation leads to a 7% increase in its ecological footprint, whilst a 1% increase tourism development leads to a further 0.018% increase in ecological damage.
Sirkis et al. (2022)	The uniqueness of Latin American cities illustrate that four groupings of factors affect visitor perception of urban tourism attractiveness that are different to the western models of urban tourism with services and the urban environment more important than core attractions with events a powerful attractor.
Wallace and Njuguna (2022)	Urban regeneration in Nairobi focused on the art deco area of Parklands, seeking to diversify the urban tourism offer.
Singh et al. (2022)	How a small town's ambitions to become a major destination are marked by uncontrollable development and a lack of planning enforcement in the urban landscape.
Kavetha and Kiroz (2022)	Environmental damage resulting from pilgrimage tourism in Indian cities and develops a methodology to understand these impacts.
Malleka et al. (2022)	Developing and challenging the perception of urban crime as a deterrent to tourism development in a city through the case of Johannesburg.
Ngoasong and Jafari (2021)	Urban tourism entrepreneurship focus on microbusinesses and the main factors which can facilitate pro-poor urban tourism growth: an enabling institutional framework, the agency of micro-entrepreneurs and policies to promote such a path to development.
Hattingh and Bruwer (2020)	The development of a gay space in Cape Town and its role in urban tourism.
Donaldson and Ferreira (2020)	The review of geography and tourism geography over 100- years at Stellenbosch helps to illustrate how urban tourism research has evolved through different

(continued on next page)

Table 4 (continued)

Output	Indicative contribution
Muldoon (2020)	stages in South Africa and its divergence from the evolution of western models of human geography. The importance of the peri-urban fringe in South African cities and townships and their relationship and the perception of residents towards tourism.
Huysamen et al. (2020)	How townships are portrayed and represented as slums of hope in slum tours and the contradictions of hope and massive socio-economic inequality.
Mgiba and Chiliya (2020)	Tourist patronage of Vilakazi Street precinct in Johannesburg and the value of ICTs in reputation management.
Mahdi (2019)	It examines the case of Marrakesh, Morocco and how an urban policy designed to boost tourism has led to a questionable long-term strategy for growth due to the lack of resilience for this economic development strategy in a post-colonial heritage city.
Donaldson (2018)	Making the case for small town urban tourism research and its contribution to local economic development and as a research direction which had been popular in tourism research, which also has parallels with rural researchers in western countries in small town development, especially market towns (Powell and Hart, 2008).
Giddy and Hoogendoorn (2018)	An ethical examination of walking tours of inner city and slum areas in pursuit of authentic urban tourism experiences, with a discussion of Johannesburg.

Sources and other relevant publications: Rogerson, C. and Rogerson, J. (2022). *The Making Of Capital City Tourism in South Africa*. *Tourism Review International*, 26 (1), 9–24; Burton, C., Rogerson, C. and Rogerson, J. (2020). *The Making of a 'Big 5' Game Reserve as an Urban Tourism Destination: Dinokeng, South Africa*. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 9(6), 892–911; Rogerson, C. and Rogerson, J. (2021a). *The Other Half of Urban Tourism: Research Directions in the Global South*. *GeoJournal Library* (pp. 1–37); Rogerson, C. and Rogerson, J. (2021c). *Urban Tourism Under Apartheid: The Johannesburg Chapter*. *GeoJournal Library* (pp. 149–172); Booyens, I. and Rogerson, C. (2019). *Re-creating slum tourism: Perspectives from South Africa*. *Urbaniz*, 30, 52–63; Rogerson, C. and Rogerson, J. (2021d). *Mundane Urban Tourism: The Historical Evolution of Caravan Parks in South Africa 1930–1994*. *GeoJournal Library* (pp. 93–112); Rogerson, C. and Rogerson, J. (2018). *The evolution of hotels in johannesburg 1890–1948: A case of historical urban tourism*. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 23(3), 738–747; Rogerson, C. and Visser, G. (2014). *A Decade of Progress in African Urban Tourism Scholarship*. *Urban Forum*, 25(4), 407–417; Kyara, V., Rahman, M. and Khanam, R. (2022). *Investigating the environmental externalities of tourism development: evidence from Tanzania*. *Heliyon*, 8(6); Sirkis, G., Regalado-Pezúa, O., Carvache-Franco, O. and Carvache-Franco, W. (2022). *The Determining Factors of Attractiveness in Urban Tourism: A Study in Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Bogota, and Lima*. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 14(11); Wallace, N. and Njuguna, M. (2022). *Urban Tourism Diversification: Rejuvenation of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Historic Parklands*. *Nairobi in J. Gona and L. Atieno (eds) Sustainable Tourism Dialogues in Africa, De Gruyter Studies in Tourism, De Gruyter.com (Vol. 7, pp. 145–16)*; Singh, U., Upadhyay, S. and Jha, I. (2022). *The co-production of space in a tourist city: A case of Dharamshala*. *Cities*; Kavitha, V. and Firoz C. (2022). *Benchmarking sustainability of pilgrimage cities: a case of three cities in Tamil Nadu, India*. *Benchmarking*; Malleka, T., Booyens, I. and Hoogendoorn, Gov (2022). *Urban Crime and Tourism: Curating Safety in Johannesburg Tourist Spaces*. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 11(1), 46–59; Ngoasong, M. and Jafari, A. (2021). *Determinants of Micro-entrepreneurship in Urban Tourist Centres of Sierra Leone and Morocco*. In: Ngoasong, M., Adeola, O., Kimbu, A., Hinson, R. (eds) *New Frontiers in Hospitality and Tourism Management in Africa*. *Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management*. Springer, Cham; Hattingh, C. and Bruwer, J. P. (2020). *Cape Town's gay village: from "gaytrified" tourism Mecca to "heterosexualised" urban space*. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 6(4), 907–928; Donaldson, R. and Ferreira, S. (2020). *A century of human geography at Stellenbosch University: Reflections on urban and tourism geography*. *South African Geographical Journal*, 102 (3), 327–343; Muldoon, M. (2020). *South African township residents describe the liminal potentialities of tourism*. *Tourism Geographies*, 22(2), 338–353; Huysamen, M., Barnett, J. and Fraser, D. (2020). *Slums of hope: Sanitising silences within township tour reviews*. *Geoforum*, 110, 87–96; Mgiba, F. and Chiliya, N. (2020). *Online reputation, virtual experience and tourists' revisit intentions. The case of*

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The conjectural approach in urbanism research has a role to play to challenge Paradox Two, to understand how the visitor is economically and physically absorbed in these multifunctional cities since it recognises the 'specificity of cities – their existence as entities that are at once singular and universal – emerges from spatio-temporal dynamics, connectivities and horizontal and vertical relations' (Shephard et al., 2015: 1947). In Asia, for example, other models of urban tourism such as casino tourism in Macao (Xinhua et al., 2022) and the role of state-promoted tourism urbanisation (Ong & Liu, 2022) offer different insights on tourism urbanisation to the established studies by Gladstone (1998) and Mullins (1991, 1992, 1999). In the case of Jamaica and the Balearics, tourism urbanisation did not effortlessly absorb tourists without the highly visible loss of land (Brooks, 2018; Pons, Rullán, & Murray, 2014).

4. Paradox 3

Among the paradoxes in Ashworth and Page (2011), we need to recognise that urbanisation globally (see Short et al., 2000; McNeil, 1999) is changing urban places and tourist use of such places illustrated by Gavira-Durón, Cruz-Aké, and Venegas-Martínez (2018), as the vulnerability of urban places to natural disasters (Amore & Hall, 2021) highlight the concept of urban resilience (Dai, Xu, & Chen, 2019). Resilience is now a much greater feature of research from western and global south perspectives (see Leonard et al., 2020) as will be discussed below. However, these agendas seem to be running in parallel to the problems of intensity of use and clashes between tourists and residents, now subsumed within a broader debate on overtourism. City resilience offers a great deal of scope for research to cross boundaries as the move from smart to 'wise' tourism destinations (Coca-Stefaniak, 2020) to consider tourist infrastructure conceptually alongside other debates on the resilience of urban locales. The infrastructure debates also highlight the issue of overtourism.

Peeters et al. (2018: 22) defined overtourism thus

'Overtourism describes the situation in which the impact of tourism, at certain times and in certain locations, exceeds physical, ecological, social, economic, psychological, and/or political capacity thresholds. Psychological capacity refers to the capacity of people (residents and/or other visitors) to emotionally cope with crowding effects. Political capacity implies the incapability of local governments to grasp, manage, and govern excessive tourism growth consequences, jeopardising host community quality of life. This definition includes all forms of stress caused by high growth and volumes of visitors. It includes social (hosts, guests, citizens), physical (infrastructure, space), economic (tourism commercial zones) and ecological (noise, air quality, water use, water quality, waste ...) aspects.'

Overtourism has its origins in the rich tradition of impact research in tourism as identified by seminal publications by Mathieson and Wall (1982) and Wall and Mathieson (2005) that were focused on concepts such as carrying capacity, with a long history of study in leisure and recreation (Pigram & Jenkins, 1999). The overtourism concept has been developed from many of the early urban tourism concepts such as

crowding, the urban tourism experience and resident-host interactions (Page, 1995). The new label of overtourism clearly has appealed to researchers as a simplified approach to understand the different facets of 'too many visitors in specific locales' (e.g. Aall & Koens, 2019; Koens, Postma, & Papp, 2018a; Koens, Postma, & Papp, 2018b). Overtourism does re-emphasise the need to revisit and perhaps rethink the paradox that tourists need cities, but cities do not necessarily need tourists or indeed do not want tourists in their communities. What makes overtourism appeal to policymakers as a concept is its simplicity value in evidencing facets of the problem at a city or place scale especially where controversial developments in the urban environment impact resident attitudes (e.g. Tournois & Djerić, 2019). For example, the consequences of Airbnb and the inflationary effect on resident rents and house prices. In the UK a Parliamentary research report (Cromarty, 2022) was closely followed by an inquiry convened by the minister responsible for tourism (Gov.uk, 2022) as reports of the unregulated growth in Airbnb was being conflated with destinations seeing a shift from rental properties for the local population to short-term lets for tourists. Cromarty (2022) cited the example of London where Airbnb listings rose 378% 2015–2020 and accounted for over 75,000 listings. In some coastal resorts, the higher yields available from holiday lets had displaced people from rental properties as England was estimated to be losing 11,000 rental properties a year to second home and holiday lets at a time of a national crisis in the availability of affordable rental housing. Some destinations in coastal towns saw protests in 2021/2022 against tourists due to the inflationary and displacement pressures tourism posed to rental accommodation, with its more enviable tax regime that benefits investors.

Urban events can also contribute to dispossession and feelings of overtourism (e.g. Sengupta, 2016) that appear to have been compounded during the pandemic as holiday rental prices price local people out of urban housing markets (Cromarty, 2022). One consequence in some cities with large tourist populations, often seasonally concentrated, has been a growth of protest and anti-tourism sentiment more broadly (Colomb & Novy, 2016; Novy, 2019) as well as the build-up (Duignan et al., 2022) and during large-scale sporting events (Duignan, Pappalepore, & Everett, 2019). Protest in urban environments builds on the work in critical events (Spracken and Lamont, 2016) on the impact of events on local populations, often in response to the impact of Airbnb (Hughes, 2018). What is clear in this emergent discourse of protest is that the concept of overtourism, like many of the models of tourism-resident impacts, remains problematic in explaining why some localities suffer and express views on overtourism and others do not. This is because one size does not fit all in attempts to model and depict what criteria constitute overtourism and at what point a tipping point is reached. We may return to Wirth and the notion of the unique features of place and the conjunctural city in seeking to fit a concept to the problem. Whether we can label places and their populations' universal abhorrence about tourism leads us back to the caution exercised in seminal studies on resident-tourism relationships like Ap and Crompton (1993) who recognised that resident communities are not homogenous and therefore generalisations become more problematic. Krippendorf (1987) expressed similar views explaining that we must recognise different categories of resident-tourism engagement (see Fig. 2). Consequently Fig. 2 shows that we have a diversity of views that are not easily generalizable to simple models. Here the local nuances of each locality and their topography and built environment will also add to the impression of overtourism as will the stresses of everyday urban living (Yates, 2011).

What appears to be a key explanatory variable is seasonality as Sainaghi, Mauri, and d'Angella (2019) demonstrate, as measures to spread the distribution of tourists to ease pressures mean that the off-peak season is considered as one option (e.g. Figini & Vici, 2012). The UNWTO (2019) report advocates strategies such as dispersal of visitors, developing new itineraries and greater visitor-resident communication and integration. Yet studies such as Grinbergerger et al.(2014) indicate that visitors tend to concentrate visits in proximity

of their accommodation and have a propensity to visit iconic key sites. So seeking to divert them from visiting iconic sites is unlikely to gain much traction if this is the main purpose of visiting. Other studies such as Mortazavi and Cialani (2016) illustrate the complexity of adopting blanket strategies to address overtourism. One possible avenue to address crowding and overuse may be event portfolios that are evenly distributed throughout the year. Even so they can work in an opposing manner such as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where numerous events come together in one place in one month: The fringe itself, compounded by the International Edinburgh Festival and Military Tattoo, increases the density of tourist flows and crowds in the city.

New research agendas in urban tourism also offer some useful direction to broaden the understanding of the resident and tourist perception and feelings of place in relation to overtourism. Kang, Yang, Dang, Zhang, and Liu (2022) introduced the notion of liveability and urbanism and how tourism intersects with resident's perception of place liveability in China. They observed an inverse relationship existed between place liveability and the level of tourism development. Antchak (2018) offered a useful series of theoretical observations about how events can initiate a transformative effect on public spaces and thereby thickening experiences of place (also see Smith, 2005). The central concept here is the rhythms of a city (Degan, 2016) which Lefebvre (2004) explained as the 'interaction between a place, time and expenditure of energy' (Antchak, 2018, p. 52). Events and their performative elements can transform the rhythms of the city and the experience of place in its transformed state (see also Ernwein & Matthey, 2019), offering a new direction for research using constructs in psychogeography to understand the changes in the feelings, moods, and behaviour of tourists and visitors to the events. Several research studies have developed the atmospheric aspects of urban tourism environments (Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021), building upon sensory analysis of tourist emotions, with sight and vision the most powerful impacting perception of destination characteristics (Buzova, Sanz-Blas, & Cervera-Taulet, 2021; Kah, Shin, & Lee, 2022). Other senses such as smell, and noise can have a significant impact on certain visitor markets (Lin & Dong, 2018). Whilst this is a novel research approach, some of the roots of these psychogeographical analyses can be observed in the behavioural geographies of the 1970s and 1980s (Burgess & Hollis, 1977; Gold, 1980) and emergent studies mapping sensory experiences (Li et al., 2023).

At a more microgeographic scale, Lopes, Santos Cruz, & Pinho (2019) suggest, there is a need for a greater understanding of publicness in cities, as this traditionally defined the structure of cities, with their large public realms and their ability to absorb visitors. The critical issue is whether residents feel marginalised in such settings. Mordue (2017) suggested urban tourism research should reorient itself from being a policy-performing vehicle to one engaging with marginalised and oppressed people who are absent from these privatised (and public spaces) of urban tourism. The implications of tourism development on city imaging, as critical city branding studies are demonstrating (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005), depends upon on whose perspectives and interests are represented not only on-the-ground but in terms of the image and representation of cities. In the case of London, Carmona and Wunderlich (2012) adopt a classification of public and private spaces with overlapping uses that challenge such a proposition of previous studies that divide space into mutually exclusive rather than mutually inclusive categories. So whilst there is a developing agenda around overtourism, marginalisation and concerns over the tourist intensity of use, Paradox Three still has considerable validity. This is because research since 2011 has deepened our understanding of the issues around tourist intensity, but there is still some way to go in developing a more comprehensive understanding of what Ashworth and Page (2011) described as *urban tourism*s and their contribution to the intensity of use, in time and space from a daily, weekly and seasonal perspective and their connection with urbanism.

Perhaps the key to this paradox is the recognition that few cities

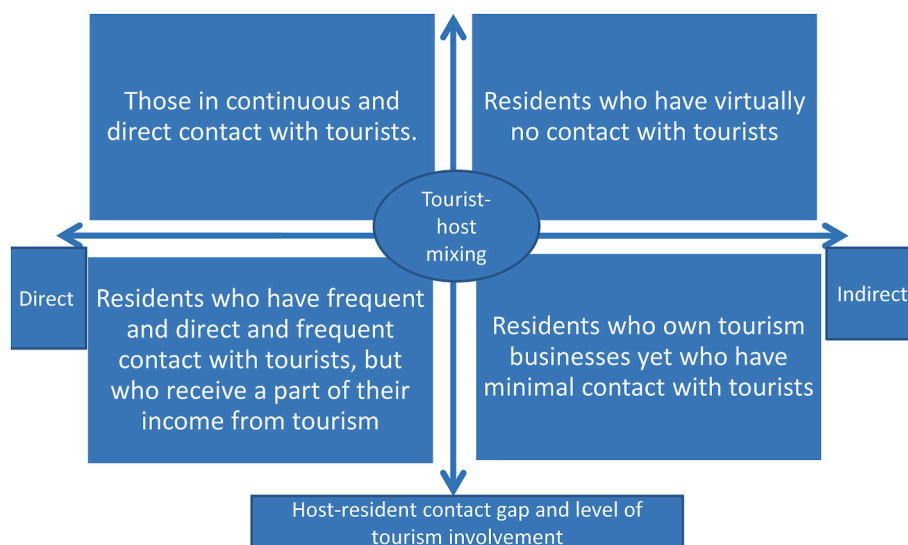


Fig. 2. Krippendorff's model of tourist-host contact and interactions.

actively 'manage' tourism unless it reaches a saturation point (Cheer et al., 2021), with city governance designed to deal with strategic planning (Hall, 2008). But day to day operational issues associated with overcrowding require new public governance and often radical solutions, drawn from outdoor recreation associated with site management for sensitive places (Hall & McArthur, 1998; Pigram & Jenkins, 1999) that are not just paper exercises but invoke tangible soft and hard measures to control the power of tourism.

5. Paradox 4

The critical issue for future research is in understanding whether tourism is driving the development process in cities that depend on tourism compared to mixed or specialised urban economies. Paradox Four posited that the most dependent cities gained the least from tourism and vice versa. Nilsson (2020) has started to develop this agenda through an analysis of overtourism and its relationship to long-waves of development, and whether the disruptive effects of new technology are a major driver of growth (Yeager et al., 2020). Much of the discussion in the existing tourism-globalisation literature (e.g. Timothy, 2020) illustrates how this has remained a significant area of research in the social sciences and so need not be reiterated here (see McNeil, 1999; Short et al., 2000; Stock, 2019). Ashworth and Page (2011) examined the well-worn concepts of urbanisation and globalisation including the concept of world cities (Pearce, 2005; Maitland and Newman, 2009; Derudder, Taylor, & Witlox, 2012; Morrison & Maxim, 2022; Knox & Taylor, 1995). Cities are places to live work and undertake business in, as the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index illustrates (also see Acuto & Pejic, 2021) with implications for tourism governance (Summers, 2021). Other key concepts examined by Ashworth and Page (2011) were globally networked capitalism, reglobalisation (see Benedikter, 2021; Clark, Kearns, & Cleland, 2016), and the impact of globalisation on how cities are represented and promoted (e.g. Chakravarty, Goerzen, Musteen, & Ahsan, 2021; Heeley, 2016; Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2002; Short, 2017a). As Short (2017b: 1) argues 'Global city status is maintained and attempted through hosting international events, marketing campaigns, and urban makeovers' which are also characterised as places of social polarisation. At its most simplistic level, public and private sector bodies have engaged in city marketing to attract mobile global capital, as a former public-sector welfare-oriented stance has seen more entrepreneurial traits adopted to attract inward investment, most notably in tourism.

Sheller (2009) suggests that within critical urban geographies,

several global processes affecting cities in terms of rescaling are leading to divergent outcomes. These include the spatial process of dispersal (i.e. sprawl), and selective concentration of specific activities in certain cities in areas or districts (e.g. Olympic Games). Spatial splintering is also occurring, that is altering the urban core(s) and periphery of cities for tourism, observed earlier in the models of the postmodern tourist city. The concept of 'urban splintering' is where urban districts are divided into distinct residential and tourist spaces, with little bleeding between the two, and are home to different socio-economic classes and city segregation, as popularised by Graham and Marvin (2002). Running in parallel to this is the global competition among world or aspirant world cities for hallmark events, notably the Olympic Games (e.g. Duignan & Pappalepore, 2021; Duignan, Pappalepore, & Everett, 2019). Even within countries, cities are competing for what Short and Kim (1999) identify as primacy status evident in the European City of Culture programme (Liu, 2014). Some countries and cities, like Japan and Tokyo, have utilised large-scale events (e.g. Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games) as a way to revitalise a place's cultural offer – a flagship destination development project to rethink and reorientate what the place and its people has to offer for tourists through multimillion dollar nation branding and marketing communications campaigns. Interestingly, for more recent events, this has come after either a serious endogenous or exogenous shock, which subsequently helps to legitimise governmental intervention on this scale. For example, London 2012 sought examine how to regenerate one of the most socio-economically deprived urban districts in the city. Other studies also examined how to revive the international reputation and how to regenerate the Fukushima region after the 2011 nuclear disaster (Duignan, 2021).

There is growing evidence that the municipal entrepreneurialism that has informed local government thinking on tourism is changing as new theoretical developments such as new municipalism (Thompson, 2021) emerge. Accompanying this is the hollowing out of the nation-state and private capital is leveraged to achieve place-specific strategies, as capital uses space to remake places for tourism, changing the nature of state-business relationships (Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2012). Some world cities have distorted national patterns of economic development, disconnecting it from its local region and even its national tourism economy, as activities like business travel connect with other world cities (e.g. Minner, Zhou, & Toy, 2022). Attempts have been made to address the imbalance. VisitEngland (2020) policy is to rebalance the spatial and economic dominance of London as a world tourism city, encouraging measures to achieve a greater regional dispersion of visitors to reduce the primacy London exercises over tourist itineraries outside

of the region. Other studies show that tourists may engage in multi-city visits (Hwang et al., 2006) as part of a more generalised urban tourism itinerary that has many parallels with the historical patterns of urban tourism in the Grand Tour (Towner, 1996).

Academic thought on urban research has begun to recognise that a key facet of globalisation is global capital flows, expanding the seminal research by Britton (1991) on the tourism production system and the exploitative nature of how capital identifies opportunities in urban tourism, develops them and leaves questions on who the beneficiaries are. Grubbauer and Čamprag (2019) have explored urban entrepreneurial strategies, modes of governance and use of urban megaprojects to regenerate cities within which these exploitative relationships emerge, leading to public protests. This 'reveals new dynamics in the global circulation of urban development models and related capital flows' (Grubbauer & Čamprag, 2019, p. 664) with a loss of local control of the development process to global capital. As Shepard et al., (2015) argue this is a reflection of the new urban entrepreneurialism and impact on local urbanism.

Sigler and Wachsmuth (2020) build on the global capital flows literature, illustrating how transnational gentrification is developing and is interconnected with tourism and state-led initiatives to revitalise urban neighbourhoods and to generate local economic activity. This builds upon the local economic development arguments by Rogerson (2019) in terms of globalisation as cities sought to use tourism to lift the dispossessed out of poverty through employment creation, a feature that is of greater significance in the global south with the prior impact of colonialism. Yet to address the issues of dependence which urban tourism may generate as a variable source of income, Rogerson and Rogerson (2022) examined the impact of covid on South Africa's eight metropolitan areas, and its catastrophic effect, with the urban areas experiencing a disproportionate impact upon tourism. Whilst they argued that this may only be a temporary reversal to the city dominance experienced over the last 20 years, the effect was most severe for largest metropolitan areas.

With the dearth of research on the economic impact of tourism on cities (a notable exception is Murillo Viu et al., 2008), and given the arguments on the global south, and its urbanisation trajectories and capital flows we need to take stock of the effects of changing dynamics of urbanisation. Randolph & Storper (2022) highlight these complexities and suggest that the condition of late urbanisation and the different types of impacts experienced in the global north and south do create different development paths for cities. This makes theoretical generality more complex. For this reason, what Ashworth and Page (2011) posited from a western perspective, is certainly far from fit for purpose in a global south setting, reflecting upon the findings of Randolph & Storper (2022) literature review of urbanism and the global south. Further research on the economic dependence of cities and tourism is needed given the fluidity with which global capital and the entrepreneurial city is seeking to redefine its tourism offer, to remain or become competitive, with urban tourism a powerful force to shape cities (Amore & Hall, 2021).

6. Ongoing issues associated with framing the paradoxes: are the assumptions still justified?

Ashworth and Page's (2011) argued that to understand these paradoxes, a series of key propositions needed to be explored further, beginning with the role of the city in tourism.

6.1. The city in tourism

New debates on tourist mobility (e.g. Larsen and Urry, 2006) have now surfaced redefining the nature of urbanism epitomized by Dennis and Urry's (2009) *After the Car*, calling for a system change to reset society and provide an alternative form of mobility. Urbanism is dependent upon transport for the system to function, and tourism is added to that to move tourists around, although many cities transport

infrastructure was not built for tourist use. The corollary of this is that tourism and leisure needs are frequently bolted on to existing infrastructure. These mobility needs are juxtaposed with a multiplicity of other competing mobility needs. There has also been a rise of micro-mobilities (Davies, Blazejewski, & Sherriff, 2020), giving rise to new forms of mobility and access to urban centres but particularly peripheral districts. Therefore, supporting efforts to disperse crowds and avoid host-guest clashes and competition for the same transport type has been viewed as a method to alleviate overtourism (e.g. Duignan et al., 2022 highlight locals fighting with tourists with suitcases to compete for space on city bus networks). These approaches also help showcase new and more local spaces less dis/affected by urban gentrification and monochromatic clone-town-like cultures. But it depends upon visitor willingness to adapt pre-planned itineraries.

It cannot be assumed that all tourists in cities are, in any meaningful sense, urban tourists. Here concepts such as Massey's (2005) *throwntogetherness*, characterises urban visitation and time-space encounters, when people come together at a particular place and point in time as tourists and non-tourists. It would seem that these encounters transcend the debates on seeking to define what type of visitor each is. These occurrences have tended to blur into the experiences of residents and other users of the city creating experiences ranging from harmony through to contestation of urban space. In fact, visitors in densely packed urban environments often feel and identify as tourists in the city in an ever-changing space which is increasingly eventful and festivalised. This gives rise to new urban experiences, sometimes as limited and temporary cultural attractions that make the city anew every week, month or year. Massey's concept of *throwntogetherness* has never been as relevant as public space in the city has become the playground of playful and enterprising citizens and businesses.

It is a truism that urbanicity appeals to a wide range of motivations for being a resident or a visitor, with the diversity of functions, facilities, built forms, cultures or peoples, feelings and the appeal to the senses. As Spirou (2011: xvi) observed a broader social science approach to urban tourism is necessary before we can answer such questions as 'how tourism, culture and entertainment helped transform urban centres' as a transformative route for urban places becoming destinations. The role of the city in tourism is evolving. In the Netherlands, for example, Broitman and Koomen (2019) examined the urban density of residents in Dutch historical cities. They observed a re-urbanising trend leading to a growing concentration of residents in central areas, attracted by the cultural heritage and urban amenities of cities that are a facet in attracting visitors (also see Espelt and Benito, 2006). This challenges conventional assumptions on distinct spatial assets and attractions that are the preserve of the visitor. Instead we need to think about the complex layers that urbanisation creates (e.g. Gu, Kesteloot, & Cook, 2014), in which socio-spatial activities like tourism can be located. Like Massey's analogy, this represents an unstructured messiness. It typifies the post-modern city in a way that is unpredictable and unfathomable in terms of where, who and how public, private, cultural and entertainment spaces are becoming animated alongside fixed heritage assets to enliven the city. It is throwing everyone and everything together in a melting pot unlike never before. The city has and continues to intensify identity as a laboratory to push the boundary of what is and what is not possible in contemporary society. An alternative lens which Cocola-Gant and Lopez-Gay's (2020) highlight is the formation of tourist enclaves in Barcelona due to Airbnb. These examples illustrate the dynamism of urban change in which tourist activity co-exists. Even so, there is a limited understanding of the serendipitous behaviour in urban tourism motives and activities, a feature which Delaplace (2020:134) noted with regards to urban-based Olympic Games as 'few scientific studies exist on the subject of visitor behaviour'. Alongside this neglect is a need to understand the ability to discover, chance upon and be inspired by the diversity of elements in the urban landscape that stimulate the senses and contribute to a sense of place (Chen et al., 2021).

We also need to give more attention to cities as accumulations and

concentrations of economic and political power, organisations and activity (Ba et al., 2021), and their cultural (Hall, 2013), entertainment and leisure functions that combine into a sense of urbanicity. Reiterating Ashworth and Page (2011) the assumption that we can distinguish, isolate and examine a distinctive urban tourist must be questioned in this messy post-modern city. In many other locations, the economic, social, cultural, and thus behavioural differences between tourists and residents are clear but it is difficult to distinguish between tourist and non-tourist uses of the city. New theoretical perspectives such as human needs analysis illustrate a focus on leisure and residents' needs but it fails to address the position of tourism as a sub-set of leisure to help explore if this approach will offer greater conceptual clarity (Cardoso, Sobhani, & Meijers, 2022). This argument is at odds with the UNWTO (ND) definition of urban tourism as 'a type of tourism activity which takes place in an urban space with its inherent attributes characterised by non-agricultural based economy such as administration, manufacturing, trade and services and by being nodal points of transport. Urban/city destinations offer a broad and heterogeneous range of cultural, architectural, technological, social and natural experiences and products for leisure and business'. The tourist is too embedded in other, much wider considerations to be successfully identified and isolated from such definitions. This makes a distinction between the visitor and local more difficult and less relevant than with many other forms of tourism, and within this are the antecedents of the problems which often arise from tourist-resident conflicts over limited resources and spaces. As Huijbens (2023) observed, urban space is in a perpetual state of becoming, being in a constant state of tension between different users which hinges upon the types of encounters that occur based on how tourists use the city (also see Maitland, 2008).

6.2. How do tourists use cities?

Given the quantitative importance of urban tourism, the expansion of technology-assisted analysis such as GIS and itinerary mapping post-2011 has assisted in understanding the time-space dimensions of city users (e.g. Sugimoto, Ota, & Suzuki, 2019). A well-formed literature is now emerging that highlights the importance attached to time in urban visits and activities (Garrett, 2015) with a homophilia evident in visitor behaviour in seeking similar rated attractions (Hernández, Santana-Jiménez, & González-Martel, 2021). But there has also been a growth in research about authentic encounters with residents (see Dirksmeier & Helbrecht, 2015, on the geography of prejudice) to understand this fluidity of space becoming. Likewise, Nientied (2021) frames a similar discussion about new urban tourism and urban encounters in Rotterdam. Kramer (2022) has also introduced the notion of mindfulness about the German concept of *Muße* and the experiential aspects of the encounter in urban settings. These theoretical studies help rebalance the neglect of the encounter at a conceptual level within urban settings, despite its long-standing importance in tourism studies about how tourists use urban space. To advance these research directions, Pearce, Yongzhi, and Son (2008) developed a framework to assess visitors' responses to and use of cities using a diverse range of research methods including surveys, sketch maps, collecting stories, and experiences of critical incidents. What should never be underestimated for the urban tourist is the adventure and excitement experienced with the first visit to a destination (Su, Wall, & Ma, 2019). 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 which each shape tourist use of the city.

6.2.1. Selectivity

The tourist makes use of only a very small portion of all that the city has on offer, typically related to its walkability and accessibility (Anton Clavé, 2019; Garrett, 2015). Scale is the critical variable associated with selectivity. Encalada-Abarca, Ferreira, and Rocha (2022) demonstrate

the concentrated nature of tourist use of the city using fractal analysis to identify intensive areas of use. As Ashworth and Page (2011: 8) argued, 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'. Maitland (2006) highlighted how the issue of selectivity was accentuated in larger cities like London as new areas for tourist visitation were developed. The decisions are also shaped by prior experience of places visited and destination familiarity that impacts multi-attraction visitation (Caldeira & Kastenholz, 2019) as well as length of stay (Mortazavi & Cialani, 2016). Other studies, including Defert (1966), reinforce this selectivity and scale issue, and further illustrated that high-risk perceptions of different parts of the city often constrain tourists to safe spaces that are on the beaten track, as opposed to more riskier experience is less known districts.

6.2.2. Rapidity

According to Ashworth and Page (2011:8) 'tourists consume urban tourism products rapidly. Cities are by their very nature places of high levels of people-activity, where crowding often occurs'. This is reiterated in several studies (e.g. Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012; Domènech, Mohino, & Moya-Gómez, 2020) which has numerous theoretical explanations (see Freedman, 1975). The perception of intensive use may be compounded by the growth of the 24-h society (Moor-Ede, 1993; Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, 2005) and the night-time economy (ShawR, 2018; Pinke-Sziva, Smith, Olt, & Berezvai, 2019). Dunn (2016:10) has explained how the night-time city has evolved from a place of fear and negative imagery to one of liberation, exhilaration and hedonism as 'cities at night are distinct, constellations of light within shadows and tempos of spectacle that contrast with the daytime'. Conceptually it is at odds with the slow city movement and its association with sustainability and eco-compatible strategies (Clancy, 2018) that may characterise some aspects of city use and pose a challenge to the paradox.

Ashworth and Page (2011:8) also observed that 'the length of stay at any one urban tourism destination is much shorter than in beach or winter sports resorts, as data from most National Tourism Organisations will attest. 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 (Berg, Borg, & Meer, 1995)'. Borges et al. (2020) study of the use of events to extend the length of stay in urban destinations validates these arguments as most urban tourism policymakers seek to extend the short length of stay of the urban visitors. The efficacy of events to achieve deeper and longer stays still warrants further attention as Berg et al. (1995) observed few visitors to cities stay for longer than two days. In fact a continuum of city visiting may exist and reinforce arguments about more dependent cities benefitting less, as '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' (Ashworth & Page, 2011, p. 8) as noted by Chiou and Hsieh (2020). This behavioural characteristic is difficult to manage and extend as only an overnight stay will substantially increase the tourist spend (Almeida, Machado, & Xu, 2021). Research in highly contested and overcrowded historic cities like Venice continue to demonstrate that the high-impact day-trip market remains a management conundrum and financial burden due to establishing its overall profitability (Borg, 2004; Horváth, 2018; Ba et al., 2021). In small historic districts and cities, rapidity may also contribute to overtourism where the volume of visits simply compounds throughout the day, as visitors arrive but do not depart quickly, simply recirculating around the urban environment. Even when they do depart, a further influx may replace them to consume the night-time city. This is a feature not repeated in many other destination types where accommodation may limit the visitor capacity, thereby constraining access temporally and spatially.

6.2.3. Repetition

Ashworth and Page (2011) observed that the visitor to an urban destination was less likely to return repeatedly to the same city (even where snapshot surveys report a desire to return – Ben-Dalia, Collins-Kreiner, & Churchman, 2013). Theoretical explanations of this phenomenon suggest urban tourists are engaging in a form of collecting pre-marked sites and artefacts that must be visited if the place is to be authentically experienced to add to the cultural collateral of the holiday or visit. These elements are collected digitally via phones and shared on Instagram (Paül i Agustí, 2021). Arguably, ‘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’ (Ashworth & Page, 2011, p. 8). As Mordue (2007) suggested, it means cities have to seek new markets or continually reinvent the urban tourism products, as the entrepreneurial city has. Once again, cities have turned to one-day and multiday events to increase the likelihood of repeat visitation. Furthermore, events such as light festivals have quite literally shone a light on existing heritage and cultural attractions to showcase and illuminate fixed assets and temporary art and creative exhibitions. These have helped to repurpose existing venues (concert halls to railway arches) and public spaces to animate the city (Smith, 2006). As recent studies show, cities with more varied niche products (Clough Marinaro, 2019; Crespi-Vallbona, Domínguez Pérez, & Miró, 2019; Giordano & Ong, 2017; Lau & Li, 2019), especially the multifunctional city, often have a greater propensity to innovate. Even so, Rogerson and Visser (2007) highlighted the challenge of new places entering the global urban tourism circuit to create a market, and the challenge of serial reproduction of culture. Their suggested approach in South Africa was to emphasise the creative industries as a route to nurturing creative urban tourism.

6.2.4. Capriciousness

The urban tourist is essentially capricious, and some researchers have also argued that urbanists often find themselves in competitive and capricious environments (Banks, 2022; Hall & Savage, 2016) which is evident from the effects of the Covid pandemic (Liang, Leng, Yuan, & Yuan, 2021). Urban tourism is especially vulnerable to shifts in fashion and consumer tastes and lifestyles as the impact of Airbnb illustrates (Gyódi, 2021). As discussed earlier, understanding current hot and cold spots for tourist activity are key to understanding how space is used (van der Zee, Bertocchi, & Vanneste, 2020). Urban tourism thus becomes a lifestyle accessory as particular cities are ‘in’, or ‘passé’ or certain activities are ‘in’ or ‘out’. More specifically, evidence of capriciousness exists in several studies (e.g. Edwards, 2009; Smith, 2015), indicated by the unpredictable nature of the sequencing of flows (McKercher and Lau, 2009). This seems to run at a tangent from attempts to apply spatial precepts to measure proximity and distance between the tourist and infrastructure use (e.g. Dadashpour Moghaddam, Ahmadzadeh, & Valizadeh, 2022) where the capriciousness is overlooked, since changes in weather may directly impact visitor behaviour. Xu et al.’s (2022) modelling of visitor mobility found that complex models could not easily reconcile the capricious behaviour of the individual tourists in relation to the unique characteristics of individual cities. There is also a tension between what politicians or stakeholders want urban tourism to represent (Su, Bramwell, & Whalley, 2018) including notions of celebrity status (Currid-Halkett & Scott, 2013). The latter may see a sharp fall in popularity but where appropriate policy is implemented alongside the hosting of temporary events, changes in visitation may be managed (Richards & Duif, 2019).

6.3. Tourism in the city: Is there a tourist city?

Tourism is generally a poor delineator of types of city or even districts within cities (see Hallyar and Griffin, 2005; Hallyar et al., 2006 on precincts and urban tourism space). 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 exception being the concern with tourist enclaves created by Airbnb). As Ashworth and Page (2011:9) argued, ‘all cities are potentially multifunctional (Batty, Besussi, Maat, & Harts, 2004), or they would not qualify as cities. The exclusively tourist city or even tourist urban precinct (Hallyar, Griffin, & Edwards, 2008), does not exist for if it did it would lack the diversity that is an essential urban characteristic’. Perhaps a more meaningful approach is that tourism is embedded in the city so that the ‘tourist city’ could only be conceived alongside and overlapping with, other ‘cities’ as illustrated in Fig. 3, recognising this is a simplification of the messiness discussed earlier. Studies such as Amin and Thrift (2017) suggest that tourist cities are not homogeneous but exist in many forms, with overlapping spatially-contingent activities (such as entertainment, festivals and events, cultural and historic zones) that are easy to identify but difficult to demarcate as the blurring of resident and tourist use of central areas in Dutch historic cities reinforced earlier. Conversely, even regions such as the Arctic, climatic constraints aside, have identified elements of urban tourism even though most Arctic towns ‘are not tourist resort towns’ (Müller, Carson, de la Barre, & Granås, 2020, p. 79). Urban tourism in this context is viewed as a way to re-image the region to draw upon the global interest in visiting unique urban places (see Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007 on destination promotion). In the Arctic, the first nation and cultural dimension will be a powerful issue to consider in relation to potential impacts, if indeed such fragile communities want to pursue this development trajectory. So where does this leave Fig. 3? It remains an indicative model, seeking to try and simplify the complexity of the city and tourism interactions between users on the one hand and the supply of resources, suggesting that these markets co-exist with differing motives or preferences. Building on Amin and Thrift’s (2017) notion of citiness and new approaches such as the conjectural city, it helps us read what is happening in the landscape of urban tourism as a step to understanding the connection with tourism, urbanism and citiness.

Fig. 3: Some users and uses of the city. Source: after Burtenshaw, Bateman, and Ashworth (1991), Page and Hall (2003).

6.4. Tourism impacts upon cities

Tourism impacts research has seen a rebirth in an urban setting with the *IJTC* and new agendas like overtourism attracting international attention from researchers and policy-makers (Koens et al. 2018a, 2018b). Ashworth and Page (2011) controversially suggested that tourism impacts upon cities are frequently over-estimated (especially in the economic sphere) or parallels derived from examples of overtourism such as Venice (e.g. Borg, 1998). The political economy of city governance has a great deal to offer in understanding impacts (Hall & Wilson, 2016), especially urban heritage visitation (e.g. Su et al., 2018), where boosterism is often associated with urban regeneration schemes (Amore, 2019). It is widely recognised that bids to host events tend to over-estimate economic benefits and downplay social impacts (Hall & Page, 2020; Pearce, 2005). Again scale is everything in this relationship and political economy has become one of the more expansionist forms of scholarship on urban tourism (Su et al., 2018) to look beyond the surface causes of perceived impacts. Here the intersection with overtourism could be further developed to understand the scale of impacts in terms of city size and whether they are more amplified in smaller compact urban forms (e.g. the historic city) compared to districts of larger urban forms.

In the postmodern city, the agenda of the new urban governance (Connelly, 2007; Mordue, 2007), means everything is about quantification (e.g. see Murillo et al. 2008), particularly among public agencies investing in tourism in cities, to justify public investment. The difficulties with many analyses of economic benefits accruing from urban tourism are that they expect a higher dependence upon catered accommodation, and inward capital investment for that purpose. When behavioural factors such as short stays, lack of repeat visits, and capriciousness are factored in, creating an urban tourism experience (see

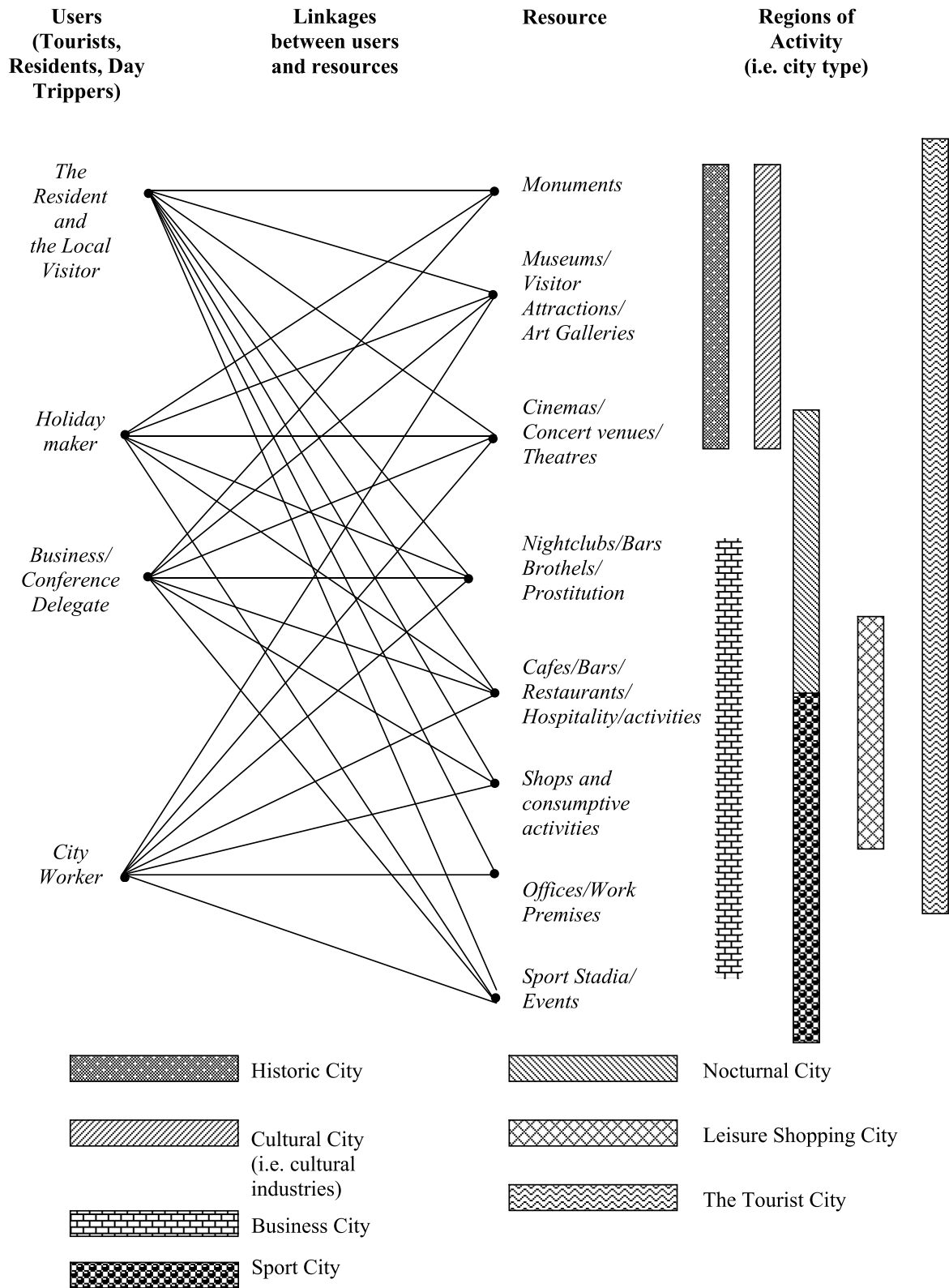


Fig. 3. Areas in the Tourist City, modified and developed from Burtenshaw et al. (1991), Page and Hall (2003) and Ashworth and Page (2011).

Wearing & Foley, 2017) to generate visits and a broader infrastructure requires significant sunk costs. Some free public spaces (i.e. public realm) are provided well below cost as a public service (Ye, Wu, & Zheng, 2019) but increasingly some cities are turning to tourist taxes as a vehicle to recover these sunk costs of service provision, such as Amsterdam, where finances also contribute to infrastructure

maintenance (von Briel and Dolnicar, 2020). Some studies such as Riganti and Nijkamp (2008) examine the willingness of tourists to accept tourism-related congestion in a city such as Amsterdam in common with other studies (e.g. Mahboob, Ashfaq, Humayon, & Akhtar, 2021). There is also an underlying security and safety role in contested territory where tourists visit historic sites, such as Jerusalem (Shtern,

2022), with such cities also the target of terrorist attacks. As [Ashworth & Page, 2011: 11](#) concluded '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'. Further research is needed to accept or reject this paradox.

6.5. Management of tourism in cities

The management of tourism in cities is such a broad area that makes generalisation difficult apart from in the areas of visitor management or local government management of public realm spaces. Numerous studies of tourism planning ([Hall, 2008](#)) indicate that whilst tourism has a place within the public management of cities, such as service provision (e.g. sewerage, cleansing, lighting, safety, transportation and licensing and enforcement of legislation), few scholars have identified where urban tourism planning exists in a discrete sense. Multiplicities of public and semi-public agencies (e.g. Destination Management Organisations) are associated with tourism in the city, but these do not create urban tourism planning and management in most cities. Destination Management Organisations rarely have a physical management role whilst cultural and leisure-related agencies provide and manage the performances, collections, and urban heritage structures that have attracted the visitors but are not primarily provided for them.

The major feature requiring management in an urban tourism setting is the number, timing, objectives, and spatial behaviour of tourists. But local government has a limited role in shaping those behaviours apart from at specific sites or attractions: the city is a free to enter public good alongside a portfolio of open and free events programmed in public squares and parks too. Most local government activity is directed to mitigation of the perceived undesirable local impacts of tourism and the tourist as the work on overtourism suggests, often using tools such as land-use zoning, traffic and circulation measures including information and promotion ([Paddison & Walmsley, 2018](#)). In some cases new perspectives such as creating people-friendly environments for certain groups has emerged in many cities with a knock-on effect for visitors ([Page & Connell, 2023](#)). What these initiatives show is that tourism in cities is inherently bound to local places that are not replicable elsewhere – it is the [Wirth \(1938\)](#) uniqueness of place argument. The extension of this argument is that urban tourism products 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. As [Ashworth and Page \(2011:11\)](#) observed 'the paradox is thus that a tourism product that strives to be locally unique and differentiate itself from its competitors often results in planning and development that is itself global, serving tourists that are also global in their preferences and choices. The tourist-historic city has been an important vehicle for both the localisation of the global and the globalisation of the local' (also see [Graham et al., 2000; Zhang et al., 2021](#)) as imagined and mythical storytelling is used to imaginatively authenticate urban heritage ([Lovell, 2019](#)).

7. Implications for urban tourism research: have the paradoxes changed?

This paper argues 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, using a broader social science perspective (e.g. [Spirou, 2011](#)), a more spatial and theoretical analysis is needed to understand how international changes have shaped the evolution of urban tourism places (see [Ong & Liu, 2022](#)) especially in the global south. Is there a healthy intellectual environment where critique, open debate, and divergent opinions contribute to a greater theorisation in urban tourism research? The establishment of the *IJTC* has created a

greater quantum of research literature alongside that published in non-peer reviewed outputs, but there is a lack of continuous theoretical expansion in urban tourism that characterises urban studies. In fact this paper draws very heavily upon urban studies for this very reason to cross-fertilise and open up new potential avenues for research, initially as a response to challenging the [Ashworth and Page \(2011\)](#) paradoxes. Theorisation is not someone else's responsibility; it is incumbent upon everyone in the academy to contribute to this objective if tourism is to connect more fully with the social sciences and further afield. At a more mechanistic level, tourism activity related to urban places has transformed in several ways since 2011 reflected in the review of the paradoxes.

First, the lack of attention to urban tourism as a component of tourism research is changing and so the 'imbalance in attention' is no longer valid. But, as the prior debate on theorisation suggests, what constitutes urban tourism remains imprecisely defined (if indeed it can be defined?). Second, new approaches, such as overtourism, remain a synonym for established concepts such as carrying capacity and are worthy of a separate detailed analysis in tourism, not because they are not useful, but to question some of the assumptions and logic of specific attributes of the overtourism concept. It is perhaps one of the major breakthroughs in elevating impact research into the public policy realm and is a laudable development. It does indicate that the city has not been built primarily for tourist use, as land use is often contested, has multiple users and the over-use varies in time and space.

Events further compound that level of contestation as visitor use clusters in the public realm and in new private infrastructure subsidised from taxation for mega events. As [Delaplace \(2020\)](#) illustrates, the city residents are not a major beneficiary of that investment; its residents tend to be both the host and funder of the projects and tourism is often displaced during mega events. However, communities adjacent to such investment often have priority access to Olympic related venues for smaller cost and access to new green spaces (London, Tokyo), new waterfronts and cultural districts (Rio). If one takes a longer-term perspective, the festivalisation of post-Olympic space for example provides an opportunity to connect in local citizens and social groups. [Delaplace's \(2020\)](#) analysis of tourists as a visitor market for the Olympic Games found that the timing of the event determined attendance by tourists. The paradox that exists is that whilst visitor numbers to the hosting country typically rise by 8%, the numbers visiting the hosting city often undershoot the forecast numbers.

The crowding out concept of mega-events impact on urban tourism markets typically leads to a drop-in business tourism activity and lower than expected tourist revenues. Alongside this is the redirection of tourist activity toward official venues and sponsor activation sites – what [Giulianotti et al. \(2016\)](#) refer to as 'corporate kettling'. This problematic appears to reinforce the arguments of [Müller \(2017\)](#): events need cities to host the activity and visitors, but paradoxically, this displaces existing markets and other areas benefit from the 'Olympic effect'. It is no surprise that [Delaplace \(2020\)](#) and other studies point to a reluctance of cities and communities to host these events. Of course, long standing theoretical debates like [Lefebvre's \(1968\)](#) rights to the city thesis pose multiple layers of ethical and moral issues around whose city is it anyway? Do tourists have an equal right to access the city as a free public resource? And what should the balance be between tourist use and resident use if access to the urban environment is highly contested and space is limited?

The fourth paradox has received a great deal of research since 2011, often in grey literature where rhetoric and commissioned reports are used to justify the economic benefits of events to boost urban visitor activity. As [Delaplace \(2020\)](#) illustrated, the literature frequently overlooked issues of displacement, costs of hosting and the neglect of alternative uses for public funding for local needs. In the smaller more tourism-dependent localities, the dependency relationship is portrayed in briefings and press releases to justify the further investment to maintain a self-reinforcing argument to retain competitive advantage or

to support local employment. A further theoretical perspective at this juncture relates to the way governments/tourism managers/urban places have developed together, and often forced through city-based tourism development schemes. It constitutes the way in which these *legitimising identities* (of what places should look like, who they are for, and how tourism is part of the city as growth machine) by powerful stakeholders have created severe resistance and push back with some clear examples of resistance identities. As Duignan & Pappalepore, 2021 argue, this is part of a new *project identity* (in Cassells, 2010 terms), as a *counter-legitimising identity* is forming collectively and globally, against the deep integration of tourism in the lives of cities, citizens and dis/affected urban communities. Examples of mega events such as the Olympic Games continue to raise substantial concerns for communities impacted and the opportunity cost of investing in one-off infrastructure with limited long-term local use post-event (Zimbalist, 2015). Lastly, the critical asymmetry of the tourist and the city remains inadequately debated in the academic literature and so it remains an open question awaiting further debate. Perhaps a starting point is that 'Urban tourism', and 'sustainability' are autonyms, as cities attract volumes of visitors, that consume large quantities of resources to serve their needs and so hedonistic tourist (or business-related) conspicuous consumption means sustainability is only weakly developed by isolated examples of visionary businesses or through voluntary means.

Some degree of greening has occurred in the strategies of cities since 2011 to mitigate the impact of tourism, but perhaps contentiously, a pragmatic position is that 'sustainable urban tourism' is almost impossible to achieve in terms of the idioms of sustainable tourism, due to the scale and volume of production and consumption. Although this is a contentious argument for the sustainable tourism paradigm, it requires further investigation. Taking the lead from urban studies research, it suggests we need to shift the debate from sustainability to climate change (Long & Rice, 2018). Litter clearing alone from events and peak season visits demonstrates how far away we are from any real notion of sustainability principles in urban visitation, apart from the implementation of walkability principles and public transport usage (Le-Klähn & Hall, 2015; Ram et al., 2021), and the attempts by some businesses to adopt greener practices. Whilst new themes such as dark urban tourism (e.g. Powell, Kennell, & Barton, 2018) have emerged, there are more profoundly worrying trends associated with the voyeurism of slum tourism tours (e.g. Steinbrink, 2012; Dovey & King, 2012) and the risk of visiting areas that often-become crime hotspots (e.g. Paül i Agustí, 2019). This raises not only moral issues but more debatable positions on slum tourism as a root to economic development. Despite this, a wide range of research areas are deepening the scholarly activity even if it is dependent upon case studies of tourism that are far more extensive than the position in 2011.

7.1. Future prospects for urban tourism research

This paper has demonstrated we must embrace urban studies and its theoretical critiques if we are going to further in connecting tourism and the social sciences (see Segota, 2019). As the discussion to date has shown, the focus on postulates (i.e. paradoxes) as advocated by Jasso (1988), requires formal reasoning and a more formal analysis of the relationships between postulates. One such example of that connection is Cristiano and Gonella's (2020: 2–3) application of the systems thinking methodology from operations research to urban tourism in which they argue:

The "tourist city" has been defined as "an original novelty of our modernity" (d'Eramo, 2019), a ubiquitous, familiar, yet not elaborated phenomenon, eluding questions and neutralising thinking ... Even in the presence of a wide literature, its conceptual elaboration is still poor and fragmented ... A novel conceptual elaboration of post-pandemic prospects is therefore necessary for tourist cities.

Cristiano and Gonella (2020) argued that future research agendas

need to be framed using several concepts now emergent in the urban tourism literature – namely sustainability, resilience, management and understanding the tourism dependency relationship in smaller tourist cities with a reliance upon mass tourism (evidenced during the covid-19 pandemic when visitor activity diminished). Using the concepts of overtourism, Cristiano and Gonella (2020) depict urban tourism as an 'extractive' industry, recognising that cities are capitalist vehicles for production and consumption with costs and benefits for city dwellers and visitors at a city and community level. They posit that the city image of tourism and overtourism can destroy the vitality of urbanism, as tourist demand for resources irreversibly diverts resources from city life. The result, for urban tourism is the creation of a tourist monoculture in dependent tourist cities. As a conceptual paper, Cristiano and Gonella (2020) highlight the underlying importance of urban life and the challenges tourism poses in highly dependent cities. Their commentary indicates that attempts to intervene, to address the tourism monoculture in cities such as Venice, has had a minimal impact.

Whether one can concur with Cristiano and Gonella's (2020) assessment that urban tourism research remains fragmented, and poor is debatable. A more salient argument emerged in Pritchard and Morgan's (2013) advocacy of transformational tourism as a worthy research agenda. Their study argued that tourism research is split into 'studies' and 'management' paradigms that have continued the reproductive and additive research efforts of the academy rather than fostering major theoretical breakthroughs and agendas that translate research into action. Perhaps incremental change is what we should expect, if urban tourism research follows the development trajectory tourism research has followed since the 1970s, given the expanding quantum of outputs selectively reviewed in this paper.

At this juncture in the evolution of urban tourism research, one of the objectives of Progress papers is to discuss how the literature might continue to develop and what research agendas could be expanded or developed further. Jasso (1988) views this as a valid form of theoretical analysis, namely speculative thinking, that ideally should be integrated with the formal reasoning process to achieve a more rigorous approach to theoretical analysis. In pursuit of this speculative task of theoretical thinking, we do not attempt to devise a comprehensive listing given the limitations of space. However, it is important to preface this discussion with Bock's (2015) arguments that city tourism is changing. Bock (2015) draws upon the thesis of Rosa (2015) that the social acceleration of society is impacting city tourism, with greater rapidity in visits and the greater use of technology in such visits (in spite of the instances of slow tourism). Rosa's thesis posits that a greater acceleration in society is being impacted by the speed of technological innovations that are being adopted (e.g. mobile and SMART technology). This is certainly a fruitful line of inquiry for time-space analysis of urban tourism alongside the trend toward greater co-creation in city visits and the use of technology in the co-creation process. Technology also has a key role to play in helping identify the saturation patterns associated with overtourism in time and space. Beyond that obvious management and governance role, other studies such as Stephenson and Dobson (2020) outline how many Asian cities have used SMART technology (e.g. Singapore) to achieve sustainable development objectives like more efficient energy use in buildings. This indirectly impacts tourism while other measures using smart devices can help monitor visitor flows, usage, consumption and tourist resource use to begin to understand how to reduce their resource consumption.

These debates on future directions highlight that 'due to insufficiently robust academic research in city tourism, it does not come as a surprise that future oriented studies about cities and tourism are scarce' (Postma, Buda, & Gugerell, 2017, p. 07). Therefore, Table 5 seeks to highlight some of the research agendas which future research (including tourism futures work) might pursue (see Segota et al., 2019). Postma et al. (2017) highlighted the centrality of interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary in framing research questions on future research agendas. This also needs to be accompanied by a richer and more diverse range of

methodologies to examine urban tourism phenomena. If one adopts, for example, [Cristiano and Gonella \(2020\)](#) approach, building on [Page \(1995\)](#) and [Page and Hall \(2003\)](#) notion of the urban tourism system, then all of the research areas highlighted in [Table 5](#) are interconnected as part of an urban systems model. [Table 5](#) is a major strand of our argument on the need to embed tourism research on cities within urbanism, particularly when seeking to theorise urban tourism and its development at a global scale. We need to be far more nuanced in how we recognise different and divergent growth trajectories of the global north and south, recognising that western models of urbanism and urban development are not necessarily applicable. Here approaches used in new economic geography and evolutionary economic geography may help to supplement historical analyses of urban development to identify the point at which tourism emerges as a distinct development trajectory in a city/city system. It might also help identify the tipping point at which economic dependence emerges or whether tourism remains part of a diversified city economic structure. But such studies, are complicated, as [Norman \(2018\)](#) highlighted, by the way mega-regions are subsuming many cities, some of which are now larger than some nation-states. These issues of urban change cross-cut many of the themes in [Table 5](#) and will impact how research questions are framed and what outcomes are sought. It may very well be the case that the tourist city is a less valid concept in a mega-region setting, and we need to develop new conceptualisations that explain space, place, society, tourism and economy in a more fluid and evolutionary manner.

The management of tourism emerges as a prominent feature of [Table 5](#) as often expressed as a response to overtourism, which has evolved as a major strand of research, embracing different facets of city tourism such as the impact on the visitor experience, patterns of seasonality, and its management using different tools such as tourist taxation or ticketing or restricting access. To understand how these tools and mechanisms affect the objectives of visitor management and their effectiveness will remain a key area for research development as part of the exploration of overtourism, as well as strategies designed to avoid overtourism. New research techniques designed to develop the methodologies of what overtourism is, its measurement and recognition by visitors and city residents is likely to remain a fruitful area for research, based on comparative knowledge. However, as [Norman \(2020\)](#) highlights, the sustainability agenda in city governance has shifted towards emergency planning (and SMART agendas using ICTs) with a focus on resilience, climate change and resident and tourist well-being. Yet in the case of megacity regions, urban governance and local action will be far more important in forging a form of tourism that fits with the resource base and is less extractive (to use [Cristiano and Gonella's \(2020\)](#) adjective). Here research contributions from political economy will help understand why some cities adopt interventionist approaches to invest in the future sustainability of the tourism product and experience and others simply allow a monoculture to develop. This is where monitoring and data-driven analysis of individual cities tourism economies and experiences will be valuable to contribute towards more evidence-based policymaking.

Other important research agendas linked to the growing disquiet about the relationships between visitors and residents will continue outside of the overtourism debate. These relationships emerge over the contestability of land use and resources where tourism creates social and economic disparities, marginalising residents socially and spatially, especially in [Burdett and Sujdic's \(2008\) Endless City](#). Some studies have begun to examine interstitial spaces in cities ([Phelps & Silva, 2018](#)) and the importance of size and scale in city visitation ([Bell & Jayne, 2009](#)). Others studies have connected urbanism and the expanding city in terms of events and markets ([Hiebert, Rath, & Vertovec, 2015](#)) as well as their common existence in many Asian cities ([Henderson, 2019](#)) or agendas like alcotourism and hedonistic behaviour ([Bell, 2008](#)) and the challenge of a 24-hour city ([Chang & Huang, 2014](#); [Caves & Wagner, 2018](#); [Eldridge, 2019](#); [Nofre, 2021](#); [Zhang & Zhang, 2022](#)). The 24-hour city is a facet of modern urbanism which is 'emerging as one of the most

Table 5

Future research themes to deepen the theoretical contribution of urban tourism research.

Topic	Research Directions	Key Research Questions
Urbanism	The interconnection of everyday life and tourism	How can tourism be theorised as a facet of urbanism?
Urban theory and tourism	Developing more precision and clarity about 'southern' urbanism (Robinson, 2022)	Using a comparative approach to urbanism (and tourism) and novel approaches like conjectural analysis to stimulate a greater conceptual innovation in understanding global urbanism to derive generalisations about whether urban places experiences of tourism are similar are inherently unique.
	Achieving epistemological disruption and progressing subaltern studies (Jazell and Legg, 2019) to understand the post-colonial/imperial effect on urban tourism	Do models such as Ashworth et al (1991) hold true in new emergent global cities or is space and place changing to the point that such delineations are now intermixed and layered making generalisations less valuable?
Economic dependence of cities upon tourism and their visitor economies Influence of economic growth waves and troughs on urban tourism Urban tourism taxes	The role for a greater economic analysis of cities as destinations so that their interconnections with city economies is better understood Investment and local economic development has a tendency to follow waves of growth. Tourist taxation remains a powerful policy tool for cities to fund infrastructure and other developments such as safety and security.	Re-analysing and examining public data on the benefits and claims about urban tourism on city economies – are they robust or a selective representation of reality? How does tourism fit with the notion of waves of investment and development? What is the policy process which cities follow in introducing tourist taxes? Do they contribute to the public good and reinvestment in the tourism assets? How do visitors react to such taxes? Are their responses different to environmental or green taxes?
Overtourism	The field has seen considerable expansion of research and a systematic literature review is required to test a series of propositions.	Why do some cities with dominant tourism sectors report overtourism and others do not? How have methodologies of overtourism been used to model general assessments of localities and have they addressed the known weaknesses of calculating and assessing different forms of carrying capacity? What is the role for connecting more experiential measures of the perceived impacts and visitor experience of tourism within overtourism? Are there subtle thresholds that affect whether a city is facing overtourism?
The urban tourism experience	New developments from psycho-geography and environmental psychology have advanced our	What is the role for these new psycho-geographic – sensory features in creating a visitors sense of place and

(continued on next page)

Table 5 (continued)

Topic	Research Directions	Key Research Questions
Managing tourists in cities	understanding of the way cities have a distinct ambience, are animated, have unique and ubiquitous architectural forms and markers of place.	is that enhanced through hosting events? How do they contribute to a sense of fun and enjoyment?
	Some cities have seized upon the concept of people-friendly infrastructure for their residents.	Is the sense of place a missing attribute of destination marketing for cities?
Political economy and city tourism	Despite the difficulties of managing sites and sights in cities, how have cities developed their management of visitors to enhance the visitor experience?	How do these new initiatives affect tourist's sense of place and overall experience?
	Britton model Urban regeneration Testing concepts such as Panreiter's (2022) notion of the genius of cities have both economic development potential but patterns of uneven development	What measures do the public and private sector use to manage peak demand and daily rhythms of tourism activity? Are these invasive or accepted as a necessary imposition? MNCs and control Power and control How does tourism contribute to these divided patterns of uneven economic development? Does tourism contribute to both development but also poverty and inequality? Are these creating hidden geographies resulting from the social exclusion related to tourism?
Sustainability of urban tourism production on the city environment	Climate change	How are cities and tourism likely to mitigate and overcome the challenges of climate change in the late Anthropocene in relation to the processes of demographic intensity, hyperglobalisation and centripetal state politics identified by Fox and Goodfellow (2021)?
Monitoring visitor activity	How do cities globally seek to collect data on urban tourism to establish the volume and value of visitor activity?	Can novel methods such as aerial photography, big data and mobile tracking data be harmonised to create a greater visualisation of urban tourism?
Time-space geography and urban tourism	How do the landscapes of urban tourism change on a daily, weekly and seasonal basis? Are there specific contributions which ethnic diversity offer to these landscapes of urban tourism? Do they offer potential to become different spaces in day and night?	How are perceptions of place impacted by time-space differences such as between day and night-time? Do these help affirm different tourism 'cities' or a more heterogeneous cityscape that appeals in different ways?
Application of new research agendas from other disciplines	New economic geography and its antecedents offer potential to evolutionary economic geography	Investment and global capital flows and interconnection with other urban tourism agendas How do history and geography collide to create destination trajectories?
Events and the urban environment	Human rights and land expropriation	Do mega events almost entirely have to contribute to a divided society? Who benefits and who loses?
Resident attitudes and perceptions	The recent expansion of Airbnb research and connection with gentrification of cities has	What are the common themes in the Airbnb literature, achieved through a systematic literature

Table 5 (continued)

Topic	Research Directions	Key Research Questions
Seasonality	created a new focus for protest and concerns about impacts on residents	review, on the way Airbnb displaces residents and how have cities sought to manage its consequences?
	Although a well-worn topic in the quantitative field of tourism research, it remains poorly understood in urban tourism in terms of its contribution to the economy, issues of overtourism and how it shapes resident perceptions of living and mitigating the effects of tourism.	A significant role exists for using novel techniques from social media and GPS technology to model visitor activities, visits and their accommodation to understand the touchpoints of tourism and the residents and other groups, especially event attendees.
The urban tourist and the contribution of philosophy	Kirillova (2019) analysis of existentialism, from philosophy, connecting with a need to understand the <i>humanness</i> of urban tourism opens up many new avenues for	How does existentialism shape people's needs and desires as visitors that are much deeper and profound? How does it fit with tourism and wellness and what is its contribution in achieving eudemonic well-being?
Tourism-leisure interface and similarities and differences in consumption	Social psychology and looking at similarities between resident leisure and urban tourism behaviour	Is the urban tourist any different to the resident seeking urban leisure?
Well-being	Examining the public policy agendas of governments promoting healthy living, quality of life agendas (e.g. engaging with the outdoors and urban spaces for wider issues such as mental health) in leisure and tourism.	What role do cities provide as sites of consumption in visitor and resident well-being?
Whose city is it?	Revisiting theoretical arguments around 'rights to the city' and the literature on inequality and cities	Whose city is it and how is tourism juxtaposed with other competing uses and groups of people? How do we create more inclusive spaces for residents and visitors?
Urban tourism in post-covid world	What changes are expected to be short-term and long-term in relation to urban tourism?	How has the new order of post-covid shaped the way public bodies and governments look at urban resilience in terms of tourism?

Sources: Fox, S. and Goodfellow, T. (2022). *On the conditions of 'late urbanisation.'* *Urban Studies*, 59(10), 1959–1980; Jazeel, T. and Legg, S. (eds) (2019). *Subaltern Geographies*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press; Robinson, J. (2022). *Introduction: Generating concepts of 'the urban' through comparative practice.* *Urban Studies*, 59(8), 1521–1535; Parnreiter, C. (2022). *The Janus-faced genius of cities.* *Urban Studies*, 59(7), 1315–1333; Smith, A., Osborn, G. and Quinn, B. (eds) (2022). *Festivals and the City: The Contested Geographies of Urban Events*. London: University of Westminster Press; Šegota, T., Sigala, M., Gretzel, U., Day, J., Kokkranikal, J., Smith, M., Seabra, C., Pearce, P., Davidson, R., van Zyl, C., Newsome, D., Hardcastle, J. and Rakić, T. (2019). *Future agendas in urban tourism research: special editorial.* *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5 (2), 109–124; Kirillova, K. (2019). *Existentialism and tourism: new research avenues,* *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5 (3), 429–442.

aggressive forms of material, symbolic and heritage dispossession of local communities within the central historic neighbourhoods of many European cities' (Nofre, 2021, p. 1551).

Understanding these processes in relation to the impact of global capital becomes important as it alters the landscape and rationale of many cities, temporally and spatially indicating the need to understand

the role of tourism in urban change. These debates are not new and surfaced in debates on tourism and urban regeneration in the 1980s and place transformation. What is new in the night-time economy, and the way the nocturnal city is dispossessing local people of their neighbourhoods and way of life. As local people cease to patronise the nocturnal city, they are displaced by what Nofre (2021) describes as the transnational partygoers. This raises the key question of who does the nocturnal city belong to? (also see Eldridge, 2019). These debates have also resurfaced in a covid world on what should our cities be used for, especially the speculative urbanism now impacting sub-Saharan Africa (Watson, 2014). Watson outlines how western iconography is embedded in urban development plans, often developed by western consultancies which subsume poor peri-urban communities into world-cities and the mesh of satellite cities in enlarged city regions. These new entities will shape the nature of urban tourism in different ways, particularly in terms of whose city it is, highlighted when cities build event infrastructure and further displace local communities. New areas of research such as philosophy and tourism (e.g. Koch, 2016) begin to pose profound questions about the humanness of urban tourism and its purpose in terms of resident and visitor well-being, resurfacing debates about overtourism and equity and who has access to the city. These debates highlight the importance of research on the interface of resident leisure and tourism that has remained under-developed as a research theme.

By asking much deeper questions about what is an urban tourist (if in fact they can be identified), and what does it mean to have tourism co-existing alongside other urban activity (especially in emergent mega city-regions), we can move our research efforts from isolationist approaches to the intersection of tourism and urbanism. Urbanicity shapes the context for tourism and so may help explain the urban tourism phenomenon. Geographers and sociologists are well-suited to this line of inquiry because urbanism is a fundamental tenet of their concern with place, space and societies. Interdisciplinary research approaching tourism from these perspectives will help create a greater synthesis of knowledge to begin to address the unanswered question of what makes cities so attractive for tourism now and in the future. As tourism is now featuring in the discussion of critical urban theory (e.g. Edensor & Jayne, 2012; Parker, 2015; Jayne & Ward, 2016; Peake, Koleth, Tanyildiz, Reddy, & Patrick, 2021) it is timely to engage with these interdisciplinarity and boundary-spanning debates. These are not new for tourism researchers, as arguably such approaches provided the foundations of the development of the tourism academy since the 1970s and will do in the future.

This paper seeks to develop a greater theoretical debate and to stimulate thinking within the academy on the notion of urban tourism. It builds upon previous critiques of urban tourism by Ashworth (1989, 2003) and Ashworth and Page (2011) and reviews both the progress in the urban tourism outputs since 2011 and how these might be strengthened through more engagement with debates in urban studies.

Author Contributions

This was originally submitted as a single authored paper and Dr Duignan joined as a second author at the revision stage and made an equal contribution to rewriting the paper.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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