

Degrowth Art's Response to Mass Tourism: Through the Practices of Tourism Photographers

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ABSTRACT: This paper analyzes mass tourism through the concept of Degrowth, focusing on photography as a form of visual art. Drawing on the theory of Serge Latouche, Degrowth is defined not as negative economic growth but as a critique of the ideology that prioritizes expansion, consumption. The paper argues that popular responses to excessive mass tourism, such as Sustainable Tourism, Luxury Tourism, or Quality Tourism, remain embedded in growth concept and therefore fail to address the structural causes of mass tourism. First, the study examines tourism representations on social media, including trends such as “#instagramvsreality,” which appear critical of overcrowding yet often reproduce new forms of tourism growth. It then analyzes the photos Martin Parr, Massimo Vitali and Alessandro Toscano, whose representations reveal the tension between individual experience and collective tourism. Their photographic practices are interpreted as forms of “Degrowth art” that encourage critical reflection and aesthetic “re-enchantment.” The paper concludes that visual art offers an alternative cultural approach to mass tourism, shifting attention from economic growth toward perception, meaning, and human-scale values within travel experiences

KEYWORDS: Degrowth Art, Mass Tourism, Overtourism, Leisure Theory, #instagramvsreality

1. Introduction to the Degrowth Art analysis

1.1. Tourism and Leisure in Degrowth

This paper focuses on the concept of “Degrowth”¹, originally introduced and systematized by French economic philosopher Serge Latouche, to study the contemporary phenomenon of tourism, mainly through the photography as a visual art. The concept of “Degrowth” by Serge Latouche is being explored not only in the political and economic fields but also across various fields, including tourism and leisure. However, the issue of Degrowth and tourism has yet to be sufficiently discussed. This introduction begins by examining how tourism and leisure are important themes for Degrowth in Latouche’s texts. Then, this introduction continues by examining the “Degrowth” approaches to excessive mass tourism, or overtourism – a central issue in contemporary tourism – by considering Latouche’s perspective, while acknowledging the trends of “Sustainable Tourism,” “Luxury Tourism” or “Quality Tourism.”

To begin with, the concept of “Degrowth” by Latouche isn’t simply a rejection of economic growth. Latouche denies that “Degrowth” is misunderstood as negative economic growth. His concept means “*abandoning economic ideology – the belief that ‘more is better’*”² and “*literally stepping out of the economy.*”³ In other words, it is about distancing ourselves from the dominant ideology of economic growth in our daily lives and discovering alternative values⁴. Within this idea, Latouche emphasizes the importance of leisure time, citing the utopian ideas of William Morris and other British socialist artists, and argues as follows: *News From Nowhere includes a lot of themes unique to Degrowth. For example, the importance of exercising the “right to fully enjoy*

¹ Several English translations exist for the French word “*Décroissance*,” and Latouche suggests “Decrescendo,” but this paper takes the more common term “Degrowth”.

² translated from Japanese, ラトウシュ, セルジュ, 『経済成長なき社会発展は可能か?』, 中野佳裕訳 作品社, 2010, p.105

³ translated from Japanese, *Ibid.*, p.106

⁴ As practical ways to achieve Degrowth, Latouche advocates the “8R”, which include concepts such as “re-evaluate” and “re-conceptualize” that concern the creation of values.

*leisure time” as well as cutting working hours drastically, and the demand for a truly human life.*⁵ In this regard, Latouche notes that Morris’s degrowth practice is “not fanatical asceticism, but rather joyful and poetic practice, and must be so,” emphasizing “the demands of an aesthetic and the role of art.” Furthermore, in another texts, Latouche develops his theory on why and how leisure is important for degrowth, citing other major philosopher’s theories on leisure as follows:

In 1962, sociologist Joffre Dumazedier published his pioneering study “Toward a Society of Leisure.” In this book, he examined in detail the three functions of leisure: Diversion, Amusement, and (Personal) Development. Dumazedier’s research is entirely based on the hypothesis of the “autonomous agent.” By the way, Henri Lefebvre remarked in the same period that in a “bureaucratic society composed of controlled consumption activities,” if “we cannot form ourselves through labor, in labor, and with labor,” then “the meaning of life – it is a life that has lost its meaning.”

*Without the “Re-enchantment” of life, degrowth will inevitably fail again. There remains the need to give new meaning to liberated time. As long as salaried labor remains unchanged, the working class will not acquire a “proper sense of leisure” – that is, the “various objective and subjective ways for fulfilling liberated time by autonomous activities.”*⁶

Here, it’s clear that what is important for “Degrowth” theory of leisure by Latouche is the practice of “Re-enchantment,” which develops Max Weber’s concept of “Disenchantment.” What exactly is this “Re-enchantment”? Latouche emphasizes the role of art in “Re-enchantment,” like his reference to Morris above. In another book, he states as follows:

The realization of degrowth society raises the question of the “Re-enchantment” of the world. This term must not be misunderstood to mean

⁵ translated from Japanese, ラトウーシュ, セルジュ, 「ウィリアム・モリス、あるいは具現化されたユートピア」, 『〈脱成長〉は、世界を変えられるか?』, 中野佳裕訳 作品社, 2013, p.256

⁶ translated from Japanese, ラトウーシュ, セルジュ, 『経済成長なき社会発展は可能か?』, *op. cit.*, p.239

we must invent a religion of degrowth. Rather, the emphasis should be on rediscovering the meaning of the sacred, restoring legitimacy to the human spiritual dimension – this spirituality can be entirely secular – and more, recovering the capacity for astonishment. Poets, painters, artists of every kind – in the extreme sense, all specialists who work with the useless, the gratuitous, the things of the dream world, or the victimized parts of ourselves – must find their place and open the way to what might be called paradoxically “internal transcendence.”

[...]

Degrowth must be an art of living. It is the art of living well in harmony with the world, art of living alongside art.⁷

1.2. Solutions for overdevelopment of tourism?

Based on these points, this paper analyzes artworks, particularly photography as a visual art, to achieve “Degrowth” in tourism and leisure. However, before starting the analysis, there will be a short, critical discussion of excessive mass tourism, which is a main topic in this paper, as well as “Sustainable Tourism,” “Luxury Tourism” or “Quality Tourism” which have attracted attention as its potential solutions. This step aims to reexamine the significance of degrowth approach. Since the 2010s, excessive mass tourism, in other words overtourism, has been a growing issue in the tourism industry. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines overtourism as “the impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitors experiences in a negative way.”⁸ Therefore, attempts to moderate the effects of mass tourism are often apparent in the tourism industry. A primary example of this attempt is what is called “Sustainable Tourism.” UNWTO emphasizes that tourism is specifically mentioned in Goals 8, 12, and 14 of *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (commonly known as the SDGs), adopted in 2015, and recommends specific ways to achieve “Sustainable Tourism,”⁹ such

⁷ translated from Japanese, ラトウーシュ, セルジュ, 『脱成長』, 中野佳裕訳, 白水社, 2020, p.141-142

⁸ UN Tourism, ‘Overtourism’ – *Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions*, 2018

⁹ The UNWTO defines sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of

as equal employment opportunities and environmental conservation. As well, UNESCO has launched *UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme*, which also promotes environmental conservation, heritage management, and respect for local communities. Of course, such policies aim to moderate the risks of mass tourism and represent goals that should be thoroughly considered. However, the fact remains that they are still confined within the thought patterns of economic growth. Beyond “Sustainable Tourism,” the trends known as “Luxury Tourism” or “Quality Tourism” are gaining attention within the tourism industry as responses to excessive mass tourism. These approach to tourism development prioritizes the consumption per visitor rather than the number of tourists, yet it too remains confined within the ideology of economic growth, merely aiming for a different kind of growth.

Serge Latouche is quite negative about such approaches. While the concept of “Degrowth” is sometimes confused with negative economic growth or sustainable development, Latouche clearly distinguishes “Degrowth” from these. He said, *“By adding the adjective ‘sustainable’ to the concept of development, we have merely made things a little more complicated. I don’t believe that sustainable development is a concept sufficient to solve all the problems.”*¹⁰ Sustainable Tourism still merely presupposes self-sustaining growth. To consider Latouche’s “Degrowth” tourism, a different approach is essential.

Now returning to the topic at hand, this paper attempts a degrowth approach to examining tourism through the visual art.

2. Analysis of Mass Tourism Representations

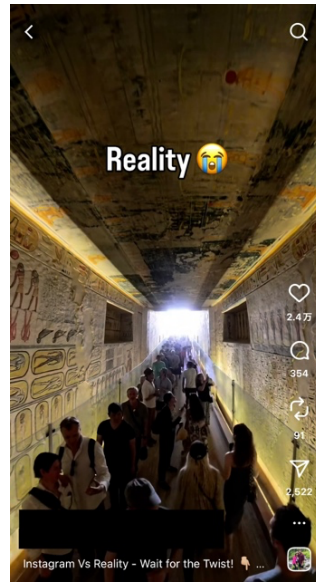
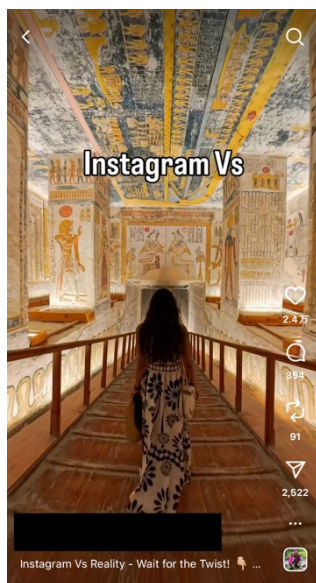
2.1. Analysis Example 1: SNS, #instagramvsreality

Before analyzing photographers’ representations of tourism, the representative representations of mass tourism circulating on SNS (Instagram and TikTok) will be examined comparatively with

its economic, social, and environmental impacts, both now and in the future, and meets the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities”

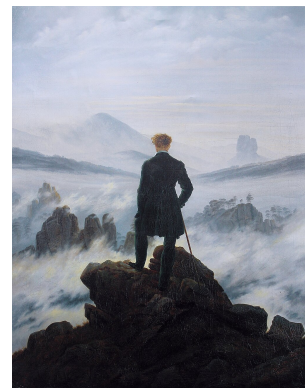
¹⁰ translated from Japanese, ラトウーシュ, セルジュ, 『経済成長なき社会発展は可能か?』, *op. cit.*, p.78-79

photographers' tourism photographs. Here, in this section, an attempt will be presented to identify the points of focus and methods of expression in a more typical critique of tourism through visual images. This is a short Instagram Reel video, divided into two parts, filmed at Egypt's famous tourist destination, the Valley of the Kings. (Figure 1)



← Figure 2: Instagram Reel, 2025

↓ Figure 2: Caspar David Friedrich, Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer, 1818



The first half of this video shows the appearance of the instagram poster at a tourist spot beautified by social media. This angle is reminiscent of Caspar David Friedrich's German Romantic paintings. (Figure 2) The use of perspective helps create depth in the landscape, with the smartphone camera capturing the central figure (the video creator themselves) from behind. The tourist destination shown in this first half of this reel video rarely captures other tourists besides her, and this editing can be considered a visual technique reminiscent of a typical adventure. Additionally, this first half is always accompanied by grand and beautiful music, which also helps to enhance the beautifying effect of SNS. On the other hand, as the latter half begins, a screen displays, with the word “*Reality*,” suddenly scenes of the same tourist destination crowded with people due to overtourism. The grand background music fades out, replaced instead by a man’s mocking laughter. Moreover, the crying emoji “😭” is added, making it clear this reel video is a negative, cynical reaction to overtourism. This example reel video,

posted in July 2025, has been viewed over 1.6 million times now in November 2025. This post is tagged with the hashtag “#instagramverreality,” and numerous other videos like this exist¹¹. In videos of this kind, it's clear that they criticize mass tourism in famous tourist destinations all over the world, while simultaneously expressing irony toward the romanticized, idealized performances on social media like Instagram or TikTok. What is noteworthy here is not only the beautifying effect on social media, but also the “meta-perspective” of the video creators themselves – Instagrammer and TikToker – who are also tourists. In the first half of such reel videos, the Instagrammer themselves – a tourist who in a sense also appears like an adventurer (the post is also tagged with the hashtag “#hiddenspots”, giving a false impression that tourism is an adventure) – appears on screen, with their celebrity status as an influencer. However, in the latter half, the view of the surrounding crowded tourist destination is shown as if from the Instagrammer's own viewpoint. This contrasting dual perspective – the adventure-style viewpoint and the subjective viewpoint – could be characterized as a “meta-perspective”, which means that they are simultaneously participants in “overtourism” as tourists and as Instagrammers, in a somewhat self-deprecating, ironic manner. (because their posts are actually responsible for this overtourism) This meta-perspective can also be understood as the dilemma between the individual and collective dimensions of the tourism experience. Of course, the first half of the Reel video represents the personal tourism experience, while the latter half represents the collective tourism experience, and this ironic meta-perspective integrates them. As noted in the UNWTO's definition of overtourism, the issue lies in the subjective dimension of “*the quality of tourists' own experiences.*” Considering the dilemma between the individual and the collective in representations is therefore extremely central. In that regard, the premise is to take into account the representations of mass tourism created by tourists themselves on social media.

This trend of reel videos can also be seen as a collective allergic

¹¹ Smith, Sean, “What do we see in a viral landscape? Instagram vs Reality and the future of overtourism”, September 2, 2024, <https://www.digitmagazine.com/academic-papers/viral-landscape-instagram-vs-reality-future-overtourism>

reaction to mass tourism, the phenomenon of excessively grown tourism. However, caution is needed regarding whether representations of on social media can be recognized as a degrowth approach. While it may be possible to approve of the “degrowth” idea that rejects economic growth in tourism and seeks to move away from it, especially in criticizing the negative impacts of excessive growth-driven tourism on the environment, local residents, and tourists themselves. On the other hand, the idealized image of tourist destinations created by SNS presents a different vision of tourism as growth—such as “Quality Tourism” and “Luxury Tourism,” introduced in the previous chapter. Furthermore, the impact of SNS on tourism booms is immense. Therefore, it can be argued that there is no escape from the concept of growth either way. What new perspectives can be offered regarding the contemporary phenomenon of overtourism—excessive growth—requires a more critical and artistic examination. Therefore, it is worth considering the photographs of Martin Parr, for example, which will be examined in the next chapter. The meta-perspective in tourism is also a key motif in Parr's tourism photography.

2.2. Analysis Example 2: Martin Parr

In the previous chapter, as an introduction to the analysis, the more general tourism representations created by Instagrammers and TikTokers—rather than artists—were examined, focusing on how they employ aesthetic methods in their representations. Here, a cynical meta-perspective is directed toward the dilemma of mass tourism, which affects both the individual and the collective. Next, the following chapters will analyze how tourism photographers critically represent excessive mass tourism, examining their methods and characteristics. First, the most important tourist photographer is British photo-journalist Martin Parr. He has shown a strong interest in Western leisure culture, and since the early 1990s—when overtourism began to emerge as an issue—he has taken humorous photographs at tourist destinations like Machu Picchu and Angkor Wat.

Mass tourism is one of the subjects I have photographed consistently over

*the years. I have documented many of the most well known tourist sites in the world including Machu Picchu, Angkor Wat and Copacabana beach. Tourism is the biggest industry in the world and the tourist spend is always growing, despite the current downturn in global economies.*¹²

His tourism photographs can be thought of in terms of several characteristics. One of these is the cynical meta-perspective, which highlights the dilemma between individual and collective tourist experience. First, he focuses on the practice of taking commemorative photos or selfies. He captures, by his camera, tourists photographing themselves at a famous tourist spot frequented by crowds of visitors. Here, it is possible to perceive a dual meta-dimension: the personal experience of commemorative photos or selfies, and the attempt to grasp this as a collective phenomenon. Martin Parr discusses the act of taking commemorative photos in his blog post titled “*Too Much Photography*,” stating the following:

One thing that has really changed in recent years is how the tourist uses photography. When I started shooting this topic many years ago, people would take one photo of themselves in front of the site and move on. Now mobile phone cameras and digital photography mean that the entire visit is documented. From the moment the tourist enters the site, everyone has to be photographed in front of every feature of note. Now it is almost impossible for me to shoot a photo where someone is NOT taking a picture or posing for one.

[...]

*My theory is that the act of photography ourselves at tourist sites becomes so important because it makes us feel reassured that we are a part of the recognizable world.*¹³

Martin Parr has photographed tourists in various ways as they take commemorative photos with tourist attractions in the background. (Figure 3, Left) In this photo, tourists are each taking

¹² Parr, Martin, “Too Much Photography”, April 26, 2012, <https://martinparr.com/2012/too-much-photography/>

¹³ *Ibid.*

commemorative photos next to the iconic chameleon statue, a famous tourist spot at Park Güell, designed by Antoni Gaudí, in Barcelona, Spain. While they are sightseeing individually and each camera, they gaze into is different, they all uniformly touch the chameleon statue with one hand and take the same standard pose. As Parr points out, taking a commemorative photo of just oneself is impossible; other tourists will inevitably appear in the shot. This point is similar to the contrast between Instagram images and Reality in the previous chapter's example of SNS. The excess of such commemorative photos taken as proof of tourist experiences serves as a prime example, through Martin Parr's cynical meta-perspective, of highlighting the dilemma between individual and collective tourist experiences. In other similar examples, Parr captures multiple tourists filling the frame as they take commemorative photos, revealing the dilemma between the individual and the collective through analogical representation. (Figure 3, Right)



Figure 3 ©Martin Parr

Parr also mentions selfies from the same point of view as commemorative photos.

*The tourism industry, which is the biggest in the world, now dictates that the first requirement of any trip is to prove you were there with the necessary photo. It connects you to the world that we know and understand, and is a vital part of any successful holiday experience. We used to have to ask a passing tourist to take the photo, but thanks to the selfie stick those days are over and we are now self sufficient.*¹⁴

¹⁴ Parr, Martin, "The Selfie Stick," May 9, 2015, <https://martinparr.com/2015/the->

This reference in 2015 focuses on the selfie sticks carried by tourists, noting that photography as proof of the tourist experience has become an even more personal method through the selfie. Here, Martin Parr's concern lies in the dual dimension of the individual and the collective within tourism. On the contrary, this Martin Parr's humanistic approach can be seen in his focus on the micro perspective of individual tourist experiences, which tend to vanish, within the macro, collective phenomenon of mass tourism. In other words, the cynical meta-perspective represents the coexistence of a collective macro-perspective and a personal micro-perspective. This unique viewpoint of Martin Parr is a coexistence of a critical viewpoint toward overtourism and a positive viewpoint that focuses on individual experiences. Indeed, Parr's own humorous gaze directed at individual tourists could be said to be a characteristic of his humanism. In a May 2025 interview, when asked about the qualities necessary for a photo-journalist, Parr responded as follows: *First, I believe it is necessary to love people, that's important. Life is interesting, and people are also interesting. So, taking a sense of humor is a good thing. That's why my photos have humor in them.*¹⁵ The fact that he almost always shoots from a human perspective rather than a bird's-eye view could similarly be considered humanistic.

Apart from commemorative photos and selfies, Martin Parr's other photographs capturing typical overtourism also show this coexistence of macro and micro perspectives. This series of photos titled "Bourton-on-the-Water" was shot during summer in Bourton-on-the-Water, a small village in the English countryside and a famous tourist destination. (Figure 4) Parr mentions, "*Bourton-on-the-Water is a honeypot village in the Cotswolds. I always try and go on a very busy summer weekend – that's when you see it at full capacity, and that is how I like it.*"¹⁶ This suggests Parr does not

selfie-stick/

¹⁵ translated from Japanese, Parr, Martin 「Martin Parr (マーティン・パー) が集積する、
「Small World」という現実の断片」 interviewed by Tomoko Ogawa, May 9, 2025,
<https://fashionpost.jp/portraits/337346>

¹⁶ Parr, Martin, "Bourton-on-the-Water," <https://martinparr.com/recent-work-4/>

have a negative impression of overtourism (“*full capacity*”). In these photographs, Martin Parr captures tourists of diverse genders, races, and ages filling the frame as they spend time on bridges, in parks, and along rivers, portraying them as an excessive mass. They are touring individually or in minimal groups, gazing in various directions. On the other hand, they share typical, common elements like orange balloons, Crocs sandals, and ice cream, emphasizing their collective characteristic as tourists. This is the same feature seen in the previous photo of Park Güell. In other words, here too, the dual dimensions of macro and micro coexist. Martin Parr implicitly expresses resistance to perceiving humans merely as numbers or quantities within the phenomenon of “overtourism.”



Figure 4 @Martin Parr “Bourton-on-the-Water

In the SNS example analyzed in the previous chapter, excessive mass tourism is simply distasteful, and alternative growth models like “Luxury Tourism” or “Quality Tourism” are celebrated. Instead, Martin Parr can be said to practice degrowth art, which resonates with Serge Latouche, by combining both a humanistic gaze and a spirit of cynical critique.

2.3. Analysis Example 3: Massimo Vitali

Like Martin Parr, Italian photographer Massimo Vitali, who has been photographing tourist destinations, beaches, and nightlife since the 1990s, also captures images of excessive mass tourism, focusing particularly on the beach mass tourism. Martin Parr also has photographed beach mass tourism extensively, but Vitali's unique characteristic is his thorough use of bird's-eye view photography. While Martin Parr dislikes bird's-eye photography, Vitali builds temporary high platforms to capture panoramic shots from above. At first glance, this method might seem to reduce humans to mere numbers or quantities, but it's not that simple. According to critics Daniela and Guido Giudici, *"If the large size of the images initially forces us to step back to enjoy a more complete view of the picture, then we immediately move closer again to analyze the details of the human landscape and to dissent a network of complex relationships, and we like or dislike some characters."*¹⁷ Vitali's photos can be said to possess both a macro panoramic perspective and a micro perspective that stimulates the viewer's imagination regarding the activities of the individuals depicted in the photos. James Lingwood also mentions the following:

*Vitali's photographs of these scenes of leisure, on heavily populated beaches and in crowded clubs are primarily works of description. They describe the form of the contemporary crowd. They are concerned not so much with the single person but with the relationships between people. In the foreground of his beach photographs, there are clearly identifiable individuals. But their status as individuals is superseded by the way they form into small social units – couples, families, groups of young men, groups of young women, groups of men and women together etc. Then as the eye moves from the foreground to the middle ground, these small social units coalesce into the larger social grouping of the crowd. Through a dialectic between immediacy and distance, between intimacy and objectivity, Vitali shows the shape of our society.*¹⁸

¹⁷ Daniela and Guido Giudici, "1994" in *Into the White*, Erich Lindenbergh, Massimo Vitali, exhibition catalogue, Erich Lindenberg Foundation, 2014.

¹⁸ Lingwood, James, "Social Grouping," September 23, 2021,

Thus, Massimo Vitali's photographs are characterized by their ability to reveal the activities of “*identifiable individuals*” and the connections between “*small social units*” within the “*contemporary crowded*”. This is probably the effect of his shooting method: panoramic photography from a temporary high platform. In the example photo below, Vitali took multiple shots of the same scenery at the same location from a temporary high position, but at different times. (Figure 5) These two photographs, taken at Florence's Piazza della Signoria, show the same location but at different times of day, as discernible from the flow of people and the shifting shadows. The vast crowds of tourists stay and pass by over a fixed location, representing the act of tourism itself. As Daniela and Guido Giudici and James Lingwood point out, while the people in the background of panoramic photos are difficult to identify individually, those in the foreground can be observed in detail, evoking each person's unique tourist experience.



Figure 5 @2025 Massimo Vitali

In this way, just as with Martin Parr, Massimo Vitali also shows the coexistence of dual dimensions—macro and micro. In this way, just as with Martin Parr, Massimo Vitali also shows the coexistence of dual dimensions—macro and micro. Rather than simply opposing Over Tourism with Luxury Tourism or Quality Tourism, Vitali offers a new humanistic value against Over Tourism while simultaneously

casting a critical gaze through a cynical and humorous perspective. This approach could be considered an artistic method of degrowth. However, in Massimo Vitali's case, it is possible to point out a more critical gaze than Martin Parr's. It is a perspective on the environment. As a photographer of beach mass tourism, Vitali captured panoramic images of people relaxing on beaches and coastlines. His photographs reveal the impact that humans have on nature. (Figure 6) Or, it could be said that by photographing natural landscapes with no humans and juxtaposing them with scenes of tourists, the power of nature is emphasized. Beaches, which began to be developed as resorts in Western Europe from the 18th century onward, are represented in Massimo Vitali's 20th-century photos not as idealized paradises, but rather as destinations for modern mass tourism. (Del Debbio, 2021) The leisure time of modern life invades natural landscapes, even giving viewers a sense of voyeuristic impression. Regarding this relationship between nature and tourists, fellow photographer Valerio Spada expresses this impression: *All of this work is about the human race and about the spaces often unexpectedly inhabited by humans, or at least occupied by them. They are shapes, contrails; they are dunes, rocks, often architecture.*¹⁹ By connecting representations of nature occupied by humans with images of beaches and numerous tourist destinations, Vitali more vividly highlights the detrimental effects of excessive tourism. This characteristic is necessarily and fundamentally linked to the subject matter of degrowth art.

¹⁹ Spada, Valerio, *Afterword for Massimo Vitali's Entering a New World: Photographs 2009-2018*, Steidl, 2020



Figure 6 @2025 Massimo Vitali

2.4. Analysis Example 4: Alessandro Toscano

Finally, this section analyzes the photographic project titled “OverTourism” by Alessandro Toscano, an Italian photographer belonging to a generation younger than Parr and Vitali. He employed editing techniques to capture “the individual and the collective in tourism” in a more radical manner than Parr or Vitali. To begin with, he captured panoramic bird's-eye views of Italian most famous tourist destinations, such as the Colosseum in Rome and Piazza del Duomo in Florence. (Figure 7, Left) In these photographs, it is no longer possible to identify individual tourists, and unlike Vitali's photographs, viewers cannot even imagine the tourists' movements or their groups. It's like a “Where's Waldo?”, children's puzzle book, in which children search for Waldo wearing a red shirt in a crowd where individuals cannot be distinguished. And he utilized this book-like concept, editing this panoramic photograph to literally cut out several individual tourists. (Figure 7, Right) And some of them are titled. For example, “*The thirsty man*” for the man who drinking water, “*The undecided photographer*” for the man who has two cameras in each hand. His editing technique characterizes both the mass and individuals in the tourist destination, macro and micro perspectives.

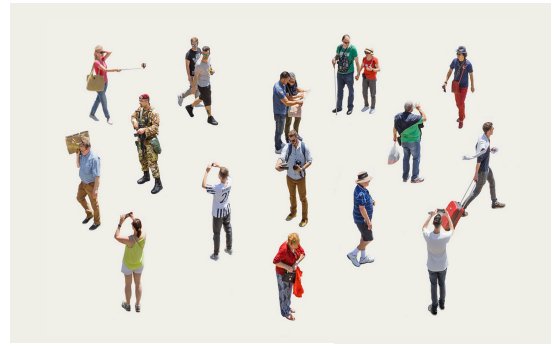


Figure 7 @2019 alessandro-toscano. All rights reserved

However, this 2019 project ended up developing in an unexpected way. At the end of 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly struck, causing immense damage to the tourism industry. Tourism came to a complete halt, and tourist destinations were left completely empty of tourists. Italian tourist destinations are no exception. Alessandro Toscano reacted quickly to the new catastrophe. (Figure 8) In March 2020, the project's Instagram account posted photos of an Italian tourist destination completely deserted—not a single person in sight, not even tourists—accompanied by the phrase “SORRY WE ARE CLOSED #iorestoacasa.” These posts were titled “Tourism after Coronavirus.” “#iorestoacasa” is the Italian “stay home” slogan used during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of course, this is a phenomenon that everyone knows. Alessandro Toscano not only captured the relationship between tourists and local destinations but also considered the impact of the virus as a new factor in tourism.

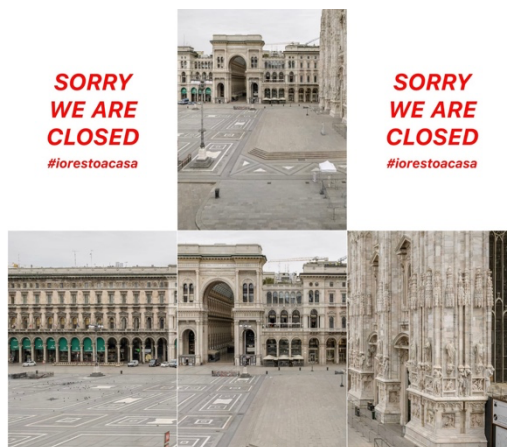


Figure 8 from Instagram of this Project @over.tourism, posted on March 11, 2020

3. Conclusion: An Essay on Degrowth Art

This paper, inspired by Serge Latouche's theory of leisure within his “degrowth” framework, examines cases of art resonating with degrowth motifs through the lens of tourism photography as a visual art. It identifies the shared perspectives and characteristics present in these works. The three tourism photographers featured here demonstrate a keen interest in the excesses of modern mass tourism, while simultaneously possessing a critical spirit and a humanistic perspective. First, the fundamental premise is a meta-perspective that captures not only typical tourist destination photos but also the masses of tourists visiting them. This highlights the dilemma between the personal and collective experiences of tourism. Photographers share this dilemma with viewers. And while avoiding the simplistic, immediate aversion to mass tourism seen in social media reel videos, it expresses a sense of distance from mass tourism through cynicism and humor, all while acknowledging the realities of tourism.

And that perspective extends beyond the relationship between tourists and tourist destinations to tourists and the environment, tourists and viruses, and so on. Indeed, there is still a pressing need to explore degrowth ideas to restart tourism in a better form now that it has come to a sudden halt due to the pandemic, and this is drawing significant attention. This paper does not specifically present economic methods to lead mass tourism toward degrowth. Rather, it attempts to present an example of this artistic and humanistic practice based on the perspective toward art held by the concept of Degrowth.

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