

CONCLUSION

Tourist transformations

During the 1920s and 1930s, members of the middle classes in the Arab East grasped at international and domestic tourism as political resources with an urgency that differed from later political approaches to tourism. Embedded in different configurations of power, these middle-class actors perceived a transformative potential in tourism, expecting that it would enable them to create viable nation-states. Tourism, they assumed, would allow them to achieve recognition of their states both from international observers and the population, while creating connections in terms of infrastructures and mobilities that would integrate the national territory and facilitate control.

A middle-class project

The most determined social group in tourism development were actors from the middle classes, who had a good grasp of the opportunities tourism provided. They dominated the tourist spaces as travellers, mediators, tour agents, colonial officials or members of local associations and national governments. Certainly, actors from social groups beyond this global bourgeoisie traversed the tourist spaces. Miss M.B. participated in the tourist movement; young Egyptians encountered travellers in their villages and presented themselves proudly for photographs; cameleers and French singers earned a living from the tourism business; and Arab notables gathered in *estivage* resorts. In contrast to the middle-class actors in tourism, however, they did not intend to harness the political potential of tourism. The systematic shaping of tourist spaces was a middle-class project.

Tourism lent itself to shaping the emerging states in the Arab East even for middle-class actors who did not have full sovereignty over state and society. Through collaboration with social groups who had more direct access to decision-making, such as the aristocracy or the colonial state, middle classes across the globe were able to participate in administering state and society “without taking over state power themselves”, as Christof DeJung, David Motadel and Jürgen Osterhammel argued.¹ Tourism was one field for such a cooperative approach – and it allowed its proponents to reach out beyond the national level.

Whether they were striving for national sovereignty or imperial control, the advocates of tourism development in the colonial administrations, in the Yishuv and in Arab societies shared the expectation that tourism was an asset in consolidating the respective territories as they had emerged after World War I. In the Arab East, tourism development was therefore a valuable resource particularly for those actors aiming to forge territorial nation-states – the Arab middle-class nationalists as well as the Zionists. In Lebanon, Egypt and in the Yishuv, where these actors had access to political decision-making either by a sufficient degree of autonomy or by cooperation, tourism development policies were more pronounced and more consistent than in Arab Palestine and Syria.

The Egyptian *efendiyya* benefitted from the partial sovereignty of their country, which allowed them to shape domestic policies, including decisions related to tourism. As European companies largely dominated the tourism sector, subsidies in favour of tourism were more contested among Egyptian deputies than in the neighbouring countries. Advocates of tourism development engaged in strengthening tourism for political reasons though, arguing that it was an occasion to enhance the prestige of Egypt on an international stage. In addition, from the 1930s the attention of proponents of tourism shifted increasingly towards a domestic clientele, aiming to enhance the identification of the population with their country.

Attentively observing tourism development policies in Egypt and Lebanon, the advocates of tourism in the Yishuv pursued a systematic approach to tourism development. The mainly Zionist actors enjoyed wide-ranging competences with regard to shaping politics in the Yishuv and profited from cooperation with the British mandatory. As the latter's interest often consisted in reducing both manpower and financial resources to a minimum, they were able to largely define measures and contents of tourism development in the Mandate.² Their aim was to define itineraries and disseminate their messages among tourists during their entire journey across Mandate Palestine. The *Zionist Information Bureau for Tourists* and the Jewish Agency thus offered a wide range of services and thoroughly shaped publications and advertisement campaigns. Tourists were addressed either as witnesses to the Zionist project or as potential investors or settlers, thus as contributors to the realisation of a Zionist state.

In Lebanon, due to the existence of a regional tourism sector since Ottoman times, tourism had been on the political agenda early on, and proponents of tourism development resumed their activities right after the establishment of the mandate. A number of important families in Lebanese politics had their strongholds in the *estivage* area, which was certainly another asset in favour of tourism and a major difference to neighbouring Syria. As soon as the French “politics of cooperation” granted Lebanese deputies and associations greater room for manoeuvre in shaping cultural policies in the Mandate, they promoted tourism more systematically as

a central pillar of both the national economy and national identity, and as a means of integrating the national territory.

British and French colonial officials had their own reasons to support tourism development in those cases; converging interests thus facilitated cooperation between nationalist middle-class actors and the imperial powers. As an economic sector, tourism did not compete with the manufactured goods of the imperial powers. Specifically in French colonial circles, tourism was rather perceived as a contribution to the “*mise en valeur*” of the colonial possessions. In Britain, *Thomas Cook & Sons* was an influential lobbyist in favour of tourism; and both mandatories perceived tourism as a contribution to prove their rightful administration of the mandates in both economic and educational terms.

By contrast, neither the Palestinian Arab middle classes nor its Syrian counterparts managed to shape coherent national policies of tourism development. In both mandates, the parliamentary representation of the population was severely obstructed and political participation was curtailed, relying in both cases on the cooperation between the mandate administration and Arab notables as well as the Yishuv, while largely circumventing the Arab middle classes. Whereas for Arab Palestinians, political representation was not provided for in the mandate treaty, military conflict and French tactics of rule impeded the political participation of the middle classes in Syria, and large parts of the Syrian middle classes spent the mandate period in exile.³

Middle-class actors in Palestine, such as George Antonius or Tawfiq Canaan, aimed to forge alliances with the better-positioned *Supreme Muslim Council* or the *Tourist Development Association of Palestine*. However, these occasional instances of collaboration did not lead to a systematic shaping of narratives and spaces of tourism. Moreover, the respective partners pursued different strategies and ambitions. While the TDA was dominated by Zionist perspectives, the tourism policies of the *Supreme Muslim Council* promoted Jerusalem as a cultural and religious symbol rather than aiming to shape visions of a Palestinian state. Kamil al-Ghazzi, pursuing a strategy of cooperation in Syria, did not even succeed in obtaining institutional support from the French mandatory. In neither of the cases, the limited room for manoeuvre of middle-class actors in the political sphere allowed for comprehensive tourism strategies at the national level – nor for any long-term strategies of state-building.

In Syria, the French High Commission shaped tourism development policies to a large extent, addressing travellers as potential supporters of the French imperial project. Advertised as a means of economic and cultural development, tourism was also conceived of as an instrument of territorial control, and the touristic and military uses of infrastructural projects overlapped. European tourists were meant to create a civilian presence in the insurgent hinterlands or at strategic outposts, and tourism advertisement, information services and organisational advice remained

largely a domain of the French High Commission as well as of international entrepreneurs. As the French officials barely cooperated with the Syrian middle classes, and, unlike in North Africa, a French settler community did not exist, local support for tourism development policies remained limited.

The strategy of cooperation of the Arab and Yishuvi advocates of tourism development did not imply that divisions along the lines of coloniser/colonised, class, gender, or race were suspended in tourism. Members of the mandate administrations sometimes had serious objections against the increasing mobilities of Others.⁴ They feared unintended political consequences of tourist mobilities, for example in Palestine, where British officials suspected tourism to be a way of concealing the illegal immigration of Jewish settlers. In French Syria, during the uprisings against the mandatory, French authorities feared that potential spies and foreign agents might enter the country as tourists and create unrest. Similarly, the *estivage* practices of Arab notables suspected of pan-Arab leanings aroused suspicion among the authorities, and a visa, as we have seen in the case of Al-Husayni, could be rejected on these grounds.

Restrictions of mobility also had class and gender dimensions. This did not only concern the Arab populations of the mandates and Egypt, but also citizens from the colonial metropolises as the example of the French singers and dancers showed. Imperial concerns about the reputation of the mandate power and a general anxiety about the allegedly uncontrollable mountain resorts outweighed their demands for access to imperial labour markets in times of economic crisis.

Similarly, Arab advocates of tourism development promoted tourism for lower-class citizens out of political considerations. Their approach towards the lower classes was educational, characterised by attempts to make them participate in excursions to national monuments, museums, and leisure practices that were considered adequate. As the lower classes were not considered a power base by the middle classes, their basic material interests were of secondary importance when it came to disputes about measures of tourism development. Objections against infrastructural projects like in Baalbek or concerns about rising prices were considered subordinate to the interests of a touring global bourgeoisie and the political, cultural and economic potential of their visit.

Finally, tourists had their very own perspectives on the narratives and visions presented to them. They were, after all, not just an audience, but actors themselves, and persons intending to disseminate their spatio-political visions among tourists thus depended on the willingness of the latter to consider their points of view. For nationalist actors aiming to disseminate new visions of their country it was thus difficult to modify tourist narratives. Moments of rupture were an occasion to spread new narratives. Crises and conflicts incited tourists to seek new lines of interpretation as the Syrian Revolt or the case of Mandate Palestine showed,

where the conflict between immigrating Jews and the Arab Palestinian population led travellers to question established narratives of the 'Holy Land'. Yet the case of Palestine also demonstrated that the chances of actors to actually modify tourist narratives were highly unequal. In case tourists were confronted with competing narratives, they tended to follow the interpretations and explanations that seemed familiar, or trusted guides from a similar social and national background. Tourists were thus by no means a passive audience, but carefully selected information, often according to criteria of familiarity.

The access to political decision-making, obviously, did not guarantee the successful realisation of ambitions projected at tourism development. Carriages and camels remained a preferred motif for George H. Williams' photographs, the dream of an international spa resort of Tiberias did not come true, the upsurge in numbers of tourists visiting Palmyra and the Jabal al-Druze did not occur, and the Lebanese coastal towns remained on the margins of tourist maps before the war. Moreover, the economic turbulences during the interwar period menaced a number of business ventures and tourism development plans. Still, the middle-class advocates of tourism believed in its potential. They continued to set incentives for businesses, modified their plans, and addressed new target groups. In the following section I argue that they did so because of the spatial paradigm shaping their understanding of state-building, which turned tourism into an important resource.

Tourism as a transformative resource

The collective appearance of tourists as well as their desire for information and guidance allowed tour operators and associations, guidebook authors and professional tour guides to use tourism as a resource for creating meaning. These actors drafted itineraries defining the importance of sites and sights, they developed narratives about the origins and particularities of nations and attempted to shape the impressions tourists would take home and share in their countries of origin. In addition, the steadiness in tourists' movements allowed them to use it as a resource for consolidating territory. Mobilities and infrastructures related to tourism, from roads and railways to accommodation infrastructures including water and sewage systems as well as electricity cables, contributed to the integration of territory. Tourists following the same itineraries connected places and attributed sense to connections and boundaries, thereby creating space.⁵ From a bird's eye view, tourism helped establishing an order of nation-states that emerged on the mental maps of visitors and local societies alike.

The transformative ambitions of the advocates of tourism development shifted from the 1920s to the 1930s, confirming Cyrus Schayegh's distinction between a

spatial “Ottoman twilight” in the 1920s and an order of nation-states in the 1930s.⁶ Seen through the lens of tourism, the 1920s were characterised by actors’ attempts to position their states in the newly established international order, whereas the outside borders were not yet entirely defined. A united *Bilad al-Sham* was still used by some Arab guidebook authors as a framework introducing the traveller to the region, various models of a fruitful Palestinian-Yishuvi coexistence circulated, and the *Société de villégiature au Mont Liban* only started to make known Mount Lebanon as a destination to a larger, international tourist audience.

In the 1930s, the focus on tourism development shifted towards a closer integration of the national territory. This included targeting domestic audiences, a shift that might have been additionally fostered by the experience of the Great Depression and the orientation towards national economies.⁷ Proponents of tourism aimed to create a national consciousness among their fellow countrymen, and they increasingly turned towards an integration of the borderlands. Both aims became manifest in new forms of local tourism aiming at both moral and physical education of the citizens.

The idea that the control of territory was vital to the sovereignty of the state was not unique to the Arab East. Charles S. Maier observed that the striving for control of bordered space (“territory”, as defined by Maier) dominated political thought in the era between around 1860 and 1970. The viability of a state, he argued, was assumed to depend on the resources given in the particular territory, as well as on the capacity of the state to mobilise these resources.⁸ This “territorial consciousness”, as Maier termed it, explains the overarching interest of both imperial officials and nationalist middle-class actors in tourism.⁹ Nationalist middle-class actors pursued tourism development policies with particular vigour, as tourism seemed to provide the control over territory that would allow them to achieve political sovereignty. This control included the classification (“mapping”) of space, considered a core element of post-colonial nation-building by Anderson, yet it went beyond mere classification.¹⁰ The integration of territory, from their point of view, was based on mobilities, infrastructures and mindsets, and tourism helped to create them.

The territorialisation characterising the transition from a post-Ottoman spatial order to the consolidation of nation-states in the Arab East can be divided into three spatial processes supported by tourism: the emergence of new centres, the integration of hinterlands and peripheries, as well as (partly) the definition of an ‘outside’.

The rise of new centres

In the course of tourism development, new centres emerged on states’ territory that were not necessarily defined by their administrative or economic significance. Rather, tourists or advocates of tourism development attributed historical,

cultural, or aesthetic meaning to them. Among these emblematic centres were sites famous for major archaeological or cultural monuments such as Luxor, Baalbek, or Palmyra. Advocates of tourism development stipulated the objective, universal significance of the site and assumed that the grandeur of the monuments testified to the grandeur of the nation or the imperial power.¹¹

On the one hand, the interests of international tourists in archaeological sites were given priority over the local interests of lower-class citizens. Michel Alouf and his supporters argued that the 'public interest' of mankind in the ruins of Baalbek, manifest in the flocks of tourists who visited the site, justified the expropriation of local inhabitants for the construction of a new road. In Luxor, the presence of tourists served as an argument for the 'embellishment' of the area around the train station and the expulsion of residents, and in Palmyra, the preservation of the ruins and their accessibility to tourists justified the displacement of local inhabitants.

On the other hand, the meaning attributed to the new centres also led to urban growth and infrastructural development. Local representatives, like Tawfiq Bishara in Luxor, used the importance of tourist centres as an argument to demand additional funds and investments in local infrastructures. At times, the successful territorial integration of a place seems to have made inhabitants reconsider their opinions regarding the new spatial order. In Baalbek, for example, the advantages its inhabitants gained from its importance as a national symbol seem to have shifted their allegiances towards the Lebanese state between the 1920s and 1936.

A certain malleability of the notion of 'tourist centre' was evident in the case of the Yishuv, where officials from the *Zionist Information Bureau for Tourists* promoted the Jezreel Valley as a particular tourist attraction. The stipulated interest derived from the promotion of the new Jewish settlements as the heartland of the projected Zionist state, while Arab Palestinian towns and villages were omitted on tourist maps. Even if tourists were not necessarily convinced by the aesthetic qualities of the settlements, most of the travellers in my sample took note of their existence and acknowledged the Yishuvi contribution to the development of Palestine.

Regarding Syria, advocates of tourism development continued to promote the urban centres of the Ottoman period as well as the *estivage* villages. Unlike in neighbouring states, options of fostering Syrian domestic tourism were not discussed – neither the French colonisers nor the notables, who built their influence very much on local support – had an interest in generating such larger, nationwide mobility. *Estivage* journeys of the notables as well as summer camps of the urban youth in the *estivage* resorts therefore remained the only instances of experiencing the Syrian space. 'Syria' as a new entity was thus largely defined from the perspectives of French (and British) observers, yet, without local support, its materialisation on the ground remained unstable.

Integrating peripheries

Tourism allowed its advocates to intensify state presence in regions that had been considered subordinate hinterlands or peripheries before.¹² This integration occurred in imaginaries as we have seen in Lebanon, where the reference to the Phoenician heritage initially was not related to actual policies of conservation and tourist circuits. Although the editors of tourist brochures referred to the Phoenician heritage, in terms of infrastructural accessibility and preservationist policies the port towns of Sidon, Tripoli and Tyre remained marginal until the late 1930s. Phoenicianism justified the *shape* of the nation, but only in a time of contestation it translated into actual policies of integrating these towns into the Lebanese tourist space. Increased movements were then supposed to reinforce the connections between the coastal areas and the Lebanese heartland.

In the contested French Mandate of Syria, French military officers and colonial administrators also identified tourist infrastructures and trajectories as a means of tying insurgent towns and hinterlands closer to the state. Directing tourists to contested areas was conceived of as a method of surveying and controlling territory without military means, thus reconcilable with mandate obligations. In the Jabal al-Druze and the 'Alawite state, tourism development was fostered as a means of 'pacification' after armed conflict. It was intended to create a civilian presence across the Syrian territory, while infrastructures such as road projects served both potential tourists and the military. As it seems that, other than in the French North African settler colonies, Syria did not attract a sufficient number of French (or other) civilians, it seems likely that the strategy did not bring the intended military success though.

A similar logic explains the promotion of tourist attractions or the creation of resorts at strategically relevant outposts. Palmyra was an example, but also the *Kallia* resort at the Dead Sea, which was promoted by its managers as an escape for the Yishuvi population even during times of violent conflict. Arab Palestinian advocates of tourism, by contrast, mainly advertised Jerusalem as a tourist centre. While this demonstrated their historical rootedness in the land of Palestine, neglecting the hinterland implied that the integration of a potential Arab Palestine did not occur: they neither drafted maps of a future sovereign Arab Palestinian state nor had the means to shape infrastructural connections.

Policies of integrating nations by means of tourism development also had sociopolitical implications as they implied the creation of shared living standards across the country. Efforts of electrification and the construction of roads and water infrastructures were particularly relevant for the Lebanese mountain villages. Moreover, proponents of tourism aimed to create domestic mobilities, ambitions that were centred on the integration of the working classes and the modernisation

of society. Thereby, they mirrored developments in Europe and North America, where fascist, socialist, and democratic governments fostered tourism to secure the loyalty of the population.¹³

In the Mediterranean, beach tourism turned into the symbol of modern societies in the 1930s and the youthful swimming woman became its visual icon. The excursions were associated with physical activity, thus differing from the Ottoman *estivage* habits and their focus on sociability, while generating mobilities towards other, previously peripheral regions. The promotion of beaches as sites of recreation was accompanied by the propagation of new codes of conduct, and the beach became associated with an educational agenda, as the detailed regulations on dress and behaviour demonstrated.¹⁴ Then, from such a perspective, tourism led to a rapprochement between urban spaces and peripheral areas, both in actual movements and in cultural terms.

Defining the 'outside'

The definition of the neighbouring countries as outside Others in tourism was rare in the four case studies under scrutiny. Presumably, notions of belonging to a shared cultural space still shaped imaginaries in former *Bilad al-Sham*. Only in some of the 1920s brochures, authors claimed a Mediterranean, distinctly modern identity for Lebanon while at the same time distinguishing it from an Orientalised Syria. Egypt, by contrast, exhibited its outside Other in tourism more prominently: in the magazines of the *Tourist Development Association*, racial and civilisational boundaries were assumed to separate Arab Egyptians from Nubians as well as Sudanese, 'lifting up' the Egyptians against clichés of uncivilised Africans.

Rather than defining their countries by their Others, advocates of tourism development in all case studies carefully shaped visions of their own community, refuting stereotypes of allegedly backward Orientals and presenting their societies in terms of an international modernity. The references for such modernity differed: whereas postcards from French Mandate Syria showcased the Hamidian urban modernity, in Lebanon, Egypt and the Yishuv, modernity implied the exhibition of industrial productivity, of which leisure activities in certain defined spaces such as beaches, luxurious hotels and clubs were one facet. The showcasing of agricultural landscapes in this context was particular to the Yishuv and must be understood in Zionist discourses on restoring ancient productivity in Palestine. Arab Palestine was an exception, as Palestinian tourist narratives presented the history rather than the modernity of Palestine, thereby expressing their claims to the land.

Lebanon had a particular relationship with its outside neighbours on whom its tourism sector largely depended. Although Lebanese citizens participated in the expansion of sports courts, clubs and swimming pools as well as *estivage* and

skiing practices, in contrast to Egypt and the Yishuv, domestic working-class tourism played a subordinate role, presumably due to the country's small population. Advocates of tourism development focused instead on attracting visitors from across the Arab world and beyond, pursuing less educational and rather political-diplomatic aims. In shaping Lebanon as a leisure space for the Yishuv (until 1948) and the Arab world, Lebanon not only managed to preserve the meaning of its *estivage* industry, but also maintained good relations with the neighbouring countries the recognition of which was viable to its political existence.

Continuities

Alongside the processes of transition towards an order of nation-states, alternative mental maps and spatial orders persisted. Such visions characterised the perspectives of Arab notables, for whom the mountains of Lebanon and Syria remained an important *estivage* resort that was not defined in national terms. To them, resorts such as Bludan or Ehden remained embedded in a framework of Arab sociability, allowing them to maintain relations across the newly established borders.

In Syria, such a perception of space as a network of interconnected centres continued to define the views of its inhabitants more generally. Neither the Syrian notables nor its middle classes seemed to develop a territorial idea of Syria. Efforts to foster tourism development, though generally limited, focused on the urban centres or the *estivage* resorts. Other than the French mandate power aiming to penetrate the Syrian hinterlands, the attractions suggested by Syrian advocates of tourism development were monuments situated in or associated with urban contexts. Visual representations, like on postcards, reproduced visions of Syria as a country of Ottoman modernity, characterised by infrastructures interlinking the urban centres. I assumed that this was related to the ongoing dominance of notables in Syrian politics whose power was based on local allegiances rather than national identifications. In Kamil al-Ghazzi's reflections, instances of thinking Syria in a territorial sense were discernible, yet a national forum for exchange and debate was lacking. For the same reasons, new centres of Syria, though sites like Palmyra and the Suwayda were identified and infrastructurally developed by French efforts, did not gain great prominence.

A perception of space in terms of networks also characterised the approach of Arab Palestinians in Mandate Palestine. Tawfiq Canaan's search for a distinctive Palestinian national culture in the villages seems to have been an exception. Arab middle-class nationalists such as Alexander Khouri and George Antonius continued to situate Palestine in their narratives in the larger context of *Bilad al-Sham*. The approach of Amin al-Husayni and the *Supreme Muslim Council*, who identified a political potential in tourism much earlier than the Syrian notables, similarly

reflected thinking in networks and alliances. His political strategy did not include tourism development in the Palestinian peripheries and hinterlands but was based largely on the symbolic importance of Jerusalem. Its touristic attraction, al-Husayni reasoned, would allow them to place Jerusalem on the mental map of a global audience and raise global awareness of the situation of the Palestinian people. While he seems to have succeeded in this regard, such symbolic action did not bring the Arab Palestinians closer to a nation-state.

Though to different degrees, the efforts at tourism development during the 1920s and 1930s had lasting effects in the four countries under scrutiny. Deputies and state officials increasingly resorted to tourism as a resource in defining a national order. This option did not exist for Palestinian Arabs, who resorted to revolt, and the uncompromising position of the French mandatory made it a stony process for Syrians. Yet in Egypt, Lebanon and the Yishuv, nationalist middle-class actors sought to gain independence within the given national frame, and they promoted their visions in the tourist arena. Zionist advocates of tourism development side-lined the interests of tourists to the benefit of the state-building project. A comprehensive strategy of informing visitors and reaching out to potential settlers and investors resulted in a projected subordination of tourists' desires to itineraries and gazes useful for the nationalist project. Egyptian representatives consolidated the Egyptian nation on the beaches of Alexandria and used tourist contexts to define civilisational and national borders against the Sudanese, and civilisational and moral borders against Mussolini's Italy. Lebanon was a striking case, as attracting tourists from outside Lebanon remained the primary goal of proponents of tourism development throughout the whole period, and tourism allowed its representatives to fashion a place for Lebanon in both a regional and an international setting. Moreover, the tourist space came to be identified with the national space by both visitors and a large segment of the population. Tourism development initiatives spread narratives of national coherence and created powerful national symbols, while infrastructures and itineraries aimed at connecting Ottoman *estivage* centres and more recently identified tourist attractions. The incorporation of territories that had long been (and would remain) disputed became a material reality, and the expansion of infrastructures directed tourists to the proclaimed national heartland: the mountain range.

The tourist's age

When the predominantly bourgeois as well as regional tourist mobilities of the 1920s and 1930s gave way to European mass tourism in the Mediterranean in the second half of the twentieth century, the territorial hopes projected at tourism seem to have lost their relevance. Continuities in the tourism business linked mass

tourism to its predecessors, as tourist movements did not entirely cease after the outbreak of World War II. The *Shepherd's Hotel* in Cairo accommodated British officers, and British soldiers were sent to Palestine for recovery. Guidebook authors pursued their efforts to shape the perceptions of these visitors even more relentlessly than before, attempting to influence their perspectives in view of the ensuing post-war order.¹⁵

Yet, the establishment of independent nation-states in the 1940s impacted mobilities in the region. Tourism was now clearly framed in national terms, organised as a sector of the national economy and subject to national visa regulations. Not least, the new reality of the State of Israel fundamentally altered the possibilities of crossing borders in the Arab East.¹⁶ The struggle of Arab Palestinian actors in tourism was severely impeded, and the idea of Yishuvi tourists skiing in Lebanon was no longer imaginable. The Arab Eastern Mediterranean had crumbled into national tourist spaces by the 1950s, both in terms of imaginaries and movements.

Moreover, the independence most countries achieved set an end to international negotiations on the right to self-rule. The political significance of tourism receded into the background. Instead, the economic potential of the Mediterranean was perceived in the accommodation of a growing number of middle- and working-class members, to whom the economic boom of post-war Europe allowed the enjoyment of holidays on the beaches of the Mediterranean.¹⁷ Packaged tours offered cheap vacations, promising the '3 S's': sand, sun, sea.¹⁸ As they were organised by large, international tour operators, the possibilities for local actors to shape tourism, its infrastructures and narratives were limited. As a result, the boom of tourism in the 1960s and 1970s went hand in hand with a trend often described as 'deterritorialisation', thoroughly analysed (and critically nuanced) by Waleed Hazbun in his case study of Tunisia. He showed how on the one hand, the revenues from tourism became a major pillar of the national economies around the Mediterranean which strengthened the position of tourism in national politics and the coherence of state-led tourism development policies. On the other, the resorts emerging along the coastlines often formed enclaves where interaction with the local population was limited. Mobility linking resorts to other parts of the country was no longer constitutive in tourism development. Low labour costs were thus the decisive criteria for the popularity of a place, while the destinations as such seemed substitutable.¹⁹ In the boom years of Mediterranean tourism, the Mediterranean destinations thus lost any distinctive appeal and with a further decrease in transportation costs, sun-sand-sea tourism was easily transferred from the Mediterranean to other destinations.²⁰

Some instances of political uses of tourism persisted even after nation-states had come to define the global order. On the international level, tourism seems to have remained a strategy for achieving international recognition. The Spanish

dictatorship, for example, fostered tourism to present the image of an open, liberal and stable country to tourists. Under different premises, in Yugoslavia under Tito, tourism was an important element of Yugoslavia's 'Third Way', presenting a friendly form of socialism to the world.²¹ In Lebanon, where the business of tourism continued to be dominated largely by Lebanese entrepreneurs, tourism remained a political resource used to position the country both in a regional and an international context. Zeina Maasri argued that the 1960s marked a shift in tourism advertisement, shaping Lebanon as a distinctly modern country on a global stage and emphasising the Mediterranean over the mountain identity.²² Yet I suggest that the coexistence of both elements, the advertising of the mountain resorts as well as the beaches, which already characterised Lebanese tourism in the interwar period, persisted well into the twentieth century. After all, the mountain resorts experienced an upsurge in popularity among Arab *estiveurs* after World War II and started to attract a growing number of Gulf tourists from the 1960s onwards.²³ Both tourism and *estivage* remained vital in Lebanon's self-positioning as a sovereign state.

On a national level, tourism remained an instrument of propagating narratives of national history and forging national identities, as in Tunisia, where state-led heritage policies promoted a secular historical narrative as an alternative to the upsurge of Islamic identifications in North Africa during the 1990s.²⁴ To some degree, even notions of territorial integration in tourism development persisted. Tourism remained an option for economic development in peripheral regions, while infrastructures built for tourism also connected the local population in these areas with the nation and created income and employment opportunities.²⁵ In Syria under Hafiz al-Asad, tourism was perceived as such a means of economically developing the national hinterlands.²⁶ Furthermore, Rebecca L. Stein has argued that tourism was part of Israeli practices of occupation and conquest in the occupied territories.²⁷

More often than not, however, tourism seems to have been fostered for economic reasons, as it provided states with foreign currency.²⁸ Such reflections seem to have led some states to pursue a strategy of 're-territorialisation', as described for the late 1970s and 1980s in Tunisia by Hazbun. This shift, according to him, had emanated from the political awareness about the vulnerability of mass tourism as an economic strategy. Reacting to the crisis in tourism experienced in the mid-1970s, governments adopted a more active role in tourism development, attempting to promote national culture and heritage and hence, advertise tourist attractions specific to the national territory rather than the interchangeable Mediterranean beaches.²⁹ Though driven largely by the bureaucracies of the independent nation-states of the Southern Mediterranean, territorial considerations did not seem to play a role here.³⁰ We may conclude that the onset of globalisation, putting an end to the territorial ambitions projected at tourism development, occurred around the 1960s or 1970s in tourism.³¹

In a long history of travel and tourism, the 1920s and 1930s marked a particular stage as the organised journeys of tourists attracted the attention of political representatives and institutions. Getting back to the idea of the 1920s and 1930s as an 'experimental stage' of the twentieth century, we have seen the emergence of Mediterranean beach resorts as leisure spaces for the working classes, but also the emergence of ministries of tourism, signalling the importance tourism came to play for a number of states.³²

At the same time, the period marked the height of tourism as a political resource, as it was expected to nourish ambitious projects of achieving sovereignty, modernising society and shaping nation-states. The historical openness of the provisional spatial order in the post-Ottoman Arab East, the international dialogue institutionalised by the mandates system, the territorial thinking of the twentieth century, and the ambitions of local middle-class actors led them to attribute major significance to tourism, which appeared to create the conditions for territorial control. Even if they did not fully achieve their aims, these proponents of tourism development drafted visions of territorially integrated nation-states that came into being at least in the Yishuv, in Egypt and in Lebanon.

Tourism thus transformed the spatio-political order of the Arab East in the 1920s and 1930s. At the same time, the 1920s and the 1930s transformed tourism. In the context of nation-building that occurred on an international stage, requiring the acknowledgement of a rather undefined global audience, and given the territorial *zeitgeist*, tourism unfolded its political power, turning from a leisurely occupation of well-off aristocrats to a practice that brought nations into being.

Notes

¹ Dejung, Motadel and Osterhammel, 'Worlds of the Bourgeoisie', pp. 20–21.

² Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine*, pp. 93–100.

³ Krämer, *Geschichte Palästinas*, pp. 233–236. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 115–119, 221–227, 239, 249.

⁴ Huber, *Channelling Mobilities*, pp. 306, 318–319.

⁵ Rau, *Räume*, pp. 183–184.

⁶ Schayegh, *The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World*, pp. 8–9.

⁷ In the Egyptian Parliament, such arguments were advanced in the context of the 1925/26 economic crisis (cf. p. 98), yet in other sources I have not come across similar arguments.

⁸ Maier, *Once within Borders*, pp. 1–2, 236–243. Maier, 'Consigning the Twentieth Century', p. 815. Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt*, pp. 130–131, 173–174. Schlögel, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit*, pp. 167–176, 189–210.

⁹ Maier, 'Consigning the Twentieth Century', pp. 819–820.

¹⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 178, 184–185.

- ¹¹ At the same time, the arguments Lebanese actors put forward in the debate about Baalbek mirrored a shift from notions of a universal cultural heritage to an understanding of cultures as diverse and distinct, as shown by Andrea Rehling: Rehling, “‘Kulturen unter Artenschutz’?”, even more so when the festival was established after World War II: Maasri, ‘Troubled Geography’, p. 137.
- ¹² Maier, ‘Consigning the Twentieth Century to History’, pp. 819–823.
- ¹³ Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism*, pp. 135–145.
- ¹⁴ Cf. Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, pp. 125–155. Azaryahu and Golan, ‘Contested Beachscapes’. Walton, ‘Beaches, Bathing and Beauty’. The widespread rejection of bathing practices in Palestine was an exception, according to Salim Tamari: Tamari, ‘The Mountain against the Sea?’.
- ¹⁵ Irving, “‘This is Palestine’”. Cf. also the guidebook of Rouhi Jamil: BO, Jamil, *Damascus – Palmyra – Baalbek*.
- ¹⁶ Schayegh, ‘The Many Worlds of ‘Abud Yasin’.
- ¹⁷ Hazbun showed though that Tunisia under Bourguiba initially envisioned the establishment of winter resorts for European elites, but due to a lack in demand turned towards mass tourism: Hazbun, ‘Modernity on the Beach’, p. 212.
- ¹⁸ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, p. 18.
- ¹⁹ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, pp. 12, 17–18. Similar patterns characterised tourism development in Spain, Portugal and Greece: Manera, Segreto and Pohl, ‘The Mediterranean as a Tourist Destination’, pp. 7–8.
- ²⁰ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, p. 19.
- ²¹ Pack, *Tourism and Dictatorship*. Crumbaugh, *Destination Dictatorship*. Grandits and Taylor, *Yugoslavia’s Sunny Side*.
- ²² Maasri, ‘Troubled Geography’, pp. 133–138.
- ²³ Buccianti, ‘Tourisme et villégiature’, pp. 26–27, 76–81.
- ²⁴ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, pp. 69–70.
- ²⁵ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, pp. 58–61. Berrino, ‘Programmi di valorizzazione turistica’, pp. 778–779.
- ²⁶ Gray, ‘The Political Economy of Tourism in Syria’, pp. 66–67.
- ²⁷ Stein, ‘#Stolen Homes’.
- ²⁸ Gray, ‘The Political Economy of Tourism in Syria’, pp. 58, 70. Gray, ‘Economic Reform, Privatization and Tourism’, pp. 93–94, 96–99.
- ²⁹ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, pp. 21–25, 33–35, 54–55.
- ³⁰ Hazbun, *Beaches, Ruins, Resorts*, pp. 70–71.
- ³¹ Charles Maier dated the end of the age of territoriality, on a macro-level, to around the 1970s: Maier, ‘Consigning the Twentieth Century to History’, p. 815.
- ³² Kunkel and Meyer, ‘Dimensionen des Aufbruchs’.

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