



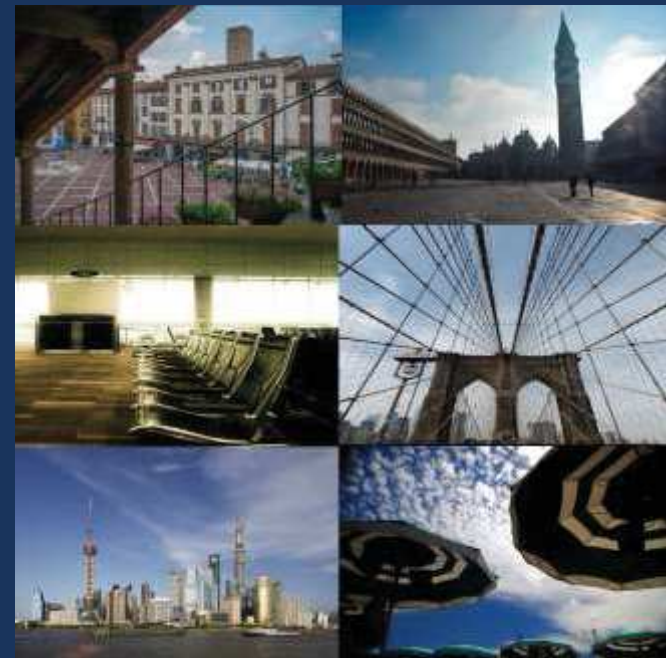
This collection of papers has been written by the international team of scholars teaching at the Master Course in Planning and Management of Tourism Systems of the University of Bergamo, while the Covid-19 emergency was spreading in all parts of the World and especially in the territory of Bergamo.

The main aim of the work is to face the topic of Tourism in the case of exogenous shocks, like the Covid-19 pandemic, reflecting on their impacts on territories, communities and heritage both during and after the crisis. The papers adopt different disciplinary approaches and methods, trying to give a multi-focused gaze to the complexity of a global phenomenon and to possible forms of recovery.

This collection is addressed to students and researchers studying in the tourism sector, who are in search of answers in this time of change and crisis. We believe that after reading this volume they won't have all the answers to their dilemmas, but they will reflect about them, they will receive proposals for specific approaches, methodologies, sources, references, examples, useful for the future of their own research.

FEDERICA BURINI is Associate Professor of Geography at the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the University of Bergamo where she is member of the CST-DiathesisLab. Her primary research interests are participatory processes and collaborative mapping to promote territorial regeneration in a sustainable perspective.

TOURISM FACING A PANDEMIC: FROM CRISIS TO RECOVERY



edited by Federica Burini



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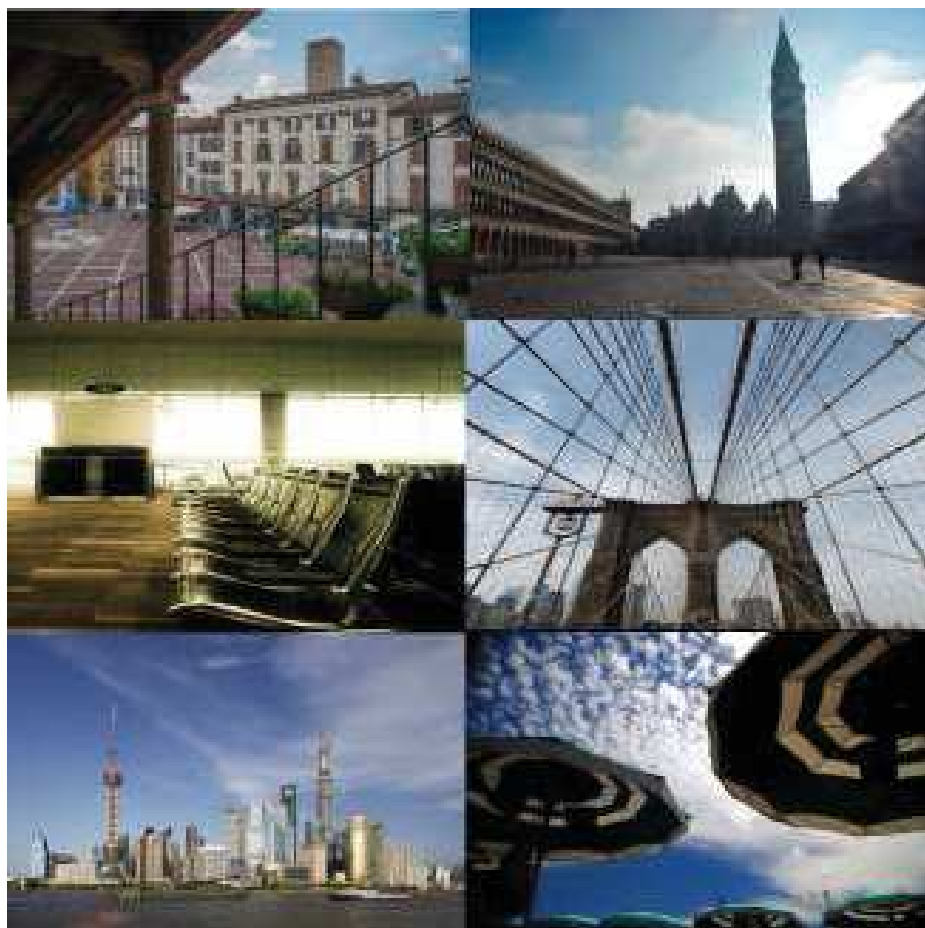
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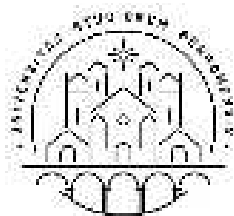
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*To our students of the Master Course
in Planning and Management of Tourism Systems
of the University of Bergamo*

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Presentation and executive summary

This collection of papers has been written in April 2020 by the international team of scholars teaching at the Master Course in *Planning and Management of Tourism Systems* of the University of Bergamo, while the Covid-19 emergency was spreading in all parts of the World and especially in the territory of Bergamo.

The main aim of the work is to face the topic of Tourism in the case of exogenous shocks, like the Covid-19 pandemic, reflecting on their impacts on territories, communities and heritage both during and after the crisis. The papers adopt different disciplinary approaches and methods, trying to give a multi-focused gaze to the complexity of a global phenomenon and to possible forms of recovery. The first section is focused on the impacts of global shocks in travel behaviours seen from economic, marketing and legal perspectives (Peter Keller, Greg Richards, Andrea Macchiavelli, Roberta Garibaldi, Andrea Pozzi, Daniela Andreini, Federico Mangiò, Simon Taylor), followed by a second section which analyses territorial and environmental issues related to tourism sustainability and adaptation to global changes (Andrew Holden, Federica Burini, Jennifer Wells, Elena Bougleux). The third section investigates tourism discourses and imageries during and after a pandemic (Rossana Bonadei, Cinzia Spinzi, Stefania Maci, Milos Nicic, Sanja Iguman), followed by a fourth section focusing on behaviours and social impacts (Roberto Peretta, Gabriella Alberti, Domenico Perrotta, Kerstin Heuwinkel). The fifth section analyses survival strategies to a pandemic for art, culture and science (Terry Stevens, Iolanda Pensa, Gemma Tully, Raffaella Pulejo, Patrizia Anesa, Gloria Pastorino). The last section deals with tourism teaching during crisis by analysing the results of a survey (Stephanie Pyne and Federica Burini).

This collection is addressed to students interested in the tourism sector, who are in search of answers in this time of change and crisis. We believe that after reading this volume they won't have all the answers to their dilemmas, but they will reflect about them, they will receive proposals for specific approaches,

methodologies, sources, references, examples, useful for the future of their own research.

I wish to thank the colleagues from the University of Bergamo and the visiting professors from British, Canadian, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Serbian, Swiss, US universities for having accepted with great enthusiasm this challenge in a so difficult period of resistance. Their valuable contributions will undoubtedly be of great interest and demonstrate that a global phenomenon should be always analysed by a global network of researchers. I also thank the anonymous referees from foreign universities who dedicated their time to read and approve this publication.

The book is dedicated to our students of the Master Course in *Planning and Management of Tourism Systems* and to those of them who particularly suffered for Covid-19.

Federica Burini

President of the Master Course in Planning and Management of Tourism Systems, Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures University of Bergamo

Spatial effects of a pandemic on Tourism: discovering territorial pathologies and resilience

Federica Burini*

Abstract:

The pandemic known as Covid-19 provides tourism studies with an opportunity for an unprecedented analysis of the spatiality of the phenomenon, both for highlighting some territorial pathologies generated by non-sustainable forms of tourism and for discovering the capacity of tourism resources to face the crisis and discover new functions.

The spatial-temporal nature and procedural behaviour of the contagion show different territorial dynamics, considered both as pathologies or opportunities, related to tourism at different scales. In both cases, some signs of territorial resilience emerge and reveal potential guidelines for future tourism planning to follow.

The paper addresses the two dimensions of the phenomenon, global and local, showing its contribution in terms of impact and territorial resilience, taking as an example the Bergamo area, one of the most significant outbreaks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key words: *pandemic spatialities, territorial pathologies, resilience.*

1. The spatial effects of a pandemic compared to other crises

Among the numerous typologies of risks for the tourism phenomenon, much of the literature employs the generic classifications of nature-induced, human-induced and technology-induced hazards (Shaluf, Fakhru'l-Razi, Aini, 2003; Faulkner, 2001): the first ones may be climatological (e.g. flood, drought, hurricane, wildfire, ...) or geophysical (e.g. earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, tsunami, ...); human-induced events are as varied and diverse as transport accidents, political instability, epidemic diseases, Technology-induced hazards may concern industrial and even nuclear accidents or mechanical/systems failure, ...

Direct impacts of these forms of risk may include fatalities, evacuation, physical, environmental and social damage and substantial economic costs (Shaluf, Fakhru'l-Razi, Aini, 2003).

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Beyond the more apparent direct effects, there are indirect and 'ripple effect' consequences which can lead to longer-term issues: in the case of a crisis, tourism can have an impact on recovery costs, social and economic repercussions, image reconstruction, and more.

In order to define the problem of how a pandemic such as Covid-19 would impact tourism from a territorial perspective, it is important to consider that it deals with a human-induced hazard which does not directly affect the materiality of space: a pandemic is an infectious disease where there is a significant and ongoing person-to-person spread in multiple countries around the world at the same time without direct impacts on physical elements of territories. Rather, it is a phenomenon which has strong impacts on people's movement and interactions, the two main conditions of tourism. The Italian geographer Angelo Turco while analysing the process of territorialisation and its complexity recalls René Thom's theory of catastrophes, stating that every territory in its evolution and dynamism also includes jumps, crucial transitions that are genuinely catastrophic (Turco, 1988, pp. 120-134). This is the passage of a territorial system from one structurally stable layer to another, through a path of discontinuity connected to an important change, such as a pandemic. On such occasions, each territorial system undergoes a transition from a minimum to a maximum level of complexity in which, thanks to self-reference, that is the ability to stay alive independently from external impacts, multi-stability is achieved, understood as a phase of invariance between two thresholds. In the first phase of the crisis, the system detects a minimum multi-stability which then becomes complex over time, having to face new problems, and passes to a level of maximum multi-stability. In this way a cyclical dynamism is configured in overcoming the competitive tensions of a crisis with respect to the territory. This process demonstrates the level of inertia of the territorial structures which, in order to be well controlled by a society, require the commitment of the territorial actors to manipulate their predictability and to exercise their power for a maximum control of the transition. All this is fully applicable to the crisis we are experiencing with the Covid-19 pandemic, which leads tourism systems to move from a certain

level of complexity and stability to a higher level of complexity once the transition phase is over.

Unlike other crises generated by climatic emergencies or geomorphological catastrophes, or also by human-induced events (like wars or accidents), one important point related to the multistability of tourism systems is related to the spatial characteristics of global crisis due to a pandemic. Tourism systems do not lose their naturalistic and cultural resources, accommodation facilities and mobility infrastructures. For this reason, inhabitants are still able to re-think about their use, accessibility and fruition – which is not the case after a natural calamity – and also to think about the kind of new spatialities that can be promoted and how to change the perception of affected territories.

The epidemic Covid-19 triggered worldwide concern since its severity was officially acknowledged in early January 2020. By the end of March 2020, this epidemic had infected a great amount of people, becoming a real pandemic²³. Some of the world's most important countries for inbound and outbound tourism (e.g., China, France, Italy, Spain, UK and USA) are dramatically affected by the virus outbreak without knowing what their future holds. It is clear that these tourism systems are passing through a period of transition which will increase their complexity and their capacity to face the same problem in the future.

2. Global spatialities of a pandemic and the emergence of tourism pathologies

The most important spatiality affected by the Covid-19 pandemic is global mobility, especially related to air transportation: some logics of globalization are brought back into play, showing a halt in international tourism (Gössling, Scott, Hall, 2020). Between closed borders, denied movements and invitations to stay at home

²³ For a better understanding of the pandemic from a social and territorial perspective, the Centro Studi sul Territorio of the University of Bergamo has undertaken a research coordinated by Prof. Emanuela Casti and Prof. Fulvio Adobati, which involves researchers from the University of Bergamo, students and external collaborators in order to interpret the evolution of the infection and its territorial outcomes. See: <https://cst.unibg.it/it/ricerca/progetti-ricerca>.

except in emergencies, airlines had to cancel thousands of flights, if not completely suspend activity for a long time. According to data reported by Flightradar24, real-time flight tracking portal, in the weeks of March 2020, commercial flights globally decreased considerably compared to the same period of 2019. Global traffic will likely continue to fall as airlines further reduce their flying schedules in many parts of the world. A comparison between commercial flights in the world and in Italy between 2019 and 2020 shows a decrease starting in the middle of March 2020 reaching 80% at the world level and 93% in the Italian context (www.flightradar24.com).

The first global spatiality produced by the pandemic is the lack of human circulation of our planet, causing us to reconsider especially international tourism, that is the connection of people and places at transnational or transcontinental distances. The most important hubs of international air travel are witnessing an unexpectedly rapid change in their organisation and planning which is also affecting at the local scale those remote destinations where especially intercontinental travel happens and constitutes the main economic resource (Gurtner, 20017). This is the case for remote islands, safari tour locations, ancient heritage sites, often located in developing countries and for these reasons having a strong impact on local development. This spatiality of the pandemic highlights one of the main territorial pathologies of these remote places: tourism as the unique source of economic development especially for external actors and not for the local communities. In those tourism-reliant destinations where international tourism is the main or exclusive activity, an unprecedented shock is happening. This suggests a future need to consider a better use of tourism infrastructures and local resources, re-imagining other activities and uses involving many more people and attracting also the communities living in the region.

Another important spatial reconfiguration caused by the pandemic is related to the so-called "hyperplaces" of tourism, described by the French geographer Michel Lussault as the places of the world considered as icons of the global society in which a density and diversity of people, practices and connections are

concentrated regardless of the season (2017). These touristic hyperplaces have changed their image during the pandemic: examples include famous public places like Times Square in New York, Piazza San Marco in Venice, La Rambla in Barcelona, the Louvre Museum in Paris, and so on. A new image of hyperplaces is now emerging during and after the pandemic, that nobody remembers, especially local inhabitants: from spaces that are overcrowded at all times of the day and in every season, to spaces that are empty all day long for weeks or months. The concentration in space and time of people – the most important characteristic of overtourism – is now fading because of a new set of distance rules and restricted travel conditions. The pandemic in these places has completely deleted a territorial pathology of tourism: overtourism. In geographical terms the phenomenon can be described as the result of an unbalanced process of territorialisation which has produced symbolic, material and organisational forms threatening the territorial capacity: a spatio-temporal concentration of tourists which affects the accessibility to local attractions or resources, changing the experience and atmosphere in the place, producing narratives and practices that are not welcomed by local inhabitants and communities (Goodwin, 2019; Peeters et al. 2018). The phenomenon of overtourism, right before the outbreak of the pandemic, was one of the most relevant global problems of tourism. In those places affected by this pathology, the main strategies seemed to be related to: i) a spatio-temporal distribution of tourists which ameliorates the accessibility to local attractions or resources; ii) a better organisation of a calendar of access to the attractions during specific times and following a specific logic related to different targets; iii) the creation of new forms of experiences especially in unknown places by involving local inhabitants and communities in the design of new itineraries and tourism practices and experiences off the beaten track. We could have never thought two months ago that the strategies for mitigating the problem of overtourism could have been appropriate for recovering tourism after a pandemic.

The third spatial reconfiguration at the global scale is the increasing role of telecommunications, considered by Jacques Lévy as the third way – after co-presence and mobility – of facing

distance (Lévy, 2014, p. 64). If mobility over long distances is a problem, another way to face distance in the globalised world is made possible by telecommunications and virtual connectivity. The pandemic has highlighted another territorial pathology of tourism: the lack of digital connectivity of places and the lack of digital communication to promote local resources affect attractions and their accessibility at different levels. We discover that virtual connections should be strengthened, thanks to the on-line accessibility of museums, destinations, places of culture; events that in normal circumstances would have demonstrated their attractiveness by counting visitor numbers now do so by the counting the number of connected users. At a global level, tourist sites are finding that virtual accessibility is the only possible way to deal with long distances, as long as they are equipped with updated websites, virtual tours, videos, translations in different languages, etc. This accessibility can also introduce an element of risks the media and social media produce new images of the places recalling the sense of risk and emergency that can in a few seconds produce a new negative image of the place. If not well managed by the destinations, these images and words can influence the behaviour of tourists and affect travel choices. This is the case of the city of Bergamo which, in March 2020, was featuring worldwide in the media: a long article in *The Washington Post* on the 16th talked about the city not for its precious tourist attractions, but rather the obituaries in the local newspaper; and a long article in *The New York Times* on March 27th described Bergamo thus: “once known as a quiet and wealthy province, ... a place where Red Cross workers go door to door, carrying away the afflicted”²⁴.

²⁴ The two articles can be read at these links: The Washington Post (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/coronavirus-obituaries-bergamo-italy/2020/03/16/6c342f02-66c7-11ea-b199-3a9799c54512_story.html) and the New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/27/world/europe/coronavirus-italy-bergamo.html>).

3. Local spatialities during a pandemic: tourism adaptation and resilience

The global effects of the pandemic are also visible on a local scale, as we demonstrated before, with the closing of airports and other means of transportation in many cities of the world, the emptiness of public or private spaces, the increased virtual connectivity of tourism destinations, local attractions or resources.

The most important spatial phenomenon that we can observe at the local level is strictly linked to the specificity of the pandemic. In the case of a global crisis due to a pandemic, as we have already seen, territories do not lose their natural and cultural resources, accommodation facilities and mobility infrastructures. They are preserved in their both natural and anthropic elements (vegetation, morphology, hydrology, buildings, infrastructures, ...) because none of the material heritage has been directly threatened or damaged.

For this reason, the spatial impact on tourism on a local scale is not measurable in physical space and its material aspects, but mainly in its spatiality, that is the spatial dimension of human agency (Lussault, 2007); and in its perception through our senses, that is in landscapes as defined by the 2000 European Landscape Convention in terms of an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors (European Council, 2000): the pandemic affects both the social agency on tourist sites and on the perception of landscapes.

Where spatiality is concerned, we have a strong reconfiguration of tourists' action, especially for mobility and co-presence, because people's movement and interaction - two important conditions of tourism experience - are completely limited. Real accessibility is made difficult because of the sudden ban of mobility outside the private domain and the introduction of social distancing as a new rule to prevent the diffusion of the virus, producing evident socio-economic effects for the closure of accommodation facilities, restaurants, museums, monuments, or the cancelling of events, concerts, etc. One important effect at the spatial level is the increasing importance of open public spaces or

open air activities, where it is easier to develop strategies to assure a fruition in safer conditions: public gardens and parks, public urban spaces like squares or pedestrian roads will be the new backdrop of the future of cultural and artistic initiatives also for tourism.

Where perception of space is concerned, by reducing general mobility and co-presence in public or private spaces to limit contagion, we witness a direct environmental impact in decreasing air and acoustic pollution produced by private or public mobility, thus revealing a new perception of our place of living. The beauty of certain de-crowded natural or urban landscapes reveals a new image and sound of our cities and territories where the material landscape is more visible than before and the soundscape is revealing living beings and things before unperceived (like birds, water courses, distant trains, ...). On the other hand, however, the disease produces an estrangement because we perceive an unreal landscape emptied of people, tourists and city users that we did not experience before in our globalised world, and we miss their actions, movements, and activities. We should therefore in the future focus on the diversity of our landscapes and consider them as strengths from which we should start.

This is the reason why territories witness a strong impact especially in their intangible heritage. Immaterial heritage – being the multiple forms of displaying spatial culture with art, events, activities, handicraft, ... – is confined only to private places and communicated through virtual forms, thus preventing both the collective production of this heritage and the fruition and sharing of experiences that are important elements in the tourism sector.

Many elements of intangible cultural heritage are being transformed in the context of the pandemic to support and reinforce public health measures. Artists in Peru and China, for example, are creating face masks using traditional design and techniques. Amazigh communities in the Moroccan Atlas Mountains share poetic verses related to Covid-19. Traditional string puppet performances in Sri Lanka tell stories of confinement and social distancing; while in Senegal, the mythical figure of Kankurang, traditionally the guarantor of order and justice, parades in the streets from 8pm until dawn, enforcing

village curfew. This is the result of a survey that UNESCO's programme of "Intangible cultural heritage" launched in order to express the risk of the pandemic on living and intangible heritage, while at the same time providing a source of resilience, solidarity and inspiration for many communities during these difficult times²⁵.

To cope with these impacts, which are built on the persistence of tourism resources and places, territories can discover new forms of use by transforming their function when the original one is no longer available, changing the way they are used, thus recalling the dynamism of territorial tourism structures (Turco, 2012). To limit socio-economic impacts, especially if the period of suspension of activities lasts several months, these resources can rediscover a form of resilience or of proactive and participatory adaptation.

The concept of resilience is defined in the mechanical world as the act of rebounding or springing back and it is also described as the quality of being able to store energy and bend elastically under a load without breaking or being deformed. However, since the 1970s the concept has also been used in a more metaphorical sense to describe systems that undergo stress and have the ability to recover and return to their original state. Resilience has been analysed for a range of natural and social systems, and following the seminal work by Holling (1973, 1986), resilience has become an issue of intense conceptual debate amongst ecologists, who consider resilience the key to sustainable ecosystem management (Pimm, 1984; Peterson et al., 1998). The concept has also gained ground in social science, where it is applied to describe the behavioural response of communities, institutions and economies. One interesting definition is "proactive resilience", coined by Dovers and Handmer (1996) who link resilience to planning for and adapting to hazards. Resilience is seen as a desirable property of natural and human systems, including territories, in the face of a range of potential stresses, including crises and hazards (Weichselgartner, Kelman, 2015). Geographical and spatial

²⁵ See the UNESCO dedicated webpage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/living-heritage-experiences-and-the-covid-19-pandemic-01123>.

approaches to an overall understanding of resilience remain quite thin but there are attempts to underline how geography matters to resilience, in terms of context, relationality, and the complicating factors introduced by place that challenge more totalizing accounts of resilience and its purported universality (Giovannetti, Semplici, 2014; Weichselgartner, Kelman 2015). In the following paragraphs we will adopt the the concept of resilience by following the approach of the Stockholm Resilience Centre (2015), considering it as the capacity of a territorial system to withstand shocks and disturbances and to use them to catalyse renewal and innovation.

4. Tourism facing resilience: a new governance for accommodation services

The first thing to do for tourism resilience during a pandemic is to re-use the accommodation structures which have not been in use for many months due to the lockdown. This re-use can mean a change of target, especially for non-hotel lodging with a few rooms or apartments, by giving accommodation to doctors or other healthcare staff instead of tourists. In the case of hotels having many rooms with bathrooms, an internal restaurant and management which is already used to organising these activities, the re-use could imply a re-functioning which would be useful for a healthcare system. For example, the lodging can be equipped to accommodate people who need to be isolated either because they have left hospital but still need care or because they are positive and do not require assistance but they cannot live at home anymore because they risk infecting their relatives.

This reconfiguration is an example of tourism resilience regarding the common good of people living in that territory, but in some cases it can be perceived as a problem by the local inhabitants who do not like receiving people infected with the disease in their area.

Harold Goodwin, famous for his analysis of resilient tourism, reports on his blog that Jess Earle of Portwrinkle Holidays in south-east Cornwall in England said he had received death threats after offering holiday flats for people to self-isolate. The idea of Portwrinkle Holidays was to allow families with elderly relatives to

go in these holiday homes where there is a lower infection rate as the area is very secluded, and this would have been a way for these lodgings to confront a period of crisis. But the perception of the local population is of bringing disease into the country and also it creates an impact on local resources: in the UK there are destinations like the Highlands, Cumbria, Southwold, national parks and National Trust properties who are reporting people moving to the resorts and their second homes thereby increasing the resident population and the strain on local supplies and the health and social care services²⁶.

In Italy, this re-use has been possible thanks to the “Cura Italia” (Caring Italy)²⁷ law which defines the procedures and agreements between accommodations services, local healthcare agencies, hospitals and Italian prefectures. This means that, in order to promote a form of resilience in the accommodation service systems it is necessary to develop a form of good governance between different public and private stakeholders that have places, competences and different kinds of services (accommodation, restauration, healthcare, security, ...) to work together for a common purpose.

The first hotel to host Covid patients in March was the Hotel Royal in Cattolica in the province of the famous seaside Italian destination of Rimini, followed by many other cities in Italy like Rome, Palermo, Catania.

A very good example of this tourism resilience related to accommodation is the one we are experiencing in Bergamo and in the Bergamo Province where in recent decades the overall increase in the number of overnight stays at accommodation facilities has been accompanied by the continuous expansion of overnight stays in owned or rented accommodation, in

²⁶ This information is given by Harold Goodwin in his blog about “Resilience and Covid-19”: <https://hub.wtm.com/resilience-and-covid-19/>.

²⁷ The Law of 17 March 2020, n. 18 “Misure di potenziamento del Servizio sanitario nazionale e di sostegno economico per famiglie, lavoratori e imprese connesse all'emergenza epidemiologica da COVID-19”, <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/17/20G00034/sg>. See especially articles 6, 29 and 49.

conjunction with the expansion of the availability of lodging and private offers on digital platforms.

The DMO VisitBergamo²⁸ was part of a process of governance during the first and the second phase of the pandemic. In March 2020 (the so-called first phase) the DMO was part of a network of public and private partners for promoting an important re-use or re-functioning of local accommodation services, both for non-hotel and for hotel structures. First of all, VisitBergamo called on all non-hotel lodging in the city of Bergamo and the Province asking them to give their unleased accommodation for healthcare activities. The response was very positive as VisitBergamo received feedback from 130 flats that after a daily check with local sanitary agencies were assigned to doctors in need of accommodation close to their place of work. Secondly, hotels in Bergamo and the Province were also very favourable to re-use, as some of them offered accommodation to big groups of doctors coming from other cities or countries to support the staff of our hospitals; like the four-star hotels in Bergamo such as Excelsior San Marco, which hosted Russian doctors; or the Hotel Palazzo Dolci-Mercure hosting emergency doctors; or Cappello d'Oro Best Western hosting 20 nurses; or also in Bergamo Province the Art & Hotel in Stezzano, hosting Norwegian doctors. Other hotels completely changed their function from hotel accommodation to healthcare service, hosting Covid-19 convalescence patients: the four-star hotels Starhotels Cristallo Palace in the city of Bergamo, the WinterGraden in Grassobbio, or the Antico Borgo La Muratella in Cologno al Serio, or the Best Hotel Bergamo West in Mozzo. The three-star hotel Parigi Due in Dalmine is also making itself available to help face the emergency, and the Youth Hostel in Bergamo is working on converting itself for healthcare purposes dedicated to children.

From May 2020 the Healthcare Agency of the Province of Bergamo (AtS) asked the Municipality of Bergamo to conduct a

²⁸ We are grateful to Alessandra Pitocchi, Communications Manager at VisitBergamo, for answering the many questions and for sharing data related to the resilience of Bergamo accommodations services during the first and second phases of the crisis.

survey about hotels available to offer their structures to AtS in order to isolate Covid-19 positive patients. The DMO also in this case played an important coordinating role and the response in the second phase was very positive with 383 available rooms and 258 to evaluate, making a total of 641 rooms. A great result of the ability to demonstrate resilience and proactive adaptation of tourism accommodation structures to crisis.



Figure 1 - VisitBergamo homepage showing the campaign #Bergamascoancheio
Source: www.visitbergamo.net

Another interesting initiative launched by the DMO VisitBergamo concerns the campaign #bergamascoancheio (I am from Bergamo too) that has many goals, like collecting funding for a project promoted by CESVI to support the hospital and elderly people suffering from Covid-19 in Bergamo (donoancheio.it), and also sending out beyond the provincial circle a request for support and identification with Bergamo, which is an emblem of the suffering of the country. The objective of this second initiative is to counteract and respond to the diffusion of a negative image of Bergamo projected by the media on the global scale, as already mentioned in reference to articles in the *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*.

Another important initiative concerns the Fair of Bergamo – which instead of organising initiatives attracting thousands of

visitors every year - demonstrated its resilience by converting its open spaces into a temporary hospital and health centre officially recognised by the Lombardy Region (Fig. 2).



Figure 2 – The fair of Bergamo temporarily converted into health centre

Another important actor for the good governance of the process of recovery from the crisis is the Municipality of Bergamo, which since the first phase of the pandemic has organised an important task force of employees working with teams of volunteers to confront the needs of families and elderly people facing very practical and also economic problems. In the second phase of the emergency the City Council of Bergamo wrote a position paper called “Bergamo 2020. Strategy of relaunch and adaptation”, in order to present a programme of recovery for the city after the emergency²⁹. It is important to highlight that in the document tourism is recognised as one of the most important drivers of the city’s economy that will need an important effort to ensure its recovery. In fact, tourism in Bergamo is an important phenomenon, having witnessed the presence of 800 thousands of

²⁹ The position paper is available at this link:
<https://www.comune.bergamo.it/node/205338>.

tourists in 2019, of which 66% came from abroad and the rest from Italy.

A lot of initiatives related to the tourism sector will concern cultural heritage and cultural initiatives that will need support to restart safely, and also the use of public spaces to provide a venue for those activities which are normally done in private places like restaurants, bars, cinemas, theatres and other indoor places that are important also for tourism purposes. Regarding mobility, a profound effort will also be needed to avoid a return to the use of private cars, to increase the provision of bicycles, new pedestrian and cycle paths, and to promote local accessibility to the most important services (the 15 minutes' strategy inherited by Paris). Finally, new technologies may enable a new definition of time-space relationships.

5. Discussion for a critical approach to tourism after the pandemic

The analysis of the spatial effects of a pandemic is giving us some important lines to follow in the future in order to promote tourism recovery in a more sustainable way. This is strictly related to the purposes of the so-called "Critical Turn in Tourism Studies" (Ateljevic, Pritchard, Morgan, 2007), that is a shift in thought that emphasises interpretative and critical modes of tourism inquiry by locating the phenomenon in its wider political, economic, cultural and social contexts. The role of social sciences of space, like Geography, is to adopt a new Cultural Geography, which analyses territories and their configurations like places, environments and landscapes from a subjective and reflexive perspective, underlying the important role of local communities. This is a critical approach to tourism spatialities which considers the interaction in one place between cultures, economies and ways of thinking, as a possible way to fight against territorial inequalities or unsustainable forms of territorial management generated by tourism (Dell'Agnese, 2018).

This critical discourse seems to be particularly useful after a pandemic, because the crisis highlights some territorial pathologies at the global scale, like market-oriented destinations, where tourism is the only source of development, or also

destinations affected by overtourism that suddenly find themselves empty with a lot of services and facilities which are not useful to local residents, or the lack of virtual connectivity and web accessibility in remote areas which makes it difficult to conceive of a way to attract future tourists and visitors.

At the local scale, we discover that the impacts of the pandemic affect the spatialities and not the material aspects of territories, and they have a strong connection with the perception of places and landscapes, with positive and negative issues. For this reason, it is possible to think partially about forms of resilience like the re-use and re-functioning of some places during the pandemic, and to imagine forms of participatory adaptation to a different and sustainable fruition of our territories to recover the qualities of our landscapes and to ameliorate the tourist's experience, following the specificities of slow tourism and the methodologies and strategies able to promote it (Casti, Burini, 2015).

While looking at the strategies that can be foreseen to face the global and the local impacts of the pandemic on tourism in a critical way, we can argue that we should apply an approach of tourism resilience, by withstanding the shock of this pandemic and its disturbances and to use it to catalyse renewal and innovation, more than to recover tourism at the same point as it was before the shock.

Thus, by re-interpreting the principles suggested by the Stockholm Resilience Centre (2015), territories should enhance:

- i) **participation and promotion of polycentric governance systems**, involving public and private actors, together with local communities as the new task force to re-imagine tourism activities in order to respond to common needs at multiple scales with a long term vision;
- ii) **learning of environmental and cultural potentials of tourism systems** by supporting long-term monitoring of key social and ecological components and provide opportunities for interaction that enable extended engagement between

participants and enable people to network and create communities of practice³⁰;

- iii) **territorial diversity and redundancy** by the promotion of new tourism itineraries and experiences out of the beaten tracks capable of strengthening the value of the landscapes and strongly related both to environmental potentials and to the spatial capital and local knowledge (handicraft, local activities and productions);
- iv) **resources' connectivity** by the organisation of a real connection of places and landscapes, by reinforcing forms of green accessibility and organising safety conditions for a more scattered service of public transport connected to services and resources;
- v) **slow variables and feedbacks** with a better organisation and planning of slow tourism activities by analysing spatial-temporal conditions, identifying specific times and following specific patterns related to different tourists' categories in order to avoid mass tourism and not to exceed the territorial carrying capacity;
- vi) **communication and management of information and related media** should continue to address consumer concerns both about safety and security, and about the richness of the offer of territories. Furthermore, territories should promote a network of virtually connected resources, services and activities on the web by the use of apps, mobile services, the use of social media.

This pandemic is taking us to a form of resilience and adaptation to the crisis, where more qualified tourism experiences must be conceived in a sustainable and critical perspective. While caring about social, environmental and economic impacts, we should strongly care about a better temporal and spatial

³⁰ This form of continuous learning should have the aim to encourage a reading of landscape in its natural and cultural aspects; to facilitate the identification of the most important resources and forms of spatial capital; and to identify all the actors to be involved in the promotion of the territorial opportunities. We can mention a research methodology to follow tested before in other territories: Burini, 2015; 2018.

distribution of tourism practices without impacting over the capacities of local communities.

This seems to be the only way in the next future to go out of the pandemic not only by recovering from the crisis but by catalysing the lessons learned by a renewal and innovation of sustainable tourism systems by avoiding to come out again with tourism pathologies.

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