

BOOK REVIEWS

MANUALE DI GEOGRAFIA DEL TURISMO. DAL GRAND TOUR AL PIANO STRATEGICO

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UTET Università, Torino, 2018, 272 pp., ISBN 978-88-6008-544-3

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The "Tourism Geography Handbook", now in its fourth edition, helps to build systematic knowledge of the discipline by presenting a review of themes, and the literature that has dealt with it, according to their appearance in Italian scientific production, up to the most recent updates. The approaches followed are many, and each of them has suggested different themes and tools: from the economic to the political, from the human to the environmental and to the perceptive. The Handbook is addressed to university students - but also to all those who for the first time approach the subject - placing itself as an agile instrument of study or work where the treatment of each single theme is carried out through an appropriate but suitable scientific language to the understanding of all readers. In this fourth edition, the exemplification takes place through emblematic cases more or less known, from the European Capitals of Culture to the tourism of video games, to show and demonstrate how they can adapt, modify and transform the places, and especially the ways in which these are presented, depending on the demand of tourists. A useful book to understand how best to value one of the most important resources of our Italy and our Europe. Tourism has become so much a part of human behavior that it represents a habit, a foregone conclusion. But what is tourism? Although this is a current phenomenon and involves and involves a large number of people, there is no common definition, as there is no agreement on its pre-eminent characteristics. Moreover, if until a couple of decades ago tourism was essentially due to a permanent holiday, induced by a desire for escape, today it knows a variety of ways, forms and motivations in continuous increase and change: the cultural journey, the trekking adventure, the food

and wine tour, the travels of the elderly, the study holiday and many more. This manual of geography of tourism presents an organic and systematic mapping of the discipline, reconstructing how it has evolved in Italy since the Fifties. Each aspect is analyzed, also through real and current examples that help the reader to understand, in order to give back a vivid and complete picture. Through numerous case studies, the Author wants to demonstrate how places, and especially ways in which they are presented, can be adapted, modified and transformed according to the demand of tourists. The volume is divided into six chapters and each of them is dedicated to one of the main themes of the geography of tourism presented according to the Italian scientific-disciplinary tradition in the last fifty years. The first three chapters place particular emphasis on tourism as an economic asset and just as other economic assets are characterized by demand, supply and a market. The difference, however, with other economic goods, is its immobile supply and, instead, a great mobility of financial flows and of people that tourism is able to generate.

In particular, first chapter "Tourism and geography" highlights how the Geography of Tourism is a branch of Geography and how much the disciplinary tradition in Italy is consolidated. Toschi, in 1947, was the first geographer to deal tourism phenomenon with a methodological approach; he transferred reflections of economists about the transfer of money from a non-tourist region to a tourist to studies of geography of tourism; furthermore he elaborated some interesting considerations on the human aspects of tourism, above all concerning motivations of the trip and tourist flows deriving from movement of

people from place of habitual residence to other destinations. In his analysis of tourist flows, Toschi considered environmental, social, landscape and other consequences that tourism phenomenon imprints on territory. In addition to examining subsequent methodological approaches, Bagnoli reflects on "place", on new meanings of "landscape" and "territory" and on modern inconsistency of tourist region as, currently, it is the result of visitors' perception «If on one hand, passive tourism region no longer exists or perhaps there are as many as tourist collectives that "perceive" the same place, on the other active tourism region does not even exist anymore or maybe, even in this case, there are as many as there are social groups that from time to time, driven by different motivations, are going to abandon their habitual residence for a short time" (page 15). Thus, the Author, sharing the view of Schimdt di Friedberg (2005), underlines the role of Tourism Geographer not simply as a compiler of tourist guides or lists of tourism resources but his professionalism goes far beyond «mountains, rivers, capitals».

Object of Chapter 2 "Tourism and Economic Geography" are the typically economic effects of tourism movement; analysis therefore includes tourist demand and offer, circulation and distribution of capital, migration, employment and vocational training. Finally, particular attention is given to the issue of territorial integration and international cooperation. Territorial cohesion policies look to tourism in two ways: either as an object of a cohesion policy or as an instrument of that policy.

Geographic-political themes are dealt with in third chapter. Bagnoli still considers useful to highlight the difference between Political Geography, the branch of geographic science that studies how the constituted power administers the territory and, in the case of volume, its tourism policies, from Geopolitics that is the study of all aspects of State territorial organization and their effects on tourist flows. He concludes that in both cases, political action has had and is of considerable importance on tourism. Examination of European and national tourism policies is interesting to understand the development path of a strategic economic sector such as tourism. In particular, the text focuses on Local Tourist Systems and the Strategic Development Plan of Tourism, both Italian strategies to promote new proposals in the tourism offer (in the first case) and new lines in tourism policies, in the second case.

Chapter 4, "Tourism and Human geography", focuses on three key ideas: identity and travel motivation; types of tourism; new tourism approach. If the traditional geography of tourism identified tourists through two characteristics: leisure and visit over twenty-four hours outside their usual residence, contemporary geography of tourism needs to broaden horizons of analysis. With the evolution of geographic thought in postmodern sense, much more attentive to reality as perceived by the subjects, the meaning of tourists is also charged with identifying meanings: rather than objectively studying what a tourist is, today the research investigates who feels like a tourist or who society feels like a tourist. The concept of tourism makes sense only in societies that recognize it as a specific activity, name it and attribute certain traits to it (Volli, 1993). Profiling of the different travel motivations, is also an opportunity to deepen a closely related geographical theme, such as environmental protection, the authenticity of cultures, the self-awareness of the tourist, the deterritorialization, the tourist stereotypes, the *dépaysement* and so on.

After having briefly recalled the evolution of contemporary geographic thought from determinism to sustainable development, Chapter 5 is dedicated to the impact of tourism activities on the territory. The Author prefers an optimistic vision according to which the choices of local communities can combine, in tourism sector, environmental protection and durable economic development, through, for example, creation of naturalist areas, literary parks, ecomuseums and brands of quality.

Finally, the construction of the tourist imitations of a region is outlined in last chapter "Tourism and Image". In order for a locality to become a tourist destination it is necessary to take care of accessibility, receptivity, safety, but, underlines Bagnoli, it is also essential to create a suitable image for the complex current market. After a careful examination of multiple tools useful for the dissemination of an adequate tourist image, the Author introduces several interesting case studies that help readers to understand the transformation process of a tourist destination.

In conclusion, it represents a valuable scientific contribution and a precious book to understand how best to value one of the most important economic resources of a country.