

Call for Papers

Paper Session, AAG Annual Meeting, 24-28 February 2012, New York City

When "the Rest" enters "the West": (Re-)Negotiating identities in touristic settings

Session Convener: Dr. Sybille Frank, Technical University Darmstadt

Since the beginning of modernity, tourist travel routes – and thus the paths of tourism researchers – have led almost exclusively from “the West” to “the rest” of the world (“the West and the Rest”, cf. Stuart Hall). Correspondingly, as far as the western world was concerned, the presence of people from the global “East” and “South” largely remained bound to the discursively constructed and administratively handled figure of the (illegal) migrant or nomad.

In the last few years, however, the expansion and lower cost of travel opportunities on the one hand, and the economic upturn in parts of the global “East” and “South” on the other hand have meant that western destinations have become realistically accessible for more and more people from the former “rest of the world” in the framework of leisure-time travelling.

This session enquires whether and how western-influenced patterns of world order, constructions of identities, as well as traditional roles and interactions in tourist space change when, in the context of cultural contacts influenced by tourism, it is no longer merely the case that “the West” visits the native lands of “the rest”, but instead that “the rest” suddenly stands on the doorsteps of western villages and cities, in order to consume locally, now in the role of tourists to be served,

- their own culture in the western world, or
- “the West” in the variety of its local cultures.

With which consequences, re-establishing or thwarting existing power relations between cultures, will identities in these touristic settings be challenged, (re-)negotiated and (re-)experienced by different social groups?

The aim of this session is to investigate interactions in tourist space between persons present face to face in specific places, who are situated in power relationships that are challenged by traditional roles and cultural knowledge. Particularly welcome are papers that empirically examine the changes in leisure-time travelling described above upon specific groups (and their relations to others) in touristic settings, such as travelers (from the global “South” or “East”), those visited (in the “West”) or those active in the service sector. Also very welcome are papers that theoretically or empirically challenge the classic West/rest dichotomy in order to sketch out new categories of scientific thinking in the field of global tourism research.

Abstracts (limited to 250 words) should be sent to Sybille Frank (frank@stadtforschung.tu-darmstadt.de) by **19th September 2011**. Please ensure that abstracts include all author names, institutions and an email contact for the lead author. Authors will be notified of acceptance of their abstract for presentation at the conference by **22nd September 2011**.