

Development of golf course in tourist territories The “Costa del Sol”

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Abstract

The game of golf was linked to the first European tourist movement in the mid-nineteenth century. Following the path marked by British travellers to warmer climates, encouraged by the hygienists and healthy trends and appreciation of landscape and Nature, the golf course was causing a disturbing transformation on the host territory.

Keywords: golf, tourism, landscape, territory

Introduction

Since the onset of the first tourist movement, in the context of the Romantic Movement, to the extrapolation to mass tourism, there was a continuing and intense relationship between tourism and the support territory. Looking for new places for leisure, away from the industrialized peripheries of large modern cities, the travellers, found, in nature and her landscapes, the ideal place for rest and entertainment. The XIX century marked the approach to unknown territory, sea and mountains like tourist favourite destinations, where the landscape was main protagonist.

Seaside and mountain resorts, became popular places for tourists, where they can develop healthy activities, outdoors, in emulation of the British elite classes. With these tours, toward warmer climes, British travellers, carried the game of golf to integrated into the new landscapes to discover in the Mediterranean coast. Once again, Nature was dominated by men, who used it like resource for leisure.

In this place for tourists, we can read the identity of those who occupy and habit, the relations established between them and the elements they share with their environment. (Augé, M.). The golf course can add new attributes to existing landscape, causing structural transformation of the territory, grate changes in lifestyle and increased urban over rural. (Lampard, E., 1955).

Looking at its genesis and evolution, the golf course, has been linked to the tourism and its expansion for all countries, since the starting point, drawing and setting tourist flows all around the world. This piece for entertainment, with great territorial impact, has been permanently subjected to debate and revision, from the territorial and urban planning, looking at the same time, its impact on social structure and the print on the environment and landscape where it inserts.

During the XIX and part of the XX, the urbanism is dedicated to plan the growth of cities; with the advent of mass tourism, by 1960, the main objective was the relationship between the new growth and the environment, seeking to integrate artifice and nature, as elements of the same landscape. The golf course, travelled from Scottish links, to take singular areas on the coast, in the wake of tourism, using their natural resources and growing new landscapes.

Beginning and evolution. From Scotland to the world

From his small origins in the Scottish coast, reached the European continent through the paths traced by rich travellers, first to the north coast and then to the Mediterranean, according Gormsen. The game has been consolidated during XIX in the British Isles, and went to Canada and United States, India and South Africa, with the settlers of new territories. Later, the golf came to China and Japan, and set in most European countries, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain and Italy, like seed of a new model occupation, linking housing with nature. In 1860 was founded en France, the first course in the mainland, established by the Scottish colony in Pau. This place, near the coast, offered perfect weather to spend the hard winter, and optimal conditions to build a golf course, like place of birth in links. The interest in new game was growing, until appear in a new edition of the prestigious Joanne, where golf was the new attraction in Biarritz, a famous tourist resort in the world.

In America, the game came with the interest of Scottish immigrants, who hired experts players to design the new courses across the ocean. Robert Lockhart sent his friend John Reid, established in New York, a few clubs and balls from Old Tom Morris store, in St. Andrews (Henderson y Stirk, 1979). Soon, Reid founded near home in Lake Avenue, the first golf course with three fairways, which would become the St. Andrew's Golf Club of Yonkers in 1892. The course was built in a pasture surrounded by woodlands, perfect getaway form the Big Apple to Nature. The new game was linked to the snobbish classes of American society, that began to bring the courses like an amenity alongside their large homes, where the greenery was the start in lifestyle. The game was come through Canada, where was founded the Royal Montreal in 1873 and the Golf Club of Quebec in 1875, but it was United States where passion grew so, that soon exceeded the number of courses in Britain.

In 1890, another player, Charles Blair McDonalds, was born in Canada, travelled to Scotland to form like golf architect at St. Andrews University, and design the Chicago Golf Course in 1890, and the National Golf Links in Southampton, in Long Island, that were a reference in following years. In 1913, the golf was not a minority sport, thanks to the first golf championships at a bright spot in the American economy and society. The first American people interested in golf, had contacted on his trips to seaside resorts in Europe, where the new game was the king; they took the game to residential area in Long Island, where yet, there was large tax-free land, similar to the links of birth. Long Island had sandy soils, well drained, where you could access by train, and where rich people built their residences, near New York. After a first incursion, with the arrival of twenties, began the most creative and prolific stage in American history, reflected in golf course designs, far from the simple courses at the start, marking the new guidelines in golf. The first courses were extravagant and primitive, with plain greens and monotonous hazards "chocolate drops mounds" (Graves, M.), until gave way to a new model under new conditions, with some beautiful examples in Golf Links in 1911, Myopia Hunt Club and the Garden City Golf Club of New York, that represented the beginning of "Golden Age", following the style of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The new golf architects learned from primary sources from Scotland, adding the best qualities to American designs, because their future lay in the technological advances, with respect to the essence of the first courses. While demand grew along the west coast, the railroad made possible the designer become professionals, who travelled from one to another place doing their job. People wanted more golf courses around the country, so new techniques were used to drain soils, remove trees and change the topography of lands.

Around 1940, with the arrival of mass tourism, the golf was a part of planned resorts, linked to the hotels, or like a new piece in the tourism developments. The United States and their economy, overcome the crisis of World War II, emerged as a great power and reference of modernity in the Western world. The new systems of production and “fordist” organization of work, were the reference of the new welfare society. Very soon, the europeans began to consume goods and shows recreab perfect life, away from wars and social conflicts. American society represented a model with new values and needs, starting a trend to mass society. This new social structure wanted to move away from labor impositcions and estrangement from Nature and landscape, that industrial development had brought, to find in the recreation the way back to their own identity. (Budrillard, J., 1976).

In 1960 the golf courses were privates clubs, with four or five hundred members, who maintained them to play. Post war period, many courses were built by municipal iniciative, that needed to promote residencial plots around the courses to finance the costs. This was the beginning of urban sprawl around the large cities, with the Nature and landscape like argument, occupying impossible places, without correcting environmental measures or necessary infrastructure, except for some of them, that were reference, such as Sea Pines in Hilton Head Island (North Caroline) or Amelia Island (Florida).

This new housing development was exported to Europe during the seventies and eighties, like a model for tourist residences in the coast, often joined to the golf courses, building the new “golf areas”. Besides a space for sports and leisure, the golf course became a great piece of territory, like a park or a garden, changed and contained in a great landscape thinking for tourism. Tourism took this model and adapted it to new needs, inventing a new place to attract tourism flows to play golf and live in. (Paniza Prados,2005).

Málaga and the “Costa del Sol”

Following initial tourist flows, based in northern Europe, the course was introduced in Spain in addition to the emerging tourist destinations that had been settled on our shores since the nineteenth century, motivated by the pleasant weather and daylight hours, which allowed to practice this sport for nearly all the year round. British colonies, which had chosen different interests our territory as a place to spend most of the year, began practicing this sport, who was born on its shores, and here were landscapes and favorable conditions for its implementation. The Rio Tinto Company Limited, in the the north of the province of Huelva, was the germ of the first golf course in our country (Bolaños Moreno), in La Dehesa, called North Lode, in 1890. A year later, another British colony settled in Gran Canarias, on the grounds of Dust Loma, founded another golf course, marking the beginning of a succession of clubs that would spread throughout the country, establishing itself as a key tourist progressively linked to interest was waking along the Mediterranean coast as an international destination, being the perfect complement to housing developments.

The booming British middle class, and after, the American people, that had maintained the hegemony in the economic and social development from the XVIII century, imposed their lifestyle bringing the love for golf to all tourist territories. When the agriculture and industry were declined, Málaga sought in tourism a way to survive, with an excellent clime and beautiful landscape to accommodate the new visitors. Territorial morphology offers this piece of land between the sea and the mountains and the spectacular landscape of Mediterranean vegetation, soon became an ideal setting to welcome travellers and tourists. The mass transit, the product of the Industrial Revolution and subsequent technological progress along with the new concept of leisure time as the result of growing economic and social

progress, raise the possibility travelling to the working classes. The living conditions of the new growth peripherals designed for the working middle class, encourage the search for new scenes and landscapes in which to escape, and restore health.

On the initiative of Directorate General of Tourism, created in 1925 the Malaga Country Club near the airport, on land sandy beach surrounded by vegetation, demonstrating for the first time the successful formula that tourism connected with golf, with the added possibility of accommodation near the same field. Small rural towns dedicated to agriculture and fishing near the coast, dominating the landscape from a mound, begin to adapt to the new process of occupation. In the first decades of the century the capital, Malaga, absorbed almost entirely the flow of British tourists arriving in Gibraltar, who were staying at the Caleta Palace, built in 1918 at seaside, and other luxury hotels, which began to proliferate, as in other places at the great European capitals. However, on the coast, began to set the first urbanization of the Costa del Sol, Montemar hotel as a whole, individual residences, introducing a model which is then repeated throughout the country. With the transformation of rural land to urban landscape was increasing the quality of the territory, where they began to be implemented through the generosity of the soil, the first golf courses related to hotel and residential accommodation, creating a lush landscape, with invented nature as demand for tourism.

Thus, the coastal territory began to change, to make artificial almost entirely, relegating the traditional landscape to the tourism. The golf course was implemented in the territory of the coast between the seaside promenade and the mountain range, such as integrating-articulating portion of the new buildings. Like a product of modernity, golf appears as an element of entertainment to the new tourist class accommodation, with a model adapted for extensive and dispersed cities. The golf course covers a landscape dimension, with the possibility to modifying the environment, like a container to new lifestyles, where Nature is always present, where is possible linked natural and artificial elements. (Fernández Caleya, 2005)

The territory and the perception of the landscape have been decisive in shaping and composition of the Costa del Sol, the main attraction for tourist flows from the start. Landscapes invented during the eighteenth century, the mountains and the sea, live in this piece of territory, which added to its climatic qualities were key to attract early travellers, both domestic and foreign.

After the early nineteenth century tourist incursions, both to Malaga, and the heart of Torremolinos, and towards the region closest to Gibraltar, where British travellers had access would have to wait until the second half of the twentieth century to attend the great discovery and projection of the Costa del Sol area, as an international tourist resort. The big jump occurs when the distances are shortened and offers the possibility to travel in large groups, by creating the airport near the capital (Secall Esteve, 1997), near Torremolinos, and the incorporation of Destiny "Costa del Sol "to package tour operators and travel companies. In these moments stood out as the first tourist establishment "El Rodeo" initiative Ricardo Soriano, who got the farms, Rodeo Alto and Bajo, to build a shelter designed to accommodate passengers who boarded at Algeciras French heading to Morocco, where the germ of future tourism development would continue to escalate Marbella as a destination for international prestige throughout the twentieth century. The investment of foreign capital in developing countries found a bonanza in the resort off the coast of Malaga, which started to become a competent rival to destinations such as France and Italy consolidated, offering solid alternative nature of the sun and almost unchanged which at that time had no specific regulation regarding the control and management of land and its resources, rather considered a good way to produce currency and to open up a stagnant country. In this first phase, land use occurred

spontaneously and unplanned, relying on natural resources and infrastructure labile, using the country's agrarian structure as economic resource (Marchena Gómez, 1987). So came the first incursion of tourism pieces involving the territory to new guidelines hotels, marinas and golf courses, began to occupy strategic positions that polarized the stage and were the beginning of the profound transformation and alteration of coastal land. Alongside this transformation as inertia territorial and inevitable, began the process of modification of the landscape and its elements, driving the transition to the current situation.

The lush landscape of the coast, where they converge in a short space, the sea and the mountains, along with the nearby international airport (1961) and historical urban system, were the ingredients needed to put the Costa del Sol as a goal tourism within the European scene. A luxury tourist infrastructure well-entrenched, favorable climatic conditions and a permit from the institutions, together with the first tournaments and global projection of some of the best courses in Europe, Sotogrande and Las Brisas.

Large farms devoted to began to join the developer phenomenon, a process initiated by J. Banús, when one of the largest planned resorts of Spain to host hotels, and other leisure facilities as well as residences, culminating with golf and marina included. Using great soil extension, joined the construction of houses and apartments with hotels like Andalucía Plaza in 1961 and Las Brisas golf course included. The planned marina with capacity for more than nine hundred boats, became the largest marina in Europe. The process was a major change in the territorial structure of the landscape and environmental variables and the organization of a mainly agricultural area now become urban structure. The mountain and river runoff and combing the area across to the coast, will be the supply network to support the new complex structure that was emerging with the first tourist pieces. Economic expectations representing this area were of great projection, helping foreign capital investment in urban operations to meet demand, avoiding the long-term environmental consequences. The common thread throughout the fabric was the 340 national highway running along the coastal edge, and acted in support of the first hotels that were colonizing parts the picturesque landscape, while maintaining the connections between historic cities and the capital and the airport, the true gateway for mass tourism.

In Estepona was built in 1966 a new hotel complex with the largest golf tour in Europe so far, the Atalaya Park, covering some 85 hectares, which is accessed from the N340, from a partial Plan the division of a colonial farm San Pedro de Alcántara. Gradually, agriculture was abandoned, and the tourist wave that imposed a new territorial order, which began to occupy large tracts of rural land to build golf courses and surrounding residences, whose blast changed too, the interior smallholdings, with the increasing arrival of rural population towards the coast. The occupation of land in the beachfront was growing rapidly at the expense of tourism demand ever more intense, without the support of network infrastructure and the necessary articulation solvent to form a real urban fabric increasingly complex. The map was generated reflected a clear transposition of the previous situation, reinforced in a timely manner, where large housing developments and golf courses, previous cadastral structure revealed. The first steps hotel strategically placed pieces, close to existing cities, with whom they maintained a certain dependence, these first elements of the generation of new tissue in their immediate environment and so the floor was sealed, alternating with voids for leisure and recreation, among which were the golf courses. Many linked to the accommodation generated from the beginning, and others, led to the construction of subsequent developments, which benefited from the idealized landscape they represented. The new residential tourism soon became the economic engine fueled by economic and political times during the eighties and nineties, as had happened in United States long before the territory subjected to an overload of use with a

direct impact on their structure, landscape and environmental variables that had entered fully into the "saturation phase" (Marchena). Along with the construction and sealing of the soil, the golf courses also proliferated to reach a total of fields currently establishing a network of gaps, filled with vegetation, a set of "gardens", which despite of its effects more or less harmful to the territory, causing a very interesting new reading on an area of 180 km where golf is a total hectares in area. After the intensity of the eighties and nineties, when architects and designers of international fame, made their mark in numerous prestigious lords (Trent Jones and Cabell Robinson), came the twenty-first century with new models of occupation, more controlled, but perhaps more hurtful, looking at sites in the hinterland, the ideal scenario for locating real estates frame, like a bubble, aimed at an exclusive tourism mainly Anglo-Saxon, who arranged their homes around the golf. The result is that the fabric of this type of extensive developments linked to golf course in Andalusia have, especially on the coast, have tripled the volume of existing consolidated urban land (Villar Lama, 2006), thanks to the combination of a number of factors that have led to this situation, and where tourism plays a major role.

The Costa del Sol is a very peculiar territory, devoid of urban history but profoundly transformed into a fairly short space of time as a direct result of the superposition of the potent activity which involved the mass tourism on the territory. Given the great transformation that was underway, the territory began this transformation without planning tools, from a basically agrarian and rural structure, to become a phenomenon unprecedented urban-territorial nationally, as an immediate response to new demands and requirements of the new tourism phenomenon. Among the urgent needs, to shelter the population from a national and international tourist flows, with very specific needs (leitmotif of tourism) that are in this area the perfect setting to realize their ideal landscape formed in the course of Modernity and its iconic landmark, the leisure.

Infrastructure capable of supporting the new mobility in all its dimensions, equipment and offers the use of free time, linked to the excellent weather conditions, involving an enjoyment of the natural and cultural landscape, in contact with nature, with the sea, agglutinated local cultural values with the highest level equipment.

It is about inventing a new nature in this land of exceptional starting conditions, where the golf course can become a manager able to preserve landscape and achieve economically sustain a region or district, while value is placed on cultural authenticity, increasing the touristic capacity of significant environmental value areas, or places obsolete, non-natural landscape in the exhausted urban interstices.

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