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# Aims & Scope

*Tourism Today* serves as an international, scholarly, and refereed journal aiming to promote and enhance research in the fields of tourism and hospitality. The journal is published by the College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Cyprus and is intended for readers in the scholarly community who deal with the tourism and hospitality industries, as well as professionals in the industry. *Tourism Today* provides a platform for debate and dissemination of research findings, new research areas and techniques, conceptual developments, and articles with practical application to any tourism or hospitality industry segment. Besides research papers, the journal welcomes book reviews, conference reports, case studies, research notes and commentaries.

# Aims & Scope

The scope of the journal is international and all papers submitted are subject to strict double blind peer review by its Editorial Board and by international reviewers. The journal features conceptual and empirical papers, and editorial policy is to invite the submission of manuscripts from academics, researchers and industry practitioners. The Editorial Board will be looking particularly for articles about new trends and developments within the field of tourism and hospitality, and the application of new ideas and developments that are likely to affect tourism and hospitality in the future. The journal also welcomes submission of manuscripts in areas that may not be directly tourism-based but cover a topic that is of interest to researchers, educators and practitioners in the fields of tourism and hospitality.

Decisions regarding publication of submitted manuscripts are based on the recommendations of members of the Editorial Board and other qualified reviewers in an anonymous review process. Submitted articles are evaluated on their appropriateness, significance, clarity of presentation and conceptual adequacy. Negative reviews are made available to authors. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the Editorial Board of *Tourism Today* or of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the thirteenth edition of *Tourism Today*, the journal of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management. The College of Tourism and Hotel Management continues to make the journal available to anyone free of charge from its website, as has been the case for many years now.

This edition has a bit of something for everyone and showcases submissions from many different scholars in many different countries. Interestingly, there are five articles out of the twelve that are submissions from Greek-based scholars in this volume. If you are particularly interested in tourism theory as it applies to Greek examples, this volume should be especially interesting to you.

The topics dealt with and methods used to deal with the tourism-related issues are varied. There are survey-based approaches, analyses based largely on secondary data, and some less-empirical approaches used in the articles in this issue. What is especially interesting is that some of the authors are quite creative. For example, Civi and Jolliffe's piece on thrift shopping seems to stand out as a very creative and insightful piece, linking the phenomenon of thrift shopping to tourism. Other noteworthy, interesting, and insightful pieces are Gian Luigi Corinto's piece on social tourism and Maximiliano Korstanje's iconoclastic piece on why sustainability does not work.

As has been the case for more than a decade now, comments that could assist us in improving the journal are appreciated, as they lead to the improvement of the journal. We hope that those who read the journal will take an active role in the journal by submitting research for our consideration. We at *Tourism Today* are always happy to see new submissions to the journal and are willing to get useful feedback to make *Tourism Today* a better journal.

We wish you an enjoyable and interesting reading.

Craig Webster  
Editor-in-Chief, *Tourism Today*

# Cruise ship tourism: development and prospects for the town of Aghios Nikolaos (Crete, Greece)<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Aghios Nikolaos is a shoreline town located on the North East coast of Crete. It is a cosmopolitan resort welcoming thousands of visitors every year, yet it suffers lately from the disadvantages of mass tourism. As a react, local authorities shifted their attention to promoting alternative modes of tourism in the region. In this paper, we examine the development of cruise tourism in Aghios Nikolaos. We investigate the port's capacity and the existing infrastructure, and study the competitive advantages of the port and the town as a cruise tourism destination. We propose measures and synergies that should be undertaken by policy makers in order to further improve the sector, and boost its competitiveness. Finally, an examination of the impacts of cruise tourism in the region is attempted in order to address issues relevant to the sustainability of this development.

**Keywords:** Cruise Ship Tourism, Aghios Nikolaos, Crete

## INTRODUCTION

The growing need of modern people to escape from daily routine and the current, overloaded and stressful lifestyles in urban environments have necessitated the creation of new, rich and diverse tourism products. Demand for vacation is shifting from spending passive holidays in a beautiful and quiet natural environment, to spending leisure time as actively as possible in new and striking natural surroundings. Changes in consumers' needs are bringing changes to tourist trends. As a result, new forms of tourism, such as the cruise tourism, have emerged, targeted to meet the needs of modern people. The cruise industry is a dynamic sub-sector of maritime tourism that has evolved into a complete and complex vacation business, and has been exhibiting a significant increase of demand at an international level during the last 30 years (Diakomihalis, 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> The authors wish to acknowledge Aghios Nikolaos' Port Authority SA for the provision of the necessary data for this study.

Aghios Nikolaos is the capital of the Lassithi Prefecture, one of the four prefectures of the island of Crete, and it is a small coastal town of 12000 residents built around an exquisite lake and situated on the shores of the picturesque bay of Mirabello. The town is an international and cosmopolitan resort welcoming thousands of visitors every year. Nonetheless, it is not immune to the drawbacks of mass tourism, and therefore the municipality, tourism managers and policy makers have shifted their attention to reposition the destination to appeal to more tourism segments and in particular segments that provide the best sustainable growth opportunities (Kozak and Martin, 2012). Such a form, to which is given special attention, is the cruise tourism.

The purpose of this paper is the study of the development and the prospects of the cruise tourism sector in the town of Aghios Nikolaos. Our research relies on secondary data, and on the outcomes of informal personal interviews of stakeholders with a role in the development of cruise tourism in the area. Specifically, we interviewed two travel agents, one member of the staff of the port authority SA and an ex member of the administrative council of the Port Authority SA.

This paper is organized as follows. Sections 2 and 3 provide a brief overview of the evolution of the cruise tourism industry worldwide, and in Greece. Section 4 presents information on the attractions of the town of Aghios Nikolaos, the characteristics of the port, the pros and cons of the town as a cruise ship destination, along with a short history of the evolution of the sector in the region. An examination of the impacts of cruise tourism in the region is attempted in Section 5, whereas Section 6 provides a discussion and recommendations. Finally, Section 7 presents our conclusions and suggestions for future research.

## **THE CRUISE TOURISM INDUSTRY**

The inspiration of cruising originated in 1835 by the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigator Company (P&O), a British shipping and logistics company with the Mediterranean being the first destination in 1844. Cruise tourism, as is known today can be traced back to the beginning of the 1960s, while its modern version dates from the 1970s with the development of the North American industry. It then experienced an increasing process of popularization, and today cruising is considered a major part of the tourism sector, with an enormous significance world-wide as an economic factor. The cruise is a multi-complex concept and combines a large part of the so called tourist chain: transport, catering/provisioning, tourism, entertainment and travel (Wild & Dearing, 2000). In the late 1990s, cruise travel was revitalised and today cruise ships have become destinations or floating resorts rather than primarily means of transport due to a multimillion investment into new, more innovative and ever-bigger vessels capable of carrying more than 3000 passengers. The dynamic sector is continuously expanding its offer of products and services and developing new markets (Dowling, 2006). Moreover, the cruise ships offer onboard activities and a long wide variety of amenities to meet the changing vacation patterns of today's market and exceed the

expectations of their passengers with practically a cruise option for everyone (Wind Rose Network, 2013).

Cruises are destinations in themselves and, viewed in this way the cruise sector is among the top ten destinations both in number of arrivals and receipts (Brida and Zapata-Aguirre 2010). In fact, the cruise sector is the fastest growing sector of the travel industry exhibiting twice the rate of growth of tourism overall, with an estimated annual growth rate of 7,5%, since 1980 (Brida and Zapata-Aguirre 2010; Peisley, 2005). This growth, as reflected in the number of passengers worldwide, was from half a million passengers in 1970 to 17,2 million passengers in 2012 (CLIA 2013). Furthermore, this rise is expected to continue through the 21st century.

Traditionally, the North American industry is dominant, representing more than 80% of all worldwide markets, but this percentage exhibits a decreasing tendency (CLIA 2013), and according to some experts, European and Asian markets promise great possibilities of growing.

Today, a fleet composed of several hundred of Boutique, Small, Med-size, Large and Mega ships, carrying millions of passengers, plies routes in all geographical areas in an expanding range of more than 500 destinations worldwide, serving a heterogeneous clientele with well-differentiated expectations and preferences. The Caribbean cruises are the favorite ones, accounting for 41.02% of all itineraries, followed by Mediterranean, Alaska and the Pacific regions (Dowling, 2006).

## **CRUISE TOURISM IN GREECE**

The development of cruise in Greece started in 1930, with Greek companies offering cruises in the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean. Since then, Greece has been constantly regarded as one of the most popular destinations in the region (Diakomihakis, 2007). According to the European Cruise Council (ECC, 2011) after a sharp decline in cruise passenger arrivals in 2010 resulting in Greece falling to third place (after Italy and Spain) from first place in 2009, an increase by nearly 7% in 2011, resulted in Greece holding today 17% of the total European cruise market with 4.8 million cruise passengers this year (National Bank of Greece, 2012). As a matter of fact, the financial crisis of 2008-2009 has not impacted the demand for cruises, and actually, the sector has the potential to increase rapidly after the crisis (Corres and Papachristou 2010). Piraeus, Santorini and Mykonos have emerged as the three most popular destinations from a total of 17 call ports in Greece, and they have attracted more visitors this year. Piraeus has seen a 12% rise, while, the ports of Crete, Santorini, Corfu and Kefalonia exhibited 62%, 30%, 23%, and 20% rise respectively (Papadakis, 2013).

Apparently, the recent developments in neighboring Egypt and Turkey, the sinking of Costa Concordia cruise ship in Italy, along with the fact that Caribbean cruises seem to have reached their saturation point (Canwest News Service, 2008) promoted Greek cruises this

year. In addition, the lower prices of food and drink adopted recently have attracted more cruise trippers. Moreover, the new measures announced in Venice to cut back the traffic of the biggest cruise ships through the heart of the city, are expected to further increase demand for the Greek ports. (Daily Mail Reporter, 2013).

Despite the potential of the country for further growth in the cruise sector, there are various obstacles that hinder the development of cruise tourism in Greece, i.e. the legislative environment, and the associated bureaucratic relevant procedures, the lack of appropriate relevant infrastructure, the poor berth allocation system, the lack of the institutional framework as a host state and the high fees charged compared to the relatively poor provision of services to cruise companies and their vessels (Dimou and Simantiraki, 2010). Additionally, it is worth noting that until the 1990s Greek companies were pioneers and very active in the international market, while today, there is only one Cypriot company, Louis Cruises, which operates two Greek-flagged vessels that cruise the Aegean.

Moreover, Greece has not manage to capture the tourist revenue that it could from cruising (it holds the 6th place in Europe with 519.4 million euros revenues in the year 2012) and this is mainly due to the fact that only a slight percentage of cruise companies select Greek ports for home porting, that is select to start and end their trip at a Greek port (Stefanidaki and Lekakou, 2012).

## **PORT OF CALL: AGHIOS NIKOLAOS, CRETE**

Aghios Nikolaos is a historic city settled in the late Bronze Age by the Dorian occupants of the ancient city of Lato pros Kamara. It used to be a small fishing village “discovered” in the 60’s by tourists, and since then it has been transformed to a well established international and cosmopolitan summer resort that welcomes thousands of visitors every year. It has a lively cosmopolitan atmosphere, a postcard-perfect marina and busy nightlife. The sea in Aghios Nikolaos is superb and the surrounding area of the town is noted for its sandy beaches and beautiful bays. The geomorphology and the climate of the area, with the rich natural, cultural and social resources, strengthen the efforts for the development of cruise tourism.

The passenger port of Agios Nikolaos is located in the heart of the town and is a safe and well protected port in all weather conditions. Two modern docks of 136 and 209 meters length each, constructed in 2005, are capable of accommodating two medium size ships (250 meters length max) if they berth alongside the pier. The port basin of 10m depth provides sufficient space and depth for cruise ship maneuvering. Among the facilities provided to cruise ship passengers is an information kiosk and WC facility.

### *STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE TOWN’S PORT*

Aghios Nikolaos is a town of natural beauty offering many attractions to the tourist.

Besides, it serves as a hub to the twenty or so small villages and farms that make up that part of Lassithi ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios\\_Nikolaos,\\_Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios_Nikolaos,_Crete)) and it provides easy access to several places of cultural heritage value, as is the historic island of Spinalonga. Moreover, the Palace of Knossos, which is indisputably the most important archaeological site in Crete, is only 40 minutes' drive away from the port. Additionally, the nearest airport, Heraklion's International airport, which is served by many international and domestic airlines connecting the island of Crete to all Europe destinations with several flights per day, is within a distance of only 64km. Moreover, when considering the competitive advantages of the town as a cruise ship destination, one has to refer to the fact that it offers visitors a secure environment with zero crime and civil unrest and a hospitable atmosphere. Furthermore, an info kiosk at the port welcomes the visitors and contributes to the creation of a friendly environment, whilst several welcoming events are organized by the local authorities, on a regular basis, during the tourist season. In fact, the port is located just a few minutes' walk from the town's center, and thus, access to shops, cafés and fine dining restaurants is convenient and tempting even for the "laziest" passengers. Last but not least, among the strengths of the port one has to point out the fact that the port does not have any other regular commercial or passenger activity. All the above, along with the relatively low costs charged by the port authority make the port appealing to cruise operators when they schedule itineraries and select their ports of call.

On the other hand, when considering the weaknesses of the destination one needs to quote the relatively low capacity of the port as it cannot accommodate the very big cruise ships of 3000 to 3500 passengers, which, as result, prefer the other ports in Crete, neither can it accommodate more than two ships simultaneously. Thus, investing in the building or improvement of port facilities and infrastructures is definitely something the authorities have to consider seriously, if they want the town to retain or increase its portion of the market. Additionally, our research revealed (interview with a member of the staff of the port authority in 2013) that a well prepared promotion plan of the town of Aghios Nikolaos as a cruise destination or even as a tourist destination on the whole is still missing. Likewise participation in relevant international exhibitions should be on a regular basis. Last but not least, a cruise passenger terminal offering high quality services to passengers as well as a permanent exhibition of local products is missing from the port, although the need for its constructions has been well realized by the local authority, and the relevant prefeasibility plan has already been prepared (data obtained from the Port Authority SA).

In order to address all the above mentioned weaknesses, the municipality has recently hired a 'cruise expert' to work on strengthening and promoting cruise tourism in the town.

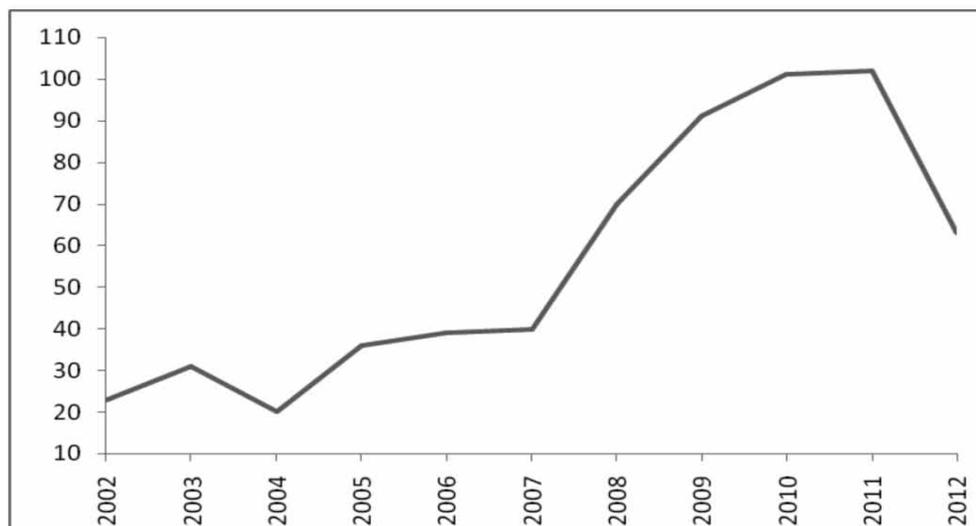
### *THE EVOLUTION OF CRUISE TOURISM IN AGHIOS NIKOLAOS*

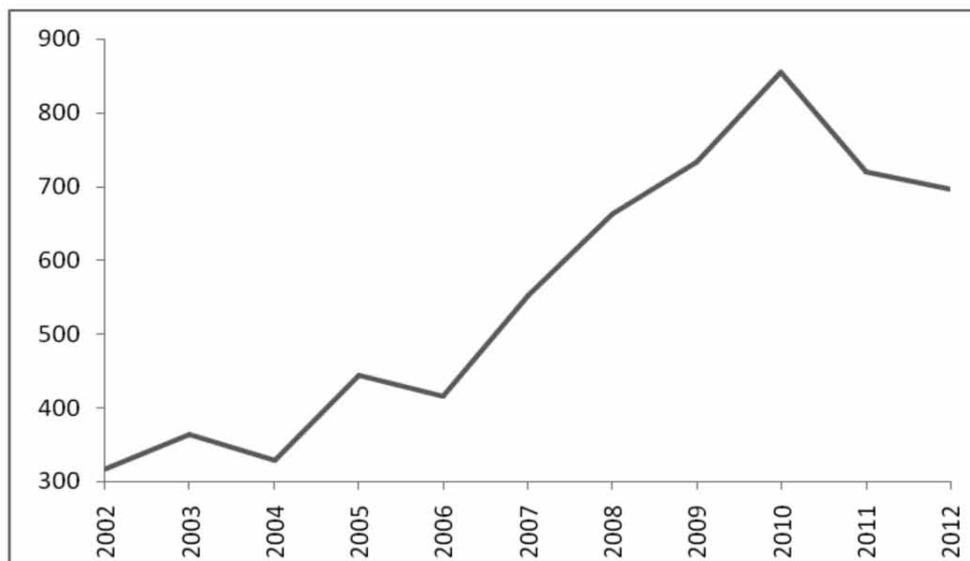
Cruise tourism in the town of Aghios Nikolaos is traced back in 1987, when three small Russian cruise ships used to arrive every Saturday evening at 5:00pm and were scheduled to depart at 12.00 o'clock the following day. They carried around 400 passengers from Israel

who were entertained in the local shops and enjoyed themselves at Cretan nights organized by tourist agencies. Then, there was a break that lasted for about ten years until year 2000 when several medium size cruise ships at the beginning, and larger vessels recently, started to arrive again on a regular basis to the port. As a matter of fact, during the last ten years the interest of cruise lines has increased significantly, the port of Aghios Nikolaos is becoming a popular destination for cruisers, and the cruise industry is evolving rapidly (interview with a member of the staff of the Port Authority in 2013). Visitors from all over the world arrive at the town on cruise ships, the majority of which started their trip in France, Italy and Spain. Among all the nationalities, Israelis have traditionally shown a strong and enduring preference to the town of Aghios Nikolaos over the years.

Figures 1 and 2 present the cruise ship arrivals and the average number of passengers per cruise ship for the years 2002-2012. It can be seen that the number of cruise ship visits increased by an impressive 343% from 2002 to 2011, reaching a peak of 102 cruise ships that year. Regarding the number of passengers, there was a 170% increase from 2002 to 2010, from 317 passengers per cruise ship on the average, in 2002 to the peak of 855 passengers in 2010, yielding an average 21.25% increase annually. The figures prove that there is a continuously increasing demand for the port of Aghios Nikolaos, and that higher capacity cruise ships have recently included the port in their itineraries. Actually, this year, RIVIERA, a large ship of 240 m length carrying up to 1800 passengers has included Aghios Nikolaos to its itinerary and is scheduled to make seven visits in 2013. The 38% drop observed in 2012, from 102 cruise ship arrivals in 2011 to only 63 in 2012, is mostly due to the loss of Crystal Serenity, a ship that changed ownership and abandoned the port, but is also a result of the total shrinkage of the cruise market in Europe during the last two years, that has forced many cruise operators to shift their interest to new markets in Asia.

**Figure 1: Cruise Ship Arrivals to Aghios Nikolaos (2002-2012)**

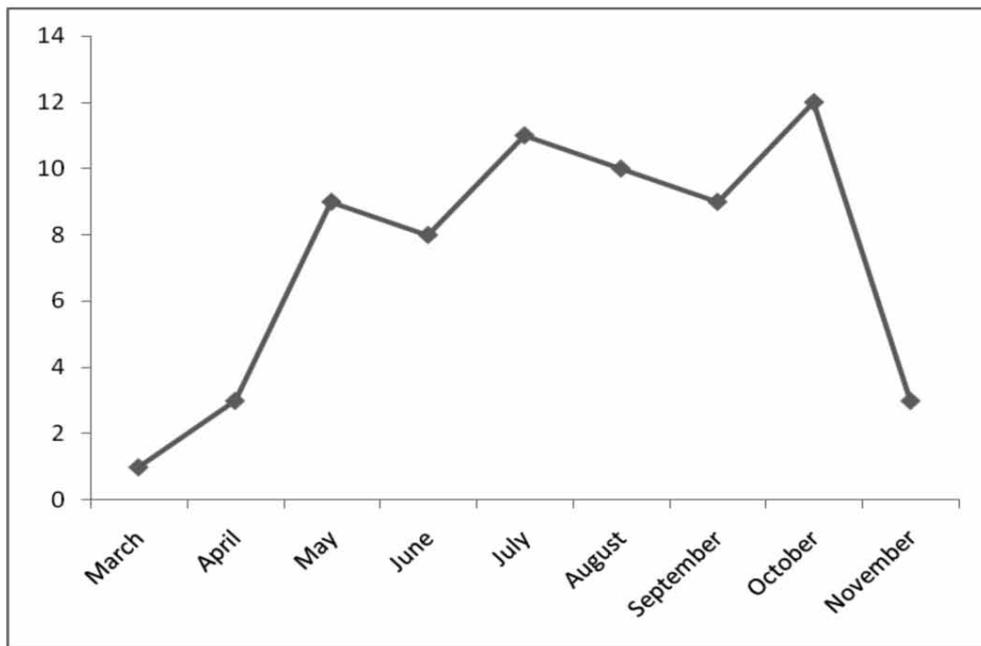


**Figure 2: Average Passengers per Ship**

According to year's 2012 data, obtained from the Association of Greek Port Authorities, the port of Aghios Nikolaos ranked in the tenth place, among the Greek ports, with regard to cruise ship arrivals, with 71 arrivals, and in the eleventh place (outperformed by the port of Hania) with regard to total number of cruise visitors with 48204 visitors. Ports ahead in the list, in descending order of passenger throughputs were: Piraeus, Santorini, Katakolo, Mykonos, Corfu, Rhodes, Heraklion, Kefalonia, Patmos, and Hania.

Concerning the coming season, the data obtained in early January from the Port Authority show that 66 cruise ships are scheduled to visit the port from March to November, 2013. The first to come, "Silver Wind" is scheduled to arrive on the 26th of March, 2013. Figure 3 presents the cruise ship arrivals on a monthly basis for the year 2013. A closer examination of the data reveals that October is the season's peak with eleven arrivals, while three cruise arrivals are expected in November, 2013. Actually, cruise ship visits to Crete are common even in December. This is consistent with the belief that cruise tourism could contribute to the efforts to mitigate tourism's seasonality in region.

**Figure 3: Cruise Ship Visits on a Monthly Basis (2013)**



There are three major cruise travel agents operating in the town, i.e. Mega Travel Services, Candia Trust Ltd and Kapa Shipping Agency. Table 1 presents the cruise ships scheduled to visit Aghios Nikolaos in year 2013, according to the data obtained in January 2013 from the Port Authority SA.

**Table 1: Cruise Ships Scheduled to Visit Aghios Nikolaos in 2013**

Travel Agent	Cruise Ship
Mega Travel Services	Silver Wind, Golden Iris, Royal Iris, Riviera, Seven Seas Mariner, Silver Cloud, Nautica, Albatros, Artania
Kapa Shipping Agency	Thomson Majesty, CORAL, Louis Cristal
Candia Trust Ltd	Costa Allegra, Thomson Celebration-Europa

### IMPACTS OF CRUISE TOURISM

Although, a thorough study of the impacts of cruise tourism to the town of Aghios Nikolaos is beyond the scope of this paper, a rough examination will be attempted.

### *ECONOMIC IMPACTS*

It is a common belief that having cruise ships arriving to a destination produces a major economic impact on the local economy. Indeed, although the biggest fraction of the income generated from the cruise sector remains to the cruise lines, the industry has the potential to provide economic benefits to the destination port. However, revenues are higher in home ports. Namely, according to a recent sector study conducted by the National Bank of Greece, the average expenditure per passenger at home ports is as high as 600,00 euros while at port of calls, it drops to only 80,00 euros (National Bank of Greece, 2012). Our research revealed that most cruisers arrive to the port early in the morning and don't depart before late afternoon, thus visitors have several hours to spend in the town and on shore based activities. Moreover, about 30% of the passengers buy organized land excursions with the most popular destinations being the Palace of Knossos, the Plateau of Lassithi, and the island of Spinalonga (interview with travel agent in 2013). It is difficult to find data to analyze the economics of cruise tourism in a region. In fact, a relevant study, designed by the authors, is scheduled to take place during the coming season.

Undisputedly, Aghios Nikolaos would benefit by improving its infrastructure in order to be able to accommodate large cruise ships and even become a home port. For this, local authorities have to address certain key and demanding elements, such as: a) expand the existing infrastructure, b) enhance all support services, c) improve the cost effectiveness and quality of services provided, and subsequently, provide incentives to cruise operators to establish operations. All the above require significant capital investment-probably unmanageable for the time being and the current economic situation. Hence, the authorities might explore the prospects and the benefit of providing initiatives to cruise companies to help economically in the building or improvement of port facilities and infrastructures in return for a future revenue-sharing formula, which would include, in some cases, priority berthing and a percentage of port charges. In fact, some of the cruise industry's giants have expressed interest in participating in the construction of infrastructure at a number of Greek ports (Papapostolou, 2012).

### *SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACTS*

On the other hand, when studying the possible social and cultural effects of cruise tourism, as Gibson and Bentley (2007) cited, these effects are broad and refer to the ways which tourism contributes to changes in value systems, individual behavior, safety levels, moral conduct, collective lifestyles, etc. Nonetheless, one has to take into account that Aghios Nikolaos has been a popular international tourist destination for the last 50 years and all this influence brought to the local community by tourists goes way back. Moreover, the number of cruise visitors is small compared to the number of residents or the number of hotel tourists in the town due to the fact that a) the size of the cruise ships that visit the port is relatively small (the average number of passengers per ship is less than 700) and b) the port has only one cruise ship visit per day (with the exception of two days with two cruise ship visits for the coming

season). Thus the negative reactions from the local residents towards cruise ship visitors cited by Klein (2005b) for destinations where the ratio cruise tourists per resident is large, is considered negligible in the case of Aghios Nikolaos.

### *ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS*

As regards to possible environmental impacts, the modifications to the natural environment caused by the construction of the two modern docks were minimal and within the limits of the old port. Likewise, other environmental impacts related to the use of energy and water, as well as to possible damages to the marine ecosystems need to be further studied but they are expected to be minimal due to the low use of the destination until today. On the other hand, the large cruise ships produce a large volume of wastes. The waste streams generated by cruise ships are governed by a number of international protocols, regulations, and standards, such as MARPOL ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruise\\_ship\\_pollution\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruise_ship_pollution_in_the_United_States)). Up to date, such environmental threats for the port of Aghios Nikolaos from the development of the cruise industry have not been reported. Nonetheless, the port authority should perform inspections and demand from the cruise lines to comply with the international standards.

It became evident from our interviews that local decision makers pressure to promote cruise tourism. However, as the number of cruise ship arrivals grow, so will the significant impacts and threats at all different levels. Hence, it's essential that local authorities take proactive measures to ensure a sustainable future for the cruise tourism in the town, with consideration of the capacity of the destination.

### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Despite the optimism that seems to be on the horizon, the competition for the town of Aghios Nikolaos is tough especially from the other ports in Crete that have the capacity to accommodate the larger cruise ships (the port of Heraklion has already been chosen by two cruise lines for home porting). However, local governments should coordinate management techniques in order to increase economic benefits (Klein, 2005; Loper, 2005). For instance, Aghios Nikolaos could collaborate with other ports in the region in areas such as sharing certain costs, managing waste, etc.

Furthermore, rather than investing in constructing larger terminals, the town should invest in its strengths. The richness and the diversity of the history and the culture, the exceptionally beautiful coastlines of the region, the mild climate, and the relatively calm seas, combined with the friendly, cosmopolitan and secure environment of the town of Aghios Nikolaos form the perfect destination in order to further develop diversification and motivation policies in the destination for the cruise line operators. Actually, as McKee, D. (1988) cited smaller host territories may benefit from concentrating upon luxurious vessels. Consequently, one could suggest that the town should differentiate from the competing ports in Crete, by focusing on

attracting a specific cruise market segment, such as the Boutique cruise vessels, and theme cruises such as: wedding cruises, or cruises with a focus on the Cretan food, music, health and wellbeing, etc. Moreover, actions should be taken to increase the level of satisfaction of the town's visitors by offering a pleasurable, high quality experience as a whole.

In addition, one should not disregard the fact that the town has invested a lot in land based tourism. However, cruise sector growth and traditional tourism sector are not incompatible, and although tourists staying aboard the cruise ship throughout their vacation, opposes the operation of the land-based vacation complexes, cruise passengers are likely to spend a few days in the port area before or after their cruise, or might repeat their visit in the future, staying in the local accommodation facilities (Dimou and Simantiraki, 2010). As a matter of fact, a recent research conducted by the American Association of Port Authorities (2012), among cruise ship visitors to the Caribbean, revealed that 50% of them would return to the Caribbean for a land based vacation. Additionally, according to both the travel agents interviewed almost 50% of the cruise ship visitors to the town are repeaters. Actually, it is in the authors' intentions to design and carry out a related research among cruise ship visitors to the town of Aghios Nikolaos during the coming season.

In order to address the challenges that lay ahead, the revitalization of Aghios Nikolaos' port of call is essential and requires immediate and decisive actions on behalf of all the major players in the cruise industry, i.e. governmental authorities, port and city officials, population, shore and cruise operators, etc. Undoubtedly, if all regional stakeholders and the governmental authorities work closely and efficiently together, Aghios Nikolaos will succeed in attracting more cruise lines and achieve a major economic impact on the local economy.

## **LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF FUTURE RESEARCH**

Among the limitations of this study was the limited availability of travel agents for in-depth interviews, and the difficulty to find data to analyze the impacts of cruise tourism in the region due to the lack of prior research, since, to the best of the authors' knowledge, there haven't been conducted any relevant studies in the region so far. Thus, future research could be directed towards studying the impacts and the sustainability of cruise tourism development. In fact, this study is the starting point of a research to be carried out by the authors, using questionnaires distributed to cruise ship visitors, during the coming season.

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# Thrift shopping as a post-recession leisure and tourism pursuit

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## ABSTRACT

The paper investigates through the case of thrift shopping, how trends in frugality may lead to such shopping as a leisure and tourism pursuit in the post-recession period. As consumers look to cut expenses many turn to thrift shopping as a means of savings while other consumers adopt thrift shopping as a pastime and leisure activity and a way of maintaining consumption. There is some limited evidence of consumers not only incorporating thrift shopping in their travel plans as an activity, but also adopting thrift shopping as a travel motivation.

**Keywords:** frugality, thrift shopping, post-recession, travel behavior

## INTRODUCTION

The world's economy suffered from an economic downturn that had led to reduced spending by consumers and businesses between 2007-2010. In the same time period, average annual consumer spending per US household fell by 3.1% to \$48,109 (The Economist, 2011) and according to the McKinsey (2009) survey, 90 percent of the US households reduced their spending - 33 percent of the response was "significantly" (Salsberg, 2009). While such impacts have not been as severe in Canada, there was an apparent new trend that consumers were watching their spending and they became more frequent visitors to secondhand resale stores. In 2009 over 35 percent of Canadian consumers surveyed agreed with the statement: "I try to buy things used or pre-owned rather than new" (Euromonitor, 2009b).

A recession does not always have negative impact for all business as it can bring fast growth opportunities for some industries. In the US according to National Association of Resale and Thrift Shops (NARTS, 2012), the resale industry is one of the few recession proof segments of retailing, not only does it survive during economic downturns but it also grows and thrives. According to IBIS World (2011), estimated revenue for Used Goods Stores has increased at an average annual rate of 6.2% to \$14.7 billion in the five years to 2011, with 1.9% growth from 2010 to 2011. As life expenses increased, unemployment rate climbed, savings accounts and retirement funds diminished, consumers cut back on discretionary spending and changed

the way they shop. As a result, many shoppers in US changed the way they traditionally shopped at department and retail stores, have started considering thrift stores as an alternative outlet to purchase cheaper, used goods instead of new merchandise, and consequently shopping at used clothing and resale stores became an economy measure (Rosenbloom, 2008; McCutcheon, 2001). According to NARTS 2010 Operating Survey (2012) findings, resale and thrift shops in USA experienced a 12.7 percent growth in net sales for used items for 2009 from 2008, that was the strongest increase in demand for the last five years. It's a substantial increase considering that total retail sales were down 7.3% in the same period.

## **THRIFT STORES**

Thrift stores, mainly operated by non-profit organizations such as Goodwill, have been around for decades; more upscale resale and consignment shops have been in existence since the 1980s. These types of stores became alternative outlets for many consumers who had less disposable income and/or became more frugal during an economic downturn. Salvation Army, one of the biggest thrift shops, experienced 5 to 15 percent increase in total sales at stores around the US in 2008. Another study by America's Research Group, a consumer behavior research firm, found that 18 percent of Americans shopped in thrift stores, while 15 percent visited consignment stores in a given year (Kelly, 2008).

As researchers we became aware of the connection between thrift shopping, frugality and recession in terms of the Atlantic Canada used clothing shop chain Frenchys and similar shops. Frenchys has developed very strong ties with its customers who have written articles (Cameron-Mccarron, 2007), books (Wilson and Wood, 2001; Wilson and Wood, 2003) and a song about them, Shopping at Frenchy's is Hughie McDonnell's musical tribute (Cameron Mccaroon, 2007). A number of tour companies have organized tours visiting a number of these shops. For example, Freedom Travel in Saint John New Brunswick in 2009 offered a two night/ three day tour, "Frenchys & Flea Markets" taking in the annual 75-mile yard sale in East Hants, Nova Scotia as well as various Frenchys locations in the region.

As it is known, shopping habits affect travel intentions, especially in the case of tourism (Timothy, 2005) it could be argued that visiting thrift stores is a leisure pursuit. Although shopping for souvenirs has always been an important tourism activity, the activity of shopping continues to develop as a significant element of tourism (Westwood, 2006) and an important aspect of destination attractiveness (Moscardo, 2004). In the context of both frugality and the recession this paper therefore explores the case of thrift shopping as a possible tourism activity, in terms of consumer motivations and profiles.

## **CONSUMERS' REACTIONS DURING A RECESSION**

According to researches, consumers adapt their buying behavior in view of expected lay-offs,

rising interest rates, high level of uncertainty, inflationary environment, the freeze or decrease of salaries, the shrinkage of purchasing power etc., as they are hit both psychologically as well as economically (Shama, 1981). Over the 2007-2009 recession, real aggregate consumer spending declined about 2 percent compared to the 1990 recession when there was no net change in real Personal Consumption Expenditures over the similar time frame and compared to 2001 when there was a net increase of about 4% (Moore and Palumbo, 2010; Chowdhury and Manzoor, 2010).

Ang, Leong and Kotler (2000) previously outlined the actual and potential reactions and adjustments of Asian consumers during the 1997-1998 Economic crises under four categories. General reactions to a recession are to reduce consumption and wastefulness, to be more careful in decision-making and to search for more information. It is also common for adjustments to be made regarding product choices like buying necessities rather than luxuries products. Consumers consider cheaper prices, product life cycle costs, durability and value for money. They show a more rational approach to promotions and indicate preference for informative rather than imagery-based advertisements. Lastly, they increase window shopping, show preference for discount and neighborhood stores and lessen end-of-aisle impulse purchases.

## LITERATURE

International organizations, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development all agree that the recession of 2007-2009 was the most severe slowdown in the world economy since the Depression affecting markets and consumers in all economic strata (Flatters and Willmott, 2009).

As the recession of 2007-2009 was the most severe slowdown in the world economy since the Depression (Flatters and Willmott, 2009), consumers made modifications in their choices and behavior in many ways. One of the consumer responses developed during and after a recession was to adopt frugal, thrifty approaches to shopping and spending, and to investigate new forms of shopping (for example, thrift shopping, yard sales, clothes swaps) (Jansen-Verbeke, 1991). The word "frugality" has its etymological root in the Latin word *frugalitas*, which means virtue or thriftiness (Bove, Nagpal, & Dorsett, 2009). Thrift is defined as making short-term sacrifices in current consumption for reaching long-term substantial goals in the future, conceptualized as a careful management of resources careful consumption and saving in the present in order to consume better in the future (Bardhi and Amould, 2005; Blattberg *et al.*, 1978; Lastovicka *et al.*, 1999; and Lichtenstein *et al.*, 1993). In their research, Bardhi and Amould (2005) identified six different ways in which consumers practice thriftiness while thrift shopping, varying from careful preplanning and pre-shopping, to restrictions on first-hand shopping, bargain hunting and recycling. Hall (2011) notes a consumer trend towards voluntary simplicity in relation to contemporary tourism.

Thrift shopping can be broadly defined as consumers shopping in numerous alternative retail formats such as estate sales, garage sales, yard sales, flea markets, swap meets, and especially thrift stores (Williams, 2003). Bardhi (2003) also identified the experiential and social benefits of it. Garage and yard sales are unregulated in most communities, estate sales are generally untaxed and unmonitored by government officials, and flea markets/swap meets may only occasionally be subject to oversight by taxation officials. Therefore it is hard to find accurate information regarding the size of the thrift-shopping in the retail economy (Christiansen and Snepenger, 2005).

The connection between thrift, frugality and consumption was studied in particular in relation to the changing economic climate (Bardhi, 2003). The author draws a distinction between frugality and thrift in consumer consumption in terms of the scale at which care and compassion is exercised, the relationship to the normative expectations of consumer cultures, and significances in terms of environmental impacts. Using this distinction to look at sustainable consumption, the author argues that thrift is not an adequate response to the economic downturn in the long run and frugality may offer more in terms of sustainability. A number of authors actually postulate that thrift tendencies encourage consumption, as consumers seek out quality goods at reduced prices they feel that they have saved, creating the opportunity for more purchases (Miller, 1998).

Shopping is known to be a widespread tourism activity (Jolliffe and Cave, 2012). The popular press reflects an emerging consumer interest in thrift shopping with a number of destinations listing thrift shops as part of the shopping attractions of their city. This reflects a trend towards recreational shopping, characterized by the intrinsic rewards received by the consumer, not related to the goods and services consumed (Guiry, Magi and Lutz, 2006). The trend towards thrift shopping as a tourism and leisure activity could also be described as what Hall (2011) identifies as an alternate form of leisure consumption. However, the literature on frugality suggests there may not be a link between such recreational shopping and frugal behavior. One study found no correlation between recreational shopping and frugality (Bove, Nagpal and Dorsett, 2009). Another research by Euromonitor (2009a) suggests that the newest trend in consumerism that was emerged during the last recession was the rise of the “frugalista”, defined as a cash-poor, thrifty woman that is still keen on stylish consumerism. Another type of thrifty female consumer emerging as a result of the downturn is the “voucherista”, a new breed of savvy shopper who clips or downloads discount vouchers to save money on everyday purchases or days out (Euromonitor, 2009b).

Academics studying shoppers have identified types of consumers including product enthusiasts (Bloch, 1986) and mall enthusiasts (Bloch et al., 1994). Gury, Magi and Lutz (2006) took this one step further identifying the recreational shopping enthusiast, who is highly involved in shopping and views it as a central part of their life. It is possible that this typology may be extended to include thrift shopping enthusiasts who may also undertake travel that includes thrift shopping and might embark on such shopping as a tourist activity.

## METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods of research were adopted as a means of obtaining a range of information (Henderson, 2008). This research strategy is sufficient for the purposes of this exploratory study, fleshing out the research theme and providing examples of “lived experiences” in relation to consumer motivations towards thrift shopping and such shopping combined with travel and tourism. Research questions posed in the context of the literature review were: 1) Do post-recession consumer behaviors, especially the frugal outlook and related thrift shopping tendencies relate to travel and tourism, and 2) are thrift shoppers motivated to a) travel for thrift shopping and b) to incorporate thrift shopping into their travel as a tourism activity?

In the first instance the researchers used a snowball effect speaking to family, friends and acquaintances, recording their comments about their thrift shop experiences and attitudes. In particular the researchers sought to elicit tourism related information, noting their motivation to travel for thrift shopping or to thrift shop while on vacation. A small random sample of 10 informants consisting of 8 females 2 males was interviewed.

To further develop the research theme a web survey was conducted by inviting thrift shop facebook groups in Atlantic Canada to participate. Three face book groups (Frenchy’s is Awesome! at 133 members; I heart frenchy’s at 551 members; Guy’s Frenchys>Sliced Bread at 109 members) posted the survey to their members. There was a survey response of 78 or just over 10% of the total membership.

A limitation of this exploratory research is that the samples for both aspects of the study were quite small. Nonetheless for exploratory research the data collected should reveal some trends in thrift shopping motivations and their relationship to travel and tourism.

## FINDINGS

Those interviewed during the first part of the study could be categorized as non-thrift shoppers; thrift shoppers and thrift shopping enthusiasts (Table 1) with the thrift shoppers exhibiting frugal behavior and thrift shopping enthusiasts mentioning the intrinsic rewards exhibited by recreational shoppers discussed earlier in the paper. It is possible that thrift shopping enthusiasts identified here could be characterized as “thrift mavens” identified by Christiansen and Snepenger (2005) as communicating information about the thrift market to other individuals. This demonstrates that there are different types of thrift shoppers, with a variety of motivations and interest in thrift shopping. While all of the types of thrift shoppers see their activity as a leisure pursuit only the “thrift enthusiasts” are motivated to travel to thrift shops and or to plan visits to a number of them.

**Table 1: Thrift/travel Typology of Shoppers Interviewed**

Type of Shopper	Age/Sex	Comments
Non Thrift	18, Female	Would never go to a Frenchys (thrift shop chain in Atlantic Canada and imitators) or plan a trip to visit a group of thrift stores.
	Early 30's, Female	Works at Frenchys. Shops there only because she works there. Does not travel because she can't afford it and does not have time.
	Mid 50's, Male	Would visit (thrift stores) on trips but would not be main reason for travelling.
	Late 20's, Male	Uses thrift stores as a basic need to buy clothes. Has gone on trips and shopped at thrift stores in Austria. Would not plan a trip just to visit thrift stores.
	Early 20's, Male	Seldom visits Frenchys or other thrift stores. Only visits on an overnight trip of he forgot some clothes.
Thrift	Early 20's, Female	Has fun at thrift stores looking for cool, random things. Doesn't think Frenchys is a destination, doesn't visit any outside the city.
	Mid 50's, Female	Would not plan a trip just to visit a few of them (thrift shops) but would stop along the way during travels and shop.
Thrift Enthusiast	Mid 20's, Female	Loves Frenchys and other thrift stores. Has gone to Vancouver and visited thrift stores there. Would definitely plan a trip just to visit a bunch of Frenchys. She was very excited and energetic about the idea. "I would 100% go out of my way to visit a Frenchys".
	Late 70's, Female	Was interested in overnight traveling to visit one, if she is not driving. She does enjoy going to thrift stores.
	Early 30's Female,	"I am very involved with the hunt in finding inexpensive clothes." "Cause you never know what you are going to find, they are all different." She showed interest in planning a trip to many different Frenchys.
	Mid 40's, Female	Enjoys thrift stores, travel's to a nearby city just to check out thrift stores. Is interested in going out of province (to visit thrift shops).

To further investigate this tendency we report below on a survey of the members of several web sites focusing on thrift shopping in Atlantic Canada, these members could be the "thrift enthusiasts" we describe above. These web sites show the tendency for so called "thrift mavens" or as we identified them, "thrift shopping enthusiasts" to disseminate information

on such shopping and influence others to further develop their thrift shopping tendencies, as Feick and Price (1987) demonstrated in their work on the market maven.

Furthermore, the survey of thrift shop Facebook groups in Atlantic Canada had a response of 78. Most respondents (92.6%) were female and most (84.7 %) reported visiting a thrift store one to two times a week. Most of the respondents were from Nova Scotia (81.3%), fewer were from New Brunswick (16%) and from other Maritime Provinces (2.7%).

Over half of the respondents (51.3%) have either visited a Guy's Frenchys outlet while away on vacation, or have stayed overnight (64.9%) during visits to these outlets. Individual comments indicate that some group visits to Frenchys are social and as they involve overnight travel could be considered to be part of tourism:

*"I've been visiting Guy's Frenchys at least once or twice a year for over a decade. Even though I no longer live near a Guy's location, every spring I and three girlfriends meet in Halifax and visit 6 locations over 2 days, staying overnight in Yarmouth. It is the one time every year that we can all get together and celebrate our friendship and the fun of Frenchy's shopping".*

Also relevant is the fact that only two of the seventy-eight respondents reported having gone on a bus tour of Guy's Frenchys outlets, so the visits to thrift shops for these consumers could be viewed as mostly a leisure pastime and pursuit, and not part of an organized tour. Nonetheless over half (59.7%) of the respondents reported planning in the future to go on such a bus trip, indicating a travel motivation related to thrift shopping:

*My friends and I are planning a caravan day-trip to all the Frenchy's in Nova Scotia.*

Another respondent noted that for her travelling to Frenchys with friends is a regular occurrence:

*I go on Frenchys road trips to visit 5 - 8 Frenchys stores at a time with girlfriends. We are addicted!*

These "thrift enthusiasts" therefore demonstrate motivations to include thrift shopping in their trip and travel plans, and are likely to be attracted to any thrift shop tours developed by tour operators, or thrift shop district promotions undertaken by destinations. This reflects a trend towards slow consumption in tourism reported by Hall (2009). However, in our research in Atlantic Canada we did find evidence of thrift shop tours, but not of thrift shop district promotions. The results of this second part of our study are also collaborated by the thrift shop enthusiast co-authors of two books about Frenchy's (Wilson and Wood, 2003). The authors report on experiences visiting Frenchys along with the social aspect of the pursuit.

## CONCLUSION

This research was inspired by the observations of the authors of thrift shopping in Atlantic Canada moving towards a tourism activity. The enquiry was informed by a literature review on the resale clothing industry, frugality and shopping behaviors, and shopping as a tourist activity. After interviewing general thrift shoppers and surveying thrift enthusiasts there is some limited support for the premise that in a post-recession context thrift shopping is seen by some as an activity to be incorporated during travel that thus potentially becomes part of tourism. Other types of shopping, including cross-border shopping, mall shopping and recreational shopping have all been previously investigated, in the recreation, leisure and tourism contexts. These preliminary findings regarding the travel motivations of thrift shopping enthusiasts could be of use to both tour operators and destination managers wishing to design products appealing to the post-recession thrifty tourist. For example, thrift tours could be developed as half day or full day shore excursion activities for cruise visitors to urban port destinations.

This investigation case of thrift shopping provides insight into consumer shopping behavior during and after a recession. While many customers prefer thrift shops to economize, some go thrift shops as a pastime and leisure activity. In both cases this consumer behavior could have a direct link to travel behavior. In contrast with the findings of Bove, Nagpal and Dorsett (2009) that there was no link between frugality and recreational shopping there is some evidence from this research that recreational thrift shoppers, particularly the “thrift enthusiasts” will not only incorporate thrift shopping in their travel plans as an activity, but will adopt thrift shopping as a travel motivation. This ties in with the work of Hall (2011) looking at the movement towards more sustainable forms of consumption and as a result more simplistic forms of tourism.

The paper also marries the literature on frugality and shopping, extending the typologies of types of shoppers who undertake shopping for leisure and recreational purposes, identifying three types of thrift shoppers as non-thrift shoppers, thrift shoppers and thrift shopping enthusiasts. Identifying a link between thrift shopping as a leisure and tourism pursuit this exploratory research has thus made a beginning towards investigating, how trends in frugality may affect tourism pursuits in the post-recession period, and what new forms of tourism might result.

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# Resident Perceptions of International Tourism in Croatia: A Survey Analysis<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines public perceptions of Croatia's tourism industry in 2013, as the country begins full membership in the European Union. Because of the magnitude and importance of international tourism in Croatia, it is imperative to better understand the economic, social, and environmental impacts of foreign visitors from the point of view of local residents. Croatian respondents are acutely aware of tourists and accurately identify the three largest groups as Germans, Italians, and Slovenes. Croatian hosts associate distinct behavioral stereotypes with each nationality. Germans, followed by Austrians, are believed to spend approximately 50% more than other nationalities, and are likewise thought to have the most positive cultural impact on Croatia. In spite of the negative environmental impacts often associated with tourism, few specific groups are stereotyped for vandalism, littering, and noisy or other unruly behavior. Our findings validate the emphasis placed by government planners upon tourism, and offer suggestions on how to improve Croatia's tourism destinations and infrastructure.

## Key words:

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism can be viewed as a means of promoting prosperity, but the industry is not without its potentially negative qualities (Crouch and Ritchie 1999; Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, and Vogt 2005). Kim, Uysal, and Sirgy (2013) argue that it is imperative for tourism developers to understand resident perception of and satisfaction with the industry. Given the enormous importance of tourism in the Croatian economy, this paper explores Croatian resident perceptions of international tourism. Following Deery, Jago, and Fredline (2012), resident attitudes toward tourists are important in determining the success or failure of a destination. Special attention is paid to resident stereotypes of tourists from different origins

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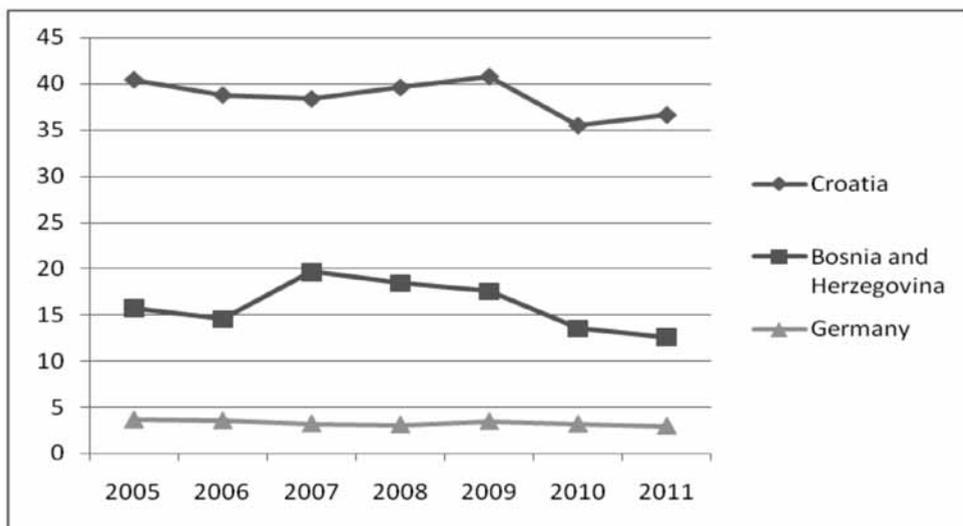
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with regard to the perceived economic, cultural, and environmental impacts. Respondents are queried about anticipated effects of EU accession, as well as prospects for this vital industry to support regional development. Although many reports have been published by organizations such as the UNWTO (2013) and WTTC (2013), these quantitative documents are mainly limited to the *economic* impacts of the industry. The present study attempts to broaden the conversation, using primary data collected through a hybrid quantitative and qualitative approach.

International tourism is important as an export in the trade balances of many countries, but Croatia is especially dependent upon the industry. According to the WTTC (2013), in 2012, travel & tourism comprises nearly 12% of Croatia's GDP, and represents 12.3% of total employment (135,000 jobs). Moreover, with 10.5 million international tourism arrivals, foreign visitor expenditures regularly represent approximately 40% of total exports, corroborated in Figure 1 by the UN's World Development Indicators (2013).

Figure 1 illustrates the importance of international tourism in Croatia relative to the industry's role in two nearby countries, Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although Germany attracts three times as many international visitors and fourfold the value of expenditures as Croatia, German tourism's relative role is small compared to that country's total exports. Even for Croatia's immediate neighbor Bosnia and Herzegovina, tourism plays a relatively greater role than in Germany, underscoring the imperative for decision-makers in less-industrialized Balkan countries such as Croatia to promote a sustainable tourism industry.

**Figure 1: International Tourism as Percentage of Total Exports**



Data Sources: World Development Indicators (2013).

Croatia is part of the dynamic and extremely competitive European tourism market, with the Mediterranean/Southern Europe region representing more than one-fifth of the global total (UNWTO 2013). As Europe's recession lingers, even within the Balkan region Croatia's own economy continues to struggle with stagnation and even contraction (Economist 2012). Despite these challenging overall economic conditions, growth in international arrivals to Croatia averages 4% per year, sustained again at 5.06% in 2012 to represent the best growth rate in the entire region (Ministry of Tourism 2013, UNWTO 2013, 7).

By interviewing tourism board members, Hughes and Allen (2005, 178) discover that Croatia differentiates itself from other "sun and sea" destinations by emphasizing culture in addition to beach amenities. Nevertheless, tourism in Croatia is concentrated in the summer months, raising the problem of seasonality. The attractions of Adriatic coastal and rural tourism with the backdrop of Croatia's unique natural beauty and cultural-historical heritage prevail during the months of June through September. Istria is the most developed Croatian tourist region with 245,000 of the country's 880,000 beds, and is closest to and most easily accessible from Western Europe.

## LITERATURE

Deery, Jago, and Fredline (2012) set forth a new research agenda for tourism that recognizes the importance of resident perceptions in promoting industry sustainability. The authors demonstrate the role of perceptions throughout their review of the literature on tourism's impacts. A better understanding of the perceived local benefits and stress introduced by tourism in leading tourist regions can be developed in order to mitigate negative impacts. A sizeable literature has also emerged on topics surrounding the tourism industry in transition countries. While some of the work examines flows to Central and Eastern Europe in general or comparative terms (Hall 1998, Hall 2004, Chou 2013), given the importance of tourism for Croatia's economy other papers are specific to Croatia (Mervar and Payne 2007, Kunst 2011, Škuflić and Štoković 2011). Still other research (Getz 1977, Hall and Page 2006, Deichmann 2007, Baldigara and Mamula 2012, Deery et al. 2012, Kim et al. 2013, and WTTC 2013) focuses upon impacts of tourism, with a heavy emphasis on economic effects.

Hall (1998) examines arrivals and receipts throughout Central and Eastern Europe from the late 1980s through the mid-1990s. Some countries such as Czechoslovakia and Albania quickly saw the floodgates of arrivals open, with more than five-fold growth from 1988-1994. Others such as Yugoslavia's successor states as well as its eastern neighbors Bulgaria and Romania, lost visitors due to the three-year conflict and the region's resulting reputation, only to begin recovering in 1995.

Hall (2004) continues his extensive analysis of tourism issues in transition economies with his edited volume *Tourism and Transition: Governance, Transformation, and Development*. The collection offers country-specific case studies with a heavy emphasis on government

policy. While Croatia is not among the case studies, considerable reference to the country is made in the comparative chapters, particularly with reference to the war's virtual snuffing out of international tourism during 1992-1995. Given the tourism industry's relationship with entrepreneurship, Hall (2004, 16) argues that all of Southeastern Europe suffered from a lack of a strong entrepreneurial sector, something that the countries of Central Europe and the Baltic enjoyed prior to the imposition of Communism. However, largely due Croatia's favorable coastline geography and cultural linkages with Central Europe, following the war it quickly emerged as a transition country with some of the fastest annual growth in arrivals and receipts among transition countries.

Based upon interviews with tourist board personnel in four countries of the region, Hughes and Allen (2005, 180) confirm the ongoing challenge faced by Croatia in assuring visitors that "Croatia is safe and...has not been completely destroyed (by the war)." Comparing Croatia to Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary, Hughes and Allen (2005) cite Croatian flight subsidies designed to expose foreign tourists to cultural sites, art galleries, and museums, which have successfully been marketed to a tourist population that is otherwise focused upon the beach.

Chou (2013) employs a panel data set to identify causal relationships between tourism spending and economic growth in ten Central and Eastern European countries from 1988-2011. Although the author does not include Croatia in the analysis, the mixed results suggest that policy makers should take care before accepting the notion that tourism necessarily causes growth. Chou discovers that in Cyprus, Latvia, and Slovakia, tourism spending leads to economic growth, while in the Czech Republic and Poland, economic growth can increase tourism. The author discovers that in Estonia and Hungary, tourism and growth reinforce one another. Finally, no causal relationship is detected between the two variables in Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Romania.

Kunst (2011) uses a case study approach to examine Croatia's policy options during the ongoing global recession. Given the role of the tourism sector in Croatia's economy and uncertainty about the country's emergence from the financial crisis, the author compares the country to Malta, Turkey, and Egypt, all of which he views as constructively guiding the industry during lean economic times. Using evidence of success by these moderately-developed Mediterranean match-mates, Kunst advocates strongly for government involvement in attracting and guiding investment in the tourism sector.

With regard to the impacts of tourism, other work is instructive in setting forth the present study's methodology. A pioneering taxonomy introduced by Getz (1977) distinguishes between economic, social/cultural, and environmental impacts. In each category, tourism ranges from positive to negative. In the case of the economy, examples range from employment (+) to dependency (-). With regard to culture, they might range from pride in host traditions (+) to an increase in crime (-). Finally, environmental impacts range from improvement of infrastructure (+) to various forms of pollution (-).

Building on Getz's work, Hall and Page (2006) adapt these categories into a series of dimensions, distinguishing between purely economic impacts and those that are more tourism/commercial-related. Getz's (1977) social/cultural impacts are further qualified as either psychological or political/administrative. Environmental impacts can be tangible effects such as litter, or the less tangible destruction of local heritage.

Tosun (2002) examines resident perceptions for tourism's impacts on the Turkish town of Urgup. Using a qualitative interview approach, he unveils a high level of community displeasure with the industry, as compared to similar analyses of Fiji and Florida. Based upon his findings, he proposes that tourism be better integrated into local development by introducing more community participation in the industry.

Andereck et al. (2005) collect responses using an extensive postal survey and telephone interview approach across Arizona, USA counties to capture attitudes toward tourism and perceptions of its impacts. Most of the findings uphold the existing literature's consensus of overall positive attitudes toward the industry, although frustrations related to crowding, congestion, litter, and crime are raised as well. The authors also indicate that community education about tourism tends to contribute to greater support of the industry and facilitate solutions for the local problems that tourism presents.

Deichmann (2007) employs Getz's (1977) original categories and Likert scales to measure responses ranging from negative to positive. Targeting hospitality professionals as respondents in several tourist-rich cities of the Czech Republic, he identifies multiple origin-specific behavioral traits and related resident stereotypes of tourists. Deichmann's (2007) paper sets forth the format for a portion of the survey instrument used in the present study. Most of the related recent research (Deery et al. 2012, Kim et al. 2013) employs similar, more-specific typologies that at the very least distinguish between social and cultural impacts.

Deery et al. (2012) offer a thorough review of the literature on the social impacts of tourism, and lay out an agenda for new scholarly directions. The authors use an elaboration of Getz's (1977) rudimentary taxonomy of economic, social, and environmental impacts that is employed here to capture scholarly contributions across disciplines. They argue that a thorough understanding for tourism's impacts is handicapped by the predominantly quantitative approach of existing literature. Finally, they suggest that personal characteristics such as how long residents have lived in an area, level of dependence upon tourism, and distance from tourism activity represent key influences on how the tourism is perceived. To capture such subtleties moving forward, Deery et al. favor qualitative techniques such as storytelling, narratives, and observation.

Kim et al. (2013) link resident's perceptions to satisfaction with their lives, which may or may not be a consequence of the tourism industry itself. The authors generate a series of hypotheses by fusing stages of tourism development (introduction, growth, maturity, and

decline) to self-perceptions of resident well-being. Using data from Virginia cities and counties, they conclude that residents indeed harbor perceptions of tourism's economic, social, cultural, and environmental impacts. These perceptions, in turn, are found to be significant predictors of residents' sense of health and safety.

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA

The present research uses a brief and simple survey instrument to gather quantitative and qualitative data on resident perceptions of international tourism in Croatia in 2013. The Croatian Tourist Board (2013) and the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2013) publish extensive data on visitation patterns and expenditures that are readily available on their respective web pages. These data, combined with UNWTO (2013), make it a straightforward exercise to obtain an understanding of flows into Croatia is a straightforward exercise. However, a clear understanding of how residents perceive the industry and its foreign participants requires primary data collection. Here, this is accomplished through the construction and administration of a survey instrument. At two pages, the survey instrument is deliberately brief and simple in order to achieve a high response rate. The survey questions are grouped into the following categories:

1.) Perceptions of International Tourism; 2.) Differences in Visitors from Specific Origins; and 3.) International Tourism and Regional Development.

At the time of primary data collection in May 2013, Croatia remains in economic recession, and has six weeks remaining before its European Union accession.” The targeted subjects are Croatian university students who are currently studying in Zagreb, and the survey is distributed as class homework. This “captive audience” approach allows us to efficiently obtain a satisfactory sample size of 69 (93% response rate). Responses are coded and entered into SPSS 21.0 software, where reports are generated, as presented and discussed in the analysis section.

## ANALYSIS

### *Leading Origins of International Tourists*

Following Deery et al. (2012), resident awareness of and attitudes toward tourism play a major role in determining the local success or failure of the industry. In the present study, we discover that Croatians are acutely aware of the presence and specific origin of visitors in their country. Table 1 shows that residents possess a remarkably clear picture of the composition of visitors. When asked what the leading origin is, 36 of 69 respondents (52%) correctly replied Germany, while 11 (16%) chose Italy, and Slovenia and the Czech Republic were each mentioned by 7 (9%). Respondents correctly placed three of the next five leading origins—Poland, Hungary, and the UK-- in the top ten as well.

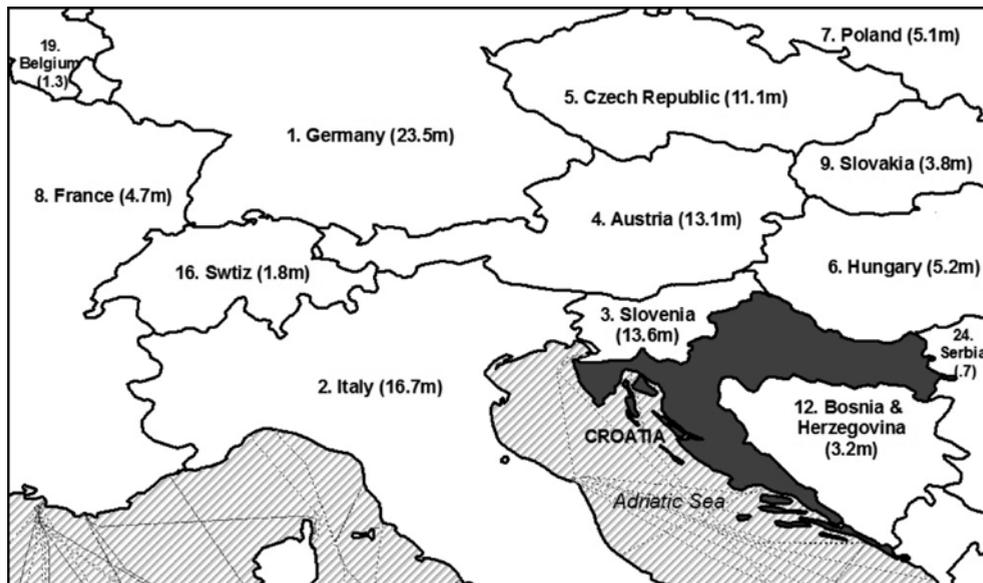
**Table 1: Actual Versus Perceived Origins of Visitors (1993-2012)**

<b>Actual Rank/Origin (arrivals)</b>	<b>Perceived in Top Three</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Pct</b>
<b>1. Germany</b>	Germany	60	87%
<b>2. Italy</b>	Italy	46	67%
<b>3. Slovenia</b>	Slovenia	30	43%
<b>4. Austria</b>	Czech Republic	27	39%
<b>5. Czech Republic</b>	Austria	14	20%
<b>6. Hungary</b>	Bosnia & Herzegovina	12	17%
<b>7. Poland</b>	Poland	8	12%
<b>8. France</b>	Hungary	7	10%
<b>9. Slovakia</b>	Russia	1	1%
<b>10. UK</b>	UK	1	1%

Data Sources: *Statistical Yearbook of Croatia* (2013), authors' survey.

Figure 1 illustrates most of the leading origins cartographically, plausibly reflecting gravity-related of proximity and mass. In other words, most visitors to Croatia originate in nearby countries (especially adjacent ones), and those with large populations such as Germany and Italy. Given extensive ferry service between Italy and Croatia, it is unsurprising that nearly 17 million visitors have arrived from across the Adriatic since 1993 (Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2013). Moreover, cultural affinities also seem to be at work, broadly amongst Slavic neighbors and successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire such as the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia. In addition to Slovenia, it is possible to identify enduring vacation patterns of tourists from other regions of former Yugoslavia, especially those new states that are landlocked. Notably, Bosnia & Herzegovina ranks 12th overall with over three million visitors since 1993, while Serbia ranks only 25th with 705,000.

**Figure 1: Leading Origins of Tourists from 1993-2012**



Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Croatia* (1996-2003 editions)

The literature contains quantitative studies of demand for tourism in Croatia (Mervar and Payne 2007, Škuflić and Štoković 2011). Most scholars attribute high demand mainly to income level in origin countries and the low price of the tourism product in Croatia. In response to these authors’ call for further study of such origin-specific demand, our respondents are asked to explain why certain groups come to Croatia. Table 2 summarizes their responses.

**Table 2: Attractiveness of Croatia as an International Tourism Destination**

Explanation	Respondent %	Main Associated Origin(s)
Proximity	35%	Italy, Germany, Czech Rep
Adriatic/Sea	16%	Germany, Italy
Natural Beauty	14%	Germany
Beautiful Coast	9%	Germany
Cultural Factors (history, food, traditions)	7%	Germany
Other (inexpensive, loyalty, beautiful girls)	5%	N/A

Source: Survey questionnaire by authors.

According to our survey results, the single most important element of Croatia's attractiveness is proximity to the origin country, which corroborates speculation raised from Figure 1, and begins to address questions raised by Škuflić and Štoković (2011) about transportation costs. Clearly, most of the international tourism is from nearby if not adjacent countries. Following this observation, the attraction of the extensive Adriatic coast cannot be overstated for citizens of landlocked countries such as the Czech Republic, Austria, and Hungary. When considering warm water beach access, Germany is effectively landlocked as well. Although Mervar and Payne (2007) discover that tourism demand is highly income elastic, the leading tourism origin Germany enjoys one of Europe's highest standards of living as well as the continent's largest economy.

### *Stereotypes of Tourists*

Deery et al. (2012) underscore the importance of understanding the social impacts of tourism. Recognizing the imperative to gauge local residents' acceptance of and involvement in international tourism (Andereck et al. 2007), we inquire how the industry is received in Croatia. This section therefore examines foreigner behaviors as they relate to economic, cultural, and environmental impact. With reference to origin country we look at emerging stereotypes and how they impact perceptions of the industry.

We begin with pre-existing stereotypes before probing into specifics. Respondents are asked to consider overall impact by origin, followed by behavior with regard to economic, cultural, and environmental impact. When asked which origins of tourists they would like to see in greater numbers, respondents favor Germany (8), Sweden (7), and Italy (5), followed by Americans, British, French, and Russians. In the eyes of Croatians, the most favored characteristics about these groups by far fall under the category of "attractive culture." Respondents consider these nationalities as cultured, well-mannered, polite, and funny. Additional reasons respondents prefer the aforementioned groups is that they spend a lot of money (Russians), and because of their attractive physical appearance, the latter in the case of Swedes.

Despite a wide acceptance of tourism, Croatians would prefer to see some nationalities in fewer numbers. Thanks in large part to Balkan wars of the 1990s, Serbs are less favored guests. In fact, 12 of the 69 respondents (17%) continue to associate Serbs with bad memories of conflict. The second least-favored nationality of tourist in Croatia is Italians, who some respondents consider to be "loud," "cheap," "inconsiderate," and unable or unwilling to speak English. According to respondents, Czechs are the only other group perceived to "cause problems while visiting". When probed, some respondents also complain that Czechs tend to bring along all of their own food and drink from home rather than supporting the local economy. Others cite recent news stories about a number of Czech tourists who have drowned in the sea.

Some delinquent behaviors highlighted by Deery et al. (2012, 68-69) are echoed in open-

ended responses to our survey. Without reference to specific nationalities, additional conduct that goes unappreciated by Croatian hosts includes unsafe behavior, arrogance, drunkenness, rudeness, litter, disrespect toward locals, and beach and traffic congestion. Among these, the most frequently cited complaints relate to littering/pollution, bad social behavior, and “cheapness.”

Overall impacts can also be measured quantitatively. Getz (1977) sets forth a framework for examining impacts of tourism ranging from negative to positive. Included in the typology are economic, cultural, and environmental effects of the industry. This typology is the basis for the questions that are asked in the survey instrument (Appendix) and reported in Table 3. The countries included in the questions are the top ten origins of visitors to Croatia in 2011, and respondents are asked to score them on a scale of -3 (extremely negative) to +3 (extremely positive). The means for each category and nationality are reported in Table 3.

**Table 3: Host Perceptions of Foreign Visitors in Croatia by Impact Category**

<b>Origin</b>	<b>Economy</b>	<b>Culture</b>	<b>Environment</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Germany</b>	2.19	1.66	0.86	1.57
<b>Austria</b>	2.02	1.63	0.85	1.50
<b>Japan</b>	1.39	1.03	0.77	1.06
<b>Russia</b>	1.48	0.97	0.47	0.97
<b>Italy</b>	1.38	1.01	0.15	0.85
<b>USA</b>	1.29	0.84	0.38	0.84
<b>France</b>	1.17	0.84	0.45	0.82
<b>Slovenia</b>	1.03	0.50	0.36	0.63
<b>Czech Republic</b>	0.76	0.65	-0.15	0.42
<b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b>	0.61	0.75	-0.32	0.35
<b>Overall Average</b>	1.33	0.99	0.38	0.90

Source: Survey Questionnaire by the authors (May 2013)

Above all, international tourism is promoted in order to generate economic multipliers such as income and employment (Hall and Page 2006, Chou 2013). While it is possible to experience negative economic effects such as localized inflation and real estate speculation, Croats do not appear to consider these as major concerns. According to our Croatian respondents (Table 3), Germans and Austrians are thought to spend significantly more than any other group, followed by Russians, Japanese, Italians, and Americans. While all tourists are received enthusiastically for their positive economic impact, Czechs and Bosnians are thought to spend the least. As unveiled in responses to open-ended questions, people from these countries in particular often “bring their own supplies” and “stay in tents.” Some

respondents see them as “drunks,” “prone to drowning,” or “cheap,” the latter because they typically do not spend money on local services and accommodations.

Socio-cultural impacts of international tourism are also important considerations for hosts. According to Getz (1977), Fredline, Deery, and Jago (2006), and Deery et al. (2012), impacts range from a strengthening of local values and traditions (positive) to crime, social dislocation, or commercialization or modification of a local area to accommodate tourists (negative). In Croatia, tourism does not appear to be perceived as a threat in this regard, and Germans, Austrians, Japanese, and Italians are thought to markedly *enhance* the local culture. For example, paraphrasing several open-ended responses, Germans are appreciated by Croatian hosts because they are “friendly,” “interesting,” “polite,” “well-mannered,” and “cultured”.

Similarly, visitors from other Slavic countries are valued for their “cultural connections” and one respondent praises Czechs as “pleasant people (who are) satisfied with Croatia.” Not all Slavs are universally accepted, however. Approximately one in five respondents point out that the very presence of vacationing Serbs in Croatia reminds them of the “difficult history” (of war) between the two countries, while others find Serbs to be “arrogant” or “big headed.” Still other respondents associate Italians with rudeness, and find Croatian Americans to be “very impolite.” Clearly, when traveling in Croatia, it is important for tourists to recognize their role as ambassadors of their home country, and our respondents appear to associate the best “polite” and “friendly” behavior with English, French, German, and Japanese visitors.

As articulated by Andereck et al. (2007), tourism’s most immediate and visible negative impact is potentially on the physical environment. Our respondents are concerned with litter, noise, pollution, and congestion “extending from the streets to the beaches.” More than any other origin, our survey respondents associate environmental problems with Italians. However, Croatia’s government has used tourism to introduce positive environmental effects such as improvement of local infrastructure, development of new facilities, and heritage conservation. Therefore, plausibly as a result of Croatia’s ongoing proactive tourism policy (Ministry of Tourism 2013), we see that most foreign visitors are viewed by locals as positive for the environment.

#### *Tourism Development: EU Accession, Tourism Complaints, and Suggestions*

Arguably the biggest national event for Croatia since the end of Yugoslavia’s war of dissolution is the country’s 2013 European Union (EU) accession. For this reason, respondents are asked how EU membership will impact tourism. On a Likert scale of -5 to +5, the average expected impact on the entire country is strongly positive at +2.89, with a standard deviation of 1.69. The expected local impact (mainly upon the city of Zagreb) is +2.52, with a standard deviation of 1.77. This disparity probably reflects the high level of economic diversification in Zagreb vis-à-vis the rest of the country, much of which is more dependent upon international tourism. It should be remembered, however, that many

international tourists from non-neighboring countries arrive in Zagreb by aircraft, bringing transportation demand to the capital city.

In order to contemplate the regional development potential of tourism in Croatia, we ask respondents about the top tourism destinations within the country, with the results reported in Table 4.

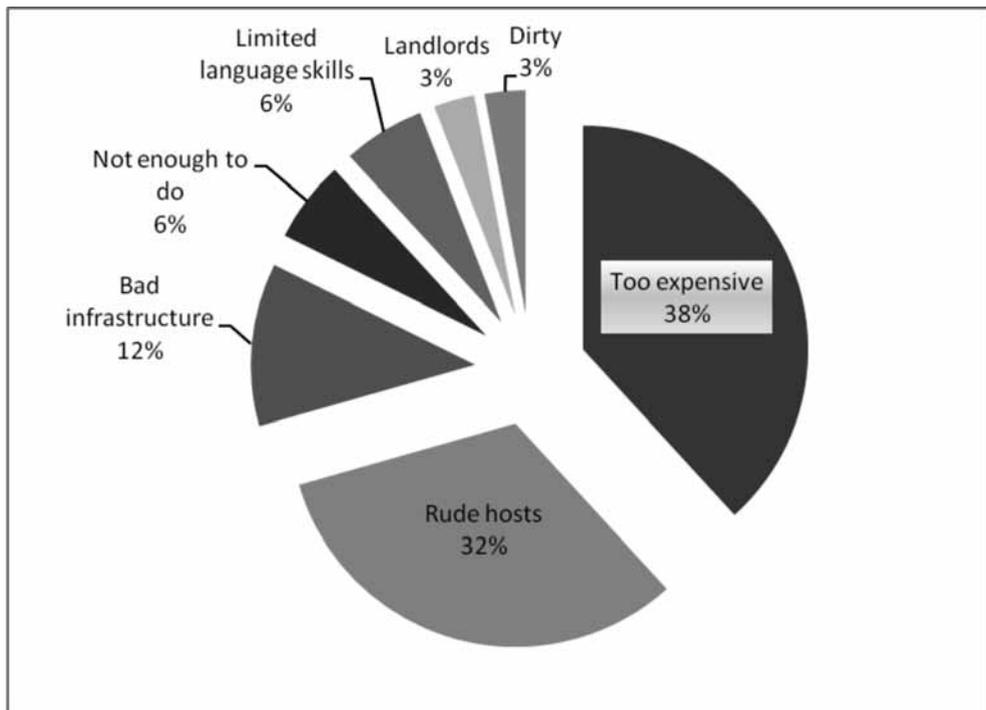
**Table 4: “Must-See” Attractions of Croatia for International Visitors**

<b>Attraction</b>	<b>Responses (n)</b>	<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>
1. Dubrovnik Old City/Walls	48	69.6%
2. Plitvice Lakes	42	60.9%
3. Pula (Roman Ruins)	14	20.3%
4. Zagreb (Capital)	12	17.4%
5. Kornati Islands	10	14.5%
6. Brijuni Islands	8	11.6%

Table 4 outlines the attractions that make Croatians most proud, ranging from historical sites such as Dubrovnik and Pula to the natural wonders of Plitvice and the islands of the Adriatic. Zadar, Split, and Krka are also mentioned. The responses in Table 4 corroborate the primacy of the Adriatic coastline, with the exception of Plitvice and Zagreb. These findings call for creative thinking by tourism authorities to better balance demand toward the interior of the country.

Respondents are further asked for the rationale underlying their expectations. The most common basis for expecting more tourism is the gradual opening the borders with Europe, while a few respondents speculate that EU membership will also give Croatia “more exposure and greater attractiveness” in the world. One respondent expects that non-Croats might feel safer now that the country is in the European Union, a likely reference to the aftermath of the civil war experienced one generation ago. Another respondent comments that “EU membership shows that Croatia is civilized country, not war-wrecked Balkan country.” In the case of Zagreb, yet another respondent expects more business travelers because of its new capital city status. Further research into these questions should report a cross-section of age and income levels, as such demographic data largely impacted the recent vote for EU accession.

In an effort to identify potential areas for improving Croatia’s tourism product, respondents are asked what criticisms they most often hear from foreign tourists. As shown in Figure 2, the highest frequency of complaints relates to (high) pricing, which is in agreement with findings by Škufflić and Štoković (2011) that underscore the importance of price.

**Figure 2: Complaints by International Tourists in Croatia**

The issue of price arises when observing that a large number of hotel rooms in Zagreb go unused even during the summer. Accommodations in Zagreb are often relatively expensive vis-à-vis other Central European cities such as Prague. When asked why, Ivo Kunst (2013) of the Institute for Tourism points out that the Croatian government consciously made the decision to “compete on distinctiveness rather than on price.” According to one female respondent “accommodation is not up to the level of Vienna or Budapest, which are even cheaper and much nicer” (than in Zagreb). Following pricing, visitors most often complain about rudeness on the part of service providers such as staff at bars and restaurants.

Our final set of questions attempts to tease out specific suggestions for policy makers, although more than half (46 of 69 respondents) left the answer blank. To improve the positive impacts of tourism on Croatia while minimizing its negative effects, 30% of respondents who have suggestions argue that the government needs to go beyond their extensive existing efforts to better promote Croatia’s attractions. Another 22% argues that destinations need more diversification, and one respondent laments that Croatia the industry is too dependent upon “just sun and sea.” Similarly, another respondent calls on Zagreb’s city council and mayor to “support cultural activities and night life from May to November, and to provide more accommodation.” Several respondents point out that locals in the industry have poor

language and hospitality skills, treat visitors impolitely, and sometimes even overcharge foreigners. In the interest of sustainability, these revelations suggest that awareness of the industry's economic importance should be promoted by government authorities. Finally, several respondents argue that tourism infrastructure (particularly transport) is substandard and needs to be improved, with specifics ranging from better seaside roads in Dalmatia to more modern accommodations.

Finally, with regard to marketing, the Ministry for Tourism might take greater interest in potential origins that respondents view to be potential growth areas. Specific countries and regions mentioned include Russia, China, Turkey, and Latin America because of their growing affluence and related ability to travel. Additionally, several respondents point out that Croatia's natural and human landscapes offer something dramatically "different" for Japanese and Chinese guests, and rightly indicate that Croatia remains relatively undiscovered by Americans. Given strong existing European awareness of Croatia's attractions, fierce competition from elsewhere in the Mediterranean basin, and Europe's languishing economy, Croatia's tourism authorities would be well-advised to follow these suggestions and augment promotion outside of Europe.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In conclusion, this paper highlights Croatian perspectives on international tourism in the country. After reviewing the role of tourism in the national economy, domestic highlights of the industry are examined. Survey research results in insights on stereotypes toward the leading nationalities of visitors, and potential for the onward growth of the industry following Croatia's 2013 accession to the European Union.

Following supplications from Deery et al. (2012), and Kim et al. (2013), we recognize the importance of local perceptions toward tourism as imperative for a sustainable industry embraced by all stakeholders. We argue that although economic, cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism in Croatia are generally positive, plenty of room exists for enhancing benefits and ameliorating costs to the local community. We find that origin-specific tourist stereotypes are rooted in historical relations between countries as well as behavior by tourists. Tourists are ambassadors of their home countries, and established stereotypes may be difficult to change. Based upon survey responses, we speculate that some negative behavior by tourists might reflect poor treatment by locals, such as rudeness and overcharging. For this reason, we believe tourism authorities should not only support the industry by providing infrastructure and marketing to visitors, but also by maximizing local awareness of the industry's importance.

Like all studies, this undertaking is limited by some shortcomings that should be acknowledged, particularly with regard to the primary data used as a basis for analysis. First, a larger sample size would lend much more credence to the results. Second, although all of the respondents

are residents of Croatia, it would be beneficial to target tourism and hospitality professionals who work directly in the industry and interact with foreigner visitors on a daily basis. These major points would justify an expanded and more authoritative follow-up to this pilot study.

These findings lead to several policy suggestions. Given its role in the economy, the tourism industry is rightly a top priority for Croatians and their government alike. The Croatian Ministry of Tourism (2013) and independent Institute for Tourism are instrumental in collecting and analyzing data that lead to policies and strategies such as the Croatian Tourism Development Strategy 2020. This strategy highlights the importance of marketing, product development, investments in infrastructure and human resources, and streamlining processes across organizations. The primary data collected here support the strategies set forth in this document, particularly with regard to improving infrastructure. Given European domination of current tourist origins and the continent's stagnant economy juxtaposed to rapid growth in the BRICs, respondent suggestions to re-focus marketing on the BRICs and the United States is sensible and constructive.

Finally, this pilot study sets forth some grounds for further research on the tourism industry in Croatia, the newest member of the European Union. The brief survey exercise provides preliminary answers to many questions, but also raises new issues. Following appeals from Kim et al. (2013), more research is in order to help improve the tourism product at different stages in the tourism development cycle. Are the findings reported here in line with opinions of professionals in the hospitality industry? Would respondents outside of Zagreb comment similarly? How has the global recession impacted travel and spending behavior in Croatia for citizens from those countries hardest hit? Now that Croatia is in the European Union, will the origins change to countries located farther afield according to expectations revealed in this study? These important questions remain to be answered, inviting further inquiry.

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<sup>i</sup> The instrument itself can be obtained by emailing the author at [jdeichmann@bentley.edu](mailto:jdeichmann@bentley.edu).

# Expanding cross border airport catchment areas using intermodality: the case of Izmir Adnan Menderes Airport

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## ABSTRACT

Airport catchment area is a dynamic measure that varies according to the examined location. The relevant literature suggests that airport catchment area fluctuates, depending on factors affecting each airport. Among these factors, intermodality in airport regions is identified as a key success factor in the expansion of an airport's catchment area. Against this background, the purpose of this paper is to explore the potential of Izmir Adnan Menderes Airport (ADB) to use intermodality as a way to expand its catchment area into the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands using Chios as a case study. The work draws first on secondary data on travel time and transport costs to develop scenarios concerning a roundtrip from the island of Chios to ten main European cities, with flights from Athens International Airport (ATH) and ADB. Subsequently, the paper undertakes primary data analysis aiming to study airport choice between ADB and ATH by Chios inhabitants. The research findings suggest that ADB was the clear preference of respondents compared to ATH in the majority of cases, i.e. crossing the Greek-Turkish border did not prove a deterrent. This has important policy implications for tourism development provided that the current détente in the Greek-Turkish political relations continues in the future.

**Keywords:** airport, catchment area, intermodality, transportation

## INTRODUCTION

Within the airport management literature, catchment area analysis refers to the estimation of the geographic area from which a large proportion of an airport's outbound passengers originate, or inbound passengers travel to. Until about twenty five years ago, choosing an airport was a relatively easy decision for passengers to make. Usually, within acceptable

travel distances only one airport provided flights to the preferred destination (Kouwenhoven, 2008). However, nowadays people can choose between multiple airports when making their travel arrangements. In this context, the size of catchment areas and overlapping catchments between neighbouring airports provide evidence of the potential for, and strength of, competition between these airports (Civil Aviation Authority, 2011). On these grounds, it follows logically that airport catchment area size is determined by passenger choices in the hinterland of the examined airport (Lieshout, 2012). Do they choose the nearby airport or do they prefer to use another one? Therefore, in order to understand how catchment areas are shaped and evolve over time, one needs to understand the choices passengers make in selecting an airport.

In relation to this last point, this study explores airport choice between Athens International Airport (ATH) and Izmir Adnan Menderes Airport (ADB), by inhabitants of the Greek Eastern Aegean Island of Chios. The study introduces intermodality as a driving factor of airport choice. Would study participants be willing to travel internationally for leisure via ADB, using intermodal transportation to reach the airport, rejecting the alternative option of travelling from ATH? The research was realized in two stages. Stage one involved an investigation of secondary data on travel time and transport costs to develop scenarios concerning a leisure roundtrip from Chios to ten (10) main European hubs by air via ADB or via ATH. Stage two consisted of a questionnaire survey with inhabitants of Chios, to establish airport preferences on the basis of the examined scenarios. The results of this investigation provide evidence of the potential of ADB to use intermodal transportation to expand its catchment area into the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing literature on airports offers several definitions for airport catchment area. According to Postorino (2010), these definitions are based on either geographical or demand considerations. Generally, from a geographical perspective, an airport's catchment area can be defined as the area surrounding the airport from which it attracts its potential users and passengers. From a demand-side of view, the airport catchment area refers to the number of travellers using a particular airport, where "their origins can be identified in a surrounding study area whose size depends on the characteristics of the airport itself" (Postorino, 2010, p. 79). The identification of the catchment area, using either point of view, aims at developing knowledge about the geographic location and demand of an airport.

Irrespective of which point of view is adopted, the size of the catchment area and the airport's market share within this area depend on a number of factors, such as access time, flight frequency and/or airfares offered by the airport in comparison to surrounding airports (see, for example, Bradley, 1998; Humphreys and Francis, 2002; Loo, 2008; Lieshout, 2012). This means that catchment areas represent a dynamic measure, evolving over time depending on relative changes in the offerings and circumstances of airports.

Since the deregulation of air travel the number of airports providing commercial operations has risen substantially and passengers have a wider choice of airfares and airports than ever before (Papatheodorou, 2002; Givoni and Rietveld, 2009). As a result catchment areas of neighbouring airports increasingly overlap and demand is shared between multiple airports (Fuellhart, 2007). This, in turn, has led to increased competition between airports as they strive to attract as much demand from their catchment area as possible (Burghouwt and Veldhuis, 2006; Civil Aviation Authority, 2011). To do so, airports need a clear understanding of the size of their catchment area and the forces that exist within this. The evaluation of the nature of their catchment areas is useful for airports to understand passenger airport choice and the competitive forces in their respective neighbouring regions. This allows them to identify the regions where market share is relatively low and new regions to expand their catchment area.

One approach to the expansion of airport catchment area is to facilitate the ability of airport travellers to use intermodal airport access (Vesperman and Wald, 2011). Since air passengers need to get to and from the airport, they oftentimes rely on more than one transport modes during their journey. Generally, intermodality refers to a system that connects all types of transportation modes (i.e. land, sea and air transport), allowing a passenger to complete a journey using more than one mode (Zhang and Hansen, 2006; Vesperman and Wald, 2011). In this study, however, the emphasis is particularly placed on an airport's connection to its infrastructural environment, commonly referred to as "surface access" (Lacombe, 1994). This is a comprehensive term that includes both ground and water access. The next section of this paper presents a case study of the potential expansion of the catchment area of ADB into the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands, taking advantage of existing intermodal surface access links.

## THE STUDY

### *RESEARCH CONTEXT*

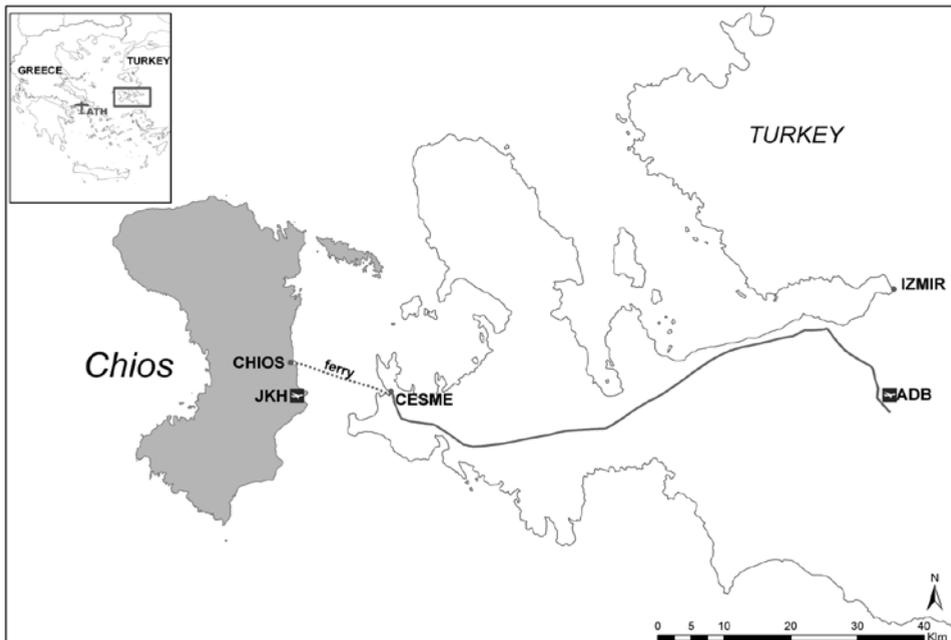
The island of Chios is situated in the north-east Aegean Sea; it extends 842 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 55,000. Chios has a local airport (Chios National Airport "Omios" - JKH) servicing its inhabitants and those of a number of small islands around it; Oinousses, north-east of Chios, and Psara, north-west of Chios. Chios is connected to both islands with Short-Sea Shipping Links (SSSL), requiring a journey of 1 hour and 3 hours respectively. However, Psara is also connected to the Port of Lavrio in mainland Greece, by a cheap direct ferry-boat service (journey time approximately 6 hours). Lavrio is located in the south-east Attica, 52 km from Athens and 41 km from ATH. This means that the inhabitants of Psara are more likely to use this access to ATH and are unlikely to use Chios National Airport.

According to EU classification<sup>1</sup>, JKH is classified as category 4, serving mostly domestic

flights and a few charter flights during the summer (Psaraki and Kalakou, 2011). This fact, combined with the geographical discontinuity of the island, means that passengers travelling internationally into and out of Chios need to be transferred by ship or airplane to another airport offering international connections. For the purpose of international travel, Chios is mainly served by ATH. Therefore, international travel from/to Chios is either cost<sup>2</sup> - or time-consuming<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, SSSL from Chios to Çeşme port (journey time approximately 40 minutes) followed by a shuttle-bus service to ADB takes approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes. This surface access system provides an opportunity for those wishing to travel into and out of Chios to use ADB instead of ATH (the distance between JKH and ADB is approximately 90 km). Map 1 provides a graphical representation of these locations.

ADB offers all-year direct connections to many European countries and indirect routes to global destinations based on hub-and-spoke operations via Istanbul Ataturk Airport (IST). It would, therefore, appear that ADB may attract passengers outside of its borders. ADB's 2013 brochure describes its catchment area as "a populous area, located near many popular holiday spots" (IAMA, 2013, p. 4), using a 2-hour drive-time isochrone (see Table 1). Taking into account that airport catchment areas can be identified with different forms of transport modes (Halpern and Graham, 2013), it appears that intermodal passenger transportation may be used by ADB to expand its catchment area into the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands. Moreover, the duration of travelling from Chios to ADB falls within the 2-hour isochrone (of travel time) to reach the airport.

**Map 1: Chios and the Turkish Aegean Coast**



**Table 1: Catchment Area of ADB**

Driving Time	Population
30 min	1.5 million
60 min	2.5 million
120 min	5.5 million

Source: IAMA, 2013

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to explore airport choice between ATH and ADB, by inhabitants of Chios Island. Essentially, the research aimed at establishing whether participants would be willing to travel internationally for leisure via ADB, using intermodal transportation to reach the airport, rejecting the alternative option of travelling from ATH. The research consisted of two stages. In the first stage, the researchers collected secondary data from airline and independent booking sites. The purpose here was to use data on optimal travel time and transport cost to develop alternative scenarios concerning a roundtrip from Chios to ten main European hubs, with flights from ATH and ADB.

Certain decisions were made during the process of developing scenarios, in order to provide certainty over the comparability of the two airports (i.e. avoid scenarios obviously favouring either airport). In this context, transport from Chios to Piraeus (i.e. Athens port) by ship (journey time approximately 8 hours) was excluded as a way of accessing Athens, because it substantially increased total travel time while only marginally reducing travel cost. In addition, an overnight stay in either Athens or Izmir was also excluded from the scenarios on two grounds. First, it would dramatically increase total travel time. Second, both airports offer direct flights to European destinations, but not on a daily basis. This would have added great complexity in the development of the scenarios, since it would have required the manipulation of travel dates to ensure flight comparability. Therefore, it became clear that the scenarios should use the same set dates for both airports, disregarding the “search plus or minus 3 days” option on the examined websites. Accordingly, roundtrip dates were randomly set (Departure: Friday, Mar-01-2013 / Return: Friday, Mar-08-2013) and travel itineraries were as follows:

- Travel through Izmir: Ship service from Chios to Çeşme (40 minutes/30 euros<sup>4</sup>) → shuttle bus service to ADB (1 hour/10 euros) → flight to destination → vice versa return journey.
- Travel through Athens: Flight from Chios to ATH (45 minutes/150-180 euros) → flight to destination → vice versa return journey.

Having the above in mind, four different categories of scenarios may emerge, i.e.:

- optimal scenario in terms of time-effectiveness for travel via ADB;
- optimal scenario in terms of cost-effectiveness for travel via ADB;
- optimal scenario in terms of time-effectiveness for travel via ATH; and
- optimal scenario in terms of cost-effectiveness for travel via ATH.

Nonetheless, it was decided to explore whether scenarios of joint optimization (i.e. in terms of time and cost) could be developed for either ADB and/or ATH. This would be desirable from a survey questionnaire design perspective (to be discussed later) as it would reduce the number of alternative choices thus making it easier for the respondents to participate. In fact, joint optimization resulted in the development of twenty-six alternative scenarios, depending on the destination in question:

- For six destinations (i.e. London, Munich, Amsterdam, Berlin, Frankfurt and Zurich) three alternative scenarios were considered: (a) the jointly optimal scenario via ADB; (b) the optimal scenario in terms of time-effectiveness via ATH; and (c) the optimal scenario in terms of cost-effectiveness via ATH.
- For four destinations (i.e. Paris, Vienna, Istanbul and Madrid) two scenarios were considered: (a) the jointly optimal scenario via ADB; and (b) the jointly optimal scenario via ATH.

Having completed the development of the scenarios, stage two of the research consisted of a questionnaire survey with inhabitants of Chios, to establish airport preferences. More specifically, for each destination, respondents had to choose one of the presented scenarios. Their answers would suggest whether they would be willing to travel via ADB to reach ten popular European hubs, rejecting the alternative of travelling via ATH. Such a decision would have allowed them to reduce total transport costs, but sometimes increase total travel time. Table 2 shows how the scenarios for two destinations looked to a respondent (all scenarios are available to the interested reader upon request).

Respondents were asked to choose one answer from six possible responses regarding why they made their particular choices, in addition to the “Other” category: “lower travel costs”; “lower travel time”; “savings in both time and cost”; “I do not wish to use the ship service to/from Çeşme as part of my trip”; “travelling to Turkey is against my conscience due to the Greek-Turkish friction”; “making travel arrangements involving Turkey is complicated”. The questionnaire also included questions to identify respondents’ demographics and basic aspects of their travel behaviour (number of national/international air trips made in the last 12 months, main purpose for travelling, price/time sensitivity, Internet usage for travel bookings, past air travels from ADB).

**Table 2: Examples of the scenarios presented to respondents<sup>a</sup>**

Departing airport	ADB	ATH	ATH
Destination	London	London	London
Scenario	Scenario 1 (via Munich)	Scenario 2 (direct flight)	Scenario 3 (direct flight)
Total travel time <sup>a</sup> (hh:mm) / total cost <sup>b</sup> (€)	<b>23:20 / 236.12</b>  Optimal scenario in terms of time- and cost-effectiveness via ADB	<b>22:50 / 314.56</b>  Optimal scenario in terms of cost-effectiveness via ATH	<b>18:30 / 420.19</b>  Optimal scenario in terms of time-effectiveness via ATH
Departing airport	ADB	ATH	
Destination	Paris	Paris	
Scenario	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Total travel time (hh:mm) / total cost (€)	<b>25:00 / 238.15</b>  Optimal scenario in terms of time- and cost-effectiveness via ADB	<b>16:20 / 387.00</b>  Optimal scenario in terms of time- and cost-effectiveness via ATH	N/A

<sup>a</sup> Total travel time includes three components: i) travel to reach the airport, including a one-hour early arrival to the airport for check-in and security; ii) travel by air from the origin airport to the destination airport, including waiting times when no direct flight is available; and iii) travel from the destination airport to the metropolitan centre of each destination. Total travel time was calculated for round trips, according to the examined scenarios.

<sup>b</sup> Total travel cost includes costs for all travel tickets used in each scenario (airfares, shipping link fares, shuttle bus fares).

The survey was conducted during February 2013. The participants were inhabitants of Chios approached in public places and asked to take part in a questionnaire study. Participants were approached directly by a research assistant in a variety of places where it was likely to find individuals who were already sitting down and who might have time available for the study. Interview locations included various eating and coffee establishments, local public parks, and the waiting areas of the local airport. Those who agreed were handed a questionnaire containing all instructions and measures. They received no benefits from their participation. The research assistant assured participants of data confidentiality and anonymity and provided explanations if necessary. A total of 300 participants were approached and 225 usable questionnaires were collected. After they had completed the questionnaire, participants were thanked for their contribution.

## STUDY RESULTS

Table 3 provides the main descriptive statistics in tabular form. In particular, with respect to the demographic background of respondents (n=225), almost half of them (48.6%) belonged to the 20-35 age cohort, with 37.3% aged 36-50 years, 13.2% over 51 years and just 0.9% under 20 years. They were evenly split by marital status (50.5% unmarried, 49.5% married) and fairly evenly split by gender (55% female, 45% male). The majority were well-educated (82.7% college educated or higher). Eighty per cent of respondents also provided personal income data and of these 40.9% stated they had a low income, 46.8% a medium-low income, 2.7% a medium-high income, and 9.6% a high income<sup>5</sup>. Given the economic crisis currently facing Greece, these latter findings are not surprising.

Table 3: Main Descriptive Statistics

AGE	< 20 years	20-35 years	36-50 years	> 51 years	
	0.9%	48.6%	37.3%	13.2%	
INCOME	low	medium-low	medium-high	high	
	40.9%	46.8%	2.7%	9.6%	
MARITAL STATUS	unmarried		married		
	50.5%		49.5%		
GENDER	male		female		
	45%		55%		
EDUCATION	lower than college level		college level or higher		
	17.3%		82.7%		
TRAVEL PURPOSE	leisure		business		
	66.8%		33.2%		
TICKET BOOKING METHOD	online		Greek travel agent		
	65.0%		35.0%		
PREVIOUS ADB EXPERIENCE	yes		no		
	11.0%		89.0%		
DOMESTIC ROUNDTrips ANNUALLY	0	1-3	4-6	7-10	> 10
	5.3%	50.5%	24.6%	8.6%	11.0%
INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTrips ANNUALLY	0	1-3	4-6	7-10	> 10
	49.9%	42.3%	5.5%	2.3%	0.0%

Participants were also asked about the number of national and international air trips they make on an annual basis (on average). They were requested to “count round trips as one” trip. For those travelling nationally the number of air-trips were 1-3 trips 50.5%, 4-6 trips 24.6%, 7-10 trips 8.6%, and over 10 trips 11%. For international travellers the percentages were 1-3 trips 42.3%, 4-6 trips 5.5%, and 7-10 trips 2.3%. Only 5.5% of respondents do not travel domestically by air on an annual basis, suggesting that the sample consisted of relatively experienced air travellers. Among those who had travelled either nationally or internationally, 66.8% reported their main purpose of travel as “leisure” as distinct from “business” (33.2%). Leisure travellers were found to be more price-conscious (66.2%) in terms of total travel costs than business travellers, who made their travel arrangements on the basis of travel time savings. No differences were found in the price/time sensitivity between respondents with different levels of income; perhaps, this can be explained by the fact that their travel expenses are covered by their employer. Sixty five per cent (65%) of the participants had made their bookings online, while 35% preferred to use a travel agent in Greece. Interestingly, only 11% of the study participants had already used ADB in the past.

Next, respondents reviewed the developed travel scenarios. In particular, for each of the ten examined destinations respondents were presented with either three or two scenarios and asked to indicate which scenario they preferred. Table 4 depicts the percentages of their responses to each destination/scenario. As evident from these results, ADB was the clear preference of respondents for all destinations but Madrid. In fact, at the individual level, ADB was consistently the airport of choice for six out of the ten examined destinations for 77.3% of those surveyed. Given the lack of variation in these responses, no statistically significant differences were detected between respondents in terms of demographic data and aspects of travel behaviour. Respondents were finally asked to indicate the main reason driving their choice selection: 45.5% indicated they considered both time- and cost-effectiveness; 41.8% indicated cost and 4.1% indicated time-effectiveness was their major consideration. A negligent percentage of 1.82% indicated the main reason for their choice was that they either wanted to avoid the shipping service to Çeşme or that they found travel arrangements involving Turkey complicated. A small percentage of 5% is also worth mentioning here, as these are the respondents who do not wish to travel via Turkey due to the traditional Greek-Turkish friction.

**Table 4: Responses (in percentages) to the Scenarios for Each Destination**

Destination	Scenario 1 Optimal scenario in terms of time- and cost-effectiveness via ADB	Scenario 2 Optimal scenario in terms of cost-effectiveness via ATH	Scenario 3 Optimal scenario in terms of time-effectiveness via ATH
London	62.7%	32.7%	4.6%
Munich	87.7%	9.6%	2.7%
Amsterdam	78.6%	9.1%	12.3%
Berlin	90.0%	-	10.0%
Frankfurt	70.8%	20.6%	8.6%
Zurich	75.1%	10.0%	14.9%
Destination	Scenario 1 Optimal scenario in terms of time- and cost-effectiveness from Izmir	Scenario 2 Optimal scenario in terms of time- and cost-effectiveness from Athens	Scenario 3
Paris	65.0%	35.0%	N/A
Vienna	73.2%	26.8%	N/A
Istanbul	87.7%	12.3%	N/A
Madrid	39.6%	60.4%	N/A

## CONCLUSIONS

Airport catchment areas are typically defined using isochrones that identify an area within which it is possible to reach the airport, usually within a set maximum access time. This approach is straightforward but results in a static image of an airport's catchment area as it ignores the driving factors behind passenger airport choice – i.e. it assumes that catchment areas do not differ between travel motives and destinations offered from an airport.

However, the key lesson from this research is that airports may use intermodal transport to expand their catchment area. In this case study, an intermodal surface access system was presented that seems to be particularly successful in these terms. The results of the study show that the inhabitants of Chios think that it is much more beneficial and preferable to travel via ADB for the majority of the hubs examined, using the existing SSSL-bus solution to access the airport. The results of course refer to stated (i.e. potential use) rather than revealed preference (i.e. actual use) and are based on a convenience sample of 225 respondents who are well educated on average and therefore more likely to make travel choices based on rational cost assessment instead of politics and nationalistic emotions. In

other words, the results should be treated with caution, yet they are indicative of a very important trend currently developing in the eastern border of Greece.

In fact, Izmir is extremely closer to Chios than Athens and there is no need to access it by air or spend much time by surface transportation. The existing surface access system, therefore, provides an opportunity for ADB to expand its catchment area into the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands, offering lower travel time and decreased consumer costs. This is happening at a time that the Turkish air transport market is protected and frequencies are relatively low (Poulaki and Papatheodorou, 2011). In the case of a market opening, accessibility will increase and thus, more opportunities will be given via ADB. In this context, intermodal connectivity between Chios and ADB needs to be enhanced. An open Turkish market with a combination of a good intermodality surface access system between Chios and Izmir may encourage larger flows from Chios to Europe via ADB.

In addition and from a Greek perspective, the converse direction of flows may also flourish: more specifically, due to a number of capacity constraints (including a short runway of just 1,511m), JKH is unable to accommodate aircraft of the size usually preferred by large German and/or British tour operators for medium haul flights. Hence and if direct flights from Western Europe to Chios are not a desirable option (leaving demand issues aside), Chios tourism authorities may seriously consider promoting the island on international tourism markets by suggesting flights via ADB (in addition to ATH) possibly in the context of two-resort holiday packages (e.g. Çeşme – Chios). This may sound controversial from a political perspective given the traditional friction between Greece and Turkey but it probably makes very good sense in a regional context. After all, the adequacy of domestic traffic may guarantee that the ATH – JKH route will remain financially sustainable irrespectively of the number of international visitors attracted. On these grounds, the current détente in the Greek-Turkish political relations may restore the importance of physical geography (i.e. the proximity of Chios to Çeşme and Izmir), which seems evident in other areas of the world, especially in Europe where cross-border collaboration (e.g. between German and French regions) is now a usual practice.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Article 13 of the Decision No 1692/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network

<sup>2</sup> At the time of the research, the cost of an airfare from Chios to AIA was approximately €150-€180.

<sup>3</sup> Travel time from Chios to Piraeus port varies from 7 to 9 hours using conventional ship.

<sup>4</sup> Connection transport prices (ship and shuttle bus services) are calculated for roundtrip services, using the maximum fare charged by the companies operating in this market.

<sup>5</sup> High income was classified by a monthly income of over €3,000; medium-high income was classified as a monthly income of €2,000-€3,000; medium-low income was classified as a monthly income of €1,000-€1,999; and a low income was classified as a monthly income of less than €1,000.

# Tourist cities in competition: recent trends in Italian urban tourism

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## ABSTRACT

Italy is one of the top tourist destinations in the world, actually such a primacy is the result of the articulated presence of several tourist destinations that conceal different territorial realities. In this context, the urban systems play a prominent role, they are able to contribute to the activation of tourist flows by ensuring the attractiveness of the entire destination. Urban tourism produces different effects (competition between different areas, regeneration of city centers, reconstruction of the historical and cultural city image). The special nature of this form of tourism allows the adoption of sustainable development policies, as also called in different documents by EU. The objective of this paper is to propose some considerations on the development of urban tourism in Italy. As a theoretical assumption, after a brief presentation of the main features of urban tourism in Italy, we referred to the model of Butler, which allows a dynamic analysis of tourist destinations through the application of the theory of the life cycle of the product. A cluster analysis was used to analyse a data set relating to tourism indicators such as the Tourist Index, the rate of presences, tourist numbers, population.

**Keywords:** Urban tourism, Italian tourism, Index of Arrival Variation, Tourist Index

## INTRODUCTION

The majority of the cities are going through a period of change, for more than three decades, that involves all aspects of the organization of economic relations and the construction of urban space. The changes also affect the use of the spaces and the processes of symbolic construction, two factors which contribute significantly to defining the tourist offer. David Harvey (2000) considers that it is producing a cultural re-elaboration of the idea of the city, related to the crisis of the old economic models and to the new perception of spaces by the inhabitants. The urban tissue seems to have become a set of contradictory references, related more to the dynamics of knowledge transfer rather than local production of meanings (Appaduraj, 1996; Jameson, 1991; Sassen, 2001). This process is determined by different factors, including the renovation of historic centers and the turnover of the population, a typical phenomenon of the major centers.

Roles and functions of the urban tissue are changing even in spite of the scale: the prerogatives of global cities are recognized also to small towns, both in terms of changes in the spatial distribution of functions, and for the distribution hub of cultural production (Montanari, 2008). In particular, the spread of creation tools and access to cultural products is one of the phenomena that characterizes the change. It has great influence on land use by the inhabitants, but also on the same settlement dynamics (Platania, Privitera and Torre, 2011).

The city remains the main site of production of intangible public goods (Cardinale, 1996), among them, those related to the cultural sector are the majority. What has changed so evident is the consumption of these products, and the transformations in the use of urban space are an expression of this change. These changes caused a peripheric relocation, which provides access to cultural production regardless of the concentration of supply (Rifkin, 2000). The central areas of large urban centers, however, still retain an irreplaceable role in the production of content, and among these, those that are the subject of tourism consumption remain preponderant.

Urban tourism is one of the main forms of tourism activity, its growth rates, faster than tourism in general, are linked to different motivations also attributable to a general increase in demand, influenced not only by intra-area flows but especially by those from developing countries. We must also consider the increase in supply over the last decades, both in terms of new urban destinations, both for new opportunities to visit nearby destinations already known (ONT, 2009).

One of the innovations in the supply organization was the continued presence of events that have provided support to the creation or strengthening of tourist flows; strategies to sustain the attractiveness often have transformed the city into containers of a varied number of events, relegating the city as the background of the tourist supply. But they are experiences that put a strain on the physical and economic carrying capacity, already substantial in urban space. They create new problems for the precarious balance of urban systems, especially historical ones.

The design factors of tourist attraction should be designed in a logic of sustainability, taking into account the nature of the city, in which the development of tourism activities is part of an already consolidated socio-economic and cultural tissue. This development interacts with other urban functions and overlaps with the network of relationships and flows of existing demand (Law, 2002).

In this context, the city often appear as autonomous political actors, able to restructure geopolitical spaces (Bagnasco and Le Gales, 2000) and to represent at the historical level a breeding ground very favorable to the production of new forms of hybridization (Platania, 2013). The different actors involved in this process of urban transformation continually redesign the space and weaken the planning of the tourist supply. In this context, the economic crisis has often prevented renovation or adaptation to the use of the city, causing in many cases the decline of towns of long tourist tradition.

The tourism competitiveness of a city depends not only on its history, the amount and attractiveness of the main resources and the quality of services offered, it also depends by the dynamic interplay between all these parties. The hypothesis at the basis of this paper is that although Italy highlights, in a pooled analysis, the different signals that arise in a mature stage of tourist development path, can be observed in a great variety of different cases, characterized both by strong growth both from situations of stagnation or even worse decline, corresponding to the characteristics of the paths described by Butler's model of development (1980).

The study is subdivided into three parts. In the first, will be discussed some theoretical aspects of the tourism function of the modern city and its policies. In the second, will be presented some statistics which allow to illustrate the state of urban tourism in Italy. Finally, in the third part, results will be discussed after having explained the methodology, which consists of using some indicators and application of multivariate analysis techniques.

### **URBAN TOURISM IN ITALY: SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The weaknesses of the traditional structure of urban tourism in Italy have been analysed in several studies (Pasqualini, 2005). Traditionally, urban tourism in Italy has been formed by cultural tourism in general. In recent years, the presence of various types of events (fairs and exhibitions, shows, sports events) did represent a new factor, and in some cases it has also highlighted the presence of a seasonal tourism flows, both elements certainly not closely connected to cultural tourism.

Despite a high number of cities – Italy is unique in the world for the rate of concentration of this kind of town – there is a serious shortage of organized structures, such as museums, galleries, guided tours. Another weakness is the absence of a national landmark comparable to the great national museums of Europe, offset only in part by the large spread of museums, small and medium-sized located mainly in the central and northern part of the country. In terms of temporal distribution, the data show that in the last fifty years there have been no major changes in the overall. Except for a few cases, tourist flows are directed to the same city, which still retain unchanged its status as prime destination of urban tourism (such as, for example, Venice, Florence and Rome), all this in spite of some cases of great transformations that occurred in European centers (Berg et al., 1995). It may be noted, finally, a dual trend in the attractiveness of small urban centers with respect to the main cities, which often has led to the alteration of the distribution of tourist flows. In most cases, the capital city are the favorite tourist destination, but in some cases, the presence of cultural heritages of particular interest, made some small towns national cultural centers of attraction, making the nearby cities secondary poles.

Undoubtedly one of the most interesting cases is represented by Turin, a city that has suffered the effects of most of the processes of de-industrialization, and that is still a laboratory for the

conversion of urban functions. The presence of areas of deterioration inside the urban tissue has been a serious problem that it attempted to solve with the organization of major events. After the reconversion of some industrial plants in museum centers or centers for fun activities, urban structure of the city has been transformed from the measures for the construction of the plants of the 2006 Winter Olympics. The whole process, still underway, aims to transform what was once the main Italian industrial town of last century in a strong tourist center.

Similar the case of Milan, known to be a city with a strong service sector that hosts some great events regularly by several decades. The project for transformation of a part of the city begins with the decommissioning of the industrial north-east, at the end of the eighties, and continues today with the actions for the exhibition space for the EXPO 2015.

Overall, it seems evident a considerable difficulties demonstrated by the entire system in dealing with the large urban transformation processes. This difficulty is due in part to a heavy historical heritage, which is also the center of the tourist supply, in part to the general crisis of economic and administrative system that affects the country over the last years.

## URBAN TOURISM IN ITALY: STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK

According to data released by the UNWTO, in 2012 Italy maintained fifth place in terms of arrivals and revenues from international tourism. As for arrivals, the comforting +5.7% in 2011 was followed by weak growth in 2012 (+0.5%), for a total of 46.4 million international arrivals. Only China, among the top five countries, has recorded the worst performance (UNWTO, 2013) (Table 1).

**Table 1: International Tourist Arrivals - Ranking**

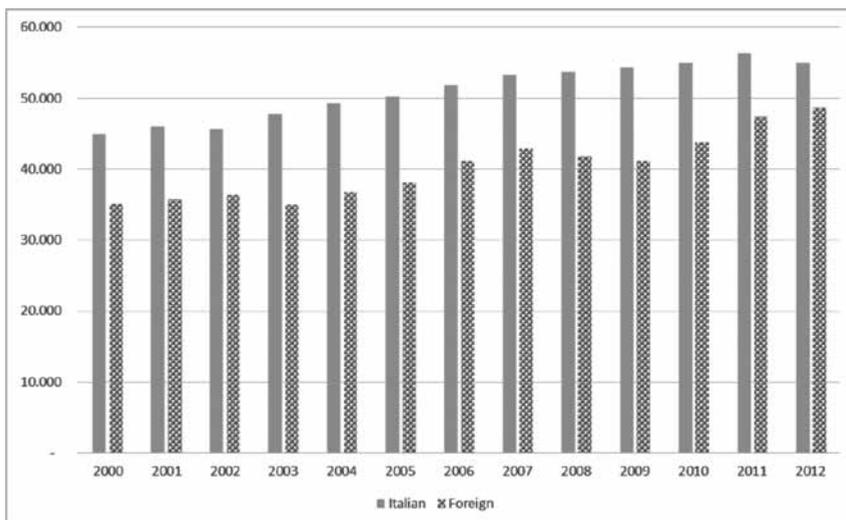
rank	Country	Million		Change	
		2011	2012	11/10	12/11
1°	France	81.6	83.0	5.0	1.8
2°	United States	62.7	67.0	4.9	6.8
3°	China	57.6	57.7	3.4	0.3
4°	Spain	56.2	57.7	6.6	2.7
5°	Italy	46.1	46.4	5.7	0.5

Source: UNWTO (2013)

The evolution in the last 12 years shows that the number of resident tourists has grown steadily, with the exception of 2002 and 2012, rising from 44 million to 54 million arrivals

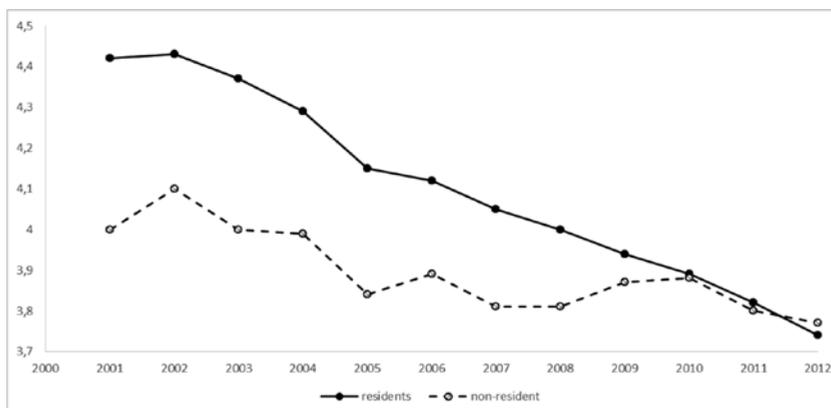
(Fig. 1). Differently, the data on arrivals of non-residents do not evidence a progressive trend as the previous one. Overall, the number of arrivals has increased from 35 million to 48 million, but with very noticeable decreases occurred in the years 2003, 2008 and 2009.

**Figure 1: Arrivals in Accommodation (Istat, 2013)**



What is most striking is the substantial decrease in the average stay of resident tourists in accommodation establishments. From an average of 4.4 nights in 2001 we moved to 3.7 in 2012 (Fig. 2). Less pronounced is the decrease of non-resident tourists, who spend 4 nights in a little less than 3.8. This development is certainly a different way to carry out the tourist experience: more and more prevalent form of tourism that short and intense few days, often on weekends.

**Figure 2: Average Length of Stay in Accommodation (Istat, 2013)**



Italy is famous on the international scene as a tourist destination of excellence characterized by the combination of sea and culture. In reality, the territorial heritage Italian, consistent and widespread on the territory, can not be easily understood by these two major categories. And this wealth obviously carries measurement difficulties.

If we consider the analysis of Istat (Italian National Institute of Statistics), the Italian urban tourist destinations are classified into city of historical and artistic interest, thermal locality, mountain locality, marine and lake locality. It is evident how this classification is questionable, since the characterization of a place on the basis of these criteria is distorted precisely because of the wealth of the elements of heritage tourism that is rarely attributable to a single of these categories.

Despite these problems, we will consider statistical surveys carried out by Istat, which remain the main source for reliable statistical analysis of this type. In the analysis of arrivals and presences in the Italian towns, cities classified as historical and artistic interest are the main destination in terms of arrivals for both Italian and foreign tourist: 2012 total arrivals were about 37 million, of which 22 are obtained by arrivals of foreign tourist. If the analysis moves on the presence, it is clear the particular nature of domestic tourism. The presence of foreigners in this kind of city is more than 60 million, but the corresponding value of residents, even though high, is less than the presences in the Marine locality (table 2)

**Table 2: Arrivals and Presences in the Italian Locality (2012)**

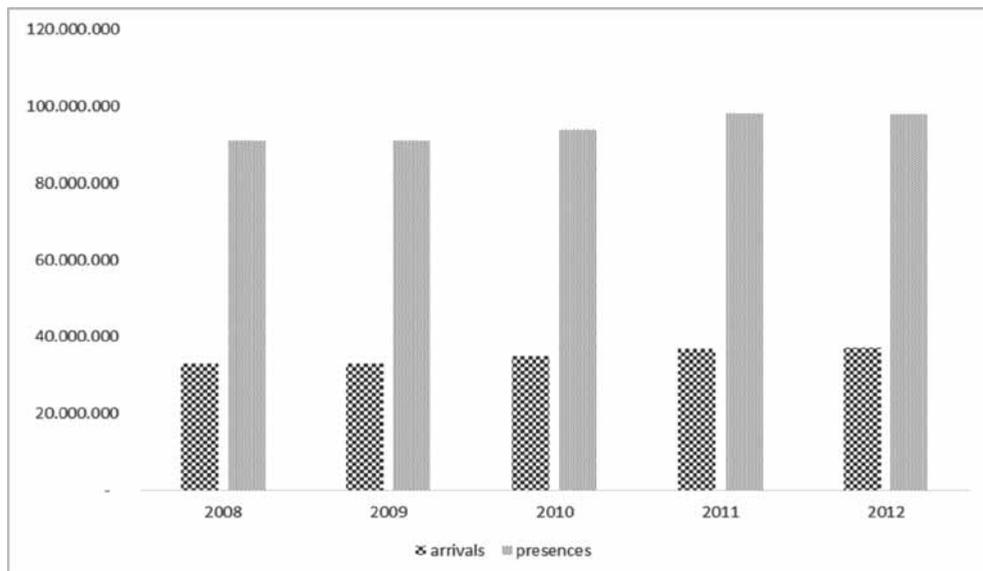
	Foreign		Italian		Total	
	Arrivals	Presences	Arrivals	Presences	Arrivals	Presences
capital of province n.a.c. *	580.297	1.601.690	1.577.737	4.522.828	2.158.034	6.124.518
City n.a.c. *	5.958.304	18.515.531	11.962.363	37.474.958	17.920.667	55.990.489
city of historical and artistic interest	22.007.351	60.291.761	14.994.466	37.748.785	37.001.817	98.040.546
Mountain locality	4.246.504	20.584.521	6.307.365	27.340.809	10.553.869	47.925.330
Lake locality	4.451.912	22.685.957	1.847.497	5.974.808	6.299.409	28.660.765
Marine locality	8.025.204	42.353.805	14.117.695	73.826.749	22.142.899	116.180.554
Thermal locality	1.498.594	5.517.463	2.026.529	7.552.329	3.525.123	13.069.792
Hillside locality	1.970.409	9.044.260	2.160.930	5.675.229	4.131.339	14.719.489

Source: Istat (2013)

(\*) n.a.c. = without classification

If we consider only the places that Istat defines “city of historical and artistic interest” can be seen as they are still attractive destinations. Overall, in fact over the last five years have seen a steady but continuous growth in terms of both arrivals and presences (Fig. 3). Arrivals are changed from 33 million to 37 million, and attendance ranged from 91 million in 2008 to 98 million in 2012.

**Figure 3: Trends in “Cities of Historic and Artistic Interest” (last 5 years)**



## METHODOLOGY

To proceed with the analysis of the state of urban tourism in Italy, the first necessary step was the creation of a data set that contained various useful statistical information, such as arrivals and overnight stays by residents and non-residents as well as other data necessary to the calculation of tourism indicators.

As regards the unit of analysis, we will refer to Istat on the movement of customers in hospitality processed annually. They represent the main source of information on domestic tourism available in Italy. This statistical survey refers to “tourist districts” that represent the minimal territorial units analysis.

For the purposes of this study, were selected among this “tourist districts”, the ones we define “Urban tourist locality”, that is those destinations that are uniquely referred to one provincial capital city, thus excluding those districts composed of territories with more cities. The analysis referred to the surveys carried out by Istat in the 2000s and the year 2012. Overall, the list is composed of 95 cities.

To analyze the degree of development of urban tourist destinations, we proceeded to create some indexes that could adequately represent the evolution of the locality in the time. Its development path is well analyzed by the Butler model (1980). In the literature, there are several contributions that have applied this model to specific cases (Lagiewsky 2006). In some cases it was used or the value of the presences of arrivals, others were added in other parameters such as number of beds, employment, classifications for purposes tourist arrivals, etc ...

In this paper has been applied the Tourist Index (TI) calculated in the first year of the survey period (2000): this index represents the actual weight of tourism compared to the size of the territory<sup>1</sup>. Its formula is:

$$TI_i = \left( \frac{a}{d} \right) / r \cdot 1000$$

where

i = provincial capital city

a = arrivals

d = days

r = resident population

The second index calculated, Av, is easy to understand: it represents the percentage variation in arrivals occurred within the period of observation, ie between 2000 and 2012:

$$Av = \left( \frac{a_{2012} - a_{2000}}{a_{2000}} \right) \cdot 100$$

After the calculation of these indexes, urban resorts were classified in homogeneous groups according to their degree of maturity of tourism. In particular it has been used a direct classification algorithm (non-hierarchical) around mobile centers (K-Means algorithm) (Molteni, 1993), using the Quik clusters present in the statistical package SPSS.

The identification of the number of groups is a classic problem of Cluster Analysis. Although there are some statistical tests that allow you to estimate the appropriate number (Beale, 1969; Marriot, 1971), the experience of the researcher remains the yardstick most appropriate. Therefore assuming the risks arising from the subjectivity of the choices, we proceeded in the analysis of classification coming to identify 5 groups.

## RESULTS

### DATA ANALYSIS

If we consider the top 20 tourist cities of the sample observed, in terms of arrivals and presences, we realize that Rome, Venice, Milan, Florence and Rimini represent excellence.

Most of the stars city is located in the northern and central Italy. Of the south are part only Naples, Palermo, Catania and Bari (table 3).

**Table 3: Top twenty Italian cities for numbers of arrivals and presences (2012)**

Urban tourist locality	Arrivals	Urban tourist locality	Presences
Roma	8.298.218	Roma	23.727.249
Venezia	4.823.483	Venezia	15.466.730
Milano	4.350.891	Milano	9.163.731
Firenze	3.270.637	Firenze	7.925.988
Rimini	1.629.976	Rimini	7.604.056
Torino	1.014.924	Torino	2.672.526
Bologna	968.000	Ravenna	2.595.698
Napoli	892.898	Napoli	2.292.213
Verona	759.874	Bologna	2.017.741
Genova	727.450	Pisa	1.689.054
Palermo	632.709	Verona	1.593.489
Pisa	607.573	Genova	1.454.321
Padova	565.971	Palermo	1.394.102
Ravenna	542.603	Perugia	1.153.245
Perugia	446.681	Padova	1.144.006
Catania	423.347	Siena	1.065.853
Siena	411.149	Grosseto	1.063.800
Trieste	308.204	Catania	985.058
Bari	292.181	Massa	931.196
Bolzano	265.067	Pesaro	850.809

Source: our elaboration from Istat (2013)

Tourist Index (TI), which represents the weight of tourism within the territorial unit at the beginning of the period of analysis, provides an alternative representation to the one linked to the frequencies of the tourist area (fig. 4).

Among the first cities, according to the index TI, there are some stars, such as Venice, Florence, Rimini. Then we find Agrigento, Aosta, Urbino. The indicator is obviously sensitive to the weight of the resident population. Cities with a high value of *TI* are destinations that attract a large number of tourists, more than the number of residents. They are, therefore, very tourist city, where the traveler, in some cases in number exceeding the inhabitants. For this reason it would be desirable to expect in key strategic for the future, that these places can maintain this power of attraction over time. The second indicator is related to the variation of arrivals in the period of analysis (2000-2012).

As with the first indicator used, even in this case processing describes the urban tourism in a different way compared to the simple measurement of the data on the frequencies.

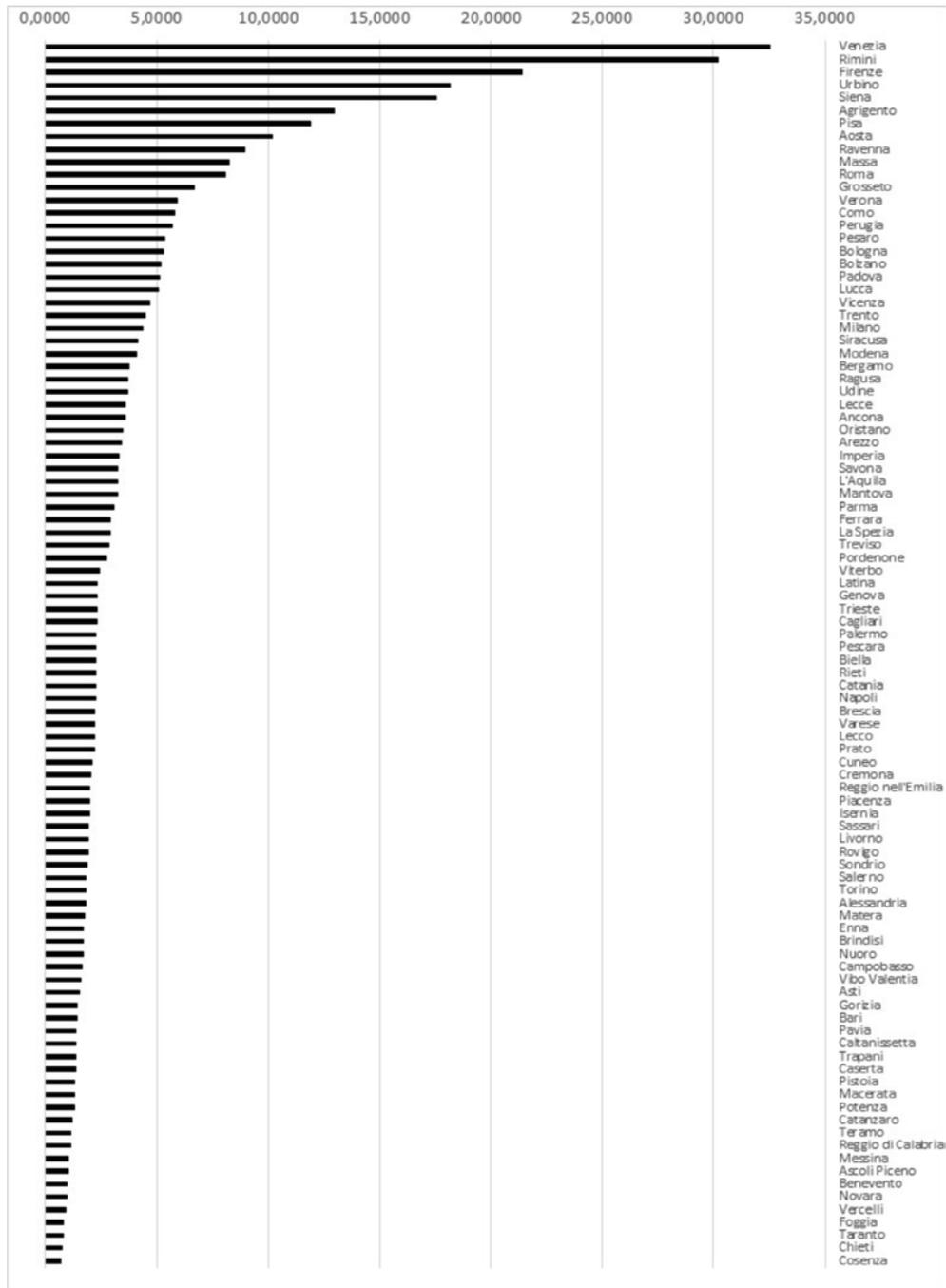
The urban localities that have shown a marked increase in the variation of tourist arrivals are Matera, Chieti, Caserta, Cosenza, Trapani, Milan, Ascoli Piceno. These cities have registered an increase of over 100% in arrivals. If we limit the observation to the first two cities, the increase is around 200%. By analysing these data, it affects the presence of medium-sized cities, with the exception of Milan, and not directly explicable in forms of tourism related to the sea, with the exception of Trapani.

Cities that have a negative value of the indicator  $A_v$  are Agrigento, Modena, L'Aquila, Campobasso, Rieti, Salerno, Aosta and Messina. Only two of these are located in northern Italy (Aosta and Modena).

It seems that the territory (provincial or regional) can affect the tourist vocation of an urban locality. To explore this aspect, we wanted to compare this result with that for the province, in order to ascertain whether there is a territorial factor that somehow influence the arrival in the destination city. Well, we can observe different situations. There are indeed some urban destination that show a figure in stark contrast with the provincial data: the case of Ascoli Piceno ( $A_v = 112.6$ ; provincial  $A_v = -34.1$ ), Savona ( $A_v = 19.3$ ; provincial  $A_v = -8.8$ ), Imperia ( $A_v = 8.3$ ; provincial  $A_v = -9.3$ ), Palermo ( $A_v = 5.8$ ; provincial  $A_v = -8.1$ ).

Conversely, they are more of those cases in which the provincial territory is more attraction than the urban locality. In particular Reggio Calabria ( $A_v = -0.6$ ; provincial  $A_v = 32.0$ ), Catanzaro ( $A_v = -1.5$ ; provincial  $A_v = 24.6$ ), Brindisi ( $A_v = -2.1$ ; provincial  $A_v = 50.8$ ), Caltanissetta ( $A_v = -3.7$ ; provincial  $A_v = 38.6$ ), Vicenza ( $A_v = -4.2$ ; provincial  $A_v = 14.5$ ), Vercelli ( $A_v = -6.4$ ; provincial  $A_v = 63.2$ ), Latina ( $A_v = -8.5$ ; provincial  $A_v = 2.2$ ), Isernia ( $A_v = -9.4$ ; provincial  $A_v = 21.0$ ), Aosta ( $A_v = -33.3$ ; provincial  $A_v = 30.8$ ).

Figure 4: Ranking of Urban Tourist Places Index *TI* (2000)



**Table 4: Ranking of Urban Tourist Places according to Av index and comparing it to its provincial data**

Urban tourist locality	Av	Provincial Av	Urban tourist locality	Av	Provincial Av
Matera	222,7	89,2	Grosseto	21,7	25,7
Chieti	192,8	39,4	Lecco	21,5	34,6
Caserta	162,7	39,2	Siena	21,5	35,8
Cosenza	151,5	38,0	Perugia	21,4	10,9
Trapani	123,9	99,6	Biella	19,7	9,3
Milano *	115,8	99,5	Savona	19,3	-8,8
Ascoli Piceno *	112,6	-34,1	Pistoia	17,7	4,0
Varese	84,9	125,3	La Spezia	17,0	22,6
Piacenza	81,5	110,5	Firenze	16,8	18,6
Lecce	80,9	161,3	Taranto	16,1	57,6
Bari *	80,3	63,7	Rimini *	15,4	20,2
Torino	77,8	99,5	Livorno	13,9	5,7
Trieste	71,3	63,8	Teramo	12,7	31,6
Enna	60,6	11,2	Benevento	12,1	5,2
Vibo Valentia	59,9	72,9	Cuneo	10,4	77,6
Macerata	57,8	27,6	Roma	10,1	8,3
Reggio nell'Emilia	56,1	16,7	Cremona	9,9	101,0
Bergamo	56,1	104,7	Foggia *	9,7	28,5
Catania	55,9	22,6	Arezzo	9,6	12,4
Pisa	55,6	41,7	Napoli	8,9	12,1
Alessandria	51,1	84,4	Imperia	8,3	-9,3
Bolzano	47,5	46,5	Palermo	5,8	-8,1
Padova	47,3	30,4	Potenza	5,8	10,8
Novara	47,1	63,2	Pesaro Urbino *	4,5	12,2
Venezia	44,2	35,2	Sondrio	4,1	44,8
Lucca	43,6	10,3	Pordenone	3,9	-0,8
Parma	42,4	12,5	Ancona	0,5	7,2
Genova	39,3	23,0	Reggio di Calabria	-0,6	32,0
Verona	38,6	61,2	Catanzaro	-1,5	24,6
Trento	37,2	33,4	Brindisi	-2,1	50,8
Siracusa	36,8	30,0	Asti	-2,9	-100,0
Prato	36,3	36,8	Massa	-3,0	-0,6
Rovigo	35,9	22,0	Caltanissetta	-3,7	38,6
Ragusa	35,4	20,2	Vicenza	-4,2	14,5
Gorizia	34,5	11,2	Vercelli	-6,4	63,2
Bologna	34,4	22,0	Latina	-8,5	2,2
Treviso	33,4	47,9	Isernia	-9,4	21,0
Udine	32,7	19,1	Agrigento	-15,0	-3,9
Brescia	32,2	43,9	Modena	-16,1	-3,9
Como	27,1	94,8	L'Aquila	-17,5	12,6
Mantova	27,0	42,1	Campobasso	-19,6	-10,9
Pavia	26,1	23,9	Rieti	-24,5	-13,5
Viterbo	25,5	27,4	Salerno	-32,3	-24,4
Ferrara	24,4	21,1	Aosta	-33,3	30,8
Pescara	24,2	20,7	Messina	-52,3	-10,2
Ravenna	23,7	28,2			

(\*) Provinces that have changed their municipal composition in the analysis period

## CLUSTER

As already mentioned, the application of cluster analysis has allowed the identification of five homogeneous segments (table 5).

The first segment is composed of two units, the “Urban touristic localities” of Chieti and Matera. Both are characterized by a very low value of the *TI* indicator and at the same time very high (among the highest in the whole sample) for the second indicator, *Av*. Understanding this segment is quite easy. The two cities are characterized by having completed, within the survey period, a significant leap forward in the tourism market.

They, despite having a modest *TI* index (the average value is equal to 1.248), showed an increase in arrivals around almost 200%. For these reasons, this group of cities has been called “Urban tourist locality with accelerated development.”

The second segment is quite similar to the previous one. In it are part of those places that have an index of tourism value (*TI*) significantly higher than the previous cluster (average value of *TI* equal to 1.757). In this group the indicator of variation of arrivals (*Av*) is, instead, low compared to the previous cluster. This includes the city of Ascoli Piceno, Caserta, Cosenza, Milan and Trapani. In this cluster, which we call “Urban tourist locality with mature development”, there are four cities in the south-central, mid-sized. Furthermore, there is Milan, the first of the large cities according to the joint use of the two indicators.

The strong acceleration of tourism development in these first two groups of destinations must not mislead on their current state of health. A sudden increase as well, at least compared to the national scene, of course, offers a number of problems in terms of sustainability of the destination. The tourism carrying capacity that derives from the growth in the arrivals will necessarily require urban policies that make it possible to manage this excessive tourist presence that produces for the urban locality and its residents several negative externalities.

**Table 5: Cluster Composition**

Urban tourist locality	Cluster	Average value of <i>TI</i>	Average value of <i>Av</i>
Chieti Matera	Urban tourist locality with accelerated development	1.248	207.761
Ascoli Piceno Caserta Cosenza Milano Trapani	Urban tourist locality with mature development	1.757	133.286

Alessandria Bari Bergamo Bologna Bolzano Brescia Cagliari Catania Enna Genova Gorizia Lecce Lucca Macerata Novara Padova Parma Piacenza Pisa Prato Ragusa Reggio nell'Emilia Rovigo Siracusa Torino Trento Treviso Trieste Udine Varese Venezia Verona Vibo Valentia	Urban tourist locality in consolidation	4.063	50.353
Ancona Arezzo Asti Benevento Biella Brindisi Caltanissetta Catanzaro Como Cremona Cuneo Ferrara Firenze Foggia Grosseto Imperia La Spezia Lecco Livorno Mantova Massa Napoli Palermo e Monreale Pavia Perugia Pesaro Pescara Pistoia Pordenone Potenza Ravenna Reggio di Calabria Rimini Roma Sassari Savona Siena Sondrio Taranto Teramo Vercelli Vicenza Viterbo	Urban tourist locality in stagnation	4.352	11.837
Agrigento Aosta Campobasso Isernia L'Aquila Latina Messina Modena Nuoro Oristano Rieti-Terminillo Salerno Urbino	Urban tourist locality in decline	4.989	-24.957

The third cluster is composed of those cities that have a growth rate of arrivals showing signs of a slowdown in the face of a substantial tourism in the area. The average value of  $Av$  is 50.353 while the  $TI$  index is equal to 4.063. In this group, consisting of 33 cities, more than half is located geographically in the north of Italy, and there is some great Italian tourist location in terms of arrivals and presences such as Venice, Turin, Bologna, Genoa, Pisa, Verona.

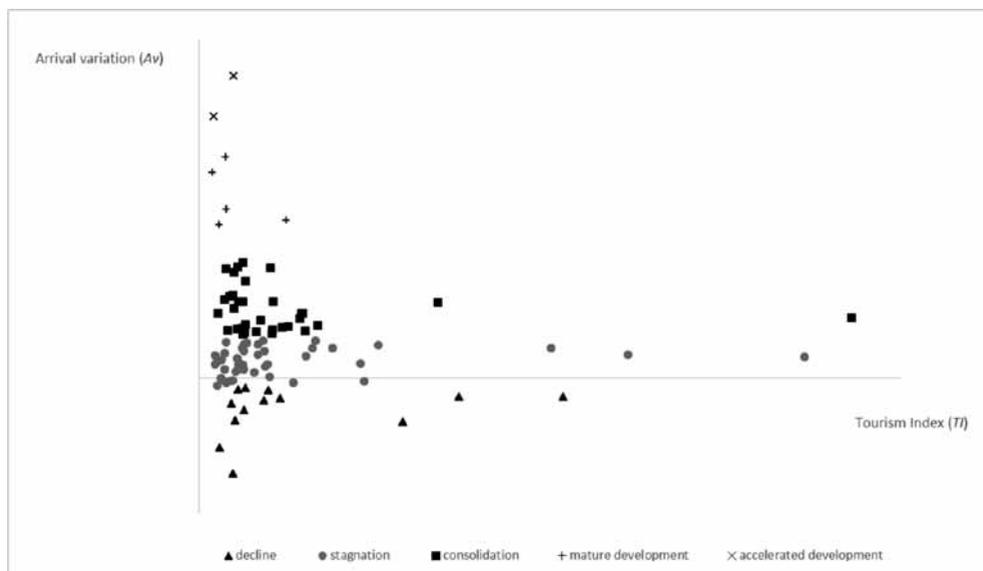
In the fourth cluster are the towns that show obvious signs of stagnation. In this group, the average value of  $TI$  is 4.352 and the indicator  $Av$  is 11.387. In the cluster, called "Urban tourist locality in stagnation" are even more obvious signs of a slowdown. We are facing a tourist destination that continues to survive thanks to the "advantageous position" that has been created, with a progressive tendency to expire in terms of attractiveness and grow old inevitably risking ending up out of the market.

Finally, in the fifth cluster, called "Urban tourist locality in decline", there are cities that, at the beginning of the reporting period, had a very interesting tourist capital, as captured by the  $TI$  recorded a mean value of 4.99. However, they are characterized by having lost considerably in terms of tourist arrivals over the 12 years. In fact, the average value of  $Av$  is negative, equal to -24.96. Among these cities are destinations like Agrigento, Aosta and Urbino that could rightly be part of the national peak tourist destinations.

For a better understanding of the results, we represent graphically the results obtained from the two indicators. In addition, we highlight the town belonged to the clusters obtained. The result allows us to deepen even better results obtained from the cluster analysis (Fig. 5). The groups that showed a growth path (cluster “accelerated development” and “mature development”) are evident with respect to the cloud data and are positioned along the vertical axis.

Vice versa, the cluster of the decline is positioned below the horizontal axis. The graphical representation also offers the opportunity to identify the best area in space where the urban tourist destinations should be positioned. This area is, of course, located in the proximity of high values for both indicators used in the cluster.

**Figure 5: Distribution of Urban Tourist Locality According to *TI* and *Av* indicators and Cluster Membership**



It is likely that the destinations that have a high value of the indicator *TI* are probably more accustomed to handle the problems of the tourism carrying capacity. We think, therefore, that an increase in arrivals should not - the conditional is necessary - to produce particular problems in the physical or economic carrying capacity. In this sense, the cluster called “Urban tourist locality in consolidation”, is very interesting. It has those localities that have shown a growth in tourist arrivals and a reasonable allocation (measured by *TI* index). Their path of development should provide an increase in both indicators. This path can be considered as ideal development route of a tourist destination.

Rereading the results obtained from the TALC model of Butler (1980), the five clusters obtained seem to correspond to the positions that Butler identified as hypothetical pathways consequent to an input of the destination stagnating and related interventions, where there this occurred, aimed at rejuvenating the destinations.

## CONCLUSIONS

The data collected allow us to formulate a first hypothesis of interpretation of the current scenario. Urban tourism in Italy began to show the first serious problems caused by the decrease in investment and absolute absence of territorial planning.

It will be necessary to continue the analysis by verifying the impact of local policies for tourism development on increasing presences. The quality of the tourist experience is directly related to the quality of services offered, as regards the products offered, but also their consistent dissemination over a territory.

The data on the increase in tourism and on the relationship between major and minor centers, seem to show that the supply of urban tourism, especially in the Italian system, is enhanced if it is proposed together with that of villages and small towns. Cases of integrated spatial planning between cities, however, seem still few.

It will also deepen the study of the environmental problems caused by the presence of tourist flows, almost always underestimated in the Italian case. The institutions have considered tourism only in terms of economic and employment potential, without considering at the moment the problem of environmental impacts and costs. The stagnation or decline in the flow of urban tourism is a problem of considerable entity for Italian economic assets and for the growth prospects often envisaged in recent years. It is not yet clear, however, from the scientific perspective, what exactly is the main problem, because the excessive presence of tourists can also become a problem. What we need is a model for the evaluation of environmental weight limits of the Italian historical centers to elucidate what is the limit beyond which the growth of tourism involves damage for which the costs are excessive to sustain.

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<sup>1</sup> During the definition of the data set, several inconsistencies have emerged between the databases used. This has made it necessary to exclude from processing some tourist cities. In particular, there are some provincial capitals that refer to different geographical areas during the two processes being compared (Avellino, Forlì-Cesena, Frosinone, Lodi). Other provincial capitals that correspond to the provinces born during the two years covered by the survey (such as Barletta-Andria-Trani, Carbonia\_inglesias, Fermo) and, finally, provincial capitals that are not uniquely identified by Istat survey but which fall in larger districts or other municipalities that include (among them Belluno, Crotone, Terni).

# Spatial Analysis of Religious Tourism in Greece

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## ABSTRACT

Religious tourism in Greece is growing rapidly in recent years. This fact renders religious tourism as an interesting form of alternative tourism which can surely contribute to the development of disadvantaged and less developed regions of the country. This form of tourism has a regional character, as it is associated with visits to monuments or places of religious importance which are spatially dispersed in Greek regions. This paper is an introductory analysis of the main characteristics and the growth prospects of religious tourism in Greece. In the first section the trends of religious tourism at the international level are analysed. Then, the impact of this form of tourism on regional development is highlighted. At a later stage, the main features of Greek religious tourism are highlighted. Moreover, the spatial distribution of the religious resources in Greek regions is analysed and the attractiveness of Greek religious places is assessed. The assessment is based on correlation analysis and statistical tests in order to examine the relationship of places' attractiveness with the characteristics of sites and monuments. Finally, the paper ends with some conclusions and proposals for the Greek case.

**Keywords:** Religious Tourism, Regional Development, Greece.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is associated with two main characteristics. The first is a dynamic characteristic referring to the movement of tourists from their residence to the place visited, and the second is a static characteristic which refers to the time that tourists spend at the place visited. The second feature is particularly important for the economic impact of tourism and its contribution to economic growth in tourist areas, as it is related to the total consumption expenses of each tourist and therefore, increased turnover of tourist facilities in the reception areas (Polyzos, 2011).

Based on the motives of tourists, the phenomenon of tourism could be classified in the following basic types (Rinschede, 1992; Sfakianakis, 2000): (A) Mass tourism, which is associated with holidays, is motivated by pleasure and relaxation and is the dominant feature of tourism in Greece. (B) Cultural tourism, which includes educational and scientific tourism.

(C) Religious tourism, in which the main motivation is religious sentiment, and includes visits to religious centers and religious events. (D) Social tourism, which is based on the formation of family or tourism groups and aims at social integration of the people travelling within the group. (E) Sports tourism, which aims at attending or participating in sports events (F) Economic tourism, which includes business, convention and exhibition tourism. (G) Political tourism, which includes the trips of persons who possess positions of responsibility in order to fulfill their duties.

In many cases the motivation for tourist visits may be found in more than one of these categories. Thus, a visit to religious centers may fulfill the religious feeling but it also may be driven by cultural and social incentives. Furthermore, economic or political tourism is often combined with holidays or cultural pursuits. Therefore, the limits of the different categories are not always distinct and the different motives regarding a tourist visit constitute the classification of tourism into categories an even more difficult task (Egresi et al., 2012).

The term “religious tourism” or “pilgrimage tourism” refers to activities such as tourist visits to monuments, places of religious importance and religious events. The term may be inappropriate when strictly theological criteria are taken into account. However, the main incentives concerning tourist visits to these places can still be established by this term. Religious tourism may include: (A) pilgrim tourists, whose travelling is religiously motivated and is targeted only to the religious site, and (B) tourists travelling in groups and combining their trip with other tourist activities (Sfakianakis, 2000; Egresi et al., 2012).

The sacred sites and official religious holidays or other events have been motivating religious visits for many centuries and they have also been the driven forces behind the “attractiveness” of certain areas (Nolan and Nolan, 1992; Rinschede, 1992). The course of history has proven that “pilgrimage” has always been a motive for people movement and thus, it formed “tourist” dynamics which may be characterised as the precursor of modern tourism. The aforementioned attractiveness has always been associated with factors such as temples and churches of religious or historical significance, religious events, historical events, significant landscape characteristics, the size and architecture of the existing building space etc (Nolan and Nolan, 1992; Fernandes et al., 2012; Raj, 2012).

In sort, the building resources which significantly affect the religious tourist flows are: (A) buildings that have retained or lost their religious function, (B) buildings of historical, religious or architectural interest which in most cases are sited in idyllic landscapes (C) buildings of religious nature such as monasteries, hermitages, theological schools, libraries, etc., in which many conferences with religious content take place, and (D) buildings used as museums or galleries with religious exhibits. In most cases, religious monuments accommodate religious or other related cultural and festive events. The “pilgrimage” spiritual element of many areas is sometimes vanished, as tourist flows to these areas increase. Their tourist attractiveness is gradually based on cultural terms rather than religious terms. This process makes these areas attractive to all visitors regardless of religion. The

visitors of these areas face religion as a form of culture and the tourist flows fall into the category of cultural tourism (Rinschede, 1992; Sfakianakis, 2000; Polyzos, 2011). Today, religious tourism, more in developed and less in developing countries is strongly associated with simple vacations and cultural tourism. Historically, religious tourism has multifunctional form, even in cases where religious motives seemed to be dominant (Rinschede, 1992). Consequently, religious tourism could be further enhanced if these tourist destinations, apart from religious monuments, own other tourist resources or are located in the range area of other tourist attractions (Polyzos, 2002; Polyzos et al., 2007).

In developed countries, religious motives appear to be less important than in the less developed countries or ancient societies. The main motives concerning visits to religious sites can be classified as follows: (A) the religious sentiment which inspires tourists to go to places of religious events, (B) the coincidence of religious holidays with official holidays and (C) the attractiveness of religious monuments and their total value as places of worship and cultural resources. Apart from the aforementioned factors, the innate desire to visit places of family origin and many people's need to leave the urban centers for a short period may also be taken as motives for visits to religious sites (Rinschede, 1992; Sfakianakis, 2000).

It should be noted that increasing the degree of combination of religious tourism with other forms of tourism, especially in developed countries, will result in the reduction of tourist "isolated" areas attractiveness. Therefore, the proximity of religious monuments to large urban centers and tourist resources of another category or to areas which attract supralocal, national and international tourist flows and also the existence of an adequate transport network are the basic requirements for ensuring the future of the "attractiveness" of religious and cultural resources.

## **RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Religious tourism, as other forms of tourism, affects the growth and economy of the tourist host areas (Polyzos, 2002; 2011). Religious tourists after satisfying their religious needs behave as typical consumers - tourists, as they need to fulfill needs for accommodation and meals or purchase some local souvenirs or other products etc. (Vukonic, 1996). In other words, religious tourists apart from seeking to satisfy their religious feeling, act as consumers, too.

The economic dimension of religious tourism and the opportunities it provides for the development of certain areas remains an issue under national and international consideration and it induces national authorities to consider the potential of such a tourism form while national tourism policies are shaped. Furthermore, many organizations and associations, such as UNESCO and the European Union, also deal with the prospects of religious tourism growth (Mira-Mylonopoulou, 2000; Lytras, 2001). Many countries take initiatives and establish programs in order to strengthen religious tourism, highlighting and promoting

religious sites and events. In most cases they seek a religious connection with the cultural, artistic, historical and natural elements, aiming to increase the attractiveness of religious destinations.

The economic development of religious tourism yields multiple benefits for the reception area, since as mentioned above, visitors are consumers of tourist products and services. So, in many cases the employment levels of religious tourism destinations are increasing, as many professions are involved in the supply side of religious tourism. Typical examples of these professions are the tour operators, airlines, hotel staff, vendors etc. Furthermore, the increasing variety of religious tourism activities and the significant economic interest that generates led to the creation of specific public or private agencies, which are specialised in religious tourism and their main duty is to organise trips in areas with intense religious interest.

Today, in many cases, the coexistence of religious and tourist element alters the character of the religious events (Mira-Mylonopoulou, 2000; Lytras, 2001). The commercialization of religious events is combined with the risk of reducing the religious character of these events, because even the most authentic events in nowadays may not evoke the necessary religious devoutness neither to attendees or to tourists nor to the local population (Raj, 2008; Egresi et al., 2012).

For some religions like Islam, the term “religious tourism” has not the same meaning as in other religions (UNWTO, 2011). In such religions the dominant motive for a visit to religious destinations is the fulfillment of spiritual duties and so, visitors do not behave as tourists. In addition, the Christian Church is more tolerant to the definition of religious tourism, because its effect is rather strong and of great economic importance for national and local societies.

Another distinction of great importance for economic growth among the forms of religious tourism concerns the duration of religious visits. Thus, two forms of religious tourism visits could be observed: The short-term tourism which includes the day trips to religious destinations and the long-term tourism, which includes the trips with overnight stays for 1-2 nights at least (Rinschede, 1992). The short-term religious tourism is characterised by short-distance trips. The motive of travelers is the transition to a religious center with local or regional importance in order to participate in religious celebrations, religious conferences or events. The long-term religious tourism includes visits to religious centers and staying in the area for several days.

The extent to which each form of tourism contributes to the economic development of the destination regions is linked to several key factors. The three most important factors are: (a) the total daily consumption expenditure of every tourist, (b) the visit duration of tourists in the place of interest, and (c) the regional multipliers' values of the area. It should be noted that religious tourist in the modern world behaves as a consumer and his expenses are steadily rising. In addition, the duration of stay in religious tourist destinations is also constantly growing. The length of the visit is affected by factors such as the existence of the necessary infrastructure, the general environment and the combination of religious tourism

with other forms of tourism. Finally, regarding the regional multipliers, their values depend on the competence of each region to cover the domestic production of all the products and services that tourists spend money on and to reduce the imports of these products from other regions (Polyzos and Sdrolas, 2006; Polyzos, 2006).

Generally, the actions for the development of religious tourism should be considered as part of State's policy for the development of the so called "Thematic Tourism". Thematic tourism links and utilizes the cultural heritage of the past, the natural environment and the current economic and other features of the regions in order to improve the tourist attractiveness of the regions. Thus, strengthening the development of religious tourism can change the current situation of the tourism sector in the country, enrich the existing incentives to visit the tourist areas, lengthen the tourist season and contribute to the diversification of the tourist product.

## RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN GREECE

### *The Main Characteristics of Religious Tourism in Greece*

Before analysing the key features of religious tourism in Greece, it should be noted that unfortunately, as in many other countries, there are no official statistical reports available about critical features of religious tourism, such as the number of tourists visiting the religious sites, the origin of visitors and the distance traveled, the length of their stay, the age, education and other socioeconomic characteristics of visitors, which would help to analyze the phenomenon (UNWTO, 2011). The statistics mainly concern the number of Greek religious sites, their age and their geographical position. Furthermore, some other statistics, regarding the annual visits to Greek religious sites are retrieved from the internet. Thus, the present analysis is strongly based on the information gathered from interviews with representatives from tourism sector and Greek Church.

Nowadays, religious tourism in Greece creates an important part of tourist flows. The main religious tourist flow concern visits to religious places of worship, such as churches and monasteries. A large part of domestic and foreign tourists in Greece visit places with religious or cultural resources. All regions of the country have important religious resources, thus becoming especially attractive for many tourists. The monuments of the Greek Orthodox Church, like Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches, cathedrals, chapels and monasteries highlight the connection of art with religious worship. Therefore, they can be considered as part of the cultural heritage and a valuable tourist attraction (Mira-Mylonopoulou, 2000; Sfakianakis, 2000; Lytras, 2001).

Additionally, it should be noted that a significant number of religious tourism sites of Greece are included in the relevant list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. This list includes the monasteries of Meteora, Mount Athos in which many monasteries are situated, the Paleochristian and Byzantine Monuments of Thessaloniki, the Monasteries of Daphni, Hossios Lukas and Nea Moni of Chios (Unesco, 2013).

Religious tourism dynamics may be of particular importance for the regional development of Greece. Religious monuments are scattered all over the country and therefore, the flow of religious tourism has the orientation “center to periphery” or mainly “metropolitan origin.” The wide spatial distribution of religious monuments leads to the balanced development of tourism economic activity and strengthens regional economic development in the less developed regions (Polyzos and Arabatzis, 2006).

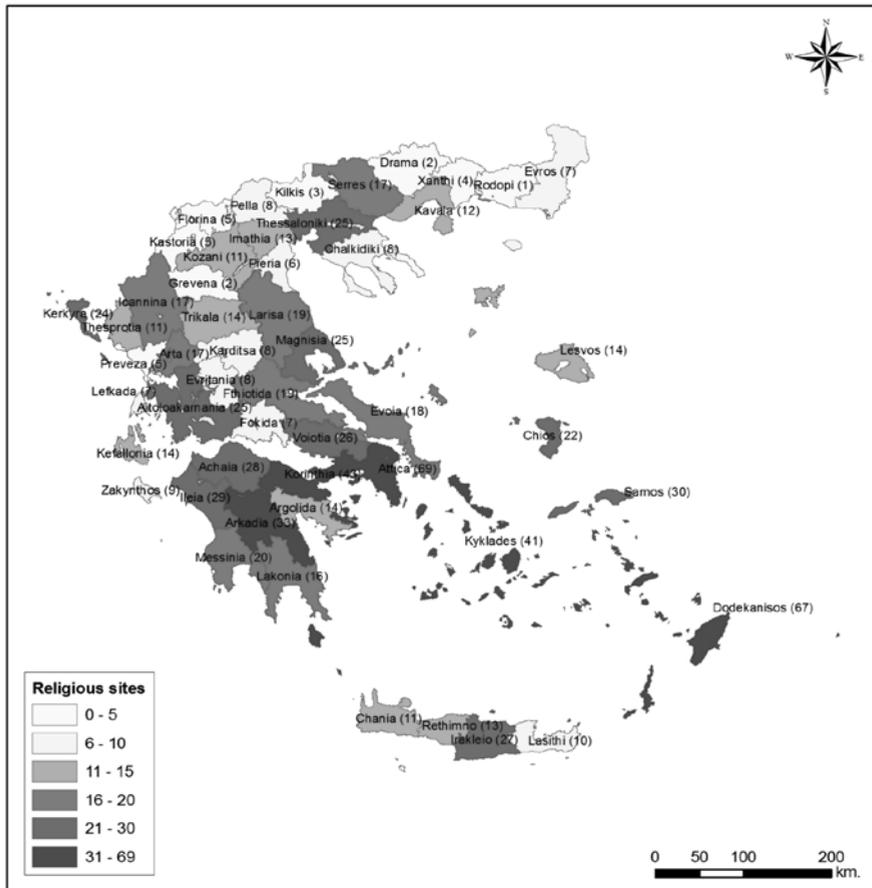
In Greece, as well as throughout the western world, the pilgrim traveler is a specific objective of the tourism industry, since it is estimated that domestic tourist flows to religious monuments exceed the number of 300,000 tourists annually. Several Dioceses, large parishes of Greek cities and various religious organizations, organize visits to religious places, either for attending a religious festival, event and ceremony or not. The vast majority of visitors who participate in these tours are middle-aged or older. Moreover, as many tourist operators highlighted, the inclusion of a visit to a religious tourist place renders a holiday package more attractive to potential customers-tourists. This inclusion also seems to outweigh the general disadvantage of religious tourism in Greece which refers to the short length of the religious tourists’ visits. Thus, extending the length of visits could act as a real catalyst for the development of the host regions.

Additionally, one key characteristic of religious tourism in Greece is that the majority of visitors are Greek residents. Nevertheless, in recent years visitors from foreign countries are also increasing. As revealed from many interviews with tourism and church actors, the vast majority of foreign visitors origins from the Eastern Orthodox Countries and mainly from Russia. Additionally, the distribution of visitors throughout the year is not even, as tourist flows increase in summer and during the days of religious festivals. However, the fact that several religious festivals and fairs are conducted not only in the summer and the shrines which are not related to specific festivals, are also available to visit throughout the year, may generate tourist flows all over the year. This could be considered as one major advantage of religious tourism.

#### *Spatial Analysis of Greek Religious Tourism Sites*

The dynamics of the phenomenon constitutes the spatial analysis of tourist sites interesting, as it reveals the potential of each region in attracting religious tourist flows. In Figure 1, the number of religious sites per prefecture, according to the survey of Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO), is presented. Firstly, regarding the Greek religious places it should be stressed that an interesting spatial distribution of religious monuments across the country is observed, as all prefectures hold religious resources. This fact renders the attraction of tourist flows possible for all the spatial entities of Greece. Therefore, even the most disadvantaged areas have the potential to take advantage of all the positive outcomes of religious tourism.

Figure 1: The Distribution of Religious Sites in Greek Municipalities



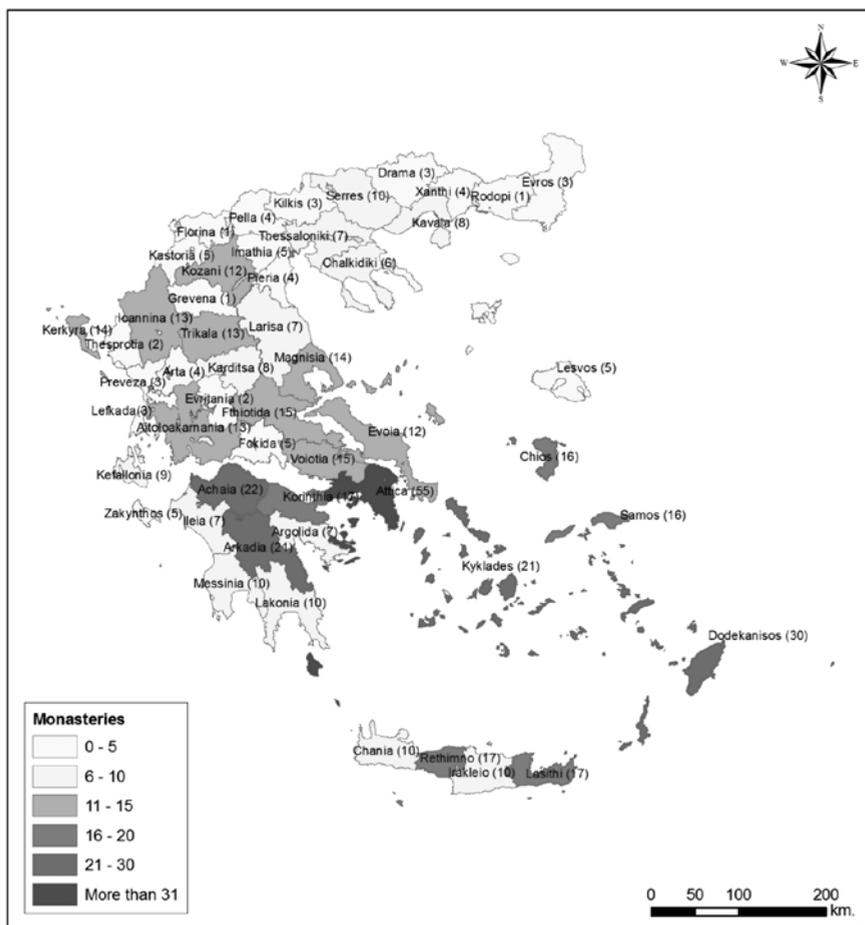
Source: GNT0 (2005), Own Elaboration

The prefectures that host the greatest number of pilgrimages and religious sites are Attica, Korinthos, Dodecanese and Cyclades. On the other hand, the prefectures of Rodopi, Grevena, Drama and Kilkis host the smallest number of religious sites. It should be mentioned that the number does not necessarily define the overall attractiveness of the prefecture, since there are various factors affecting the total number of visitors such as age, size, historical and religious importance of the site etc.

Additionally, in Figure 2 the number and the geographical position of active monasteries are presented. The monasteries included in Figure 2 are the ones that are open to visitors and the relevant list is updated by the Greek National Tourism Organization. It should be noted that many of the monasteries are not included in the religious sites presented in Figure 1, since they are not considered as typical religious tourism sites. Nevertheless, even these

monasteries remain attractive to visitors, not only for their architectural or cultural value, but mainly because they enable their visitors to participate to spiritual activities, thus satisfying their religious needs. As can be seen from Figure 2, the prefectures which host the fewest monasteries are mainly located in Northern Greece. The prefectures of Rodopi, Grevena and Florina host only one active monastery in their districts, while Evritania and Thesprotia, two. On the other hand, the prefecture with the greatest number of monasteries is Attica, which hosts more than 50 active monasteries. A large number of active monasteries which ranges among 21–30, are also situated in prefectures like Dodekanisos, Achaia, Kyklades and Arkadia.

**Figure 2: The Distribution of Active Monasteries in Greek Municipalities**



Source: GNT0 (2013), Own Elaboration

The distribution of religious sites and monasteries at the prefectures of Greece present common characteristics. The common pattern is also evidenced by the high value of the Pearson's correlation statistic (0.863) which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This finding demonstrates that some of the prefectures possess competitive advantages for the attraction of religious tourist flows due to plentiful religious sites and active monasteries. Nevertheless, in many cases the lack of resources in one of the two categories of sites is compensated by the presence of important attractions of the other category. Typical examples of this state are the prefectures of Thesprotia which host only two monasteries while hosting 11 religious sites and Arta which hosts only four monasteries while the total religious sites in the prefecture are 17. These prefectures should aim at attracting religious visitors mainly relying on the religious sites that they possess. On the other hand, prefectures like Lasithi and Rethymno present significantly greater sufficiency of monasteries than religious sites and therefore, they should rely on visitors who show a significant interest on visiting monasteries.

#### *Assessing the Attractiveness of the Tourist Sites*

As it was mentioned before, the attractiveness of each monument relies on several factors concerning both the identity of the monument and the place that it is situated. In the present paper, the attractiveness of Greek religious sites is evaluated with the use of correlation analysis and non-parametric test. More specifically, a sample of 18 religious tourism sites for which it was possible to gather information about the annual visits of the year 2007 is used in order to check several hypotheses concerning the correlation among the annual visits to Greek religious tourist sites and several factors that are believed to affect them. These sites are the most popular tourist attractions of Greece. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that tourist sites which also are attractive (mainly the monasteries of Mount Athos) are excluded from the analysis due to insufficient data.

The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 1. The first hypothesis being tested concerns the existence of a positive relationship between the attractiveness of a tourist site and its age. In order to test the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the age and the attractiveness of the site we use the Spearman rank correlation test. The attractiveness of each place is denoted by its annual visits in 2012 and its age with a variable depicting the construction date of each site. The value of the estimated Spearman Coefficient is negative (-0.420) and statistically significant at the ( $<0.1$ ) level. The estimation gives a hint that positive correlation between the age of the monument and its age exists. However, it should be noted that with the present sample size an estimation of higher statistical significance would be more valuable in order to extract more accurate results.

**Table 1: Results of Correlation Analysis**

	Year of Construction	Distance from Prefecture's Capital (Km)
Annual Visits (2012)	-0.420 (0.083)	-0.054 (0.832)

Sig. (2-tailed) is depicted in brackets

Source: Greek Church, 2013; Vourdanos, 2008; Interviews; Own Elaboration

On the other hand, the relationship between the attractiveness of the sites and their geographical position is also tested. Firstly, correlation analysis is conducted in order to check the relationship between the annual visits of the sites and their distance (km) from the capital of the prefecture that they are situated. This test aims at revealing the ability of the population dynamic of each capital to generate visits to sites of its prefecture. The estimated value of Spearman Rank Coefficient is (-.054) but it lacks of statistical significance. Thus, we cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship among the attractiveness of a religious tourist site and its distance from the capital of the prefecture that is located.

Moreover, the relationship of the attractiveness of tourist sites and their geographical position is further tested with the use of another geographical variable. In particular, Greek prefectures are divided into two groups based on the Gravity Index with the criterion value of 100. The values of Gravity Index for each prefecture are affected by the time-distance from the other prefectures and represent a measure of the relative position of each prefecture compared to all others (Petraikos and Psycharis, 2004; Polyzos, 2011). High values indicate good accessibility and central location in relation to the transport networks of the country, while low values indicate low accessibility and possibly isolated position. Thus, a dummy variable is created taking the price 1 for prefectures with value of Gravity Index over 100 and 0 for others.

Furthermore, a Mann-Whitney Test is conducted in order to test the null hypothesis that tourist sites located in highly accessible prefectures accept more visitors on an annual basis than those that are situated in prefectures of low accessibility. The statistic value  $z = -2.404$  with  $\text{Prob} > |z| = 0.014$  demonstrates, that the religious tourist sites of highly accessible prefectures are more attractive than the sites of the other category. Thus, it seems that there is a positive relationship between accessibility and attractiveness of the tourist destinations.

The above analysis revealed crucial issues of religious tourism dynamics in Greece. The key features of religious tourism in Greece could be summarised as follows:

- There is an even distribution of tourist visits religiously motivated throughout the year with a relative increase in the summer months, apparently because of the “complementary” function of other forms of tourism.

- The age composition of religious tourists is different from the corresponding composition of other forms of general or alternative tourism and the older visitors seem to outweigh the younger ones.
- The duration of stay in the destination area is relatively small (short break holidays), especially if it is not combined with other forms of tourism.
- There is a positive response of tourist enterprises, Greek Church and local communities in this form of tourism, which creates an additional advantage for further development. The general feeling is that there is not enough promotion of cultural heritage with reference to religion and especially religious monuments with international recognition such as Meteora, Patmos, etc.
- Religious sites are located in all regions of the country. Their spatial distribution is quite equal and therefore religious tourism, if exploited properly, can significantly enhance regional income and regional development.
- The attractiveness of religious sites depends on the characteristics of the region that they are located and on their own cultural and religious value. Statistical analysis revealed that the annual visits to religious sites seem to be positively related to the age of the monuments and to the accessibility of the prefecture that they are located.

## CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY PROPOSALS

Religious tourism, like other forms of the so-called “alternative tourism”, follows a different organization pattern from the mass tourism and is based generally on the utilization of different resources by the dominant model of tourism (sun - sea). Nowadays, the specific form of tourism attracts a considerable part of the world tourist flows. As a result, the authorities of the religious tourism destinations improve their relevant resources and infrastructure while the demand for visiting these destinations is steadily increasing (Tsartas et al., 2004).

As noted above, religious tourism can be an autonomous form of tourism or can be linked to other forms of tourism as a part of trip. There are forms of alternative tourism, which can be combined with the religious tourism such as cultural tourism, rural tourism, educational tourism, scientific tourism, mountain and winter tourism and touring. This combination will strengthen the main motives of the demand for alternative tourism and create conditions for increasing tourist flows to disadvantaged and mountainous areas with appropriate resources.

Either connected to forms of tourism or being autonomous, religious tourism can contribute to the development of less developed regions, enhancing degraded or ‘Abandoned’ productive sectors of the local economy. This can be managed by achieving the connection of the response in tourism demand with local production and by improving existing or building new infrastructure to promote and assist the operation of the sites of religious and cultural monuments. Additionally, development will be also be achieved by selectively enhancing production processes and techniques of other industries which are directly or indirectly

related to religious tourism (agriculture, crafts, handicraft, wood carving, etc.) and finally, by promoting tourist destinations.

The low requirements for the development of religious tourism and the great importance attached to environmental characteristics of the tourist destination, constitute religious tourism, as well as other forms of alternative tourism, suitable for areas with little public capital and limited human capital (Frederic, 1993). The contribution of religious tourism to the increase of local - mainly women - employment and to the strengthening of disciplines associated with traditional art, hospitality, handicraft, etc., which have high local multipliers can be especially important. Of course, in many cases this involves the risk of economic standstill in a vicious circle of activity and low added value and external dependence, in cases where the local economy does not show the appropriate adaptability and responsiveness to opportunities provided (Frederic, 1993).

Another key issue that should be taken into account by the authorities that are responsible for the organization of this form of tourism is the potential for increasing the length of religious visits for more than one day, which to date is the most common case. This requires the construction of necessary infrastructure in reception areas in order to support longer visits of every tourist in the religious space. The duration of stay will be enhanced by achieving the synergy of religious tourism with other forms of tourism (holiday tourism, cultural tourism, etc.), by enriching the daily program of every tourist and by increasing the attractiveness of each region.

International initiatives, such as the recent initiative “The steps of the Apostle Paul in Greece”, can significantly help religious tourism in Greece. Also, they can create the base for attracting tourists from abroad and increase the “openness” of the phenomenon. The existence of many religious destinations in the prefectures of the country is an advantage which creates conditions for synergy and enrichment of the tourist product with other forms of tourism.

The development of all forms of religious tourism in Greece requires the active involvement and support of the Greek Church, as the most religious resources and “magnets” are religiously active. Consequently, this form of tourism requires a special treatment. Greek Church should follow specific strategy in collaboration with all the Natural and Legal Persons, in order to raise the general cultural value of religious monuments. There are cases of religious monuments - religious sites such as Cave of Apocalypse in Patmos, Meteora and Mount Athos, that attract not only Orthodox Christians but also travelers from other religions. Additionally, attaining a good level of access infrastructure to the religious sites is a prerequisite for strengthening religious tourist flows.

Furthermore, the conservation and the emergence of the cultural characteristics of “religious sites” are of great importance, because they increase the overall attractiveness of the monument without reducing its religious characteristics. There are many monasteries with icon-painting, wood carding and unique architectural features, which besides their religious

importance; they also have significant cultural and artistic value. Moreover, the existing or new accommodation and tourism related infrastructure should be adapted to the morphology and the particular characteristics of the area. In this way, the competitiveness of the tourist product is improved and the protection and sustainability of available resources are achieved.

From a spatial perspective, the present analysis revealed that many regions have a greater advantage than other as far as religious tourism is concerned. Prefectures which possess plentiful resources of tourist sites and monasteries are the ones presenting the highest potential for the development of religious tourism. Moreover, prefectures which are highly accessible have a competitive advantage, since visits to their religious resources are easier. Additionally, the monuments with high cultural and religious value are more attractive, as the correlation between the age and the total visits to several tourist places revealed. These findings suggest that a detailed development plan should be formed, taking into account the particular characteristics of each prefecture. Actually, the available resources of each Greek region should be recorded and the religious sites should be promoted based on the individual characteristics and the potential of each spatial entity. This requires a basic organization both at local and national level.

Concluding, the present paper constitutes an introductory effort for the quantitative analysis of religious tourism phenomenon in Greece. The utter lack of statistics depicting the characteristics of the phenomenon in the country is a kind of evidence for the absence of an effective development strategy until today which could act as a development tool for Greek regions. Finally, the collection of data and an adequate analysis will reveal the benefits of religious tourism for the economic growth of Greek regions and thus, provide a base for the preparation of a religious tourism development plan at the national level.

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# Analyzing the evolution of tourism in Magnesia under the prism of the Tourism Area Life Cycle Theory

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## ABSTRACT

One of the most prominent theoretical approaches in recent years regarding the evolution of tourism activity in an area is the theory of “Tourism Area Life Cycle”. According to this theory, any tourism area passes through some specific stages in the evolution of its total touristic attractiveness, which is defined by the number of tourists visiting the area under consideration. In this article we try to analyze the evolution of tourism development and activity in Magnesia in the recent decades under the prism of the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) theory. At first, a basic review of the TALC theory is presented, discussing its main elements and noting some considerations about it. Afterwards, the evolution of tourism in Magnesia is analyzed and relative data are presented, giving the opportunity to determine in what stage of the TALC theory Magnesia can be placed. In particular, we analyze the evolution of tourism nights spend in the Prefecture of Magnesia in the last 30 years, as well as an overall assessment of the role of tourism in the Prefecture’s economy is attempted. Moreover, based on the conducted analysis, we propose policy measures and actions that will enable Magnesia to maintain or even improve its tourist flows and its competitive position in the tourism sector.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Life Cycle, Magnesia, Regional development

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism, as an economic activity, is one of the rapidly growing sectors in the last decades. New tourist destinations emerge in the international tourism market, while some traditional tourism areas lose their initial attractiveness and glamour and decline as a consequence of the continuous growth of international and regional competition. In the same time, the typology of tourism is enriched with new forms of tourism and innovative tourist products, which are seeking to satisfy the continuously growing needs and demands of modern multi-motivated tourists (Tsartas 1996).

Examining the evolution of tourism in Greece and in other European Mediterranean countries, as it is defined by the number of tourist arrivals in each region, a dynamic development process after the '50s is evident. The importance of tourism to the economic growth of Greece is high, since it contributes in a great extent to the creation of the national GDP. Tourism's contribution to GDP is more than 15%, it also helps to improve the current account balance by providing more than 9 bil. € of currency inflows per year. Tourism also helps to balance regional inequalities by growing employment in the regions (SETE, 2010). The impact of tourism in regional development is decisively determined by the geographical distribution of tourism activity, and other factors related to the structure of the local economy, the length of tourists' stay, the level of tourism consumption etc. (Polyzos, 2002; Andriotis, 2005).

Over time, the characteristics of tourism in Greece and other Mediterranean countries have changed. Mass tourism is the most dominant feature of tourism development in the recent decades. These changes have led many regions to rely on tourism and related activities as "strategic" economic sectors for local and regional development, by creating new jobs, especially for layers of the labor market that were in unfavorable position (Polyzos et al 2007). For Greece and its regions, tourism is a very important branch of the economy, contributing to the strengthening of economic and regional development and it is considered as a "locomotive" of the Greek economy and one of its main "pillars" (Polyzos 2002, Polyzos and Sdrolias 2006; SETE, 2010).

Besides the positive effects on local and regional development, there are negative effects as a result of unregulated and without adequate planning development of tourism activities. The evolution of certain characteristics of the tourism phenomenon like seasonality, uneven spatial distribution, saturation and environmental degradation in touristic areas, absolute specialization in touristic activities, negatively impacted on many touristic areas, contributing to the decline of touristic attractiveness and the reduce of the benefits of the regions.

For analyzing and interpreting the evolution of touristic activity overtime in various touristic areas, many theoretical approaches and models have been developed. One of the most used is "The Tourism Area Life Cycle", (TALC). This theory describes and explains some stages through which every touristic area passes. These stages are related to the evolution of the touristic attractiveness of an area. In this article we analyze the evolution of tourism development and activity in the Magnesia Prefecture in recent decades under the framework of the TALC theory. Based on statistical data of tourists nights spent in the last 30 years, we analyze the evolution of touristic attractiveness of the area and we propose policy measures in order to maintain and enhance the tourist flows of the area. Finally, some conclusions are drawn based on the preceding analysis and its results.

## THE TOURISM AREA LIFE CYCLE

The lifecycle approach initially regarded consumer products or relevant companies, while for studying the evolution of the attractiveness of touristic areas it appeared in international tourism literature about 70 years ago. In the first approaches Gilbert (1939) proposed three stages of evolution, discovery, development and decline, while Defert (1954) with a different view formalized the evolution of each tourism area in the stages of birth, aging and decay. For Defert (1954), every region can escape from the stage of decay through its renewal.

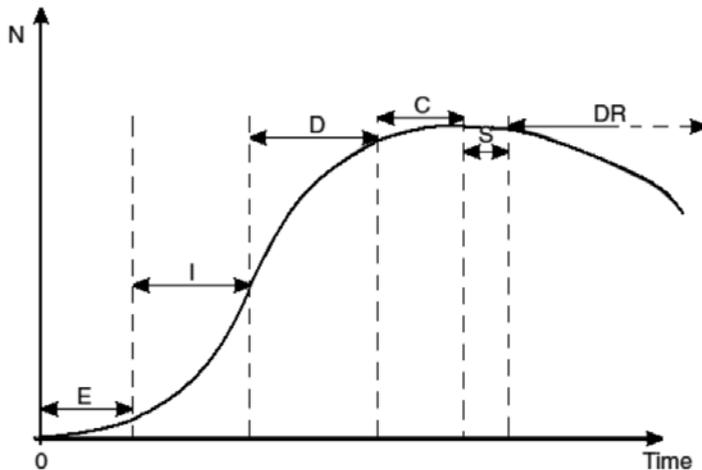
Afterwards Christaller (1964) described the changes in the attractiveness of a touristic area as an evolving cycle and presents a typical evolution path through the following stages: (a) Some painters (or artists in general) choose a quiet and distant area to work followed by some other artists. (b) The area gains fame which is exploited by touristic enterprises and they create the necessary infrastructure. (c) Finally, tourism development comes along, the area is filled by mass tourists, while in cases of excessive tourist concentration stagnation and decline emerge.

Several other researchers tried to determine the stages of the evolution of a tourism area as a typical and predictable procedure. Many of them like Butler (1980), Douglas (1997), and Russell and Faulkner (1998), sought to determine the stages of the evolution of a tourist area under the concept of the life cycle of a product. Butler (1980) tried more systematically the determination of the stages of the life cycle of a tourist area, based on previous studies and presented a generalized model for the evolution of a tourist area.

Butler's typical model is presented in Figure 1. According to this model the changes of tourist arrivals in a destination follows a six stages evolution. Briefly, these stages are (Polyzos et al 2013):

- *Exploration*  
This stage is characterized by a small number of individual visitors, discovering a destination without the intervention of third parties. The infrastructure, facilities and services used are locally owned and the number of visitors limited because of the lack of necessary means of access and infrastructure.
- *Involvement*  
At this stage the number and frequency of tourist arrivals increases, accompanied by a corresponding adjustment of the local community to the tourism phenomenon, considering tourism as a main tool for economic development. The local entrepreneurs are active in the provision of appropriate services and facilities for accommodation, catering and entertainment for tourists. At the same time, advertisement to attract tourists is enhanced and pressures on local authorities for quantitative and qualitative increases on the infrastructure are likely to occur.

**Figure 1: The Evolution Stages of TALC Theory**



E=exploration, I=involvement, D=development, C=consolidation, S=stagnation, DR=decline or rejuvenation

Source: Butler (1980)

- *Development*

In the development phase, the tourism infrastructure (buildings, services and accommodation units) grows and a regular tourist market that is attracted by intensive advertising makes its appearance. The participation of the local community on the control of the development decreases rapidly, and as a result the control of the tourism industry is transferred to foreign entrepreneurs. Also, the number of tourists during peak periods exceeds the number of local residents.

- *Consolidation*

In the stage of consolidating the rate of growth of tourist arrivals decreases, while the total number increases beyond the number of permanent residents. Some times this stage is characterized by the appearance of a business center in the tourist area and the decay of some buildings, while efforts are being made to extend the season and to increase the share of the local tourism market (Agarwal 1994). A large part of the local economy is directly linked to tourism, but many residents feel that they don't have the ability to access local attractions. The realization of negative effect from tourism results in the demonstration of some hostile feelings towards guests and new investments.

- *Stagnation*

At this stage, the large number of tourists leads to the wilting of a tourism region, despite the consolidation of the region in the tourist market and the overall spatial competition and the establishment of a good image in the tourist market. The attractiveness of the

region deteriorates over time, as the area is “no longer in fashion” as a tourist destination. Other features of this stage are the constant change of business owners, the small number of new businesses, the reduction of land value and the increase in the proportion of property in land and buildings of the local population.

The stage following the end of the cycle described above can be a phase of decline or a phase of regeneration or rejuvenation of the tourist destination. Specifically, the decline may occur by continuing shrinkage of the tourism market and with a weakness of the region to compete with other tourism destinations. This stage is characterized by a change of use of buildings and their use for activities not directly related to tourism, while there is an increase in the involvement of local business actors in tourism development.

Beyond the decline, an area can enter the phase of regeneration by enhancing existing or by the emergence of new advantages with tourism interest and the exploitation of existing but untapped tourism resources. Stansfield (1978) studying the case of Atlantic City U.S. sought to analyze and interpret the impact of technological advances on the attractiveness of tourist areas. According to Stansfield the initial improvement of the attractiveness of Atlantic City was achieved by its rail connection to the major urban centers. The continuous expansion of road and air network led the city at the stage of decay, while the establishment of casinos helped revitalize the tourism industry. Something similar has been done with the foundation of EuroDisney, which helped the city of Paris to overcome the problems experienced in its tourism attractiveness which occurred with the reduction of tourist arrivals.

The TALC Theory has been criticized for various reasons, particularly for its simplicity, lack of precision and limited universal application. Bianchi (1994) denies this natural sequence of stages and argues that such an approach, according to which every tourist destination will pass all stages in this sequence, is not realistic. According to Hovinen (1981), the approach of a cycle to a specified destination is unique, having different length, shape and form of the curve from other destinations. Moreover, the level of spatial clustering is quite unclear. Destinations covering wider geographical boundaries will have a different curve.

As in the theory of product life cycle, the form of S curve of a tourist destination has been proven that it can be affected by many factors such as the rates of economic growth, government policies, and infrastructure in an area that provide access to it. Also it is affected from competing countries in tourism and the evolving preferences of tourists (di Benedetto and Bojanic 1993).

Another point of criticism to the TALC Theory is the use of the number of visitors to the destination, as an indicator for finding the stage where each destination stands. Statistics for this parameter is more easily available than other indicators, such as the quality and type of tourists, the height of tourist revenue, the evolution of the economic multiplier effects of tourism or the number of people employed in the industry. It would be highly unlikely that the curve shape of these indicators is similar to that depicted by the total number of tourists.

The tourist revenue for a destination can be increased, despite the drop in tourist arrivals, if for example, visitors can incur higher expenditure (O'Hare and Barrett 1997).

In addition, at each stage the level of “carrying capacity” or the ability of the destination to keep visitors varies. This is especially important at the end of the development stage and then to the stage of stagnation, when the quality of the “tourist experience” begins to lose its glamor, thus indicating that the carrying capacity of the destination is exceeded.

Another point where the TALC Theory has received strong criticism, concerns the tendency to simplify the unique and complex process of tourism development to a destination. This model tends to group the otherwise unique in each destination internal social, political and economic conditions. This is obvious, because the pace and direction of tourism development of a destination can be a result of the presence and vitality of endogenous entrepreneurs or even more to be a lack of external networks of agencies, tour operators and institutions, which determine the tourist market internationally (Tsartas 1992, Ioannides 1992, Bianchi 1994).

Following the above, it is possible to extrapolate the conclusion that this model should not be regarded either as a predictive tool for the development of a destination, neither can be applied in tourism planning or formulating tourism policy. The tourism industry of a destination is being developed by the coexistence of several distinct events and situations, often unpredictable, and not only by the number of visitors as proposed by the TALC Theory (Cooper and Jackson 1989). Closing, we believe that many of the aforementioned critics of the TALC Theory may also be considered unrealistic, since Butler did not intend this model to be an accurate prediction tool, nor a universally applicable theory, but a broader conceptual framework.

The TALC Theory can be used as a mechanism for determining the wider internal (eg government policy, infrastructure construction) and external factors (eg fuel prices, evolving motivation of tourists etc.) affecting the development of a destination. The adoption of the model may lead to identification of the evolution of the tourism market in terms of origin, type and number of visitors, as well as the development of tourism supply, administrative structures and even the influence of the tourism industry to the destination.

For this reason the model has been applied in numerous studies and is widely accepted for describing the evolution of a tourist destination (Hovinen 1981, Strapp 1988, Cooper and Jackson 1989, Ioannides 1992). It is a very popular model amongst geographers (Butler 1993, Butler 2006, Pearce 1989, Burton 1995), constituting a general model that integrates a dynamic component, namely the development of tourism in a region over space and time.

It should be noted that most applications of the TALC Theory concern areas of different size than the Magnesia prefecture, mainly individual tourist destinations, or islands, as the theory itself has no clear determination regarding the type of destinations that can be applied

to (Haywood 1986). Thus, the same analysis could be conducted for each individual area of Magnesia, for example for each of the Sporades islands, for some villages of Pelion, or only for the Pelion ski resort. In this way we would have the evolution of each region separately and the findings might have been different. But a key issue is the available data and the corresponding level at which they are collected, which prevents us from having long time series for many of the variables to be controlled at destinations of geographical level lower than the level of the prefecture that is the basic unit of statistical observations. Also, many of the policies implemented are related to the level of prefecture, since smaller spatial levels are not able to design and implement a series of policies for the development of economic activities.

Next the article analyzes the development of tourist arrivals in the prefecture of Magnesia, describes the basic parameters of this evolution, makes estimation for the overall level of tourism development and determines the stage reached by the prefecture of Magnesia in accordance to the TALC Theory as described previously.

## THE EVOLUTION OF TOURISM IN MAGNESIA

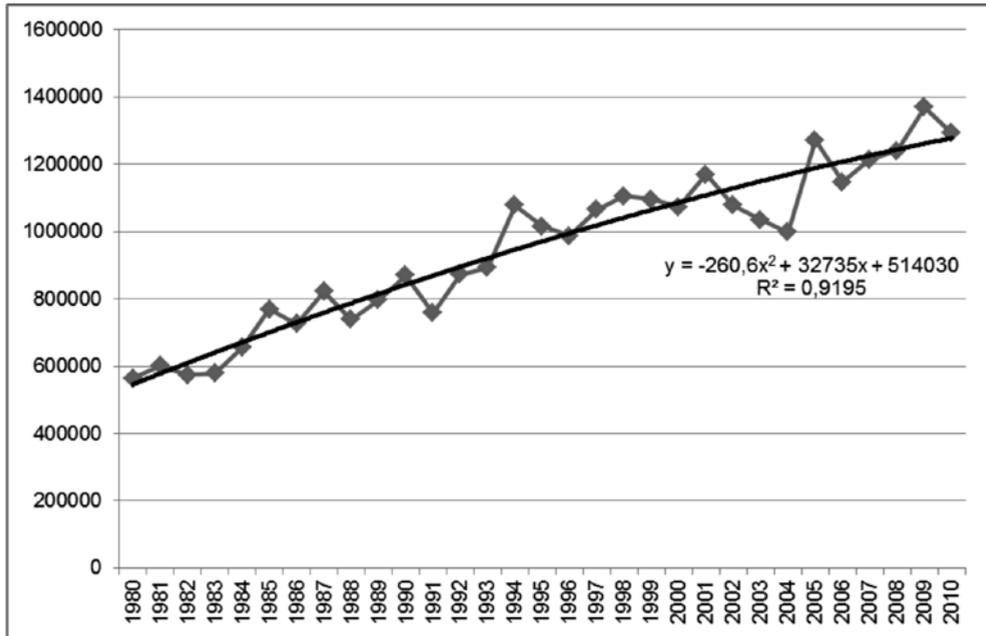
In the TALC theory, every tourist destination is treated as a dynamic entity subject to changes over time while a hierarchy of competing tourist sites is established, the degree of involvement of economic operators in the tourism industry is examined and changes in demand are recorded.

In Magnesia over the last 30 years there is a considerable tourist traffic, as the insular part of the prefecture and especially Skiathos is an internationally renowned tourism destination that attracts large number of tourists based on the dominant model of “sun and sea” mass tourism, but also the continental part plays an important role in the tourism offer of Magnesia with enough resources and infrastructure. Thus we observe that the number of overnight stays has increased from approximately 600,000 nights in 1980 to about 1,400,000 in 2009 (with a slight reduction in 2010 the latest year with available data) an increase of approximately 2.5 times the initial value, suggesting an important dynamic. A more careful glance at Figure 1 shows that this evolution is relatively stable (despite some fluctuations from year to year) with a slight upward trend as it is natural. This figure points to two different stages in the TALC theory.

The first stage is that of involvement and actually at the beginning of this stage, as described above and relates to the initial stages of tourism development of an area. The second stage, which might fit this picture, is the stage of consolidation, where the growth rate of tourists decline, but that does not correspond to our case. Another possible explanation could be that the area has already reached the point of stagnation and it has passed to the revitalization stage, but this is unlikely to happen in Magnesia, as it will be explained below. Another factor to be considered for understanding the stage in which the area might be according to the TALC Theory, is its recognition in the international tourism market. According to the data

available from all the nights spent 60% concerns domestic tourists and 40% foreigners, fact which also points to initial stages of development (Figure 2).

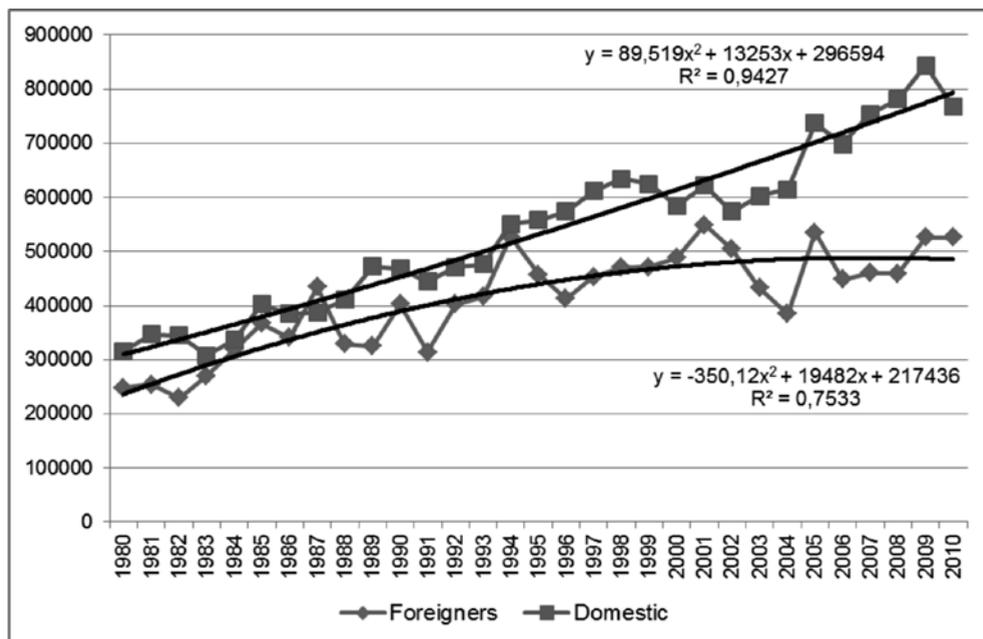
**Figure 1: Evolution of Nights Spent in Magnesia**



Source: All Media data base, own calculations.

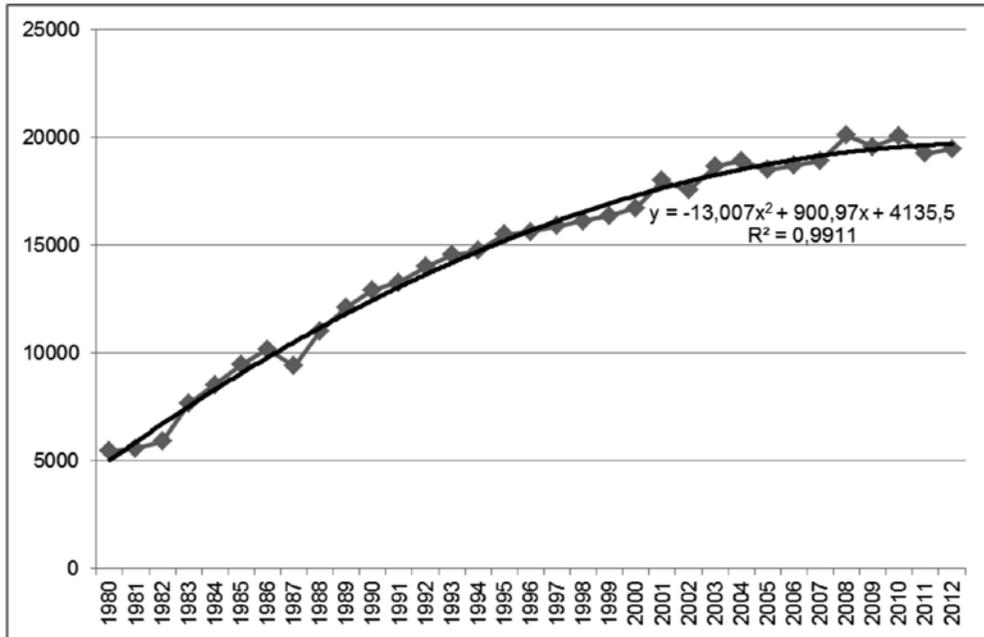
It should also be noted that the evolution of nights spent according to the origin of tourists (Figure 2) gives an upward trend for domestic visitors, while for foreign visitors gives a trend with reduced growth rate that tends to stabilization. This means that the areas that attract the largest number of foreign visitors, especially the Sporades islands and mostly Skiathos, are perhaps in a different stage in the TALC model relatively to the rest of Magnesia.

**Figure 2: Evolution of Nights Spent in Magnesia by Visitors' Origin**



Source: All Media data base, own calculations.

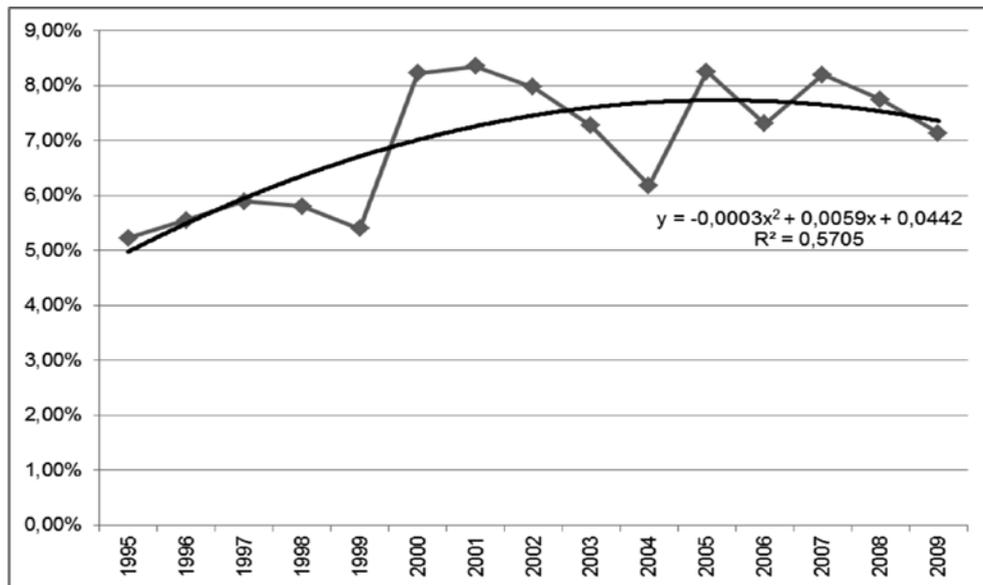
A similar picture is observed when examining the data for basic tourist infrastructure in Magnesia, as measured by the tourist beds. As shown in Figure 3, the number of beds in the prefecture has risen from about 5,000 in 1980 to nearly 20,000 in 2012. This means a quadrupling over the last 30 years with a constant growth rate, as shown by the data. This icon refers more to the early stages of involvement, as discussed previously, not to the stages of consolidation or rejuvenation, in which the increase of infrastructure is less and sometimes up to zero, as at these stages the density of the use of available structures and infrastructure plays the most important role. Furthermore, according to the analysis of Butler an area in the development stage will show considerable amount of foreign investments in the tourism sector. Also, the number of visitors exceeds the number of local residents during peak periods. Of course, this may occur in the insular part of the prefecture, but in the whole of Magnesia there are no high concentrations of visitors and there have not been implemented large foreign investments in tourism.

**Figure 3: Evolution of the Number of Beds in Magnesia**

Source: All Media data base, own calculations.

Another key element in understanding the contribution of tourism to the local economy which will help us to understand the stage of development in which the area might be according to the TALC Theory, is the contribution of tourism to the local GDP. From the available data of the last 15 years we see that the contribution of tourism to the GDP of the Magnesia Prefecture is just above 7%, with a higher value slightly above 8% and an initial value just over 5%. As mentioned above, the relevant figure for the whole country exceeds 15%. Of course these figures can be used as indicative only, as there is not a detailed input-output study of the local economy or a Tourism Satellite Accounts study for Magnesia, which will show us the real impact of tourism on local economy. Although we can reasonably assume that, in some areas, especially in the islands of Sporades tourism is almost 50% of the local economy, the picture we see here for the whole of Magnesia eventually refers to the initial stages of tourism development as it was the case in previous figures.

**Figure 4: Participation of the Tourism Sector in the GDP of Magnesia**



Source: All Media data base, own calculations.

What we should also consider is whether the growth potential of tourism is affected by changes in other sectors of the local economy, which partially compete with tourism for the use of certain resources, like the primary sector. Also, we should investigate the effects and results of the existing institutional framework, and the framework of local tourism governance. Particularly, it is obvious that the institutional framework for construction in many areas that are considered areas of protection of local architecture (such as Pelion for example) effects on the evolution of tourism, while an important role is also played by the function of local bodies in terms of the installation of new hotel units and other tourism investment in the region. Of course the issue of approval or rejection of investment initiatives cannot concentrate only economic issues, as other factors play an important role and especially environmental and social issues, but it is clear that in an economy with a focus on tourism the amount of investments would be much higher. This we could say that is one more reason to classify the Magnesia Prefecture in the early stages of tourism development and therefore in the initial stages of the TALC Theory.

From a previous research for tourism development in Magnesia (Petraokos, 2010) another fact which complicates the possibility of classifying the area into one of the stages of the TALC Theory is discussed below. This fact is the number of secondary housing available in Magnesia. According to the data of Table 1, we see that the number of secondary houses in the area is roughly equal to the number of rooms in tourist dwellings. Considering that such a residence concerns at least a family of 4 persons, then the number of available “beds” for visitors is multiplied, only in this case we cannot calculate nor the time spent, neither the charging caused by the users of these houses in the area. By deeply examining Table 1 we

see that the picture is varying depending on the area that we consider. So in the insular Municipalities the number of hotel rooms far exceeds the number of both permanent housing and secondary housing, while in the area of Pelion the distribution of hotel rooms and secondary housing have considerable variations, which leads us to the conclusion that every Municipality has different character in relation to tourism development. Also, the plethora of secondary homes in some cases would be further analyzed whether they are new constructions (implying a small amount of capital invested in the area) or it is “family” homes, which are used for summer vacation by residents of other areas which have their origin in Magnesia and keep such housing for holiday purposes.

**Table 1: Distribution of Houses and Hotel Beds in Magnesia’s Municipalities**

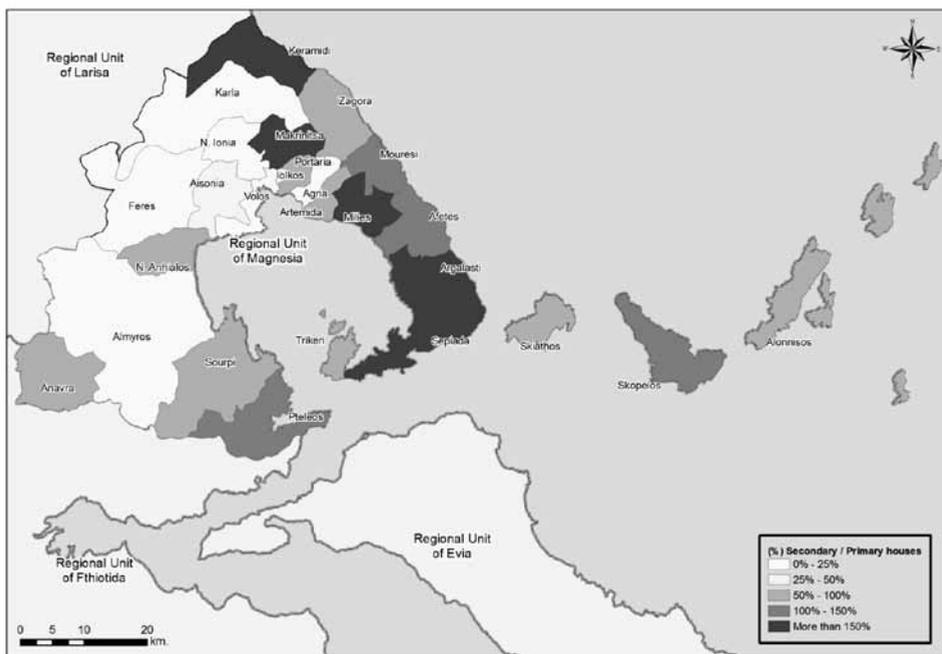
	Primary houses	Secondary houses	Total Accommodations		% Secondary / primary houses	% hotel rooms / primary houses
			Rooms	Beds		
Magnesia	65.720	21.438	20653	41667	32,62	31,43
Agria	1.772	383	382	796	21,61	21,56
Argalasti	704	1.135	619	1385	161,22	87,93
Artemida	1.508	1.215	146	324	80,57	9,68
Afetes	602	856	340	693	142,19	56,48
Zagora	1.233	790	498	996	64,07	40,39
Milies	1.021	1.605	1329	2944	157,20	130,17
Mouresi	931	1.299	1891	3483	139,53	203,11
Portaria	642	580	524	1069	90,34	81,62
Sepiada	825	1.276	1098	2174	154,67	133,09
Keramidi	217	392	29	64	180,65	13,36
Makrinita	203	419	364	558	206,40	179,31
Trikeri	598	458	100	208	76,59	16,72
Alonissos	835	688	1564	3277	82,40	187,31
Skiathos	1.873	1.069	6742	13563	57,07	359,96
Skopelos	1.635	1.842	3531	7268	112,66	215,96
Volos	27.875	2.354	1038	1910	8,44	3,72
Aisonia	893	229	0	0	25,64	0,00
Almyros	4.015	747	26	48	18,61	0,65
Iolkos	652	221	10	19	33,90	1,53
Karla	1.434	181	0	0	12,62	0,00

N. Anhiolos	2.144	1.091	169	331	50,89	7,88
N. Ionia	10.195	697	3	5	6,84	0,03
Pteleos	918	942	180	400	102,61	19,61
Sourpi	1.070	608	70	152	56,82	6,54
Feres	1.737	239	0	0	13,76	0,00
Anavra	188	122	0	0	64,89	0,00

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, National Tourism Organization of Greece (Thessaly Office), 2009

Map 1 shows the spatial concentration of secondary homes in Magnesia’s Municipalities (the structure of local authorities prior 2010). The strong presence of secondary homes in the area of Pelion is characteristic, while the western and southern parts of Magnesia clearly show lower concentrations. Here it should be noted that the secondary housing is not considered by the TALC Theory, as a phenomenon that is part of the tourist activity, despite the fact that the use of space and services resembles that of tourism, and its use is focused in time while it is also one of the elongation factors of the tourist season, which is important for the local economy.

**Map 1: Secondary to Primary Houses in Magnesia**

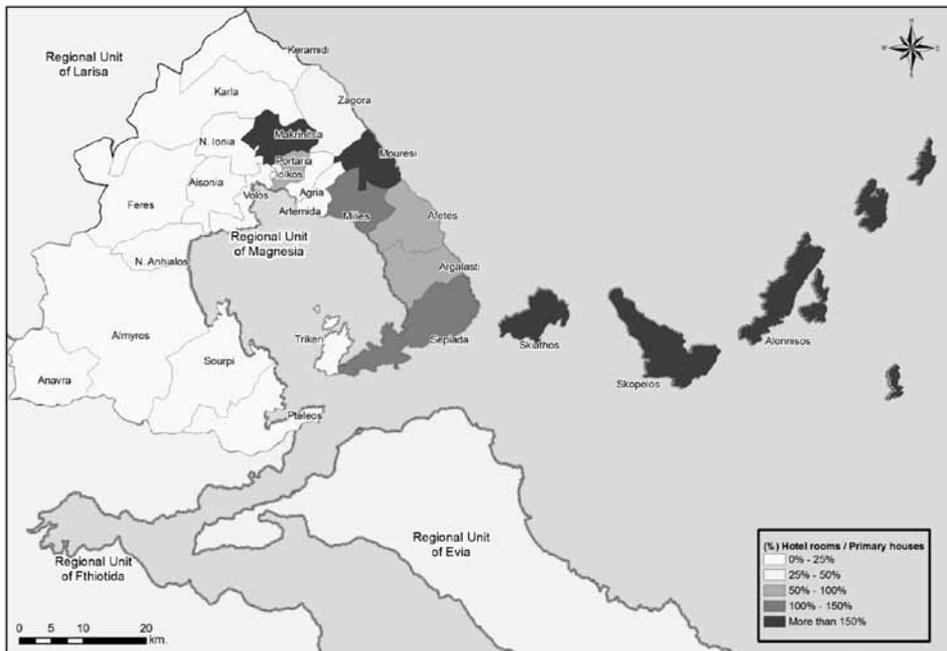


Source: Table 1

Similarly, the Map 2 shows the spatial distribution of the rooms in tourist dwellings. The over-concentration of tourist infrastructure in the Sporades islands is distinctive, and to a lesser extent there is a presence of tourist infrastructure in the Pelion area. Even more prominent in this map is the lack of tourist infrastructure in the West and South Magnesia. The distribution of tourist infrastructure in Magnesia (including secondary houses) is obvious from the two maps, and also the high dependence of the islands on the classic 3S tourist model.

These figures show us that it is clearly difficult to fit the situation in Magnesia accurately in the TALC Theory. However, the data recorded lead to the conclusion that we are still in early stages of tourism development, with local variations. Therefore, we should expect increased tourist flows in the future, as tourism is one of the sectors which may help Magnesia and the country as a whole to overcome the current economic crisis.

**Map 2: Hotel Rooms to Primary Houses in Magnesia**



Source: Table 1

## STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN MAGNESIA

The results derived from the above analysis, show that the Prefecture of Magnesia as a whole and despite the differences that exist by area, lies in the early or intermediate stages of tourism

development. As tourism in accordance to all current analyses is one of the sectors that can play an important role in country's economic recovery, it is certainly expected to constitute a significant growth factor for Magnesia. For this reason, the area should be properly prepared so that it can create the conditions for better management of the dynamics of tourism. Below some recommendations are made for the integrated development of tourism in Magnesia.

***(a) Improving tourism related structure***

Both the purely tourist facilities like hotels, as well as dining and recreation facilities should be renewed at regular intervals. Aside from the aesthetic point of view, the renewal should be made for improving the efficiency of buildings and facilities in a number of parameters such as energy efficiency, or to avoid unnecessary consumption of water or other natural resources. At the same time, the improvement of the tourism related structure would be made also by withdrawing the aged structures, which cannot accept further improvement.

***(b) Improving quality of services***

The most important factor for maintaining high growth rates in the tourism sector of a region is to achieve a high standard of the services provided while maintaining the quality / price ratio to levels acceptable by consumers. For the biggest part of tourism and accompanying services (dining, recreation, transport), the quality level is an issue that much attention should be given. Therefore most of the enterprises of the area should move towards a system of quality certification (such as ISO or HACCP) for both the applied procedures, and for the raw or intermediate materials used. In this way they would ensure a constantly high level of the services provided.

***(c) Strengthening of cooperation networks***

Cooperation networks have two aspects. One is the collaboration at the local level or among companies within the same sector to ensure common procedures for supply of raw materials or reaching out to customers, or between companies of different sectors to ensure vertical interconnection and integration of the local economy. These networks are poorly developed in the region and individual companies, but also collective bodies (like business associations) should seek to enhance cooperation networks.

The other dimension of cooperation networks is the networks of local businesses in total with foreign companies and agencies that largely determine the development of tourism. At this level the approach and the establishment of cooperation networks is more complex as the major tour operators operate on their own terms which they try to impose on individual areas. But a systemic approach of the region as a whole, and not individual companies, could provide a different perspective on this kind of cooperation.

***(d) Improving tourism promotion***

The traditional distribution channels of tourism demand and supply continue to play an important role in tourism development. However, in recent years with the development of alternative forms of tourism and the development of specific markets and specific demand the

issue of tourism promotion through specialized channels plays an important role. Essentially, the area should focus on two different issues. The majority of tourist traffic concerning mass tourism should be approached with the classic promotion techniques (exhibitions TV commercials, etc.), but this promotion should concern the whole region and the potential it has for receiving visitors in total and not in separate areas. On the other hand, alternative means that have been developed enable to approach alternative customers, but in this case the services provided should be very well organized, in order to meet their specific requirements.

***(e) Investments in alternative activities***

The alternative activities are practically those activities that are not related to the area of the beach, as most of the tourist traffic is focused around the beach, swimming and sun. These alternative activities offer opportunities for tourists to experience a different way of visiting the area. Moreover, for the region they are an additional source of income and a chance to prolong the tourist season, as they attract demand outside the peak period. These alternative activities may relate to environmental friendly activities, educational and academic activities, religious activities, sports activities, agricultural activities and many other types of specialized approach. In the area there have already been developed several such efforts and the implementation of other projects in this direction should be promoted.

***(f) Development of human resources***

One of the key success factors in tourism is the level of human capital. Once the visitor arrives at a place in any activity in which he/she participates, in every service that is provided to him/her, a number of workers are directly or indirectly involved. The largest part of the quality offered to a visitor is affected from the people dealing with the provision of the services. It is therefore a critical factor, perhaps the most crucial, to have appropriately trained and qualified staff. But in many cases, especially in small and very small enterprises (which are the majority in the area) it is almost impossible to have qualified staff, as the workers in such businesses are the entrepreneur himself and most often members of his/hers household. This fact does not ensure that the staff has the appropriate expertise. Appropriate actions for the training of personnel should therefore take place, and a series of legal problems related to the accessibility of the staff to these actions should be removed.

***(g) Identify areas for investment location***

Regardless if we talk about tourism or investments in other sectors, a clear identification of areas of absolute protection of the environment, and areas subject to other limitations such as archaeological sites, land of high agricultural productivity etc. should be made. This identification in addition to prohibition measures should however indicate areas available for development, as well as criteria for environmental protection, for local integration, for quality adjustment and so on, which the proposed projects should follow. But in order to make this identification, urban planning and spatial planning projects should be accelerated.

***(h) Environmental Management Systems - Monitoring tourism development - impact analysis***

Apart from the quality certification systems such as ISO and HACCP, as mentioned above,

the implementation of environmental management systems (like EMAS) should be promoted to the greatest possible number of companies. Although these systems do not directly affect the services provided, they enhance the “sustainable” dimension of the relevant activities. Thus, by reducing the environmental burdens produced by individual activities in a certain area, we can say that this area becomes more attractive, particularly for high-level tourism, as a fundamental factor for attracting visitors is the quality of the environment.

Apart from the implementation of any improvement movements in the individual enterprise, the local community and its statutory bodies should have the appropriate tools to monitor the development of tourism and the effects it causes in the region, having as a scope to maintain the level of development of the region, and to avoid possible adverse effects. This scope can be addressed by a monitoring mechanism of tourism activity. This mechanism will monitor the development of tourism at the local level, the evolutions in global tourism demand and will be responsible for making recommendations to the Local and Regional Government, and also to the Government for the adoption and the implementation of measures to improve the tourism product of the region.

***(i) Extend the tourist season***

The dominance of the “sun – sea” model and therefore the concentration of tourist flows in the summer period is obvious for the island part of the prefecture. The inland part has a relatively diversified distribution of tourist flows during the year, due to the different capabilities given from the presence of the ski resort in winter, or the city of Volos which attracts “city break” tourism. Alongside the strengthening of the alternative forms (proposed above) the main issue for achieving an extended tourist season in an area and in particular in Magnesia, is to maintain accessibility at high levels through external linkages (both by plane as well as with other means of transportation).

Also a paramount concern should be to provide integrated and flexible packages to potential visitors, which will contain in any case those activities that the visitor wants (“tailor made” packages) and that will ensure the highest acquisition of the experience in which the visitor anticipates.

***(j) Development of winter tourism - exploiting mountainous areas***

As previously described, the available tourism infrastructure is concentrated in some parts of the prefecture. With the exception of the west – plain part of the prefecture which is dominated by the rural economy and the development of tourism supply is very low, in other areas, mainly in mountainous and semi mountainous areas, the possibility of developing alternative activities is important. In this direction, the mountainous part of the prefecture should be studied thoroughly for what activities should be developed there (for example if environmental friendly activities are more feasible to implement than a new ski resort) so as to provide new business opportunities. Although attracting demand for such activities during the current crisis period is not easy, development chances depend almost exclusively on any investment opportunities can be realized in the coming years. At this local scale financial

tools which support similar actions are available and should be exploited to the maximum extent possible.

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this article was to make a brief presentation of the Tourism Area Life Cycle Theory and its application to the prefecture of Magnesia for the period 1980-2010. The application of the TALC Theory was held by studying the change in the number of visitors and by recognizing the stage of the theory (exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline or regeneration) in which the region fits. The positioning of a region in the TALC model is undoubtedly of special significance, since it provides the possibility of ranking the region in one of the stages of the theory. At the same time, it is a step of identifying weaknesses and shortages of the region in the tourism market.

According to the analysis carried out in the article, Magnesia, with the exception of certain sub-regions, is located at initial or intermediate stages of development and is expected to attract more visitors in the coming years. Bearing the assumption that tourism is one of the sectors that can contribute to the recovery of the Greek economy it becomes clear that it adequate preparation and proper planning should be implemented so that the emerging favorable prospects could be utilized for the benefit of the region.

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# Destination marketing using multiple social media: the case of ‘Visit Ierapetra’

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## ABSTRACT

Social media are gaining prominence as an effective tool for destination marketing. Used properly, social media provides destination management organizations (DMOs) with a low cost but very effective global marketing, communications and customer engagement platform. In fact, social media pose both opportunities and challenges for DMOs. In this respect, the aim of this paper is to analyze and present the social media strategy of the Greek Municipality of Ierapetra – ‘Visit Ierapetra’. In the analysis, social media usage patterns were identified that could serve as good practices for other destinations and DMOs, especially for other municipalities in Greece, at a time when public sector cuts in their funding are requiring them to seek greater value in the way marketing budgets are spent. Findings and discussion of this study are useful to industry practitioners and academic researchers interested in the use of social media in destination marketing.

**Keywords:** Social media, tourism destinations, destination marketing organizations, Greece.

## INTRODUCTION

The change in the motivations and preferences of tourists, and the intense competition in a rapidly and radically changing global environment, have forced destinations to seek more innovative marketing strategies in order to gain a competitive advantage. Moreover, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) are under increasing pressure to demonstrate cost effectiveness and evidence the additional value which accrues from their marketing interventions. This pressure is exacerbated further by the continuing global economic crisis, its impact on their public spending resource allocation, and the subsequent drive for value-for-money. If DMOs cannot demonstrate this added value, they will face further budget reductions and the curtailment of their activities (Morgan, Hastings and Pritchard, 2012).

On the other hand, destination marketing practices are greatly influenced by advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) due to the fragmented and information intensive nature of destination products (Cobos, Wang and Okumus, 2009). Online information is now one of a primary influences on consumer decisions in nearly all major markets. Technological changes also impact on the way that destinations manage and market themselves. ICTs have changed the tourism industry in an unprecedented way, and to a degree that has not been seen in any other sector (WTO and ETC, 2008). In addition, one significant development in the ICTs are social media, which gain prominence as an element of DMOs marketing strategy, offering them the opportunity to reach a global audience with limited resources (Hays, Page and Buhalis, 2013). In fact, the emergence of Web 2.0 and social media – two popular buzzwords today (Leung et al., 2013) – has resulted in an explosive increase of not only travel-related content, but also applications and technology for effective destination marketing (Lee and Wicks, 2010; Sigala, 2009). In a marketplace where consumers become more demanding, distribution is more transparent and supply is increasingly competitive, keeping pace with the challenges will determine destinations' competitive positioning (WTO and ETC, 2008).

In an effort to contribute to the expanding literature and knowledge on social media strategies used by DMOs, this paper aims to analyze and present the social media strategy of the Greek Municipality of Ierapetra – 'Visit Ierapetra'. In recent years, Greece found itself in the midst of a deep economic crisis. At the same time, tourism is seen as the driving force behind country's economic recovery. In 2012, the contribution of tourism to Greek GDP amounted to 16.4%, while total employment in tourism (688,800 jobs) corresponded to 18.3% of the workforce (SETE, 2014). However, Greece faces strong competition from countries characterized, by either enhanced quality and high differentiation tourism products (e.g. Spain) or from lower cost (e.g. Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia). Greece offers the same product as its competitors and claims a share of the same tourist markets (mainly tourists from countries of NW Europe). For these reasons, an important factor in maintaining the competitiveness of the country is an integrated, modernized and cost effective marketing strategy of the Greek tourism product. Consequently, the use of social media by DMOs in Greece for marketing purposes is of great importance. Towards that scope, in our analysis social media usage patterns were identified that could serve as good practices for other destinations and DMOs, especially other municipalities in Greece, at a time when public sector cuts in their funding are requiring them to seek greater value in the way marketing budgets are spent.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The marketing and promotion of a destination to potential visitors is vital. However, there is no end of ways, in which a destination can be promoted, and in every destination community there is a diverse range of opinions on the tactics that should be employed (Pike, 2004). A considerable body of studies has emphasized that adoption of social media and other Web

2.0 tools, is one of the most important and effective ways for tourism enterprises and DMOs to enhance their competitiveness. The main types of social media sites are media-sharing sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube), virtual worlds (e.g. Second Life), blogging (e.g. Travelblog) or microblogging (e.g. Twitter), social bookmarking and voting sites (e.g. Delicious, Digg), review sites (e.g. TripAdvisor), social knowledge sharing sites (e.g. Wikitravel), and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook or LinkedIn). Building on the foundation of Web 2.0, social media applications have facilitated unprecedented growth in human interaction in modern times (Lange-Faria and Elliot, 2012).

The emergence of social media has already started revolutionizing the tourism industry (Matloka and Buhalis, 2010) and various authors have highlighted the potential contribution of social media to destination marketing. The majority of available studies to date focus on the level of social media adoption and exploitation by DMOs, especially NTOs (Antoniadis, Vrana and Zafiroopoulos, 2014; Assiouras, 2011; Hamill, Stevenson and Attard, 2012; Hays, Page and Buhalis, 2013; Milwood, Marchiori and Zach, 2013; Munar, 2012; Stankov, Lazic and Dragivecic, 2010; Zouganeli, Trihas and Antonaki, 2011). Furthermore, a number of studies have examined a wide range of strategic and operational marketing issues relating to social media adoption by destinations, including the use of social media for brand awareness, reputation management, e-CRM, e-marketing, word-of-mouth effects and so on (Hamill and Stevenson, 2012). According to Lee and Wicks (2010), there seems to be a general consensus that social media can play a vital role in marketing and promoting tourist destinations. Social media offer DMOs with a tool alternative to traditional marketing to reach a global audience with limited resources and high returns. They can be effective for marketing and for building a relationship with customers. Social network sites provide an ideal platform to communicate with users and interact with them to gain more information about their interests, preferences, needs, wishes and demands (Maurer and Wiegmann, 2011). Hamill, Stevenson and Attard (2012) summarise the potential business benefits for DMOs from proactive social media engagement under five main headings: market/customer knowledge and insight, engagement and reputation management, enhanced customer experience and loyalty, sales/marketing effectiveness, efficiency and ROI, and finally, operations/internal processes. According to Sigala (2009), many city destination organizations, nowadays, have incorporated social networking features into their e-business model and strategy in order to further enhance communication with customers and benefit from the electronic word-of-mouth. Yayli, Bayram and Bayram (2011) examined the way European DMOs are leveraging Twitter to reach potential visitors by content analyzing their 'tweets'. Their main conclusion is that Twitter provides countless opportunities for DMOs to interact with customers first hand, and even tap on influential users who can create an even bigger impact for their brand.

To ensure that social media efforts will be effective and deliver high ROI on project spend, Hamill and Stevenson (2012) suggest that particular attention should be paid to measuring the '4Is' of social media performance both for individual social media channels and across all social media generally:

- Involvement – the level of customer involvement in various social media channels e.g. YouTube views, numbers participating in online communities, time spent, frequency, etc.
- Interaction – actions taken by online community members e.g. read, post, comment, re-view, recommend.
- Intimacy – the level of affection or a version shown to the brand; community sentiments, opinions expressed etc.
- Influence – advocacy, viral forwards, referrals and recommendations, social bookmarking, retweets etc.

Overall, all authors agree that tourism organizations that do not adopt social media will lack a competitive advantage. However, what could be more detrimental than not understanding or adopting social media practices is using such practices in a poor manner (Hays, Page and Buhalis, 2013). As Shao, Rodríguez and Gretzel (2012, p. 96) mention: “*the social media wave is only gaining in momentum and drowning in it is a real danger for many DMOs*”. In fact, social media pose both opportunities and challenges for DMOs. A recent study by Trihas et al. (2013), investigated the use of social media among 325 municipalities in Greece for destination marketing purposes. They found that despite the importance of keeping up with technological developments, most municipalities in Greece seem not to be familiar with the new Web 2.0 technologies. Their results showed that social media usage among Greek municipalities is still very limited and largely experimental. Greek municipalities are only just beginning to understand and appreciate how they can use social media to promote themselves. Undoubtedly they could be considered as ‘non starters’ or ‘reluctant adopters’. The low levels of technology adoption by the Greek DMOs confirmed also by Sigala (2013) who found Greece to be very slow and delayed in the development and adoption of successful destination management systems (DMS) at national, regional and local destination levels.

A successful social media presence requires an understanding of mechanisms of these sites. Jorgensen (2011) argues that social media must be managed by skilled people, but municipalities do not necessarily have social media experts employed who can ensure a beneficial presence. In addition, municipalities have other aspects on top of this to consider as they are public organizations. It seems that marketers are still searching for ways to commercially exploit social networks potentials and as a result they are still holding back and sticking to well known promotion models (Slivar, 2009). It is more than clear that most municipalities need to rethink their current approach and take substantial action if they are to fully exploit the potential of social media in the future (O’ Connor, 2011). Hence, more knowledge is needed regarding the way that municipalities and other local administrations can exploit social media for destination marketing purposes.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As mentioned above, in a previous study by Trihas et al. (2013), the use of social media

among all municipalities in Greece was examined for destination marketing purposes. The authors surprisingly found that among the top ten municipalities regarding the size of their online communities was a municipality that was neither a big city (e.g. Athens, Heraklion) nor a famous tourism destination (e.g. Santorini, Rhodes) that could justify a big number of fans, and that town was Ierapetra. This fact triggered the authors' interest to analyze and present the social media strategy of this Greek Municipality – 'Visit Ierapetra', in order to identify social media usage patterns that could serve as good practices for other destinations and DMOs, especially for other municipalities in Greece. In order to meet this objective, semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with four members of the team responsible for the 'Visit Ierapetra' project, in order to gain a wide range of information about their social media marketing activity. The four interviews took place during May 2013.

## FINDINGS

The coastal town of Ierapetra is located on the southeast part of Crete, Greece. It is the fourth most populous town in Crete with 16,139 inhabitants (2011). Its economy is based mostly on agriculture (olive oil, vegetables, fruits) and secondly on tourism. The average annual temperature of 19.7 °C (67 °F) enhances these activities. Apart from the excellent climate, the area is famous for its geomorphology, together with the rich natural, cultural and social resources. Compared with other famous tourism destinations in Crete (e.g. Chania, Heraklion, Rethymnon, Hersonissos, Malia, Elounda, Agios Nikolaos) is one of the least known destinations on the island. In 2013, tourist arrivals in the wider area of Ierapetra reached 127,000, a number that is considered small compared with the 3,335,500 tourists who in total visited Crete in the same year (SETE, 2014).

### *THE 'VISIT IERAPETRA' PROJECT*

'Visit Ierapetra' is the official tourism e-marketing campaign of the Municipality of Ierapetra. It was decided to incorporate 'visit' in the name of the campaign to denote the organization focus and respond to the shift in recent years away from the more bureaucratic sounding names that are representative of municipality divisions (Pike, 2008). The campaign is the outcome of the collaboration between the tourism board of the Municipality of Ierapetra and the Department of Commerce and Marketing of the Technological Educational Institute of Crete. This cooperation was established in July 2012 with the aim to utilize e-marketing tools (especially Web 2.0 applications), in order to enhance awareness and improve perceptions and images of Ierapetra as a tourism destination within the target markets (Germany, UK, France, USA, Italy and the rising markets of Russia and Israel). The Municipality of Ierapetra, as many other municipalities in Greece, faced public sector cuts in their funding and budget reductions for tourism promotion. As a result, the tourism board of the municipality decided to reduce traditional promotion actions that are expensive (e.g. participation in tourism exhibitions, production of brochures, etc) and focus on alternative cost-effective ways of promotion. Following the redesign and relaunch of the municipality tourism website (<http://www.ierapetra.gr>), the time was right to

support this with a proactive social media marketing strategy. At this point it is important to mention that the main body responsible for the promotion of Crete as a tourism destination is the Region of Crete. Nevertheless, in the island of Crete there are many municipalities that directly compete with each other as tourism destinations as they usually targeting the same markets. That means that each municipality, represented by its local tourism administration has its own marketing goals (which may differ or be the same as those of the Region and other municipalities), has its own budget for promotion and develops its own tourism campaign. In this context, the overall objective of the project was to develop and implement a proactive, integrated and coordinated online marketing strategy – one that fully leveraged emerging social media opportunities. Based on the above, the following key strategic objectives were agreed:

- Build brand awareness - discovery of a relative unknown destination in Crete.
- Show the beauty of the area: beaches (many big and small crystal-clear beaches) – about 45km of beach area in total, nature (gorges etc), town (attractions, life, nightlife), taste (local specialties, products, Raki, food), events (revelries, concerts, especially during summer).
- Raise and maximize positive e-Word-of-Mouth about the area.
- Attract more visitors from abroad (inbound tourism).
- Attract more visitors from Greece and Crete (domestic tourism).
- Attract more visitors from abroad that are currently visiting other parts of Crete.

Towards achieving these goals, a number of social media profiles were created across different platforms, such as Facebook, Flickr, Pinterest, YouTube, Twitter etc. It was decided that most weight would initially go on Facebook, as it is the most popular social network to date (eBizMBA, 2014). It is important to note that most of the other social media accounts were on trial basis and depending on initial results, more weight will be given in the future on the most promising ones of these. Maintaining many social accounts is a very time-consuming process, so it is virtually impossible to give the same weight in all of them.

### *IMPORTANCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY*

Photography is the most shareable item on social media (Ipsos, 2013) and one of the most powerful media (along with video) to showcase a destination to potential visitors. It was therefore crucial for the success of the project, the use of high quality material to publish across media. Initially, there was some research on the archive of photography owned by the municipality, but the results were rather disappointing. Most available photography was either old, low-resolution, not available in digital format or had unclear copyright. It was obvious that the project could not rely on this material and therefore new photos had to be acquired. Also, it was decided that most photography should be under Creative Commons license to encourage distribution and spread (Creative Commons, 2013). To acquire high quality photographs at the minimal cost, the people responsible for the project teamed up with skilled amateur photographers of the area that offered their material voluntarily. Acquired photography was used across all social media.

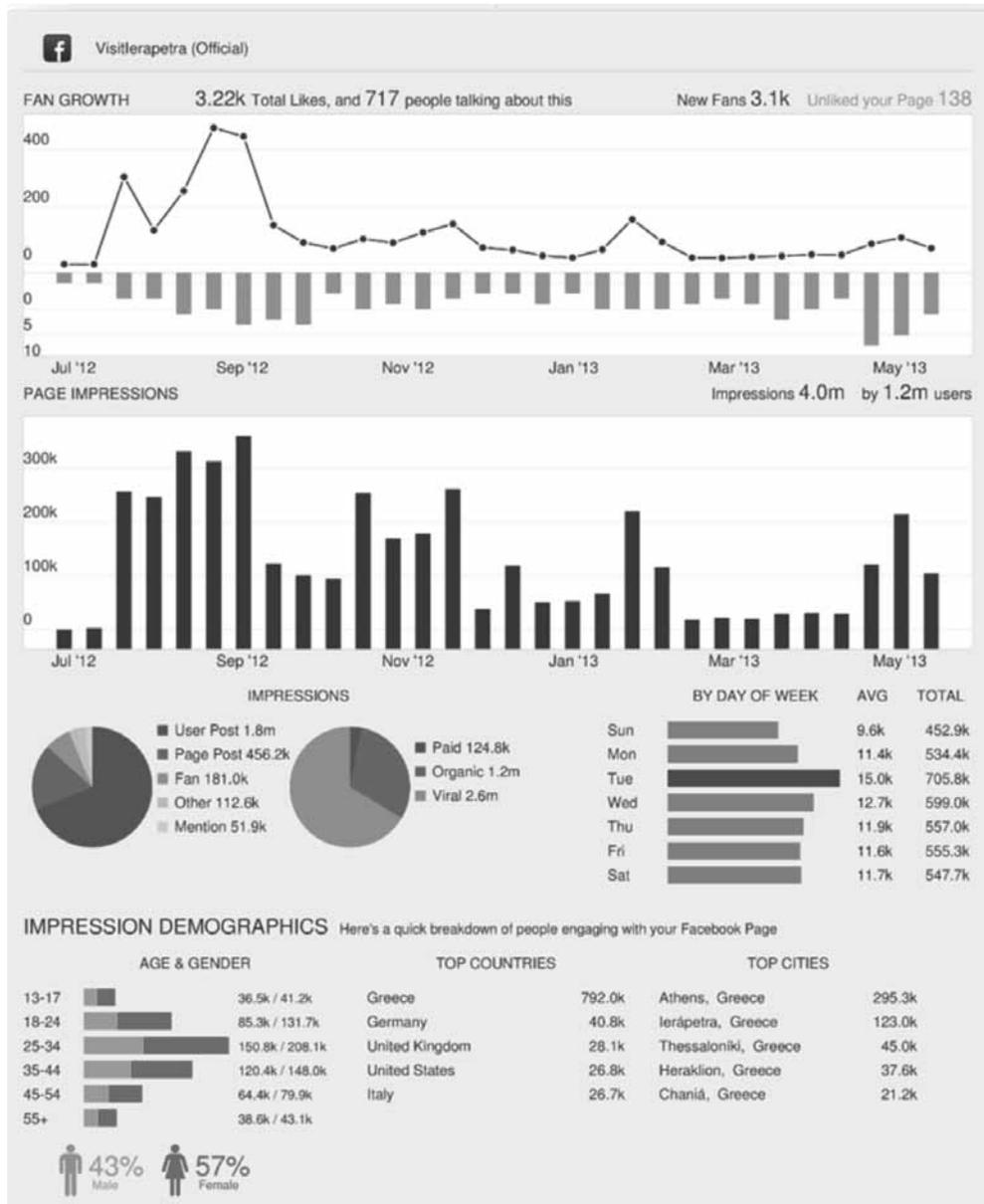
## FACEBOOK

The main publishing strategy included use of high-quality photography, watermarked with the location information (“*area of Ierapetra, Crete*”). Posting of photos (or stories) was performed 1 to 3 times per day (morning, noon and late evening). Furthermore, collaboration was launched with well-established (with many fans/likes) Facebook pages with relevant content in order for them to re-post (share) content to their fans, thus distributing the material to a much wider audience. This was one of the most important aspects for the success of the campaign, as it is very difficult to initially establish a good fan base at the beginning of a new page. Teaming up with existing pages of related topics can have a benefit to both parties, as they are usually looking for content that you can provide and they will publish it to their wide fan base. Providing a link to your page when they post your content, is usually enough for acquiring a respectable amount of fans with every post.

One very important decision was whether there would be one Facebook profile for everything that had to do with the municipality, both tourist and local information. It was clear that a common profile for both tourists and citizens would probably cause a number of serious problems. The main concern was the possibility the profile to end up a place of argument and expression of distress of the local population, mainly due to a general hostility towards the municipality and the elected officials. Also the target groups of tourists/visitors and locals are very different and it was concluded that mixing up tourist and municipality information could only cause confusion and problems. Therefore, it was decided that there should be two separate profiles, one for municipality issues and one for tourist information.

The focus of this study is clearly on the tourist information profile which shares only tourist-related information and the main purpose of the posts is to reveal the beauty of the area and the events that visitors can enjoy. Also, it was very important for the main language to be English, along with Greek and other language whenever it was possible. An interesting finding after a year of service, and studying the comments of the posts, is that although there were many residents of the area fans of the page, they rarely posted any negative comments, but instead they were proud for the beauty of their area, and clearly understood the purpose of the profile. Their help in spreading the content was actually very important, as they were very frequent “sharers” of content.

Figure 1: 'Visit Ierapetra' Facebook Statistics



### *FLICKR*

Flickr was one of the earliest and most popular social media which focused on images and photography. It is used to showcase the photography of Ierapetra at a higher resolution than Facebook. It's a much more open social media where visitors (and search engines) have much more freedom viewing the images without having to log in. This is a great place to store photos that you would want to appear on image search results (e.g. Google Image Search).

### *PINTEREST*

Pinterest is a relative new social media but one that is getting very popular at a very fast pace. In terms of content, it is image-based like Flickr, but the basic idea is making image board and "pinning" images that you like on these boards. It is a variance to the well-know "Like" function found on other social media. All Ierapetra photography was uploaded on appropriate Pinterest boards, and this was the second most frequently updated social media of the project. Results were promising but at a much lower volume compared to Facebook. Images were also in a lower quality and size than Flickr.

### *SCRIBD / ISSUU*

Scribd can be a very useful social network for publishing and sharing documents and presentations on the web. ISSUU is also for publishing documents but more appropriate for magazine-like material. Both of these networks were used and depending on the document's properties it was uploaded on the appropriate one. They are good choices for uploading multiple-page brochures, tourist guides, presentations, historical documents etc. However, this type of material for Ierapetra was quite limited and not many documents were shared. Interestingly, even with this limited material, the number of views was quite high. For example, a 700-page document describing the ancient history of Ierapetra (in English) received 3000 views in one year while the summer festivities brochure (Kyrvia) received 8000 views in about 4 months. Another interesting use of these networks, is for uploading the documents and using the EMBED code they provide to display the documents on websites (e.g. the official tourist website of Ierapetra).

### *INSTAGRAM*

Instagram is another photo sharing service but much more direct in nature. The idea is to share photos instantly as you take them with your smart phone using the Instagram App, available for all mobile platforms. The quality of the photography is not as high as in Flickr and Pinterest as the camera of mobile phones is used. However, it has a selection of filters that give a distinct character in each image that the users are familiar with. The project has experimented little with Instagram Photos but it has a clear potential in posting things "as they happen", for example during a festivity, an event etc. It is one of the most popular social networks with loyal followers and in the future it is planned for more use from 'Visit Ierapetra'.

It is also set-up to simultaneously post Instagram photos on Facebook and Twitter for more instant spread of the content.

### *TWITTER*

'Visit Ierapetra's Twitter account is very basic. With 500 tweets but only 55 followers it is definitely not a flagship social network for the project. However, everything that gets posted about Ierapetra is shared in the Twitter account.

### *FOURSQUARE*

Foursquare is the most popular Location Based Social Media and a major opportunity for tourism destinations to showcase interesting locations on their area. 'Visit Ierapetra' has created a channel there, and although in an initial state, its importance is very clear. A visitor of the area can use his mobile phone to easily find points of interest in the surrounding area, enriched with comments, tips and photos from other users of the network. Apart from the users, the page administrator is also allowed to add points of interest, photos, tips and comments as well. It is a very interesting social network to showcase points and drive visitors to these, even if there are not adequate physical road signs.

### *RESULTS*

By using social media, Ierapetra achieved hundreds of thousands impressions of advertising content to potential visitors around the world. Achieving this in any other traditional advertising form would be much more expensive, and particularly difficult to achieve it in all these countries (Greece, Germany, UK, USA, Italy, France, Israel etc.). It is also noteworthy the continuous availability of highly useful statistics that are available through Facebook insights (Figure 1) and other social media analytics, showing preferences and interests of potential visitors along with experiences of those who already visited the area. Furthermore, although paid advertising to gain new fans was used very little, due to budget limitations, the results were very promising and the cost very low. Finally, collaborating with well-established profiles of similar topics resulted to greatly augmenting the impressions to millions, at no additional cost.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study attempts to create knowledge that will help destinations to improve the effectiveness of their e-marketing strategies and plans, enabling them to make the best possible use of social media in marketing, and ultimately to be more competitive in the global marketplace. The case of 'Visit Ierapetra' is an excellent example of how a local administration can achieve effective destination marketing with a limited budget. Municipality of Ierapetra in response to the new economic situation formed in Greece in recent years

decided a shift from traditional ways of marketing to alternative cost-effective ways of promotion by exploiting social media. In this way, municipality achieved the diffusion of its promotional material to hundreds of thousands potential visitors in its target markets. Although no one can say if these online viewers will evolve into actual visits and bookings – visitor surveys could probably give an answer to that – it is recognized that the project has successfully achieved some of its key goals and objectives, especially in relation to brand awareness and e-Word-of-Mouth raise. With growing recognition of the potential of social media, it can be expected that more and more municipalities in Greece and other local tourism administrations and DMOs will engage in the future with social media for their destination marketing. While the low levels of technology adoption by the Greek DMOs do not allow the complete replacement of traditional marketing channels by e-marketing and social marketing (at least not yet), these new networks could work complementary with other marketing channels creating positive effects to tourism destinations.

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# Investigating tourism professionals' perceptions of CVB functionality in China: a qualitative projective approach

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## ABSTRACT

A qualitative projective technique was employed to identify tourism industry professionals' perceptions of the functionality of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) and the challenges facing China's event tourism industry. The results of this study indicate that the tourism industry professionals did not seem to agree on the idea of setting up western-style CVBs which are either privately-owned or semi-governmentally owned; instead, they tend to believe in more functional state-owned CVBs. The managerial and marketing implications of this study are discussed which should be beneficial to the development of China's CVBs and event tourism development. This study also provides a starting foothold for researchers who are interested in better understanding China's tourism organizations and their functionalities.

**Keywords:** CVB functionality, China, Event Tourism, Projective Technique

## INTRODUCTION

China has risen to become a top ranked tourism market in the world and Chinese cities are starting to capitalize on the bright prospects of event tourism business opportunities. On the positive side, China's event tourism business maintains an annual growth of 20% (HCEA, 2012). The fast growth of the tourism industry has an economic multiplier effect on host regions hence growing numbers of Chinese cities are showing a great interest in developing meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) and other types of event tourism. On the flipside, it should be noted that cities in China face a few common bottleneck challenges. For example, the industrial networks of event tourism business in most of Chinese cities are currently not well established. Cities in China have not been able to comprehensively brand and position themselves to showcase their competitive advantage when attracting, organizing and managing group business; and there are no market-oriented

operations or mechanisms in such cities to facilitate event tourism businesses (China Tourism Industry Guide, 2011). Additionally, the traditional state-owned tourism bureaus at different administrative levels were not originally designed to focus on event tourism marketing or promotion in terms of the functions.

As the Chinese economy becomes more open and globally convergent, the rivalry from international event tourism competitors will intensify. Such internal and external challenges impulse calls for Chinese cities to set up Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB)-like organizations which focus on bidding for group business and crafting strategic plans to develop destinations and manage group business (Wang & Shu, 2012). While more and more Chinese cities are entering the event tourism market and setting up CVBs to capitalize on and expand this new business, it is essential for Chinese tourism managers to explore and better understand the best form and functionality of CVBs in China so as to most effectively promote and market the event tourism business. Thus the purpose of this study is to inquire and discuss the effective format and functionality of CVBs from the perspective of China's tourism professionals who are engaged in event tourism.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), including Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs), play the central role in marketing their geographic areas to meeting and convention planners, the travel trade, individuals and other group businesses. Western countries attract the biggest number of international meetings and events and their CVBs generally play a key role in promoting destinations and attracting group businesses.

The literature acknowledges that CVBs provide official, unbiased information about a destination's services and facilities and serve as the focal point for the coordination of tourism industry activities. One of a CVB's critical mission is to promote and brand their destination as a desirable place for meetings and conventions and other related group businesses through travel intermediaries such as a travel agencies and meeting planners (Kim et al., 2004) and successful coordination between tourism supply side stakeholders results in effective tourism development (Moscardo, 2011). It is thus clear that the CVB's role is indispensable for a city to attract meetings and events. From the demand perspective, event planners prefer to use services provided by CVBs (or governmental tourism boards performing CVB functions) instead of other institutions because CVBs' services can satisfy their needs in an unbiased and objective manner by providing one-stop shopping opportunities that encompass the city's meeting products, services and facilities.

CVBs are primarily not-for-profit organizations that represent specific destinations. Gartrell (1994) says that a CVB must "sell the city" by performing the following six roles:

- Developing an image to position the city in the marketplace as an attractive destination for meetings and visitors.

- Coordinating the constituent elements of the industry and public sector.
- Working with meeting and group planners.
- Representing both buyers (the demand side) and sellers (the supply), so that an autonomous organization is required in order to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Providing information and responding to visitor inquiries.
- Providing leadership for the industry.

A well-known and popular term in western countries, CVBs' important role on event tourism marketing has not been well recognized in China yet till recent years. This is because tourism promotion and marketing in China has always been under the charge of the government-run tourism bureaus. Apart from China's National Tourism Administration (CNTA), every Chinese province has its provincial tourism bureau and almost every city in China has an urban tourism bureau. However, how to position a tourism bureau in a modern economy is unfortunately unclear for many of those city tourism bureaus (Tang & Xi, 2005). The problem is that the roles of government and markets have not been distinguished clearly. Such mismatched activities have actually taken a majority of the bureaus' resources inefficiently and ineffectively (Tang & Xi, 2005). Weber and Roehl (2001) suggested that CVBs have not yet been researched in a systematic and comprehensive manner. There is certainly a dearth of research about CVB roles and relationships, and this is particularly unfortunate since the roles of CVBs are often misunderstood and under-appreciated (Morrison, Bruen, & Anderson, 1998). For instance, there has been little investigation of the role of the National Tourist Organization offices abroad in the promotion of the tourism product (Webster & Ivanov, 2007).

CVBs are being set up in large Chinese cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an, Chengdu and Hangzhou, which focus on promoting and marketing event tourism. For instance, Wang and Shu (2012) studied the status quo of Hangzhou's CVB and discussed the formation of CVBs in China and how to make CVBs fully operational from the perspective of China's governmental tourism organizations. Relatively, little is known about the view of China's tourism industry professionals about CVBs in China. More specifically, to what degree are tourism industry professionals agreeable with the idea of setting up CVBs? What do the professionals think are the challenges facing China's CVBs? And what kind of organization should China's CVBs become to ensure best functionality? It is believed that a better understanding of tourism professionals' views on China's CVBs will be important since they are the front runners who know what needs strengthened or supported in marketing, bidding or organizing events. Hence, this study is designed to investigate what and how Chinese professionals think about setting up CVBs in China. Their feedback will be important to the cities which are setting up CVBs in promoting event tourism.

## DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This study adopted a qualitative projective research method in exploring and disclosing

Chinese industry professionals' views on the functions of China's CVBs. The projective technique is a unique and effective approach in conducting research spanning clinical psychology to the social sciences. However, the methodology has rarely been applied in tourism research. Projective techniques "provide verbal or visual stimuli which, through their indirection and concealed intent, encourage respondents to reveal their unconscious feelings and attitudes without being aware that they are doing so" (Will, Eadie, & MacAskill, 1996, p. 38). With this type of qualitative research, participants are asked to "match images, experiences, emotions, products and services, even people and places, to whatever is being studied" (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). This method of research helps determine what underlying thoughts occur when someone reflects on an image, figure, or idea.

There are a variety of projective techniques that have been used in marketing research, i.e. (1) association tasks; (2) completion tasks; (3) construction tasks; and (4) expressive tasks (Will et al., 1996). While each has its own features and advantages, the construction tasks essentially instruct respondents to present their opinions of other people's actions, feelings, or attitudes. This allows people to respond freely, as they are not explicitly stating how they would personally act, believe, or think (Donoghue, 2000; Gordon and Langmaid, 1988; Will et al., 1996). This study uses the 'construction tasks' projective technique to explore respondents' underlying thoughts on the phenomenon of setting up CVBs across China.

Data were collected in May 2013 when a tourism training course on "event tourism" was delivered in a university located in southern China. The training course was part of the curriculum designed for trainees who are fully employed in the tourism industry in China and pursuing masters in tourism management.

The first step was to ensure all the trainees were well informed of the definition and functions of a typical CVB in the western context. To achieve this, a lecture was given to introduce the concept of the CVB, organizational structure and the important roles and functions of CVBs in marketing, bidding for and managing event tourism. The lecture was given by a visiting scholar who teaches event tourism courses in an American midwest university.

The second step was to let trainees have a firm understanding of how CVBs are being introduced and applied in China. A manager of one of the few newly established CVBs operating in China was invited to give a guest lecture about his organizations' setup background, organizational structure, association members, budget and funding, promotion and marketing activities, etc.

After the two steps, trainees were asked to respond to the following questions: "Suppose your city is preparing to set up a similar CVB as introduced in the two lectures and your company has been invited to be a member of such an association. If you were asked by your company to offer your professional comments on the attractiveness of becoming a CVB member and how the CVB should be like, what will your comments be? Please list your response briefly and concisely."

All the written responses were collected the next day to provide sufficient time for insights. Responses were non-numeric and required content analysis. Content analysis is the method used in analyzing documents, records, or anything in textual form (Henderson, 2006). The qualitative data analysis is based on the seven-step guideline suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and Boyatzis (1998). The seven steps of data analysis include creating interview transcription, reducing raw information, identifying patterns within participants, comparing patterns across participants, creating a code, developing a selective code and determining the reliability of the code. The study took place in China, so all lectures, questions and correspondences were communicated in Chinese. The researchers involved in the content analysis are fluent in both Chinese and English. It should be noted that there may inadvertently be culturally specific terms that cannot be fully translated and the next best translation is provided.

## RESULTS

### *Respondents' demographic profiles*

A total of 58 trainees were enrolled in the class and fifty-six responses were collected, resulting in a study response rate of 96.55%. Among the 56 respondents, forty-three were hoteliers (20 general managers or deputy general managers, 20 directors and 3 department managers). Most of their hotels were ranked as either 4-star or 5-star, belonging to an international hotel chain or domestic hotel chain or independently owned or managed; four were faculty members from tourism colleges or institutes; the rest were either from tour companies, worked in a hotel association, a tourism council, a cruise club, or from a food and beverage management company. The respondents came from 23 different Chinese cities, which included major city centers such as Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Suzhou, Dalian, Shenzhen and Macau. There were 29 males and 27 females; and all received bachelor degrees and two obtained master's degrees. Majority of the respondents were in their 30s and 40s, with a few were in their 20s or 50s.

### *Results of content analysis*

As a result of content analysis, five overarching themes (see Table 1) representing respondents' perspectives about CVBs in China were identified. Each of the themes are narrated in the following paragraphs.

**Table 1: The Five Themes as a Result of Content Analysis**

	Themes based on respondents' views on CVBs in China
#1	A new concept that is gaining popularity but not well established yet
#2	Only functional as government organizations, not as private entities
#3	Rely on both the government and the group business industry for support
#4	A wait-and-see attitude
#5	Pressing needs for regulation, professional training and education

Theme 1 - A new concept that is gaining popularity but not well established yet

Many respondents expressed their lack of knowledge of CVBs, which specialized in MICE and other event tourism activities, until their exposure to the lecture and guest speaker's presentation. They perceived CVBs in China as something new and not yet well established. Examples of such comments include: 'China's CVBs are still at the preliminary stage of development;' 'Have not heard about CVBs in China yet. Only know that conventions and exhibitions are organized and managed by hotels or convention and exhibition companies;' 'CVBs in China have not been able to draw attention from tourism professionals in China at this stage;' 'China's event tourism is mainly focused on exhibitions, not conventions yet, unfortunately;' and 'due to China's situation, we cannot 'copycat' everything from the western CVBs.'

Theme 2 - Only functional as government organizations, not as private entities

Most respondents agreed that the full functionality of CVBs could only be successfully executed by government organizations in China which have the necessary funding, administrative authority and coordinative powers. One proof is that one of these bureaus' major functions involves destination marketing and promotion of tourism programs including event tourism. These functions largely overlap with the functions of CVBs. Typical examples of the comments include: 'CVB's functions in China must be placed in the framework of the government since organizing big tourism events can hardly be successful without the support of the government in China;' 'CVB funding mainly comes from the government which means that its functions are directly controlled by the government;' 'Most conventions and exhibitions in China are sponsored or organized directly by governments;' 'The private sector in China has limited power in promoting and organizing event tourism. As a result, it is hardly possible that CVBs can be set up by private sectors in China;' 'In China, the government tourism bureaus are in charge of destination marketing and promotions. CVBs' functions in promoting event tourism as well as the destinations where the event takes place overlap with that of government tourism bureaus;' and 'A CVB in China is not an independent organization, and typically serves as a department of a tourism bureau.'

Theme 3 - Rely on both the government and the group business industry for support

The respondents were impressed by the independent role of CVBs in countries like the United States. But when thinking of have the exact same structure and functions in China, many respondents believed that success of CVBs in China relies on both the support of government and event tourism companies, and hope CVBs can be a good platform to strengthen the cooperative relationship between the two parties. Typical respondent comments include: 'It is very important to strengthen cooperation between government-owned CVBs and tourism companies in terms of sharing customer data leads, inviting buyers for familiarization trips or site inspections and jointly bidding for event tourism;' 'I tend to agree that CVBs can be an ideal platform for joint marketing and resource integration;' 'It

is a good idea to set up CVBs in China, but its success relies on the support from both the government and the event tourism industry;' and 'The status quo of CVBs in China is not satisfactory and needs more recognition and support from the professionals in the tourism industry.'

#### Theme 4 – A wait-and-see attitude

While joint efforts are considered important, some respondents wished that CVBs in China could exist and function without the government's involvement, but felt that is was impossible at this point in time. Some respondents on the other hand, were pessimistic about how well CVBs can function in China, given that there are very few professional event tourism organizations or trained personnel. Common comments consisted of: 'The success of CVBs in China relies on independent operation, self-discipline and professionalism, but such conditions are not yet clearly evident;' 'I wish that CVBs in China could function completely independently without involvement or control of government. The government cannot provide all the necessary support for the growth of event tourism;' 'Associations in China are mostly government-owned, and merely execute coordinative and monitoring functions at a low and limited levels. Typically it involves collecting membership fees and nothing else;' 'There are very few professional convention and exhibition companies, very few professional congress organizers or meeting planners in China, not to mention professional CVBs;' and 'Not optimistic about the functionality of CVBs in China. Such organizations are most likely to be temporary, especially when organizational affiliation and responsibilities are not very clearly defined.'

#### Theme 5 - Pressing needs for regulation, professional training and education

Many respondents expressed the need for event tourism related professional training, education and government regulation. Comments exemplifying this theme included: 'Regulating the operation of event tourism is important so that the competition in the event tourism market will not get worse;' 'There is an urgent need to set up norms, standards, regulations, certification of qualification to guarantee a healthy development in the event tourism industry as currently, there are very few certified meeting planners; most of the conventions and exhibitions are still undertaken by non-professional organizations;' and 'What needs to be done is more training and education, and to ensure more professionals.'

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This qualitative study identifies five themes about CVBs in China from the perspective of Chinese industry professionals. Wang & Shu (2012) conducted a study on China's CVBs from the perspective of the government administrators and officials. In comparison with results from that study, several perceptual discrepancies were identified between government and industry professionals. The first major difference is that the government believed that

CVBs were well established in Chinese cities like Hangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing; while the industry professionals were either not aware of the CVB terminology or did not know that there are CVBs in China. To minimize the perceptual gap, CVBs in China need to improve their tourism stakeholder groups' awareness in general and increase CVB visibility. CVBs need to promote themselves not only to end-consumers on the demand side, but also to the providers in the tourism supply chain and other event tourism business-to-business entities.

The second major discrepancy is that city governments, such as Hangzhou's, tend to mimic western countries' CVBs by setting up an association with inclusion of all major related tourism service providers. However, findings from this study indicate that industry professionals would rather have China's CVBs not perform like an 'association' but act more like a traditional government tourism bureau. This is because all the member associations are currently government owned and do not operate independently in terms of marketing and management. There are no independent associations in China because government approval and involvement is required to form an association. Jenkins & Henry (1982) pointed out that the governments of developing countries ought to play active roles in tourism development as most developing countries are characterized by a scarcity of resources and lack of strong and experienced tourism sector. Government involvement has greatly influenced tourism development, particularly for developing countries with socialist economic systems (Mill and Morrison, 1992). Besides, there exists considerable regional disparity in China's tourism growth between the coastal and interior regions (Wen & Tisdell, 2001). In other words, a government-run CVB would be a better choice for an interior regional city, if such a city has a priority in developing event tourism but its private tourism sectors are not as strong as that in a coastal city.

From the market perspective, event tourism customers are generally looking for an independent, unbiased, non-commercial entity to work with. Hence an ideal CVB should either be a government supported tourism organization or an independent not-for-profit association. These models are what the customers are familiar with and prefer. In the case of China, an association run by the government is assumed to serve government geo-political priorities above all and cannot be assumed to function independently of government policy. This is because Chinese associations' political emphasis is perhaps more important than their marketing focus, and many have very limited business activities. These associations or groups have limited resources and no administrative power unless governing agencies, such as the CNTA, devolve their authority to the institution and entrust it to bear out some responsibilities (Wang & Shu, 2012). Thus a logical solution for China is to set up government CVBs or incorporate CVB functions into government tourism bureaus. Respondents further expressed their confusion between the existing government tourism bureaus and the newly established CVBs, as there is a large function overlap between the former and latter. This study's findings are consistent with the findings in Wang & Shu (2012), which additionally explained the challenge facing China in making CVB a separate and indispensable organization.

Theme 3 shows that, no matter what format Chinese cities may adopt in setting up CVBs, industry professionals agree on the importance of developing group business and event tourism in China and strongly hope to become an active part of this business by closely cooperating with CVBs or tourism bureaus. In the event tourism market, many Chinese cities do not have much of an international profile even though they have strong destination qualities. Most Chinese cities have a low profile in the international event tourism market except for global business hubs like Beijing and Shanghai. The lesser known major cities in China need large and well-coordinated marketing efforts, directing strong marketing messages to event tourism markets. This is mostly about identifying and refining group-business products and training local event suppliers to better approach and respond to the market more successfully. All these functions require the active involvement of both the government CVBs or tourism bureaus and the event tourism industry. More specifically, hosting international conventions or meetings must be approved by governments. If a local organization wishes to consider hosting an international conference in China, approvals are required by different levels of government and at different stages of hosting. For instance, the host needs government's approval for bidding for international events; after an event is successfully bid, further approval is needed for the execution of the event (for example, sending invitation letters to international attendees for them to apply for visitor visas). A successful event tourism destination requires good public-private partnerships and a less bureaucratic and more streamlined process.

The fourth theme highlights the industry professionals' doubts over the functionality of CVBs in China. The respondents expressed their uncertainties in the marketing role of government tourism bureaus especially in the international tourism market. On one hand, respondents do not see the 'association' format as a solution for China's CVBs as they believe associations in China are only a 'fad' as China's associations are mostly operating on internal affairs (i.e. its association members on management, education or training, etc.) rather than external business (e.g. enhancing image and awareness, marketing, promotion, etc.); on the other hand, a state-owned CVB will be viewed as another bureaucratic organization like the provincial tourism bureaus. This type of negative perception can be reversed only through efforts to market and manage event tourism businesses in a more professional and effective manner.

The last theme emphasizes the importance of event tourism on regulations, education and training. Some cities in China have strong support for event tourism development from local governments but the largely undeveloped private sector tourism supply network is relatively inexperienced in hosting international events. Except for cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, the majority of the Chinese cities have few potential local hosts who can serve in leadership positions within international group-business suppliers. Moreover, the concept of a professional congress organizer or meeting planner is still very new to most organizations in China and it is usually only considered when there is a need to organize an international event. CVBs should have event specialists to actively solicit group business from associations and corporations regardless of size of event. It should be noted that a few

convention and exhibition companies in China which are interested in bidding for international events are encouraging their employees to obtain certification through organizations such as Meetings Professional International (MPI). However, few employees successfully obtain certifications from such American or European based organizations as English proficiency is necessary to take the test. The China tourism authority can facilitate education and training opportunities domestically to better enable local event tourism companies to access training opportunities.

In short, this study identifies tourism industry professionals' perceptions of CVB's functionality and the challenges China is facing by applying a qualitative projective technique. Overall, respondents from the tourism industry do not seem to be as inspired when compared with city governments, with regards to the idea of setting up independently operated CVBs in the form of associations. It seems setting up a government CVB or including CVB functions within the government tourism bureau is considered to be more appropriate. Since the marquee mega event known as the Beijing Olympics in 2008, China has increasingly played host to many other MICE tourism ranging from trade fairs like the World Expo to sport tourism like the Asian Games. With the increasing demand and competition from the international event tourism market, city government organizations are expected to provide more effective and professional marketing and training to support the industry's needs. Findings and implications of this study are especially informative and useful to China's tourism authorities involved in CVB or CVB-like operations. In addition, this study will help international event managers and planners better understand the status quo of China's CVBs which are typically considered to be the 'front-stores' of the event tourism business. This study has also provided a good foundation for researchers who are interested in conducting more comprehensive and quantitative studies on the future format and functionality of Chinese CVBs which would make up for the shortage of qualitative research like this, typically in terms of the reliability and generalizability issues.

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# Effects of Service Fairness and Disconfirmation on Diners' Satisfaction Judgments

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of service fairness is an important component of customer satisfaction. Although previous research has identified several service fairness factors that influence customer satisfaction, there are still many issues that need to be examined. This study proposes a new model that includes new fairness dimensions. In addition, this research compares the influence of service fairness and disconfirmation on restaurant patrons' satisfaction. The results of this study will help the restaurant business to identify the areas where fair or unfair treatment of customers will have an impact on their satisfaction judgments and behavioral intentions.

**Keywords:** service fairness, equity, disconfirmation, customer satisfaction, diners, and behavioral intentions.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of fairness is an important component of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Clemme (1988) stated that it is human nature to pursue fairness in any situation—politics, work, courts, marriage, and sales transactions. In the marketplace, consumers have fairness expectations regarding results or benefits they should receive in a service delivery situation. Consumers form fairness expectations based on their own experience with a service firm, knowledge of the company and its competitors, word-of-mouth, and advertisements (Seiders & Berry, 1998). Consumers assess fairness by comparing their fairness expectations with the service they received. Customers' perceived fairness was found to have a considerable impact on customer satisfaction (Oliver & Swan, 1989). It is likely that unfair service transactions will cause customers' dissatisfaction.

Therefore, this study attempts to investigate customer satisfaction in the context of a restaurant situation, incorporating the fairness concept with the disconfirmation theory that has been one of the most popular measurements in customer satisfaction research. This study proposes a model that compares the influence of fairness and disconfirmation on restaurant patrons' satisfaction. The results of this study will help the restaurant business to identify the areas where fair or unfair treatment of customers will impact on their satisfaction judgments and behavioral intentions.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section first presents a review of equity theory and justice theory that have been incorporated in service fairness research. Next, dimensions of fairness will be discussed. Lastly, the theory of disconfirmation will be reviewed.

### **Fairness/Equity Theory**

Oliver and Swan (1989) stated that the concept of fairness is almost identical with equity, and these two terms have been used interchangeably. Fairness/equity concerns the equitable distribution of physical objects such as money and metaphorical objects such as job opportunities, punishments, and equal chances of winning. It is fair when those objects are divided equally and/or when people receive what they deserve (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The theory of equity was developed by Adams (1963, 1965) and received attention in sociology, psychology, and organizational behavior research (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). Bagozzi (1975) introduced the concept of equity to the marketing and consumer behavior literature and raised questions regarding the consequences of inequity in marketing exchange. Subsequently, many studies (Bowen, Gilliland, & Folger, 1999; Fisk, & Coney, 1982, 1985; Huppertz, Arenson, & Evans, 1978; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Oliver & Swan, 1989; Seiders & Berry, 1998) attempted to investigate the fairness/equity issue in a marketing context.

The equity theory proposes that people in an exchange relationship compare their input-to-outcome ratio with that of others in the relationship. Fairness occurs when an individual's input-to-outcome ratio matches an exchange partner's input-to-outcome ratio. A mathematical equation of the input-to-outcome ratio was used in fairness/equity research; however, this method was found to have many restrictions. For instance, some inputs or outcomes cannot be quantified, such as the efforts and frustration that consumers invested during their purchasing processes. Additionally, people do not always know the exact inputs and outputs of their exchange partners (Oliver, 1997). Therefore, the calculation of the input-to-outcome ratio has received little interest in the fairness literature. Instead of using the input-to-outcome ratio, many studies (Fisk, & Coney, 1982, 1985; Huppertz, Arenson, & Evans, 1978; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988) used scenario-based experimental design to measure fairness, and several researchers (Clemmer, 1988; Oliver & Swan, 1989) developed measurement scales.

### **Dimensions of Fairness**

Previous studies (Bowen, Gilliland, & Folger, 1999; Goodwin & Ross, 1992; Seiders & Berry, 1998) proposed that there are three dimensions of fairness that customers use when evaluating fairness of a service encounter. The first one is outcome fairness. This dimension refers to results of a service delivery. In a restaurant situation, it can be quality and quantity of food and beverage. Additionally, consumers compare the results they receive with their investments such as price paid, time, and efforts. Thus, this dimension is similar to consumers' perceived value. The second dimension is procedural dimension which relates to the process of delivering a service. It includes the components such as handling of service problems, speed of responding to service requests, and customers' waiting time. The third dimension is interactional fairness which concerns consumers' evaluations of service employees' interpersonal manners. Expression of respect, honesty, concern, sensitivity, courtesy,

politeness, and empathy are important characteristics of interactional justice (Bowen, Gilliland, & Folger, 1999; Seiders, & Berry, 1998).

Clemmer's (1988) study is the first one that examined the relationship of fairness and customer satisfaction in a restaurant setting. The study made a contribution to developing the dimensions of fairness and testing the effects of service fairness on customer satisfaction. Carr (2007) adopted the three dimensions in his study of information system services. His results show that all three fairness dimensions had significant impact on consumers' perceived overall fairness of a service provider which later influenced consumers' overall satisfaction and loyalty. In their study of service fairness for two casual dining restaurants, Namkung, Jang, Almanza, and Ismail (2009) found that the three service fairness dimensions contributed to consumer' evaluation of restaurant service. In addition, they proposed a new price fairness dimension to their research.

Although the three service fairness dimensions have been tested in various situations in previous research (Clemmer, 1988; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004; Carr, 2007; Clark, Adjei, & Yancev; 2009; Namkung, Jang, Almanza, & Ismail, 2009), those studies only measured customer-to-service provider comparisons. Bagozzi (1986) stated that consumers may compare themselves with other consumers as well as the service they receive with that of other service providers. For instance, restaurant customers may compare the services they receive with those of customers at the next table as well as with the services they get from other restaurants. Therefore, in order to capture the concept of fairness thoroughly, it is necessary to include customer-to-customer and seller-to-seller comparisons when measuring service fairness.

### **Theory of Disconfirmation**

The disconfirmation model is one of the most widely used measurements of customer satisfaction. The model measures if customers' perceived performance of a service provider meets, exceeds or falls short of their expectations (Oliver & Swan, 1989). The resulting disconfirmation has been proven to have a significant impact on customer satisfaction.

Several studies have compared the effects of fairness and disconfirmation on customer satisfaction. The results have been mixed. Oliver and DeSarbo (1988) looked at five determinants of satisfaction: attribution, expectation, performance, disconfirmation, and equity. They found that disconfirmation and performance had greater impact on customer satisfaction than the other ones. The relative effect of equity on customer satisfaction was ranked as fourth highest among the five satisfaction determinants in their model. Oliver and Swan (1989) mentioned that the expectancy disconfirmation model has dominated customer satisfaction research, and previous studies usually found that disconfirmation had the most profound effect on customer satisfaction. This may be due to the fact that most previous research only focused on the outcome of a service transaction and did not include interpersonal aspect of service.

Oliver and Swan (1989) compared the effects of equity and disconfirmation on customer satisfaction for new car buyers. The interpersonal part of the service was incorporated into the study. Their results found that equity had a greater impact on satisfaction than

disconfirmation. Oliver and Swan's (1989) study shows that the importance of fairness in customer satisfaction should not be ignored.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

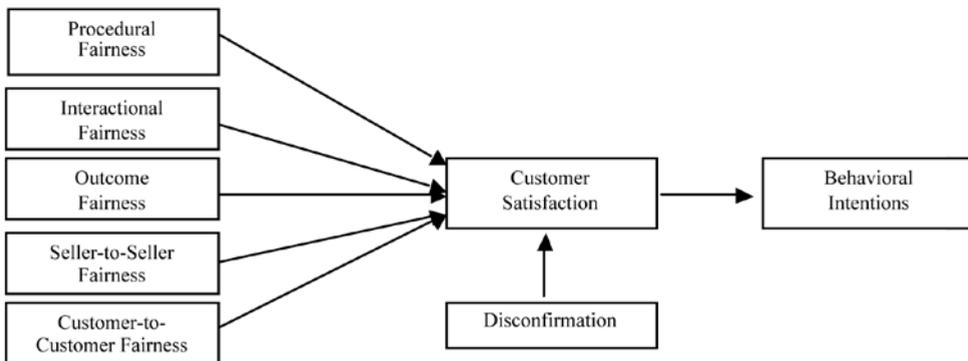
Although the issue of service fairness has received attention in the literature (Clemmer, 1988; Wirtz & Mattila; 2004; Carr, 2007; Clark, Adjei, & Yancev; 2009; Namkung, Jang, Almanza, & Ismail, 2009), there are still many issues that need to be explored. For instance, previous research has suggested that service fairness consists of three dimensions: procedural dimension, interactional dimension, and outcome dimension. Nonetheless, these dimensions may not fully represent the concept of service fairness. In an exchange relationship, consumers not only compare their inputs and outcomes with those of a service company, but they also consider other consumers and their experience with competitors of the company (Bagozzi, 1975).

Based on the literature review, the following purposes of this study are proposed:

1. To develop and refine the measurement of fairness for the restaurant industry
2. To compare the influence of different service fairness dimensions on customer satisfaction
3. To compare the impact of service fairness and disconfirmation on customer satisfaction

Clemmer's (1988) three fairness dimensions have been included in this study. As discussed previously, these three dimensions may not fully represent service fairness. This study proposes two new dimensions: customer-to-customer fairness and seller-to-seller fairness. Customer-to-customer fairness refers to consumers' comparison of their benefits from a service transaction with that of other customers of the same business. Seller-to-seller fairness regards consumers' comparison of different businesses of the same type. Therefore, this study includes five fairness dimensions. The proposed model is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: The Proposed Model of the Impact of Fairness and Disconfirmation on Customer Satisfaction**



## METHODOLOGY

### Instrumentation

An on-site survey at a table-service restaurant was included in this study. The survey instrument used for this study was a self-administered questionnaire composed of four sections measuring service fairness, disconfirmation, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. The items on the questionnaire for measuring service fairness were based on the literature review. Since this study incorporated two new service fairness dimensions: seller-to-seller fairness and customer-to-customer fairness, a focus group study was employed to generate the items for measuring these two new service fairness dimensions. A total of 15 items were developed which represent the proposed five service fairness dimensions. They were measured based on a 7-point, Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

Three items were developed for measuring disconfirmation regarding the restaurant's food, service, and atmosphere. The three disconfirmation items were measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale ranging from *much worse than expected* to *much better than expected*. To measure customer satisfaction, two items were used: "Overall, this restaurant visit was very satisfactory," and "My overall experience left me feeling quite happy." The items were measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Two questions regarding behavioral intentions were used: "Based on my experience today, I would recommend this restaurant to my friends or relatives," and "Based on this visit, if I were choosing between this particular restaurant and another similar type of restaurant, I would choose this restaurant again." These two items were also measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. In the last section, respondents' age and gender were asked. Consultation with the managers of the restaurant that cooperated in this study and a pilot study were conducted to arrive at the final versions of all the questions.

### Data Collection

An on-site survey was conducted at a table-service restaurant in the northeastern United States. A table-service restaurant was preferred to a fast food restaurant or restaurant which primarily offers a buffet because more interactions between customers and restaurant employees were desired for this study. The on-site survey was conducted over a seven-day period, and it was conducted at breakfast, brunch, lunch, and dinner meal periods. The questionnaires were given to restaurant customers after they finished their main courses. The patrons were asked to participate in the survey when they were waiting to pay. Each respondent was offered a coupon, which could be redeemed for free ice cream as an incentive for participating in the survey. A total of 397 useable questionnaires were collected.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the sample. Among 397 participants, the largest age group (38.2%) was between 21 and 34 years of age. More than half of the people surveyed were under 34. Only 6.5% of participants were above 55. This indicates that a large portion of customers of the restaurants were young. About half of them were males, and the other half of them were females. The means and standard deviations of all service fairness items are presented in Table 2. Note that the three items that represent the customer-to-customer dimension were worded in a negative way; thus, after converting the means, the scores of these items are between five and six. Therefore, mean scores show that most respondents rated five or six on all of the items. Table 3 and Table 4 show the means and standard deviations for items regarding disconfirmation, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions.

**Table 1: Sample Characteristics of Study Respondents (N = 397)**

Variable	Frequency(n)	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
Under 21	89	23.5%
21-34	153	38.2%
35-54	111	27.7%
55-70	22	5.5%
70 and above	4	1.0%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	195	49.1%
Female	195	49.1%
Missing Data	7	1.8%

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Service Fairness Items (N = 397)**

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
<b>Procedural Dimension</b>		
The waiting time to be seated was appropriate.	6.30	1.10
Service was quick and smooth in the restaurant.	6.11	1.02
The restaurant staff provided the service I needed.	6.29	0.98

<b>Interactional Dimension</b>		
The employees were friendly.	6.43	0.86
The employees were attentive in provided good service.	6.24	1.02
The employees were courteous to me.	6.47	0.84
<b>Outcome Dimension</b>		
The cost seemed appropriate for what I got.	5.96	1.18
I received what I ordered.	6.66	0.88
The food was of the quality I wanted.	6.15	1.31
<b>Customer-to-Customer Dimension</b>		
They treated some guests better than me.	1.85	1.44
Other guests were given more desirable seating than I.	1.99	1.52
Other guests who came at the same time as I did got their food quicker than I did.	1.80	1.30
<b>Seller-to-Seller Dimension</b>		
Compared with similar choices of restaurants, the quality of food here is better.	5.15	1.31
Compared with similar choices of restaurants, the staff here is more friendly and courteous.	5.42	1.21

Note. The above items were measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree”(7).

**Table 3: Mean Scores of Items Regarding Disconfirmation (N = 397)**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
The quality of service	5.41	0.98
The quality of atmosphere	5.60	0.99
The quality of food	5.60	0.99

Note. The above items were measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from “Much worse than expected”(1) to “Much better than expected”(7).

**Table 4: Mean Scores of Items for Customer Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intentions (N = 397)**

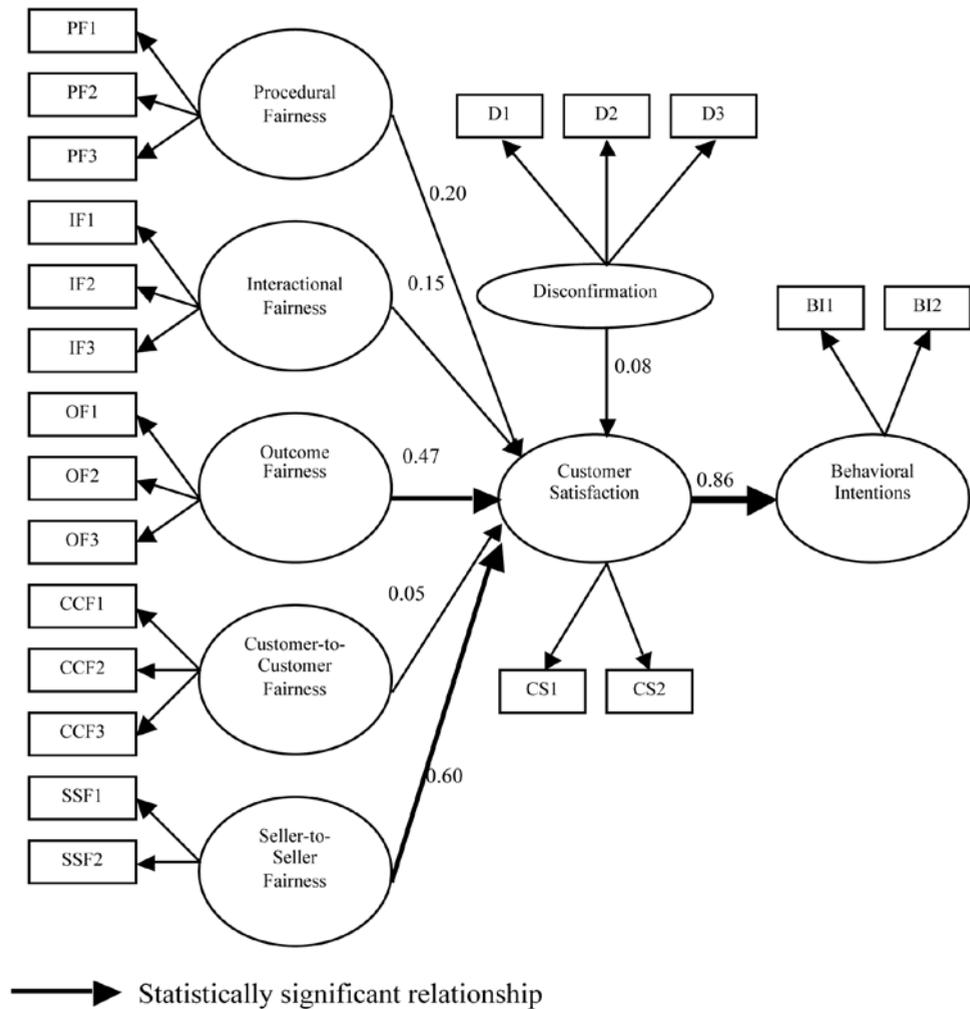
Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>		
Overall, this restaurant visit was very satisfactory.	6.11	1.03
My overall experience left me feeling quite happy.	6.01	1.05
<b>Behavioral Intentions</b>		
Based on my experience today, I would recommend this restaurant to my friends or relatives.	5.99	1.20
Based on this visit, if I were choosing between this particular restaurant and another similar type of restaurant, I would choose this restaurant again.	5.86	1.24

Note. The above items were measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree”(7).

### Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

The next step of the analysis is to examine the causal relationship among the variables in the proposed model. A structural equation modeling analysis was conducted using LISREL to examine the impacts of service fairness and disconfirmation on customer satisfaction. A nonsignificant Chi-square indicates that the model fits the data (Kelloway, 1998). The results show that the Chi-square value is 241.07 with 165 degrees of freedom, and it is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). The chi-square increases as the sample sizes increases. Given the big sample size of this study, chi-square might not be a reliable fit index, thus, other fit indices were used to examine the model fit. It was found that the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.04 which indicates a very good fit to the data. Other indices such as goodness of fit index (GFI = 0.90), normed fit index (NFI = 0.91), and non-normed fit index (NNFI = 0.96) are all above 0.9. It can be concluded that the fit of the proposed model is good. The causal relationships among the variables are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Causal Relationship Among Variables in the Proposed Model**



Chi-Square = 241.07, df = 165,  $p < 0.001$   
 RMSEA = 0.04  
 GFI = 0.90  
 NFI = 0.91  
 NNFI = 0.96

The influence of the five service fairness dimensions on customer satisfaction was examined. Among the five dimensions, outcome fairness and seller-to-seller fairness have significant impacts on customer satisfaction. Disconfirmation was found to have no significant effect on customer satisfaction. This is similar to Oliver and Swan's (1989) results that disconfirmation is not the most important factor that influences customer satisfaction. In this study, customer satisfaction has a significant association with behavioral intentions.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the contributions of this study is the assessment of the service fairness dimensions. This study examined three service fairness dimensions that were identified by previous research, and it was found that outcome fairness had a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, for participants of this study, quality of food, correctness of their orders, and value they received were considered as more important in terms of their perceptions of service fairness. The other two dimensions: procedural fairness and interpersonal fairness were found to have no significant influence on satisfaction.

For the two new service fairness dimensions proposed by this study, the seller-to-seller dimension was found to be a significant fairness factor while the customer-to-customer dimension was not. This finding suggests that restaurants need to pay attention to the level of quality that competitors offer. Consumers' comparisons of quality of different restaurants can have a considerable effect on their fairness judgments.

More research is needed to investigate service fairness dimensions because customers may have different fairness judgments for different business sectors. This study proposed two new service fairness dimensions, and one of them was found to have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. The two dimensions are still exploratory in nature; thus, further research needs to reexamine them to see how customers evaluate the dimensions for different services. In addition, there might be other fairness dimensions that have not been identified and might be critical to consumers' fairness perceptions.

Following the lead of previous research (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Oliver & Swan, 1989), this study compared the influence of fairness and disconfirmation on restaurant patrons' satisfaction. The results support Oliver and Swan's (1989) research results that service fairness did have a significant influence on satisfaction, and its effect was even greater than that of disconfirmation. The disconfirmation model has been the primary focus of customer satisfaction theory; however, the results of this study suggest that in order to better capture the dynamics of customer satisfaction judgments, future research needs to examine other factors in addition to disconfirmation.

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# Social tourism and social agriculture for sustainable development

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## ABSTRACT

In very recent years, after many decades of support to agriculture and rural society, the Common Agricultural Policy (PAC) have fostered its second pillar of Rural Development Policy, including rural tourism. The farms can actually broaden and reground their activities, enlarging their boundaries toward the production of market and non-market goods and services, re-positioning farm resources (workforce, structures) in extra corporate uses, out of the farm boundaries, within the surrounding territory. Farmers have the opportunity to maintain their activities by means of contemporarily producing commodities, services and non-commodities to be used by the entire society. Agriculture and the rural society will be able also to introduce new forms of products in its organizational and social patterns. That is, the ability to include also the production of social tourism within capabilities of farms and rural areas. The presence of less wealthy tourists in rural areas and in farms will contribute to ensure further revenues to farming and relaxation to a larger segment of tourism market, de-season ability and de-crowding of mainstream tourism resorts. Rural Tourism needs to consider smartly the sustainable hospitality and the introduction of social goals should be a good pace in the direction of a Sustainable Rural Tourism pattern.

**Keywords:** social tourism, social agriculture, convergence, multifunctionality

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid increase in global demand for tourism over the past decades has been urged by the rise in living standards, caused both by growing wealth and air travel lowering tariffs. The importance of tourism is not just about the money visitors spend on travel, accommodation, leisure activities or buying souvenirs, but the overall industry stimulates the participation and collaboration of communities, tourists, national and local governments, local suppliers and businesses throughout a more or less extended and complicated supply chain. For this, the main International Organizations of Tourism have for many years claimed for sustainability principles in order to avoid social and economic spatial asymmetries caused by the unequal geographical distribution of costs and benefits. Moreover, both the political statement of agricultural 'multifunctionality' and the terrific increase of rural tourism offer the opportunity

to study and implement sustainable and more integrated models of tourism, also considering important social goals. A better spread of tourism benefits in the territory is today more feasible than in the past, with the consequent maintenance of social cohesion in rural, less favorable or peripheral areas and some decongestion in urban areas. In this sense, social tourism should encounter social agriculture, benefiting the less favored components of the society.

This essay aims at illustrating some interactions between productive and social aspects both in agriculture and in tourism that are actually intertwined and potentially useful for enhancing socioeconomic sustainability. The paper is organized as follows: paragraph 2 illustrates the necessity to better profit from the ‘multifunctionality’ of agriculture as well as any other industry, paragraph 3 considers the literature on sustainable agriculture and sustainable tourism. Thus, paragraph 4 exposes the importance of the right to holiday, both in the sense of a social achievement and as an economic opportunity for selected tourist destinations. Paragraph 5 gives a possible political perspective and some conclusive considerations are reported in the final paragraph 6.

## **BACKGROUND: MULTIFUNCTIONAL INDUSTRIES**

Since recent decades the developed economies realized an increasing concern about the nexus between human activities and the environment, considering more deeply many new emerging viewpoints. Every economic activity produces one or more main intentional output and some unintentional others. Depending on circumstances, many of these are perceived as negative or positive socioeconomic externalities (Arrow, 1970).

In the present global confrontation among Countries which actually claim for opposite development models, the Western society deeply revolutionized the role of agriculture (FAO, 1995; 2013), ceasing the long period of exclusive market support, choosing the way of encouraging the social, cultural and environmental objectives for rural communities and farming (EC, 2008) in a sustainable perspective. Notwithstanding the statement of a sustainable agriculture, replacing a too strong market competition, the future role of farming is still fuzzy. The entire society, e. g. policy makers and consumers, has charged farmers with new social, cultural and environmental goals, though stating not to reduce the public support to farmland and continuing to maintain focus on the productive main role of agriculture. Nevertheless, facing the factual relative fading of market goals in comparison to the increasing emphasis for non-market ones, the western farming professional organizations and unions have been afraid of reducing farmland to a museum activity. Some authors fear the definitive missing with competitive markets (Amadei, Segré, 2007), reducing farmers in a limbo with a subsequent diminishing entrepreneurial capacity. Yet, the challenge for farmers is more complicated and intriguing, as they are today facing—after the first definition of technological convergence by Rosenberg (1963)—an industry convergence (Weaver, 2007), that is an actual issue also in peripheral sectors like agriculture, especially in the use of new

media (Corinto, Curzi, 2010; Corinto, Musotti, 2012). Thus, the powering convergence of tourism and agribusiness will be seriously considered by future policies and programs.

In very recent years, after many decades of 'blind' support to agriculture and rural society, the Common Agricultural Policy (PAC) fostered its second pillar of Rural Development Policy, in comparison to Agricultural Markets Support, the traditional first pillar of the European public intervention (EC, 2006). The EU has gradually diminished its focus on productivity and enhanced that on immaterial objectives. The modern goal for agriculture, namely 'multifunctionality', includes all goods and services produced by farming activities. The concept was introduced in 1993 by the European Council for Agricultural Law (CEDR, 1999), and fast entered a large debate about the social and economic role of agriculture. Three years before, the Cork Declaration of the European Commission entitled 'A living countryside' (EC, 1996), already expressed the aims of the European Commission to consider agriculture as a real interface between people and the environment. By this way, farmers can actually behave for the exploitation and maintenance of natural and social resources, folkloric traditions, landscape and the countryside.

The most accepted definition of multifunctional agriculture indicates the production of food and fibers jointly to environmental amenities, agricultural tourism, safety and food quality, landscape management, preservation of biodiversity, cultural heritage and farming traditions (OECD, 2001; Van Huylenbroeck et al., 2007). Moreover, the academic Italian debate on this topic has produced an original definition of 'rural' multifunctionality (Aimone et al., 2006). This latter is particularly fascinating because considers the 'local' integration with other economic sectors and the all society. That is to say a holistic point of view for agriculture itself. Therefore, the today economically weakened primary sector can surprisingly play an important social role with more power than in the past.

The farms can actually broaden and reground their activities, enlarging their boundaries toward the joint production of market and non-market goods and services, re-positioning resources (workforce, structures) in extra farm uses, out of their boundaries, within the surrounding territory, thus grasping new opportunities to maintain at least current revenues and assets.

Within this framework, tourism can play a positive alliance with agriculture in producing private and public goods. The result should be the broader opening of the consumer's allocation leisure time market for farmers.

In few next years, agriculture will face new challenges, as the 2013 might be a round point in the long history of the Common Agricultural Policy. Agriculture for fifty year has been asked to feed people, but that was not all. The CAP has been a policy on landscapes, employment, environment, climate change and biodiversity. Still, after the adoption of Europe 2020 strategy (EC 2010a), together with the rest of the society agriculture will better contribute to undertake the road to green, sustainable, smart and inclusive growth.

Today, the intervention instruments are structured in two complementary pillars, with annual direct payments and market measures making up the first one, and multi-annual rural development measures the second one (EC 2010b). Thus, agriculture is still a fundamental part of the European economy and the all society requests high quality, competitive and reliable raw material inputs, as well as in non-food sectors. Rural activities, from tourism, transport, to local and public services are yet important for the European society. As the tourism policy itself is characterized by a 'crossing nature' and a large number of other European policies have a direct or indirect impact on it, including the Rural Development Policy (EC 2010b), the converging nexus between tourism and agriculture should effectively match, becoming an operational issue.

## LITERATURE ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM/RURAL TOURISM

Today, the travel and tourism industry is seemingly considered as a near no cost fostering factor for employment and well-being, offering near 'no limit' opportunities for the global economic development and capable of promoting all communities, the richest and the poorest ones, both in Western and Eastern Countries. On the other hand, the tourism and travel industry is considered as a nearly perfect instrument suitable to achieve sustainable development, being a feasible tool for both exploiting natural resources and protecting them. Often, the tourism literature shows an unquestioning acceptance of this optimistic vision, with many supporters believing the industry can easily contribute to national development and to foreign exchange earnings with less consideration about impacts on society and the environment. On the contrary travel and tourism industry shows evident social implications, land use competition, competing allocation of labor, thus originating several social and ethical considerations.

Near thirty years ago, in discussing models in tourism planning, Getz (1986) reported the tourism policy had evolved in three stages since World War II. After the emphasis on initial travel facilitation and then of its promotion, the third period recognized tourism as an industry during the 1960s, within which a great interest of tourism planning has arisen. In fact, Getz affirmed:

'More recently, considerable reaction to the biases of tourism planning has been voiced, ranging from discussion of limits to growth to advocacy of alternative planning models' (p. 21).

The claim for limits to growth has been particular strong in that historical period of questioning on the necessity to recognize the existence of intrinsic resource limits to an infinite socioeconomic development.

Reporting a literature review, Getz (1986) said that many alternative planning methods have been proposed, but the most intriguing—for the aim of this essay—is the necessity to assure the control of social benefits to host communities as well as the requirement of a community based control and forward-looking planning. In this sense, Murphy (1983) offered an interesting

perspective, viewing tourism ecologically as a community industry, as tourism thrives on a community's resources, it must not simply exploit resources for its own development without considering what can be returned back to the entire community.

In few years from the issue of the cited literature, the concept of sustainable development spread the worldwide after the Rio Conference (UNCED, 1992a) and the door to sustainable tourism definition was opened up as well. Today, sustainability is a seemingly well accepted concept, even though the gap between theoretical acquisition in literature and practical implementation is still large.

The concept of 'sustainable tourism' arose in the Alpine region of Europe by Austrian, French, German and Italian academics and conservationists and tourism professionals (OECD, 1994). The concept has often been named also as 'green tourism', 'responsible tourism', 'post-industrial tourism', 'meta-tourism' and 'alternative tourism' or many others. In any case, it was a necessary answer to the stressing problems of mass tourism in the Alps and the Mediterranean region. The definition matches with the planning goals exposed by Getz, because the concept of sustainable tourism can be:

[...] described as a system of long term tourism planning which is friendly towards the long term well-being of communities and habitats, the visitor, and the tourist industry' (OECD, 1994, p. 33).

Thus, the sustainable tourism does envisage a triangular relationship in the tourism equation, identifying at least three categories of players: communities and habitats, visitors, and tourist industry. The unplanned mass tourism, often gives too much market power to only one part of the triangle, because the industry can actually dominates decision making, to the damage of all rest parties, causing eventual resort's overcrowding and deterioration. On the opposite, the 'sustainability' concept must give symmetric power and knowledge to each party, resulting in careful, slow optimization of each other's goals and objectives. The fundamental base of the sustainability is the need for a limit of the tourism activities which must be strongly considered as a concern by local tourism planning agencies.

After the review on the definition of Sustainable Tourism, here following I briefly approach the definition of Rural Sustainable Tourism.

The necessity for a definition of Rural Tourism is not very old, but the definition for 'rurality' is an old issue faced by geographers, sociologists, economists and planners for many years and with many different points of view. Within the wide debate on rurality, three major discussion points have arisen: '(i) population density and size of settlements; (ii) land use, and its dominance by agriculture and forestry; (iii) "traditional" social structures and issues of community identity and heritage' (OECD, 1994, p. 9). Yet, definitions differ at all in diverse Countries because of the varying national meanings of 'rural tourism', and many asymmetries divide Western and Eastern Countries, firstly because agriculture models are fundamentally different, as well as the overall conditions in rural areas, and not secondarily

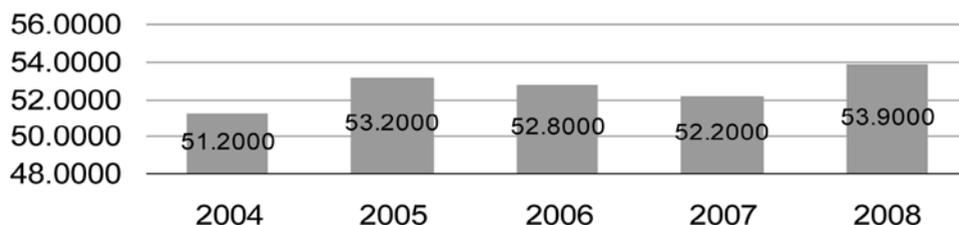
because national agricultural policies do differ a lot in goals and objectives. The rural life (and thus the Rural Policy) in a Western Country can be very far from that in an Eastern one.

Considering the OECD Countries, we can accept that Rural Tourism could be a suitable concept both for development and conservation (OECD, 1994). Rurality is an idea generally connected with low population densities and open space, with small scale settlements, generally of fewer than 10.000 inhabitants, just to give a threshold. Agriculture and forestry are the predominant activities and natural areas are diffused, local communities tend towards traditionalism. Government and regional policies lean towards conservation rather than radical or rapid change. Therefore, we can consider that Rural Tourism is to be located in rural areas and must be built upon small scale enterprise, open space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, traditional societies and traditional practices and connected with local families and local controlled communities (Scott et al. 2007). The obvious consequence is that it should be 'sustainable', intending that its development has to sustain the special rural character of an area, and also that its development should be sustainable in its use of resources. In other words Rural Tourism can be a feasible tool for conservation and sustainability, because it well represents the complex feature of rural environment, economy, and history of local places.

## **A SOCIAL CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY: THE RIGHT TO HOLIDAYS**

Not all people, and not everywhere, benefit of a vacation period in a week, month or year even though, during the past decades, leisure time has become a fundamental moment during the year for many families or individuals. Holidays can assure people the opportunity to take a break from their usual environment or allow to discover other aspects of their own country or other countries around the world. Tourism actually contributes to bringing people from different cultures closer and fostering mutual respect among different populations.

Considering the period from 2004 to 2008, the percentage of the EU population (aged 15 or more) that made at least one holiday trip of at least four overnight stays was just over 50%, and reached 53.9% in 2008 (Figure 1). The differences among Member States are very high. Not considering the kind of tourist destinations, the share of the population that made at least one holiday trip of 4 nights or more in 2008 ranged from 7.1% in Bulgaria to 77.9% in Luxembourg and 89.7% in Cyprus. In Southern Countries and Countries with important seaside tourism destinations, domestic trips are the main choice for vacation. In Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Croatia, more than 75% of people who went on holidays in 2008 only made trips within their country of residence.

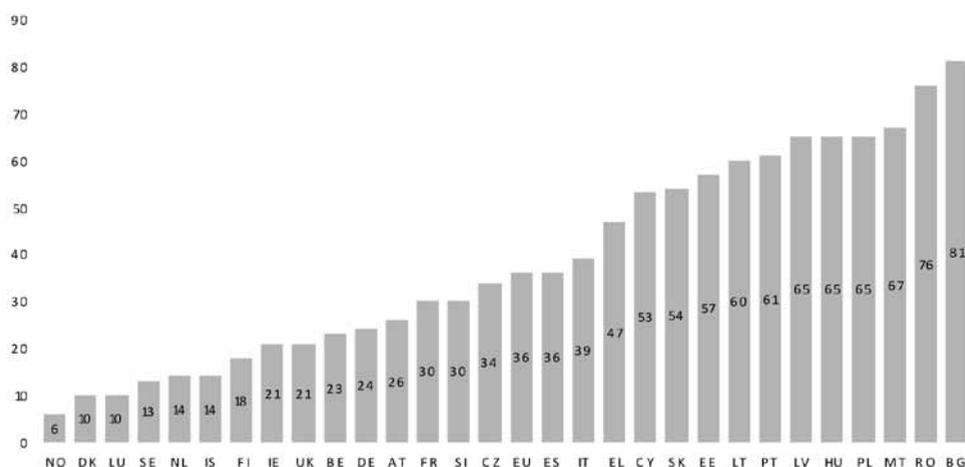
**Figure 1: Participation in tourism, EU-27, 2004-2008\*.**

Source: Eurostat, Tourism Statistics. EC (2009).

\* Note: (1) Share of the population aged 15 or over that made at least one holiday trip of 4 nights or more during the reference year; (2) EU-27 excluding BG, CY, LU, MT, RO, SE, SK (incomplete or unreliable data).

Today, another important tourism pattern belongs to the so-called 'ageing society'. In fact, because people remain healthy longer, it should mean that the tourists aged 65 or more will become an important segment for the tourism market in the future.

As we have above shown, the participation in tourism in the European Union is relatively constant during time, but data on not participating are impressive. In the context of the statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC in EC, 2009), the share of households that cannot afford to pay for one week of annual holiday away from home during a year rises to more than one in three. The data for the most recent year for which data for all Member States are available, namely the reference year 2007, are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Share of Households Unable to Afford 1 Week Annual Holiday Away from Home, 2007.**

Source: Eurostat, Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). EC (2009).

Nevertheless, in Europe since 1936 the Geneva International Convention (ILO, 2005) recognizes the workers have the right of a paid time holidays and for the first time, the term ‘Social Tourism’ has been used in an international conference, while in 1996 the Montreal Declaration has been adopted in sight of ‘a humanistic and social vision of the tourism’ (UNDPI, 1989).

In the present evolution of western societies’ context, considering both the demand and the supply sides, agriculture and tourism have many points of contiguity about best practices to be adopted in sustainability (environment, culture, leisure and society). Otherwise, agriculture and tourism actually face the necessity to adopt both socio-economic and ethical choices and share collaboration instead of performing competition for the use of land and allocation of consumers’ leisure time.

The fast change of the western societies’ patterns, since the post WWII till now, has determined that some phenomena such as those related to leisure time became ‘power factors’ instead of remaining residual forces in causing social, cultural and economic changes. Moreover, the new potentiality of agricultural tourism can actually create a closer contiguity between tourism and agriculture.

Since many years (OECD, 1994, p.5), clearly realized this topic:

‘For many years a number of rural areas have been beset by population loss and declining services. These problems are now exacerbated by changes that have brought job losses and falling income to the farm sector.

‘In contrast to this downturn, tourism has blossomed into a prosperous, fast-growing activity, and has indeed turned out to be a significant factor for economic growth in the countries in which it has developed.

‘It was therefore important to determine whether tourism’s growth potential could be harnessed as a strategy for rural development, in particular by drawing upon resurgent interest in the countryside, its traditional way of life, and landscapes and the architectural heritage, referred to as amenities.’

Nowadays, the political interest focuses on the necessity to foster the enhancement of tourism industry, encouraging an extension of the tourist season by means of the promotion of social tourism (EC, 2010a). Agricultural tourism can actually promote the beneficial presence of “social tourists” in countryside.

## **THE MARRIAGE OF SOCIAL TOURISM AND SOCIAL AGRICULTURE**

Social tourism was born following the necessity of a major solidarity and allowing to have leisure time and make tourism also for weaker segments of society. Today it encompasses all those activities that are free and ‘freeing’, allowing to make women and men completely realized both in individual maturity and in civil participation (Tonini, 2010). Thus, social tourism helps people to improve self-consciousness, re-discover life values, and self-enrichment due to profound knowledge of other people, lands and cultures by means of techniques of cultural entertainment and hospitality. The power of tourism in innovating

economic and cultural systems should be joined to the rural society's capacity in maintaining territorial equilibrium, social values, matching sustainable and durable models of farming and land managing. The Travel and Tourism industry can play the overwhelming role of 'His Majesty the Tourism' (Tonini, 2010), whom all has to be devoted to. Contrarily, the role of tourism in social relationships is an important topic for discussion from many point of views, including ethics.

The fundamental, political and more elaborated guide-lines of ethical behavior have been stated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The document is based on a well-balanced equilibrium between utilitarian and deontological principles. The 1948 Declaration built a well worldwide recognized framework that encompasses different cultures, religions and ideologies and thus is the 'contractual' landmark mainly recognized at the international level. The ethic vision about human behavior needs that people make choices preferring altruistic to selfish behaviors and this topic has been considered also in studies and research within economics (Axelrod, 1984).

About the agriculture-ethics relation, the FAO Panel of Eminent Experts on Ethics and Agriculture (FAO, 2007, p. 10) has stated that:

'Ethics require that people go beyond self-interest to care for others. The Panel has agreed in its earlier sessions that the major avenue to this is through contractarian ethics, which combines duty-based and utilitarian approaches. Ethics may be approached through the agreement of rationally self-interested and socially responsible individuals on guidelines for social interaction and governance.'

The main ethical issues on food production and farming are substantially two. The first concerns with the promotion of sufficient production and distribution of food in order to assure everyone the sufficient food access. The other ones pertain to policy measures ensuring the ecological sustainability of food production, including fishing and forest managing (FAO, 2007). Moreover, since many decades CAP has embraced these guide-lines, including sustainability in its own goals (EC, 2006).

Within the ethics-tourism relations, the guidelines are delineated by the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism adopted in Santiago de Chile (WTO, 1999), that recalls the Manila Declaration on World Tourism (UN, 1982), the Rio Conference (UNCED, 1992a) and the Agenda 21 (UNCED, 1992b).

The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism has stated the right to tourism and free movement of tourists, defining in ten articles the following principles:

1. Tourism's contribution to mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies;
2. Tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfillment;
3. Tourism, a factor of sustainable development;
4. Tourism, a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and contributor to its enhancement;
5. Tourism, a beneficial activity for host countries and communities;

6. Obligations of stakeholders in tourism development;
7. Right to tourism;
8. Liberty of tourist movements;
9. Rights of the workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry;
10. Implementation of the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

It is quite evident that the shadow aim of the Code is to favor free and spontaneous contacts among men and women of different worldwide cultures and styles of life. Tourism is to be considered a vital force for peace, friendship enhancement and reciprocal comprehension of different populations.

As above mentioned, the concept of agricultural multifunctionality can be considered respectively to farms and rural areas but it could be further extended encompassing all activities within a territory. This extended agro-territorial perspective has been defined referring to all potential activities of farms which actually or potentially interact with local available resources and industries in a territory (Alfano and Cersosimo, 2009).

Within all those external activities, farms can perform a wide range of social activities such as recreative, cultural, educational and accommodation services, that is, environment education centers, kindergartens, wellness and health centers managing, disadvantaged persons hosting and social cooperatives or enterprises. Social tourism can actually be a service produced by agriculture in order to match the goals as delineated by international and national organizations and policy makers and contemporarily contribute to sustain farm revenues.

In Italy, the Tourism Code (GU, 2011) reserve the art. 28 to the topic of social tourism, introducing 'vacation grants' as a tool for solidarity intervention in favor of weak and low-income people, contemporarily matching the goal of de-seasonality of tourism flows and decongestion of most crowded tourism areas.

By an holistic point of view, sustainable agriculture and sustainable tourism should be strong allied as well as social tourism and social agriculture in a sustainable governance of land and contribute to social durability of local communities.

## CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

A strong alliance between Travel and Tourism and Agriculture is possible and then should be favorable in many regions of the world. Sometimes, the two industries are actually competitors for land use and recently in Western Countries also for tourists acquisition due to the boom of agriculture tourism in many tourism destinations.

Travel and Tourism need to use natural resources and landscapes for tourism purposes, often not completely considering the un-substitutable role of farmers in producing quality of tourism resort landscapes. Furthermore, a necessity of nature authenticity and naive relational tourism

is growing. Agriculture has with no doubt transformed original natural resources into means of production, economically exploited often following high intensive conditions. Nevertheless, for selected segments of tourists, rural areas are still the realm of authenticity, landscape, and well-being, at least in comparison to urban style of life and urban living people's perception.

Since some decades, the rural tourism has faced an actual boom, not everywhere but in some part of Europe and largely in Italy, particularly in some suitable regions. Agriculture has already demonstrated its attitude to enlarge its sphere of competence, responding very well to social pressure for public goods production and becoming a real multifunctional activity. Nowadays, the importance of producing non-commodities is still increasing in comparison to fading necessity of bulk productions of food and fibers.

Agriculture and the rural society will be able also to introduce new forms of products in its organizational and social patterns. That is, the ability to include also the production of social tourism within capabilities of farms and rural areas.

The presence of less wealthy tourists in rural areas and in farms will contribute to ensure further revenues to farming and relaxation to a larger segment of tourism market, de-season ability and de-crowding of mainstream tourism resorts. Rural Tourism needs to consider smartly the sustainable hospitality and the introduction of social goals should be a good pace in the direction of a Sustainable Rural Tourism pattern.

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# Why sustainability does not work

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## ABSTRACT

Development has certainly placed under debate within the fields of anthropology in these days; to some extent, two different perspectives are at odds. For one hand, liberal scholars argue that societies are located in a continuum in search for rationalization and social evolution; on another hand, neo-Marxist scholars emphasize on the belief that some countries accumulate a major grade of capital with the aim to dominate politically to others. These two conceptual forms of understanding the development have not dialogued hitherto. Under such a context, the present paper is aimed at triggering the debate of a topic which has somehow ignored by academy; the limitations and contributions of sustainability and tourism in developing countries.

**Keywords:** Enhancement, Development, Tourism, Anthropology, Hegemony

## INTRODUCTION

The advance of industrial logic and ecological problems of climate change have brought serious concerns to policy makers in the last two centuries. The paradigm of sustainability, originally coined by biology, as an all-encompassing philosophy that leads to protect local resources, was adopted in tourism fields by many scholars. The concept of sustainability not only appealed to create a need to protect the non-renewable resources, but also imposed the meaning of improvement as a valid mechanism towards progress (Goodwin, 2002). Although, much attention was given to the fact that sustainability develops the economies of poor countries (Bouillon, 1985; Vitry, 2003; Silva Santo, 2003; Schluter, 2008; Nadeau et al, 2008; Alvarez and Korzay, 2008; Franch et al, 2008; Dwyer, 2008; Dos Santos and Antonini Oliveira, 2004; Blake et al, 2008; Altman and Finlayson, 2003; Santana Talavera, 2006; Singal and Uysal, 2009; Bagri, Gupta and George, 2009; Alves and Hilal, 2009; Lade, 2010; Lacher and Nepal, 2010), less attention was placed to the main discourse this philosophy promotes. The present essay-review is aimed at discussing the limitations of sustainability to create prosperous and symmetrical conditions of life in peripheral countries as well as the conceptual framework to understand how and for what the eco-friendly paradigm has been built. At the time, West recognizes its economic system may create serious consequences for other cultures and the planet; it confers a sentiment of paternity to strengthen the dependency by means of financial credit. As a result of this pervasive ethic, the paradigm of sustainability becomes in an instrument of control and submission. Because this discussion is not given

in Anglo-World, where the sustainability is widely accepted, it is necessary to pose a cross-cultural approach citing works which remain unaffordable for Anglo-readers.

## PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

Through the XIXth century, the great European powers launched to discover and colonize the unexplored world. Based on the idea of assisting native aboriginals whose cultures were on danger because of the advance of colonial powers, the first anthropologists should be a discipline oriented to intervene in the suffering of aboriginals. But things come worse to worst, these non-western cultures in danger may be effaced if social scientists do not document timely their customs, traditions and lore.

West alluded to non-white world as the last remnants of savage life. Documentation of aborigine's life was not only read by local governors, but also applied to domesticate the savage. This means that unwittingly anthropology and colonialism was inextricably intertwined (Korstanje, 2008; 2010; 2012). Far from disappearing, this belief which combines charity and imperialism has mutated to new forms. Sustainability and development are two ideological forms of connecting West with the rest of the world. To put this in bluntly, if anthropology over-valorized the rationale as a criterion of distinction between Whites and non-whites, tourism takes the accessibility of communities to superior forms of development in the same direction. Being a developed (civilized) country is for modern mind a subtle way of marking the boundaries between centre and periphery. The radical criticism of this research is based on a great paradox. One on hand, tourism-led analysts claimed that the advance of capitalism (as colonialism before) generates serious negative effects for communities, but at the same time, they encourage the adoption of tourism as a primary industry. The lack of infrastructure in tourism-receiving countries aggravates the situation. Peripheral governments are pressed to ask for a loan in the international financial organizations as World Bank or IMF (International Monetary Fund). The higher interests and potential failures of these countries to generate competitive economies place the theory of sustainability under the lens of scrutiny. These organisms replied that failures are based on cultural impediments to adopt development as a fresh alternative to boost economy (Cardelli & Rosenfeld, 1998; Corbalan, 2004; Esteva, 2000). Culture, one of the great inventions of West from XVIIIth century, paves the pathway to justify the collapse of native governments by means of corruption, lack of rational thought, and other problems as civil wars. Therefore, it is important not to loose the sight how the idea of culture has surfaced.

## THE INVENTION OF CULTURE

To understand the obsession for authenticity and culture proper of modern thought one should trace into the *Imagined Village*, a research that assesses the onset of English folksongs. Based on the primary assumption that the industrial revolution divided the world in two, Georgina Boyes (2010) argues that English folk revival was constructed in sharp contrast with urban

life trying to recover not only the lost cultural values, but also innocence and simplicity. The first anthropologists believed cultures evolved in a unique line through history. Recycled in more evolved forms, European cultures were seen in connection with primitive and rural mind. Basically, what is important to remind here is that eighteenth-century developed a romantic paternalism where spiritual values, proper of rural life, was opposed to alienation in urban cities. People, as never before, were divided in factory-workers and peasant.

Heritage, culture and folklore are enrooted in the logic of imperialism and expansionism. Whenever the first ethnologists, colonial administrators and missionaries reported the customs and habits of aborigines, Europe recognized how some persistent primitive activities have survived to the passing of years. That way, scholarship concluded, under the theory of survivals that primitive beliefs and their systems have evolved to new forms more civilized. At some extent, the survivals evidenced the sentiment of superiority of European intellectuals and legitimized their political expansion throughout the globe. This assumption paved the ways for the advent not only of culture but also folklore. Therefore, Boyes (2010) considers that heritage nature is the continuance performed to the extent to persist as a collective memory. Nonetheless, survival theories are unable to respond why some institutions simply disappear while others transcended thousand of years. The cradle of imperialism, England, became the stepping stone of culture-related fascination. From XIX to XXth century's folk associations, museums, festivals were certainly re-cycled to be offered as a tourist product. After all, the inception of revival tradition transformed the uncivilized or uneducated life of peasants in a criterion of attractiveness for capitalism.

This book brilliantly shows how folk-songs are gradually replaced by a specific ideology based on antiquarianism and control. The British style of life, its proud, genders, race and classes were in imminent danger. German manufacturing combined with military strength exerted considerable influence upon England. Romanticism and German music persuaded somehow to middle-class women in refusing to the idea of producing large families. Pre-industrial communities were the hope in a moment of temblor, considering that a popular claim inherited to festivals or strikes was really prohibited by state. To maintain the societal order, aristocracies recurred to create a symbol of national unity such as ceremonials where the royal life opened its doors to lay people. One of the first steps in this direction was the opening doors parliament, followed by the royal weddings.

Basically, those rituals strictly circumscribed to privileged classes, were not only disseminated to the rest of England, but also engendered a reason for unity based on military displays, flag and patriotism. The discourse of science that proclaimed survival theories led citizenry to learn from past. Tradition, in this vein, played a key role in consolidating this process. As Boyes (2010) put it, *“tradition is, however, relatively indivisible. Considered in isolation, invented traditions appear as sporadic, staged events, presented by an elite to an uninvolved populace. But within the combination of history, consistency and semi dramatic performance embodied in invented traditions was an implicit resonance of earlier customary observances – particularly those involving public display”* (p. 29). Arts and painting revitalized the tendons of nationalism flourishing a sentiment of nostalgia where superiority and conservatism were

combined. In the world, British Empire reserved its right to civilize and educate the peripheral colonies, but indoors uneducated folk should be rechanneled to avoid the important pathologies as laziness, alcoholism, or social fragmentation. In doing so, folk-songs and lore contributed notably to the new imperial educational policies, local pride exploitations. Following this argument, heritage concerns were elaborated as a discourse where britishness was associated to purity, cleanness, order and happiness.

The Imagined Village is more than a book, which illustrates as a politic treatise how invention of heritage worked to dissuade ethnic and inter-class conflicts. This research explores, from many perspectives, the role of events and culture attachment towards the creation of English country dance. The invented heritage, this is perhaps, the main thesis of this work, is adapted to the economical, sociological context. From colonialism to Second World War, Britishness has experienced diverse forms and expressions conferring a negotiated self image to populace. From this perspective, this process of identity (ideological fiction) eluded the fragmentation of nationhood, but author add, this consensus is politically drawn by status quo. Important movements such as British fascism or feminism would break the country into pieces; otherwise, these new ideologies were immobilized and mitigated by the introduction of fictional consensus where dance, patriotism and liberty converged. Although English peasants earned insufficient money to meet their basic needs, folk-song transformed such a suffering in pride and commitment to be the keepers of heritage. Secondly, with exceptional sensibility Boyes (2010) provides with a coherent conceptual framework to understand these types of issues, in few words, a research highly suggested to anthropologists, sociologists and historians who are concerned in the way how nation-states produce ethnicity and nationhood for being commercialized by means of tourism industry. Last but not least, this book presents an innovating thesis in cultural studies, which points out that anthropologists who often are concerned in the protection of heritage, voluntarily or not design politically the architecture of power (culture) so that the involving society works. Nonetheless, may we precise that problems of development to flourish in African countries are accountable to tourism?

## THE IDEOLOGY OF THE WEST

Tim Ingold (2000) explores the roots of sustainability as a discourse oriented to control national life. Taking his previous cues from Gibson as well as other phenomenologist philosophers, Ingold argues convincingly that the point of departure in ecological debate should aim at deciphering the western ideology. Rather, the specialists today turn their attention to the trust of technology, or the needs to renew the existent energy sources. As this backdrop, West considers the human life as disengaged from the natural ethos. The modern discourse not only keeps the supremacy of reason to sort the world but also is entitled to dominate other organism and live forms which lack of conscience. This point of view leads West to preserve nature excluding the human presence. One of the aspects that characterize the existent ecological policies is the total absent of humans in reserve and preserved parks. It is not accident that humanity and nature are mutually excluded. As civilization, the sense of knowledge we produce signals to a deeper division whose borders are determined by the

sedentary logic of capitalism. To validate this path-breaking thesis, Ingold takes the example of hunters and gatherers who see the world from a relational view. Not only these nomad groups do not need the surplus of production to monopolize, but they connect with nature from another stance. The nature should not be domesticated or controlled to create a general well-being because it provides the sources for survival.

The contrast to pragmatism Ingold calls that “the dwelling perspective” deserves considerable attention. His view is based on the fact that anthropology is based on the premise some forms of “humans build” are projection from environment. This alludes to think that the space should be built (symbolically created) to be dwelled, as both were two separate facets of living. In order for nature to be safe, also no human intervention should be achieved. Rather, Ingold proposes a relational view of ecology to remind that building is not dwelling. Humans inhabit the space at the same time they live. Therefore, the dwelling perspective should set pace to a much broader weaving paradigm. Following this explanation, it is interesting to evaluate the problem of ecology in perspective. Hunters and gatherers take the food of animals to fulfil their basic needs. Nature gives to humans everything they need, but with some restrictions. Like ancestors, animals serve the role of protectors of hunters here and afterlife. In the case humans attempt to monopolize the hunting activity, animals withhold their flesh leading them to starvation and misfortune. Animals play a pervasive role in the cosmos, they may be protectors or monsters depending on what humans do. By hunting is not killing, the sacrificed animal rebirth to life continues in a cyclical way. This cosmology concentrates a strong relational way of being in this world irrespective of technology and culture. Nor dwelling is opposite to live, neither culture is a human invention to be inserted in a hostile environ. Unfortunately, anthropology from its inception failed to break the Cartesian dualism considering the other (aboriginals) in opposition to the own culture. By the way, the concept of culture as technology, labour and history were conducive to strengthen the old sentiment of euro-centrism that facilitated the advance of imperialism.

Technology, sustainability, intelligence, the habit of dwelling and the concept of landscapes have been socially constructed to expand the belief that reason, which is only human, can be expressed by means of language. Equally important, it would be interesting to discuss the dichotomy between labour and leisure. As Ingold put it, both are two side of the same coin. Even if the division between what is reasonable and desirable was proper of sedentary tribes (pastoralism), capitalism introduced two significant changes. First and foremost, it expanded the belief non-western cultures were petrified in the time (which paves the way to create the need of assistance in West). The aboriginal ethnicities not only were a pre-stage of Europe civilization, but also they do not have a proper consciousness of their history. Both prejudices are present in the specialized bibliography of seniors’ anthropologists and ethnologists. Secondly, the capitalist eye forged the myth the leisure liberates the workforce from its oppression. Ingold explains convincingly that the ideological power of capitalism rested on its efficacy to control and mark goods and workers protecting their integrity to be continuously exploited. The formers are marked by the price of exchange, fixed at the market. The later, rather, depends on its capacity to consume the fabricated merchandises. To put this in bluntly, workers move their resources to fabricate precisely the merchandise they

will consume in their free-time. Touring is working by other means. All these terms are the residual result from a significant rupture accelerated by capitalism to see the self as something external to natural world. In view of that, it is almost impossible to reverse the problems of ecology without changing the existent ideology of capitalism. The dwelling perspective, enrooted in the ideology of capitalism, does not allow preservation accepting the presence of human beings. The ecological reserved zones are liberated from human presence. This happens, Ingold concludes, simply because modern eye thinks human beings are alien from nature, the world still remains as a hostile environment to control. As we will see in next section, the idea of control as well as protection is of paramount importance to understand the success to expand the ideological discourse of sustainability.

## DEVELOPMENT AND HEGEMONY

Eco-friendly studies and sustainable theory adopted by tourism fields recognizes that development, under some conditions, does not lead the communities to the desired profits (Kiss, 2004) or generates much higher negative impacts on culture (Forstner, 2004). Real State speculation constraints native to the access to peripheral or pour lands (Vail and Hultkrantz, 2000) because tourist destinations are erected in privileged territories, sometimes causing big damages to natural heritage and patrimony (Briassoulis, 2002). At some extent, M. Nihalani argues that development based on the paradigm of sustainability seems to be fruitful for involving community because it revitalizes the renewable and non-renewable resources to enlarge the threshold of economic benefits and reducing costs. Basically, the monitoring of government and local control provide with a balanced growth sustainable in the time (Mihalani, 2008). Following this, Moscardo acknowledges that the understanding on the effects of sustainability is vital to hold the life in communities (Moscardo, 2007). The irreversible growth of tourism, based on the technological advances and worker-union benefits brought by mobile cost reduction or more suitable means of transport, have not reflected in better ways of living (Khatchikian, 2000; Getino, 2002; Wallingre, 2007). Some Marxist sociologists alarmed society on the alienatory nature of tourism (Zamora & Garcia, 1988; Korstanje, 2010; Tzanelli, 2013; Maccannell, 2003; Blake et al, 2008) while others as E. De Kadt (1992) delved into the importance of historical relations to forge the social bonds in tourism industry. Problems or benefits to adopt tourism as a sustainable industry would depend on the degree of autonomy historically developed by involving nation. Turner and Ash's polemic text widely scrutinized by tourism specialized literature, posed the key question of sustainability on the asymmetrical condition of labor tourism fagocitates. For these specialists, tourism exhibits a capitalist logic where domination and submission are two of their primary aspects. For pour countries, the needs to relief poverty allude to adopt industries which demand a great investment. Tourism-delivering nations export their human resources to consume everything in the peripheral paradise. Capital generated in tourist destinations is chronically repatriated to the main imperial cities where the great investors come from. Tourism facilitates the conditions of domination proper of capitalism (Turner & Ash, 1975). Both, Turner and Ash were reluctant to accept the benefits of sustainability in the onset of 70s decade. Pearce has recently demonstrated the importance of

intermediaries and wholesalers in the process of trade as well as the design of tourist destination:

*“Making more explicit links to the wider distribution literature the results of research can be more readily related back to other sectors and fed into a wider disciplinary debate. In this respect, it is interesting to note that while issues of multi-channel distribution have only recently been attracting much interest in the broader literature, the use of multiple channels is quite commonplace for suppliers of tourism products due to some of the factors discussed here. In these ways, the circle from research on general issues of distribution to sector specific ones and back again might be completed, enabling researchers to make more effective contributions” (Pearce, 2008:165-166).*

Last but not least, Carson et al (2009) considers that capital plays a vital role in expanding or constraining tourism. The conceptualization of heritage or patrimony gives the reasons for policy makers to exploit a product. Rather, to our ends, one of the most troubling aspects all these studies have is the lack of critical perspective to deepen on the ways the concept of culture, heritage and sustainability has been constructed for West.

## WHY SUSTAINABILITY DOES NOT WORK

Next, we will debate to what an extent sustainable paradigm is the hidden side of capitalism; one that gives the reason to commoditize people, and territories. Once finalized the WWII, president Truman cuts the world in two when in 1949 proclaimed in the needs for America to assist under-developed countries. From that moment on, “being better” became in a priority which should be expanded to civilized world in order to undermine the enemies of America. As the previous backdrop, anthropology embraced two diverse ideologies. “Anthropology for development” envisaged that social scientists should promote the idea of improvement to help aboriginals to escape from poverty. Rather, a second more radical wave (post-Marxist) signaled to the belief that development was a capitalist instrument for subordination and exclusion. Of course, the discussion not only was not ended, but also leaped to other disciplines. It is unfortunate, in tourism today sustainability is not questionable by its effects, but not by the ideological values it embraces. What would be more than discussing here is the connection of global trade, unlimited loans to peripheral countries by US, and sustainability theory. If the theory of development instilled the need, the financial international banks monopolized the means to fulfill that needs. The concept of sustainability did not alleviate, but accelerated the consequences of the first and second division of labor (Escobar, 1995; Grillo, 1985; Hobart, 1993; Schnapper, 1988).

Recently, supporters of development faced serious problems to explain, why in spite of many investment, things came out wrong. Peripheral nations which bet to tourism as main industry today increased their debts and dependency from abroad, as well as ruined their local non-renewable resources. Based on the premise that wealth is a natural results of intelligence and rationale, West played a pervasive role by configuring in non-western cultures the needs to be developed, at time its plans backfired, Science (anthropology) and

trade (tourism) replied this happened because of the backwardness of natives (cultural pathologies). The meaning of savage sets the pace to new expression as cultural pathologies, which ranges from civil wars, corruption and other human problems. The international banks that decades earlier issued uncontrolled loans today did not exert any type of self-criticism. The argument suffered little adjustments alone. Sustainable tourism pivoted in solving the old problems of anthropology and development. The emergency of climate change, which needs a rapid attention, opens the doors for the imposition of a new ideology that at the surface is different, but at the bottom remains the same.

Unlike colonialism, which requested greater volumes of migrants, slaves and workers, tourism now alludes to globalization as a centrifuge force which exchanges people and goods into similar circuits. Capital replicates by the imposition of new modern allegories as patrimony, heritage which creates the needs. Later at a second stage, poor countries adopt this ideology discourse to ask international assistance. The success of this ideology depends on the degree the periphery accepts its so-called inferiority respecting to centre. This conforms the epicenter of hegemony (Marmora, 2004; Korstanje, 2008). So, we consider that “the discourse of sustainability” applied on tourism forms an ideological narrative which separates people in two sides, civilized (developed) and uncivilized (non-developed). The following points not only synthesizes the argument of the present essay but also stimulate the discussion to be continued in other layouts.

- 1) Sustainability emerges as an economic practice which reinforces a previous historical relationships between masters and slaves.
- 2) Development seems to be based on false-dichotomy that the world is cut in two: developed and undeveloped societies
- 3) Whether human groups are labeled in terms of a continuum passage towards evolution, the rationale is the key concept to mark the superiority of some over others. The derived failures in development programs have polemically explained by means of cultural issues in developing countries as lack of political stability, problems in governability, and corruption.
- 4) The doctrine of development not only has been functional to the interests of status-quo but also divides the world in two nourishing an ethnocentric discourse: “all who do not want to improve their material and cultural conditions of life should be considered as primitives!”.

Following S. Zizek’s contributions, ideology works as a dream mingling the reality from the fantasy. One of its most influential power does not rest on what it utters, but what it covers (Zizek 2009). Unfortunately, scholarship in tourism and hospitality has not developed a critical view against sustainability. Studies only focus on the effects, which may be corrected adopting a new plan or program. The main cultural values of sustainability are never questioned. It is contrasted as opposing to negative forces of market. Rather, we think capitalism which overrides countries and sustainability are both side of the same coin (Viola, 2000). Whole peripheral countries placed in hands of foreign investors strategic resources creating a new criterion of dependence. This reminds us undoubtedly that there are many subtle strategies for colonizing which are not debated in specialized literature. Most likely

one of the major strength these strategies have are associated to the fact they are not placed under the lens of scrutiny by experts and scholars concerned to sustainability issues, rather, they still encourage development and sustainability as vehicles towards an imposible happiness.

## CONCLUSION

The present paper discussed the contradiction of discourse of sustainability which focuses on the effects of capitalism, but keeping its main cultural values: speculation, rationale, control, and calculation. Explained why anthropology was yesterday and is today a discipline which concerns for the life of aboriginals, but gives to imperialism the necessary information to control them, it is interesting to expand the debate to the role of tourism fields, as echoer of sustainability promise. National heritage consumed by national imaginaries posits the needs of protection. The symbolic engine of West gathers and homogenizes scattered ethnicities into one-sided imaginary, the nation-state. The success of sustainability rests on making to believe these nations they had a patrimony to protect –from the advance of evil forces as capitalism, market and so forth. States are now subordinated to the power of capital by means of allegoric consumption. As explained above, the periphery more concerned in alleviating their condition of life and work embraces to international credits which gravitate in a hegemonic dependency respecting to international banks, most of them hosted in central countries. Last but not least, this hermeneutic circle not only explains why sustainability does not work, but also the new forms of hegemony in an ever-changing world.

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