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EDITORIAL

Tourism and spatial planning

This issue of *JPRiTLE* is a dialogue between the two disciplinary and professional domains of spatial planning and tourism. Some of the overlaps of interest between tourism development and policy, and spatial planning policy, are beginning to develop a systematic literature. Hayllar, Griffin, and Edwards (2008), for example, point out that tourism activity in cities is geographically concentrated. The so-called precincts in which tourism can often be concentrated are both part of, and distinctive within, the city. How these connections between the city and the precinct work, and what their socio-economic and cultural implications might be, are questions which exercise policy-makers in spatial planning as well as tourism. These are simply a sample of questions which demonstrate some coincidences of interest between spatial planners and tourism policy-makers. In this issue, however, our focus is different.

Professions and disciplines are partly constituted by distinctive ways of seeing the world; what we might call distinctive gazes. These gazes are inevitably spatial, as spatial relations are co-constituted with social relations. The significance of the spatiality of tourism – and particularly its relationship to places and their meanings for people – has been recognised for decades, for example, in discussions of urban tourism, and tourism geographies more generally (Mugerauer, 2009; Nepal, 2009). In examining tourism-related issues, through a planning lens, we hope here to reverse what can be termed the 'gaze' of the narrator. So, instead of looking at issues in communities and places from the position of a tourism policy-maker or analyst, in this issue we encourage a gaze *at* tourism from the broader society. A gaze that emanates from society, and planning for society, *to* the role of tourism and the contribution it makes to the society and planning for society.

What then does such a gaze entail? Simply stated the concern in such a focus moves to the meaning and power of tourism to an external observer, a non-tourist. It raises issues of embeddedness and interaction that go beyond the seductive qualities of tourism to reveal and repair the disjunctions and overflows that make up tourism when viewed from the perspective of communities, societies and places. In such a project, the very rationale of tourism is called into question and the interrogation of tourism is not any more exclusively on goals set within the tourism and for tourism. Places then are more than 'destinations', arguably a dominant term in tourism studies that reifies the touristic gaze by reducing the complex realities of lived experiences in a location to one that is essentially tourist centred. The emphasis then is not so much on the creation of new attractive 'tourist bubbles' (Magerauer, 2009, p. 303), but is more on the liveability and attractiveness of ordinary spaces as well. Communities are more than 'local communities' that populate touristic destinations, staking instead a claim to be the ultimate client in tourism ventures. Recognising this in a number of studies of spatial planning's engagement with tourism unearths a number

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of tensions, to which we return later in this introduction. Before doing so we will briefly outline what underpins the distinctive gaze of spatial planning.

'Spatial planning' is a phrase with contested meanings (Harris & Hooper, 2004; Morphet, 2011). For current purposes, we use it simply to avoid confusion for a tourism audience between planning which involves use and management of land, and hence the spatial relationships of activities, with some of the other kinds of planning which tourism must also involve – related to finance, marketing, events, to name but a few (see also King & Pearlman, 2009).

Spatial planners – as professionals and researchers/scholars – have suggested a number of ways in which their kind of planning contributes positively to social and economic life, notably:

- by mitigating negative externalities (or 'spill-over' effects) of social and economic activities within particular spaces, typically in a situation of so-called market-failure (Klosterman, 1985),
- by providing a coordinating mechanism that focuses attention on spatiality and spatial effects for the investment and other decisions involved in complex multi-actor/agency developments which may extend over many years and across spatial scales and tiers of governance,
- by providing forums where shared visions of futures of places can be forged through facilitated communication between different interests (Healey, 2006),
- as a particular case of the above, providing a forum for the general public (especially may be normally marginal groups) to participate in decisions on places they know and value,
- by providing a set of vocabularies for multiple disciplines to think about space and place (Healey, 2012).

In recent years, the ambitious idea that spatial planning has a distinctive remit to 'shape place' (Healey, 2010) has gained strength – i.e. planning is central to making the kinds of places (their feel as well as their functionality) that people want. These 'people' will include tourists, and those active in promoting tourism (Hayllar et al., 2008), but the distinctive claim of much spatial planning is that it is not promoting any single narrow sectoral perspective on place, but rather seeking to create a place which is sensitive to, and respectful of the diverse aspirations of many, if not all, and especially of those who usually have little or no public voice.

Thus, Rydin (2011, p. 31) claims that:

> … planning is about coordination and integration. It is about looking at all the different aspects of urban development … about thinking of all the different needs of, and opportunities for, an area in order to guide where new infrastructure investment should go. It is about taking as comprehensive a view as possible by engaging with relevant stakeholders.

For her part, Healey (2010, p. 21) promotes planning as 'deliberate, collective action' to create better places, but recognises that in practice what goes under the name of planning has sometimes 'subverted' this. Among the documented limitations of planning as actually practised are the following:

- at times it can be narrow rather than be expansive in its visions: e.g. it may retreat into just a concern with physical changes or aesthetics of the built environment,

ignoring their socio-economic significance; or be focused on bureaucratic procedures rather than facilitating inclusive deliberation (Forsyth, 1999);
- spatial planning may simply be one more agency pushing its 'line' among others, rather than a coordinating mechanism – i.e. it may add to conflict and/or confusion;
- it may embrace entrepreneurialism, understood in the broadest sense, and 'getting things done' and forget about longer term futures and/or the distribution of costs and benefits (Brownill, 1990).

These positive and negative points are drawn from the general planning literature. Some recent tourism literature (Dredge & Jenkins, 2011; Hayllar et al., 2008; King & Pearlman, 2009; Mugerauer, 2009) makes it clear how many important issues and concerns are shared by those researching and debating both tourism policy and spatial planning: ensuring that all voices are heard, and diverse values respected, in a plural, often fractured, world; securing social justice, however that contentious term is understood; reflecting on the notion of expertise in policy-making; understanding the challenge of sustainability; understanding the differential impacts of policy interventions; and – not to be neglected – making sure something does happen when necessary to improve the state of the world (community, city, region, nation, etc.). These are complex matters, and the papers in this issue can only begin to explore some of the tensions which may arise.

By 'tensions' we mean the potential for dilemma or conflict which demands a temporary resolution through decisions and actions. These tensions might be between identifiable users, sectors or interests as below:

- The tension between tourism led speculative real estate development and loss of local access to land as a resource for wider uses.
- The tension between physical and economic development and socio-cultural, and environmental issues.
- The tension between local concerns and global/national/regional concerns.
- The tension between touristic and local meanings and significance.

A deeper and fundamental type of tension arises when dealing with values and the ethics of planning and tourism. These can be said to be deeper and fundamental in that they provoke a reflexivity that has the potential to cut across much of the above-listed tensions. For instance, these might involve:

- The tension inherent in managing for equity and efficiency.
- The tension inherent in managing planning and impacts across different time horizons.
- The tension inherent in planning and managing unpredictability in a changing globalised world of multiple influences and multiple actors.

Employing lenses of 'tensions', in the gaze at tourism, then invites narrations of resolutions and non-resolutions. Such narrations then involve the consideration, use, enhancement and conservation of various types of resources, the employment and inhibition of power and the mobilisation of particular values by public, private, community and voluntary actors who act through institutional forums or networks at various scales. The resolutions and non-resolutions are, however, temporary 'fixes' at best as they are

always subject to change and destabilisation. Narratives of the practice of tourism are then inevitably complex and contingent in both space and time. One way of presenting the contributions in this collection is through examining the main tensions, their resolutions (and non-resolutions) and the assemblages that are brought to bear when tourism meets planning.

At least one of the contributors of each article in this edition is from the discipline of planning. They, come from different geographical areas (Italy, India, USA, Turkey, UK and Portugal) and are interested in different aspects of spatial planning. All of them, however, share an interest in tourism and put forward an account of tourism from a planner's viewpoint. The gaze is therefore from planning towards tourism.

Gonçalves and Thomas show how major regeneration projects – very definitely consequences of governmental spatial planning initiatives – can sometimes provide arenas for hearing voices which are not generally influential. In Cardiff Bay, public spaces have been created which display some sensitivity to the history of a local community which has been historically marginalised within the urban politics. Perhaps in this case the fact that a new agency was created, standing outside the city's traditional political networks and sponsored by a higher tier of government, allowed ways into discussions of the future for usually marginalised groups (Thomas & Imrie, 1999).

Chettiparamb and Kokkranikal also highlight the significance of the political context in both framing the challenges to public policy (including spatial planning) and providing resources with which these challenges can be addressed. While advocating for precision, in the use of the concept of 'responsible tourism' in planning, their account of such an initiative in Kerala emphasises the communicative and coordinative contributions of planning that can potentially lead to better overall spatial qualities and inclusive overall development.

Both the articles by Goncalves and Thomas and Chettiparamb and Kokkranikal in their own way address the tensions between physical and economic development aimed at tourists, and the socio-cultural and economic concerns of often marginalised populations. The resolution of these tensions when it happens in both papers is through grassroots level activism that aims at appropriating both economic power (Chettiparamb and Kokkranikal) and symbolic power in the form of art (Goncalves and Thomas). But whilst Goncalves and Thomas posit grassroots action in opposition to local authority power in efforts to regain marginalised identities, Chettiparamb and Kokkranikal describe a cooperative and facilitative relationship between the local authorities and activist groups. Both cases, however, highlight the importance of the role of higher scales of power.

In New Orleans reconstruction post-Katrina appears to have prioritised re-establishing events and tourism in a way which has had little or no regard for the implications for social justice. Gladstone's paper illustrates the influence of a pro-tourism regime, and the apparent subservience of all public policy – including planning – to its agenda. Speaking truth to power is never easy, but there are celebrated instances of its happening in the USA, and with some effect (Krumholz & Forester, 1990).

Kinde's discussion of religious tourism in Vrindavan demonstrates that the regional planning agency combines a lack of interest in the pilgrimage/religious tourism which is central to the town's historic identity with the promotion of its own agenda of urban expansion on the basis of land speculation. Far from co-ordinating investment, the spatial planning agency appears to be adding to the complexity of competing interests which are making it difficult to address a traditional planning task – the mitigation of

externalities, in this case, environmental and other 'spill-over' associated with the growth of religious pilgrimage.

Both the articles by Gladstone and Shinde focus more on the unresolved tensions that arise from tourism in the absence of a responsive and responsible local government that governs in the name of all. In both these cases, the tensions that arise from tourism, though problematic, remains unchecked and unresolved. The local state here appears as inert and ineffectual even adding to the problems rather than resolving them.

In Sicily, too, spatial planning fails to fulfil a co-ordinating function in relation to decisions which affect World Heritage sites. Moreover, spatial plans appear to be at odds with the Management Plans required by UNESCO. Lo Piccolo and colleagues argue that a fundamental reason for this is the difference in the nature of the two planning regimes. The spatial plan is a conformative plan – i.e. the acceptability of a development proposal is judged by the degree to which it conforms with the detailed 'blueprint' in the plan. Management Plans, on the other hand, are performative – they define desired outcomes/performance and allow flexibility as to how these are achieved. The Sicilian case demonstrates why effective tourism management must sometimes have regard for the principles and practice of spatial planning.

Keskinok's case study underlines a point made by Shinde's account: that a major challenge for spatial planning is resisting the perception of place as simply, or primarily, an economic resource (e.g. a land resource) to be exploited by a particular economic sector (in this case tourism-related). The capacities of governments to deal with such perceptions then often hinge on the power, concepts and vocabularies that are provided by professions such as planning.

Both the articles by Keskinok and Lo Piccolo and colleagues bring scale into focus. They show how the tensions between differences in the actions initiated at different scales ultimately fail in resolving tourism-related issues at the local level. While the particularity of place has been celebrated and remains always significant, these two papers are a reminder of the significance of action at higher levels too. Ways in which the different scales relate to each other and ultimately to the locality create its own tensions. We hope that the accounts of planning's gaze on tourism that the reader will find in this issue will encourage a thoughtful dialogue between both planning and tourism, a dialogue that dialectically moves between the context and the sector to highlight tensions, gaps and overlaps that both disciplines together can start to address.

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