RESEARCH ARTICLE

POLICING THE 'ANTI-SOCIAL' TOURIST. Mass tourism and 'disorderly behaviors' in Venice, Amsterdam and Barcelona.

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ABSTRACT: In the last years, several cities in Europe and around the world have witnessed the emergence of social movements critical of mass tourism, underlining a diversity of 'externalities' associated to this highly-complex global industry. The so-defined 'anti-social' (i.e. unruly, offensive, inappropriate) behavior of tourists has been highlighted by both social movements and the local and global media among these negative effects of tourism, and local authorities have responded with many campaigns and strategies to regulate the impact of visitors in the lives of locals. By focusing on three European city-cases (namely Amsterdam, Venice and Barcelona), this paper discusses the current efforts to regulate 'disruptive behavior', while examining the limits of these initiatives and the challenges that these approaches create to the daily management of public spaces.

KEYWORDS: disorder, mass tourism, media discourses, policing, urban spaces

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1. Introduction: Tourism pre and post pandemic

In May 2017, tourism was booming all over the world and no one expected the future chaos of closed borders, cancelled flights and stranded cruise ships that was the outcome of the coronavirus pandemic. At that time, Mayor Dario Nardella announced a new strategy to cope with the masses of tourists sitting, eating, and 'camping out' at the steps of the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence: hosing the popular areas down with water. Stating that 'respecting decorum' was a major concern, and while pointing out that the majority of visitors 'are respectful and elegant', Mayor Nardella further said that they had 'nothing against tourists', because 'they are a great resource for our city' (Giuffrida, 2017).

A report from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2018) entitled 'Overtourism'? (2018) confirmed this narrative of the industry as a great resource, by emphasizing its contribution to secure employment and infrastructure development, while indicating that the international tourist arrivals worldwide was expected to reach 1.8 billion in 2030: "This exponential growth reinforces the critical need to manage tourism in a sustainable manner" (UNWTO, 2018: 13). But another exponential growth forced the world to stop, and tourists suddenly became a 'biological threat'. In the early days of the lockdown in Spain, British tourists were filmed partying and drinking in Benidorm, ignoring the pleadings of the local police (Fernández, 2020). In India, a group of 10 tourists were forced to write 'I am sorry' 500 times by local police, as punishment for breaking the lockdown. The group allegedly thought that the 'relaxation of the lockdown from 7am to 1pm for people to go out and buy essential goods extended to allowing them to take a walk by the river' (Whitnall, 2020).

This paper takes the reader back to the world before coronavirus, and therefore the discussion presented here does not represent the future scenarios of global mass tourism, which are uncertain. But as these examples show, tourists enjoying their holidays and locals trying to go on with their lives are still clashing under this novel scenario.

The discussion has been structured into four sections: firstly, a general reference to the scholarship on anti-social behavior and social control, commented with a focus on tourism; secondly, a summary of the main negative effects of the global tourism industry, starting with the global perspective to later focus on the specific solutions implemented by local authorities in three European city-cases: Amsterdam, Barcelona and Venice; thirdly, I will discuss both the theoretical and practical challenges that this type of policing of tourists creates for both the understanding and management of urban public spaces. The last section summarizes the findings and proposes new avenues for research.

1. Public spaces and anti-social behavior

Anti-social behaviors have always been at the center of the discussion about public spaces[1] and policing. Once a person leaves the relatively 'safe' environment of her private dwellings, she is exposing herself to the world, to the realm of difference. As Sennett (2002 [1977], 1990) demonstrates, the evolution of the public space from the previous 'chaotic stage' (crowded with merchants, beggars and prostitutes) to the 'neutral' environments of 'our' contemporary global cities is a complex process of cataloguing accepted or tolerated behaviors, while establishing the appropriate social control of any form of 'deviancy'. Goffman (1963) has

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[1] Parkinson (2013) brings into question the characteristics of 'public spaces' as opposed to 'private spaces', discussing the complexity of the notion of the 'public'. Marcuse (2014) also addresses the paradoxes associated to the definitions and study of the 'public space', particularly for political uses (i.e. the rights of free speech and free assembly). A discussion on the nature of public spaces is not the main goal of this article.

emphasized how individuals adopt strategies 'to pass' as 'normal', and how the binomial stigma/status is determining for placing individuals in their respective social positions.

The regulation of public spaces includes a combination of social and technological strategies. From the technological dimension, a series of physical devices have been used to secure 'order' in public, semi-public and privately-owned-yet-open spaces. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) revived the need for natural surveillance, by substituting walls with windows[2]. Anti-climb technologies, thorny plants, benches with spikes (i.e. hostile architecture), drones, automatic lighting and even classical music have been used to 'compartmentalize' public spaces, keeping away those considered 'unwanted' in the city.

From the social dimension, the early emergence of 'vigilante groups' – an ancestor of the institutionalized police[3] – could be considered the precursor of more modern concepts such as 'natural surveillance', in which citizens play a key role in controlling anti-social and criminal behavior. Broken Windows policing, highly criticized due to its underlying racism and classism, aimed at regulating all sort of 'minor offenses' while promising that a zero-tolerance policy toward these disruptive behaviors would prevent more serious forms of crime (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). In its fight against the homeless, prostitutes, young people and the impoverished classes – largely Black and Latino communities in United States[4] – Broken Windows policing became an extremely-biased exercise of social control, which was nonetheless adopted by many cities and local authorities worldwide as the solution for 'urban disorder'.

This paper continues this long debate on anti-social behavior and public spaces (i.e. the city), while slightly changing its focus from the so-labelled 'underclass' (which remains the primary target of these policies) to the policing of tourists, which for many cities have become an unexpected cause of disorder and citizen's concern. In recent years, particularly after 2014, major international media outlets have reported the emergence of 'anti-tourism sentiments' in many travel destinations. The word 'overtourism' has become a media trend used to refer to places that have reached their tourism carrying-capacity (UNWTO, 2017: 5) and are facing negative externalities as a result of the ever-growing global tourism industry. Similar words have described this phenomenon, including terms such as turismofobia (particularly in Spain), followed by the coining of countering terms such as responsible tourism or sustainable tourism, which are perceived as potential solutions to the crisis.

It is necessary to point out that unlike the so-labelled 'underclass', tourists are not necessarily powerless victims of policing. Generally, tourists do not lack the means to face the potential economic or legal consequences of their 'disorder'; and as temporary users of a city, their exposure to effective policing is quite limited. However, there are similarities between the policing of tourists and the policing of regular citizens (especially the disenfranchised sectors of the population). From public urination to excessive noise, the policing of the 'disorder' created by tourists targets 'abnormal' and 'deviant' behaviors in the name of a 'greater, common good', thus presenting the same legal challenges in the security and freedom debate, and consequently being linked to broader discussions on taste, dirt/purity, and particularly impunity/punishment. Tourists, however, are not a homogenous group and cultural determinants might play a role in their 'offensive' behavior.

Some of these unruly behaviors could be considered 'normal' in other public/private settings, and their displacement into the public space might be involuntary or accidental. The regulation of 'disruptive' behavior

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[2] Kaytal (2002) refers to these diverse uses of architecture as a mechanism of crime control. See Ferrell et. al. (2008) for a discussion of CPTED strategies.

[3] Roberts (2013) highlights this relationship between contemporary police and former vigilante groups, particularly for cities in the United States.

[4] Thompson (2015) and Jay and Conklin (2017) emphasize the limits of the Broken Windows policing, while providing compelling examples of the oppression of certain disfranchised populations, particularly because of their class or race. Ferrell et. al. (2008) also refer to the flawed principles of the Broken Windows model.

in Venice needs to take the geography or the physical environment of the city into consideration. In terms of infrastructure, some 'common' activities that are banned in Venice – such as carrying a bike – might seem superfluous in other social settings such as Amsterdam. Similarly, in a recent article published in the South China Morning Post, tourists are accused of being 'offensive' because they leave tips in Japanese restaurants or keep their shoes on while stepping on a tatami mat (Hutton, 2018), exemplifying how customs are localized and the concept of 'disruptive behavior' varies according to culture.

According to Yar (2012), the will-of-representation (as a link between crime and media) could motivate some individuals to engage in anti-social behavior, aiming for online self-promotion in the form of symbolic capital (prestige, or 'likes' in Facebook or Instagram[5], which in the current global economy could potentially turn into massive economic rewards when they become 'influencers'). When a tourist films himself jumping from a Royal Caribbean cruise ship[6], this anti-social behavior might be 'voluntary' but not necessarily 'free', considering that behaviors could be coerced by both external and internal factors. In Barcelona, young adventurous male visitors filmed themselves while climbing the towers of the Sagrada Familia church, and their video shows their escape from the scene and their 'chill-out' party at an Airbnb tourist apartment. The footage was posted by the YouTube user Ally Law, a verified channel with more than 3.13 million subscribers[7].

Tourists might just behave accordingly to contextual circumstances. For example, following the sociology of crowds, it might be possible that some tourists 'misbehave' because they enjoy a certain anonymity within a larger group. These might be the reason why mass events such as the Venetian Carnival, as Davis and Marvin (2004) indicate, have become a problem for Venice, entailing massive infrastructure costs, sporadic police and garbage collector strikes, and masked tourists behaving wildly around the city, thus pushing locals to either abandon the city or 'imprison themselves in their own houses' (Davis and Marvin, 2004: 255). Another contextual explanation might be that tourists, after all, are on holidays. A sort of technique of neutralization/subterranean values, as proposed by Sykes and Matza (1957; also Matza and Sykes, 1961)[8] for criminal and unruly behavior might facilitate a temporary suspension of the moral imperatives of a subject, who could engage in 'disruptive behavior' that she would not normally consider 'back at home'.

A class perspective is also essential, considering the thesis proposed by Duschinsky of when 'dirt' (or in this case, disorder) could be read as 'matter out of place'. Wealthy classes do not necessarily produce less disorder or do not engage in any lesser degree in forms of 'anti-social' behavior, but they do have the means to hide their 'disorder' from the public (space) (Sampson and Raudenbusch, 2004: 321). This is important to address considering that many travel destinations are appealing to 'luxury tourism' as a way to solve the increasing problem created by 'poor' tourists (those who do not contribute enough to the city)[9]. Observing

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[5] Indeed, classical tourist activities such as taking photos have become characterized as 'anti-social', considering that masses of tourists are using city streets as backgrounds for their Instagram selfies, music videos and online self-promotion. See the case of Rue Cremieux in Paris: *'Paris street to 'shut out Instagrammers''* (*BBC*, 07.03.2019) and of Notting Hill in London: *'Residents of London's affluent Notting Hill neighbourhood are begging Instagram influencers to stop taking photos on their doorsteps'*, by Adebola Lamuye and Barney Davis (*Insider*, 28.02.2019)

[6] See: *'Man jumps from cruise ship for Instagram video. He survives — and is banned for life'*, by Taylor Dolven (*Miami Herald*, 17.01.2019).

[7] The video is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YX-kd_dU3mI. The video was last accessed on June 1st, 2020.

[8] Techniques of neutralization are justifications that might be valid for an individual in order to commit a crime (or for effects of this paper, to engage in anti-social behavior), even if these justifications are not accepted by the rest of society. Subterranean values, similarly, might be repressed by the individual but they exist under more socially accepted values (for example, the search for thrill and pleasure might be repressed by work ethics, but might emerge under particular circumstances).

[9] In September 2014, Hollywood actor George Clooney and human rights lawyer Amal Alamuddin got married in Venice in a four-day wedding celebration. Some news articles highlighted the local discontent caused by the crowds of tourists and paparazzi attracted to the event. The celebration required the temporary closing of public waterways, and local gondoliers were 'in uproar about the high waves created by unruly paparazzi boats' (Armellini, 2014). This example suggest that the 'disorder' created by wealthy tourists needs to be studied more closely.

Saint Mark's square in Venice, for example, the tourist who sits down and eats a panino on the Procuratie steps is not engaging in a radically different behavior from those sitting in fancy cafés such as Florian or Quadri. The regulation of one activity over the other is a matter of spatial politics, in which the commodification of public space, discussions on 'taste' and a blatant 'aporophobia' must be considered[10].

To further complicate the matter, increasing numbers of tourists seem to attract other 'unwanted' actors such as street vendors (of both legal and counterfeit goods, from watercolors to fake Gucci bags), panhandlers, buskers and performers, organized criminals (such as pickpockets and scammers), sex workers, drug dealers, amongst others. Their presence contributes to the idea of generalized 'disorder created by tourists', and it might help to re-ignite discourses and strategies of social control against immigrants, refugees and other disenfranchised populations, particularly because they 'occupy' the public space for 'unauthorized' profits. The case of the 'manteros' in La Barceloneta, presented in the following pages, is a good example of this complex scenario.

2. The 'negative' outcomes of the global tourism industry

In April 2018, the British newspaper The Telegraph appealed to the Collins and Oxford dictionaries to consider the term 'overtourism' as the word of the year. The article, written by journalist Greg Dickinson (2018), used Google Trends to demonstrate the visible peak in the frequency of word, while linking the phenomenon to both the popularity of certain travel destinations ('love to death') and the skyrocketed number of Chinese tourists (1 380% increase for 2017 when compared to 2000 according to the China Outbound Tourism Research Institute's data). Less than a month later, a scientific report published by Nature Climate Change stated that the tourism industry was responsible for about 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions, four times more than previously estimated (Lenzen et. al., 2018). Later in October, The Economist (2018) addressed an old controversy – and one more linked to the topic of this paper – regarding human excrement in Mount Everest, pointing out how the increasing number of tourists are creating an 'environmental crisis' and how a 'biogas reactor' in Gorakshep could be an 'innovative solution', so 'the mountain would be a little less brown and a little more green'. Overcrowding, loss of 'authenticity', scarcity of affordable housing, air pollution, overconsumption of water, collapsed infrastructure and other many 'externalities' have been documented as both direct and indirect outcomes of the global tourism industry[11].

In the academic literature, the book edited by Colomb and Novy (2017) is a complete collection dedicated mostly to urban tourism, including cities such as Berlin, San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro and Shanghai. In the introduction, the editors provide a list of impacts on people and urban spaces linked to mass tourism, separating between economic (changes in property values, rents, wages, etc.), physical (overcrowding, environmental pressure, gentrification, etc.), psychological (loss of sense of belonging, resentment, alienation), and social and cultural impacts (loss of diversity, voyeurism, problems with public order, repressive policies, etc.). Warning about the risk of oversimplification, the editors understand all these 'externalities' as interconnected.

This paper focuses on the last dimension, the social and cultural impacts of mass tourism, but I share Colomb and Novy's concern regarding 'oversimplification'. Anti-social behaviors could not be reduced to social-cultural causes but must be analyzed while keeping an eye on economic, political, psychological and spatial

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[10] Indeed, not all locals have welcomed the legislation against 'sitting and eating', with one news article reporting about a concerned citizen who staged a performative act of civil disobedience to protest this 'unfair' policy, expressing that the measure targeted those who lack the means to pay (De Lazzari, 2018).

[11] Higgins-Desbiolles (2005) indicates that tourism is more than an 'industry', highlighting the complexity of this practice as a 'social force'.

factors[12]. Unlike theories such as Broken Windows policing in which anti-social behavior is linked to the emergence of more serious form of crime, the narrative about the unruly behavior of tourists does not go full circle and seems to be perceived mostly as a 'nuisance' than as a 'forecaster' of more serious crime (with some exceptions). The discussion presented here will focus mostly on social issues such as 'inappropriate' behaviors (from public sex to the satisfaction of physiological needs), garbage disposal, 'partying', drug consumption, prostitution and sex tourism, noise, among other.

For example, observing the issue of noise, there is a clear difference between the aircraft noise experienced by local residents who live in proximity to Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam and the 'drunk tourism' noise experienced by those who inhabit the Red Light District, and indeed different legislation and measures have been proposed to address and minimize the negative impact of each type of 'noise'. Indeed, several specialized reports such as McKinsey and WTTC (2017), UNWTO (2018) and Epler Wood et. al. (2019) warn about 'universal' solutions to the 'externalities' of mass tourism and recommend finding suitable answers for each individual case.

The issue of 'anti-social' and 'disruptive' behavior also depends on the political decisions taken to brand the city as a 'tourist' destination in the first place, which aimed to attract visitors and investors to the city, particularly as a potential solution for the economic recession that hit the world in 2008. The branding of Barcelona as a 'tourist' destination started a couple of decades before this financial crisis, when the city nominated itself as venue for the 1992 Olympic Games (Mansilla and Milano, 2018; Russo and Scarnato, 2018)[13]. City-branding could be sponsored by the State and local authorities in the form of official advertising campaigns, but 'global reputation' could be created through references in cultural products (such as films) and even mouth-to-mouth communication. The tourism 'sol y playa', which applies to Spain as a whole, and the cultural background of the 'movida' (both a reference to the hectic nightlife and a socio-cultural hedonistic and artistic phenomenon) might also play a key role in attracting a specific subset of visitors that value transgression, in part as a countercultural rejection of the political 'establishment'[14]. According to Torres García (2016: 58), the 'movida' was read and discredited as 'deviant', and the political achievements of the movements have been underplayed.

Other more systemic factors might have contributed to create an 'overtourism' crisis in many European destinations after 2014. In several news articles published in the last years, several stakeholders and scholars have identified some causes, including: a) the overall availability of low-cost airlines, b) the political instability of countries such as Egypt and Turkey, which allegedly motivated tourists to search for alternative, safer destinations, c) the emergence of new consumer markets such as India and China, and d) a relative increase in the 'disposable income' of a the 'global middle class', which could be paired with a valued perception of travel and tourism as a form of personal realization[15].

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[12] Williams (2008) argues that 'night spaces' have a distinct logic than 'spaces of daylight'. Linking his reflection to the impact of the so-called nighttime economy, Williams proposed that night spaces are associated to ideas of leisure and pleasure, which might contribute to the emergence of resistance to social order (and subsequently promote 'deviant'/'anti-social' behavior).

[13] The introduction of this volume offers a more detailed view of the political decisions that transformed Barcelona into a 'travel destination', with valuable references to the acts of protest and resistance coordinated by local citizens.

[14] I thank the anonymous reviewers for pointing out this observation.

[15] The personal motivation of travelers and the systemic factors that have influenced the growth of the global tourism industry are too complex to be addressed properly in this paper.

2.1 Methodology

This paper is based on a qualitative analysis of 723 news articles, including op eds and editorials, published by several global and local media outlets from January 1st, 2014 to December 31st, 2017. These articles were collected through the aggregator database Factiva, and they included articles in various languages (mostly German, Spanish, English and Italian). The media texts were coded to facilitate the retrieval of information and analysis, with the assistance of the software NVivo. Some news articles from 2018 to 2020 have also been included to keep the central theme of this paper updated. The discourse analysis was based on an article published by Tonkiss (2004) and consisted of mostly three phases: a) Identifying key themes, b) looking for variation in text, and c) paying attention to silences.

Additionally, the data included here has been collected from other various sources such as official reports, booklets, video campaigns from YouTube, Twitter accounts and other communication channels used by both local authorities and activists. Interviews with key activists and local citizens in Amsterdam, Venice and Barcelona took place between November 2019 and March 2020 (for a total of 24 interviewees)[16]. Between June 2018 and March 2020, the researcher attended several community meetings and acts of dissent (from symbolic occupations of a given area of the city to mass demonstrations).

In the following subsections I will refer to some strategies to regulate 'disorderly behavior' in the three aforementioned city-cases.

2.2 Venice: #EnjoyRespectVenezia

The campaign #EnjoyRespectVenezia, promoted by local authorities under the government of Mayor Luigi Brugnaro, was launched in 2017 during the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, as declared by the United Nations General Assembly[17]. The campaign has included booklets, posters, videos on YouTube with the participation of a variety of celebrities and personalities[18], and collaborations with local and global businesses and corporations. In a booklet published by the local government, the city informs tourists about 'how not to behave in Venice':

a) Do not eat or drink sitting on the ground or outside designated areas, 200€ fine; b) Do not swim or dive into the canals, 450€ fine; c) Do not walk around bare-chested or in a swimsuit, 200€; d) Do not feed pigeons or seagulls, 25-500€; e) Do not litter or dump rubbish in public areas, 100-200€; f) Do not place padlocks on bridges or monuments, 100€; g) Do not buy fake goods from illegal street sellers, 100-7000€; h) Bikes are forbidden (even when only lead by hand), 100€; i) Do not deface the public or private property with graffiti, 400€; and finally, j) Do not camp out in public areas, 50€. (Città di Venezia, 2018).

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[16] Some interviews with key informants did not take place due to the coronavirus emergency. However, the information collected from these 24 sources offers important insights about both the activism of local populations and the negative outcomes of global mass tourism.

[17] The website of the campaign is: https://www.comune.venezia.it/it/enjoyrespectvenezia

[18] Among the many personalities that have expressed their support for this awareness campaign in short YouTube videos published in the channel of the Comune of Venezia are Hollywood actors such as Emma Thompson and George Clooney, and many other Italian celebrities such as swimmer Federica Pelligrini, singer Francesco Carrer and film director Paolo Virzì.

While the regulation against 'love locks' and graffiti 'makes sense' in a historical city protected by UNESCO[19], walking around in a swimsuit during the summer months or feeding the birds might seem 'arbitrary restrictions' to visitors, especially considering that the posters do not provide the logic behind the policing. Although Venice is surrounded by water and there are several beaches around (Lido, Jesolo, etc.), the city has enforced a strict policy against 'improper dressing'. For example, five tourists were fined for sunbathing in front of the Saint Mark's Basilica, although they later apologized and excused themselves arguing that their intention was to have a 'street performance' inspired by the concept of the 2018 Biennale of Architecture, "Freespace" (Bertasi, 2018). Similarly, a gondolier recorded tourists swimming in the San Marco basin, which also sparked public contempt[20].

There are no references to urination or public sex in the numerous posters placed around the city, and while the prohibition of these acts might seem 'obvious', the exorbitant fines associated to these offenses are a good argument to communicate the ban more clearly[21]. A news article published by the local newspaper La Nuova di Venezia and Mestre reported about a Venetian woman engaging in sexual activity with another Italian man under the Ponte di Calatrava during the past Carnival, with a second article reporting two additional masked 'visitors' captured in a sexual act by a CCTV camera of a nearby hotel. As La Nuova reports, the first couple was fined 3.300 euros, the same amount allegedly charged to two tourists for urinating a wall of the Saint Mark's Basilica some days before[22].

The city of Venice has also included the figure of the 'guardian' or 'stewards' in Saint Mark square, a group of people hired by local authorities to minimize the impact of mass tourism. The stewards are responsible for relocating tourists who are sitting and eating on the steps of the Procuratie near Saint Mark's Square and around other popular areas. This initiative could be tracked back to 2012-2013, when the figure of the Guardians appeared as a result of the collaboration between the Associazione Piazza San Marco and Costa Cruises, which sparked criticism because of the sponsorship. For some people in Venice, cruises are a synonym of jobs and economic growth, but many local activists have campaigned for years against the negative effects of the cruise industry, pointing out the impacts that these 'big ships' have in terms of air pollution, erosion of the islets, overcrowding and the endangerment of the ecosystem of the Venetian lagoon. In recent years, these Guardians have been included has part of the #EnjoyRespectVenezia campaign.

Several local businesses have placed the posters of the #EnjoyRespectVenezia campaign in their doors and windows, and other partnerships with major corporations have been observed. For example, in 2019, a collaboration between VISA and the local government was announced as an extension of the #EnjoyRespectVenezia, inviting tourists to 'help us preserve Venice' by paying with their VISA credit card. Another partnership included the online platform for tourist accommodation Airbnb[23], which many activists in the city consider as a key player in the current housing crisis which has contributed to the expulsion of many Venetians from their city. In 2018, in a YouTube video published in the channel Airbnb Citizen, the company offers advice to tourists about how to behave in Venice, reminding them to keep to the right, to separate their

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[19] D'Eramo (2014) addresses the role of UNESCO in limiting the transformations of touristic cities (particularly in Italy), which entails a process of 'museumification'.

[20] See: *'Venezia. Tuffo in Bacino, turista richiamato da un gondoliere'* [Video], (*La Nuova di Venezia e Mestre*, 18.10.2018).

[21] A booklet associated to the campaign *#EnjoyRespectVenezia* has been published by the local authorities, however, the booklet is not free of charge and its available only to those visitors willing to pay 1.50 EUR.

[22] See: *'Venezia, ubriachi e amanti focosi: denunciati',* by Carlo Mion (*La Nuova di Venezia e Mestre*, 03.03.2019) and '*San Marco, pipì sulla basilica: due turisti multati dai vigili'*, by Vera Mantengoli (*La Nuova di Venezia e Mestre*, 25.02.2019)

[23] Airbnb has diversified its market in the last years, including other services such as tours and even volunteering 'experiences' (non-paid).

trash and to avoid diving into the canals. The animated video depicts 'Mr Venezia' and its winged-lion cat 'Lionardo' sharing their knowledge to help visitors to 'live like a local', 'like a real Venetian'[24]. The campaign also recommends tourists to visit alternative areas of the city, such as Dorsoduro and San Polo, and to 'take some time to explore the islands' (referring to Murano, Burano and other nearby islands in the Venetian lagoon).

At the grassroots level, Facebook groups and online communities have formed to fight back against the many impacts of tourism, and they might include whole sections of their online activism to 'document' tourists misbehaving. The page Venezia NON è Disneyland, followed by around 70 000 Facebook users, has an extensive documentation of tourists picnicking in the street of Venice, sunbathing in San Marcos, swimming in the canals, carrying/riding a bicycle, or napping on a bridge. This documentation immortalizes 'anti-social' behavior and re-enforces the idea of a 'crisis', even if the tourists clean after themselves and their 'disorder' is temporary (which could be experienced as relatively 'permanent' considering recurring 'offenses' due to the mass numbers of visitors). Moreover, these acts are also read at their symbolic level, with the disorder being interpreted as an offense against the 'idea' of Venice, as a threat to common heritage and the 'civility' of Italian or European values.

2.3 Barcelona: Conviure a BCN

One of the most famous incidents regarding anti-social tourist behavior in the Barceloneta was a photograph of three naked Italian tourists 'partying' in 2014. Several news articles around the world reported about this incident, which became immediately associated to 'cheap' (or 'low-cost'), 'drunken' and 'party' tourism. To put the event in perspective, nudity is not particularly bizarre in Barcelona, which also has a nudist section in the Mar Bella beach, just a few minutes away from the Barceloneta. Mar Bella is also popular among international tourists and LGBT populations. However, the nudity depicted in the image of this incident is a nudity 'out of place' that was re-signified as a 'proof' of the decay that the city has experienced as an outcome of unregulated mass tourism. Several marches and political rallies were linked to this event, demanding the action of local authorities, which lead to promises to regulate the emergence of tourist rentals (especially Airbnb).

A Vice article published in 2015, refers to the many negative outcomes of tourism experienced by residents of the La Barceloneta neighborhood, highlighting the foreclosure of businesses and the opening of new tourist-oriented services, the rampant spread of tourist flats (with specific claims against Airbnb) and the burden of 'anti-social' behaviors of tourists, including 'drunk men dressed as bananas'[25]. Under the label of 'low-cost' tourism, Barcelona is considered a major destination for partygoers, and the many clubs at the beach have attracted 'young' and 'loud' tourists, including those celebrating their stag and hen parties. In 2017, local inhabitants staged a protest at La Barceloneta beach, creating a human chain along the beach, which captured the attention of both national and international media. The protest included banners stating 'We don't want tourist in our buildings! This is not a beach resort'.

But La Barceloneta is far from being the only space in Barcelona affected by mass tourism and 'disruptive' behavior. News articles reported issues of 'incivismo' in Las Ramblas, Poblenou, the Gothic neighborhood and around popular 'tourist' sites such as La Sagrada Familia, one of the masterpieces of architect Antoni Gaudí. The 'bad' behavior of tourists is also mentioned in a report written by the current administration of the Park Güell, a public park that was enclosed to regulate tourist flows and to protect the heritage, not without

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[24] See: https://news.airbnb.com/welcome-to-venice/
[25] See: *'The Battle of Barcelona: Residents Vs Drunk, Naked Tourists'*, by Sam Edwards (*Vice*, 10.06.2015)

sparking a long history of protest acts against the enclosure (a ticket is required to enter the monumental area of Park Güell, although locals could apply for free access). Several banners have appeared in El Raval, for example in the streets surrounding the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA), targeting several issues such as tourist apartments (Airbnb), noise and skateboarding[26].

In recent news articles, 'disruptive' behavior has been reported at the Turó de la Rovira (also known as the bunkers of Carmel), a hill overlooking Barcelona and a historical site with a run-down appearance, mostly due to the remnants of an anti-aircraft battery that helped to defend Barcelona during the Civil War. Neighbors have reported excessive noise, urination, binge-drinking and robberies. The panoramic views of the city have gained popularity among 'selfie-hungry tourists' and Instagram users. Indeed, 'anti-social' behavior has expanded to reach other municipalities neighboring Barcelona such as L'Hospitalet, with locals understanding this new scenario as a direct outcome of the moratory against new hotel developments in Barcelona (Cols, 2018), because in 2015 the local government of L'Hospitalet welcomed these projects[27].

In 2019, a new campaign Conviure a BCN was launched in order to tackle 'disorderly' behavior and to educate visitors. The main topics promoted include: to look after green spaces, to minimize noise, to clean after your dog, to buy from legal shops and to prevent sexual aggressions. A section of the website targeted to tourists also invite them to Enjoy and Respect, stating: "The city belongs to people who enjoy it all year round, as well as people visiting. Let's live and share Barcelona together with respect!"[28]. The campaign includes several banners with the word 'Respect' that have been placed in popular streets in La Barceloneta, for example, the Passeig de Joan de Borbó. Other signs have been located along the beach, in various chiringuitos (small bars and restaurants at the beach) and public toilets.

Unlike Venice and Amsterdam, there are no references to any fines or punishments in the recent campaign in Barcelona, with the exception of the issue of buying from illegal vendors, which could 'lead to fines of up to 500 euros'. This measure is part of a long and complex strategy to control the emergence of unauthorized markets around La Barceloneta and in other popular sites such as Park Güell. The sellers, which often share characteristics such as (irregular) migration status and skin color, are known as 'manteros' because they sell their products on a blanket, and they have also organized to secure political rights[29]. News articles in local media have frequently reported violent clashes between the collective and local police. Indeed, there is a sort of symbiotic relationship between the manteros and other illegal vendors in Barcelona and tourists, and it is not infrequent to find these workers offering drinks (i.e. water, beer or cocktails), products (sunglasses, collars or beach towels) and services (massages) to vacationers crowding the local beaches.

Another type of disorderly behavior that has captured media attention in Spain and United Kingdom is the issue of 'balconing' (understood as a practice in which tourists – generally, male – jump from a balcony into the swimming pool, or to another balcony, a roof or the ground), which has been constructed as a 'crisis'[30]. Indeed, several tourists have died while engaging in this practice, with some of the victims testing positive to intoxication, particularly alcohol. The practice of 'balconing' has been 'prevented' with official campaigns aiming at 'self-regulation', warning tourists about the serious risks. While this approach can be considered as a form of legal paternalism, associated to a narrative of 'saving at risk populations from themselves', the practice is not only a matter of personal safety but has social consequences in the cities, including for example,

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[26] The Plaça dels Angels, located in front of the MACBA, has become a hotspot for international skateboarding, and young people frequently congregate in this area to skate, smoke marihuana, listen to music and drink beer. Many videos in YouTube depict acts of skateboarding at this venue, including targeted advertising.

[27] Interview with local activists of L'Hospitalet (January 2020).
[28] The website for the campaign is: https://www.barcelona.cat/ca/viure-a-bcn/conviure
[29] The website of the association is: https://manteros.org
[30] See: *'Problem of 'balconing' makes a comeback, with six dead so far this summer'*, by Lucía Bohórquez (*El País*, 22.08.2018)

increased pressure to health and emergency services, a collective sentiment of fear or anxiety (i.e. a deterioration of public safety), amongst others[31]. At least one news article refers to this issue in relation to La Barceloneta, quoting a neighbor who worries about partying tourists in the nearby buildings. The practice, however, impacts other 'party destinations' such as Benidorm (near Alicante) and Magaluf (near Palma).

2.4 Amsterdam: Enjoy and Respect – We Live Here

Recent efforts to control anti-social behavior of tourists in Amsterdam could be tracked back to the proposal to ban tourists from the popular coffee shops, which was heavily discussed in 2012 and later rejected[32], due to fears of more serious 'crime' originating from the prohibition. Amsterdam has become a popular destination for those who are searching for sex, drugs and party, or in other words, those in search for a 'freedom' that they could not probably enjoy in their cities, back at home. Nowadays, the city-branding of Amsterdam is being re-invented, with the local government aiming at emphasizing the 'cultural goods' of the city (including Rembrandt, van Gogh, Anne Frank, canals and Dutch architecture, tulips, etc.), while at the same time de-emphasizing the idea of Amsterdam as a 'party destination'. This change is not necessarily new, considering that Dahles (1998) already documented the efforts of local authorities and private investors to attract a more 'cultural-oriented' tourism.

In terms of urban mobility, local authorities have banned the 'beer bikes' and other vehicles from the city center[33], while also removing the popular 'I Amsterdam' signs from outside the Rijksmuseum[34]. In terms of housing and real estate, the city has implemented strong rules for the operation of tourists' rentals (particularly, Airbnb), although some housing activists denounce that the efforts are insufficient[35]. Indeed, local media has recently reported an interruption of the negotiations between local authorities and the online providers of tourists' rentals, which have been associated to a series of negative outcomes including garbage disposal, noise and real estate speculation.

With the objective to regulate and minimize 'anti-social behavior', local authorities launched the campaign Enjoy and Respect, which is particularly noticeable in the famous Red Light District. In these streets, 'disruptive' behavior policing consists of a combination of techniques aiming at self-regulation (with some bars inviting their customers to be quiet and to respect the neighborhood), combined with more punitive measures. The official campaign 'We live here' informs tourists about the regulated behaviors and the punishments associated to each transgression. The four rules included in a flyer are:

> 1. Local people use public toilets or restrooms in cafes. Otherwise, they get a fine. 2. Local get alcoholic drinks in cafes or on a terrace, not on the streets. This also saves them from getting a fine. 3. Also, locals here respect the

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[31] These deaths could be the result of an accident while taking a selfie and a paper by Bansal et. al. (2018) emphasizes the need to collect better data from health institutions.

[32] See: *'Amsterdam tourist cannabis ban rejected by mayor'* (*BBC*, 01.11.2012). In this article, the former Mayor Eberhard van der Laan expressed his concerns that the ban will eventually lead to more serious issues, including 'more robberies, quarrels about fake drugs, and no control of the quality of drugs'.

[33] See: *''Beer bikes' Amsterdam calls time on drunken, urinating processions"* [AFP] (*Guardian*, 01.11.2017)

[34] See: *'The 'I Amsterdam' sign – a 'symbol of mindless mass tourism' – has been removed'*, by Greg Dickinson (*The Telegraph*, 04.12.2018)

[35] Two interviews with local activists against Airbnb in Amsterdam (November 2019).

residents and sex workers. They don't stop and stare, don't yell, and don't take photos of people without permission – doing these things might get them in trouble. 4. Please, act like you would do in your own neighbourhood.[36]

The 'We Live Here' campaign has been completed with photos on the main doors of buildings, as a way to create awareness among tourists that residents inhabit these houses. A video promoting the campaign 'Enjoy & Respect' is available on YouTube, describing the target 'nuisance visitors' as generally 18-34-years-old male tourists from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For 'dumping rubbish' or 'singing out loud' the fine is 140 euros, while for 'booze and banter' the punishment is 95 euros[37].

Public drinking is not the only issue in Red Light District, and the photographing of sex workers has been deemed particularly problematic. In an informal conversation with a sexual worker[38], she pointed out how the massive presence of tourists, documenting everything with their cameras in both photo and video, has negatively impacted their business by keeping customers away due to privacy concerns (Holligan, 2019). According to this informant, the massive presence of tourists threatens the livelihood of people who are already stigmatized or vulnerable, considering that many workers are not able to find alternative jobs in other industries, or have irregular migratory status, or are members of a minority group due to their race, gender (for example, transgender) or age. Both international and local media have covered stories focusing on the impact of mass tourism in the Red Light District (Kakissis, 2018), and the local government is allegedly finding solutions to improve the conditions of those involved in sexual work, including the banning of guided tours (Henley, 2019). Sex workers have also rejected this banning, pointing out that some tours benefit them because they provide information about sexual work and educate tourists about how to behave, while tourist who visit on their own might just photograph them anyway[39]. Moreover, in an interview with another sex worker, the informant pointed out that the 'photographing of sex workers' was the only 'disruptive behavior' that was not regulated with a fine by local authorities, expressing doubts about the impact of the Enjoy and Respect campaign[40].

Indeed, just like the manteros in Barcelona, sex workers in Amsterdam have become 'scapegoats' in the fight against 'disorderly' behaviors. Local activists' groups such as Stop de Gekte have pointed out that window prostitution, coffee shops and similar companies have created an atmosphere similar to an 'amusement park', which is associated to the decay of the neighborhood and the 'unruly' behavior of tourists (i.e. screaming, vomiting, urination, etc.), which severely impacts their quality of life[41]. On the other hand, sex workers frequently campaign for their right to work in the area, even creating official reports about the safety of window prostitution when compared to other venues. In their report, however, sex workers also refer to social-emotional violence that they have suffered from tourists, particularly in the form of intrusive questions and 'taking pictures' (Aidsfonds, 2018). Before the coronavirus crisis, four possible scenarios were proposed by the local authorities to manage the Red Light District area, all either maintaining or reducing the current number of available windows. Sex workers, on the contrary, have frequently advocated for more windows.

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[36] Leaflet for the campaign "I Live Here", which later was renamed to "We Live Here". The official website is available in: https://welivehere.amsterdam/about/. The campaign also includes an Information Centre and Community Centre, where local inhabitants provide information to visitors (including some postcards with the photographs of local neighbors that participate in the campaign).

[37] The video is available in the YouTube account I Amsterdam: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rs91WCUtQUk

[38] Personal communication with a sex worker at the Prostitution Information Center (Informal conversation, September, 2018).

[39] See: *'Sex workers angry at red light district tours ban'* (*Malta Independent Online*, 02.04.2019)

[40] Interview with a representative of the sex workers at the Prostitution Information Center (November, 2019).

[41] See: https://stopdegekte.nl/waarom/

3. Discussion: The limits of the 'anti-social' and the need for a paradigm change

The following discussion has been structured in five central propositions, focusing mostly in the examples mentioned above for Amsterdam, Venice and Barcelona, but might still be useful for other cities and travel destinations in Europe and abroad:

a)   The 'anti-social' and 'disruptive' as empty category: The 'anti-social' label might still enjoy some popularity among media outlets and in academic circles, but it might require to be deconstructed or abandoned as an analytical concept. First, the 'anti-social' is an empty category because it comprises a diversity of behaviors (i.e. noise, drug dealing, 'love locks', graffiti, photographing, etc.), which are caused by a diversity of personal motivations, social contexts, and political/economic determinants. The category also overlooks other social issues that are clearly 'anti-social' (for example, air pollution or real estate speculation), but that are not labeled or categorized in such a way. In general terms, the mere presence of tourists in a city – or tourist destination – can be constructed as 'disruptive', because of the many diverse negative impacts that the global tourism industry is associated with. This concept is counterproductive because on the one hand, tourists are not a homogeneous group, and while some 'rude' tourists might misbehave, the big majority of law-abiding, decent tourists are stigmatized as a result. On the other hand, 'scapegoating' tourists as the cause of social disorder does not pay attention to the systemic causes of these controversial behaviors, or to the effects that the policing of anti-social behavior has in the real lives of both locals and visitors[42].

b)   The disorder of locals: 'Scapegoating' tourists as the cause of urban disorder might ignore the 'disorder' produced by local citizens in the same public/private spaces. Locals might also know where and when to engage in 'disruptive' behavior, without risking being caught (for example, instead of urinating near a tourist attraction, they might do it in a backstreet some streets away). Furthermore, some areas attract a fair combination of both locals and tourists. The bunkers of Carmel in Barcelona is a good example of this: while local residents' complaint about noise, drug consumption and disgusting human waste, it is impossible to attribute these 'anti-social' practices exclusively to tourists. Some locals – or temporary visitors from nearby cities and towns – might participate significantly in this outdoor drinking. The approach proposed by local authorities in Amsterdam seems to be a good strategy for policing social misconduct, because it does not recreate 'us versus them' narratives[43] and explicitly communicates that both locals and visitors are bound by the same rules regarding the spatial uses of the Red Light District.

c)   Over-policing regular acceptable (political) behavior: Once the 'anti-social', 'deviant', 'abnormal' and similar terms are used to justify the restriction of a given behavior, there might be a risk of over-policing. Venice provides a good example with its banning of eating in particular places (i.e. eating while sitting on bridges or at the steps in Saint Mark's square). As previously mentioned, locals have protested the overreaching powers of both local police and local authorities, suggesting that some of these measures curtail their freedom. The under-policing of some areas of the city must to be addressed as well.

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[42] Parr (2009) emphasizes the need to understand the governmentality of anti-social behavior 'on the ground', proposing the use of critical realism as a strategy for effective policing.

[43] 'Us versus them' narratives have been frequently used as a social control narrative to oppress and expel 'unwanted' populations. See: Ferrell et. al. (2008). Some scholars in tourism studies and reports from the United Nations World Tourism Organization propose to consider 'tourists' as 'temporary' residents.

d) Displacement of the 'anti-social' behavior: As a solution to the so-defined 'anti-social' behavior of tourists, many tourist destinations are opting for displacing/disaggregating the tourists while spreading them across the city (or to nearby cities and towns). There is a need to understand the 'real' impact of these proposed solutions, in order to avoid the simple geographical displacement of the problem. In other words, closing down illegal tourist rentals in Amsterdam might only result in the creation of illegal tourist rentals in Rotterdam. Local authorities might be forced to engage in trial-and-error approaches regarding the displacement of tourists. Intoxicated tourists in a stag-party in La Barceloneta might produce the same amount of noise if they are suddenly relocated to Poblenou, turning the issue into a nimbyist (not-in-my-backyard) spatial power struggle. The success of any 'displacement' strategy might require coordination among state actors, private partners and the local citizenship, as well as inter-city/inter-state collaboration.

e) Education of the 'anti-social' tourists and self-control: The discursive 'need' to educate the tourists constructs them – as a flawed homogeneous category – as individuals lacking something, being it 'common sense', 'manners', 'respect', or even 'an interest in culture or heritage'. Following this narrative, local authorities self-proclaim themselves as 'instructors', supposedly providing the tourist the 'etiquette' they lack. This approach is highly individualistic and infantilizes tourists, while not paying attention to other more complex social or environmental causes of the so-defined 'anti-social' behavior: lack of infrastructure, media discourses regarding a specific destination, contextual circumstances (such as mass events), etc. It is important to mention that education is a fundamental tool for informing tourists about the history of a destination (i.e. city, beach, monument, etc.), the cultural value for locals, the rules of behavior, etc. However, as it happens in Venice, it might be counterproductive to 'sell' this information to visitors, because it restricts the number of people that can be reached by the awareness campaign. This process of educating the tourists, keeping the discussion of the morality of this strategy aside, might be inadequate if the process begins when the tourists are already in the city, but it could be more effective with a friendly, creative communicative strategy that targets tourists before they arrive (for example, through changes in city-branding, partnership with transport companies, or use of technological/social media tools)[44]. The education strategy also presumes that 'tourists' are less committed to the protection of a given destination than locals, which might not be the case for frequent tourists (those who have visited a city for several times and have 'emotional' connections to the place) or highly-educated visitors.

Conclusions

The massive presence of tourists has become problematic in several city-destinations in Europe and around the world. New strategies for social control of the so-defined anti-social behavior of tourists have been developed, consisting of a mixture of strategies that include repression of the unruly behavior (mostly through fines), education of visitors, displacement of tourists to other parts of the city and re-branding of the city-destination (for example, to attract more high-quality tourists while keeping the 'unwanted' mass of tourists away). Focusing on the specific cases of Venice, Amsterdam and Barcelona, this theoretical reflection warns of the limits of these strategies and discusses the need to overcome the concept of the 'anti-social', while identifying potential challenges for the policing of public/private spaces in a context of 'overtourism',

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[44] This is the strategy of the City of Amsterdam, which through its *Enjoy and Respect – We live here* campaign has aimed at informing tourists about their 'obligations' as visitors before they reach their destination. In a document provided by local authorities, the target groups (i.e. male young visitors from the Netherlands and United Kingdom) have reported increased 'awareness' after the first months of the campaign.

including: the risk of over-policing, the geographical displacement of 'disorder', the uses of 'anti-social' narratives to target disenfranchised local populations (i.e. illegal vendors or sex workers), amongst others.

There is an evident lack of empirical studies to determine the role that the massive presence of tourists plays in both the production of 'disorder' and the fostering of so-defined 'anti-social' behavior, in order to comprehend whether this is a 'crisis' created by the (sensationalistic[45]) overreporting in both local and international media, or whether specific changes in the uses of public/private spaces linked to the global tourism industry are taking place (and the degree of these changes). In the three campaigns analyzed here, the concepts of "Enjoy" and "Respect" take prominence, although both concepts could be void of meaning. More research is needed in order to understand what these terms mean for both locals and visitors, particularly considering that cities are living spaces, a mixture of 'spaces of work', and 'spaces of leisure'. The role of Airbnb and other tourist rentals and their impact in the quality of life of neighbors, beyond the subject of access to affordable housing, needs to be explored thoroughly.

Finally, in the interviews with local activists and citizens, the issue of anti-social behavior was mentioned only twice when the sources were asked about the three more serious issues associated to 'mass tourism'. The two sources were from Amsterdam and had a direct connection with the Red Light District. Lack of affordable housing and the transformation of local businesses into tourists' shops were the two more common answers provided by the informants. This, however, does not imply that locals do not experience 'disruptive' behavior on a normal basis. Indeed, the 'unruly' behavior of tourists frequently appears in local and international media and is often discussed in social media and Twitter accounts. While some of these stories might be considered anecdotic, it seems that global mass tourism created similar scenarios both across and within cities, and that the solutions proposed based in education and relocation of tourists offer only 'partial results'. In the interviews, some activists considered the campaigns as unsatisfactory, undervaluing them as 'cosmetic measures' that did not tackle the issue of mass tourism in the long term.

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[45] Milano (2018: 556) argues that the phenomenon of tourism phobia (turismofobia) is linked to media sensationalism.

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