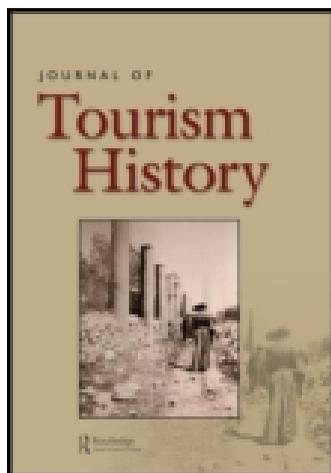


This article was downloaded by: [84.73.115.220]

On: 22 April 2015, At: 04:03

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



[Click for updates](#)

Journal of Tourism History

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjth20>

Système touristique et culture technique dans l'Arc lémanique: analyse d'une success story et de ses effets sur l'économie régionale (1852-1914) / Le tourisme comme facteur de transformations économiques, techniques et sociales (XIXe-XXe siècles) [Tourism as a factor of economic, technical and social transformations (XIXth-XXth centuries)]

Mathieu Narindal^a

^a Department of History, University of Neuchâtel Neuchâtel, Canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Published online: 04 Feb 2015.

To cite this article: Mathieu Narindal (2014) Système touristique et culture technique dans l'Arc lémanique: analyse d'une success story et de ses effets sur l'économie régionale (1852-1914) / Le tourisme comme facteur de transformations économiques, techniques et sociales (XIXe-XXe siècles) [Tourism as a factor of economic, technical and social transformations (XIXth-XXth centuries)], Journal of Tourism History, 6:2-3, 258-262, DOI: [10.1080/1755182X.2015.1005891](https://doi.org/10.1080/1755182X.2015.1005891)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1755182X.2015.1005891>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims,

proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

discuss the depiction of Catholicism in the Gothic novel). Then there is a diversion into Turkey (covering British Prime Minister William Gladstone and the Bulgarian atrocities, Turkish and Persian artwork, and the largely forgotten work of Muslim convert Marmaduke Pickthall) interspersed with brief interludes on Nice (as a health resort for ailing Brits), London (as a lure for Mediterranean criminals), Portugal, Lebanon and Greece. The balance is thus a little odd. The level at which the research is pitched is also variable: some essays are built on detailed archival research (one draws on unpublished diaries of American residents in Syria during the famine of 1917), with little sense of context, argument and relevance to the larger issues at play (is famine essentially a Southern horror?). In contrast, the essay on press reviews of macabre images in Keats makes a greater effort to build in a context, but rushes its argument. It is also hard to fathom the rationale behind the order of the essays. At the outset, we veer chronologically from the eighteenth to the twentieth to the sixteenth centuries, then settle for a while in the mid-nineteenth century, with little obvious thematic development to guide us. So, while the scope is interestingly broad, and the reader may well find some articles of general or specific interest, it is hard work to draw any intellectual conclusions about what it is that makes the Mediterranean a viable object of study: is it not too dispersed, too varied in terms of race and religion? What are the connecting threads – apart from a set of bad experiences, imagined or actual – that link these studies together?

For the most part the nexus of Northern mentalities that constructs these visions remains uninterrogated. We are served up a ‘pot pourri of horrors’ (11) without understanding the point of view that constructs these monstrosities. Much is made of Protestant anti-Catholicism and the tropes and stereotypes that extend from the Gothic imagination into, for example, the judicial system. Susan Oliver begins to probe in more detail the appeal to the salacious among literary reviewers, and Paul Barlow reveals that theories of race are rarely *merely* theories of race, but involve culture and political expediency too. But how might this relate to the distribution of power and the fate of empires on a broader scale? And is the Northern perspective any less ‘perceived’ or ‘imagined’ than the Southern? In very many cases, we are offered detail that is undoubtedly of interest, but the essays are compiled in a way that offers relatively little in terms of larger reflections. This is not, of course, a monograph: we are unlikely to see a unified point of view develop from beginning to end, but despite the broad coverage here and because we are only seeing one side of a multifaceted story (the dark side), it runs the risk of looking like a list of gruesome grievances.

Sharon Ouditt

School of Arts and Humanities, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, UK

Sharon.ouditt@ntu.ac.uk

© 2015, Sharon Ouditt

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1755182X.2015.1005890>

Système touristique et culture technique dans l’Arc lémanique: analyse d’une success story et de ses effets sur l’économie régionale (1852–1914), by Cédric Humair, Marc Gigase, Julie Lapointe Guigoz and Stefano Sulmoni, Neuchâtel, Editions Alphil-Presses Universitaires Suisses, 2014, 476 pp., €32 (paperback), ISBN 978-2-88930-009-9

Le tourisme comme facteur de transformations économiques, techniques et sociales (XIXe–XXe siècles) [Tourism as a factor of economic, technical and social transformations (XIXth–XXth centuries)], edited by Marc Gigase, Cédric Humair and Laurent Tissot, Neuchâtel, Editions Alphil-Presses Universitaires Suisses, 2014, 354 pp., €32 (paperback), ISBN 978-2-88930-003-7

Whereas the sociocultural phenomena related to the development of tourism are now quite well known, its internal logic, as well as its economic impact, is less understood. A study published by Cédric Humair, Marc Gigase, Julie Lapointe Guigoz and Stefano Sulmoni, from the University of Lausanne, which is the result of a long-term research project, brings a new light on the matter, analysing the genesis of one of Switzerland's major tourist areas. A second book, which brings together a series of papers presented at an international symposium held as part of the same research programme, opens new comparative perspectives.

The first book, *Système touristique et culture technique dans l'Arc lémanique*, examines the unfolding of a tourist system (whose three fundamental dimensions are hospitality, transportation, and the entertainment of travellers) in the Lake Geneva Region between 1852 and 1914. The authors seek to understand why the development of tourism in this area was a success story, despite the reality that the region's natural advantages are far from unique in Europe. Their second goal is to estimate the economic impact of tourism on the region, which has traditionally been characterised as backwards when compared to the industrialised eastern part of Switzerland.

In order to explore these two issues, the authors use (among other sources) an impressive statistical and biographical database they generated through painstaking research. The first section of the book examines the evolution of tourist supply and demand in the Lake Geneva Region. The tourist web became denser, while accommodation and transport infrastructures, as well as entertainment activities, were continually adapted to technical progress and changes of fashion. According to the authors, this process, which took a different form in the four main tourist destinations on the shores of Lake Geneva (i.e. the areas of Vevey-Montreux, Lausanne, Geneva, in Switzerland, and Evian, in France), is the key to understanding the success of tourism. But where did the capacity for such adaptation come from?

The second and third sections of the book, which look closely at the individual and collective protagonists of the Lake Geneva Region tourist system, provide a first answer. During the relevant period, capital concentration, as well as organisational processes, took place in the tourism sector. Big hotel businesses emerged, in which bankers now played a central role. Hoteliers gathered in trade associations, responsible for defending their interests to the public authorities and for regulating their economic activities, in order to increase the sector's profitability. Transport facilities were progressively mechanised, and their operators followed a similar path. Only the entertainment sector, with specialised players in charge, remained heterogeneous. The different parties involved in the tourist system belonged to specific social networks, each of them having a particular function. The regional bankers played a key role in mobilising capital; in so doing they allowed tourism to develop on an endogenous basis, which turned out to be very beneficial for the region. Many architects and engineers, often trained in the area, where a technical school was established, provided know-how. Finally, numerous people relayed the postulations of the tourism sector in the political sphere. By retracing the process that led to the opening of the Simplon tunnel, which boosted tourism in the Canton of Vaud, and

examining the role of some key individuals, the authors illustrate deftly the density and efficiency of the networks coordinating the tourist system. The existence of such a web of players was a decisive factor in the ability of the Lake Geneva Region to successfully adapt. But it is not the only one; just as important was the mastery of technical progress.

In the fourth section, the authors demonstrate, by considering several cases, the crucial dimensions of modernisation in the tourism sector. First, it matched commercial imperatives: in a context of increasing competition, both internal and external, the main players in the Lake Geneva Region tourist system, which specialised in the luxury niche, were forced to improve their offerings to keep on with the demands of travellers. Modernising was also a way, as it was increasingly the case in the early twentieth century, of reducing operating costs, thereby fulfilling an economic function. During the Belle Epoque, innovative technologies also had a symbolic significance: they fascinated and attracted travellers. Being at the cutting edge of progress allowed tourism players to stand out from their competitors. In the end, great technical achievement played a promotional role. Along with the regional landscape, it was the most recurring feature in tourism advertising.

As the authors note in the fifth section, the connection between tourism and modernity was not free of tension. In the Lake Geneva Region several examples show that technological advances had a negative side. Modernisation was always a risk, especially when innovative technologies were used or when cost considerations outweighed safety concerns. In case of a disaster, financial and symbolic consequences could be very damaging to the tourist area. Moreover, technological progress did not necessarily guarantee increased profitability; the installation of new equipment, the operation of which is not fully mastered, often resulted in additional costs. Sometimes the emergence of certain technologies threatened existing economic players, raising socioeconomic opposition. At the turn of the twentieth century, an antimodernist and nationalist movement, targeting tourism and its infrastructures, developed in the ranks of a conservative part of the population. Representatives of this sociocultural opposition to progress successfully fought against the construction of a railway on the Matterhorn.

In view of these obstacles, the progress of tourism in the Lake Geneva Region, which is discussed in the sixth section of the book, was impressive. The development of tourism not only propelled modernisation by generating a demand for technical equipment and know-how, it also had a more diffuse indirect influence. Thus, companies were more willing to take the technical and financial risks involved in the realisation of innovative technical installations, knowing that they could count on this particular clientele; the mobilisation of capital was also facilitated. This explains, along with other factors, why, in Switzerland, some pioneer technologies, coming from the big industrial states, appeared in the Geneva Lake Region. Tourism also stimulated their rapid dissemination: because of intense competition, new installations quickly became standard. Numerous companies with technical expertise emerged, which in some cases produced their own installations or even invented new equipment pieces. The arrival of the elevator on the shores of Lake Geneva, which is closely analysed, is an excellent example of this complex dynamic.

The last part of the book shows how tourism truly became the leading economic force in the region. The authors deliberately chose to ignore some aspects, which have already been highlighted in other regional case studies (stimulation of agriculture, regional trade, and the building industry), to stress lesser known ones. Thus, they

describe how the tourist boom contributed to the creation of an efficient public infrastructure (transport, communication and energy networks, water distribution and sewage drainage systems), which benefited the industrial sector. Tourism was one of the driving forces of regional industrialisation. It boosted the chocolate, the food and the tobacco industries, encouraging the rise of some prominent companies (Nestlé being the most famous). Luxury industries, such as regional watch manufacturers, as well as numerous industrial businesses which appeared in the late nineteenth century, were also stimulated by the purchasing power of tourists and by the investments of tourism promoters. Last but not least, the authors investigate the influence of tourism over the Lake Geneva Region's financial centre, in particular its leading position in international wealth management. They suggest that the presence of the European elite on the shores of Lake Geneva facilitated the inflow of foreign capital and allowed bankers to forge privileged relationships with their customers. However, by bringing easy money and stimulating wealth management, tourism may also have delayed the emergence of big banks, as elsewhere in Switzerland, which would later be detrimental.

The second book, edited by Marc Gigase, Cédric Humair and Laurent Tissot, is an immediate extension of the Geneva Lake Region case study. The desire to more fully understand to what extent the massive impact of tourism was exceptional supplied the impetus to the organisation of an international symposium, of which this book is the product. Its objective is to explore the social, economic and technical effects of tourism in a comparative perspective. In an introductory paper, Cédric Humair, Marc Gigase, Julie Lapointe Guigoz and Stefano Sulmoni summarise their research. A first section then deals with the socioeconomic dynamics of tourism. While tourism development is often seen as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, John K. Walton shows that it is an integral part of the industrialisation process. The case of the French ski manufacturer Rossignol, analysed by Anne Dalmasso and Régis Boulat, confirms the role of tourism practices as drivers of innovation and industrial production. Focusing their attention on Campania, Annunziata Berrino and Ewa Kawamura demonstrate how the rise of heavy industry restructured the tourism area. Johan Vincent, looking at Brittany, and Mari Carmen Rodríguez, at Santiago de Compostela, both argue that the touristification process, albeit profitable, was a source of tension between tourists and locals, inducing identity and territorial redefinitions. Finally, examining a specific area of the Vercors Massif, Gilles Della-Vedova outlines the key role of local players in the touristification process, which was only one dimension of the evolution of the rural world.

The second section of the book explores the effects of tourism on technical modernisation. In his paper, Richard Gassan reveals how the success of two pioneering railway lines, related to tourism, encouraged railway development in the USA. Bernd Kreuzer, who considers the case of the Austrian Salzkammergut, observes the same connection between tourism and modernisation as in the Lake Geneva Region and on the French Riviera. As for the hospitality industry, Alexandre Tessier, scrutinising the Parisian case, explores how luxury hotels took profit from and drove innovation. Modernisation was a condition of survival in this market segment. As Françoise Breuillaud-Sottas and Piergiuseppe Esposito both point out, tourism also stimulated the development of health and medical infrastructure. In Evian, the presence of the curistes led to the improvement of the sewage drainage system. In the Lake Geneva Region, as a consequence of the rise of medical and health tourism, local medical institutions were at the cutting edge of technology.

The third and last section of the book addresses the sociocultural impact of tourism. Philippe Duhamel's paper highlights its role as a driver of urbanisation. Anne-Marie Granet-Abisset examines the issues raised by the presence of seasonal workers in Alpine resorts. Valérie Lathion shows that the custom, introduced by English climbers, of making donations in favor of the families of Swiss guides who died in accidents eventually led to the creation of specific accident insurance. For his part, Sylvain Pattieu concentrates on a travel agency, owned by the General Confederation of Labour, a French trade union, which promoted social tourism. He stresses the tension between activist logic on one side and professional and business logic on the other, which finally prevailed. The book ends with two papers devoted to automobile tourism. Étienne Faugier describes how structural developments initiated in Quebec by this type of tourism were the cause of radical cultural changes, raising sociocultural tensions. Catherine Bertho Lavenir highlights the emergence of a culture specific to automobile tourists, leading to a renewed perception of the European area.

Cédric Humair, Marc Gigase, Julie Lapointe Guigoz and Stefano Sulmoni's findings represent a major contribution to the history of tourism. *Système touristique et culture technique dans l'Arc lémanique* investigates very closely the complex dynamic of the tourism system. It sheds new light on the link between tourism and modernisation: not only are tourist facilities places where technologies are first implemented; the development of tourism also gave a global impetus to the technical culture of the Lake Geneva Region. As for the study of the regional hotel industry, the book deals primarily with luxury hotels. However, the lack of archives documenting smaller businesses, as well as the structure of the regional hotel market, explains this approach. *Le tourisme comme facteur de transformations économiques, techniques et sociales*, which opens up new interpretative horizons, confirms the fruitfulness of such research programmes and approaches. It provides the evidence that meticulous case studies are a necessary basis for the understanding of tourism as a transnational phenomenon.

Mathieu Narindal

*Department of History, University of Neuchâtel
Neuchâtel, Canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland*

mathieu.narindal@unine.ch

© 2015, Mathieu Narindal

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1755182X.2015.1005891>