

The relationship between Mass Tourism and Territory and its development in the Andalusian Tourist Administration.

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Abstract

Since it appeared as a mass phenomenon, in the second half of the XX century, tourism has proved to be one of the most constant economic sectors. Today it is intensified and strengthened by the nomadic society (Cacciari, 2002) in which we're living constantly as "passengers". So, because of its special relevance in the global economy, tourism may be about to become the administration leading area, capable of influencing any other public management field. This is already happening, in Omar Bouazza Ariño's (2009) opinion, in the Andalusian Autonomous Region: it developed a Sustainable Tourism General Plan (2007-2011) which encourages the participation of the Tourism Regional Office in the creation of the territorial planning tools, considering it as a primary point of view from which territory has to be studied and managed.

In such a context, this research provides an analysis of the tourism management administrative tools relating to the Andalusian Region, taken as a representative and consolidated European tourist destination. Considering the evolution of the Autonomic Tourism Legislation, this work presents some specific points of the interaction between the tourism current management and the territory planning. It highlights the incorporation of the recent process of change of the tourist phenomenon, in search of a possible balance between the priority of the social aspects over the economic one, and with the awareness of the strong tendency of the global mobility of changing the territory and the landscape.

Keywords: tourist society, global change impact, tourism management, territorial planning.

1. Tourism as a mass phenomenon.

Since tourism turned into a mass phenomenon, in the second half of the 20th century, it has evolved up to a consolidated economic sector. Initially considered as a transitory tendency which wasn't worthy of a deep consideration, later it demonstrated to be a constantly developing profitable activity. It is actually characterized by a strongly steady trend, capable of holding and overcoming fiscal crises in different geographical and political contexts. In Spain, the fact that the tourism activity was overcoming successfully periodic crises that were occurring since 1973, it permitted its recognition as an important economic sector. Along with its revaluation there came the Spanish modernization, the capitalization and the application of neoliberal policies.

Fundamentally, tourism reached the status of consolidated economic sector in all that it evolved within the process itself of the constitution of the global mass society, so that it represents one of its clearest manifestations. Edgar Morin, up in 1962, included mass tourism between the typical appearances of the epoch of consumerism, when everything turns into a product and culture is substituted by the *cultural industry*. In particular, tourism is the expression of the *leisure culture* of the industrial individualistic society (Morin, [1962] 1967: 63-64).

After the Second World War, most of the West European countries like England, West Germany and France, achieved an unexpected high economic growth. The manuals of tourism history report that the wealthy European middle class, still affected by the recent happenings, seized the renewed freedom by devoting itself to travelling. This stage was characterized by a constant increase of displacements from the most prosperous European countries towards the Mediterranean area. Spain got involved in the process too, even though the Francoist regime, willing to control the people flows as well as the information and cultural exchange, was impeding the international travelling through strict bureaucratic processes.

The fundamental step that eventually led the described facts to the dimension of mass phenomenon was the appearance of a new professional figure in the field of economic business related to holiday organization: the touroperator. Besides the economic growth of some countries and the middle class' need of consolation, the availability of planes and unemployed aviators caused by the end of the conflict had been decisive. The touroperators were those dealers who could work out the situation and find in it the chance to set up alternative charter airlines as well as the resource to create a new product: the organized trip. The process enriched and assured of fast and regular income the increasingly numerous businessmen who were investing in it. Although in minor measure, the small local tourist activities got benefited also, as they got insured at least a certain number of presences in their housing and restoration structures. The phenomenon kept spreading until it faced the lack of housing and the impossibility to meet the demand. To cope with such a huge development of the mass tourism, the touroperators' charter companies started building hotels and chains of hotels; as a reaction, the regular airlines turned part of their typical offer of flights into new product options and rates starting their own agencies and touroperators.



1. Roses, Costa Brava: in the past and today (Source: <http://www.aragirona.cat/noticia/20289/>).

As tourism is exercised on the territory, by turning into a mass phenomenon, it definitely meant a deep transformation, in all that the territory is the base of the displacements and that it characterizes the tourist spaces with its qualities. In ten or fifteen years the beauty of the Mediterranean environment had changed its appearance forever, and many folksy villages turned into cities with a clear residential tourism projection. A clear example may be the Catalan one: the approaching great business was perfectly understood and quickly seized. At that time some seaside areas of Catalonia multiplied by two hundred its value; but the purpose of immediate results of the investments caused the current critical condition of the Catalan coast.

While the phenomenon of the organized trips was spreading, as an effect of contagion, the administrations decided to take part to the business: it was the hotel managers themselves or the village Mayors in person who were putting in touch with the touroperators offering them their

establishments and trying to claim their attention. It officially meant the beginning of the new urbanization of the main Spanish coasts: because of the increasing demand of mass tourism and thanks to the collaboration of the private sector with the public one, in the Fifties, those tourist coast areas which are still the most important of the country, started their full developing. Costa del Sol, Benidorm, Canaries, Balearics, are other examples (Moreno Garrido, 2007:213-218).

These experiences of new urbanization in the post-war period did not have anything to do with the early development of the littoral: hopefully, in the interwar period some building plans had positively connected with the architectural International Movement. In spite of that, the radical and irreversible transformation of the Spanish littoral in most of the cases hasn't any constructive quality. What the coasts actually inherited was the early location of the first tourism development scenes as its logical evolution.

The described process has been possible, besides the political and economic context already mentioned, also because of the nature of the society that gave birth to mass tourism: it was a new one, capable of appreciating and demanding this particular type of relationship with the destination place and its inhabitants.

2. The tourist society: nomads in the postmetropolitan territory.

With the birth of mass tourism, a transformation into a whole tourist society started: the mobility, the tourist high expense and the enjoyment of leisure, nature and culture, are its identifying features.

Indeed, mass tourism is one of the early manifestations of the current society, which has been defined as the globalized, consumerist and fictionalized society of the spectacle. By the time mentioned, tourism becomes something that does not have anything to do with the concept of travelling: in 1977, while the tourism was finally being taken into consideration as a non-transitory phenomenon, the French ethnologist Marc Augé was registering a process of social change: (Augé, 1977: 15) the tourist moves towards something that he expects from the place of destination, about which he already has a lot of information, and especially many images, so that the satisfied tourist is the one that meets the image that he was expecting, while the goal of travelling was rather the discovery of something unknown. They are opposite attitudes to the experience. The tourist destinations are now products that are chosen between innumerable options constantly presented and advertised in all the media.



2. Tourist services spread on the net (Sources: <http://www.es.lastminute.com>, <http://www.andalucia.org>).

The development of mass society meant a change that strongly affected the territory. The separation between city and countryside, between the urban thing and the rural thing (what's something else, different form it) diminished as the evolution of the traditional urban model shifted towards the metropolis one. The planetary urbanization had just started, and the constructive speculations in the Spanish coasts can be considered a manifestation of that process: a progression to the urban and territorial dissolution through an indefinite building expansion and the assessment of the priority of the union of place of production, market and exchange. The traditional symbolic places look suffocated by the predominance of the exchange places, expression of the mobility and dynamicity of the city (Cacciari, 2002:31).

Today we are already assisting to the following part of the process. The spreading metropolis was still structured around the production, market and exchange places; the factories were preserving a certain material and symbolic stability. Now, on the other hand, in postmetropolitan age "we are already in the presence of an indefinite, homogeneous, indifferent space in its places, where events happen on the base of logics that already don't correspond to any unitary global project. Now, the transformations' rapidity prevents the recollection of the past memories in the lapse of a generation. This endures that we're already in a situation where home and what's not home connect up: to dwell and not to dwell, they are two sides of the same coin "(Cacciari, 2002:34).

The Italian philosopher Massimo Cacciari, in his book *The City*, formulates a powerful interpretation of the contemporary horizon: some of his fundamental statements are reported below.

“The postmetropolitan territory constitutes a geography of events, a practice of connections that crosses hybrid landscapes. The "border" of the postmetropolitan space is given by the limit reached by the network of the communications: as the network itself goes spacing out, we can say that we "go out" of the postmetropolis, but it is evident that it is a question of a *sui generis* "limit": it exists only to be overcome. It is in permanent crisis. In this respect, it can be said with a paradoxical formula that we live in a *detrterritorialized* territory (Cacciari, 2002:54)”.

“The postmetropolitan territory ignores the silence. It does not know, cannot know distances; these are its enemies. Inside it, any place seems to be destined to become wizened, to lose intensity up to turning into nothing more than a passage, a moment of the universal mobilization” (Cacciari, 2002:36)”.

“This reveals that the illusion of the diminution of our requirements of physical movement with the IT technologies was pure ideology, because the more the speed of the information grows, the more it seems to increase the desire of physical movement and of ubiquity (Cacciari, 2002:49)”.



Images of global mobilization (Source: <http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/economia/20100820/>).

Along with the development of the information technology, the evolution of the air transport, through the charter lines, to the *low cost* ones, is actually taking the man's capacity of mobility to unexpected limits. It can be said, as Cacciari suggests, that we live as nomads, that our way of living is similar to the nomad's one: he makes home of any place by bringing his carpets where he needs to stop or where it turns out to be beneficial to him. Not only the current social condition already doesn't allow a real meeting with the *other*, like it happened in the past by travelling, but it also tends to lose those ritual paces that permitted to make a difference between the daily, the working time of year, from the enjoyment of the experience of the tourism. If tourism is a leisure activity of enjoyment of the cultural, naturalistic, leisure and commercial offer, it is remarkable that nowadays all these activities are definitely absorbed in the ordinary routine.

3. The changing framework of tourism management.

So in the postindustrial society, whose principal characteristics are the *deterritorialization* and the nomadism, a deep transformation has concerned the concept of inhabiting. The globalization and the information technologies permitting to reach all kinds of fact and knowledge and the increase of the number of cheap flights with the low cost companies, produce a sort of social iper-mobility, orientated to the enjoyment of different kind of activities including leisure. The present one could be described as a nomadic society whose territory is not materially definite, but it is definable by the connections that every individual is establishing, selecting and changing in every moment.

Nowadays, the tourist sector is still a very profitable economic activity, but it has to face the challenge represented by the main characteristics of the new society. People don't need certain type of services anymore to organize their trips: everyone can get the information and the contacts to arrange the tourist experience and, above all, to tailor it as if it was a made-to-measure suit.

A meaningful change in the type and quality of the tourist services is being demanded. At the same time, a significant extension is concerning the concept of tourism itself, so that it is worth to deepen into the current official definition of Tourism: for the Tourism World Organization (U.N.W.T.O.) (Bouazza Ariño, 2006:54): "Tourism covers the activities realized by the people during their trips and stays in places which are different from their habitual environment, for a consecutive period shorter than one year and motivated by leisure, business and others."

In this definition, as Omar Bouazza Ariño says, "[...] a qualitative leap is observed for having included work as possible determinant element. Now tourism is the travelling activity of the people, which is not only motivated by leisure, but also by other reasons, so that the different modalities of tourism and their development will be organizable from a territorial unitary point of view classifying them as tourist use (2006:55)."

Including work as a motivation for the tourist activity definitely means to wipe off the hint of extra-ordinariness that the acceptance of the term "tourism" possibly maintained. And on the other hand, "[...] it is necessary to bear in mind that the tourist infrastructure may be used by the resident population (for example: theme parks, ski slopes, beaches, spa, etc.) so that we have one more reason to defend the integration of the tourist administration in the territorial general planning. Hereby the tourist use is included in a general frame and the differences between the tourist and who's not tourist fade away. So, eventually, the planning is realized in a global context taking into consideration the tourist use inside the general frame and not as a number of development plans centred on different forms of tourism in an independent way "(Bouazza Ariño, 2006:54).

The aim of Bouazza Ariño's study is to promote the necessary integration of the tourist management into the territory planning, conceiving the general administration role as principal. It is based on the solid normative knowledge of the author, as well as on a full comprehension of the present situation and of the possible future development of our society: "the tourist phenomenon signifies at present one of the liveliest manifestations of the so called globalization. The massive flow of people from one country to the other because of leisure, work (or both simultaneously), culture, sport, etc., generates important repercussions in the economic field as well as in the environment for its impact in the receiving society and in the identities of every place. Those effects can be positive, negative or imperceptible, depending on the intensity of the flow and on the more or less correct deployment of the territorial planning." For this reason, Bouazza Ariño (2006:34) asserts that in the task of territorial planning, the administration must be inspired by the principle of sustainability, an attitude that, in his opinion, can be intrinsic to the chosen modality of territorial planning.

4. Brief study of the recent tendencies in the Andalusian Tourist Administration: The Sustainable Tourism General Plan of Andalusia (2007-2011) and the project of a new Tourism Law.

The awareness of the process of change and the complexity of the contemporary territorial and social horizon is what claims the attention of the Andalusian administration today, especially in the tourist sector.

The current *Ley de Turismo* (Tourism Law) of 1999 was the first general tourist Andalusian legislation, promulgated in the exercise of the exclusive jurisdiction regarding the management of the field, established by the Autonomy Statute of Andalusia (Article 13.17 of the 1981 text) and confirmed by the article 148.1.18 of the Spanish Constitution. The main purpose of the law was to put order in the normative confusion and dispersion represented by the mixture of regional regulations and national pre-constitutional standards, along with the necessary delimitation of its application area. Two steps of the development of this law are worthy of note: the first is the introduction of the principle of sustainable development to tourism, here still mainly understood in the social interpretation as, for example, in the prescription of accessibility for the disabled to tourist facilities, and the second is the configuration of the region as a Tourist Integral Destination, confirmed and developed in the following legislation. Such a definition presents Andalucía as a territory whose original common characteristics, beyond the singularities of each particular area and cultural identity, are promoted as a whole and offered as a tourist product (Bouazza Ariño, 2007:183-184).

The *Plan General de Turismo de Andalucía* (Master Plan of Tourism of Andalusia) of 2004-2006, as operative planning of the 1999 law principles, expresses the will to create an administrative tool that in addition to the management of the tourist economic activity could be also a land and urban planning tool. In fact, the *Disposición Adicional Quinta* (Fifth Additional Provision) integrates it into the *Ley 1/1994 de Ordenación Territorial de Andalucía* (Law of Territorial Planning of Andalusia) by inserting it in the list of *Planes con Incidencia Territorial* (Plans with Territorial Incidence). The aim of this change was the subordination of the sectorial management to the general territorial planning, in order to maximize their integration logic, along with Bouazza Ariño's point of view (2007:186-187). It reveals, on the other hand, the comprehension of the different framework of extension and permeation of the tourist sector in all the other ones. Moreover, such modification of the *Ley de Ordenación Territorial* of 1994, executed by the Tourism Administration entity in 2004, shows the fundamental role that the

tourism industry plays in the region of Andalusia, as well as the Regional Tourist Office's tendency to assume a lead position in respect to other sectors. If it is true that the application of these principles has not been totally carried out yet, it is certain that its steady development continues in the subsequent legislation.

The *Plan General de Turismo Sostenible 2007-2011* (Master Plan of Sustainable Tourism of Andalusia), recovers and underlines the concept of sustainability brought forward in the Tourism Law of 1999, and while it presents the tourist sector as the main economic activity of the region, claims that "Andalusia is in a historical situation of change of cycle". The regional administration recalls the beginning of its tourist development when "[...] the competitiveness of products and destinations followed the classic law of relation price-quality (PGTSA: 132)", and report that "in Andalusia, the tourist sector has reached unequivocal features of maturity [...], the seasonal variation persists, though the progressive ascent of other segments with lower seasonal behaviour (SPA, golf, sports monitoring, etc. ...) is correcting this aspect (PGTSA: 133).

Along with what has been said before in this research, the study of the present situation reveals that "this process, along diverse phases, is culminating and reaching its limits. [...] On one hand the tourist behaviour is evolving [...]: in the standard of consumption and choice of the product, the attributes of singularity that provoke a sensation of ergonomics in the consumer, are gaining importance. That is to say, the consumer tends to select a combination of differentiated products that he consider as representative and accommodated to his own way of being and to his interests. [...] The segment of tourism that shows the most significant growth is the one that bases its choice of destination on the expectation of living a singular experience on the base of made-to-measure products" (PGTSA: 133).

"In this context, the most rentable Andalusian tourist space, the littoral, starts registering a certain loss of tourist attraction in some of the most developed destinations, due to the saturation of the territory caused by the urban growth. In certain cases, the reached urban density has brought to the congestion of infrastructures and services, causing environmental affections which are difficult to correct, as well as a definitive loss of character and identity of the urban image and of the landscape. The negative effects of this deterioration are mostly affecting the resident population and users of the territory, but there's no doubt that it is harming in a notable way the tourist companies operating in such framework too" (PGTSA: 134). Actually, the integration of the tourism management in the general territory planning is needed to permit the development of processes of requalification of the obsolete destinations that could be fast as well as coherent, paying special attention to the citizens' point of view.

Following this path, the project for the next *Ley de Turismo* (waiting for the imminent approbation after being subject to public examination and to the possible amends) introduces the determination of the administrative steps to manage the sector within the relationship with the territorial and tourist planning. The Article 17.3 of the *Sección Segunda. Del Uso Turístico del Suelo y las Relaciones con la Ordenación del Territorio* (Second Section. On the Tourist Use of the Soil and the Relationship with the territorial Planning – PLTA: 9) states that "The Regional Office which is relevant about the tourism matter, will emit a report to the *Planes de Ordenación Territorial* (Territorial Planning Projects) of subregional range in the term of one month before its subjection to public information [...]. This step is very remarkable because it means a novelty in the usual process: previously, the Regional Tourism Office presented its reports and amends after the territory planning normative was defined, together with all the

other involved entities. Now, it will present its reports and amends during the development itself of the territorial general plan, shifting from a passive to an active role.

The new law will also incorporate the global change towards the universal mobility, setting a wider extension of the tourism reference framework, going further than the UNWTO definition. Here the term “tourism” definitely gains a general reach: it includes “those activities that the people realize during their trips and stays in a place which is different from their usual environment, for a definite period of time” (PLTA: 4). According to this statement, it also registers that the tourism service activities are flanked by a wide number of activities with incidence in the tourist area, (*actividades con incidencia en el ámbito turístico*), extending the tourism management beyond the usual action radius.

5. Final reflections.

So it has been said that mass tourism had a major impact in changing the modern way of life as well as the territory of the twentieth century. The subsequent evolution to the contemporary tourist society has two distinctive features: the exceptional mobility of the people and the *detritorialization* of the territory, where distances do not count yet, and the time and the intensity of flows are the real dimension. The territory is subject to stratification and hybridization with the communication systems networks. They modify it virtually as well as they affect the society; although it appears to be mainly virtual, the modification of the society always has material aspects too. The rapidity and fluidity of the changes occurring in the *detrterritorialized* territory, because of the continuous suspensions and resumption of the connections, are particularly difficult to manage.

On the other hand, the economic fundamental relevance of the tourist sector is nowadays undeniable mostly all over the world. Equally, the process of change of the tourist phenomenon is becoming more and more evident. Its interdependence with the global transformation of our society is clearly recognizable, which makes a priority of the renewing of the criteria and principles that are guiding the current sectorial management, as well as its necessary integration to a general administrative framework. In this work, such an interpretation of the recent happenings is shown and accompanied by the example of the Andalusian case.

The Andalusian example has been briefly presented as a significant attestation of the effort of evolution made by a public administration to work out the situation in order to handle the present epochal shift. Through a preliminary analysis of its administrative tools development, which suggests the convenience of a deeper and wider research, the Andalusian Tourist Office appears to be aware of the economic power that its sector of competence has, as well as its strong tendency of changing the territory and the landscape. The concept of sustainability flanks their formulation from the beginning, revealing also the intention of balancing the priority of the social aspects and the economic one. The leading role that the office is gradually achieving between all the sectorial areas may represent one of the earliest manifestations of a territorial and cultural makeover that maybe about to happen in the global context.

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