



Tourism and Politics

Global Frameworks and Local Realities



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Chapter 13

Governing Tourism Monoculture: Mediterranean Mass Tourism Destinations and Governance Networks

Giorgio Conti and Carlo Perelli

Introduction

North-Mediterranean mass tourism destinations represent a consolidated research subject. During the past 50 years an increasing concentration of tourism destinations all along the coast line has been attracting consistent international tourism flows. In 1990 according to the European Environment Agency 135 million tourists chose the Mediterranean Sea and the same agency forecasts for the year 2025 between 235 and 350 million tourists in the region (EEA, 2003). Different authors have been focusing their attention on mass tourism destinations facing a stagnation phase (Agarwal, 2002; Knowles & Curtis, 1999; Priestley & Mundet, 1998) and supporting a rejuvenation process (Butler, 1980). Nowadays an attention to tourism diversification processes is generally observable between policy-makers (Bianchi, 2004; Bramwell, 2004) and the rhetoric of sustainable tourism provides the dominant strategic horizon of contemporary tourism policies in the region in opposition to the risk of a De-Mediterraneanization of the Mediterranean (Selwyn, 2000).

Tourism policies and planning strategies in the tourism sector have been traditionally conditioned by the traditional perception of tourism as an environmental friendly industry. Furthermore the hegemony of economic growth-based discourses among local decision-makers have been conditioning the tourism policies and planning evolution toward an integrated framework including environmental and social priorities. Short range and economic driven priorities has been traditionally limiting the capacity to implement strategic planning tools supporting longstanding integrated development policies. Adopting Getz (1987) and Hall (2000) schematization of different approaches to tourism planning we can easily recognize

in the past years the dominance of *boosterism* and *industry-oriented approaches* or, following Burns (2004) a *tourism first* attitude.

Traditional mass tourism destinations in the Mediterranean are nowadays trying to react to the difficulties of the local tourism system by the introduction of new modes of governing the tourism phenomena. Two driving forces (occasionally integrated) are reshaping the traditional approaches to tourism policies and planning strategies: the dominant discourse on the sustainability of tourism and the attention for innovative governance processes. If on the one hand the literature exploring the relationship between tourism and sustainability principles is flourished during the last 15 years, on the other the attention to governance issues characterizing tourism phenomena is relatively reduced. Some interesting exceptions are represented by researches focusing on the implementation of collaboration strategies (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Buhalis & Cooper, 1998; Jamal & Getz, 1995), on power (Bianchi, 2003; Cheong & Miller, 2000), community participation in the decision-making process (Murphy, 1985; Pearce et al., 1996; Reed, 1997), and on the political dimension of tourism phenomena at the destination scale (Bianchi, 2004; Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004; Kousis, 2000).

This chapter focuses on the role of governance processes in the development, consolidation, and diversification phases of coastal tourism systems traditionally marked by a tourism monoculture and particularly in the analysis of Rimini case (Figure 13.1), historically the leading Italian coastal destination.



Figure 13.1: The location of Rimini.

As showed by Rhodes (2000; 1997) there are multiple definitions of governance.¹ We agree with the definition stating that governance is about *new process of governing* (Rhodes, 1997). At the same time can be important to underline the fact that the contemporary attention to governance processes is supporting the attempt to reconceptualize the traditional debate on government forms under new conceptual categories. In this sense the conceptual opposition government versus governance is in our view to be reconsidered sharing the two concepts, the core object of research. The case of networking strategies in an urban policy-making scenario clearly describes this process. Our analysis wants to investigate the origins and the contemporary consistency of networking strategies that constituted in the past the main reason of Rimini tourism system success. The analysis adopts as a theoretical framework the urban regimes analysis approach.

Defining Urban Regimes

At the end of the 1980s (Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989) the emergence of urban regime theories in the US has been introducing interesting elements in the urban governance debate. Aiming to focus on the nature of networking experiences in urban governance processes regimes analysis has been obtaining more and more attention also in Europe (Dowding, 2001; Harding, 1997; John, 2001; Stoker, 1995; Stoker & Mossberger, 1994).

Adopting a very general definition we can see urban regimes as *informal but stable coalitions governing the city*. This definition introduces us to some basics characteristics of a regime. First the existence of an informal network involving local government and non-governmental actors and influencing local decision-making processes. As a condition to identify a regime the non-governmental partners of the networks have to participate with own resources to the policy-making process. If not the policy-implementation process can be considered as the simple exercise of governmental functions by local government institutions.

The nature of network agreement is informal and founded on a collaborative approach between the partners (Stone, 1993). A coercive participation to a network rarely originates a stable regime being the collaboration on shared strategic purposes the founding condition of the existence of a regime. Similarly a bureaucratic cooperation between governmental actors and non-governmental partners is generally not effective if not founded on really shared visions (Davies, 2003). In this sense Stoker (1995) individuates regimes as cooperation networks different from coercive systems of participation and collaboration but also from a traditional system of cooperation merely based on market rules.

Second, the stability of the coalition is measured by the capability to provide a widely shared agenda, a strategy capable to group a relevant network of partners and to provide broad consensus on a governing vision. The agenda have not to cover the totality of the domains of the governing actions but the capability to provide a clear and shared strategy in a domain perceived as strategic by the local community can determine a long-lasting

¹ According to the author at least seven main definitions of the concept can be individuated notably: Corporate Governance; Governance as the New Public Management; Governance as "Good Governance"; Governance as International Interdependence; Governance as a Socio-cybernetic System; Governance as the New Political Economy; and Governance as Networks.

urban regime. In this sense the consensus over a shared strategy is not strictly coincident with shared goals. Governing coalition can exist also in presence of not equally shared goals (Stone, 2004a). Networking processes are more exactly based on congruent goals being very common the case of the concurrent presence of shared goals, conflicting goals, and competing priorities between coalition partners.

Third, agenda feasibility can determine the stability of a regime. This condition is strongly related to the consistency of the resources the coalition is able to activate to support the agenda purposes (Stoker, 1995). In this sense the consistency of the governing network agenda and the access to resources (public or private) are unequivocally related. A dynamic equilibrium between the creation of a broad consensus on the agenda and the implementation of the strategy is generally needed to support an urban regime. Agenda feasibility is commonly dependent by agenda credibility expressed by the *interdependence* idea, meaning the capability to combine congruent purposes and adequate resources to legitimate the governing agenda.

Even lacking of the character of a complete and coherent theory of government and power relationships, urban regime theory provides an interesting analysis tool to investigate local politics. The attention for the characteristics of governing networks and the modalities of the adhesion to the governing strategies provides a useful set of variables for the researcher. Being the finality of such an approach to verify the existence and the conditions of stable governing networks and being the basic characteristics of a regime very difficult to be achieved is very common that a regime analysis will lead to the conclusion of the absence of a regime. As clearly explained by Stone:

“Over time, I have come to feel strongly that asking whether a given locality or set of localities pass a litmus test to qualify as urban regimes is the wrong question. Enquiry needs to focus on the character of local governing arrangements, what enables them to pursue an agenda, and what shapes the strength and direction of a locality’s problem-solving efforts. Put in general terms, as urban actors construct their responses to the problems and challenges around them, how do governing arrangements take shape? What matters as urban actors adapt their political and civic relationships to the task of governance?”(Stone, 2004a, p. 9)

Regime analysis has been criticized by several authors both for adopting a localistic focus and to underestimate the role of the State in local governance mechanism, especially in Europe (Davies, 2002b; 2003; Harding, 1994). Nevertheless the local scale of the analyses does not exclude the evident influence of external influences on coalitions governing the city but simply focuses on the observation of the mechanism adopted by local networks to constitute long-lasting governing alliances. The fact to consider as a framework the external influences on local governance patterns is not due to an underestimation of the local–global connections characterizing contemporary societies but only to the choice of a bottom-up approach to the analysis of governance mechanisms. The need to integrate this approach with a top-down analysis of the international actors contributing to shape local policies is not on discussion but it’s simply out of the finality of a regime analysis approach. Furthermore a better understanding of local governance mechanism can contribute to clarify part of the governance mechanisms puzzle also in a comparative perspective (Stone, 2004b).

Urban regime analysis can be of some utility in the analysis of tourism destinations. An interesting example of the application of an urban regime approach in tourism research is provided by Long’s study on London inner city fringe (Long, 1999) or Thomas and Thomas

(2005) research on small and medium enterprises impact on tourism policies. The choice to adopt this approach in the analysis of traditional mass tourism destinations like Rimini is due by several reasons. First is commonly observable in this kind of destinations the consolidation of long-lasting phases where tourism growth is characterized by a wide consensus and local economy is developed around what can be defined as a tourism monoculture. What is generally not investigated is what kind of alliances has been creating the conditions for such a general consensus on *tourism first* growth strategies and what kind of governance mechanism has been founding the governing actions.

Second, consequently to the reorganization process of contemporary tourism industry traditional tourism destinations in the Mediterranean are facing similar difficulties in supporting tourism diversification policies and in activate a rejuvenation process to confirm their leading position in the international tourism market. This change of paradigm in local tourism policies involves the rethinking of traditional governing schemes and commonly causes the emerging of conflicting positions between traditional tourism sector actors and new emerging priorities in tourism organizational patterns. A regime analysis can help to identify and investigate conflicting positions and shared strategies.

Third, the characteristics of European tourism sector justify an increasing attention to networking strategies. According to the European Union (EU) Commission (2004) about 60% of the holidays with at least four overnight stays are spent in seaside destinations and during the period April–October. Furthermore in 2000 about 99% of the enterprises in tourism sector and related activities were small (from 10 to 49 employees) and medium enterprises (from 50 to 250). These characteristics are strongly dominant in southern Europe nations being for instance one-third of the big enterprises (more than 250 employees) concentrated in UK. At the destination level this scenario involves a consolidated tradition of political mediation with tourism businesses networks, business categories representatives, sector Unions, and Chambers of Commerce. In some cases Parties or religious representatives can represent a relevant actor in local governance processes. Urban regimes analysis can help to identify governing alliances and strategies starting from the analysis of the evolution of tourism policies and planning strategies. Differently from Structuralist class analysis for instance, urban regime approach focuses on the form governing coalitions assume by *doing things*, being the effectiveness of the agenda adopted a key element for the identification of a regime.

Methodology Remarks

Our research has been conducted between September 2003 and January 2006. The fact that one of the authors is born in Rimini and during his professional life has been directly and indirectly in contact with tourism officials, entrepreneurs but also what can be defined as the local civil society inevitably advantaged and conditioned the documentation phase and more generally the research plan. During the research phase apart from the inclusion of data derived from newspapers archives, primary and secondary literature, official city, and provincial data we worked in direct contact with the functionaries of the local Provincial Institution in charge for the tourism sector and the Sustainable Development division. We participated in three workshops organized by the Province to coordinate the Local Agenda

21 activities and to create a national network of local authorities implementing tourism-related LA21 processes.

In parallel, informal meetings with local Parties representatives, academicians, and tourism sector operators has been organized aiming to select significant issues and to organize the following interviews phase. The direct interviews have been conducted in October 2005. We selected 20 peoples trying to include also relevant actors normally obtaining marginal positions in the local debate and in media consideration. The interviews involved representatives from local Institutions (Municipality, Province but also Trade Unions), tourism entrepreneurs, local representatives of Parties, local associations, and among the others the President of the local Fair and the Director of the regional Tourism Office. During the same period we organized two workshops with the aim of discuss the findings of the research and stimulate useful suggestions on the research structure.

The first took place in the Province offices involving functionaries working in tourism-related sectors for the Regional, Provincial and Municipal authorities, local University professors, the local Chamber of Commerce, and with the participation of the Province Councillor for the tourism sector. The second workshop has been organized in collaboration with two different local informal networks (one involved more in the local political dimension and in local associations, the second grouping local citizens working in different ways in the local public life and in cultural activities) and we obtained to involve around 25 peoples from very different backgrounds² animating an interesting debate on city strategic views.

The Formation of a Seaside Tourism Monoculture

The evolution of Rimini from small town with an established economy based on agriculture and handicraft to one of the European capitals of coastal tourism has occurred through a series of phases. The analysis of these evolutionary moments enables us to emphasize the governance mechanism supporting the formation, consolidation, and crisis of the tourist system based on the seaside tourism monoculture. This system has determined until today the evolution of the Riminese territory, going through different political phases almost undamaged until the 1980s.

Rimini has been historically one of the main city of the area mainly for the key position at the cross road between coast, plane, and inner mountains territories as testified by the strategic role of the city in the Roman Empire communication system. Today Rimini is included in the Emilia–Romagna region and with the surrounding coastal tourism system is one of the main tourism area in the EU, with around 45 million overnight stays each year. The first nucleus of the future tourism industry was born in 1843 with the opening of the *Stabilimento Privilegiato dei Bagni Marittimi*, 20 years after the inauguration of the establishment in Viareggio, Italy's first seaside resort. Rimini in those years accounted for about 30.000 inhabitants. It was situated in the *Stato Pontificio*, under the Pope's dominion, in a backward economic reality based on agricultural incomes. Its strategic geographical position and its healthy coast – free from malaria – led some members of the rising urban middle class of the town to

² From Academicians to citizens formerly involved in local politics, from local Parties representatives to school teachers or leading tourism attractions managers, from cultural events responsible to local opinion-makers.

undertake the venture, with the support of some progressive nobles. It was basically therapeutic tourism. The idea of opening the public baths initially met with the determined opposition by the notables men of the town and that of the municipality representing their interests: the new middle class drive disagreed with the static economic system of the time based on agricultural estate incomes. This scenario will not change with the adhesion of Rimini in 1860 to the *Regno di Sardegna*, the original form of what will become the unified Italian state.

The completion of the Bologna–Ancona railway line in 1860 and the intuition of future profits induced the municipality to buy the baths in 1869 after the economic failure of the first ownership. The same year a travelling expedition set out on a cruise in the Mediterranean Sea (Tuscany, Liguria, and the French Riviera) to visit and learn from the most developed tourism destinations in Mediterranean Sea. The appearance of the public management determines the transition from a pioneering phase marked by private industries initiative to the development of a seaside building sector which paralysed the newborn tourist industry. The investments strategy focusing on the baths, the therapeutic tourism, and on the hotels sector was given up in favour of an economic development based on land revenue incomes and real estate speculation under the influence of local governing elite. In 1873 the building sector society *Società Anonima Edificatrice Riminese* was established, subsidized by the local bank *Cassa di Risparmio* that represented the interests of estate ventures and promoted the building of detached houses, of the Kursaal, and of the new hydrotherapeutic resort. A concept of holiday was born, and with it the littoral town marked by detached houses (Conti & Pasini, 2000). The strategic partnership between municipality and real estate speculators, supported by the local bank will represent the key variable in local governance processes during the following 100 years.

In 1907 the first municipality regulation for the building of detached houses on the beach was approved and in 1908 the municipality sold the management of the littoral area to private individuals. The tourism business started to attract external capitals and entrepreneurs from Milan (grouped in the SMARA Company, *Società Milanese Alberghi Ristoranti e Affini*) chose to built in Rimini the *Grand Hotel Hungaria* aiming to attract elite tourism flows. During the following 40 years the debate on the opportunity to support an elite tourism will be dominant in the local scenario and only with the mass tourism boom of the 1950s Rimini chose its definitive position in the international tourism market. In 1910 the tourism tax was instituted (lasting until 1989) and in this first phase was controlled by the municipality and mainly finalized to assure investments on tourism sector as well as on the urban quality improvement. It originated on the other hand a long-lasting quarrel and a harsh political contrast over the destination of the resources. In 1912 the first town-planning scheme was brought into existence. The philosophy of the plan was clearly oriented to the creation of an elite tourism destination, a coastal garden city with a seaside promenade that resisted in its basic structure until today. If considered under an urban planning point of view such a scheme adopted a low profile aiming only to rationalize a posteriori, the spontaneous littoral urban expansion.

After the First World War all factories of foreign ownership were forced to close. Furthermore the existence of Italian chemical factories was contrasted. The debate over the choice between a seaside-estate economy and the industrial development as axis of priority development let the interests of real estate incomes prevail. The final closing of the *Stabilimento Idroterapico* (Hydrotherapy Resort) in 1920 confirmed the monocultural orientation of the destination development.

In 1922 Rimini was under Fascist control, but the change of regime did not invert the direction of the seaside-real estate development. It was a period of very high taxation levels. In the early 1930s one-third of the inhabitants fed themselves on the town soup-kitchen (Conti & Pasini, 2000). The fragility of the monoculture had reached its apex: most industries were nearly abolished, the tourism season was short and, in spite of the increased number of people who went on holiday, only a few benefited from the tourist industry.

As the *Azienda di Cura, Soggiorno e Turismo* (Tourism Office) was established in 1926, and all the decision-makers represented the Fascist regime as well as its interests. The control over the municipality and the Tourism Office by the same individual, the Fascist regime representative *Podestà*, symbolically embodied the apex of the seaside tourism monoculture. In 1931 the ownership and management of the Grand Hotel and the surrounding bathing establishments are acquired under the control of the municipality. Mussolini spent his holidays in Riccione and the Adriatic Riviera becomes the favourite beach of Fascism. In order to popularize holidays special trains and seaside camps for children were created by the Fascism (De Grazia, 1981). Holiday time becomes part of the rhetoric discourses supporting the regime ideology and in the mid-1930s around 2.5 millions stays are reported in the Adriatic Riviera. Touring had been given a boost together with boarding houses and hotels suitable for both the middle and working class.

This first development phase shows some interesting elements that will support the mass tourism boom, the consolidation of the tourism monoculture but also the emergence of what can be defined as a regime according to the characteristics described before. First the exponential growth of the built areas in the seaside and the consolidation of a privileged relationship between the municipality and the local real estate sector. The consequent urban sprawl in absence of effective planning tools will guarantee in the following decades a justification for an unlimited urban growth philosophy being the urban structure impossible to be radically modified after the pioneering years expansion. Second, the choice to support tourism sector development despite of the industrial factories on the one hand will prevent environmental damages and on the other will create the conditions for the development of a broad hospitality culture in the year of reconstruction after the Second World War. Again can be interesting to note that even crossing different political phases and governing regimes (the unitary Italian state as like the Fascist regime), the support to the consolidation of a seaside tourism monoculture has been representing a constant characterization of the city-governing strategies.

Mass Tourism and the Creation of Rimini Model

After the Second World War, Rimini had lost more than 80% of its buildings because of the bombings (Fabbri, 1992), but it quickly took back its role as Italy's leading seaside tourism destination. The Italian Communist Party (PCI) won the 1946 elections with 37.5 of the votes and strategically decided not to interfere with the recovery process of the city. Consequently no urban planning tools were adopted whereas particular investments were strongly supported. In 1947 the local bank Cassa di Risparmio financed a renewal project for the seaside area and the demolition of the Kursaal the symbol of the former elite tourism season conflicting with the development plans of PCI.

In 1951 tourists exceeded 1 million stays (Dall’Ara, 2002) and starting from 1954 foreign tour operators started to sell the Adriatic Riviera destinations in north European countries. However, the transformation into a mass tourism destination coincided with the agricultural reform in the first half of the 1950s. The National Government abolished the institution of the sharecropper, representing the usual form of agricultural organization in the area at the time. As a result the local government had to face the disintegration of the traditional economic base for inland families. The social block grouping former sharecroppers, farmers and craftsman families constituted the basis for the newly born Riminese tourism industry.

Two elements have been characterizing the decade 1948–1958 that represented the key moment in the consolidation process of the seaside tourism monoculture. The economic scenario was marked at the same time by the urgency of reactivate the local economy after the destructions of the Second World War, by an increasing demand for holiday in the society and by the availability of the working force expelled from the traditional economic sectors and mainly the agriculture. On the other hand the political scenario was characterized by an impressive consensus around a new generation of decision-makers animating the local PCI.

The Communist Party governed the city uninterrupted from 1946 to the 1980s. As shown in Table 13.1 the traditional diffusion of socialist movements in the Emilia–Romagna region has been legitimating an emerging group of young politicians that showed a remarkable ability in creating a broad consensus on their development project.

We can resume their philosophy with the expression “*from proletariats to owners*”. This paradigmatic change has been realized in a very short period of time. More and less in two decades a new hospitality sector has been formed supporting private entrepreneurship in the creation of new hotels in the seaside area despite any hypothesis of planning rationalization of the area. More importantly this new entrepreneurship without capitals has been supported by the local financial system (with a leading role of the bank *Cassa di Risparmio*) that assured the capitals for starting the business and to expand the structures literally one floor each year. The bills system sustained by the increasing holidays demand

Table 13.1: Rimini, the PCI, local elections results, 1946–1990.

Elections year	Votes (%)
1946	37.47
1951	31.16
1956	33.18
1957	35.23
1961	38.05
1965	43.22
1970	36.25
1975	44.07
1980	42.41
1985	39.89
1990	33.62

Source: Zaghini, 1999.

and two decades of sold out tourism seasons has been the engine of an impressive quantitative growth (from around 80 hotels in 1947 to 1.466 in 1961 in Rimini municipality).

The pragmatism showed by the communist leadership in choosing and supporting the seaside tourism monoculture has been sustained by the city only in part for ideological reasons. The real exceptionality of the development model in discussion is the fact that has been capable to group communist, socialist and catholic-oriented entrepreneurship, local finance and at the end of the day two Parties ideologically conflicting like the Christian Democrat Party and the Communist Party. The confrontation between the municipality (governed either by Socialist or Communist Parties) and the *Azienda di Soggiorno* (Tourism Office) of liberal orientation, led by the Central Government of the centre-right wing has been animating the local political debate for long time. The confrontation ended only in 1974 with the election of a member of the PCI to the guide of the *Azienda di Soggiorno*. But only in a first phase the opposition concerned the local development strategy. In the early 1950s in fact the alternative between popular tourism versus elite tourism created the condition for a confrontation opposing municipality and hoteliers supporting a popular tourism and on the other hand the Tourism Office and, indirectly, the national Government that in this phase did not support mass tourism.

The Communist Party became a unifying force sustaining the seaside tourism monoculture in which the working class and the new popular entrepreneurial class met (Zaghini, 1999). The relevance of the mediation process results more significant if we consider that the Italian political debate was characterized by that political phase known as of *Bipolarismo Imperfetto* (Galli, 1966) when Communist Party not legitimated by the political forces as possible alternative for the Government on a national scale made itself known as government force in the local institutions. In those years, in the electoral results emerged a predominance of the Christian Democrat Party in the national political elections and that of the PCI in the administrative elections in the so-called *Regioni Rosse* areas of Central Italy like Emilia–Romagna. Can be interesting to note that during the 1957 local elections Rimini becomes a national case being one of the few Italian areas where the USSR invasion of Hungary in 1956 had not implied the fall but rather the rise of votes for the PCI.

The dominance of local politics in tourism strategies analysis is clearly explainable by shortly analysing the role of tourism sector in the national political scenario. The normative framework approved after the end of the Second World War on the one hand has been supporting the administrative decentralization of tourism-related issues to regional Governments but on the other hand has been creating a Commissary for Tourism in 1947 and then a Ministry of Tourism in 1959 aiming to centralize the control over tourism policies (De Salvo, 2003). The contradictory nature of such a regulation strategy and the fact that Italian Regions has been effectively operating only starting from the 1970s led to a scenario where for long time the local Tourism Offices has been representing the most effective tool of intervention for the national Governments. Other collateral sectors like the regulation of beach use permissions have been more strictly dependent from national level politics. In some cases like in 1954 large coalitions of Member of Parliament (from Communist, Socialist, Social Democrat, and Liberal Parties) advanced the request for a Special Law supporting the Riviera Adriatica tourism system. But the Tourism Offices as a consequence of the relevant power derived by the control over the tourism tax money played constantly a central role in the implementation of local tourism policies. In Rimini the consensus over the development model created the

conditions for a shared agreement on the key issues even in presence of a continuous confrontation on tourism policies implementation. Furthermore the Tourism Office has been adopting a mediation strategy also with the hoteliers starting from 1955 grouped in an autonomous category association. It is well-known for instance the fact that at least until the 1960s an informal agreement fixed the amount of the tourism tax as an annual total determined regardless of the effective tourists stays.

In the first half of the 1960s, while several Spanish and Greek mass tourism destinations were given birth, the local tourism model took its distinctive character. The 1965 *Piano Regolatore Generale* (general town-planning scheme) is an interesting example of the strategic horizon sustaining the local development policies. For the first time it was decided a renewal of hotel sector toward a greater quality of the services blocking the quantitative growth of the hospitality sector structures, that is to say the core variable of the economic growth in the post-war period. The expectations of the PRG had to be partly frustrated missing the opportunity to invert the course which led to a crisis in the following decades (Fabbri, 1992) and validating the monocultural vocation of the urban development.

In 1966 the motorway connecting Rimini with Bologna was ameliorated creating the condition for a growth also in week end breaks tourism flows. In 1967 the airport of Miramare 3494 aircrafts had landing with 204,438 travellers from northern Europe. Rimini reached the apex of foreign tourists stays. Starting from the end of the 1960s the international tour operators began to choose other destinations because of the characteristics of local hotel sector management model. The family business model was no more able to ensure qualitative and quantitative standards appropriate to the support tour operator's supply. The Italian tourism replaced the international tourism flows. The family full board hotels with one or two stars became the drive of the system but the lack of coordination between tourism operators on the one hand originated a process of specialization and customization of the local tourism supply but at the same time weakened the possibility of effective tourism marketing strategies at the destination level.

The evolutionary process of the local tourism system has been only marginally affecting the consolidated governing structure and the consensus over the development model. On the contrary, the left-wing municipality kept a conservative attitude and pushed to the pursuit of the monoculture model. A new political subject supported the consolidation of the consensus base on development policies. The Cooperatives Societies even if historically less strong in Rimini than in the rest of Emilia-Romagna were characterized by a strong ideological adherence, Catholic and Socialist/Communist oriented. They represented the attempt to create coalitions between the economical operators, and became relevant consensus tools. The Cooperatives has been operating in different sectors. The CORIAL for instance grouped more than 100 hoteliers aiming to obtain better conditions for hotels purchasing. Probably the most successful example of this bottom-up networking strategies was represented by the Cooperative Society *Promozione Alberghiera* constituted in 1968 and conditioning at least until the 1980s the tourism policies strategies. Created by few local hoteliers the Cooperative grouped in some periods more than 300 hoteliers and represented the first attempt to rationalize tourism marketing and commercialization strategies. Furthermore the Cooperative has been supporting both the extension of the traditional summer season and the diversification of the destination supply by the development of the conferences sector.

The Cooperative Societies were connected with influent national-based associations and introduced the themes of the national political debate in the local governing scenario. At the same time the experience of the Cooperative Societies in Rimini has been providing an organizational framework at the national scale. The *Promozione Alberghiera* success was at the base of the constitution of a national-based federation of Cooperatives called *Federturismo* supported by the Christian Democrat Party. On the other hand the Communist Party supported in 1974 the creation of a Cooperative called *Cooptur* that started operating in the social tourism sector.

The emerging role of local networking experiences introduced interesting innovation in tourism policies implementation. Concluded the boom phase of the 1950s and 1960s the left-winged governing coalitions started supporting a tourism diversification process. The loss of attractiveness toward international tourism flows (representing around 40% of the arrivals at the end of the 1960s) if on the one hand did not produce a reduction of total stays for the presence of a new national demand for holidays on the other created the conditions for an economic loss for the reduced spending capacity of Italian tourists. Starting from this phase seasonality, tourism diversification and quality standards become the key variables of the following 40 years tourism policies. The most important diversification experience is represented by the local Fair opened in 1968. The Fair managed by the municipality, the Tourism Office, and the Chamber of Commerce has been supporting conference and events tourism development creating the conditions for the modernization of the sector in collaboration with the emerging Cooperative Societies representing the innovation force of the local tourism system.

During the 1970s a continuous confrontation between the Unions and the tourism industry anticipated the general debate on the development model opened during the 1980s. Interestingly both the Christian and left-winged Unions started to discuss the viability of the seaside tourism development model contesting the tourism sector working conditions. This reflection concerned first of all Rimini and its peculiar model of tourist industry. Small entrepreneurs without capitals originated one of the most important tourism districts in the Mediterranean. This development model preceded somehow that of the industrial districts of the so-called *Third Italy* (Bagnasco, 1988; 1977) emerged in the years of the consolidation of the Riminese tourist industry. The common characteristics were the family business, the low starting capital, a great flexibility in the organization of the work that also implied average working hours of 8–14 hours a day without a weekly rest, salaries 40% below the standard contract, and half of the employees working illegally (Benini & Savelli, 1976; Mackun, 1998). This productive model applied to tourism originated a high customization of tourism supply targeted on a habitual clientele (Bonini, 2003; Benini & Savelli, 1976). These characteristics represented the strength and at the same time the weakness of the model. On the one hand, it offered a highly personalized service and a perfectly suited holiday, so that the Riminese mass tourism supply has never been rigidly standardized in line with the traditional tour operators Fordist supply (Ioannides & Debbage, 1998). On the other hand the model was not stimulated to the innovation of the management processes and to the acquisition of new customers.

Since the early 1980s it was universally evident that the seaside monoculture model was facing a relevant crisis. Several economic operators denounced the stagnation of the model and the need for a structural renewal based on significant economic investments. Rimini's mayor Chicchi (Dall'Ara, 2002) since the first half of the 1980s invited to a renewal and

to structural investment. The first effective attempt to support a renewal process of small hotels quality standard started only in 1994. At the same time the Fair consolidated its leading position in the event and conference sector reaching in 1985 around 400,000 visitors. In 1987 the first Italian aquatic Park was created in Riccione. The Park called Aquafan strengthened the process leading to the constitution of a real Riminese district of the thematic and recreational parks. In 1988 the tourist tax was abolished opening a new crisis front in a system that shifted from stagnation to crisis.

The environmental and mass-media crisis of 1989³ accelerated a process ongoing for a decade (Agertur, 1989). But 1989 was also the symbolic year of the collapse of the Socialist regimes of East Europe. In Rimini, as well as in the rest of the *red* Emilia–Romagna there changed the local political equilibriums and the leadership of the Communist Party faded away in favour of local centre-right wing governments for a short time. In 1991, PCI chose Rimini to celebrate the passage from the old PCI to the new *Partito Democratico di Sinistra*. Political equilibriums had to be reinvented and the traditional networking strategies grouping hoteliers and other tourism sectors started wavering no longer supported by the adhesion to the seaside tourism monoculture model but also to a shared ideology. The crucial issue set after 1989 has been the need to rebuild shared vision of both the town future and its place in the tourist market. If the seaside tourism monoculture and the adhesion to the political ideology have been the hinges on which Rimini has built its social, economic, and political relationships starting from the 1990s both cannot control the social and economic fragmentation tendencies. Today the social contract that made Rimini famous is breaking into pieces.

Reinventing Rimini Territory Vocation

We can symbolically choose 1989 crisis as the turning point between the monocultural evolutionary process of Rimini local economy and a new phase. This passage implied a new competition for the access to a new clientele oriented to emerging tourism sectors arisen before the 1989 crisis but never representing a sound alternative to the traditional tourism model. The new development poles became the Fair, the conventions, the marina, events tourism, and the inland. Some sectors like the discotheques in the Adriatic Riviera benefited of a boom during the 1990s with 90–100 thousand visitors each weekend but the sector lost its importance at the end of the decade. The entrepreneurial class delayed conforming to the radical transformation of the tourist demand, uncertain between the old development model, and the emergence of new forms of tourism (see Table 13.2).

The institutional actors on the other hand has been often much more willing to a strategic reflection than the economic operators supporting for instance the creation of a seat

³ In July 1989 the campaign against mucilage presence in the Adriatic Sea broke out in national and European newspapers lasting during the all summer. Pollution was indicated as main reason for such a phenomenon. The state of national emergency was declared and Rimini applied to some international authorities, such as Peter Morris who had worked in Alaska to put an end to the damages provoked by the petroleum came out from the Exxon oil-tanker. Summer visitor presences fell from 7.069.935 in 1988 to 5.174.694 in 1989. On annual bases the fall is fixed on around 2.500.000 stays less (Dall'Ara, 2002). Successive studies will emphasize the recurrence of the mucilage presence, already certified for ages, and absence of connections between pollution and the phenomenon determined by other variables like water temperature and sea streams.

Table 13.2: Tourism diversification strategies after 1989 environmental crisis.

Development policies	Main architectural projects
Fair tourism	New trade fair district
Conferences tourism	New conference centre
Marine tourism	New Marina
Theme parks	
Cultural tourism	
Event tourism	
Nightlife and discotheque	
Old town regeneration	

of the University of Bologna in Rimini starting from 1992 education programmes in tourism-related issues. From a reactive reflection motivated by the stagnation of international tourism the political debate started focusing on the slow passage from the old tourist model of the seaside tourism monoculture to a new tourism vocation. The 1989 crisis marked a paradigmatic passage as reported by the words of the Mayor Luciano Chicchi:

“The algae of this summer 1989 [...] have only accelerated the process, by putting everyone with his back to the wall and compelling to a reaction, to a choice. From audience of a dragged agony, we need to become actors of a new development phase” (Dall’Ara, 2002; originally in Italian).

Considering the environmental impacts, real or alleged, the 1989 crisis marked a point of no return on the perception of the psychological and physical destination carrying capacity. In fact, although tourist presences collapsed and only in the past few years tourists stays went back to the levels reached before 1989 the bathers began to use the beach starting from the summer 1990. Nevertheless the idea of environmental risk started playing a part in the debate on the future of the destination. All problems related to the waste water treatment systems and swimming water quality have become a priority and the matter of environmental decay generally fed to a large extent the first antitourism demonstrations. During the 1990s a growing concern for the environmental and territorial criticalities together with the perception of tourism as threat and not as occasion for a strategic improvement of urban quality can be registered. At the same time, the Catholic Church has adopted a definite position regarding the changes of life style connected with tourism and the danger of a progressive transformation of the Riminese community identity (Dal’Ara, 2002).

Two surveys carried out in 1994 and 2001 emphasized the fact that citizens started showing signs of intolerance towards tourism. Between the two surveys such percentage rose from 14.5 up to over the 18% of the population with a progressive radicalization of the antitourism positions of those uncertain or just annoyed in the mid-1990s. If we analyse the motivations a certain degree of anxiety clearly appears for lack of tourism phenomena government and for its strongest impacts such as noise, traffic, rise in prices, and the overloaded urban infrastructures. Therefore it is not tourism that causes anxiety but

rather the lack of a tourist planning strategies (Trademark, 2001). At the same time, a seasonal and often irregular employment with fewer prospects of winter job and the stagnation of arrivals leading to a consequent cut in profits for the operators marked a change in the perception of the economic and social sustainability of the tourism model.

Structural characteristics of the local tourism system and the evolution of the international tourism industry both on the demand and supply side as described by the Fordism/Post-Fordism debate (Amin, 1994; Ioannides & Debbage, 1998; Poon, 1993; Torres, 2002) have been relevant variables in the seaside tourism monoculture crisis. More generally during the 1990s (even if with some differences in the effectiveness of the process) the approach to local development policies in Europe has been evolving toward a plurality of decentralized forms of actions. According to Governa and Salone (2004) four main elements have been innovating the urban and territorial policies strategies in Italy, in some case leading to normative changes supporting the process:

- The emerging and general recognition of new forms for the representation of interests and the consequent legitimization of a plurality of actors supporting different interests in urban and territorial transformations.
- A new approach toward decision-making processes including more attention to negotiation, public–private partnerships and inter institutional cooperation.
- A new centrality of local authorities in supporting integrated strategies at the territorial scale and an acceptance of an international competition scenario.
- The increasing adoption of public competition systems in the distribution of financial resources on the national scale.

One of the main consequences of such an evolutionary process has been the centrality of local and territorial development strategies. Differently from the traditional top-down approach to development strategies local authorities at urban, provincial, and regional scale are more and more involved in supporting local economic actors and territorial vocations in the planning process. On the other hand we can observe the lack of a coherent reconsideration of planning and decision-making processes under the light of a systemic, complex, and flexible approach that the new centrality of *territory rhetoric* will implies. Short-term and business drove planning philosophy underline strategies and processes that most of the time makes reference to value expression like strategy, integration, and system without accepting the consequent change in decision-making and planning paradigms (Dematteis & Governa, 2002).

At the same time the Italian tourism sector has known an evolution in the governing mechanisms at different levels. At the national level during the 1970s the regional Governments have been starting to use the powers the Constitution assured them. Conflicting interests opposing the regional Governments and the central one reduced the level of independence and innovation previewed by the reform supporting the progressive decentralization of powers on the regional scale even if different laws (1977; 1983) attempted to regulate the domain. In 1993 the Regions promoted a popular referendum for the abrogation of the Tourism Ministry. The success of the initiative created the conditions for an effective control over tourism sector policies by regional authorities.

The emerging role of the Regions lasts until now even if in 2001 a new law aimed to reorganize the sector. The reform (Law no. 135, 2001) dealing with the “*Riforma della legislazione nazionale del turismo*” tried to introduce a new organizational body called Local

Tourism System defined in the Article no. 5 as “homogeneous or integrated tourist systems including territories even belonging to different regions, characterized by the integrated offer cultural, environmental goods of tourist attraction, including typical agriculture products or local handicraft products, or else characterized by a wide presence of both single and associated tourist enterprises”. In Rimini experience the creation of a Local Tourism System organization is nowadays debated also for the perception of such an innovation as ineffective especially for budget constraint. A contested point is the regional direct financing of the Local Tourism Systems and the lack of coordination between the national law provisions and the regional norms not financing the Local Tourism Systems. The local-based institutions supporting local tourism marketing strategies and tourism policies implementation have been only partially supported by the regional norms. The principle of the distinction between marketing strategies (supported by the Region) and commercialization projects (supported by the operators associations) as expressed by the regional law regulating tourism financing has been criticized for the lack of coordination and the inadequacy in supporting the new integration phase of different tourism sectors and different territories under coherent strategies.

The municipality after the end of the PCI hegemony has been losing the ability to support innovative development strategies different from the daily mediation between different interests. On the other hand the closure of the Tourism Office in 1986 (with the progressive transfer of functions to the regional level) and the abolition of the tourism tax in 1988 have been progressively reducing the capability to sustain effective policies at the urban scale. The two traditional protagonists of the local debate apparently have progressively lost their leading role of the local economic networks. New emerging influence poles like the Fair seems to represent in a more consistent way the most innovative expressions of the local economy.

Starting from 1995 another relevant actor has been continuously increasing its influence on the tourism sector in Rimini. The Province especially starting from 2002 has been the most influent supporters of the adoption of sustainable development as the key concept leading to a new broad consensus on local development strategies. The Province has also introduced in the local debate the sustainable tourism theme especially by means of the actions of an EU Life project⁴ and has been supporting the experience of a Local Agenda 21 on the provincial base. The weakness generally related to LA21 processes (agenda setting

⁴ The EU Life project *Strategies and tools toward sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean coastal areas* (Life 00/env/it-0067), promoted by the Province together with the Calvià City Council (Spain), Ambiente Italia, and Federalberghi (Italy). The project started in 2000 and ended in December 2003. Two international conferences dealing with themes of sustainable tourism, the adoption of administration plans based on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) of the UE and the Carrying Capacity Assessment (CCA) of the United National Environment Programme (UNEP) has been organized. Furthermore the project implied the diffusion of environmentally friendly management strategies among tourism sector operators, the activation of participative processes at the local level, such as Local Agenda 21 and the reinforcement of a network of cities for a sustainable tourism in cooperation with the International Council for Local Environmental Initiative (ICLEI). In Calvià the demolition of 16 hotels built in the early 1970s and the new planning strategies have given visibility to a possible reuse of edified areas often showing relevant impacts, in Rimini the project tried to put into action a process of divulgation on sustainable tourism themes.

modalities, reduced stakeholders representation, and decision-making process legitimacy) can be observed also in the Rimini experience.

Since June 2002 the LA21 forum tried to integrate within the Agenda 21 process the EU Life project cornerstones by mean of visible actions aiming to create the conditions for an alternative development view between local tourism operators. In this sense an interesting project has been the realization of a preliminary project for the design of beach establishments with low environmental impact (environmental friendly buildings materials, water saving, recycling, and alternatives energy sources). After the opening of the first establishment in the summer of 2003 the partial reduction of the establishment administration costs has been leading a small number of beach operators to implement the same actions. The impact on the sector is still reduced existing around 500 beach operators in Rimini and the surrounding destinations, nearly 10% of the national amount.

Poor success met the Local Agenda 21 process put in action in February 2003 by the municipality over the crucial themes of urban regeneration, mobility, and participated urban planning. In the light of this experience the provincial Local Agenda 21 has been choosing to avoid critical themes like mobility, tourism seasonality, limitations in hotels stays, eco-compatible agriculture, urban quality, alternative energy sources, and accessibility to the territory. The provincial authority if on the one hand has stimulated the adoption of good practices in the sustainable administration of tourist enterprises on the other hand has been able to create effective premises for the integrated promotion of the Riminese territory by means of the creation in 2001 of the *Agenzia per il marketing di distretto* (the District Marketing Agency).

By means of such agency the Province started adapting its strategies to the new national law on tourism introducing the Local Tourist Systems innovation. The agency thanks to the institutional and financial support of the Government, the Emilia–Romagna region, and the Province has been equipped with the greatest freedom of action in order to represent a local reference for the sector. The new agency arose from the cooperation with the category associations, included in the board of directors. The promotion of the territory on a large scale is the strategic starting point for the building of the Riminese integrated tourist system by mean of new tourism seasonality and the diversification of the tourism supply; between the projects activated by the agency the financing of modernization projects for tourism sector activities.

Notwithstanding with the attempt of the Province to adopt sustainability principles as the key concept of Rimini new urban vocation and the incontestable impact of such a strategy on tourism marketing very challenging issues in terms of destination accessibility and local mobility have to be faced. The discussion over the opportunity to plan the construction of a surface railway has been involving the city for more than two decades and from 1996 the operative proposals has been discussed. The main issue has been represented by the choice of the localization of the new course in a city showing a very compact structure. An opportunity has been represented by the traditional railway infrastructure that if adapted showed interesting strength. On the one hand the reduction of the costs for the intervention, on the other the reuse of partially dismissed areas not in use. The choice has been different. In January 2006 the Province, The Mayors of Rimini and Riccione and the President of the TRAM Agency (the subject in charge of the project) presented the definitive plan for the building of a new surface railway only partially using existing structures advantages. A 93-million euro project for the construction of around 9 kilometre route with a capacity of around 3000

passengers per hour. The main constraint seems to be the mediation process with the owners of the properties that will be expropriated. Even reducing to 17 the number of stops to limit the impact of the main infrastructural works,⁵ has been calculated that the mediation process will involve around 650 different stakeholders. The negotiation at the moment has been managed by the direction of the project and some solutions like for instance the reduction of the number of the railway tracks to two seems to indicate that an effective mediation process has been activated. The project will start in 2007 and the planned conclusion is 2011. The main issue can be represented by the length of the administrative processes in the eventuality of new conflicting positions during the expropriation process.

The surface railways construction is part of a more general strategy toward the theme of mobility involving National, Regional, and Local decision-making levels. The aim is to provide Rimini area with a new line for the A14 highway (from two lines to three) and the complete renewal of the SS 16, one of the most traffic-congested secondary roads. According to the President of Rimini Province the success of the integration of these three innovative solutions to mobility issues will be one of strategic resources supporting the provincial economic system. Starting from the summer 2005 some Rimini hotels have been supporting a project to reduce the use of cars from the main Italian cities to Rimini. The customers choosing the hotel supporting the initiatives has been travelling by train and the hotels covered the costs of the journey. Starting from summer 2006 the initiative will involve international customers by the organization of trains from the traditional zones of incoming (France, Germany, and Austria). Apart from these interesting initiatives the main issue at the moment seems to be represented by the tourism flows management strategies. During the summer 2005 for instance the traffic system has been near to collapse in different week ends (especially in June) for the number of excursionists or week end tourists arriving in Rimini. During the first week end of June for instance the highway has been blocked for hours and the impacts on the regional traffic system has been relevant. The new week end tourists mobility represent the new challenge for the local decision-makers and clarify the complexity of the contemporary phase in Rimini tourism development.

Tourism diversification process and the extension of the traditional seasonality can be considered as emerging trends. During the past years interesting growth rates are observables during the whole year especially in the conferences and events sector. The conferences tourism growth today is competing with the traditional seaside tourism attracting over 1 million stays each year and generating economic resources comparables with the summer season. Interestingly is the hotel sector that is retarding the innovation of organizational philosophy for instance opening the whole year. At the moment around a quarter of the hotels work on an annual base and in different cases out of the peak season the room supply has been lower than the demand limiting the growth potentiality of the event and congress sector.

The Fair is more and more influent in the local development dynamics. In 2005 for instance has been approved the project for the construction of the most important Italian conference centre in Rimini strategically supporting the sector as the main protagonist of the tourism diversification process. One of the main constraints in the rejuvenation process

⁵ Spontaneous committee grouping citizens involved in the expropriation process has been created to contest the project but at the moment seems that an agreement has been reached.

at the destination level are represented by the real estate market dynamics. According to a real estate agent report in 2005 Rimini has been the most expensive real estate market in the Emilia–Romagna region and largely over the national average costs.⁶

The real estate speculation has been traditionally representing a relevant actor in the seaside tourism monoculture system. Nowadays the availability of building spaces in the urban area is extremely reduced and the building permissions are one of the most effective tools for the municipality to finance the realization of new tourism attractions. The basic idea of the so-called *motorini immobiliari* approach (that translated can sound like *building sector engines*) is to provide building permissions for a value similar to the costs of the property acquired by the municipality in order to finance it. The formula for instance has been adopted to partially cover the costs for a new stadium and for the new conferences centre. This approach is really attractive for building speculators. The urban structure is suffering traditionally unsolved questions in the mobility sector but also in terms of spaces available for public uses. In the new congress centre case the political opposition parties has been supporting a radical position against the consolidation of this approach to support public interventions costs. Furthermore representing the positions of the city centre commerce sector the protest has been focusing on the commercial destination of the new buildings that will be introducing new competitors in the traditional commerce scenario.

The same approach seems to be at the base of the most interesting scenario for the renewal of the hotel sector. In the attempt to create a wide consensus base during the 2005 summer the actual leading Party *Democratici di Sinistra* born from the transformation process of the former Communist Party tried to elaborate a discussion document (DS, 2005) on tourism development strategies. It's the first attempt of a relevant political actor to recreate the conditions of collective consensus that characterized Rimini before the 1989 crisis. Interestingly apart from the support to the new tourism seasonality and tourism products diversification processes in the framework of the Sustainability principles the document seems to lack strategic vision in imagining a new and innovative development strategy. Themes like the support to the growth of the immaterial culture resources like arts, fashion, and music and more generally the activities with strong innovation potentialities are largely underestimated and need more institutional support.

On the contrary great attention has been devoted to the proposal for the creation of a company supporting the hotel sector renewal process. The idea is based on the observation that around 45% of the hotels business are directed by managers that do not own the hotels and as a consequence the lack of motivation to periodically renew the structures is evident. A company financed by relevant economic partners⁷ and supporting the project has been involved in the feasibility study in collaboration with the hotel sector association. The project will finance the purchasing of the structure, the renewal or the demolition of the hotels out of market. This approach will represent an opportunity to renovate the local tourism supply and at the same time a chance for replace out of market hotels with other services. The main critics to the project observe that even aiming to increase the tourism sector structures standards it will finally increase the anomalies of the real estate market supporting the adoption of the so-called

⁶ Data *Ufficio Studi Tecnocasa*.

⁷ A national-based company with partners like *Sviluppo Italia* (51%) and *Banca Intesa, FIAT* and *Marcegaglia* collecting the 49% of the shares.

motorini immobiliari financing tool. The creation of urban transformation companies will provide the organizational framework supporting the single regeneration process and providing a coherent strategy according to the characteristics of the city area interested by the project.

Interestingly a decentralization process involving the new tourism attractions and led by the impossibility to find urban spaces adequate to the needs of the emerging tourism sectors is supporting the adoption of tourism policies focusing on the district scale. The association of the local theme parks for instance (now called *Riviera dei Parchi*) since 1988 has been supporting the creation of a real tourism parks district and today involves the main attractions of the Adriatic Riviera. The same approach can be observed in the attempts to integrate the inland tourism attractions with the coastline tourism supply. The creation of the new brand *Signoria dei Malatesta* is trying to support the integration of two tourism territories like the coast and the inland traditionally not collaborating and now is starting supporting integration processes even with other tourism systems outside the provincial and regional boundaries adopting the philosophy of the new national law regulating Local Tourism System activities.

Tourism marketing strategies seem to represent a sector where the level of integration between different decision-making levels starts to produce systemic strategies of promotion. From 2001 the Agenzia per il Marketing di Distretto (Marketing District Agency) has been supporting the promotion activities on an integrated scale including the inland destinations and the emerging niche tourism sectors (sport, food and wine, cultural tourism). The hotel sectors has been creating Product Clubs grouping hotels targeting their supply on peculiar niche sectors like sport tourism or showing typical characteristics like the hotels managed by women.

On the other hand the regional Tourism Office strategy has been focusing on the German market target. The agency has been supporting the choice of the German low cost airlines Hapag-Lloyd Express and DBA to increase the flight from the main German cities to Rimini for the summer 2006. The local hoteliers associations have been ready to support the costs of the operations by covering the eventual loss derived for the airlines by a reduced success of the project. The local tourism sector associations have been participating also to the costs of an annual-based marketing campaign in Germany to support the promotion strategy. The attempt to inaugurate a new season of relationships with the international tourists flows can be considered as a challenging test for the emerging policies supporting the increase of small hotels quality standards and more generally the efforts to renovate Rimini destination image.

Tourism Monoculture and Governance Regime

The 1980s crisis of the traditional seasonal tourism supply involved the whole asset of the decision-making process. Today different tourism sectors concur in sharing resources and influence on decisional process for the presence of new stakeholders. On the other hand political legitimacy depends on the capability to manage an increasingly complex network of interests. We have described the scenario of the groups of interest supporting the tourism monoculture development model. The coincidence of interests between tourism sectors activities and building industry growth has been relevant at the point that we can indicate this phase also as *tourism-real estate monoculture* model.

In Rimini the impressive capability of political realism showed by PCI in the post-war period supported the peculiar formation of an entrepreneurial class without capitals and the

bills represented the only resource accessible for the new entrepreneurship. The key factor of Rimini success as a tourism destination has been the creation of thousand of boarding houses managed by former sharecroppers or craftsman's families. The city has been rebuilt around the tourism development project and this network of small businesses (around 1650 at the edge of the development cycle at the end of 1970s) has been part of what we can define as an *urban regime* scenario. The influence of the hotel sector in the decision-making process for around 40 years has been impressive. We can individuate in the dualism Municipality (expression of the local tourism industry) and the Tourism Office (representing the national Government priorities and detaining the relevant incomes determined by the local tourism tax) the main conflict area in the local decision-making process for a decade. The first supporting the Communist Party strategy, the second aiming to preserve the 1930s status of Rimini as elite destination. Nevertheless when the success of the tourism monoculture model appear complete (in less than 10 years), even the Tourism Office–Municipality conflicting positions have been coinciding.

If we consider some aspects described as constitutive of a regime we can find an interesting correspondence with the tourism monoculture system. First the level of consensus on shared development priorities and interests was nearly total. It was very clear that the city needed to be rebuilt in the first years after the Second World War without limiting the capacity of the new entrepreneurial class to reach enough money to own a parcel and build a boarding house. Supported by an exponential growth of the demand tourism represented an easy accessible driving force for local economic actors despite the crisis of other sectors. In this phase the ideological adhesion to the Communist Party development policy provided a supplementary consensus base on values and strategic visions. A growth-based approach was nearly universally accepted on the one hand limiting the debate over the city's strategic choices and on the other providing effectives and widespread consensus-based strategies for city development. The analysis of local press tourism development *discourse* provides interesting confirmation of the level of consensus in Rimini local debate. It shows that both government oriented and leftist local newspapers have been sharing for long time the same orientation toward tourism development priorities.

Second the influence of the tourism operators on local governments was high. Rimini municipality has been governed by the Communist Party for around 40 years and local governments founded in the Party an important vehicle of consensus. Even when the 1950 and 1960 boom has been reducing the tourism growth new forms of consensus and collaboration has been introduced in the local governing scenario. The Cooperative Societies provided the solution for the new development phase criticalities. The need to change governing approach in the passage from the uncontrolled expansion phase to the management of a complex tourism system reaching 6 millions stays each season created a new space for the first institutionalized networking strategies.

This consideration introduces the theme of the effective implementation of the governing strategy. In a first phase the resources has been mainly provided by local actors like the bank Cassa di Risparmio. At the same time the sold out seasons of the 1950s and 1960s supported those investments. Starting from the 1970s the Cooperative Societies and emerging development poles like the Fair has been supporting more effectively the tourism policies enlarging the governing network to new actors. The Tourism Office has been traditionally supporting continuous investments in urban renewal projects but also in tourism

events, marketing campaigns and generally in tourism-related projects. Starting from 1988 local tourism policies has been facing the increasing difficulties of a financing system introducing elements of competition between different actors and a reduced freedom of movement in the spending policies.

Another interesting element of the tourism monoculture regime is the limited influence of the national Government in tourism policies implementation. The institutional framework of tourism government at the national level has been creating the condition for a reduced influence of national Government in local strategic choices. This process has been increasing the influence of both the local representatives of the Communist Party and of the Christian Democrat Party. Even with a continuous conflicting positioning on the implementation of tourism policies we can observe the existence of a consolidated consensus on strategic choices. Starting from the 1970s the increased influence of the regional government level on decision-making processes has been opening the scenario to a new actor. We can observe that until the end of the 1980s this evolutionary process has been only partially influencing the Rimini governing coalition. Furthermore can be interesting to note that the connections between the regional tourism authorities and the local politics have been traditionally relevant. The former Mayor Ceccaroni for instance has been in charge during the 1970s as regional Councillor for Tourism and the actual director of the regional Tourism Office has been in charge as Mayor of Rimini in the past.

A real turning point has been represented by the years from 1986 to 1989 (Dall'Ara, 1986). We identify in this period the end of the traditional tourism monoculture system and the passage from the traditional regime governing the city to new forms of governance. The abolition of the local Tourism Office (1986) and of the tourism tax (1988), the crisis of the former Communist regimes in east Europe and Asia united with the 1989 environmental crisis constituted a real fracture with the traditional governing scenario. Starting from the end of the 1980s we observe an interesting evolution in the local governance patterns. The tourism growth philosophy starts to be generally perceived as no more capable to support a monocultural development strategy based on the traditional tourism season. Rimini faces the challenge of a multiplication of development poles (in the tourism sector but also in the emerging manufacturing productions) and of legitimating their role in the traditional governing coalitions. The traditional tourism actors founded in local decision-makers like the Tourism Office and the municipality two perfect partners in building effective governing coalitions. The contemporary scenario seems to be characterized by the search for new equilibriums. In this picture traditional actors and emerging ones are competing in the definition of a new strategic agenda managing the contemporary complexity.

At the moment we can observe the lack of a shared development strategy. On the one hand the building sector and the local govern seem to constitute the most influent alliance and in some way the last manifestation of the partnership governing the city for around 40 years. All the main urban policies implemented during the last 10 years and planned for the future 10 seems to be inspired by the traditional urban growth philosophy lacking for instance planning schemes introducing a deep reflection on the strategic renewal of the urban structure. Very relevant projects like the new conferences centre and the new stadium are manifestations of such an approach. Others projects like the surface railways are interesting pioneering attempts to reorganize the urban mobility representing probably the main contemporary issue in the area.

On the other hand conflicting positions oppose traditional and emergent economic operators of the tourism sector but more generally different groups of interests. The debate over the impacts of informal commerce, over the Beach Scheme opposing traditionalist and innovates approaches to tourism services management, the continuous discussion over illegal working conditions in the tourism and buildings sectors, the emergence of antitourism manifestations increased by the impacts determined by new tourism flows are all manifestations of the multiplicity of views on destination future. A shared agenda is far to be individuated and the multiplication of conflicting positions clearly describe this process.

Sustainable Development of tourism constitutes the most relevant attempt to provide a unifying discourse in local development strategies. In this sense the role of the Province as an actor capable to coordinate the different interests can represent an interesting perspective even if not in a near future. At the moment sustainability has been adopted as a conceptual framework trying to provide a unifying strategic vision. The future will show to what extent sustainability discourses will really affect the complex scenario analysed.

Conclusions

This chapter adopts an urban regime approach to the study of governance processes in a traditional mass tourism destination showing development patterns originating a tourism monoculture system. In this sense we individuate a phase (around from 1948 to 1988) showing some peculiar aspects of a regime as described by the urban governance literature. The progressive lost of influence of such a governing partnership has been originated by several factors. The international literature focusing on global changing processes (Soja, 2000; Swyngedouw, 1997) has been introducing elements of reflections on the new relationships between local territories and global processes and the reshaping of local realities identities and vocations. In a word Complexity is more and more the conceptual framework characterizing these processes. This chapter focuses more on the local dimension of such a process of territorial change trying to analyse the consistency of local networking strategies in order to provide long-lasting governing coalitions. What emerges from our analysis is that the passage from tourism monoculture systems to multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholders scenarios characterising some traditional Mediterranean destinations implies new governing strategies and new discourses legitimating agenda setting processes.

The growth-based strategy supporting tourism monoculture in Rimini originated a broad consensus and at the same time a reduced opportunity for alternative views in some way reinforced by the peculiar approach to democracy of PCI inspired by *Democratic Centralism* principles. Today if on the one hand competition between territories is based on a larger scale and involves a broad spectrum of actors on the other traditional governing networks keep a certain influence on the decision-making processes. The emergence of a broadly accepted discourse of *public participation* on decision-making processes has been supporting for instance the implementation of Local Agenda 21 processes both on the municipal scale and the provincial one (Provincia di Rimini, 2003). Even if the Province LA21 has been reaching a certain visibility especially for the attention devoted the adoption of Sustainable Development as a key concept we observe a lack of effectiveness of the process but also some criticalities in the agenda setting and in the stakeholders selection processes. Furthermore the

lack of coordination between LA21 suggestions and effective planning tools reduces the impact of such a strategic expansion of the decision-maker's base. The persistence of local elites control over governance processes testimony the need for new and more effective mechanisms of democratization of politics at the local level (Somerville, 2005).

At the moment the reshaping of the governing scenario by mean of the integration between different levels of government and different development poles supporting competing strategies is definitely leading to the end of the tourism monoculture phase and to the integration of traditional governing partnerships with emerging actors at different levels. This scenario that imply the evolution toward what has been described as a multi-level governance regime (Hooghe & Marks, 2001; Marks, 1996) redefining the role of traditional representatives institutions and networks of interests is nevertheless facing the resistances of a consolidated local oligarchies founding their interests in traditional governing coalitions. Tourism diversification and enlarged tourism seasonality are central variables in providing new resources supporting this evolutionary process.

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