

THE MOBILITY-RESILIENCE CONTINGENCY:

TOURISM AND FORCED MIGRATION
INTERSECTING ON LESVOS, GREECE

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RESILIENCE

Multiple Resiliences:

Resilient mobilities, e.g. spaces, places, communities, destinations

Resilience – A frame to discuss:

- 1) *Ecological change*
- 2) *(Address) human suffering*

(Sources: Cretney 2014; Brown 2014; Cohen 2008; 2009; Henderson 2005)

Resilience, in this context, then becomes the ability to adapt to changes, accommodate the unexpected and, if necessary, recover (and bounce back) from social, cultural and environmental devastation



RESILIENCE (AT RISK)

...because of unknown and little understood consequences of mobility and immobility

Resilience differs :

- Social privilege shapes spaces in which people move
- The resilience offered those as an effect of

(i) their geographical and (ii) social (im)mobility

(Sources: Ganguly 2014; Röslmaier 2016)



TRANSFORMATION OF (RESILIENT) SPACES

.....by governments and the tourism industry

Can be positive - BUT!

Paradoxical practices and performances displace :

- Events
- Tourists
- Refugees
- Locals
- (Tourism) businesses



MAIN FINDINGS

- *Decline of transportation capacity (ferry, local busses, planes)*
- *Increase in transportation prices*
- *Accumulation of (immobile) refugees – voluntarily and forced*
- *Refugees occupying (immobile) local and tourist spaces*
- *Price discrimination (Accommodations)*
- *Forced transformation of local and tourist spaces*
- *Social (im)mobility traded for spatial (im)mobility and vice versa*
- *Refugee (im)mobility traded for local/tourist (im)mobility a. v. v.*





(IM)MOBILITY OF RESILIENT (IM)MOBILITIES

- Increase of tourist, tour operator, volunteer cancellations
 - Fear for and/or protest against (im)mobility
 - Decreasing attractiveness for *tourism*
- Decrease of tourism -> decrease of transportation capacity
 - Increase of spatial immobility (to and from the island)
 - Decrease of social mobility (locals and refugees)
 - Increase of tourism replacement and space/identity transformations
 - Decrease of attractiveness for tourism and increase of cancellations

Vicious cycle: *Transformation of resilient mobilities*

...with ripple effects for distant mobilities, including spaces



ACCOMMODATE CHANGE?

....difficult as this reinforces a

...co-construction and negotiation of resilient (im)mobilities

Resilience at issue as this affected the sustainability of:

- 1) Communities (trauma, wellbeing, peace, culture)
- 2) Tourism businesses (economic viability, jobs, status)



SUSTAINABILITY: A RESILIENCE PERSPECTIVE

"the likelihood an existing system of resource use will persist indefinitely without a decline in the resource base or in the social welfare of others"

(Walker and Salt 2006, 165).

The resource base and social welfare is threatened by:

- tourism and local activities moving from an desirable to an undesirable state
- the social, economical and cultural instability
- and immobilization of social and human capital

All that is necessary for communities/destinations to withstand unforeseen perturbations and remain sustainable

BOUNCING BACK OR ADAPT?

- **Restoring Lesvos' status as prime (tourism) destination is difficult**
- **So is the ability for actors and spaces to adapt to future changes**

The intermobility of tourism and forced migration interrupted the social and economical 'status quo' as an effect of the destination being insufficient resilient to accommodate this (materialistic) intermobility

Sustaining the resilience of mobilities at Lesvos is at risk

MOBILITY = RESILIENCE?

....at Lesvos, tourism and locals rely on themselves in order to prevent their ‘destruction’...yet reinforce their destruction by counterproductive practices and performances

Tourism, in relation and intersection with forced migration, has been transformed from being a force that secures resilience and sustainability for the locals and the destination, to a force that (re)produces:

”unsustainable resilient mobilties”

(which in turn reinforces their immobility)

The resilience of one group/type of mobility is (thus) affecting, and depending on, the resilience of others – including those not (yet) on the move



THE FUTURE OF EUROPE?

Many European destinations/economies require both tourism and migration in order to remain resilient. At the same time, and paradoxically, this resiliency is endangered by both tourism and forced migration

- Refugee and tourism flows (in general): increase > decrease
- Tourism flows (to affected but tourism dependent destinations like Lesbos) decrease

A study of destinations in Lesbos, Germany and Sweden shows that both phenomena are endangered in terms of/by their (reciprocal) (potential)

(i) (im)mobilization and (ii) (de)accumulation

How can we sustain the resilience of European tourism destinations and the(ir) mobilities they(inter)depend on to decrease the risk for this to happen?



THANK YOU



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