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Between Education, Commerce and Adventure. Tourist Experience in Europe since the Interwar Period. Thomas Mergel / Nikolaos Papadogiannis, Institut für Geschichtswissenschaften, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin; Maren Möhring, Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam, 19.09.2013-20.09.2013.

Reviewed by Sina Fabian
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Between Education, Commerce and Adventure. Tourist Experience in Europe since the Interwar Period

Tourism in Europe constituted a boom sector over the course of the 20th century. After World War II it ceased to be confined to the upper and middle-classes and became increasingly accessible to the working classes. Although travelling is an important aspect of people's life, tourism still remains an under researched field. Cf.: Rüdiger Hachtmann, Tourismus und Tourismusgeschichte, Version: 1.0, in: Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte, 22. 12.2010, URL: http://docupedia.de/zg/Tourismus_und_Tourismusgeschichte?oldid=84660; (8.1.2014). The international conference "Between Education, Commerce and Adventure. Tourist Experience in Europe since the Interwar Period", which was held at the Centre for Contemporary History in Potsdam on September 19-20 2013, contributed to filling this gap. The conference aimed to illustrate the different forms and diversities that shaped tourism over the last century, and therefore focused especially on factors such as immigration, youth cultures, and state-sponsored holidays.

After an introduction by NIKOLAOS PAPADOGIANNIS (Berlin) who outlined the conference's aims and a short presentation by HASSO SPODE (Berlin) who introduced the "Historical Archive of Tourism", which is based at the Technische Universität Berlin, the conference opened with its first panel. MARK KECK-SZAJBEL (Frankfurt an der Oder/Berkeley) illustrated the GDR's endeavours to establish Poland as a Sehnsuchtsort for East Germans. The open border policy between Czechoslovakia, Poland, and East Germany from 1972 onwards made travelling within these three states relatively easy. By promoting tourism to Poland and Czechoslovakia the GDR sought to offer an outlet for the strong desire to travel among the East German population. Keck-Szajbel argued that the open border policy also served to reconcile East Germans with the loss of former German territories in the East and to accept the status quo. By visiting former homes in Poland, Keck-Szajbel stressed, the GDR tried, unofficially, to offer a form of substitute travel which sought to divert the longing to see friends and family in the West. MARTIN HURCOMBE (Bristol) also described a Sehnsuchtsort. He focused in his paper on members of the French far right who travelled to fascist Italy in the interwar years. Italian fascism as a concept was widely contested among the French far right and travels to Italy served to reinforce these tensions. Hurcombe argued that the regime was highly idealized in the writings as a society which melted all aspects of life into one total experience. The result, Hurcombe pointed out, was the emergence of a "new man", the "uomofascista", which the writers saw as "one who experiences none of modernity's alienating effects, but rather an unproblematic totality of being". According to Hurcombe, the travel writings enfold the utopian dimension which political travelers in Fascist Italy experienced and which were then translated and enforced in the writings.

CHRISTOS MAIS (Leiden) connected in his paper two important aspects of the conference by focusing on youth tourism in a highly politicized context. He examined "revolutionary tourism" during the military junta in Greece 1967-1974. Anti-junta groups were established mainly abroad or had branches outside Greece. Tourism to and within Greece, according to Mais, served therefore as important means of communication between the regime critics in Greece and abroad. He argued that political activists disguised as tourists in order to move freely within the country, but rather than enjoying the beaches and historical sights, their main aim was to enable communication between the different anti-junta groups and other Western European countries. Mais pointed out that tourism should not be seen as mere pleasure trips but that especially the 1960s constituted a time where the tourist destination was often chosen by aspects of

political activism rather than solely by "touristic" features. Proceeding with youth tourism, JÜRGEN MITTAG / DIANA WENDLAND (Cologne) illustrated the rise of long-distance tourism in West Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. Mittag and Wendland argued that the pioneers of long-distance travel especially to Asia and South America were young people, mostly students. They set out to experience faraway places without making use of established tourism structures. These so called "alternative tourists" emphasized their way of travelling as "the right way" and severely criticized "mass tourism" such as package tours. However, Mittag and Wendland also pointed out that alternative tourism quickly became commercialized with the establishment of alternative tour operators and travel guide books which aimed at a mass market. Wendland stressed that the images and portrayed sights in alternative guide books did not differ substantially from the established ones. Alternative tourism, Wendland and Mittag argued, developed from a pioneer in long-distance travel with high moral standards to a highly commercialized enterprise with alternative tourists being increasingly accused of bad behaviour. WHITNEY WALTON (West Lafayette) presented yet another form of youth travelling. She focused on the experiences of US American female students who studied in France up to the 1970s. Although studying and living in a foreign country might not be considered as "tourism" in a narrow sense. Walton argued that the experiences American students made in France could be compared in some ways to tourist experiences. She stated that studying abroad as well as tourism contributed to a sense of internationalism by experiencing new cultures and ways of life. Another feature that tourism and foreign exchanges had in common was, according to Walton, the reassessment of one's own national identity and sense of self. She also pointed out, however, that the experiences did not necessarily had to be similar since tourists did very often not have to engage with the foreign culture whereas exchange students were somewhat forced to do so. Therefore Walton posed the question whether studying abroad should be seen as a form of tourism or should be treated separately. The emerging discussion centered around the question whether tourist experiences can be completely blanked out and separated when visiting a foreign country even if one is primarily on a political or religious mission. Thomas Mergel (Berlin) referred to radical Islamists who travel to special training camps and provocatively asked whether they should also be seen as tourists.

The next panel focused on the relationship of tourism and migration. MARCEL BERLINGHOFF (Heidelberg) analyzed the use of the terms "tourist" and "migrant" in a bureaucratic context as categories for visas, work and residence permits. Berlinghoff argued that the seemingly clear-cut distinctions between these categories were undermined by migrants and Western European authorities alike in the postwar boom period. Due to the massive labour shortages in countries like France or West Germany, officials in both countries also accepted informal and sometimes illegal ways of work migration, mostly from Mediterranean countries such as Turkey, Spain, or the Maghreb region. Job seeking with a tourist visa or ex-post legalizations of work permits became accepted methods. Berlinghoff pointed out that after the economic boom had ended in the 1970s regulations became much stricter and the entry of migrants with tourist visas was restricted. They were even labeled "faux touristes" and it was alleged that people from traditional migration countries could not have any tourist motivation but simply tried to seek for work illegally in a Western European country. NIKOLAOS PAPADOGIANNIS (Berlin) also focused on migrant workers in West Germany. He was concerned with young Greek immigrants and analyzed their holiday patterns. Papadogiannis pointed out that their travel patterns changed in the course of the 1960s and 1970s. While young Greek migrants did participate in some forms of the emerging West German youth culture in the 1960s, their travel patterns remained quite distinct from West German youths, Papadogiannis argued. Greek migrants, regardless of their age, overwhelmingly travelled to Greece to meet up with family and friends where they predominately stayed in their natal areas. These travel patterns changed somewhat in the 1970s when an increasing number of Greek students migrated to West Germany. Younger migrants, according to Papadogiannis, now travelled with friends of the same age to different places and countries. Their travels, however, also served to reinforce the impression by the Greek migrants of a north-south divide in Europe. MAREN MÖHRING (Potsdam) reinforced in her comment that different forms of mobility such as tourism and migration should not be looked at separately as their experiences are interwoven and inseparable.

The conference then moved on to interwar and postwar tourism experiences. GUNDOLF GRAML (Decatur) analyzed the public discussion on tourism in postwar Austria which began immediately after the end of the war. Graml stressed that tourism constituted an important economic sector but more importantly, the discourses on tourism also functioned to negotiate and reconstruct a national Austrian identity which was different from the German one. The dominating narrative depicted Austria as a victim which was entirely innocent

of the atrocities the Nazis had committed. Graml argued that the reestablishment of tourism did not serve as a kind of "cover-up" which sought to hide the Nazi past but that by discussing tourism it became possible to rethink and reimaging a "new" and independent Austria. The imagined "tourist gaze" John Urry, The Tourist Gaze, London et al. 2003 (1. ed. 1990). was used by the Austrian government, as Graml showed, to introduce and enforce rules and regulations concerning, among others, hygiene and education. Expanding further on this subject, ADAM ROSENBAUM (Grand Junction) turned to postwar tourism in Bavaria where he focused mainly on American tourists. Rosenbaum pointed out that Bavaria had been the heartland of the National Socialist movement and was marketed during the Third Reich as an epicenter of modernity. After the war, however, Bavaria's cities and popular tourist regions were destroyed. Therefore, the regional tourism industry turned to Bavaria's countryside and focused not on modernity but on decidedly pre-modern, pastoral and dynastic traditions such as Ludwig II., Rosenbaum stressed. He also argued that while American tourists indulged in allegedly "traditional" sites and festivities such as Schloss Neuschwanstein and the Oktoberfest they were also interested in the Nazi past and visited the Dachau concentration camp or the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg. Therefore, Rosenbaum concluded, American tourists both sought the "inauthentic" invented traditions as well as the "authentic" postwar Bavaria. ANDREW BEHRENDT (Pittsburgh) focused in his paper on cinema experiences of travelling in Austria and Hungry in the interwar period. The 1920s and 1930s constituted a time, Behrendt showed, where the majority of the people could not yet afford to go on holiday but the desire to do so was ubiquitous. Therefore, he argued, watching feature films in the cinema provided an opportunity to gaze at potential holiday destinations such as the Wolfgangsee and also showed the "correct" tourist behaviour. By watching the movies, Behrendt explained, movie-goers developed expectations of what they would see and do when, in a distant future, they would visit these places in person. He stressed that the films with the help of camera techniques and turns of plots did more than simply illustrate a tourist destination but created a sense of almost real experience for the audience.

Turning to tourism during the Cold War, FRANCESCA ROLANDI (Turin) addressed the phenomenon of Yugoslav shopping tourism in Trieste. The Yugoslav population was in the privileged position, compared to other communist regimes, to being allowed to crossing the border into Trieste and thereby into the "West" several times a week for shopping purposes. Although Yugoslav officials did not appreciate the substantial outflow of currency the shopping sprees caused, they did not effectively try to hinder it, as Rolandi pointed out. She argued that the possibility to visit and shop in Trieste served to conceal the scarcity of goods in Yugoslavia. Instead, the Yugoslav press stressed the privilege Yugoslav citizens enjoyed by moving more freely and consuming substantially more Western goods than other communist regimes could offer. BENEDIKT TONDERA (Hannover) looked at a more rigid communist regime and its tourism patterns to the West. Soviet tourism to capitalist countries sounds at first like a paradox. But, as Tondera argued, one should not compare Western tourism aims such as getting away from it all or self-fulfillment with the aims of Soviet tourism. People who were chosen to visit the capitalist West had to go through a rigid selection process and had to be trustworthy and willing to promote the Soviet way of life abroad. Before embarking on their guided and closely monitored tour, they had to go through a special training where they were instructed what to say and do while abroad. Therefore, Tondera introduced the term "Soviet gaze" and argued that their tourist experience was very different from the Western one. He also stressed, however, that even Soviet officials, who were responsible for guiding and monitoring the holidaymakers and their behaviour, were occasionally overwhelmed by the sights of cities such as Vienna or New York which was then reflected in their official reports about the trip.

The final discussion centered mainly around two issues: It was remarked that tourists and their experiences had been absent from most papers while the focus had laid largely on official policies or the tourism industry. One could add that it would be fruitful for further discussion not to focus solely on tourist experiences of minority groups and fractions of society but on the experiences of everyday tourists. Interwoven with this was the second aspect which was brought up again in the final discussion. Should the term "tourism" be expanded to include the experiences of migrants, political activists, and exchange students, for example, or would "tourism" then become blurred and indefinable? No definite agreement was reached and this surely is an issue that will be and has to be discussed further. The conference also showed how many links the history of tourism provides into various different areas and that research into tourism should be further encouraged.

Conference Overview:

Panel I: Tourism and Dictatorship

Mark Keck-Szajbel (Frankfurt an der Oder/Berkeley): Poland as Sehnsuchtsort: East Germans in the People's Republic in the 1970s

Martin Hurcombe (Bristol): Discovering Uomo Fascista: Political Tourism in Fascist Italy and the French Far Right

Comment: Mario Daniels (Hanover)

Panel II: Tourism and Youth in postwar Europe

Jürgen Mittag / Diana Wendland (Cologne): How adventurers become tourists -the role of alternative travel guides and tour operators in the course of standardisation of long-distance travelling

Christos Mais (Leiden): Mixing Revolution and Pleasure: Visiting Greece during the Junta (1967-1974)

Whitney Walton (West Lafayette): Study Abroad as Alternative Tourism: United States American Youth in France, 1945-1970s

Comment: Detlef Siegfried (Copenhagen)

Panel III: Tourism and Migration in Postwar Europe

Marcel Berlinghoff (Heidelberg): "Faux Touristes"? - Tourismus in europäischen Migrationsregimen seit den 1960er-Jahren

Nikolaos Papadogiannis (Berlin): Between migration and tourism: The travel patterns of first and second generation Greek immigrants in West Germany, 1960s-1980s

Comment: Maren Möhring (Potsdam)

_Panel IV: Tourism, national / regional identities and social order in Central
Europe before and after the Second World War_

Gundolf Graml (Decatur): Tourism and "Nation-Building": The Case of Austria, 1945-55

Adam Rosenbaum (Grand Junction): Beer, Castles, and Nazis? Tourism and the Construction of Authenticity in Postwar Bavaria

Andrew Behrendt (Pittsburgh): Distant Gazes at Nearby Places: Virtual Tourism in Popular Austrian and Hungarian Interwar Cinema

Comment: Thomas Mergel (Berlin)

Panel V: Tourism and Cold War borders

Francesca Rolandi (Turin): Trst je nas! Yugoslav shopping tourism in Trieste

Benedikt Tondera (Hanover): '"The Soviet Gaze"?- Überlegungen zu den Spezifika des sowjetischen Auslandstourismus

Comment: Hannes Grandits (Berlin)

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