



Turismo Patrimonial e Socioambiental

Giovanna Adriana Tavares Gomes
(Organizadora)

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APRESENTAÇÃO

O E-book promove reflexões por meio dos artigos acerca de questões epistemológicas do fenômeno do turismo contemporâneo considerando o turismo patrimonial e socioambiental como protagonistas destes estudos. O Fenômeno do turismo sempre foi tratado como típico da sociedade capitalista pós-revolução industrial e que apresenta interligações espaciais e territoriais transformadoras passíveis de análises. A atividade do turismo vem sofrendo significativas mudanças da forma como vem sendo construída e também de como vem sendo consumida por turistas. O perfil desse consumidor busca novas formas de vivenciar as experiências, de forma autônoma ou tradicional. A experiência cultural aliada a hospitalidade, economia criativa, sustentabilidade e uso de tecnologias tem imenso valor para esse “novo turista” denominado “híbrido”. Sua busca por experiências autênticas envolvendo a organização e planejamento das empresas que operam produtos com foco nos serviços de base local dos destinos turísticos visitados, faz com que agências de viagens, operadoras, agências emissivas ou agências receptoras se empenhem na organização e execução dessas experiências. Outro ponto significativo dentro deste contexto são os Sistemas de Informações Geográficas (SIG) considerados pelos turistas muito importante por possuírem ferramentas fundamentais no auxílio do planejamento e gestão da viagem, pois conectam turistas aos destinos de interesse georeferenciando os atrativos, auxiliando nas rotas, roteiros e mapas que podem ser acessados facilmente por inúmeras plataformas digitais. Ressalto ainda nesta publicação a importância de um olhar reflexivo, antropológico, sociológico, humanista, civilizatório e mais cuidadoso no que se refere as transformações, fenômenos sociais, patrimoniais, socioambientais, culturais e econômicos ocasionados pela prática da atividade turística em comunidades como: Kalunga Engenho II e Prudentópolis.

Giovanna Adriana Tavares Gomes

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INCIDENCES FROM TOURISM AGENCIES ON TOURIST SPACE FLUIDITY

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ABSTRACT: The study aims to verify the tourism agencies performance on the fluidity of tourist space. The reason for this study is the lack of research that links the element Firms to tourist space fluidity given its substantiality as a dynamic element for the sector. The paper has considered the core aspects of tourist space and its fluidity to compose theoretic connections, as well as the role of tourism agencies in the tourism sector. Regarding with the methodological aspects, the present study presents theoretical nature and has adopted the inductive method to subsidize central analyzes. Related to the problem approach, the work has a qualitative character due to the nature of data collected, research instruments and theoretical assumptions that guide the investigation.

Its objective is descriptive for recording and describing the observed facts without interfering in them. About technical procedures, bibliographical research was carried based on previously published material. The main aspects highlighted from the results were two interfaces of Firms performance in tourist space, a positive and a negative one. At first, the positive one refers to the business dynamization of diverse infrastructure equipment and superstructure directly or indirectly associated with the tourism sector generating economic and social benefits. It is also important to mention, the potential to lead consumption of cultural tourism products and destinations, promoting knowledge about locality and authentic experiences. Moreover, the strengthening of networks in the promotion and commercialization of lodging, products, and locally based services is another positive aspect. Secondly, the negative one, which refers to the uniformity of tourist packages promoted by tourism agencies, limited to a pre-established space and time. Furthermore, it is suggested further perspectives on the analysis of Firms and their impacts on the fluidity of tourist space, as well as practical approaches such as case studies that attest them.

KEYWORDS: Tourism agencies; Tourist space fluidity.

INCIDÊNCIAS DAS AGÊNCIAS DE TURISMO NA FLUIDEZ DO ESPAÇO TURÍSTICO

RESUMO: O estudo tem como objetivo verificar a influência das agências de turismo na fluidez do espaço turístico. A incipiência de estudos que vinculem o elemento Firms à fluidez do espaço turístico é a motivação deste estudo, dada sua substancialidade como elemento dinâmico para o setor. Para compor as conexões teóricas são considerados os principais aspectos do espaço turístico e o constructo de fluidez do espaço, bem como o papel das agências de turismo. Em relação aos aspectos metodológicos, o presente estudo apresenta caráter teórico e adota o método indutivo para direcionar o estudo. Quanto à abordagem ao problema, este trabalho possui caráter qualitativo devido à natureza dos dados coletados, aos instrumentos de pesquisa e pressupostos teóricos que norteiam a investigação. Seu objetivo é descritivo por registrar e descrever os fatos observados sem interferir neles. Quanto aos procedimentos técnicos, a pesquisa bibliográfica foi realizada com base em material previamente publicado. Os principais aspectos observados a partir dos resultados foram duas interfaces da atuação das Firms no espaço turístico, uma positiva e uma negativa. Primeiro a interface de natureza positiva, como a dinamização dos negócios de diversos equipamentos de infraestrutura e superestrutura associados direta ou indiretamente ao setor turístico; o potencial de direcionar o consumo de produtos e destinos turísticos culturais, promovendo conhecimento sobre a realidade local e experiências culturais autênticas; e o fortalecimento de redes a partir da atuação das agências de viagem na promoção e comercialização de produtos e serviços de base local. Segundo, a interface negativa, que diz respeito ao caráter uniformizante que as agências de turismo podem promover na comercialização de pacotes turísticos limitados a um espaço e tempo pré-estabelecidos. Ademais, sugerem-se novas análises sobre as Firms e seus impactos sobre a fluidez do espaço turístico, bem como abordagens práticas que os atestem.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: agências de turismo; fluidez do espaço turístico.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Due to the spatial incidences from tourism and its significant economic impact, the sciences, especially geography, had started to notice the tourist phenomenon after the post-war in the 1960s, right when tourism began to show up a significant economic potential.

In this context, to understand the tourist space it is essential to pay attention to the concept of geographic space based on the consideration of five elements suggested by Santos (2006): men, firms, institutions, infrastructure, and ecological environment.

Between the five components of tourist space proposed by Milton Santos (2006), the present study suggests the analysis of the Firms element, composed by tourism agencies and travel operators as responsible for a significant set of articulations that

provides dynamic to the tourist space (SILVA, 2012).

Therefore, the objective of the present study is to verify the tourism agencies influences in the tourist space fluidity. To do so, it is necessary to understand the construct of tourism agencies, the concept of tourist space fluidity and identify the links between tourism agencies and the tourist space fluidity.

The reason for this study is the lack of research that links the element Firms (tourism agencies and travel operators) to tourist space fluidity given its substantiality as a dynamic element for the sector. It is important to emphasize that the work does not intend to finish the discussion about the proposed theme.

Regarding with the methodological aspects, the present study presents theoretical nature and has adopted the inductive method to subsidize central analyzes. Related to the problem approach, this work has a qualitative character due to the nature of data collected, research instruments and theoretical assumptions that guide the investigation. Its objective is descriptive for recording and describing the observed facts without interfering in them.

About technical procedures, bibliographical research was carried based on previously published material, especially from authors like Carlos (1996), Santos (2006), Fratucci (2009), Macedo and Silva (2016), and so forth. Furthermore, the study considers the concepts of tourist space fluidity and tourism agencies, also approaches the incidences of tourism agencies.

2 | THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TOURIST SPACE

Based on the assumption from Geographic Space's category, geography is defined by the study of the relationship between society and nature (COSTA; RIBEIRO; TAVARES, 2004), this way tourism as a socioeconomic phenomenon, consumer and space transformer could not lack the geography's contributions to defining tourist space.

The geography science uses three approaches to study tourism, the production of tourist space from economic and political perspectives; the space lived by locals and the spatial representations of tourist areas (*ibidem*). It is also taken into consideration conceptual elements such as landscape, territory, and place - targets of tourism appropriation – to understand tourist space (ALVES; SALES, 2010).

The landscape implies a unit space that brings together social and natural, subjectivity and objectivity, spatiality and temporality, cultural and material, real and symbolic production. Its elements must be analyzed together to understand the complexity of its functionality (GERVASI, 2013). Regard to the concept of landscape, Santos (2006) understands the issue as

. . . a set of forms that, at a given moment, express the inheritances that represent the successive localized relations between man and nature . . . the landscape is only a portion of the sectional configuration that can be encompassed by the vision . . . it is given as a set of real-concrete objects (SANTOS, 2006, p.103).

Regarding territory, it is defined in geography as spatial similarities such as local identity, symbolic, political, economic, cultural or environmental aspects (Alves; Sales, 2010). The authors Staniski, Kundlatsch and Pirehowski (2014) understand the place as where people find personal references, value systems, affective ties, and individual meanings, responsible for generating different ways of perceiving the space. This way, the concept of tourist space is conceived by geography from several approaches.

The tourist activity is dynamic and has in space, its primary object of consumption. Tourism, based on the consumption of space, acts in its (re) production in a way that induces the social, cultural and spatial localities reconfiguration (SILVA, 2012, p. 59).

Based on this assertion, it is possible to conjecture that the tourist space consists of any space appropriated by tourism, and so subjected to positive or negative modifications. In this context, geographical studies on tourism are essential for the analysis of spatial planning and social production.

Anjos (2001) considers tourist space as a system of natural-artificialized objects for creating artificialities to meet demand desires. From this connotation, it would not be contradictory to consider tourism as a space transformer by taking into account the geographic space's impact on tourism.

Tourism manifests itself through various forms, modalities, and scales in the same territory. It is subordinated by the actions of private initiative, government, and even the small organized communities; all this movement occurs synchronously in the same state, region or country. Its reproduction speed is above most human activities, not respecting borders or territorial limits, feeding, almost without scruples, the most varied sectors of human knowledge, especially those related to technological and informational advances (FRATUCCI, 2009, p. 121).

Tourist space is mentioned in literature in various ways as center, nucleus, area or place. Furthermore, it should be noticed that the tourist phenomenon materializes through the establishment of its fixes - attractions, equipment, services and support infrastructure (FRATUCCI, 2009).

The author Milton Santos (2006) suggests that tourist space is composed of fixes and flows. While the fixes are the space elements fixed in a place, the flows would be the dynamic interaction between that causes modification of meaning and value.

Therefore, it is possible to conceive the fixes as infrastructure, superstructure and tourist attractions in general, in other words, the elements that make up the offer; while the flows consist in the elements that make up tourist demand such as tourists and their interaction with fixes.

In contemporary times, the touristification process is a significant spatial reordering factor because it marks the re-definition of fixes, divides space into different territories and generates a new structure of flows and interrelationships (FRATUCCI, 2009).

Thus, the existence of elements to articulate tourist space is fundamental to boost the relationship between fixes and flows (SILVA, 2012).

This articulation and dynamization between the constituent elements of tourist space generate space fluidity, which means interconnection, movement and articulate relationships that originate networks (FRATUCCI, 2009). In this context, the objective of this study is to understand how the element Firms (tourism agencies and travel operators) influence tourist flows.

2.1 TOURISM AGENCIES: MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

Regarding the concept of tourism agencies, the WTO (2001) establishes that tourism agencies or travel agencies are intermediary companies that provide services to travelers, playing an important role in the tourist marketing channel.

According to the General Tourism Law No. 11,771 of September 17, 2008, which regulates Tourism Agencies, these correspond to “Art. 27: . . . a legal entity that performs the economic activity of paid intermediation between suppliers and consumers of tourist services or provides them directly”.

Its designations include offer and tickets sale, lodging, tickets for events or exhibitions, educational and professional programs, rental of vehicles and other resources, as long as the agency is registered in all necessary organs (BRASIL, 2008).

In 2017, the number of travel agencies throughout Brazil reached a total of 32,211 branches. Most of them concentrated in the Southeast region (51.76%), followed by the Northeast with 19.28%, the South with 15.83%, the Midwest with 8.25% and the North with 4.88% (SEBRAE, 2017, p.19).

Tourism agencies play a crucial role in the tourism market, especially when it comes to making products available to consumers (tourists), as well as disseminating information on tourist destinations, promoting, encouraging and influencing tourist flows around the world (SILVA, 2016, p. 26).

In agreement with this assertion, the authors Macedo and Silva (2016), Pitta (2017) postulate that travel agencies are components of the tourist distribution system and part of the supply chain and services. In this context, the role of operators is to mediate tourist services between demands and provide tourist assistance to travelers or tourists (BRASIL, 2014).

The difference between them is that tourism agencies sell in large scale. Therefore, their price is lower, while the specialized agencies, in turn, adopt the strategy of differentiation and customization of services (MACEDO; SILVA, 2016).

The globalization and the development of technologies have generated changes throughout the market, especially in the tourism sector which has sought to adapt to current demands. In this circumstance, tourism agencies witness a series of transformations in their systems and management processes.

The development of IT has inevitably had a significant effect on the operation, structure, and strategy of tourism companies around the world. The costs of communication and operation are reduced with new technologies, increasing interactivity, efficiency, productivity and competitiveness (MORAES, 2007, p.168).

Such transformations represent obstacles for tourism agencies because information technology provides direct contact between suppliers and consumers, implying in the process of disintermediation of tourism services.

It can be observed from the study of Faucao and Galvão (2012) that the competitiveness globalization to which local destinations are exposed, the variety of offered products, the intense competition, and market dynamics that generate constant transformations require travel agencies to develop a high level of adaptation and quality in the provision of services. This is the context from which virtual tourism agencies emerge.

Virtual companies can be interpreted as a new way of organizing business activities, where different and independent “partners” explore a business opportunity through the establishment of cooperation. Thus, virtuality is the “ability to offer consumers a complete product or service while the company itself has only a portion of the competence, the other necessary skills must be acquired through cooperation (PEREIRA; MAIA, 2002, p.8).”

In this context, e-commerce and information technologies have provided a boost for cooperation between several partners on a global scope, which exceeds the limits of time and distance among partners and customers increasing the range of virtual companies (PEREIRA; MAIA, 2002).

This way, information and communication technologies are faced either as a challenging competitor to the innovation capacity of tourism agencies or as a tool to support the operationalization of their services.

It is quite true that travel agents, as well as business people from the industry, must be vigilant and monitor the development of staff qualification to stay and grow together with the market; as well as knowing its demand to offer the right products. Thus, besides conquering the client, the travel agent passes from one air ticket issue to a travel consultant, dream maker (FAUCAO; GALVÃO, 2012, p.2).

Therefore, the intangibility of tourism products and services lies on the need for investment in the service quality as a determinant factor for travel agencies performance. Hence, the provision of quality products added to excellence in service is the path for each agency to achieve differentiation.

When discussing service quality, it is not possible to apart it from the personal dimension it is immersed (FALCAO; GALVÃO, 2012), that is the reason why service attendance must be linked to customer needs and expectations. Hence, satisfied customers multiply their satisfaction with good recommendations to their friends, as well as dissatisfied clients negatively propagate the company’s image, which implies a

loss of customers.

La característica más marcada del ámbito organizacional es la velocidad con que circula la información impulsada por el proceso de globalización, la disponibilidad de nuevas tecnologías de la información y consumidores cada vez más exigentes. Esto determina que las organizaciones tengan respuestas rápidas para la nueva sociedad del conocimiento (ANJOS et al., 2011, p. 723).

The authors Falcao and Galvão (2012) share the same understanding by observing that the owners of travel agency attitude in dealing only with the physical and operational structure without getting feedback from their costumers, make it hard to assure the quality of services. This proposition highlights the importance of quality management tools in tourism agencies in order to guarantee feedback.

Tourism agents should be close to their customers before, during, and after their holiday, but especially when unpredicted things happen. A tourism agency should add value to a trip or holiday, and should understand that planning a holiday is not reduced only to destinations; it is mostly about the customer (BUTNARU; BORDEIANU, 2012, p. 54).

Even facing such technological advances, as well as higher market competitiveness and the increase of self-guided tourists that organize their own trips through the Internet, it is evident that tourism agencies continue playing an essential role in the tourism sector as mediator and distributor of tourism products in a safe way, reducing the vulnerability of self-guided purchases on the internet.

Thus, despite significant development of technologies, tourism agencies are no less important players in the tourism sector due to their experience in shaping services to the profile of each consumer, and their ability to purchase products and services at market prices (BUTNARU; BORDEIANU, 2012).

3 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The tourism agency activities established by the General Tourism Law (BRASIL, 2008) include offer and sale of tickets, lodging, tickets for events or exhibitions, educational and professional programs, rental of vehicles, among others.

From these activities, it is possible to perceive the benefits from tourism agency services such as facilitation of tourist access to air tickets, reduction of time research and risks regarding the lodging security. Also, they guarantee tickets for events in a manageable time, the association of additional services to the tourist program, guarantee of vehicle rental, and so forth.

Looking at these practices, it is noticed a series of connections established by tourism agencies between demand and tourist offer. Therefore, it should be stated that one of the roles of tourism agencies in the tourist space fluidity is the business dynamization between infrastructure equipment associated directly or indirectly to the

tourism sector in a movement that generates economic and social benefits.

However, tourism, tourists and their impacts are clearly not evenly distributed over space or over time. Substantial differentiation occurs at a variety of international, regional and local scales (PAGE; HALL, 2014, p.1).

When considering place as a product of the relation between space and society, Carlos (1996) considers that tourism agencies contribute to the production of non-identity and non-place by selling the space. This way the space commercialized by the tourism industry loses its meaning and becomes space of emptiness, a center of made-up culture and loss of identification with native place.

Tourism is held by some observers to have a corrupting influence, brought about by the cheapening of artistic values or the or the commercialization of local traditions and customs; for example, the performance of religious or historical ceremonies on demand, out of context and for monetary reward. Other writers suggest tourists can have a strengthening and stimulating effect, either by reawakening interest in a society's own culture or simply by supporting the ballet, theatre or museums by their presence and entrance fees. (PEARCE, 1981, p.222)

Therefore, this assertion reinforces the need to analyze tourist space from the understanding of social relations with the destination and locals insertion in tourism enterprises (SOUZA; BAHL; KUSHANO, 2013).

Many studies of the social and cultural impact of tourist development were initially framed in terms of social and cultural costs but subsequent research has tended to be more balanced, acknowledging also the advantages and disadvantages which the expansion of tourism can bring to different societies and communities. A prime consideration in examining the social and cultural impact of tourist development is the nature and composition of the various groups involved and the relationships between these (PEARCE, 1981, p. 217).

Also, their emotions and their sense of identity have to be considered in a contrary path to the standardization of capitalism (SOUZA; BAHL; KUSHANO, 2013).

Firstly, the transitory nature of the relationships between hosts and guests, often coupled with language barriers, allows little opportunity for understanding to develop between the two groups. Secondly, the fact that the tourist is on holiday while the host is at work may heighten differences between the two, especially as holiday behaviour is generally much less restrained than usual. Thirdly, the seasonal nature of much tourism tends to be more disruptive than year-round activities, often creating the need for seasonal workers and exacerbating any tensions which might exist between the different groups (PEARCE, 1981, p. 217).

Given these observations, it is evident the incidence of tourism agencies and travel operators in the commercialization of tourist packages conditioned by scripts, attached to the speed of time and quantity of attractions, contributing to generate non-relation and non-knowledge, determining and pre-conceiving tourists' look (CARLOS,

1996).

This positioning is reassumed by Souza, Bahl and Kushano (2013) by postulating that the modern world has changed man's relations to space turning it into a commodity, a relation of non-identity production and spatial metamorphosis, the present without history nor cultural accumulation.

The demonstration effect noted earlier also encompasses daily patterns of consumption. Emulating the visitors, the residents may adopt new clothing styles, begin eating and drinking the imported food and beverages favoured by the tourist, or aspire to obtain the transistor radios, cameras and other material goods so casually displayed by him. Inability by the local to emulate the visitor, if so desired, may lead to a greater awareness of poverty, envy, frustration and consequent ill-will towards the visitor or to his compatriots who have been more successful. At the same time, fulfilment of the desire for more imported goods may have significant adverse economic effects (PEARCE, 1981, p. 223).

The authors Macedo and Silva (2016) in their case study illustrate the role played by tourism agencies and operators in leading consumer choice highlighting that a significant percentage of resort revenue is represented by the sale of these firms. This way, tour packages limited to a script end up ignoring the local identity and lifestyle.

Occupational changes may also stem from tourist development. Language can be a critical factor in determining which sectors of the population will profit from tourism. Many native spectacles, for example, are presented by expatriate entrepreneurs or organized by the better-educated indigenes, the so-called 'culture brokers' [...] if initially the demand for qualified staff exceeds local capabilities or if control is in the hands of external promoters, the better positions will be filled from outside, leaving the local residents the more menial tasks. Continuation of this policy will lead to frustration and perhaps hostility towards tourism (PEARCE, 1981, p. 219).

On the other hand, Fratucci (2009) understands tourist space as a place in which interactions and inter-relations between hosts and tourists occur in a reciprocal recognition to the existence of each other. Thus, it is inferred now that the touristification process assumes a new connotation in opposition to the conception of Carlos (1996), who conceives it in a purely predatory way.

All these implications are somehow related to the tourist space flows. Its holistic understanding requires an analysis of the systemic relations that occur beyond the tourist space itself, including the involvement of input supply systems, labor, among other implications.

Therefore, as a driving force of tourist flows, travel agencies contribute to local development and tourist massification, making it into standardized and superficial practices. At the same time, it is unarguable that agencies have the potential to lead cultural consumption guaranteeing actual experiences and knowledge about local reality and authentic culture.

Added to this, the networks mentioned by Fratucci (2009) should be strengthened by travel agencies influence in the promotion and commercialization of lodgings,

products, and local based services. This proposition converges with Roscoche (2014) who believes that tourism should promote a social and political response to the postmodern society in the process of territorial formation and planning. Otherwise, an unwanted process of socio-spatial segregation would begin, modifying the social structure.

Regarding with it, the approach of social processes and the insertion of those spaces into the world's network of tourist services (COSTA; RIBEIRO; TAVARES, 2004), as well as the touristification process is very broad and, at the same time, intrinsically linked to the Firms performance as a dynamizing element of tourist space.

Therefore, it justifies the importance of considering both positive and negative implications of the Firms performance in order to converge their performance to space organization and social justice (FRATUCCI, 2009).

4 | CONCLUSION

The study aims to verify the incidences of tourism agencies in the tourist space fluidity. To do so, theoretical connections were established about the construct of tourism agencies and the concept of tourist space fluidity in order to identify the relationship between the Firms element and tourist space fluidity.

The literature in the preceeding sections clearly show that tourism agencies impact in the tourist development in different ways. The study presents preliminary reflections about the performance of tourism agencies in the tourist space fluidity and its positive and negative implications in the spatial planning process. The main aspects highlighted from the theoretical approach were two interfaces of Firms performance in tourist space, a positive and a negative one.

At first, the positive one refers to the business dynamization of diverse infrastructure equipment and superstructure directly or indirectly associated with the tourism sector generating economic and social benefits.

It is also important to mention, the potential to lead consumption of cultural tourism products and destinations, promoting knowledge about the local reality and authentic experiences. Moreover, the strengthening of networks in the promotion and commercialization of lodging, products, and locally based services is another positive aspect.

Secondly, the prejudicial one, which refers to the uniformity of tourist packages promoted by tourism agencies, limited to a pre-established space and time. Also, conditioned to a bunch of attractions that have to be seen, generating pseudo-recognitions to visitors.

It is salutary mentioning that the work does not intend to end the discussions on the proposed theme. Instead, it aims to establish a theoretical reflexion about existing relations between the Firms elements and tourist space fluidity.

Furthermore, based on the premise that all research should encourage further

studies, it is suggested new perspectives on the examination of Firms and their impacts on the fluidity of tourist space, as well as practical approaches such as case studies that attest them.

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