Tourism in Florianopolis, Brazil. Landscape Patrimony in the basis of a Sustainable Development

Ayrton Portilho Bueno Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Departamento de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brasil <u>ayrtonbueno@hotmail.com</u>

Abstract

This paper is about the role of territory and landscape in the development in the Island of Santa Catarina, in the municipal district of Florianopolis, Brasil. Tourism activity, together with urban growth (attracted by tourism), was addressed in its social, political, economic and cultural aspects and its patterns of settlement distribution in the territory, identifying the consequences of the model that association urbanization and tourism, orients its development in the Island of Santa Catarina. This investigation led to the conclusion that such model is not socially or spatially sustainable, and allowed pointing to a model of appropriation of the territory by tourism activity that considers the pre-eminence of the landscape as the main element in the attraction of tourist flows and in the quality of life of the residents, specially by the creation of identity with the territory.

Keywords: Landscape, Urbanization, Tourism, Florianopolis, Brazil

Introduction

The city of Florianopolis, South of Brazil, in the recent process of urban and tourism growth, has been searching alternatives of self-financing and seeks for its position among the global cities when trying to bring clean industries as tourism and the sector of information technology, activities that could develop alongside life quality associated to a natural landscape. Even though most economic active sectors of society base their speech in the acknowledged and complimented natural and cultural resources of the city that represents an excellent landscape patrimony, it has been losing qualities. The incapacity of giving value to the landscape patrimony ends up in a territory mosaic in fast fragmentation and loss of important areas of extreme landscape interest, combination whose configuration is different to the other capitals of the country and Mercosul region.

The local environmental legislation with its non-definitions and asymmetries among municipal, state and federal regulations assumed a passive conservation character, taken as modern, but that is made fragile by little capacity of implementation and enforcement. Even with rigorous definitions of areas that are allowed or not allowed to urbanize, in the limits of areas of city expansion the superposition of the last over the first one has happened constantly. On the other side, sectors of tourism businesses without strategic vision and focused on short-term profits are, besides alienated from other sectors of society in places where tourism can be developed, strongly contaminated by the construction industry and real estate agencies. They take advantage of certain juridical conditions and the corruption of the ones supposed to enforce the law to impose an urban and tourism development plan whose territory exploitation by the real estate industry has been destroying what is left of attractive natural landscapes.

This paper makes a reflection of these matters, based in recent investigation about the landscape, understood as a synthesis of the other dimensions that make part of the territory taken over by man, and the development of tourism in the city. It starts from a critical look over

the capacity of globalized tourism bringing benefits to the area, reflects over the model of territory and tourism development of the city of Florianopolis, more specifically about its island portion, the Island of Santa Catarina. Considers about the ones involved in the production of the city space and finishes making a suggestion that allows the insertion of the city in the international tourist destinations net with the value given to its landscape patrimony, in a way of reaching a sustainable development of the activity in a globalized context.

Tourism and Globalization

The little compromise of world capital, which powers the mass tourism, with the social and environmental problems in tourist destinations has been a constant during the expansion of the activity, making many localities have an explosive increment in hotel construction and real estate negotiation in tourist places and areas nearby, usually with high land use. In the countries of the periphery, the transformation of the territory and the degradation of areas, impacts that are common to the process, tend to be aggravated by the structural condition of society. The lack of a sustainable behavior, only required by resident populations and planners with high environmental conscience, make countries of the periphery of global economy find countless difficulties to give an impulse to this activity in a social and environmental balanced way. Besides that, the necessary capital concentration for the tourism expansion process in global economic centers and the search of adequate destinations or localities in a market point of view make frequent cycles of expansion and crisis alternate between themselves, impacting local structures and generating discontinuity of results: "As industrial production, the placement of tourism is decided based on where the compositions maximize the profits of the company" (Villamil, 1983).

So, in a globalized economy, tourist destinations have faced strong and permanent disputes in global and regional market flow. Even though it is seen as an economic alternative for regions of high attractiveness, the inconstancy of the activity and the desire of getting adequate to market exigencies have as consequence the effort to immediately answer to demands, which, associated to the lack of a complete policy of the activity development, imposes high pressure on societies and environments. While consuming landscapes and not bringing the benefits suggested by marketing and waited for by the resident community, getting to the point of threatening life quality and the survival of areas, this tourism model has been having difficulties of being understood by some segments as the sustainable option of social and economic development for countries of the periphery of global economy, as exemplified in the case of Florianopolis.

The "Touristization" of Florianopolis

The capital of the State of Santa Catarina, the city of Florianopolis, has today an area of 451km², being 12,1km² in the continental portion and 438,9km² in the Island of Santa Catarina, and a population around 369 thousand inhabitants, what makes the density of a little over 800 inhabitants per square kilometer, according to the last research conducted by IBGE (2000). Its economy is mostly based on commerce and administrative services to which has been added other more specialized private services, but even then the city has been finding great difficulty for its financing. Besides the fact of having some prestige among the countries of the south of South America (Argentine, Uruguay, Paraguay and Chile, in this order, are the most expressive emitters of international flow), the tourism in Florianopolis is characterized, for now, by a national and essentially regional demand. According to information from Santa Catarina Turismo – SANTUR (2001), 84% of the visitors come from the states of the south region of Brazil, of São Paulo e Rio de Janeiro, getting to almost one million of inhabitants during the summer season (Convention Visitors Bureau de Florianopolis, 2005) and in the turn of the

millennium it was among the three most demanded destinations of Brazil. Nowadays, Florianopolis is offered for tourism focusing beaches, culture and history, ecology and events, counting on more than 100 hotels of tourist or superior category and lodging for more than 20 thousand people (including campings, hostels, etc.), sector that is directly responsible for about 10 thousand jobs and, when associated to the segments of restaurants and entertaining, to more than 20 thousand. In the 2003/2004 season, over 580 thousand tourists visited the city, being almost 500 thousand of Brazilians and over 89 thousand foreigners, generating an income around 113 million dollars. Of this amount, the national tourists contributed with approximately 89 million and the foreigners close to 24 million. That corresponds to approximately 0,6% of the dollar income in the country in the same period (EMBRATUR, 2004).



Figure 1 - Localization of Florianopolis, Brazil. Source: Google

The tourist attractiveness of Florianopolis stems from its natural attributes and cultural landscape resulting from the colonial processes of human settlement and farming (see figure 2). This unique spatial structure is characterized by urban concentration, functional and geographical, of the founding nucleus, and an urbanization of the periphery, spread in several nuclei, originally from colonial occupation. In the city evolution, the creation of the rural coastal space was one of the transforming moments that marked the most the physical structure of the city as it established a particular distribution of human occupation spread apart and with the island natural systems in the space in between them, a specific land division, a number of common use areas and a restricted terrestrial circulation system that up to today influences in territory organization, being kept that way until the middle of the 20th century, when they started being threatened by the modernization of social and economic relations. These characteristics, as the fact it is an island, are the ones that make the city different from other space organizations, because it is constituted by dispersed human occupation made up of urban and not-urban structures among high scenic value of landscapes, identifiable by everyone that visits them. The process of touristization begins in the mid-50s, after a delayed process of modernization in the urban core, caused by factors as the regional rural migration and fast decadence of agriculture and fishing and the increase of value of the real estate in areas in the interior and coast of the island, started to increase at the fifties, when 75% of the population was already in the urban areas. Starting at the eighties, this occupation was directed towards the coast of the island, initially with second residences, but now has been transformed in permanent, with new migratory flows.



Figure 2 – General View of Lagoa da Conceição District, Florianopolis. Source: author

The tourism and the activities related to it started to progressively represent important income, making the planning and stimulation of the tourism in Santa Catarina and Florianopolis appear after the first signs of the region's potential for the exploitation of these activities in the seventies. In the eighties, the government starts to incorporate the territory organization of tourism in the region, especially with the implementation of a law of occupation, the Plano Diretor dos Balneários (IPUF, 1985), which tried to organize the expansion towards the coast of the Island of Santa Catarina, with the creation of tourist interest areas, classification of land areas, creation of preservation areas (limited and permanent), the posterior implementation of specific plans for areas that differentiate from the others and the forecast of participation of the community. The implementation of countless lots of second residence (meant for seasonal use) in an extensive low-density model (usually 75 inhabitants per hectare) and the incentive to construction of lodging equipments, sometimes of inadequate height for the coast and with excessive occupation of the lot, gave a jump start to the construction industry and the economy of the city, but at the same time, led to a environmental prejudicial occupation and created a landscape that is vulgar in its urban and architectonic aspects, repeating a mass tourism model already seen in other decadent, or in its way to be so, tourist localities (see figure 3).



Figurae 3 – View of the new urban-touristic settlements in Jurerê Internacional Beach, Florianópolis. Source:author

In the turn to the nineties, government and private agents related to tourism started several campaigns to put the city in a wider context of tourist demand, beyond national, basing on a

strategic thought, following examples of global cities, as Barcelona, which had some success. The strategic plan of the tourism planning for Florianopolis - Plano Estratégico de Planejamento Turístico para Florianopolis - PLANET 2000 comes out in 1995 from the effort of several agents and social segments, governmental and private. At that time some unwanted consequences of tourism promotion were already noticed, from the advertised life quality of the city and the growth in construction industry, came the arrival of migrants of middle and high income that settled in legal urban areas, and of social groups of low income that also were attracted by the job opportunities in the construction industry, very active in the city, and in the informal seasonal jobs. The city was unprepared to face such situation and the increase of value of the land, and this constant flow of migrants has been occupying, in an unqualified urban and architectonic way, several areas of the city, many of them (of different income levels) in places of tourist and ecologic interest of high value, but others in areas of high risk to the population (low-income population), creating a new landscape indirectly related to tourism. Even if the efforts of various organizations, entities and social agents, related, directly or indirectly, for increasing value given to natural heritage and landscape of the city to maintain balanced organization of the territory and the value given to the remaining culture of colonization Azorean local attributes to create a difference in the global tourism market (at least at the regional Mercosur) goals were not always reached by the city administration, as well as the treatment of chronic disease in the region: basic infrastructure (drainage, sewerage and waste) and urban mobility.

What has been observed (Bueno, 2006), from the adoption of crystallized territory development model in the city plan of organization of the land, suggests that the tourism guidelines given by the plan for the tourism development of Florianopolis – *Plano de Desenvolvimento Turistico do Aglomerado Urbano de Florianopolis* (IPUF, SETUR, 1981, *Plano Diretor dos Balnearios - PDB* (IPUF, 1985), of tourist development – *de Desenvolvimento Turistico - PDT* (IPUF, 1996) and the PLANET (Forum Permanente de Planejamento Turistico, 1995), previously mentioned, that focus on valuing the landscape and environment qualities of the Island, as well as its cultural values, have been giving privilege to an extensive urban and tourist model, on the opposite direction of the constructed and natural landscape characteristics.

After all, the PDB, while assuming a protectionist posture that reflects in a inflexible conservation of certain parts of the territory, strongly based on environmental point of view that gives privileges to the ecosystems "themselves", even though it leads to preservation, it does not consider an aspect of its social function – the possibility of the territory being a base for development, at the same time it leaves others, with as much landscape and environment value, to the extensive and intense use, not pointing to an environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Conflicts, disputes and movements of resistance to tourist urbanization.

In a city with multiple social, economic and cultural facets as Florianopolis, with modern economic sectors and other patrimonial and pre-industrials, with traditional political practices, based on clientele and patronage (Werner, 1985), and modern systems of divulgation and marketing of ideas, the conflicts and disputes have been marking the recent process of urbanization. Since the anti-city speech, connected to an unrecoverable past and based on the myth of the untouchable nature, even the one that desires the position of global tourist metropolis, followed by an uncertain and by any cost future, are all made explicit as urban utopias that guide the social actors in this context of symbolic and material dispute for the territory of Florianopolis. As the speech and the government and private actions do not converge and the results get further from a situation of equilibrium and respect of the territory and landscape, several social actors, also private and from the government have, during the last twenty years, inspected, requiring adaptations and imposing resistance to the development of tourism.

Businessmen from the real estate and tourist sector, public administrators and local political agents make up the thought line that is favorable to development, based in the urbanization of tourist cities, and to conservation, related to authoritarian and technocratic practices and administrations. The businessmen, still mostly of local capital, understand the resistance to unbridled urbanization as attitude of groups contrary to the development of the city, which would only have as option the adoption of the model commended by them, externalizing the businesses urgency in taking advantage of the natural site before foreign capital, although postures of sensibility towards the environment have found space among them due to the perception of how the matter affects the businesses. On the other side, it started to be visible in the beginning of the eighties a movement formed by social groups conscious of the city territory limits and the drastic social and cultural transformations brought by the urbanization caused by tourism, associated to the universities, government administration, the third sector (NGO's) and communitarian movements.

These resistance movements, that are part of the social construction process of the space in Florianopolis and for not feeling beneficiated or for positioning against social injustice and environmental degradation made evident by urbanization, oppose to the development process of tourism as it has been happening. Supporting progressive ideas, claiming participative decisions about the city and its environment, fighting for the preservation of the culture and environment of the island, is also perceptible, in this segment, the ideology created about certain sectors that are against development and globalization, that go beyond environmental demands, many times used only as a pretext, eliminating the possibility of the city taking advantage of tourism, as this alternative did not deserve, in the beginning, consideration.

The communities affected by real estate establishments react to transformation, even if for different motivations. Many of them formed by recent migrants, and it is not possible to speak of the ones of low-income only, by the settlement in the capital desired by many, not always in legitimate situations, try to keep their space. Some, of higher income and better informed, start from the concept known by the urbanists as NIMBY (Davis, 1993), to assume a defensive territorial attitude. Other communities, without political and economic power, search for survival and reproduction through action that claim their localized interests, priority over tourist and real estate ones. Besides that, in many cases, it is not clearly noticed the difference that certain environmental fights establish between conservation of environments and the rejection, that has more ideology as background than environmental purposes, to private establishments, among alternative possibilities of financing the city and real estate speculation and between taking advantage of the tourist potential and landscape deterioration

Considerations about the Tourism Development Model in Florianopolis or How Taking Advantage of Landscape Patrimony.

The investigation about the landscape patrimony of the Island of Santa Catarina in relation with tourism demonstrated that the development of the activity has obeyed a model of spatially extensive and temporally intense use of the territory as support of urban expansion with serious consequences to the natural aspects, attributes of most tourist attractiveness. This model follows politics and guidelines traced by social entities and organizations connected to the businessmen that bet in a vision of low sustainability in mid-term. Even with strategies of insertion in the international market, incorporated since the beginning of the nineties and based on marketing and competitiveness, focusing on the qualification of tourism and attraction of the elite as public, the ways of use of the territory remain, or worse, have seen their occupational trend and their segregator accent increased.

The life quality, the richness of the landscape and culture, always mentioned by the government, businessmen and communitarian and environmental groups as important elements for the city,

do not seem to make certain sectors sensible beyond the speech. Even though the premises of plans and government policies recognize the exceptional landscape conditions that gave potential to tourism is not possible to say that all intentions of valuing the landscape patrimony, widely divulgated by the most interested in tourism, have been completely accomplished, resulting in a process that what was supposed to be tourism came to be real estate speculation. Besides the competition with qualified and traditional destinations with similar urban and tourist landscape, the seasonality, the lack of urban infra-structure, the currency exchange variation, the asymmetry of power among the different agents producers and consumers of the city space and certain "preservationists" attitudes, the model adopted is the main responsible for the fact that tourism is finding difficulties of developing itself in a sustainable way. The problems of this model are revealed in the waste of the suburban morphology of low density over plains of cultural, scenic, ecological and landscape value, in the individualist and segregator character of residential areas of houses isolated in the lot, and in the encouragement of increasing the urban and tourist density in the beach borders and in areas still without adequate infrastructure and in the homogenization, with tendency to constructive density increase of tourist establishments, with evident losses, due to voracious consumption, in landscape and environment.

The current challenges before globalization demand structural and paradigm changes in terms of sustainability and efficiency of the activity: establishment of government policies that facilitate the attraction of external capital, competitiveness of companies and destinations, increase on the offer of collective use equipments near the main centers of tourist interest, trying to find strategic concepts of habitability, visitability, and investibility in a sustainable way on the territory. New paradigms point to the inclusion of the environmental variable, in a wide vision, where social and spatial sustainability is the key in the consolidation, maintenance and survival (competition) strategy in a globalized market. The development of contemporary tourism has valued unique identities and landscapes that result from an adaptation of the model to the territory, but also adapting the territory to the new tourism model, raising the possibility of tourism being an opportunity of maintaining the landscape. In Florianopolis, the richness of landscape attributes, considering the diversity of geo-ecological systems and the significance of colonial heritage in the territory structure present themselves as a strong possibility of sustaining the image of the Island, opening doors to habitual and new tourist demands. The tourism focusing on culture, adventure, ecology and businesses, among other modalities, has been finding demand, demonstrating the renovation capacity of the activity in search of new consumers. Even in small scale and without threatening the hegemony of traditional tourist destinations, the new attractive spaces have had progressive growth in regions of the periphery with certain specifications. Among the measures of correction of the route of tourism development, the adequate valuing and use of the landscape demand a change of point of view towards the model established in Florianopolis. Some questions pertinent to an alternative territory development model, compromised with sustainable development can be pointed.

A point to be considered is the necessity of dissociation between the tourism development and the urban development, because in the Santa Catarina Island context these expressions represent opposite notions, if not incompatible. The tourist capital should avoid and eliminate the influence of real estate capital (CCRS Arquitects, 1993) and, if the attraction of tourism is the landscape and the growth of the activity cannot dispose of it, it should happen in a way that does not obliterate the landscape. The tourism does not develop only by extensive use of territory and does not act only as aggressor of the environment, but can act as agent of the creation of the territory that considers and depends on the landscape. The urbanization that, on the other side, has as one of its fundaments the accumulation of capital through the use of the land of the city, presents a series of inconveniences when is established in landscapes valued by the residents and visitors.

Another question that must be considered is the necessity of comprehension of tourism not only as another segment of economy, but as a communication process, with a cultural dimension and that, differently from the other industries, has a specific product and way of consuming it: in the

case of Florianópolis, its landscape. Considered as a result of communicative production process, the landscape is a nature and society product, and when, through time, it is degraded, looses the qualities required by residents and visitors. The landscape exploitation by tourism, when produces negative consequences, due to exhaustion of the environment reflected in the image of the locality, starts charging high social and economic costs, affecting other sectors of economy, diminishing the possibility of being inserted in the global market competitively, especially in a city with most of its territory in an island and with few alternatives of economic development.

The conflicts due to the model of urban tourist expansion in Florianopolis has shown that other actors are involved in the process, even in a forced way, and that resident populations can have more sympathy for tourism development in the future, if supported by the real improvement of the situation of the residents, especially because "...in reality, many of the negative impacts attributed to tourism are result of a lack of state politicies (government policies) of development, not of problems inherent to tourism" (Villamil, 1983:23). This way, the activity will only develop in a sustainable way if attention is paid to the demands of the other sectors of society, especially the unprivileged in terms of offer of collective use equipments, infrastructures, jobs, and possibility of exercise of citizenship and, in what is the concern of this paper, for qualification of environment and valuing of the landscape.

The possibilities of use of landscape patrimonial resource can impel a series of alternatives of territory ordering especially if considered its cultural dimension that goes beyond the esthetical enjoyment and the ecological precepts. The landscape starts being understood as an element of identity construction and even as a way of promoting citizenship. And the comprehension of conservation and preservation as social end ecological concepts has to go beyond the intangibility of natural spaces, incorporating the idea of active conservation and preservation, in a contemporary view of social use of nature.

So, it is considered the creation of the territory through the enjoyment of landscape by tourism, understood here not necessarily as aggressor of the environment, but as development factor that can bring, in certain control conditions, sustainability to certain regions. The development of the city starts being one of the specifics of sustainable development, with dimensions of environment, with the intrinsic conflicts derived from living in society, "... associated to urban life practices and search of better conditions of life, through the creation and or maintenance of environmental/material conditions that can promote and express social environmental justice" (Costa, 2000).

In this movement, the sustainable development is supported by aspects of territory (localisms, regionalities), in the shared administration of development and territory, reaching the different administrative and representative levels, in the consideration of social, economic and cultural diversity (space democratization), as the adequate treatment of qualifying aspects of space, as the morphologic studies of territory and city, the consideration of demographic and support capacity matters, with the elaboration of parameters and indicators of sustainability, and the organization of systems of transportation, supply, sewage system and energy conservation and efficiency. And if the strategic speech states de necessity of empowering the local actors, with the placement of the perception of a crisis, where society unifies itself around a project of salvation, and the consensus is necessary and vital, so it is necessary for that to overcome the paradox created with the adoption of the enterprise attitude in the treatment of the city, with decision being made by few, usually to their own interests.

Conclusion

Even though the search of a certain consensus suggests the denial of the conflict, inherent to the third-world cities, in the belief of a possible social peace with the abandonment, even if

temporary, of local interests for the creation of an unitary, cohesive and legitimate project for the city, in Florianópolis the matter of environment and balanced use of the territory with the valuing of the landscape seems to be the only matter that can gather different interests.

The alternative to be created must consider, according the suggestion of Vainer (2003), the denial of marketing the public space with the politicization of the everyday life of citizens, in a permanent reconstruction and reoccupation progress of these public spaces, but with a more realistic view of the development and financing possibilities of the city, considering the tourism attracted by the landscape and environmental qualities of the region, motto for a possible pact among the conflicting parts, since that, in the end, both depend on the territory for their survival and reproduction.

The dialect between continuity and change is basic to consistently face an international reality in continuous transformation, to react with urban critical culture to some globalizing processes and having the possibility of counteracting with the creative, social and political local weight. In front of the challenges of globalization and the paradox of development and conservation it is believed that the attributes of the place, and in the studied context, of the landscape, with the valuing of the region as territorial base, are essential "...as appropriate reactions of culture, nowadays, to the crushing strength of globalization" (Franco, 2001:.11) that fragments and alienates.

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