Sharing the New Localities of Tourism

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Abstract Geographers have long pondered the role of tourism in producing and shaping space. The description of resort geographies popular in the 1980s and 1990s has gradually given way to the current vogue for place-making and place marketing, re-centering geography in the tourism field. More recently, however, the rise of the sharing economy and "relational tourism" has caused researchers to look beyond the construction and consumption of place and to delve into the co-creation of localities between tourists and residents. These shorter and longer-term "locals" increasingly find each other without the intervention of the traditional tourism industry, giving rise to whole new fields of economic, cultural and social exchange. The growth of companies such as Couchsurfing, Airbnb and Uber not only represents a challenge to traditional views of tourism, but is also reshaping the localities inhabited by tourists. This analysis examines the consequences of the new localities of tourism and they ways in which this might affect the future of tourism itself.

Keywords Sharing economy • Airbnb • Localities • Relational tourism • Place

1 Introduction

From a geographical point of view, tourism can be seen as an activity that produces and consumes space. In the past, there used to be a fairly close relationship between the spaces in which tourism produced tourism experiences, and the spaces in which tourists consumed them. The spatial diffusion of tourism was controlled by a dedicated, narrow value chain that had changed little since the days of Thomas Cook. Tourists went to hotels run by tourism companies, transported there by trains or planes run by transport companies and consumed animation provided by dedicated tourism staff. In the contemporary network society, however, consumers are increasingly able to circumvent the tourism supply chain and become actively

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D. Dredge, S. Gyimóthy (eds.), *Collaborative Economy and Tourism*,
Tourism on the Verge, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51799-5_10

involved in the production of their own tourism experiences. The new 'mobile consumer' (Ochoa, 2015) is more directly in contact with a raft of new 'tourism' producers that have little or no contact with the traditional tourism industry.

In this shifting tourism landscape the conventional tourism industry seems to be particularly concerned about the rise of the 'collaborative economy', which arguably facilitates the direct sharing of resources between consumers, without the intervention of commercial intermediaries. The tourism industry itself is beginning to see this as a threat to its business, labelling it a 'shadow industry' (HOTREC, 2014).

This chapter considers the consequences of the shift towards collaborative and co-created forms of supply for the tourism industry and for the production of tourism spaces. We will attempt to assess the ways in which these new 'shared' localities of tourism are re-ordering the relationships between tourism space, place and location, and shifting the distribution of power within the tourism industry.

2 The Rise of the Local

Early analyses of tourism development mirrored the relatively homogeneous and linear processes of mass tourism development in their analysis of tourist space. The models of Barrett (1958), Miossec (1977), Butler (1980) and Smith (1991) all depicted the growth of coastal resorts as stemming from a central zone close to the beach and fanning out in successive temporal waves into the periphery. The market-based nature of such development processes produced a landscape dominated by large-scale tourism consumption. This is one of the central arguments of such seminal works as Sharon Zukin's (1991) *Landscapes of Power,* John Hannigan's (1998) *Fantasy City* and Judd and Fainstein's (1999) *Tourist City*.

However, the development of the collaborative economy is now contributing to a hollowing out of such traditional models of "industrial tourism", because low entry costs mean that local communities are now able to act as micro-producers of tourism. So we are seeing a divergent movement of power in the tourism system, upwards towards global distribution systems and downwards to micro-producers and small local enterprises.

Recently, therefore, the study of tourism geographies more attention has been focussed on the micro level of urban neighbourhoods (Zukin, 2010) or small rural communities (Brouder, 2012) where micro-entrepreneurship is emerging. Sharon Zukin's (2010) *Naked City* explores the development of different neighbourhoods in New York, which in her view are being transformed into consumption zones. She explored the processes by which former working class areas have been gentrified, with the generation of symbolic value in these areas largely being attached to the concept of "authenticity". Essentially, she argues that the "authentic" is now symbolically linked with the local. The question then becomes not "what is authentic?" but "what is local?"

However, the new localism seems to complicate rather than resolve the issue of authenticity. The “global” and “local” are not spatial structures (levels, scales, places, distances, etc.), but different representations of space competing against each other to determine social reality (Guy, 2009). The point is that distances and other spatial measurements simply cannot tell us where to draw the boundary separating what is local and what is global or where the local ends and where the global begins. The adoption of particular temporal or spatial practices can make one a “local”, even when s/he has travelled far or stayed a relatively short length of time.

Essentially, in an era of global mobility, it is easy to become a (para)local somewhere else. A range of “soft infrastructure” facilitates this shift, with facilities such as hostels, coffee bars and Internet cafes and local intermediaries offering a ‘plug and play’ destination (Richards, 2010). Boutique hotels and Airbnb are simply the latest plug-ins for the local experience:

> I think what’s similar between a boutique hotel and Airbnb are three key things. Boutique hotels were really all about living like a local. How do you have an experience that feels like a local experience? That was really all around the food experience. Secondly, it was about having a design point of view so the design didn’t feel generic. Thirdly, it was about turning strangers into friends. That’s why we called staff “host” at our hotels. All of these things apply to Airbnb too. (Chip Conley, Airbnb)

The interesting point about the collaborative economy is that the economic structure itself builds in the “local” dimension, by offering the sharing of goods, services and knowledge between visitors and hosts.

3 The Spatial Effects of Collaborative Tourism Practices

The growth of the collaborative economy points to a new set of practices operating in the field of tourism production and consumption. If we view the situation from a social practice perspective, then we can borrow from Shove, Pantzar, and Watson’s (2012) analysis of practices as comprising objects and materials (technologies, things, tools, infrastructure, etc.), skills and competence (know-how, background knowledge) and images and meanings (emotions, motivations, ideas, etc.). A change in any one of the elements of the practice is likely to have recursive effect on the others. For example, the rise of budget airlines (technological change) has stimulated a change in the image of previously peripheral tourism locations (image change) and increased the know-how of local actors about tourist needs and how to meet them (increased skills). Changes in the practice also affect the consumers, who are afforded a range of new destinations, becoming more skilled in researching the possibilities of the destination via the Internet and fuelling the image of new destinations as the ‘place to be’.

The usefulness of the practice approach lies in emphasising how the different elements of the tourism system, including the ‘locals’ and the ‘tourists’ are interlinked and interact. Transitions in practice reflect changes in the composition

of the elements of materials, skills and meanings in the practice. Practices emerge, persist and disappear as connections between different elements are made and broken. New practices involve novel combinations of new and existing elements. The ways in which the different elements of the tourism practice are affected by the collaborative economy are considered below.

3.1 Resources

One of the key dimensions of the collaborative economy is that it has opened up a range of new resources to tourism practices. This is evident in the way that the recent rise of Airbnb has transformed the tourism profile of many cities:

> Nearly 55 million guests have booked the online sharing site since 2007, and 30 million of those were in the last year. Looking just at summer 2015, more than 17 million people booked Airbnb. That's 353 times the number of bookings 5 years ago when Airbnb hosted 47,000 guests during the summer of 2010 (Oates, 2015).

Companies such as HomeAway are also making an impact on local tourism markets, with over 10% growth in 2015. The company is now partnering with online distribution companies such as Kayak and Expedia to expand reach and increase bookings (Oates, 2015: 52). Such companies can have a big effect at local level. In Barcelona, for example, by May 2014 Airbnb was offering almost 7000 entire flats, almost 5000 entire rooms and 285 shared rooms (Arias Sans & Quaglieri Domínguez, 2016). This has had a significant impact on the accommodation supply and revenue in the city:

> Jeroen Merchiers, Airbnb's Barcelona-based general manager for Spain and Portugal, said that last year rentals through his firm had a $128 million impact in Barcelona, much of which helped struggling locals: 77% of the hosts rented out one room in their home and earned an average of 220 euros a month, he said, most of which went toward basic needs. "In southern Europe, people are struggling. Fifty three percent of the hosts say the money they make as a host allows them to stay in the room or house where they are. Thousands of families are using this to make ends meet." (Mount, 2014)

Interestingly, many of these new tourism resources in Barcelona are being provided by foreigners. As Arias Sans and Quaglieri Domínguez (2016) note for example: The knowledge of the Italian language is indicated in more than one fifth of Airbnb listings studied in Barcelona, whilst the proportion of Italian citizens in the whole resident population is relatively marginal. Most of the foreign residents active on Airbnb tend to be white, western middle class "ex-pats" rather than being representative of the migrant of population of the city as a whole.

3.2 Skills and Competence

In the emerging collaborative economy of tourism, more formal hospitality and intermediation skills are being replaced by informal ones. The Airbnb host also needs to acquire specific skills in the reproduction of the “local” Airbnb experience. These include how to show “empathy” towards the client and recognise their needs. Airbnb gives specific guidance to hosts on how to develop such skills.

The way in which the host engages with guests is defined by Airbnb in terms of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Pinchera, 2015). At the basic level, what guests want is a clean environment with wi-fi. At higher levels of need, which Airbnb equates to “success”, the important thing is for hosts to give attention to the guest, for example by giving them information about things to do and places to go. But the highest level of “transformation” or self-actualisation is seen as the creative part of the process. This is where personalised experiences are generated through empathy between host and guest. This requires creativity and emotional work on the part of the host, and this is where a networked system such as Airbnb has an important competitive edge over traditional tourist providers. Where hotels and other traditional forms of accommodation have to train their (usually poorly paid) staff to empathise and be creative, Airbnb relies on their feedback system to reward and train the host to deliver transformational experiences. Those who are good at this will receive more positive guest feedback, and therefore more business than other hosts.

But also important in the new collaborative hospitality system is the role of “local” hosts in providing local “buzz” or atmosphere (Bathelt, Malmberg, & Maskell, 2004). Maintaining this buzz also depends heavily on face-to-face contact between key actors, a fact that shapes creative spaces and also provides potential entry points into the local creative field for tourists. Examples include the ‘ruin bars’ in Budapest (Lugosi, Bell, & Lugosi, 2010), emerging creative clusters in Berlin (Lange, 2012), and creative events such as SXSW (OECD, 2014).

Again there seems to be a specific role for ex-pats in the development of conduits and local buzz attached to tourism. In Barcelona, for example, much of the recent innovation around tourist transport has been led by European ex-pats. This includes the creation of a large number of bike hire companies, predominantly founded by Dutch migrants, and the Cooltra scooter hire company, founded by German brothers living in the uber-cool Gràcia neighbourhood (Richards, 2016). These ex-pats bring with them specific technical skills, but they also have the communication channels necessary to reach foreign markets in the countries of origin, which is far more difficult for most spatially embedded locals.

3.3 Meanings

One of the important meanings attached to the new collaborative tourism systems is that they are not part of the traditional tourism system. Airbnb makes much of the fact that it is not a hotel company. Because each of the dwellings offered by Airbnb is unique, it offers a vast diversity of accommodation options, as a recent review points out:

> [...] while Airbnb has come to be known as the low-key, economical way to travel, it also boasts some seriously incredible, one-of-a-kind accommodations. So, yeah, you could stay in hotel. Or, you could stay in a glass tree house in the Tuscan forest, or a real-life Scottish castle, or even a restored windmill in Santorini (Refinery 29, 2015).

Airbnb also emphasises the fact that it promotes relationships. One important part of the Airbnb practice is that the direct financial transaction between host and guest is removed by the Airbnb website, so that the development of a relationship is not made more awkward by the host having to ask for money. So in this sense it also positions itself as being different from other commercial accommodation providers.

Airbnb also likes to stress that it contributes to local communities by giving them opportunities to earn money directly from visitors. The ‘community’ role has been strengthened by the opening of Airbnb offices in many different cities around the world. These offices provide a physical point of contact for Airbnb hosts in the city, but they also enable the company to lobby directly with municipal authorities when its interests are threatened.

4 Emerging Practices: Co-Creation Between Tourists and Locals

New practices emerge as a result of new combinations of resources, skills and meanings, such as those discussed so far (Shove et al., 2012). The emergence of a new system of the co-creation of space between tourists and locals has been an important result of these changes. The production of tourist space is no longer simply a question of top-down production of standardised experiencescapes by multinational companies or governments. Increasingly, the development of experiences takes place as a co-creative process between ‘tourists’ and “locals” linked in networks operating largely outside the tourism system. This changing practice also results in very different types of space or ways of using space.

One of the most evident changes in the practice has been the shifting boundaries of the “tourist” and the “host” or “local”. The rise of the mobilities paradigm has underlined the shift from highly directed to much more diffuse and widespread forms of tourist movement. Whereas in the past tourists were fairly easy to identify and localise through their relatively limited range of behaviours, today the concept of the tourist is much more difficult to define. Growing numbers of people travel for a wide range of reasons which may have little to do with the idea of a “holiday”.

Many people now travel with a mix of leisure and work or study motivations, such as ERASMUS students, lifestyle entrepreneurs or "global nomads" (Kannisto, 2014). Again, these patterns emphasise the important role of expats in providing the conduits to the local buzz.

In particular, major cities have become places where different groups of relatively mobile cosmopolitans meet with the relatively sedentary "locals". As Russo and Quaglieri Domínguez (2012) have pointed out in the case of Barcelona:

> It is up to the cities and regions to accommodate such diversity and nurture the social and cultural connections or 'atmospheric' elements that determine their capacity to offer a distinct and stimulating atmosphere where, according to the logic of experience marketing, ordinary activities are transformed in memorable experiences.

This makes it clear that what is important for places to attract tourists and other mobile populations is no longer just concrete attractions or tourist infrastructure, but "atmosphere". This atmosphere is often seen as something pertaining to the "local", the "everyday", and particularly the "edgy" aspects of these (Hannigan, 2007). At the same time, "locals" make increasing use of the spaces once reserved for tourists. In fact in some places the tourists themselves have become subject to a "local gaze" that places them as objects of curiosity themselves (Richards & Wilson, 2004).

Locals also become the providers of tourist experiences. In many cases locals become the intermediaries who interpret the places they live in for the tourist, a function that in the past was often taken by the guide travelling with the tourists. Locals are also increasingly supplementing the local accommodation supply. Barcelona research (Richards, 2015) shows that 47% of local residents have provided accommodation to friends and relatives in the past year, supplementing the more commercial spaces provided via Airbnb and the hospitality exchange possibilities of Couchsurfing.

The shared or collaborative tourism model is now being extended to whole communities or cities. For example, Seferihisar in Turkey has become the "world's first homestay holiday village", linking together different houses in the village to provide accommodation for tourists. "Fast-food outlets and chain stores are out. Renewable energy, slow travel and long-held local traditions are decidedly in" (Tomasetti, 2014). As one homestay guest notes:

> And [with our guests] we will pick our own vegetables from our garden. If they want to eat fish at dinner, we will go fishing ourselves in the morning. We will give [visitors] a real opportunity to live in a Cittaslow (Tomasetti, 2014).

The emphasis is on local people, local products and local hospitality. These are elements of the tourism experience that have been gaining momentum in recent years. For example, Gilli and Ferrari (2016) describe the development of the *albergo diffuso* or diffuse hotel in Italy as a new form of network hospitality. In a number of small villages different abandoned houses have been converted into tourist accommodation, and have been linked together with services such as restaurants to produce a network accommodation system. This has helped to

regenerate a number of villages that otherwise would have suffered from depopulation and economic decline.

The shift of the collaborative economy from individual producers and consumers towards entire communities has not escaped major players such as Airbnb. Brian Chesky, one of the founders of Airbnb recently coined the idea of the "shared city". "We are committed to enriching cities and designing the kind of world we want to live in. Together, let's build that shared world city by city." The Airbnb vision of the shared city has been extended into the Airbnb Community Compact, which contains three commitments:

- We are committed to treating every city personally and helping ensure our community pays its fair share of hotel and tourist taxes.
- We are committed to being transparent with our data and information and we will help cities understand the home sharing activity in their community while simultaneously honoring our commitment to protect our hosts' and guests' privacy.
- In cities where there is a shortage of long-term housing, we are committed to working with our community to prevent short-term rentals from impacting the availability of long term housing by ensuring hosts agree to a policy of listing only permanent homes on a short-term basis (Chesky, 2015).

The difference between these new places and the traditional spaces of tourism is that their function relies on relationality rather than visual consumption or any type of traditional tourist "gaze" (Urry, 1990; Richards, 2013, 2014). We go there because of the local people and the opportunity to live like them, rather than just to look at them. For cities this places an increasing emphasis on what Richards and Delgado (2003) termed "trusting spaces", where the users of specific spaces can come together and develop relationships of greater or lesser duration. This in turn facilitates the sharing of knowledge and skills, strengthening the practice of relationality itself. Trust development in the Airbnb practice is supported by a number of aspects of the process. The properties have reviews from customers, which the company says "cannot be invented". The reviews are supported by photos of the property, and the trust of guests is increased through a verified ID, by links to social media and a "host guarantee" of up to 700,000 euros.

According to Germann Molz (2014), "sharing with strangers" is one of the key aspects of the new "networked hospitality" model. Through such sharing, Airbnb provides relationality benefits for both hosts and guests, as one host explains:

> As a society we have fewer and fewer opportunities to interact with real human beings, strangers, in person. This is due to the explosion in popularity of smartphones and other technological devices that consume attention in public spaces. (These devices were not as ubiquitous in the past 10 years as they are today). If you look around you as you wait at a bus stop or for the train, you'll see everyone looking at their phones or shut off from the world via their headphones. AirBnB offers people a chance to make those serendipitous personal connections that we are missing in society today. It can be absolutely wonderful to meet random people you would never have otherwise met via AirBnB.
>
> Additionally, the experience of being in someone's home is very different from staying in a hotel. You get a real taste of what life is like for the locals. You can get one of a kind

recommendations and tips from your hosts, who are familiar with the area and who can usually give you more insightful recommendations (and more tailored to you!) than what you will find in a guidebook (Airbnb host, Quora.com, June 2014).

These new practices of tourism therefore require new skills (relationality) to open up new resources (private homes) to tourists and to create new meanings (don't be a tourist—live like a local). These new practices have in turn transformed tourism, and the spaces in which tourism is produced, consumed and performed.

5 How Has the Making of Tourism Spaces Changed?

Recent studies of emergent tourism localities have identified many new types of tourism spaces, such as the Airbnb apartment, the local neighbourhood or the *albergo diffuso*. If we compare the contemporary process of developing new spaces for tourism with the "traditional" model of cultural attraction development, some of the key features can be identified. If we look for example at MacCannell's (1976) model of sight sacralisation, then we can identify a process that proceeds through stages of marking, framing, enshrinement, mechanical reproduction, and social reproduction. These are basically processes that work from discrete and embedded space to more abstract and diffuse social contexts. In many cases, these processes are driven by the competition that emerges between places in the local, regional, national and global search for attention in the modern economy. But in the relational context of contemporary tourism, different processes are at work. As the structures of modern society lose their importance and authority, so does the shared need for identity and self-actualisation begin to take on a more important role, as Airbnb has recognised (Pinchera, 2015). Rather than the sights of tourism being marked and framed by a tourism industry intent on concentrating the tourist gaze, the "local" has now taken on the position of a collaborative marker of authenticity that is co-created between residents (including temporary residents, expats or migrants) and visitors. This tends to shift the focus of tourism activity away from the traditional public spaces of the city towards the private and interstitial spaces of the home, the atelier or the hostel.

The re-location of tourism practices has stimulated a lively debate on the ownership of and access to the city by visitors and by residents creating tourism services. The basic question being posed is: who benefits from these new tourism practices? There is a clear shift in economic benefits away from the traditional tourism sector towards new relational forms of tourism, but there are also other issues at stake.

Airbnb is keen to emphasise the benefits that it brings to local communities. For example, it claims that it helps hosts to make ends meet, and that 50% of hosts are on moderate to low incomes. To emphasise the fact that most hosts are private individuals, Airbnb claims that "82% share only the home in which they live." These hosts not only earn money, but also gain other benefits. For example in

Boston, 48% of hosts said that Airbnb hosting had positively affected their interaction with the local community and 62% said it had positively affected the way they view life (Airbnb, 2014). In terms of the benefits for "travellers", Airbnb says that most visitors want to "experience cities not as tourists, but as locals." According to their surveys, 76% want to explore a specific neighbourhood, and 89% want to "live like a local". This seems to suggest a collaborative benefit for hosts and tourists in constructing a local experience that will appeal to visitors and generate income for local people.

In spite of all the hype about the benefits of the collaborative economy, however, it seems that the outcomes are not always positive. In the case of Airbnb, for example, Arias Sans and Quaglieri Domínguez (2016) argue that the company is flouting local regulations on accommodation provision, producing unfair competition for commercial accommodation suppliers and increasing the concentration of tourism in already heavily visited areas. They also see indications that apartment rentals through Airbnb and other platforms has helped to keep property prices high in such areas in spite of the economic downturn in Barcelona.

Similar problems are now being noted in New York, where a report published in 2014 noted that 72% of Airbnb rentals booked in New York appeared to violate the law (New York State Office of the Attorney General, 2014). In addition, three districts of the city—the Lower East Side/Chinatown, Chelsea/Hell's Kitchen, and Greenwich Village/SoHo—accounted for one-third of private short-term rentals. These three, largely central districts, accounted for host revenue of $186.9 million, which represented 55% of host revenue for private stays in Manhattan. As Arias Sans and Quaglieri Domínguez (2016) found in the case of Barcelona, therefore, the pattern of Airbnb provision in New York seems to strengthen rather than dilute the concentration of tourist accommodation in central areas of the city. The locational concentration also tends to channel income towards particular types of hosts. In Boston, for example, Airbnb figures indicate that around 12% of hosts work in the Arts, design and creative services, 13% in Information Technology, 15% in professional and business services and 20% in education and health services. This seems to indicate a large over-representation of the middle class, or Florida's 'creative class'.

Airbnb has tried to deflect criticism of its operations by releasing a large amount of data on its operations in New York City. The Airbnb presentation of the figures seems to support the picture of local homes being rented out by local residents. About 93% of revenue earned by active hosts in New York City comes from those who share their entire home and who only have one or two rental listings on Airbnb. The median annual host income is roughly $5110—a welcome supplement to the average income, but hardly a commercial business.

However, Airbnb also made the data available to journalists under strict conditions. They could only access the data on Airbnb laptops in a private meeting room, and these data had also been edited by the company, arguably to protect confidential information. Subsequent analysis of these data revealed that of the 35,966 listings for New York City, 55% were for an entire apartment. Under state law it is illegal to rent out an entire apartment for less than 30 days, unless it is a

family home. In addition, less than 2% of hosts had three or more listings on Airbnb, but this small group accounted for about 24% of total host revenue in 2015. Analysis by the Huffington Post revealed that about 10,000 hosts were making between $10,001 and $50,000 a year, and about 127 hosts were making between $127,000 and $350,000 a year by renting out their entire homes.

The Verge (2015) concluded:

> Overall the data is a big step toward meeting the company's pledge of transparency. But viewed carefully, the numbers tell a different story than the one put forward by Airbnb. Over the last year, hosts renting out multiple units for long periods of time still represent a significant portion of Airbnb's income in New York, potentially taking housing stock off the market.

In spite of these apparent problems, Airbnb remains extremely popular with hosts, visitors and the market at large. This is presumably because it is giving these parties what they want. The hosts derive income and make new contacts through the platform. The visitors are given a taste of the local, even if this is often manufactured by people operating hotel-like businesses. The Airbnb brand is viewed in a more positive light than most traditional hotel brands (Nguyen, 2013). The performance of the Airbnb platform is therefore also linked with a high market valuation, which has risen from $10 billion to $25 billion in recent years (O'Brien, 2015). The different parties therefore share a positive attitude towards Airbnb, even though they may not actively be collaborating with each other in the accommodation setting itself.

One of the explanations for the popularity of Airbnb may lie in Korczynski and Ott's (2006) concept of the "menu" in mediation. They argue that many products and services are now offered in the format of a menu, which places an emphasis on autonomous choice—the consumer is apparently free to choose from a range of options, as on the Airbnb website. However, the menu effectively hides the structure and power of the global platform. The consumers who choose Airbnb accommodation are not aware of the algorithms that control the menu of properties they are offered, which are designed to maximise sales rather than provide the consumer with a full choice (Bialski, 2016). Thus, Airbnb can continue to appear consumer and host friendly, while at the same time pursuing a more nakedly profit-driven path.

> The fantasy that Airbnb sells is that all its "operators" are small mom and pops who rent out a room to make a little pin money but the studies have shown that many of the Airbnb hosts have many many more than one or two units which they share with short term money paying guests. Some have 50 or more. Those units are off the market for regular rentals and are pulling in $100 a night or more in urban areas where housing for regular residents is scarce (Justice Holmes, Charleston 17 June 2015, quoted in Gelinas, 2015).

Although collaborative tourism practices bring micro-producers and consumers closer together, the public sector is one party that is often conspicuously absent from the practice. Companies like Airbnb have grown up outside traditional regulatory frameworks, and in many cases are operating in contravention of local accommodation regulations. The response of lawmakers has been mixed, with

some cities seeming to actively embrace Airbnb's vision of the 'shared city' and others being openly hostile. Amsterdam, for example, has created new regulations covering the temporary letting of private homes by residents, stipulating that these cannot be let for more than 60 days a year and that they should also be occupied during this period by the owners. The owners are also responsible for collecting the local accommodation tax on behalf of the city. In New York, however, here has been a much more antagonistic relationship between lawmakers and Airbnb. Pressure has been put on the city not only by large accommodation providers, but also by local residents objecting to the argued negative impacts of Airbnb rentals. As some have commented, local neighbours are being replaced by tourists:

> New Yorkers and residents of other cities have the right to live in buildings with neighbors, not Dutch tourists with wheelie bags. (Gelinas, 2015).
>
> Should you suddenly suffer a hipster "neighbor," from a foreign country who decides that instead of getting a real job, he'll subsidize his existence by renting out an apartment in your non-doorman, non-elevator, tiny rent-stabilized building to anyone flying in at 2 am from anywhere on the globe, you will understand just how awful Airbnb truly is (Charlotte, New York 6 July 2015, quoted in Gelinas, 2015).

Airbnb has engaged in enrolment and mobilisation strategies (Dredge & Gyimóthy, 2015) in order to counter such criticism from public authorities and social groups. This includes opening offices in cities with large concentrations of Airbnb hosts, and undertaking research to support its case.

6 Conclusions

Tourism as practice has changed dramatically in recent decades. From being a largely top-down Fordist production system, tourism has become a much more dispersed nexus of integrated production and consumption. The impact on tourist space has also been significant—there is now an increasingly integrated type of tourism space emerging where the boundaries between tourism and the everyday are becoming much more vague. The desire to live like a local, combined with the desire of locals to become producers of tourism experiences, has stimulated a new "live like a local" trend that has been met by a range of bottom-up products and experiences.

This involves a reordering of resources, skills and meanings. In contrast to the traditional tourism system, which predominantly colonised public space, the collaborative economy has opened up interstitial private resources for tourism. So the previous situation, in which public resources such as transport infrastructure or cultural attractions, subsidised the private provision of tourism experiences, is being supplemented by a new model in which the private sphere provides an additional economic resource.

In terms of skills, consumers are becoming more skilled, and the gap between producer and consumer is narrowing. Because the consumption of tourism increasingly involves the everyday, the types of skills required become more closely

aligned to skills gained from other fields, enabling an expansion of the provision of such experiences by those with no experience of tourism. There has also been a vast increase in peer-to-peer provision of information and skill development, so that the professional gatekeeping function has become far less important. The core competence is no longer the understanding of the tourist, but understanding the source communities of tourists. This has positioned ex-pats as particularly useful collaborative tourism intermediaries.

The meanings attached to the practice of tourism have also shifted as we have all become tourists and many of us are engaged in supplying tourism. Tourists used to be welcomed purely on economic grounds, but they now have a wider range of roles (as citizens, as consumers of culture, as members of the creative class). They also help to provide the carrying capacity for many practices that link the local and the global in terms of resources, skills and meanings.

However, when one examines the effects of such 'Airbnbization' of tourism practices, one sees potential dangers as well as benefits. Clearly the cheapness and flexibility of services such as Airbnb or Uber are good for the consumer. But on the other hand the power of the tour operator or hotel group is replaced by a colonisation of the lifeworld (Richards, 2011), which is even more seductive because the locals seem to willingly collaborate in the colonisation process. The economic crisis in many countries has helped to facilitate this process, as people strive to generate additional income from the assets that they own or rent. This is a virtual miracle of global capitalism—thanks to the network society you can now develop the world's largest accommodation chain without investing a penny in bricks and mortar. Airbnb is currently estimated to be worth around $25 billion, which would make Airbnb worth more than Hyatt Hotels Corp, which has a market value of $8.43 billion.

Unlike Hyatt, Airbnb does not develop tourist enclaves. It may strengthen existing ones, as in the case of the centre of Barcelona. But it can also pioneer new tourist nodes, which are more integrated into local communities. This may be good for some local people who may earn extra income directly from the tourists, but it also raises important questions about the power relationships in the system. There are now interesting battles taking place in cities around the world between vested tourism and travel interests, such as hotel groups and taxi companies, and 'sharing economy' disruptors such as Airbnb and Uber. Interestingly, the hotels, who have traditionally resisted regulation, are now very much for it. The cities where these processes are largely unfolding have not yet found effective ways to control or regulate these developments.

What are the likely outcomes of these new practices? One may be the development of new types of intermediation and tourist occupations. Whereas the growth of the symbolic economy was characterised by an increase in basic service occupations to support the consumption of the middle class (Zukin, 1995), it now seems that the middle classes themselves have been co-opted into the labouring class. Airbnb depends on the relational skills of the middle class or Florida's creative class to make the system work (Bialski, 2016). It is no accident that Airbnb itself was founded by a pair of designers from San Francisco. Although the Airbnb

rhetoric is that they are helping the poor in cities like Barcelona, the reality seems to be that they are particularly enlisting the mobile cosmopolitan classes, and in doing so, helping to shift underemployment from the fields of the developing periphery to the streets of the metropolitan core.

The extent to which the collaborative economy has changed the geography of tourism is debateable, since much of the provision of new-style accommodation and other services seems to be centred on established tourism areas. However, it is opening up new spaces in the form of private homes, and producing more direct contacts between tourists and locals. What we are actually witnessing is the colonisation of the lifeworld, as commerce reaches into spaces that were previously beyond its reach (Airbnb) or deregulates service provision (Uber) or privatises space (as in the case of Park Güell in Barcelona). The problem is that as the attractions of tourism become increasingly based on the everyday, and the potential transformation of such spaces into tourism places is apparently limitless.

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