



ΠΡΑΞΗ:

«ΘΑΛΗΣ-ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑΣ-

Το ανθρώπινο δυναμικό ως βασική συνιστώσα της αναπτυξιακής δυναμικής και διαφοροποίησης των περιοχών: Η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας»

Κωδικός MIS **380421**

ΥΠΟΕΡΓΟ:

«Το ανθρώπινο δυναμικό ως βασική συνιστώσα της αναπτυξιακής δυναμικής και διαφοροποίησης των περιοχών: Η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας» και α/α «01»

ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΙΑΚΟ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ:

«Εκπαίδευση και Δια Βίου Μάθηση» (Ε.Π.Ε.Δ.Β.Μ.) 2007-2013
Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων

ΑΞΟΝΑΣ ΠΡΟΤΕΡΑΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ 11:

«Ενίσχυση του ανθρώπινου κεφαλαίου για την προαγωγή της έρευνας και της καινοτομίας στις 3 Περιφέρειες Σταδιακής Εξόδου»

ΚΑΤΗΓΟΡΙΑ ΠΡΑΞΗΣ:

«ΘΑΛΗΣ»

Η Πράξη συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (Ε.Κ.Τ.) και από εθνικούς πόρους, μέσω του Προγράμματος Δημοσίων Επενδύσεων (Π.Δ.Ε.) του Υπουργείου Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων

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Δράση 4: Μελέτες περιπτώσεων τοπικών πρωτοβουλιών



Η παρούσα έρευνα έχει συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο - ΕΚΤ) και από εθνικούς πόρους μέσω του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος «Εκπαίδευση και Δια Βίου Μάθηση» του Εθνικού Στρατηγικού Πλαισίου Αναφοράς (ΕΣΠΑ) – Ερευνητικό Χρηματοδοτούμενο Έργο: ΘΑΛΗΣ. Επένδυση στην κοινωνία της γνώσης μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου.

Συντάκτης : Μελισσουργός Γεώργιος

Για την εκπόνηση του παραδοτέου απασχολήθηκαν τα κάτωθι μέλη της ομάδας έργου :

ΜΕΛΗ ΟΜΑΔΑΣ ΕΞΩΤΕΡΙΚΩΝ ΣΥΝΕΡΓΑΤΩΝ (Ο.Ε.Σ.)

ΜΕΛΙΣΣΟΥΡΓΟΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ

Θεσσαλονίκη, 30/11/2015



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Πανεπιστήμιο Μακεδονίας

Ερευνητικό Πρόγραμμα ΘΑΛΗΣ

Το ανθρώπινο δυναμικό ως βασική συνιστώσα της αναπτυξιακής δυναμικής και διαφοροποίησης των περιοχών: Η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας.

ΟΜΑΔΑ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ 4

Χαροκόπειο Πανεπιστήμιο

Μελισσουργός Γεώργιος

Δ4. Μελέτες περιπτώσεων τοπικών πρωτοβουλιών

Παραδοτέο Π4.6.2: Τελική έκδοση κειμένου προς δημοσίευση σε διεθνές περιοδικό



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ΤΜΗΜΑ ΓΕΩΓΡΑΦΙΑΣ
ΧΑΡΟΚΟΠΕΙΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ

ΠΑΡΑΔΟΤΕΟ 4.6.2

Tourism and economic geography: rethinking the agenda

Yorgos Melissourgos

Final paper to be submitted to an international journal



Η παρούσα έρευνα έχει συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση(Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο - ΕΚΤ) και από εθνικούς πόρους μέσω του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος «Εκπαίδευση και Δια Βίου Μάθηση» του Εθνικού Στρατηγικού Πλαισίου Αναφοράς (ΕΣΠΑ) – Ερευνητικό Χρηματοδοτούμενο Έργο: ΘΑΛΗΣ. Επένδυση στην κοινωνία της γνώσης μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου.

Tourism and economic geography: rethinking the agenda

Yorgos Melissourgos

INTRODUCTION

The striking omission of the importance of tourism among Anglophone economic geographers, who, due to language, are leading current debates, is evident in three well-circulated readers of economic geography (Lee and Wills, 1997; Sheppard and Barnes, 2000; Barnes et al, 2004). In their pages there is hardly any reference on tourism. The same stands for the more recent reader by Tickell et al (2007), while in Pike et al's (2006) insightful textbook there is only few general and case study references on tourism. In the companion volume *Handbook of Local and Regional Development* (Pike et al, 2011) the only reference on tourism is made by one of the authors of this chapter (Hadjimichalis, 2011). The renowned P. Dicken's textbook *Global Shift* (2003), which incorporates a number of significant world-scale industries in its consecutive updates, again says nothing about tourism. Even in the more exclusive field of services, tourism is missing from important books like the pioneering one of P. Daniels (1993). According to a report by D. Che (Ioannides, 2006: 81), in two leading journals, *Economic Geography* and *Regional Studies*, one may find just one or two papers respectively that deal with tourism in the 2000-2005 period. Updating this specific inquiry (conducting a May 2012 SCOPUS advanced search using tourism and travel selected keywords), we've come up with just 2 publications in *Economic Geography* and 9 papers in *Regional Studies*.

These examples clearly illustrate that tourism has been absent from major Anglophone economic geography debates, despite the current plurality of traditions and cross-disciplinarity that have been celebrated in the field of economic geography, especially after the cultural turn. It seems that mainstream economic geography's focus remains on industry and manufacturing in particular,

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incorporating, more recently, the geography of producer services. In this way, Anglophone economic geography simply means industrial geography. This is also true for other national traditions/languages which are heavily influenced by the Anglophone scholarship. In Greece, for instance, tourism is again absent from the native economic geography literature, this being reflected in two of the most well-circulated economic geography textbooks in Greek that both make no reference to tourism (Labrianidis, 2001; Kourliouros, 2011). This omission is important, given the dynamic development of tourism studies in Greek academic institutions and the tradition of tackling tourism in studies of tourism development (Buhalis, 1999; Tsartas, 2010), regional development and planning (Spilanis, 2000; Briassoulis, 2003), sociology and social impacts (Tsartas, 1991, 2003) or the environment (Coccosis and Tsartas, 2001), just to mention a few examples.

At the same time, the problematic rose by empirical and theoretical research on tourism never seems to find its way in theories and policies or in debates about the future of geography (Gibson, 2008; cf. Thrift, 2002). However, it would be misleading to argue that tourism scholars completely neglect all the top priority issues that nowadays are central in economic geography cycles. What happens actually is that there is an important strand of research that deals with tourism from an economic geography perspective, but this debate is occurring within the field of tourism studies. For example, D. Ioannides (1995) established a pioneering research agenda calling for a strengthening of ties between tourism and economic geography. This agenda includes changes in the global tourism production system and their relevance to more general systemic changes, the dynamics of new corporate strategies of restructuring and the role played by local actors in shaping the economic landscapes of tourism. His call was further developed in Ioannides and Debbage's *The Economic Geography of the Tourist Industry* (1998a).

These efforts have been among the first to acknowledge that there is something peculiar with the relationship between tourism and economic geography, a fact that draw the attention of many academics in the years to follow (Agarwal et al, 2000; Hjalager, 2000; Agarwal, 2002). But even before Ioannides and Debbage, a strong geographical focus on tourism –one that also incorporates a number of mainstream



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economic geography issues— has been provided in Shaw and Williams' book *Critical Issues in Tourism* (2002, first edition 1994). Despite its nature as an introductory textbook, this work pushed the tourism debate closer to issues that are usually addressed by economic geographers, contrary to many other contributions that, albeit insightful, have been much more conventional (eg. Pearce, 1989, 1995; Hall and Page, 2002). Shaw and Williams would later publish *Tourism and Tourism Spaces* (2004), which stands as a coherent effort to investigate tourism from a political economy point of view, again bringing to the front broader economic geography issues and debates. At the same time, this work echoed earlier contributions that shared a political economy perspective and had been very influential in redirecting the focus of tourism research (R. Britton, 1979; S.G. Britton, 1982, 1991; Debbage, 1990; Urry, 1990). But, we argue, the problem still remains. For example, despite Britton's (1991) well-cited call for a critical geography of tourism in contrast to what he perceived as descriptive and weakly theorized work, the explosion of tourism studies in the years that followed (see Hall et al, 2004) moved insufficiently towards that end since, 13 years after Britton's claims, Shaw and Williams emphatically argued that "...tourism research is still often descriptive, atheoretical, and chaotically conceptualized in being abstracted from broader social relationships" (2004: 1). Along the same line and while acknowledging the "...potential opportunities to enhance understanding in tourism studies by embracing progress in economic geography", Coles et al conclude that "...[d]espite repeated calls in this regard over the past decade, neither a sustained dialogue nor a large body of knowledge has resulted" (2008: 321). A similar lack of interest on tourism as a global economic activity and as a vital research theme is evident in two important and controversial schools of thought since the 1980s, namely "geographical economics" (particularly in the work of P. Krugman) and "New Regionalism". We pay detail attention to these contributions because they seem to be better equipped to understand and study tourism from an economic geography perspective both missing, however, the point.

Through the influential work of Paul Krugman (1995, 1998), new trade theory and new economics of competitive advantage have emerged as important issues explaining uneven economic development, or better uneven regional development.

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His work, labeled as “geographical economics”, goes beyond comparative advantage (factor endowment) and perfect competition and illustrates that in a world of imperfect competition international trade is driven by increasing returns and external economies which are spatially specific to particular localities and regions. He addresses a wide range of issues such as trade, externalities, globalization, history and path dependence and as a method he starts with a real problem and builds models to capture the essence of that problem. It is beyond the scope of this short paper to discuss in detail the importance of Krugman’ work, how it brings geography back to spaceless economics as well as the various critiques it has attracted (see Martin and Sunley, 1996; Martin 1999). However, he and his critics prioritize again industries/manufacturing and their geographical clustering as sole economic activities engaging in international trade missing once again tourism. This is ironic when we take into account that tourism today is one of the most globalized economic activities, the clustering and the production of local/regional externalities by tourist firms is the driving force behind any economically successful tourist region and that tourist spending at particular locations is considered as the source par excellence of exports by a nation. In other words, he is missing one of the most important contemporary economic parameters which has been consistently ranked as the number one services export producing a trade surplus in many countries, not to mention its significance in well-developed cities and regions that are first-ranked tourism destinations like London, New York, Paris and other urban centres.

On the other hand, the problem with “New Regionalism” (NR) is different. Economic geographers within NR give attention to small and medium industrial firms (SMEs) and ignore totally small tourist firms. It is well known that NR is not a single, coherent theoretical group in economic geography and regional development studies. It rather sums up the work of scholars from diverse schools of thought (Lagendijk, 2003) pointing to the importance of the region (i.e. a socio-spatial entity at a sub-national scale) to explain growth in the context of globalisation. Explanations are provided via an institutional perspective on regional economic development, where geographical accounts of strong inter-disciplinary nature use notions of economic sociology, evolutionary and cognitive psychology, and institutional economics (Amin, 1999). NR is a hotly debated intellectual arena and,



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again, we do not intend to provide here a full account (see Hudson, 1999; MacLeod, 2001). However, a corner stone in NR is the significance of some non-economic factors such as knowledge (codified and tacit), learning (in various forms), networking, social capital, reciprocity and trust, in order to explain why some regions are more dynamic than others. Ironically these non-economic factors form the modus operandi of small tourist firms as well, which use the social and cultural capital of particular communities to promote their business; they exploit family, feminized, low or unpaid labour based on reciprocity and trust; they form sophisticated regional networks for supply of inputs and for allocating visitors; they exploit local knowledge to introduce ecological sensitive tourist packages or to promote local health food; and they learn continuously among themselves and from practices of large firms in the same sector. Many writers within the NR school have used Third Italy as their model, but this was not of help to understand how small scale industry interacts with small scale tourism, how pluriactivity in agriculture sustains both small-scale manufacturing and tourism and, finally, how multiple employment in these three sectors was, until the 1990s, the corner stone of family labour reproduction. Today Third Italy is in crisis for many reasons (see Hadjimichalis, 2006), one of those being in fact the rapture in this peculiar mode of social reproduction of small industrial and tourist firms.

Thus, it seems to us that a window of opportunity for tourism was opened by NR in terms of both small firm emphasis and non-economic factors, which unfortunately very few economic geographers have used. This is not to suggest that there haven't been critical geographical approaches in tourism studies, often inspired by mainstream geographical accounts. Here we have in mind the shift during the last decade towards urban tourism in the Global North, the debate on place marketing and tourism and some research on global value chains and tourism (see below). But we argue that this is exactly the problem: though limitedly, economic geography has influenced tourism studies (and there is now a more or less distinct sub-discipline which we may call the economic geography of tourism), but this is not bi-directional in any way, ie. economic geography of tourism has been having a very small impact on the wider economic geography debate. Therefore there is a need for reconfiguring this particular agenda, but –as Agarwal et al have long called for– this

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is “not a plea for the simple transfer of theories of globalization, restructuring and post-Fordism, mostly elaborated in context of manufacturing or financial services, to tourism” (2000: 242).

EXPLAINING THE MISSING LINK

From the discussion so far we could spot a negligence of tourism in Anglophone economic geography debates. This is evident in most cited works, despite ever growing efforts to fill in this gap. These very efforts are much unfolded within the domain of tourism studies but have minimum impact on economic geographers’ debates. So why is tourism “misplaced”? The literature on the relationship between tourism and economic geography points to a number of reasons for explaining this “misplacement” of tourism. We try bellow to handle this question discussing four possible sources for this neglect.

To begin with, there is a theoretical bias, according to which “... sectors such as manufacturing or producer services are the foundation of wealth creation in any community, whereas consumer services such as tourism, which often depend on unskilled, highly feminized, low-wage, seasonal and/or part-time labour, are merely peripheral actors” (Ioannides and Debbage, 1998b: 5-6). This can be linked to the traditional prioritization by Anglophone geography (and more generally by research in the Global North) of large scale fordist industry, where unionised and stable male labour predominates and where large industrial clusters are the familiar, cloudy, productive landscapes. By the same token any activity, including tourism, which folds in other sunny landscapes and is characterized by other forms of work, namely the informal sector, is neglected (Shaw and Williams, 2002). Thus delivering tourism services particularly in destination regions of the Global South could never attract a “proper” attention by economic geographers due to the social characteristics and forms of labour of those performing tourism. On the contrary research in Southern Europe since the 1970s, coming from environments and traditions whose development history was not based on the fordist factory, the mass worker and the



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welfare state, made important contributions uncovering the importance of informal everyday practices and the networking among small scale industry, agriculture and tourism (Smith, 1999; Recio, 1998; Paci, 1992; Hadjimichalis and Vaiou, 2004). This body of research, some times written in other than English language, remains largely unknown to Anglo-American economic geographers. Unfortunately, the debate on flexible and networked SMEs since the 1980s, within the so-called “New Regionalism” school, as we said above, because of its dual focus on paradigmatic industrial small firms and on “exploring” deviations from the fordist norm (Scott, 1998; Amin, 2000), it really missed the chance of becoming an insightful window of opportunity for making the important link between small tourist firms and their industrial counterparts. Not least because they are often part of the same family business (Hadjimichalis, 2011).

A second possible source for the neglect of tourism is definitional. From a theoretical point of view, there is a well-developed debate as to whether tourism can be regarded as an industry or not. A review of this debate is sketched by Smith (1998), who argues that tourism, though not a conventional industry, can be regarded as a synthetic, or a matrix, or a composite industry. This is also related to how the tourism industry, if any, could be measured. Can we actually get a picture of tourism as industry using conventional statistical methods, when parts of the industry cater both to intermediate and final demand or there is lack and inefficiency of data concerning, for example, domestic tourism? An additional difficulty stems from the fact that visitors and non-visitors consume both tourism and non-tourism commodities and infrastructure, and tourism and non-tourism industries both supply non-tourism and tourism commodities. Smith (ibid) actually calls for the significance of advanced statistical methods –namely the Tourism Satellite Account– that helps in providing with a tourism ratio, i.e. the percentage of receipts in an industry attributable to tourism, but it is highly debatable whether this is a feasible solution to the problem at hand, let alone its scarce use by tourism geographers (Ioannides, 2006). The debate is not over yet. But if we accept for a moment that tourism is a synthetic industry, this argument has apparently not convinced economic geographers who, given their preference to the industrial sector, continue to neglect tourism.

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A third possible source for the neglect of tourism by economic geographers is its classification in services in general and in consumer services in particular. Although the classification into services is more convincing, from a conventional economic geography perspective it still imposes some problems. General services bear with it a conceptual difficulty due to the intangible nature of service activities and the limited shelf-life of products, while consumer services connote the derived short-term utility and the simultaneous of production and consumption, where the end result is an experience rather than a tangible good (Debbage and Daniels, 1998:19). In addition, tourism is characterized by "...[s]patial fixity in consumption, the incorporation of service quality into the tourism experience, and the complexity of tourism products [that] all make the tourism industry distinctive [...], if not unique" (Agarwal et al, 2000: 242). Consumption of tourist services always contains a spatial fix and although there is a great deal of flows necessary for its materialization (passenger air flights, information, product delivery etc), the actual tourist experience is always associated with the tourist destination, i.e. a place different from residence. These features are not part of the "conventional" paradigms of primary sector industries, manufacturing industries or some of the most celebrated services, which are the object of mainstream economic geography theories. In the latter products are material or immaterial objects (like insurance, a banking account), produced in one place, purchased in another and consumed in a third one. The materialization of tourism presupposes the movement over space of the consumer him/herself – not of the product and this is something new for economic geography.

Finally we may add a fourth source adding an imaginary dimension in the missing link between tourism and economic geography. In contrast to other economic sectors –and manufacturing in particular– tourism became a sector with important international economic and socio-political implications only after World War II, when working and middle class people were able to have long summer holidays. This time gap is argued to have had an effect on the development of a social and cross-disciplinary science like geography, especially in the academia of the Global North. It is not by chance that economic geography and regional studies are first and more strongly established in countries that, on the one hand, had an important domestic industrial production and, on the other hand, were in a position to shape the



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international division of labor. On the contrary, mass tourism in holiday destinations during the internationalization phase of tourism is to be found mainly in the Global South, in the so-called “sunny belt” and not in industrial northern nations. In this respect, mass tourism is associated with places in less developed regions and countries with “other” cultures, often former colonies, away from home where you go for holidays not for work. Thus the imaginative geography of these “other” places as leisure-places added an “Orientalist” vision to tourism, as Said (1979) could argue, which further contributed to its devaluation as an inferior activity. The combined effect of the association of tourism with less developed places, with holidays/leisure and with “Orientalist” characteristics difficult to be appreciated –not to say comprehend– by economists (such as pluriactivity, seasonality, relaxation, sexuality, low productivity, feminization and spatial diffusion of activities), may prevent economic geographers’ “tourist gaze” to see tourism as something worth-studying.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN MAKING THE LINK

The link between economic geography and tourism that we call for in this paper has to be exercised very carefully. In this last section we highlight some critical issues from an economic geography and regional studies perspective which, to our view, are important in this regard. A new window is prosperously opening by applying issues already discussed in tourism research which are familiar to economic geography, especially those deriving from political economy and institutional economics, from sociological and anthropological approaches and from development studies. We see five areas for possible research.

The first one concerns **the analysis of the tourism supply system from a political economy point of view**. Global value chain (Gerefi, 1994; Coe et al, 2008) has been embarked on the study of tourism (Clancy, 1998; Mosedale, 2006, 2008). This is an important path which may also broaden –or even challenge– the

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theoretical configurations of the chain approach (see the important empirical insights in Lessmaister, 2008; Erkuş-Öztürk and Terhorst, 2010). Although this body of work has advanced our knowledge of the production system and its wider implications, there are strong signs of a theoretical advancement bottleneck, due to the fact that chains, by ignoring the unique characteristic of tourism, propose a framework that has been designed for classical industrial or agricultural production. Tourism services cannot be deconstructed following the traditional input-output model in which global value chain methodology is founded. Furthermore, we argue that there is still a lot to be done in this respect, in order to properly form an advanced methodological and theoretical framework that will incorporate the particularities of the tourism system (cf. Judd, 2006) and overcome the descriptive particularities of field research. A final theoretical problem is that, in most value chain analyses, value itself is under theorized and takes aboard the monetary form of value only. Therefore we argue that a political economy perspective can unpack the diversity of the sector, i.e. size and forms of firms' organization, fragmentation, oligopoly control and above all the flow of exchange value away from local labour, firms and places to other firms and places and its uneven and unjust mode of appropriation. Of particular importance here is the international division of labour in the context of globalization in which information and communication technologies arise today as the strongest driving force for change in tourism.

A second important research area that is also linked to the first one, is **to think tourism production and consumption spatially, in terms of uneven socio-spatial development**. It has been suggested that transactions via proximity (transactions that are sensitive to geographical distance due to complexity and uncertainty) are crucial in forming clusters of production (Storper and Scott, 1995). Yet there is very little research from an economic geography perspective on these hot issues, despite the fact that functional tourist clusters, such as accommodation (large brand hotels operating side by side with local rooms-to-let), leisure along the beach, night life, souvenirs, restaurants etc, all cry for attention. The oligopoly organisation of mass travel, the changing production landscape of dis-intermediation via internet, as well as the particularities of tourism geography, highlight a variety of spatial and uneven characteristics which are multiscalar in nature. Their combined

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effect has a name, uneven development, and in holiday destinations it reproduces uneven local/regional development. We should also bear in mind that “spatial externalities remain intrinsic to the industry” (Gordon and Goodall, 2000: 297) and that the pure agglomeration economies at the destination require some sort of regulation which, in our opinion, are much closely related to labour markets, land uses and environmental policies than with tourism policy per se (a fact that remains unaddressed by tourism scholars).

A third important issue is **the mode of articulation between tourist SMEs, the informal sector and large tourism firms**. Here concepts such as flexibility, deskilling, socio-spatial embeddedness, networking, learning and others discussed in NR are useful entry points for research. However, we should avoid many of the problematic uses of these concepts by NR in paradigmatic SMEs industrial firms only, by focusing to the mode of articulation of tourist SMEs among themselves (networks, clusters), with other local sectors and also with large international firms in a variety of market structures (from monopolistic competition of large gate-keeping firms down to the spontaneous local clusters of small family businesses). Important questions here include, among others, how and under what conditions tourist firms co-operate and organize networks; how they compete for costumers and when they form local cartels; how low paid, informal, feminized labour move between small and large firms – the list continues. We believe there is no other contemporary economic sector in which we could identify this complex and extraordinary articulation of different capitalist forms of organization, control, labour and profit making. Furthermore, the tourism product, as we said before, is based on social interaction between the supplier and the consumer, where the quality of the product and the satisfaction of the consumer are mainly defined by this customized interaction. Thus, the immediate contact between the consumer and the service provider, i.e. with those who work in tourism, play a crucial role and this highlights the need for research along these lines. Here economic geographers and regional analysts need to be sensitive to gender, racial, sexual and post-colonial issues and apart from their quantitative methods they need to use also qualitative ones.



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The fourth issue concerns **place marketing and branding**. One can easily accept that without branding there is no successful tourist destination. At the moment of consumer's decision to choose a place for holidays, only an abstract model of the product exists. Information search for –and sales of– tourist products on the web (from air tickets and hotels to tour operators' offers, local festivals, local food and weather conditions, sport events etc) nowadays form the largest internet revenue. All the above use extensively place marketing and branding techniques, sallying images, symbols and quality of services at the destination point. Non of these are available in advance to the consumer and thus the tourism product is a “confidence good” (Werther and Klein, 1999). This characteristic requires information and marketing and it causes the explosion on the one hand of web services which promote particular places and on the other reinforce the significance of those known places which have already a brand. There is already research on urban tourist place marketing in the Global North but very little in the Global South. What is missing is on the one hand research on the limits of branding, on its effects on local people and local resources and on elevating conditions of uneven local/regional development among places within a country. And on the other, research is missing on the role of the state, and regional/local authorities as both active promoters and regulators of tourism (land use plans, building permits, tourism and non-tourism specific infrastructure provision, labour legislation and others).

Finally the fifth research area is the **economic, social and environmental effects of tourism in particular places**, a well developed field in tourist, social and anthropological studies but still weak in economic geography and regional studies. As we said in the introduction, tourism has been often seen as an unquestionable economic opportunity for peripheral regions. In fact, the lack of regional development is mistakenly considered as a prerequisite for dynamic tourism exploitation, in terms of unspoiled natural endowments. By now it is well documented in tourist studies that tourism activities are not an a priori safeguarded way in stimulating regional development. Economic geography and regional analysis could made important contributions in this field by uncovering positive and negative spirals of circular causalities –to remember Gunnar Myrdal; by calculating forward and backward linkages; by estimating the importance and magnitude of “tourist

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leakages” out from the locality/region (local payments for imports necessary to tourist but not produced locally); by the same token to estimate the neglected issue of tourism and recreational activities as generators of growth, depending on certain conditions, to other areas beyond final destinations; by estimating the cost of opportunity loss to other regions due to transferring resources to tourist regions, like water and people; and finally to study the environmental cost evident in all tourist destinations of the global south.

Tourism is a major “export” sector, it provides employment to millions, but this is not without cost. In other words we need to do innovative research on who loses and who gains, on how the labour of million low paid tourist workers all over the world, including the global north, ends up in few hands. In these directions more work is needed. Most researchers would agree with d’Hauteserre (1996) who argues, “tourism studies offer an excellent opportunity to reconcile geography’s subdisciplines”. Nevertheless, Anglophone economic geographers and regional planners, with their hegemonic position in the field, do not take yet this opportunity and we believe that it is time to do so.

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