

TOURISTS, URBAN PROJECTS AND SPACES OF CONSUMPTION IN PARIS AND ILE-DE-FRANCE.

General framework

The phenomenon of tourism development in Paris cannot be observed only at the urban scale, but it is necessary to analyse all other relative processes, at the different scales, from the large scale of the whole city development strategy to the urban one. Paris, in fact, is the core of a metropolitan area of 11 million of inhabitants who cross its territory everyday for different reasons (work, leisure, events, etc.). To these daily flows of people, it is necessary to add tourist flows (26 million tourists who visited this city in 2005 and they spent by each 237.20 Euros per day!). Tourism generates more than 500,000 direct jobs. This area attracts the greatest number of foreign tourists to France. Evidently the role of the City of Paris itself is crucial for these results. In business tourism (44 percent of hotel stays in Paris) as well as in tourism for leisure (56 percent). Paris still holds the position of a world leader because of its museums, history, cultural attractions, events and festivals, hotel capacity (in 2004, 25 percent of French rooms and 31 percent of number of stays are concentrated in Paris region hotels, and international airport). Nevertheless the role of the Parisian "banlieues" (first and second ring) becomes more and more important for tourism development principally for two reasons. On the one hand, it is less restrained to develop in this area, different forms of tourism, more inventive than the classical "Paris City Tour" (for example: Marne-la-Vallée, in the Department of Seine-et-Marne accommodates about 15 percent of foreign visitors, in large part because to the attraction of the Disneyland Paris Resort). On the other hand, the City of Paris is also a department the limits of which are marked by the Paris ring-road which separates the City of Paris from the suburbs. So the City of Paris can't extend any more. In this context, the "banlieue" is, compared to the City center, conceived as an asset in order to keep producing new attractive spaces. However, many sectors of the Parisian "banlieue" are already disadvantaged in comparison with the rest of the Ile de France territory, characterized by heterogeneity (social, of landscape, of texture etc.). Thus, because of these unstable areas of "banlieue", it is required to consider in terms of balanced planning strategy in order to make an integrated tourism development policy dealing with the whole Paris Region. Then we can understand the phenomenon of tourism development in the City of Paris, only through the broader planning strategies concerning the Ile de France region as a whole, analyzing their relations with both the main regulatory urban tools and their spatial applications (at the scale of a quarter) even including the aspect of urban practice. In other words, we are dealing with *so-called*, the "urban project process" (interactive and iterative process taking into account different actors, scales and temporalities). In this way, according to an urban project approach, we can explain the tourism policies that are changing the way in which the City of Paris thinks about its attractiveness in global competition for visitors and global competition between the major centres of business wealth and heritage and culture.

So new attractive places in Paris (Belleville, Promenade Plantée, Bercy) and in its region (the regional clusters as Saint-Denis, Val de Marne, etc..) are often expected to provide sustainable and alternative forms of leisure and tourism, can generate urban, social, and economic benefits for local communities and provide more creative tourist experiences for visitors. In Paris and elsewhere 'politiques de projet' seem very important in re-branding the city promoting the image of particular places. But all these initiatives are carried on in a complex context in which we can encounter some risks to increase several problems as the structural crises of some marginal areas or the progressive loss of inhabitants and jobs leaving Ile de France. In the last ten years, in fact, Paris has lost 126,000 paid workers (93,000 workers in the industrial sector and 33,000 in the building sector, according to INSEE). As well as young workers, who leave Paris because of the high cost of life, the region also loses retired people who want to live in a more pleasant environment than Ile-de-France.

In this context, how urban competitiveness and territorial attractiveness – for visitors, for economic growth, and to attract and retain a middle class – should be considered?

Another problem concerns more directly the growth of the City of Paris surrounded by the suburbs and the matter of their governance. Both of these approaches correspond to a double vision of Paris: one, an image promoted by an urban design (Greater Paris, promoted by the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy) and the other, an informal institution allowing different stakeholders of the region to meet and to share the opinions about their relation with the city centre.

Development “attractiveness” or competitiveness policies in Paris and in Ile-de-France: contradictions and ambiguities

Planning issues in Paris and in the Ile-de-France Region

The principal planning tools, the SCOT (Schéma de Cohérence Territoriale at region scale), the PLU (Plan Local d’Urbanisme, at local scale) and the PADD (Projet d’Aménagement et de Développement Durable, connected to both of them), are helping the region to enhance competitiveness not only in relation to investors but also in relation to visitors, artists, students and researchers (PLU, Diagnostic, 2004). In order to do that local leaders often adopt policies based on design (or a project) in order to make the territory more ‘attractive’ and then more ‘competitive’.

In the Paris region, in particular the inner-lying, densely-populated area dense (with about 5 million of the inhabitants of the region as a whole) the aim is to increase economic competitiveness and job creation by means of a system of “clusters of competitiveness” (pôles de compétitivité)¹ combining research and production. The main problem of this clusters system is lack of relationship with the territory (from physical point of view). Clusters depend on individual economic interests connected to specific features of some municipalities or urban areas which can create a “pole de compétitivité” in order to obtain funds from State.²

Tourism is considered as a major area of action to develop the Parisian economy – through enhancing the environment, developing cultures and employment (PLU, Diagnostic). The tourism sector in the Paris Region can obviously be distinguished from the other French regions. It is ahead in terms of tourist income. On average, 237.20 Euros per day were spent by each of the 26 million tourists who visited Paris in 2005. More than 500,000 people are employed in tourism (CCIP, 2007). This area attracts the greatest number of foreign tourists to France. As a result, meetings, mega-events or media-events (such as the Olympic Games or the Rugby World Cup, for example) are becoming more and more an object of desire for all municipalities, small or large, principally in the Inner-lying Parisian suburbs³.

In addition to tourism objectives, the PLU of Paris highlights the concept of ‘territorial offer’ as part of its effort to reduce territorial inequalities providing higher quality urban landscapes, public spaces suited to specific neighborhoods (for example the most underprivileged) and provision of the necessary services and infrastructure .

¹ In France, at the present time, there are 67 Pôles de Compétitivité combining Research & Development which receive funds from State. See: Némery, J.C. (2007), *Les pôles de compétitivité dans le système français et européen. Approches sur les partenariats institutionnels*, Paris, L’Harmattan.

² The municipality of Paris, in 2005, signed a “Charta of Partnership” with the “Chambre de Commerce et d’Industrie” and the association *Paris Europlace* in order to create a new technologic and financial innovation “cluster of competitiveness”. See: Economie.paris.fr. The Mayor of Paris has established a budget of one billion Euros for innovation and research in Paris. He wants also develop “digital projects”. (Paris Council of 26th of May 2008)

³ As the « Festival de l’Oh ! », launched in 24th and 25th of May 2008, by the Department of Val-de-Marne with the participation of the municipality of Paris, in order to re-discover the Seine river in a new atmosphere. See: www.festival-oh.org

The governance of Paris: a city between State and City Region

The central question for planning in the Ile-de-France region is how to find the right place for Paris, in the center of a conurbation of more than 11 million inhabitants, but concentrated in a small perimeter. In fact, the City of Paris is also a department the limits of which are marked by the Paris ring-road which separates the City of Paris from the suburbs (tabl.2). So the City of Paris can't extend any more.

This situation poses a dual problem:

- The lack of building land
- The need for high-density buildings (the fashion for skyscrapers is coming- back). This proposal concerns particularly the "Portes de Paris" for which some of the most important Parisian architects have designed skyscrapers mixing offices, housing and shopping centers.⁴

Many initiatives are being carried out by the municipality of Paris in order to bring together the principal local leaders to define a common planning strategy. Recently, the French State has also become concerned by the future of "Greater Paris" which should include a part of the suburbs.

- The City of Paris in Parisian conurbation is searching for project partnership

The different scales of government and intra-regional differences create some specific issues for Ile-de-France. The City of Paris, for example, has an exceptional economic and cultural role and has not yet begun looking for a real partnership with neighboring municipalities that have tried separately to become more attractive and competitive by taking advantage of their regional location. (tabl.3)

Some municipalities located in the inner-ring of the Parisian suburbs such as the municipalities of Val-de-Marne, have an individual vision of territory. Establishing administrative partnerships near any capital is always very difficult. The City of Paris has also realized a PADD on an urban scale, but it has provided some 'Territorial projects in partnership with cities of the inner suburbs in a so-called 'GPRU' (Grand Projet de Renouvellement Urbain) document, with particular regard to the territories located near the outskirts of Paris. There are 11 GPRU sites.

In addition, the PLU of Paris is attempting to strengthen the cooperation between Paris and its conurbation, in a large range of actions including the GPRU's social housing and public spaces and the PDU (Plan de Déplacement Urbains) plan of urban mobility Ile-de-France. Developing public transportation, and making bicycles available to the Parisian public through the "Vel'lib" service, have been two of the main actions of PDU. Particularly, the "Vel'lib" has been very successful.⁵

Outside the city the development of the North-Eastern suburbs includes cooperative projects around the Plaine Saint-Denis and broader negotiation with the municipalities of Plaine de France and wider environmental initiatives such as the PRQA (The Regional Plan for Air Quality).

The political and institutional challenge is marked in the urban landscape. The connections of the river Seine into the suburbs create many particular types of landscape and opportunities for cooperation. Where there is a physical barrier to cooperation, such as the Paris Ring-road, some effort has gone into studies of crossing points in a series of urban projects.

Furthermore, the 'Contrat de Plan Etat Région' (2000-2006) established 10 clusters for growth, 3 of which are connected to Paris: the Plaine Saint-Denis, in the North, the Seine Amont, in the East and

⁴ *Opinions on building skyscrapers in Paris divide population and local actors. For population the skyscrapers are synonymous of social housing in peripheral quarters (the "Grands Ensembles"). Then they are a symbol of poverty, conflicts and social segregation. Architects state that this negative image is connected to the use (social housing) of the skyscrapers and not to the buildings themselves. On the opposite side, building a luxurious skyscraper mixing different uses could enhance the quality of a site. This is also the point of view of the mayor of Paris.* http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2008/05/28/le-retour-des-tours-aux-detours-du-grand-paris_1050552_823448.html

⁵ According to a survey (15th of May 2008) there have been 20 million bicycle rentals and 190.000 subscribers since the program was launched, in 2007.

the Val de Seine, in the South-West.

Particularly, the departments of Seine-Saint-Denis and Val-de-Marne have launched a schedule on 'industrial and cultural tourism' (see, for example, the MAC VAL – Museum of Contemporary Art, located in the town of Vitry-sur Seine in Department 94, Val de Marne), specifically catering for local inhabitants .

The North East Parisian cluster lies in the department of Seine-Saint-Denis. It is one of the most important sectors of industrial tourism development. It is captured by its marketing slogans: 'Five different sites on one axis to redesign the Paris of events'. The cluster is formed around large cultural, tourist and leisure facilities (Stade de France, the Basilica of Saint- Denis, the Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace, the Park of la Villette, the exhibition centers at Le Bourget and Paris-Nord Villepinte, and the Flea market at Saint-Ouen) already established as attractions in the area, forming a clearly visible image for local stakeholders and international visitors.

This zone is seen as having great tourist potential, stimulated by the on-going urban regeneration projects of Paris North East around the North East sector of the Paris ring-road.(tabl.6)

The benefits to the local image of the designation of the zone are expected to include local urban and economic regeneration and to strengthen the local population's sense of belonging inducing a new positive perception of the value of their heritage. Such initiatives reflect developments over the past few years on the central question for planning in Ile-de-France – how to find the right place for Paris, in the centre of this conurbation, in order to share equitably all the benefits that its territory is able to produce.

There is much debate about getting together participants in the Parisian conurbation to enhance economic efficiency and to encourage its urban and social dynamism. The problem of the perimeter of Greater Paris including a part of the suburbs can be discussed only by means of an adequate system of territorial governance.

- Government policy to create Greater Paris with an urban project

Responding to this question the French government launched, in March 2008, an "International Consultation on the Future of Metropolitan Paris", entitled: Designing the Future of the Paris conurbation. The call for submissions for this consultation is addressed to teams of professionals and particularly of architects. We can read in the introduction of this document:

"On the inauguration of the Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine in Paris, 17th September 2007, the President of the French Republic affirmed the importance of quality in architecture, as well as in urban and landscape planning, for the quality of life in France. He also expressed the desire that an international program of consultations be created in the coming months, bringing the skills of ten architectural and planning offices to bear on the subject of a new overall urban planning project for Greater Paris. These statements using policy orientation which he had first expressed at the inauguration of Satellite 3 of the Roissy Charles-de-Gaulle Airport on 26th June 2007."

In others words, a Greater Paris cannot take shape without a great urban project (architecture and urban landscape). This "designed" approach of a territory is defined also as «spatial intelligence of urban territory» which can help to elaborate «diagnostic and prospective approach to the urban and landscape development of Greater Paris over the next twenty, thirty, and even forty years." The policy of the French government is clear: creating a great and attractive Paris, including a part of the suburbs, signifies a return to spatial policies. We are near to the French notion of "embellissement" ("embellishment") of Paris. As a result, 10 teams of architects have been chosen to give a new outlook to Paris. The 10 proposals for a new master plan for metropolitan Paris were unveiled in March 2009, "may just be the kind of brazen idealism the world needs right now. (...) The results of a nine-month study commissioned by President Nicolas Sarkozy, the proposals aim to transform Paris

and its surrounding suburbs into the first sustainable “post-Kyoto city,” a reference to the treaty on climate change, with an expanded Métro system and sprawling new parks”. (New York Times, 17 March, 2009). At the present time we can see these proposals at the Cité du Patrimoine et de l’Architecture. “The aim of the study was twofold: to create a plan for a greener, more sustainable city, and to break down the isolation between the outlying neighborhoods and the historic center” (NYT, id.). But this international contest raises some questions, for example about the criteria of choice of the architects (“The teams range in experience from well-established international stars like Richard Rogers and Christian de Portzamparc to French architects who are just beginning their careers”, NYT, 2009) or about the true aim of these projects (some people and some French presses have questioned Mr. Sarkozy whether this is anything more than an elaborate publicity stunt) or about the feasibility of some projects (for example the Mr. de Portzamparc’s plan proposes demolishing both the Gare du Nord and the Gare de l’Est and replacing them with a single massive European train station just outside the city center). As a result, some criticisms are rising from public opinion about this initiative.

These proposals, however, allow emphasizing the necessity to conciliate environmental concerns with social cohesion in order to create a new Paris’s identity, more integrated to the territory of Ile de France.



Atelier Christian de Portzamparc

The architect Christian de Portzamparc has proposed a new elevated maglev train that would run above the Paris périphérique.

Contradictions and ambiguities

The considerable tourist attractiveness of Paris and Ile-de-France

Obviously, the role of the city of Paris itself is crucial for these results. In business tourism (44 per cent of hotel stays in Paris) as well as in tourism for leisure (56 per cent) (CCIP, 2007c), Paris still holds the position as world leader because of its museums, history, cultural attractions, events and festivals, international airports and hotel capacity (in 2004, 25 per cent of French rooms and 31 per cent of the number of stays were concentrated in Paris region hotels, INSEE, 2005). After the city of Paris, the Department of Seine-et-Marne accommodates about 15 per cent of foreign visitors, in large part because of the attraction of Disneyland Paris. The proportion of short stays (fewer than three nights) is also a particular characteristic of the Paris Region. In fact, 70 per cent of overnight stays are short stays in Ile-de-France against 56 per cent in France (INSEE, 2005).

But...A significant “presence” deficit

Some studies on tourist development in France⁶ show that the number of people present on a site, in the high season, is very important in developing a consumer economy. In this way, we have statistics from INSEE, based on rate of presence which tells us about new trends in regional popularity.⁷ These studies indicate the exact number of people present on a site. They also take into account people whose main home is on the same site (according to the census). So the "rate of presence" is calculated on the basis of the population indicated by the census and the number of nights spent by tourists, minus the number of days which the residents spend elsewhere (Davezies, 2007). Following this approach, the rate of presence in Ile de France is 96%, which amounts to a significant deficit.⁸

In other words:

- In terms of raw data, Ile-de-France is the leading tourist area in the world
- In terms of net tourism, the number of "franciliens" (population of Ile-de-France) leaving Ile-de-France is higher than that of tourists coming to the same region.

This deficit is of 500,000 people/years!

And...the middle-classes are seeking to move to other regions

The people who work in Ile-de-France are increasingly seeking other locations for their place of residence, in short, they want to live elsewhere.

Laurent Davezies'⁹(2007, 2008) analysis shows that while the GDP of Ile-de-France has been increasing continuously, household incomes in this region are decreasing. This process is enriching other French regions which benefit from the transfer of incomes from the most productive regions (with higher a GDP) and which also offer "residential quality" and an attractive environment.

The Metropolitan areas: losing territories?

According to this author, there are always two types of territories : metropolitan areas which are competitive at the global level but which are still « losing » (due to increases in unemployment, concentrations of low-income populations and poverty and large social disparities), and territories with a high level of residential and environmental attractiveness which are «gaining» (in terms of quality of life, decreased unemployment thanks to jobs for an unskilled or low-skilled workforce, tourist attractiveness, in short a perfect balance between society and territory).

This gap between Ile-de-France and the new territories which were gaining, was reinforced by the decentralization that established the principle of salary equality (salaries in Ile-de -France salaries had until then benefited from a subsidy linked to the higher cost of living in the region) and improvement of amenities (universities, schools, etc...) and infrastructure.

A dual territory: producing and consuming

Thus while production occurs in Ile-de-France, spending (and consuming) occurs elsewhere. This is

⁶ C.Terrier, M.Sylnader, A.Khiati, « En haute saison touristique, la population présente double dans certains départements », Insee Première, n°1050, 2005, in Davezies, L. (2008), *La République et ses territoires. La circulation invisible des richesses*, La République des Idées, Paris, Seuil.

⁷ The income and the consumption (which stimulates employment in the domestic sector) are considered as two key factors in the relationship between the shape of territorial development and poverty. In other words, we are seeing another form of New Economic Geography based on consumption (and not only on production).

⁸ The rate of presence goes from 140% in the urban areas of Saint-Tropez, Royan, Briançon, Trouville, Chamonix, Agde to 205% in Lourdes. (Davezies, 2008)

⁹ The level of employment in Ile de France decreased from 1990 to 1999. Its migratory balance is negative (-450.000) and many people seeking unskilled or low-skilled jobs go to other regions. So Ile-de-France is losing this workforce which is necessary its development

what makes L. Davezies say that production and consumption¹⁰ are now disassociated and that the territories which are the most productive are not necessarily those which are the strongest or most desirable. The “franciliens” consumption in other regions than Ile-de-France is enormous. Usually, Parisians spend two months per year more than 100 km away from Paris where they often have a second home. As a result, the demand for less qualified jobs in Ile-de-France is decreasing. This process makes it more difficult than in other regions integrating less qualified people. So, in Ile de France, we are witnessing a dual phenomenon: while it is more and more attractive for highly qualified workforces progressively renewed (in order to adapt to globalization changes for competition with other world regions), social inequalities are increasing.

Paris and Ile-de-France: a rich and poor ghetto?

The risk for Ile-de-France is that the middle classes will go elsewhere, leaving only the very rich and very poor (those who have no place else to go, or who have subsidized housing), with the resulting risks of intense social conflict and spatial dislocation.

For this author, increasing competitiveness (in terms of desirable businesses and workers) the search for tourist attractiveness at the world level, shouldn't obscure the fact that the vitality of a city is also based on its residential economies and the quality of the social and urban dynamics that it is able to create.

Residential quality could be more tourist attractive than metropolitan competitiveness

This leads L. Davezies (2007) to conclude that the regions which offer residential attractiveness are also attractive for tourists.

Conclusion

There is a structural issue in developing projects across administrative boundaries and an issue with integrating policy objectives. Tourism is increasingly seen alongside economic and social planning.

In addition, one of main priorities of tourist development policies in the Paris region is to enhance the physical quality of many urban spaces.

The ‘embellissement’(‘embellishment’) of Paris is the primary objective of current policies illustrated in the PLU by the PADD, but it seems to be also at the heart of government policy.

The City of Paris continues to develop tourist initiatives in different ways: highlighting traditional urban heritage and the renewal of the landscape of the banks of the Seine, but also promoting the enhancement of other urban landscapes such as Belleville, and creating new urban landscapes for consumption like Bercy Village.

The image of places is also enhanced through many temporary events such as Paris Plage or Paris Respire, encouraging walking and the use of bicycles instead of cars.

The ‘festivalisation’ of the city familiar in North America has also becomes one of the effective promotion strategies for Paris.

In Ile-de-France, and particularly in the urban core, we can see evidence of the urban project approach to urban quality and renewing the city's image and a new desire to connect policies across administrative and physical barriers.

Tourist policy is readily incorporated into such a general approach to urban planning.

But there are also some fundamental economic challenges facing the region that impact on these new approaches to urban policy.

Fundamentally, there is a perceived problem, not about the flows of visitors but about retaining the region's relative wealth and middle class.

¹⁰ Significant job creation (about 300,000 in 2007, according to an interview with Michel Husson in the February 16, 2008 issue of *Libération*) is thus explained by the many short-term (and therefore precarious) contracts and by the low-skilled jobs (aid to individuals for example) offered by the regions that are gaining.

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