

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL
PSYCHOLOGY OF TOURISM

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1. FOREWORD

The complexity of the tourism phenomenon appears evident at even upon a superficial analysis. The number of individuals involved, and a variety of involving modes, are such that it may be immediately suspected that a wide range of typologies of users, modes of action, opportunities of choice in fact may be certainly included within the ambit of tourism behavior as such.

The aim of the notes is to supply some useful indications for the pursuance of some objectives relating to both base research on tourist behavior and potentialities of use of such research for operational purposes to take optimizing action.

In particular, I purpose: to emphasize some significant contributions already present in the files of tourism psychology, in order to supply a memorandum for future research; to sum up some already arrived-at conclusions; to stress the usefulness - even from a practical standpoint - of juxtaposing the (new) psychological point of view to the more traditional modes of interpretation (financial and geographical) of the phenomenon.

Beside these objectives of reviewing, I shall also try to introduce some interpretative element derived from my own experience in the field of tourism psychology in order to add some further considerations to what already in literature.

Previous theories of this work are to be generally traced in the psychological and socio-psychological scientific tradition. I have drawn, however, amply upon some main sources, to which anyone wishing to tackle this subject may usefully refer (1).

Particularly useful for the purpose of the setting of tourism psychology I found the works of MacCannelli (2), Pearce (3), Smith (4), Costa (5), and numerous articles published in the reviews: "Journal of Leisure Research", "Annals of Tourism Research", "Environment and Behavior", "Journal of Travel Research", etc. Although being among the few available and referring primarily to North-American cultural environment, these works do, however, allow the building up of a point of reference for the future. Useful indications may be also drawn from interesting works on a general focusing of the tourism phenomenon (6; 7; 8; 9), on tourism marketing (10; 11; 12), and from texts which, although not specifically dealing with this subject, can, however, supply some relevant generalities (13; 14; 15).

Within the ambit of this introduction to the subject, I have resumed, besides, (and tried to develop further) the works on tourism psychology which I have recently produced (16; 17; 18; 19; 20; 21) to which I refer in case further consideration on the subject should be desired.

2. RESEARCH ON TOURISM PSYCHOLOGY

Generally speaking, from a psychological point of view: tourist behavior may be usefully examined at least by three modes of approach which consider both tourism cultural and interpersonal factor and its individual cognitive factor.

A social psychology of tourism

First: tourist behavior may be socio-psychologically interpreted through a definition of the social role of the tourist, of tourist motivation, and, of social contact between tourists and hosts (3). Such a social psychology of tourist behavior emphasizes the deep-rooted tradition which interprets human behavior as a phenomenon largely determined by the interpersonal context in which each individual finds himself. Such context ope-

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rates its action mainly through culture, socialization processes, opportunities of interaction with other, etc. (22; 23).

In socio-psychological terms: primarily, tourism appears characterized by a peculiar structure of drives which, although being related to basic motivations from which all so many other models of behavior originate, are, in part at least, original. It then appears useful to understand how he who does tourism operates his own particular choice of the object, as he finds himself to act upon psychological motivations which might be eventually gratified by many other different modes as well.

Tourism is then a collective-character behavior, tending to happen by group, and consequently causing specific interpersonal dynamics. Such dynamics intervene both in relationships developing within the communities of tourists and in the interaction between tourists and non-tourists. The models of culture analysis produced within the ambit of anthropology, in particular the concepts of myth and ritual feast, therefore, do also contribute to understand what happens in terms of traveller's subjectivity.

An environmental psychology of tourism

The first, and more classical, analyses of tourist behavior emphasize the set of socio-psychological variables defining the user in terms of interpersonal environment. There is, however, another perspective, stressing the complementary elements of tourist action, that is, focusing on the characteristics of physical environment. By first approximation, tourism, in fact, is defined by an acting individual, but also by the space in which, through the movement, it is done.

According to such interpretation: tourism is made the object of research by environmental psychology (15; 24; 25). Reference points for research concern therefore: the way in which environment affects behavior, the structure of space in interpersonal terms, the cognitive representation of subjective space by individual and groups (26). This latter aspect, which is generally defined to be of environmental cognition, is also the one more studied in present ecopsychological literature, and therefore the richer in providing useful information for defining the overall picture of tourist analysis.

By the terms in which it is involved in tourism research (3; 27), environmental psychology is therefore chiefly concerned with defining the mental maps that the various tourists, present-day or potential, build themselves of the space surrounding them. This is based on the theoretical assumption, on the other hand amply confirmed by research, that the individual does not interact with the world according to what is defined the "reality" of things, but rather with reference to his own subjective representation of the things themselves (28; 29), that is, to what is defined their "image" (30). Therefore, in ecopsychology terms, is of special interest the defining of space subjective representations, which stand at the base of the choice the tourist makes between the possible different vacation destinations. Reading of the behavior in terms of environmental images, therefore, appears useful also in order to define the influences that travel may have on the subjective representation of the place of departure, and therefore the general effects on the subjective building up of new environmental realities (for instance: the developing of the concept of Europe). Through the definition of expectations and ideal conceptions relating to the place of vacation, it can also indicate the criteria to adopt in the measures to be taken for the preservation and improvement of the environment inheritance of tourist interest.

A cognitive psychology of tourism

Therefore, the modes of intrapsychical processing of the choice of travels can also be

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usefully read in the more general terms of cognitive psychology (31; 32; 33). Tourist acting, in fact, becomes more understandable if read in terms of learnt, purpose-oriented, behavior, based on specific plans of action and on a continuous series of choice between the alternatives subjectively present at the given moment. In this sense: inner mechanism of processing should be considered, and the various modes of action also in the terms of problem solving finalized to the achievement of objectives on the basis of pre-existent drives should be observed.

Therefore, it concerns the cognitive process originating tourist choice, and thus the modes of mental "learning" of this practice. We face, in fact, a mode of behavior dependent on contingencies, as subject by definition to the mood of he who puts it into practice, that, however, does recur in relatively constant modes, with considerable effects of economic, social and ecological nature.

A definition of the tourist

The first problem we face when tackling tourism psychology is the lack of a generally-shared-by scientists definition of who is exactly the tourist. Almost immediately, in fact, we find that it is not possible to supply a differential diagnosis of the tourist on the mere basis of behavioral factors. That is, it appears particularly difficult to find an adequate answer to the question "who is a tourist?" (34).

The more internationally widespread definition, and the one more often used to define the tourist in field researches, is that defining "tourist" whoever stays outside his own habitual place of residence for a minimum amount of time, ranging from 1 to 4 days, depending on the various administrative or research bodies. In other words: a tourist is he who is circumstanced to sleep outside his own house. As it stands, such definition is little conclusive, given that it may include individuals who would hardly do as likely tourists such as, for instance, soldiers in barracks or the sick in hospitals.

It so happens that is preferred to refer to people who spend their income in a place other than that in which they produce it (35). Under such a classification of tourism, however, falls also the weekender, the mail-order buyer, or the one who may buy tools for jobs he is to do around the site where he is working.

Therefore, it is frequent that a decidedly psychological factor eventually comes to be added to the two definitions ("tourist sleeps outside" + "tourist spends in a remote place"): that is, the motivation, that is to say, the mood in which travel and expenditure come into play. The emphasis is therefore placed on the fact that the situation in which the individual currently finds himself is determined by a free choice. That is, tourism is defined as a prolonged movement, and an expenditure, which are made for reasons of pleasure.

In operational terms however, it is very difficult to make a distinction between a tourist and a traveller who moves for motives other than hedonistic. Besides: from a socio-psychological and psychological point of view, the difference between he who travels exclusively for pleasure and he who does it for duty as well, is only a matter of degree. And even from an economic viewpoint in terms of tourism budget, traveller's characteristics have a relative relevance. The very EEC's action programmes concerning tourism (36) tend to consider tourism "all journeys of more than twenty-four hours for non-immigrant purposes" (p. 1).

However: it is a fact that both the majority of scientific research and collective imaginary, as has also been ascertained experimentally (3), tend to perceive tourist action as a fundamentally situation of leisure time, although with own typical, in part, characteristics. In short, that which defines tourist whoever may move within the territory for a certain period of time, is not, in our culture, a spontaneous mental categorization.

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Therefore, attention must be then paid to over-simplification that, in supplying the idea of understanding a general range of realities, may end up with explaining none in particular. If it should be pretended to include within the concept of tourism a whatever prolonged movement, it will not any longer be a question of producing a tourism psychology but simply one of studying a series of various individual psychological situations ranging from that of the convict remotely jailed to that of the government employee charged on transfer duty.

It is true that pleasure tourism may be more efficaciously understood if related also to the more general travel category (for whatever purpose). It is also true, however, that of such travel it represents a specific case. Besides: it appears essential to know the psychological reasons for the decision, as they play a role in all moments of tourist action.

From the standpoint of psychological analysis, the relationship between tourism and movement in general may then be schematized precisely on the basis of the motivations for the movement. And this for heuristic reasons. The variable immediately presenting as determinant is in fact the voluntary factor of behavior. As a matter of fact: the more desired is the travel, the more related it is to self-determined psychological mechanism such as individual's wishes, expectations and projections. The more involuntary is the movement, the more partly hetero-determined variables such as a defence and adaptation mechanism intervene to qualify it psychologically. Metaphorically resuming a well-known model of developmental age psychology (37): voluntary movement, tourism, relates firstly to behavioral processes of reality assimilation to its own wishes, whereas forced movement involves adaptation processes to the new imposed reality, with all intermediate stages.

From this point of view: a taxonomy of travel behaviors may be schematized, and exemplified, in a gradient ranging from a minimum to a maximum of self-determination:

MINIMUM SELF-DETERMINATION		EXAMPLE OF TYPOLOGIES OF TRAVELLERS	
Refugee	Migrant		
Exile	Seasonal		
Convict	worker	MAXIMUM SELF-DETERMINATION	
Kidnapped	Athlete	Student	Tourist
Stateless	Patient	Sport fan	Vacationer
		Conference	Excursionist
traveller	Businessman	Pilgrim	Hobo

We shall here concern ourselves mainly with the right side of the scheme, that is, of willed travel, while deferring the analysis of imposed travel possibly at a future occasion. Considerations here made may, however, be useful also to gather some aspects of those travel situations which, although partially imposed, do contain some elements of choice.

In order to complete our definition of the tourist, it is finally necessary to clarify the role of the more general theme of the psychology of leisure (38) in the case of tourism. Tourist choice, in the terms which we are here about to delineate, appears in fact conceptually defined both by the fact that the individual is in a displaced place compared with the habitual one (travel) and by the fact that he carries an activity based on the gratifying use of free time (leisure) (39). From a psychological point of view, tourism then

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may consist in that behavioral subset common to leisure and travel.

LEISURE TOURISM TRAVEL

A profile of the tourist

Researches on the characteristics of the who currently does a tourist practice, although with the definition and conceptualization problems just now indicated, offer a sufficiently precise picture of present-day typical tourist. We do not here purpose to provide a sociology or a geography of tourists; a definition of them in terms of socio-economic and age characteristics however, may certainly be of help also for a better understanding of values, reasons, and choices from a socio-psychological standpoint.

On the basis of a wide variety of researches present in literature relating to various cultural and geographical environments (12, part one), it is possible to gather a homogeneous profile. The various researches agree in fact in their outcome.

Tourist practice has continually grown with time. The percentage of individuals travelling for pleasure is yearly growing, and in the more developed countries exceeds (sometimes largely) half the population.

Tourist practice is put into being by sufficiently varied social specimens, but in a very clearly direct or inverse proportion compared with some variables. Tourists are chiefly young people; their presence decreasing directly proportional to age (the group between 20 and 40 years or just over it prevails). Slightly more frequent are men rather than women, and are either workers or non-workers. Less present occupational categories are workers and farmers (rather, these latter are virtually absent from tourist practice). Disposition to travels increases directly with educational level. Tourists percentage on population increases according to size of place of residence.

In short: tourism is currently an activity typical of the more advanced, less conventional, comparatively more affluent social groups. Simultaneously: tourist practice is taken, up by an increasing number of people, which fact tends to "lower" participants' socio-economic level. There are, however, indications suggesting that increase in tourism habit depends on an enlargement of the middle class (tourist group par excellence) and on a spreading of its value rather than on an increase of interest in travelling among the other groups of population.

3. A MODEL: PUSH FACTORS AND PULL FACTORS

In the light of what has hitherto been said and considering basic analyses developed by disciplinary areas involved, a psychological model of tourism analysis will essentially base on three concepts: travel motivations, tourist images, processes relating the first to the second

Motivations represent a subjective state of need which is generally perceived as a lack of something, driving the individual to seek an object suitable to reduce or eliminate such a state of need. Without entering the complex theoretical discussion on the psychophysiological and psychological structure of processes motivating human action (40; 41), it will be worth out while to remind that psychological research tends to support a motivation model as relatively undifferentiated original drive, creating in the individual a generalized state of need.

Such undifferentiated drive, hungry of stimuli that would dampen the uneasiness being

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at the origin, gears towards easier-to-reach models among those it has available. There exists, however, a relative substitutibility of intergratifying stimuli so that to a same structure of drives a relatively wide variety of gratifying objects in general corresponds. For instance, taking into account the case of physiological drivers, it comes up that to the very motivation of thirst different and interchangeable objects, and so behaviors, may correspond: to drink water, a soft drink, to suck an orange, etc.

Motivations may be considered the element that "pushes from" a subjectively negative state, whereas objects appear presence of which "pulls towards" a subjectively positive state.

Interchangeability of objects gratifying such a motivation appears higher when the needs are of more abstract nature, that is, have not a character of absolute impellency. For these latter needs: the lack of gratification produces limited and reversible effects only (conversely to what happens in the case of basic physiological needs). This appears particularly relevant in the case of leisure activities, and thus of tourism. To the wish of pleasantly spending the time a number of occasions and behaviors may correspond, as much as to the wish to travel the most varied destinations may result gratifying.

In compliance with this base model, the following factors then come into play in defining structurally the tourist behavior: a complex of relatively stable motivations for each individual (which are partially similar for all types of leisure) and a potentiality of almost limitless images (theoretically: any place in the world may be chosen as tourist destination).

To the two factors, however, there must be added the peculiar modes of reality processing by each individual, that is, the cognitive processes relating (and that in certain way do build) motivations and images.

We shall have then "push" factors, that is the motivations, and "pull" factors, that is, the images as well as their interaction, that is, the behavioral process. In literature, emphasis on push and pull factors has been placed by various authors who have dealt with tourism psychology (42; 43). Reference to below mentioned cognitive process instead, is derived from the analyses tradition in general psychology.

On the other hand, these factors act by constantly influencing each other, according to an always relatively unstable dialectical process. This for reason of the feedbacks that continually intervene, through the action and through the same modes of cognitive processing. So that, for instance: even a remote substitutive gratification may sometimes radically change the motivational picture; contact with desired reality supplies new information modifying the image; the intervening of remembrances or of new cognitive processes (the fact of thinking over it) may modify the link-up process with the two parts, etc.

The model here delineated may be thus schematized

PUSH FACTORS

COGNITIVE PROCESSES

PULL FACTORS

4. TOURISM AS LEISURE: DYNAMICS OF MOTIVATIONS

If we compare researches relating to typologies and motivations characterizing both tourist choice and leisure behavior, we immediately notice that there are many points in common. It so happens in fact that, within the ambit of a travel, the individual carries activities that are all so typical of the leisure he carries in his own habitual place of residence, while we observe that the type of gratification sought in leisure time is defined

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by the individual in terms similar to those used by the tourist.

It may therefore be useful to consider tourism a subset of the leisure activity. This does not mean mixing up the two types of activity through over-simplification; rather, to understand better both the phenomena through an analysis of their common elements.

Leisure VS. free time

In the research on the use of "non productive" time, the tendency is generally to distinguish between "free time", meant generically as a quantity of time the individual has available once he has satisfied the duties inherent to his status-role (in particular: work), and "leisure", meant as active search of gratifications through specific behaviors. Such distinction appears, however, of relative use, and is sometimes vitiated by a forced opposition between time of work (defined "a priori" as alienated) and time of relaxation (considered necessarily preferable).

In post industrial society, however, such a distinction appears relatively little useful, apart from certain statistical uses. It so happens in fact that for many individuals work does not necessarily have those connotations of "punishment" that some leisure researchers have attributed to it, while free time may structure according to models approaching working activities (for instance: handicrafts made for hobby), and sometimes it is not appreciated to the expected degree (consider the complex problem of: unemployment, under-occupation and part-time job).

A recent analysis of psychological research on free time, carried by Castelli and Guasco (44), shows that there are numerous theories relating to both categorization and conceptualization of behaviors and leisure related attitudes. Such theories appear, on the other hand, only relatively consistent with another. For instance, there is a current of thought that tends to regard leisure as a moment of subject's individual positive independence, who may thus build an autonomous dimension of life as against society's obligations. Another current, instead, considers leisure a not-less-alienated-from-work activity, that itself may be made instrumental in achieving productive ends (in "capitalism") or that should be coordinated, at any rate, with all other moments of collective life (in "socialism"). This mere example shows how it is not possible to refer to an one-only model of leisure being shared by the community of researchers.

By trying to obtain from such diversity of viewpoints a somewhat common thread, it is possible, however, to circumscribe leisure behavior to a sort of least common denominator which can be useful for our analysis.

Such conditions may be indicatively represented by various particularities. There is neither production of objects or services nor of personal wealth. The behavior consists of some specific activities, but it is always possible to establish an inactivity state. A specific pleasant mood is present, followed by a feeling of relief, the possibility of self-determination, the lack (or little presence) of preoccupations. The leisure behavior is then defined by the fact of its being put into practice on the basis of an intrinsic motivation, and of being structured also in terms of status symbol and of adaptation to an ideal image of self.

Those sociological and socio-psychological variables indirectly defining the actual coming into being of the leisure activity are then added to these conceptual poles. Firstly, there are personal variables, that is, essentially: sex, age, personality, attitudes, education, income, state of health, kind of habitually-done work. To these, financial availability and class-related traditions, type of activity done, family group, friendship groups must be added as well as the status group to whom the individual looks up to in imitative terms.

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Differential models of leisure motivation

The birth of a leisure psychology is especially related to the name of Neulinger (38; 45). Subsequently, however, such a discipline has developed, winning over an increasing number of behavior researchers (44). According to Crandall (48), there is now a separate area of research concerned specifically with "motivations for leisure", although still a sector under development.

To this purpose, various socio-psychological Scales, among others, have been produced (often structured according to the Likert mode I) such as for instance a "leisure Activity Questionnaire"(49), a "Leisure Satisfaction Scale" (50), a "Paragraphs About Leisure" (51), etc., besides various other Scales to which no particular name has been applied.

In these (as in others) researches, slightly different leisure concepts have been adopted, having, however, many elements in common. In the case of field research, the leisure concept (and then of tourism) is generally defined in operational terms, through explicit lists of activities regarded "a priori" as leisure. This allows more clearness, and comparison, between the several researches.

In this sense, a very stimulating research is London's, Crandall's and Fitzgibbons's (52), who purpose to define, among a small sample of Americans, leisure's psychological structure. The Authors observe the existence of 3 main behavior Factors according to which leisure activities organize, and 3 motivation factors segmenting gratifications sought in such activities. Both factor's triads, with the activities and needs that more significantly define them, may be thus synthetized (in a processing based on 52):

STRUCTURE OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES

SPORTS

visiting friends playing baseball playing tennis
playing basketball camping tennis

CULTURAL- PASSIVE

playing records
going to the movies visiting
museums attending concerts
attending sports events reading

PRODUCTIVE- INTELLECTUAL

knitting or crocheting
painting/drawing
cooking/baking
cleaning the house
playing chess hunting

STRUCTURE OF LEISURE MOTIVATIONS

FEEDBACK

- Seeing the results of your efforts
- Knowing how well you are doing without hearing it from others
- hearing how well you are doing from other people
- pressure to do well
- doing many different things, using a variety of skills and talents

L1KING

- feeling satisfied
- liking much to have the opportunity of ...
- not significantly affecting the lives and well being of others

POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

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- high participation (in the last year)
- significantly affecting the lives and well being of others
- cooperating with other people
- developing close friendship
- feeling secure
- feeling important or special

According to the whole of their data, the Authors maintain that "it is possible to differentiate individuals within a group on the basis of their perceptions of leisure activities" (52, p. 260).

In literature, there are various other researches studying both types of leisure activities such as they structure in individuals' habitual behavior (53; 54), and main motivations originating the choice of these activities (49; 55).

For instance, Tinsley and Johnson (51) purpose to define analytically an updated taxonomy of leisure activities, relating it then also to the psychological benefits of participation in the various types of activity. They thus observe the existence of nine relatively homogeneous groups: Intellectual Stimulation (working crossword puzzles, going to movies, reading fiction); Catharsis (jogging, watching basketball, swimming); Expressive Compensation (camping, canoeing, hiking); Hedonistic Companionship (drinking and socializing, attending popular music performances); Supportive Companionship (picnicking, visiting friends and relatives); Secure Solitude (collecting stamps, collecting autographs); Routine, Temporary Indulgence (Shooting pull, playing cards); Moderate Security (Bowling, playing golf); Expressive Aestheticism (Woodworking, raising house plants).

By analyzing then the relationship between the several activities and the relating psychological benefits which are thought to be obtainable from, the Authors observe, for instance, that Intellectual Stimulation relates to a great interest in intellectual aestheticism and wish of solitude. Catharsis is separate from any intellectual gratification and only related to the pleasure of physical exercise. Expressive Compensation attracts mainly "it offers participants an experience which is completely different from that which they find on the job" (51, p. 240). Hedonistic Companionship seems to represent almost a wish of escape from solitude. Supportive companionship is similar to the previous one but with a less gratification of a feeling of power which, instead, is present in that one. Secure Solitude relates to a strong interest in defence and protection. Routine, Temporary Indulgence is chiefly motivated by the wish of killing time, without too much pretension. Expressive Aestheticism relates to an intellectual self-expression in solitude. Moderate Security instead operates medium gratification, and does not seem to be characterized by really original psychological qualities, as against the other behaviors.

Howard (49) goes still deeper in his analysis on the relationships between personality characteristics and types of preferred leisure, utilizing a personality test based on the well-known Murray theory (56). For instance, he observes that persons with high scores on factor "Outdoor Nature - camping, hiking, etc." displayed significant correlations with variables of Endurance, Autonomy, Dominance, Understanding, and a rejection of harm avoidance (...). Persons with high scores on the "Sports" factor - played football, played basketball, attend sports events, etc. - were inclined to be more aggressive, impulsive, and playful than their counterparts (...). Those individuals scoring high on factor "Aesthetic Sophisticate" - played tennis, musical instrument, etc. - exhibited significant positive correlations with the variable exhibitions, dominance and affiliation. (...) Those individuals who scored high on factor "Leisure Detached" - refusal

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of leisure - displayed significant negative correlations with the personality variable exhibition and understanding" (49, p. 232-233).

With an essentially representative sample of American population, Beard and Ragheb (55) develop then deeply a more analytical definition on the motivation originating leisure. Their data do not contradict the others which we have previously seen (52); rather, they further precise them.

The Authors show how four Main Factors may be identifiable in leisure motivation. Such factors are thus described: "The 'Intellectual' component of leisure motivation assesses the extent to which the individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities which involve substantial mental activities such as learning, exploring, discovering, creating or imagining. The "Social" component assesses the extent to reach individuals engage in leisure activities for social reasons. This component includes two basic needs. The first is the need for friendship and interpersonal relationships, while the second is the need for the esteem of others. The "Competence-mastery" component assesses the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities in order to achieve, master challenge, and compete. The activities are usually physical in nature. The "Stimulus-Avoidance" component of leisure motivation assesses the drive to escape and get away from overstimulating life situations. It is the need for some individuals to avoid social contacts, to seek solitude and calm conditions; for others is to seek rest and to unwind themselves" (55, p. 225).

Tourism motivation

Firstly: what characterizes tourism as against leisure, which then causes a separate analysis of the motivations, is the action of space factor. To be more exact: space location plays, besides, two different roles. Tourist behaviors tend to be placed along a gradient ranging from the simple round-trip, made in a single journey both back and forth, to continual movement made for all the time passed outside home. In the first case, we have something close to vacation; in the second, something close to hoboing. Psychologically, the two behavioral models have probably many points in common, as well as plenty of elements of diversity. In reality, however, intermediate situations beside sheer cases are likely to happen. In both situations, on the other hand, dominant characteristic remains the fact of being elsewhere (however staying or moving that one may be).

Tourism literature has often placed emphasis on the travel factor rather than on that of vacation. And even a historically interpreted analysis of the subject (6) tends to speak of explorers and travellers rather than vacationers.

In short, tourist image tends to coincide with the moving tourist. When reconstructing the genesis of tourism, we have then spoken of the religious tradition of pilgrimage (57), that of the eighteenth-century grand tour, and that of afterwar mass tourist. In specialized literature, a tourist phenomenon, then, recalls a conceptual and historical sequence of this kind:

PILGRIMAGE

GRAND TOUR

If closely analyzed, the distinction between the "mystic" pilgrim, eighteenth-century "noble" traveller and present-day "vulgar" tourist appears, however, rather questionable. Respective motivations, real motivations for one's travel choices, as well as structural content of proofs that are left, appear in fact rather similar for all the three types (17).

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We shall deal then with tourism motivations without developing a sharp distinction between the various types of travel and stay. On such motivations, some literature both of analysis and reviewing and field research (16; 43; 58; 59; 60) is available, where theoretical and practical problems related to this specific object of research are also discussed.

There is a distinction between tourism motivations and tourism satisfactions. The first in fact come close to the "pull" factor concept; the second, partly mix with the "push" factor. In research practice such a distinction however is not developed deeply. In fact, it appears difficult to separate, for instance, the wish of calmness from the satisfaction of having found a quiet place, or from the interest in food from good-cooking. Basing on the data of a field research carried among a small "qualitative" sample of Americans, Crompton (43) develops an analytical structuration of psychological tourism motivations. According to his model, tourist choice appears fundamentally decided by a subjective situation of unbalance, which the individual tends to redress by going to a vacation resort. In addition, the situation elements may be structured into two groups of motivations: socio-psychological factors, and cultural factors. For many aspects: these two factors may also be read as "push" factors (socio-psychological ones) as related to the wish of leaving, and as "pull" factors (cultural ones) as related to the definition of the destination to reach (the tool) in order to terminate the original uneasiness state. Crompton's model may be thus synthesized (with a processing from 43):

MOTIVATIONS FOR PLEASURE VACATIONS

SOCIO PSYCHOLOGICAL MOTIVES (push factors)

Escape from a perceived mundane environment
Exploration and evaluation of self
Relaxation
Prestige
Regression
Enhancement of kinship relationship
Facilitation of social interaction

CULTURAL MOTIVES (pull factors)

Novelty
Education

In a research analyzing vacation satisfaction motivations both before and after the travel, Lounsbury and Hoopes (62) observe four main factors determining the interviewed's positive considerations. In some way, themselves such factors also appear hybrid, as they include both the elements of motivations for leaving and those of chosen place as a means to gratify departure motivations. I give, however, the scheme, with some of the more significant items:

VACATION SATISFACTION VARIABLES (main items)

RELAXATION AND LEISURE

The way your plans worked out
The way you felt emotionally
The way you felt physically

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The pace-of-life you experienced

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The opportunities you had to be "close to nature" The weather

The amount of pretty scenery you saw

ESCAPE

Your opportunities for "getting away from it all"

Your opportunities for being alone

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

How your children behaved

Your relationship with your spouse/lover

FOOD AND LOGGING

The food you ate The accommodations

In addition, there are examples of tourism motivation analysis, developing models of phenomenon reading based on reference to disciplinary specific models such as psychoanalysis (63) or anthropology (39).

According to such perspective, tourism fundamentally represents a sort of recurring-character, culturally-structured collective travel, to which the generality of individuals participates, although lacking full awareness of its profound meaning. It concerns, among others: a mystic rebirth (accentuated by the ritual of immersion into water; a reconstruction of "precivilized" and nearly wild world (where many walk about halfnaked and in occasional "hordes"); a regression to infantile emotional stages characterized by the indulgence in the more simple functions of life (such as eating and drinking at will); a narcissistic shut-up on one's own thoughts, coupled to unusual attention to one's own body; a moment in which a time-radical suspension is subjectively lived (thanks also to the contact with symbols of civilizations); a loosening of sexual restrictions typical of civilization. It concerns in practice a year's period representing a midway between Carnival and New Year's Day.

Finally, in order to complete the analysis of tourism motivations, it is necessary to underline that many contributions to the subject propound to take it for granted that tourism is made up of exclusively positive realities. In truth: there exists many indications (3; 19; 59) that tourist situation, although actively sought, may represent an uneasiness motive as well. In particular: it has been observed that travel produces in many individuals uneasiness of psychosomatic and psycho-physical nature. According to Rubenstein (59), in the travel experiences of his American tourists sample, there are present phenomena such as: feeling tired and energyless (34% of cases), feeling irritable or angry (30%), quarrelsome with fellow travellers (21 %), constantly preoccupied or anxious (27%), with digestive problems (16%), lack of interest in sex (22%), headache (21 %), insomnia (11 %), etc. In practice: almost a third of the tourists would be suffering at least a little during the travel.

That is, for some aspects, it seems that in the vacation situation a rather complex twoway attitude develops. This derives both from the fact that it is possible that related-to-the-environment-novelty might take place and from the fact that the for -someaspects constrictive nature of tourist activity which, having become in our cultures an almost obligatory choice, may sometimes end up with assuming some characteristics of duty besides pleasure's.

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In order to understand fully psychological tourism motivations, it is then necessary to realize those that, socio-psychologically speaking, are the barriers opposing travel choice. McIntosh (54) observes essentially 5 motivations: expense, lack of time, physical limitations, family stage, lack of interest. Analogous motivations for the failing of tourist choice are also found in an analysis of ours of available researches in literature (12, part one), but with the addition of the reference to the fact that: it is preferred to remain at home (even in the absence of particular barriers), there is no fellow traveller with whom to go, it is thought to live in an already suitable piece of vacation.

5. TOURISM AS CHOICE: IMAGES AND MAPS

Environmental representations

A fundamental established fact of ecopsychological (25; 26) research consists in the arrived-at conviction that, in order to understand fully the relationship between the individual and his environment, we should not limit ourselves to consider only what the environment "is", but also what the environment "appears". This derives essentially from the fact that man does not act in the world on the basis of the totality of possible cognitions relating to his environment (the absolute concept of physical world), but on the basis of the elements with which he has come into contact (through perception) or of which he has subjectively formed an idea (through received information and through personal cognitive processing of it).

In order to understand this concept, it is very useful the distinction proposed by Koffka (28), and typical of environmental psychology (29), between "geographical environment" and "behavioral environment", where for geographical environment it is meant the physical platform within which one moves, and for the behavioral environment the subjective references of such movement. The distinction between the two is made clear through the classical example, proposed by Koffka (28), of the rider who, after having crossed a plain in a cold winter's night, experiences a great emotion when he realizes that the plain is a frozen lake. Behaviorally speaking: he has first crossed a plain, and then (but only in the remembrance) he has crossed lake; or better: he has first made a journey, and then he has run (still in terms of mental integration "a posteriori") a terrible danger. These variations at the behavioral level, however, do not interfere with the "geographical" reality of his movement (which, in the absence of subsequent information on the existence of a lake, the rider would not ever have even imagined).

In general: it may be assumed that geographical environment is relatively the same for all individuals, whereas behavioral environment varies at least slightly from one individual to another. This distinction appears essential in the case of tourism as well. It is in fact evident that, to a same geographical reality, experiences rather different from one individual to another correspond, and even more, from several groups of individuals playing different roles in the tourist process.

The tourist image

The same beach is different for the permanent tourist, for the passing tourist, for the weekender, for women, children, youth of the neighbourhood, beach-attendant, the inhabitants of that place, those of next-to place, mayor, head of sanitary institute, organizer of tourist group, tour operators in his office, husbands remained in town, etc. Simultaneously: to many individuals different places may appear rather similar such as

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happens for he who seeks "the sea" or "an isle in the ocean" or "a good hotel" or "an organized tour" or "the ancient civilizations", and that, in his research of a kind, may find himself in evaluating substantially identical situations which are geographically very far.

The importance of environmental image in the case of travel is given also by the fact that, as has been pointed out (for instance in 66), the tourist tends to choose firstly the vacation destination or the kind of travel to be made, only secondly seeking a specific accommodation in that place. The kind of received welcome will have a certain weight on the determining of the final satisfaction, but will act only indirectly.

For many reasons tourism very mechanism tends to accentuate these effects. The huge number of travellers, and the great quantity of tourist-calling places, tend to produce a complex play of variations and similarities. Each place in fact tries to differentiate from all others in order to have some special attraction making it different and more desirable, in addition to being relatively unreplaceable to the eyes of potential tourists. Simultaneously: tour operators and travel agencies try not to over-differentiate and not to make too exclusive the places, so as to drive more elastically the tourist flows towards areas which would homogeneously fall within their productive strategies, without undergoing the pressure capacity put upon by much-sought places on tourist flows (and thus capable of imposing their own conditions, leaving to the middleman little to play upon).

Independently of the policies operated by the tourist offer, there are then some mechanisms which are difficult to control (that is, substantially "spontaneous"), acting on determining the demand. These are the cultural and psychological processes causing the forming of environmental images, and interacting with the reality of the places of destination. Such images of tourist resorts represent the conceptual component of the pull factors.

In the case of tourist image, it is then essential that the individual should have awareness of its existence, that is, that he should be capable of distinguishing it from nontourist places. One of the typical characteristics of the place of vacation, in terms of image, is that of belonging to the specific category of tourism. Independently of the particular cases which are being epitomized, the "touristic" must spatially express through the adhesion to an archetype defined in relatively strict terms. To the formation of such model, both individual's motivations and structure of expectations, the mass-media and the tendency to the behavioral reiteration characterizing travel behavior contribute. Each individual's choices, although varying considerably from one individual to another, all develop within the ambit of this original model.

This seems to derive from criteria which may be defined as answering to a goal of "cognitive saving". It is in fact much practical to follow a somewhat already traced path, as this eliminates the mental uneasiness and anxieties which a choice between an excessive number of alternatives involves. Simultaneously: the very idea of tourism presupposes the existence of tourist resorts, meant as different from the usual places. In fact, if post industrial society has chosen to renew itself through the Elsewhere (instead of through a week of Carnival in the square), it is necessary, however, that such Elsewhere should satisfy cultural rituals to it characteristic. A good way to be sure of having indeed spent a vacation is then that of having been in a certainly tourist place. This mechanism tends to modify also the individual's image of the habitual place of residence (14; 67). In order that an image of Elsewhere may be formed as opposed to the everyday of the Here, it is in fact necessary that the differences between the two areas should be established (17). It easily happens then that the tourist tends to exaggerate the environmental, cultural and atmospheric diversities presented by the tourist place, in order that he may have to a greater extent the feeling of living a different ex-

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perience.

The existence of a mental category specific of "tourist piace" is also of use from the viewpoint of the research of information useful to determine one's travel choice. In fact, the individuai will develop a selective attention to those stimuli that will present to him as easily categorizable in terms of "vacation destination" instead of, for example, in terms of "a piace where it is easy to find work". He will tend then to activate cognitively his attention (in a tourist perspective) only when he perceives precisely a "tourist" stimulus (a nice picture, an adventurous and romantic tale, etc.).

Many researches have been carried on tourist image characteristics, both with the intent of defining the concept of "ideai" tourist piace and of developing a differential analysis of different possible destinations (68; 69; 70; 71). Putting together the data provided by some researches in literature (18; 20; 72), what the average tourist seems more often to expect, may be synthetized in a list including several factors (sometimes intercontradictory).

THE IMAGE OF TOURIST PLACE

- sun
- sea
- good weather
- culture and inheritance from the past
- possibility of meeting with the other sex
- adaptation to tourist fashion
- nature
- scenery and characteristical landscapes
- possibility to cooperate with local population
- folklore and festival
- night life
- good hotel structure
- good food
- possibility to move about
- value (good ratio quality/price)
- calmness VS. adventure (dangerless)
- presence of other tourists VS. feeling of solitude
- novelty VS. familiarity with the piace
- saving VS. luxury.

In determining the choice of one piace rather than another, subjective perception of presence or absence of the various factors plays a considerable role. On the other hand, it should be considered that this list represents an average indication, and that the importance of each factor in determining one's choice of tourist destination varies from a type of individuai to another. There are, however, some recurring tendencies, so that to certain places particular experiences tend to correspond.

The various researches seem to point out that subjective structuration of each piace (be it tourist or otherwise) tends to organize on a model of stereotypal character, independently of geographical and historical reality of the piace itself. A particularly pointfui case is that of the third world (60; 73), which represents the seat, in terms of geographical environment, of situations of dire poverty and under-development but also, in terms of behavioral environment, of many vacation "paradise" where well-being seems to reign supreme beside an eternally happy life, recalling the utopia of the good

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savage.

There are some experimental evidences suggesting how the forming of impressions relating to a place may follow a path in some way similar to that of the forming of impressions relating to one's fellows (74). This suggests that relatively few elements are sufficient, provided that they conform to individuals' expectations, to build an environmental image which for many aspects is "false" but well rooted. This mechanism adds to usual distorting tendencies, encouraging in the individual the forming of international prejudices, easily determining a vicious circle of fancy expectations which often end up with being confirmed by the selective attention the individual himself pays to finding the proofs precisely of that which he already expected from the beginning. Thus in Scotland, all the men walk about wearing a skirt and playing bagpipes, in Italy eat spaghetti with the mandolin, while in Spain all dance flamenco and in Germany drink beer with wurst sausage.

And yet: it is precisely these stereotypes that determine some aspects of international tourism, such as it presents in post industrial society. The motivation to escape and to novelty that drive many to travel would remain unsatisfied if the tourist's movements should not happen, at least behaviorally, in a completely different way. And it is probable that there would be considerably fewer tourists to London, or to the Blue Coast, if of these areas an image of industrial areas overcramped with traffic jam should be accentuated.

The question of the subjective images of places has originated the study of those called mental maps (75; 76). In particular, it has been noticed how such maps tend to structure according to certain recurring modes, such as: a vision of the world containing many fewer elements than those actually available (and thus a high selectivity and shortcoming of the maps); a structuration of the world in a neighbourhood and an Elsewhere on the basis of a strongly homecentered habitat vision, where far places appear increasingly faded and where there appears a series of "isles" relatively distant one another on the basis of one's experience (real or mass-media-derived); a separation between familiar places and otherwise, easy-to-reach and difficult-to reach places (which partly corresponds to a subjective distance not necessarily coinciding with kilometric distance), places specialized for scenery landscapes and functions (natural, industrial, tourist, etc.), unique places and ordinary places, desirable places and places to shun, etc.

Riley and Palmer (77) help us to understand the interest such question presents to the eyes of a tourism researcher through a research on seaside resorts, which makes use of the Repertory Grid Analysis carried among a North European sample. Such research points out, for instance, that image of places such as Majorca, Rimini and Benidorm is characterized with: hot, more sunshine, different food, gay night life, good hotels. St. Ives, Newquay and Torquay instead are typically expensive, exclusive, warm with good beaches, whereas Aberdeen, Southend and Margate on the other hand result less classy and endowed with poorer scenery.

It is presumably that to such image differences individuals' different behaviors correspond. In particular: there will be an "a priori" selection so that, for instance, a family with children of tender age will orient towards an essentially different image from that which may attract a youth out amorous adventures or an aged professor of history of art.

At an international scale, it has been noticed, for instance, that among the Canadian public (78), Central America's Caribbean Area is experienced as endowed with good weather and hectic night life, whereas Europe is considered rather the place of residence of friends and relatives, with historical places and nice sceneries.

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Environmental communication

In determining tourist images, one of the more important factors is represented by mass-media effect. Among these, there must be counted both communication operated especially for persuasive purposes, that is, advertising and publicity, promotional activity in general, and all information which the individual is exposed to, although with accidental reference to the tourist phenomenon. There is then an operational range from agencies' brochures, hired pages in periodical magazines, tv spots, editorials in between news, tourist guide-books, leisure reviews, geography school textbooks, foreign reportages, travel literal accounts, to books of adventure, etc. To these public sources, more private information are added such as, accounts of friends and relatives, photographs of their vacation, one's personal experience, etc. All these point of stimulus are then reprocessed by the individual who interprets and autonomously organizes them into his own mnemonical structures.

Part of these environmental images is voluntarily built by pressure groups, purposing explicitly to reach the objective of creating a favourable tourist image in order to gear tourist demand towards specific places. Such actions base fundamentally, such as happens for the generality of persuasive communication, on the emphasizing of positive elements, on the non-mentioning of negative aspects and on the utilization, as a lever to stimulate the desired behavior into the potential target, of references that sum up past individuals' behavior (history or recurrent habits of the practice in question) by symbolic aspects and motivations of a very general character.

One of the primary objectives of advertising communication is also that of creating in the public the awareness of the existence of one's object. Tourism communication, in fact, purposes to bring into focus a geographical reality with the aim of not to mix it with the background of the rest of the world, of building around it what is called an "image" (23). All recent history of tourism development is constellated with the "tourist" discovery of places (isles, villages and towns) which until just recently before were completely ignored by the very individuals that now seem to dream of nothing else but to go there.

To the objective of creating an awareness, the intent of reducing the feeling of subjective risk, ever present (as potential deterrent) in the individual's mind juxtaposes. This goal is usually attained by supplying much information (or at least its appearance), a sort of "taste" of the tourist package (illustrations and the brochure's texts), and social witnessing (everybody is talking about it, even the tour operator himself has been there, etc.).

In addition, tourism persuasive communication purposes the objective of stressing the presence of symbolic differences allowing the establishing in the potential public's mind of a rooted distinction (as subjective and thus relatively impermeable to actual verifications) between the different destinations. It is then desired to create the perception of marginal advantages in the proposed formula, as against what the overall tourist panorama offers (in which the various places present at first sight as relatively similar to one another). It is also tried to awake an imitative behavior, by presenting the choice in question as typical of social groups which the individual may consider reference groups to look up to (the jet-set, the people who know how to live, the happy family, etc.). Objective of publicity is also that of producing in the individual the highest possible involvement, so that choice operated may enter permanently the user's project of life.

Several authors have studied the characteristics of advertising communication relating to tourism (5; 79; 80; 81; 82; 83). They have gathered that, firstly, tourist communication universally proposes a sun-mithology as a reference point for every vacation situa-

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tion. There is almost no publicity communication relating to travels in which there is not present a reference (iconic or textual) to a brilliant sun. The tourist utopia, such as witnessed by these communications, is in short, an extratemporal condition, at least from the meteorological viewpoint.

Besides sun, another component is the recall, necessarily in stereotypical form, to mankind's roots. Such recall refers both to history proper, and thus to the events happened over the last centuries (art galleries, monuments, historical buildings, etc.), to the more indistinct periods of the relatively remote past (archaeological museums, excavations, etc.) and to the past in the more primordial sense of the word (folklore, savage animals and tribes, geological structures, etc.). It concerns differing and variously culturized levels of a return to the origins, but the general concept appears again that of a revisitation of what has been in order to obtain an occasion of renewal from it.

This group of communications, largely corresponding to what the tourist expects to do or at least to the climaxes of his vacation (staying in the sun and regressing into the past), on the other hand, seems to relate to some symbolic components of a regenerative character precisely. From the sun and intense, primordial and nearly magic energy it is tried to obtain, from the biological and historical past a new legitimization in terms of human condition. In either case: with respect to nature and the better quality for being man (the time that was) a sort of symbolic cannibalism seems to express, allowing the acquiring (by absorbing them) of world's positive valencies, substituting them for the elements of toxicity which we have been stuck with during civil life.

Of considerable relevance is also the effect of tourist guide-books, which supply further support to the stereotypical but profoundly felt conception by individuals, of tourist environment. Studies hitherto made (84; 85) show on the other hand that tourist guide-books tend to confirm tourist's expectations, and above all to emphasize always and in all cases exceptionally elements (to describe whatever place as "picturesque"). Tourist guide-books contents on the other hand seem to develop in the course of time according to succeeding cycles, which retrace the cultural evaluation present over the various historical periods.

As basic tendency: tourist guide-book has always primarily the function of psychologically assuring the traveller of the facts that all is under control and that there is an answer for every problem. To this amulet character, even today, it is, besides, coupled the concept of "Open Sesame", opening the door to the Mysterious World through the indication of both the things to do, how to do them, and the secrets behind the appearance (often dangerously Normal) of tourist places.

It seems, however, that the space which the eighteenth-century guide-book had, which coincided more or less with narrations of travel having a literary and not seldom emphatic character, representing more than other a way to live or relive in emotional terms the travel dimension (72) has considerably restricted. In particular, we notice the spreading of ever technical guide-books, proposing in addition implicit objectives of tourist's education to facts. Today, that is, it is preferred a nearly manualistic and instrumental guide-book concept, appearing increasingly as a geography textbook, or as a series of instructions for use of the Elsewhere.

6. TOURISM AS COGNITIVE PROCESS: A STRATEGY OF PROBLEM SOLVING

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Tourist behavior may be also interpreted in terms of a general problem that the individual experiences. He feels he is both partly driven by a basic psychological need, and attracted by the alluring symbols provided by the images the world proposes to him. He therefore finds himself in the position that he has to tally the optimal mechanism of drive conciliation with the object capable of gratifying him, but taking into account all the constraints already framing his life both in "objective" terms (physical, temporal, economic constraints, etc.) and in "subjective" terms (personality characteristics and cultural influences).

Simultaneously: tourism presents itself as a behavior having by now an history and regularities of its own, which are determined by behavioral stratifications caused by practice. That is, to the variety of individual attitudes some regularities seem to correspond, involving ample groups of individuals. Even for the case of tourist behavior the rule holds good that individual's action is subjectively determined; such subjectivity, however, does not mean causality and lack of rules, but rather the action of specific rules characterizing what is subjective.

Tourist learning

The observation that travel in post-industrial society is in part a "duty" (19) gives us an indication of character learnt by tourist practice. Vacation is part of the employment contract, and the concept of going on vacation is rooted in the existential cadences structuring the year of the average citizen. Summertime New Year's Day (or Carnival) presupposes, in order to obtain reality's symbolic refundation, a physical transfer to the Elsewhere world so as to return in fully renewed conditions to the Here world and of Normality. Escape from this obligation means to violate an accepted social rule and gives the impression of not having obtained something which was, after all, to be had. The individual who does not go on vacation often feels he has missed a chance, and that he has been incapable of freeing himself from the "intoxications" produced by previous year's quotidianities.

Primarily, tourist behavior is learnt by itself, in the sense that a growing part of population has been travelling for pleasure ever since early childhood. That means it has learnt to consider tourism a "natural" component of existence, and goes on vacation on precisely with the very matter-of-factness such as when it had to go to school, washes its teeth, or opens an account-current. It is, however, useful to remind that all these behaviors in reality are historically recent, relatively arbitrary usages, although the habit we have of doing them makes them felt to us as obvious.

In addition, the citizen learns what are the characteristics of a real vacation. As we have seen: one of the more typical qualities of destinations chosen as objectives by tourist practice is the fact of belonging to a specific category of individuals' subjective geography, of their behavioral environment, that is, precisely to the "tourist place" category. The great migratory-tourist flows then gear primarily towards places which are tourist by definition. In other words (and analogously to what happens for other behaviors as well): the public tends to do what he has already done.

A proof of the reiterative character of usages relating to vacation is offered by a recent research on the Italian population (86). Data show that the majority of the sample tend to go again to a tourist place they have previously been once (19%) or more (45%). About a third only (36%) go there for the first time. Faithfulness to vacation place is very strong in the case of stay-vacation, whereas much less so in the case of travelvacation.

These data are further confirmed by a research of ours on the Varese lake area (18). We have had in fact occasion to notice that in this typical context of stay-vacation, a

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fourth only (26%) of the interviewed were touring through that area for the first time, as against nearly a third (30%) stating directly they had been frequenting the area "ever since". In short, the wish to return to the already been-to place appears rather strong.

A better understanding of such rooted disposition to repeat oneself may be obtained if we examine the tourist phenomenon in terms of learnt behavior. Analogously to the generality of situations in which a choice is to be made between the many possible alternatives, in the case of vacation as well typical mechanisms do come into play, which stand behind the adoption process of any behavioral strategy (23; 32; 33). When individual has to decide whether to travel or stay at home, driven to travel will he be by the various motivations we have previously seen, but also by the fact that everybody goes on vacation and that he, too, has become used to it. Analogously to many other behaviors: the strongest drive to put them into effect originates from their social spreading.

However, tourist learning is put a brake upon by some elements hampering its growth. Financial limitations, work necessity, insecurity feeling, etc., will play against travel choice. The threshold of travel activation having been crossed (that is, once having decided to go) to choose between the many opportunities available shall have then to take place.

On all the choice process phase, however, the mechanism of information search, on which to base one's choice, will have a relevant role. Such mechanism will fundamentally consist in paying special attention, in conscious and active terms, to those very sources we have seen characterizing the forming of tourist images. Brochures, advertisements and leisure reviews will be consulted, attention will be paid to what newspapers say, opinion will be asked of friends and relatives who have already experienced the potentially reachable places. There will be voluntary exposure to mass-media in order to self-convince oneself that what one has in mind to do is wise.

It must be then considered that tourist choice happens at a high level of involvement. That is, it does not concern an occasional and extemporaneous gesture; rather something involving relevant aspects of the individual's life. It concerns an action requiring considerable expenditure, comparable to the purchase of a durable and, besides, a question regarding the individual's life to the full, although for only the vacation's period, that has therefore influence over all the image of the tourist's Self.

For a better understanding of the question, it may be observed how the expense for a single tourism "unit" is not lower than that for the purchase of a household appliance, but is placed at a level indicatively approaching the individual's month salary. It concerns, besides, an expense which generally does not associate with the acquiring of any tangible goods, since the vacation's content is all in "immaterial" qualities. That is, we face a profoundly consumer behavior, the object of which fails the moment in which it is enjoyed (similarly to what happens for a soft drink or a chewing gum), requiring, however, an expense being usually considered approaching sheer investment (comparable to that for a piece of furniture or a second-hand car).

Tourist action will then be constantly followed by the preoccupation of reducing travel risks. It concerns, in fact, moving away from home, from all material and psychological security structures to it related, and tackling new, potentially hostile environments. Although among his motivations there is that of finding novelties and intense emotions, the individual wishes in all case to live securely. In fact, he is continually being caught up between hammer and anvil where on one side there is the wish to do something different, and on the other the fear to encounter something too much different (and thus unpleasant).

With the generic risk of personal security (in real or fancy terms), financial risk is asso-

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ciated, related to a hardly-expected-in-the-beginning expenditure. Social risk then is ever present, which, associated as it is with a very much visible choice, contributes to a public definition of individual's status (where there is even the risk of going to the "wrong" place). It follows that tourist choice associates with a series of preoccupations and anxieties to a matter of even considerable degree. It will be necessary, in fact, to lose time in gathering information on the potential tourist places, operate a choice in financial terms (how much is it justified to spend for a vacation? Will it be worthwhile to spend more to go to a farther and more famous place?), face the tension determined by the uncertainty of the choice between a huge variety of possibilities.

The individual is then brought to bring into play choice simplification mechanism, helping him to reduce subjective risk and psychological tension. He will thus tend to follow mental paths that present somewhat as guaranteed. And the best way consists in doing what he has already done, that is, what others (friends, mass-media) have experienced for him. What matters is the being capable of structuring at departure one's forecast of what will happen in terms which would not include sheer elements of risk (apart from those exorcisable by a simple assurance-on-travel policy). Tourist choice process may therefore also be read as a learnt sequence, in which the individual learns to be tourist by solving (in an ever refined way through time) the problem of structuring his travel at best.

On the other hand, such learning refers to all vacation elements. Therefore, a tourist place, or a typology (Southern isles, castles), or a mode (plane, tour) may be "learnt". And even he who often changes his travel destination (in this driven perhaps by the intent of gathering the highest possible range of emotions) operates through a progressive expansion mechanism, often supported by a travel organization, looking in all cases to points of support that would make him feel assured (such as a friend's address, a reliable baedeker, a credit card, etc.). There exist likely different levels of risk acceptance, related to individual's personality and socio-psychological characteristics. A certain caution however, is widespread.

In the learning process, cognitive dissonance mechanism also plays a significant role (87; 88) that is, the individual's tendency to balance the information he has on the world so as to obtain an homogeneous and uncontradictory image. This has considerable weight in the case of tourism, which we have seen to be a rather demanding choice. It should be then observed that the band of tourist possibilities includes a wide series of places to which the individual has not previously been, which he is not therefore in a position to evaluate upon. So that, for instance, once he has determined his destination (and during the journey and way back), he may be always entertained by the doubt that another destination might have been better.

Similarly to what happens in the case of high involvement choices (13), the individual will actively seek elements confirming the positive components of his travel, utilize other people as reference point for information and imitation, be rather impermeable to accepting counterarguments once decided on a definite objective, easily feel a certain dissonance subsequent to his choices (as he will feel he will not be able to go back and take up another from the many, and similar, possible choices), and so he will try continually to assure himself of the positivity of the choice he has made.

To this "a posteriori" need of assurance, there relates the frequent statement on the part of the tourist of wanting to return to the place he has just been to, his disposition to show to everyone the pictures he has taken of the travel and telling his adventures (so as to obtain, that is, a public sanction of his doing), as well as to pay attention to the mentioning in mass-media of elements relative to his travel. In short, he will tend to operate a self-learning mechanism by which he will self-supply to himself the cor-

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roboration to continue the taken way.

An indirect demonstration of all this is supplied, besides, by the fact that the generality of tourists state that they have been satisfied with the vacation spent, as is shown by the various researches (3; 18), independently of the fact of having suffered some discomfort (sometimes considerable).

Tourist contracting

In each individual's mind, tourist choice follows a conceptual process. Such process is also generally inserted into a process of collective problem solving, involving other people. In fact, tourist choice very often happens on the basis of contracting between the family's other members, or with a group of friends. Even he who travels alone, before leaving, has often had to decide whether to join or not other people's programmes (already known or belonging to organized tours). Interpersonal relationship often has considerable weight on tourist behavior determining. Among other reasons, this derives from the assuring capacity inherent to the fact of travelling with other people, or at least from the higher certainty of having had a better pick if it is decided through comparison with other people's.

Travel decision-making strategies tend especially to interact with habitual processes standing behind the structuring and maintaining of family cohesion. Therefore, they reflect involved individuals' culture-class, as well as their specific family history. According to Jenkins (66), among American families, vacation decision-making process happens through a complex mechanism of negotiation with the action of coalition between a parent and his sons. A compromise is generally the result of such negotiation, reflecting a single member's higher persuasive power. According to a research conducted among upper class Belgian couples (89), decision on vacation seems to be characterized in the final choice by a syncretic influence of both parents, but information research on the matter tends to be carried by only one parent who appears then the family travel expert. Another research, comparing spousal influences on the choice processes operated among five countries in three continents (90) shows that vacation choice is essentially a joint decision in France, in the United States of America and in Holland, and is more, instead, an autonomous husband dominated decision in Venezuela and Gabon.

Travel can also be the release valve of possible tensions within the family. This happens both through the opportunity, that vacation offers, of establishing interactions in a particularly relaxed, and thus potentially more intense and truer, atmosphere, and (more seldom) through the opportunity of a temporary higher-freedom condition (possibility for the young to be out all day with friends and come home late at night, separate vacations, etc.). Vacation situation, instead, tends to be a motive of tension in insufficiently well-structured interpersonal relationships, such as happens in somewhat occasionally gathered groups of friends. On the other hand, it has been shown how, at least in the case of groups using a car, there are fewer opportunities of conflict in families than in non-habitually-living-together groups of individuals (91).

In short: in the analysis of tourist choice behavioral strategies, interpersonal dynamics (especially family's) should also be taken into account in order to understand thoroughly the meaning of what the public do.

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7. RESEARCHES ON TYPOLOGIES OF USERS

Research on potential tourism

Researches on tourist values typical of the population as a whole give significant indications on the psychological reality of tourist behavior. Such researches purpose to define public's experiences in its whole. That is, they try to understand the attitudes and values characterizing present-day social culture with regard to travel activity. Their aim is to identify tourism conceptual picture (individual and collective), its behavioral and cultural models, in terms relatively independent of actually chosen tourist destinations. Although in its relationship with objects, behavior is often determined by a circular causality (so that, as we have often indicated, it is not easy to establish a dividing line between push factors and pull factors), the possibility to know from the beginning how tourist interests spread within population is in all cases of considerable use. Therefore, it concerns more to develop a definition of the various types of tourism present in a given culture than to identify Tourist's archetypal profile (92).

For instance, a distinction between the essentially contemplative tourist, whose relationship with the new environment is based on pure admiration (almost, as if he would mingle with it), and the activist tourist, whose approach to places is aggressive as if he should have to conquer them, has been proposed (93). Another example is Cohen's classical work (34) who distinguishes between: tourists, territorialists, students, pilgrims, old-country visitors, conventioners, business travellers, tourist employees. Cohen (58; 94; 95; 96), still, structures a typology based on various types of tourists, of which three appear particularly significant. There is the vacationer, inclined especially to permanent and quiet vacation, based on rest and not too much novelty. There is the sightseer, who seeks scenery and cultural stimuli, with a certain disposition to move, visiting several places in a single travel. There is the drifter, who represents present-day, affluent version of the hobo, interested almost more in just moving about than in the places he comes close to during his continual going places.

Other researches have revealed that there is relationship between individual's value attitudes and his tourist disposition. For instance, Voiland (97) observes how, among a student sample, there is diversity of habits to vacation between individuals sensitive to questions of environment protection and those who are not. Besides, it has also been verified how, consistently with what we should have expected on the basis of the analysis by Max Weber (98), individuals of Protestant religion are relatively little attracted by the ethics of vacation (99).

In addition, there is also who has tried to define the role of the various types of traveller through their social images (3, p. 32). A multiple-choice questionnaire provides pointful profiles. For instance, the Tourist in general is characterized by the fact that "takes photos, buys souvenirs, goes to famous places, stays briefly in one place, does not understand the local people". The Traveller resembles the previous one, but with variations, as he "stays briefly in one place, experiments with local food, goes to famous places, takes photos, explores places privately". The Jet-setter "lives a life of luxury, concerned with social status, seeks sensual pleasures, prefers interacting with people of his/her own kind, goes to famous places". The Hippie "does not buy souvenirs, does not live a life of luxury, is not concerned with social status, does not take photos, does not contribute to the economy"; etc.

More recent socio-psychological research has utilized the conceptual model of researches called psychographics or life-style (100; 101). These generally consist in submitting a series of statements relating to a variety of activities, interests, and opinions to a population sample. Answers thus obtained are processed usually both

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through factor analysis and through cluster analysis, and a definition is obtained both of chief factors, which stand at the base of the behavior, and of typologies of users. An important objective of psychographic research in fact is that of achieving (through the sample) a sub-group segmentation of the researched universe.

Concept standing behind life-style researches is based on the conviction that the significant clusters into which population may be segmented describe single individuals' opinions and behaviors better than it would be obtainable by analyzing all the population as a whole. Reference provided by answers given by the sample as a whole is es. senti al as a starting point, but sub-groups are more realistic. It is believed in fact that complexity of present-day life, single personalities, historical stratification of culture and individual biographical experience, produce behavioral typologies much differing one another but relatively similar for groups of individuals.

Psychographic researches are usually structured according to two modes: some try to tackle the totality of the activities, interests and opinions characterizing the whole of a culture, purposing to gather general typologies of individuals segmentation by sub-cultures; others, instead, tackle deeply a single theme, and limit to define specific typologies relating to that theme.

Examples of tourism psychographics

By various works (102; 103; 104), Perreault, Darden and colleagues, develop a psychographic among American citizens, succeeding in showing that there exist generalized vacation life-styles and that such vacation life-styles differ according to sociologically relevant variables. Interviewed sample's travel-related habits and attitudes, that is, appear more understandable if reference is made to social sub-groups than to society as a whole. The Authors reveal the presence of 5 main sub-groups. I here quote a description of them, borrowing in part from the researchers' own words (104, p. 219-221).

The first group is that of "Budget Travellers", who account for 28% of the total sample. They "are interested in travel and seek travel information, but their major vacation interests are economy-oriented. For example, they are high on interest in camping and are relatively high on educational historic travel. There is consistency and additional support for these findings in that these "Budget Travellers" indicate little interest in cosmopolitan, first class, or jet-setter type travel activities". They have a medium income, are often married, with sons, and have had a fair level of education.

There are then the "Adventures" (24%). They "like adventure (...) they exhibit a relatively low desire for relaxing travel and relatively high disposition toward venturesomeness. The adventurers are relatively money oriented in their travel and willing to indulge in jet-set type activities and one-upmanship in their travel activities". They are relatively young, highly educated, and with decidedly higher-than-average incomes. The third group includes the "Homebodies" (20%) that "are distinctive in what they do not do in terms of travel. The people in this group enjoy relaxing travel, but have no interest in vacation travel, do not seek travel information, are not venturesome, and have a low predisposition to travel. They do not enjoy camping, educational, economic, historical or tour travel. They do not share vacation talk with others, are not at all gregarious, and do not want family vacations. They are not opinion leaders in travel. They probably fulfill their relaxation motives more easily by standing at home than by travelling during the vacations". They have a good income, but are less optimistic about their financial future than the Adventures are. They do not like vacationing mainly because all their life is based on staying quietly at home.

There is the small group of "Vacationers" (7%) that represent "the antithesis of the

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Homebodies. These people do not occupy the lowest rank on any of the areas of vacation interest. They are most interested in vacation travel and most apt to be opinion leaders about vacation travel. They plan ahead more, but are more undecided about their vacations (...). Their interest in travel is reflected in the fact that they travel more on weekends. They would like cosmopolitan, first class travel and are one-upmanship oriented to travel. They are functionally gregarious and like family oriented vacations". They generally have a poor education and engage in decision-making activities. They are very active over all the forefront of social activities and neighbourliness in general. Finally, there is the group of the "Moderates" (21,5%), who tend more or less to be averagely-ranked in all the various attitudes and behaviors scales utilized in the research. They figure averagely al so with respect to age, income, education and in general to the various socio-economic characteristics.

Still through a psychographic analysis, it has been researched the profile of those individuals who are thought to be more disposed to engage in new forms of vacation leisure time activities, who are defined "Vacation Innovators" (103). An important percentage of these is found in the group of "First Class Travelers", that of financially rather capable tourists. Some, however, are also found among the less affluent individuals, but who are interested to learn and improve themselves, that is, among the interviewed more disposed to perceive the vacation in terms of romantic and adventurous dream. In general: it very often concerns people who base their existence on work rather than on their home and homelife in general.

A research carried among the European cultural area, precisely referred to the Italian case (86), gives some further indications on tourist psychological typologies. This research, relating to a tourist type likely different from that proper to North-American culture, shows, for instance, that the more widespread vacation life-style in Italy is that permanent, called "stay-vacation" (80%), as against "travel-vacation" (16%), with minimal relevance (for the remaining 4%) for boating, cruising and travelling for cultural events. Italian tourists remain mostly in Italy (87%) whereas only a minority travel abroad (13%).

In general typological terms, three vacation life-styles are mainly sought, synthetically definable thus: "Lively Relaxing" (35%), "Entertainment" (21 %), "Absolute Calmness" (20%), whereas all the other tourist life-styles revealed by the research (Sports and Health; Adventure; Culture and Study; Natural Treatment; Thermal Treatment: Sports and Hobby; Hobby) are present all in modest percentages.

Cluster analysis carried on the data reveals eight main tourist types, whom I here shall briefly describe by order of importance. The more widespread one is the "Hedonist", devoted to relax and pleasure, unengaged, lazy, disposed to entertainment, frequenter of the more traditional places. Then, there is the "Narcissist", eager to be liked by his own self and by others, devoting much care to his body, often having good financial means, disposed to calmness. These two typologies alone account for about half Italian tourists.

There is then the "Healthiest" tourist, often affluent or intellectual, with environmental, industrial-against, consumer-against dispositions (at least as stated values), especially careful for psychological integrity; the "Sporty", who takes advantage of vacation to take exercise; the "Mole" particularly present among the middle class, little disposed to seaside-frequenting and showing his body; the "Dynamic", ever-moving and travelling: the "Nudist", interested in total sun-bathing. Belonging to a group by itself is the "precarious", that is, essentially the aged, who leads novelty-freelife, and is especially mindful of avoiding harm to his health.

This data group shows how the Italian tourist tends to prefer a more sedentary and permanent type of vacation than the North-American does. *Dne* of the reasons for this

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may be accounted for by the large number of secondary houses widespread throughout Italy, that is, that Italy's tourist offer is "per se" provided with the requisites we have seen as necessary to the establishing of tourist place image (at least: sun, sea, symbol of the past).

8. RESEARCHES ON UTILIZATION CONTEXTS

Research on present-day tourism

If research on potential tourism is essentially concerned with defining likely tourist's basic value attitudes preceding actual travel decision, research on present-day tourism deals with actual tourist behaviors, often researched the moment in which these are put into practice. In short, focus is moved from basic general motivations to place of tourist practice.

Such researches consist generally in conducting interviews among individuals frequenting tourist places. They may be focused on both the type of tourist practice (for instance: camping, hotel, under-water fishing) and on the specific environmental context in which tourist behavior takes place (for instance: sea, mountains, but mainly specific places).

In these cases: the objective is not that of staying tourism as a society's cultural model or as typologies in which behaviors of a population structure, but rather that of establishing the psychological and social profile of a particular current situation. This type of research is useful to define the differential image characterizing both the several tourist activities and the various places of vacation. It therefore appears very efficacious in defining tourist's mental maps, meant as the reference overall picture on which he bases his behavioral choices before actual departure.

Cases of specific tourist practices

In the case of seaside places, for instance, we have available a research (105) observing the presence of nine main Factors of tourist satisfaction with the seaside resort of Cape Cod in Massachusetts. They are: "1. Beach opportunities: (...) the quality of beach facilities, cleanliness of beach areas, availability of parking spaces, and availability of space on the beach. 2. Cost: (...) the cost of vacationing, the cost of general goods and services, and the quality of goods and services relative to price. 3. Hospitality: (...) willingness of residents to aid tourists, willingness of employees to aid tourists, general friendliness of employees toward tourists, courtesy of residents toward tourists, general hospitality of residents. 4. Eating and drinking facilities (...). 5. Accommodation facilities (...). 6. Campground facilities (...). 7. Environment: (...) scenery and natural attractions, and quality of environment. 8. Extent of commercialization" (105, p. 319). It is on the basis of such Factors that individuals tend to organize their choices of the vacation place.

Another interesting tourist practice is camping. By recalling to the elements gathered in a previous analysis (20), it is in fact possible to observe how field research shows the gap that sometimes exists from superficial observation and the true facts. At first sight, camping, in fact, appears as a relatively economical type of tourism, thanks to its contained costs, but uncomfortable, and thus sought likely for economic reasons and for lack of something better. We find, instead, that, in Italy at least (106), campers are chiefly young people, male, with a particularly considerable representation both of socio-professional intellectual, working, middle-class conditions, and middle socio-

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economic condition, "Integrated" and "Consumer-against" consumer's consumption styles. In the United States, campers largely fall within the medium or high socioeconomic bracket (107).

Besides, these, and others (108; 109), researches observe the existence of two main camper typologies. In a first group, based on a camping model as low-cost tourism, we have people of financially lower personal income, but also students (of not necessarily lower family income), while a second, of considerable relevance, relates to middle, upper-middle class, educated categories, which could well afford more costly vacations but prefer precisely that type of vacation, of close contact with nature, in an atmosphere of interpersonal familiarity which camping only can offer.

By contrast, an interesting case may be also represented by the tourists who apparently pursue objectives which are nearly opposite to the more widespread models. The majority of vacation activities, in fact, relates to the concept of relax, of calmness, of being among people. There are, however, minorities of tourists who seek, instead, fatigue and tension, that is, the absence of company.

Those seeking wilderness solitude (110), for instance, want chiefly to find a feeling of "cognitive freedom" in a natural environment perceived as unspoilt. They do not, however, seem to seek a true, complete isolation, rather "an environmental situation in which they have some control over the information they must process and the attention required of them to process it" (110, p. 478). He who loves mountain-climbing (111) (where the social element remains, but where there can be high risk) is instead driven primarily by the interest in six underlying motivational dimensions: Challenge and Risk, psychological Catharsis, Recognition of one's Self (as adequate to an image of one's Self considered satisfactory), existential Creativity, opportunity to develop one's capacity to make decisions, contact with natural environment (112).

In these cases as well, of "extreme" tourist situations (of some quantitative relevance, however), there appears evident that detailed analysis of the facts reveals elements otherwise not recognizable. These behaviors are in fact understandable only in the light of cultural and psychological factors, and would not be understood in their reality if we should limit ourselves to evaluate them in terms of money they move or in those of tourist flows involved.

The case of a European piace: Varese

A research, which I have recently conducted (18, part two), allows picturing, to a good level of detail, of tourism specific characteristics in the Varese lake area, located in the Italian region of Lombardy. I shall therefore quote some result in detail so as to supply an example of how a research on specific tourist practices may also be of help in a possible action of direction and of control of the phenomenon.

Tourist style in the Varese area has a family connotation and is characterized by users that (at least as far as Italians are concerned) come mainly from areas in the surroundings (especially that of Milan). Groups of adults, employed, with children, prevail, although relatively. Students, however, are not absent (themselves also often with parents and relatives) and so are pensioners. Family dimension consists chiefly in staying with family's own members (partner, children, relatives) rather than in going to visit relatives.

It concerns very faithful users (in this area attachment to the stay-vacation is higher than national habit), having a marked disposition to stay for longer-than-average periods and to keep returning over the years. Such faithfulness is fairly widespread among foreigners as well. The more regular comers would seem however to be Italians from areas in the neighbourhood who love to go there both to spend the weekend and for

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longer-than-one-month stays.

The Varese area seems to gather the socio-economically higher-than-national-average tourists bracket. This is likely due to the fact that these come mostly from the surrounding area, one of Italy's more developed.

The more appreciated qualities of the stay are mainly natural and environment attractions: the scenery and the green. To such gratifying sight, an atmosphere on the whole of calmness, quietness, relax couples. More than that, this feeling of peace, is a key knot in the bond with the area: for the majority it is its chiefest quality; some would further increase it, whereas to a minority it represents a limit, and goes beyond it because of lack of stimuli and boredom. Staying with others is al so liked, but it concerns a relatively extrinsic element compared to peculiar characteristics of piace.

An absence of organized entertainment is perceived, especially in the form of amusement facilities. Vacation gayer and more relaxing factors, particularly the wish to be among people, remain frustrated because of lack of animation. Tourist style prevailing in the sample interviewed is certainly characterized more by intimacy and relax than by excitation and mundanity, but overcalmness ends up with representing a limit chiefly for the younger. In addition, criticism on the lakes' pollution level is being made. On the basis of overall evaluation, it should be observed that it concerns individuals who are basically content with the situation, and derive from their experience many more motives of satisfaction than of criticism. Finally, the holiday values of this sample structure according to seven main Factors: Intimacy, Sociality, Action, Disalienation, Travel, Passivity, Standstill.

One of the useful conclusions which we may gather from a research such as this (as well as from previously quoted other ones) may be a certain caution in judging the tourist phenomenon on the basis of its more apparent evidences. Appearance of organized, especially that of international, tourism, may in fact almost involuntarily induce us to regard tourism as essentially made up of coaches with shirt-flowered occupants, doing all Europe in 8 days, of charter planes and sailing yachts. On the contrary: many much less conspicuous and folkloristic realities of vacation exist, but that do quantitatively play a remarkable role. It is precisely by playing attention to these "secondary" situations that a more realistic, as well as more operatively useful, picture of presentday tourism may be obtained.

9. THE ROLE OF THE TOURIST

The tourist and the non-tourist

We have previously observed how it is not easy to define the tourist, especially because of the precariousness of his condition. Whoever, in fact, may be tourist at a given moment, and be no longer so a moment later. This means that traveller status concerns only a part of people's life, and not the basic structure of their identity. Socio-psychologically speaking, situations such as these (of transient character, although very much involving), which the individual finds himself to live only temporarily in, are defined "roles". To put into practice the tourist behavior then, means to fulfill a role (that of tourist) according to modes similar to those with which an actor plays his part on the stage.

According to the role theory (113; 114) every actor, in a given situation, plays a relatively fixed part, determined by the set's specific circumstances in which he finds, besides by his personal inclinations. Individual's behavior, therefore, may be read also as the giving of a part which is relatively rigid for all those who identify themselves with it,

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although personal variations to the theme are possible. The role each interprets is supported also by the others' complicity, who stand around the actor. Individuals, especially those more educated or intelligent or experienced, have awareness of their role's ritual, at least in part so, character, but this does not prevent the performance from being satisfactory.

In the case of tourism, for instance, to the part of the tourist with camera that of the local, letting himself to be taken pictures of, corresponds, and to the visitor's wish to know the local culture the clearly folkloristic dances organized by the locals corresponds.

It will then be useful to observe that, if traveller's role is partly an effect of the tourist set, it also represents a product of individual's active volition who decides to go on vacation. One of the functions of tourism, in fact, is precisely that of allowing the individual to play a satisfactory part. The tourist role is, therefore, in good and in evil, in good part willed. The tourist, that is, chooses to be a person who has nothing to do who can afford to spend without buying anything "concrete", who may spend his day with no constrictive engagements but just to amuse himself, who may wander from one place to another, etc.

In addition, in his construction of his temporary identity, he seeks some interlocutors who should confirm him in his role, whereas he avoids associating with those who may result in contrast with the identity he in that moment aspires to. Analogously: in the choice of the tourist destination to reach, Self's definition mechanisms come into play, similar to those for instance, determining the choice of a dress. The tourist "wears" a type of vacation which he believes conforms to his status. This happens according to the implicit principle: tell me where you go and I tell you who you are. The exotic place, or the unusual destination, therefore, may represent an individual's qualifying element. Analogously: some rejections of organized tour originate in part from the nonwanting to recognize oneself in a picture (the occasional fellow-travellers) considered inadequate to the part one should desire to play.

Tourist interaction

In terms of role, tourist situation is characterized by two possible types of interlocutors: the other tourists and the non tourists. In either case: what we have observed in motivations, typologies, and tourist practices definition, is useful to understand the type of interaction put into effect. This, in fact, will considerably differ according to the type of behavioral strategy the individual is trying to put into practice.

Tourist interaction represents a particular instance of interpersonal relationship, and his consequently structured by all the psychological processes generally involved in the interaction, such as: person perception, attribution processes, national stereotypes, and generally group dynamics (22;87;115). For example: travel context tends to strengthen the feeling of belonging to a group and to isolate the tourist from the external social environment. Simultaneously, it gives rise to more intense relationships with one's fellows than is the case in everyday life, as well as to defence mechanisms against and feeling of distrust of those cultural groups from which one is encompassed (116).

The spontaneous solidarity that tourism accentuates among individuals capable of mutually recognizing in them selves some common elements stands at the base, for instance, of the easiness with which individuals speaking the same language communicate with one another abroad. Such familiarity, much higher than the one that happens in a like chance meeting in the countries of origin, is determined precisely by the forming of in-group feeling (belonging to same nationality) by contrast to an out-group

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(the locals). This sometimes constitutes a problem for those individuals who do not wish to identify with their own fellow-countrymen (especially if they judge them to be of different status from theirs), and for those who perceive as unpleasant the fact of being defined part of an out-group (the tourists) in relation to the local culture when they, instead, would rather remain unobserved or be recognized as another kind of travellers (jet-setters, explorers, anthropologists, hippies, etc.).

As regards interaction with the locals, it should then be observed that actual contact between tourist and local is generally limited to the individuals belonging to the tourist set only. It concerns primarily: airhostesses, tourist guides, hoteliers, taxi-drivers, bus drivers, restaurant personnel, customs officials, policemen, salesmen, etc. The locals with whom the traveller will have occasion to interact in friendly terms, that is, outside a role of specific service, will chiefly be only those belonging to local higher classes who should feel so inclined (117).

The basic fact however is that tourist interaction with the locals represent a complex, rich-in-shade, but often unbalanced situation, especially in the case of international tourism (4). The guest is vacationing whereas the host is working: the first is rich, the latter is not; the two belong to profoundly different cultures. In addition, it concerns a meeting which, by definition, will last little and may hardly have a follow-up (if not possibly, by letter) during the "normal" phases of the tourist's life (once again citizen). The guest will tend to interpret all that happening according to different criteria from those he utilizes at home. One of his objectives, in fact, is that of momentarily denying the existence of everyday reality in relation to which he desires to live an alternative dimension. This brings him not to recognize in the new situation the characters of the old's. He will therefore be spontaneously disposed not to perceive as work what happens in tourism supporting structures, and not to perceive as trade all what he will be offered, but tend to connote all in a tone vaguely of play. He will naturally be rationally aware of the fact that waiters and salesmen are working, but also have the impression that all that occurs in a more relaxed spirit than that actually of work.

Colouring up of all the world of the Elsewhere in tourist terms is at the base, for instance, of the disposition some tourists have to wear dresses which they themselves would judge shameful should they have to wear them at their own place, or to be much more nosier than they would if their neighbours were present. Such frequent habit (sometimes judged by the hosts to be lack of respect) originates from the fact that, even if he finds himself in a metropolis, the traveller is living in an alternative world, made up of freedoms and a loosening of social conventions. And it is precisely his subjective condition that prevents him from believing that surrounding environment is in reality (for the locals) a normal world, strictly determined by established rules of social conduct.

The tourist is driven also by the wish to develop satisfactory interactions with the others, and loves to think of the place in which he is as a better environment than the one where he habitually lives. He will therefore be inclined to familiarize with the local, and to expect from him a like disposition to enter a friendship. Only hardly may he accept that the local's attitude is the same as he himself would stance if he should chancely meet a tourist who may happen to pass in front of his office.

The interaction between host and guest is also put a brake upon by the presence of many limitations. These are primarily represented by language, but also by culture and customs (which may, for instance, not contemplate the possibility, especially for women, to interact with strangers). In other words: interpersonal communication channels result limited, and possibility of misunderstanding high. That may be the cause of both great unfriendships and great friendships, according to the direction (positive or negative) in which the misunderstanding happens, and this in terms relatively independent

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of interaction material "reality".

Even the host, on his part, tends to develop a stereotypical structuration of tourist relationship. According to the rich analysis provided by Mathieson and Wall (1982): visitors' image among the locals appears to evolve, at least in the Third World, according to a recurrent sequence. In a first time, there is Enthusiasm, because of the novelty of the situation and for the fact that with the guests (rich and therefore of consequence) the usual behaviors typical of local culture are acted upon. To it follows Apathy, once the locals have become used to this presence and discovered that to their ceremonious attitude a same degree of politeness on the part of their interlocutor does not correspond. A certain Irritability then develops, followed by Antagonism, for the reason that the locals find they can compete with the invader in his own territory (the consumer goods), because they have come to know him and cannot understand why these individuals (the tourists) are unreasonably rich, immoral (promiscuous and always half-naked), and do nothing in their life (since this is the only attitude in which the locals see them) and, lastly, because the impression spreads that the true control of the tourist organization, with relative earnings and honours, itself is in the hands of the foreigners. The impression, in short, forms of being deprived of something (even if, as it sometimes is, the natural resources, today so much a bone of contention, were not much longer before despised). The cycle ends with Acceptation, in that there has been reached a satisfactory integration of the two confronting cultures, and neither of the contenders feels inferior or superior to the other.

The relative unbalance typical of travel situation on the other hand, cannot be fully satisfied even with the best of goodwill. All participants in the tourist interaction are in fact interested in maintaining more or less things such as they stand 80% the host and the guest are interpreting a role, which cannot modify more than that much, happening which the very role fails.

Even the tourist more honestly wishing to know the profound reality of the Elsewhere, who wants then to come into a true familiarity with the locals, does not wish at all to be really one of them. He seeks sincerity, as one of the motivations for his decision to travel consists precisely in the will to live for a moment far from the constraints of civil life, but wants a sincerity which should not be precisely "polluted" by quotidianity's limitations and duties. For instance: he would never dream of getting down to work for a local, unless such an act should have the taste of an adventurous fact. Analogously: the local may be interested in interacting with the traveller, but certainly does not wish to see him invading his own life's daily (and of his own social relationships) structures.

The tourist set

Tourist practice, in its image but chiefly in its true happening, is also characterized by the fact that it occurs in a particular context, which may be defined as the tourist environment or, remaining within the model of role interactions, the tourist set. This varies from one type of tourism, to another, and from one place to another, but tends always to contain, more or less, the same range of possible situations. Such situations may be considered, by paraphrasing an analogous town-planning concept, the tourist furnishings.

Of tourist furniture a series of situations and objects is part, fulfilling an useful function for travel and providing, besides, the signs of this parallel world's existence (of the-Elsewhere). Tourism physical environment has a considerable relevance also by reason of the limitations which, at least in terms of duration, we have just observed as characterizing interactions with others. This brings into focus the context in which one

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finds himself. Besides: for some aspects, travel interpersonal environment is itself a physical environment since the prevailing interaction with the hosts consists simply in the fact of having them within one's radius's range (with no other more direct contact). All the elements concurring in making movement within space possible belong to the tourist set, which are: travel agencies, information bureaus, means of transport (car, bus, train, plane), railway stations and airports, customs, embassies, consulates, motorway toll gates, etc. All Things Considerable and with characters of uniqueness are there, witnessing the actual exceptionality of the place in which one finds himself, such as: monuments, museums, folklore, monumental landscapes, etc. There are the special places of stay and of refreshment, functionally similar to those of one's own home, but with yet a touch of diversity, such as: hotels, with their room and hall, and restaurants and bars. There are shops and shopping centers, which are important by reason of the strong disposition to buy characterizing vacationing. Finally, included in tourist furnishings, there is the luggage, with its symbolic (and practical as well) function of home brought along.

The spatial element of the tourist set represent also a factor structuring the kind of relationship with the locals, often in the sense of representing a limitation to integration with the local culture. All tourism structures (from charter planes to hotels) tend in fact to configure as something similar to ghettos, although without having any particularly negative connotations. The locals do not take part, if not occasionally, and generally for motives of work.

On the other hand, the separation between host and guest is largely intended, in the sense that, for the host community, tourism represents an activity (industrial) which, according to good organizational rules, requires its own spaces so as to be carried most efficaciously. Simultaneously: the locals wish to be able to continue carrying on their normal activities in a situation of privacy, and do not wish to lose control of their society. Tourists, on the other hand, appreciate the exotic dimension of the place but have no particular interest to discover its more worldly aspects, as they want to stay in a tourist place and not in just an ordinary place. From this common will, operators derive their frequent tendency to organize fake local environments (houses and villages in reality not lived in) which tourists may visit without embarrassing the hosts (119).

Additionally, the tourist set is defined by a particular time structuration. The home time in fact is characterized by the presence of rather regular rhythms, by heterodirection of one's time budget (in the sense that a good slice of the available time must be utilized according to rules which are not determined by the individual), by the constant attention to calendar, by the inexorable rhythm of the clock. The foreign time instead is much more freely individual-determined, its cadences defined by the time lived (with all its discontinuity), the clock tends to be replaced by more undetermined, elastic rhythms and cadences, such as the accentuating of hunger and sleep stimuli, while the exact time is often supplied by sunlight situation.

The spatial-temporal set of tourist condition therefore is influenced by these peculiarities, and all the travel condition background confirms it. The tourist lives in a world with more nights out or outside his lodging than he does in his place of residence; sees sceneries, natural attractions and facilities (beaches, skiing tracks) which are not part of his normal condition; meets many more strangers than he usually does. He finds himself to live a somewhat intensified seasonal dimension as he, in his place of residence, would hardly think of staying all day outside in the snow or in the sun. Another element characterizing tourist situation is the kind of psychological atmosphere in which the traveller finds himself surrounded with. In the some situation one has the impression of being at the centre of one's own more stable world, and has

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available elements supplying him the sense of security for his existence, whereas in the vacation situation the impression of having moved towards the world's boundaries rather prevails, including a situation of adventure and unpredictability.

There is then a series of experiences determining vacation psychological situation in terms set in contrast with quotidianity. In metaphorical but efficacious terms, during travel, it may be relieved that recurrent prevalences occur, so that, for instance, Exceptional prevails over Normality, Power over Duty, Openness over Closeness, Have over Give, Licence over Morality, etc. In short, the individual seems more open towards the principle of pleasure, as opposed to that of reality, than he is during his daily life. It concerns an often limited freedom, but that permeates through all the tourist atmosphere thus making it emotionally more intense.

All this yields a definition of set which is also determined in phenomenological terms. In fact, to be tourist means to fulfill a role, but also to live in a context containing evident signs of touristicity. An experience which should not include, at least in part, these elements, could not qualify to the concept of vacation. Simultaneously: the presence of some of these elements (for instance: plane, customs, hotel) in a situation of non-vacation (work mission) tends to create something of the tourist experience even in the individual driven by more practical purposes.

In short, the tourist set strengthens the circular process so that the traveller actively seeks some environmental signs satisfying his basic motivations, and the presence of these environmental signs openly represents the proof of achieved satisfaction (even for he who is not actively seeking it).

10. COMPLEMENTARY THEME: **THE SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF TOURISM**

Tourism variously interacts with the reality of the places on which it insists. It interferes, in fact, at least, with the hosts' socio-psychological reality who live in the tourist situation as residents (as non-tourists). In addition, one of tourism typical characteristic is that of having an impact on the whole of the society among which it is put into being. Such influences, which are many and two-faced, have been studied in detail by Mathieson and Wall (118) and a series of other authors (14; 120).

Some of the effects tourism has on the society in which it develops are of positive character. These concern an individual economic benefit accruing from the flow of money brought in by visitors and the creation of new jobs, as well as from the capacity these monetary flows have of gearing the area's industrial development. There is also an effect of community modernization, which concerns the introduction of elements useful to the improvement (in organizational and life terms) of local structures, ranging from the spreading of effective sanitary standards to the developing of more productive systems of work (from the set work-time to the computer).

At the interpersonal level, tourism leads to the developing of a friendly attitude among individuals involved. Although (as we have seen) actual interactions between hosts and guests are rather contained, there notwithstanding develops a familiarity with the place and inhabitants' usages which may be likely to produce positive effects at international entente level. Besides, in individuals there develop comprehension and tolerance, thanks to the realizing that usages and customs different from one's own there exist. On the other hand: it is commonly shared among researchers that the most efficacious antidote against a negative interpersonal stereotype consists precisely in being as much as possible in contact with the object of such stereotype (121).

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At the local culture level, revivalism of cultural traditions on the wane commonly take place. Dances, exhibitions and festivals are resumed, and handicrafts production develops. The guest, in fact, is inclined to buy local folklore too (as a souvenir), and the host tries to satisfy him to get money in exchange. This mechanism gives rise, however, to distortions, as usages are sometimes resumed in relatively cheap and vulgar forms. Despite this, however, several examples of culturally important recoveries do exist.

At the environmental level: some preserving actions are sometimes carried, resulting useful to buildings and nature protection. This happens through establishing natural parks, or through policies for coasts and buildings safeguarding.

There are, however, also considerable negative impacts on local situation in its whole. Tourist presence means an increase of litter, with consequent difficulty to dispose of it and pollution risks. To house the numerous tourists structures are built such as are likely to alter the scenery or place's ecological balance. The construction of hotels may bring into the area new building techniques which, should they prove more productive than those in use, lead to unbalances in local society, such as: the new importance deriving from having capital availability (as against simple work-force) in the construction of a house, that is, the disappearance of crafts related to certain types of construction. Tourists often bring about an increase in noise and traffic congestion.

At the social level: travellers' wealth, and the fact they do not belong to the local social system, produce an increase in delinquency rate. It concerns primarily theft, but also personal violence. Besides sheer criminal intent, these offenses may be also a result of cultural incomprehension mechanism, in that the attitude of individuals involved in crime may be mutually misunderstood. What in a culture is regarded as simply an act of politeness, in order it may appear profound willingness. That is the reason, for instance, for the local's often sexually aggressive attitude with women-tourist (but certainly not so with local girls), determined by signs (for example: less conventional clothing than the local's, non-will of offending the interlocutor by refusing to speak to him, etc.) which are erroneously judged seductive. Other modifications in the criminal sense concern: spreading of gambling, arriving of related-to-underworld individuals, corrupting of officials in charge of tourism and building activity, that is, granting of licences, prostitution (with relative sanitary side-issues).

Tourists arriving has also effects on social order in its whole, in that it tends to produce profound alterations in employment systems, women's roles, community cohesion, its demographic structure, its institutional balances. Changes in language are also produced, by the introduction of new words and picking up of the languages more frequently used by tourists in the area. Patterns of land tenure change as well. Additionally, inflation processes caused by in-coming of outside currency tend to disrupt local hierarchies, with new emphasis being placed on entrepreneurs as against the traditional mighty ones. This may cause effects ranging from disputes between rivaling lobbies to exclusion of the aged (financially and culturally less prepared to the new situations). Tourism can also modify religious practices, material culture, art, clothing, free time, cuisine. Tourists bring in new consumer models as well. In practice: all tourist region's environment (physical, social and psychological) is involved in the phenomenon.

All these effects, which tourism brings into the reality on which it insists, are two-faced.

From one side they appear positive, from the other negative.

Tourism may be read simply as an acceleration (of which it represents a visible but not unique moment) of our world's general evolution. Social and cultural impacts which we have just observed in fact are nothing but the usual consequences of encounter between developed industrial culture of some Western areas and the rest of the world (especially the poorer's). It concerns phenomena which tend, in our world

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so integrated at planetary level, to happen in all cases, however, relatively independent of travel specific case.

This does not mean that tourism should not represent a particular mode of the evolution of such world's integration. It is also so important to reduce negative consequences, favouring on the contrary those positive, while it is essential to succeed in determining what factors prevail. It is in fact as little productive to complain about tourism as it is to try to develop it at all costs, if we cannot establish a criterion through which to judge the effective estimate (positive or negative) of its influences.

11. PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN AN EMERGING PROBLEM: THE CARRYING CAPACITY

The major problem which currently seems to characterize world scenery of tourist phenomenon concerns the difficulty to balance between demand and offer, especially from the viewpoint of volume of flow. Such issue virtually involves all tourism carrying structure: from means of transport, roads, places of stay and of refreshment, to occasions of animation, etc. This regards, however, to a greater extent, environmental contents of tourism itself, the sceneries forming the background of the practice.

It so happens, in fact that tourist behavior is largely defined, as we have more than once observed, by the fact of happening in a travel environment. This means that the tourist must feel in a time and in a space different from those of quotidianity. Research on environmental perception teaches that a place appears different from another chiefly in phenomenological terms, that is, when it contains signs which are decoded precisely as different. The Elsewhere must then have, at least a little of, the charisma of uniqueness. Chiefly in the cases of itinerant and cultural tourism, the signs of tourist condition of an environment are supplied by the presence of elements which, by definition, cannot have their equal in the rest of the world, failing which there is decrease of interest in the place. And such elements are often monuments (buildings, town structures, etc.) or ecosystems (clear sea, particular rock structures, etc.). Now: both the monument and ecosystems are precarious by definition, as it concerns objects and balances which are affected by even moderate alterations. Tourist contexts, however, in order to be enjoyed, must be physically approached by the tourist. And the tourist's presence represents a serious hazard of alteration of the very tourist signs. In other words: the tourist, whether he wants it or not, tends to operate a negative influence on the very reality which supplies him its reason for existence.

The tourist wants to visit the building, but each step through the ancient rooms produces an imperceptible abrasion of the mosaic on the floor and imperceptible wall vibration. Each dive into the blue sea represents an infinitesimal quake in the lagoon's ecological and ethological balance. Effects become more dramatic if we consider the camera flashes, or even just the lamplights, dismembering the colours of a picture, or if we consider the increase of litter and organic discharge consequent to the construction of an hotel, or even the disposition many tourists have of materially bringing home a piece of the visited place (a stone, shell, brick). The issue becomes apocalyptic if we consider that the number of tourists is continually on the increase and that by now in the world (and especially in Europe) they amount to hundreds of millions each year.

The problem of the carrying capacity concerns primarily environmental physical structures. However, it is possible to extend this concept also on to a psychological level. In the case of tourism: the psychological carrying capacity may be hypothesized as the interval existing between minimum threshold (the forming) and maximum threshold

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(the saturating) of a positive experience of tourist condition. Below minimum threshold: there is no tourism subjective condition. Over maximum threshold: negative valencies prevail over.

It is well to observe that there is one carrying capacity for the host, and one for the guest. Besides, there are at least three levels at which such capacity may be defined: individual level, collective level, cultural level. All these capacities interact, giving thus rise to a dynamic balance which tends to modify through time.

The play of the various carrying capacities is very complex. Four main stages, however, can be identified:

ABSENCE/MODERATE LOAD/HIGH LOAD OVERLOAD

In the first stage, there is no feeling of being in a tourist condition. From the traveller's point of view, this is what happens, for instance, when the type of behavior being put into practice is so fraught with signs different from the tourist one that it is not even perceived as such (such is the case, to give an example, of Gauguin at Tahiti). From the viewpoint of local culture there is substantial absence of tourists when visitors are few, occasional, isolated, and utilize the same structures are used by the locals without there being anything especially organized for them.

There is moderate load when the individual recognizes himself as traveller, and follows psychological and geographical itineraries determined by the fact of fulfilling the role of tourist. The local population feels the tourists' presence as a formed and somewhat extraneous group, but has no trouble to go on living just as peacefully with them. Some specific tourism structures do exist, but represent a tiny isle within the ambit of local territorial reality.

There is high load when the balance between tourist factor and local factor becomes precarious; that is, when the two realities have almost equal importance. The number of tourists is equal to or even higher than the locals', structures to accommodate them have analogous size to that of the locals', a considerable part of services and local activities is exclusively tourism-devoted.

There is overload when the tourist factor decidedly prevails over the local reality, and carries the ball. In practice, a tourist autonomous state creates, where all revolves around it and there is virtually no more indigenous reality. The traveller meets almost exclusively only tourists, and the place's original inhabitants are practically reduced to sheer curiosity. This is the extreme case of tourism for tourism's sake, where the nature of the situation is affirmed almost exclusively (through a process of circular causality) by the fact that the place proposes itself as tourist by definition. The area is no longer identified by the fact of presenting some environmental peculiarities, but by being conspicuously a tourist place. Some minimal elements are present (for instance: sea, sun), but what it really characterizes the place is the collective confirmation by other visitors.

The problem of the carrying capacity is firstly one of the balance, and of capacity of resources to renew. Socio-psychologically, it offers justification for consideration, especially when there exists a situation of interaction between cultures. It may be less justified to speak of it when the tourist environment is structured from the beginning as voluntarily isolated from the local reality, such as happens in some villages (Club Mediterranee-like) or in towns built artificially and exclusively for tourism (such as Disney World), which therefore propose themselves in some sense as gathering places or as museums rather than tourist places.

The relevance of the problem depends also on the tourist typology insisting on the pia-

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ce. It so happens in fact, that for a significant number of travellers, one of the attractions of vacation should consist in precisely the presence of many other tourists. This is what happens for instance on the Adriatic coast where the presence of many people creates a particular atmosphere of liveliness which may result gratifying "per se". The impression in fact is created similar to that offered by the medieval carnival, of a true world's upsetting where no one does anything any longer but all enjoy themselves. Tourism then becomes a moment of symbolic regeneration of all the society, and even feelings of guilt, if any, such as related to the fact of letting oneself go (instead of working) are hidden by the fact that all the visible world around oneself is doing the same thing.

The problem does exist, is serious, and should be certainly paid attention to when there is contrast with local social reality. In the case of Europe, this is what occurs in macroscopic terms at Venice, where tourist pressure is so strong that it jeopardizes the very existence of an indigenous culture which, backed by a thousand-year-old history, has, yet, all intention to survive. In this case: in cultural terms, we see a sort of pacific occupation in which a mass of individuals, present each over short periods, ends up with almost taking the place of the local population.

In subjective terms, the problem of the carrying capacity arises precisely where the attraction motive is supplied by specific environmental conditions, not by the simple opportunity of being involved in the vacation New Year's Day. A high load, or overload, situation may in fact lead to the disappearance of the actively sought object. Natural scenery is no longer such if there is impossibility to see the pictures, or if these (as happens) are taken off the rooms to prevent the mass of visitors damaging them. And the atmosphere typical of the place is no more if indigenous usages disappear and the area's architecture is replaced by hotels the same world over.

To wind up: it concerns a delicate problem. The nature of the tourist place, in fact, must be such that the traveller should recognize in it what he is seeking. In psychological terms, the problem of the carrying capacity is essentially a question of environmental image identity. But this does not mean that a particular form of the reality should be necessarily preserved, but rather that the traveller should be confirmed in that prejudice of tourist reality which he left home with and which represents the already defined object to gratify his vague motivations.

Some analyses have been recently worked out, that propose to tackle some environmental problems through a restructuration, in ecopsychological terms, of the behaviors which may be considered the cause of them (122; 123; 124). It still concerns teething-stage actions, which however, might have precisely in the tourism field an interesting development.

12. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

In the winding up of these notes, it is possible to draw some indications that may be useful for future research and for action on the tourist phenomenon.

It is firstly observed how the introduction of psychological variables in the analyses of the tourist phenomenon appears amply justified. It allows to gather aspects which would otherwise be hardly visible, although of considerable relevance, in determining the phenomenon itself (in fact there is no tourism without tourists' subjectivity). There exist many leisure activities. These, however, may be connected back to a circumscribed number of main types. Travel represents one of the versions in which these activities present, with psychological reasons of their own but also with many points in common with the general concept of leisure in its whole.

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In the choice of the activities by each individual (or by groups of individuals), there are some psychological variations, in the sense that there are personality and social typology differences that reflect on leisure organizations modes. Subjective variations are also present, in the kinds of gratification which are obtained from the various practices. At a general level: we should learn to distinguish between geographical environment and behavioral environment, both in tourism description and in the actions geared to direct it. We must fully realize that the individual interacts with behavioral environment and only indirectly with that geographical. If we should act exclusively on the geographical environment, individuals involved would interpret the situation in all cases in the terms of their own subjectivity with results which may differ from those which were expected to be reached.

We should succeed in dismembering the tourist process down into its several variables, then examining them, as far as it is possible, one by one (although naturally without losing sight of the general picture). In particular: we should consider that various combinations of push and pull factors exist, which fact produces several typologies of users, and several specific tourism practices, each with its own modes and rules. Tourist behavior is not at all univocal. Under the term, there gather so many cases and types that circumscribing their structure, as we have here tried to do, is a useful step but represents still a too rudimentary level of knowledge.

There is a certain genericity (or vagueness) both in the needs and in tourist destinations. In other words: dialectical play between motivations and gratifying objects is neither rigid nor precise. This means that, at least in part, there is a certain interchangeability of destinations. The tourist is generally disposed to choose between a rather wide range of possibilities rather than to focus inflexibly on a single objective.

There seems there is a sort of vicious circle, so that what acquires a tourist character is what is as such defined. Some really unique situations have higher possibility to be defined as attractive tourist destinations, but a good deal of tourism happens in places of which chief quality (beside the presence of some minimum requisites) is that of being socially guaranteed adequate for travel, by the fact, that is, of being full of people.

An element of rigidity in tourist choice is instead represented by the social and cultural dimension, as the travel learning process presupposes that tourism is done precisely where it has been already done, or where the reference groups have done, or where they are said to have done. This means that each actions on tourism must succeed in entering the "trickle effect" mechanism, such that the socially more representative categories set the rules of this behavior (as such psychologically determined), whereas other groups generally limit themselves to follow such rules without inventing any other new ones.

Even as far as the carrying capacity is concerned, the picture is also very complex, consequently requiring an analytical reading, so as to avoid making superficial generalization. It should be considered in fact that environmental image identity sought by the tourist may not tally with the one, for instance, advocated for environment protection. To wind up: analogously to what happens in the generality of the situations concerned with environmental qualities managing, what the public desires thus not necessarily represent an ideal to pursue. Such collective will, however, cannot but be taken into account. To tackle this intricate process, we should cut improvisation and superficial analyses down to minimum, so as to approach each case single and on the basis of empirical data.

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