



THE CIRCULATION OF WEALTH RESORT DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISTIC CAPITAL OF PLACE

Mathis Stock, Christophe Clivaz, Olivier Crevoisier, Leila Kebir and Stéphane Nahrath.

Authors

Mathis Stock, Christophe Clivaz, Olivier Crevoisier, Leila Kebir and Stéphane Nahrath.

Mathis Stock is a geographer at the University Institute Kurt Bösch (IUKB) in Sion (Switzerland). His current research interest is on mobility, the urban/tourism nexus and globalisation.

Christophe Clivaz is a political scientist at the IUKB. His current work focuses on issues of governance of tourist places and comparative analysis of tourism policies.

Olivier Crevoisier is a territorial economist. His research deals with territorial innovation models and with the effects of financialization on local economies and on urban development.

Dr Leïla Kebir is a lecturer specialised in regional and territorial development studies. She is particularly interested in innovation and local resource creation.

Stéphane Nahrath is full professor in political science and head of the tourism studies unit of the IUKB. His teachings, research and publications focus on the comparative analysis of environmental, land use and tourism policies, on urban governance, as well as on sustainable tourism.

ISSN : 1662-744X

La reproduction, transmission ou traduction de tout ou partie de cette publication est autorisée pour des activités à but non lucratif ou pour l'enseignement et la recherche.
Dans les autres cas, la permission de la MAPS est requise.



Contact:

MAPS - Maison d'analyse des processus sociaux
Faubourg de l'Hôpital 27
CH - 2000 Neuchâtel
Tél. +41 32 718 39 34
www2.unine.ch/maps
maps.info@unine.ch

Abstract

Resort development raises not only the question of rise and decline of tourism, but also of change of place qualities. How can the variability of resort development be further qualified and explained? We develop the concept of "touristic capital" of resorts in order to analyse the variable trajectories of resorts over time. It is suggested resorts engage a specific touristic capital within a global tourism field. The differential capacity of accumulating and engaging resources, governance, image, monetary incomes urban qualities and knowledge in the tourism field is seen as a significant aspect of resort development. The concept dwells on different disciplinary achievements within geography, economics, sociology and political science.

Keywords

Resort development;

Touristic capital;

Tourism field;

Touristification; urbanisation

Acknowledgment

The research project «**Between Abyss and Metamorphosis: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Development of Tourist Resorts** » is supported by the Swiss National Foundation for Scientific Research, research grant n° CR1111_135390 and the Canton of Wallis.

Main applicant: Mathis Stock (IUKB). Co-applicant: Christophe Clivaz (IUKB), Olivier Crevoisier (UNINE), Frédéric Darbellay (IUKB), Stéphane Nahrath (IUKB), Leila Kebir (IUKB).

INTRODUCTION

Resort development is one of the most widely researched subject matters within tourism studies. It has been subject to numerous empirical studies since geography started covering the topic in the 1930s. Several theoretical models have also been presented (see Pearce, 1987; Shaw & Williams, 2004). This development raises questions with regard to the process of a geographical place's touristification, i.e. transforming a place into a destination, as well as with regard to other processes that affect a constituted tourist resort. Tourist resorts have been described as a specific territorial form of geographical places whose mono-activity and smaller size and shape distinguish them, for example, from cities (Equipe MIT, 2002). Empirical observation shows that tourist resorts undergo very differentiated trajectories, during which decline and restructuring are the rule; some resorts are, however, able to maintain a tourism activity over a long period of time (Williams & Shaw, 1997; Agarwal, 2002; Butler, 2006; Equipe MIT, 2011).

The fundamental question is therefore: How do some resorts maintain tourism for a long period, whereas others evolve into places where tourism is no longer dominant, and still others totally relinquish tourism as an economic and a cultural activity? Tourist resorts have very differentiated trajectories and it is worth asking how these different trajectories can be described and explained. This requires a historical contextualisation, since some tourist resorts, such as Chamonix and Zermatt, have existed for more than 150 years, whereas others were only developed in the 1950s (Benidorm), and still others are being created (Equipe MIT, 2011). Moreover, certain resorts having stopped being resorts and have been transformed into cities, such as Brighton & Hove, Cannes, Atlantic City and Montreux, although they are still to some extent dependent on the tourism trade, while tourism totally stopped being an economic driver of the local system in previous resorts such as Malo-les-Bains and Tamaris (France).

The question raised does not solely address the rise and decline of tourism in a place, but also the evolution of the territorial form of resorts. Research has shown that resorts undergo an urbanisation process during which their initial features change radically (Mullins, 1991; Stock, 2001; Equipe MIT, 2002; Equipe MIT, 2011). Consequently, research that focuses only on the tourism activity in resorts and neglects their possible conversion into other territorial forms fails to answer the question raised above. Furthermore, since resorts are not isolated, they have been linked to the globalisation of tourism since 1800. Tourists, investors, politics, etc. construct, reconstruct and acknowledge the differences between tourist resorts and create a spatial hierarchy of resorts (Chadefaud, 1988).

In order to answer some of the questions raised above, we provide a conceptual work on the touristic capital of resorts in a tourism field in order to describe and explain the evolution of tourist resorts. This article aims at a theoretical exploration of the concept of resorts' touristic capital. The touristic capital concept describes the competitive advantages that a local territorial system accumulates and the engagement of those actors in the global tourism field with such advantages. We suggest that the touristic capital concept refers the capital of a geographical place, such as a resort, in which multiple actors engage to maintain its touristic quality, or to

enhance as well as maintain its relative position in the competitive tourist field. These advantages are relative to the capital of other resorts and also relative to multiple actors' judgements. Since tourists, markets, institutions, etc. are globalised, these advantages are played out in the global tourism field, i.e. a constellation expressing the power relationships between resorts. In order to maintain resorts' touristic qualities, these interdependencies need to shift the locus of power from a merely local system to the relationship between resorts as they occur in the global tourism field.

We will address the questions raised by suggesting the following steps: Firstly, a critical review is provided of existent models to show the strengths and limits of existing resort development explanations. Secondly, we will present a conceptual framework linking touristic places and their internal dynamics with the more global tourism field. This allows us to construct the touristic capital concept by identifying its relational character as an element of resorts in a global tourism field. Thirdly, we will examine the implications of this concept. The conclusion links touristic capital to the different empirically identified trajectories.

1. RESORT DEVELOPMENT: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THREE APPROACHES

Research on the evolution, transformation and restructuring of tourist resorts has flourished since the 1970s. Since Butler's (1980; 2006) study, this change has been framed as either a tourism area life-cycle with several stages, or as the restructuring of tourist resorts (Williams & Shaw, 1997; Agarwal, 2011). We, however, examine more historically driven attempts in order to understand how resorts undergo changes in their place identity (Corbett, 2011; Equipe MIT, 2011).

1.1 The life-cycle approach

Within a geographical approach to tourism, research on the development of tourist places is an important and well documented task. One of the best known is Butler's (1980) tourism area life-cycle model in which tourism is framed as a business cycle. This model is related to Christaller's (1955) attempt to understand tourist resorts as peripheral places where the social diffusion from elite to working-class people affects the resort development by turning an exceptional place into an ordinary place. In turn, Plog's (1974) model of the different tourists psychological characteristics that have affected the more elite or mass-tourism character of places is related to that of Christaller. Each of these models focuses on different aspects of a similar problem; we could call this the Christaller-Plog-Butler model. Besides the existing criticisms (see Butler, 2006), *three* critical points have to be highlighted:

Firstly, the life-cycle model fails to acknowledge that tourist resorts undergo a transformation of place quality during their development (Equipe MIT, 2002). It is crucial to not only analyse tourism *in* a place, but also the changing qualities *of* a tourist place (Stock, 2001). There may be an empirical measure of the decrease in tourism's relative importance *in* a place, but this does not necessarily mean that a *place* declines. There are various forms of transformation: from resorts to smaller villages, or from resorts to bigger urban nodes (Equipe MIT, 2002). Brighton is a case in point: The decrease in importance of the tourist trade has gone hand in hand with the development of a huge diversity of urban functions. Currently, Brighton is a regional metropolis, not a tourist resort (Stock, 2001).

Therefore, one problem of the above model is its sole focus on tourism activity, neglecting the socioeconomic dimensions of tourist places. Tourist places are also places for day trippers, work places for the local and regional population, as well as central places for different urban services (hospitals, schools, administrations, transport hubs, the service industry, etc.). To understand the development of tourist places, we have to develop an approach that understands the change in urban functions and place practices, and does not only focus on the touristic dimensions of places. In short, the life-cycle idea does not acknowledge tourist resorts' multiple trajectories during which seaside resorts become cities, cities become tourist places, resort complexes become urban places and seaside resorts develop into residence

communities (Equipe MIT, 2011). Empirically, there are numerous examples of the incremental – not exponential – development of resorts and the multiple crises affecting them. Specifically, crises due to a lack of tourists are more probable than crises due to an overload of tourists (Equipe MIT, 2002).

Furthermore, the focus on the local scale has led to the neglect of the specific global tourism regime within which the development of tourist places, such as seaside resorts and mountain centres, occurs. Consequently, we link the development of single resorts and the development of the entire global system of attractions (MacCannell, 2001) to form a global tourism field (Clivaz et al, 2011). Not only should individual resorts be examined, but the interdependencies of resorts should also be examined. This leads to several questions: How should we conceive of the development of tourist resorts within global tourism? How do tourist resorts engage in cooperation and competition with other resorts? How do the interdependencies between tourist resorts occur? How do tourists, investors, politics, etc. construct, reconstruct and acknowledge the differences between tourist resorts? How is the hierarchy between resorts constructed?

Finally, contemporary models lack a time element. For instance, in Butler's model, time is not specified and is a black box. The advantage of this lack is that the model is less complex, providing an abstraction that allows very different kinds of resort development to be examined. Yet, for a thorough understanding of resort development processes, it is important to know how long a resort will develop: five years, 10 years, 50 years, 200 years? An investigation into the processes resorts undergo in relation to the time frame is therefore needed. Is it a rapid development? How can the different rhythms of resort development be distinguished? Are there breaks in the development? Related to the question of the time element, the question is: At what moment does a resort emerge? The historicity of place is important, because the moment of touristification is decisive to understand the development conditions. Places developed in the 1850s (Atlantic City), or in the 1970s (Cancun), experience very different socio-economic conditions when coming into being and developing. Therefore, both the time frame and the historical context need to be addressed.

1.2 The restructuring approach

The second approach seeks to analyse the political and economic conditions of resorts' economic transformations. The literature on restructuring has benefitted from insights from economy, geography and sociology. Restructuring means a change towards a "significantly different order and configuration of social, economic and political life" (Soja 1989, 159). The restructuring thesis has been widely used in urban geography and economic geography, but has also been utilised as a framework for the analysis of tourist resorts (Williams & Shaw, 1997). Agarwal maintains that "contrary to the relative simplicity of the resort lifecycle, the restructuring thesis is an imprecise and complex body of theory which consists of a set of theoretical propositions about the widespread economic and social changes taking place in society and which involve deep changes in the geography of production and consumption"

(Agarwal, 2002, 27). This framework identifies the changing features of the capitalist economy from Fordist to post-Fordist production and consumption patterns.

The problem raised has specifically been that of resort decline – understandable within the British context - and the restructuring of tourism within a resort. Such resorts, which were highly prominent in the British tourist culture until the 1950s, have since exited the market, with resorts in the Mediterranean and South-East Asia replacing them. Research has proposed the following causes of their decline: firstly, the collapse of the domestic market due to the accessibility of alternative destinations (Cooper, 1997); secondly, the social change in the clientele, i.e. the erosion of high and average income tourists frequenting these resorts (Demetriadi, 1997) and the parallel increase in the numbers of visitors who are not high spenders (Cooper, 1997). Moreover, this development may also be explained as a *cultural change*: Similar to the 19th century shift in focus from the beach's therapeutic, medical function to its pleasure and leisure function, a progressive shift in interest has occurred from the sea to the sun (Urry, 1990), triggered by technological elements that change the accessibility of other places and alters the terms on which the competition between destinations is based (Urry, 1997; Cooper, 1997; Soane, 1993; Demetriadi, 1997; Agarwal, 1997).

Although the analysis of the reasons for tourist resorts' decline has clearly explored interesting research questions, it remains contradictory. *The extent to which* the forces at work are endogenous/exogenous, cultural or economic, institutional or infrastructural remains unknown. In particular, the existing research has very little to say about the role of the different types of actors – whether they are tourists, political decision-makers, land owners, developers, local entrepreneurs, traders, citizens, etc. – involved in the process of tourist development in general and in the maintenance or decline of tourist activities in particular. The question of *how* they are negotiated between the different types of actors needs to be examined.

Furthermore, the existing research does not explore spatial restructuring in terms of the transformation of resorts' territorial forms. Instead of studying a resort's changing qualities, research has studied the changing quality of tourism within a resort. Therefore, there is no clear understanding of the consequences of this decline process for the quality of places. What kind of places are they now? Are they still tourist resorts, or have they been transformed into *something else*? These kinds of questions remain unanswered.

1.3 The transformation of place qualities

A third approach focuses on the transformations of tourist resorts' place quality. This approach comprises the idea that resorts have been invented, constructed and reproduced as resorts over time. The transformation does not only affect the local economy, culture and society, but also the place quality. The historian Soane (1993) proposes an interesting approach. He identifies the changing place qualities as from resorts towards resort regions, as occurred in Brighton, Los Angeles and Nice. Soane understands resort regions as the scale of former local resorts changing into a regional scale of an agglomeration of resorts. The Côte d'Azur example

is particularly significant – formerly separate resorts underwent expansion and achieved the urbanisation of the seashore. Currently, the whole Côte d'Azur – from Menton to Toulon – is urbanised and offers tourism services. Soane (1993) calls this a resort region, while Equipe MIT (2002; 2011) calls it tourist conurbation. Other examples are Florida, which, between St. Augustine and Key West, has tourist-centred places along the coast and the Sunshine Coast in Australia, which is centred around Brisbane, where tourism-centred urbanization processes have been observed (Mullins, 1991).

An important insight that this research has identified is the need for a proper distinction between different place qualities in order to reconstruct the transformation of resorts into different territorial forms. Distinguishing between a tourist city, tourist resort, tourist enclave and a tourist site, Equipe MIT (2002) proposes a model of tourist place development in which changing place qualities are the core issues. The identified trajectories include from tourist resort to city, from tourist site to tourist resort, from tourist enclave to tourist resort where tourism is ever present. But there are also processes towards urban places without tourism, such as from resort to suburb, or from resort to recreational community. In these cases, tourism no longer informs the place quality, but other features do. The touristic elements have often been transformed into residential qualities.

1.4 Conclusion

Resorts cannot be analysed as isolated places, as they are related to a system of places where cooperation and competition occur. Their relative position in a hierarchy of resorts, which the emergence of ever new tourist resorts, practices and products challenges, is dependent on the global resort system. The emergence of new tourist gazes and practices had huge effects on the classic mountain destinations, for example, the decisive invention of the Mediterranean sea as a summer vacation place from the 1920s onward; previously the winter season had been preferred and hotels closed in the summer season (Equipe MIT, 2005). It also triggered the decline of British seaside resorts (Williams & Shaw, 1997). The emergence of Alpine skiing in the beginning of the 20th century triggered the emergence of new resorts especially designed for skiing, which challenged the older fashionable summer resorts that did not open during the winter, which one of the protagonists describes in the book *Skiing* (Lunn, 1913).

It also raises the question of where crises originate. Is there only one crisis, as suggested in the Christaller-Plog-Butler model, with too many tourists (from lower social classes) that affect the carrying capacity? Evidence shows there are multiple crises: urbanism-driven, ecological, economic and political crises (Agarwal, 1997). At one point, all tourist resorts seem affected, but they respond differently to crises. The differential capacity to cope with crises might be one of the key problems when trying to identify the mechanisms of tourist resorts' transformation. It also leads to the question: Where do bifurcations (i.e. the change in the trajectory, or the transformations of resorts) originate? Do they originate from the practices of tourists who invent ever new practices and modify their spatial preferences? Do they originate from entrepreneurs

who propose new goods and services to tourists, such as the emergence of winter holidays in the mountains in St Moritz (1864)? Do they originate from public policy? Throughout their history, we observe different sources of resort transformation: New practices invent new tourist places, such as North Americans living in Paris going on summer vacations to the Mediterranean sea (Löfgren, 1999), public policy regarding the French development of Languedoc-Roussillon and La Plagne, while private economic operators were decisive in the development of ski areas in the U.S. (Beaver Creek) and in the development of resort complexes (*Club Méditerranée* in various locations). In both cases, practices that already existed elsewhere were copied. Resort development does not, therefore, rely on a single trajectory, but is dependent on a great number of interwoven practices. In order to understand the differentiated effects of the economic, political, geographical and sociological dimensions, we build a framework of resorts' touristic capital.

2. TOWARDS A CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE TOURISTIC CAPITAL OF RESORTS IN A GLOBAL TOURISM FIELD

Capital is a polysemic concept in social sciences, rooted in political economy, but now widely used in different disciplinary contexts. Individuals (Bourdieu, 1984; Putnam, 2000), firms, institutions, states (Bourdieu, 2012) and geographical places (Harvey, 2001) deploy capital in keeping with their different uses in sociology, geography, economy, regional science, etc. We explore the possibility of assigning a specific capital to tourist resorts.

2.1 Capital as a concept developed in several disciplines

Capital is one of the most famous political economy concepts. Marx had a technical and social vision of capital as a capitalists-owned production means. Capital allows capitalists to control the production and circulation process, turning money into commodities and commodities into possibly more money. Capital is accumulated quantitatively and the entire system is oriented towards maintaining the profit rate. In respect of space, Marx considered relocation one of the most important means of maintaining the profit rate. Harvey popularised this idea with his spatial fix concept (2001). The spatial fix of economic capital is therefore the transformation of money into a localized built environment. Harvey also gave the term spatial fix a second meaning: Analogous to a technological fix, it means a spatial strategy of displacing capital to overcome the contradictions of capitalism, such as local over-accumulation.

From an economic point of view, actors not only have to find ways to maintain the profit rate locally, but large international tourism companies, like tour operators, also constantly re-allocate their activities around the world to maintain their profit rate. Therefore, for tourism resorts, the dynamics of economic capital is not based on relocation, but needs another understanding. The central economic process consists of the qualitative reorganisation of various objects – such as the landscape, hotels, reputation, infrastructure, etc. – through the local institutions (or, sometimes, in spite of them) in order to maintain a sufficient level of economic value creation locally. Here, sufficient means that monetary income allows the reproduction of the local system in a competitive global tourism field.

In this perspective, capital is both a set of objects – the natural and built environment, a place's symbolic reputation – and the local capabilities to manage and reorganise them in order to turn them into a monetary income. In this case, capital does not refer to capitalists' ownership, as in neoclassic and Marxian traditions, but to a set of local objects, institutions and capabilities that interact dynamically and more or less coherently. This is linked to current institutional economics in which capital is the set of all of a society's innovation and production capabilities. For instance, knowledge embedded in people, in a landscape that no-one owns, or in local tales is part of a society's capital if it is, in one way or another, included or potentially included in economic circuits. Consequently, Camagni and Capello (2013) define territorial capital as "the set of local assets, - natural, human, artificial, organizational, relational and cognitive – that

constitute the competitive potential of a given territory.” (p. 1387).

Bourdieu extended the capital concept within sociology – in the sense of social, cultural and symbolic capital, besides economic capital – as a disposition of individuals who, as agents, engage in a specific field. Bourdieu made a significant contribution by defining a specific field of interest within which capital occurs (Bourdieu, 1987). This specification is especially useful to understand that tourist resorts compete in the tourism field, but not, for instance, in the steel production or higher education fields. Bourdieu also considers nation-states and institutions, such as universities, as disposing of and engaging in specific social fields with their different kinds of capital (Bourdieu 2012). This allows capital to be conceived on a collective level and not only on an individual level. Valuating individual or collective attributes as capital depends on a capacity to capture a significant portion of the material and immaterial resources – the trophies or gains at stake in the field (in the case of tourism, e.g., market shares or prestige) – for the capital holders, in order to enhance their position in this specific competitive field.

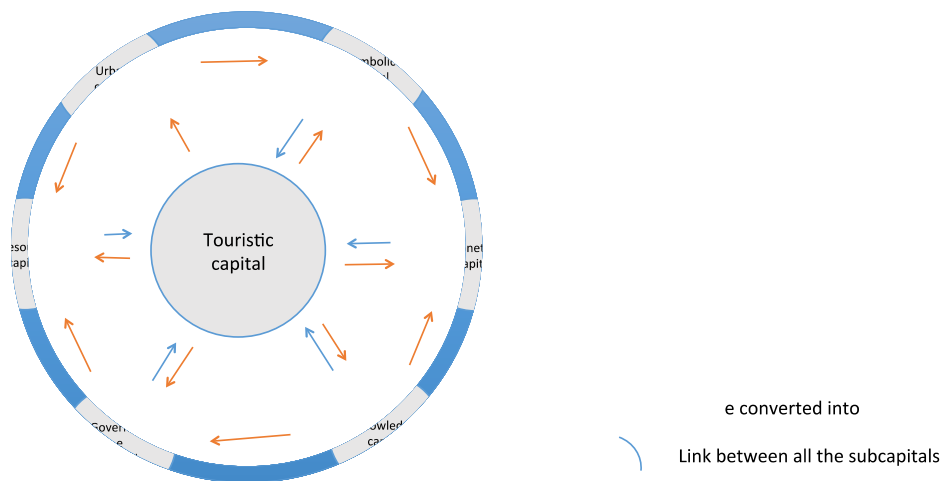
A third concept – spatial capital – is currently being developed as a capital of space within geography. Framed as the advantages of a given area, Harvey (2001, p.405) describes this capital as “collective symbolic capital which attaches to names and places like Paris, Athens, New York, Rio de Janeiro, Berlin and Rome is of great import and gives such places great economic advantages relative to, say, Baltimore, Liverpool, Essen, Lille, Glasgow. The problem for these latter places is to raise their quotient of symbolic capital and to increase their mark of distinction to better ground their claims to the uniqueness that yields monopoly rent”. Urban capital is therefore a collective symbolic capital that different kinds of actors recognize as a certain marker of meaning. It is interesting to note that Harvey approaches the collective symbolic capital as only other-directed, i.e. towards *investors*. Nevertheless, there is no indication of the specific field in which this symbolic capital occurs. In its attempt to understand how tourist places maintain their tourism trade over a long period, Equipe MIT (2011, p.222) mentions a “capital of a space”. It stresses, “the spatial fix of the invested economic capital and the urban capital are a token of durability, especially because of the evolution potential towards other forms of activities” (Equipe MIT, 2011, p.235). The authors acknowledge infrastructures and urbanness as capital that can be transformed into multiple activities when tourism declines. Capital of space is regarded as a resilient element that prevents a place from collapsing.

We can build on these contributions to define the touristic capital as a collective capital linked to geographical places. Touristic capital can be defined as an ensemble of physical, economic, social, political, urban and symbolic characteristics that permits a place – and the actors living in it, developing it, or exploiting it - to position itself in a tourism field and, in comparison to other tourist places, to gain advantages. This concept aims at understanding the differential capacity of tourist places to maintain (or to lose) touristic quality – relative to the modification of the tourism field – over a certain period of time. Touristic capital is therefore conceived as both a potential for further development and an actual advantages acquired through a long-term construction process.

2.2 The concept of a touristic capital of resorts in a global tourism field

Touristic capital is understood as a place's set of characteristics accumulated over time and engaged as advantages *vis-à-vis* the institutions, practices, markets of competing tourist places, which can be described as forming a *tourism field*. These characteristics can be of *spatial* (the location, qualities of space, degree of urbanness, etc.), *socio-cultural* (the knowledge, know-how, competences, attitude towards tourism, stratification of local society, etc.), *political* (the governance/political steering capacity, inter-policy coordination, coherence and robustness of institutional designs and rules, conflictuality of decision processes, etc.), *economic* (the financing capacity), *environmental* (the state of the environments, landscape and bio-physical resources) quality. Here, we take into consideration six different dimensions referring to the resource and governance, urban and reputational, monetary and knowledge dimensions of resorts' touristic capital (see Clivaz et al., 2011; Darbellay et al. 2011; see figure 1).

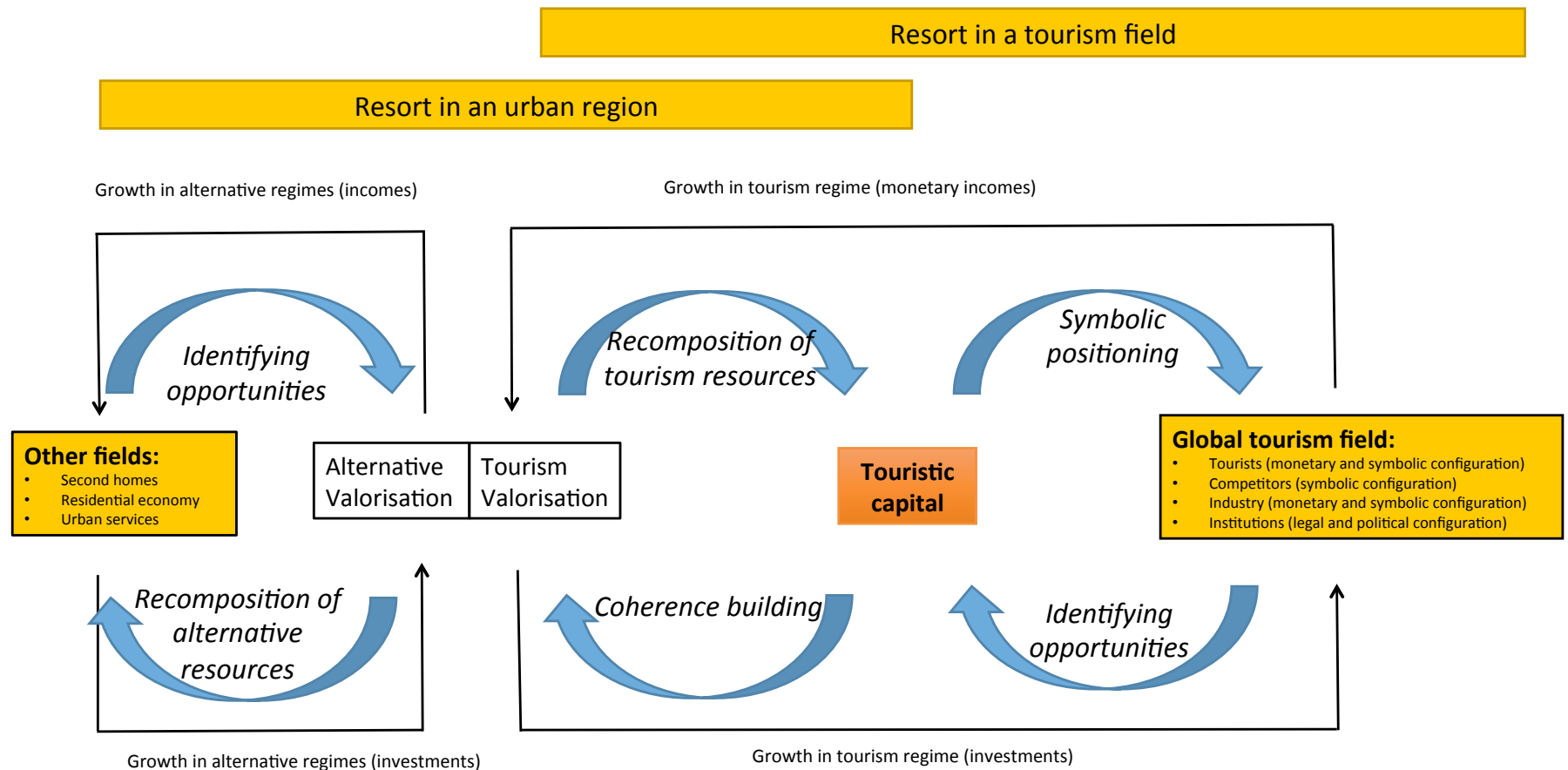
Figure 1: The dimensions of touristic capital



Sources : Clivaz et al., 2011; Darbellay et al. 2011

In order to build a dynamic representation of touristic capital, we first consider that touristic capital – on a national and a global scale – allows for the adaptation of local resources to the global conditions of the tourism field's competitiveness, institutions and symbols. The touristic capital and the global tourism field shape each other and are in dynamic interaction (see figure 2).

Figure 1: Touristic capital in the tourism field



Source : own elaboration

The first loop represents the development of resorts as the valorisation of items within a tourism growth regime in which use value and monetary value are constantly developed as tourism valorisation. *Monetary flows*, which are measured in terms of incomes and investments – the black arrows in figure 1 – drive these accumulation processes. Local players, who will/will not invest and develop their position in the tourist field, capture the inward monetary flows originating from tour operators and/or tourists expenditures. For instance, entry fees, accommodation, catering, etc. allow monetary flows. Conversely, enjoying public goods or experiences, like walking in the mountains, on public beaches, etc. does not allow the capture of monetary expenditures. In tourism, compared to other fields of activities, there is usually relatively less overlap between what tourists practise and what they pay for. This means that some of the local players catch the income flows directly, while others depend on the redistributive, secondary flows. This also explains why tourism resorts cannot be regarded as simple agglomerations of market-related companies. Touristic capital contributes to the local capability to build a converging representation of what happens in the field and then directing the more or less collective actions to renew the common resources. This also presumes that there are collective rules and institutions that share the monetary costs and benefits.

The *tourism field* consists of a configuration of actors and norms whose actions have the same interest and the same intentionality – a touristic engagement with the world, i.e. a tourist gaze – in order to fabricate, commercialise and consume material and immaterial tourist goods and services, but also to elaborate the norms and laws concerning transport and hospitality services, the food/drink quality, landscape preservation, etc. Therefore, we conceptualise the diversity of actors as an interdependent configuration (i.e., mutually dependent in an asymmetric power relationship) within the same logic of interest – tourism. A multi-scalar network of people, places, institutions and firms, whose actors have different kinds of *advantages* with which they engage while enacting processes, represents this configuration. These advantages are therefore the elements of the touristic capital of resorts engaged in the touristic field. The global field of tourism should not be regarded as a passive selection of innovations that tourism players propose. Value creation, especially in experiential activities, requires customers' active involvement, as well as that of many other players like journalists, guide writers, tour operators, etc. These players play a role in the construction of various places and practices' meanings. Therefore, a market should not be regarded as the meeting of largely independent supplies and demands, but rather as a global stage (Jeannerat 2013) where producers invest various resources to build this stage and where customers engage in experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1999, Lorentzen 2009, Lorentzen and Jeannerat 2013). Moreover, spectators and critics – journalists, experts, tour operators, lawmakers, and international governmental and non-governmental organisations - scrutinize, comment, legitimize or stigmatize the play presented on the stage.

From an economic view, the market exerts quantitative and qualitative competitive pressures on places. In terms of prices, the problem is particularly acute in high cost countries, because actors cannot escape the local labour, land, or real estate costs, while having to provide basic

services like accommodation and food. In qualitative terms, the local players, who take their resources and competences into consideration, eventually develop a representation of the field's evolutions and *identify the opportunities* they provide for a resort. This qualitative, symbolic competition creates the conditions for supply side differentiation and improvement of the understanding of customer aspirations. The innovation process in a place can be regarded as a re-invention process of the local objects (the landscape, buildings, cultural traditions, local competences, etc.) in order to build new tourism resources that will be more aligned with the evolving clientele. This process need not just be seen as an imposed constrain, but also as an active process of changing the global conditions of the tourism field. For instance, Alpine skiing was developed in only a few places before becoming a world standard. This *symbolic positioning* is especially significant regarding the price and symbolic positioning of a resort in the global tourism field.

Drawing on the identification of opportunities, local actors *rearrange tourism resources* by selecting adequate objects pertaining to the global tourism field. This process is dependent on the quality of the touristic capital in terms of governance and knowledge. In turn, this process contributes to the definition of tourist capital through the valorisation of specific items within a tourism regime. For instance, the transformation of snow into a tourism object in some resorts in the Alps at the start of the 20th century extended the traditional summer season to the winter. In turn, this process strengthens the touristic capital of a resort. However, coherence building is crucial to valorise objects as tourism attractions. *Coherence building* refers to the local political and private actors' capacity to valorise objects within tourism, especially by providing infrastructure. Coherence building thus refers to the political dimensions of touristic capital, for which governance and local institutional arrangements are crucial. Consequently, coherence building leads to tourism valorisation, which in turn strengthens touristic capital.

As resorts develop, they accumulate or valorise items (infrastructure, flats, buildings, etc.) that other actors – not necessarily related to tourism (local residents, workers, etc.) – can use. As such, resorts are confronted with the urban growth accumulation system, which consists of the residential economy, either through the creation or the development of new uses for existing items. Signals that a developing or a pre-existing urban region provides, trigger this accumulation system. The articulation between the resort accumulation system and the urban growth system can be a source of tension, as they can compete for existing resources (e.g., the transformation of hotels into apartments and tourists' appropriation of a city's popular neighbourhoods). Urbanisation can also be a source of complementarities and support the resort development, for instance, by allowing the building of certain infrastructures (a concert hall, a public transportation system, etc.) with a minimal demand-level requirement. The mobilisation of touristic capital allows the *recomposition of resources*, due to the *alternative valorisation* of objects previously valorised as tourism resources. By *identifying opportunities* in other fields, the valorisation process and monetary incomes are triggered for resources that have ceased to be part of the tourism growth regime.

A second loop can therefore be described because resorts are not only embedded in a global tourism field, but also in an urban region and are present in other fields besides tourism. From a processual point of view, accessibility and urbanisation characteristics change over time and allow new kinds of linkages to an urban region. Specifically, the transformation of resorts into places for leisure or into residences for an urban region's inhabitants is crucial (Equipe MIT, 2002). As a consequence, elements like the landscape, events, the availability of personal services, reputation, infrastructure, etc. can also be valorised in other economic activities, as they contribute to urbanness in general. This loop develops on the basis of previously built and accumulated tourism resources, but is valorised in different types of activities, some related to tourism, while others are totally unrelated. For instance, a (business, academic, etc.) congress is the valorisation of infrastructure in a global congress field, but through the presence of temporary mobile individuals related to tourism. Another alternative valorisation is the transformation of obsolete tourism accommodation into forms of housing stock for residential use. The urban region therefore constitutes the adequate horizon of action within which the touristic capital of a place is engaged.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONCEPT

Capital is understood here as accumulated resources and the capacity to mobilise these resources. Touristic capital is a situated construction of diverse actors at a certain place at a moment in time. The concept of capital is linked to the capacity, disposition and mobilisation of highly diverse elements (whether physical objects, formal or informal rules, the symbolic dimensions of nature, etc.) within a tourism field.

Firstly, touristic capital is conceived as fundamentally relational and relative. Resorts possess capital under the condition that its constituting elements have *value* for other actors in the relevant configuration, here the touristic field. For resorts, touristic capital is the capacity to produce tourist goods and services with value for the global economic and symbolic market, which tourists, tour operators, hotel owners, travel agencies, etc. recognize as value. According to Bourdieu (1984), this refers fundamentally to symbolic capital, because the different actors involved need to share similar cognitive frames. It is interesting to note that touristic capital is co-constituted through interaction between the multiple actors, who encode the signification of a place (local decision makers, producers and diffusers of marketing strategies regarding tourist goods and services), and those who decode this symbolic realm (tourists, guidebooks, travel agencies, etc.). Therefore, the local society does not entirely control the touristic capital, due to the multiplicity of actors involved in its valuation in the tourism field. Furthermore, touristic capital is partly symbolic and can therefore be interpreted in multiple ways.

Secondly, tourist capital evolves over time, as does the touristic field. On the one hand, there is an accumulation process of touristic capital, which symbolic, cognitive, resource and urban elements trigger. Touristic capital is the result of a reciprocal reinforcement of the different elements in the sense of positive retroactions in the local system. This capital is therefore more

than the sum of its parts, but is the relationship of these parts' potential synergies. However, touristic capital can also be destroyed, for instance, through the loss of reputation, a lack of resources, political instability, etc. On the other hand, the touristic field also evolves as ever new resorts enter the field and old established resorts exit it (Antonescu & Stock, 2014). The acceleration of tourism's globalisation goes hand in hand with integrating new resorts into the touristic field, therefore establishing new patterns of competition.

Finally, touristic capital can be transformed into forms of economic activity other than tourism. For instance, via urbanisation, an in-depth restructuring is triggered through the conversion of touristic capital into economic or resource capital. The spatial fix of economic capital through real estate investment (hotels, second homes, resort complexes) is one of the salient examples of the fungible nature of touristic capital leading to urban capital. Other examples of the fungible nature of tourist capital refer, for instance, to the change in objectives (from tourism to other forms of economic development) within a growth coalition (Logan & Molotch 1987) as a form of political capital conversion. Resource capital (water, sand, infrastructures, etc.) might also transform into activities other than tourism, for example, hydro-electricity, manufacturing, commercial zones, residences, etc.

The touristic capital concept allows the following hypothesis to be formulated regarding the transformation of tourist resorts: Resorts' variable capacity to *accumulate* (i.e. *capitalise on*) competitive tourist advantages, which enable them to sustain the *relay* (as in a relay race) between different forms of tourism over the course of time, or to *convert* these advantages (i.e. this *capital*) in the context of active restructuring strategies, can explain change in the course of their trajectories. Conceptualising the touristic capital as an advantage within a network of places also necessitates the empirical reconstruction of the global tourism field. It is therefore an attempt to better understand how the network of tourist places emerges and how the relative importance of tourist resorts has continued to change throughout history. The touristic capital concept captures this relativity, especially through its insistence on the symbolic dimensions. This symbolic capital reflects the value of a resort in the global tourist field.

However, tourist resorts do not only change in the tourism field, they also participate in other fields. This is especially apparent when local tourism experiences a crisis and connecting to other fields besides tourism becomes necessary. For instance, many resorts have developed congress centres to capitalise on their accommodation capacity, which tourists may fill. To enter the congress field, such resorts use their advantages that, relative to those of metropolises, have proved to be appealing over the last 70 years: their landscapes, small-size settlements and recreation activities combined with adequate infrastructures (congress centre, hotels, knowledge in catering, etc.). This seems to be particularly clear within metamorphosis trajectories (Clivaz et al., 2011) during which places lose symbolic capital in the tourist field, but try to convert this symbolic capital into advantages in other fields. Another example refers to the real estate field in which tourist places are either positioned as permanent or secondary residences of finance centres, international corporations, or international associations. These places become interesting as real estate investments, not as tourist place.

4. CONCLUSION

Tourism development over the last 200 years has been a dynamic process. The transformation of tourist resorts is linked to the multiple processes of reconfiguration of the economic, social, geographical and cultural contexts. Specifically, despite the remarkable persistence of some attractions and places, that which is recognized as a tourist attraction is regularly revised (Equipe MIT, 2011). With the globalisation of tourism, the ever expanding tourism field is subject to ever new places entering it, while other places exit it. Newcomers modify the web of interdependencies and, therefore, the touristic capital of each tourist place. The concept of resorts' touristic capital in a global tourism field may help us better understand several important problems.

Firstly, the accumulation and engaging of touristic capital could be the key element to understanding why resorts have continued to develop tourism activities for more than 150 years despite various crises and reconfigurations of the tourist gaze. Governance and institutional resource capital, urban and reputation capital as well as monetary and knowledge capital are engaged in only one sector, namely tourism; no attempt is undertaken to diversify the economy. The only diversification processes refer to tourism where the scope and the depth of the activities change over time. Zermatt is a case in point (Roy et al., 2012): Huge crises, such as those at the end of the *Belle Époque* tourism (1870-1914), did not affect the local tourist activity. The invention of Alpine skiing was used as an opportunity to change the business model from only Alpinism towards a summer *and* winter resort. Since 1960, Zermatt has had a higher winter than summer clientele, and offered about 2 million bed nights and around 20,000 beds in 2010. It has become a highly diversified, global mass-tourism resort, serving as a recreation place for a huge diversity of people, including alpinists, visitors, skiers as well as the wealthy and the middle-class of more than 100 nationalities.

Secondly, the collapse of tourist resorts may be explained by an incapacity, due to political struggles and diverging monetary and knowledge capital, to transform the accumulated touristic capital into a renewed tourism sector after a tourism crisis. Finhaut (Wallis) is a case in point (Sauthier et al., 2012): Contrary to Zermatt, the crisis at the end of the *Belle Époque* brought tourism to an end. In 1912, Finhaut – in the canton of Wallis in Switzerland – was the second most important tourist resort after Zermatt, but thereafter struggled to recover after the loss of its English clientele. Low urban capital – tourism had not changed the village structure into a more developed urban node – did not allow for utilising the touristic infrastructures for other purposes. The reputational capital was rapidly destroyed and could not be rebuilt. Several attempts were made to reconnect with tourism through supposedly radioactive water cures and skiing, but these activities competed with other resources, such as hydro-electricity exploitation. Today, Finhaut is a village with 300 inhabitants who work in the nearby cities; only one tourist site (the barrage d'Emosson) remains and the remaining hotels have been transformed into apartments.

Thirdly, the fungible nature of the various capital elements leading to other kinds of capital and an urbanisation process, in which the tourism valorisation of objects gives way to alternative valorisations, may explain the metamorphosis of resorts into highly diversified resort regions

(Soane, 1993). Montreux is a case in point (Guex et al., 2012): The end of the *Belle Époque* tourism in 1914 brought a brutal decrease in the number of tourists. The 1912 peak of a bed capacity of 7500 – probably one of the largest in the world at that time – collapsed to only 3000 within ten years, of which only 2500 were left in 2010. During the rise of tourism from 1850 to 1910, the population of Montreux increased from 3000 to 20,000. All the introduced urban amenities (electricity, telephone, telegraph, banks, etc.) triggered an important urbanisation process. This reconfiguration of the local system made use of the tourist infrastructure, transforming it into residences as well as into congress and convention spaces. Several attempts were made to reconnect with tourism (the Montreux Jazz festival, the heritage, Chillon castle, wine tourism, etc.). A new urban regime, in which hotel managers do not play a central role, is now in place. Montreux is currently a highly diversified city within the Lemanic metropolis, with tourism still playing a role, but as just one among many other activities. Montreux can therefore be interpreted as a successful restructuring rather than a decline.

In sum, we contend that the variable capacity of resorts to *accumulate*, i.e. *capitalise on* the competitive tourist advantages that enable them to sustain the *relay* between different forms of tourism over the course of time, or to *convert* these advantages in the context of active restructuring strategies, can explain the variable character of tourist resorts' trajectories.

Through this analysis, the three distinctive characteristics of our approach emerge. Firstly, the crucial importance of considering the territorial form in order to avoid analysing the tourism in a place instead of the local territorial system. The transformation of the place quality is an issue for resort development. Resorts do not remain resorts, but evolve into different territorial forms, which have to be taken into account if we are to understand how tourism activity can be maintained or transformed over time. The urban quality, i.e. the accumulation of an urban capital in terms of diversity, density and centrality, seems to be crucial for resilience to crises. Secondly, the uneven capacity for dealing with crises is only partially dependent on strategies and equally dependent on a resort's position within a global network of tourist places. Each new innovation over the past 200 years has put tourist resources at risk of depreciation, due to changing images and practices. The promotion of the Mediterranean sea as a major summer destination triggered the obsolescence of British seaside resorts as well as the stagnation of Alpine mountain resorts. Tourist cultures and tourist gazes constantly modify the global network of tourist places. The growing number of new wealthy and middle-class tourists who can access tourism practices in all major metropolises allows certain selected resorts to diversify their clientele and to respond to the risk of obsolescence. This response is related to the local society's knowledge and governance capacity.

Thirdly, tourist resources are a very complex problem if they have to be produced and reproduced over time. These practices regard geographical places with a certain tourist gaze and produce ever new potential resources as monetary interactions, but local operators mobilise and construct knowledge, invent, make use of and enforce regulations in order to derive monetary capital from tourism resources. However, local operators also have the problem of regulating their secondary resources, such as water, soil, urbanism and public space, which

tourists use but do not pay for. Conflicts about the ownership and the management of resources have been identified as a crucial element in responses to crises.

The interpretation of the different resort trajectories as uneven and engaging differently constituted touristic capital as well as the conversion of this capital into other forms of capital seems an important step for a more thorough analysis and explanation of what happens to tourist resorts over a long period.

References

- Agarwal S. (1997) The Public Sector : Planning for Renewal ? in Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), 1997, *The Rise and Fall of British coastal Resorts: Cultural and Economies Perspectives*. London: Cassell, pp.137-158.
- Agarwal, S. (2002). Restructuring seaside tourism The Resort Lifecycle. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(1), 25-55.
- Agarwal, S. (2012). Relational spatiality and resort restructuring. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(1), 134-154.
- Antonescu A. & Stock M. (2014), The globalisation of tourism. A geo-historical approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 45, 77-88.
- Bourdieu P. (1984) Quelques propriétés des champs, in *Questions de sociologie*, Paris, Minuit, 1984, pp.113-120.
- Bourdieu P. (1992) La logique des champs, in *Réponses. Pour une anthropologie réflexive*, Paris, Seuil, pp.71-90.
- Bourdieu, P. (2012). *Sur l'Etat : cours au Collège de France (1989-1992)*. Paris: Raison d'agir: Seuil.
- Briassoulis, H. (2002). Sustainable Tourism and the Question of the Commons. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29 (4), 1065-1085.
- Bromley D. (1991) *Environment and Economy. Property Rights and Public Policy*, Oxford, Blackwell.
- Bromley D. (ed.) (1998) *The Handbook of Environmental Economics*, Oxford, Blackwell.
- Butler R. (1980) The Concept of the Tourist Area Cycle of Evolution: Implications for Management of Resources. *Canadian Geographer*, vol.24, pp.5-12.
- Butler R. (ed.) (2006) *The Tourism Area Life Cycle. Conceptual and Theoretical Issues*. Clevedon : Channel View Publications.
- Camagni R. & Cappello R. (2013) Regional competitiveness and territorial capital: A conceptual approach and empirical evidence from the European Union. *Regional Studies*, Vol. 47, N°9, 1383-1402.
- Chadefaud M. (1988). *Aux origines du tourisme dans les pays de l'Adour : du mythe à l'espace : un essai de géographie historique*. Université de Pau.

Christaller W. (1955) " Beiträge zu einer Geographie des Fremdenverkehrs ". Erdkunde, vol. 9, n°1, pp. 1-19.

Clivaz, C., Nahrath, S., & Stock, M. (2011). Le développement des stations touristiques dans le champ touristique mondial. In Duhamel P., Kadri B. & Violier P. (eds) Tourisme et mondialisation, Paris: ETE.

Cooper C. (1997) Parameters and Indicators of the Decline of the British Seaside Resort. In Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), 1997, The Rise and Fall of British Coastal Resorts: Cultural and Economies Perspectives. London: Cassell, pp. 79-101.

Corbett T. (2001) The Making of American Resorts. Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa, Lake George. Piscataway, Rutgers University Press.

Darbellay, F., Clivaz, C., Nahrath, S., Stock, M. (2011). Approche interdisciplinaire du développement des stations touristiques : le capital touristique comme concept opératoire. Mondes du Tourisme, n°4, p. 36-48.

Demetriadi J. (1997), The Golden Years. English Seaside Resorts 1950 – 1974. in Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), 1997, The rise and fall of British coastal resorts: Cultural and Economies Perspectives. London: Cassell, pp.49-75.

Devlin R. & Grafton Q. (1998) Economic Rights and Environmental Wrongs. Property Rights for the Common Goods, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar.

Equipe MIT (2002) Tourisme 1. Lieux communs, Paris, Belin.

Equipe MIT (2005) Moments de lieux, Paris, Belin.

Equipe MIT (2011) Tourisimes 3. La révolution durable, Paris, Belin.

Gordon I. & Goodall B. (1992) Resort Cycles and Development Processes. Built Environment, vol. 18, n°1, pp.41-56.

Guex, D., Roy, J., Sauthier, G. (2012). La trajectoire historique du développement touristique de Montreux entre 1850 et 2010. Working Paper de l'IUKB (2) – 2012.

Jeannerat, H. (2013). Staging experience, valuing authenticity: Towards a market perspective on territorial development. European Urban and Regional Studies 20 (4): 370-384.

Harvey D. (1985) The urbanization of capital. London, Basil Blackwell, 239p.

Harvey, D. (2001). Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography. Edinburgh: University Press.

Knoepfel, P., Nahrath, Stéphane, Varone, Frédéric. (2007). Institutional regimes for Natural

Resources: An Innovative Theoretical Framework for Sustainability. In P. Knoepfel (Ed.), Environmental Policy Analyses. Learning from the Past for the Future - 25 Years of Research (pp. 455-506). Berlin: Springer.

Lévy J. (1999) Le tournant géographique. Penser l'espace pour lire le monde, Paris, Belin.

Libecap G. (1993) Contracting for Property Rights, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Logan, J.R. & Molotch H.L. (1987) Urban fortunes. The political economy of place, Berkeley: UC Press.

Löfgren, O. (1999). On holiday: a history of vacationing. Berkeley: University of California Press. Logan & Molotch 1987. Urban fortunes. The political economy of place, Berkeley: UC Press.

Lorentzen, A. (2009). Cities in the Experience Economy. European Planning Studies 17 (6): 829 - 845.

Lorentzen, A. and H. Jeannerat (2013). Urban and regional studies in the experience economy: What kind of turn? European Urban and Regional Studies 20(4): 363-369.

Lunn A. (1913) Skiing. London, Nash.

MacCannell D. (2001) Tourist Agency, Tourist Studies, vol. 1, 1, 23-37.

Mullins, P. (1991), Tourism Urbanization, International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, vol. 15, n°3, pp. 326-342.

Ostrom E. (1990) Governing the Commons. The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action, Cambridge.

Pearce D. (1987) Tourism today. A geographical analysis.. Longman Scientific & Technical.

Pine, B. J. and J. H. Gilmore (1999). The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage, Harvard Business School Press.

Plog, S. C. (1974) Why Destination Areas Rise and Fall in Popularity?. Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, vol. 14, no 4, pp. 55-58.

Putnam, 2000, Bowling Alone. America's Declining Social Capital. New York, Simon & Schuster.

Roy, J., Guex, D., Sauthier, G. (2012). La trajectoire historique du développement touristique de Zermatt entre 1850 et 2010. Working Paper de l'IUKB (3) – 2012.

Sauthier, G., Guex, D., Roy, J. (2012). La trajectoire historique du développement touristique de

Finhaut entre 1860 et 2010. Working Paper de l'IUKB (1) – 2012.

Soja, E. (1989). *Postmodern geographies: the reassertion of space in critical social theory*. London; New York: Verso.

Soane J. (1993). *Fashionable resort regions: their evolution and transformation with particular reference to Bournemouth, Nice, Los Angeles and Wiesbaden*, Wallingford, CAB International.

Shaw G. & Williams A., 1997, *The Private Sector: Tourism Entrepreneurship - a Constraint or a Resource ?* in Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), 1997, *The Rise and Fall of British Coastal Resorts: Cultural and Economic Perspectives*. London: Cassell, pp.117-136.

Shaw G. & Williams A. (2004) *Tourism and Tourism spaces*. Sage.

Stock M. (2001) Brighton & Hove, station touristique ou ville touristique ? *Revue Géographique de Lyon-Géocarrefour*, vol. 76, n°2, pp. 127-131

Urry J. (1990) *The Tourist Gaze*. London; Sage Publications.

Urry J. (1997) *Cultural Change and the Seaside Resort*. In Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of British Coastal Resorts: Cultural and Economies Perspectives*. London: Cassell, pp.102-113.

Walton, J. (1983) *The English Seaside Resort: A Social History 1750-1914*. Leicester: Leicester, University Press.

Williams A. & Shaw G. (1997) *Riding the Big Dipper: the Rise and Decline of the British Seaside Resort in the Twentieth Century*. in Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of British Coastal Resorts: Cultural and Economies Perspectives*. London: Cassell, pp.1-18.

Williams A. & Shaw G., 1997, *Riding the Big Dipper: the Rise and Decline of the British Seaside Resort in the Twentieth Century*. in Shaw G. & Williams A. (eds.), 1997, *The Rise and Fall of British Coastal Resorts: Cultural and Economies Perspectives*. London: Cassell, pp.1-18.