

Ambiance, Tourism and the City

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1 **Ambiance, tourism, and the city: An introduction**

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Cruise passengers arriving in Lisbon enjoy a privileged sight of the city's urban layout. Observed from the viewpoint of the Tagus River, the city – magnified and vibrant as the vessel slowly approaches the docking area – reveals its unique orography, covered by a mixture of different architectural styles punctuated by contemporary flagship buildings and new open public spaces along the riverside. A popular cruise destination on the rise before the pandemic, around 300 vessels dock in the Portuguese capital city each year (Kovačić and Silveira 2020). Cruise ships have thus correspondingly become a frequent feature on the historic city's skyline. Their presence in the old port area all year around embodies the success story of Lisbon as a thriving tourist destination.

In 2019, the year before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the city received almost five million tourists – a new yearly record – of which more than 600,000 were cruise passengers.¹ For several consecutive years (2017–2020), Lisbon was elected as the Best City Break Destination in the World, boosting its popularity as a tourist destination. The rapid transformation of Portugal's capital city into a “tourist city” (Judd 2003) also stemmed from the stimulus policies that led to economic recovery in the years after the harsh austerity that followed the Portuguese financial crisis (2010–2015), a narrative shared by other tourism-dependent economies in Southern Europe (Malet Calvo and Ramos 2018). The combination of real estate development and tourism emerged as apparent solutions for the recession (Cócola-Gant and Gago 2019). This exponential growth in foreign visitors was abruptly broken off by the pandemic (Sánchez-Fuarros and Paiva 2021), although at the time of writing this introduction (September 2022) Lisbon's tourism market appears to have recovered its pre-pandemic momentum.

Cruise passengers arriving at the gates of the historic city centre quickly join the other crowds of tourists on foot, in tuk-tuks, on scooters, on bicycles, or driving all sorts of the personal transporters that flood through the narrow streets and alleyways of the historical neighbourhoods. In addition to such saturation, an increasing number of public spaces have been privatized and with others turned into tourist attractions (Gomes 2019). Furthermore, souvenir shops, convenience stores, nightlife venues, international restaurant chains, and automatic laundries have rapidly taken over from traditional shops and spaces of local conviviality (Guimarães 2021), boosting “tourism gentrification” (Cócola-Gant 2018) and

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Figure 1.1 Cruise ship docked at the gates of the historic neighbourhood of Alfama, Lisbon.

Photo: Iñigo Sánchez-Fuarros

altering the look and feel of these areas. In addition, hotels, Airbnb apartments, and other lucrative short-term accommodation markets have mushroomed in Lisbon's central areas, displacing local residents and escalating property prices (Cócola-Gant and Gago 2019; Montezuma and McGarrigle 2019). Over the course of less than a decade, the pressure of (over)tourism has generated a lasting impact on the city's social, economic, and physical environments. For instance, that “the city [of Lisbon] is losing its soul” (Borges 2016) was the motto of a campaign that gained notoriety in the media and in local political circles around 2016–2018 as a response to the transformation of the city centre into a “theme park” for tourists (Lovell and Bull 2017). As any theme park worthy of its name, Lisbon's city centre has become “no longer a physical space to be inhabited but instead a cultural frame to be experienced” (Muñoz 2010, 81). In this context, the vindication of the “soul” of Lisbon may be read as a poetic gesture tinged with nostalgic overtones while also highlighting the gradual loss of individual and collective urban landmarks – which provide local residents with “a sense of origins” (Zukin 2010) – as a result of the rapid changes experienced by the city. What is the soul of a city if not the everyday ambiances to which its inhabitants feel attuned?

This process – which some authors refer to as touristification (Sequera and Nofre 2018) – is far from exclusive to Lisbon. As the different contributions to this book demonstrate, it is repeated, with subtle variations and different intensities, in cities

all over the world. Indeed, as we shall see in the next section, critical research on tourism has long been warning about the negative effects on the everyday life of city dwellers of an industry aligned with the processes of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2003) so characteristic of financial capitalism (Milano and Mansilla 2018). It is not by chance, therefore, that the ideas that inspired this collection have arisen amidst the growing unease of Lisbon residents about the negative impact of tourism on their daily lives. Indeed, this introductory chapter – written from a small capital city in the European South which has recently entered the academic debates about touristification and its discontents – is intended as a critical contribution to these debates.

However, this collection seeks to approach this issue from a slightly different angle. Whereas the existing literature has focused mainly on tourism as a powerful force of urban change and as a source of contention (see e.g. Colomb and Novy 2016), the book advocates a critical approach to the notion of urban ambiances as a means to interrogate the contemporary tourist city. Through a series of case studies, this volume approaches the impact of tourism on the urban environment with an emphasis on the notions of “ambiance” and “atmosphere” as tools to explore the physical regeneration and sensory transformation of contemporary tourist sites (Degen 2008). How do tourism and city development affect the ambiances lived in the urban context? How do sensory experiences participate in creating particular urban ambiances and sites for tourist consumption? Furthermore, what is the role of atmospheric production in relation to the marketing of contemporary tourist destinations?

This introductory chapter aims to introduce some of the key themes that inform the different case studies developed in the chapters that collectively form this volume. The first section provides a brief overview of the critical traditions studying global tourism within the scope of neoliberal capitalism. Rather than an isolated system, global tourism is a hybrid and complex economic and socio-cultural process that, as Marc Morell argues, “needs society to work as a whole” (Morell 2018, 43). As such, “it implies processes of change in the socio-economic dynamics and the components of the landscape and environment of a territory” (Ojeda and Kieffer 2020, 143) and with these transformations generating deeper impacts on tourist cities.

The centrality of tourism to the urban economies of cities is, indeed, the focus of the next section. As privileged spaces for capital accumulation, the development of cities as urban tourist destinations has exacerbated the dynamics of inequality, exclusion, and discrimination as over-tourism exerts excessive pressures on urban infrastructures with negative consequences for the quality of life of local residents. Thus, touristification is often contemporaneous to other urban processes such as gentrification, urbanalisation (Muñoz 2010), or the displacement of local population. As such, we contend that touristification cannot be dissociated from urban capitalism’s own development and contradictions and therefore requires studying within this framework.

The third section introduces the notion of “ambiance” and argues about its relevance as a lens through which to study the impact of tourism on the urban

environment. Although there has been a growing interest in the study of ambiances within tourism research, there is surprisingly little interest in the articulation between tourism, ambiances, and the city. Thus, this collective volume aims to fill this gap by focusing on the relationship between the ambiances of tourism and the liveability and cohesion of local communities. This relationship most frequently takes on the form of a vicious circle: Tourism activities depend on the unique character of local cultures to compete on the “global catwalk” (Degen 2003), while these very same local cultures are threatened by the growth of tourism, and therefore the very atmosphere that made them special might eventually fade away. This paradox is explored in the following section, approaching the notion of authenticity and its atmospheric resonances as an example. In fact, no discussion of the ambiances of tourism can ignore the issue of authenticity as most of the chapters in this volume demonstrate. Authenticity is not only a driver for urban renewal and branding but also a catalyst of tourism experiences. The sixth and final section then introduces the rationale and chapters of the book.

Critical approaches to global tourism and neoliberalism

The global industry of travel, tourism, and hospitality has grown exponentially over the last four decades whether accounted for in terms of recorded arrivals, accommodation capacity, revenues earned, or the geographic distribution of new destinations (Scott and Gössling 2015). The global tourist system accounted for 10.4% of global GDP in 2019 and was responsible for 1.4 billion international visitors travelling to which we must also add many more billions of domestic tourists (JLL and WTTC 2019). These figures fell away dramatically during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 but are currently heading swiftly back to recovery, especially in regions highly dependent on tourism such as Mediterranean Europe and the Caribbean (UNWTO 2022). The success and growth of the global tourist system have been sustained by specific material conditions: The massive expansion of transportation technologies, the reduction in border travel restrictions, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) developments with software and apps facilitating travel planning and marketing. These infrastructures also changed the meaning of travelling and prompted the formation of new subjectivities around mobility, reinforcing materially and morally differentiated (although interdependent) transnational circuits of travel (Amit 2015). In our contemporary hyperconnected world, the allure of other places, cultures, and opportunities shapes individualistic and collective mobility projects, including workers, international students, tourists, and lifestyle migrants (Hayes 2021). Consequently, new “regimes of mobility” arose (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013), redefining human border-crossing fluidity while still reproducing global inequalities, privileges of circulation, and colonial imaginaries. The current consensual devotion to the tourism industry and its “benefits”, simultaneous to the continued perception of labour migration and refugees as a threat, especially in the Global North, provides a good example of the contemporary (and contradictory) politics of global mobility (Bianchi et al. 2020). Moreover, this entire global framework

structurally connects to the consolidation of the post-industrial, neoliberal agenda (Harvey 2007), a global formula for economic development (free trade, institutional restructuring, financialization, service economy) that enshrined the tourism industry as the cherry on top of the global capitalism cake. In this sense, in accordance with this hegemonic cosmopolitanism, governments, international organizations, and the private sector unanimously insist that tourism creates jobs, boosts trade, facilitates investments, and generates prosperity to the host countries (see for instance Mastercard's Global Destination Cities Index 2019).

In contrast with this triumphant narrative, broadly trumpeting the interests of the industry, a tradition of critical studies on tourism has flourished since the decade of 1970s, following classic works such as Turner and Ash's *The Golden Hordes* (1975), MacCannell's *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976) or Valene Smith's *Hosts and Guests* (1978). However, it was not until the 1990s that the critical production on tourism studies multiplied and experienced consolidation by the development of two different approaches. On the one hand, there was the "cultural turn" in tourism studies (Bianchi 2009) nourished by post-structuralism's emphasis on power, discourse, performativity, and identities, which draws upon the seminal work by Urry in *The Tourist Gaze* (1990). On the other hand, the return of a structural critique of the global tourist system from a political economy perspective, which recovered Marxist approaches to working conditions, capital accumulation and material inequalities (Ioannides and Deb- bage 1998; Fletcher 2011). Both of these critical traditions evolved in tandem with the boundless expansion of mass tourism and global touristification, returning an integrated understanding and revealing, among other aspects, the huge levels of job precarity in the sector (Cañada 2018; Robinson et al. 2019), the sociocultural and heritage dispossession felt in destinations (Devine and Ojeda 2017; Morell 2018), and the substantial interlinkage between the tourism industry and climate change (Gössling and Peeters 2015; Lenzen et al. 2018). Therefore, contemporary critical scholars have unveiled the ubiquitous presence of global tourism in neoliberal capitalism (Mosedale 2016; Cañada and Murray 2019), identifying it as an ominous, holistic device that extends beyond being some discreet sector of economic activity. In their article about tourism and its forms of structural violence, Büscher and Fletcher wrote that tourism is "not merely a capitalist practice but a central practice through which capitalism sustains itself" (2017, 651). Within the same line of thought, Nogués-Pedregal, when summarizing the anthropological contributions to tourism studies, suggested that tourism is "capitalism's most perfect and sophisticated creation" (2019, 230). Whatever the case may be, it would seem clear that the global touristic system and its proficiency in framing and commodifying social relationships, landscapes and territories, global imaginaries and transnational mobility, represents not only a portion of the global economy but rather the very form adopted by capitalism as a means of extracting economic value from human and non-human natural resources in post-industrial conditions. It is precisely due to the particular nature of tourism as a hybrid and complex economic and socio-cultural process involving images, technology, practices, infrastructures, meanings, and textuality that the developments of the Actor-Network

Theory, the methods, and theoretical insights of anthropology and, in general, qualitative approaches to particular tourist sites (such as those contained in this book) have proven to be fruitfully applicable to tourism studies (van der Duim et al. 2017; Salazar 2017).

City tourism, urban change, and social contestation

Almost half of the 1.4 billion international tourists who travelled in 2019 did so with the purpose of visiting cities and with the majority of the rest spending at least one night in cities while travelling to another destination (JLL and WTTC 2019). Indeed, tourism has become a central component of the urban economies of many cities worldwide, playing its role in the complex transformations of their morphologies, institutional structures, and social lives. Even though cities under capitalism have always been privileged spaces for capital accumulation and centralization (Harvey 1978; Brenner and Theodore 2002), the advent of mass tourism and global touristification increased and accelerated many processes inherent to urban capitalism. From the 1980s onwards, many global cities launched post-industrial city marketing campaigns aimed at attracting capital investments, wealthy residents, and businesses, developing specialized tertiary districts and leisure sites for visitors, in a neoliberal urban governance shift towards entrepreneurialism (Harvey 1989). In parallel, the growing presence of tourists and the dynamics of the industry in cities further encouraged urban renewal operations and the attraction of real estate investment, opening new areas and spaces to commercialization and consumption. The subsequent expansion of global mobility deepened the effects of gentrification on a transnational scale (Hayes and Zaban 2020) changing the demographic composition and class structure in many global cities and increasing urban polarization and inequalities. These processes have been threatening not only sociocultural and class heterogeneity (the very fabric that renders cities unique and appealing) but also the social life of neighbourhoods, including the lack of access to housing, health, and mobility for low-income communities (Musterd and Ostendorf 1998). In fact, tourism seems not only to intensify previously existing gentrification processes but also to trigger new ones (Cócola-Gant 2018; Cocola-Gant et al. 2020), which bring about different forms of displacement, especially through successive waves of evictions. The impact of tourism accommodation digital platforms (such as Airbnb) provides one of the most obvious interconnections between tourism and gentrification, with house owners and real estate investors putting their properties into the much more profitable (and liberalized) short-term tourist market. Consequently, cities have experienced house scarcity, huge increases in rental prices, the displacement of residents to suburban areas, and the proliferation of evictions in an exclusionary process now spread throughout many urban areas and regions around the world (Valente et al. 2022).

Apart from the central problem of housing, many other issues have been impacting on the sustainability of urban destinations and disturbing their inhabitants, a varied array of grievances which have recently been portrayed and discussed

under the label of “overtourism” (Milano et al. 2019; Mihalic 2020; Wall 2020). First, everyday mobility and accessibility for residents may become compromised due to the overcrowding of touristic sites and the saturation of public transportation services, potentially occurring commonly during the peak season, especially in cities with historical, usually narrow, central districts. Second, residents often suffer from excess noise levels caused by the presence of large groups of tourists, music festivals in towns, public entertainment shows, open markets, and nightlife venues (such as bars and clubs), places that may also motivate drunkenness and other impactful, annoying or even dangerous behaviours. Third, the monoculture of tourism has led to the spread of tourist-oriented shops and facilities, frequently as franchises displaying a considerable level of uniformity, that substituted the previous local retail outlets in a process sensed by the inhabitants as a loss of local identity and sense of community. Fourth, the presence of tourists stimulates the privatization of public spaces (terraces, fairs, markets, and festivals) and the commercialization of private property through the utilization of applications (from housing to meals), activities connected with precariousness, the informal economy, and the lowering of employment standards. And last, but not the least, the ecological pressures on destinations are huge, with rising levels of air pollution in cities (planes, cruisers, more vehicles circulating), the difficulties of managing the additional waste produced by visitors, and the challenges of providing a water supply in many urban destinations located on islands or in desert/arid environments.

Over the last decade, the growth of mass tourism and its pressures on urban infrastructures and inhabitant quality of life have led to the multiplication of local conflicts, political struggles, and forms of contestation against that perceived as “overtourism” in many cities worldwide (Colomb and Novy 2016). While reactions to mass tourism are not a new phenomenon (Boissevain 1996), this new cycle of protests and tensions has connected with people’s contemporary awareness of their own weakened, disempowered citizenship, a lack of urban governance to tackle urgent questions such as housing access, and the widespread sense of navigating through a permanent economic crisis. Neighbourhood groups, left-wing political parties, and grassroots social movements have identified the excesses of mass tourism, pointing at its negative consequences both for residents and the sustainability of urban environments and demanding social justice and their “right to the city” (Purcell 2002). However, the boundaries between tourist and non-tourist, locals and foreigners, are more blurred than ever before, defying the former borders between travel, migration, work, and leisure. Frequent travelers, international students, digital nomads, retired foreigners, tourists, and the local middle and upper class often circulate through the same places and infrastructures, consume similar urban experiences, and share interchangeable narratives about their practices and lifestyles in the convoluted settings of global cities. Therefore, the problems often identified as *touristic* (such as gentrification) actually intersect and overlap with the ordinary developments and contradictions of urban capitalism, which themselves only serve to reproduce previously existing situations of exclusion, inequality, and discrimination. Moreover, given that the

strategy of many cities has been for decades to entrust their economies to tourism monocultures, global organizations and with political parties only presenting mitigating solutions and “greenifying” measures to calm down urban inhabitants (see for instance UNWTO 2018). In any case, challenging the limits of tourism expansion and its consequences for the populations, whether by critical scholars or by grassroots movements, involves questioning the core neoliberal restructuring of cities as theatres of leisure and consumption, reaching beyond tourism as a discrete economic activity.

Ambiance and tourism. And the city?

One of the most relevant (and intangible) facets enacted, manipulated, and marketed by the economic actors responsible for the touristic exploitation of the world’s cities is that of ambiance. We may describe “ambiance” as the unified perception of the sensory emanation of places. Thinking about ambiances draws our attention to the affective power of the sensory factors that compose places and how people sense, feel, and think about them (Sumartojo and Pink 2018). The concept of ambiance is akin to atmosphere, a term which is more often used in the Anglophone and Germanophone context (for the conceptual differences between ambiance and atmosphere, see Adey et al. 2013; Paiva 2022). In this book, we prefer to adopt the term “ambiance” due to its longer history in the field of tourism studies (Volgger and Pfister, 2020).

Indeed, ambiance has long since been considered fundamental by the tourism industry. This interest of the tourism industry in ambiance stems from the longer history of atmospheric production in retail and services in which spatial design and the introduction of affective sensorial features, such as music or fragrances, have been recurrent tools to draw customers into immersive and pleasurable consumption experiences (Bitner 1992; Goss 1993; Howes 2004; LaBelle 2010). Tourism service providers have appropriated these tools to create more satisfying experiences for tourists, and the production of ambiances is now central to the design of many tourism-oriented facilities. Hotels rely on architecture, spatial design, and management to provide positive experiences for tourists (Heide et al. 2007). Spas design ambiances to suggest quietness, wellness, and relaxation (Manhas et al. 2019). Airplanes focus on air quality, temperature, layout, and amenities to provide a satisfactory flight experience (Han 2013) and deploy music and video to generate an in-flight atmospheric identity (Vanspauwen and Sánchez-Fuarros 2023). Airports rely on spatial design and ambient music to enact safe and tranquil spaces for travellers (Adey 2009, 2014; Adey et al. 2013).

The widespread interest in the production of ambiances by tourism service providers is hardly surprising when considering the amount of evidence produced by tourism studies demonstrating their efficacy. These studies argue that perceptions and acknowledgement of ambiances of place interrelated with strong emotional experiences (Lu et al. 2017). For this very reason, ambiance plays a fundamental role in the formation of memorable experiences (Kim 2014; Coelho et al. 2018), and with the literature reporting that tourists having positive atmospheric

experiences attain higher levels of satisfaction and are more willing to recommend the destination (Jani and Han 2014). Consequently, ambiance is perceived as fundamental to the development of destination loyalty (Wang et al. 2021).

It has been noted that the production of ambiances entails the mobilization of several fields of knowledge, including architecture, urban design, business management, marketing, and UX design, among others (Heide et al. 2007; Paiva and Sánchez-Fuarros 2021). In this sense, there are also different approaches to producing ambiances. At the level of architecture, ambiances can be designed to create spaces that direct subjects towards practices of consumption, promoting interactivity and immersive multisensory experiences (Heide et al. 2007; Adey 2008, 2014). At the level of design, ambiances can be staged by introducing elements such as light, music, or food, which provide novel or distinct sensory experiences in a given place (Bille et al. 2015; Bjerregaard 2015; Bille 2019). At the level of performance, producing ambiances involves the organizing of events that engage consumers in affective practices with special sensory experiences (Sumar-tojo 2016; Michels and Steyaert 2017; Paiva and Cachinho 2018).

One interesting aspect of tourism studies is that ambiance is considered not only in terms of an embodied, site-specific multisensory experience but also in terms of the indirect experiences mediated by media and the imagination (Coelho et al. 2018).

Despite the tourism industry's interest in ambiance, and the burgeoning literature on urban atmospheres, strikingly few studies have approached the relationship between ambiance, tourism, and the city. While the role urban ambiance plays in tourism experiences has been thoroughly explored, there has been far less attention to how the ambiance of tourism destinations sustain liveability and social cohesion for local communities. According to Wheeler and Laing (2008), the well-being of local communities in tourism destinations depends on the existence of vibrant ambiances for both residents and tourists. Such balances are difficult to achieve. Places with vibrant ambiances that stem from the effervescence of the local community's social life often become the key attractions for tourists seeking that same vibrancy (Zhang et al. 2016), leading to touristification processes that degrade local resident quality of life (Paiva and Sánchez-Fuarros 2021). Over time, this not only harms local communities but also negatively impacts on the quality of tourism experiences.

Such issues highlight the intimate relationship between tourism and local cultures. The ambiances of tourism draw upon the facets of local cultures that endow identity and a sense of belonging to communities alongside a sense of uniqueness to each place (Volgger and Pfister 2020). For instance, the power of the ambiance of historical architecture and urban heritage over creating unique and distinct experiences, especially for tourists, has been underlined (Berman 2006). On the other hand, increasing attention is now paid to intangible heritage, such as music and food (Sánchez-Fuarros 2016).

In this sense, tourism activities depend on local cultures to sustain them and compete with other unique products in a competitive international market. Paradoxically, local cultures are nevertheless under threat from the growth of tourism

in many different ways. On the one hand, the touristification of urban places often leads to processes of transnational gentrification that displace local residents from those neighbourhoods becoming tourism hotspots (Sequera and Nofre 2018, 2019; Malet Calvo and Ramos 2018). On the other hand, the success of tourism-oriented businesses often leads to the decline of resident-oriented stores and services, leading to the loss of important community hangouts (Guimarães 2021, 2022). More importantly, the ambiances of touristified places are themselves subject to change as the tourism activities go about introducing their own sensescapes, commonly leading to increases in noise and litter (Shaw 2014; Paiva and Sánchez-Fuarros 2021).

Tourism, ambiance, and authenticity

Urban ambiances for tourism consumption depend on the production and performance of various sensorial elements to be experienced by visitors. One of the most valued and relevant depends on the (re)production and enactment of what is perceived as the local culture's "authenticity". Indeed, authenticity has become a major force in shaping contemporary urban life (Tate and Shannon 2018). As a place-making strategy (Cao 2022), different ideas of authenticity are mobilized as discursive devices with real and practical effects on enhancing the heritage value in the rehabilitation and preservation of historic centres (Barnes et al. 2006) or on rendering the unique characteristics of a location into a commodity as is often the case in top-down revitalization projects of ethnic and deprived urban areas (see e.g. Sánchez-Fuarros 2017). In her book *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places* (2010), sociologist Sharon Zukin explores the powerful paradox at the root of this phenomenon: how the pervasive demand for experiences of authenticity, mostly by educated urbanites and tourists, is destroying the local uniqueness of the very urban places they seem to venerate. Zukin maintains that authenticity refers to a sense of origins linked to a feeling of community rooted in a particular territory – or, as she puts it, to "the social connectedness that place inspires" (Zukin 2010, 220). In Zukin's view, urban authenticity retains certain atmospheric overtones as the authenticity of a place leads us back to its vibes or feeling. As seen earlier, processes of urban change such as gentrification and touristification threaten those vernacular ways of inhabiting the city which, in Zukin's words, "create the distinctive character of the streets (Zukin 2010, x). This is especially the case in (over)touristified urban centres, where the introduction of new consumption practices, tourist attractions, and global lifestyles disrupt traditional everyday urban ambiances (see Di Croce in this volume).

An elusive concept, authenticity is embedded not only in the vocabulary of urban preservation (Salah Ouf 2001) and revitalization (Waitt 2000) but also in that of the tourism industry.² As Sine Heitmann argues, authenticity "is one of the key drivers for most tourism experiences" (Heitmann 2011, 45). Whether searching for obscure graffiti through the back alleys of the city (see Lindmäe and/or Muñoz Morán in this volume), finding that restaurant frequented by local patrons, or discovering that music bar off the beaten tourist track, tourists

constantly search for experiences of authenticity (MacCannell 1976). The idea of authenticity has been conceptualized in different categories within tourism research, with the objective, constructive, and existential approaches the most prominent in recent scholarship (Wang 1999; Rickly 2022; Knudsen and Waade 2010). While the first approach equates authenticity with the notions of originality and uniqueness related to the typical objects of tourist desire (heritage sites, museums, cultural events), the constructivist approach focuses on the socially constructed nature of authenticity. On the other hand, the category of existential authenticity aims to capture precisely the experiential dimension of authenticity, which is mobilized through interactions of its objective and constructed components (Rickly-Boyd 2013).

Tourism authenticity is, in short, a hard to define, multi-faceted concept (Rickly-Boyd 2012). An authentic tourist experience does not mean the same to every tourist: This correspondingly involves a combination of the expectations of tourists, their prior understandings and knowledge of local/foreign values, and the nature of the tourist encounter itself (Larsen 2010). David Grazian's work on the Chicago blues scene brilliantly illustrates this idea (Grazian 2003). In his book, Grazian explores how the values attached to a certain idea of music authenticity mediate the relationship between tourists arriving in Chicago in search of an "authentic" blues performance and the surrounding urban environment and how the latter is transformed to accommodate (or resist) foreign values and expectations.

In this sense, tourism authenticity advances along a continuum ranging from displays of "staged authenticity" (MacCannell 1976) for mass tourism consumption to tailor-made, individualized, and exclusive tourism experiences. While the former is often associated with theme parks, cultural events, or historical reenactments of heritage sites, the contemporary embodiment of the latter would be the economies of authenticity that circulate within the sharing and experience economies (Lalicic and Weismayer 2017; Andersson 2007; Paulauskaite et al. 2017; Pine and Gilmore 2013). In the latter scenario, the tourist moves from being a more or less passive spectator to becoming a performer or producer of these experiences. In both cases and along the continuum, the creation of particular atmospheres that evoke the sense of an "authentic past", uniqueness, wonder, or truth – all attributes associated to a certain idea of authenticity – is required. In this sense, pre-existing atmospheres are often modified, adapted, or recreated for the tourist audience to deepen their attractiveness and to better align them with tourist expectations. For instance, shops selling traditional products in tourist areas often adopt a fake vintage aesthetic in which the patina of tradition is replaced by scenarios in papier-mâché, carefully groomed sale assistants and photo-friendly backgrounds. By the same token, eating and drinking spaces in tourist districts also perform and stage atmospheres of authenticity attuned with the "real" dining experience they intend to convey to their diners (Cuthill 2007). For instance, Bryce Peake explores how ambient sounds and music contribute to the production of "authentic" eating experiences in restaurants on the Maltese island of Gozo (Peake 2008).

The paradox underlying the production of authentic ambiances for tourist consumption evokes the figure of the “innocent vandals” referred to by Bruno Latour in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue for *Iconoclash* (Latour et al. 2002). Through this figure, Latour refers to a type of iconoclast that destroys images “unintentionally”, almost with kindness. The French anthropologist sets the example of restoration and architecture as two activities that, in their eagerness to protect and idolize images – to restore works of art in the first case and to embellish cities in the second – they end up destroying them. The desire for authenticity can generate the same outcome. Indeed, Francesc Muñoz suggests the concept of “urbanalisation” to account for a process of city simplification in which urban diversity and complexity are reduced to fit into a common visual order (Muñoz 2010). The production of *banalscapes*, according to Muñoz, is the result of processes of imitation and selection in which certain vernacular elements of the past are emphasized over others.

Following Muñoz and expanding this idea to other domains of the sensorial, we propose the concept of “sonic touristification” to account for the dynamic and contested process through which the sound environment of a place, that is collectively recognized and valued as distinctive, is progressively affected by other sonorities associated with – or directly produced by – tourist activities. For instance, the increased demand from tourists visiting Lisbon to listen to live fado in traditional neighbourhoods such as Alfama has led to a proliferation of fado venues “that cater mostly for a tourist audience, at the expense of other types of establishments (Sánchez-Fuarros and Lacerda 2022). As a result, the sound of fado – Portugal’s quintessential form of urban popular song – pervades the streets of Alfama as the evening draws in, masking other sonorities and becoming the prevailing “sound-mark” of the territory. On the other hand, sonic touristification also manifests itself through the implementation of noise ordinances and the control of certain practices in public spaces that are considered inappropriate (Sánchez-Fuarros 2017). Thus, sonic touristification implies significant – and sometimes irreversible – changes in the local sound environment through processes of equalization and filtering that result, in most cases, in the banalisation and homogenization of its sonic diversity.

Hence, any study about the production of atmospheres for tourist consumption cannot avoid discussing authenticity. This represents a theme that, to a greater or lesser extent, cuts across all of the chapters in this book. Both ambiance and authenticity are relational concepts. While the former “foreground the interaction between the properties of the built environment and the lived experience of city dwellers” (Thibaud 2011, 204), in the case of authenticity, its meaning and value emanate from the interplay between objects, sites, and experiences (Rickly-Boyd 2012). In this sense, we argue that the conceptual framework of atmospheric studies provides the potential to extend the studies of authenticity within tourism research to incorporate the sensuous production of authentic experiences for the consumption of tourists.

The contents of this book

The book is divided into five sections covering a wide range of case studies spanning different geographic locations and fields of study. These contributions

explore how atmospheres for touristic consumption are designed, staged, and performed in different social and cultural contexts, including Spain, Ireland, Colombia, the United States, Italy, Slovenia, Mexico, France, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Malaysia. The book extends to a companion web page that includes various audiovisual materials that complement the content of the individual chapters.³

The first section contains a strong musical emphasis as two of the three contributions included explore the role of music in the affective enactment of urban public spaces. In their chapter, Ofer Gazit and Elisa Bruttomesso discuss the problematic contributions of music tourism to the social and economic development of impoverished tourism destinations in the Caribbean. By analysing the return of viral YouTube videos to the locales in which they were filmed, in this case San Juan's La Perla neighbourhood and Kingston's Fleet Street, Gazit and Bruttomesso suggest the need to rethink the obligations of big tech companies to the cultural places that generate so much of their revenues due to the disproportionate financial gains of data mining companies as compared to those of local musicians, venues, and producers. The next chapter further explores the role of music in the construction of sonic urban imageries. Natalia Bieletto Bueno and Gustavo Galván Cázares set out comprehensive analysis of the *estudiantinas* phenomenon in Guanajuato (Mexico) and how public performances affect the experience of the surrounding built environment. At the core of this chapter is the delicate balance between urban planning, cultural legacies, cultural policies, and tourism, with the presence of the *estudiantinas* in the narrow streets of Guanajuato's colonial city centre raising timely questions about the usage and control of public space, the reproduction of colonial legacies, and the monoculture of certain musical expressions oriented towards tourist consumption. The third and last chapter of this section takes a critical look at the metamorphosis of one of Medellín's evil districts into a tourist destination. In particular, Maria Lindmäe examines this transformation on two, closely intertwined, levels: the design of urban ambiances through urban planning, and the staging and performing of such ambiances via walking tours (see also the Trevor Jamerson and Kwame Harrison chapter for an interesting comparison). Lindmäe's chapter resonates with Gazit and Bruttomesso's in the sense that both contributions raise critical awareness about the dangers of commodifying underrepresented and impoverished local communities, and the ways in which the production of atmospheres for tourist consumption can contribute to such fetishization.

The second section is dedicated to the ambiances of the built environment. Panizza Allmark draws on her own photographic research in shopping malls across the globe to reflect upon the social representations embedded in the consumption-oriented ambiances of shopping malls. Her reflection examines how representations of hegemonic gender and racial ideals are built into the aesthetics of shopping malls, creating spaces of Debordian spectacle that simultaneously attract and fetichize. Allmark's reflection leads us to think about the production of spaces of consumption under capitalism, and how they interweave aesthetics and politics. While shopping malls have long since been understood as the most iconic materialization of consumption culture, Allmark highlights how they are

now also advertised as “shopping destinations” across the globe, creating a new social and economic role for these kinds of spaces. Pablo Arboleda, on the other hand, provides a novel perspective on sun and sand tourism facilities by exploring these spaces during the low season in Spain. Arboleda draws upon a creative ethnographic excursion during wintertime, which resulted in the making of a videopoem about the ambiances of abandoned tourism facilities, to discuss their liminality and spectrality. Arboleda’s discussion raises important questions about how the rhythms and cycles of tourism interact with the material landscape, and how the architecture of tourism facilities encapsulates ambiguous emotions and senses of place over time. The reflections by Allmark and Arboleda unveil the cultural complexity of the ambiances of tourism – and consumption – oriented architecture and offer significant examples of how researching ambiances can unveil the nuances and contradictions of wider social and economic processes.

In the third section, we turn to the moving experience of ambiances. Here, the understanding of movement spans two different dimensions. On the one hand, these chapters explore walking through ambiances as a specific mode of relating to the environment, and perhaps one of the most important in everyday life. On the other hand, they also unveil how ambiances move us, changing our knowledge of the city, our sense of place, and our connection to the environment. First, Brahy, Pattaroni, and Hoffman investigate La Ligne Verte, an urban pedestrian route in Nantes, France. The authors are concerned with understanding how the route is perceived by pedestrians, and how it orients and frames their experience of the city. They question the sensory experience of the route, looking at how it paves the way for a specific version of the city, which in turn raises the question of what kinds of city are under creation through contemporary urban projects and for whom. In this sense, Brahy, Pattaroni, and Hoffman also unveil how the construction of urban materiality and ambiance also builds up what they call the “common of the city”. Second, Sandi Abram approaches the impact of the touristification of Ljubljana, Slovenia, on the sensory organization of public space. Abram applies a sensobiographic walking method with old and young residents in the city to understand how they perceive the changes in the city’s public space from the material and sensorial perspectives. His study conveys how residents respond cognitively and emotionally to what Abram describes as the hyper-aestheticization and spectacularization of public space that aims to create sensory-affective enticement for tourism consumption. Third, Yonatan Collier reflects on the outcomes of his own creative practice through describing the making of “Taman Tugu: Interference/Resistance”, an interactive musical work developed for the Taman Tugu jungle park in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The musical work is mapped into the jungle park through an augmented reality (AR) audio app, allowing visitors to explore the work while walking through the park, providing interesting interactions between the park’s ambiance and Collier’s atmospheric musical work. While the Brahy, Pattaroni, and Abram studies lead us to question the ambiances created for tourism and consumption, Collier’s work provides a hopeful inspiration to think about ways to create more sustainable and ecologically aware experiences in tourism cities.

The fourth section shifts the focus to local spaces of sociability in which identities and a sense of belonging are negotiated and affirmed. The section's three chapters explore how tourism threatens the sustainability of these local environments. Muñoz Morán's chapter navigates through different scenarios and urban environments in which graffiti images interface urban tourism, creating "textures" that extend beyond the visual and material dimensions of an artwork. Taking the relational features of ethnographic research as both a method and a metaphor, the author details how graffiti combine the past, present, and future of cities, participating in urban meta-pictures that connect different worlds while transmitting meanings and generating urban ambiances. From the geodesic domes of a listening spy station in West Berlin to the abandoned buildings and empty walls of Barcelona's Vallcarca neighbourhood, this chapter collected different examples of how the material features of urban environments are active and political non-human entities that enable and facilitate the interface between people, images, and meanings. In this sense, the author proposes the academia to take seriously not only the discourses and practices of graffiti artists but also the way materials, images, and environments – that function as their canvas – impact (and transform) artists and artworks. The article also identifies how many of the images and narratives that facilitate individual and collective political struggles have ended up engulfed by the demands and presence of the power dynamics of mass tourism.

The next chapter places its focus on the many changes experienced in Cincinnati's Findlay Market (Ohio), the only surviving public market in the city that daily receives many locals and a growing number of tourists and visitors. Lisa Marie Beiswenger presents us with the history of this market, that went through many difficult episodes from cleansing reforms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the current modern logistic difficulties. Based upon surveys and participant observation, the article presents three major changes experienced in the market during the last decades, which relate to the sociocultural transformations of American cities in the twenty-first century. First, the market evolved from being a place where people come to purchase cooking ingredients to a space full of shops selling prepared food and beverages. Second, the market expanded its opening hours and days from just three to six days (closing only on Mondays), which attracted new types of visitors from outside the area. Third, vendors depended traditionally on food stamp purchases from poor people (mostly Afro-American) while now most of their customers are urban professionals looking for more gourmet and sophisticated foods and ingredients. In sum, gentrification processes in the area changed the socioeconomic status of visitors who, in turn, demanded the new products that continue to transform the Market.

Meanwhile, Wanumen's chapter presents the promotion and marketization of Barranquilla's Gay Carnival by the local and national authorities to project the city as a modern and cosmopolitan destination, especially aimed at attracting LGBTIQ+ niche tourism. However, the author demonstrates the many ways heteronormativity (and homonormative neoliberalism) appropriate and dominate queer bodies to produce a profitable, touristified carnival while disregarding the violence and discrimination these same bodies suffer not only during the carnival

but also in their everyday lives. On the one hand, carnival's promotional videos manipulate the soundtrack to conceal people's disapproval and reactions of mockery towards LGBTIQ+ parade participants, trying to dispel the tensions, discrimination, and violence that still prevail in Barranquilla's public space. On the other hand, queer bodies are only allowed and accepted in the carnival as artistically productive in specific roles (dancers, producers, choreographers, directors) but are excluded from music making, which is an integral part of the heteronormative core of Caribbean identity and politics. While the carnival creates some free space-times for gender and sexual diversity, these are totally intersected by everyday violence and discrimination, including homophobic and transphobic shouts during the carnival's parade.

The articles included in the fifth and final section explore the mechanisms through which atmospheric production participates in the creation of experiences of tourism authenticity. It is not by chance that the three articles in this section focus on different aspects of the urban sonic environment, for sound, through the "anamnesis effect", possesses a unique power to "revive a situation or an atmosphere of the past" (Augoyard et al. 2006, 21), merging sound, perception, and memory. In his chapter, Nicola Di Croce examines the changes in the acoustic environment of traditional markets in the Italian city of Palermo as they become tourist attractions. In particular, he analyses the survival of traditional sonic practices such as the trader's everyday cries and sales pitches that reflect a line of continuity with a past that is now fading due to the decline in traders and local consumers and the homogenizing forces inherent to the very process of touristification. Drawing from the findings of two creative and research led projects, Di Croce argues that a critical listening culture is key to attuning to the affective tonalities that endow urban public spaces with their unique characters. The urban sound environment is also the focus of the next chapter. William Trevor Jamerson and Anthony Kwame Harrison explore the way different types of sound (musical, verbal, and ambient) create an immersive sensuous experience of Blackness for tourists who participate in community-based walking tours in Harlem, what they refer to as a "moving tourist bubble". Connecting critical race theory with sound studies, Jamerson and Harrison's contribution unveils a powerful paradox at the core of the touristification of deprived urban areas: Tourism operates simultaneously as an agent of gentrification and, in the particular case of Harlem, all the while supporting a claim that it remains, essentially, a space for – and belonging to – African American Blackness.

Finally, Aileen Dillane and Sarah Raine's chapter draws us into TradFest, an annual music festival that is held at Temple Bar, Dublin's iconic cultural district famous for its traditional pub culture and association to traditional Irish music. Their contribution problematizes the authenticity/inauthenticity dichotomy that is frequently implied in tourism discourses and practices by exploring the distinctive atmosphere of Temple Bar's traditional Irish pubs as a complex interaction between the built environment, the materiality of objects, people, and music, in which tourists and locals confront their own expectations. Aileen and Raine depart from the assumption that equates the authentic with the "real", and instead

propose an approach to the study of authenticity that privileges the performative, conjunctural, and relational aspects of the tourist encounter.

The book closes with an afterword written by Manuel Delgado entitled “Urban correspondences” in which the author draws a fine line connecting the urban theory implicit in Charles Baudelaire’s work with the revolutionary sensory ecology proposed by the CRESSON researchers in France to which this volume is greatly indebted. The author firmly rejects the temptation to read the city as a text and, instead, views it as

an order of profound coincidences, at once clear and lush, in which colours, smells, patterns . . . and sounds dialogue and merge with each other until engendering something we are unable to either define or describe. (p. 258)

To deepen the understanding of the ways in which these elusive entities that we call “ambiances” or “atmospheres” pervade the physical regeneration and sensory transformation of contemporary tourist destinations is the ultimate aim of this edited collection.

Notes

- 1 *Source*: TourMIS (www.tourmis.info).
- 2 Urban revitalization and tourism development are, in fact, mutually dependent.
- 3 The multimedia and audiovisual documents may be consulted at the following URL address: <https://soundsoftourism.pt/ambiance-tourism-and-the-city/>.

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