

TOURISM AND URBAN DYNAMICS: REFLECTIONS ON THE USE OF TOURISM AS AN URBAN ENTERPRISE STRATEGY

TURISMO E DINÂMICAS URBANAS: REFLEXÕES SOBRE A UTILIZAÇÃO DO TURISMO ENQUANTO ESTRATÉGIA DE EMPRESARIAMENTO URBANO

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Abstract

Since the 1970's, there is a process of restructuring urban management due to difficulties of the capitalist economy. Deindustrialization, unemployment and fiscal austerity lead governments to view the city as a business to be managed. This is what Harvey (1996) calls "urban entrepreneurship", a form of urban management in which local public authorities incorporates a business stance in attracting new forms of accumulation. In a scenario marked by the competition between cities for the attraction of new forms of capital accumulation, this "Business-State" starts to seek ways of diversifying productive activities. This article focuses on how tourism takes place in this process and thus interferes with urban dynamics. Based on empirical observations of what has happened to some of the most emblematic examples of urban entrepreneurship in Europe, the possibility that arises is that tourism, with its promise of economic development, has contributed to legitimize the actions of the entrepreneurial State.

Keywords: Tourism, urban dynamics, urban entrepreneurship.

Introduction

Historically, cities have become centers of production, exchange and politics (GLADSTONE, 1998). Being protagonists in political, economic, social and cultural life (CASTELLS & BORJA, 1996), the first cities emerged "where neolithic technique and material conditions enabled farmers to produce more than what they needed to consume" (CASTELLS, 1984, p. 92). While for Mumford (1991) there is no definition capable of expressing all its

manifestations, Salgueiro (1992) refers to the city as an entity where a diversified set of activities are developed; a concept that expresses not only the form that territory is occupied, but also the economic activities developed within and the way inhabitants live.

The city, being a reflection of the society that lives in it (CASTELLS, 1984), is characterized by its dynamicity (FONSECA & COSTA, 2004), and its expansion, according to Santos (1989, p.17), is "a phenomenon not only recent but also growing on a planetary scale." If in the nineteenth century urbanization was witnessed by industrial development, manufacturing being the main economic engine of these cities, we are able to verify nowadays the influence of new economic activities in the production of urban space (MULLINS, 2003), such as those related to the financial sector and services.

As a reflection of the (social) relations of production (LEFEBVRE, 2001), "product and condition of social processes of transformation in the most recent phase of capitalist development" (HARVEY 1996: p. 48), the city we live, since the 1970s, is in a process of restructuring its management driven by difficulties of the capitalist economy (HARVEY, 1996, p. 50):

Deindustrialization, unemployment, seemingly "structural" and widespread, fiscal austerity at both national and local level, combined with a growing wave of neo-conservatism and a much stronger appeal (though more frequent in theory than in practice) to the rationality of market and privatization, provide a framework for understanding why so many local governments, often of different political connotations and armed with different legal and political powers, all took a similar direction.

The direction of the author refers to a change in the profile of management and urban policies that come to view the city as a business to be managed. Harvey (1996) calls this "urban entrepreneurship" a form of urban management in which local public authorities - motivated by the need to insert cities into the competitive global economic space - adopt a corporate stance in the attraction of new forms of accumulation. In short, it corresponds to a "local development strategy based on the competitive insertion of urban systems into global economic flows", reflecting "the proposition of a 'new' urban policy" (COMPANS, 2005, p.79).

In Harvey's (1996) conception, urban entrepreneurship has as its central characteristic the partnerships between public power and the private sector in attracting external sources of

financing, investors and sources of employment. In this sense, as a way to give the city a greater degree of competitiveness, local public administrations start to use strategies such as: exploitation of specific advantages of the city (use of intrinsic or created resources) for the production of goods and services; investments in structures and activities related to consumption (such as shopping malls, sports stadiums, entertainment, etc.); and raising funds from central governments.

Thus, in a scenario marked by inter-urban competition for attracting new forms of capital accumulation, this "Business-State" starts to seek ways of diversifying productive activities and differentiating cities. Within this logic, tourism was not ignored by public administrations as an element of urban economic growth.

In a global context, tourism has stood out as one of the most important economic activities today. UNWTO (2016) estimates show that 1 in 11 jobs worldwide is connected to the tourism sector; 7% of exports of goods and services across the globe are related to the travel industry; 10% of the world's Gross Domestic Product is credited to tourism and; the volume of activity in 2015 was approximately \$ 1.5 trillion worldwide.

Because it, is often associated with a number of socio-economic benefits (generation of jobs and income, distribution of wealth, equilibrium of national balances, improvement of the quality of life of the receiving communities, insertion of young people in the labor market, etc.), The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) proclaims the idea that tourism can be an instrument to combat poverty and social exclusion, as well as an important tool for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore, it is not without reason that national, state, regional and local governments, supported by a developmental discourse, have been promoting tourism as a strategy for the economic dynamization of their territories.

As an eminently urban phenomenon (HENRIQUES, 2003, p. 163), tourism is strongly related to urban space, whose peculiarities have always exerted a power of attraction. Therefore, if there is a demand for the urban tourism segment (tourists interested in the experiences provided by the visitation of urban spaces), and if there is an offer interested in meeting such demand (cities seeking economic diversification, attracted by the enthusiastic statistics of tourism), we could say that there is a market. A market, by the way, that is on the rise.

Tourism is an activity globally recognized for its unstoppable rate of growth. The 25 million international travelers registered in 1950 became 763 million in 2004. Even in times of economic austerity, the growth rates of international tourist demand have been little shaken (UNWTO, 2012). Between 2000 and 2008, according to UNWTO data (UNWTO, 2012), international travel grew 4.2% per year, reaching 922 million tourists in 2008. Although there have been retractions in the flow, such as those observed soon after the outbreak of H1N1 in 2008 (when the number of tourists decreased from 922 million in 2008 to 880 million in 2009), these have always been followed by a recovery that generally surpassed the pre-decay stage. Currently, growth prospects remain: forecasts indicate that the 1.2 billion international travelers registered in 2016 will be 1.4 billion in 2020 and 1.8 billion in 2030.

In the face of such a scenario, local public administrations have recognized that tourism is a strategy for economic development and urban restructuring, as well as an instrument to promote the city (REBOLLO et al, 1997). In this context, the city began to assume a new role in the world economic order: that of tourist destination. This situation brought the need to think about the role of tourism in the process of urban dynamics. It is against this need that the present article seeks to discuss the nexus between tourism and urban dynamics, starting from the reflection on the modality of urban management presented by Harvey (1996) - urban entrepreneurship.

Urban Tourism: The City as a Place of Tourist Practice

Despite recent academic interest in the subject, urban tourism is not a contemporary practice. As Henriques (2003, p. 163) states, "the relationship between tourism and urban space is much older and more complex than the relative youth of this subject in tourism studies can make us believe." The trips of the Grand Tour or Petit Tour, for example, already showed the interest of travelers in knowing the important economic, political and cultural centers of Europe of XVIII century. For this reason, it is curious that, although urban centers (Venice, Florence, Rome, Paris) were the destinations of young aristocrats in their Grand Tour or Petit Tour trips, the city was seen, until very recently, just as a space emitted by tourists.

For Henriques (2003), the conception of the city as eminently emissive pole was structured in the 1950s and 1960s. At the time, the urban was associated with work and, therefore, adverse to leisure. Therefore, practicing tourism implied, fundamentally, leaving behind the urban (and all its ills) to return to the field, the mountains or the sea. However, according to Henriques (2003), from the 1970s onwards, an image was created in which the city was both an emitting center for travelers and a receiving center. During the 1980s and 1990s, the idea that cities are not only places of visitation is consolidated, but this visit contributes significantly to the socioeconomic dynamics of urban centers visited through the generation of jobs, tax collection, revitalization of historical centers, preservation of heritage and development and improvement of the offer of animation services.

Although the interest of people in the cities as a locus of tourism practice is not new, it is mainly from the twentieth century that cities see tourism as an effective option for generating flows and accumulating capital. New York, for example, attracts more than 40 million tourists a year, and in 2004, it raised about \$ 220 million with hotel taxes. The direct expenses of tourists came close to U \$ 15 billion. In total, the tourism industry generated \$ 23 billion for the New York economy and accounted for more than 250,000 jobs (NYC & COMPANY RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS, 2012).

Thus, it seems reasonable to say that the relationship between tourism and urban spaces is symbiotic: tourism has been shown to be a productive activity relevant to urban centers, whereas these are important points for the issue and reception of tourists. While at the time the Grand Tour cities simply attracted the attention of travelers; nowadays it is verified that cities are increasingly positioning themselves as tourist destinations, seeking to tailor their structures to attract visitors (REBOLLO et al, 1997).

In fact, today the urban spaces occupy an important position in the geography of tourism. The view that tourism is necessarily moving away from urban centers (going to natural areas, for example) is wrong. Many tourists move from urban centers to other urban centers. Among the most visited destinations in the world are just urban centers like Hong Kong, Singapore, London, Bangkok, New York, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona and Tokyo. While the United States National Park Service (NPS, 2012) reports that in 2011 the country's most visited park (the Blue Ridge

Parkway, between the States of Virginia and North Carolina) received 15.3 million visitors, NYC & Company Research and Analytics reports that, in the same year, the city received 50 million visitors, both domestic and foreign (NYC & COMPANY RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS, 2012).

These figures only confirm the attractiveness of cities to tourists. This attractiveness is due to its dynamicity and diversity of activities, expressed by the multiplicity of tourism resources (REBOLLO et al, 1997; HENRIQUES, 2003). For Sassen (1998), the tourist attractiveness of the city is centered on the urban scene itself and the experiences lived in this scenario, while the OMT (2005) confers on the cultural offer - historical centers, museums, art galleries, monuments, etc. - the main factor of tourist attractiveness. There is, therefore, not a single attraction, but a whole.

The Role of Public Power in the Management of Tourist Cities

During the 1960s, in the middle of the booming euphoria of Western economies, tourism was considered such a promising activity that its planning consisted of building the means to meet the growing demand: new hotels and access roads. This logic lasted until the early 1990s, at a time when tourist destinations were often rare. Throughout the 1990s, this mentality undergoes a change. Emerging tourist destinations that offer structured and innovative tourism products created based on demand studies arisen. Moreover, due to advances in the means of transport and in information technologies, historically limiting factors such as distance, adversity and uncertainty of the route and the scarcity of destination information have become less relevant.

As a result, in the first decade of 2000 there were already a few hundred destinations around the world vying for the attention of the major issuing markets. What actually happened was that amateurism gave a way to planning and, with this; a framework of competitiveness between destinies came into force. The scenario of great competition between cities-destination for attracting visitor's flows started to demand from the cities the incorporation of a set of actions to raise the level of attractiveness and to reinforce the degree of competitiveness of its tourist products. In this process, the public power played a fundamental and decisive role.

The need for government involvement in the planning and management of tourism is justified by the fact that it is a multi-sectorial activity with socio-cultural implications, which, according to Beni (2001), should not only concern the entrepreneur, but above all, the government, which represents the guarantee of the interests of the collectivity. According to the author, the public authority corresponds to one of the most important actors in the tourism development process because, as a rule, it is who provides the conditions, plans, and defines the policies and the general lines through which the activity will develop.

Pearce (1989) considers that the public sector is involved in tourist activity, either directly or indirectly, due to economic (such as the strategy of diversification of the economy, job creation, balance of payments, etc.); socio-cultural, to ensure that the benefits are equitably shared) and environmental factors (responsibility to safeguard the environment). In this perspective, Cruz (2002) emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the public power to establish goals and guidelines for the orientation of the socio-spatial development of the activity, both in the public sphere and in the private sphere. It is therefore recognized the importance of the performance of public power, regardless of the scale of action, in the management of tourism activity and in the formulation of specific policies to promote and coordinate this action.

When it comes to urban tourism, as already reported, it is verified that urban development policies have bet on the activity as a strategy of economic diversification. In this way, we cannot think of the management of tourism disconnected from urban management itself. After all, it is in the city that tourism will develop, from it using the means of production and in it imparting new socio-spatial dynamics.

Mullins (1991), for example, notes that the government has acted in the implementation of physical infrastructure (access, sanitation, electricity, communication) and social infrastructure (schools, health services, etc.) in order to promote tourist and urban development. Edwards et al (2011) argue that tourism management should aim to achieve positive results in terms of improving visitor experiences, reducing negative impacts on communities and improvement of the urban system. The intersection between tourism policy and urban policy is thus evident.

In the context of tourism management of destination cities, literature has shown the interest of the public power by establishing partnerships with the private sector to carry out structuring projects. Motivated by the economic benefits of tourism, the public power, from an entrepreneurial management perspective, started to seek private sector support for the design and execution of urban revitalization projects as a form of tourist attraction (JUDD, 1995; PAGE & HALL, 2003; KELLY, 2011).

Public-private cooperation in tourist development of destination cities, according to OMT (2001), has taken place in actions to make the destination more attractive, to improve the effectiveness of marketing activities, to increase productivity and to improve the management of the tourism system. The actions related to the city marketing of the tourist cities have been the main object of the public-private cooperation, according to a research carried out by the OMT (2001). The entity also shows that promotion is not the only point of interest in these partnerships, especially those in the areas of infrastructure, product development and labor qualification.

One of the most emblematic examples of how public-private cooperation was used in tourism development is the case of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao (capital of the Basque Country, Spain). According to Poyatos & Martínez (2011), considering the cultural tourism market in evolution in the European context, the public power saw in this museum an alternative of economic dynamization and urban renewal. The "Guggenheim effect" was able to generate a new business network linked to tourism and advertising, as well as improvements in social indicators, positioning Bilbao as a city of services focused on tourism. According to the authors, the Guggenheim has become the symbol of a modern city, projecting it in the international tourist scene.

The urban requalification of degraded areas (such as port and deindustrialize zones) is another strategy of urban entrepreneurship that has been used as a way of increasing the competitiveness of tourist destinations (PAGE & HALL, 2003; KELLY, 2011; JUDD 1995), having direct consequence in the dynamics of a city. Ritchie (2011) reports the cases of revitalized areas such as the Docklands (London) and Quincy Market (Boston), resulting from the creation of public-private agencies for the construction of tourist areas. Such structuring

projects, as pointed out by Hall (1995), have created new centralities in cities that become centers of visitation and thus attracting foreign investments.

Although they have used different strategies, the purpose of both the construction of the Guggenheim in Bilbao and the revitalization of the Docklands and Quincy Market is the same: to create the image of the city as "an innovative, exciting, creative and safe place to live, visit, play or consume" (HARVEY 1996, 55). However, the urban entrepreneurial stance applied to tourism management of city-destination, is not only about creating competitive advantages but also about "selling" them. After all, the city has no advantage in having significant tourism products, attractive tourist areas, urban quality and tourist infrastructure or having centrality in the transport networks if it does not have a market that is eager to consume it. It is, in this sense, that another strategy of urban entrepreneurship takes place: city marketing, that is, the promotion of values and image of the city in such a way that potential users are aware of the distinctive advantages of that place (KOTLER et al., 1993).

Another example of urban entrepreneurship in the management of tourist cities is the achievement of mega-events. As Rolnik (2010) notes, since the 1980s, mega-events have ceased to be purely sporting or cultural to become host city strategies for large-scale urban transformations and to dynamize the economy through visitation. That is why the public power has made efforts to capture mega-events; efforts that are even more effective associated with the realization of the mega-event to tourists that will attract the same to the headquarters of the mega event, as well as the amount of money that will come with these visitors.

Final Considerations

As a way to make the city a more attractive tourist destination, public power and the private sector are working together to create an image of an innovative place. According to Harvey (1996, p. 54-55), investments are concentrated in the valorization of space, in cultural innovation and in the enhancement of the quality of the urban environment (including the adoption of postmodern styles of architecture and urban design). It is in this sense that consumer attractions (sports stadiums, convention centers, shopping malls, marinas, food courts) and entertainment (the organization of temporary or permanent urban spectacles) are designed for

visitation. The central objective of the interventions is, therefore, to provide the city with elements that allows increasing its attractiveness.

It should be made clear; however, that in the model of entrepreneurship that guides urban interventions, costs have been shared and the benefits, appropriated by promoters of renovation projects (MOURA, 1997; ARAÚJO & PFEIFFER, 2011). This is evident in investment cases that are directed to "nobler" areas and endowed with better infrastructure that, under the discourse of increasing competitiveness, end up overlooking investments aimed at solving chronic problems such as housing, health, education, sanitation or transportation in the most needy and precarious areas. That is, actions of urban entrepreneurship end up increasing existing socio-spatial disparities, rather than promoting the development of the territories in which they are developed. With actions aimed at increasing the flow of tourists, there is something similar.

Investing in the construction of an Olympic stadium, for example, may make it necessary to postpone the construction of a hospital or prevent the government to increase the salary of teachers from the public network. Besides that, the decision to direct a large volume of resources for a city could mean to stop financing important issues and continue to stimulate regional inequalities (PRONI et al, 2008). The Seoul Olympics is an example of that. While this investment was related to an image of modernity, due to the construction of first generation facilities, it was also known by the 720 thousand people removed from their residences due to the works related to the event (COHRE, 2007 apud GAFFNEY & MELO, 2010). With the commercial appreciation of this particular space induced by the improvements provided, there was a rise in prices in places of urban interventions, which promoted the expulsion of the poorest population living in the area.

In addition to that, according to Fonseca & Costa (2004, p.29), the Business-State has been the main responsible and stimulator of real estate producers' profits, since they implement infrastructure, accessibility, road improvements, collective services, etc., in places where the promoters need to install their enterprises. Leal (2011) draws attention to the territorial inequalities resulting from the implementation of real estate mega-projects and strategic projects in the Metropolitan Region of Recife, such as Cidade da Copa, in São Lourenço da Mata. According to the author, these are reflections "of the presence of economic interests within the

State apparatus, in its increasing privatization, and in the reduction of spaces of public interest to the detriment of its social function" (LEAL, 2011, p.3).

Considering the city strictly as a tourist destination (that is, forgetting all its other functions), it is noticed that the actions of entrepreneurship are not only important, but also fundamental. Through these, the destinations become interesting and innovative, reaching the goal of every tourist destination, which is to attract visitors. It happens that a city is not and cannot be seen solely as a tourist destination. When we implement actions of urban entrepreneurship that see the city as a mere tourist harbor, we end up not considering space in its entirety.

According to what it has been discussed, we verify two situations: on the one hand, the need of tourist destinations to act in a logic of urban entrepreneurship as a way to remain competitive; on the other, the realization that the capitalist logic that governs these actions triggers processes of territorial inequalities that, in turn, affect the urban dynamics.

As a central element in this whole process, it would be expected that, in theory, the State would coordinate urban entrepreneurship actions from a broad consideration of the effects of actions on the well-being of societies, forbidden them when they do not best served the interests of the community. Withal, this is not what happens. In Harvey's view (2005), because the State is committed to the functioning of the capitalist model of production, it performs minimal basic tasks in supporting the capitalist mode of production.

As Marx explained (apud HARVEY, 2005), in the early development of capitalism, State instruments were used, for example, to free industrial capital from usurious interest rates, providing many of the necessary prerequisites (in the form of immobile capital) in the built environment (docks, ports and transport systems). In addition, State power was indiscriminately used (brutally, in many cases) to create the basic relationship between capital and labor. Primitive accumulation (the initial divorce of labor of the means of production and the land) was affected by force or through legalized violence through the State. In the same way, labor laws and various forms of institutional repression have brought the excluded labor force into the labor market, helping to impose discipline on labor, so necessary to capitalism.

It should be noted, then, that the State is by no means a passive element in the logic of the capitalist system. Tourism, too, since its activities is nothing more than a way to accumulate capital. Therefore, it is with caution that both the role of the State and its alleged improvements or benefits provided by actions based on the logic of urban entrepreneurship must be seen, especially when these actions use tourism as justification.

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