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# The logics of tourism expansion throughout the world: A geohistorical approach

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**ABSTRACT.** — The current distribution of tourist sites throughout the world is the result of a process of spatial diffusion, which started in Europe during the eighteenth century. Based on sketch maps of an unpublished database of almost 3,000 tourist sites, the article details four important milestones in the globalization process of tourism: its initial diffusion in Europe, its subsequent spatial expansion as part of the colonization and its spread in the second half of the twentieth century. The paper then examines some key factors to explain the dissemination of tourist sites in the world. It highlights the role of physical circulations in the production of touristic sites, along with other cultural, technical and economic logics.

CAPITALISM, DIFFUSION,  
GLOBALIZATION, PRACTICE,  
TOURISM

**RÉSUMÉ.** — Les logiques de la diffusion du tourisme dans le monde: une approche géohistorique. — La distribution actuelle des lieux touristiques dans le monde résulte d'un processus de diffusion spatiale, entamé en Europe au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. En s'appuyant sur des cartes de synthèse réalisées à la suite d'un dépouillement d'une base de données inédite recensant près de 3 000 lieux touristiques, l'article détaille quatre jalons importants de la mondialisation du tourisme: sa diffusion initiale en Europe à partir de l'axe du Grand Tour, son déploiement en Amérique du Nord au XVIII<sup>e</sup> et au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, son expansion spatiale dans le cadre de la colonisation et sa généralisation dans la seconde moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il met ensuite en avant quelques facteurs clés de la dissémination des lieux touristiques dans le monde, en soulignant le rôle des circulations, mais aussi des ressorts culturels, techniques et économiques de la production des lieux touristiques.

CAPITALISME, DIFFUSION,  
MONDIALISATION, PRATIQUE,  
TOURISME

Although certain tourist practices have ancient origins, such as the *rusticatio*<sup>1</sup> which ancient Romans greatly appreciated taking in Campania, tourism as we know it today was born in a specific moment, in the 18th century, and in a specific place, England, the first country to experience a growth of centres for taking the waters, and then for enjoying the seaside. This development had been preceded by the Grand Tour (Black, 2003); it was adopted by those with independent means who only travelled “to foreign countries out of curiosity and idleness.”<sup>2</sup> Since that time, tourism has only continued to grow, expanding into new places, to the point that today, it has become a worldwide phenomenon.

1. This Latin word designated a stay in one's country house for repose or for fun. Since the mid-19th century, the French term “*villégiature*,” derived from the Italian *villégiare*, has come to connote sedentary holidays in a spa town or by the seaside. It evokes the practice of the upper classes.

2. From the definition for “tourist” in Émile Littré's dictionary (1874, vol. 4, p. 2275).

As a social fact, tourism now is understood to mean both a specific practice of physical movement, as well as the diverse economic activities, such as transportation, accommodation, and amusement, which enable it to take place. It also refers to the spaces consecrated for and by this activity, whether they were formed *ex nihilo* or, initially intended for some other purpose, came to be used for tourism. Tourism's worldwide expansion can thus be analysed along three distinct but complementary axes: a widening sector of the population's access to tourist practices; businesses and their broadening spatial scope of activity; and the diffusion of tourist sites. In this article, we examine this third axis. We seek to describe and comprehend the way that tourist sites have grown throughout the world and the internal logics of this process, from the 18th century to the present day. We take a geohistorical approach (Grataloup, 2015), exploring tourism's movement in time and space.

Just as tourism can be considered a “social invention” of the 18th century, the spaces which have since been dedicated to it can be considered a “spatial invention” of Modernity. As such, the worldwide multiplication of tourist sites has occurred via a spatial diffusion process of this innovation, issuing forth from an emitting core zone, deployed in preferential directions, with channels through which to propagate, but also with barriers and limits on how far it could spread (Saint-Julien, 1992). This process has spread in two principal ways: via spatial expansion, as new tourist sites were created far from previously-established ones, and via progressive spatial concentration, as new places to visit fill in the gaps between older, more established tourist sites (MIT Team, 2011).

Our analysis of the progressive spatial concentration of tourist sites is based on a number of synthesis maps, designed to show the date of establishment for over 3,000 tourist sites throughout the world. We shall thus begin our analysis by presenting the methodology we used to create and represent this data. We will then discuss the modalities of (re)producing tourist sites. Next, we will offer a chronological look at four major milestones in the worldwide spread of tourist sites. Finally, we shall suggest several major results of this worldwide spread, through the lens of the histories of thought, of technical development, and of capitalism.

## A cartographic challenge

Tourism, like many other social practices, has created special, dedicated spaces which support its widespread expansion. Following the MIT team's definition, we understand a tourist site to be a “site which was created or repurposed by tourism and transformed, at least for a time, via the presence of tourists” (MIT Team, 2002, p. 300). As such, tourist sites make up a spatial ensemble of objects, activities, and people, configured for and by tourists.

As Andreea Antonescu has underscored in her doctoral dissertation (2016), several distinct criteria may indicate that a place has become a tourist site: Whether tourists come to visit it, whether it offers services meant for tourists (such as guided tours), and whether the local infrastructure has been built up in order to welcome tourists (with hotels, casinos, etc.). Another indication is that the site is publicized in printed tourist guides or in relevant academic literature.

While several major works on the global history of tourism or travel, such as those by John Towner (1996), Orvar Löfgren (1999), Sylvain Venayre (2012) and

Éric Zuelow (2015), describe tourism's global outspread, they do not provide any detailed analysis of the question. In order to explore the subject in depth, we on the MIT Team had to juxtapose a considerable mass of information of various origins (2005 and 2011). In doing so, we created a geolocalized database of 3,000 sites over the whole planet, specifying the moment when tourism appeared there, the kind of site it is, and sometimes how tourism in that place has evolved (Gay et al., 2011). Later, A. Antonescu (2016) completed another vast study on the worldwide outspread of tourism, using tourist guidebooks to establish the genealogy of over 40,000 tourist sites. Here, our method is more qualitative; we seek to pull out all the stops, and we take as our initial vantage point that of the present. We have thus chosen to examine the history of some tourist sites which are popular today. Moreover, in order to understand the processes at work in tourism's spread and to go beyond simply creating databases, we have systematically examined the major international journals of tourism studies,<sup>3</sup> the major journals of French and international geography going back over a century,<sup>4</sup> and the publications of other disciplines as well.<sup>5</sup> We have also consulted numerous works and doctoral dissertations which study tourism's history. Finally, we have used the ample, accessible, and high-quality archives of several regions which have been tourist centres for many years, namely the Côte d'Azur, Florida, and California.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the multitude of sources consulted, it remains likely that for numerous sites listed in our database, the start of touristic usage predates – possibly by many years, even decades – the date we have provided, because we have, at best, only been able to record the first mention of its use as a tourist site. Likewise, it should not be doubted that numerous sites which are in effect visited by tourists have not been taken into account.

Faced with the many challenges that this kind of approach implies, and in order to best take our results into account, we have opted for a qualitative cartographic portrayal, emphasizing new information, rather than a strictly statistical depiction which would give the illusion of comprehensiveness and precision. As such, we drafted three maps, respectively focusing on Europe, North America, and the wider world. We focused on the element of notoriety, even though we know it is an uncertain, relative notion. This subjective judgment call of “importance” is, however, moderated by other factors, as we take into account a site's emblematic nature, its size, or its regional primacy.

### The (re)production tourist sites

The production of tourist sites comes about in two distinct ways. The first is the result of investing in tourist infrastructure for a site which is already inhabited and set up for some in-and-out movement. This is typically the case for major metropolises, such as London, New York or Paris, which were not designed specifically for tourists, but which today attract masses of them. The second kind of production consists of creating tourist attractions ex nihilo, in spaces which had been previously little-used, if they were used at all. The founding of ski and winter-sport resorts in the Alps or in the Rocky Mountains are just one striking illustration of this phenomenon. In both cases, however, the emergence of a site for tourism depends on several preconditions, which vary over time and space, and which have already been studied by Daniel Clary in his analysis of “Paris's coastal façade” (1977). Perhaps for obvious reasons, in order for a place to become a tourist attraction, tourists must be able to get there and to stay there.

3. In particular, the *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management and Tourism Geographies*.

4. Notably, the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *Geographical Review*, *Landscape*, *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *Journal of Cultural Geography*, *Area*, *Journal of Historical Geography*.

5. Notably, the *Journal of Contemporary History*, *Economic History Review*, *The Journal of Economic History*, *Journal of Southern African Studies*.

6. In particular, *The Florida Historical Quarterly* and *California History* spécialement. We should also note the seminar work on the Côte d'Azur: *Trois siècles de tourisme dans les Alpes-Maritimes*, Conseil général des Alpes-Maritimes and Silvana Editoriale, 2013, 210 p.

This means that the distance between the place that a tourist comes from and the site that hopes to attract them must not be too far nor too expensive for the tourist to overcome. This depends directly on how well-established relevant transport networks are. The evolution of transportation and the correspondingly greater ease with which people can travel great distance has been a major factor in the growth of tourism and tourist sites. The invention of the steamboat and of the railroad greatly expanded tourism far and wide. The expression “touring car,” first recorded in 1906,<sup>7</sup> indicates that from its beginnings, motorcars were seen as closely connected to pleasure trips. By the late 1950s, with the invention of long-haul jet engines, the aeroplane further expanded potential tourists’ ability to travel far and wide; the rise of charter flights enabled the democratization of the phenomenon, making such long-distance travel much less expensive. Different forms of transportation engender different styles of tourism: one can thus contrast the railroad, the ship, and the aeroplane, which have led to an anisotropic form of tourism expansion, an extension along linear, fixed lines, to the automobile, which has supported more isotropic, self-directed travel.

But the issue of sites and their accessibility to potential visitors is not solely a question of transportation. A whole series of technologies, such as Global Distribution Systems, documents like exchange coupons and travellers’ cheques, and the dissemination of knowledge, via guidebooks and agencies, also facilitate tourism and contribute to its spread. Thomas Cook (1808-1892) was one of the central figures in the effort to simplify travel and organize tourism (Brendon, 1991). The hotel voucher he created in 1867, which a traveller could exchange for a night in a hotel, largely contributed to the creation of a worldwide tourism network (Tissot, 2000, p. 187). With an eye to his clients’ security, Cook further innovated by creating Cook’s Circular Notes in 1874. A precursor to travellers’ cheques, travellers could exchange them at their destination for local currency. Finally, he also invented the concept of a travel pass, offering for purchase a single ticket which allowed for free circulation by train or by boat.

Here, we should also mention the political dimension of tourist accessibility. Many parts of the world have long remained – and some still remain – closed to foreigners or to tourists. Though it welcomes millions of religious pilgrims each year, Saudi Arabia continues to bar tourists entry. It is similar for the Andaman Islands, to the southwest of Myanmar, where access is strictly controlled by the Indian government. And while the fact that some areas remain off-limits does slow the growth of international tourism, whenever such restrictions are lifted, a massive influx of tourism tends to occur. In Nepal, for instance, it took less than fifteen years for trekking networks to develop once the local authorities legalized it in 1950 (Sacareau, 1997).

Moreover, a space cannot become – and remain – a tourist site if visitors cannot stay there. Tourists need to be able to spend the night onsite; they must be able to eat and access shops or essential services, and they must be able to do so reasonably safely. The minimal conditions that needed to be met for tourism to be viable in a place have considerably varied over time. They have also varied depending on the style of trip envisioned, the distance over which the tourists travel, and the specific nature of their travel plans. Nonetheless, for tourism to develop in a place, it is fundamentally necessary for local, existing structures to be renovated as visitor lodgings, or new buildings need to be built for that purpose. This is a process involving the circulation of financial means between two spheres of capital accumulation (Lefebvre, 1968; Harvey, 2001): that of industry, manufacturing, commerce, and banking, and that of

7. Rey A. (1998). *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*. Paris: Le Robert, vol. 3, p. 4113.

the built environment. In recurring fashion, capital passes from the first of these circuits towards the second. With regards to tourism, the transfer has often been carried out within the transportation industry. In the 19th century, railroad companies thus became emblematic figures in the spread of tourism, investing immense financial capital in hotels, seaside resorts, and mountain escapes. In the 20th century, airlines played a similar role, constructing hotels in newly-served destinations in order to ensure that their flights would be full (Gay, Mondou, 2017).

Ideas for new tourist sites often consist of duplications, based on a model. In this, Nice and the Côte d’Azur occupy a special place in the annals of the history of tourism, because it was here that a new urban form was invented, the “winter city,” which was cosmopolitan and dominated by mainly English visitors seeking comfort and vigour. These British tourists were in large part inspired to come to the South of France by the Scottish doctor Tobias Smollett (1721-1771)’s travel narrative, which described his family’s stay in Nice between 1763-1765 (Boyer, 2002)(see photo 1). Over time, the Côte d’Azur would come to serve as a model worldwide, inspiring emerging cities to strive to present a similar kind of intense, worldly lifestyle and urbaneness. From the proper toponym, “The Riviera,”<sup>8</sup> referring specifically to the coast running North of the Gulf of Genoa, the term has become generalized. Now, there are many “rivieras”; this transition alone demonstrates the mechanism by which new tourist sites take inspiration from older ones. From their founding, the

8. Roger Brunet et al. in *Les Mots de la géographie* defines this as “a kind of touristed seaside dominated by the residences of the wealthy, densely populated, with a sharp cliff face, numerous capes and bays, and a climate considered enchanting.” (1992, p. 395).



**Photo 1/ The first terrace-promenade des Ponchettes in Nice**

Completed in 1776 and inspired by Italian suspended promenades, this walkway illustrates a new way of relating to the shore, a place where locals and visitors to Nice alike could admire the water’s edge without getting too close. This walkway predates the famous Promenade des Anglais by half a century. Hippolyte Caïs de Pierlas (artist). Comte de Lasteyrie (lithographer).

View of the terrace and the castle in Nice, 1821. Lithograph, 237 x 308 mm. Musée Masséna, Nice.

tourist-attracting coastal areas surrounding Opatija, Yalta, and Sochi have been respectively qualified the “Austrian Riviera” (Rapp, Rapp-Wimberger, 2013), the “Crimean Riviera,” and the “Caucasian Riviera.” Opatija has been called “another Nice” and the Soviets did everything they could to bill Yalta as the “Krassnaya Nizza”. On the other side of the Atlantic, Florida became a major wintering site for Americans from the country’s Northeast, inspired to go there in large part by the businessmen Henry Plant (1819-1899) and Henry Flagler (1830-1913). The latter named Florida’s coast the “American Riviera,” seeking to entice rich visitors who typically would spend their winters on the Côte d’Azur (Braden, 2002). And in Asia, since 1910, the Izu Peninsula has been known as the “Riviera of Japan”.

### Four major milestones in the spread of tourism

Despite their methodological differences, the two databases designed to show the spatial outspread of tourism throughout the world (Gay et al., 2011; Antonescu, 2016), both stress two phases of rapid expansion of tourist spaces. In particular, both show a quick multiplication of tourist sites in the second half of the 19th century and again in the second half of the 20th. Consequently, the second half of this article will focus more specifically on these two key periods for the expansion of tourism worldwide. Before that, however, we will revisit the history of the initial spread of tourism in Europe and in North America.

#### *The socio-spatial emergence and spread of tourism in Europe*

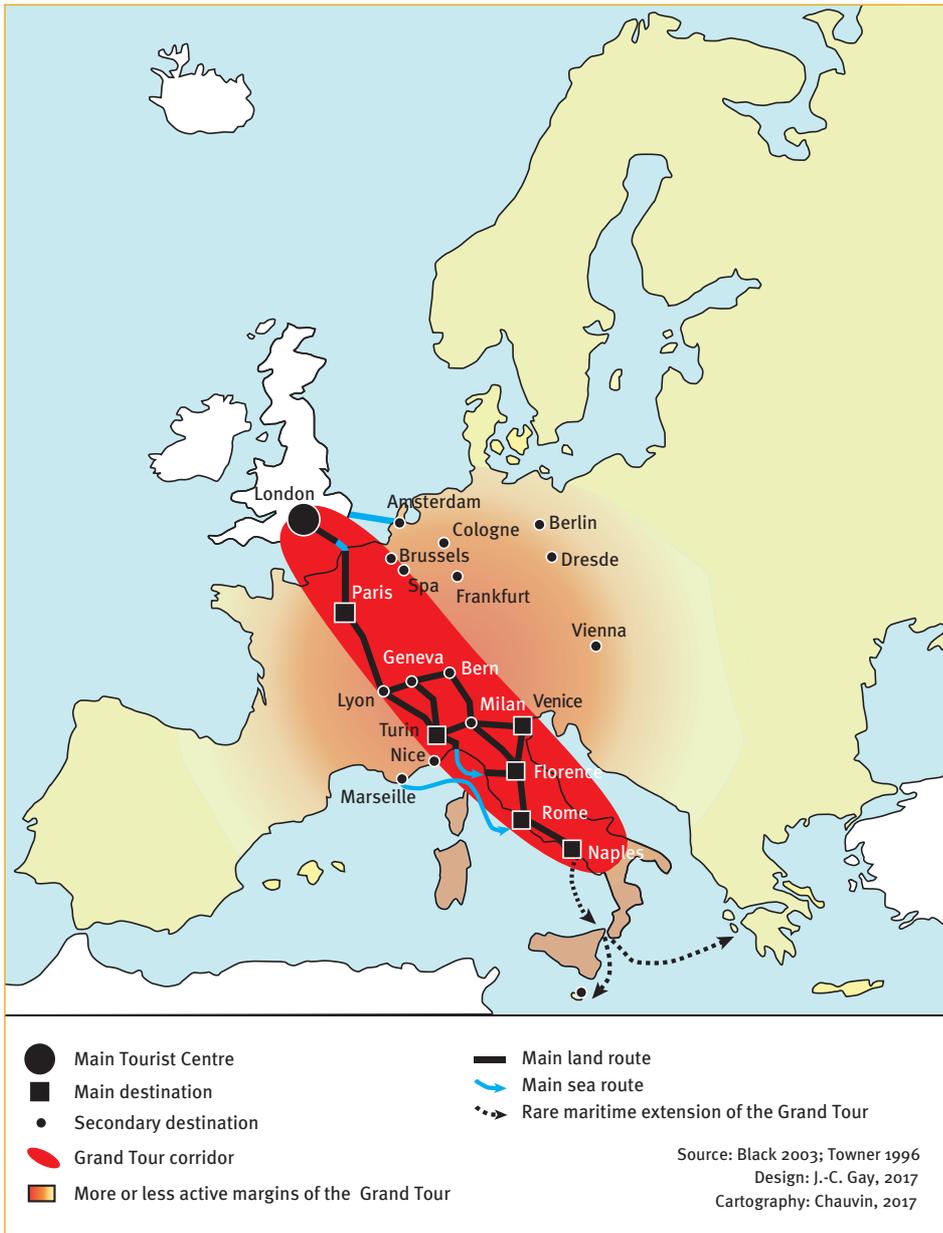
The most direct ancestor of today’s tourist practices was the Grand Tour,<sup>9</sup> which experienced its height of popularity in the 18th century, before its decline. Indeed, in the early 19th century, the Grand Tour inspired the invention of the terms “tourism” and “tourist.” These young men, primarily Englishmen, accompanied by their tutors, would spend up to two or three years traversing France, Switzerland, Germany, and the United Provinces, on the way to or from Italy. Paris was generally a crucial first stop, where they would perfect their education. There, they learned good manners, the arts of dancing, swordsmanship, and riding, which would prepare them for illustrious diplomatic or political careers. Most then went onwards to Geneva or Lausanne. The English gentleman William Windham (1717-1761) took advantage of his stay in 1741 to lead an expedition to the glaciers in Chamonix Valley and to write a narrative about it, which would become one of the foundational texts of the “invention” of Mont Blanc, alpinism, and mountain tourism (Joutard, 1986, p. 92). Once they had crossed over the Alps, they stopped off in Turin, Florence or Venice, major academic centres, before continuing on to Rome and Naples, to the well-frequented royal court, or generally one began to retrace one’s steps. Visitors studied the ruins of ancient Rome and/or the archaeological sites at Pompeii and Herculaneum, or Renaissance and/or baroque painting or architecture. Then, bound homewards, they would stop in Innsbruck, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, Potsdam or Hamburg before returning to England via Amsterdam and the United Provinces (Towner, 1996).

One cannot help but be struck by the fact that the Grand Tour simply followed the axis of cities which had been established in the Middle Ages, from Flanders to southern Italy, and which would become the veritable backbone of Europe (fig. 1). Le Grand Tour sheds light on the centres of cultural, economic, and political power of its era. By

9. Defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as “A tour of the principal cities and places of interest in Europe, formerly supposed to be an essential part of the education of young men of good birth or fortune.”

the mid 18th century, these wealthy young men would be slowly replaced by older men and women, or by families seeking relaxation (Black, 2003). The original reasons for the trip, centred on the classical humanities, which spurred the flowering of a real culture of travel in England,<sup>10</sup> thus declined. The trip became shorter and itinerant travel was replaced by wintering in one place, far from the London fog. But while the type of travellers changed, the first tourist sites of continental Europe continued to be those situated on the London-Naples axis, along the path already trodden – and copiously written about – by the young aristocrats of the Grand Tour.

10. John Towner (1996) argues that tens of thousands of English people would have travelled abroad each year during that century.



**Fig. 1/ The Grand Tour**

### *The early spread of tourism in North America*

By the late 18th century, outside of Europe, only the Northeast of the United States experienced the phenomenon of tourism (fig. 2). Transatlantic connections facilitated relations, allowing for tourism to extend thousands of kilometres further. In the early 19th century, American elites imitated the behaviour of the British aristocrats and bourgeoisie, spending time in and around some twenty spa resorts located in proximity to major cities (Weiss, 2004, p. 295). Seaside tourism took off more slowly: Nahant (Massachusetts), Newport (Rhode Island), Long Branch and Cape May (New Jersey) were the first. The first tourist guidebook published in the United States – in 1822<sup>11</sup> – according to Richard Gassan (2005), restricts the American tourist circuit to a small part of the Northeast, to which should be added the Bas-Saint-Laurent and the Gaspésie peninsula, in Canada. This is the area that Serge Gagnon calls the “Tourism Belt” (2003, p. 122). At the end of the Civil War (1861-1865) American tourism grew further, spreading along with the nation’s reintegration of the South and conquest of the West (fig. 3).

The spread of North American tourism thus followed western expansion and the growth of the transcontinental railroads. The Northern Pacific line pressured Washington, in the early 1870s, to make Yellowstone a national park (Shaffer, 2001, p. 44), which they then used in their advertising campaigns. In the latter decades of the 19th century, all of the North American railroad companies built hotels along their lines, promoting local natural attractions in guidebooks and brochures. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) focused particularly on the Rockies.<sup>12</sup> This spatial spread thus led to a dense assortment of tourist sites around Denver, San Francisco, and between Vancouver-Seattle and Los Angeles-San Diego, as well as in the central South, along the Mississippi Delta.

### *Colonization as a major vector of the spatial spread of tourism*

During the 19th century, the world of tourism primarily spread throughout the networks of imperialism, for as Westerners came to live far from their country of origin, they developed local tourist practices calqued on older European ones. Colonists, expatriates, and uprooted elites’ cultural connection spurred the first global extension of tourism (Zytnicki, Kazdaghli, 2009). At the same time, transforming colonies into spaces for tourism helped legitimize the colonial project itself, showing the metropole’s “modernizing and civilizing force” (Boukhris, Chapuis, 2016, p. 3). Tourism was thus one aspect of the world’s Europeanization at the time; figure 3 seems to show the effect of European tourist practices’ wider adoption. In Australia, starting in the mid-19th century, settlers created the first seaside sites close to major cities, which were all established along the coast: Glenelg near to Adelaide; Manly near Sydney, etc. (White, 2005). The dynamic population growth in these new Anglo-American countries thus becomes a remarkable indicator of tourism – remember that the United States only had 2.5 million inhabitants at its independence; there were 76 million Americans in 1900.

In British India, by the end of the 19th century, the high-water mark for the empire, there were approximately 80 “hill stations” in the mountains. Britain’s colonial power thus doubled spatially with its seasonal, migratory climb, up to the point that they declared Shimla (at 2200m above sea level) the official summer capital of the British Raj in 1903 (Sacareau, 2013).<sup>13</sup> Between Great Britain and India, Egypt was another place that tourism reached. Between 1815-1850, as part

11. Davison G.M. (1822) *The Fashionable Tour, or, a Trip to the Springs, Niagara, Quebec and Boston in the Summer of 1821*. Saratoga Springs (NY): GM Davison.

12. A telling anecdote: The name “Banff,” given to the tourist site and famous national park, created in the 1880s, comes from Banffshire, a Scottish county in which two directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway were born.

13. Some hoped to make Dalaba, 1,100 metres above sea level, in Futa-Djalon (Guinea), the summer capital of French Western Africa.



**Before the Civil War**

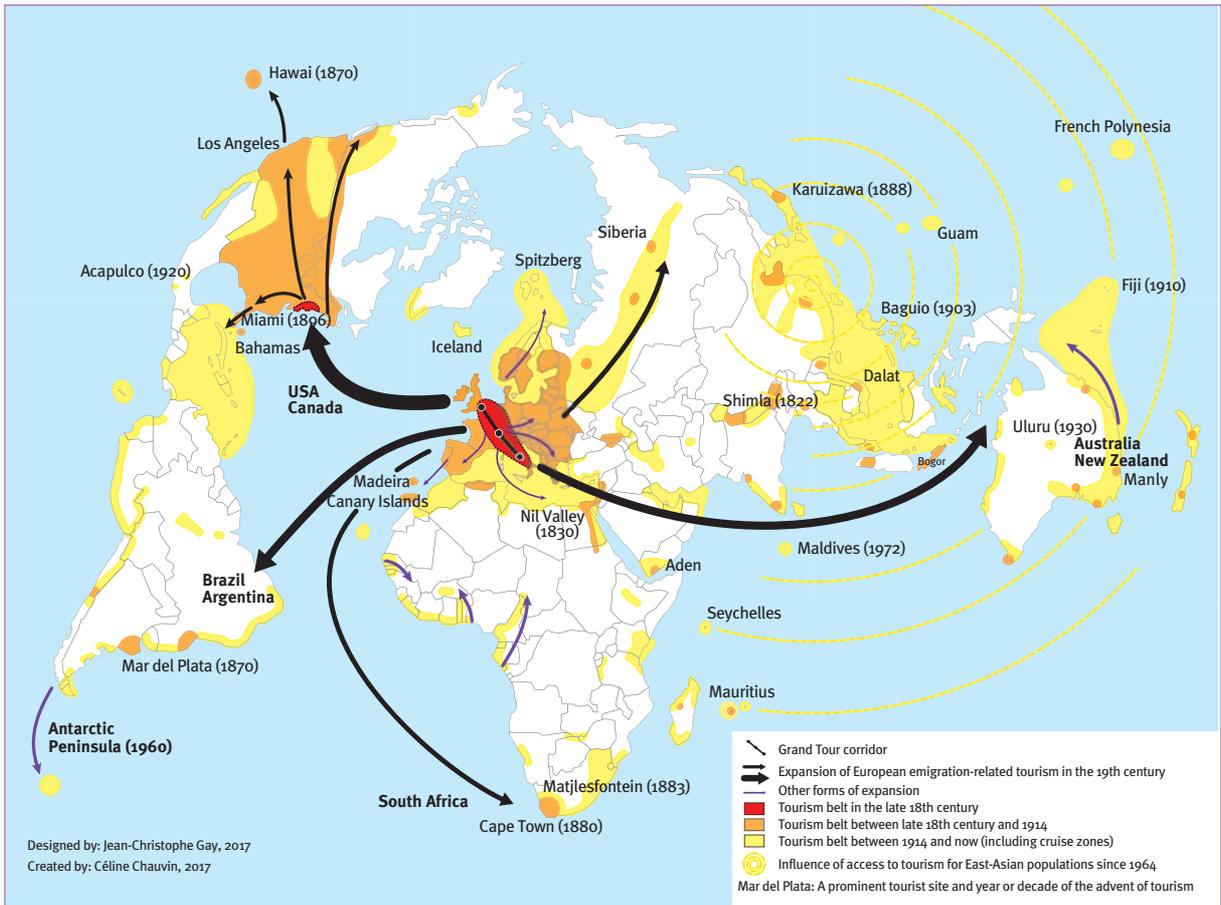
- First tourist resorts (decade of advent of tourism)
- Spread of recreational travel with the first big cities (NY, Boston and Philadelphia) from late 18th century onwards
- Tourism belt in the 1850s
- Scattered extension of northern health resort area around 1850
- Scattered extension of southern health resort area around 1850
- ★ Pioneering tourist site outside the *Tourism Belt* (decade of tourism development)

**After the Civil War**

- ➔ Growth corridor
- Tourism belt from the 1870s to the 1900s with density increase
- ▬▬▬ More or less touristic belt with expansion from the 1870s to the 1900s and density starting to increase
- ⊖ Blind spot with tourism development from the 1930s

Sources: Aron,1999; Lawrence, 1983; Weiss, 2004  
 Design: Gay, 2017  
 Cartography: Chauvin, 2017

**Fig. 2/ The spread of tourism in North America**



**Fig. 3/** The spread of tourism throughout the world

of Muhammed Ali Pasha's programme of modernising the territory and its institutions, related also to his attempts to become closer to the British, Egypt was progressively opened up to tourism (Anderson, 2012). Then, the travel expert Thomas Cook billed Egypt as a choice exotic destination for European tourists; in 1869, when the Suez Canal was opened, he scheduled cruises on the Eastern Mediterranean and along the Nile. At the same time, previous sites solely of British commercial and naval bases – on Corfu, Gibraltar Madeira, and Malta, etc. – became prime wintering spot. The Germans, French, Dutch, and Americans also established winter resorts in their colonies, a perk to make the challenges of expatriation more bearable. The earliest were in Java, after the creation of Buitenzorg (today, Bogor), which literally meant “sans souci,” “without worries.”<sup>14</sup>

Barely arrived in the Philippines, in 1903, the Americans turned Baguio, (1,500 metres above sea level) into their colonial government's summer capital. French settlers also went to take the waters there when they could (Jennings, 2011, p. 52). In Vietnam, the French modelled their summer capital on Shimla in India, choosing Da Lat for its location in 1900. And in Madagascar, settlers and the military built up Antsirabe, a spa town at 1,500 metres above sea level. Business and

14. It should be noted that not only are places calqued off one another, but names are borrowed, too, as the Dutch quite probably named their winter resort after Frederick the Great's summer palace in Potsdam (Schloss Sanssouci).

religious interests were also vectors for spreading tourism, via the intermediation of expatriates. As such, it was an Anglican missionary who began the practice of summer sojourning in Japan, in particular in Karuizawa (1,000 metres above sea level), in 1888, in order to escape Tokyo's summer humidity. In 1895, Another Anglican missionary also founded the most famous Chinese mountain resort, Guling, in Jiangxi province.

Between 1870 and the outbreak of the First World War, the world economic market grew ever more and more integrated, and international exchange flourished at an astonishing rate (Marnot, 2012). For the first time, in these years tourism first truly became a global phenomenon. Tourist spaces became a veritable worldwide archipelago of sorts. Language itself reflected this shift, for in 1873 the English expression "globe-trotter" was recorded for the first time. Then, as now, it served to designate those few, privileged individuals who "without pretention, are able to fairly easily travel around the whole world."<sup>15</sup> And along with this unprecedented opening of the wider world to tourism, in Western Europe, with a growing focus on mass market appeal, spaces open to tourism densified throughout the landscape. In particular, seaside resorts grew in both England and France, frequented by the working class as well as by wealthy families since the late 19th century (Walton, 1983). In the United States, this tourism densification happened slightly later, in the interwar period, as more families bought cars and as campsites proliferated (Aron, 1999, p. 209 *sqq.*).

### *The course of tourism's generalized expansion*

In the most recent decades, tourism has expanded in a massive and generalized fashion: 54% of the tourist sites included in our study sample were founded after 1950; a third of the sites which A. Antonescu (2016) identified have emerged as such between 1974 and 2000. The clear majority of these recently-emerging sites are located in developing countries. Some of these are former colonies where tourism began already in the colonial period (for example: Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, the Philippines, Tunisia, and Vietnam). Others are countries which were never colonized (such as Cambodia, the Ivory Coast, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, the island nations of the South Pacific, and Zimbabwe).

This rapid expansion of tourist spaces in developing countries has been enabled, in a technical sense, by the lessening difficulty of travel and distance via the spread of air travel. Tourism's growth is also directly linked to the globalization of capitalism, and the growing ease of free trade throughout the world. Finally, in a concrete sense, it is the result of a combination of processes in which – separately or via interconnection – governments, major international organizations, and multinational tourism businesses all intervene.

Beginning in the 1950s, following decolonization and/or out of a desire to detach themselves from European or American economic domination, most of the countries of the global south pursued rapid development. Though industrialisation was generally considered the only possible way to escape from postcolonial economic dependency, these countries faced many challenges in doing so. In particular, they lacked capital to industrialize with and had a weak interior market. Many states' governments, notably those without oil or gas resources, thus turned to other sectors of activity, tourism among them. They were strongly encouraged to follow this route by prominent international institutions, among them the World Bank,

15. Anger B. (1890). *Notes de voyage d'un globe-trotter*. Lille: Danel, p. 1, as cited by Venayre, 2012, p. 419.

which financially supported “integrated” seaside resorts, such as Ixtapa in Mexico, Morocco’s Agadir, and Bali’s Nusa Dua. From Mexico to Indonesia, governments thus promoted voluntaristic policies of tourist expansion, combining transportation infrastructure investment to aid access to the area and facilitating international entry, encouraging airline companies to fly in and out of their country, promoting policies of open-fly zones, and supporting private, national, and international housing investment (via financial aid, public credit, various kinds of guarantees, and the opening of public land to private development, etc.) The governments of these countries also created tourism-promotion campaigns, broadcasting their ads in the major foreign markets. Developing countries’ governments also planned their own massive programs of tourist resort construction, not unlike how local governments in Europe and in the United States who work to promote tourism in certain, less-frequented peripheral regions. In Mexico in 1968, as part of a national tourism plan, the government identified several regions ripe for development, the CIP (Centros Integralmente Planeados), among them Cancún. When Egypt regained the Sinai Peninsula in 1982, the country began major investment there, designating the Gulf of Aqaba as a priority zone for promoting tourism.

The debt crisis in these developing countries (1979) and the policies of structural adjustment imposed by the Western powers on no fewer than 70 nations in response to the crisis, requiring deregulation and the privatisation of public tourism enterprises, further facilitated the spread of private finance (Bianchi, 2002). Even places where the International Monetary Fund (IMF) did not intervene, in particular in countries with socialist regimes, national governments engaged in vigorous programs of economic liberalisation. Some examples are Infitah in Egypt starting in 1975, China’s economic reform beginning in 1976, and Vietnam’s Doi Moi policy of 1986. This shift led to a massive growth of private tourism projects with complex financial backing, as can be seen in the boom in tourism-related real estate in Turkey since 1990.

Since 1960, due to the combination of governmental voluntarist activity, at least until the debt crisis, and the deployment of private capital, a multiplication of new tourist sites can be observed throughout the developing world. Most of these are built along the seaside, following the 3S model (“Sea, Sand and Sun”). This expansion has also been reinforced by the growth of broad access of non-Western companies to the tourism market. This phenomenon can be precisely dated from 1964, when Japanese citizens were allowed to travel abroad. The inhabitants of the “four Asian dragons” (South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan) rushed to keep up. They were followed by the five “Asian tigers” (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam). Latin America and, to a lesser degree, Africa also joined in this internal tourism growth process. China’s arrival on the tourist scene, however, has made the most marked difference. In less than a quarter century, China has become the country with the most citizens traveling abroad (135 million Chinese did so in 2016). Chinese people also take hundreds of millions of domestic trips. A new centre for the diffusion of tourism has thus emerged and, to the long, Eurocentric history, as classically represented in figure 3, we must now add the short history of the East Asian emerging polarisation. There are now tens of thousands of tourist sites in China, in Southeast Asia, and in the Indian and Pacific oceans.

Tourists are now everywhere, or almost: From Antarctica to Alaska, from the Sahara to the Gobi Desert, from alpine summits to Pacific atolls (photo 2).



**Photo 2 /** Tourists visiting Kings Canyon in Watarrka National Park (Northern Territory, Australia). Photo by J.-C. Gay, 2011.

### Interpretive Guidelines

As is generally understood, all phenomena of spatial outspread result from multiple processes which take place on different scales. Tourism's spread throughout the world is not exception to this rule. While we cannot exhaustively treat the question here, we will mention several of these processes, thus providing guidelines via which the spread of tourism throughout the world can be interpreted.

We should first underscore the structural role that the evolution of the circulation of people, goods, ideas, and capital has had in this matter. As we have mentioned above, improvements in transportation and the development of international exchange, whether during the age of imperialism in the second half of the 19th century, or as part of the rapid globalization since 1950, these advances have provided fertile ground for tourism's flourishing and expansion.

This is not the whole story, however, and we would like to shine a light on three important motivating factors for the creation of new tourist sites and, thus, their dissemination. For a site to become a tourist destination, it must offer opportunities for certain recreational practices (such as discovery, play, relaxation, shopping, and socializing). The technical means must also exist for the site to be made accessible and for tourists to be able to stay there, and local economic and political conditions must also allow for tourism's development. The creation of new tourist sites thus depends on interconnected cultural, technical, economical, and political resources. Each of these resources has been and can be mobilized in different, varied ways, as we shall briefly illustrate with several examples.

With regards to cultural resources, changing expectations vis-à-vis the body and the mind over time have had their impact on tourist practices. Practically speaking, the way we relate to illness, to wellbeing, and to natural elements such as fresh air, water, and sun, have led to changes in how and why we travel.

During the years of the Grand Tour, discovering the bio-physical world was a central element of the social invention of tourism. This was fed by the changes in mental representations of the sea and the mountain in Europe between the 17th and 18th centuries, and by the new aesthetic taste for contemplating landscapes (photo 1). European exploration expeditions reported back on the new “wonders of the world” such as Niagara and Victoria Falls. These sites quickly attracted tourists, among the earliest natural sites to do so, due to their exceptional nature. Existing structures were quickly transformed to support the presence of tourists, and new establishments were created *ex nihilo*, at Niagara Falls (Ontario), for example.

A desire for “untouched” site which, as soon as they are visited, are no longer new, led to a new quest, this one tied to a new cultural cue, seeking the unknown, popularized in the West since 1750, with the decline of traditional, theological understandings of the world. This “cenotropism,” (from “*kénos*,” meaning “void” in Greek),<sup>16</sup> this “desire for [foreign] shores explains the incorporation of new lands into touristed space (Corbin, 1988). By the late 18th century, the British aristocracy and bourgeoisie developed a taste for the picturesque, which pushed them to explore the far corners of the British Isles, such as Snowdonia in Wales, the Lake District in Northern England, or the Scottish Highlands (Borsay, 2006, p. 189). Today’s environmental concern likewise leads tourists to visit other sites deemed “natural,” “wild,” or “untouched,” such as the Amazon rainforest.

The evolution of tourist practices reflects the changing ways people think about landscapes, but it also reflects changes in popular conceptions about health. Doctors promoting the therapeutic virtues of taking thermal waters in the 18th century led to a rapid multiplication of “modern” spas, based on Bath as a model, first in England, then in continental Europe and the Northeastern United States. In the US’s Southeast, such spas existed, but were smaller and more isolated (Lawrence, 1983)(fig. 2). Likewise, seaside resorts gained popularity after 1750 thanks to the doctor Richard Russell’s (1687-1759) therapeutic recommendations. His prescriptions made Brighton a wealthy city, and sea spas spread rapidly throughout European shorelines. The first sea bathing establishment outside of England was established in Livorno, Italy, in 1780 (Berrino, 2011, p. 121).

Moreover, numerous tourist sites were created specifically to avoid epidemics. The major cholera epidemic in India, between 1817-1821, led the British to develop mountain resorts there, preferably more than 2000 metres above sea level in order to avoid malaria, too (Kennedy, 1996, p. 12). At the same time, cholera and yellow fever led many city-dwellers in the Northeastern United States to leave their home in summer time for a “change of air” in the Adirondacks, Catskills, or in the Hudson River Valley. Escaping epidemics was also the reason that Point Clear, Alabama, early-on became a summering point for the rich families of Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans. Likewise, the 1867 cholera epidemic and particularly the 1870-1871 summer yellow fever epidemics spurred the inhabitants of Buenos Aires to take summer refuge in the Mendoza and Córdoba mountain regions (Bernard et al., 2014, p. 25).

Overall, thus, the rhythms and spatial relationships which have governed tourism’s spread are directly linked to the interconnections between places, trends, our views, and our mentalities. One cannot understand why so many tourists flocked to beaches in the 20th century, or how the 3S model developed, without recognizing that in the 1900s-1910s, particularly on the American and Australian coasts, being

16. Équipe MIT, 2011, p. 180.

tan came to be seen as an external sign of wealth. Outdoor existence quickly became a privilege to be enjoyed by those with the means to practice sports or to go on holiday (Segrave, 2005, p. 9).

One can also read into this history the way in which technical and scientific evolutions have greatly impacted tourism's growth throughout the world, and not solely vis-à-vis transportation (Hjalager, 2015). In medicine, discovery of the prophylactic effects of quinine against malaria in the 19th century, and later, the development of effective vaccines against yellow fever, tuberculosis, and hepatitis A and B increased tourism's spread in areas where these illnesses remain endemic, particularly in the intertropical zone, which has benefitted from the re-evaluation of heat throughout the 19th century and into the mid-20th. Air conditioning, invented in the early 20th century, likewise helped make the warmest regions of the globe more accessible to tourists. In the United States, by 1960, most of the hotels and motels in the Sun Belt had air conditioning. (Biddle, 2011). Could Las Vegas have become such a major destination without air conditioning for its casino-hotels? And we must not forget chemistry's contribution in perfecting sunscreen, and the invention of new materials which have allowed for sites to be used in a myriad of different ways. For example, one cannot truly understand the spread of ski resorts and winter sports sites without following the evolution in skis, ski clothing, improvements in chairlifts, etc. The same thing can be said about seaside spaces and the evolution of water sports, from surfing to sailing to diving. Finally, we must underscore the importance of successive innovations in (tele)communication technologies. From the telegraph (1844) to the World Wide Web (1989), and from the landline phone (1877) to mobiles (1983), the development of these new ways to communicate further aided the spatial spread of multinational tourism enterprises.

A third angle of approach takes in the development of tourist sites and their general international outspread through the lens of the political and economic organization in each phase of the growth of global capitalism over the last two centuries. According to the work of the regulation school (Boyer, 2015), which pays particular attention to the interconnections between economy and politics, the history of capitalism is marked, in time and space, by different modes of development, each of which combines an institutional configuration (its mode of regulation) and an economic configuration (its regime of accumulation). The first corresponds to the set of institutions which allow for the economy's development and stability; the second refers to the mechanisms responsible for economic growth.

Tourism's spatial expansion has thus gone hand in hand with the succession of distinct forms of capitalist economy (Bianchi, 2002). 18th century merchant capitalism allowed for the emergence of elite tourism in Western Europe and in the Northeastern United States, the material basis of which was rooted in aristocratic and bourgeois families' investments. 19th century industrial capitalism profoundly impacted the spatial expansion of tourism in Western Europe, via the construction of spa and seaside resorts, and in North America (see above re: Florida). Powerful banking interests were the real forces behind numerous real estate companies founded in the second half of the 19th century (Toulier, 2010, p. 35). The imperialism of the second half of the 19th century also played its part as the vector of tourism's expansion into both settler colonies and exploitation colonies.

The fordist regime of accumulation of France's postwar "Trente Glorieuses" in turn corresponded with the promotion of mass tourism, supported by the government and organised both by the government and by major, vertically-integrated firms. Their efforts led to the densification of tourist spaces throughout Western Europe and North America. In similar fashion, as part of its promotion of the "people's health," Soviet state capitalism also gave rise to numerous tourist sites, particularly seaside resorts, first on the shores of the Black Sea, in particular around Sochi, and then – as of the 1960s – by the Caspian Sea. Socialist Romania and Bulgaria followed suit; their state enterprises – beginning in the 1960s – built up an ensemble of large-capacity tourist attractions along their Black Sea coastlines.

Finally, contemporary deregulated capitalism has further contributed to the growth of tourism and tourist spaces, particularly via investing a part of sovereign wealth funds or pension funds into tourism-related real estate. Naturally, reigning families and the families of industry and financial magnates also invest in tourist real estate. Dubai's reputation as the metropolis of "above ground" tourism (MIT Team, 2005) is one example of these new modalities. But at the same time, financial capitalism is also characterised by the fragility of its economic basis, which leads to numerous real estate projects – particularly many meant for tourism – being abandoned before completion, such as those of the Dubai Holding Investment Group's real estate subsidiaries.

## Conclusion

The worldwide spread of tourism and the spaces dedicated to it started out from a single source: 18th century England. It initially expanded following the axis of the Grand Tour in Western Europe, itself inscribed along the route of medieval merchant cities; soon after, it expanded to the Northeastern coast of the United States. In the decades and centuries which followed, the spread of tourist sites took place in non-linear fashion, following the cycles of world economy, growing at the same time that production and exchange grew generally (1870-1914; 1950-2010). Over time, the rhythm of tourism's growth has only accelerated.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, with the European powers' colonial expansion, networks of global circulation for people, goods, and capital were established, which led to a major broadening of the space where tourism could be practiced. This was the case both in settler colonies, in Latin America, the Maghreb, or in Oceania, as well as in exploitation colonies, such as in sub-Saharan Africa and South/South-East Asia. In this time period, however, because of the persistent difficulty of overcoming distance, the vast territories which did not interest the colonial powers, in particular the interior parts of Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, did not then become part of tourism's sphere. In the final quarter of the 20th century, however, advances in air travel have made these areas accessible, and in many cases, particularly as concerns the Caribbean, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, and along the whole circumference of the China Sea, voluntarist policies of tourism development have led to a rapid multiplication of tourist sites, following both endogenous and exogenous modalities.

In addition to this worldwide spread of tourism and its consecrated spaces, there has also been a different kind of spread, a densification around sites which have already and historically attracted tourists. Discreet and limited to Western Europe at its start, this densification has become the principal means of tourism's outspread

today. This is due both to the growing mass appeal of tourism of countries where tourism has a long history, but also due to the growing access to tourism on the part of more and more people in Eastern Europe, Asia, and other emerging countries.

Though the worldwide outspread of tourism and its sites is the result of numerous processes, it is overall a story of circulations: first, the circulation of Europeans who, via their colonial plans, took possession of the world. The circulation of ideas is relevant here, too, as well as the evolution of mentalities and the growing place for tourism in public policy, at least in the 20th century. In a world which has been interconnected and globalized longer than one might think, the rapid circulation of innovations has been flagrant, particularly as pertains to those which have allowed for easier communication and transportation (cheaper, speedier, and more comfortable travel), as well as the improvement of objects which allow for easier travel to diverse physical spaces, from the poles to the equator. Finally, the circulation of capital, moving from the sphere where merchandise is produced to that where buildings are built, has led to the creation of tens of thousands of new tourist accommodations and, with them, a further expansion of the space dedicated to tourism.

The spread of tourism throughout the world has also been aided by the progressive growth of the social base for this practice invented by the British aristocracy in the 18th century. Limited up to the beginning of the 20th century to European and North American elites, this practice first spread to the middle and working classes in developed countries, then, by the 1960s, began to spread to more and more diverse social groups in developing countries. Tourism's demand – like its supply – has also become global. For the time being, it remains in an unequal dynamic: our own work shows the striking centrality of Europe throughout tourism's history. Will the recent emergence of Asian tourist demand lead to new connections, new hybridizations and exchanges? Will it decentre tourism from its European base? Might it even lead to Europe's role in tourism growing to be marginal?

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