

Tourism as a space to meet. From the architecture for tourism to the production of new spaces.

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Abstract

This writing is part of an ongoing PhD research. The study analyses tourism spatial effects and design solutions seeing as, since, as new aspects define an important shift in tourism and they highlight a meaningful trend, which is showed by need of integration between tourists and locals into the fabric of everyday life.

This paper attempts to analyze the developing relationship between tourism and space, it examines the two principal ways in which tourism space is built – making a space for tourist or making a space with tourists.

The issue, in the relationship between tourists and locals, exercises the paradigm of encounter to embrace a common terrain for experiencing new forms of space.

Considering the results of recent tourism studies, the primary goal of the paper is to describe spaces where people can meet and validate new touristic forms of encounter, and introduce the role of design and architecture.

Keywords: tourism space, encounter, everyday, creativity, homogeneous - heterogeneous space

Introduction

The anthropology of tourism assumes the encounter as a fundamental object of study, which is produced by the relationship between host and guest within a specific anthropic and natural space.

The dimension of the encounter has three intertwined aspects. First- horizontal - concerns the relation between groups of tourists which travel, visit, enjoy according to subjective maps, needs and personal motivations.

Second, always horizontal, is about ways, subjects and times through which a host community lives places, organizes its self and gets ready for the others. Third aspect is vertical and it refers to the pervasiveness and to the depth of tourism, with important effects on rhythms of cohesion and disruption of place in the contests of everyday life.

The form of encounter is complex, because it is a processes and not a punctual moment, it's a relation between two parties, and is divided into a variety of areas in which people physically meet (Simonicca A., 2004).

So studying tourism as an encounter means considering a relation between several things. The encounter occurs between people, between people and space, among people as socialized embodied subjects in contest in which tourism is available; it is also between expectations, experiences and desires. Space is important in each of its aspects (Crouch D., 2000) and is more than a journey through it, much more than a backdrop and a stage, it offers an encounter in place with the other, and it's experienced as a seductions. The space of encounter takes place when tourists and residents meet and are forced to negotiate the meaning of the place in which they find themselves (Oakes T., 2005) and both co-create it together.

The encounter, applied to architecture, relates to the identification of a spatial dimension, shared in a relation between two parts, recognized and also daily lived by a local community.

The encounter could be represent a theme of project within tourism and social interaction, which may take various forms and features, different scales of reference.

Recent studies, belonging to the theories of tourism and to the social sciences, demonstrate an important change through which tourism is going, where new agents, such as creativity, lead to a shift from tangible heritage towards more intangible culture and greater involvement with the everyday life of the destination (Richards G., Wilson J., 2006). As Zukin (1995) argues the common element of this need is to create a 'cultural' space connecting tourism, consumption and style of life and one of the essential requirements of this system is physical spaces where people can meet and validate new cultural forms, or 'playgrounds of creativity' (Richards G., Wilson J. 2006).

The encounter, within this shift and new needs of tourism, acquires a new meaning, it contributes to creates distinctiveness and exchanges because it relates to the everyday and to a lifestyles of local community. Involving the conception of space and giving a new role to architecture, the encounter also showed itself as a good reading tool to understand and design contemporary tourism spaces.

This theoretical - experimental article attempts to examines the relationship between space and tourism, analyzing previous design mechanism and taking theories of heterogeneous and homogenous spaces into consideration. We examine ways and new forms of tourism spaces using the complex dimension of the encounter considering the implications of the shift of tourism and the relation of everyday life. The understanding of the nature of space and the tailored solutions could become a laboratory of architecture and trying to portray, classify and understand the common ground where the encounter takes place.

About tourism space, design and architecture

Tourism has always involves a physical and cognitive transformations of a territory, because it needs of physical spaces to takes place, demonstrating an important role for architecture and recognizing a suitable independent field of study for architects.

According to Asterio Savelli (2008) tourism is all the activities used by people during their travels and stays in places outside their usual environment of residence, for leisure, business and other reasons; again Domash and Seager (2001) defined a space 'all of the actions that take place at a particular location'; using this definitions tourism produces specific places which have feature of liminality.

Space holds the balance of power in tourism and it's very important to understand contrasts between specialized tourist space and the integrated spaces of everyday life.

What are the design mechanisms of the production of tourism space? More specifically, what role do space and design play in tourism? What are the differences between specialized tourist space and the integrated spaces of everyday life?

Of course the link, which holds space, design and architecture is not easy to be clarified, is wider than we can fully conclude in this article but we can start to clarify first reflections.

Researches on tourism space are notoriously absent, as Careen Mackay and Deborah Kerstetter (2005) indicate in them exploration of cruise ship space, however, reviews of the literature on tourism and built mechanisms, on space and liminality, on design and heterogeneous - homogenous space follow.

Principal design mechanisms

The production of spaces to make tourism practices initially is based on a basically mechanism: to a physical resource, which represent an attractiveness, we have to apply a technological transformation, so it's necessary build spaces for the accommodations, facilities and any things useful for the practice of tourism. Resources are tangible, they may be natural, environmental or belonging to cultural and building heritage and obviously they have been changeable during the course of history.

This mechanism is well described by Lozato-Giotart J. P. (2009) when he speaks about the concept of landscapes-source as the most considerable part of a territory and first element of attraction.

About this we can find examples within cases of the Mediterranean seaside resorts, when the sea, the beach, the sun were promoted to represent the allures and the subsequent success of resorts depended on the ability to manage and plan vacationers free time.

Calogero Muscarà and Magda Fregonese (1995) also show the simple example of a glacier, which is transformed into a tourist resource only when is perceived as well as enjoyable, because it responds to our imagine of beauty, or because it satisfies our need to challenge, but it occurs a technology transformation to become a tourist place and to take advantage of the good.

The mechanism, which transforms a resource - culturally recognized - into attractiveness by technological transformation leads to the idea of designing services and facilities.

Another mechanism of production tourism spaces, which consider tourism as a distinctive form of free time, is inherent the design of a site completely dedicated to leisure and recreation.

First examples are spa or wellness resort, as the city of Bath in Cornwall, which is truly all-embracing design for relax (Bojer M., 1997). The entertainment industry also experiments the idea of build a place only for leisure with theme parks. In particular the introduction of experience - theorized by Pine and Gilmore (1999) - as a real commercial product, is used by the entertainment industry to create staging for leisure.

The built of a specific place is conceived also trough a formal typological solution, capable of representing the idea of leisure. Theme, style, form, stage of place are really important and they are exclusive designed for visitors.

Finally, tourism reflects the evolutions of society and culture, it reveals specific spaces built totally for tourists and different from everyday spaces, from which it follows the existence of an architecture for tourism.

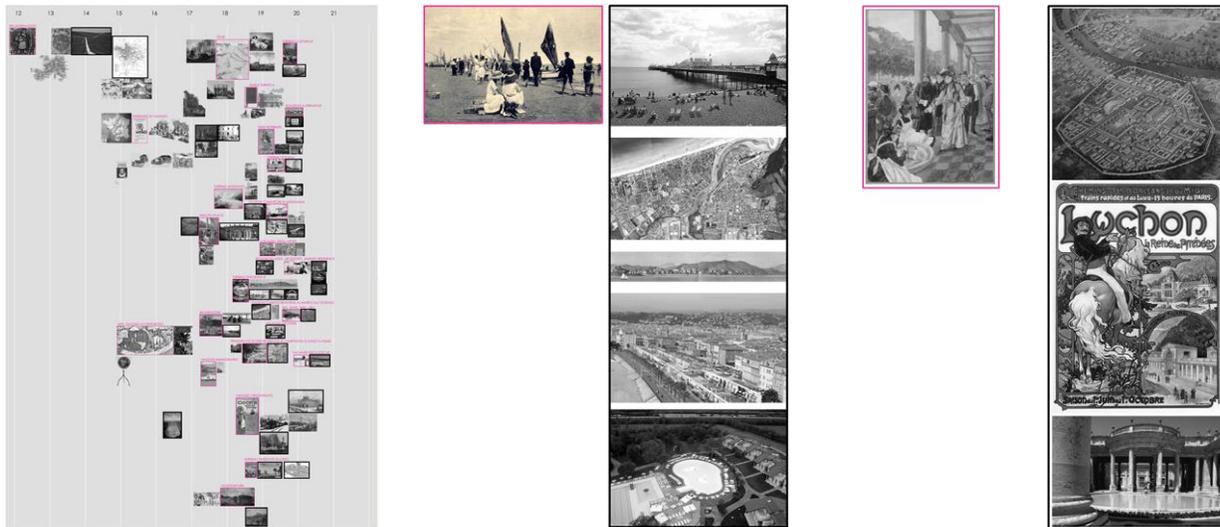


Fig. 1-2-3 Great wall – Figures represent all the spatial tourism implications and the two principal design mechanism: tangible resource as the sea/spatial transformation or built specific leisure place.

Source: Graphic elaboration of the author

Homogeneous - heterogeneous spaces

Some studies on tourism prompt us examinations about form of space, its organization, materiality, aesthetic and sensual qualities so they given us suggestions on the role of design and on the production of space. Exploring the relation between tourists and spaces and using the metaphor of stage, Tim Edensor (2000) opposes contrasting forms of “enclavic” and “heterogeneous space” which are derived from Sibley’s (1989) distinction between ‘purified’ spaces and ‘weakly classified spaces’ with blurred boundaries.

This distinction reveals precisely spatial effects and tailored solutions, in particular the primary difference in the presence or not of a plan and design.

Enclavic spaces are designed with the greatest care, they are also centralized, organized, hierarchized, symbolized and programmed. They maintain continually clear boundary and tourists are cut off from social contact with the local community.

Heterogeneous spaces are spatial complexes, where overlapping functions, spaces, signs, corners and niches, generate a cellular and labyrinthine structure (Edensor T., 2000).

The separation of the two spheres seem to not find a solutions into the architecture design, emphasizing order against spontaneity, and it suggests us in another point of view the same division among specialized touristic spaces and others non planned forms.

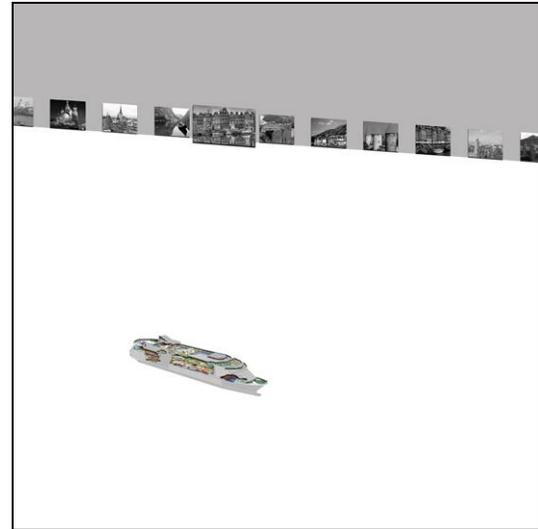
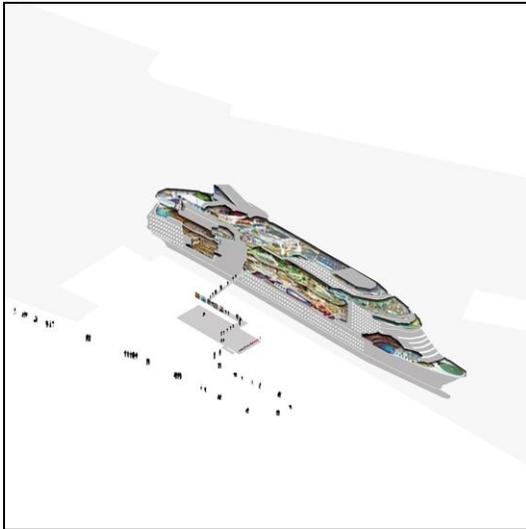


Fig. 4 - 5 Homogenous space –The cruise ship space. Source: Graphic elaboration of the author



Fig. 6-7 Heterogeneous space -Touristic use of open spaces within Diocletian's palace, City of Split, Croatia. Source: Graphic elaboration of the author

Changing

Tourism in recent years has gone toward a rapidly changing, which is an important step compared to the traditional reasons, construction of its products and disclosure practices, further this transition converge on a shift which society also has lived.

Main important ingredient we have to consider if we want to understand the feature of new tourism spaces.

As Richards G., Wilson J. (2007) argue creativity, experience, subjectivity open a complex process where tangible and intangible resources, creative industries go together. Users are no more a recipient of ready-made products but co-maker of touristic experiences.

‘In this sense, creativity could to be applied to tourism through the development of new products, or new experience, of new form of consumption or new tourism spaces.’ Arguably, creativity is any form of tourism which is related to imagination and it involves the productions of new meaning linking things together in new ways, it’s not only related with art, culture, science but with every forms of human activities (Richards G., Wilson J., 2007).

The everyday obtains another considerations in tourism spaces. The dissolution of precise temporal and spatial scans, implies that tourism involves spheres of daily life and spreading on non-traditional outlying regions. Tourism spaces are stopping to be a simple relationship between the starting mass tourist areas and reception areas to become widespread and a part of our networked society. Then studying the phenomenon today means no longer focus only on geographical areas for their perceived characteristics ability or to think places or attractions as an inversion of everyday life; a vision, long dominant at least until the 80s (Savelli A., 2008).

Moreover pressures of globalization and problems, caused by restructuring the current economic instability, stimulate tourism to constitute themselves as an important tool for development and transformation, sometimes one of the few possible ways to follow and is therefore justified to a series of objectives, wider than in the past, such as urban regeneration, improving the national image, the creation of new civic identity, economic growth and improved quality of life (von Krogh Strand I., Smith A. 2011).

Changing challenges space, architecture and the division – in the first part described – between specialized touristic space and heterogeneous space.

The paradigm of encounter, which complains a common shared terrain, gathers people in context and puts them together and it may be a new theme of project.

Laboratory of architecture

Making a space for tourists	Making a space with tourists
- Division with local community	- Need of co-presence with local community
-Use tangible and traditional resource as sea, physical heritage	-Use intangible resources as lifestyle, atmosphere, imagine, identity
- Extractive	- Maker of new meaning
-Building new place totally for entertainment, as leisure park	- Inventing place, playing sense of places, times and traditions, as routes, creative districts
- Control	- Involvement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism as a static product - Offering standard activities - Being an industry - Division homogenous-heterogeneous space - Difference between Touristic hub and Periphery - Is a reversal of the everyday - Sectoral - Clear Boundaries - Ready-made - Functional - Reproducing place - Building specific space - Architecture for tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism as a creative moment/space - Playing with hobby, art, crafts, foods - Involving creative industries - Create a space of neutrality, a ‘third space’ - Every place could become a hub - Is integrated with the everyday - Creative - Creating relations - Personal, Experiential - Multifunctional - Building new contest and geographies - Building space of encounter - Tourism inspired spaces -New role for Architecture
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Table 1. Specialized touristic spaces versus new tourism inspired spaces

Conclusions: Tourism as a space to meet

We demonstrate that tourism needs of physical spaces from which follows an architecture of tourism, but the traditional design mechanisms don't correspond to the contemporary needs of integration with everyday life and of transformations. Furthermore the opposing division between heterogeneous and homogenous space – which the literature of tourism proposes – is no more altogether satisfactory because it doesn't given back the role of the architecture design in tourism and it's not descriptive of new tourism spaces.

So the introduction of a reading tool appears useful to understand the contemporary complex tourism space. In fact the paradigm of encounter, applied to architecture, is capable to interpret the contemporary tourism space in the relation between tourist and resident and it could become a criteria of project because recognizes the existence of a space of co-presence, shared with local community.

We also analyze the necessity of co-presence and wider integration with everyday in the recent literature studies, which examine the shift of tourism trough new aspects such as the creativity.

Table 1 presents an attempt to describe the two main tendency of built space tourism –making a space for tourist or making a space with tourists - and first design actions to experiment new tourism inspired space. Of course many issues are open yet and no exhaustive but making tourists and residents together in a space of encounter is the future challenge of tourism and so it's a possible laboratory of architecture.

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