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Zerva, K., Palou, S., Blasco, D., & Donaire, J. A. B. (2019). Tourism-philía versus tourism-phobia: residents and destination management organization's publicly expressed tourism perceptions in Barcelona. *Tourism Geographies*, 21 (2), 306-329. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2018.1522510>

## Tourism-phia versus Tourism-phobia: Evolution of residents and DMO's perceptions in Barcelona

**Abstract:** The current research on hosts' perceptions of tourism has focused on survey-based studies, proving their heterogeneity at the moment of the study but lacking to present any evolution in time. This paper aims to show if and how hosts' narratives of tourism have changed in the particular case of the city of Barcelona (Spain) from 2004 to 2015. analyzing any common and opposing points of their argumentation as they may change in time. These narratives represent the perspectives of two opposing groups of hosts: residents and DMOs. We used thematic analysis to portray their public discourse, as expressed in the residents' magazine *Carrer*, and the annual reports of *Turisme de Barcelona*. Through the analysis of common and opposing points of their argumentation, our findings show a clear division between the residents' tourism-phobic perception and the DMO's tourism-philic one which appear to change over time, going from complete opposites to searching for common ground.

**Keywords:** residents, DMO, perception, Social Representation Theory, Barcelona, tourism-phobia

### 1. Introduction

Host-guest relationships in tourism destinations have been thoroughly analyzed in the literature, and cover aspects such as residents' perceptions of the costs and benefits derived from tourism, community engagement in tourism management and decision-taking, and degrees of visitor satisfaction, to name a few of the areas most explored. Many theories and models, like Social Exchange Theory or the Segmentation Approach, have been used to analyze how different segments of a community or even each member of a particular segment perceive costs and benefits related to tourism in their territory (Lankford & Howard 1994; Hernandez et al. 1996; McNaughton 2006; Iorio & Wall 2012; Presenza et al. 2013, Griffin 2013). In a destination, the host community is comprised not only by its residents but also by its local authorities, whose members not only live in the destination but also decide for and publicly defend their tourism planning. The host is compared to a passive receiver of change during the process of tourism development (Su & Teo 2008), or as a component of tourism supply, that is, a service provider, or even the spectacle itself (van de Berghe in Woosnam 2011) who should treat tourists well (Hernandez et al. 1996).

Focusing highly on the residents' perspective through quantitative analysis, an heterogeneity in reaction towards tourism has been reported, varying from complete support from clusters such as "lovers" (Davis et al. 1988; Madrigal 1995; Fredline & Faulkner 2000; Williams & Lawson 2001),

1 “advocates” (Andriotis & Vaughan 2003), and “activists” (Presenza et al. 2013), to opposing clusters  
2 such as “haters” (Davis et al. 1988; Madrigal 1995; Fredline & Faulkner 2000), “opposers” (Presenza  
3 et al. 2013), and “cynics” (Williams & Lawson 2001). Between these two extreme standpoints, many  
4 less absolute perceptions were represented by clusters who preferred such as “in-betweeners” (Davis et  
5 al. 1988), “realists” (Madrigal 1995; Fredline & Faulkner 2000), “cautious romantics” (Davis et al.  
6 1988), “socially and environmentally concerned” and “economic skeptics” (Andriotis & Vaughan  
7 2003), or “disenchanted” (Presenza et al. 2013), and finally, those residents who live distanced from  
8 the tourism impact, called the “innocents” (Williams & Lawson 2001).

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16 On the other hand, the official positioning of the local authorities like Destination Management  
17 Organizations (DMOs), does not reflect such a variety of perceptions, but on the contrary there is a  
18 clear support of the economic importance for continuous tourism planning and development so as a  
19 destination can become and /or remain competitive in the global market (Sainaghi 2006; d’Angela &  
20 Go 2009; Bornhorst, Ritchie & Sheehan 2010; Volgger & Pechlaner 2014). The negative impacts of  
21 problematic tourism strategies such as environmental costs (Mihalic 2000), lack of cooperation or  
22 consensus among organizations (Beritelli 2011; Bregoli 2013), or official planning without the  
23 knowledge and support of the host population in search for more sustainable approaches (Madrigal  
24 1995; Andriotis & Vaughn 2003; Gursoy et al. 2010; Látková & Vogt 2012), are presented as the next  
25 challenge of future development policies of local authorities.

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32 This diversity of standpoints towards tourism - albeit investigated on separate terms - has been poorly  
33 highlighted within and between hosts during the course of time. Looking for destinations where  
34 opposing points of view among DMOs and residents are reported and could create a confusing image  
35 of hospitality to tourists, the case of the city of Barcelona was considered inviting. The main objective  
36 of this study is to show the evolution of the separate narratives of tourism as expressed by residents  
37 and local authorities in Barcelona, in order to see if there is any possible metamorphosis of these  
38 collective and on some occasions opposing perceptions and, if any, towards which direction. The  
39 reporting of the evolution of hosts’ perceptions could indicate the possibility of an homogenous  
40 hosting image of the destination.

## 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 **2. The Study of Perceptions and Perceptions about Tourism**

### 52 53 54 ***2.1. Formation of attitudes towards tourism***

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56 Locals’ perceptions and attitudes towards tourism and its development have been widely studied, and  
57 various models and theoretical contexts have been used to explain how they are formed and expressed  
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2 in potential or developed tourism destinations (Sharpley 2014). Previous theories explain how  
3 perceptions are influenced, shaped and re-shaped, accepting the concept of change. Within the  
4 interpretational context of social realists, society and human activities depend on one another and are  
5 constantly changing. Through social interaction, ideas based on perceived and socially constructed  
6 realities, are formed, and action taken (Friedman & Miles 2002). For Archer (1995) changing social  
7 realities should be analyzed by distinguishing between three concepts: 1) social structures (such as  
8 opportunities and power relationships among stakeholders); 2) cultural systems (for example, ideas of  
9 what is true or false); and 3) the perceptions formed or actions taken based on these perceptions. This  
10 analysis explains how these concepts influence ideas and actions of others over time, leading to further  
11 development of these structures and systems. Thus, the key in analyzing social reality is distinguishing  
12 a temporal sequence where socio-cultural interaction, structural conditioning and elaboration emerge,  
13 intertwine and redefine one another over time (Archer 1995: 76).

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22 Yet in most studies attitudes and perceptions are considered as synonyms (Sharpley 2014), while by  
23 definition that is not accurate. According to the Cambridge dictionary, attitude can include either a  
24 feeling or opinion, or a way of behaving, while perception refers only to opinion. Regarding ways of  
25 behaving, various models have been developed so as to show different types of attitudes towards.  
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29 Doxey's Index of Tourist Irritation or Irridex (1975) provides one of the most influential  
30 interpretations of a host community's response to the impacts of tourism development. This  
31 interpretation proposes four progressive stages in attitude evolution: starting with 'euphoria', moving to  
32 'apathy', then 'irritation', and finally 'antagonism'. This deteriorating sequence of reactions, from  
33 positive to negative, is based on residents' increasing dissatisfaction with uncontrolled capital  
34 additions and augmented tourist arrivals. Thus, the host-guest relationship becomes incompatible  
35 when community identity is endangered, pronounced by feelings of unhappiness and, occasionally,  
36 open hostility (Beeton 2006). However, limitations of this index were soon reported, mainly with  
37 regards to its superficial analysis of complexity of factors influencing residents' attitudes towards  
38 tourism (Mason & Cheyne 2000), while ignoring a community's heterogeneous profile, which can  
39 contain a simultaneous coexistence of these stages.

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48 At the same time, Butler (1975) introduced a more flexible model, following Biorcklund and  
49 Philbrick's framework (1972) on the process that is created when different cultural groups interact and  
50 positive/negative attitudes change in multiple directions, from active to passive and vice versa.  
51 Examining groups and individuals within a single tourist resort, he introduced a four-cell matrix,  
52 suggesting that attitudes towards tourism can be either positive or negative, and behaviors can be  
53 active or passive (active-positive, active-negative, passive-positive, and passive-negative) at an  
54 individual level. Yet, albeit different attitudes and behaviors were presented simultaneously, a neutral  
55 category is not introduced (Griffin 2013), and hosts can pass from any of the stages to another one  
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2 with no pre-determined order.

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4 Moving on from host attitudes, to host reactions, Dogan (1989) sees only the positive or the negative  
5 side of tourism impacts, and reports four types of responses from locals (resistance; retreatism;  
6 boundary maintenance; and revitalization and adoption). Apart from the temporal sequence, these  
7 responses can all co-exist at any time in a host community and change in a variety of directions  
8 without following a unidirectional course (Griffin 2013), in the same way as Butler's model. In the  
9 same field of host reactions, Ap and Crompton (1993) developed the four-stage embracement-  
10 withdrawal strategy (embracement, tolerance, adjustment, withdrawal), where an explicit continuum  
11 of stages (like the Irridex model) explain the dynamic, but uniform evolution of resident response from  
12 positive to negative, based on tourist numbers and behavior.  
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## 22 *2.2. Evolution models of perception towards tourism*

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24 In the present study, the aim is not to analyze attitudes and ways of behaving but the perceptions of  
25 hosts towards tourism impacts. Following the conceptualization of previous studies (e.g. Gursoy et al.  
26 2002; Nawijn & Mitas 2012; Nunkoo & Gursoy 2012), residents' attitudes towards tourism  
27 development (meaning support versus opposition), depends on the perceived impacts of tourism at  
28 both a collective and individual level (Kayat et al. 2013). One of the most accepted theoretical  
29 frameworks used to study residents' perception regarding tourism is the Social Exchange Theory  
30 (SET) (Hernandez et al. 1996; Faulkner & Tideswell 1997; McGehee & Andereck 2004; Gursoy et al.  
31 2010; Nunkoo & Gursoy 2012; Kayat et al. 2013; Presenza et al. 2013). This sociological theory was  
32 first developed by Homans (1961), who indicated that the actions and reactions of individuals are  
33 based on how they perceive the trade-off between the benefits and costs they receive on completing a  
34 specific exchange, whether they feel the relationship is worthwhile, and whether there is a chance of  
35 having a better relationship with another individual (Woosnam & Norman 2010). Adapting the SET  
36 theory to the tourism field, Ap (1992) specified that residents' support for tourism development and  
37 their involvement in the tourism industry depends on the extent to which perceived rewards outweigh  
38 perceived costs (Kayat et al. 2013; Nunkoo & Kam 2015). The SET theory does not look into how  
39 perceptions and responses evolve over time, but focuses on the study of the multiple variables that – at  
40 a certain moment in time – can influence perceptions and, thus, actions of exchange.  
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53 The importance of the perception of past experiences in an individual's interpretation of a given event  
54 was previously analyzed through the Experience Use History construct, developed by Schreyer, Lime  
55 and Williams (1984). This was incorporated in the tourism field by Draper, Woosnam and Norman  
56 (2011), who focused on the influence of an individual's travel experience on their attitude towards  
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1 tourism and local government, concluding that travelling outside their country provided residents with  
2 an understanding of the positive impact of tourism to the overall community. The importance of being  
3 a traveler in perception formation was also included in the Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS)  
4 developed by Woosnam and Norman (2010). The scale demonstrates that residents and tourists show a  
5 positive degree of emotional solidarity when the former realize the benefits of tourism, accept their  
6 role as hosts, and understand the role of a tourist (Woosnam 2011).  
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11 Putting aside past experiences and shifting the emphasis to the intensity and attitude changes in  
12 interpersonal relationships between differentiated groups of people (such as hosts and guests), gave  
13 rise to the Intergroup Hypothesis Theory or the Contact Hypothesis Theory, credited to Allport (1954).  
14 Through this theory, social interaction changes negative perceptions existing between rival groups,  
15 thus reducing tensions or conflicts. For this to be achieved, appropriate conditions must be established.  
16 These include similar group status, common objectives, intergroup cooperation (rather than  
17 competition), and support from the government. This theory was used by Pizam et al. (2000), to  
18 demonstrate how intergroup contact affects prejudiced and discriminatory behavior between hosts and  
19 tourists working at a destination for extended periods, leading to a positive turn in behavior towards  
20 each other. Yet, on the other hand, criticism has focused on a superficial resident-tourist cultural  
21 encounter, based on a mutual commercial exchange (Reisinger 2009).  
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31 Pearce, Moscardo and Ross (1996) deepened the analysis of factors affecting perceptions of everyday  
32 life, and brought the Social Representations Theory to the field of tourism development. This theory  
33 supports the idea that people's understanding of the world around them depends on representations, by  
34 which we mean mechanisms that turn the unfamiliar into familiar on the basis of past experiences and  
35 prior knowledge. These social representations (Moscardo 2011) can refer to a community's shared  
36 concepts, such as language, values, knowledge, images, ideas, explanations or simply thoughts (Pearce  
37 et al. 1996; Andriotis & Vaughan 2003). This approach helps direct attention to the social construction  
38 of knowledge of tourism and its impacts by analyzing the links between individuals and their attitudes  
39 within the social context they share (Jenkins 2003), and between their knowledge and understanding  
40 of tourism (Moscardo 2008). Most importantly, these representations, once created, take on a life of  
41 their own and are in constant adaptation mode (Moscardo 2011). 'Here and now' depends on the past  
42 and determines the future, thus, the concept of change is vital.  
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### 51 ***2.3. Constraints and benefits perceived by destination residents***

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1 (Davis et al. 1988; D'Angella & Go 2009; Gursoy et al. 2010); the commodification of heritage  
2 landscape (Su & Teo 2008); the uprooting of traditional society; and the destruction of natural  
3 resources (Andereck et al. 2005), all of which lead to hosts displaying negative behavior towards  
4 tourists. Particularly negative impacts of tourism were crowds, congestion, loss of tranquility, and  
5 noise in touristic areas, as well as increased social problems such as crime, drug trafficking and  
6 prostitution (Allen et al. 1988; Ap 1992; Hernandez et al. 1996; Gursoy et al. 2010; Kayat et al. 2013).  
7 Added to this were increased psychological tensions (Andereck et al. 2005); the negative influence  
8 tourism has on traditional family values (Kousis 1989); the uncertainty of tourism as an effective  
9 development tool to reduce local poverty (Manyara & Jones 2007); and the unequal distribution of  
10 costs and benefits within local stakeholder communities in ecotourism (Gezon 2014).  
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18 Nonetheless, it has been argued that community concern and collective benefits do not have a direct  
19 impact on locals' attitudes towards tourism, because the positive economic or cultural benefits tourism  
20 could generate along with negative social impacts results in a neutral behavior from the locals.  
21 (Gursoy et al. 2010). For this reason, it seems that personal benefits seem to have a higher influence  
22 on residents' final perceptions and attitudes towards tourism (Látková & Vogt 2012; Nunkoo & So  
23 2015), even higher than costs (Gursoy et al. 2002), but they are not distributed equally among all  
24 residents in a tourist area (Gezon 2014). These benefits are considered value domains that residents  
25 derive from an exchange (Nunkoo & Kan Fung So 2015).  
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32 Common factors found to have a direct impact on residents' personal benefits or general well-being  
33 (Kim et al. 2013), leading to positive perceptions of tourism were as follows: close contact with the  
34 tourism industry in terms of employment and increased salary (Madrigal 1993; Hernandez et al. 1996;  
35 McGehee & Andereck 2004; McNaughton 2006; Su & Teo 2008; Kim et al. 2013; Gezon 2014);  
36 simply having close contact with tourists (Belisle & Hoy 1980; Nawijn & Mitas 2012); living near the  
37 tourist area (Belisle & Hoy 1980; Sharma & Dyer 2009) or away from it (Faulkner & Tideswell 1997;  
38 Látková and Vogt 2012); and living in a low tourism dependent community (McGehee & Andereck  
39 2004), or a multicultural community (Ling et al. 2011). Personal benefits also relate to residents who  
40 have land and money (McNaughton 2006), and who rent rather than own their own homes (Snaith &  
41 Haley 1999). This broad focus on tourism economic benefits is known as the Growth Machine Theory  
42 (Madrigal 1995; Woosnam & Norman 2010).  
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51 The lack of studies that analyze the evolved dialogue between residents and DMOs provides poor  
52 evidence over the consequent evolution of hosts' perception over these personal and collective costs  
53 and benefits in time, while, on the other hand, contradicting voices of the host community on tourism  
54 could lead to a confusing image of the destination in terms of hospitality. This generates questions  
55 regarding whether initial perceptions over costs and benefits sustain in time or alter when new  
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2 interpretations take place, assisting to a more homogeneous discourse of the host community.  
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### 6 7 **3. Methods**

8 Existing literature, at a theoretical level, has endeavored to explain how residents' perceptions and  
9 attitudes are formed and evolve over time. At a practical level, research has focused primarily on the  
10 attitudes of hosts, whether residents or local authorities, in particular moments in time under the scope  
11 of identifying different coexisting clusters. However, research has not paid much attention to the  
12 evolution of these collective attitudes, that is, of hosts as residents and hosts as local authorities, in  
13 order to identify the common and opposing points of view that form over time and shape the public  
14 discourse of hosts as a whole. On another level, although multiple studies have been published related  
15 to residents' perceptions of tourism, a very limited number have used qualitative methods of data  
16 analysis to detect these perceptions (Sharpley, 2014).  
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24 After analyzing the various theoretical models that look at hosts and guests' relationships in tourism  
25 destinations, we focused on the theoretical context of the Social Representations Theory (Pearce,  
26 Moscardo & Ross 1996), this being the most appropriate theoretical approach to analyze a dynamic  
27 evolution of perceptions, as in the case of different groups of residents in the city of Barcelona. Two  
28 opposing narratives are identified; 'tourism-*philia*', which focuses on the positive effects of tourism on  
29 the local economy and society; and 'tourism-*phobia*', which highlights the negative impacts of tourism  
30 on local communities. This article attempts to single out the main features of the two narratives of  
31 hosts' representations and their evolution from 2004 to 2015 in Barcelona in order to see if, or to what  
32 degree, they tend to integrate elements of the opposite axis, creating in-between constructions. The  
33 choice of the time period is based on the lack of investigation in Barcelona after 2005 (d'Angella &  
34 Go 2009; Garay & Cánoves 2011), a period generally acknowledged as the most successful for  
35 Barcelona's tourism industry.  
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44 In order to identify these narratives, hosts' perceptions and attitudes were identified in two public  
45 discourse sources: the magazine *Carrer*, which is written from the residents' point of view; and the  
46 internal reports of the DMO *Turisme de Barcelona* (Barcelona Tourism), which is written from the  
47 local authorities perspective. One of the most important advantages of these resources is the fact that  
48 they have maintained a homogeneous database over the years, giving a more reliable data analysis.  
49 *Carrer* presents various civic economic and socio-cultural issues, while *Turisme de Barcelona* is  
50 exclusively aimed at the tourism industry. Of the 48 issues of *Carrer* available between 2004 and  
51 2015, we analyzed the 37 which referenced tourism issues while all 12 internal reports from *Turisme*  
52 *de Barcelona* were analyzed.  
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1 *Carrer* is a periodical publication (four issues a year) of the *Federació d'Associacions de Veïns i*  
2 *Veïnes de Barcelona* (Federation of Neighborhood Associations of Barcelona), founded in 1991,  
3 which brings together more than 100 associations within the city. The magazine *Carrer* acts as the  
4 voice of neighborhood problems in the city. *Carrer* has a clear, essential citizen character, contributing  
5 to the discussion and public debate on issues related to public and political life in Barcelona, its  
6 institutions, sectors and economic activities. As a data source, it does not represent the perception of  
7 all Barcelona residents, but the official public positioning of the city residents, who form part of these  
8 associations. With a wide range of civic groups in the city, it backs the position of a structured  
9 rejection of tourism and the beginning of a tourism-phobic movement.  
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17 On the other hand, *Turisme de Barcelona* synthesizes the tourism-philic discourse. This public/private  
18 consortium was created in the nineties, with the purpose of promoting tourism in the city. For the  
19 purposes of this study, this dual public/private body representing the strategic planning of tourism on  
20 an official level, is what we call local authorities.  
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24 Thematic analysis, also known as inductive content analysis (Guest, MacQueen & Namey 2012;  
25 Tuckett 2005), was employed to analyze the publications of *Turisme de Barcelona* and *Carrer*  
26 magazine. According to Reissman (2008), thematic analysis categorizes accounts or aspects of  
27 accounts that are being told. This analytical method is inductive, content-driven, and it gives more  
28 importance to the qualitative dimension of the sources analyzed. According to the constructivist  
29 paradigm, data must be analyzed through a process of induction, where the researcher looks for  
30 meaning materializing from the data in answer to the research question (Janesick 2000).  
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36 In this sense, an exploratory approach was adopted with the purpose of gaining insights and ideas from  
37 a specific topic (McNabb 2010). To do this, we used QSR NVivo, a computer assisted qualitative data  
38 analysis software (CAQDAS) package designed to assist with the analysis and management of  
39 qualitative research. NVivo was used to capture the initial free node coding, then to develop coding  
40 and explore connections between codes and categories. Data was organized into categories on the  
41 basis of themes, concepts and similar features (Jennings, 2001). Based on the presented literature on  
42 types of perceptions, predefined coding of positive and negative standpoints towards tourism led to the  
43 creation of the general categories of tourism-philia and tourism-phobia as identified in the textual  
44 sources. The themes that formed each category were separated among economic, socio-cultural and  
45 environmental concepts in search for possible benefits and costs related to these concepts. Emergent  
46 codification was then applied within each theme so as to identify the precise factors that both types of  
47 hosts name as benefit and cost. Thematic analysis intends to represent a view of reality by analyzing  
48 texts systematically to identify topics that are progressively integrated into higher themes. Thus, the  
49 main factors regarding the perceptions of the two different host groups in the city of Barcelona were  
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1 identified. Due to the fact that the high majority of benefits were identified within the DMO's  
2 narratives, and the high majority of costs within the residents' discourse, tourism-philia was assigned  
3 as a perception category for the DMO, and tourism-phobia for the residents.  
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#### 10 **4. Evolution of Tourism-Philia and Tourism-Phobia in Barcelona**

##### 11 **4.1. 2004-2007: Questioning the Promised Tourist Success**

12 2004 was the first year where a tourism management initiative like Universal Forum of Cultures  
13 (Fòrum de les Cultures) was not welcomed as the Olympic Games of 1992 and its results were  
14 generally below expectations. This was the cornerstone of a civic movement criticizing the urban  
15 development model in general, and the tourism model in particular. This failure was an external factor  
16 that initiated narratives against the success of tourism planning.  
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##### 26 *4.1.1 Tourism-phobia: Global criticism*

27 In 2004, a generalized, critical, civic opinion regarding the city development model and tourism  
28 emerged. According to public opinion, as expressed in *Carrer* magazine, only three mentions were  
29 made in favor of tourism, basically on cultural benefits, such as the democratization of tourism. After  
30 the post-Olympic euphoria, a number of social representatives began to question the city's tourism  
31 growth strategy, the reorganization of its economic activity, and the social and cultural effects of urban  
32 dynamics. The Forum gave shape to a rather disperse and discontinuous criticism, accumulating in a  
33 wave of criticism, contrasting with the previously accepted opinions about the success of the city:  
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41 *“In fact, the 141 days that the Forum lasted were a huge pilot test for the new model of a city*  
42 *dedicated to fairs, conventions and tourists, that the City Council was sold to the economic*  
43 *power without any complicity from the social and citizen structure of Barcelona”*. (October  
44 2004)  
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48 It is, in essence, a criticism of the city development model, and more specifically, its growth model. In  
49 just a few years, the number of buildings has increased, the seafront skyline is marred with  
50 skyscrapers, green areas such as the Montjuïc Mountain have been taken over, and the “Port Vell”  
51 operation has reclaimed land from the sea. This substantial transformation of the urban image of the  
52 city in a very short period of time has provoked a critical reaction, focusing on the urban speculation  
53 processes, land requalification, and excessive construction and real estate rentals in the economy.  
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*“The uncertainty has highlighted the serious shortcomings of the so-called Barcelona model - a city of showcase, design, tourism and services that encourages speculation and forgets about old and new neighbors and neighborhoods.” (March 2005)*

Thus, at the beginning, tourism-phobic attitudes are represented by a general criticism of the city development model, and a reaction against a number of commercial, real state, urban planning and cultural processes, among which tourism is only one component. Criticism of tourism appears only as a consequence of the general criticism of the city development model as a whole.

#### 4.1.2 Tourism-Philia: The Euphoria Stage

During this period, the Forum was observed with some concern, while *Turisme de Barcelona* reaffirmed its strategy, focusing on the benefits of tourism, and claiming the responsibility for *“increasing the offer and reaching higher occupancy rates”*. This was a period when satisfaction of the strategies implemented was obvious, and optimism for the future represented a rational reaction, especially considering the economic downturn of other sectors. Thus, the basic argument for supporting tourism investment was that the tourism sector of Barcelona was favorable, compared to the unstable economic situation in other sectors, at both a national and international level.

*“The political and economic situation changes every year, generating crises and slowdowns even in the strongest economies. In the context of certain instability, rare is the example of a city that preserves and improves market share in the competitive segment of business tourism.” (2004)*

*“[...] especially in times of economic slowdown, or an unfavorable conjuncture for other sectors [...] the tourism sector in Barcelona has symptoms of high strength and it is a platform for boosting the local economy.” (2007)*

*“During year 2004, the number of accommodation units has increased by 12,5%. [...] this fact represents a huge responsibility for the tourism promotion managers of the city, and we have to work hard to correspond to this increase in the offer [...]”. (2004)*

The only negative comment regarding tourism management related to congestion and was barely mentioned. Thus, arguments focused strongly on fiercely defending tourism as a hegemonic value of the city due to the economic impacts of being an international tourism attraction. The DMO also indicated how the residents of Barcelona should feel about living in the destination.

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*“Barcelona is and must remain an attractive destination internationally for its quality and conviviality. [It is] a city where tourism supports the daily life of its inhabitants and we are proud to be people of Barcelona.”* (2007)

This pride came from using tourism as a tool for global recognition of the city. The DMO focused on explaining its aim to promote a type of tourism that would fit the needs and spirit of the city, while recognizing the importance of control and responsibility with respect to tourism growth management.

*“In Barcelona, we design the tourism that we want for the city. We direct this phenomenon [...] towards the needs that we identify in the city, and those which our society claims for. We want quality tourism for the city, that which makes responsible use of the city, and that is interested in the character of our people, of our country”.* (2006)

Thus, *Turisme de Barcelona* organized its discourses and justified its actions in the creation and interrelation of economic and of cultural capital. For instance, arguing that tourism is partly responsible for the higher standards in the quality of life of the citizens, the overall positive rates of growth and the validation of the city cultural highlights. It claimed, for example, that *“[tourism is] one of the crown jewels”*, and that it contributes to the *“preservation of our culture, our cultural spaces, which makes us different from the others”*. (2007)

## 4.2 2008-2011: Extreme positioning

In 2008, a long period of expansion in Spain was threatened by the official appearance of an economic crisis, based on the fact that the public account surplus became a deficit. The insecurity of this external factor on a personal and collective level was reflected on the perceptions of both types of hosts, but through completely extreme viewpoints. Tourism, nevertheless, experienced sustained growth, both in accommodation units and international arrivals, especially in the city center.

### 4.2.1 The Consolidation of Tourism-Phobia

During this period, tourism – for the residents – was not part of the more broadly questioned Barcelona development model, but rather, the problem itself. Cultural benefits were no longer recognized, apart from a small reference to the generation of wealth.

*“Tourism as a monoculture was not part of the premises of the Barcelona model in previous years, but it has become a dominant factor, with a true obsession to increase, at any price, the number of tourists in the city.”* (December 2011)

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2 Tourism-phobia was now more obvious than ever, and could be divided into two opinion streams: 1)  
3 tourism damages the social and cultural life of the city and creates an imbalance in what was  
4 previously harmonious; and 2), at the same time, previous economic structures are also in danger.  
5 These two poles were similar to the opinions of inhabitants, with social and cultural references  
6 predominating slightly. In this case, the most frequent concept is congestion, which includes excessive  
7 density of tourists in small areas, negative effects on mobility, the competition for a piece of land, and  
8 a high concentration of tourism in a small number of neighborhoods.  
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11 There is a close relationship between the concept of congestion and density in tourism spots, and the  
12 configuration of a city for tourists. This was one of the core elements of tourism-phobia during this  
13 period. Mass tourism was promoting a city that is designed, managed and commercialized for those  
14 who come to spend a few days, instead of those who live there. Additionally, criticism focuses on the  
15 results of homogenization processes in commercial and leisure spaces, the creation of a ‘store window-  
16 city’, and the perception of a thematization process. From this perspective, the new city is becoming  
17 an empty scenario, sold out to economic activities, emphasizing its loss of identity.  
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21 *“Tourism overexploitation perverse effects lead to a thematization and abusive use of places.*  
22 *Take for example the Rambla, overcrowded with tourists, franchise terraces, living statues,*  
23 *kiosks, tourism picaresque, [and] banal and ordinary atmosphere, all of it spelling out the*  
24 *idea of kitsch [...] We have become unable to see the mess that surrounds us.”* (December  
25 2011)  
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28 The interesting thing here is that criticism of hotels and tourism apartments was merely economic-  
29 bound due to the tendency to generate concentration processes. Yet, criticism of apartments focuses on  
30 coexistence conflicts, derived from the fact that two very different collectives (tourists versus  
31 residents) with a very different relationship with the space that surrounds them (superficial for tourists,  
32 emotional and intense for residents) have to live together.  
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36 *“Tourist apartments are a cancer for the neighborhood. Their very existence among*  
37 *neighbors implies an aggression to everyday life”* (April 2009)  
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41 Furthermore, tourism generates competition against other economic activities, damaging the harmonic  
42 coexistence of all sectors, something that characterizes Mediterranean cities (Leontidou 1990). The  
43 advantage of economic superiority of the tourism sector in comparison to other sectors, was  
44 interpreted by residents as a disadvantage for the growth of, or even future existence of, other  
45 commercial activities. Critics argued that this results in a group of neighborhoods that only serve  
46 tourism purposes, and therefore have lost their previous economic diversity, which in turn makes them  
47 very vulnerable.  
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2           *“The ‘everything for the tourist’ [policy] has also affected the commercial model, causing a*  
3           *situation where it is more and more difficult to live in the neighborhood. The Consortium*  
4           *hasn’t protected the traditional businesses, and tourism has modified the types of shops, in a*  
5           *way that nowadays the offer does not satisfy the neighbor’s needs”.* (December 2011)  
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#### 10 11 12 *4.2.2 The Consolidation of Tourism-Philia*

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14 In 2008, the city council and *Turisme de Barcelona* promoted a process of strategic reflection, with the  
15 aim of analyzing the impacts of tourism in the city, and suggesting specific measures to ensure that the  
16 sector adjusted in accordance with the life of the city. The Barcelona Tourism City Plan is a collective  
17 debate showing that tourism, and its direct effects, has reached the category of political and  
18 institutional concern. The Plan opened a number of new political and public debates. In the meantime,  
19 the official discourse of *Turisme de Barcelona*, and its promotional actions maintained its ideological  
20 position, favoring the economic dimension of tourism.  
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23 *Turisme de Barcelona* did not mention one negative impact of tourism, choosing to focus on its  
24 tourism-philic standing, using mostly economic arguments to show that the model of the city and the  
25 model of tourism development were clearly interrelated, arguing that the tourism success of Barcelona  
26 directly benefited the whole city. This correlation between the two models was expressed in  
27 statements such as *“the benefits of tourism have contributed to the well-being and wealth of our*  
28 *society”*, *“tourism is the star of the city economy”* or *“[Barcelona is] a city born for tourism”* (2008).  
29  
30 Tourism was now, not only a very important engine for the economic development of the city, it was  
31 in fact the most important one. These discourses suggested that city and destination had merged as  
32 one, that is, there was no city without tourism, and no tourism without the city.  
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36 The emphasis on the economic success of the tourism model justified approving the actions of the  
37 hotel sector. This is the very sector residents blamed for the concentration of tourists during the same  
38 period, which in comparison to other strong sectors of the local economy, is presented as an indicator  
39 of the competitiveness of the destination. Now, tourism is not compared to other weak sectors, but  
40 rather to other competent ones.  
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43           *“[Hotel occupation goes] much better than other economic sectors of great weight in our*  
44 *country, such as automotive and construction industry.”* (2008)  
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49 This self-defensive attitude was a reaction to two different realities that took place during this period:  
50 the economic and financial crisis; and a strong wave of citizen criticism of tourism, once again,  
51 indicating how residents should feel about tourism.  
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*“2009, for our companies, was certainly a complicated, very demanding exercise. The situation of widespread economic crisis is known to everyone. However, I think we should be able to distinguish between sectors that have been able to provide answers to the crisis, which have stood up to it. In the city of Barcelona, this has been the case of tourism.” (2009)*

### **4.3 2012-2015: Opposites begin to attract**

It is from 2012 that a common understanding begins to appear in both narratives. Between 2012 and 2015, tourism-philia showed the first hints of officially admitting some of the negative impacts of tourism, while tourism-phobic reactions appeared to show acceptance of the positive impacts of tourism.

#### *4.3.1 Tourism-Phobia: The Introduction of Compromise*

In the final period, the intensity of tourism-phobic criticism lessens. Not only does the number of critical comments reduce, but the intensity is also less fierce, and nuance is introduced to the discourse. Whereas in the previous periods, criticism is seen in absolute terms, now we see a general reflection on some of the benefits of tourism, at a strictly economic level. Tourism-phobia over time is confronted in a different way, where the solution is not in rejecting tourism and its benefits, but in efficiently managing the negative effects embedded in tourism, in name of the rewards brings to everyone.

*“Luckily the in-depth debate [between the two sides] shows that there are more meeting ends than diametrically opposed opinions.” (March 2015)*

*“It became clear that the debate could not be simplified into a dichotomy (tourism, yes or no). People [...] sought for answers to a number of problems generated by tourism in their everyday life: roads and streets collapse, increase of rental prices and neighbor exile, noise and vandalism, regulation of the economic activities created around tourism, etc.” (March 2015)*

There is a second reason for this evolution, which is attributed to the increase in the use of peer-to-peer accommodation services by tourists, reducing entrance barriers to the tourism industry significantly. Now there are many more potential beneficiaries from tourism, thus filling the gap that existed previously between tourism managers and residents. Thanks to sharing companies, such as Airbnb, and taking action into their own hands, some residents became tourism managers, and their discourse

1  
2 became more empathetic towards tourism. Tourist apartments went from having a negative cultural  
3 impact, to having a positive economic one.  
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6 *“Many people who participated identified themselves as members of the Barcelona Host*  
7 *Association; they rent out rooms in their homes to tourists, whom they live with during their*  
8 *stay. Many of them explained that their personal economic situation justified their option, and*  
9 *all of them claimed for a regulation of their activity, in order to be safe.”* (March 2015)  
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13 This indicates that tourism has slowly gone from being part of the problem of the city development  
14 model, to being admitted as part of city life; a life that needs better management nonetheless. Previous  
15 criticism regarding congestion, a loss of the city’s identity, a concentration of economic activity, price  
16 increases leading to gentrification processes and, all in all, the creation of a dual system dividing  
17 tourism from the ‘real city’, are prolonged in this period, justifying the presence of phobia. Statements  
18 like the one below indicate that the economic benefits of tourism in the case of Barcelona have not  
19 been managed in such a way as to spread its effects to other economic sectors of city life.  
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23 *“Behind the luxury hotels and the tourism attraction of the city there is another city that is real*  
24 *[...] That Barcelona constituted by thousands of citizens who cannot make ends meet is*  
25 *continuously increasing”.* (May 2012)  
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#### 34 **4.3.2 Tourism-Philia: The Moderation Stage**

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36 After 2012, partly due to the continuing economic crisis and the assessment proposed in the city’s  
37 Strategic Plan, *Turisme de Barcelona* changed its discourse and began to be more critical towards  
38 tourism. Along with the ideas of success and wealth related to tourism, there were also issues such as  
39 the need to manage and adapt tourism to fit comfortably in the city, in order to ensure a *“model that is*  
40 *suitable with the daily lives of Barcelona citizens”.* (2012)  
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46 In previous periods, responsibility for the success of the tourism industry was always attributed to the  
47 public and private sector. Yet in the official discourses of the third period, the concept of responsibility  
48 for the success of the tourism model was aimed for the first time at society as a whole, and the need to  
49 spread the benefits of the activity to the whole city is particularly stressed; acknowledging a problem  
50 already mentioned by the residents’ problem. Neighbors appear for the first time as tourism subjects  
51 and actors who were actively involved in distributing tourism and its economic benefits across the  
52 city.  
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2           “[Tourism] is also a big responsibility. It is certain that tourism has become a common good  
3           which everyone should have to care about.” (2012)  
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6           “One of the greatest challenges that we have at this moment is to keep on generating new  
7           tourism attraction areas that help [diminishing] the saturated city center. District tourism  
8           plans represent one step forward in this line, and undoubtedly will contribute to promoting  
9           tourism points of interest in each of the neighborhoods of the city”. (2013)  
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13       Yet, even though responsibility is the work of many agents, the management role of the DMO to  
14       balance and neutralize the negative effects of tourism in the city and the life of its residents is  
15       highlighted. This undoubtedly insinuates that the official discourse of *Turisme de Barcelona* made  
16       some slight changes for the first time since its creation in 1994, when tourism needed to be controlled,  
17       and its management had to be in line with the correct development of other economic activities. In this  
18       discourse, tourism was compared to other sectors in order to diminish its superiority, while accepting  
19       its significance as one of the fundamental parts of the city’s development model.  
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23           “*The extraordinary growth that the tourism sector has experienced in the last few years also*  
24           *expresses the need to guarantee an integrating growth in the whole city, suitable with the*  
25           *development of other economic activities and the lives of citizens”.* (2014)  
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29       In this new discourse, there is also room for some of the former ideas, such as the importance of  
30       tourism in the economy of the city, the fact that tourism contributes to the quality of life of citizens, as  
31       well as Barcelona holding the leading position as a southern European destination, and the increase in  
32       the number of hotel units.  
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35           “*What we need is to keep the promotional action machinery greased [...], as well as to*  
36           *generate new offer that allows [us] to receive new tourists, especially those with higher*  
37           *expenditure capacity”.* (2012)  
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## 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47       **5. Findings and Discussion** 48

49       This research is an in-depth analysis of hosts’ narratives regarding their perceptions on the evolution  
50       of tourism and tourism management in Barcelona, a successful tourist destination, and questions the  
51       expected ‘happy ending’ of an effective tourism model. We analyzed theoretical models on host-guest  
52       relationships in tourism destinations. Furthermore, we focused on the theoretical context of the Social  
53       Representations Theory (Pearce, Moscardo & Ross 1996), which assumes that knowledge and beliefs  
54       are under constant adaptation mode, and a qualitative analysis of the internal public discourse between  
55       two major components of hosts was implemented. Hosts are both residents, and local authorities.  
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2 Considering the conflictive relationship existing between them in the tourism literature, this study  
3 analyzes their voices and the evolution of their relationship from 2004 to 2015. It uses sources  
4 representing public discourse which show an interesting and dynamic inter-influence. Particularly, we  
5 suggest that, even though it is easy to detect extreme attitudes of love and hate towards tourism, in the  
6 interplay of local tourism perceptions we should also consider the socially constructed narratives of  
7 social groups that support opposing stances towards the same tourism model, reflecting existing values  
8 at every stage and their interrelation and evolution within the public dialogue.  
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11 In contradiction to Doxey's (1975) or Ap and Crompton's (1993) uniform evolution of attitudes, or  
12 even Dogan's (1989) positive-negative interplay of perceptions, our objective is to transcend the  
13 superficial love/hate perception of hosts towards tourism, present a parallel maturation of the two  
14 narratives through their interrelation on a public discourse level and see up to which point the host  
15 community is starting to communicate a common message towards the tourism sector in the case of  
16 Barcelona. After identifying that the residents' and the DMO's public discourses take clearly opposing  
17 positions, our data suggest a different interpretation of a phobic and a philic tourism perception over  
18 time. The transformation of narratives from negativism to completely phobic and then to compromise  
19 from the residents' side; and from positivism to completely philic, and then to moderation from the  
20 DMO's side, concurs with the theory's baseline. This is that that the same concepts – meaning tourism  
21 and tourism management – are perceived in contradictory terms between two different social groups of  
22 the host community, for different socio-economic reasons, but in time, adaptation and adjustment can  
23 create a common ground for discussion and understanding.  
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27 The separation into three time stages (2004-2007, 2008-2011, and 2012-2015) indicates the  
28 differentiated positioning towards tourism within the public discourse of residents and representatives  
29 of the DMO, that is, from opposite poles of hosts within the same tourism model in the same city.  
30 Even though the phobic and philic basis remain anchored in each discourse respectively, their  
31 approach changes over time. Within the phobic narrative, the emergence of which coincides with the  
32 relative failure of the *Fòrum de les Cultures* event, the use of the term 'tourism' refers basically to its  
33 management by the other hosts, that is, local authorities. Residents' disappointment does not focus on  
34 tourists themselves, but on the selling out of other hosts in the name of economic benefits.  
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37 During the first stage, local authorities' recognition of this generalized attitude in other sectors makes  
38 tourism part of a general problem. If initially, criticism of the civic movement was aimed towards the  
39 city development model, at a second stage, tourism was identified as an autonomous and causal source  
40 of conflict. This is when a narrative against tourism, basically identifying economic and socio-cultural  
41 impacts, becomes clear. Residents' concerns in previous studies regarding overcrowding (Allen et al  
42 1988; Ap 1992) and the tourism industry's inability to spread the economic benefits around the whole  
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1 society (Manyara & Jones 2007; Gezon 2014) are also detected in this study. Yet during the third  
2 period, tourism is not part of the problem, nor the problem itself, but part of the city's identity with  
3 major management problems that still remain.  
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7 On the other hand, within the philic narrative, tourism is highlighted as one of the few sectors not  
8 forming part of Barcelona's economic crisis (between 2004 and 2007). Growing into the protagonist of  
9 the city's economy between 2008 and 2011, and maturing later on into one of the main sources of  
10 economic welfare (but not the main one) in a time of financial crisis. Tourism in Barcelona was  
11 compared to other sectors and tourist destinations in order to highlight its success and in response to  
12 the increasingly phobic reaction of residents. During this second period, extreme and opposing  
13 opinions of the tourism development model showed that there were no common discussion points,  
14 apart from the economic crisis, which made the residents feel insecure.  
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21 Therefore, during the third period, public discourses progressively left extreme positions. Tourism was  
22 no longer the only problem, or the only economic motor of the city, and a common ground in  
23 accepting tourism as part of the city's DNA was sought, with issues that the phobics still needed to  
24 handle, and benefits to be admired by the philics. This new approach looked for middle ground, and  
25 led to the third stage. For the residents this was a compromise stage, where the undeniable economic  
26 impacts (basically at the level of personal benefit) of the Growth Machine Theory (Madrigal 1995)  
27 became part of their discourse, while for the local authorities, it was a moderation stage, where  
28 confronting the irrefutable negative social impacts, such as congestion, had to become part of the  
29 strategic plan.  
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37 It is evident that the hosts' phobic/philic standpoint is strongly defended throughout all three stages.  
38 Residents blame tourism industry for its preference towards economic benefits without considering its  
39 social impact. At the same time, the DMO is praised for its economic success in comparison to other  
40 economic sectors and tourism destinations. Yet, at the beginning the perception is that tourism is an  
41 external factor that damages/benefits the city's identity, and over time this perception evolves into an  
42 internal part of the city that needs to be better regulated so as to stop degrading the social life of the  
43 locals, or to start broadening the economic welfare to other sectors and areas of the city.  
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49 We believe that this research can contribute to the literature with insights for both DMO managers and  
50 residents' organizations, in order to better understand the balance between tourism benefits and  
51 impacts that better fit in different settings in other destinations. Future research should keep analyzing  
52 the dynamic character of perception formation towards tourism between different social groups of  
53 hosts to see if, and how, consensus can be reached and, therefore, find a uniform voice for hosts.  
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