Contemporary Issues in Cruise Tourism: The People and the Ports

Over the past two decades cruise tourism has more than doubled in size, from 5 million cruise passengers in 1997 to 28 million in 2018. Cruise industry forecasts reveal continued growth, with the number of vessels operating likely to increase from 264 ships in 2018 to 472 ships by 2027. What does such rapid and persistent growth mean for tourists and port communities? What is the impact of such continued growth on maritime environments, destination communities and economies, and what sustainability challenges and opportunities exist? How do port destinations accommodate such growth, at a time when many places are starting to push back against mass tourism, and what systems are in place to manage the needs of the various stakeholders involved? This session explores these critical questions by examining relations between resident populations and the people who visit, both cruise passengers and non-cruise tourists, and critically discusses the impacts of cruising on the ports.

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Science and cruise tourism practices: A cool combination?
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Polar tourism is increasingly diversifying. Some of the current drivers for this diversification include the manifestation of the shared economy of science and tourism, the emergence of public – private partnerships between polar science institutions and commercial tourism operators, and the popularisation of citizen science and transdisciplinary approaches in polar research. There are undoubtedly mutual benefits of combining science and tourism, however this does not mean that the production of joint expeditions are seamless and unproblematic. In this paper we aim to analyse how science and tourism practices connect from the inside out, i.e. through an ethnographic study of a joint science and tourism expedition to Svalbard, in order to understand the implications for management. The analysis builds on the work of contemporary practice theorist Theodore Schatzki, who claims that social practices are embedded in material arrangements and organised by practical and general understandings, rules and teleoffective structures (objectives).

The SEES expedition was framed as the largest Dutch research expedition to the Polar Regions and combined the work of around 50 multidisciplinary scientists, along with 50 paying tourists, various media representatives and other officials on a 10 day expedition cruise. The authors took part in the activities and investigated if and how the two practices of tourism and science would co-exist, how they mutually affected each other, and what are the management implications of this combination. This resulted in the following key insights.

Most participants, both tourists and scientists, were aware of the unique combination of science and tourism during this expedition, the differing stakes and objectives, and the flexibility this
brought along. Particularly the scientists were eager for their own scientific mission to be successfully completed, whereas for most of the tourists the presence of the scientists and the data collection provided a key motivation to take part in the expedition to learn from the scientists and by participating in different scientific projects. However, insurance rules complicated this process. Tourists could only participate in scientific projects if a tourist guide would join them and if the ship would stay close by. In the beginning the right balance between tourism and science had to be found. As the expedition progressed, the participants adapted to the differing interests in the expedition. Adaptive and smart planning and clear communication are crucial factors, and can be seen as a connecting practice for effectively combining science and tourism.

Sustainability in conflict – a study of cruise tourism to Gotland
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Cruise tourism is fraught with sustainability challenges related to a mismatch of scales in time and space: a large number of people to small places, for a short period of time. This is also the case at Gotland, a Swedish island in the Baltic Sea. Gotland is a long established tourism destination, mainly for Swedish tourists, but has also hosted smaller scale cruise tourism for many years. The main attraction is the cultural heritage of the medieval town of Visby. This year saw a significant rise in number of visitors. The reason is a new cruising quay. Used for the first season, this new infrastructural investment resulted in a rise in number of ships, as well as larger ships.

This new situation resulted in new sustainability challenges. Seeing as many as 5000 tourists a day, a tourist attraction like the town Dome faced new problems. Due to the door to the church being opened so frequently the climate in the building changed, with mold as a consequence. The sewage system of the toilets collapsed. The intensity of visitors at some hours made the negotiation between using the dome as a tourist attraction and as a site of religious contemplation difficult. As the church does not charge an entrance fee, the need for more attendants had no funding.

How can mixed methods research including ICT and tracking of tourists be used to shed light on this situation? The purpose of this paper is to discuss how methods including qualitative fieldwork at the destination, a survey of cruise visitors’ perceptions, GPS loggers distributed to the cruise tourists to capture movements in the destination and to click on when seeing a point of interest, be used to understand sustainability challenges at this destination? Can they, possibly, in collaboration with the actors at the destination, be used to deal with sustainability challenges?

Keywords: Cruise tourism, Gotland, Sustainability, economic, ecological, social challenges, mixed methods
Understanding sustainable behavioral patterns and perception of cruise tourism impacts based on cruise motivation as clustering criteria

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Cruise tourism is the type of tourism that has according to all statistics undergone phenomenal growth over the last two decades. The sustainability within the cruise tourism has received considerable attention in the last few years. Nowadays, both cruise tourists and cruise operators are aware of potential negative impacts of the cruise tourism on cruise destinations, which is especially important when a novel port of call was introduced in the cruise line itinerary. Thus, Pori, (Finland) is seen as the perfect research environment, as it is recently recognized and introduced as a new stop within the Baltic cruise lines route. The cruise tourists’ motivation play important role in understanding their perception regarding the sustainability and anticipated cruise tourism impacts. The aim of the research is to understand the relation of the motivation to involve in cruise tourism towards sustainability issues. Specifically, the study aims to segment the cruise tourists according to their cruise motivation, followed with an examination of the separated clusters towards sustainable behaviour and anticipated impacts of cruise tourism towards the destination. Finally, satisfaction and loyalty in the context of the cluster membership characteristic of the cruise tourists have been additionally explored. The results finding will be great value for cruise line operators and destination marketers in further understanding the relation of the cruise tourists’ motivation and its connection with sustainable behaviour, satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: sustainability, cruise tourism, motivation, clustering, Finland

The value of narratives on cruise. Images, destinations and cruisers in Sicily

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As happens for all types of tourism, even in the case of cruise ship tourism narratives play a fundamental role. Advertising’s images, tourist guidebooks, suggestions by travel agencies and relatives and friends’ word of mouth create complex narratives able to influence routes of passengers-tourists when they visit a destination.

By using partly a fieldwork conducted in Sicily, in this paper I intend to explore the ways through which narratives of destinations “interact” with cruisers’ choices when they are ashore. In order to study this interaction, I analyse some significant cruise tourism advertising, advice from cruise companies, narratives of cruisers and former cruisers I collected during a period of participant observation (aboard some cruises and on the mainland). From this complex “picture” it is possible
to understand better what perception of some Sicilian destinations cruisers have before to visit them. At the same time, it is possible to identify some dynamics of interaction ashore, when they visit a destination as they please: decision-making processes, chosen routes and so on. Moreover, this paper tries to bring out the value of narratives in the construction of an anthological way to visit the region where the ship stops. Indeed, if economic data report cruise passengers do not spend much on average ashore, that complex system of representations – outcome of both cultural patterns and systems of interaction – can make a same destination attractive for their future travels.

**Cruise tourist experiences ashore: informing the future New Zealand cruise industry**

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The global cruise industry is rapidly growing and the New Zealand cruise industry has experienced significant growth – double that of the global rate. Important components of the cruise industry are the experiences offered to cruise tourists when they go ashore at ports-of-call. Surprisingly, experiences at ports-of-call are seldom investigated in academic literature. Through a quantitative survey with cruise passengers coming ashore (n=742) the research presented at this conference aims to provide an understanding of the onshore experience sought. Findings from this research and a larger planned research project, will inform cruise industry stakeholders, especially cruise operators and destination organisations, in future marketing and investment strategies.

**Exclusionary mobilities: Enclave tourism, private islands and the cruise industry**

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Research linking tourism enclaves with social and spatial exclusion has steadily expanded these past two decades. Critics have argued such developments are unsustainable – not only are local residents isolated and excluded from tourism space, but enclaves also deliver disproportionate economic benefit through imbalanced power relations to local and/or international elites. Similarly, cruise ships are also framed as enclaves, where passengers seek structured and standardised experiences on vessels expressly designed to maximise on-board consumption. Such mobile enclaves have become destinations in themselves, with ports of call concerned that passengers spend decreased time and therefore money in their destination. Nowhere is this more acute than where cruise lines lease so-called ‘private islands’. Often, although not exclusively, located in the Caribbean, private islands enable cruise lines to offer an ‘exotic’ yet sanitised version of paradise away from any unpleasant sights of poverty, or physical and health risks and to guarantee good customer service. They also offer cruise lines access to new destinations to boost the appeal of established itineraries in countries whose tourism infrastructure is not ready to accept international tourists. Intentionally designed to segregate tourists from local communities, such spaces raise questions of social exclusion, (im)mobilities, and power
Navigating uncertainty: Tourists' perceptions of risk in cruising
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Understanding how tourists feel about risk is crucial because the presence of risk, whether real or perceived, has the potential to change travel decision-making. However, risk is not well understood in travel, and particularly limited in relation to cruise holidays. Cruises are particularly relevant for examining conceptualizations of risk due to the complex decision-making involved for many tourists (Petrick et al, 2007) and the ‘complementarity’ nature of the consumption experience (Gibson, 2006; Vellas & Becherel, 1995). A cruise is a bounded and enclavistic holiday, with particular maritime traditions affecting social aspects and unique physical risks, making a cruise an excellent means to explore the multi-dimensional nature of risk.

However, current understanding of risk in cruising narrowly focuses on physical aspects such as health and safety. Based on a recent PhD study, this paper discusses how risk in cruising may also be understood in relation to social, psychological, financial, performance and time aspects. Image elicitation was used to illuminate thoughts and feelings about cruising and how risk may be interpreted in the cruise context and how risk may be interpreted by both cruisers and non-cruisers. This study illuminates how the perception of risk is far more complicated and multi-dimensional than previously thought, and illuminates risk in cruising is more than just physical risk. Risk has been traditionally conceptualized as the potential for physical harm, and yet this does not fully explain risk nor encompass the social construction of how risk perceptions are formed. The way risk is currently defined is too narrow to fully explain risk in cruising. The familiarity of the ship emerges as an attractive tourist bubble to some cruisers, and is also rejected by some noncruisers as too similar to home and not 'other' enough. Framing the study through a risk lens challenges the way risk is conceptualized in cruising, and provides insight into the nuanced ways risk may influence tourist decision-making for a cruise.