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TOURISM AND LANDSCAPE: CONFLICTS, COOPERATION AND RESILIENCE

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Introduction

The word "landscape" is susceptible of non-univocal interpretations in relation to the different linguistic genesis, *landscape* in English, *paysage* in French, *landschaft* in German, which refer to different cultural matrices of meaning [1]. Over the centuries the concept expressed by the word "landscape", in the various European languages, has however evolved according to a common trend, from the meaning of relationship between the human community and the territory towards a progressive growing interest in the perceptual component.

The interest in landscape themes, affirmed in the Florence 2000 Convention, has fuelled and built a cultural background and a wide international debate that have brought to light the issues inherent in the authenticity of landscapes and reaffirmed the already known notion of cultural landscape as an expression of the anthropocene, as it refers to the sphere of interaction between man and the environment, resources, constraints and techniques of land use. The cultural landscape, although not explicitly mentioned in the text of the Florence Convention, has been recognized since 1992 as a protected category by UNESCO; in Riccardo Priore's examination of the text of the European Landscape Convention [2] it is interpreted that the attribute "cultural" is intentionally omitted by the legislator in order not to privilege or exclude any type of landscape system.

In analysing the consistency and evolution of the cultural landscape, the intimate connection between the image of the places and the dynamics of growth and transformation of the territory is read in close correlation with the biophysical and socio-economic characteristics of a territory; we can say that the semiology study of landscape's changes can explain the genesis of the evolutionary processes of the territory and guide the future management of ecosystems [3] by recognizing what the dominant changes are and the causes that produced them, and distinguishing the resilient components and custodians of the identity characteristics in which local communities recognize themselves. The right to identify oneself in one's own landscape is one of the founding principles of the Florence Convention with the declared desire to confirm the belonging of a landscape context to the characteristics of the place, where the locution "as it is perceived" identifies the manifestation of iconographic values in which the inhabitants recognize themselves; affirming, in this sense, the importance and the right to landscape of their places.

The affirmation of the principles for the protection of landscapes and rights on the landscape implicitly attests to the existence of the risk of irreparably losing value in terms of memory and identity of places, of which the landscape is an unwritten text of great documentary value.

The risk of landscape distortion and adulteration can take on multiple aspects in relation to the forces acting on the territory. Urbanization, abandonment, industrialization, intensive cultivation, tourism development, are powerful drivers of change that must be appropriately directed as they act on territorial resources and risk to compromise them irreversibly.

The tourism exploitation of the landscape is, among the development activities, the most reckless and self-injurious in that, with the integration of infrastructures and services aimed at satisfying the demand for tourism, it compromises the very source of attraction. The rural, coastal, mountain and urban landscapes are often, in our country, resources of great attraction, and therefore subject to economic interests, but at the same time they arouse the dissent of the inhabitants who feel the discomfort of the invasive presence of tourism and fear that the vocation to tourism can alter their usual habits; therefore, the consideration that *landscape tourism* and *landscape identity* are conflicting entities increases, if referring to the interaction with man, where the sense of belonging of the permanent community, heritage of peasant cultures intrinsically rooted in the territory, comes into conflict with the extraneousness of visitors [4].

Mentioning Michael Jakob [5]: «The authentic landscape and the non-authentic landscape do not exist. ... The experience of the landscape is the experience of oneself. It is important both what the subject perceives and the act of perceiving as such: the subject is part of the landscape that composes it».

I can't help but think of the enchantment of famous urban landscapes of our cities, such as Rome, Venice, Florence, Naples, to name just a few, where the animated component of tourists is constant and that the recent pandemic has emptied from people, hibernated in a timeless dilated space; landscapes that could only be appreciated with the help of darkness in their essence, offered themselves in the light of day in the eyes of the bewildered world.

Fig. 1. Ventotene, Roman Port (photo credits: Paola De Joanna).

But despite the fascination and emotion of feeling alone for a moment in contemplation, as if that moment was only ours and only for each one, in which silence amplifies getting lost in the dimension that makes one observer and observed, remains the clear awareness that landscapes, in a tautological sense, exist when they are discovered (Fig. 1).

Focus and topics

The focus of this Landscape at Risk session is aimed at the impact of the exploitation of local resources for tourism purposes on the landscape intended as a common good, therefore not only as a value to be protected in itself nor as an exclusive identity heritage of the inhabitants, but as good whose enjoyment everyone has a right to. The contributions herein explore the relationship between tourism and landscape according to the different aspects in which the image of places represents both the resource with its recognized value that attracts tourism, and the theatre in which tourism moves, a *tableau vivant* in balance between the value

produced by the attractiveness of the landscape in terms of tourist appeal and the deterioration suffered by the impact that tourism produces. The debate on the theme generally refers to tourism phenomena whose size tends to exceed the carrying capacity of places in terms of absorption of the flows of people and the possibility of adapting resources and services to the demand dimension without changing the character of places; however, it would be an understatement to think about the impact of tourism only compared to the large scale of sites of extraordinary interest; tourism can have many facets that affect local development in a capillary way, I refer to those many seaside resorts of our coasts that live in winter hibernation and then explode in the summer season, or, conversely, to the destinations of winter tourism, but also the growing interest in hiking, and last but not least, tourism out town that attacks destinations within the suburbs that are increasingly crushed even when they are the object of interest and never of protection. Out-of-town rural tourism is in fact proposed as an alternative for some social, economic and environmental problems in peri-urban rural areas, it is an innovative economic activity that nevertheless also appropriates and consumes the territory [6].

The tourist phenomenon, therefore, is proposed in very variable ways which in each place can take on different characteristics and produce different impacts; it should also be considered that in the last twenty years the approach to tourism has changed due to greater ease in access to means of transport, to the reception structures, more and more widely distributed and flexible for every need, and still ease in communications.

Facing with a phenomenon in rapid and uncontrolled evolution is a new challenge in which the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) intervened by dictating the directives for sustainable tourism aimed at:

- make optimal use of environmental resources which constitute a key element in the development of tourism, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to preserve natural heritage and biodiversity;
- respect the socio-cultural authenticity of the host communities, preserve their built and living cultural heritage and their traditional values and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance;
- ensure long-term sustainable economic operations, providing equally distributed socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders, including stable employment and earning opportunities and social services for host communities and helping to alleviate poverty [7].

The here presented studies come to the awareness that only the search for synergies between tourism and landscape can collaborate in the resilience of tourist destinations; resilience is a key concept in the thought of the socio-ecological system and implies not the resistance to change but, above all, the ability of a system to positively adapt to change [8].

Among the tools of greatest interest for the control of transformations and the adaptability of a site to the impact of tourism and to the rapid and continuous evolution of tourism, the experiences of collaboration are identified in the management with the stakeholders of the involved categories and local populations [9] (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Walkways along the top of Monteriggioni's walls (photo credits: Paola De Joanna).

Sustainable tourism for resilient communities

Sustainable tourism development is one of the most cited examples of actions that make a community more resilient. Tourism, indeed, is an integral part of contemporary communities, and as such, reflects the challenges that communities face under the growing pressures of global environmental and social change. The most common resilience perspective in tourism has concerned the recovery of tourism industries and tourist arrival numbers following rapidly occurring changes – that is, disaster and crisis preparation and recover [10]. These have included the global economic crisis of the 2000s, the terrorist attacks during the last 2 decades, the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, earthquake threats in several areas of the world, and, last but not least, the COVID-19 pandemic. The bewilderment caused by Covid-19 has crushed every desire for escape and travel, temporarily closing the tourism golden age. This pandemic has grounded our hyper-mobility, and within the space of 3 months, the framing of the global tourism system changed from overtourism to "non-tourism" [11].

In this perspective, the tie between tourism and landscape will involve, once again, an array of resilience-driven approaches across a range of more sustainable levels. Many of these post-pandemic changes will be driven by new technologies that may herald an era of cyber-tourism. Therefore, there is a need for the tourism industry to position itself as a strategic early mover, in terms of community planning, trialling and incorporating emerging ideas and technologies, and applying multiple strategies to deliver new options to preserve the landscape. Such ideas will generate new tourism streams, thereby further strengthening the industry's global competitiveness into the future. The tragic event of the Coronavirus pandemic requests an afterthought about the connection between the demand of use by tourist flows and their spatial adaptation, both referring to the mobility aspects and, mostly, to the relationship between the host community and the tourist one. This is all the more true in relation with the forecasting models of growth used till now for tourism: in such models the lack of attention paid to unexpected risks that can occur and that are inevitably related to the global climate change generates impacts that have shaken the certainty of the stability of the western culture and have further amplified the fragility of the weaker geographical areas of the world. Disasters are expected to lead to a critical reconsideration of the global volume

growth model for tourism, for reasons connected to the risks posed by global travel and the contribution of the tourism industry to global pollution, climate change and, more in general, the socio-cultural instability of certain geographical areas of the world. Given the seeming inevitability of social and environmental change, resilience planning has recently emerged as perhaps a more effective approach to community planning and development than the sustainability paradigm. The approach we saw before - based on the carrying capacity – does not seem to guarantee protection in reference to the inhibition of the evolutionary processes of resources and with reference to their possible subtraction from more advantageous uses, which represents per se a form of potential impoverishment. The issue of the inhibition of evolutionary processes of resources concerns those areas strongly characterised in biological terms (such as, for example, the shrubs and forests, the garigues or coastal dune systems); dynamic ecosystems that change continuously according to trajectories that are highly sensitive to the degree and forms of human habitation. This sensitivity to exogenous factors and the inhibition of their evolutionary process are not peculiar to the biological systems alone, but are equally important for social resources. Similarly, sustainability based on the principle of resilience pays scarce attention to the issue of alternative use potentials; it does not consider that the use of a resource implies the inhibition of other possible uses, regardless of whether these could be more advantageous, profitable, or in any way preferable. In addition, the conflict, among other things, is not limited to tourists and non-tourists, but also between residents who benefit from tourism and those who are excluded, in relation to the alternative use of public spaces, tangible or intangible, resources. In this sense the contexts of tourism represent an interesting laboratory, where themes and problems seem more obvious and explicit; and where the plan/project seems necessary and unavoidable to reduce contradictions and conflicts. Public involvement in planning and development is axiomatic because of the nature of tourism – in offering communities, environments, and cultures, it is a peculiarly pervasive industry which '...uses the community as a resource, sells it as a product, and, in the process, affects the life of everyone' [12]. It is important to instil a "sense of purpose" in regions where tourism development is taking place [13], and a distinctive destination identity needs to be established. Encouraging local production of goods and services to substitute for those imported from faraway regions is one way of doing this, including some of the most obvious measures - making maximum use of local architects and builders, purchasing building and other materials locally, promoting quality local farm produce, and incentivising front-line tourism businesses to use a range of regional products where appropriate. In this way, a supportive local industrial environment built up over time will help to improve levels of indirect and induced economic gain for the industry, with concomitant positive effects upon employment and income levels. Adopting such a genuinely collaborative approach to tourism development will result in developments which, rather than being 'blots on the landscape', enhance the local area, foster involvement and pride in community, ensure a 'good-neighbourly' relationship between tourism and other local industries, and contribute to the distinctive 'sense of place' sought after by discerning travellers. Also, raising the profile of the nascent destination will make it easier to lever the investment necessary in order to develop facilities and service standards appropriate to the target markets - in the short-term derived from the host community, in the longer-term from external sources. Thus, much of the action may lie within the remit of regional or local authorities who are the prime guardians of the planning system, landscape quality and tourism possibilities. "In the sheer volume of its geographical flows and presence impact, tourism represents a highly effective factor of change in the landscape" [14]. Yet tourism can also create new landscape qualities and contribute to sustainable landscape development, settling a symbiotic relation with mutual profits. Regions profit from leisure and tourism developments, but these come at a price. The development of leisure and tourism needs to be subjected to careful planning in order to become and remain a valuable contributor to people and landscape. "Sustainable development" strategies attempt to find more well-balanced approaches. At the time of writing, there is no evidence that sustainable tourism is a consideration within massive socio-economic post-COVID19 stimulus package in Italy, although several European environment ministers have called for plans prepared for the European Green Deal to be central in rebuilding European economies [15]. Changes to tourism as a result of a global community-resilience will be uneven in space and time over the world. While some areas will undoubtedly reconsider the nature of their landscapes and focus more on local and more sustainable forms to manage the tourism, without substantial institutional and governmental interventions, which are currently overwhelmed with saving lives and creating conditions to restart domestic economies, the juggernaut that is international tourism will roll on. The touchstone of these new perspectives should be "empowerment" to combine everyone's power in collective action for the common good. Such developments are essential if slogans such as 'think global, act local', or even 'think local, act global' [16] are to be given some substance. We just should find the way by which local communities can be linked with each other in order to create collaborative action at global level. These discussions are fledgling, and they are not so obvious.

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