

The initial capital needed is not always large	There is a lack of professionalism
The product is composite	The businesses are often family run, small or medium-size
Makes product differentiation possible	The economic benefits do not remain in the country, but they go to foreign companies
Few barriers for the entry of new companies exist	Art cities may have uncontrolled urban expansion
Develops tourism-cultural infrastructure	
Promotes programmes to improve cultural heritage	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Search for local identity and sharing of cultures	Loss of cultural identity
Opening up towards new cultures and ways of life	Negative environmental and social impact
Protection of the environment and the local culture	Congestion and destruction
Importance of investment in training and education	Poor knowledge of the local social and cultural reality
Need for managerial and administrative know-how	Lack of motivation from the workers who have poor career opportunities
Importance of planning of cultural events	Excess of exploitation
Start-up and expansion of a tourism market	
High domestic and international competition	
Originality of the cultural and local heritage	
Stimulation of the partnership between cultural institutions and private sector	

Table 2. The city of Alexandria

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
The port activities and textile, food, chemical, petrochemical and paper industries	Loss of cultural focal point at international level
The commercial and financial activities	New urban processes of unregulated construction and real-estate speculation
The building of the great library, with its 3 million visitors per year, has had a positive effect on the cultural tourism sector	Heavy buildings taking over the European eighteenth and nineteenth-century centre
The city has not completely lost its cosmopolitan character	Extreme contrast between social classes and Lack of basic services
The refounding of the library has already led to redevelopment of the nearby neighbourhoods and the restoration of important national heritage monuments	The city centre is like a simulacrum of the past
Foreign cultural centres in Alexandria, the Anna Lindh Foundation, Centre Francais, the British Council, the Goethe Institute, the American Centre in Alexandria, as well as the Russian, Greek, Spanish, Swedish and the Italian centre ANPIE	Few cultural events of international prominence
	Ramleh, the middle-class garden city, is being threatened by blocks of flats with high population density
	Overdevelopment along the coast of Alexandria in parallel with urban sprawl, and damage to the landscape as well as environmental pollution

	Demolition of the San Stefano Hotel on the Corniche and the widening of the road to make 5 lanes up to the real estate of Montazath
OPPORTUNITY	THREATS
Revitalisation of the city centre. The new cultural life around the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the library of the Mediterranean World, with a capacity of about 5 million volumes, with the Workshop Centre and the Egyptian Association for B.A Friends	Today the administration is more interested only in the seafront
The development of the East Port, an avant-garde project for the waterfront with its value in terms of territorial and cultural development, economic and productive	The negative environmental of the coast and lake, of the ground, water and air
The expansion of the port with modernisation and improvement of the urban and extra-urban transport services, a suburban underground to the west, creation of a new underground station, Cairo Station	The development of large business centres, shopping malls, and leisure facilities in the outskirts to the east and south
The start of an archaeological excavation campaign in the urban area	Alex West, three new mixed residential areas, on the north bank of Lake Maryut, 23 km from the centre, on land reclaimed from the lake
Alexandria has been named capital of Arab tourism for 2010	The overdevelopment of tourism, Porto Marina Resort on the coast above El Alamein, spreading for 20 km into the desert
The restoration and expansion of the El Dekehila port	
The free zones linked to the port and relative industrialisation systems	
The development of the road and railway networks for greater ease of access and traffic flow	
The planning of the high-speed Cairo-Alexandria train	
The project for a new airport 43 km from Alexandria	

CHANGES IN TOURISM DEMAND BETWEEN VIETNAM AND CHINA

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Abstract

It is increasingly important to measure the changes in demand between markets. Many tourism organizations are attempting to determine who their future competitors are, and which markets are impacting upon their own arrivals market. The Vietnam market seems to be a potential competitor for China. This assumption is based upon the facts that both countries cover similar climate zones, have increasingly similar service standards and have similar attractions, but that Vietnam is emerging and new. A direct comparison of arrival numbers indicates that China arrivals growth is stabilizing and that growth to Vietnam is dynamic. However, it remains unclear that the growth in tourist arrivals to Vietnam is at the expense of China.

Dynamic shift-share analysis can be used to measure competitive changes in arrivals demand.

The method used is relatively simple to calculate and uses data that is generally available for a wide range of markets. In a competitive world market this method is capable of testing the competitive effect between two markets. As such it provides a useful industry tool for the analysis of markets, and in particular the relative significance of competing markets. It can be used over time, and provide a longitudinal tool for the measurement of market change, to evaluate potential market challenges as they develop, and to provide insight into future problems and prospects.

Data on international visitor arrivals are obtained from the Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, Madrid: World Tourism Organization. The regions in this study include Americas, Asia, Australasia, Europe and Others (including Africa and the Middle East). Data are the arrivals by country of residence from abroad, at different periods (1995, 2000 and 2005). In this study we have used shift share analysis to investigate relative changes in tourist arrivals to Vietnam between two periods, 1995-2000 and 2000-2005. The results show over time Vietnam has experienced an increasing growth rate in tourist arrivals from main world regions compared to China.

Key words: Vietnam, China, Tourist Arrivals, Dynamic Shift-Share Analysis, Tourism Trade.

INTRODUCTION

The WTO estimates that in 1950 only 15 countries received about 25 million international tourists, but in 2000 over 70 countries received more than one million tourists per annum. Noticeably China (PRC) is now ranking amongst the top 15 tourism destinations. Tourism is a form of trade whereby arrivals are exports and departures are imports. Because of the huge value of tourism trade worldwide, the balance of trade between any two regions is important in terms of the overall redistribution of wealth.

Currently, tourism is a major source of transferring funds between regions. Hence, the larger the flow, the extent of the balance could change for any region. Also as tourism is the main source of transferring funds from the developed to the underdeveloped countries, and the growth in Asian tourism imports places the region a more favorable position worldwide.

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) Panel of Tourism experts, world tourism has grown positively overall in 2004, as travel confidence returned robustly from earlier terror and health threats. The world economy bounced back extraordinarily and experienced the highest growth since 1976, despite all the earlier shocks such as September 11 and SARS. The WTO Madrid Report also shows that in absolute terms international tourist arrivals in 2004 worldwide increased by 69 million (WTO, Madrid 2005). The largest gain was the Southeast Asian countries (over 33 million), nearly half of all new international arrivals. Europe came second with an increase of 16 million new arrivals, followed by the Americas with 11 million. Lower gains were recorded for the Middle East and Africa, with growth of 6 million and 2 million international arrivals respectively. The stabilizing of growth is also supported by the findings of Turner and Witt (2008), whereby it is shown that tourist arrivals into the larger Asia Pacific region was stable at 6% for the period 2004 to 2006.

Growth in arrivals to Vietnam jumped sharply in 2004 to an annual average growth rate of 20.6%. In 2005 this growth was maintained at 18.4% and declined in 2006 to 3.3%. Over the same period, China was already one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. In 2003, the total number of inbound tourists was 91.66 million, which was about ten times of the number in 1980. In the same year, China's ranking for tourism earners of foreign currency was among the world's top five. The WTO has also made a forecast that China's tourism industry will become the world's top tourism leader by 2020. The latest information from China's State Administration of Statistics (<http://www.cnto.org/chinastats.asp>, September 4th 2009), showed the total number of tourist arrivals in 2006 totaled 124.94 million, including 22.21 million foreigners, up by nearly 5% from the same period in 2005.

However, it is not possible to say that growth in Vietnam is at the expense of China (and vice versa) by simply examining arrival numbers. However, this is a significant question because of the huge value of tourism trade worldwide, the balance of trade between these two growth regions is important in terms of the overall redistribution of wealth. Hence, the larger the flow, the extent of the balance could change for any region. As a service industry the main advantage is the high requirement for employment of the local workforce. Consequently, any shifts in market share are potentially very significant for individual countries.

The objective of this study is to determine the directions of the shift share between these two international tourism high-growth neighbouring countries - Vietnam and China; and also the likely medium term balance of tourism trade based upon tourism arrivals expenditure. The implications of the findings will be discussed in relation to the benefits and losses for each country and the methodology is useful for the comparison of other country pairs.

DATA SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

Data on international visitor arrivals were obtained from the Yearbook of Tourism Statistics (Annuaire des statistiques du tourisme / Anuario de estadísticas del turismo), Madrid: World Tourism Organization. The regions in this study include Americas, Asia, Australasia, Europe and Others (including Africa region and the Middle East). Data are the arrivals by country of residence from abroad, at different periods (1995, 2000 and 2005).

The world regions are defined here along similar lines to WTO definitions:

- Africa - Continental Africa excluding Egypt and Libya.
- Americas - Central North and South Americas.

- Asia - North, South and Southeast Asia including Afghanistan.
- Australasia - Australia and New Zealand.
- Europe - North, South, East and West Europe including Russia and Turkey.
- Middle East - East Mediterranean, Levant, Arab countries including Libya and Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Due to lack of data and the small number of arrivals to Vietnam from Africa and the Middle East, these two regions have been grouped together under the category labelled as Africa/Middle East.

SHIFT SHARE METHODOLOGY

Shift share analysis has been chosen to decompose the growth in each region over the time period 1995 to 2000 and then to 2005. This simple descriptive technique is useful for isolating trends in regional performance, and for supplying data to policy makers to interpret changes in the industrial structure of their economies (Wilson and Mei, 1999). Basically, shift share analysis decomposes into three effects: national growth effect known as share effect, industry mix effect, and competitive effect (Barff and Knight, 1988).

Wilson and Mei (1999) also argued that most studies using shift share methods are quite static in the way that they only consider changes at the beginning and the end of the period. This static approach does not take into account the continuous changes in the industry mix effect.

Additionally, the static approach also does not take into account the interaction between the industry mix and the competitive effect. According to Toh, Khan and Lim (2004), the Esteban-Marquillas extension to the shift share approach allows for interaction by adding a fourth effect called the allocation effect into the model. Hence, a dynamic shift approach has been devised to allow for the adjustment of continuous changes in the industry mix component. However, the main criticism of the Esteban-Marquillas extension raised by Stokes (1974) was that this Esteban-Marquillas shift share extension can lose the property of region-to-region additivity, as well as the aggregation-disaggregation symmetry. Stokes' criticism was later disproved by Haynes and Machunda (1987) and this study confirmed that the Esteban-Marquillas shift share extension has an analytical superiority over the traditional shift share formulation.

In this analysis the work of Toh, Khan and Lim (2004) is used (incorporating the Esteban-Marquillas extension) to investigate the net shifts in international arrivals between Vietnam and China from 1995 to 2005 inclusive. In this way the shift share approach measures the change over time to international tourist arrivals to Vietnam, benchmarked against China. This Esteban-Marquillas shift share extension assumes that visitor arrivals growth to Vietnam is due to the area wide effect, country mix effect, competitive effect and allocation effect. The net shift in tourist arrivals for each region is also measured to determine whether Vietnam is competitively superior to its benchmark area of China.

Mathematically, the Esteban-Marquillas shift share extension is expressed as follows:

$$T1AB - T0AB = T0AB (\beta \text{ ALL}) + T0AB (\beta A - \beta \text{ ALL}) + HAB (\gamma AB - \beta A) + (T0AB - HAB) (\gamma AB - \beta A)$$

Where, $T1AB - T0AB$ = Absolute growth of visitor arrivals from region A to Vietnam from the beginning to the end of the period.

$T0AB (\beta \text{ ALL})$ = Area wide effect.

$T0AB (\beta A - \beta \text{ ALL})$ = Country mix effect.

$HAB (\gamma AB - \beta A)$ = Competitive effect.

$(T0AB - HAB) (\gamma AB - \beta A)$ = Allocation effect.

The area wide effect measures the growth effect, and is the product of the visitor arrivals from region A to Vietnam at the beginning of the period multiplied by the growth rate in arrivals from all regions to Vietnam and China collectively.

The country mix effect measures the changing importance over time of any other region A relative to the rest of the originating regions, for the benchmark destination area (which is Vietnam in this case). If the country mix effect is positive, it means that Vietnam is increasingly specializing in attracting visitor arrivals from other originating regions A, since the growth rate from region A is greater than from other regions.

The competitive effect measures the performance of Vietnam relative to China, to determine whether Vietnam has a competitive advantage over China in region A. The allocation effect takes into account the interaction between the country mix effect and the competitive effect. This effect determines if Vietnam is specialized in attracting visitors from any other region A relative to China. A full detail of the shift share formula is given in the appendix.

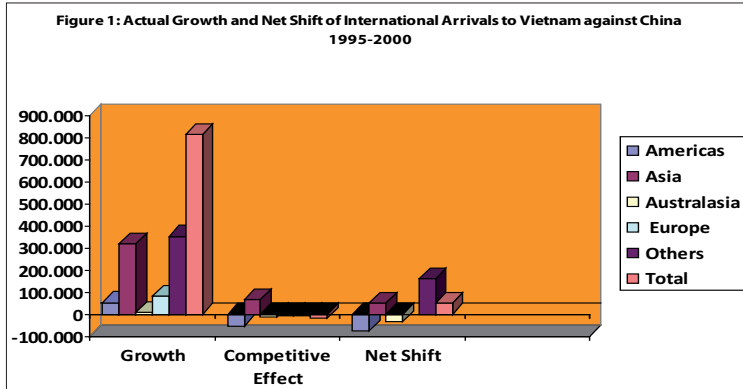
SHIFT SHARE ANALYSIS FOR VIETNAM VERSUS CHINA

The shift share analysis of growth in international arrivals to Vietnam from 1995-2000 and 2000-2005 is based on four regions, namely: Americas, Asia, Australasia, Europe and Others (including the Africa region and the Middle East). Tables 1 and 2 summarize the actual growth in international tourist arrivals to Vietnam and examine the area wide effect, country mix effect, competitive effect and allocation effect, as well as measuring the net shift in tourism arrivals.

Table 1 shift-share analysis of growth in international arrivals to vietnam, 1995-2000

From	Actual Growth	Area Wide Effect	Net Shift	Country Mix Effect	Competitive Effect	AllocationEffect
Americas	52,623	130,945	-78,322	-8,812	-52,711	-16,799
Asia	319,170	268,632	50,538	8,139	63,928	-21,529
Australasia	9,551	44,245	-34,694	-6,115	-15,641	-12,938
Europe	80,461	132,067	-51,606	-25,250	-6,933	-19,423
Others	352,580	190,736	161,844	203,213	-7,896	-33,473
Total	814,385	766,625	47,760	171,175	-19,253	-104,162

Between 1995 and 2000, tourist arrivals from other Asian countries (not including China) and other regions (such as Africa and the Middle East) to Vietnam recorded a positive net shift (50,538 and 161,844 respectively) compared to China. The Americas, Australasia and Europe are the three main regions for which Vietnam lost ground to China, with negative net shifts of 78,322 Americans, 34,694 Australasian and 51,606 European tourist arrivals (refer to Figure 1).



In addition to an overall actual growth, Asia's total arrivals enjoyed a positive overall area wide (or regional effect). This was due largely to the overwhelming Asian arrivals to Vietnam during 1995 and 2000. However, Vietnam recorded a negative country mix effect in Americas, Australasia and Europe regions. This means that Vietnam was decreasingly specializing in attracting tourists from these three regions, because the growth rate from, say the Americas was less than the rest of the originating regions.

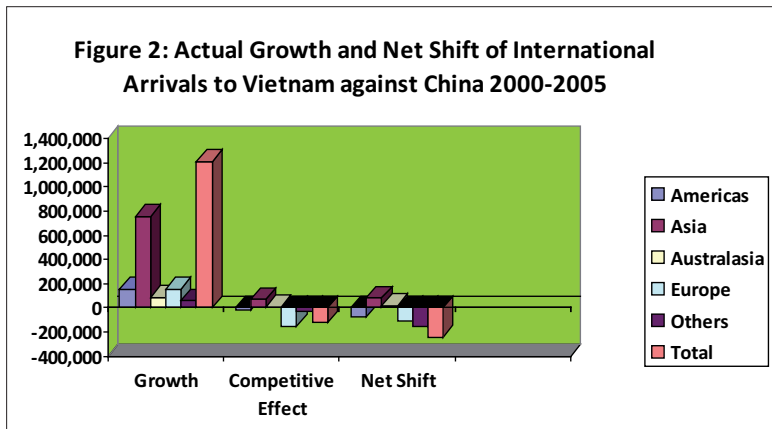
With the competitive effect, a negative effect of 19,253 tourists confirmed that Vietnam had a competitive disadvantage over China in travel especially from Americas, Australasia, Europe and others. Finally, the allocation effect takes into account the interaction between the country mix effect and competitive effect. Negative allocation effects in all regions mean that Vietnam was not specialized in attracting tourists from these regions, where China had a very good competitive advantage during this period.

Table 2 shows that the absolute growth of arrivals from all regions to Vietnam over the period of 2000 to 2005 was 1,208,327 (more than the growth from the 1995 to 2000 period). This growth explains why the area wide effect contributed a total of 1,454,747 tourist arrivals. In comparison to China, there was an overall negative net shift of 246,420 (difference between the actual growth and the area wide effect) and that Vietnam was competitively inferior to China in all regions except for Australasia (refer to Figure 2).

Table 2 shift-share analysis of growth in international arrivals to vietnam, 2000-2005

From	Actual Growth	Area Wide Effect	Net Shift	Country Mix Effect	Competitive Effect	Allocation Effect
Americas	155,297	233,345	-78,048	-53,756	-19,075	-5,217
Asia	754,469	674,778	79,682	22,926	70,353	-13,597
Australasia	85,780	70,906	14,874	8,983	3,602	2,289
Europe	154,602	261,800	-107,198	6,915	-153,758	39,645
Others	58,188	213,918	-155,730	-6,071	-27,265	-122,394
Total	1,208,327	1,454,747	-246,420	-21,003	-126,143	-99,274

It is alarming to note that when comparing the previous period (1995-2000) to the second period (2000-2005), the competitive effect increased from 19,253 to 126,143 (Tables 1 and 2). This implies that Vietnam is increasingly less competitive in attracting tourist arrivals over China especially from the Europe market during this five-year period of 2000-2005. However, it is noted that Vietnam gained more ground in competition for tourists from the Americas over the same period.



CONCLUSION

In this study shift share analysis is used to investigate relative changes in tourist arrivals to Vietnam between two periods, 1995-2000 and 2000-2005. The results show over time Vietnam has experienced an increasing growth rate in tourist arrivals from main world regions compared to China.

Vietnam's positive net shift during the five-year period of 1995-2000 implies that Vietnam has been superior to China in attracting international tourists with respect to Asia, Africa and the Middle East. In the same period, in relation to the competitive effect, Vietnam has increasingly specialized in arrivals from Asia, and has experienced a competitive advantage in the Asia region over China. However, for tourist arrivals from other western regions such as the Americas, Australasia and Europe, Vietnam have been increasingly inferior to China. Between 2000 and 2005, in comparison to China, there is a negative net shift of 246,420 (difference between the actual growth and the area wide effect) and that Vietnam was competitively inferior to China in all regions except Asia and Australasia.

Consequently, there is substance in the argument that Vietnam is emerging as a major competitor for China. However, this is currently constrained by local international flows. Should more local country flow shift in the near future, possibly prompted by increasing discount air travel in the region, Vietnam could very seriously impact upon tourist arrivals growth in China.

Finally, it is noted that the shift share arrivals do not reflect expenditure. To some extent this is known for some individual countries. For example, Australia ranks about 18th in the number of tourist arrivals worldwide but about 7th in tourism receipts. It is assumed here that the aggregation of nations into regions overcomes odd expenditure patterns. Hence, further research may also be possible to examine a similar data pattern based upon receipts as opposed to tourist arrival numbers, to more closely examine the question of the balance of trade, and the capacity of tourism growth to provide a degree of export advantage to these developed regions.

APPENDIX

SHIFT-SHARE FORMULATION

$$T1AB - T0AB = T0AB (\beta \text{ ALL}) + T0AB (\beta A - \beta \text{ ALL}) + HAB (\gamma AB - \beta A) + (T0AB - HAB) (\gamma AB - \beta A)$$

Where:

$T0AB (\beta \text{ ALL})$ = Area Wide Effect

$T0AB (\beta A - \beta \text{ ALL})$ = Country Mix Effect

$HAB (\gamma AB - \beta A)$ = Competitive Effect

$(T0AB - HAB) (\gamma AB - \beta A)$ = Allocation Effect

γAB = growth rate in tourist arrivals from region A to destination B

$\beta \text{ ALL}$ = growth rate in tourist arrivals from all regions to the benchmark area

βA = growth rate in tourist arrivals from region A to the benchmark area

HAB = expected tourist arrivals from region A to destination B

The terms in the equations are defined as:

$T1AB$ = tourist arrivals from region A to destination B at t1 (end of the period)

$T0AB$ = tourist arrivals from region A to destination B at t0 (beginning of the period)

$T0B$ = tourist arrivals from all regions to destination B at t0

$T0A$ -AREA = tourist arrivals from region A to the benchmark area at t0

$T1 A$ -AREA = tourist arrivals from region A to the benchmark area at t1

$T0AREA$ = tourist arrivals from all regions to the benchmark area at t0

$T1AREA$ = tourist arrivals from all regions to the benchmark area at t1

Note: In this context, region A refers to the origin region excluding Vietnam and China. Benchmark area refers to both Vietnam and China collectively. Destination B refers to Vietnam.

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ECOTOURISM: A NEW TYPOLOGY OF TOURISM. CHARACTERISTICS AND POTENTIALITY OF DEVELOPMENT IN ITALY

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Abstract

This research focus attention, at first on the ideologies of ecotourism that has become one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry, with a growing annually by 10-15% worldwide.

The ideology of ecotourism advocates a style of life that postpones to two current historians of experiential and existential tourism; the importance of the return to the nature, that gives us insight into our impacts as human beings and also a greater appreciation of our own natural habitat, or better of the authenticity of human existence.

In this moment, ecotourism market shows the following elements:

1. A segment in rapid growth. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) esteems that ecotourism represents the 2-4% of the whole world tourist market and since 1990 showed an annual growth around 20% in the international tourism markets (The International Ecotourism Society, www.ecotourism.org).
2. In many Developing Countries with a consolidated ecotouristic industry, the segment has seen a strong growth of the number of visitors accompanied by an increase of the revenue produced by these last ones.
3. Many Developing Countries, with tropical virgins ecosystems, uncontaminated beaches, archaeological rests, want to strengthen this market of niche and many Countries that are investing in the ecotourism as means to attract foreign capitals with the purpose to relaunch their economic development.
4. In the moment in which local communities have acquired the awareness of the economic benefits of the ecotourism, they are motivated to protect their natural resources and to adopt the due behaviors (the motto is: "Wildlife pays so wildlife stays").
5. Ecotourism constitutes a valid element of push to the formation and environmental guardianship and interpretation of the nature. It is strongly directed to the preservation and guardianship of the protected areas and it needs public and private funds to such end.

One of the peculiarities of ecotourism is to be able of leaving in the local economies up to the 95% of the sustained tourist expense, contrarily from what happens to the other typologies of tourism organized, in which 80% of the expenses sustained by the tourist are distributed among companies, hotel and other tourist operators (Honey, TIES, 2004).

In the second part of the search the Italian ecotourism market is analyzed, in the prevailing form of tourism nature. Ecotourism in Italy is remarkable with the ability of annual growth, that reaches 20%, while the annual growth of the traditional tourism is equal to 3,4%. Particularly, the frequenters are underlined, the typology of their titles of study, their distribution for receptive structures, the origin, the preferred activities, etc..

Besides it is underlined, that the possibilities of growing, of the Italian ecotouristic offer, are very elevated and with a series of opportunity, nevertheless some points of weakness and threats have been perceived. Insofar it needs to intervene with timeliness for an enjoyable offer, that makes system to reach in an organic form the market with clear formality, in information and transparency in a relationship quality/price, otherwise the tourist flows will be addressed toward destinations, that in great measure, they will have satisfied such conditions.

In conclusion, this contribute wants:

- a) To spread the values of ecotourism, giving a recognizable economic value to the nature without destroying it.
- b) To develop a tourism that strengthens the protection of the nature and the culture, that creates less environmental impacts.
- c) To give some possibilities to refine the tourism of traditional nature.
- d) To address local authorities and private operators of this sector and to underline the most emergent problems in Italian market in comparison to the other markets.

Key words: Ecotourism Nature Tourism Experiential Tourism

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this research is to explore the methodologies that define the phenomenon of ecotourism, in strong expansion at the beginning of the 21st century in the world and its current and potential development in Italy from the point of view of the demand and of offer. In the first part, indeed, it analyses ideologies of Ecotourism, which supports a lifestyle that refers to two next historical tourism experiential and existential; the importance of a return to nature and the authenticity of human existence.

Ecotourism is rooted in the profession of faith for attention to the nature and for the conservation and the subordination to it by man.

Eco-tourism, is a type of tourism practiced in natural areas relatively unimpeded, with the main purpose of studying and observing them. Ecotourism is a market, which in recent years has had a very sustained trend of growth; it is linked to the nature, in the context of which has shown signs of growth not at all negligible in relation to the new needs of the tourist, who wishes to avoid crowded places, to abandon the traditional stereotypes of tourism and give freedom to own instinct living more closely nature.

In summary this contribute wants to disseminate the values of ecotourism, developing a tourism that reinforces the protection of nature and culture, creating less environmental impacts and to highlight the most emerging issues in Italian market ecotourism compared with other markets.

ECOTOURISM IDEOLOGIES

The dizzying growth of tourism in general has, for some time, opened a debate for a process of revision of tourism development based on the principles of sustainability. It is this the sense of the United Nations that proclaimed the 2002 International Year of Ecotourism. in Quebec (Canada). The declaration of Quebec and the international discussions have reiterated growing importance of the development of models and sustainable practices in tourism; in particular ecological tourism has advocated to be effective in the well-being, the health of body and spirit and of the environment and also to develop and alleviate the poverty of the countries of South of the world. The declaration of Quebec contains a wide boards of interests for one subject of growing importance not only as a sector of considerable potential for economic development, but also as a powerful instrument for the conservation of the natural environment provided that it is properly managed. The ecological tourism in this perspective is characterized by some distinctive features: 1) It aims to the promotion of sustainable development of the tourism sector; 2) it does not determine the degradation or depletion of resources; 3) it focuses attention on the intrinsic value of natural resources in response to a philosophy that more *biocentrica* than anthropocentric; 4) it requires the ecotourist to accept the environment in its reality without expecting to change or adapt it to its at his convenience; 5) it is based on direct meeting with the environment and is based on a direct cognitive dimension (Tuohino, Hynonen, 2001).

Ecotourism has become the typology of the fastest growing in the sector of the tourism industry, growing annually by 10-15 worldwide (Miller, 2007).

Ecotourism focuses on experiences in natural areas, promoting preservation, appreciation and understanding of environmental and cultural. According to the Australian Ecotourism Association: "Ecotourism is ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding appreciation and conservation".

One definition of ecotourism is more shared by the International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 1990) which states: Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environmental and improves the well-being of local people. In this definition, ecotourism has a strong program and also describes a set of desired results, concerning: a) environmental and socio-cultural compatibility as a fundamental condition; b) the contribution of benefits to the environment protection projects and for local people (participation, creation and wide distribution of income); c) an increase in environmental awareness and greater acceptance of nature conservation as land use and adequate pay.

The Ecotourism Association Italy, Italian referent of the International Ecotourism Society, proposes a definition expressed in the following terms: a responsible way to travel in natural areas, preserving the environment in which the local host community is directly involved in its development and management of the destination and where the largest part of the benefits stay within the communities.

Ecotourism (or ecological tourism) is travel pristine and usually in protected areas that strive to be low environment impact. It provides funds for conservation and for the economic development of local communities. Furthermore, it fosters respect for different cultures and for human rights (Honey, 2008). The various definitions of ecotourism want to open up new perspectives of life, which are measured with visible behaviors of the subjects, with a set of continuous practices to improve the environment, based on four principles that are: 1) minimal environmental impact; 2) maximum respect for the host culture, 3) substantial socioeconomic benefits to local populations, 4) maximum benefit for leisure guests. It is a philosophy of the vacation traveler who lives for non-consumerism, but to discover and understand their most authentic places, people, with their heritage and traditions.

At present, the ecotourism market shows the following elements:

1. A fast-growing segment. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimates that ecotourism accounts for 2-4% of world tourism market and a potential annual growth of 10-12%.
2. In many developing countries with well-established ecotourism industry, the segment has seen strong growth in visitor numbers accompanied by an increase in revenues generated by them.
3. Many developing countries with tropical ecosystems virgin, pristine beaches, archaeological remains will be to develop a niche market and many countries are investing in ecotourism as a means to attract foreign capital to boost their economic development.
4. When the communities have become aware the economic benefits of ecotourism, they are motivated to protect their natural resources and to take the necessary behavior (that is the motto: If Wildlife you pay so wildlife stays).
5. Eco-tourism is an important element of training and environmental protection and interpretation of nature. It is strongly oriented to the preservation and protection of sheltered areas and requires public and private funds for this purpose.

One of the features of ecotourism is to be able to leave the local economy up to 95% of tourism expenditure supported, unlikeliness from what happens in other types of tourism organizations, where 80% of expenditure by tourists is distributed between airlines, hotels and other tour operators (Honey, TIES, 2004).

The principles and practices of Ecotourism are:

1. to minimize negative environmental and social impacts in the destinations;
2. to build environmental and cultural awareness and respect;
3. to provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts;

4. to provide direct financial benefits for conservation ;
5. to provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people;
6. to raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate;
7. to reduce CO₂ footprint.

Further Ecotourism Definitions

We may have come across some of the following terms that closely related to ecotourism :

Agri-tourism

This type of tourism is gathering strong support from small communities as rural people have realized the benefits of sustainable development brought about by similar forms of "green tourism". Visitors have the opportunity to work in the fields alongside real farmers and wade knee-deep in the sea with fishermen hauling in their nets.

Nature Tourism

This interlinks with ecotourism however it is concentrated more on enjoying and respecting the wildlife and the environment without the educational element present in ecotourism.

Responsible Travel

Responsible travel was launched in 2001, in Brighton (England) for travellers, who want more real and authentic holidays, that also benefit environment and local people.

This concept is the same as with ecotourism as tourists and businesses alike are expected to act responsibly in regards to the environment and local people of the destination. It focuses on the responsibility of the traveler to consider any possible negative impacts caused by their presence.

ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The philosophy that should characterize ecotourism is to minimize, and if it possible to avoid any negative impact on the area visited; to contribute to the conservation of natural areas and sustainable development of the whole area and local communities, and ultimately, to create widespread awareness for environmental protection among the indigenous population and for tourists. In essence, rather than a concept or a definition, it is an aspiration. Ecotourism holidays disdain too typical, and standardized, thus favoring the development of local economies present in protected areas in general and it puts a strong brake on the depopulation of mountainous areas.

Turning to the concept of sustainable tourism, it is shown that it expresses the plan to ensure the profitability of a tourist resort in the longer term, with the goal of ecological, socio-cultural and economic life compatibility. Tourism activities generate costs and benefits, through their relationships with local resources (Di Paolo 2004). What it is necessary, it is that there is a positive balance divided equally between the users of today and tomorrow, according to the inter time approach. Sustainable tourism means to make tourism in a way in which is on a long term the basis ecologically bearable, economically viable and ethically and socially fair and justified (Boccella, Paziienza, Rinaldi 2008).

It follows that ecotourism and sustainable tourism are not the same thing. Ecotourism refers to a segment of the tourism industry, instead of sustainable tourism refers to the sustainability criteria to be applied to all forms and tourist activities. Indeed, all tourism activities, whatever their motivations are - vacations, business conferences, congresses or fairs, health, adventure and ecotourism course - must be sustainable.

Sustainability in tourism relates at all services, infrastructure, management and planning that must meet the criteria of environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability (Di Paolo 2004).

Ecotourism is a type of tourism that focuses on experiences in natural areas, promoting preservation, appreciation and environmental and cultural understanding.

The concept of eco-tourism contains tourist, searching situations, places where man has made few or no changes and that during the "consumption" of the tourist experience, he is fulfilled by the feeling of experiencing unique and unforgettable. His attitude towards environment is effectively aimed at its preservation, in the awareness of the issues and dangers placed on it.

Finally, in general, the reasons that differ ecotourists from tourists can be represented as follows:

- uncrowded location;
- rich areas of wilderness remote;
- to know the nature and animal life (feel the sensation of living in close contact with nature);
- to learn about the natives and their cultures;
- to feel the spirit of the community (making new life experiences, especially if it is city people)
- to see and observe plants and animals
- physical challenges (runner tourist, trekking, canoeing, river rafting, tree climbing).

ECOTOURISM IN ITALY

According to the definitions specified above, eco-tourism in Italy is: a) tourism nature, namely observation, appreciation and conservation of nature; b) tourism of nature protection and welfare of local populations.

Eco-tourism as nature tourism has as main reasons to consider the holiday as opportunities to observe and enjoy nature and traditional culture, namely to tune with nature and local community.

In ecotourism as a second approach there is a mindset, an attitude, an act of operators and users to respect nature as a necessary condition to ensure over time the profitability of tourism and the community from tourism itself.

In Italy the first approach prevails.

Eco-tourism in Italy seen as nature tourism represents about 20% of the tourist market of arrivals, but it is important that the ability of annual growth up to 20%, while the annual growth rate of traditional tourism is equal to 3,2%. In Italy we show a large number of small players (associations, agencies, NGOs) who are engaging in ecotourism both as promoters of outgoing than incoming. In Italy there is a spirit of ecotourism, especially in parks, farm and tourism school (5° Rapporto Ecotur, 2007).

DEMAND ON ECOTOURISM

On the segments most representative of ecotourism on the basis of analysis by the Italian tour operators, who operate on this type of travel, we encounter an absolute uniqueness in identifying "Parks and protected areas." The other segments are agri-tourism, rural tourism, mountain, sea and marine reserves and lake tourism.

Regarding agri-tourism, it is not just a form of accommodation facilities: it represents the need to escape from the stressful life of the city and places standardized and standardized holiday, with a contact with nature and the outdoors, the desire for healthy and genuine eating and curiosity about our country roots (Leoni, Morelli, (2006)).

Regarding the preferred ecotourism activities, mainly Italian, on holiday in parks and protected areas, we collect sport for 54%, including hiking, which is practiced in the mountains, trekking mountain - bike, cross country skiing, horseback riding, canoeing, and climbing. Then there is relax with 24.3%. Furthermore, there is the rediscovery of ancient traditions for 12% and to follow the traditional recipes of the gastronomy for 10%. Finally, it notes the interest in history, culture, nature museums, etc.. included in

the category “others” that are recording a value of 4.4% in 2006 (5° Rapporto Ecotur, 2007). Instead of, with reference to expectations, the first exposed itself recognizes in the “living contact with nature,” followed by “frequenting places not crowded,” “sports and outdoor activities,” the “desire for freedom,” the possibility to benefit of “reasonably prices”.

Regarding the target on nature tourism, it is noted that the age group that most requires it, it is between 31 and 60, years, which reaches 50%, followed by a large distance range from 16 to 0 years, reaching 22%. Followed by over 60, which are 15% and finally there’s the band “ up to 15 years, which represents 13%. (6° Rapporto Ecotur, 2008).

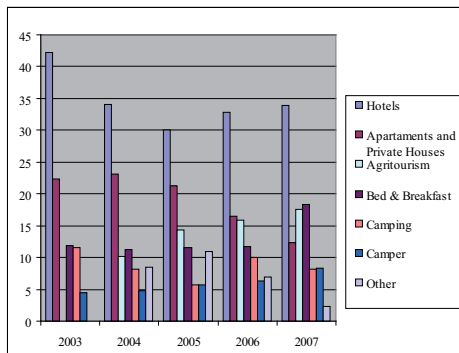
According to the survey conducted among national tour operators, who sell in their catalogs nature tourism, it has been observed in years 2005-2006 that the “youth” are those that registered the largest index of preference (39.9%), followed by “families” (37.4%) and from “over65”, fell from 24.7% to 22.7%, confirming once again that nature tourism is wanted by all the people.

With reference to the level of education possessed, purchasers of nature tourism have a high school leaving certificate (diploma) in 46% of cases, a degree in 37.2% and 16.8% have elementary and junior secondary-school leaving certificate. Percentages, that in last years represent a slight change of address: graduates decrease and the number of those who have lower levels of education grow, dispelling the belief that nature tourism is a type of elite.

COLLECTIVE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS USED BY ECOTOURIST. ORIGIN AND AVERAGE OVERNIGHT STAYS

Interesting are the data on the accommodation facilities used by nature tourists. Hotels and pensions are, in 2007, the favorite solutions with 33.9%, a slight increase over 2006, followed by the Bed & Breakfast reaching 18.3%. Even the farmhouses marked a steady growth reaching 17.6%. At considerable distance below the apartments/ houses, 12.4%, considerably lower than 2005 (21.6%), Finally, the campsites follow with 9.2% in 2007 and remained constant with 2006, the camper with 6, 3% and the voice “other” which value in 2007 was 2.3%, much lower level than 2006, equivalent to 8%. (it includes guest houses, lodges, hostels, boarding schools, educational centres, etc.) (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Accommodation facilities utilized by ecotourists from 2003 to 2007. (per cent values)



Regarding the origin of ecotourists, the survey shows that they come predominantly from the region with 46.1% in 2007. It is a value tending to decrease compared to previous years. Ecotourists of national origin are 36.1%, those ones of European origin make up about 13.8%, and the rest of the world, 4%. (6° Rapporto Ecotur 2008).

With regard to the length of stay permanence of ecotourism in Parks and Protected Areas are found the following characteristics. In protected areas exists the phenomenon off, that is not staying overnight, which is the category most frequently with 40.1% in 2007, it is followed that one with "1 Day" with 12.1%, and that one of the weekend with 17% and even that one of the "3 days" with 9.6% and from "1 week" with 13.8%, and finally, that one with "more than a week" with 7.3%. This diversity of results derives from the fact that tourists of the national parks come far away compared to the tourists of regional parks and other protected areas. Often they come from European countries and from countries outside Europe who are staying for a longer time.

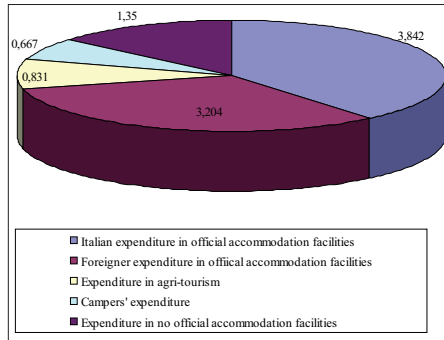
OVERNIGHT STAYS IN ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES AND COMPOSITION OF THE EXPENDITURE ON ECOTOURISM.

Italian Ecotourism (tourism nature) takes place primarily in national and regional parks and protected areas. The overnight stays of eco tourists in accommodation facilities in national and regional official parks (there are included 23 national parks and 139 regional parks) are recognized by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), while in protected areas different from parks attendances are not recorded by ISTAT and they are estimated using appropriate procedures. The overnight stays in the hotels in 2007 totaled 59,593,788 and those ones of complementary accommodation facilities to 27,682,966, resulting in 87,276,754 (with an average night stays of 4.48 days). Adding an estimate of overnight stays in the accommodation facilities in protected areas unlike from national and regional parks that can be quantified in 8,640,399 night stays in 2007, we have determined 95,917,153 of overnight stays in total in the official resort accommodations of protected areas in general, which we may divide, after having weighted on the basis of official night stays recorded in national and regional parks, Italian overnight stays 59.756386 (62.3%) and 36,160,767 of foreign night stays (37.7%). Compared to 2006, the composition of official overnight stays in hospitality establishments protected areas of Italians than foreigners was in line with the previous year.

For a quantitative dimension of the expenditure of Italian ecotourism (nature tourism), we consider the daily per capita household expenditure for 2007 that is € 64.3 (the value was determined on the basis of national index consumer prices for expenditure chapter "accommodation services and refreshments" and for the foreigner ecotourism is considered the daily expenditure of 88.61 euros (estimates UIC).

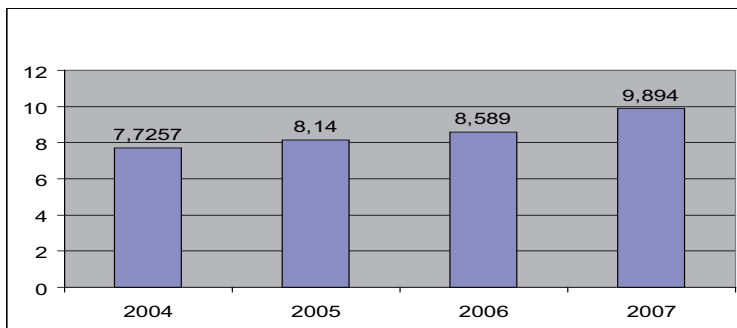
Expenditure for the national component in the accommodation facilities totaled 3,842.335.619 billion in 2007, while expenditure for foreign component in the official accommodation is 3.204 billions of euros. Sales in the farm sector amounts to 831 millions of euros: Campers' expenditure amount to 667 million of euros. Finally, we must add the expenditure of Italian night stays amounted to 7,116,614 and foreign 12.905933 in the exercises not officially classified, based on a parameter 19.16% of the night stays in official hospitality establishments (6° Rapporto Ecotur 2008) which total is 1,350 billion of euros (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Composition of the expenditure on nature tourism in 2007 (absolute values in billions of euro)



The overnight stays above specified, on the basis of previous calculations, have generated a total expenditure of 9,894 billion of euros, up by 0.49% compared to 2006 (Figure 4) as to say that nature tourism is alone over 10% of total expenditure of Italian tourism. The decreasing performance in growth between 2006 and 2007, it has been due to the persistent and deep economic crisis involving not only Italy but the world-wide, determining a lot of changes in people's behavior, that has have a remarkable continuity in 2008. by financial crises in the world. Referring to the analysis for 2009, a light increasing of nature tourism expenditure is expected.

Figure 4 Expenditures on ecotourism in Italia (in billions of euro)



OFFERING ECOTOURISM IN ITALY: A SWOT ANALYSIS

Ecotourism (nature tourism) in Italy, is a rapidly changing and expanding segment and represents an important opportunity for tourism development.

The SWOT analysis made of incoming international markets is a useful tool to detect the product ecotourism (nature tourism) in Italy's strengths consist of a wide range that has many possibilities to combine with all other types of tourism, but at also revealed issues that do not allow to take him to the stage of take off. Indeed, a survey carried out in other major markets of incoming international highlights for Italy's strengths and opportunities, but also problems that are represented by periods of weakness and threats summarized in Schedule 1 below (ENIT - Agenzia Nazionale Italiana del Turismo):

Scheme 1 Swot Analysis of ecotourism (nature tourism) in Italy on international markets

Strengths	Weaknesses
Diversified and unique natural heritage	Lack of unified promotion and marketing
Nature tourism integrated with other tourism and in particular with the cultural	Crisis and informational material, specific guidance
Mild climate and pleasant	Uncompetitive prices and value for quality/price unsatisfactory
Growing interest in the environment and contact with nature	Lack packages All Inclusive
Food and wine pairing with	Mobility difficulties in the territory
Easy to reach Italy by neighboring European countries	
Growing interest of the actors for nature tourism (ecotourism)	
Opportunities	Threats
Growing interest in the environment and contact with nature	Offers at attractive prices in other destinations
A growing search of well-being	Growing research interest throw destinations of Eastern European and non European (Korea, China)
Low cost flights throw smaller towns growing	Internet use for many competitive offerings and marketing
Websites promoting	Negative news on environment and ecology in Italy
Expansion of tourism for the elderly	
Opportunity to exploit the protected marine park	
Growing demand for alternative accommodation (farm holidays, B&B)	
Growing interest for operators for nature tourism (ecotourism)	

There are several initiatives that can be taken both on the demand side to increase visibility and market of product nature, and to the supply side, such as photo contests on the flora and fauna, event sponsorship, *ad hoc* campaigns.

CONCLUSIONS

Ecotourism is generally characterized by the high propensity of subjects care about the environment, who love the outdoors and practice active holiday.

Ecotourist, psychologically, feels the need to radically break away from the urbanized society and from hectic pace of life and repetitive and he is driven by the desire to discover wild places by the presence of modern man to discover himself and to be renewed..

It was found in the study that young people and students are an important target group, attracted by the outdoor life, sport, but also motivated by the desire to interact with others and cultivate hobbies, unworkable in an urban environment. There is an audience of tourists aged between 30 and over 55 and children.

With respect to ecotourism in Italy, in the prevalent form of nature tourism, there is a growing segment higher than consolidated kinds of tourism (sun, sea, cultural itineraries, etc.). The possibilities for placement Italian ecotourism offer are very high and with a range of opportunities, but we have been detected weaknesses and threats, based on lack of an organic form of the market with clear, defined, with performances in mobility on the territory and a quality/price is not satisfactory.

So we must act immediately to offer usable, making system to achieve an organic form in the market

with clear rules, in information, and transparent in the relation (bearing) between quality/price, or else the tourist flows will be directed to a greater extent through destinations, in which will be satisfied these conditions.

In conclusion, on the one hand, this paper will: highlight that ecotourism is connected with the nature, atmosphere, but also with culture, the history of the man, the ethnic groups for the interest turned to the communities implied. And still, ecotourism attests on four principles which are: 1) minimal environmental impact; 2) maximum respect for the accommodating cultures; 3) substantial socio-economic benefits to the local populations; 4) maximum benefit for the free time of the hosts. On the other hand this paper emphasizes a several emerging issues in Italian ecotourism market compared on international markets.

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**CREATING AN ITINERARY THROUGH THE CAVE DWELLINGS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.
GUIDELINES FOR TRANSFORMING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN AREA INTO A TOURIST ATTRACTION**

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Abstract

The underground of the Mediterranean has a pervasive role within the metropolitan scenario because although it may include many features of the construction of contemporary cities as is usually the case worldwide, the experience of the city is characterised mainly by the development of the aboveground areas. In fact, if the underground and its caves have always been fundamental, worldwide, for the initial steps towards urban developments, in several interior areas this relationship is much longer standing.

Common social, cultural, economic and climatic problems aboveground have been dealt with and solved through the construction of underground cities and the potentialities of the underground have proved to be an ultimate solution: the underground being the place chosen for urban settlement.

The idea of *negative culture building* became very popular in order to resolve problems caused by common social and climatic conditions. It carried very individual connotations, being much more influenced by the subterranean location than by the local aboveground town planning approach. The dominant local building know-how was reconsidered and new building rules were adopted to accommodate seasonal climatic effects, offering safety for inhabitants and storage of perishable supplies.

The underground had an important role in many phases of urban settlement and underground spaces and networks were developed to face natural and human adversities, to practice forbidden religions, and deal with scarcity of resources in internal areas.

The approach from the urban and environmental history point of view in the first part of this paper considers these sites as an interpretative key of a common attitude to urban development. In fact, we would like to promote the development of these locations in order to enlighten tourists as to the Mediterranean urban experience, and thus dismiss the stereotype, which considers the underground and the aboveground worlds to be as opposite as dark and light.

Approaching the question from the point of view of the history of architecture,, Southern Spain, interior France, the desert of Tunisia, Syria and the remarkable Cappadocia define the perfect interpretative context for the study of the Italian site in an abandoned, rural area near Matera, straddling the regions of Puglia and Basilicata.

All the listed examples of caved cities demonstrate the ability to create spaces, basing the architectural experience on appropriate management. In all the analysed cases great attention was paid to the balance of natural elements, respecting the pre-existing environments, in order to create sustainable urban development in areas lacking in resources.

1 The first part is by Roberta Varriale, the second is by Antonio Bertini.

On the basis of this acknowledgement, the second part of this paper depicts the transformation from a theoretical model to a proposal for a tourist route.

The study will plan an ideal tour; a cruise in the Mediterranean integrated with several itineraries and visits to different localities, in order to give tourists the opportunity to visit places full of history, culture and natural assets, merging with the local hospitality and culture.

After having composed the framework of areas, the case study will focus on the area of the Sassi of Matera and its Gravine. This internal area of Southern Italy is a good example of the above-mentioned cultural identity, it is rich in history, art, architecture, and it is a perfect example of an inland Mediterranean habitat. Moreover, the exploitation for urban purposes shows the aptitude to organize spaces into a system capable of both respecting local culture and creating an economy, but which are not yet a popular tourist attraction.

In conclusion, the present paper will study the process which led to the cultural inclination to the use of underground spaces of these areas for urban purposes as an expression of their urban development style. This approach is effective for developing tourism in the internal areas by involving both the local residents and public management. It constitutes a new perspective to help reduce the economic gap between coastal and internal areas.

Key words: underground caved cities, sustainability, identity, internal areas

Part one

From an underground attitude to an urban identity

In contrast to the predominant role in the construction of the Mediterranean identity, many of the underground sites are nowadays a great distance from the most popular tourist routes.

This paper aims at using an initial analysis of these sites, followed by an approach to urban and environmental history as an interpretative key of a common urban attitude in order to design itinerary across the Mediterranean countries by which the areas in question become both the physical and cultural means of communication. In fact,, we would like to promote the development of these locations in order to enlighten tourists as to the Mediterranean urban experience, and thus dismiss the stereotype which considers the underground and the aboveground worlds to be as opposite as dark and light.

This research is based on the use of an approach known as *verticalization of urban structural processes*, in which *verticalization* is part of a process of conscious acquisition of the role played by specific underground characteristics in the development of the aboveground spaces (Varriale 2009).

Examples listed in this paper are organised according to the urban needs, the underground location solved in a functional way, and the physical demonstration that the underground is not a *non space* (Augé 1992). It is a fact that several social, cultural, economic and climatic aboveground problems have been dealt with and solved through the construction of underground cities. However, while the underground experience is very common, in the following presentation the places were selected because of the prevalent role played by the underground its influence in the configuration of the urban context, its use, its destination and its anthropological connotation in the Mediterranean area, and this role has been considered as a possible starting point for new tourist itineraries.

In fact, if nowadays underground space is often used to configure future urban scenarios, i. e. a place where aboveground conflicts are solved and transformed into solutions (Durmisevic 1999), in the past, the relationship between aboveground and underground was not always unidirectional. In the following pages, the attention will be focused on two underground urban problems solved by the use of underground spaces: the adoption of natural resources and the management of social conflicts.

Natural resources, conflicts, underground solutions in the Mediterranean

In economic geography, the study of the start-up process in urbanization has been strongly influenced by

the role played by attraction factors which influenced the original settlements. According to this interpretation, the initial phases of urban localization are linked to the existence of factors such as natural resources, climatic conditions, and many others. In this scenario, the underground has always played a fundamental role as the source of several natural resources (water, minerals, building stones, caves to be used as natural shelters, etc.). If the appropriation of underground resources in an urban context is a common worldwide experience, there are a few cases where the relationship between underground and urban settlement has been extreme. In these cases, the underground has not only influenced urban settlement, but it has been at the core of the urban development process itself.

The villages of Matmata in Tunisia, underground cities in Cappadocia, Turkey, the Old Town of Ghadamès in Libya and Matera's "Sassi" or stones in Italy are sites where the underground is itself the place actually chosen for urban settlement. The idea of *negative culture building* became very popular in the Mediterranean area in order to face and solve common adverse social and climatic conditions.

The villages of Matmata were originally constructed in the 18th Century as a protection from Moslem attacks and the harsh desert elements: vertical caves were built by man into tuff soil. These were usually formed in a circle with doors and rooms dug into the vertical walls (Ouezdou 2001). The internal organization and the construction of specialised functions reflect the passage from seasonal nomadic refuges to sedentary urbanization (Picture 1).

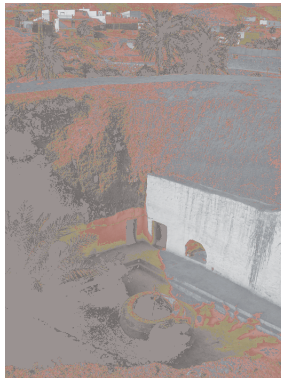
These *underground homes* consist of a courtyard, 5 to 10 metres deep from which a labyrinth of small rooms for sleeping, grain storage and family gatherings are interconnected by narrow passageways, the entrance, generally a sloping tunnel, could be closed in case of danger. The villages of Matmata, located 450 Kilometres South of Tunis, were used as, the setting for the 4th episode of Star Wars, in 1977, and since that event have become a popular Tunisian tourist attraction nevertheless, inexplicably, it is not yet on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The Old Town of Ghadamès in Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1986 but is still not a popular tourist site. The location, known as *the pearl of the desert*, is one of the oldest pre-Saharan cities and is a perfect example of a traditional settlement based on a vertical division of functions. Under open terraces for women's use a floor for the family is to be found, below which the ground floor is used to store supplies; underground was used for networks of passageways.

In Cappadocia, an eastern region of Turkey, the dramatic tuff landscape was shaped into subterranean cities: Ozkonak, Kaymakli, Derinkuyu, Mazi, Ozluce, Tatlarin and the spectacular Goreme (Picture 2).

Picture 1. Underground. Matmata village

Picture 1. Underground. Matmata village



Picture taken by Antonio Bertini® (1993)