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degli Studi  
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**DA** Dipartimento  
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A tourism model for South Albania’s coastal landscapes.**

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*“Me gusta hacer Turismo,  
Es algo estimulante,  
Es una emocionante manera de aprender.”*

from the movie  
El Turismo es un Gran Invento, 1968

## **Abstract**

Nell'ultimo decennio, l'Albania sta rivendicando il suo ruolo nel panorama turistico del Mediterraneo. Il turismo rappresenta una delle sfide più grandi e un'opportunità per il paese, sia per il suo rapido sviluppo che per il positivo impatto sull'economia nazionale con il rischio però di sfruttamento fino all'esaurimento delle risorse naturali locali. A causa del suo sviluppo turistico molto recente, una parte significativa della tesi si concentra sulla creazione di un solido stato dell'arte, presentato in tre chiavi di lettura: geografia, storia ed economia del turismo. La dissertazione offre, infatti, una panoramica completa sull'evoluzione del turismo nel corso dell'ultimo secolo, la contestualizzazione del caso specifico dell'Albania su scala geografica mondiale e una riflessione sull'impatto del turismo sull'economia nazionale.

La ricerca si propone di esplorare la relazione tra paesaggio e turismo nelle aree costiere, formulando una risposta alla domanda di ricerca più generica riguardante la definizione di un modello turistico che influenzi positivamente i paesaggi costieri a sud dell'Albania. Pertanto, il quadro teorico spazia dai modelli turistici alle teorie del paesaggio e dell'ecologia. I modelli turistici più conosciuti, scelti per la loro somiglianza con i principali casi di studio in termini di scala e risorse, sono presentati e analizzati al fine di definire le basi per la progettazione di un nuovo modello.

La parte centrale si concentra sull'analisi dei paesaggi della costa sud dell'Albania - in termini di qualità e impatto del turismo, con l'obiettivo di inquadrare la sua evoluzione più recente e individuare le questioni critiche. La ricerca si conclude con la presentazione di un modello turistico concettuale, basato sulla reinterpretazione di quelli presentati in precedenza e composto da elementi appartenenti alla letteratura paesaggistica e integrati con le esperienze turistiche di altri casi di studio mediterranei. Il "modello a bolla" viene quindi applicato nell'area di studio con la proposta di creazione del Parco dei Paesaggi Protetti della Riviera, passando dalla teoria alla pratica. Una riflessione finale fornisce gli spunti per le ricerche future e apre una discussione sulla necessità di aggiornare il concetto di conservazione e protezione.

**Parole chiave** Albania, Impatto Turistico, Paesaggi Costieri, Paesaggi Turistici, Riviera Albanese

## **Abstract**

Throughout the last decade Albania has been claiming its spot in the Mediterranean touristic panorama. Tourism represents one of the main challenges and greatest opportunities for the country, due to its fast and positive impact on the economy countrywide but the risks of local natural resources being exploited are high. Due to such development, a significant part of the dissertation focuses on the creation of a solid state of art observed from three points of view: tourism geography, the history of tourism and tourism economy. The dissertation in fact provides a complete overview on the evolution of tourism over the last century, the contextualization of Albania's specific case on a worldwide geographic scale and a reflection of the impact tourism has on the national economy.

This research aims to explore the relationship between landscape and tourism in coastal regions, addressing the overall research question concerning the possibility of defining a tourism model that positively impacts southern Albania's coastal landscapes. Therefore, the theoretical framework ranges from tourism models to landscape and ecology theories. The most well-known tourism models – chosen for their similarities to the main case study in terms of scale and resources - are presented and analyzed so as to settle the basis for the design of a new one.

At first, southern Albania's touristic landscapes and spaces - in terms of quality and impact of tourism – were analyzed to frame their evolution and single out critical issues. Upon making comparisons with other Mediterranean cases it was seen that they supported the choices made in the final part, in which a "bubble model" is described and transferred from theory to practice with the proposal of a Riviera Protected Landscape Park establishment. The conclusion provides input for further research and opens up a discussion about the need to re-interpret the concept of conservation and protection.

**Keywords** Albanian Riviera, Coastal Landscapes, Coastal Ecosystem, Touristic Landscapes, Tourism Impact



*"Para que el turismo sea un proyecto para conocernos, un proyecto para la paz."*

*Ricard Pié*

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*Tirana, Ferrara, Barcelona / March 2019*

*Enrico Porfido*



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## **1 Introduction**

The dissertation is the result of three years of research on the impact tourism has on coastal regions, but it also represents an ideal continuation of the Master Thesis topic discussed at the University of Ferrara in March 2015 titled "PAIS(VI)AGEM - Tourism as an opportunity for the valorization and protection of natural and cultural landscapes in the Bay of Guaraqueçaba, Brazil" (Supervisor: Luca Emanuelli; Co-supervisors: Alessandro Cambi, Marta Maria Bertan Sella Gabardo), in which the direct observation of a natural, and virgin, territory and the participation process realized with the local community resulted in a proposal of a site-specific tourism model.

This doctoral thesis aims to learn from that experience, and then expand it to a wider theoretical speculation. The results are then verified with a territorial application in southern Albania, without presuming a singular answer and creating an opportunity for further discussion and research. The complementary activities developed in the tourism framework (such as EU project proposal preparation, consultant services for private bodies and themed seminars, both attended and given, have been fundamental for adding concreteness to the theoretical speculation as well as providing the dissertation results a layer of realism emphasizing the possibility of relating research with design.

The research was conducted in the departmental research centers of POLIS University of Tirana (OMB – Observatory for the Mediterranean Basin), Università degli Studi di Ferrara (sealine) and Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (IHTT – Institut d'Hàbitat Turisme i Territori), during the academic years 2015-2018.

## **1.1 Risk and benefits of tourism in developing countries: the problem statement**

*168. Sottoprodotto della circolazione delle merci, la circolazione umana considerata come un consumo - il turismo - si riduce fundamentalmente alla scelta di andare a vedere ciò che è diventato banale. La configurazione economica della frequentazione di luoghi diversi è già per sé stessa garanzia della loro equivalenza. La stessa modernizzazione che dal viaggio ha ritirato il tempo, gli ha anche ritirato la realtà dello spazio<sup>1</sup> (Debord, 1979).*

Tourism changes according to social and economical global transformation, and as does its approach to territories, landscapes and cultures. Tourism often acquires a negative reputation, due to numerous bad practices worldwide. In fact, it is commonly rated as one of the most significant causes of land exploitation, landscape consumption and local identity loss, and such is the case of the Adriatic-Ionian region where the coastline has been seriously damaged by tourism structures built in the last 50 years. Yet tourism is a fundamental survival resource for a territory and its community, and tourism development is seen as a vital tool for territorial promotion.

We have to go back to the start of the World Wars when considering tourism as a strong impact activity when workers were given paid holidays and public transport drastically improved. People started to move more frequently and much more easily with the creation of railways, highways and airports. And after the two wars, western European countries lived a phase of great tourism development. Natural territories became the main target of private investors seeking the perfect places for rest and relaxation. 'Nowadays, the attention is shifting on the Tourist itself, as an independent entity with specific and personal interests who plans his/her own the trip and the experiences he desires' (Emanuelli, 2016, p. 28).

Tourism has started to become one of the main actors in territorial transformation. But "introducing" tourism to a territory rich of natural heritage is a highly risky process that needs to be controlled and well-planned. 'Tourism may either be a threat or a tool in improving global sustainability' (Buckley, 2003). In a country like Albania, where tourism

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<sup>1</sup> Translated from the Italian: "Human circulation considered as something to be consumed tourism is a by-product of the circulation of commodities; basically, tourism is the chance to go and see what has been made trite. The economic management of travel to different places suffices in itself to ensure those places' interchangeability. The same modernization that has deprived travel of its temporal aspect has likewise deprived it of the reality of space" (Debord, 1979).

performs an important role in development, it is necessary to monitor this phenomenon and raise local awareness when it comes to respecting the territory.



*Figure 1.1 "The tourist II" by Duane Hanson 1988 (source: Saatchi Gallery)*

*"The old generation of tourists perfectly represented in the masterpiece of Duane Hanson [...] The figures are dressed in typical holiday clothes with all the required trappings, including camera and tripod and a handbag bulging with tourist souvenirs, such as a brochure for a Florida theme park and museum tickets" (Leighton, 2015).*

So how can tourism be a sustainable resource for national development without exploiting natural and cultural landscapes? Is it possible to promote sustainable and respectful tourism development, especially in coastal areas that suffer the most pressure? What is the right model to adopt for both protecting and valuing the natural and cultural heritage and boost the local economy?

## **1.2 Purpose of this study**

The dissertation aims to reflect on tourism's impact on natural and cultural landscapes, focusing on those most at risk of exploitation - the coast, and suggest a tourism model that can, and will, positively affect the local heritage rather than exploiting it. Due to its history, Albania has decades of delay in terms of tourism development if compared with its European neighbours. This represents an opportunity to learn from their experiences, but due to fast-economic growth, tourism is evermore more impacting Albanian landscapes. Retracing Albanian tourism development, the thesis aims to understand the impact of past tourism policies and to redefine possible future scenarios.

The main question of this thesis concerns the possibility of developing a model that protects and values the Albanian Riviera. Due to the lack of existing literature, it was firstly necessary to build a solid study framework, helping place Albania on the world tourism map, to understand its history and provide a more structured data system on contemporary tourism. The forth chapter aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the position of the Balkans and specifically Albania on the worldwide panorama?
2. What are the tourism policies and tourism typologies promoted by Albanian Governments in the last century? In which way did they affect the territory and landscapes?
3. How does tourism contribute to the Albanian economy? What is the potential of the country and particular regions? What trends are relevant for Albania and and what is likely to occur in the foreseeable future?

This first part is functional where a solid state of art is created not only for this research, but also for future studies. Answering these three questions offers us a clearer vision of Albanian tourism.

The central part of the thesis aims to answer the main question:

Is it possible for Albania to develop a tourism model that positively affects the natural and cultural landscape resources?

This main chapter starts from a specific question concerning touristic spaces ("which typology of touristic space does the Albanian Riviera provide?"), the comparison with

Mediterranean case studies and ending with an analysis of the territory through direct observation (study field trips). This allows to put the Albanian Riviera into a specific category and provide the material for reflecting on a future proposal. The territorial analysis adds a visual layer to the history of tourism development rebuilt in the previous chapter and also provides a complete overview of coastal landscape metamorphosis, zooming in on precise areas most at risk and evaluating the impact tourism has had.

In the concluding chapter the guidelines for future development are traced, according to other Mediterranean experiences. The model proposed is then a reinterpretation of the most classic model used for studying the impact of tourism on spatial organization (Miossec, 1977; Barbaza, 1970; Dramstad, et al., 1996). For further discussion, the dissertation ends with an attempt to pass from a purely theoretical model to a practical one, introducing the concepts of "protection" and "protected area". The proposed model could, in fact, be transferred to the territory as Protected (Touristic) Landscape Park. This final discussion is further supported by the presentation of three emblematic case studies.

### **1.3 About touristic data: limitations of the study**

The main limitation observed during the study is related to the lack of tourist data. Tourism in Albania is a relatively new industry and precise tourism data is not available.

Particularly from an economic point of view, there is no identification of the tourism sector in GDP data, as such there are no tourism specific indicators. It might be approximated by the category "accommodation and food services", but this, of course, has its limitations. The group of 'inbound travellers' for example consists of visitors (tourists) and many categories of other travellers (from long time workers to business travellers, from refugees to diplomats). Domestic tourism is even harder to grasp. Indirect indicators such as the inflow of financial resources for travel services, and balance of payment data have been used as an indicator for tourism activity in the country. This means that data on tourism are proxies, and not exact figures. During the writing of this thesis, the main data adopted is based on statistical research (INSTAT data) and additional studies, complemented with interviews and classified according to a set of indicators (paragraph 4.3). The argument is the same concerning the history and evolution of tourism. Few are the scientific sources available, as much as themed maps and studies.

For those aforementioned reasons, a significant part of the dissertation is focused on the collection and organization of the tourist data available and its integration through a number of different sources including both scientific and newspaper articles, travel journals and guides, official documents and on-situ expert interviews.

#### **1.4 About methodology**

According to Mukherjee et al (2002)'s classification, the typology of research methodology undertaken in this thesis is exploratory, conducted in real-time and hence giving uncertain outcomes. This perhaps exemplifies a significant amount of academic research, where parameters are initially fairly flexible and the nature of the end product uncertain (Mukherjee, et al., 2002, p. 668).

Due to the different study fields approached here – from geography to history, economy to urbanism and landscapes – and the strong interdisciplinary character, the methodologies adopted are different in accordance to the typologies of data analyzed.

The dissertation is divided into five parts: (i) the state of art, (ii) theoretical framework, (iii) creation of a complete state of artworks for Albanian tourism, (iv) analysis of the specific touristic space features and its comparison with other case studies, (v) design of a tourism model and further discussion. The methodologies adopted are presented individually below:

- i. Data collection concerning the state of artwork has been conducted through a literature review in the Albanian National Library in Tirana (Biblioteka Kombëtare e Shqipërisë) with specific research done in English, Albanian and Italian. An online scientific journal website and international conference proceedings have also been consulted, but with lesser results.
- ii. The theoretical framework is the result of a literature review of the main theories concerning the geography and history of tourism, urbanism and landscape architecture. This part has mostly been conducted during periods abroad in Barcelona, using ETSAV library facilities - Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura del Vallés, ETSAB - Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona and Facultat de Geografia i Història de la Universitat de Barcelona. During the periods (April – July 2017 and June – July 2018), different experts were

consulted starting with Professor Emeritus Ricard Pié (who is also the External expert of this dissertation) and the whole IHTT team – Institute of Habitat, Territory and Tourism. With regards to the spatial issues of tourism a series of lectures organized within the framework of the Master in Landscape Architecture of Barcelona's UPC University has been followed (Taller "Salvamos el Paraiso" "Saving Paradise" workshop). Amongst all the speakers, Professor PhD Salvador Antón's lectures and discussions have been fundamental (8<sup>th</sup> July 2017 - "Why is tourism not an evolutionary science?"), Arch Patricia Pérez (2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 – "Sobre resiliencia / trabajar con los procesos") and Arch PhD Purificación Díaz (9<sup>th</sup> July – "La construcción del territorio del Turismo").

- iii. The creation of the updated state of artworks is mainly based on archive research – literature reviews on three main topics: the geography of tourism, history for tourism and the economy of tourism.

Regarding the geography of tourism, the research was mostly developed during time abroad through literature reviews (see previous paragraph) and under the supervision of the external expert Prof Emeritus Ricard Pié. The results were discussed with a number of international scientific community members in various occasions, such as the guest lecture in Università Milano – Bicocca ("From isolation to 'touristic periphery' The social impact of tourism on coastal landscapes" organized within the frame of the Masters in Tourism Studies - 2nd November 2017 – referent: Prof PhD Silvia Mugnano) and the first International Congress for Transversal Tourism and Landscapes, Malaga, 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

Concerning the history of tourism themes, most of the work was developed in the Albanian National Library in Tirana (Biblioteka Kombëtare e Shqipërisë) with a literature review of local newspaper articles, tourist guides and publications in several languages: Albanian, Italian, English, French, Spanish and German, concerning tourism in Albania. The data collected was then re-elaborated with the methodology of the timeline, presented by Prof Emeritus Ricard Pié and Arch. Cynthia Pérez during lectures attended in the framework of the Masters of Urbanism of UPC Barcelona (April - May 2017). The methodology has been further implemented and presented in the International Conference "EDINNARCH2017 – Educational Innovation in Architecture and Engineering". Malaga, 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017 and published in the paper presented in this occasion: Perez,

C.C., Porfido, E., Pié, R., Vilanova Claret, J.M. (2017) *Timeline as analytic tool for investigating tourism evolution and development* (see publications list at the beginning of the dissertation).

Concerning Albania's tourism economy, the data presented is the implemented results of a report titled "A Regional Touristic Comparative Analysis of Albania" – commissioned by RISI Albania to the consultancy team lead by the author with two additional members: MSc Aida Ciro and Dr Peter Nientied. This section is based on secondary analysis of National INSTAT data and interviews, such INSTAT data has been organized into assets of tourism resources, recent visitor trends, locations, protected areas, main road connections, social equity and employment and work with other donors. To disclose opinions and plans on tourism and the perceived future of tourism 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives from central government structures including National Coastal Agency, Albanian National Tourist Board, local government representatives of Durrës, Gramsh, Kukes, Tirana and Fier municipalities, Associations including the National Association of Tourist Guides, Albanian Tour Operators and Agencies and the Association of Touristic Restaurants, donors such as the AADF – American Albanian Development Fund, and local businesses such as the Uka Farm. The interviews have been conducted with experts of both public and private sectors, dealing directly with tourism and tourist strategies within the Albanian territory. With regards to local municipalities, forty questionnaires were sent to the most representative cities in Albania, but only five answered.

- iv. The central chapter focuses on the main case study – the Albanian Riviera – and the methodology adopted is mainly a direct observation of the territory made during a number of field trips (September 2016, January 2017, August 2017, December 2017, May 2018). These observations aimed to verify the typology of touristic spaces developed in southern Albania according to the classification presented in the theoretical framework (paragraph 3.4), in order to propose a future implementation model. To evaluate the impact of touristic buildings/facilities on the landscape, the GLVIA methodology was chosen - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – as well as the Viewshed tool of Google Earth. The first methodology was elaborated by the Landscape Institute of London (The Landscape Institute, 2002). This method of evaluation is not the only possible one, but it has been chosen for its ease of application. In fact, it is mainly based on

direct observation rather than pure data analysis and this perfectly answers our research's limitations (lack of technical information available in the Albanian context). The main method modifies the current pictures and erases the intervention to analyse, restoring the *status quo antes*. From comparing the current version (*status quo*) and the previous one (*status quo antes*), it is possible to evaluate the building impact. The Viewshed tool of Google Earth has been used for defining the "blank areas" of the coast, through the overlapping of consecutive frames taken in selected viewpoints on the national highway that crosses the Riviera, SH8.

- v. The final chapter focuses on the model proposal and its further discussion. Upon considering the model, a hybrid between the existing ones, the methodology applied is more of a literature review than a proper design process. The model is then tested during the discussion phase, trying to go from a purely theoretical approach to a practical one. The model is applied to reality through a re-interpretation of the protected area concept. This idea comes from the case study analysis (three PA's facing the Adriatic Sea) and several discussions with field experts. In fact, Albania is host to many projects dealing with Protected Area, one of such is promoted by the Italian Development Cooperation Office in collaboration with the EU network Natura2000 and titled "Strengthening capacity in National Nature Protection - preparation for Natura 2000 network" (Caterina Carugati – AICS Tirana is in charge of such). A number of the project's meetings were attended as external observer, in order to better identify the main issues concerning protection and in particular the introduction of touristic activities in Albania's protected areas. The final discussion has been partially presented and further implemented on several occasions, such as the National conference "Promotion of sustainable development in Protected Areas – the Tourism Sector" (Shkoder, 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September 2016) organized in the framework of the project mentioned above and the International "AESOP Annual Congress 2017 – Space of dialog for places of dignity. Fostering the European Dimension of Planning" (Lisbon, 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2017), where the paper titled "Tourism as an Economic Resource for Protecting the Landscape: Introducing Tourism Initiatives in Protected Areas of Albania" was presented.

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

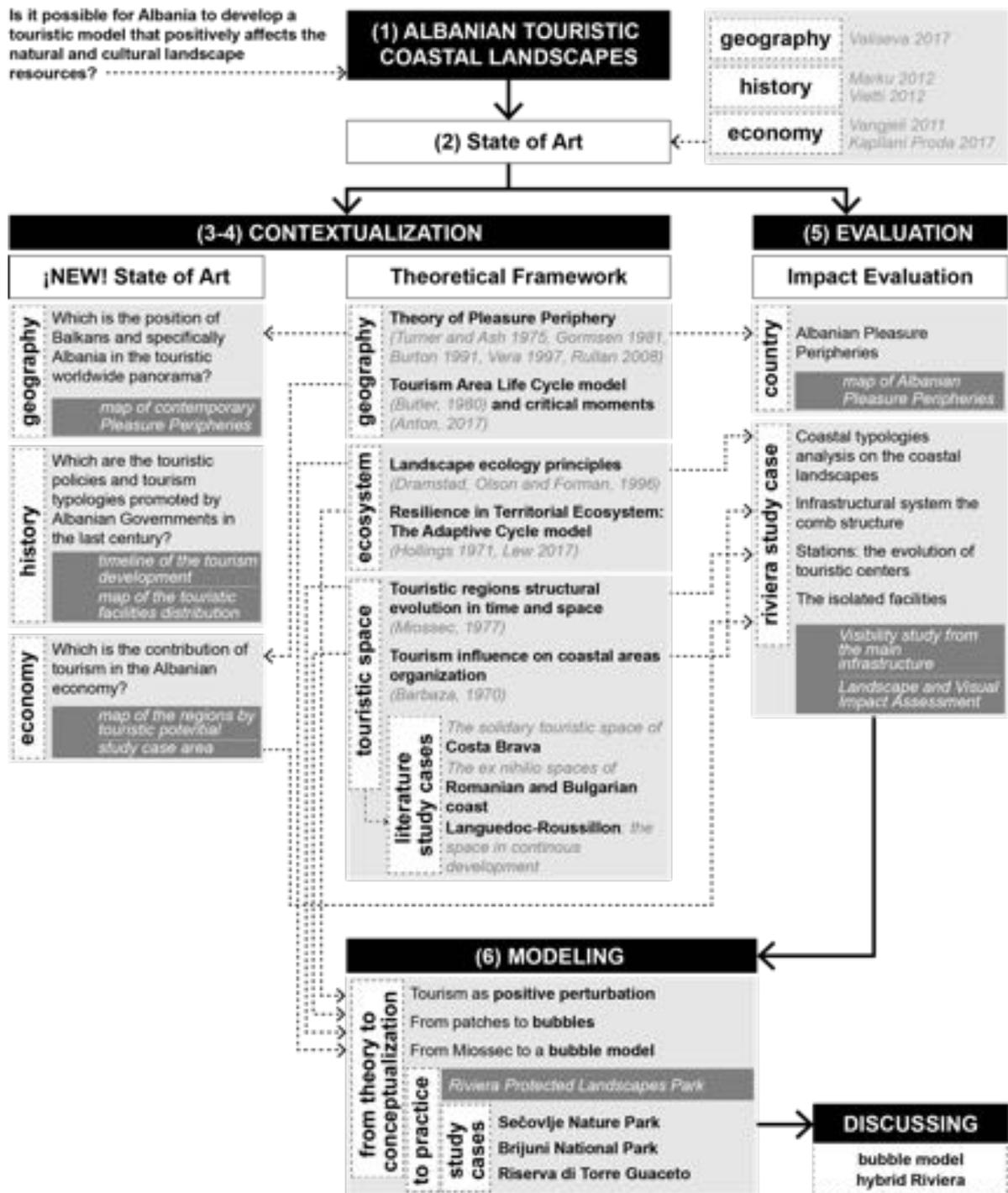


Figure 1.2 Diagram of research phases/methodologies adopted (source: author)

## 1.5 About the Balkans countries



Figure 1.3 The Balkan Region (source: author)

Before approaching the dissertation, it is necessary to better define the discussed theme, but more importantly, the study area: the Balkan countries. The Balkan region is the third European Peninsula – after the Iberian and Italic ones – and represents the physical and historical connection between Western and Eastern worlds. This location is the main cause of the unique phenomena that shaped what are nowadays named the Balkans. But which countries are considered Balkans and why?

*“In geografia fisica i Balcani sono il sistema montagnoso dell’Europa meridionale, nella Penisola Balcanica, che si sviluppa quasi interamente in Bulgaria con direzione est-ovest, parallelamente al Danubio per circa 600km dal cordo del fiume Timok, al confine con la Jugoslavia. In geopolitica i Balcani, o meglio, quelli che si definiscono tali, intendendo come la regione balcanica interessanta ai recenti sommovimenti politici e guerre vere e proprie, sono un’altra cosa” (Lizza, 2002).<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> Translated from the Italian: In physical geography the Balkans are the mountainous system of southern Europe, in the Balkan Peninsula, which develops almost entirely in Bulgaria with east-west direction, parallel to the Danube for about 600km from the Timok River's border, on the border with Yugoslavia. In geopolitics the Balkans, or rather, those that define themselves as such, meaning that the Balkan region is interested in recent political upheavals and real wars, are another thing.



*Figure 1.4 Balkan Peninsula: geo-physical vision (source: author, based on Hajdù, Illes, & Raffay, 2007).*

From a geo-physical point of view, the Balkan region can be defined in three ways according to various natural borders: the (i) Sava-Danube line, the (ii) Trieste-Odessa line or the (iii) Carpathian and Balkans line (Hajdù, et al., 2007).

According to the Sava-Danube definition, there are 13 Balkan countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro (the whole countries), Croatia, Greece, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey (partially within). The same goes for the Trieste-Odessa line, which joins the two ending points of the peninsula, bordered by three seas: Adriatic, Aegean and the Black sea. The last one, the Carpathian and Balkans line, is definitely the most extended definition and keeps the continuity of the Balkans mountains in Bulgaria with the Carpathian chain and hence including Austria, Hungary, Moldova, Slovakia and Ukraine under the “Balkans” definition. From a geo-political point of view, the question is even more complex. The countries borders have been re-drawn a number of times and in some cases, they are still being discussed (see Kosovo and Serbia). But this is not the topic of this dissertation.

In conclusion, the definition of the Balkans is today the geo-physical one of the Sava-Danube line, excluding Italy and Turkey because only 0,1% of Italian surface belongs to the Balkan peninsula and just 3% of Turkish territories.

Furthermore, in this dissertation the Republic of Kosovo is considered an independent country although the declaration is unilateral and only recognized by 111 of 193 UN member states.



*Figure 1.5 Balkan countries (source: author)*

The Balkan countries taken into consideration in the following chapters are Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia.



## **2 State of Art**

*'Some metaphors used to describe the "essence" of the Balkans like the bridge / the crossroads / the border – have been and remain the basis for the creation of stereotypes, as the dominant representation form, both inside and outside of the Balkans' (Dragicevic-Sesic & Dragojevic, 2004, p. 19).*

Tourism in the Balkans – and especially in Albania - is a recently study field and consequently there are few scientific bibliographies. This lack of information and systematic data makes doing research even more difficult. In the following paragraphs, the existing information is grouped according to the scale (the Balkans and then Albania) and therefore according to three principal categories: history, legislation and the economy of tourism (only for Albania).

## 2.1 Tourism in the Balkans

*'The modern tourist is on a constant quest for something new, undiscovered, not previously experienced, but also something modern, safe, preserved. The Balkans are offering tourists a new experience; excitement, flamboyance, everything but everyday monotony' (Tomka, 2014).*

In the last two decades, tourism in the Balkans has fastly grown. Due to its position and complex history, the whole region has been considered "between stagnation and progress, between the past and the future, between preserving the existing state and a revolution" for far too long (Dragicevic-Sesic & Dragojevic, 2004, p. 19). Especially the envisioned climate of insecurity caused by conflicts – the most recent ones being the Yugoslav Wars or Wars of Yugoslavia, from 1991 to 2001 – which delayed the mass tourism boom other Mediterranean countries have enjoyed since the 70s.

Though due to this being "undiscovered" and "unknown", today the entire region is going through a golden age of touristic promotion. Lonely Planet – the colossus of travel guides – awarded Albania the best destination of 2011. In 2016, the Bay of Kotor in Montenegro was in the top chart of must visit cities, while Transylvania in Romania was ranked as the best region in the world to travel to (Butler, 2015). The region of the Julian Alps in Slovenia recently entered the chart, winning third place in the "Best destination of 2018" chart (Lonely Planet, 2018). According to (UNWTO, 2017), Croatia exceeded 14 million tourists in 2017. Visits to Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia are also increasing, but with slower trends.

### Top experiences in Balkans



From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

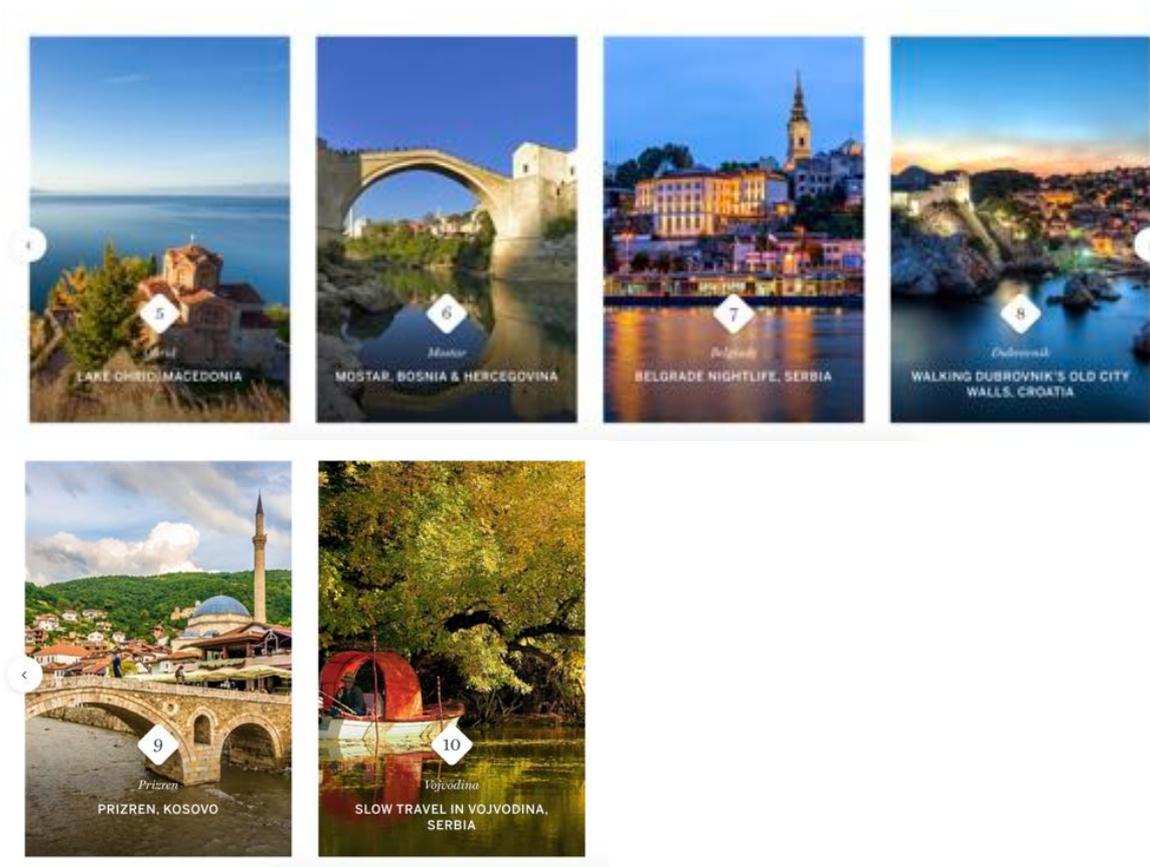


Figure 2.1 Top experiences in Balkans (source: [lonelyplanet.com/balkans](https://lonelyplanet.com/balkans))

Regarding figures, in the last UNWTO report the Balkan countries were divided into two geographic groups: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, Serbia and Slovenia are classified as “Southern and Mediterranean Europe” along with Andorra, Cyprus, Israel, Malta, Portugal, San Marino and Spain, while Bulgaria and Romania were considered “Central/Eastern Europe”.

*‘International arrivals in Southern and Mediterranean Europe grew by 5% in 2015. Spain, the subregion’s top destination and Europe’s second largest, posted 5% growth, receiving a record 68 million international arrivals. Other established destinations, Andorra (+13%), Slovenia (+12%), Portugal (+10%), Croatia, Cyprus (both +9%), Greece (+7%) and Malta (+6%) also reported strong results. Italy received 4% more arrivals after hosting the 2015 Expo in Milan. Emerging destinations Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia all reported double-digit increases’ (UNWTO World Tourism Organization, 2016).*

This made the comparison more complex, but the Table 2.1 collects data from way back to 1990 up to 2017, and even includes the forecasted data for 2027 included by the UNWTO in each country report of 2017.

year	Albania	Bosnia	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Macedonia	Montenegro	Kosovo	Serbia	Slovenia	Yugoslavia
1990	0,03	N/A	1,586	7,049	8,873	0,562	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,65	1,186
1999	0,039	0,089	2,667	3,443	12	0,181	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,884	0,152
2010	2,191	0,365	6,047	9,111	15,007	0,262	1,088	N/A	0,683	1,869	N/A
2013	2,857	0,529	6,897	10,948	17,92	0,4	1,324	N/A	0,922	2,259	N/A
2014	3,341	0,536	7,311	11,623	22,033	0,425	1,35	N/A	1,029	2,411	N/A
2015	3,784	0,678	9,316*	12,683	23,599	0,486	1,56	N/A	1,132	2,707	N/A
2017	4,261	0,733	8,163	14,353	26,066	0,529	1,879	N/A	1,272	3,034	N/A
2027	6,25	1,018	11,961	26,033	39,92	0,754	2,978	N/A	2,095	4,042	N/A
% growth 2017/2027	31,84%	28%	31,75%	44,87%	34,7%	29,84%	36,9%	N/A	39,28%	24,94%	N/A

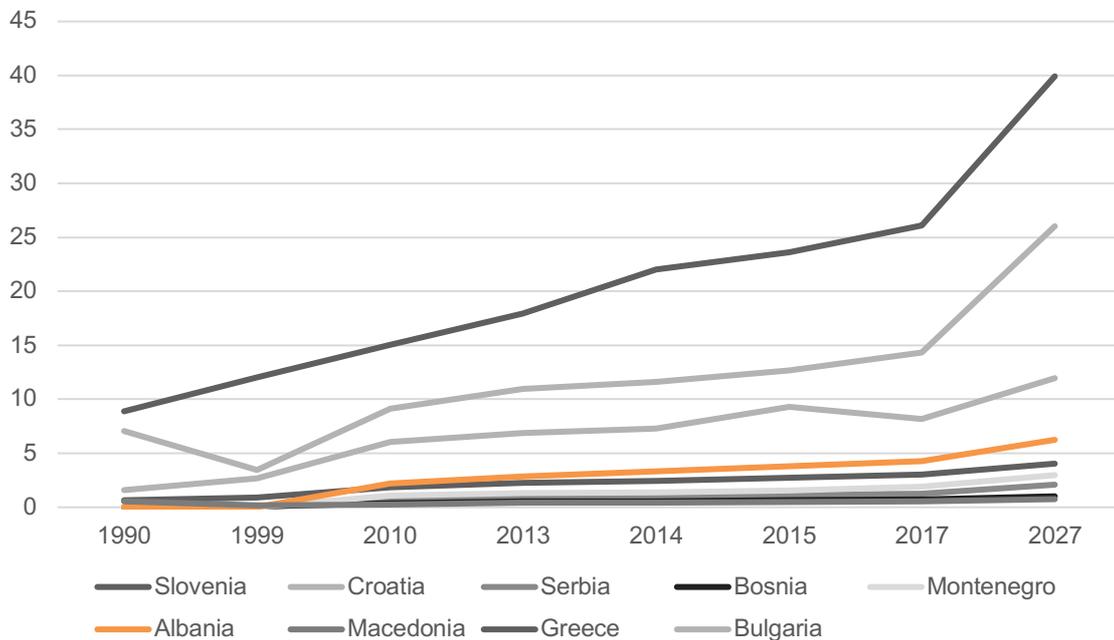
\* source: infostat.nsi.bg

Table 2.1 International tourists' arrival in million/year (source: author, based on UNWTO, 2000, 2016; WTTC, 2017; infostat.nsi.bg)

In the last row of the Table 2.1, the growth index in visits between 2017 and the forecasted data of 2027 has been calculated in percentages. Most are around 35%, with an over performance of Croatia (44,87%) and the under performance of Slovenia (24,94%).

*'The Balkan countries exchange significant tourist flows amongthemselves which support the development of their tourism industries mainly in the neighbouring countries' (Vasileva, 2017).*

It is significant to see that what Valiseva (2017) stated above is actually verified by the comparison of data, by year. In fact, the growth trend is the same in most Balkan states.



*Figure 2.2 Chart of the touristic visits from 1990 to 2027 in Balkans (source: author, based on UNWTO, 2000, 2016; WTTC, 2017; infostat.nsi.bg)*

## 2.2 Tourism in Albania

Tourism in Albania is a recently fast-developing phenomenon, which has been living its boom phase in the last twenty years, as until the collapse of the Communism regime (1945-1991), inbound tourism was restricted, while domestic tourism followed strict rules. Although small touristic fluxes have been present since the beginning of the last century, it has never held a major role. Rather, nowadays it represents one of the greatest challenges and opportunities for the country. For its fast impact on the national economy,

Governments are giving tourism development priority often with no clear planning. This attitude is disastrously impacting natural resources as well as local markets that are becoming unaffordable for residents yet really attractive for its low cost to foreigners.

*'Albania has an extremely interesting touristic potential. This is expressed in terms of natural heritage, as well as historical and cultural. Natural influencing factors are the favorable geographic and geo-touristic position, the variety of natural landscape, an appropriate climate, a rich water assets and rich flora and fauna system. From a historical point of view, the Albanian territory is widely characterized by cultural hotspots' (Doka & Humolli, 2015, p. 202).*

Although today interest in the topic is increasing, scientific production regarding its evolution is small. The following paragraphs list the state of the touristic evolution, the legislation and the economic sources in existence.

### **2.2.1 The tourism evolution**

The history of Albanian tourism is yet to be fully explored nor scientifically edited. The two authors who tried to re-organize the information are Dr. Francesco Vietti in his doctoral thesis<sup>3</sup> titled "Hotel Albania" published in 2012 and Xhelal A. Marku, journalist of the "Radiotelevizionit Shqiptare" in his book titled "Turizmi shiptare" (2012).

Despite the research focusing mainly on ethnology, the study by Vietti (2012) is fundamental for the references included and the broad bibliography. Vietti's study and his published book in fact mainly focus on rebuilding the evolution and development of Albanian tourism through the words, journals and books of travellers.

Concerning the second reference - Marku (2012), its chapter titled "Pak histori per Turizmin Shqiptar"<sup>4</sup> (p.12-17) has been adopted as a starting point to later be integrated and implemented with the information acquired from other sources, such as scientific and newspaper articles, travel diaries and guides and official documents. Most of such documents are perusable in the "Biblioteka Kombëtare e Shqipërisë" [National Library of Albania].

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<sup>3</sup> PhD in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Genoa (Ph.D. in "Migration and Intercultural Processes", supervisor Prof. Marco Aime) discussed in 2011. The dissertation has been then published as book by Carrocci editore in 2012. In this dissertation, the text referred to the original doctoral thesis.

<sup>4</sup> Translated from the Albanian: "A brief history of tourism in Albania".

### **2.2.2 The touristic legislation**

Kapllani Proda (2017) clearly listed the official touristic strategies promoted by Governments after the collapse of communism:

1. "For the development of tourism in priority areas", Law on Tourism No. 7665, dated on January 21, 1993;
2. Tourism Development Strategy 2002-2012;
3. Tourism Sector Strategy 2007-2013;
4. National Tourism Strategy 2014-2020.

The first law, established in 1993, was "*not a modern and comprehensive law for tourism development; [it was] rather an appropriate response to the priority issues the country was facing in 1993*" (Kapllani Proda, 2017, p. 39). The 2002-2012 strategy mainly aimed to define four main objectives: (i) the generation of jobs and income, (ii) the acceleration of economic development of the country over the social impact, (iii) the improvement of living conditions in Albania, (iv) the commencement of economic activities (Ministry of Tourism and Territory, 2012). The main aim of the 2007-2013 Tourism Sector Strategy is to coordinate the different sectors of the economy, [...] and to combine them through its main strategy and the actions for the plan in order to boost the development of natural and environmental tourism (Kapllani Proda, 2017, p. 39). In the last document – the "National Tourism Strategy" - the Albanian Government emphasized the importance of tourism for the economic growth. "*It wants to develop tourism in its broadest sense and extend the tourism season to span across all four seasons by introducing alternative forms of tourism*" (Vladi, 2014), with the intention better distributing the touristic pressure among coastal areas and inland destinations. Apart from the Government's overall development strategy documents and the General National Territorial Plan for Albania 2015-2030, tourism ambitions are articulated in a few in the National Draft-Strategy for Tourism 2014-2020.

Another relevant point for sustainable tourism is the Law no. 107/2014 "On Planning and Territorial Development", that deals with sustainable development through a more rational use of land and natural resources and a better plan of the current and future potentialities for territorial development on a national and local level, based on the balance of natural, economic and human needs as well as public and private interests.

Despite provisions and references to sustainable tourism in the aforementioned documents, and a small number of initiatives undertaken by the government to initiate a discussion on sustainable tourism development in Albania, the Albanian government and tourism sector have limited notions of such sustainable development. Tourism in policy and research has so far focused on the virtues of the tourism product in general (Vangjeli, 2011).

To conclude, current initiatives for promoting sustainable tourism in Albania are rather insufficient. The government's current policies are "inconclusive" in terms of sustainability. Short-term projects and investments are facilitated and supported more than the concerns about environment and local communities. In addition, *"local governments are weak in applying regulations. In terms of management and coordination, the culture of working together in partnerships in destinations is weak"* (Nientied, et al., 2018).

### **2.2.3 The touristic economy**

As mentioned in the paragraph concerning the study's limitations (paragraph 1.3), from an economic point of view, there is no identification of the tourism sector in GDP data, as such there are no tourism specific indicators.

The European Union (2012) made a suggestion about tourism development in the Mediterranean region saying that "governments are increasingly recognising that tourism requires a complex set of mutually-supporting infrastructures, policies and planning decisions, formulated at both national and local levels, if the broad nature of tourism's benefits are to be realised and potential costs managed. While tourism remains an essentially private-sector activity, some governments accept that they have a substantial role to play in addressing market failures emerging from tourism's fragmented SME-based structure" (European Union, 2012, p. 11). This 'realisation' may apply to the Mediterranean region in general, but in Albania this is hardly the case. The regional authorities are still weak (Institute for Public and Private Policies (IP3), 2015; Manxhari, 2015; Shutina, et al., 2016), and not yet capable of planning for sustainable tourism. There are many different reasons. Firstly, central government in Albania is dominant, and decentralization of powers and strengthening decentralized government units is a very slow process. For more than a decade researchers and international agencies have been advocating decentralization, but the process is quite slow indeed. Secondly, through Law no. 115/2014, "On Administrative-Territorial Division of Local Government Units in the

Republic of Albania”, in 2016 the country was reorganized. The number of local units changed from 308 communes and 65 municipalities to 61 municipalities. Twelve qarks (regions) were kept, consisting of a number of municipalities. The Region is meant to represent the interests of the regional community, as an instrument to tackle municipal fragmentation. The Regional Council is composed of local mayors. But, Regional Council decisions cannot violate the autonomy of any of the regional municipalities’ membership without their approval. Municipalities have to pay for the Regional Agency through a fixed percentage of their budget, though the Regional Agency has no fiscal authority. “The regional councils are perceived more as local government associations, rather than in their envisioned role as an intermediary level of government able to effectively promote regional development and facilitate cooperation among local governments” concludes Muçollari (2017, p. 121). The focus is on the national and local governments – coordinating roles for regional development agencies is not part of government tradition. Indeed, regional development policy in Albania lacks spatial and territorial dimensions and cross cutting issues, such as tourism. Investments are in infrastructure (water, roads, etc.), regional development as an economic development tool producing integrated development projects with adequate territorial governance, only exists on paper (Institute for Public and Private Policies (IP3), 2015, p. 49). A third pointer refers to dealing with the sustainability aspects of tourism. Sustainable tourism as a term is widely used but unfortunately has limited content. Nobody in Albania or in the world for that matter is against sustainable tourism, and municipalities welcome all tourism investors, happy to receive development opportunities. Despite the rhetoric, sustainability is a minor consideration (Nientied, et al., 2018).



### **3 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework chapter provides an overview of all the aforementioned theories throughout this dissertation. Each theory has been summarised as results of a literature review process of both main authors and critics and/or updates. After a brief introduction concerning the “liquidity” of contemporary tourism, the theories are presented by topic and scale of investigation (geography and economy, ecosystem, touristic spatial issues).

Some of the theories are more related to theoretical models (e.g. Theory of Pleasure Peripheries, TALC model, Adaptive Cycle), while others belong more to the practical experience (e.g. the tourism influence on coastal areas organization). The theories in paragraph 3.2 are used to support the systemization of the new state of art (chapter 0), while the following ones (paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4) are functional to the observation of the territory and creation of the tourism model (chapters 5 and 6).

### **3.1 Liquid tourism**

*'Fluids travel easily. They 'flow', 'spill', 'run out', 'splash', 'pour over', 'leak', 'flood', 'spray', 'drip', 'seep', 'ooze'; unlike solids, they are not easily stopped - they pass around some obstacles, dissolve some others and bore or soak their way through others still' (Bauman, 2000, p. 2).*

Sociologist Zygmunt Baumann (2000) introduced the concept of liquid modernity, referring to the development of human relationships and love. Liquid modernity is *'the condition of constant mobility and change [...] in relationships, identities, and global economics within contemporary society'* (Baumann, 2000: 3). A number of researches have been dealing with its definition and in an interview, the journalist Rod Dreher opened debate saying: *'Bauman writes of a transition from solid modernity to a more liquid form of social life'* (Dreher, 2017). Liquidity therefore means that any known stability disintegrates; it refers to the overall proliferation of flexibility in society and its concurrent uncertainties. In liquid modernity, everything become unstable, precarious and uncertain.

Baumann's thinking can easily be applied to tourism – as well as other social and economic sectors. A new tourist generation has developed over the last twenty years, with new demands and different ways of organizing trips. Contemporary tourists autonomously explore the market, and with everything they need online, they can follow-up their own demands and have more control because *'they know / can determine what they want'* (Iabichino & Gnasso, 2014). Tourism trends and the emergence of liquid tourism poses new challenges. Predicting tourism development is much more difficult than it was before. Since there are many tourism products available on the market and tourism behavior is more liquid and therefore less predictable, it is difficult to forecast choices (Iabichino & Gnasso, 2014).

Compared to its original meaning, tourism and touristic thinking have evolved enormously. Between the two World Wars, tourism became accessible to more people. With increased welfare, new railways and highways improving mobility, and paid holidays for employees the possibilities of going on holidays were created and a whole new tourism industry gradually emerged, and then mass tourism boomed. In the 1970's Southern European countries became favourite destinations for the richer northern countries, creating the first stable "touristic periphery" (Turner & Ash, 1975). The development of tourism destinations was often a rapid and poorly controlled development process, so countries created new

tourist cities such as Port Grimaud and the Mission Racine in France, Benidorm and Binibeca in Spain, the Costa Smeralda in Italy.



*Figure 3.1 Port Grimaud (source: Google Earth [accessed on June 2017])*

However, since about two decades ago, tourism demand for the sun, sea and sand model has stagnated. The “sun, sea and sand” model is not over, but many alternatives have emerged. And two critical factors have enormously influenced the market: lower transportation costs, especially through low fare airlines, and the development of the internet. Such factors need no further explanation. According to Piè (2013) there are two more bases for changing tourism demands. The first is the increased number of older people in countries with higher purchasing power per capita, stressing the potential of tourism for seniors. The second cause lies in the changes in the development of tourism preferences, to more personal experiences and inspiring destinations. This has led to a diversity of tourism offerings, ranging from ecotourism to cultural and language tourism.

*‘I primi turisti che faticosamente riuscivano ad andare in vacanza negli anni successivi alla seconda guerra mondiale, si accontentavano facilmente di qualsiasi servizio veniva loro offerto. La cosa più importante per loro era il fatto di essere riusciti finalmente ad andare in vacanza. In quegli anni la struttura turistica in cui soggiornare, o la destinazione da raggiungere, assumevano un’importanza secondaria rispetto all’atto stesso dell’andare in vacanza. [...] A partire dagli anni*

*'60 esplode il "turismo di massa". Il turista vuole ritrovare in vacanza i servizi e le comodità ai quali è abituato a casa propria, e si sente rassicurato dal fatto di vedere riprodotte in albergo abitudini e caratteristiche della propria quotidianità. [...] Tra la fine degli anni '80 e gli anni '90 del secolo scorso, ci si accorge che a fianco della generazione dello standard stava nascendo una nuova generazione di turisti, caratterizzata da una diversa maturità, da una maggiore esperienza, capacità di scegliere e di confrontare. In uno slogan: Going Local, immergersi nella cultura dei luoghi, essere considerati non tanto turisti o consumatori, ma residenti, seppure temporanei. [...] La "nascita" di una nuova generazione di turisti, la quarta, è frutto della frammentazione dei comportamenti di vacanza che caratterizza lo scenario attuale del turismo e che dà vita ad una galassia di stili di vacanza dai confini labili e tenui' (Dall'Ara, 2010, pp. 13-16)<sup>5</sup>.*

The contemporary tourist wishes to explore and be in touch with local culture and its people. People are looking for authentic experiences and many niche markets arise: ecological, underwater, sports, language, adventure, backpacking, and gastronomic tourism just to name a few. These types differ but experiencing something different and authentic is the common denominator. Indeed, there is much more diversity in tourism destinations and higher quality offerings are being demanded all the time. According to Dall'Ara (2010), the contemporary tourist represents the fourth generation. The first generation was easy to satisfy, since the priority was to simply escape everyday life. But after the 1960's, tourists got more demanding, looking for more comfort (the second generation then mass tourism developed. At the beginning of the 1990's, tourist profiles changed considerably. Canestrini (2010) defines this third generation as the permeable tourist. From simply taking snaps, tourists want to feel and get to know the society and "permeate" it, for example talking with locals and understanding places. Nowadays, due to the Internet, the fourth generation has transformed permeable tourism into liquid tourism. Liquid tourists look for more authentic experiences. The liquid feature is related to adaptability, from the destinations chosen to holiday behaviour. Tourists and travellers alike have access to everything they need to know

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<sup>5</sup> Translated from the Italian: *'In the years after the World War II, first tourists struggled to go on holiday and they easily satisfied with any service received. The most important thing was the fact that they finally managed to go on vacation. In those years the accommodation, as much as the destination, was of secondary importance in comparison with the possibility of going on holiday. [...] Since the 1960s, "mass tourism" exploded. The tourist wants to find the services and comforts to which he is used to in his own home, and he feels reassured by finding in the hotel the habits and characteristics of his daily life. [...] Between the end of the 1980s and the 90s of the last century, a new generation of tourists was emerging, characterized by a different maturity, greater experience, and the ability to choose and compare. In a slogan: Going Local, to dive into the culture of places, to be considered not so tourists or consumers, but residents, also if just temporary. [...] The "birth" of a new generation of tourists, the fourth, is the result of the fragmentation of holiday behaviors that characterize the current tourism panorama and which gives birth to a galaxy of holiday styles with thin borders' (Dall'Ara, 2010, pp. 13-16).*

about tourism destinations, services and travel. They have become autonomous in booking and organizing trips by themselves, causing tour operators to close their high street shops and move sales channels to the Internet (Rosa, 2013). Big tour operators do still sell many "conventional" products, but they also see that small-specialized travel organizers are emerging to sell sports, wildlife and special destination tourism, etc. etc.



*Figure 3.2 The four tourists' generations (source: artademia.it, mredsewingroom.blogspot.com, wbbproject.eu; volunteerhq.org) / From top left to bottom right: 1) Thomas Cook's travels advertisement; 2) Camper as tourism mean for families during the 60s; 3) Sportive activities as representation of slow tourism; 4) Family volunteers holidays.*

New networks in tourism have emerged and travellers can directly and with ease rent a room from homeowners abroad and establish social relations. Tourism service providers join forces and create new flexible offers. In the travel chain, integrated offers from door to door have been developed and according new travel preferences accommodation, time and activities, many different categories of tourists have emerged. It is worth referring to the specific case of backpackers who have functioned as scouts for new destinations (Richards & Wilson, 2004), and are found in every corner of the globe, from remote villages in the Hindu Kush to the city centres of New York and Paris. Such backpackers are the first group of completely independent tourists. But other factors have also transformed travelling, such as the transportation network evolution. As (Shackley, 2006)

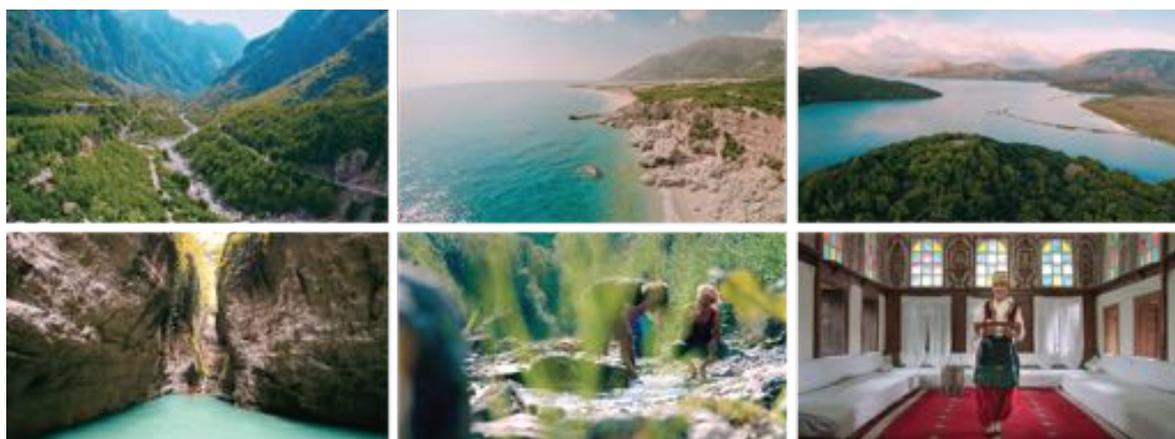
suggests, budget airlines have brought a wide range of previously unreachable (including smaller cities) destinations online and this has contributed enormously to the development of tourism in places that people had hardly even heard of but prepared to visit if low cost flights are available. As a result, low cost carriers such as Ryanair, Flybe and EasyJet have gained a big share of the European market. To conclude, since space and time are less of an obstacle and destinations not bound to tourism packages, tourism has become “liquid”, with travellers and tourists alike behaving autonomously.

The indispensable tool for modern tourism is definitely the Internet for information gathering, buying, selling, sharing experiences and meeting new people and fellow travellers. Tourists may be independent from tourism agents, but now they themselves have to find their way through the huge mass of data available, information that is scattered and not always trustworthy. The so-called Internet democracy (rights to privacy and freedom of opinion and association online) will be tested in the current era of Internet commercialization. Independent tourists can be defined as do-it-yourself travellers: digitally confident, independent individuals, using a range of devices and tools to plan, manage and book travel online (Fitzpatrick, 2015).

In Albania, independent travellers and tourists are flooding in. Air fares to Albania have gone down substantially over recent years. Accommodation solutions like Airbnb are already present and growing; even in small towns like Berat and Gjirokaster – that have UNESCO heritage – locals offer cheap rooms in their homes to tourists. This means that receiving tourists has become part of the local practice, something for which the Albanian is well known, and something that has a long tradition. In the old villages there was a person appointed to welcome foreigners, also known as the “khans” or hosts. This concept evolved over the centuries and assumed the nuance of local hotel.

Tourists who travel in Albania have suddenly passed from the first to the fourth of Dell’Ara’s generations. Due to its historical evolution, Albania seems to have skipped the 70’s tourist boom and the “permeable tourist” generation of the 80’s-90’s, going straight to a liquid tourism model joining all the previous trends with the contemporary ones. It is not surprising that while the coasts of Durrës and Saranda are living the tourism boom that formally reminisces of the 70’s development of Italian, French and Spanish Riviervas, both private and public tourism bodies are already promoting a more “liquid” tourism.

“Liquidity” is, in fact, a concept that Albania is investing heavily in, more or less consciously, starting from the paradox of a national strategic tourism plan that has been a draft since 2014, but of which is always taken as a reference. In 2014 the Albanian government launched an international competition to design a new nationwide branding campaign, won by the American agency Strawberryfrog.



*Figure 3.3 Frames from the advising clip “Albania GO your Own way” (source: R&TAdvertising, 2015)*

At 1'28” the promotional video shows an amazing collection of breath-taking views. The main resource sold is the untouched nature, where everybody can go their “own way”. The tourists shown in the video are the perfect representation of “liquid tourists”. They hike with backpacks to reach hidden corners of the country, they do sledding in the snow and parachute on the Riviera, they interact with the locals who always seem to be ready to welcome them. There is also space for a “baby boomers” couple, the tourist generation of people born in the 40's-50's and that now have the time and the money to travel (Pié & Rosa, 2013). The tourism model presented includes the traditional “sun, sand and sea”, but adding more options in order to branch out. The authors' intentional strategic choice of not including Tirana and other big cities in the video stresses the touristic guidelines promoted by the national authorities, based on the valorisation of natural heritage and historical cultural resources.

### **3.2 Theories on the geography of tourism and touristic development**

Theories about touristic geography and economy have been used as a base for building the state of art of the main case study, Albania. The two theories used in the first chapter

aim to build a solid framework for the upcoming chapters, starting from the tourism geography theory of Pleasure Peripheries, which update wants to verify the fact that the Balkans, and more specifically Albania, lie in the touristic Mediterranean. The TALC model, strongly criticized over the last few years, is only adopted as term of reference for understanding in which stage of touristic development this new destination is and to easier compare it with other countries.

- Theory of Pleasure Periphery (Turner and Ash 1975, Gormsen 1981; Burton 1991, Vera 1997, Rullan 2008);
- TALC Tourism Area Life Cycle (Butler, 1980) and critical moments (Anton, 2017).

### **3.2.1 Theory of Pleasure Periphery**

Those areas have already been part of other geographers' studies. In 1975, Turner and Ash introduced the concept of "Pleasure Periphery", a *'tourist belt surrounding the great industrialised zones of the world'* for the first time (Turner & Ash, 1975). The model proposed is reputable and it follows the socio-economic transformations.

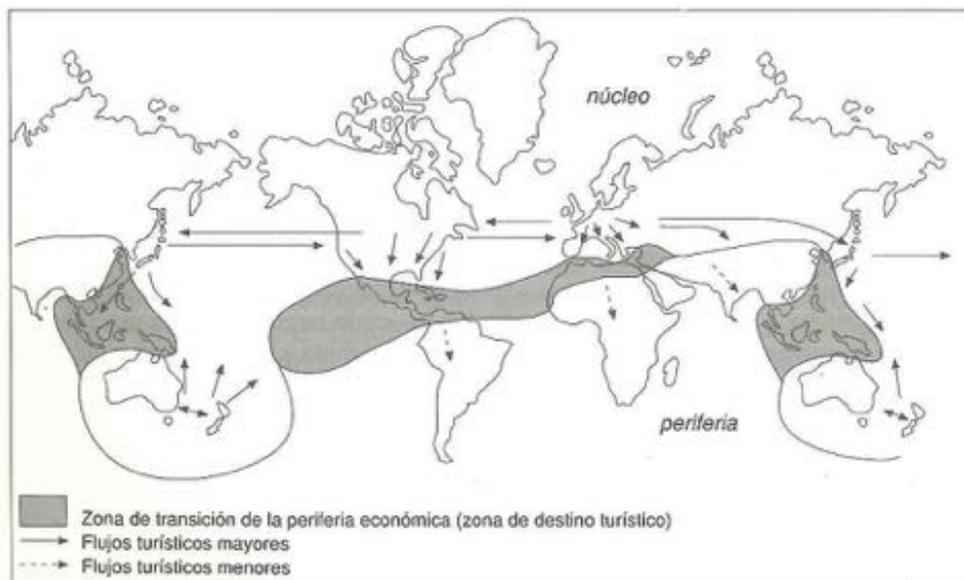


Figure 3.4 The world touristic region's "nucleus-peripherias" by Burton 1991 (source: Vera, 1997)

*'A North American Periphery might therefore include the islands of Hawaii and the Caribbean; a European Periphery, the coastal resort towns of the Mediterranean; a Japanese periphery, the cities in Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia; and so on' (Huggan, 2001).*

Those so-called “Pleasure Peripheries” are continuously subject to transformations and ‘remain fundamentally unstable’ (Huggan, 2001) due to their strict relation with societal development. According to Huggan (2001: 195), ‘as each individual periphery spreads, the various peripheries begin to merge into one another’. This conclusion somehow supports the prediction by Turner and Ash, who said that the world will end as a ‘one giant, global Pleasure Periphery, where the rich of the world relax and intermingle’ (Turner and Ash, 1975: 12). This last utopian provocation has to be contextualized in such a critical interpretation that the authors wish to provide about contemporary society. The definition of Pleasure Peripheries has been furthermore discussed and evolved by Erdmann Gormsen (in 1981 and then in 1997), who converted the word pleasure into touristic peripheries and rebuilt a chronological timeline of evolving touristic areas.

<b>Author/s</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
<b>Turner and Ash</b>	1975	First definition of Pleasure Periphery, reputable and adaptable Utopian view of a final unique periphery.  Areas individuated (3+): Carribean and Hawaii, Mediterranean and Southeast Asia.  [No original maps available]
<b>Gormsen</b>	1981, 1997	From Pleasure to Touristic Periphery.  Areas individualized (4): (i) British coasts and the Baltic Sea in the XVII - XIX century, (ii) French, Italian and Spanish coasts during the 20's-30's, (iii) Mediterranean coasts in the 60's, (iv) the rest of the world in the 80's-90's.  [No original maps available]
<b>Burton</b>	1991	From Touristic Periphery to Region.  Areas individualized (4): Europe, North America, Pacific, the periphery  [see Figure 3.4]
<b>Vera et al</b>	1997	Definition of 3 Mediterranean areas of touristic development.  Areas individualized (3): Caribbean and Hawaii, Mediterranean and South-East Asia.  [see Figure 3.4]
<b>Rullan</b>	2008	Review and representation of Gormsen.  Introduction of “central periphery”.  [see Figure 3.5]

*Table 3.1 Single authors' contributions to the Touristic Peripheries theory (source: author)*

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

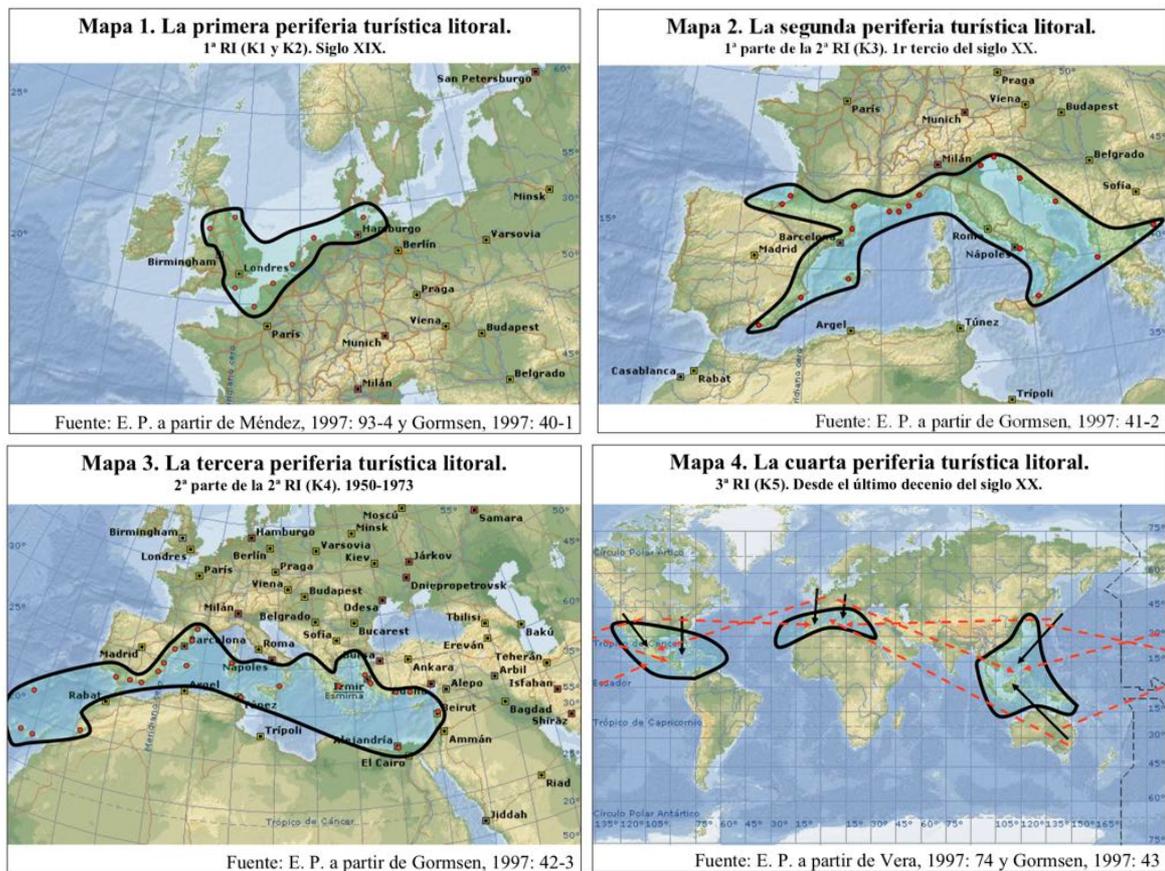


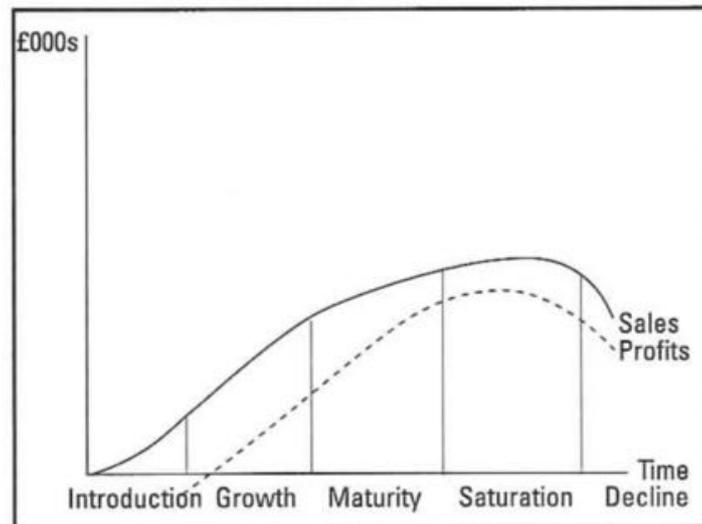
Figure 3.5 Evolution of touristic peripheries (source: Rullan, 2008)

### 3.2.2 TALC Tourism Area Life Cycle and critical moments (Butler 1980, Vera 1997, Antón 2017)

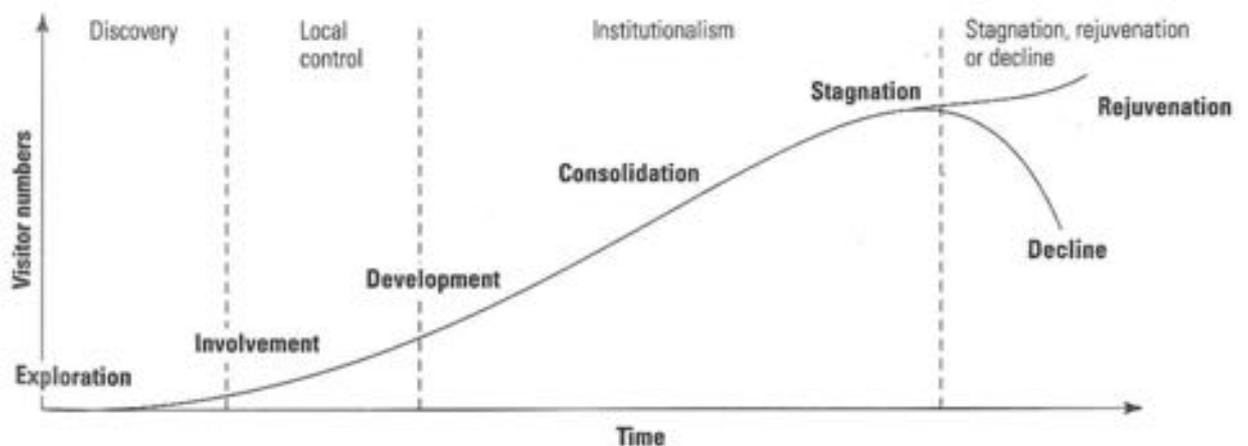
Even though there are many models that research the evolution of tourism, the “Tourist Life Cycle” (from now on referred as TALC) by Butler (1980) is known for being the most used by tourism researchers (Vera, et al., 1997), and that according to (Brouder, et al., 2017), is the most influential model for the evolution of tourism destinations. Its primary concern is the understanding of resource management and development under conditions of increasing visitor numbers, through evolutionary processes or stages. These stages are what we will define through the identification of each case study’s historic events.

The TALC model derives from the Product Life Cycle (PLC), which has been influential in marketing and corporate strategies, raising the question on how the “tourism product” should be defined and how its sales measured. The TALC states that *the ‘product is the*

*destination (or tourist area) and that a destination's experience life cycles are analogous to product life cycles' (Davidson & Maitland, 1997; Pacheco & Acolla, 2010).*



*Figure 3.6 Product Life Cycle (Davidson & Maitland, 1997, based on Palmer, 1994)*



*Figure 3.7 TALC model (Davidson & Maitland, 1997, based on Butler, 1980)*

The TALC curve is divided into 6 parts, defining thus six stages of a touristic destination evolution: (i) "Exploration", (ii) "Involvement", (iii) "Development", (iv) "Consolidation", (v) "Stagnation", and (vi) "Rejuvenation or Decline". For each phase, Smith (1977 - cited by Davidson & Maitland, 1997) identifies seven types of tourists seeking different types of experiences, making different demands and having different impacts on destinations.

<b>Destination stage</b>	<b>Visitor Type</b>
Exploration	Explorer/Elite/Off-beat
Involvement	Unusual
Development	Incipient mass
Consolidation	Mass
Stagnation	Charter

*Table 3.2 Classification of tourists' characteristics (source: Davidson & Maitland 1997, after Baker 1992, Plog 1976, Smith 1977)*

Although Butler's model is still a reference, ever since the 1990's researchers have been discussing a post-TALC model in order to better measure success. One of the main limitations of Butler's model was the fact that the visitor numbers were assumed as fundamental data, not considering the net benefit generated by each visitor.

The life-cycle-based models aimed to analyse and define the evolution of tourism in destinations through its graphical representations in line-shape – from now on “path”, but the following studies showed the gap between these purely theoretical models and their real application. One of the main limitations of the TALC model concerns continuity of the line. Previous researches focused on the destination changes in time, but few analysed *'the critical incidents marking the transition from one stage to the next'* (Gale & Botterill 2005). Those critical incidents – from now on called “moments” – are *'path-shaping evolutionary inflection points causing a destination's path to shift in direction and focus'* (Sant-Ibanez, et al., 2017).

Moments are often associated to shocking events such as natural disasters, economic crisis, and terrorist attacks that negatively affect fluxes, and specific events such as hosting the Olympic games that are capable to completely transform the evolutionary path of a destination. This leaves an uncovered gap concerning those moments beyond the natural environment and general economic trends, principally social and cultural ones (Sant-Ibanez, et al., 2017).



Figure 3.8 Nature of moments (source: author, based on Sanz-Ibañez et al., 2017)

Analysing the nature of those inflection points, Sanz-Ibañez, et al. (2017) define two scopes (pre-moment and post-moment) and the main variables that characterize every specific moment. The 'pre' includes all the triggering actions (spontaneous or selective) leading to a moment, while the 'post' concerns how the moment impacts the evolutionary path. Given that every moment is strongly context-related and composed of a number of different variables, the main features that define a moment are related to intensity, durability, scale and speed of the shift provoked.

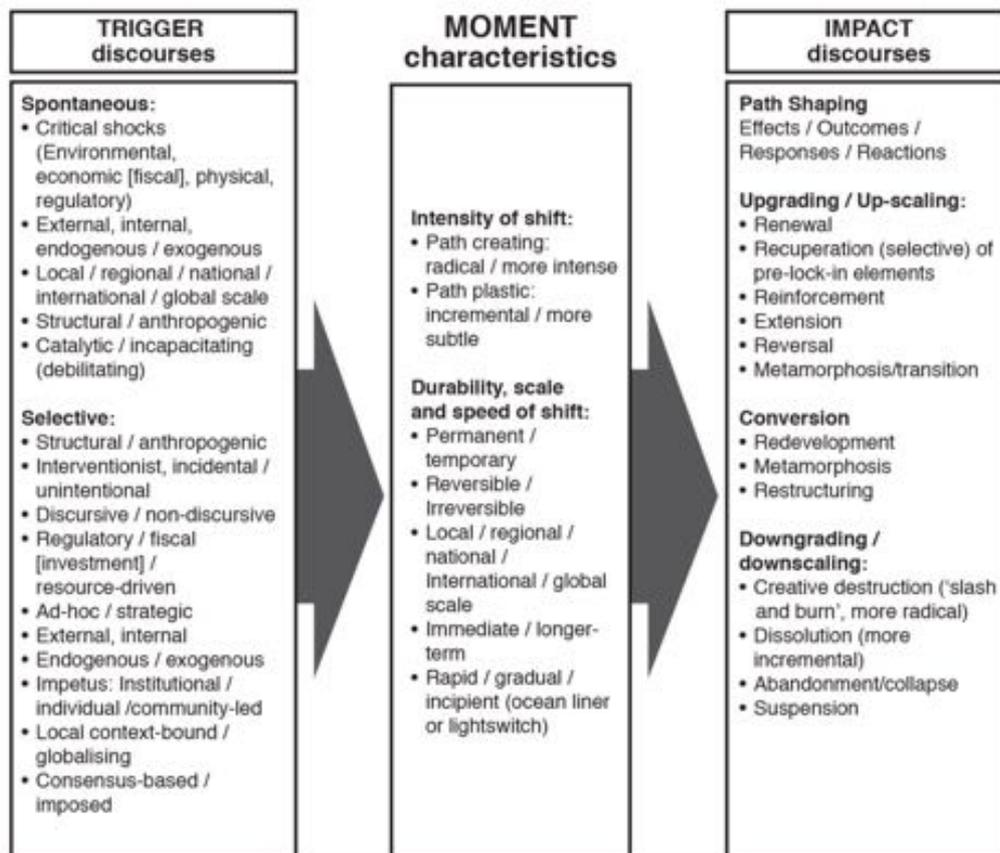


Figure 3.9 Moment triggering actions, characteristics and impact (source: Sant-Ibañez, Wilson & Anton Clavé, 2017: 89)

### **3.3 Theories on ecological and urban system, and the possible role of tourism**

*'Use of an ecological framework for planning suggests new principles based more on the recognition of our ignorance rather than the presumption of our knowledge about the systems we try to intervene in' (Holling & Goldber, 1971, p. 221)*

In design practises, contemporary ideas of ecology and planning can be traced to the work of Ian McHarg in the late 1960's and early 1970's, which showed that the analysis and assessment of natural resources (geological, soils, water, habitat, etc.) could inform us of the best places and ways to develop land for social occupation. *'McHarg's practice opened up planning the idea of the interconnectedness of cities, suburbs and the natural world: designing with nature in mind'* (Reed & Lister, 2018). A huge number of academics such as Forman and Hollings, whose theories are presented in the next paragraphs, followed his path. Theories about landscapes and ecosystems represent the framework for understanding an ecosystem's behaviour, introducing tourism as an external factor and make it a part of the system itself. The main theoretical contribution of this dissertation is the comparison between the ecosystem model of the Adaptive Cycles (Hollings, 1971) and the Butler's TALC model – adopted not for its interest in economy field but for its clear consequentiality. This comparison leads to the concept of Resilience that has been broadened from ecology to social science, tourism included.

#### **3.3.1 Landscape ecology principles: patch, edges, corridors and mosaics (Dramstad, at al., 1996)**

Richard Forman's research is a key example of a new direction in applied ecology enabled by the availability of LandSat imagery and computer-aided geographic information systems analysis during the 1980's and early 1990's (Reed & Lister, 2018). In his book "Landscape Ecology Principles in Landscape Architecture and Land-Use Planning", published by Island Press in 1996, Forman collected a series of landscape ecology principles.

*'The principles of landscape and regional ecology apply in any land mosaic, from suburban to agricultural and from desert to forest. [...] Like a plant cell or a human body, this living system exhibits three broad characteristics: structure, function, and change. Landscape structure is the spatial pattern or arrangement of landscape elements. Function is the movement and flows of animals, plants, water, wind, materials, and energy through the structure. And change is the dynamics or alteration in spatial patterns and functioning over time'* (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 14).

The structural pattern is then 'composed of three types of elements: patches, corridors and matrixes controlling movements, flows and changes' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 10). The whole landscape system is then a "mosaic" of neighbourhoods, which are in turn the configuration of patches, corridors and matrixes.

### 3.3.1.1 Patches

'In a densely populated world plant and animal habitats increasingly appears in scattered patches. [...] Patches are differentiated in terms of size, number and location. Patches may be as large as a national forest, or as small as a single tree. Patches may be numerous in a landscape, such as avalanches or landslides on a mountainside, or be scarce such as oases in a desert' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 19).

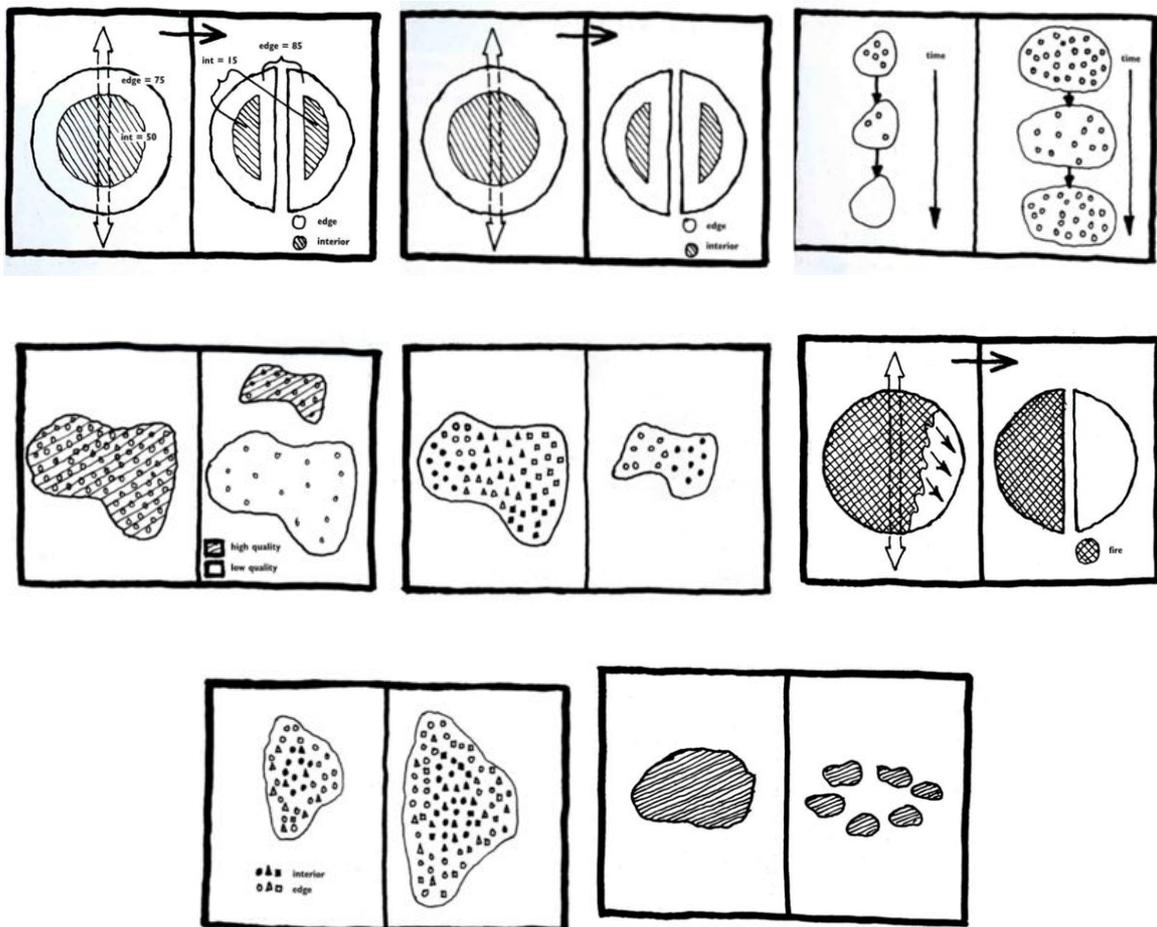


Figure 3.10 Patch size (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 20-22)  
 From top left to bottom right: 1) "Edge habitat and species"; 2) "Interior habitat and species";  
 3) "Local extinction probability"; 4) "Extinction"; 5) "Habitat diversity"; 6) "Barrier to disturbance";  
 7) "Large patch benefits"; 8) "Small patch benefits".

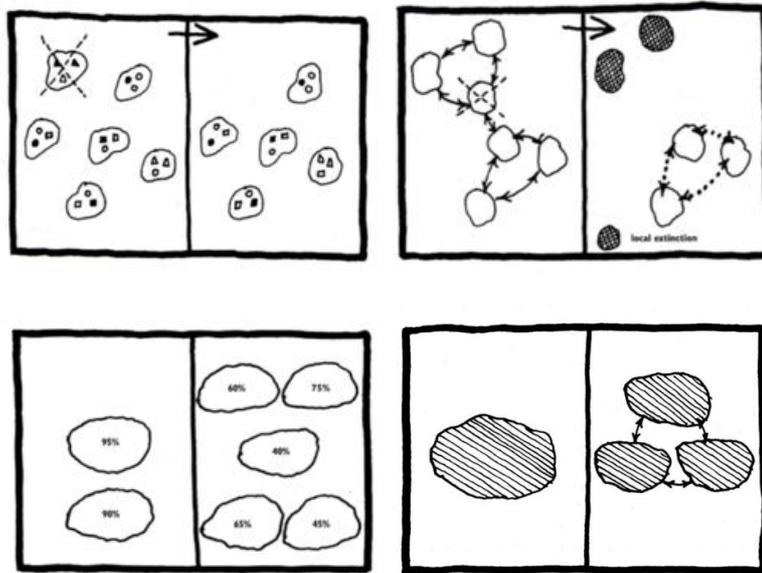


Figure 3.11 Patch number (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 22-23) / From top left to bottom right: 9) "Habitat loss"; 10) "Metapopulation dynamics"; 11) "Number of large patches"; 12) "Grouped patches as habitat".

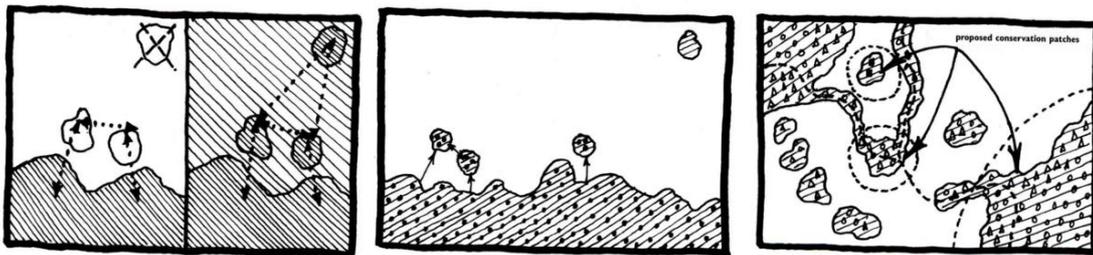


Figure 3.12 Patch location (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 24) / From top left to bottom right: 13) "Extinction"; 14) "Recolonization"; 15) "Patch selection for conservation".

### 3.3.1.2 Edges

*An edge is described as the outer portion of a patch where the environment differs significantly from the interior of the patch. Often, edges and interior environments simply look and feel differently (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 27).*

The authors introduced five edge structures, five possibilities of boundary shapes (straight or convoluted) and four shapes (round or convoluted).

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

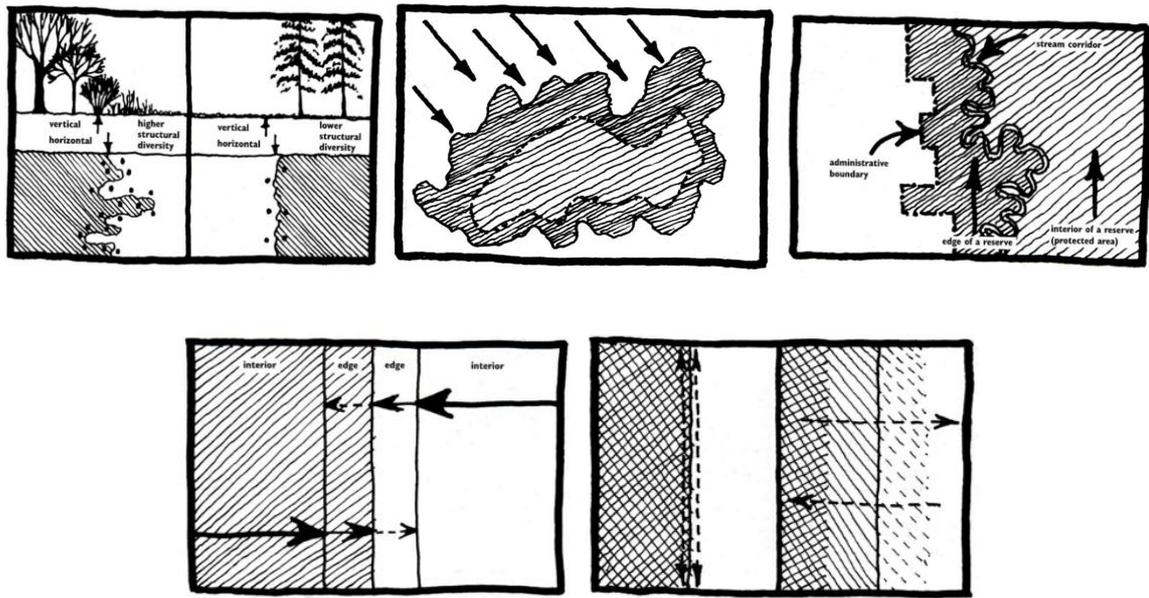


Figure 3.13 Edge structure (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 28-29) / From top left to bottom right: 1) "Edge structural diversity"; 2) "Edge width"; 3) "Administrative and natural ecological boundary"; 4) "Edge as filter"; 5) "Edge abruptness".

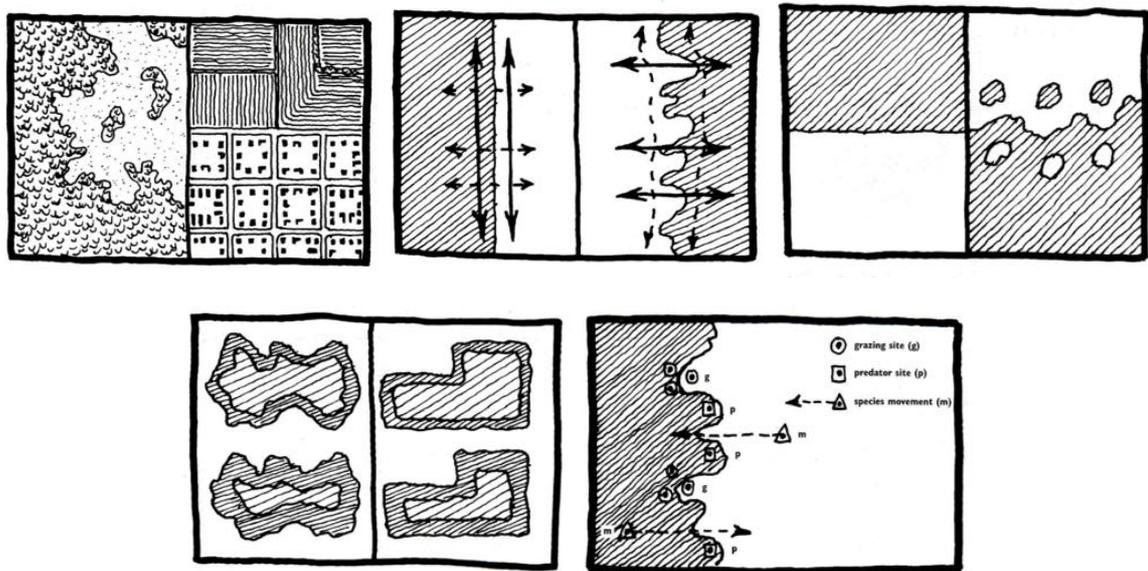


Figure 3.14 Boundaries (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 29-31) / From top left to bottom right: 6) "Natural and human edges"; 7) "Straight and curvilinear boundaries"; 8) "Hard and soft boundaries"; 9) "Edge curvilinear and width"; 10) "Coves and lobes".

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

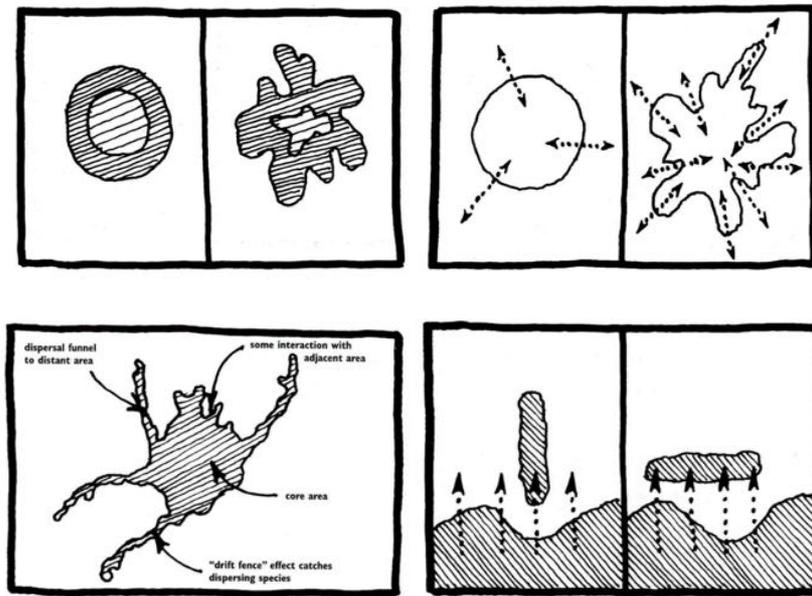


Figure 3.15 Shapes of patches (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 31-32) / From top left to bottom right: 11) "Edge and interior species"; 12) "Interaction with surroundings"; 13) "Ecologically "optimum" patch shape"; 14) "Shape and orientation".

### 3.3.1.3 Corridors

The loss and isolation of habitat is a seemingly unstoppable process occurring throughout the modern world. [...] Several dynamic processes cause such isolation and loss overtime. The key spatial processes include: fragmentation, dissection, perforation, shrinkage and attrition. [...] Corridors in the landscape may also act as barriers or filters to species movement (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 35).

The 13 typologies of corridors are grouped in four categories: corridors for species development, stepping stones, roads and windbreak barriers, streams and river corridors.

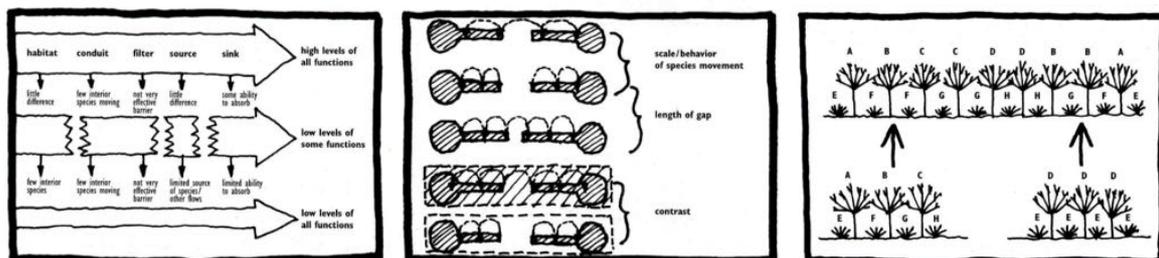


Figure 3.16 Corridors for species movement (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 36) / From top left to bottom right: 1) "Controls on corridor functions"; 2) "Corridor gap effectiveness"; 3) "Structural versus floristic similarity".

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

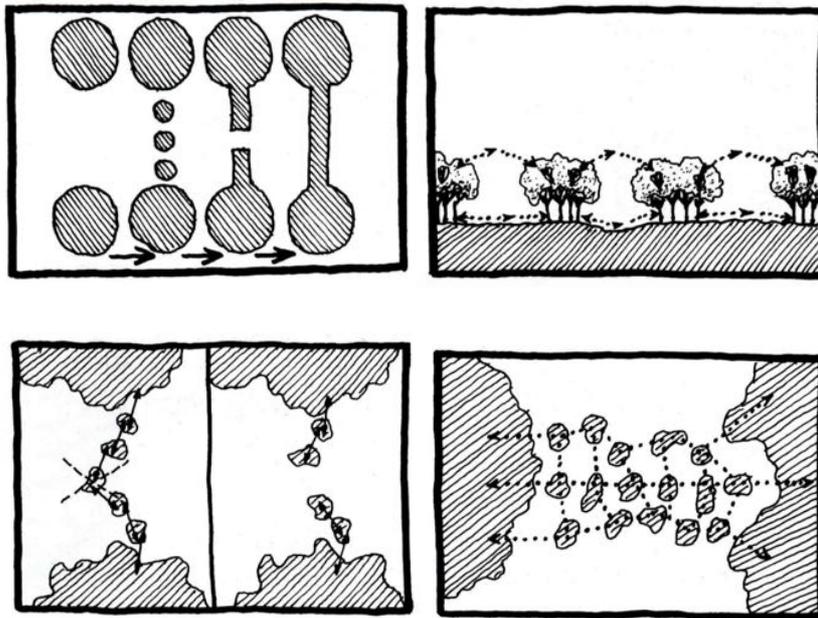


Figure 3.17 Stepping stones (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 37-38) / From top left to bottom right: 4) "Stepping stone connectivity"; 5) "Distance between stepping stones"; 6) "Loss of a stepping stone"; 7) "Cluster of stepping stones".

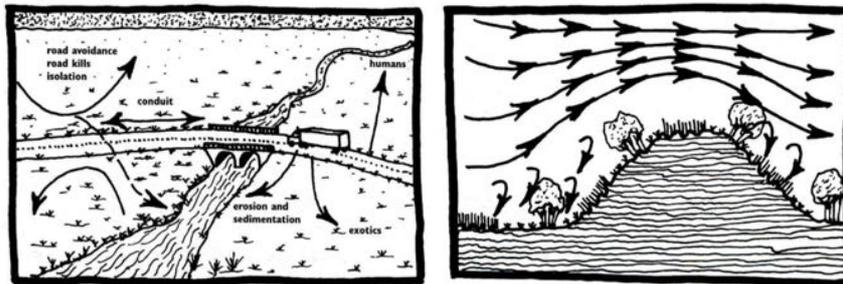
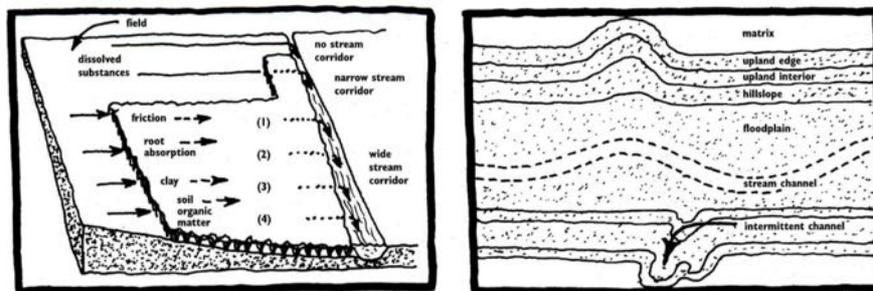


Figure 3.18 Road and windbreak barriers (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 38) / From top left to bottom right: 8) "Roads and other 'trough' corridors"; 9) "Wind erosion and its control".



From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

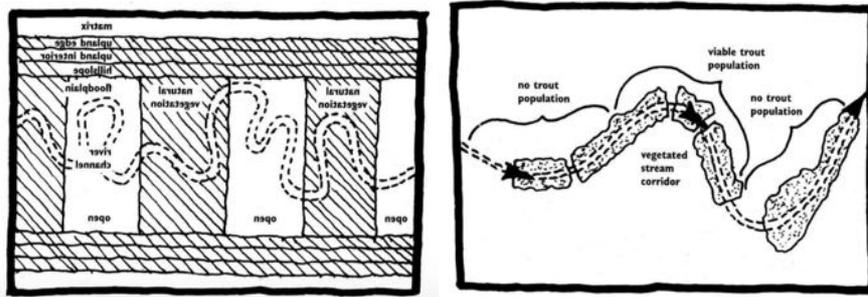


Figure 3.19 Stream and river corridors (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 39-40) / From top left to bottom right: 10) "Stream corridor and dissolved substances"; 11) "Corridor width for main stream"; 12) "Corridor width for a river"; 13) "Connectivity of a stream corridor".

### 3.3.1.4 Mosaics

The overall structural and functional integrity of a landscape can be understood and evaluated in terms of both pattern and scale. One assay of the ecological health of a landscape is the overall connectivity of the natural system present. Corridors often interconnect with one another to form networks, enclosing other landscape elements. Networks in turn exhibit connectivity, circuitry, and mesh size. Networks emphasize the functioning of landscapes and may be used by planners and landscape architects to facilitate or inhibit flows and movements across land mosaics (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 41).

The mosaics are divided into: network typologies, fragmentations and pattern and scale (fine or coarse).

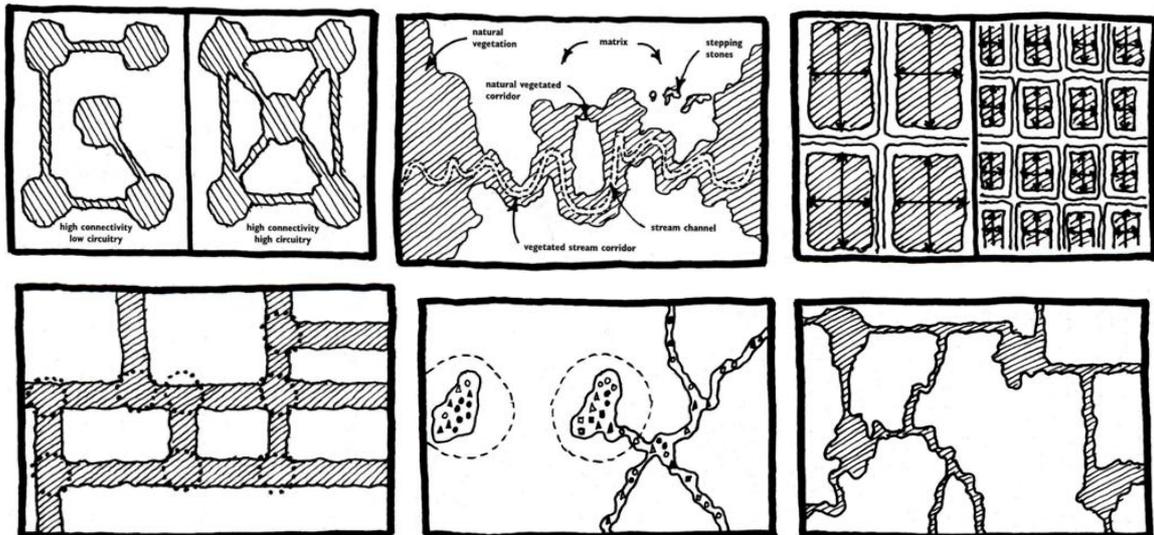


Figure 3.20 Networks (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 42-43) / From top left to bottom right: 1) "Network connectivity and circuitry"; 2) "Loops and alternatives"; 3) "Corridor density and mesh size"; 4) "Intense effect"; 5) "Species in a small connected patch"; 6) "Dispersal and small connected patch".

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

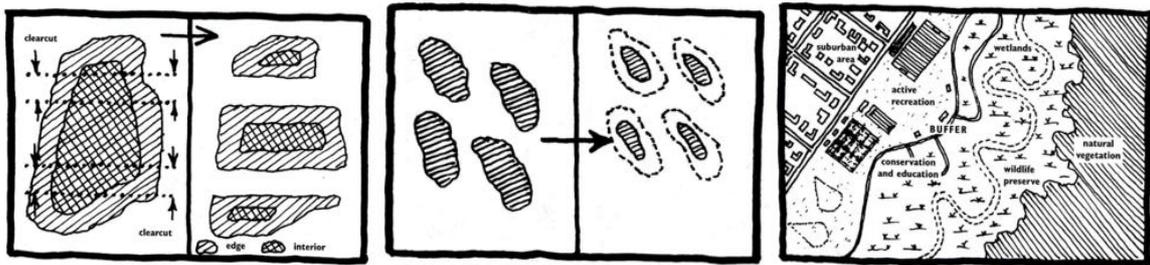


Figure 3.21 Fragmentation and pattern (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 44) / From top left to bottom right: 7) "Loss of total versus interior habitat"; 8) "Fractal patches"; 9) "Suburbanization, exotics, and protected areas".

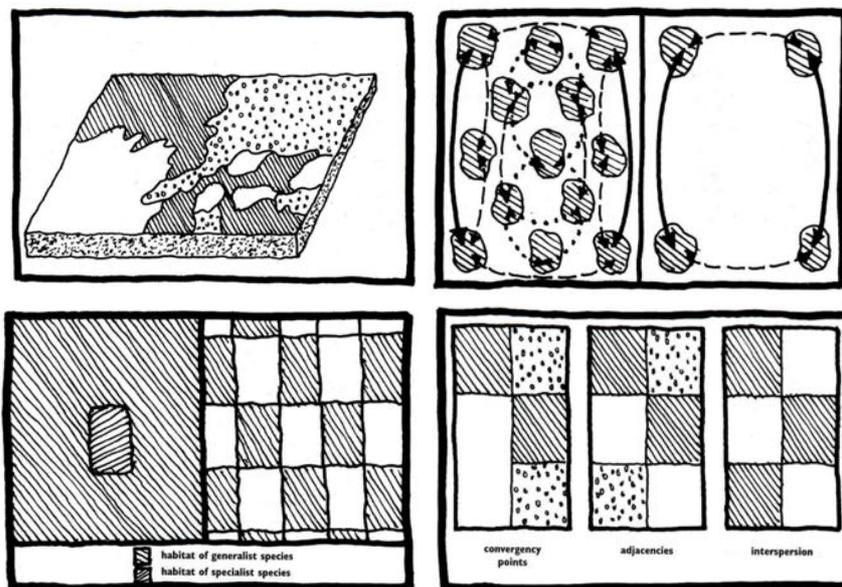


Figure 3.22 Scale (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996: 45-46) / From top left to bottom right: 10) "Grain size of mosaics"; 11) "Animal perception of scale of fragmentation"; 12) "Specialists and generalists"; 13) "Mosaic patterns for multihabitat species".

### 3.3.2 Resilience in Territorial Ecosystem: The Adaptive Cycle (Hollings 1971)

Certain remarkable similarities can be found amongst the concerns of ecologists and planners. Like complex urban systems, ecological systems appear to be characterized by four distinctive properties. These include their functioning as interdependent systems, their dependence on a succession of historical events, their spatial linkages, and their non-linear structure (Holling & Goldber, 1971, p. 221).

The "Adaptive Cycle" model by Holling (1971) is one of the first resilience theory concepts elaborated. The author introduced it as part of his systems approach to resilience theory 'using a 3-dimensional diagram, with the cycle moving in a roller coaster pattern among the three key variables of resilience, potential, and connectedness' (Lew, 2017).

From a theoretical point of view, Holing's contribution is significant because it shakes down the anthropocentric vision when dealing with ecosystems. In his contribution, he stated that '*long before man appeared on the scene, natural systems were subject to traumas and shocks imposed by climate change and other geophysical processes*' and the main characteristic of ecosystem resilience is that those changes are perfectly absorbed (Holling & Goldber, 1971, p. 221).

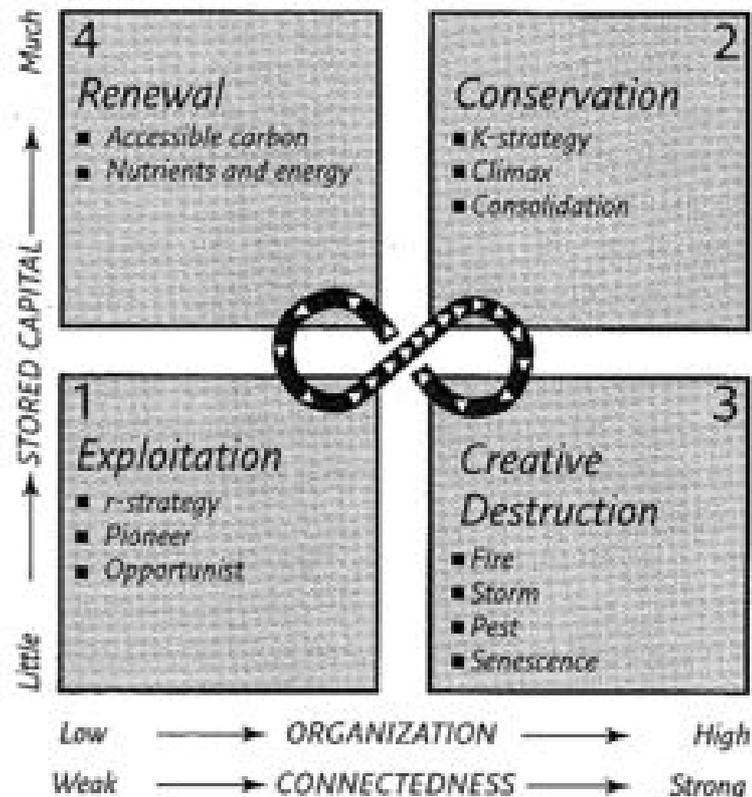


Figure 3.23 "The four ecosystem functions and their relationship to the amount of stored capital and the degree of connectedness" (source: Holling, 1986: 307) / The arrows point out the verse of the ecosystem cycle. The changing distance between the arrows indicates a difference of speed.

The behaviour of ecosystems 'can be represented by the sequential interaction of four ecosystem functions: exploitation, conservation, creative destruction, and renewal' (Holling, 1986, p. 307). The speed of change from one stage to another is slow from conservation to creative destruction and then always speeds up. According to Fath, Dean, & Katzmaier (2015), given that a "resilient system" is '*one that can navigate all stages of the adaptive cycle (r, K,  $\Omega$ , and  $\alpha$ )*' (Fath, et al., 2015), it is necessary to focus on the main features for overtaking each stage. In the Table 3.3, the required capacities are listed. In

other terms, 'resilience is the capacity to successfully navigate ALL stages of the complex adaptive cycle ( $r$ ,  $K$ ,  $\Omega$ , and  $\alpha$ )' (Fath, et al., 2015).

Needed capacity	Requirement for success
Capacity to grow ( $r$ )	Activation energy
Capacity to develop ( $K$ )	Self-organized to store information and capital
Capacity to survive ( $\Omega$ )	Improvise to maintain vital functions
Capacity to renew ( $\alpha$ )	Learn and forgive to reorient

Table 3.3 Key features for the success of a system (source: Fath, Dean, & Katzmair, 2015)

The Adaptive Cycle model suffered a huge number of re-modelling attempts. One of the most significant is by (Burkhard, et al., 2011), which substituted the "lazy-eight adaptive cycle model [which] is a powerful and useful metaphor of system dynamics" (Fath, et al., 2015).

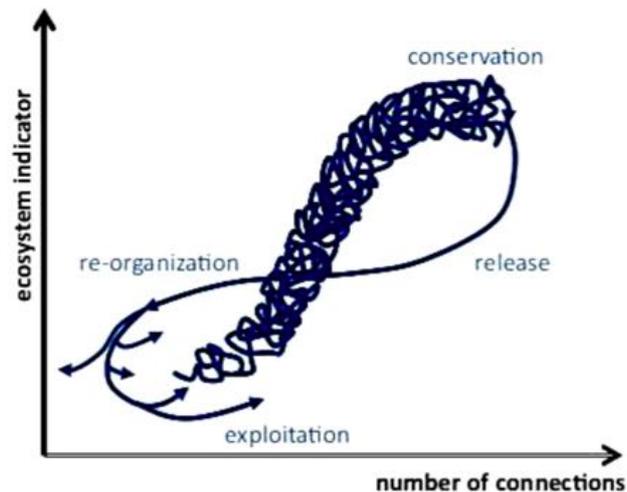


Figure 3.24 Adaptive cycle showing the number of connections (source: Burkhard, Fath, & Müller, 2011)

When it comes to urban systems, the same Holling created a parallelism (1971). He stated that "the real substance of an analogy between ecological and urban systems lies not in the similarities between parts or processes, but in fundamental similarities in the structure of entire systems" (Holling & Goldber, 1971, p. 226).

The four characteristics of an ecosystem listed by Holling & Goldber (1971) are: (i) interaction and feedback, (ii) historical succession, (iii) spatial linkage, and (iv) non-linear

structure. The same properties seem to be important for urban systems. Firstly, both ecological and urban systems work as a result of interaction between parts; secondly, cities are the products of history as ecosystems. Third, the urban system shows significant spatial interactions, which are affected by events over space. Homogeneity in structure is not a main feature for a city, which appears as 'a spatial mosaic of social, economic and ecological variables' (Holling & Goldber, 1971). And in conclusion, the "non-linear" and discontinuous properties noted in ecological systems can be also applied to urban systems.

### 3.3.3 The models comparison: Adaptive Cycle and TALC (Lew, 2017)

In 2017, Alan A. Lew – professor of "Geography, Planning and Recreation" at the University of Northern Arizona published a reflection on the opportunity of joining the Adaptive Cycle model by Holling (1986) and the TALC model by Butler (1980), on his personal blog.

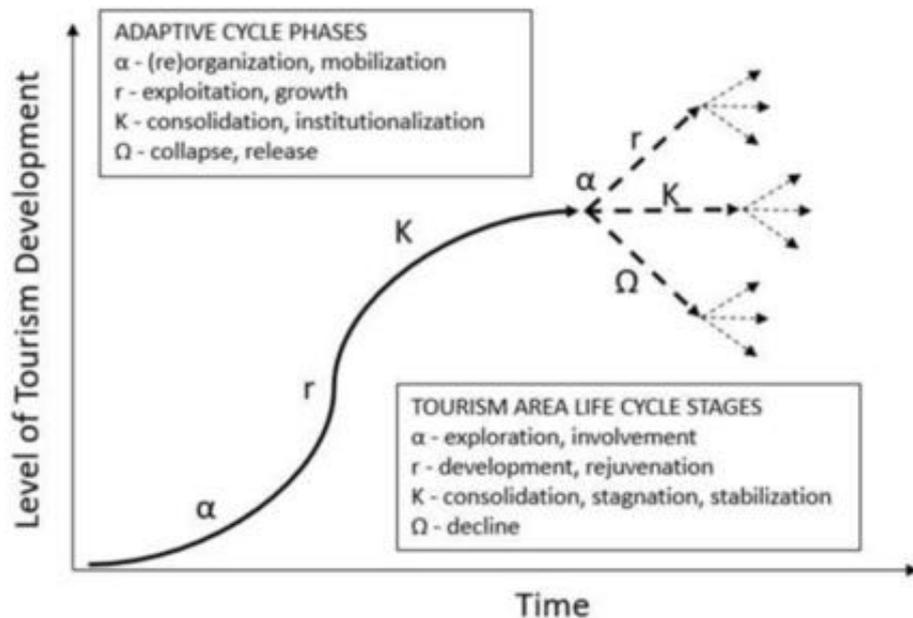


Figure 3.25 Attempt of joining the Adaptive Cycle model and the TALC model (source: Lew, 2017:3)

In his most recent publication, he also converted the scheme into a table, adding a parallelism with the three variables of Resilience, Potential and Connectedness (Bakti, et al., 2017).

Adaptive Cycle STAGE		VARIABLE		
		Resilience	Potential	Connectedness
1. (Re)Organization	$\alpha$	Increasing	High	Low
2. Exploitation; Growth	$r$	High	Low	Increasing
3. Consolidation; Conservation	$K$	Decreasing	High	High
4. Decline; Collapse	$\Omega$	Low	Low	Decreasing

Notes: *resilience* = capacity to innovate and adapt  
*potential* = capacity to change using accumulated resources  
*connectedness* = capacity to control and manage

Table 3.4 The four stages and three variables of the Adaptive Cycle (Lew, 2017:4)

According to this table and the previous scheme, Lew stressed the idea that 'not all systems must go through all stages of the cycle' (Lew, 2017). He describes the cycle's orbit in its different stages, dividing them into: large and small cycles, growth, collapse and reorganization.

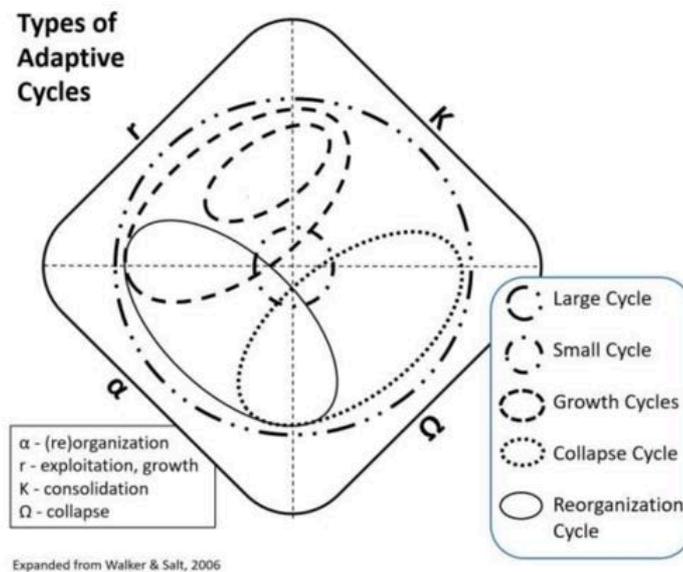


Figure 3.26 Types of Adaptive Cycles (Lew, 2017:5)

Lew's doubts are correct but formulating an answer within the framework of this dissertation is difficult and distances us from our goals. Although an attempt has been made, following the parallelism presented by Barbés-Blazquez & Scott (2017). The table

below provides a clear example. In addition, it has included an extra-column containing the corresponding TALC phase, according to Bakti, et al. (2017).

<b>Adaptive Cycle</b>	<b>Example (Barbés-Blazquez &amp; Scott, 2017)</b>	<b>TALC model</b>
<b>Growth</b>	Outside investors may want to buy agricultural lands and shift to other more competitive crops, some residents may see an opportunity to develop small-scale tourism.	Development Rejuvenation
<b>Conservation</b>	This transition means that some of the possibilities are discarded and a specialization develops. For instance, communities in the region may decide that tourism is a viable option. They will need to build transport and accommodation infrastructures, develop communication routes and create marketing strategies.	Consolidation Stagnation Stabilization
<b>Collapse Release</b>	Tourism relies on adequate transportation access, timely food shipments, trained staff, effective marketing strategies, environmental quality: if one of these elements fails or comes out of alignment it has repercussions throughout the whole system. Triggers are usually external to the system and can be natural disturbances that prevent tourists from enjoying an attraction or they could even be a social disturbance.	Decline
<b>Reorganization</b>	After this initial disarray, the pieces of the system start to coalesce once again. Resulting in innovative ideas, such as re-conversion of buildings, etc.	Exploration Involvement

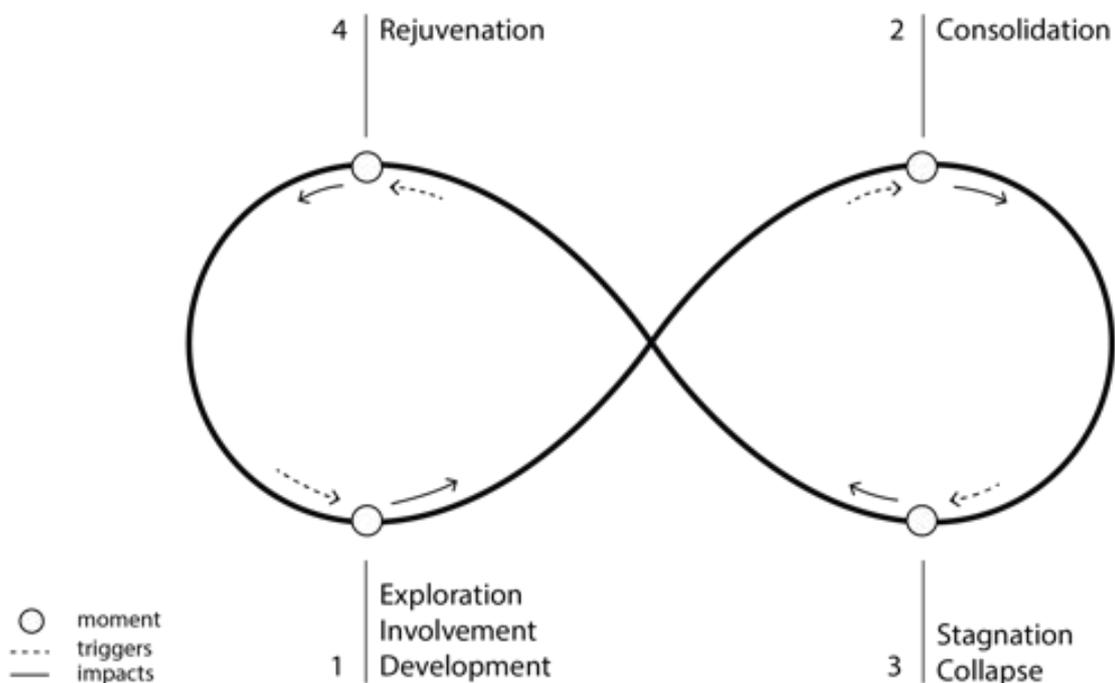
*Table 3.5 parallel between Adaptive Cycle and a touristic system (source: author based on Barbés-Blazquez and Scott, 2017 and Bakti, Lew, & Kim, 2017)*

Introducing tourism into an ecosystem is a risky and delicate procedure. The ecosystem model of the Adaptive Cycle is reinterpreted and adjusted to the touristic destination evolution phases of Butler's model in order to define a matrix to then compare the case studies.

The comparison of these two models will lead to a preliminary conclusion. This, more theoretically, concerns the possibility of considering the TALC model no longer as a curve,

but as an infinitive function (as the Adaptive Cycle model). This is the idea introduced by “Infinitive Butler” – under a different lens – by Sant-Ibanez, Wilson, & Anton Clavé (2017) whom identified the key role of the ‘moment’ in the touristic destination evolution, such moments are the inflection points of the TALC curve, caused by ‘Triggers’ (with different natures: social, economic, environmental) and followed by a number of ‘Impacts’.

The representation of the joint-model should join the shape of the AC with TALC phases and moments.



*Figure 3.27 Hypothesis of the two models overlapping (source: author)*

The main objective of comparing Adaptive Cycle ecosystem theory and touristic destination development phases (TALC) is to prove that a touristic ecosystem does act as a natural one. Crisis/collapse is then assumed as a necessary condition for the ‘renewal’ step in order to then restart the cycle. Through the observation of Mediterranean case studies that already gone through the whole cycle, it is possible to identify an abacus of ‘actions’ to do or avoid in the critical phase (cause-effect direct relationship).

### 3.4 Theories on touristic space

This last paragraph of the theoretical framework hosts the interpretation which is particularly relevant to the model proposal. A number of academics and researchers have been focusing on regional models of touristic development. In one of his most recent publications and studies, the geographer Salvador Anton Clavé (Brouder, et al., 2017) perfectly summarised the touristic models' evolution, dividing them into: Pre-TALC, TALC, Post-TALC and Human Agency Approaches.

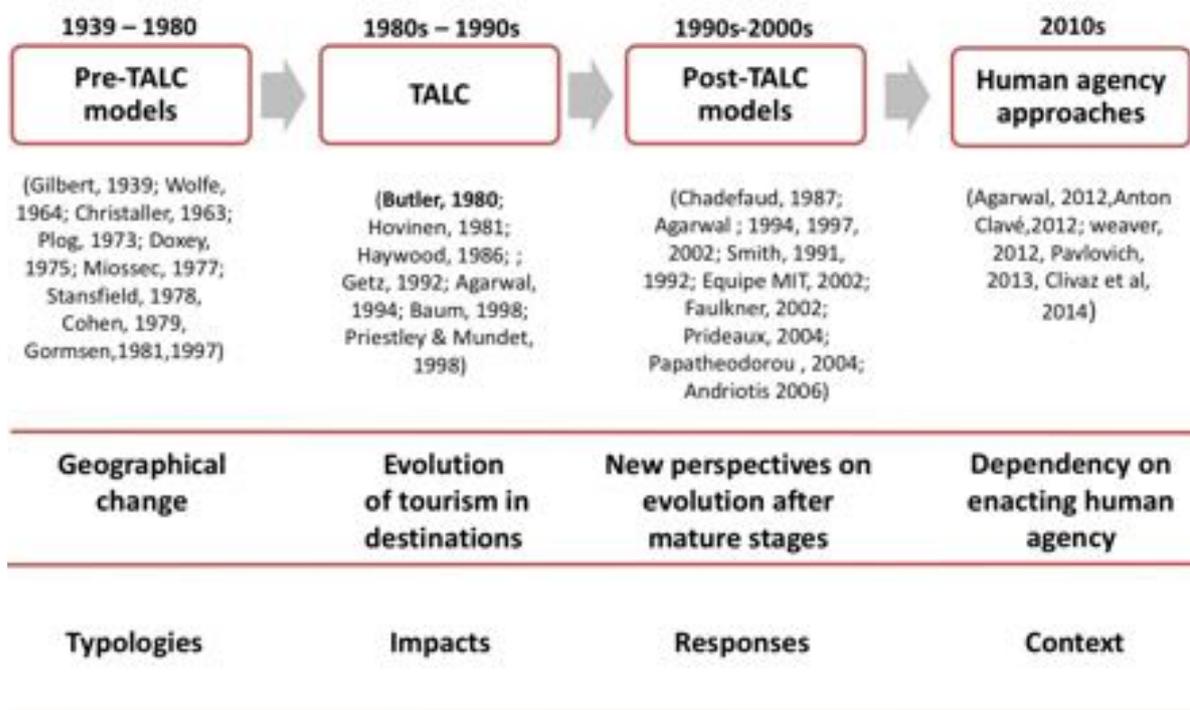


Table 3.6 The evolution of destination (source: Anton Clavé, 2017)

The pre-TALC models are more focused on geographical change and Miossec (1977) represented the evolution of territory usage by tourist activity very well (Lozato-Giotart, 2008, p. 121).

Authors	Main contribution	Year
Gilbert	Changes and growth of the built-up area in seaside health resorts acting as residential population attractors with a spatial development perspective.	1939
Wolfe	Interest on the processes of change of tourism destinations and its potential effects with special interest in second homes areas.	1952
Christaller	Tourist flows and patterns explaining the spatial distribution of tourist places. Demand perspective.	1964
Plog	Changes in the tourist market are related to subsequent changes in the destinations visited. Destinations decline is predictable and inevitable.	1973
Doxey	Model suggesting that communities pass through a sequence of reactions as the impacts of tourism in a destination become more pronounced.	1975
Miossec	Destination evolution is driven by the continuous adaptation of demand and supply with 5 phases from a pioneering stage to a congestion stage.	1977
Stansfield	Seminal case study about rejuvenation of tourism destinations. Rejuvenation is possible if destination emphasises its (unique) locational advantages	1978
Cohen	Discussion of the need to conceive multi-lineal models of tourism development illustrated by an elaboration of MacCannell's fundamental concepts.	1979
Gormsen	Spatio-temporal model explaining common factors in the development of destinations over increasingly peripheral zones of the world.	1981, 1997

Table 3.7 The Pre-TALC models (source: Anton Clavé, 2017)

The nine authors quoted above can be subdivided according to the topic of the study and their main contributions.

Gilbert (1939), Wolfe (1952), Stansfield (1978) contributions are more related to the field of tourism on an urban scale.

- Gilbert (1939) is the first to study the expansion of touristic areas in England. Since the 1800's the English coast was famous for its sea-bathing facilities, but he was the first to study their systematic growth and the effect tourism has on the urban asset.
- Smith (2010) described Wolfe as "the godfather of many tourism geographers". Arguably by far 'Wolfe's most visible contribution to tourism geography is in the area of vacation and second homes' (Hall & Smith, 2015).
- Stansfield (1978) outlines the "resort (life) cycle". As for the other models, it has different phases. The first one is the "discovery" of a area with interesting recreational possibilities, 'possibly focusing on an existing settlement of which its economic functions are not yet particularly resort-oriented, or the conscious creation of a resort, usually by a group of entrepreneurs' (Stansfield, 1978). This phase is characterized by 'intensive real estate speculation, rapid construction of the expanding infrastructure of the resort' (Stansfield, 1978). His study case is

Atlantic City, where the first phase took place during the WWI. For many reasons related to time and consumption, the city lost its charm. It took until elections of 1976, when a regeneration project was presented. It was entirely based on the idea of legalizing the casino in Atlantic City. *'Gambling may fail to be the universal panacea its champions asserted it would offer'* (Stansfield, 1978, p. 249).

Christaller (1964) and Miossec (1977) extended their contributions on a regional scale, from the study on the location of recreational areas to a more specific systemization of tourism spaces.

- Analyzing the possibilities of spatial occupation and their impact on economy, Christaller (1964) listed two ways: the abstract idea of “pure” space and the “real” area, which is *'equipped with mountains, plains, coastline and vegetation'* (Christaller, 1964). And while listing the factors playing a role in man's adaptation to space, he mentioned tourism, describing it as “a branch of the economy avoiding central spaces and the agglomeration of industry”. According to Christaller, the recreational areas are mainly arising in the peripheral areas of the districts in search of “the highest mountains, in the loneliest woods, along the most remote beaches.
- On a regional scale Miossec (1977) draws the development of tourism spaces with the aim of systemizing its evolution. Omitting the degree of success in the attempt to develop a model, Miossec offers a perspective that will lead to new systemizations of the economic and spatial aspects of tourist destinations and the interpretation of newly created ones (Pié & Rosa, 2013, p. 89).

Outstanding for its scale of study is Gormsen (1981), whose spatial-temporal model has been fully presented in paragraph 3.1.1 and its contribution is the one allowing the switch from the Turner and Ash' Pleasure Periphery to the more contemporary Touristic ones.

The contributions of Plog (1973), Doxey (1975) and Cohen (1979) are more related to the study of sociology and anthropology, focusing their attention on tourists' behaviour and its effect on the market.

- During his speech at the Travel Research Association in South Carolina, Stanley Plog (1973) showed results of a psychographic system. The discourse emphasized that *'destinations appeal to specific type of people and typically follow*

*a relatively predictable pattern of growth and decline in popularity over time'* (Plog, 2001, p. 13). This study is the first big attempt to look at the life cycle of tourist destinations and represented the starting point of further research.

- Doxey's (1975) 'Irridex' model is more focused on local communities. According to it, communities always go through a series of reactions to tourism phenomena evolution and its impact in their territories. More it become pronounced, more their perception changes. *'Thus, an initial euphoria is succeeded by apathy, irritation and, eventually, antagonism'* (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997, p. 6).
- In "Rethinking the sociology of tourism", Cohen (1979) criticized the two generalised approaches to tourism: the proposal of universal models and conceival of the dynamics of tourism as a unilinear process. Referring to MacCannel (1976), Cohen argued that different typologies and a multi-linear approach to the dynamics of tourism should be favoured.

For the purpose of this dissertation, the attention has been focused on regional scale theories, especially Miossec's model (1977), which attempts to systemize a tourist destination's evolution and also combine it with the tourists' behaviour and the local community's reaction.

#### **3.4.1 Structural evolution of touristic regions in time and space (Miossec, 1977)**

As listed during the Anton Clavé presentation (2017), Miossec's model is relevant because he is the first – and the last for innovation - to draw the stages of a tourist destination evolution. There are five phases described by Miossec (1977, p. 46), four plus a pre-tourism phase:

0. In the pre-tourism phase (phase 0), territory is either crossed (transit) but not visited, or too far away to be a goal of vacation (isolation); there is no station; tourism demand does not know this territory nor is interested in it.
1. Tourism is manifested timidly (phase 1) by a pioneer station; the receiving population observes this phenomenon with curiosity or indifference; the tourist function of the space is extremely weak and does not provoke any notable equipment nor appreciable externality; tourists have a rough perception of space.

2. As soon as the pioneering station has shown that the activity is viable (phase 2), the stations are multiplying, infrastructures arise; labour, food, water, etc., and people flock to the stations; increasing the volume of tourists, and certain areas of space being recognized.
3. Phase 3 is an organizational phase: each station organizes its environment (animation, excursions, etc.). Specializations and competition among stations start and slowly affect the space.
4. Phase 4 tends to be saturation: a pyramid system of hierarchical stations is consolidated, and connectivity of communication channels increases to maximum, recreating the landscapes cluttered with infrastructures that the tourist fled from.

From Miossec's description of his own model it seems pretty clear that the main problems appear after phase 3 (Figure 3.28). The saturation in terms of visitors' number causes this "phénomène quelque peu catastrophique" that happened in Florida, the Costa Brava and the Cote d'Azur (Miossec, 1977, p. 48).

The case studies mentioned by Miossec are furthermore assumed as references by many geographers, tourism scholars and academics. In his book "Géographie du tourisme. De l'espace consommé à l'espace maîtrisé" published in 2003, Jean-Pierre Lozato-Giotart uses some of them to classify regional touristic spaces, distinguishing them between: (i) Riviéras, beaches and lakefronts, (ii) urban spaces, (iii) mountain multipolar and bipolar spaces, (iv) culturally attractive tourist regions. For the purpose of this study and especially for the central study case – the Albanian Riviera, it is important to pay more attention to the first category (Table 3.8).

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

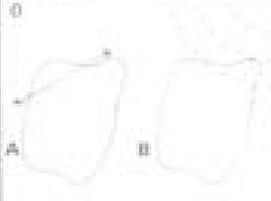
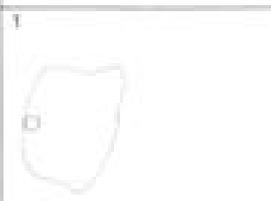
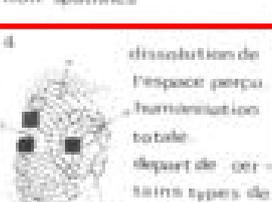
STATIONS	TRANSPORTS	COMPORTEMENTS DES TOURISTES	ATTITUDES DES RESPONSABLES ET DE LA POPULATION DU TERRITOIRE RECEPTEUR
<p>phases</p> <p>0</p>  <p>A B</p> <p>territoire traversé fontain</p>	<p>phases</p> <p>0</p>  <p>A B</p> <p>transit isolement</p>	<p>phases</p> <p>0</p>  <p>?</p> <p>intérêt méconnaissance</p>	<p>phases</p> <p>0</p>  <p>A B</p> <p>stockage refus</p>
<p>1</p>  <p>station pionnière</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>déshébergement</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>perception globale</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>observation</p>
<p>2</p>  <p>multiplication des stations</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>augmentation du trafic relations entre les stations</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>progress dans la perception de lieux et d'itinéraires</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>politique d'infrastructures recyclage des stations</p>
<p>3</p>  <p>organisation de l'espace-vacance de classement. Début de hiérarchie et spécialisation</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>circuits d'excursions</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>compétition et ségré- gation spatiales</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>ségrégation effets de démonstration dualisme</p>
<p>4</p>  <p>hiérarchie - spécialisation saturation</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>connectivité - maximale</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>dissolution de l'espace perçu humanisation totale départ de cer- tains types de touristes formes de substitution situation et crise</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>A B</p> <p>tourisme total plan d'aménagement sauvegarde écologie</p>

Figure 3.28 Essay summarizing the dynamism of the tourist area / Essai de synthèse du dynamisme de l'espace touristique (source: Miossec, 1977)

subcategory	description	example
<b>Multipolar beach regions – dense and diversified</b>	The most traditional tourism. The prototype of Riviera, mainly rocky, where tourism developed “spontaneously” through the extension of existing infrastructures and transformation of maritime facilities in proper touristic ones.	Cote d’Azur, Andalusia and Costa del Sol, Costa de la Luz, Costa Brava, Istrian Riviera, Opatija-Pula-Brjuni Islands Riviera, Liguria
<b>Lake Riviera regions</b>	Similar to the beach region description, but on main lake fronts.	Ginevre, Garda, Costanza, Klagenfurt, Balaton lakes
<b>Specialized and multipolar regions</b>	Extended tourist regions - mainly sandy - which characterized by mass tourism and by the creation <i>ex nihilo</i> of the touristic polarities.	Lido di Venezia, Riviera Romagnola, Algarve
<b>Specialized regions with polar discontinuity</b>	This typology is characterized by alternation of tourist spaces and non-tourist areas.	Languedoc-Rousillon, Tunisian Lido (from Nabeul to Jerba), Canaries, Bahamas, Corsica

Table 3.8 *Rivieras, beaches- and lakefronts category (Lozato-Giotart, 2008:123-130)*

### 3.4.2 **Tourism influence on coastal areas organization (Barbaza, 1970)**

*‘Parmi les critères sur lesquels pourrait se fonder une typologie des implantations touristiques nous retiendrons: 1) le degré d'occupation de espace, et la plus ou moins grande vitalité et diversité des activités, antérieurement a l'intervention du tourisme; 2) le caractère spontané ou volontaire des équipements; 3) le caractère ponctuel ou continu des implantations’ (Barbaza, 1970, p. 448)<sup>6</sup>.*

After her research masterpiece on Costa Brava<sup>7</sup>, geographer Yvette Barbaza compared her main case study with two others in an important essay titled “Trois types d'intervention du tourisme dans l'organisation de l'espace litoral”<sup>8</sup> (Barbaza, 1970). In this text, she categorized the typologies of coastal territorial occupation at the hands of tourism.

<sup>6</sup> Translated from the French: “Among the criteria on which a typology of tourist establishments could be based we will retain: 1) the degree of occupation of space, and the greater or lesser vitality and diversity of activities, prior to the intervention of tourism: 2) the spontaneous or voluntary nature of the equipment; 3) the punctual or continuous nature of the implantations (Barbaza, 1970, p. 448).

<sup>7</sup> Titled “Le paysage humain de la Costa Brava” (in Catalan, “El paisatge humà de la Costa Brava”), resulted of her Doctoral Thesis (1956-1966).

<sup>8</sup> Translated from the French: “Three ways in which the touristic industry can influence the development of coastal regions” (Barbaza, 1970).

Reflecting on a spontaneous tourism phenomenon, she observed that “if it grows very quickly, the equipment is also hasty, disorganized and may jeopardize future tourism potential of the region. In this case it is important to control it and possibly slow it down” (Barbaza, 1970, p. 448). And she also added that if this spontaneous movement does not happen, “ex nihilo, independent, more or less isolated stations” must be created (Barbaza, 1970, p. 449) in order to provoke it.

The three categories by Barbaza (1970) are:

1. The “Costa Brava-Côte d’Azur” Types. Both spontaneous touristic Riviervas with traditional rocky coastline, without hinterland but very specialized, with old harbours and where various traditional activities developed in inhomogeneous ways. There is no territorial unity, the growth of tourism caused considerable landscape and social changes, starting from the end of the area’s isolation;
2. The Romanian-Bulgarian Type, where tourist facilities arrived before the tourists. The construction of big resorts (such as Mamaia and Golden Sands, etc.) is very localised and strictly functional. They are holiday-playgrounds in their purist form and scarcely affect the previous organisation of the territory;
3. The Languedoc-Roussillon Type. A case in which there is the will to develop tourist potential in an extended territory, including the hinterland area in this scope.

#### *3.4.2.1 The continuous and solidary touristic space of Costa Brava*

The first case – the Côte d’Azur is important for its tourist history because it passed from all the development steps. Born as an aristocratic winter destination, the urban agglomeration growth is controlled and restricted in specific areas. The mass tourism arrival (c.1950’s) provoked ‘*the descent of habitat towards the beach and linear occupation of interurban littoral spaces*’ (Barbaza, 1970, p. 449). This obviously strongly affected landscapes, infrastructures and the quality and aesthetics of touristic buildings. In the Costa Brava, the situation is different, because aristocratic tourism never arrived. Girona’s coast only had to face the tourism challenges after World War II, when growth was fast, and it difficult to control due to speculation.

For both cases, this massive and brutal irruption of tourism caused a number of changes, which should have implicated previous organization of space (Figure 3.29). On the Costa Brava:

- Change in the existing habitat: the original dwelling/buildings have been adapted to the new territorial needs (e.g. accommodation and other touristic facilities);
- Increasing the territorial connection network – from the hinterland of Girona to the coastline, has been strongly densified and diversified. While more traditional economic interests and trade were still kept in the axis of Girona-Barcelona, the coastal area found in tourism its new and personal economic main resource, braking the isolation of the area and imposing the modernization of its infrastructure;
- The introduction of a common brand “Costa Brava”, unifying the former Upper and lower Ampurdan region where each town is unique and there is no strong hierarchy in terms of touristic facilities.

*‘Mais, parce que le tourisme est intervenu dans un milieu densément occupé, fortement et diversement humanisé, parce qu’il s’y est intégré sans en détruire l’originalité profonde, parce que malgré les inévitables transferts de mainuvre la pêche, industrie, agriculture y restent actives, cet espace touristique est vivant et divers. Il reste vrai’ (Barbaza, 1970, p. 451).<sup>9</sup>*

Despite the delay in controlling such fast development, the case of the Costa Brava is exemplary because mass tourism did not destroy the local identity nor have any effect on the landscape.

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<sup>9</sup> Translated from the French: “But, nevertheless tourism has intervened in a densely occupied, strongly and variously humanized environment, it has integrated without destroying the deep originality. For example, despite the unavoidable transfers of labor, fishing, industry and agriculture remain there active. This tourist area is alive and diverse. It remains true” (Barbaza, 1970, p. 451).

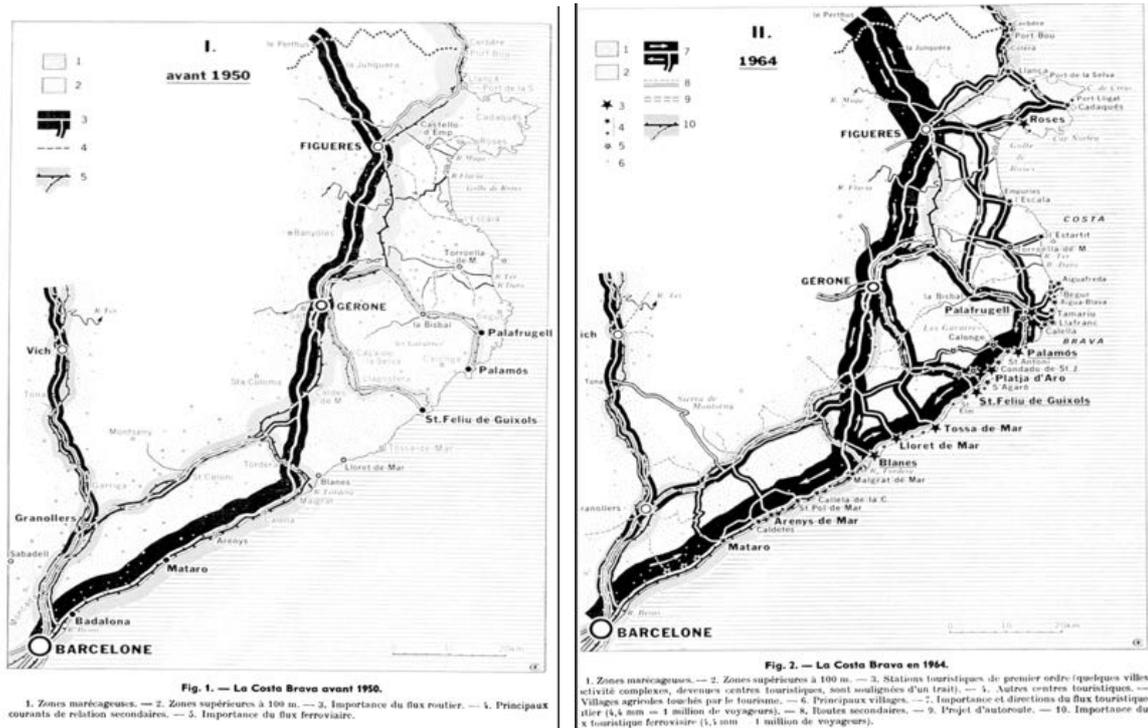


Figure 3.29 Costa Brava before 1950s (left) and in 1964 (right) (source: Barbaza, 1970:452-453)

### 3.4.2.2 The ex nihilo spaces of Romanian and Bulgarian coast

The coastline of Romania and Bulgaria extends from the Danube Delta to the Turkish border, alternating sandy beaches (from Midia to Costanza), 20/30-metre-high cliffs (from Costanza into the whole Bulgarian territory), forested promontories (from Varna to Nessebar) and dark volcanic rocks and fine sand dunes (south of Nessebar all the way to the border).

Until World War I, tourism in this area was very light, such as few summer residences appearing in c.1900's – such as the one belonging to the Romanian royal family. In 1940 the coast started to change due to the establishment of three main harbours (Costanza, Varna and Bourgas). *'Unlike the Costa Brava, this Black Sea coastal area was not landlocked, but human occupation was quite light outside the cities and left very large spaces available for possible development'* (Barbaza, 1970, p. 454).

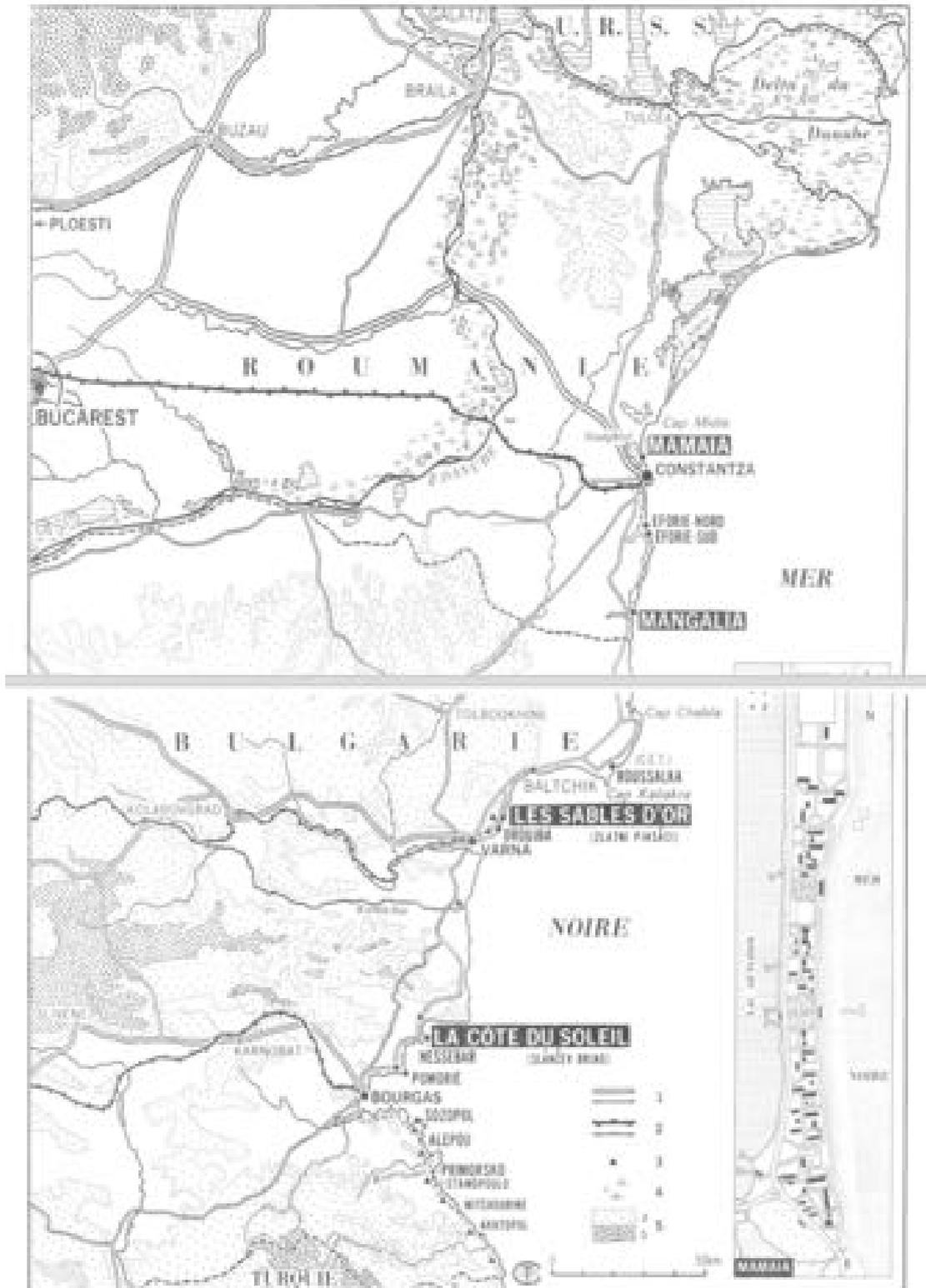


Fig. 3. — La côte bulgare et roumaine.

1. Bâches. — 2. Villes littorales. — 3. Terrains de camping. — 4. Zone touristique. — 5. Zone touristique (a) de 200 à 300 m. (b) au dessus de 300 m. (Plan de Sibiu) (c). Agence de voyage des chemins de fer roumains. — 2. Agence de l'Office national de tourisme.

Figure 3.30 The Bulgarian and Romanian coast (source: Barbaza, 1970: 456-457)

After WWII, with the establishment of the Popular Republics, the land became property of the State which then started the construction of enormous tourist complexes. The process of "touristification" was the complete opposite to other international cases, since the decision to build such facilities dated back to before the arrival of mass tourism. The tourist stations of Zlatni Pjasaci and Slancev Brjag (Bulgaria), Mamaia and Mangalia (Romania) were built ex-nihilo on virgin territory (Barbaza, 1970, p. 455). The results were remarkable. Places for around 25'000 bed were built and in the following years the number of international tourists increased enormously.

*'Sur le littoral en tout cas, la séparation des fonctions est totale. Les stations sont exclusivement, rigoureusement touristiques. Toutes les autres activités sont restées l'apanage des villes et villages sur lesquels, en revanche, le tourisme n'a guère de prise. [...] Toutes les fonctions urbaines: administratives, tertiaires, industrielles sont restées concentrées dans les trois grands ports: Constantza Varna, Bourga. [...] Leur rôle dans l'organisation de l'espace littoral est renforcé par le tourisme dans la mesure où toutes les routes principales, les voies ferrées, les lignes aériennes et maritimes y aboutissent, de sorte qu'ils jouent le rôle de plaques tournantes concentrant et redistribuant les flux touristiques' (Barbaza, 1970, p. 459).<sup>10</sup>*

The link between those hubs is not based on solidarity nor complementarity (like on the Costa Brava), but on dependence. There is no continuous touristic space, but a discontinuous system which is empty in winter and overcrowded in summer (Barbaza, 1970, p. 460).

#### 3.4.2.3 *Languedoc-Roussillon: the space in continuous development*

The Languedoc coast has two main factors attracting tourism: sun and sand (160km of endless sandy beaches). The rest of the territory was characterized by small stations on the ancient Via Domitia. While the two "sister" coasts – Costa Brava and Côte d'Azur, were living the golden age of tourism, this area was strongly underperforming. The reasons lie on technical issues: the presence of stagnant water (lagoons) densely populated with mosquitos, strong and violent winds from the north-west and the monotony of flat-sandy landscapes. None of them could have been solved by private investors, and

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<sup>10</sup> Translated from the French: "In any case on the coast, the separation of functions is total. The resorts are exclusively, strictly for tourists. All other activities remained under control of towns and villages where, on the other hand, tourism has little effect. [...] All the other urban functions (administration, tertiary sector and industries) stayed in the three main ports: Costanza, Varna and Bourga. [...] Their role in the organization of the coastal area is reinforced by tourism since all the main roads, railways, airlines and shipping lines end up there, so that they play the role of hubs concentrating and redistributing tourist flows." (Barbaza, 1970, p. 459)

much less by small local authorities. In 1963, the Mission Racine (also known as "Mission interministérielle d'aménagement touristique du littoral"<sup>11</sup>) was established by the French State in order to reproduce the best practices of the Romanian-Bulgarian coast, but obviously with different means and objectives, as an act of "voluntary geography" (Barbaza, 1970, p. 462).

*'Par ses moyens en raison des différences de régimes politiques et de systèmes économiques. Les contraintes foncières et les problèmes de rentabilité court terme freinent l'entreprise languedocienne malgré l'importance des interventions prises en compte par l'Etat où la lenteur relative des réalisations. Par ses objectifs une part en effet le projet prévoit non l'implantation d'une ou plusieurs stations indépendantes les unes des autres, mais l'aménagement global, en une seule opération, d'un espace continu couvrant ensemble du littoral languedocien et roussillonnais et intégrant les agglomérations existantes' (Barbaza, 1970, p. 462).<sup>12</sup>*



Fig. 14. Política territorial que determinó las ZAD y DUP en la costa de Languedoc-Roussillon.  
Fuente: Aménagement touristique du littoral Languedoc-Roussillon. Techniques et Architecture, 1969, n° 2, série 31, novembre.

Figure 3.31 The littoral of Languedoc-Roussillon (source: Pié & Rosa, 2013:222)

<sup>11</sup> Translated from the French: "Interministerial mission of coastal touristic development".

<sup>12</sup> Translated from the French: "By its means because of differences in political regimes and economic systems. Land constraints and short-term profitability problems are holding back the Languedoc firm, despite the importance of the interventions taken into account by the state, where the relative slowness of the projects. By its objectives one part indeed the project envisages not implanting one or more stations independent of each other, but global arrangement, in a single operation, of a continuous space covering the whole of the Languedoc and Roussillois littoral and integrating the existing agglomerations". (Barbaza, 1970, p. 462)

The application of Mission Racine was made possible thanks to the application of different strategies. The monotony of the landscapes was interrupted with the reinforcement of every single existing centre in accordance to their own territorial characteristics and history and strongly connecting them with the immediate hinterland. Mosquitos control was also possible through disinfestation.

The innovation introduced by said strategy is mostly related to infrastructural development, based on the highway system. The creation of a parallel axis to the shoreline, in order to ensure peace and tranquillity of tourist areas, was integrated and supported by secondary roads so as to facilitate access to each station and its integration with the hinterland.

#### 3.4.2.4 Summary of the three models

<b>Case</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
<b>Costa Brava</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of touristic space;</li> <li>• Preservation of the local identities;</li> <li>• Improvement of infrastructures;</li> <li>• Strong connection with the hinterland;</li> <li>• Common touristic brand.</li> </ul>
<b>Romanian-Bulgarian coast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discontinuous touristic space with stations created ex-nihilo;</li> <li>• Public investment (facilitated by the establishment of the Popular Republic and the lack of private property);</li> <li>• Dependent relationships between the stations.</li> </ul>
<b>Languedoc-Roussillon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous touristic space with stations created ex-nihilo;</li> <li>• Public-Private investment system, regulated by the a strategy (Mission Racine, 1963);</li> <li>• Hierarchical infrastructural system with a main road parallel to the shoreline and secondary roads to access the stations;</li> <li>• Strong connection with the hinterland;</li> <li>• Creation of buffer areas between the stations.</li> </ul>

*Table 3.9 Summary table of the three models presented by Barbaza, 1970 (source: author)*



## **4 Albanian tourism: a new Geography, History and Economy**

This chapter is focused on the creation of a solid framework and state of art regarding tourism development in Albania. Three main analyses have been conducted and each one answers a specific research question; tourism geography, tourism history and policies, and the economic impact of tourism.

First of all, to forecast growth opportunities, Albania is considered part of a system, the Balkan Peninsula, since it is hard to restrict tourist flux analyses within national borders. The main objective of first part is to revise the 'Touristic peripheries' theory by Turner and Ash (1975) and focus on the role of the entire Balkans. Through updating the data used by geographers (Vera, et al. 1997) it has been possible to redraw the contemporary touristic peripheries and to understand the role of Albania in the world panorama.

The second analysis (paragraph 4.2) aims to retell the history of Albanian tourism, through literature review and desk research of articles, laws, travel guides and every typology of touristic literature available. The creation of a timeline of events, accompanied by images and policies adopted, tries to define the typologies of tourism promoted over the last centuries. This allows to understand the present-day situation and provide tools for understanding the country's non-linear touristic development.

The last paragraph (4.3) of the chapter deals with an economic regional comparative analysis of the country aiming to better profile areas with more potential but also higher risks. This analysis has been fundamental to define the study area of the dissertation – the Albanian Riviera.

#### **4.1 Are the Balkans in the (new touristic) Mediterranean?**

*What is the position of the Balkans and specifically Albania on the touristic worldwide panorama?*

In 1975, Turner and Ash introduced the concept of "Pleasure Periphery", defining it as a *'tourist belt surrounding the great industrialized zones of the world'* (Turner & Ash, 1975, p. 11). Those Pleasure Peripheries are continuously subject to transformations and *'remain fundamentally unstable'* (Huggan, 2001, p. 195) due to their strict relationship to societal development. The definition of Pleasure Peripheries has been furthermore discussed and evolved by Erdmann Gormsen (1981 and then 1997), who converted the word "pleasure" into "touristic" peripheries and defined the three areas that were then to be named by Vera et al (1997) as the "three touristic Mediterraneans": Caribbean and Hawaii, Mediterranean coasts and South-East Asia.

According to Huggan (2001), as each individual periphery spreads, the various peripheries begin to merge, coalescing into *'one giant, global Pleasure Periphery, there the world's richest relax and intermingle'* (Turner & Ash, 1975, p. 12). This last utopian provocation has to be contextualized into a critical interpretation that the authors want to provide about contemporary society.



*Figure 4.1 The "new" unique Mediterraneansource (source: author)*

Through a data update of the categories used by Vera, Lopez Palomeque, Marchena, & Anton (1997), which are (i) time, (ii) space and (iii) income, it is possible to re-define the new tourist emitting and receiving regions. This methodology allows the re-drawing of the boundaries of this so-called new touristic Mediterranean, a unique "giant Pleasure Periphery", connecting the the real Mediterranean coastline to south-east Asia, passing through the Balkans to Arabic peninsulas and India. This section aims to project Albania on the global touristic panorama.

#### **4.1.1 From the old to the new Mediterraneans: introduction**

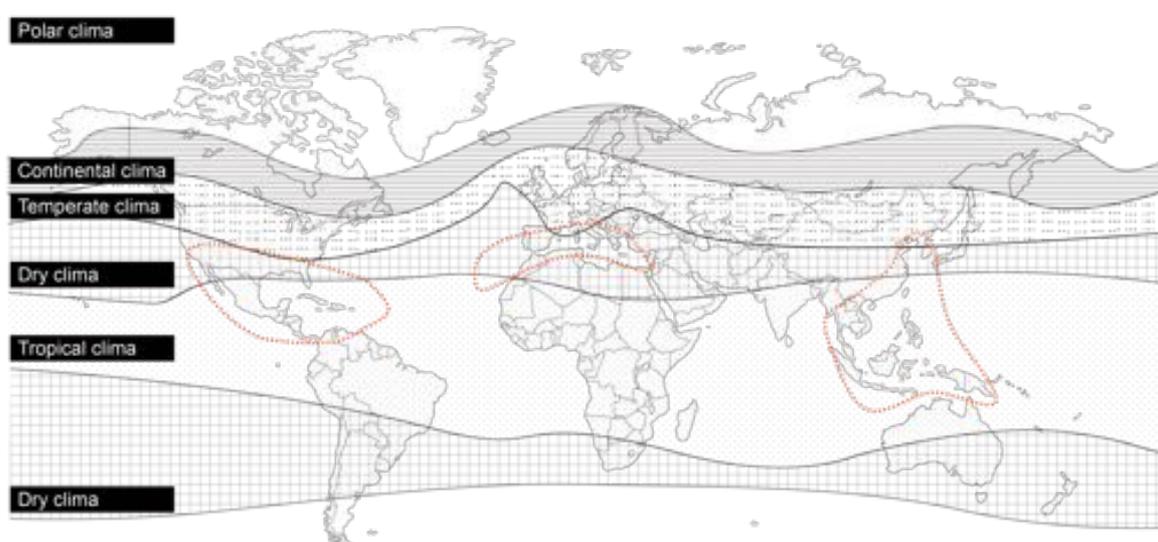


Figure 4.2 *The three Mediterraneans* (source: author, based on Burton 1991, Gormsen 1997, Vera et al 1997, Rullán 2008)

*'El turismo de masa ha colocado a la producción turística como uno de los negocios mas importantes y de mayor crecimiento sostenido en los últimos treinta años, diseñándose una geografía turística donde las áreas con mayor nivel de renta, una moneda mas fuerte en su tipo de cambio y las necesidades de ocio, por ejemplo, se relacionadas con su condiciones climáticas (la búsqueda de litoral y sol), se convierten como decimos en emisoras de turistas y los espacios con características complementares, en receptoras. Especialmente los tres grandes "mediterráneos turísticos": el Mediterráneo propiamente dicho, el Caribe y el sudeste Asiático' (Vera, et al., 1997, p. 8)<sup>13</sup>.*

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<sup>13</sup> Translated from the Spanish: "Mass tourism placed tourism production as one of the most important and fastest growing businesses of the last thirty years, designing a tourism geography where areas with the higher incomes, a stronger currency in its exchange rate and the needs of leisure, for example, are related to their climatic conditions (the research for sea and sun), becoming touristic emitting regions, while the ones with complementary features work as receiving regions. Especially the three "touristic Mediterraneans": the Mediterranean itself, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia" (Vera, et al., 1997, p. 8).

In 1997, the geographers Vera *et al* (1997) defined the three areas considered the most touristic attractive ones in the book “Análisis territorial del turismo”, due to many favourable conditions, such as weather and climate, and named them “the three big touristic Mediterraneans”. Figure 4.2 shows the “Mediterraneans” location and their climate zones, based on Burton (1991)<sup>14</sup>. The analysis considered the socio-economic factors connecting the tourist emitting regions – where tourists come from - and the receiving ones – where they go to. Those factors belong to social, technological, economic and political frameworks.

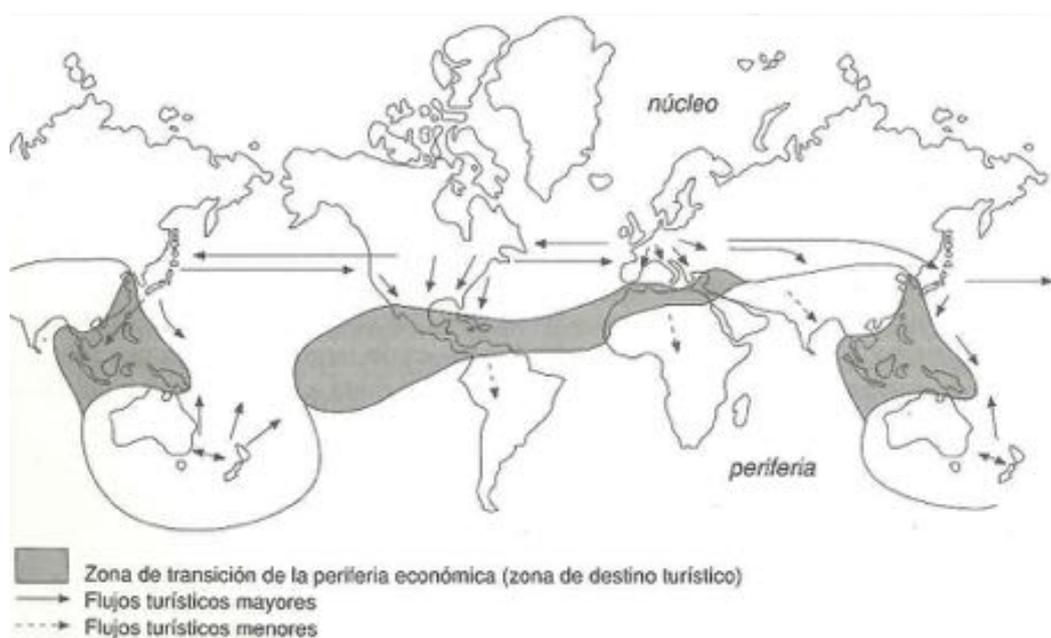


Figure 4.3 “Nucleon-periphery” world touristic regions according to Burton, 1991 (source: (Vera *et al*, 1997: 74)

According to Vera, *et al.* (1997), there are four main key-factors of touristic development, these being:

1. The first is the “time conquest”, meaning the moment in which the labour market recognized the right of paid holidays. In most industrialized countries, this happened in between the two World Wars;

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<sup>14</sup> The climatic features in the definition of touristic areas assume a fundamental role. In addition, it has been used a reference contemporary to Vera’s publication– Burton, 1991.

2. The “space conquest” occurred with the technological development of mass transportation and the diffusion of cars. Reducing travel times and distances, the possible touristic destinations increased tremendously.

While both factors are more internationally related, the following two are strictly related to the single country economic development.

3. The third factor is “income and touristic consumption capability” that was - and still is - higher in industrialized countries;
4. The last one is the more social-cultural factor and is connected to the transformation of tourism into a basic need.

From this time on, tourism is no longer a marginal activity, but is now a structural part for society development. Although such factors have a well-defined start date, their relationship to the dynamic aspects of contemporary society - such as the economy and habits – causes their continuous transformation. In order to verify whether the previously mentioned areas are still as attractive as two decades ago, new data has been considered, integrated and analysed.

<b>Touristic development factors (Vera, et al, 1997)</b>	<b>Additional data</b>	<b>Sources</b>
<b>1. Time conquest</b>	A. Average annual leave (2012)	Ghosheh (2013)
<b>2. Space conquest</b>	B. Number of departures C. Number of arrivals (2015) D. Flights connections (2017)	<a href="http://www.data.worldbank.org">www.data.worldbank.org</a> ; <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/">www.theguardian.com/</a>
<b>3. Incomes and touristic consumption capability</b>	E. GDP pro capita (2015)	<a href="http://www.data.worldbank.org">www.data.worldbank.org</a>

*Table 4.1 The table shows the factors mentioned in (Vera et al, 1997) and the new data and sources used to update them (source: author)*

These five additional figures aim to define both the new tourist emitting and receiving regions (Table 4.1). The purpose of this analysis is to draw touristic macro-areas and compare them with Vera’s in order to verify their dynamism.

Vera’s final factor mentioned in the book – “the transformation of tourism into a basic need” – has been discussed enough in the previous chapter of this dissertation. The transformation of tourism into a need is considered an already complete process, although we are still far from saying that everybody has the means or chance to go on holidays.

#### 4.1.2 Touristic emitting regions

In defining the touristic emitting regions, some additional factors must be considered and are:

1. Average annual leave – the time tourists have to spend on holidays;
2. Number of departures – the possibility of travelling deriving from the number of connections available;
3. Flights connections – the possibility of travelling due to infrastructure;
4. GDP per capita – the economic possibilities to invest in holidays.

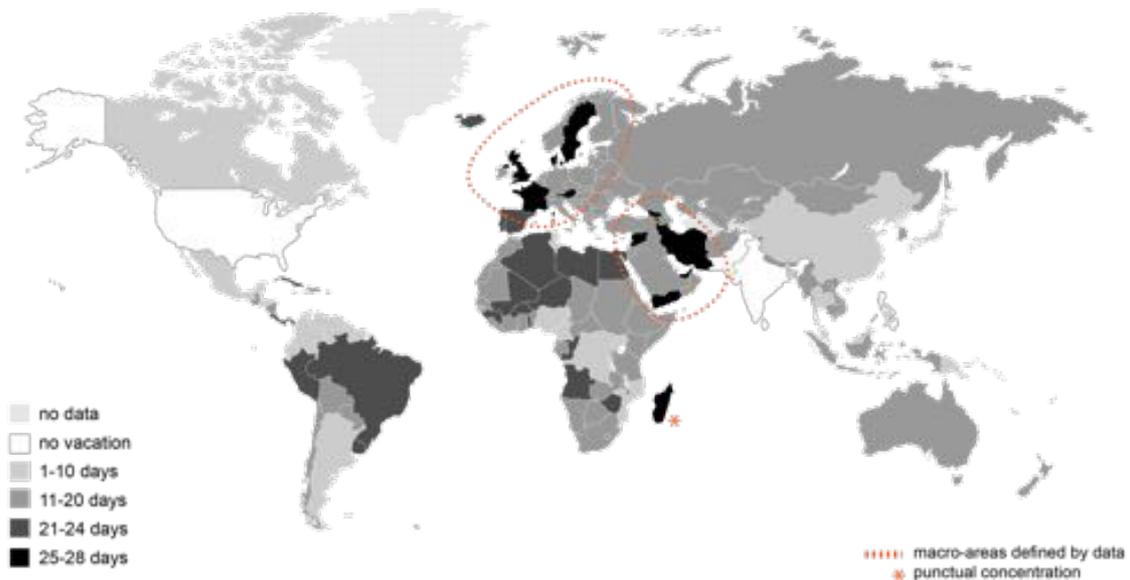


Figure 4.4 Average Annual Leave in 2012 by country (source: author, based on Ghosheh, 2013)

The time availability deriving from the time conquest is a must for any tourist. Figure 4.4 shows the two areas with the highest rate of paid holidays: (i) the Arabian Peninsula<sup>15</sup> with the UAE and Yemen (30 days/y), Iran, Syria and Kuwait (25 days/y); (ii) Northern Europe including the UK (28 days/y) followed by Austria, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Sweden (25 days/y). In addition, there are other isolated countries such as Comoros, Djibouti, Libya and Madagascar (25days/y).

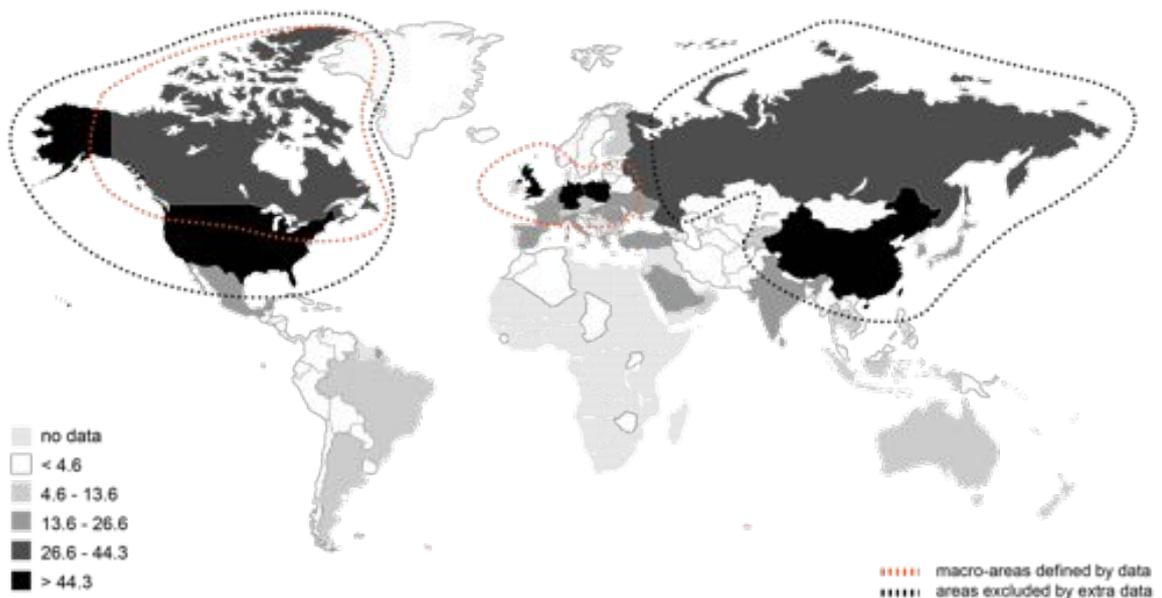
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<sup>15</sup> Extended to the surroundings.

But the average annual leave data cannot be considered alone due to the following consideration:

1. There are countries like India, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka with no universal legislation;
2. The USA has no universal national entitlement and is hence excluded from this map, despite its fundamental role in world economic mechanisms.

When addressing the issue of number of departures in 2015 (Figure 4.5), at first it appears there is a limitation in the touristic data analysis. The three areas individualised are: (i) North America and Canada, (ii) Northern Europe including the UK, Germany and Poland and (iii) China.



*Figure 4.5 Number of departures in 2015 by country (source: author, based on [www.data.worldbank.org](http://www.data.worldbank.org) [accessed in May 2017])*

Country	Departures	Population	Travel Rate	Ranking
<b>China</b>	116.886.000,00	1.371.000.000,00	0,09	7
<b>Germany</b>	83.737.000,00	81.680.000,00	1,03	2
<b>USA</b>	73.454.000,00	321.418.000,00	0,23	6
<b>UK</b>	65.720.000,00	65.129.000,00	1,01	3
<b>Poland</b>	44.300.000,00	37.986.000,00	1,17	1
<b>Russian Federation</b>	34.550.000,00	114.096.870,00	0,30	5
<b>Canada</b>	32.267.000,00	35.848.000,00	0,90	4

Table 4.2 Number of departures in 2015 by country and travel rate, where in red the countries that will be further excluded in this analysis figure (source: author, based on [www.data.worldbank.org](http://www.data.worldbank.org) [accessed in May 2017])

The number of departures is directly proportional to the population, but this has nothing to do with the percentage of access to tourism and leisure activities. In fact, if we relate the number of departures with the population (Table 4.2), countries like China and the USA fall to the bottom of the list while Poland, Germany and the UK confirmed their fundamental role as tourist emitting countries. For their low travel rating China, the USA and Russian Federation are shown in black.



Figure 4.6 Flights connections in 2014 (source: author, based on [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com) [accessed in May 2017])

The number of flight connections increases daily and determines four different areas (Figure 4.6): (i) the USA, Mexico and the Caribbean, (ii) Mediterranean and Arabic Peninsula, (iii) South-East Asia and (iv) Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Airport</b>	<b>No. of passengers</b>
1	Atlanta, Georgia, US1 (ATL)	104,171,935
2	Beijing, CN1 (PEK)	94,393,454
3	Dubai, AE (DXB)	83,654,250
4	Los Angeles, California, US2 (LAX)	80,921,527
5	Ōta, Tokyo, JP (HDR)	79,699,762
6	Chicago, Illinois, US3 (ORD)	78,327,479
7	London (LHR)	75,715,474
8	Hong Kong, HK (HKG)	70,314,462
9	Shanghai, CN2 (PVG)	66,002,414
10	Paris, FR (CDG)	65,933,145
11	Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, US4 (DFW)	65,670,697
12	Amsterdam, NL (AMS)	63,625,534
13	Frankfurt, DE (FRA)	60,786,937
14	Istanbul, TR (IST)	60,248,741
15	Guangzhou, CN3 (CAN)	59,732,147
16	New York, US5 (JFK)	58,813,103
17	Singapore, SG (SIN)	58,698,000
18	Denver, Colorado, US6 (DEN)	58,266,515
19	Incheon, KR (ICN)	57,849,814
20	Bang Phli, Samut Prakan, TH) (BKK)	55,892,428

*Table 4.3 TOP20 airports by passengers' traffic in 2016 (source: author, based on ACI Airports Council International, 2016)*

To verify this hypothesis airport traffic was taken into consideration. Table 4.3 shows the number of passengers in the top 20 airports worldwide, six of them lie in the USA and three in China and have the highest number of domestic flights. It is necessary to differentiate domestic and international traffic. The next table shows the TOP20 airports according to international passenger traffic.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Airport</b>	<b>International Passengers</b>
1	Dubai, AE (DXB)	77 453 466
2	London, GB (LHR)	69 816 491
3	Hong Kong, HK (HKG)	68 139 897
4	Paris, FR (CDG)	60 369 798
5	Amsterdam, NL (AMS)	58 245 545
6	Singapore, SG (SIN)	54 835 000
7	Frankfurt, DE (FRA)	53 994 154
8	Incheon, KR (ICN)	48 720 319
9	Bangkok, TH (BKK)	43 251 807
10	Istanbul, TR (IST)	42 302 859
11	Taipei, TW (TPE)	38 103 889
12	London, GB (LGW)	36 667 769

13	Kuala Lumpur, MY (KUL)	34 434 015
14	Madrid, ES (MAD)	33 787 171
15	Munich, DE (MUC)	31 313 329
16	Doha, QA (DOH)	30 906 303
17	Tokyo, JP (NRT)	30 547 564
18	New York, US (JFK)	30 017 244
19	Barcelona, ES (BCN)	29 077 820
20	Rome, IT (FCO)	28 280 267

Table 4.4 TOP20 airports by international passengers' traffic in 2015, in green the airports that appear also in the previous table (source: author, based on [www.aci.aero/Data-Centre/Monthly-Traffic-Data/International-Passenger-Rankings](http://www.aci.aero/Data-Centre/Monthly-Traffic-Data/International-Passenger-Rankings))

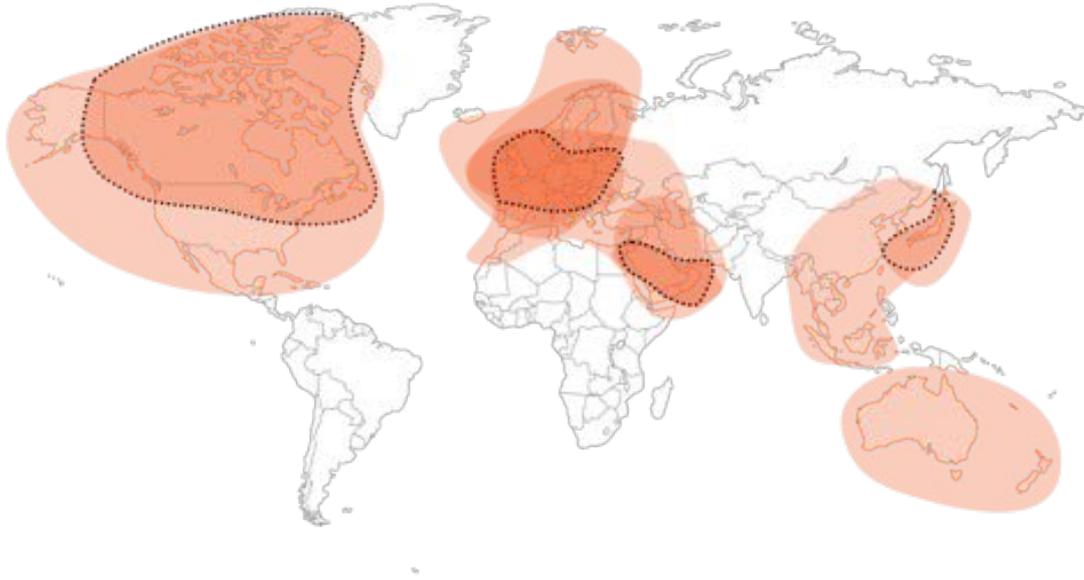
Comparing international passenger numbers with the previous table about airport traffic it is notable how the first two airports, by traffic – Atlanta and Beijing – completely disappear from the second chart. In Table 4.4, the only American airport is New York's JFK (18<sup>th</sup>) and the first Chinese airport is Shanghai (PVG) ranking 25<sup>th</sup> with 23,384,559 international passengers against the 66,002,414 registered in Table 3. Only a third of the passengers are international, the rest domestic.

As far as tourism is concerned, the only two areas verified with this analysis are the (ii) Mediterranean and Arabic Peninsula and (iii) South-East Asia. While (i) the USA, Mexico and the Caribbean and (iv) Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, are furthermore not considered with the exception of New York City.



Figure 4.7 GDP pro capita in 2015 (source: author, based on [www.data.worldbank.org](http://www.data.worldbank.org) [accessed in May 2017])

The GDP per capita figure shows the five richest macro-areas (Figure 4.7): (i) the USA and Canada, (ii) Northern Europe, (iii) Arabic Peninsula, (iv) Japan and (v) Australia. This data is important to verify the "tourist consumption capability". Three of those areas, (i), (ii), (iii), already appeared in the previous figures, while Australia and Japan appear here for the first time.



*Figure 4.8 The contemporary Touristic Emitting Regions (source: author)*

The overlapping of the previous four figures (Figure 4.4 to Figure 4.7) defines four macro-areas - the tourist emitting regions: (i) Northern Europe and the UK, (ii) Arabic Peninsula, (iii) Canada and (iv) Japan. Those areas have also different importance according to the number of overlapping layers they resulted from (see Table 4.5).

<b>Macro-area</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>(i) Northern Europe and UK</b>	This area appears in the four analysed categories, recording the highest annual leave average (Scandinavian countries, the UK, France and Austria), the highest number of departures (the UK, Germany and Poland), a high concentration of airports ranking well on the international passengers' chart (6 in the TOP20). In addition, GDP per capita is over average.
<b>(ii) Arabic Peninsula</b>	The Arabic Peninsula records more than average annual leave and GDP per capita, although neither are homogeneously spread through the territory. The region stands for its connections, ranking first due to the over-performing Dubai airport (1°) and Doha (16°). The number of departures is still low.

<b>(iii) Canada</b>	Canada ranks high due to the GDP per capita and a high number of departures. Those conditions allow it to perform well concerning emission of touristic fluxes, though the flights connections are under-average with no airports in the top ones.
<b>(iv) Japan</b>	Japan ranks well due to the GDP per capita and its high number of connections. Tokyo airport ranks 17°, before New York and Barcelona. The good performance of Japan and the growing network of international airports (7 in the TOP20) allow us to forecast the region's extension to the whole of South East Asia over the following years.

Table 4.5 Resume of emitting regions and their descriptions (source: author)

### 4.1.3 Tourist receiving regions

To define tourist receiving regions, additional factors to be considered are:

1. Number of arrivals – the possibility of travelling deriving from the number of available connections;
2. Flights connections – the possibility of travelling due to infrastructure.



Figure 4.9 Number of arrivals in 2015 (source: author, based on [www.data.worldbank.org](http://www.data.worldbank.org) [accessed in May 2017])

The case of arrivals data is similar to that of departures in terms of reliability. The two macro-areas individualised are: (i) North America and Mexico, (ii) the central-southern Europe, the Russian Federation and South East Asia. Since the touristic flux considered is

incoming, it is not possible to apply the “Travel Rate” –previously used to narrow down areas. In order to better define such areas, we must overlap it with the figure for flight connections (Figure 4.10), but when it comes to tracing the tourist receiving regions, Figure 4.9 needs an additional update. The areas proposed show which airports are crossed the most, though to understand in which direction tourism is moving, it is worth considering where tourists stop. For this reason, the figure is updated with the data on the number of international overnight visitors in 2016 (Hedrick-Wong & Choong, 2016).

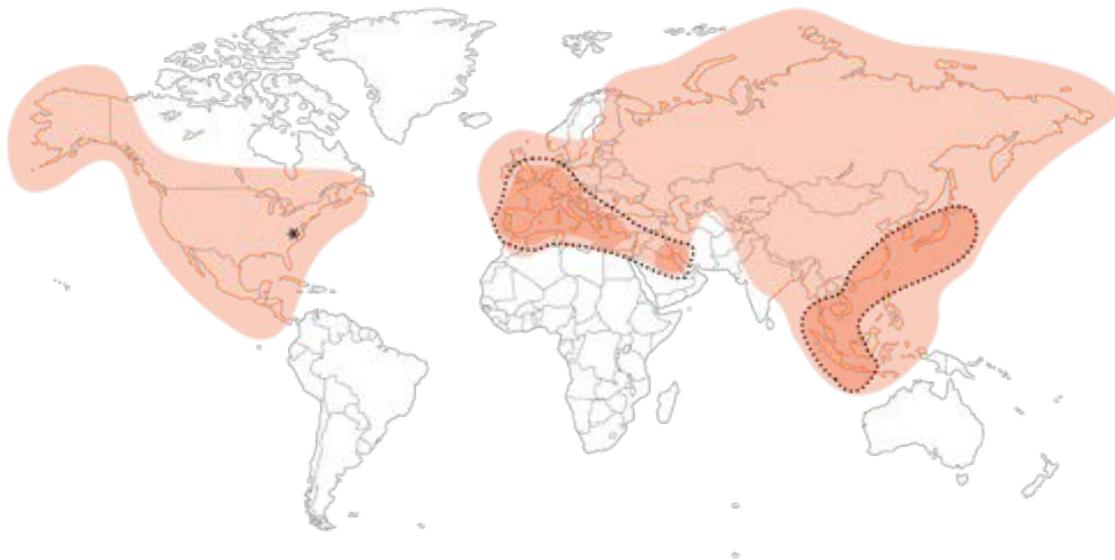
<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Visitors in mn</b>
1	Bangkok	21.47
2	London	19.88
3	Paris	18.03
4	Dubai	15.27
5	New York	12.75
6	Singapore	12.11
7	Kuala Lumpur	12.02
8	Instabul	11.95
9	Tokyo	11.70
10	Seoul	10.20
11	Hong Kong	8.37
12	Barcelona	8.20
13	Amsterdam	8.00
14	Milan	7.65
15	Taipei	7.35
16	Rome	7.12
17	Osaka	7.02
18	Vienna	6.69
19	Shangai	6.12
20	Prague	5.81

*Table 4.6 TOP20 cities by international overnight visitors in 2016 (source: author, based on Hedrick-Wong & Choong, 2016)*

This integration led to the definition of two macro-areas, definitely narrower than the one traced by the *Number of arrivals*' Figure: (i) South East Asia with 9 airports lying in its territory, (ii) Europe with 9 and the two cases of (iii) Dubai and (iv) New York. Comparing table 4 (Airports by international passengers) and table 5 (Cities by international overnight visitors), it can be concluded that there are cities like Frankfurt, Munich, Madrid and Doha that are fundamental airport scales, but still not considerable tourist cities. This emphasizes the need to crosscheck data.



*Figure 4.10 Flights connections in 2014, integrated with Table 5's data (source: author, based on [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com) [accessed in May 2017])*



*Figure 4.11 The contemporary tourist receiving regions (source: author)*

The two main areas left standing from the overlapping of the two data layers are: (i) South East Asia and (ii) Southern Europe and Arabic Peninsula (Figure 4.11). Those two macro-regions stand for the incredibly high concentration of international airports and overnight visitors.

Macro-area	Description
<b>(i) South East Asia</b>	With a network of 9 airports, the South East Asia confirms its first position as touristic receiving region.
<b>(ii) South Europe and Arabic Peninsula</b>	This macro-area includes the most touristic countries in the world such as France, Spain and Italy, with two rising touristic destination like Turkey and Greece. The Arabic Peninsula has been included in this area, due to the presence of the over-performing Dubai airport and the strong connection it has with European countries.

Table 4.7 Resume of receiving regions and their descriptions (source: author)

#### 4.1.4 Going to a uniquely touristic Mediterranean

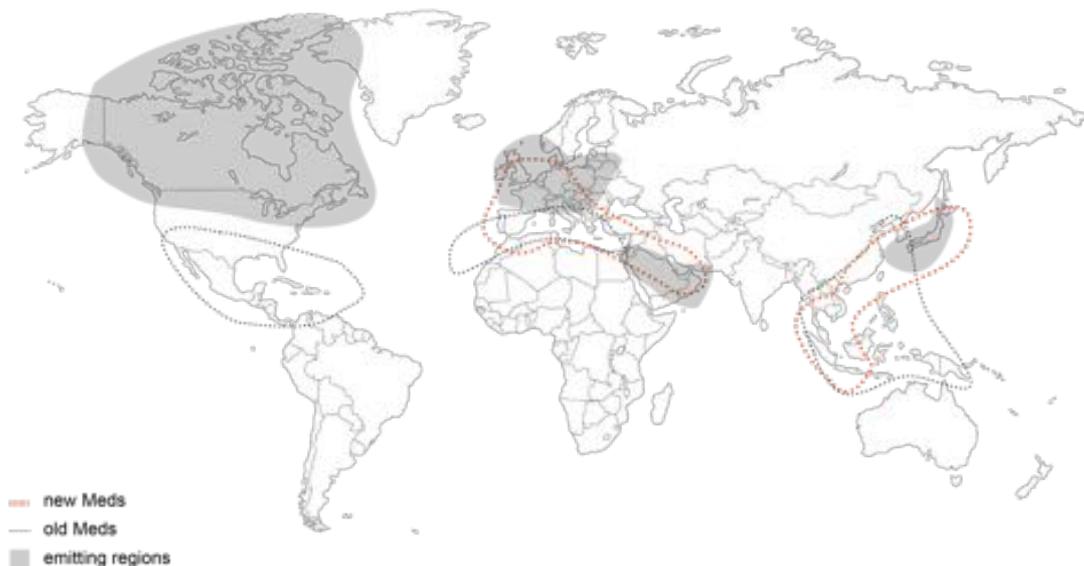
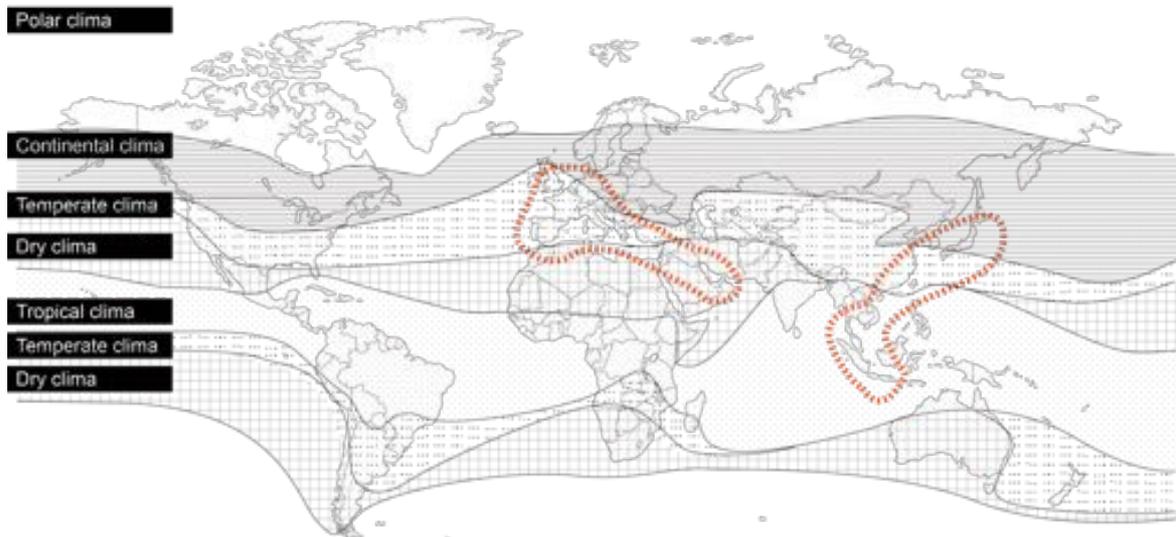


Figure 4.12 The new Mediterraneans (source: author)

The new Mediterraneans have now been retraced and it is possible to summarize some previous conclusions (Figure 4.12):

1. The number of Mediterraneans decreased from 3 to 2. The areas described by (Gormsen, 1981) confirmed are (i) the Mediterranean area and (ii) South East Asia;
2. The third Mediterranean – the Caribbean – slowly disappeared;
3. Due to the data analysed, it is worthy that the tourist market is moving more and more to the East.



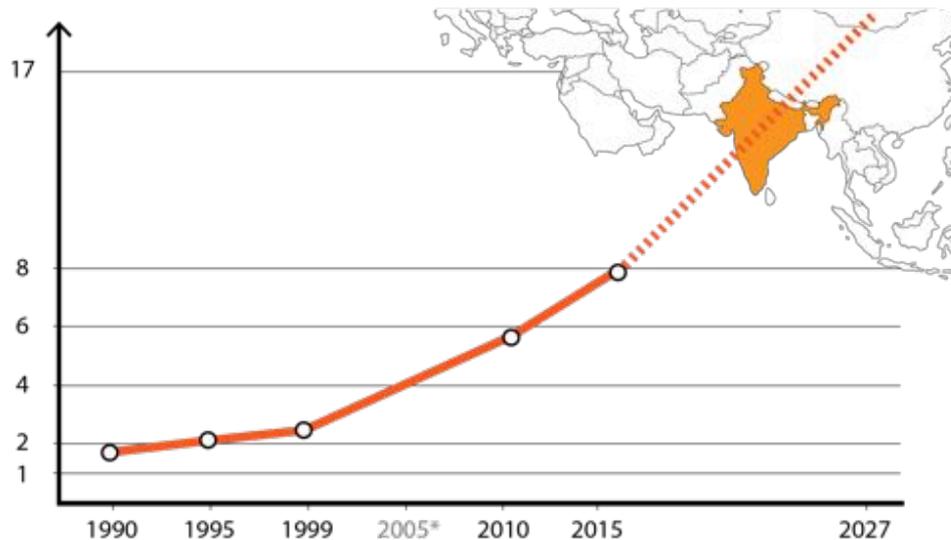
*Figure 4.13 The new Mediterraneans with clime (source: author)*

In order to complete the study framework, it is also worth defining the climate areas the new Mediterraneans belong to (Figure 4.13). The comparison with Burton's classification of climate area reported by Vera, et al. (1997, p. 74) provides a further opportunity for reflection. Gormsen's Mediterraneans were lying more towards the tropics (Caribe and Southeast Asia) and dry climate (the Mediterranean). The areas individualised by this study lie more towards temperate and dry zones, emphasizing the strict relationship between tourism and climate change.



*Figure 4.14 The new unique Mediterranean (source: author)*

Furthermore, observing the two new Mediterraneans retraced in this study, it can be supposed, basing on their evolution trend, they will join in a unique Mediterranean. The joining point is the South Asia, especially India (Figure 4.14). According to different UNWTO and WTTC reports (UNWTO, 2000) (UNWTO, 2017) (WTTC, 2017), India is in a constant growth and positively performing from a touristic point of view (Figure 4.15).



*Figure 4.15 India's touristic performance (source: author, based on UNWTO 2000, UNWTO 2016, WTTC 2017)*

The birth of a unique "Mediterranean" joining the European Mediterranean countries with South East Asia - passing through the Arabic Peninsula and the Southern Asia region - shows a radical change. This shift to the east strongly affects the tourism's prospective future, creating a new touristic axis in which the Balkan region is included and represents, together with the Arabic Peninsula, the connection between East and the West.

## **4.2 From the Grand Tour to social media: the history of Albanian Tourism**

*What are the tourism policies and tourism typologies promoted by Albanian Governments in the last century? In what way did they affect the territory and landscapes?*

The research question of this section regards the evolution of tourism in Albania in terms of policies adopted by local governments, typologies of tourism promoted, and the touristic images built and sold abroad during different periods in history. This information finds a direct 'functional translation' on the territory. In fact, the impact of tourism on the

landscape during different historical phases is measurable in terms of accommodation, facilities and infrastructure.

Although the numbers are not comparable with other Mediterranean neighbouring countries like Greece, Italy and later Croatia and Montenegro, Albania has always been a tourist destination. The absence of any structured literature about tourism in Albania represented an obstacle, but with an in-depth literature review that includes a number of different sources such as newspapers articles, travel journals and guides, official documents and with in situ interviews with experts it has been possible to retrace the main phases of touristic development of the last century and provide a structured framework for future studies. The information collected is chronologically presented and visually organized in form of a timeline in this paragraph and, integrates historical, social, economic and touristic happenings. The methodology of the timeline allows overlapping different topics (e.g. economic, infrastructural, social, historical), focusing on the identification of events affecting the tourism evolution.

The attractiveness of this region was strongly influenced by the marks of the first travellers who came across them. 'Not by chance at the end of the nineteenth century, Bram Stoker would choose them as the setting for his Dracula' (Jimenez, 2016). The different periods' image comparison shows that Albania has always been promoted for its natural landscapes and cultural heritage, emphasising its spotlessness. Although the purpose was the same, the methods and policies adopted were varied, causing different impacts.

Six phases have been identified:

1. The Grand Tour era (1800s – 1920s)
2. King Zog I and western tourism policies (1925-1939)
3. Tourism during the Italians "soft" invasion (1939-1944)
4. Tourism during communism and the case of Albturist (1945-1991)
5. Tourism after the collapse of communism (1991-2000)
6. "Albania, Go Your Own Way": the new Mediterranean destination (2000s – today)



Figure 4.16 Visual timeline of the images used for promoting Albania (source: author, based on Destani 2008, Disho 1937, Albturist 1958, Liebe 1989, R&T Advertising 2015) / (i) Sketches of Kruja' landscape by Edward Lear, 1898. Source: Destani, 2008; (ii) Shoder' bridge picture used to promote tourism during the 30s. Source: Disho, 1937; (iii) Cover of the tourism magazine 'Drini – rivista mensile del turismo albanese', 1942; (iv) Durrës beach in 1960s. Source: Albturist, 1958; (v) Albanian dossier about tourism in the magazine 'Europe', 1989. Source: Liebe, 1989; (vi) Framework of the promotion video 'Albania, go your own way'. Source: R&T Advertising, 2015.

For different historical reasons, the well-known 'sun, sand and sea' tourism model that had transformed most of the Mediterranean coastline has been partially affecting the Albania. Before Communism, the images promoted and strategies adopted have been mostly related to cultural tourism, addressing the fluxes in the main historical, archaeological and artistic inland cities. From the 40's to the 90's in full dictatorship period, the first attempts of replicating the 'sun, sand and sea' model affected the coasts of Durrës and Vlorë, but due to the small number of foreign visitors and the ban on local citizens being near borders and coasts and has never revealed its risks. In these years the brand 'Riviera' has been used for the southern coast, evoking the touristic experiences of Italy, France and Spain, but only by name. With the collapse of the regime and the sudden freedom of movement, the coast was quite literally assaulted in the 90s, with the construction of concrete macro-structures in the main coastal cities of Durrës, Shengjin, Vlorë and Saranda. The poor infrastructure conditions slowed down this process, providing an opportunity for

reflection. Comparing with neighbouring countries, whose coasts are almost completely built on, the Albanian one did not have enough time to be affected.

#### **4.2.1 The Grand Tour era (1800s – 1920s)**

*'Despite being a Mediterranean country very close to Italy and Greece, in the Victorian age Albania apparently attracted neither British travellers nor Thomas Cook tourists'* (Marroni, 2013, p. 89). The few that did write stories, sketches and articles on Albania were Grand Tour travellers, mainly the British, such as Edward Lear and Lord Byron in the 1800's, Harold W. Tilman, Patrick Leigh Fermor and Peter Quennell at the beginning of the 1900's.

The first traveller whose story was reported is François de Poqueville, member of Bonaparte's mission in Egypt, who travelled through Albania and in 1805 published his diary "Voyage en Morée, à Costantinople et en Albanie", before being appointed as French consul in Albania by Ali Pasha (Vietti, 2012). Poqueville described Albanians as:

*'[...] pastori, guerrieri o agricoltori, sobri ed attivi, che si contentavano de' loro viaggi o ne' loro travagli di un po' di farina nell'acqua, o di un po' di riso che fan cuocere nell'acqua, e sembra che il canto, la danza e l'allegria tenga loro luogo in tutto, e li ristori dale fatiche'* (Vietti, 2012: 41).<sup>16</sup>

Lord Byron discussed the Balkans in England in his own diaries (MacCarthy, 2003), describing fascinating and dangerous scenarios. In his famous poem "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" (1812), Byron wrote about a romantic, remote, wild and exciting Albania, but this was not enough to make his colleagues follow the same track (Bhattacharji, 2010). The testimonies of Poqueville and Byron are the last ones of a romantic, solitary and heroic way of travelling and the remainder of a medieval tradition (Leed, 1992).

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<sup>16</sup> This reference has been reported in Italian and published by Vietti (2012: 41). Translated from the Italian: *'[...] shepherds, warriors or farmers, sober and active, who were content with their journeys or in their travails of a little flour in the water, or a little rice that they cook in the water, and it seems that song, dance and joy have place in every moment of their life, and restore them'*.



Figure 4.17 Albanian Riviera landscapes - Dycadhes - sketched by Edward Lear in 1848 (source: Destani, 2008)

Edward Lear was one of the few who provided a sufficiently fond and colourful description of the country. In his famous diaries “Journals of a Landscape Painter in the Balkans”, published in 1851, he used a number of peculiar adjectives for describing Albania such as *‘thwarted, confused, distracted, motley, bewildered, ill-defined, entangled, and perplexing’* (Marroni, 2013, p. 96). This literary description clearly found its graphical expression into the author’s watercolours, in which people are dressed in Ottoman clothes, vegetation is typically Mediterranean, and architecture is a perfect mix of classical and Byzantine.

*‘To the unlearned tourist, indeed, Albania is a puzzle of the highest order. Whatever he may already know of ancient nomenclatures – Epirus, Molossia, Thesprotia, &c. – is thwarted and confused by Turkish divisions and Pashaliks. Beyond these, wheel within wheel, a third set of names distract him in the shape of native tribes and districts – Tchamouriá, Dibra, &c. And no sooner does he begin to understand the motley crowd which inhabits these provinces – Greeks, Slavonians, Albanians, Bulgarians, or Vlachi – than he is anew bewildered by a fresh list of distinctive subsplittings: Liape, Meredithi, Khimáriotes, and Tóskidhes. Race, religions, and national denominations seem so ill-defined or so entangled, that he would give up the perplexing study in despair, were it not for the assistance*

*of many excellent books on the subject, a list of the principal of which is subjoined' (Destani & Elsie, 2008).<sup>17</sup>*

In the introduction of his diary, Lear gave precise instructions about how to travel through Albania, claiming his role as the first traveller to visit it and wrote a report.

*'Per quanto riguarda alcune regioni del sud e dell'interno dell'Albania, ritengo di essere il primo e unico gentiluomo ad averle visitate e averne scritto un resoconto. Si tratta già di qualcosa di importante in questi tempi essere in grado di aggiungere il più piccolo mito di novità al mondo di informazioni e interessi dei viaggiatori (...). Riguardo al miglior modo di viaggiare in Albania, un buon "dragoman", o interprete, è assolutamente necessario, a prescindere da quante lingue si conoscano. Francese, tedesco e italiano sono inutili: bulgaro, albanese, turco e slavo sono richieste in questa Babele. Coloro che non amano consultare i libri e perder tempo nell'organizzazione delle tappe del viaggio, potrebbero trovare conveniente pagare la loro guida una certa somma per giorno, in modo che essa possa provvedere a tutto ciò che serve ogni giorno, cibo, alloggio, servizi. Sarà giusto pagare un pound e mezzo se viaggiate da soli e un pound a persona se viaggiate in due, tre o più. Così ho fatto io, dando un dollaro al giorno alla mia guida per tutte le spese per il cibo, i cavalli, ecc. (...). Prima della partenza, dev'essere assolutamente preparata una notevole scorta di utensili per cucinare, piatti, coltelli, forchette, ecc., i più resistenti possibile (...). Un accendino e un buon rifornimento di coperte non devono essere dimenticate; due o tre libri; un po' di riso, polvere di curry e caienna; tutto l'occorrente per il disegno se amate fare schizzi di ciò che vedete; meno vestiti che potete, tenendo conto che dovrete avere due set di vestiti: uno per le visite ai consoli, "pasha" e dignitari, e l'altro per la vita quotidiana; un po' di chinino in pillole (lasciate a casa qualunque cosa, ma non questo!), un "boyourldi", ossia una lettera di presentazione per governatori e "pasha" e il passaporto provinciale per voi e la vostra guida (...). La semplicità dev'essere il vostro obiettivo. Quando avrete tutte queste cose, che gli italiani chiamano genericamente "roba", chiudetela in due sacche Brobdignagian, unitele con una corda e legatele una per ciascun lato della sella' (Lear 1851, p. XIV).<sup>18</sup>*

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17 This reference is from the "Journals of a Landscape Painter in the Balkans", work of Edward Lear and first published in 1851, and reported in (Destani & Elsie, 2008, pp. xiii-xiv).

18 This citation has been integrally taken from Vietti (2012: 49-50), given the difficulty of finding the original source. Translated from the Italian: 'Concerning some southern and inland regions of Albania, I believe I am the first and only gentleman to have visited them and written a report. In these times, it is important being able to add a small myth of new to the world of information and interests available to travelers [...] Regarding the best way to travel in Albania, a good "dragoman", or interpreter, is absolutely necessary, regardless of how many languages are known. French, German and Italian are useless: Bulgarian, Albanian, Turkish and Slavic are required in this Babel. Those who do not like reading books and wasting time organizing the stages of the trip may find it convenient to pay their guide a certain amount per day, so that he can provide everything you need every day, food, accommodation, services. It will be fair to pay a pound and a half if you are traveling alone and a pound per person if you are traveling in two, three or more. So I did, giving a dollar a day to my guide for all the expenses for food, horses, etc. [...] Before departure, a substantial supply of cooking utensils, plates, knives, forks, etc., must be absolutely prepared, as long as possible [...] A lighter and a good supply of blankets should not be forgotten; two or three books; some rice, curry powder and cayenne; everything you need for the drawing if you love to make sketches of what you see; less clothes than you can, taking into account that you will have to have two sets of clothes: one for visits to the consuls, "pasha" and dignitaries, and the other for daily life; a bit of quinine in pills (leave home anything, but not this!), a "boyourldi", known as

Lear also provides information on accommodation, specifying that there were only two possible choices: being hosted by the “bey”, the Turkish governors of the area, or by the “khanji”, locals appointed by the community for welcoming and hosting foreign travellers.

*‘I viaggi in Albania possono durare a secondo la volontà di chi viaggia; ci sono khan da due a quattro ore di distanza. [...] Un khan è una sorta di albergo diretto da un khanji, di nomina statale, ed è aperto a tutti i viaggiatori. Qualche volta si trova anche il cibo nel khan, qualche volta no, così si deve ricorrere al proprio riso col curry. Nelle grandi città i khan sono edifici di tre lati con un cortile e consistono di due piani: il piano terra è adibito a stalla, quello superiore è diviso in camere che danno su un corridoio di legno che gira tutto attorno al palazzo e a cui si accede tramite scale. Nei distretti poco frequentati, il khan è invece costituito da una singola camera, a una estremità con un pavimento per gli uomini e tutto il resto per le bestie: qualche volta bipedi e quadrupedi sono mischiati insieme. Prima arrivi, meglio alloggi, questa è la regola di queste sistemazioni’ (Lear 1851, p. XVI).<sup>19</sup>*



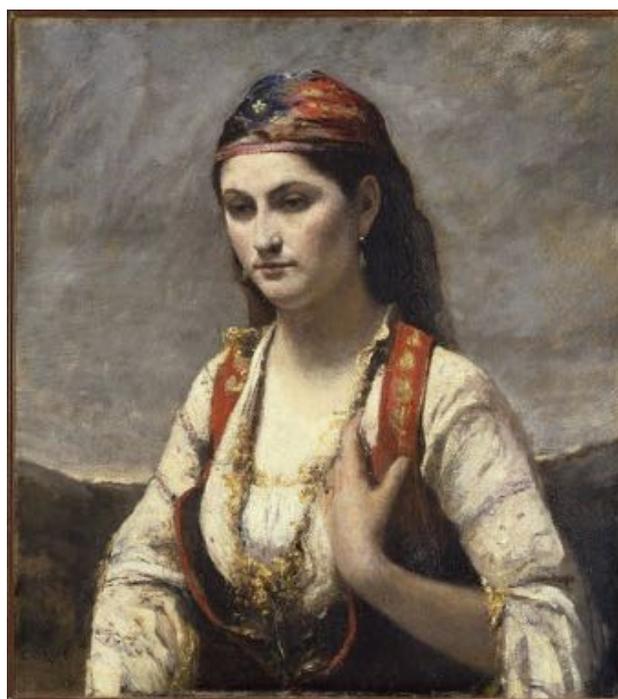
Figure 4.18 Shkoder landscapes sketched by Edward Lear in 1848 (source: Destani, 2008)

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*a letter of presentation for governors and "pasha" and the provincial passport for you and your guide [...] Simplicity must be your goal. When you have all these things, which the Italians generally call "roba", close it in two Brobdnagian bags, join them with a rope and tie them one on each side of the saddle'.*

<sup>19</sup> This citation has been integrally taken from Vietti (2012: 51-52), given the difficulty of find the original source. Translated from the Italian: *'Trips to Albania can last according to the wishes of those who travel; there are khans every two to four hours. [...] A khan is a kind of hotel managed by a state-appointed khanji, and is open to all travelers. Sometimes there is also food in the khan, sometimes not, so you have to resort to your own curry rice. In large cities the khan are three-sided buildings with a courtyard and consist of two floors: the ground floor is used as a stable, the upper one is divided into rooms that give onto a wooden corridor that runs all around the building and which is accessed through stairs. In the less frequented districts, the khan is instead made up of a single room, at one end with a floor for men and everything else for the beasts: sometimes bipeds and quadrupeds are mixed together. First arrivals, better accommodations, this is the rule of these accommodations'.*

The conditions are obviously very different and was a choice between the luxurious properties of the officials along with the obligation of attending long meals of thirty dishes, and the poorer accommodation provided by the “khanji”, but with a lot more free-time (Vietti, 2012). In the works of Lear, both his “Journals” and sketches, the affinity with the pictorial trend known as “orientalism” is really evident.



*Figure 4.19 The Young Woman of Albano (L'Albanaise), 1872 by Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot.  
(source: Brooklyn Museum)*

In the same years, John Murray published the first travel guide on Albania, titled “Handbook for Travellers in Greece: describing the Ionian Islands, the Kingdom of Greece, the Islands of the Aegean Sea, with Albania, Thessaly and Macedonia” (1854). In the book, Murray described Albania as a Greek region like Macedonia, where travellers can stroll around having a pleasant time with antiquity. In Section 4 of the guide titled “Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia”, Murray provided detailed information about history, climate, passport and documents, money, “manners and dress”, dances, but most importantly for this study, ‘direction of travelling, Accommodation &c.’ (Murray, 1854).

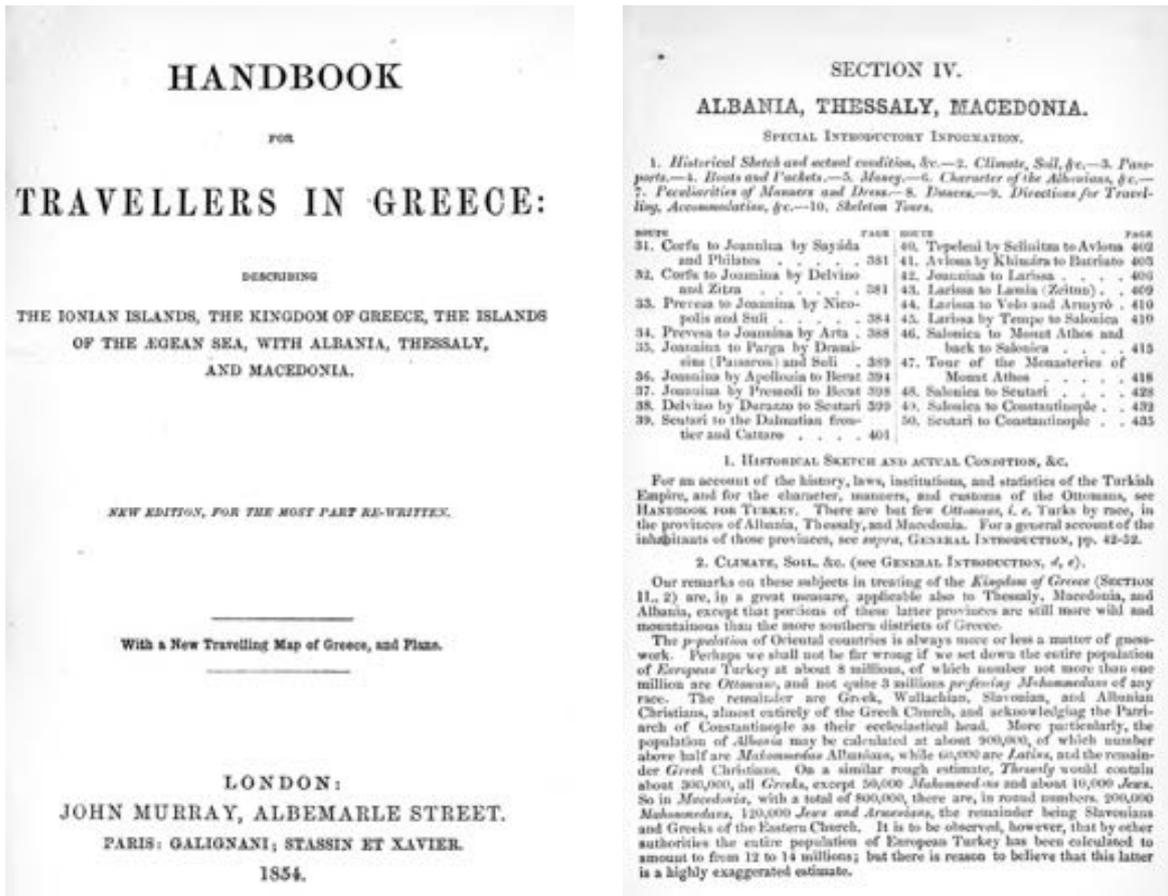


Figure 4.20 Cover page and Section IV of “Handbook for Travellers in Greece: describing the Ionian Islands, the Kingdom of Greece, the Islands of the Aegean See, with Albania, Thessaly and Macedonia” by Murray, 1854 (source: University of Toronto, John M. Kelly Library)

‘The only places of accommodation are khans, buildings erected by the government for the use of travellers, and are very plentiful on all main roads. They are entirely unfurnished; in some there are a good many rooms, and the building itself is surrounded by a wall enclosing a courtyard, where horses are turned in for the night. The “khanji”, as the keeper of the khan is called, generally sells wine, and Indian corn cake or bread. The khans in the towns are frequently tenanted by the lowest rabble, and are consequently very dirty, though those in the country are always the cleanest. [...] An unfurnished room can generally be hired for a few days in any of the large towns’ (Murray, 1854, p. 379).

There are 3 “skeleton tours”, subdivided into Routes from the 31<sup>st</sup> to the 50<sup>th</sup> of the guide. The routes crossing the contemporary Albania, are Routes 31 to 41 (Murray, 1854, pp. 381-406), summarised in the table below.

<b>Route</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Cities, Towns, Villages</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
31	<b>Corfu to Joannina by Sayada and Philates</b>	Corfu, Sayada, Philates, Raveni, Joannina	Philates
32	<b>Corfu to Joannina by Delvino and Zitza</b>	Corfu, Butrinto, Delvino, Delvinaki, Monastery of Sosino, Fall of Glizani, Dodona, Zitza, Joannina	<i>not mentioned</i>
33	<b>Prevesa to Joannina by Nicopolis and Suli</b>	Prevesa, Fort Santa Maura, Nicopolis, Luro, Castel of Suli, Joannina	<i>not mentioned</i>
34	<b>Prevesa to Joannina by Arta</b>	Prevesa, Salagora by sea, Arta, Joannina	<i>not mentioned</i>
35	<b>Joannina to Parga, by Dramisius and Suli</b>	Joannina, Dramisius, Suli, Parga	<i>not mentioned</i>
36	<b>Joannina, by Apollonia, to Berat</b>	Joannina, Zitza, Delvinaki, Argyro Kastro, Gardiki, Stepetzi, Tepeleni, Lundschi, Karvunari, Gradista, Fragola, Apollonia, Berat	<i>not mentioned</i>
37	<b>Joannina, by Premedi, to Berat</b>	Joannina, Kalpaki, Ostanitza, Premedi, Klisura, Berat	Kalpaki, Ostanitza, Premedi, Klisura
38	<b>Delvino, by Durazzo, to Scutari</b>	Delvino, Argyro Kastro, Tepeleni, A Khan, Berat, Karaburan, Lusnja, Tscherni, Kavaya, Durazzo, Alessio or Lesch, Scodra or Scutari	Tepeleni, Berat, Karaburan, Lusnja, Tscherni, Durazzo, Lesch, Scodra
39	<b>Scutari to the Dalmatian frontier and Cattaro</b>	Scutari, Antivari or Bar, Castel Lastua, Budua, Cattaro	Antivari
40	<b>Tepeleni to Selenitza and Avlona</b>	Tepelevi, Karvunari, Selenitza, Avlona or Valona	<i>not mentioned</i>
41	<b>A week's tour in the Acroceraunian Mountains. Avlona by Khimara to Butrinto</b>	Avlona, Kanina, Dradziades, Ericho or Oricum, Dukadhes, Aspri Ruga or Strada Bianca, Palasa, Drymadhes, Liates, Vuno, Pilieri, Khimara, Porto Palermo, Kiepero, Bortzi, Sopot, Pikarnaes, Lukovo, Spirlia, Santa Quaranta, Butrinto	<i>not mentioned</i>

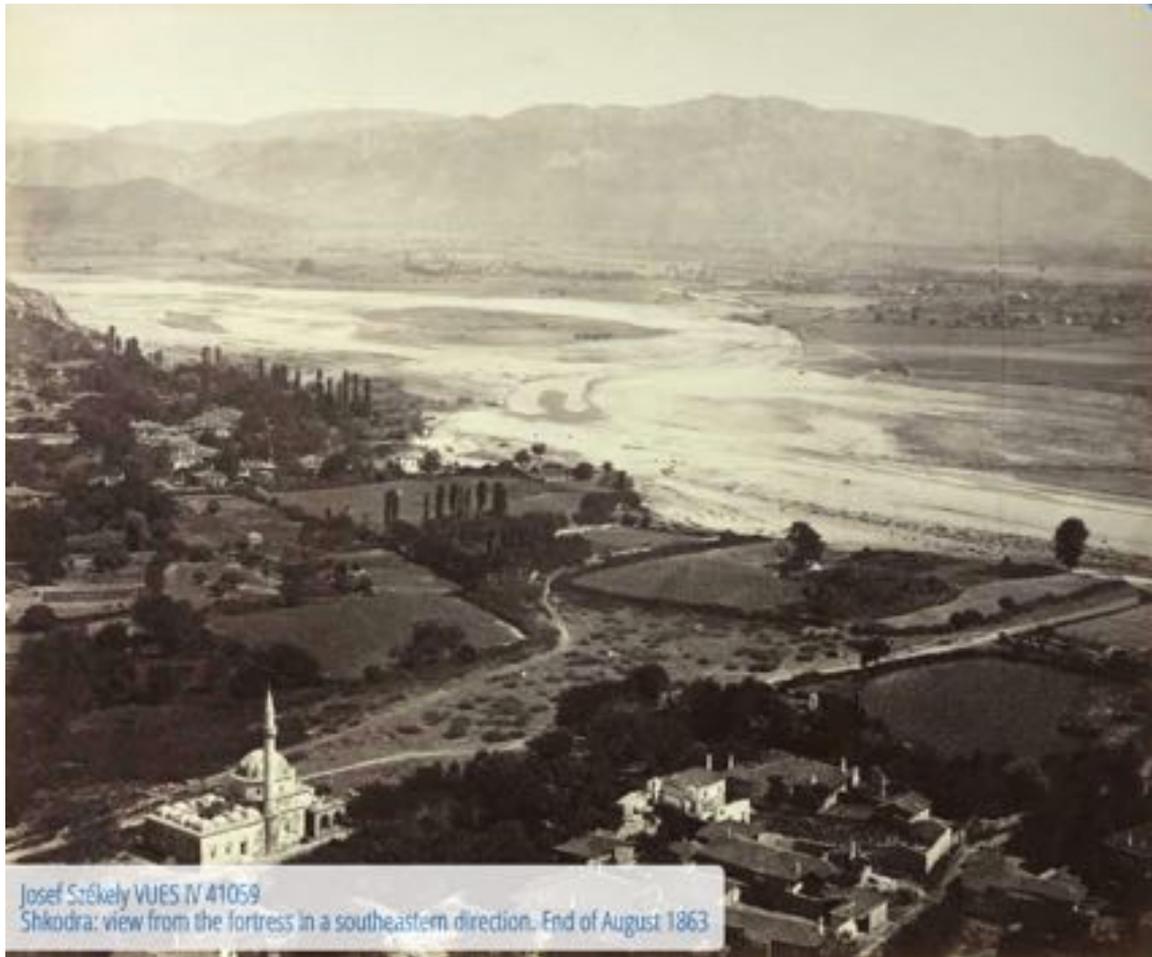
*Table 4.8 Table of the Murray's Itineraries crossing Albania (source: author, based on Murray 1854)*

When describing the routes, please note that Murray sometimes specifically mentioned the location of "khans", while in others not. To show Murray's itineraries in map form it is given that the main cities described in the book provided some forms of accommodation.

The Austro-Hungarian expeditions also played an important role in promoting Albania. In the second half of the 1800's, Viennese researchers travelled all around the Empire

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*

accomplishing ethnological studies and photographic tours. The biggest collection of photographs belongs to Josef Székely (1811-1869), a Hungarian photographer, who crossed the country and took the photographs that are nowadays considered Albania's oldest.



*Figure 4.21 "Shkodra: view of the fortress from a south-easterly direction" by Josef Székely, August 1863 (source: <http://www.albanianphotography.net/szekely>)*



Figure 4.22 “Kalishta: monastery on Ohrid Lake, view from the south” by Josef Székely, September 1863. (source: <http://www.albanianphotography.net/szekely>)

The influence and role of the Ottoman Empire was significant in the creation of a tourist accommodation system that was to be inherited and implemented by future governments. At that time in history and given its geographical position between Austrian and Ottoman Empires, *‘Albania assumed the role of border, a marginal place where it is still possible to experience forms of authentic, pre-modern age travel’* (Vietti, 2012, p. 43).

#### **4.2.2 King Zog and his westernization touristic policies**

When Albania declared independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912, it entered a sudden phase of westernisation. During the First World War, the country was transformed on the battlefield, a group of patriots led by Ahmet Zog, future President of the First Republic and later King of the Albanian Kingdom (1928-1939), re-established order in 1920 with the creation of a solid central government based in Tirana (Parser, 1937) ) and along with the creation of the “Klubi Automobilistik Mbretëtor” [Albanian Automobile Club] (1931) – and the national tourist board “Enti kombetarë i Turizmit” [National Tourism Authority] (1936), the king was the first to start a process of internationalization.

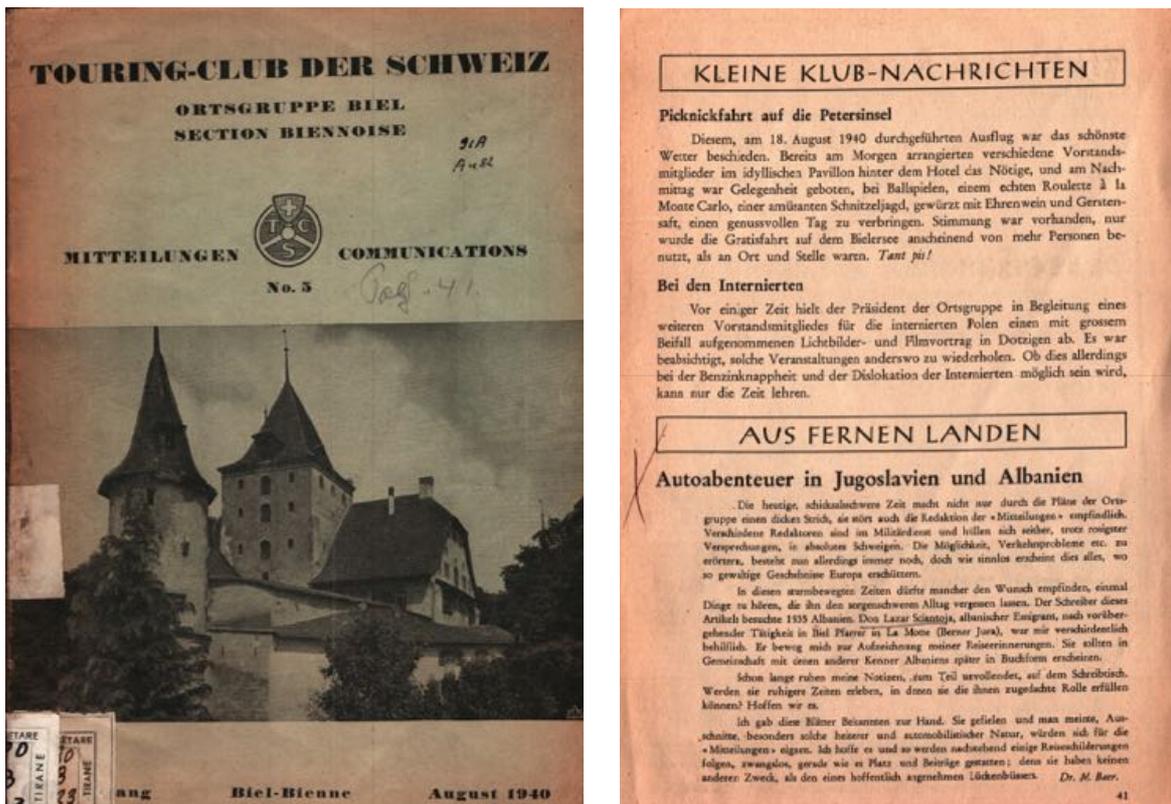
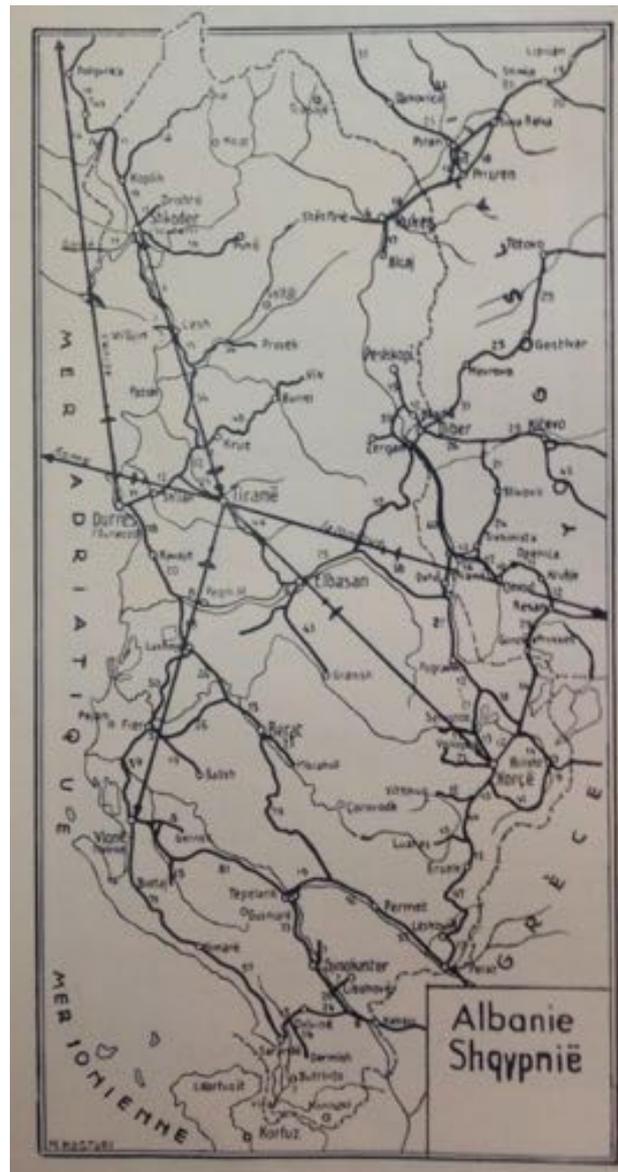


Figure 4.23 Cover of the Swiss Automobile Club and the article about Albania “Sehnsucht nach Albanien: nachdichtung eines Liedes aus Scutari” (source: Touring-Club der Schweiz, 1940)

The Automobile Club played a fundamental role in this process, ‘guaranteeing – for example - through local authorities, the cleanliness of Kingdom hotels and restaurants and to avoiding the increase of tariffs according to the guest’ (Disho, 1937). In addition, the Club provided maps and guides *“très utiles si vous parcourez les montagnes, et là où il n’y a pas encore d’hôtels, le montagnard sera très fier de vous offrir une large hospitalité sans rémunération aucune”*<sup>20</sup> (Parser, 1937, p. 102). Due to this major commitment Albania began to be promoted in foreign magazines such as “Expansion belge” as *“un pays touristique idéal, la vie est très bon marché et presque tous les habitants parlent les langues étrangères”*<sup>21</sup> (Parser, 1937, p. 104).

<sup>20</sup> Translated from the French: “very useful if you travel the mountains, and where there are not hotels, the people of the mountains will be more than happy to host you without charging anything”.

<sup>21</sup> Translated from the French: “an ideal touristic country, where life is very cheap and almost all the inhabitants speak foreign languages”.



*Figure 4.24 Map of Albania included in the article “La Situation Economique de l’Albanie et ses relations commerciales avec la Belgique” by Démètre Beratti (1937) in the magazine “L’expansion Belgique”, dated February 1937 (source: Beratti, 1937)*

In addition, Princess Maxhide, the Kingdom’s cultural representative, drew attention to the educational role of tourism and its impact on economic development and demanded a great effort for Albania to move forward (Malecka, 1997). Her role, together with King Zogu’s other two sisters, was fundamental in pointing out the importance of sports, artistic and touristic activities for the country’s development. The policies introduced by princesses Myzejen, Ruhije and Maxhide lead to the creation of the “Federation of Sport and Arts Associations” in 1935 and the “National Tourism Authority” in 1936.

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

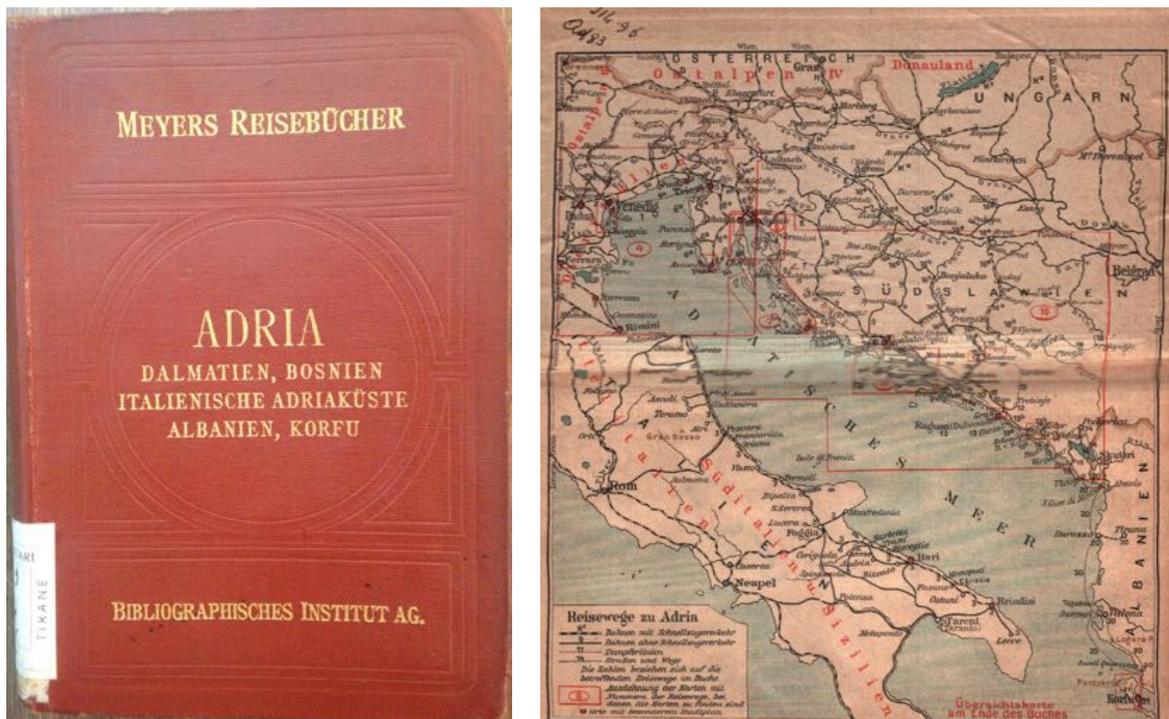


Figure 4.25 Cover and main map of the travel guide “Adria: Dalmatien, kroatische Küste, Bosnien, italienische Adriaküste, Albanien, Korfu” (source: MeyersReisebucher, 1930)



Figure 4.26 General map of Balkans and a map of Tirana included in the “Guide de l'Albanie: avec un carte des voies d'accès, une carte routière et les plans de Scutari, Tirana et Kortcha” (source: Leon, 1931)

In 1930, the Bibliographisches Institut AG included Albania in its travel guide “Adria: Dalmatien, Kroatische Küste, Bosnien, Italienische Adriaküste, Albanien, Korfu”, while

Léon Rey edited the first French travel guide, titled "Guide de l'Albanie: avec un carte des voies d'accès, une carte routière et les plans de Scutari, Tirana et Kortcha" (1930), in which the author states that *'peu de contrées offrent au voyageur des paysages comparable à ceux de l'Albanie'*<sup>22</sup> (Rey, 1930, p. 1).

In the German guide, the accommodation structures are described as places far from the European standards and it is suggested you always take insect repellent and personal bed sheets due to the presence of malaria in the country.

*'Für Unterkunft und Verpflegung setze man seine Ansprüche auf das bescheidenste Maß herab. Gasthöfe nach Art der anderen europäischen Mittelmeerländer sind in Albanien äußerst selten zu finden; in der Regel gehen auch die besseren Häuser kaum über den Komfort unserer einfachen Landgasthöfe hinaus. Insektenpulver ist fast überall unentbehrlich; zu empfehlen ist auch Benutzung eines eigenen Bett-tuchs. Die Zimmer sind fast immer mehrbettig, so daß auch der Einzelreisende oft gezwungen ist, mit Fremden zusammen zuhause. Die Preise sind den Verhältnissen entsprechend gering. Die Küche ist in allen besseren Gasthöfen italienisch, im Norden österreichisch; im übrigen entspricht sie der Unterkunft. Hauptfleischgericht ist Hammelbraten; bei der Zubereitung der einheimischen Speisen wird viel Zwiebel oder Knoblauch verwendet'* (MeyersReisebucher, 1930, pp. 260-261)<sup>23</sup>.

Eleven touristic structures are cited in this guide. There are two in Shkoder (Grand Hotel and Hotel de la Ville), two in Durrës (Bristol and Splendid Palace), four in Tirana (International, Continental, Splendid and Roma), two in Vlorë (Gambino and Vlora) and one in Sarande (Pirro Palace).

The touristic facilities are described as sober also in the French guide. In addition, the catholic priest and the local municipality replaced the old Turkish figures of "khans".

*'Logement et nourriture. - Le voyageur est à l'heure actuelle assuré de trouver dans les principales villes des hôtels convenables. Les chambres et la literie son généralement propres mas les salles de bain font souvent défaut. En été, il est*

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<sup>22</sup> Translated from the French: "Few countries offer to tourists landscapes comparable to Albania's ones" (Rey, 1930, p. 1).

<sup>23</sup> Translated from the German: "For lodging and meals, one puts down his claims to the most modest measure. Inns of the other European Mediterranean countries' standard are extremely rare in Albania; as a rule, even the better houses barely go beyond the comfort of our simple country inn. Insect powder is almost everywhere indispensable; it is also recommended to use a separate bed sheet. The rooms are almost always shared, so that the single traveler is often forced to live with strangers together. The prices are correspondingly low. The kitchen Italian is in all better inns, in the north Austrian; otherwise it corresponds to the accommodation. Main meat dish is roasted; the preparation of local dishes includes a lot of onion or garlic." (MeyersReisebucher, 1930, pp. 260-261).

indispensable de voyager avec sa moustiquaire et de la faire placer sur le lit par le garçon d'hôtel, même si les fenêtres se trouvent pourvues de toiles métalliques. Lorsque étant seul, à défaut de chambre à un lit, l'hôtelier vous loge dans une chambre à deux, trois ou même quatre lits, exiger que les autres lits ne soient pas occupés. Il est prudent de retenir sa chambre à l'avance dans les hôtels de Durazzo, de Tirana, de Scutari et de Kortcha. Dans les villages dépourvus d'hôtels, on logera chez l'habitant. S'adresser de préférence à la mairie (Bashki) ou dans les provinces catholiques, chez le curé. Aucune maison, même la plus pauvre, ne restera fermée à l'appel de l'étranger' (Rey, 1930, pp. 11-12)<sup>24</sup>.

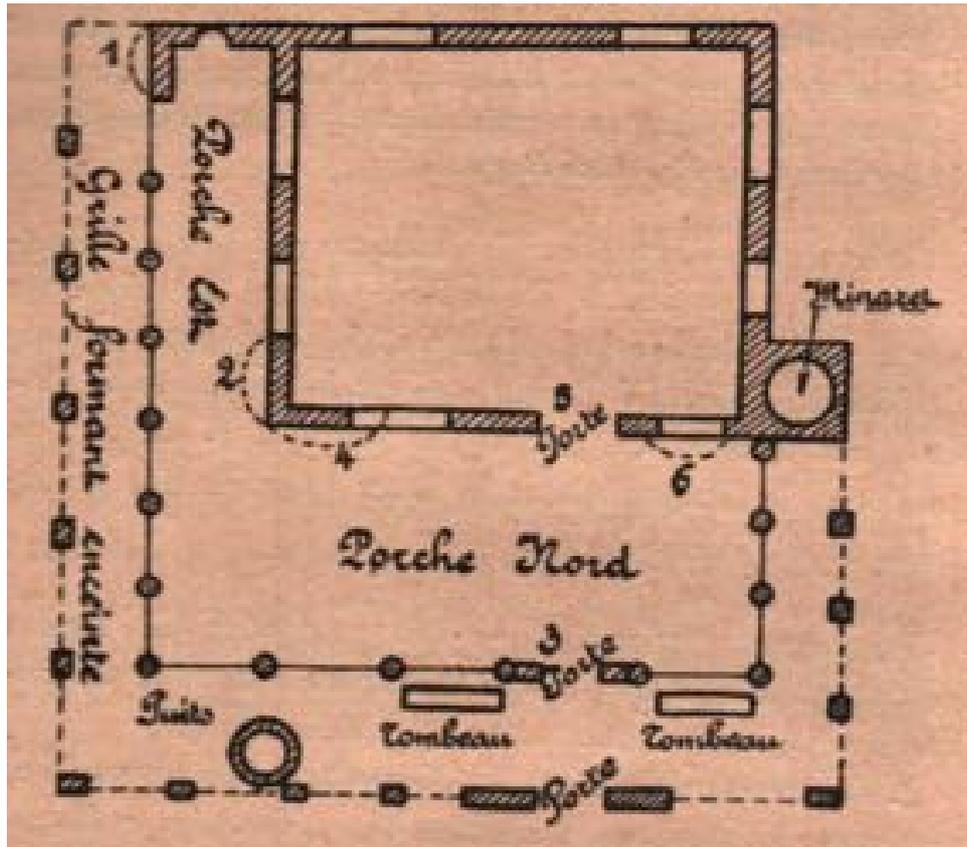


Figure 4.27 Plan of the Tirana Mosque in the "Guide de l'Albanie: avec un carte des voies d'accès, une carte routière et les plans de Scutari, Tirana et Kortcha" (source: Rey 1930:88)

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24 Translated from the French: "Housing and food. - The traveler is currently assured of finding suitable hotels in the main cities. Rooms and beds are generally clean, but bathrooms are often missing. In summer, it is essential to travel with a mosquito net and have it placed on the bed by the waiter, even if the windows are provided with metal cloths. When alone, in the absence of a single-bed room, the innkeeper lodged you in a room with two, three or even four beds, demanding that the other rooms not be occupied. It is prudent to reserve your room in advance in the hotels of Durazzo, Tirana, Scutari and Kortcha. In the villages without hotels, local inhabitants will welcome you. Refer preferably to the town hall (Bashki) or in the catholic provinces, to the cure. No house, even the poorest, will remain closed to a foreigner." (Rey, 1930, pp. 11-12)

This guide is more detailed than the German one in terms of descriptions, facilities mentioned, and maps provided. The itineraries proposed in the guide started with the neighbouring countries:

1. De Cettigné (Yugoslavie) a Scutari
2. D'Antivari (Port) et de Dulcigno a Scutari
3. De Riyeka et de Virpazar a Scutari par le lac
4. De Scutari a Saint-Jean-de-Medua par la Boyana
5. De Scutari a Tirana
6. De Tirana a Elbasan
7. De Durazzo a Tirana
8. De Durazzo a Elbasan
9. De Durazzo a Berat
10. De Berat a Fieri
11. De Fieri a Valona
12. De Elbasan a Pogradec
13. De Durazzo a Monastir
14. De Pogradec a Kortcha
15. De Kortcha a Florina
16. De Kortcha a Monastir per le lac Prespa
17. De Kortcha a Tepeleni
18. De Tepeleni a Argyrokastro
19. De Tepeleni a Valona
20. De Berat a Tepeleni
21. D'Argyrokastro a Santi-Quaranta
22. Da Valona a Santi-Quaranta
23. De Santi-Quaranta a Jannina

There are 34 hotels listed in this guide. There are three hotels in Shkoder (Grand Hotel, Pension Romano and Hotel Continental), one in Lezhe (Hotel International), ten in Tirana (International, Continental, Palace, Grand Hotel, Adriatik, Splendid, Stamboul, Ferrara, Roma, Pension Lewy), four in Durrës (Splendid, Bristol, Isola Bella and Adriatik), two in Elbasan (Adriatik and Bristol), one in Berat (Hotel Tirana), one in Fier (Hotel Illyria), two in Vlorë (Gambino and Adriatik), two in Pogradec (Tirana and Defrim), two in Korça (Palace and Monastir), two in Tepeleni (Europa and Adriatik), three in Gjirokaster (Royal,

Constantinople and Lundjeria) and one in Saranda or Santi-Quaranta (Pirro Palace). Most of such are also included in the Italian travel guide analysed in the following paragraph.



*Figure 4.28 "Grand Hotel (Ish- turizmi I vjeter) dhe rruga qe me pare quhej Sami Frasheri, sic dukeshin ne vitin 1938" in Elbasan, in an old postcard, 1938 (source: ElbasaniAD archive, donation of Fiqiri Drinziu)*

#### **4.2.3 Tourism during the Italian 'gentle' invasion**

From 1939 to 1944, Italy officially invaded the country, although this process had already started at the beginning of the century due to many economical and political interests, as proved by the release of books like "Albania. Guida Militare" (Ministero della Guerra, 1915). In fact, since the turn of the century Italians started to migrate to Albania. Some of them in regularly, according to State guidelines and considered proper "colonists", while others were considered illegal (Vietti, 2012). Despite its brevity, this period positively affected the country's touristic development mainly as a result of its propaganda policies in terms of culture, infrastructure and touristic structures.



Figure 4.29 Commemorative stamp of the "Virgilian bimillennial, depicting King Eleno and Enea on the banks of Butrint (source: Gagano, 2014)

The Italian archaeological missions played an important role. Luigi Maria Ugolini's mission (1895-1936) led to the discovery of the Butrinti ruins and represented a fundamental step for Albanian tourism. The Fascist Government compared the archaeological site of Butrinti to the site of Rome and Troy and as a result the fascist propaganda organized the "Crociera Virgiliana" [Virgilian Cruise] in 1930, a cultural trip retracing the mythological Aeneas's trip narrated by Virgil.

*'Il 15 settembre 1930, il piroscafo Aquileja partì da Brindisi in direzione delle coste albanesi. Al loro arrivo a Butrinto, i passeggeri ebbero come guida lo stesso Ugolini, che li condusse sui luoghi toccati dal viaggio di Enea; in tal modo, il racconto virgiliano fu reinterpretato alla luce dell'italianità e delle ambizioni geopolitiche fasciste. La costruzione dell'immagine seppe servirsi anche dei nuovi mezzi di comunicazione, come i manifesti pubblicitari [...]. La locandina di una compagnia di navigazione getta un ponte virtuale fra l'Italia e l'Albania, una specie di via "Egnatia" transadriatica che, mescolando allegramente duemila anni di storia, mette insieme l'antica Illyria e relativa nave liburna, la moderna Albania, e quelli che avrebbero dovuto essere i vantaggi della tecnologia italiana, evidenziata da tracciati stradali e corridoi aerei' (Gargano, 2014)<sup>25</sup>.*

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<sup>25</sup> Translated from the Italian: 'On September 15, 1930, the steamer Aquileja left Brindisi in the direction of the Albanian coasts. At their arrival in Butrint, Ugolini himself guided the passengers through the places of the Aeneas's journey; in this way, the Virgilian story was reinterpreted in the light of Italianism and fascist geopolitical ambitions. The construction of the image also used the new means of communication, such as advertising posters [...]. The poster of a shipping company throws a virtual bridge between Italy and Albania, a sort of trans-Adriatic "Via Egnatia" path that, blending together two thousand years of history, joining the ancient Illyria with the Liburnian ship, the modern Albania, and those that should have been the advantages of Italian technology, highlighted by road layouts and air corridors' (Gargano, 2014).

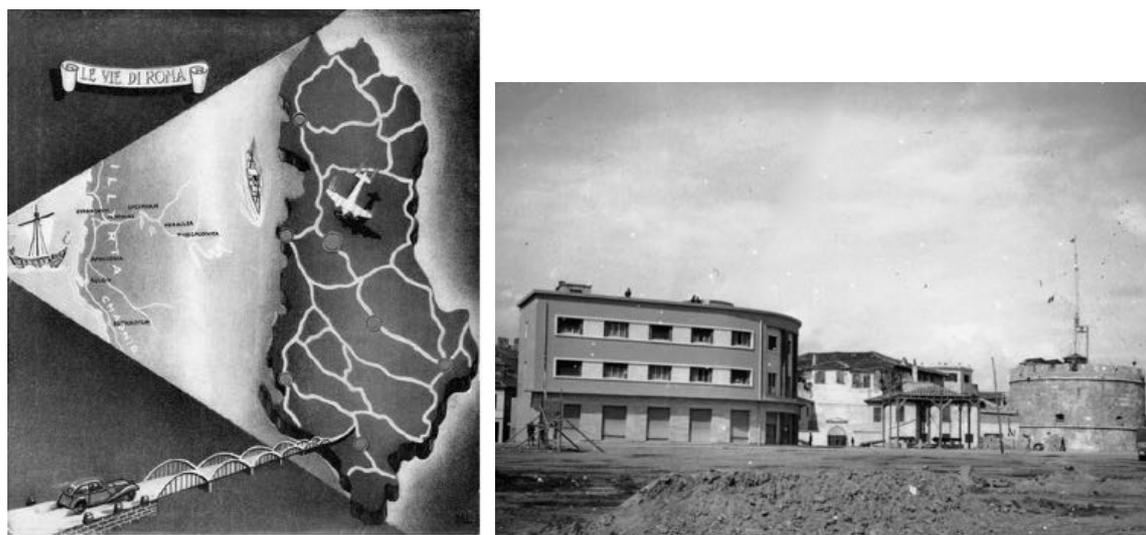


Figure 4.30 Right: “Le vie di Roma”, advertising poster of the society “Navigazione Adriatica” (source: Gagano, 2014); Left: Hotel Turizmi in Durrës, 1941 (source: private collection of Pierluigi Zamperlin)

The tourism policies promoted during the Italian invasion not only affected the “image of the country”, but also physical infrastructure. Some of the most important public works were undertaken during the Italian occupation, such as Tirana’s airport, the first highways, the foundation of the “ETA – Ente Turistico Alberghiero” [Touristic Hospitality Authority] and the first accommodation structures (Vietti, 2012). In his diary for 26<sup>th</sup> April 1939, Galeazzo Ciano (1903-1944), Italian diplomat and husband of Edda Mussolini, wrote:

*‘Decidiamo oggi alcuni importanti lavori pubblici in Albania, e tra l’altro la costruzione dei maggiori centri di alberghi per i quali il Duce dà il contributo personale di un milione di lire’ (Ciano, 2000)<sup>26</sup>.*

In 1940 the first Italian travel guide was published by the “Consociazione Turistica Italiana” and, as explained in the introduction, the main goal was to show the world the amazing achievement of the Italian army. The guide was part of the “Guida d’Italia” series, which considered Albania, as much as Libya and West Africa, as Italian regions.

*‘Non si creda che questo nuovo volume, rapidamente allestito, sia frutto di improvvisazione. Fino dall’Anno XV il prof. Pirro Marconi, della R. Università di Napoli e capo della Missione Archeologica Italiana in Albania, ci faceva presente, a nome di S. E. Jacomoni, che le nostre Autorità si preoccupavano assiduamente*

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<sup>26</sup> Translated from the Italian: “Today we decide some important public works to do in Albania. Among all, the construction of the main hotels, for which the Duce gives a personal contribution of one million of lire” (Ciano, 2000).

*di mantenere e di accrescere il nostro prestige in Albania, tanto nel campo culturale quando in quello turistico. Si pensava perciò di adempiere ad una fondamentale esigenza provvedendo alla redazione di una prima Guida Turistica, diligente e compiuta, in cui il Paese venisse illustrato ne' suoi aspetti artistici ed economici, e risultassero in piena luce le grandi opera di civiltà e di redenzione dovute al genio realizzatore degli Italiani'* (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 5)<sup>27</sup>.

The guide described a *'paese di grande varietà geografica, con grandiosi fiumi, poetici laghi ... pianure e sonnolente lagune costiere, una terra di forti contrasti ... con città animose e progressive, un paese ricco vivamente suggestivo che tiene sempre desto l'interesse di ogni turista'*<sup>28</sup> (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 12). Furthermore, a thematic monthly magazine titled "DRINI – rivista mensile del turismo Albanese" [DRINI – monthly magazine of Albanian tourism] was published, serving as international promotion.

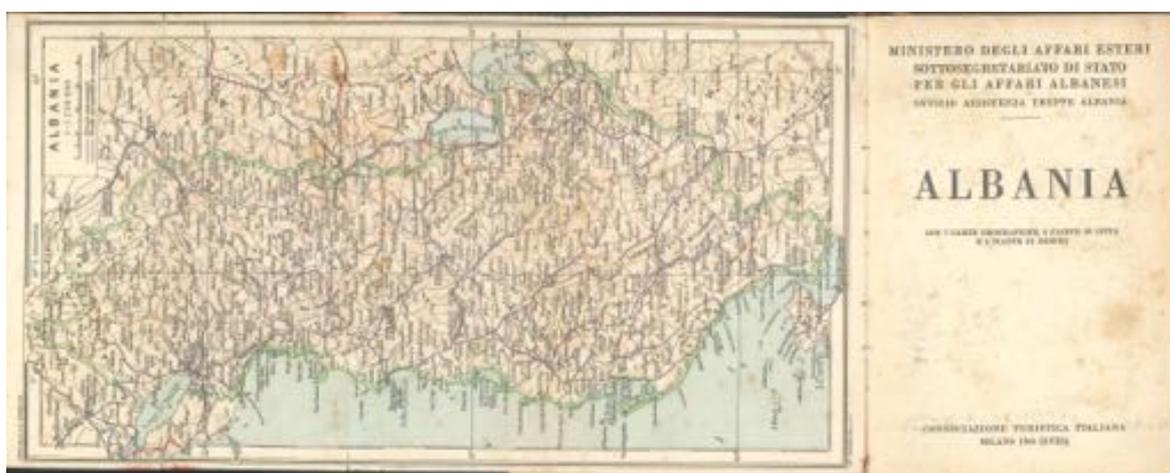


Figure 4.31 Main map and first page of the travel guide "Albania: con 7 carte geografiche, 6 piante di città e 2 piante di edifici", edited and published by the Consociazione Turistica Italiana in 1940

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<sup>27</sup> Translated from the Italian: "Do not believe that this new volume, quickly edited and published, is the result of improvisation. Until the year XV the prof. Pirro Marconi, from the University of Naples and head of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Albania, made us present, in behalf of S.E. Jacomoni, that our Authorities were diligently concerned to maintain and increase our prestige in Albania, both in the cultural field and in the tourist one. It was therefore thought to fulfill a fundamental need by providing the edition of the first (Italian) Touristic Guide, diligent and accomplished, in which the country' artistic and economic aspects were emphasized, as much as the great work of civilization and redemption due to the "genius" realizer of the Italians" (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 5).

<sup>28</sup> Translated from the Italian: "country of great geographic variety, with magnificent rivers, poetic lakes ... plains and sleepy coastal lagoons, a land of strong contrasts ... with animated and progressive cities, a highly suggestive country that always keeps the interest of every tourist" (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 12).



Figure 4.32 Drini, rivista mensile del turismo albanese. Anno III, n°5. (source: Enti Kombetari e Turizmit, 1942)

In the section “Avvertenze e informazioni”, there is a detailed description of tourist facilities, which is also useful in comparing it with previous guides. During the study it was noticed that the paragraph below, quoted from the Italian guide, is a partial translation of the French guide by Rey Léon (1930) analysed in the previous paragraph.

*‘Alberghi. - Nei porti della costa e nelle principali città dell’interno si trovano buoni o discreti alberghi. Nei centri minori gli alberghi sono più rari e meno decorosi. Nei villaggi è necessario ricorrere all’ospitalità degli abitanti; sarà bene, in tal caso, rivolgersi al capo del Comune o, nei paesi cattolici, al parroco, i quali assisteranno il turista con pieno impegno. In generale si può affermare che nessuna casa, anche del più povero, rimane chiusa al forestiero. Il quale, congedandosi dall’ospite, offrirà qualche donativo o qualche moneta d’argento ai bambini della famiglia. Nei monasteri ortodossi si trovano camere per i viaggiatori. Tanto l’alloggio quanto il vitto vi sono gratuiti; ma è consuetudine fare alla partenza un’offerta che corrisponda all’incirca a quello che si sarebbe speso in un albergo. Se proprio non vi si è costretti, evitare di pernottare negli “khan” (sic), gl’infimi alberghi locali’ (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 13)<sup>29</sup>.*

29 Translated from the Italian: “Hotels. - In the coastal ports and in the main inland cities there are good or discreet hotels. In smaller towns, hotels are few and less decorous. In the villages it is necessary to count on

The figure of the catholic priest substituted the Turkish “bey” and “pash” described by John Murray and the old traditional structures – the “khan” – were not recommended but rather there are 45 hotels listed in the guide mainly located in major cities.

<b>City</b>	<b>Hotel</b>	<b>Rooms</b>
<b>Tirana</b>	Hotel Continentale, rruga Pjeter Bogdani	40
	Hotel Durazzo	-
	Hotel Imperiale, bulevardi Vittorio Emanuele	20
	Hotel Internazionale, bulevardi Mussolini	-
	Hotel Metropoli, bulevardi mbreteresha Elena	-
	Hotel Reale, rruga e Dibres	10
	Hotel Regina, bulevardi Vittorio Emanuele	-
<b>Durazzo</b> <b>Durrës</b>	Hotel Augusteo	6
	Albergo dei Dogi, sheshi princ Umberto	-
	Hotel Europa	-
	Hotel Internazionale	-
	Hotel Iola	8
	Hotel Isola Bella	12
	Hotel Pallas	-
	Hotel Splendido, bulevardi Vittorio Emanuele III	-
<b>Argirocastro</b> <b>Gjirokaster</b>	Hotel Impero	-
	Hotel Reale	-
	Hotel Savoia	-
<b>Berat</b>	Hotel Colombo, rruga Mbretnore	16
	Hotel Savoia, rruga Mbretnore	4
	Hotel Tirana, Lek Dukagjini 8	-
<b>Coriza</b> <b>Korçe</b>	Hotel Imperial	-
	Hotel Roma	-
	Hotel Pallas, rruga San Giorgio	18
<b>Elbasan</b>	Hotel Principe	-
	Grande Albergo	8
<b>Fier</b>	Hotel Illyria	-
<b>Kavaje</b>	Hotel Adriatik	-
	Hotel Elbasan	-
	Hotel Korça	-
	Hotel Skandenberg	-
	Hotel Vlora	-
<b>Kukes</b>	Hotel Italia or “Alberghetto”	-
<b>Permet</b>	Hotel Adriatik	-

*the hospitality of the inhabitants; in this case it will be good to contact the head of the Municipality or, in Catholic villages, the priest, who will assist the tourist with full commitment. In general, it can be said that no house, even the poorest, remains closed to the foreigner traveller. Those who will use these services will offer some donations or some silver coins to the children of the family. In the Orthodox monasteries there are also rooms for travelers. Both accommodation and food are free; but it is a custom to make an offer that corresponds roughly to what you would have spent in a hotel. If you do not have to, do not stay overnight in the "khan" (sic), the worthless local hotels" (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 13).*

	Hotel Europa	-
<b>Peshkopi</b>	Hotel Qendra Hotel Defrimi	- -
<b>Perparimi Pogradec</b>	Hotel Reale	5
<b>Sarande</b>	Hotel Bella Venezia Hotel Kastrioti Pallas Hotel Pirro	- - -
<b>Shijak</b>	Hotel Agimi, sheshi B. Mussolini	-
<b>Scutari</b>	Hotel Imperiale, prane lulishtes	15
<b>Shkoder</b>	Grande Albergo, prane lulishtes	12
<b>Vlorë</b>	Hotel Gambino, sheshi i Xhamise	10

Table 4.9 Table of accomodations listed in the travel guide "Albania: con 7 carte geografiche, 6 piante di citta e piante di edifici" (source: author, based on Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940)

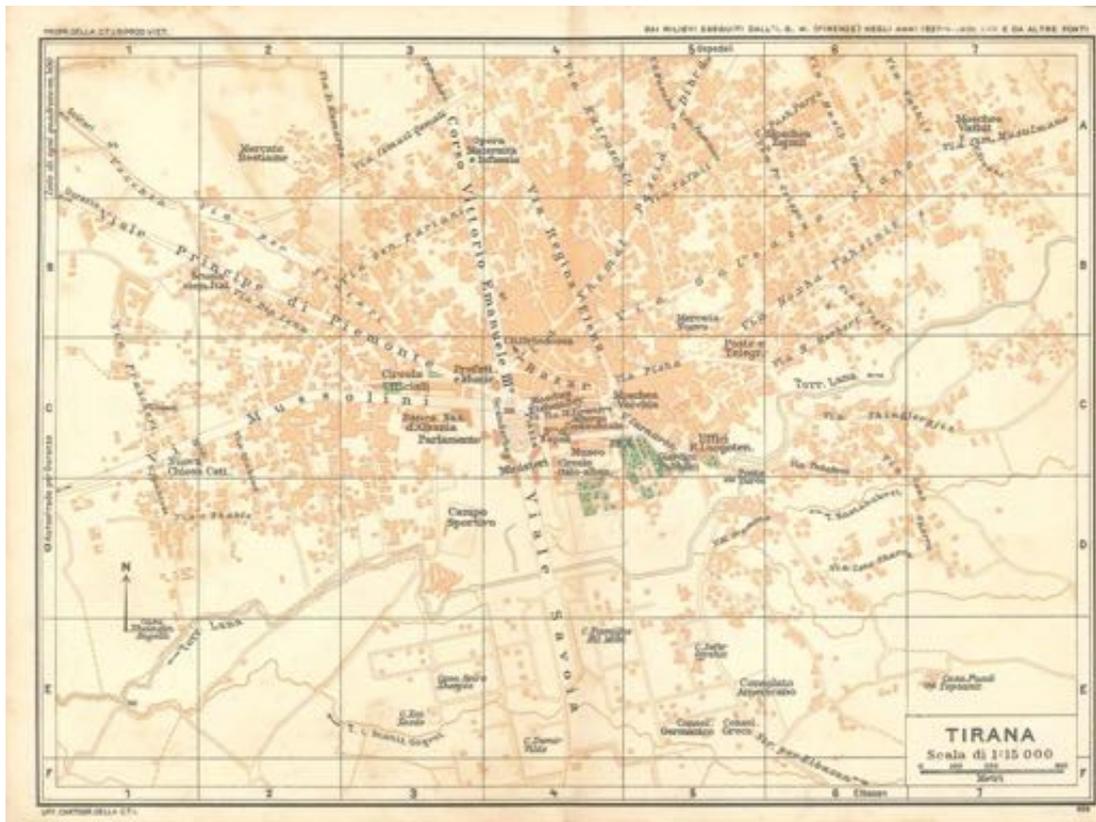


Figure 4.33 Map of the centre of Tirana with the "Albergo Continentale", included in the travel guide "Albania: con 7 carte geografiche, 6 piante di citta e 2 piante di edifici" (source; Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940:152-153)

It is worth noticing that in the "Itinerari Aerei dell'Albania" (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, pp. 128-132) section of the guide, the internal area connections, completely absent today are also mentioned. The itineraries were the following:

- Tirana – Scutari
- Tirana – Scutari – Kukes – Tirana
- Tirana – Kukes
- Tirana – Peshkopia
- Tirana – Coriza – Argirocastro
- Tirana – Devoli
- Tirana – Valona – Argirocastro
- Tirana Salonicco

The tourism system during the Italian period was well organized and structured. Unfortunately, some of those facilities were lost in the following years.

#### **4.2.4 Tourism during Communism and the case of Albturist**

During a communist dictatorship that lasted more than 40 years tourism's role was of propaganda when concerning foreigner inbound fluxes and an educational purpose for domestic tourists. The only scientific production about touristic activities in these years belongs to the geographer Derek R. Hall (1984, 1990, 2001), who travelled through Albania many times and had the opportunity to collect data and experience it for real. In one of his latest articles (Hall, 2001), the author defines an "Evolutionary Framework" of tourism in Communist and Post-Communist Societies. Hall divides such framework into three main phases: early socialism, middle socialism and later socialism.

*'[The first phase] typifies the Soviet Union from the 1920s to the 1950s [...] although in Albania it lasted until the mid-1980s. [...] Under these circumstances, international tourism was severely constrained, with economic development placed on a virtual war footing. [...] facilities were developed for domestic, group-oriented tourism and recreation in coastal resorts, upland areas, mountains and rural spas, sponsored by economic enterprises, trade unions and youth organizations' (Hall, 2001, p. 95).*

*'From the mid-1950s, following the hiatus after the death of Stalin in 1953, dogmas began to be relaxed in most countries, [...] although in Albania and North Korea, this was reinforced by an isolationist ideological outlook'. (Hall, 2001, p. 96)*

*'Economic circumstances of the late 1960s and the 1970s brought increasing convertible-currency debt to the Soviet Bloc. One response was to embark on enhanced programmes to attract hard currency tourists. [...] Indeed, until 1991 substantial parts of the Soviet Union, Mongolia and Albania remained proscribed to foreigners'. (Hall, 2001, p. 96)*

In this framework, it is worth noticing how Albania is always mentioned as an exception with a few other countries. Tourism in communist societies was vital for building the collective identity and was mainly conceived as “domestic”. Visits to borders were discouraged, trips abroad were limited or simply disallowed, but this does not mean a touristic mass phenomenon was taking place in those countries. In addition, we can consider this tourism as avant-garde for contemporary “eco-sustainable tourism” due to the types of activities proposed.

*‘Il turismo socialista non ha mai previsto infatti partenze individuali per soggiorni meramente balneari, ma esperienze collettive fortemente legate alla natura e comprendenti principalmente momenti di relax in apposite strutture turisto-sanitarie ed escursioni all’aria aperta, a piedi, in bicicletta, in barca. [...] Accanto a questa interpretazione del turismo come attività benefica per il corpo, si sviluppò anche una forma di turismo intesa come rafforzamento delle convinzioni politiche. Visite organizzate ai musei, esposizioni artistiche e artigianali, luoghi simbolo della storia nazionale e della rivoluzione comunista, configurarono un vero e proprio “turismo patriottico” (Vietti, 2012, p. 78)<sup>30</sup>.*

With regards to inbound fluxes, Albanian tourism development is divided into two phases. In the first phase of the communist government, Albania was politically connected to the Soviet bloc and Enver Hoxha stated that *‘the country was [...] open to friends, revolutionaries and progressive democrats and honest tourists who did not interfere in our affairs’*, in one of his speeches (Logoreci, 1977, p. 209).

After the 1960’s, when Albania became more isolationist, *‘the ideological commitment of foreign visitors ‘was tested by daily requirements to undertake up to six hours work on a collective farm in return for the privilege of staying in the country’* (Cosgrove & Jackson, 1972, p. 44) and the dictator enforced it saying that *‘the Socialist Albania is not welcoming with the bourgeois degeneration and is not for sale for dollars or roubles’* (Logoreci, 1977, p. 209).

Obviously, this attitude did not promote tourism development, but in 1955, the first structured touristic network began to consolidate due to the creation of the institution Albturist (Marku, 2012), the national tourism company *‘covering all tourist activities’* (Hall,

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<sup>30</sup> Translated from the Italian: *“In fact, socialist tourism has never sponsored individual departures for merely seaside stays, but collective experiences strongly linked to nature and mainly comprising moments of relaxation in special tourist-health facilities and open air excursions, on foot, by bicycle, by boat. [...] Alongside this interpretation of tourism as a beneficial activity for the body, a form of tourism also developed as a strengthening of political convictions. Organized visits to museums, art and craft exhibitions, symbolic places of national history and of the communist revolution, set up a real “patriotic tourism” (Vietti, 2012, p. 78).*

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*

1984, p. 543). Albaturist was founded following the examples of other national tourism agencies in Communist countries, such as "Intourist" - the official travel agency of the Soviet Union, "Cubatours" and "Luxingshe" - the Chinese national travel agency.



*Figure 4.34 Picture of a tourist couple on Durrës beach under a billboard with written "The purpose of the bourgeois-revisionist television is the mass degeneration" (source: Bunk Art 2 exhibition)*

In order to enter the country, a tourist should undertake a long security process. The first step was the visa request. Group visas were the only issued, so individual trips were not allowed. The second control took place right at the border, *'where the Albturist officials standardized certain aspects of the aesthetics and clothing of foreign visitors who might disturb Albanian citizens'* (Vietti, 2012, p. 81). In the main law regulating foreign access (Instruction n°7, dated 25<sup>th</sup> April 1975), it is stated:

*'2. Personat me veshje ekstravante dhe me paraqitje jot e rregulli (me perjashtim te perfaqesues diplomatike, te fluar qeveritare dhe ekipe sportive), lejohen te shkoine ne sallat transit ose ato te protjes. Aty perfaqesuesi I organit kufitar u njofton atyre se hyria ne Republiken Populore te Shqiperise mund te lejohet, ne rast se pranojne te rregullohen (te presin floket e te vished normalisht). Kur ata pranojne nje gje te tille, lejohen te hyjne ne Republiken Popullore te Shqiperise' (Instruction n°7, dated 25th April 1975)<sup>31</sup>.*

The same law also disallowed entering with western literature, considered revisionist, as well as all religious texts. Once in the country, tourists could only follow precise itineraries, be accommodated in the Albturist structures and move in groups under the guide/control of a local guide. Public transportation was not an option, as much as individuals walk. The main program included visits of the "museum cities" Berat and Gjirokaster, the capital Tirana, the archeological site of Butrinti and Apollonia and other spots important to national history such as Kruja, where in the 1980s the museum of the national hero Skanderbeg was rebuilt with the features of the original fortress (Vietti, 2012).

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<sup>31</sup> Translated from the Albanian: "2. People with extravagant clothes and irregular appearance (with the exception of diplomatic, governmental representatives invited and sport teams) are allowed to go to the transit or waiting rooms. There, a representative of border authorities will inform them that for entering the People's Republic of Albania, they should undertake a regulation process (hair should be cut according to the Albanian parameters, as much as the clothes). Only if and when they accept it, they are allowed to enter the People's Republic of Albania" (Instruction n°7, dated 25th April 1975).

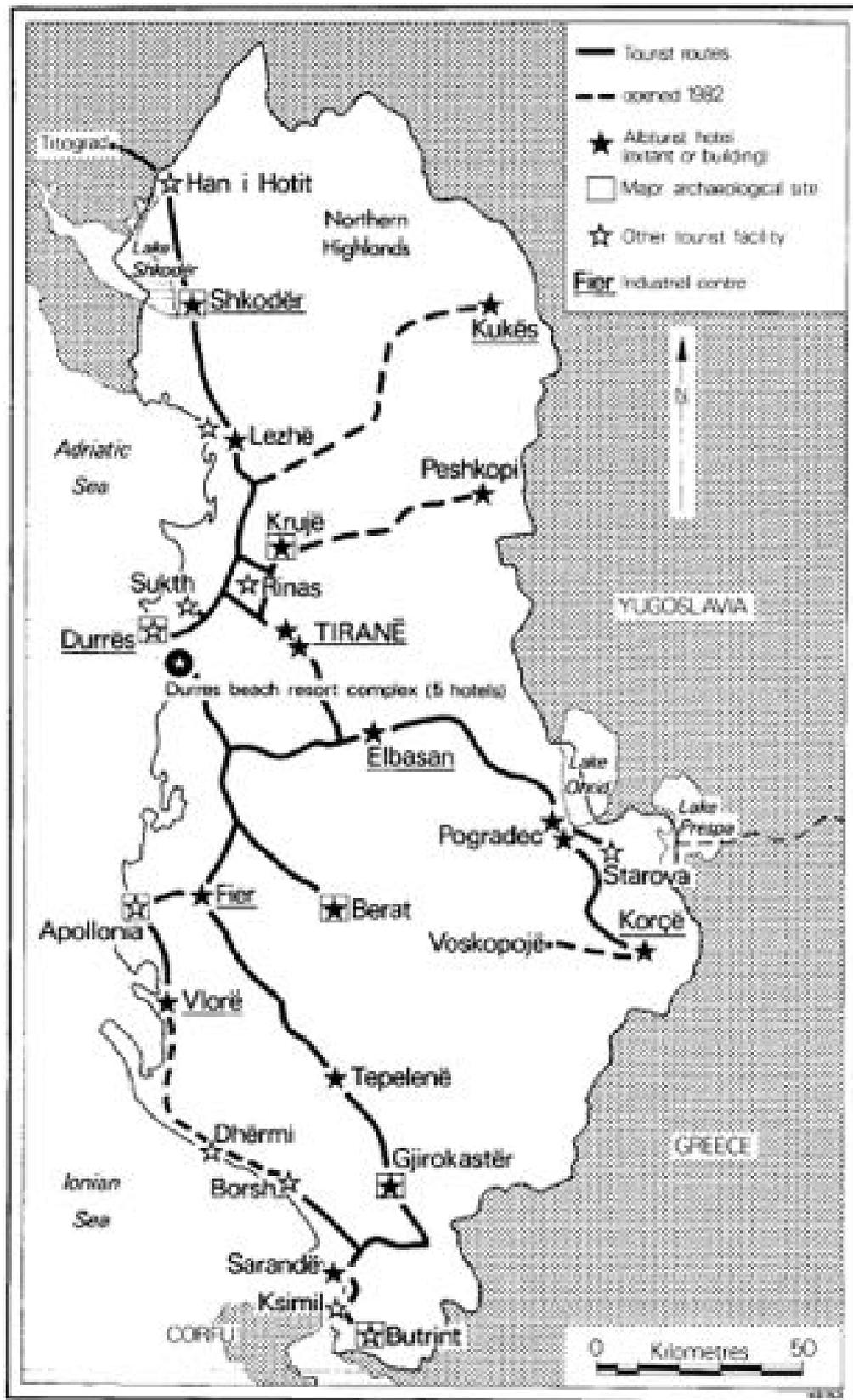


Figure 4.35 Map of the Albustrian touristic structures and itineraries (source: Hall, 1984: 545)

Albturist partially restored accommodation structures built during the reign of Zog and the Italians. Twelve more hotels were built between 1973 and 1982, to international standards (Hall, 1990).



*Figure 4.36 Child playing on the beach of Shengjijn, the touristic center of Shkoder and Lezhe areas. In Albanian Landscapes (source: Albturist, 1960s)*

The multi-language travel guides edited by Albturist described Albania as ‘a revelation of a country full of touristic charm’, a ‘flowering garden’, ‘a touristic jewel’ (Albturist, 1958, p. 3). The two editions, 1958 and 1969, were printed in small numbers. It is worthy of noticing that compared with the previous ones, the English, German, French and Italian guides, which have a lot of information more about sights, even the most remote ones, there are no sections concerning accommodation and transportation. The strong national identity is always well represented in these guides by people wearing traditional clothing, although some pictures depicted scenes close to the lifestyle of a Western country are shown. Those last pictures contrast with the Instruction no. 7 of the People’s Republic of Albania, dated 25 April 1975, in which it is affirmed that the ‘*entrance to the People’s Republic of Albania to women with mini and maxi skirt*’ will not be allowed, [*sic*], proving the gap between reality and its representation.

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

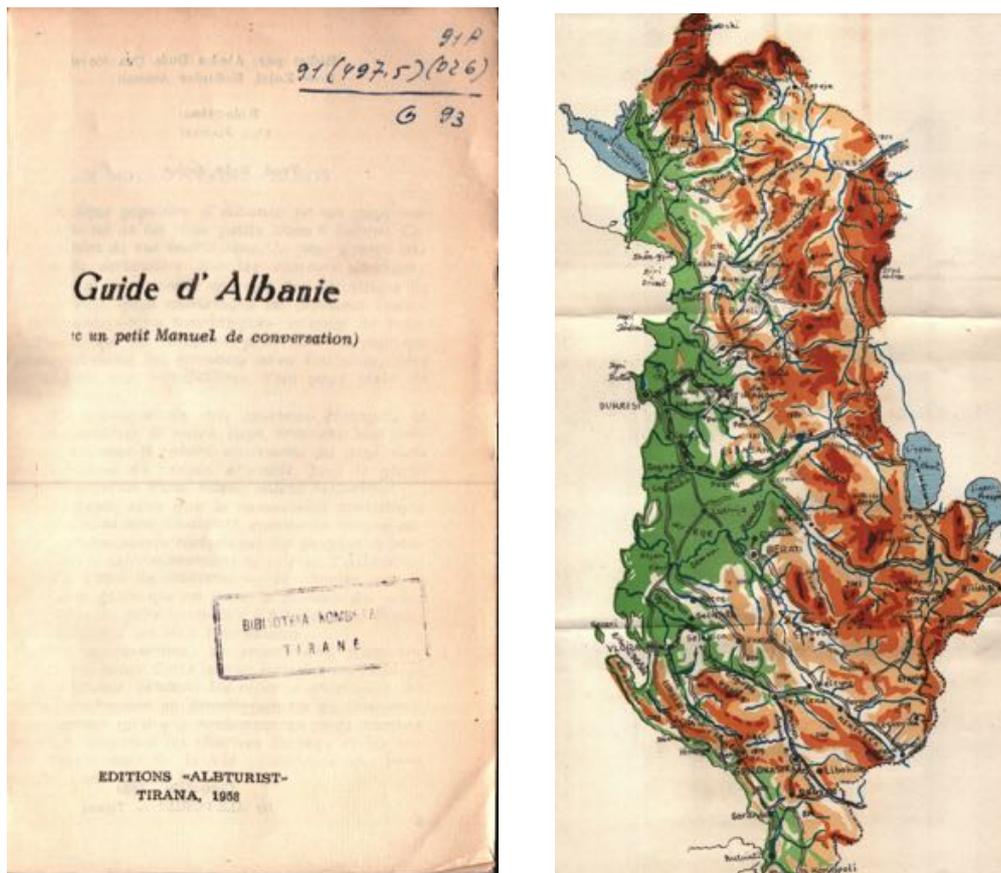


Figure 4.37 Cover and main map of the “Guide d’Albanie: avec un petit manuel de conversation” (source: Albturist, 1958)



Figure 4.38 Women at the beach of Durrës. In “Guide d’Albanie: avec un petit manuel de conversation” (source: Albturist, 1958)

On the other hand, where internal fluxes are concerned, Albturist was also responsible for organizing and regulating domestic tourism. Albanian citizens were allowed to spend some days a year in “Resting Camps” – in Albanian “Kamp pushiveme” – or in “Pioneer camps” – for children, where they were strictly monitored and contact with the outside world was not allowed and the number of domestic tourists was bigger than the international number. According to Hall (1990), only around 10,000 international tourists entered the country in 1987, while other sources (Thomson, 1988; Ascherson, 1988) lowered the number to 7,500. Vietti (2012) estimated an average of circa 5,000/year in the decade 1970-1980 based on official Albturist documents. This number is really low if compared with the almost 30'000 domestic tourists who in the 1960s benefited from the state structures.



*Figure 4.39 Kamp e pushimeve (source: Arkiv Kombetar e Shiperi, 1960s)*

#### 4.2.5 Tourism after communism collapse

After the regime's collapse in 1991, Albanian society suddenly faced the panorama of the contemporary world. The opening of borders caused an enormous emigration flux, while incoming tourism reached a minimum due to a sense of insecurity caused by recent historical events such as the civil war, the financial crisis (1997) and Kosovo War (1998-1999). During those years, the tourism evolution process reverted to the discovery phase, and Albania was back to being 'an enigmatic and unknown country, a rugged but beautiful mountainous region on the Adriatic coast, an ancient cultural ground' (Liebe, 1989).



Figure 4.40 Albanien: Daten: Fakten: Reisetips (source: Liebe, 1989)

#### 4.2.6 “Albania, Go your own way”: the new touristic Albania

In the 2000s, the political situation balanced out, and tourism re-joined the country's priorities. In 2007, the Albanian National Touristic Agency (NTA) was established by the Council of Ministers (Marku, 2012) and organized in two technical offices: Office of Tourism Promotion and Office of Tourism Assistance. In this context, the first tourism brand of this new generation was created: “Albania, the new Mediterranean Love”.



*Figure 4.41 The first touristic brand of the new generation (source: albaniantourism.com)*

In 2014, The government of Albania launched an international competition to design a new nationwide branding campaign (Karafili & Jojic, 2015). The winner, the American agency StrawberryFrog, cleverly reworked Albania's image of a 'wild land to be discovered' into an image of a place for people 'who set their sights on something more rewarding, more personal, more visionary' and who 'seek experiences that are new, different, and uniquely their own' (StrawberryFrog, 2014). This philosophy was also applied to the advertising commercial produced by R&T Advertising in 2015, where the scenes show Albania in a new light; clearer and more natural, building an image of a land that is genuine and unexploited, something much more than wild.

In the official video 'Albania: Go Your Own Way' (Albania: Go Your Own Way, 2015), the landscapes promoted are breathtaking, shaping the image of an unspoilt country in the minds of prospective tourists. The type of tourism promoted is adventurous and sporty, with a number of possible activities from hiking to rafting to parachuting, as well as activities related to culture and gastronomy and history. This emphasises the government's choice of promoting a more sustainable model, based on three pillars: nature, gastronomy and tradition. The model presented aims to value the whole national territory, to preserve its local traditions and uses and emphasise its authenticity and unique identity, promoting a mood favouring sustainable travel so that the tourist can 'set off as a traveller, stay as a guest' (Albania: Go Your Own Way, 2015).

In 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a national photography competition with the hashtag #ColoursofAlbania. It was the first public initiative in Albania that allowed the citizens to act in first person as promoters of their own country. In a few months, more

than twenty thousand pictures had been posted to Instagram, accompanied with other hashtags, such as #myalbania, #visitalbania and #wonderfulalbania.



*Figure 4.42 Examples of pictures available on Instagram with the hashtag #coloursofAlbania (source: author, based on [www.instagram.com/explore/tags/coloursofalbania/](http://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/coloursofalbania/) [accessed on 10th December 2017])*

The success of the new tourism images of Albania lies in the promotional tools chosen. Initiatives such as the #ColoursofAlbania competition and the 'Albania: Go Your Own Way' campaign play a fundamental role for many reasons. Firstly, 'the strength of Instagram as a "self-promotion aid" is its ability to change each user into a potential marketer for each piece of visual material uploaded [*sic*]' (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015, p. 1093). This app is creating awareness of the existence of the tourism destination (Hanan & Putit, 2014), and is furthermore a considerably 'low-cost promotion channel' (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015). Through fast and cheap communication, the new tourism image of Albania is presented to the world.

All those promotional initiatives enormously contrast with a total lack of laws, coordination, detailed national strategies and plans. Until today, the only document concerning tourism is a draft of the "National Touristic Strategy 2014-2020".

#### **4.2.7 Distribution of accommodation in the national territory**

Before Communism, the images promoted and strategies adopted have been mostly related to cultural tourism, addressing the fluxes in the main historical, archeological and artistic inland cities. From the 1940s to the 1990s in full dictatorship, the first attempts of replicating the 'sun, sand and sea' model affected the coasts of Durrës and Vlorë, but due to the small number of foreigners and the prohibition of locals' citizens to stay close to be close to borders and coastline it never revealed its risks. In these years the brand 'Riviera'

has been used for the southern coast, evoking the touristic experiences of Italy, France and Spain, but only by name. With the collapse of the regime and the sudden freedom of movements the coast was literally assaulted in the 1990s, with the construction of macro-structures in concrete in the main coastal cities of Durrës, Shengjin, Vlorë and Saranda. The poor infrastructure conditions slowed down this process, providing an opportunity for reflection. Comparing with neighbouring countries, whose coasts are almost completely built up, Albania's did not have enough time to be affected.

Observing the development map of tourist facility distribution (Figure 4.47) through different historical phases individuated and drawn according to data available in the travel guides and cited in the previous paragraphs, it is possible to make several observations.

Firstly, until the collapse of the regime tourism policies in the last century promoted inland tourism instead of the most traditional sun, sand and sea model. The beach model area was circumscribed to the coast of Durrës and the immediate proximity since the period of the tourism's internationalization, implemented during the Communist regime. The biggest tourist complex "Hotel Adriatik", in fact, was in Durrës and is comparable to any modern resort. All other facilities were condensed in the main historic cities, as result of a clear strategy started under the Italians of promoting and valuing local culture.

This behaviour, unusual for a Mediterranean country with a major coastal area, is strictly connected to geography and the political system. The coast of Albania is, in fact, rich in lagoons and coastal wetlands (Shkodër, Karavasta-Divjaka, Ksamil) and the southern area has for a long time been disconnected due to its rocky morphological composition and the impossibility of building good infrastructure due to poor technology. Later on, during Communism, most tourist activities were located inland due to the prohibition of the population to draw near borders and coasts. Few facilities were opened on the coast, such as the first hotels in Dhërmi and Borsh, but those were reserved for members of the Party and nobody else, not even foreigner tourists obliged to follow certain tours.

Only in the last two decades, tourism extended to the whole coast, consolidating its presence on the area of Durrës and creating new hubs: Shëngjin and the north, Gulf of Vlorë and the Albanian Riviera.

From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.

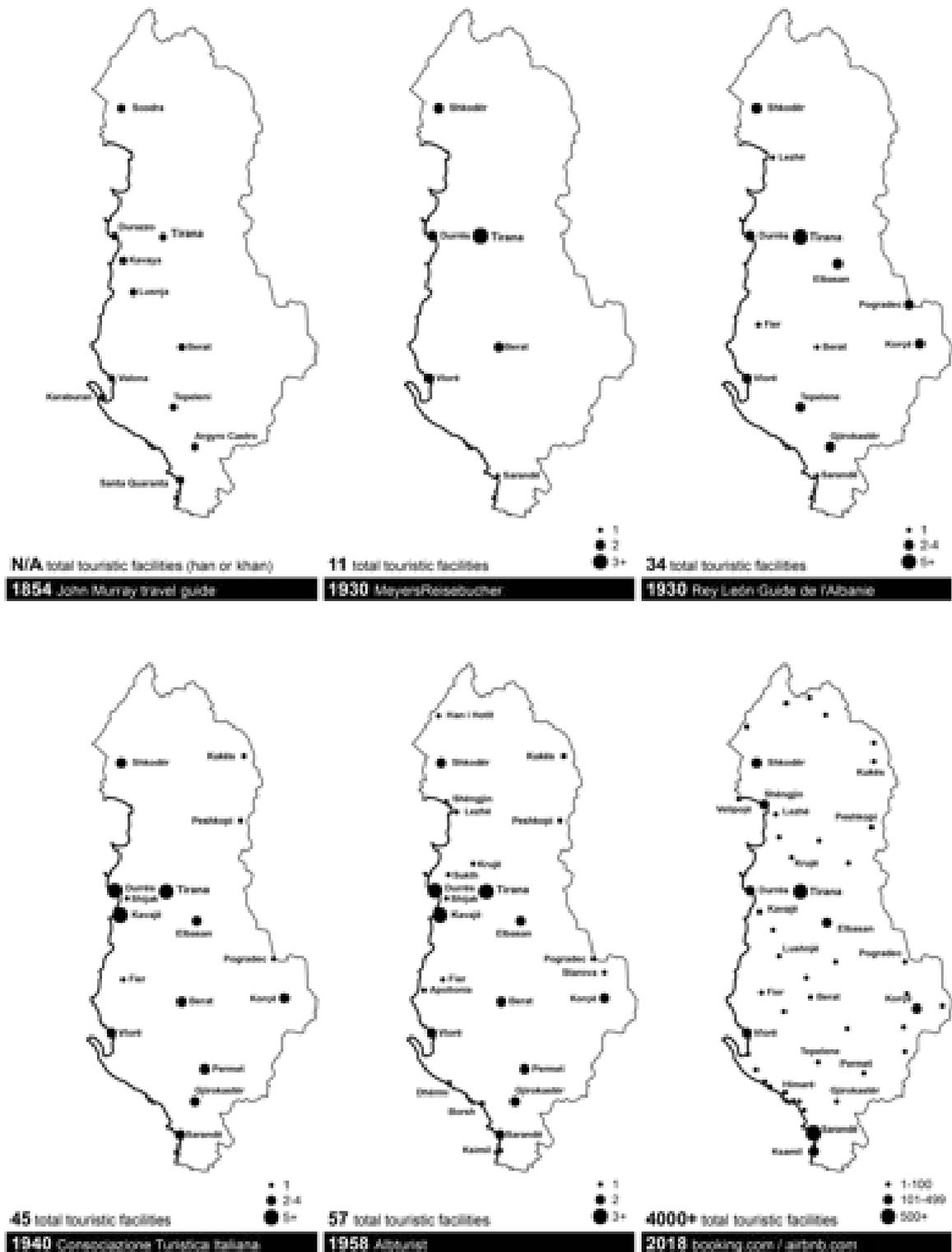


Figure 4.43 Distribution of the touristic structures in the territory, comparison (source: author, based on Murray 1854, MeyersReisebucher 1930, Rey 1930, Consociazione Turistica Italiana 1940, Albturist 1958, booking.com and airbnb.com 2018)

#### 4.2.8 Albania touristic evolution timeline

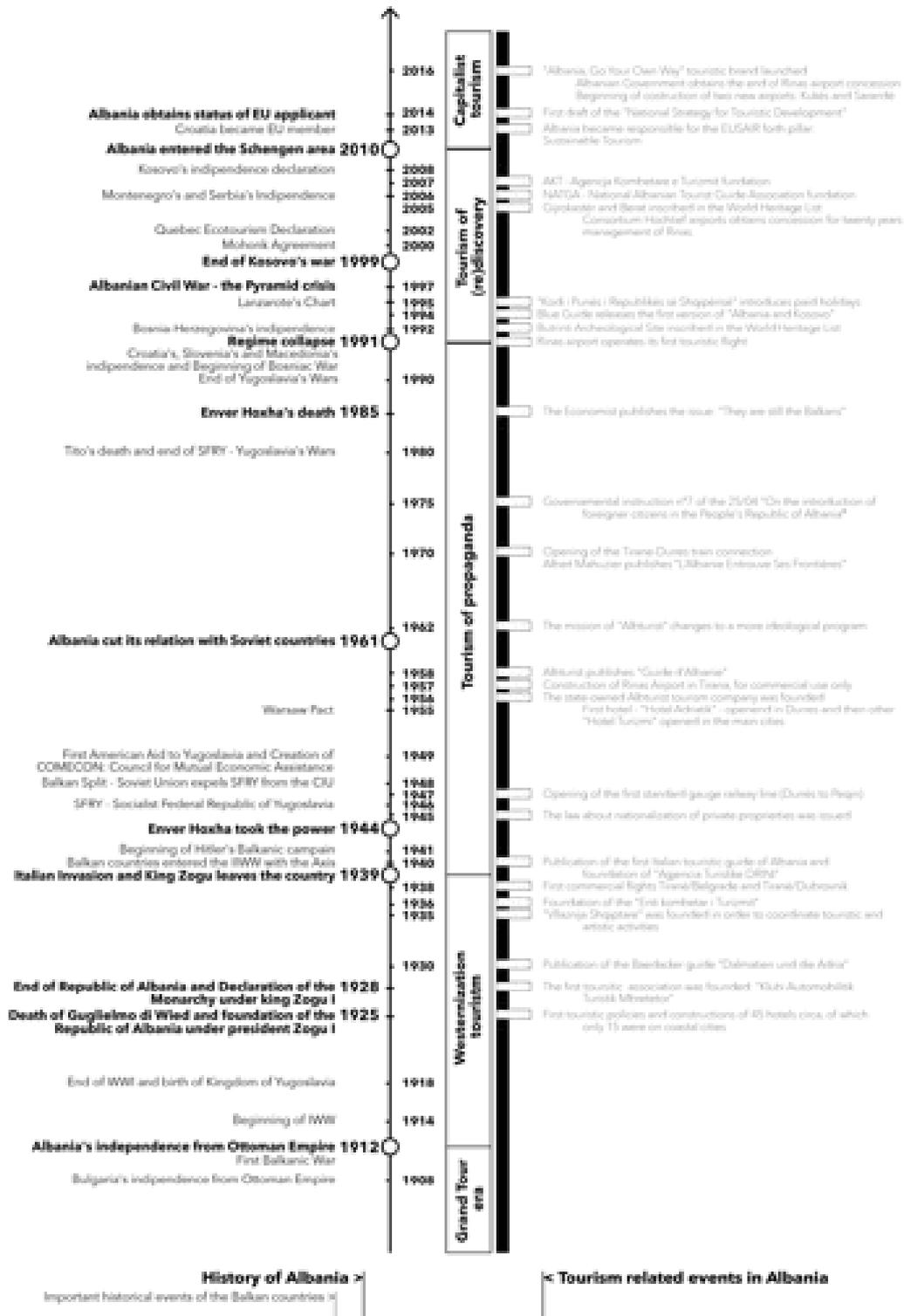


Figure 4.44 Albanian touristic evolution timeline based on Disho (1937), Parser (1937), Malecka (1997), Biagini (2005), Hosch (2006), Liçaj and Molla (2011), Marku (2012), Jimenez (2016), Vasileva (2017) / see the Appendix section for the full-page version

#### **4.2.9 Conclusions**

1. Although the numbers are not comparable with the other neighbouring Mediterranean countries like Greece, Italy and later Croatia, Albania has always been a tourist destination;
2. For different historical and geographical reasons, the well-known “sun, sand and sea” model that transformed most of the Mediterranean coastline has been partially affecting Albania;
3. The coastal landscapes have always been conserved, due to the lack of infrastructure or regulated tourism concentrated on cultural activities;
4. A comparison of images from different periods shows that Albania has always been promoted for its natural landscapes and cultural heritage, emphasising its spotless views.

#### **4.3 The touristic numbers of Albania: a critical analysis of the touristic figures**

*What is tourism's contribution to the Albanian economy? What is the potential of the country and the single regions? What trends are relevant for Albania and what scenarios are likely to occur in the coming years?*

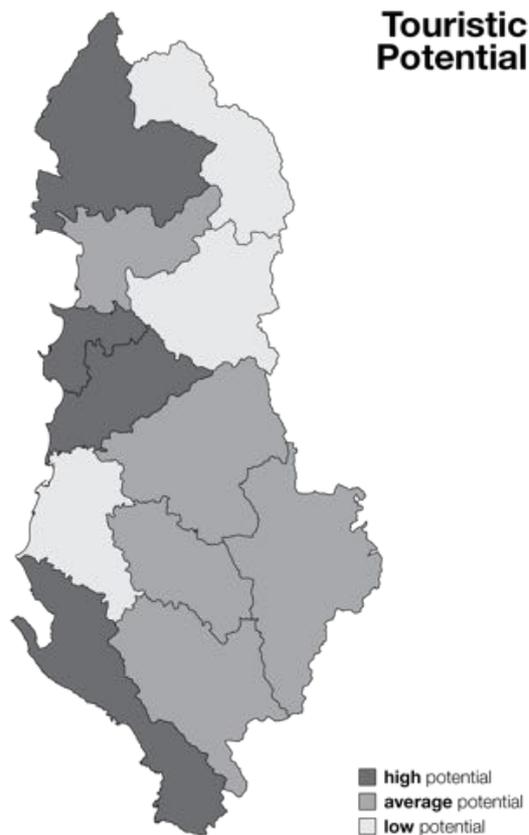
In the last decade, Albania has been claiming its role on the Mediterranean touristic panorama. After years of isolation, this emerging tourist destination is trying to define its identity and find a unique element that can be used to compete with neighbouring countries. In 2015, the Balkan countries were visited by almost 56 million (UNWTO, 2017) of the up to 600 million tourists that travelled to Europe. In the Balkans peninsula, Greece ranks first with 24 million tourists, due to its already well-structured position on the tourist market. Croatia and Bulgaria rank next, just before Albania with its almost four million tourists. According to the WTTC's annual report (2017), tourism contributes 8.4% to the Albanian GDP and this percentage is expected to double to 16% in the next decade<sup>32</sup>.

The aim of this section is to define the tourist potential of Albania by region, starting from the identification of tourism resources and then considering additional criteria such as

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<sup>32</sup> As already mentioned in the introductory paragraph about touristic data, there is not an identification of the tourism sector in GDP data, as such there no tourism specific indicators. It might be approximated by the category “accommodation and food services”, as it has been done in the Report cited, but this has of course its limitations.

physical and digital accessibility, tourist services both infrastructural and human resources, potential growth and project feasibility. The relevance of this article is twofold. Firstly, a synopsis of tourism resources in Albania is presented and discussed, such an overview is new for Albania – there are catalogues of “interesting places to visit” of course, but a regional presentation and analysis has not been made as yet. Secondly, after this analysis we will argue for tourism planning at a regional level, at present there is a near absence of such a thing though the national government does do macro tourism promotion, and at the municipal level a number of municipalities undertake tourism development activities – mostly issuing permits to private sector initiatives and a number of urban redevelopment activities. We will advocate a more active role from the public sector, if negative impacts on tourism development are to be minimized and sustainable tourism be promoted.



*Figure 4.45 Map of Touristic Potential by region and the source maps of Touristic Resources distribution, Accessibility and Services, Relevance, Growth potential and Feasibility by region (source: author)*

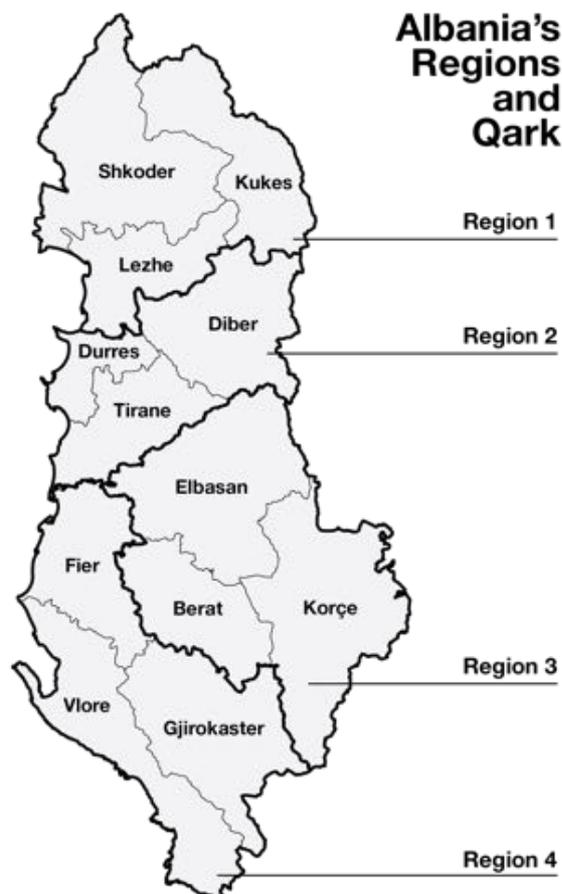
The composite indicators have been constructed considering the following documents, figures and data:

1. **Resources:** List of cultural monuments and presence of special status sites (e.g. UNESCO), issued by the Institute of Cultural Monuments; List of Protected Areas by surface, issued by the Environmental Ministry;
2. **Accessibility.** 'Physical accessibility': proximity to main road infrastructure, the distance from Tirana airport and the Durrës, Vlorë and Saranda ports (in km and hours), number of times accessed by border (2014). 'Digital accessibility': since there is no official register of tourist accommodation services, a desk research was conducted by accessing the most well-known online booking platforms ([www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com), [www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com), [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com));
3. **Services:** number of tourist accommodation (see, digital accessibility), info points available on the territory,
4. **Relevance:** mainly focused on human capital: Registered jobseekers by educational level by qark (number), Unemployment rate (in %, national level), Average population by age (2014), The highest diploma attained by the population 21 years old and above at qark level (2014) – source INSTAT;
5. **Growth potential:** Total employment by qarks (number), Active companies by qark (number), Active companies by economic activity by qarks (average values 2010-2014) and Active companies by ownership at qark level (number) – source INSTAT;
6. **Feasibility:** Number of tourism projects developed between 2010-2015, Amount of investments between 2010-2015, Bank distribution in Albania by qark (number of branches/agencies), Total deposits by qarks (weights in %), Loans to businesses (% of total) – source INSTAT.

The first group of indicators (1-3) aims to build the state of art regarding the whole tourist experience from the travel conditions, from accommodation and places to visit, while the second (4-6) analyses figures that help in ranking regions by potential development, concerning human and economic capital to invest and feasibility of tourism projects. The expectations are based on historical data meaning that tourism development towards the future is the continuance of past development, until the end of 2016. These expectations are incorrect when governments intervene, and/or the public sector changes its tourism

development investment pattern. This is unlikely to happen for the coming years and will be explained later.

Before introducing the data analysis, some clarification is needed about Albania's administrative system. There are three main hierarchical levels: municipalities, "qarku" and central government. Municipalities and qarks are respectively 61 and 12, and they are both expressions of local government. Qarks' skills are limited, so nowadays the relationship is more with central government-municipalities. In 2015 another level was introduced: The region of which there are four, grouping the qarks by three. They are not administrative units and their role is to work as mediators for central government to regional development.



*Figure 4.46 Map of Albania's Regions and Qark (source: author, based on Toto, Gjika, Shutina, & Aliaj, 2014)*

Although Albania has a relatively small territory, substantial differences can be witnessed amongst tourism resources in different regions within the country. The following

paragraphs are organized according to the above indicators and are integrated with themed maps. All the information is then gathered on a final map ranking each qark as having high, average and low touristic potential.

Given the latest developments vis-à-vis regionalization and its role in the lessening of disparities in terms of economic development of the various regions, final considerations are made on a regional basis (and not on qark level), in order for them to be better comparable (across sectors if needed). Tourism development does not happen in an isolated and fragmented way. In most cases, it spans across boundaries of a single territorial unit, and across sectors. A point in case is infrastructure, which has clearly shown that it cannot work if fragmented as it affects accessibility and connectivity. As such, a region is comprised of a suitable development unit.

#### **4.3.1 Touristic Resources**

The main component of touristic attractiveness of a site is the presence of resources in the territory, or closeby. By resources, it is meant both 'natural and cultural heritage' (MacCannel, 1976). The two main elements considered for this indicator are protected areas (natural heritage) and cultural monuments. The comparison is both quantitative (number of protected areas and number of cultural monuments) and qualitative (the extension of protected area and the presence of UNESCO and archeological sites).

According to that data, the qarks of Korçe, Berat and Gjirokaster score the highest. Korçe territory holds the highest number of protected areas, while Berat qark stands out for the high number of cultural monuments registered and the presence of a UNESCO site. Gjirokaster's Ottoman Historic Centre (UNESCO site) and the Castle with the Roman Baths are probably the main attractions of the southern area. Shkoder with its Castle and the new Marubbi Photograpy Museum, Tirane with a number of museums, galleries and cultural activities rank average potential, as much as the qarks of Vlorë (all the old villages along the Riviera coast), Durrës and Elbasan (with their archeological heritage) and Fier (with the Apollonia archeological site candidate in the UNESCO World Heritage List). The qark of Diber is slightly under the average, but it has a big surface of recently created protected areas. Compared to the others, the qark of Kukës and Lezhe are considered to have the lowest number of cultural and natural heritage sites.

### **4.3.2 Accessibility**

Accessibility of a qark is a fundamental requirement for development. In order to assess it, a first distinction should be made between physical and digital accessibility. Physical accessibility concerns the quantity and quality of the infrastructure network – considering indicators such as number of connections by air, sea and road by quality, efficiency and distance – and the number of times accessed by border (data referred to 2014). Digital accessibility refers to the possibility of booking tourist services online, crucial for current further development.

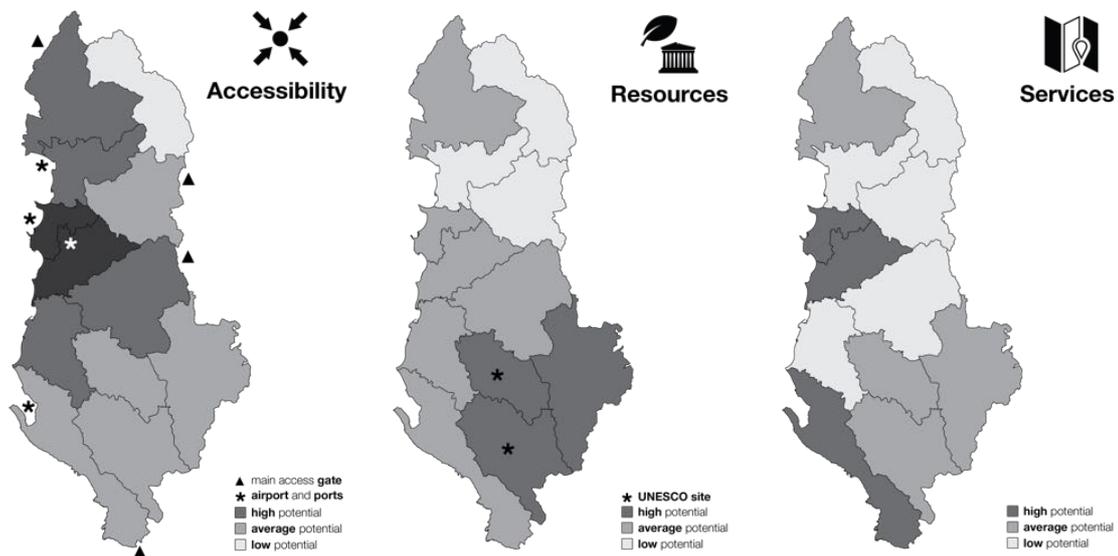
The qark of Durrës over-performs in terms of connections due to the fact that it hosts the country's first port and the only airport (Airport Tirane-Rinas formally belonged to Durrës qark). In addition, the highway quality is the highest in the country, with Tirane ranking second. Those two qarks together can be considered the main infrastructural hub, with the highest level of accessibility. The qarks of Lezhe, Shkoder, Fier and Elbasan follow, due to their location close to this main hub. All the other qarks are in the average, with the exception of the qark of Kukës, which presents low quality/quantity of infrastructure, despite it being on the way to Kosovo.

Concerning digital accessibility, it is worth looking at the data on Vlorë qark, that ranks by far the best with more than 1'000 accommodation businesses online. Despite the low quality of the land infrastructure network, the presence of Corfu International Airport (GR) positively affects seasonal tourism. Tirane and Durrës are the most accessible second to Vlorë, followed by Shkoder and Korçë. Slightly under the national average, you can find the qarks of Berat and Gjirokaster, followed Fier, Elbasan, Kukës, Lezhe and Dibër at the bottom of the list. This data is probably influenced by the low presence of attractive spots, that transform them into transitioning areas.

### **4.3.3 Services**

In terms of tourist services, the data is challenging to collect, due to high levels of informality, as well as, inconsistencies in the way accommodating structures are registered online, particularly when it comes to the municipality to which they belong. According to interviews conducted, the new law provisions in terms of classification and certification of accommodating structures, and tour operators are considered an important step forward. Yet, it has been brought to the Ministry's attention that the same principle of

classification and certification should apply to restaurants and other catering businesses. Given that, the classification and certification of accommodation structures has yet to start and the assessment of existing structures can only be done from a qualitative perspective (also based on online reviews, ratings and interviews). The qarks of Durrës and Tirana rank the highest, followed by Vlora, although in this case tourism is more seasonal if compared to the first two. The qarks of Shkoder, Berat, Korce and Gjirokaster rank average, having recently started to develop also due to an increasing demand for domestic tourism. The remaining 5 qarks perform poorly in terms of tourist services, with visible disparities on both a regional and country level.



*Figure 4.47 Map of Touristic Resources distribution, Accessibility and Services (source: author)*

#### **4.3.4 Relevance**

Relevance as a criterion refers to a qark's relevance to tourism (development). More specifically, this criterion analyses a qark's social capital in terms of education level, employment sectors, development sectors, unemployment, jobseekers and age groups in order to assess its relevance to potential tourism development activity in a particular qark. With the exception of Tirana, ranking first in terms of percentage of the skilled population and degree of qualification, the highest scoring qarks compared to the national average (educational level, approx. 40% having completed secondary school, and unemployment rate at approx. 8%), are Shkoder, Durrës and Vlorë, all three of which are university towns. Korça, Gjirokastër, Berat, Elbasan, Fier, and Gjirokaster rank average, despite four

qarks having universities whose curricula could be better aligned to tourism related fields. Kukës and Dibër are the poorest performing, resulting in significant disparities clearly noticeable on both a regional and country level. The unemployment rate among youth (age group 15 to 29 years) is 31.2% among males and 28% among females. This data refers to the second trimester of 2016 and is only available at a national scale.

#### **4.3.5 Growth potential**

In order to assess a qark's growth potential, the following aspects were analyzed: the economic background, intermediation level and entrepreneurial spirit: GDP and GNDI contribution, banking system, presence of branches, access to business loans, percentage of deposits vs total deposits, active companies by size, sector, and ownership. With the exception of Tirana and Durrës, which together comprise the so-called economic engine of the country, the highest ranking qarks are Fier and Vlorë, whilst the lowest ranking are Kukës and Dibër. The other 6 qarks rank average, with limited access to both banking services and loans, and a modest contribution to the GDP, all 8 of which are below their potential especially when considering the significant resources at their disposal, yet to be valued. Based on interviews conducted with municipality and private sector representatives, no facilitating schemes have been reported, that serve to catalyze tourism related start-ups/ businesses.

Despite encouraging figures in terms of new companies set up in 2014 in the majority of qarks, external development, such as the anti-informality measures undertaken by the Government in 2014, make it difficult to assess actual entrepreneurship across qarks. Findings obtained through interviews highlight the high degree of informality among entities, operators, or entrepreneurs engaging in tourism related activities, which negatively affects the standards and quality of service provided. It may be noted that starting a small tourism enterprise is dependent on structures like destination management and for a small provider accessing tourism markets is difficult. Another interesting finding through the reports, is that both the private sector and some representatives from the public sector (the head of the National Tourism Agency), find VAT is the highest in the whole Balkan region, making our sector less competitive.

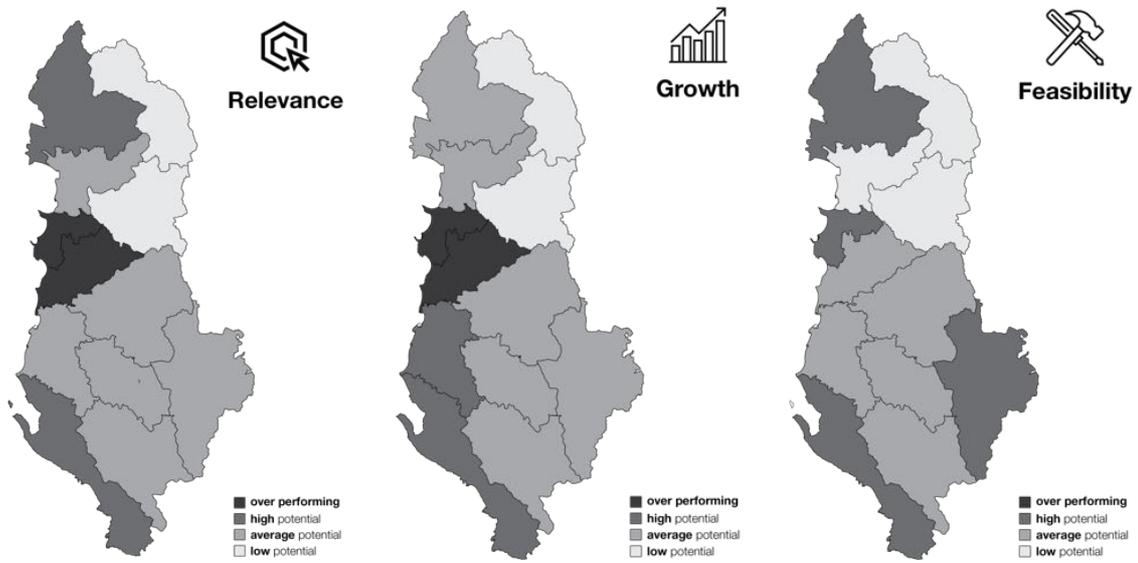
#### **4.3.6 Feasibility**

Feasibility aspects, such as alignment with government and municipality priorities, complementary work with other donors and expected projects etc, were also used as part of the desktop research and interviews. Although only at a draft stage, the draft Tourism Strategy, and the new Law "On Tourism" (no.93/2015, with bylaws yet to be approved) are considered a good start as far as setting the framework for sustainable tourism development, though with certain aspects yet to be finalized such as the draft for the National Tourism Plan (article 9) and the bylaws, etc., along with the operationalization of national objectives and their translation locally is challenging. Aspects such as a lack of structures dedicated to tourism development, no budget allocated to such activities, and significantly bigger territories to manage often with limited accessibility and connectivity (with the exception of Tirana-Durrës hub) all mean that the tourism potential in a number of qarks has not been valued and used as the main possible driver of economic development and job creation.

National structures consider the drafting of the National Tourism Plan as essential to sustainable tourism development, whilst representatives from the private sector go as far as demanding tourism fall under a separate ministry because of the potential it has to drive economic development in the country. That said, the new law does provide significant scope for national and local actors alike such as municipalities to support the development of tourism, as well as cooperation with private sector actors (private businesses, banking).

Tourism has become a priority for a number of investors in Albania. An overall consideration should be made regarding the role of Albania in the European Adriatic-Ionian Region Strategy (EUSAIR). Together with Croatia, Albania is responsible for the fourth pillar concerning Sustainable Tourism and deals with two main objectives: the diversification of tourism products and services; improvement of the quality and innovation of the tourism offer and actor's capabilities. USAID, the World Bank, the EU, the AADF, Italian Cooperation, and the Albanian Development Fund all have a clear link to tourism, generating both local economic development and creating job. In territorial terms, the AADF, through its Tourism Improvement District and Business Improvement Districts, is more focused on targeting specific areas in Albania, including key traditional historical towns such as Shkodër, Berat, Krujë, Vlorë, Tiranë, Gjirokastër and Korçë. Whilst the WB,

through its newly approved “Integrated Urban and Tourism Development Project”, will be focusing on the southern qarks, mainly investing in infrastructure improvement. The EU, as part of their cross-border-cooperation programs, has tourism development as one of their priorities, specifically focusing on preservation, renovation and capacity development.



*Figure 4.48 Map of Relevance, Growth potential and Feasibility by region (source: author)*

### 4.3.7 Touristic Potential by region, comparison and conclusions

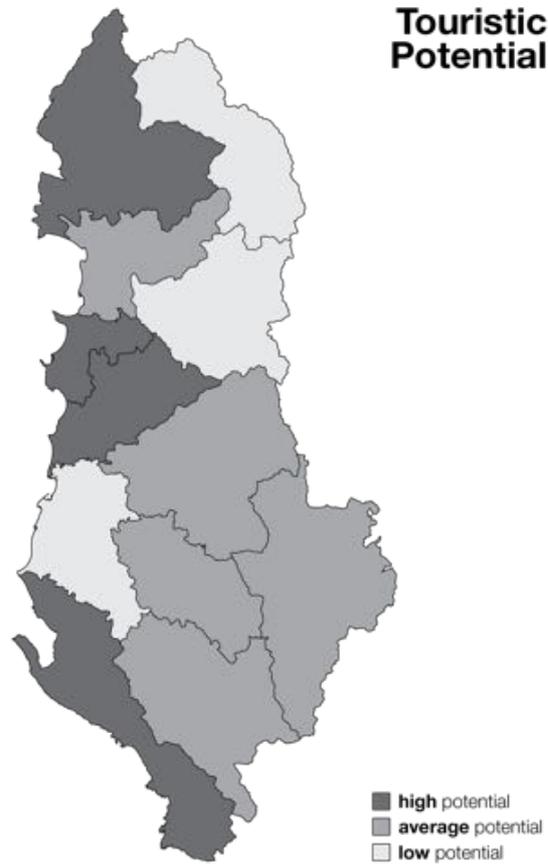


Figure 4.49 Map of Touristic Potential by region (source: author)

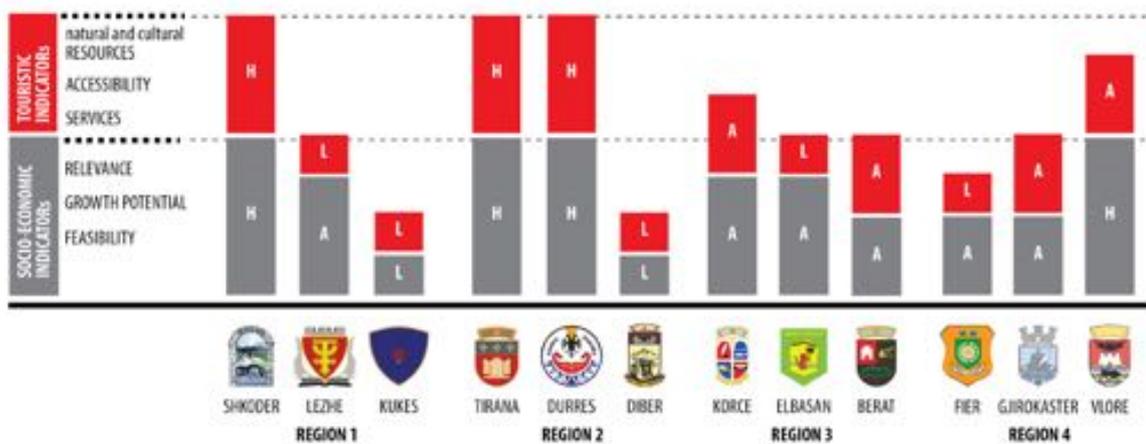


Figure 4.50 Region comparison by indicators (source: author)

Observing the final map, it is clear there is a huge gap between regions. Those differences are mainly caused by low quality or even absence of services and lack of

accessibility. Due to this, qarks like Kukës and Dibrës remains partially out of the touristic transformations. Growth indicators show major attention to coastal areas, while resources are more or less distributed equally throughout the national territory. A similar argument is for the analysis of human capital (relevance indicator), which the map also made the over performance of the Tirana-Durrës hub clear, and last but not least, in recent years the feasibility indicator drove our attention to the southern regions, despite a decade of concentration in the north.

A final consideration regards the qark of Vlorë, which performs highly in nearly all indicators. This means that a lot of attention has been given to touristic development here and is also confirmed by the increasing number of facilities built recently.

The region is therefore assumed as the main case study of this dissertation, due to the great tourist pressure these coastal landscapes have suffered in the last year, making an urgent need of reflection and intervention in this area clear.



## **5 Touriscapes and touristic space / evaluation of the touristic impact on the Riviera coastal landscapes**

In this chapter, the study area – representing the main case study – will be furthermore presented, contextualized in terms of location and touristic development, analyzed and classified according to the theories of the third chapter (the theoretical framework) in order to have a clearer vision before designing a possible model. In the analysis phase, the territory is divided into connections (infrastructure) and polarities (the touristic centre) in order to understand the relationship between them and their impact on the landscape.

## 5.1 The touristic segmentation of the Albanian coast



Figure 1 – Index map of the coast of Albania with indications of eroding and accreting sectors: (a) Adriatic Coast, (b) Ionian Coast.

Figure 5.1 “Map of the coast of Albania with indications of eroding and accreting sectors: (a) Adriatic Coast, (b) Ionian Coast” (source: Simeoni, Pano, & Ciavola, 1997:153)

The Albanian coastline is about 380 km long, with about 284 km facing the Adriatic Sea and the other 96 km the Ionian Sea, consists of 70% sandy beaches and is ‘characterized by lowlands and wide coastal plains in the north and a mostly rocky coast with some alluvial plains in the south’ (Rossi, et al., 2017), such as Shkodra lake, the lagoons of Karavasta-Divjaka and Butrint, Qeparo-Borsh valley. Lagoons especially cover a wide part of the coast (15,000 hectares circa) and are fundamental to the local economy (e.g. fishing, salt mining and other activities) (Simeoni, et al., 1997; Eftimi, 2003).

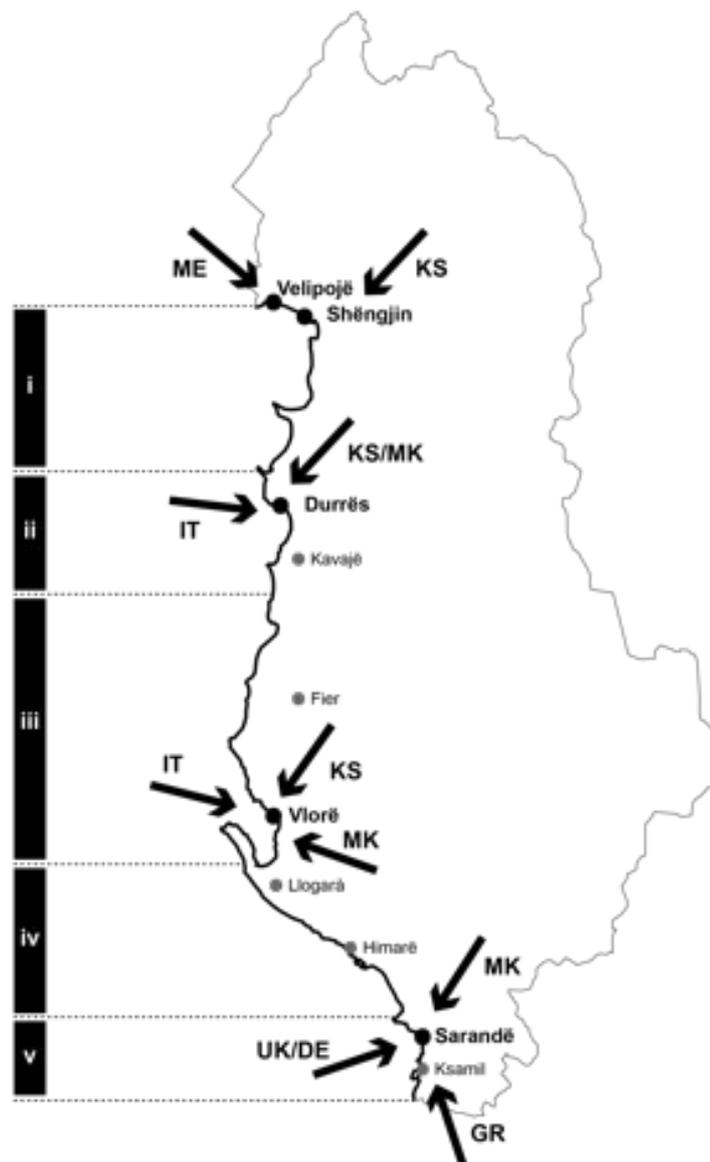
*‘The coastline is almost free from artificial structures that are present only near the ports of Shengjini, Durrës, Vlorë and Saranda. The only man-made structures that are scattered almost every - where along the coastal zone are military bunkers, built to prevent invasion of troops from the sea [...]. Despite the fact that some form of human intervention has taken place, the evolution of the Albanian coast in recent years did not suffer from the large man-made changes that affected the coastline of nearby countries [...]. The development of the Albanian coastal zone will be one of the key elements for the future economical growth of the country. Development in tourism activities will inevitably lead to an increase in urbanization*

*of the coastal zone, causing ecological and sociological changes' (Simeoni, et al., 1997, pp. 152-154).*

According to Simeoni, et al. (1997), two decades ago the coastal occupation was still low with a few exceptions (Shengjin, Durrës, Vlorë and Sarandë), although there was awareness of the future impact tourism may have on both ecology and society. In the following years, tourism differently and irregularly “colonized” the coast, mainly due to the distribution of infrastructure. The heart of this network is represented by the two regions of Tirana and Durrës, which host the only Albanian airport – Rinas “Nënë Tereza”, and the main port in Durrës, also considering historical development, Durrës represents the first coastal touristic settlement of the whole country. Right afterwards, tourism arrived also to the coasts of Vlorë – that host the second most important port – and Sarandë, that benefits from the touristic fluxes of the Greek island of Corfu in front of it and represents an important international tourist destination and infrastructural scale, both port and airport. In the north, the city of Shenjin is the only coastal tourist destination, especially appreciated by domestic tourists, or the ones coming from neighbouring countries such as Kosovo and Macedonia. The last to start its transformation is the area between Vlorë and Sarandë, also known as the Albanian Riviera. This piece of coastline has become really well known in recent years, due to its amazing and unspoilt landscapes.

The “sun, sand and sea” model is tourism’s most traditional model: a mix of second residence settlements and hotels that shape the “first coast”. In Durrës, Vlorë and Sarandë, this model expresses its worst impact on the landscapes, building a continuous line of touristic services and accommodation, without thinking about the areas just beyond nor the hinterland. In Shenjin the situation is similar but resized. The southern area of the Riviera has gone through this development in the last couple of years. Due to the difficult morphology and almost absent infrastructure, the tourist invasion has been slowed down. Although, the villages of Drymades, Himare, Qeparo and Borsh are recently recovering the lost time and starting to follow the linear model evolution scheme. The other areas – the Shkoder, Karavasta-Divjaka, Butrinti lagoons – still preserve their natural features, due to their geological characteristics that make their exploitation difficult. Although despite these conditions, the first investments and development projects are starting to appear on the market promoting the recovery of land through big tourist settlements, in defiance of public opinion being strongly against it.

This chapter aims to provide a critical overview of the study area, building a solid framework of a coastal landscape features, from a geological point of view, urban and touristic development, visual and landscape impact. A number of trips have been conducted to observe territorial transformations and individuate the main phenomenon. The main observation concerns the dualism of urban agglomerations: the old villages, which seem to be stopped in time and the new isolated tourist structures (paragraph 5.2) and their impact on landscapes and territory (paragraph 5.3). The final consideration will be used as a starting point to define the guidelines for the proposed site-specific tourism model (paragraph 5.4).



*Figure 5.2 Segmentation of the Albanian coast: typologies of tourism developed (source: author)*

This analysis, supported by the maps of the tourist facilities of the last century (paragraph 4.2.7), shows a high concentration on the central coastal area (Durrës-Golem) and in the extreme south (Sarandë). The Albanian coast can be divided in different segments according to the typologies of tourism promoted, developed and its impacts (

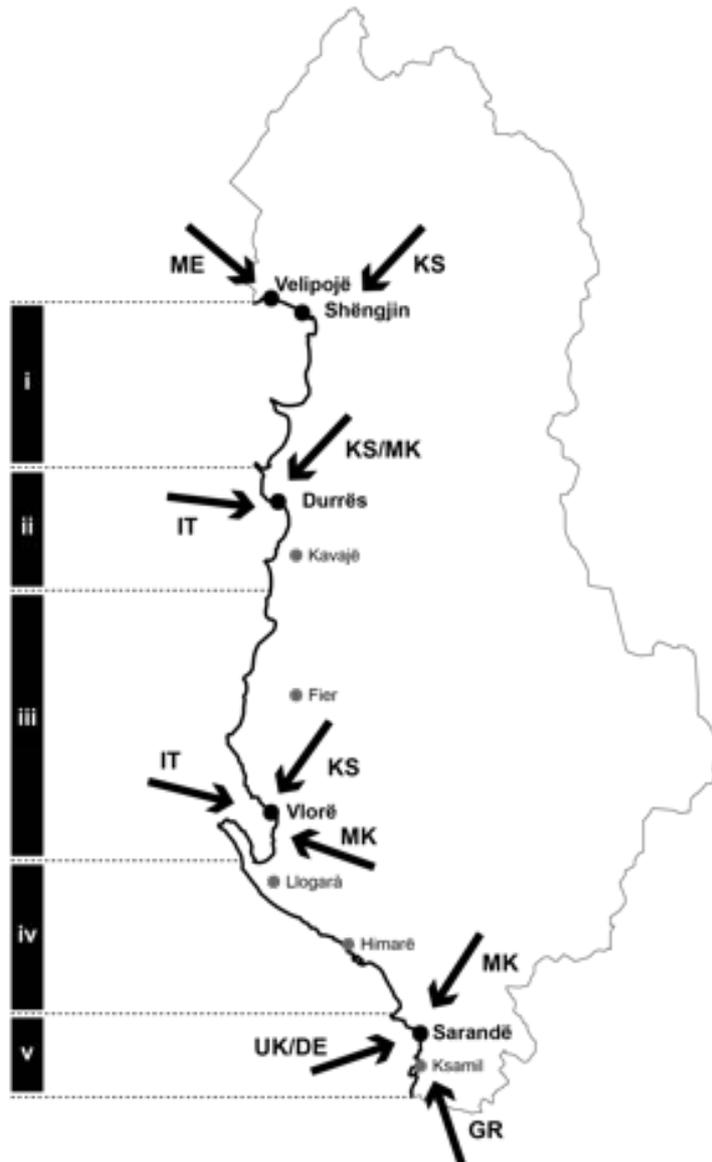


Figure 5.2). The paragraphs below present the five areas individuated and provide a general profile:

(i) Velipojë-Shengjin and the domestic flux. The northern coastal area of Albania runs from Shkoder to the northern Durrës region, including the Cape of Rodon promontory, and this area is mainly visited by Kosovo and Montenegro tourists due to good infrastructure

connections. The route Velipojë-Montenegrin border only takes 45 minutes by car, while Podgorica - Shengjin – the main touristic spot of the area –is only 1h50' by car, while from Prishtina is a bit more than 2hrs.

*'Sipas të dhënave nga hotelëritë e Shëngjinit, qytetarët nga Kosova përbëjnë numrin më të lartë të këtyre rezervimeve, por shihet tendencë në rritje edhe për prenotime nga turistët e huaj' (botasot.info, 2017)<sup>33</sup>.*



*Figure 5.3 Shengjin waterfront (source: AlbaniaTravel.com [accessed in June 2018])*

The tourism model developed and promoted is the most typical coastal tourist complex, composed of multi-storey buildings, hotel and resorts facing the main waterfront and connected by a promenade (Figure 5.3).

(ii) Durrës and Golem, the Albanians' second residence. The way tourism developed along the Durrës coast is a typical example of mass tourism. In summer, a large tourist flow, mainly domestic but also from Kosovo, Macedonia and Italy, gravitates towards the Durrës beach area and the region is totally overwhelmed (Figure 5.4). In Durrës the private sector has been in the lead, and local government has not taken much responsibility in serving public interest. On the Durrës Municipality official website, the

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<sup>33</sup> Translated from the Albanian: 'According to the data from the hotels of Shengjin, the citizens of Kosovo made the highest number of these reservations, but there is also a growing tendency for bookings from foreign tourists' (botasot.info, 2017).

Durres Beach is described as 'me i populluar i Shqiperise, per shkak te perqendrimt te madh te hoteleve dhe qendrave te banimit' (Bashkia Durrës, 2018)<sup>34</sup>, which might not be the right way to promote sustainable tourism development.



*Figure 5.4 Golem waterfront, south of Durrës (source: AlbaniaTravel.com [accessed in June 2018])*

(iii) Vlorë region. The entire area of Vlorë is well known for second residence tourism. Tourists come from the rest of the country, especially from inland, and Italy, due to the presence of the country's second biggest port, directly connected to the ports of Bari and Brindisi (Italy). Vlora city had a major development phase after 2007 (Figure 5.5), as shown in the study of the existing situation developed by the National Territorial Planning Agency which was supposed to represent the base for the Intersectorial Integrated Plan of the Coast (AKTP, 2009, p. 15). During this period, the waterfront line almost doubled in size, extending southbound.

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<sup>34</sup> Translated from the Albanian: 'The most populated beach due to the large concentration of hotels and residential centers' (Bashkia Durrës, 2018).

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.5 Vlorë expansion (source: AKTP, 2009:15)*

(iv) The Albanian Riviera. The coastal segment between Vlorë and Sarandë, the main case study of this dissertation, represents the only exception of the Albanian coast. Due to poor infrastructure, the area is lagging behind in tourism, revealing an opportunity for more sustainable development (Figure 5.6).



*Figure 5.6 Albanian Riviera, view from Llogarà Park (source: Eranda Janku)*

(v) Saranda, the German/British/Italian Albania. The southern area of Albania, where the city of Saranda lies, is the country's second largest tourisy spot in terms of tourist access and facilities and the first for international fluxes (Figure 5.7). Saranda is easily

reachable by car from Greece and Macedonia and by air from the Greek airport of Corfù, the island just in front of the city. The proximity of this airport, which counted more than half a million (c.600,000) international passengers in the month of August 2017 (FraportGreece, 2017), greatly influences touristic development in the area. The presence of the port also positively influences the touristic growth, and *'në anijet turistike dëgjon të flitet edhe anglisht, italisht, gjermanisht'*<sup>35</sup> (Monitor.al, 2012).



*Figure 5.7 Saranda (source: ionianseaways.com [Accessed in June 2018])*

### **5.1.1 The study area delimitation: the Albanian Riviera**

*'About one third of the Albanian coastline stretches along the Ionian Sea with a low degree of occupation by man. It is scarcely populated, since the only human activities are related to agriculture and cattle breeding: the total number of inhabitants are in the order of 60,000 [...]. Erosion of cliffs is prevalent along the coastline with formation of pocket beaches or narrow gravel beaches at the base of slopes like those at Lukova and Spile near Himare. The coast inside the Gulf of Butrinti has a different landscape, since the deposits of the Bistrica and Pavles rivers have created a coastal plain at Vurgu'* (Simeoni, et al., 1997, p. 154).

With a length of about 130km, the Albanian Riviera is the coastal area along the Ionian Sea, starting at the city of Vlora to the city of Saranda. It makes for one of the richest natural areas and ecological sites in Albania, an agglomeration of a series of protected areas, old churches, archeological sites and small traditional villages. Considered one of

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<sup>35</sup> Translated from the Albanian: *'On the ships you can hear English, Italian and German'* (Monitor.al, 2012).

the biggest tourism potentials of the country, disclosing territorial potential without destroying such, still remains a challenging task in this particular area.

*'Bregdeti (terme albanais signifiant: le littoral) qui comprend les charmantes bourgades cotieres: Lukove, Piqeras, Borsh, Qeparo, Himare, Vuno, Dhermi et Palase. Très panoramique est la petite baie de Porto Palermo' (Albturist, 1958, p. 119)<sup>36</sup>.*

*'Von Valona kann man auf einer länge der Küste verlaufenden Höhenstraße, die meist schlecht fahrbar, aber sehr aussichtsreich ist, über den Logarà-Paß (1055m) und durch die sog. Albanische Riviera nach (130km) Santi Quaranta (s. unten) gelangen' (MeyersReisebucher, 1930, pp. 265-266)<sup>37</sup>.*



*Figure 5.8 Road signage after the Llogarà pass (source: Eduardo González Mataró, 2018)*

In the last century the area has been shown as a panoramic, picturesque and virgin region, rich in natural and cultural resources. The main urban centres are represented by small villages, most of them located on the main road and in a few cases in contact with the sea (Dhermi-Dhrymades, Himarë and Qeparo). From a morphological point of view,

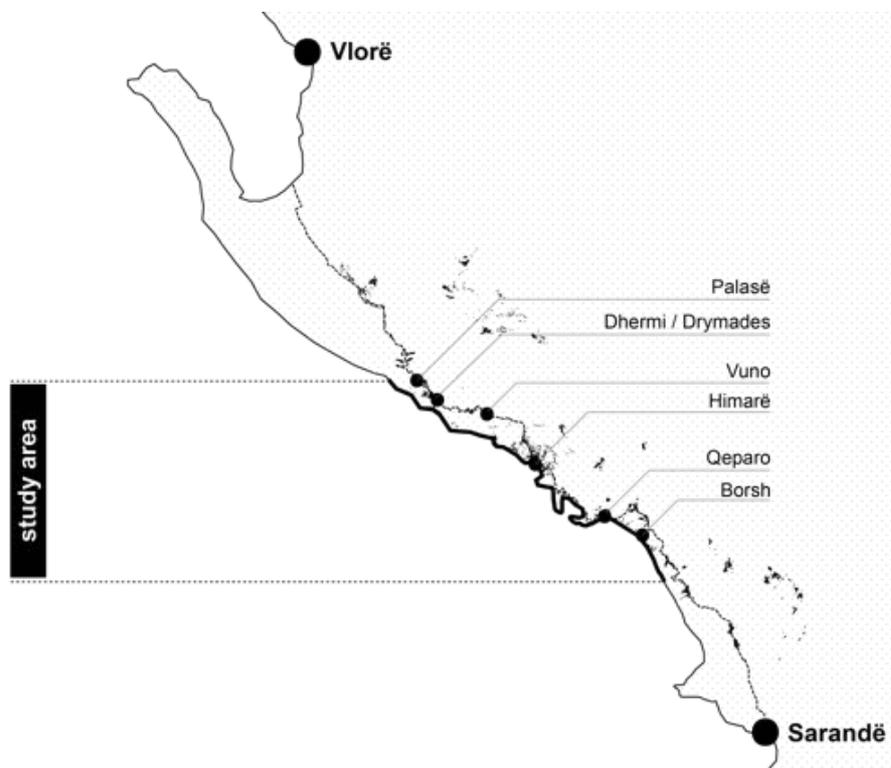
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<sup>36</sup> Translated from the French: "Bregdeti (Albanian term meaning: the coastline) includes the charming coastal villages: Lukove, Piqeras, Borsh, Qeparo, Himare, Vuno, Dhermi and Palase. Very panoramic is the small bay of Porto Palermo" (Albturist, 1958, p. 119).

<sup>37</sup> Translated from the German: "From Valona you can reach the coast along a long stretch road, which is mostly difficult to drive, with good views, over the Logarà Pass (1055m) and through the so-called Albanian Riviera to (130km) Santi Quaranta" (MeyersReisebucher, 1930, pp. 265-266). Santi Quaranta is the name given by the Italians to the city of Sarande.

the 'study area is strongly characterized by a mountain system that, until now, has played the role of preserving the natural ecosystem, acting as a physical-morphological barrier against human invasion' (Rossi, et al., 2017, p. 687). Another important issue is related to mobility and accessibility. The absence of urbanization, or better its concentration in small villages, is mainly due to poor infrastructure. The only connection between those spots is represented by the national road SH8 – "ruga Shtetërore, a slow route moving sinuously 'between remote villages and the natural heritage' (Rossi, et al., 2017, p. 287).

Traveling along the Riviera is an experience rich in stunning panorama, which support the comprehension of this peculiar region. In the last years, the small villages have been "assaulted" by seasonal tourists, which were coming from the region to establish their second residence, or from abroad to explore a new "exotic" destination. Those trend changes strongly challenged the carrying capacity of the area, creating high difference in between the touristic seasons. Villages, in fact, appeared completely empty in winter and overcrowded in summer. This behavior affets also the development of tourism architectures, which are fast blossoming everywhere without a proper plan. Existing 'buildings have been transformed by a number of architectural additions, resulting in an obvious contradiction between traditional and contemporary architecture' (Rossi, et al., 2017, p. 287).



*Figure 5.9 Map of the study area, from Llogara Pass to Borsh (source: author)*

Considering those elements, the challenges of the Albanian Riviera are related to the improvement of local services and accessibility and its adaptability to seasonal changes. Another dare is the morphology of the region, as previously said, which '*represents an interesting challenge when dealing with climate change*' (Rossi, et al., 2017, p. 287).

Given the economic analysis (paragraph 4.3) and the above reflections, the area was selected as subject of main case study of the dissertation. In fact, due to the strong tourism and speculation pressure, the area urges a development plan. In detail, the area now considered as the Riviera is the territory going from the Llogarà Pass to the Borsh Valley, just before the National Road SH8 loses its direct contact with the coast.

## **5.2 Is the Southern Albanian coast a Riviera? Analysis of the touristic space**

Referring to the definition of Riviera and the classification of tourist spaces provided by Lozato-Giotart (2008), the Southern Albanian coast is considered traditional despite not completely answering the Riviera definition, so it cannot be excluded it from this category.

In fact, contrary to the other Mediterranean Rivieras, the Albanian one did not have the expansion and development of the original urban clusters, such as the symbolic case of Nice in the Côte d'Azur, where "neighbourhoods never stopped expanding since the 19th century overpassing the ancient urban nucleus" (Lozato-Giotart, 2008, p. 56), is not proposed again here. In southern Albania, tourism is "spontaneously" developing just like on the Costa Brava – northern Catalonia - and other Rivieras (Lozato-Giotart, 2008, p. 125), and only in the last few years has there been pressure from external speculators and investors pushing to create luxury resorts (alias tourist stations *ex nihilo*).

According to the definition – not properly given but achieved through the literature review of the theories on tourist space (paragraph 3.4) – a Riviera is an area where tourism "spontaneously" developed with infrastructure being the result of extensions to the original, tourist polarities/stations are not built *ex nihilo* and the geological composition is mostly rocky. In the following paragraphs three main issues will be analyzed with different

methodologies in order to answer the question here: geological composition, infrastructure expansion and tourist station development.

After further checking of historical sources, it has also been noticed that the tag "Riviera" for this area appeared in the 1930 German Travel Guide edited by Meyers for the first time:

*'[...] Geradeaus werden die bergen von korfu sichtbar. die nun folgenden sanfteren Hange sind besiedelt (sog. Albanische Riviera)' (MeyersReisebucher, 1930, p. 266)<sup>38</sup>.*

While in all other guides and books, the area was referred as "bregdeti" (in Albanian, the coast), "le littoral" (in French), or simply as a route joining Valona with Santi Quaranta (the Italian name for Sarandë).

Only during the second half of the communist regime, the name Riviera became more recurring. In all Albturist<sup>39</sup> publications, in all languages and for all purposes, the area was named Riviera. In the French version "Guide d'Albanie" (Albturist, 1958), the area is described below as:

*'L'enchevêtrement de la nature, les contrastes du climat, la végétation exubérante, la mer bleue, les sommets dépassant les 2000 mètres d'altitude, les coteaux et les versant peuplés d'oliviers, agrumes, crus, arbres fruitiers, les plages attenantes à la mer comme autant de bandes argentées à côté de versants abrupts, la fureur des ouragans résonnant sur les hauts sommets même pendant le mois de mai, la douceur du climat en contre-bas même pendant les journées de janvier, quand les amandiers commencent à fleurir et les violettes tirent leur tête des buissons, ont fait donner, à juste titre par ailleurs, le nom de "Rivière Merveilleuse de l'Albanie" à cette contrée' (Albturist, 1958, p. 133)<sup>40</sup>.*

An interesting collection of images was used by Albturist to promote and disseminate a new image of Albania, not only including landscapes, but also historical artefacts

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<sup>38</sup> Translated from the German: "Straight ahead, the mountains of Corfu become visible. The following gentler slopes are populated (so-called Albanische Riviera)" (MeyersReisebucher, 1930, p. 266).

<sup>39</sup> See paragraph 4.2.4.

<sup>40</sup> Translated from the French: "The entanglement of the nature, the contrasts of the climate, the exuberant vegetation, the blue sea, the summits exceeding the 2000 meters altitude, the hillsides and the slopes populated with olive trees, citrus, raw, fruit trees, the beaches adjoining the sea like so many silver strips next to steep slopes, the fury of hurricanes resonating on the high peaks even during the month of May, the mildness of the climate down below even thinking the days of January, when amandiers begin to bloom and the violets take their head from the bushes, have rightly given the name of "Wonderful Riviera of Albania" to this country" (Albturist, 1958, p. 133).

belonging to the museums of Durrës and Butrinti. Among all those pictures, the one titled “Туристы на Ривьере” - translated from the Russian: Tourists on the Riviera, is significant. It is one of the few pictures with people portrayed and follows the propaganda guidelines according to what was needed to show the country as progressive.



*Figure 5.10 Туристы на Ривьере / Tourists in Riviera. In “Albanian Landscapes” (source: Alburist, 1960s)<sup>41</sup>*

The fact that use of the Riviera tag was consolidated during the 60s is probably due to the parallel phenomena happening in the other Mediterranean countries (the birth of the Riviera Romagnola, as well as the expansion and consolidation of the Côte d’Azur, Costa Brava and Costa del So). While use of the same tag in the 1930s is not entirely clear, it was probably attributable to the fact Germans were among the main tourists travelling to the Côte d’Azur and hence the term Riviera was already part of their vocabulary.

### **5.2.1 Coastal typologies**

The Albanian Riviera is characterized, as previously mentioned, from a high slope. With an altitude difference of a maximum 450 metres in a short distance of 2 kilometers. In

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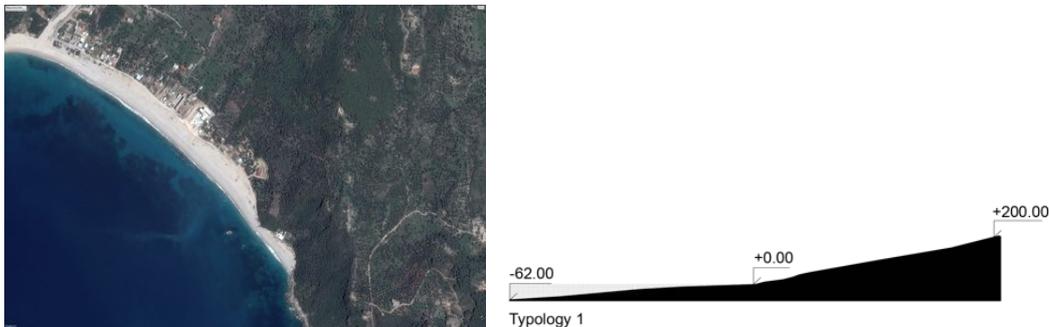
<sup>41</sup> The publication date is estimated by the author. The book has been found in a market in Kruja during summer 2017 in Russian, Spanish, Italian and German. The images were the same in all of the books, just the captions were translated in the different languages. In none of them, the year of publication was reported. It has been supposed the period of publication due to the known date of foundation of Alburist company (1956) and the fact that after 60s the relationships with URSS and Russia were broken. So since the book has a version in Russian, it is evident that it has been printed in a period when the relations were still good.

creating a taxonomy of the coastal typologies, the study area was divided into 41 segments and individually sectioned (Figure 5.11). The map below shows distribution and alternation of the different categories.



*Figure 5.11 The Alternation of the coastal typologies (Source: "La Riviera Albanesa, un paisaje de limite y oportunidad". Final presentation of the workshop "Salvamos el Paraiso" organized in the framework of the Master in Landscape – Fundació UPC Barcelona. Group Group tutor: Enrico Porfido; Students: Denis Santaella and Santiago Valdivieso) / see the Appendix section for the full-page version*

From direct observation of the coastline, six different coast typologies were individuated according to their geological composition and morphology:



*Figure 5.12 Coastal typology 1: Sand beach, plan and section (source: author, based on Google Earth)*

1. Sandy beach – coastal fragments characterized by white sandy beaches with a depth varying from 5 to 15 metres and an incline of around 2,5%. This typology is the most diffused and as hence the most used and affected by tourist activities, due to ease of access;

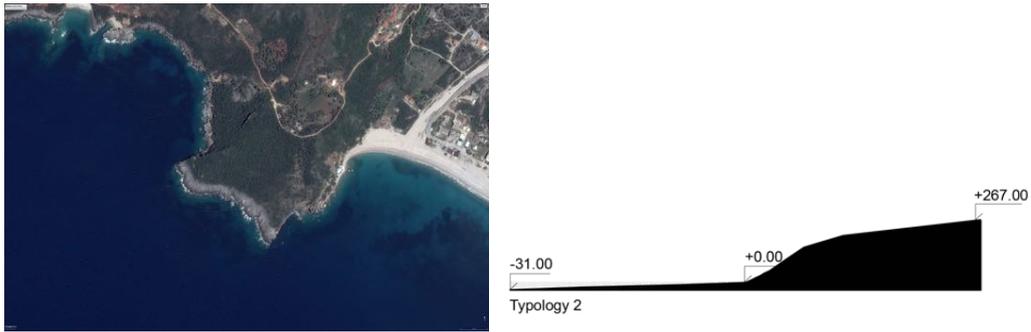


Figure 5.13 Coastal typology 2: Rock beach with high inclination, plan and section (source: author, based on Google Earth)

2. Rocky beaches with high inclination (cliff) – coastal fragments with high inclination cliffs and characterized by low accessibility. Such areas represent the most preserved ones and can be found mostly on either side of a bay;

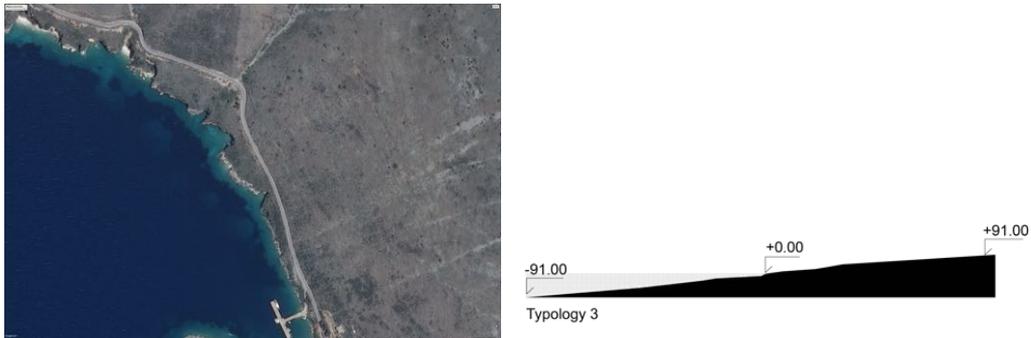


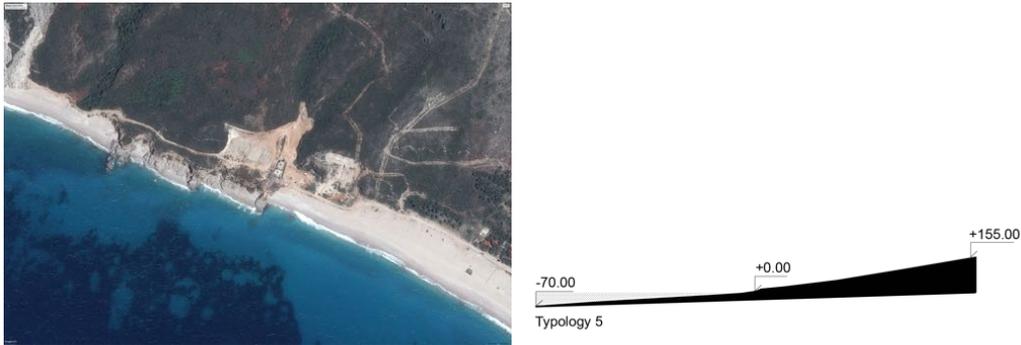
Figure 5.14 Coastal typology 3: Rocky beach with low inclination, plan and section (source: author, based on Google Earth)

3. Rocky beaches with low inclination – coastal fragments with low inclination. This typology is only visible in the bay of Porto Palermo, characterized by the low seabed;



Figure 5.15 Coastal typology 4: River delta, plan and section (source: author, based on Google Earth)

4. River delta – coastal fragments on the mouth of a river, characterized by different types of sediment (stones, sand, mud), high humidity and water presence in different seasons, low vegetation. This typology is mostly found in two areas: The Palase delta and the Qeparo/Borsh valley, both areas strongly affected by tourism due to their flat extension;



*Figure 5.16 Coastal typology 5: Mixed A, plan and section (source: author, based on Google Earth)*

5. Mixed A – coastal fragments characterized by sand and a few stones probably as a result of sedimentation;



*Figure 5.17 Coastal typology 6: Mixed B, plan and section (source: author, based on Google Earth)*

6. Mixed B – coastal fragments mostly characterized by pebbles with some exceptions related to cliff detachment.

With the exception of few small sandy beaches, the whole area is dominated by rocky landscapes and when height difference is not very significant, the beaches are mostly composed of pebbles and stones. These phenomena are probably caused by the high level of erosion of the area (as shown in the Figure 5.1). From a geological point of view, the area is considered a Riviera, like the Costa Brava, the Dalmatian Riviera and Liguria.

### **5.2.2 SH8 – the main and unique connection**

*'South of Vlora, the bus goes around the bay offering a view of the peninsula separating the Adriatic from the Ionian sea. A long climb starts passing through the crowns of pine trees with views back to the bay. Once it reaches the Llogara pass, a spectacular panorama unfolds: the bus continues its journey, slowing down at every sharp bend along the road. It takes the whole day to get from Tirana to Saranda stopping at some stunning beaches, high cliffs and quaint villages. A sequence of diverse and peculiar landscapes lead south towards Butrinti, passing through the National Park wetlands to the archaeological site on a hill overlooking the Vivari Channel' (Lobosco & Lang, 2016, p. 142).*

The Albanian State Road 8 – SH8, abbreviation for “Rruga Shetëtoe 8” – connects the city of Fier with Sarandë, passing through all the villages and towns along the coast. Ranked as one of the world’s most spectacular roads (Dangerous Roads, 2018), the SH8 is a dual-carriageway around 126km long. The most spectacular view is from the Llogarà Pass (the end of the National Park), southbound. From an altitude of 1.043m a.s.l. it is possible to see the whole Albanian Riviera, then in just a few kilometers, the road gets to sea level and starts its spectacular winding path through all the small villages of the area.



*Figure 5.18 (right) The view from Llogarà Pass, (left) the Llogarà Pass from the beach of Palasë (source: own photo)*

Originally built around 1920, the SH8 connected villages with no direct contact with the sea. In the map of the Consociazione Turistica Italiana (1940), the road was constantly parallel to the coast (Figure 5.19).

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



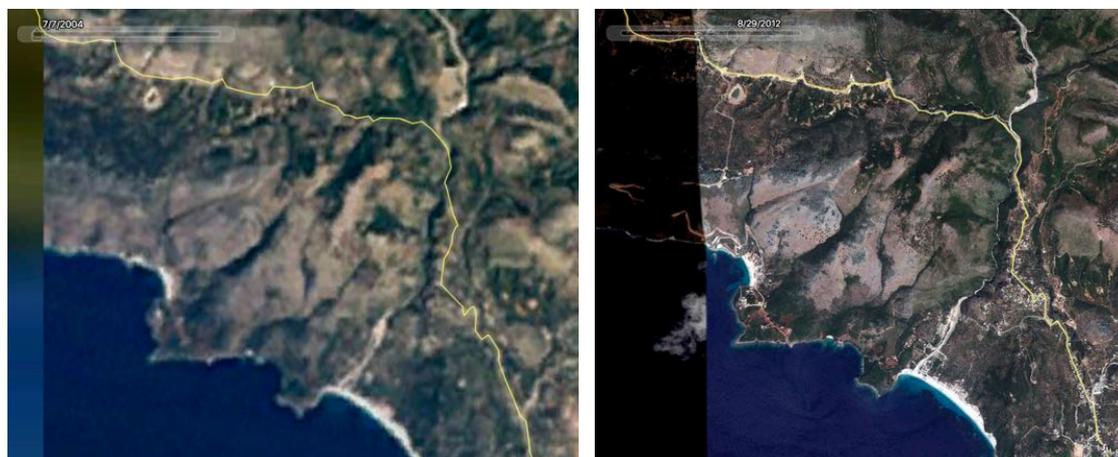
*Figure 5.19 SH8 in the Albania map of the first Italian touristic guide (source: Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940)*

During the Communism period, this stretch was closed with only military facilities (bases, bunkers) built along the coast.



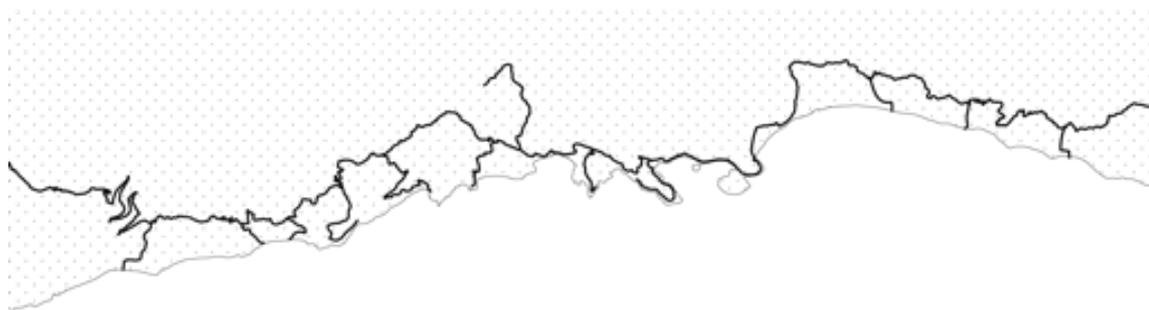
*Figure 5.20 SH8 main road evolution in the last 40 years (source: GoogleEarth, 1986, 1990, 1999, 2010, 2016)*

The path of the main road did not change at all, as the satellite maps show in Figure 5.20, but over the last two decades a number of secondary branches started to reach the shore and zooming into some of the areas those connections are more evident.



*Figure 5.21 Secondary road built between 2004 and 2012 just before the Gjipe Canyon (source: GoogleEarth 2004, 2012)*

This “spontaneous” interconnection process is a reminder of the Languedoc-Roussillon case. Those infrastructure extensions provided the much needed contact with the sea, creating a “comb like structure” starting the construction of the coastal stations (paragraph 5.2.3).



*Figure 5.22 The comb-structure of the SH8 today (source: author, based on GoogleEarth, 2017)*

### **5.2.3 Stations: The evolution of touristic centers/polarities**

Tourism development along the coast has not been homogeneous and the first centres to face the pressure of tourism were from north to south: the villages of Dhermi-Dhrymades and Himarë, later followed by Borsh. The reason why the tourism arrived earlier here is

mainly related to ease of access and proximity to the beach. Starting from these four main poles, tourism slowly invaded the other villages, both inland and on the coast, such as Dhermi, Vuno, Qeparo. Few areas have been temporarily saved, although in the last couple of years, it managed to arrive to some of the most remote areas such as the Palasë Delta, Gjipe Canyon and Kakome Bay.

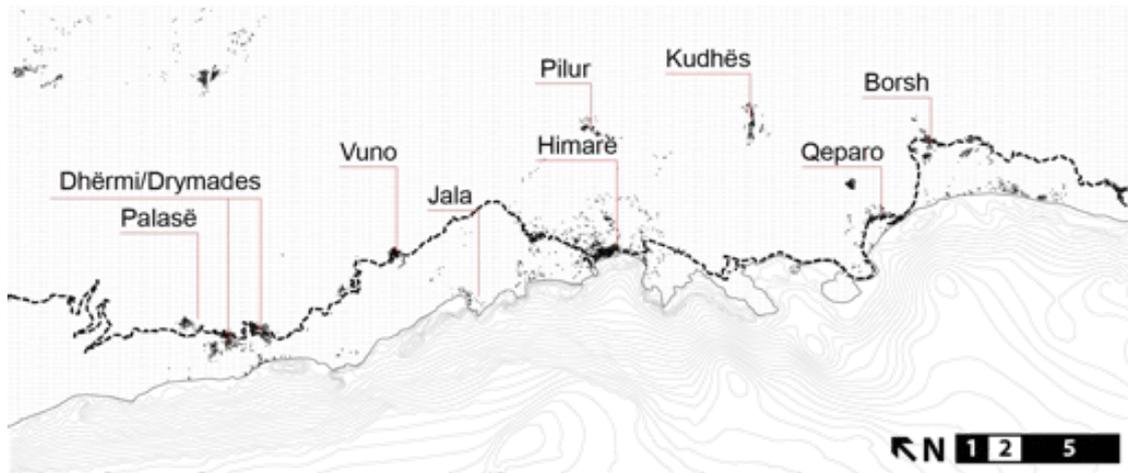


Figure 5.23 Map of the villages of the Albanian Riviera (source: author, based on Google Maps)

A graphic reconstruction of the tourist evolution in those main areas (based on Google Maps over different years) helps understand the speed of this tourist invasion and to reach the first conclusions about the touristic expansion model.

### 5.2.3.1 Palasë

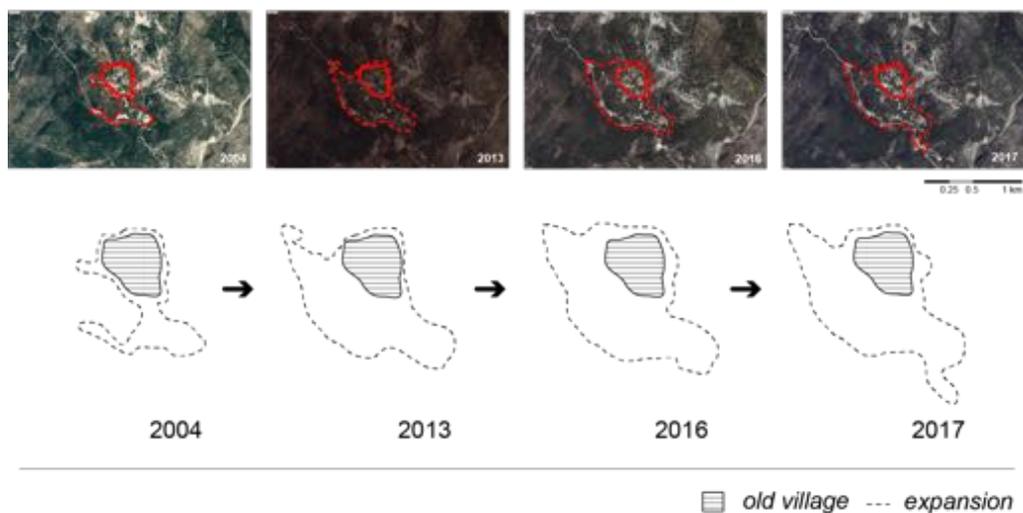


Figure 5.24 Palasë village evolution (source: author, based on Google Maps 2004, 2013, 2016, 2017)

*'Km. 41 si giunge al Passo della Logorà m.1055 e si inizia la discesa verso la costa di Chimara. Al paesaggio alpestre si sostituisce improvvisam. la distesa del mare Ionio in cui appaiono in fondo, a S, le isole del gruppo di Corfù [...] Cinque lunghe serpentine portano al villaggio di Paliasa, ai cui piedi sorgeva Palaeste, dove sarebbe sbarcato Cesare, inseguendo Pompeo nel 48 a.C.'* (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206)<sup>42</sup>.

Palasë - also know as "Paljasa" from the old Greek name, is the first village, going down from the Llogara National Park. Palasë village is characterized by small roads and houses realized in the local white stone. In the main square there is a 400-year-old plane tree, which represented the centre of village life. The coastal part is 1.5km length and it is known as "Palasë beach".

From observing the maps, the village of Palasë shows a **low expansion rate**. Probably due to its distance from the coast, the new constructions are concentrated on the main road, while the old center is preserved in the original conditions (see paragraph 5.4).

#### 5.2.3.2 Dhermi and Dhrymades

*'Di qui incomincia la splendida \*costa della Chimara, che rivaleggia coi paesaggi più celebrati della costa Dalmatica: è un alternarsi di salite e discese sulla dorsale di alture, ora rocciose, ora fertili e ricoperte di flora del tutto mediterranea: aranci, limoni, cedri e ulivi. [...] Km. 58 Dhrymades, dalle case aggrappate alle pareti di un profondo burrone'* (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).<sup>43</sup>

The village of Dhermi is the second on the road to Sarande and not located on the sea. The original village is in fact on a small promontory at approximately 200m. Recently, this area lived a fast and excessive increase in accommodation facilities, such as individual or bi-familiar villas complexes, apartments and hotels. This area is named "Dhrymades" (from the greek name of Dhermi, Δρυμάδες, *Drymades*) and is officially part of Dhermi village<sup>44</sup>. Although for the purpose of the study, such areas are considered two different

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<sup>42</sup> Translated from the Italian: "Km. 41 you reach the Logora Pass (1055 m) and the descent towards the coast of Chimara starts. The alpine landscape is suddenly substituted by the Ionian sea in which the islands of the group of Corfu appear on the background [...] Five long serpentine curves lead to the village of Paliasa, at whose feet Palaeste stood, where Cesare would have gone ashore, pursuing Pompeus in 48 BC." (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).

<sup>43</sup> Translated from the Italian: 'From here begins the splendid \*coast of Chimara, which challenges the most celebrated landscapes of the Dalmatian coast. It is an alternation of climbs and descents on the ridge of hills, sometimes rocky, other rimes fertile and covered with Mediterranean flora: orange, lemon, cedar and olive trees. [...] Km. 58 Dhrymades, characterized by houses clinging to the walls of a deep ravine' (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).

<sup>44</sup> Due to its name in two languages (Dhermi in Albanian and Drymades in Greek), the touristic guides of the last century often confused them referring to one or the other without distinction. The Italian guide of the 1940

urban agglomerations. Following the current trend and road signage, the name Dhermi is used for the old village, while Dhrymades for the coastal area.

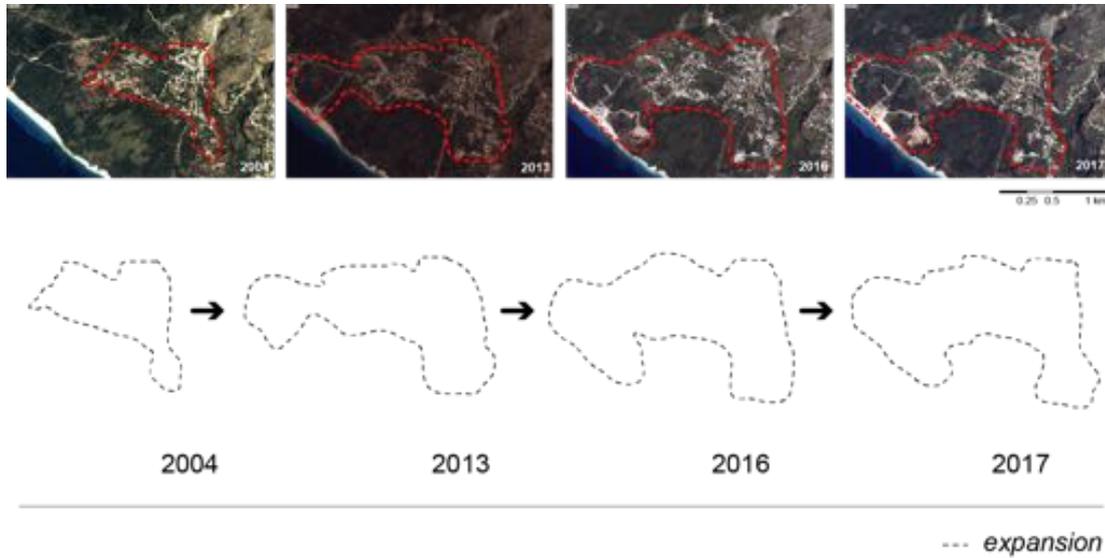


Figure 5.25 Dhermi evolution (source: author based on Google Maps 2004, 2011, 2016, 2017)

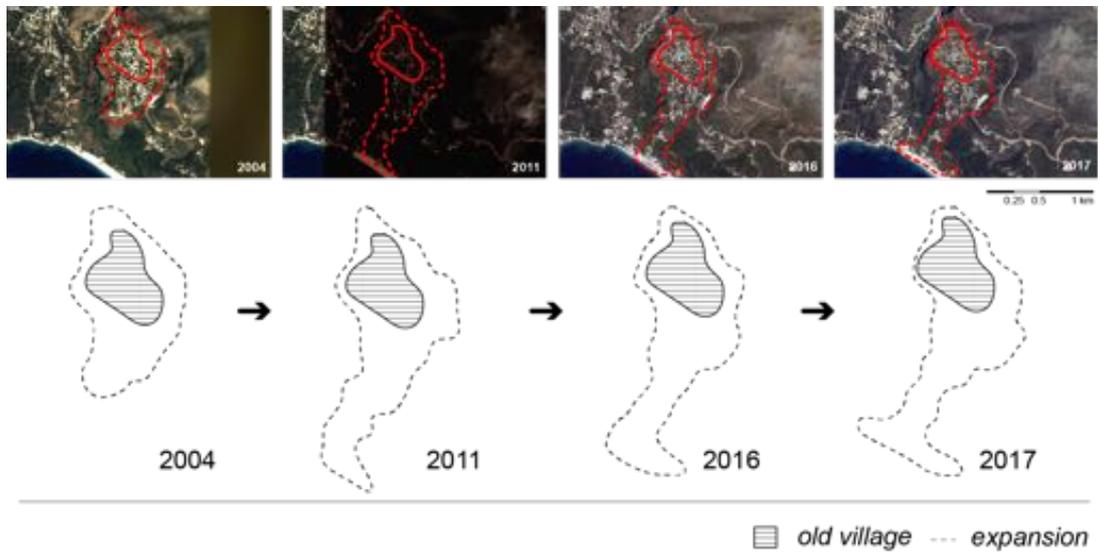


Figure 5.26 Drymadhes evolution (source: author, based on Google Maps 2004, 2013, 2016, 2017)

(Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940) mentioned the greek name Drymades, while others the Albanian name Dhermi. Due to this, often the village name has been misunderstood.

The coastal expansion of Drymadhes started around 2010, while access to the sea was still limited. On the 2013 map, the first beach road started the process of coastal cementification, leading to the construction of two new resorts. The old village of Dhermi has been left mainly untouched, with its original, traditional buildings. Few investors are opening small businesses such as hostels and bed and breakfasts (e.g. Holiday Villa Old Qeparo), while most are concentrating on the other bay. In fact, again after 2010, another road was built in order to connect the seaside, and later on, the old town. This new link launched development of a new area, which will soon connect the coast with the upper one. The Dhermi old village presents a **low rate** of expansion, while Dhrymades a **high rate**.

### 5.2.3.3 Vuno

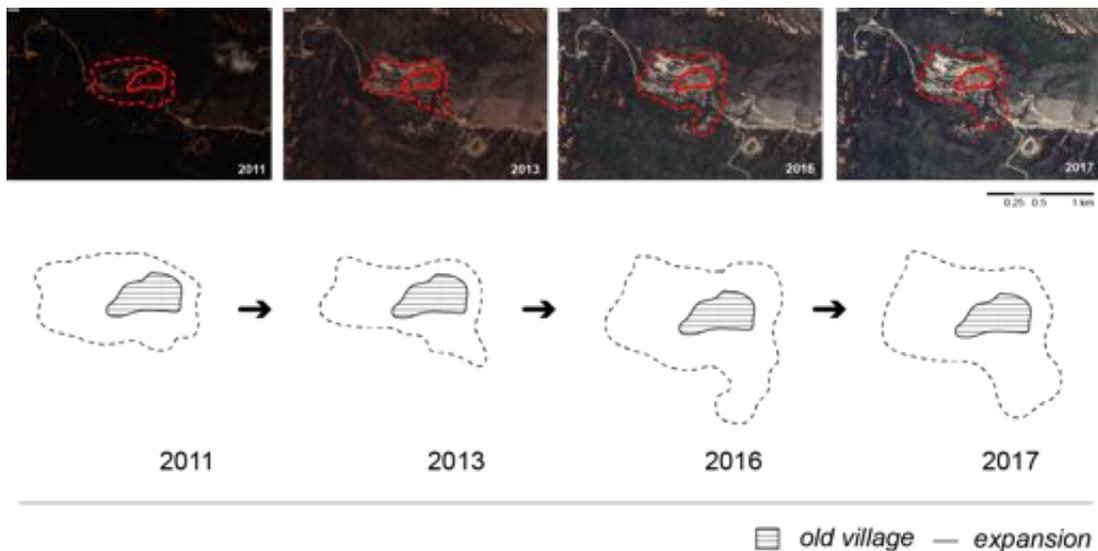


Figure 5.27 Vuno village evolution (source: author, based on Google Maps 2011, 2013, 2016, 2017)

*'Km. 63.5 il borgo di Vuno, ove rimane una rozza scultura medioevale rappresentante il Leone di Venezia, che gli abitanti stessi indicano con il nome italianissimo di "Sammarco" ' (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).<sup>45</sup>*

Vuno is the third village of the Albanian Riviera. The village is 300m a.s.l. and its name probably derives from the Greek word Bouvó, meaning "mountain". The village is the

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<sup>45</sup> Translated from the Italian: *'Km. 63.5 the village of Vuno, where there is a rough medieval sculpture representing the Lion of Venice, which the inhabitants themselves indicate with the Italian name of "Sammarco" ' (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).*

fourth on the road to Saranda and is mainly developed inland. Its position is strategic given its proximity to Gjipe Canyon and the beach of Jala.

In recent years, the village of Vuno has kept the main surface dimension. Due to tourism activities such as the "South Outdoor Festival" ([www.festival.south.al](http://www.festival.south.al)), the village is becoming a point of reference for alternative tourism based on inland sports promotion. From observing the maps, Vuno village also presents a **low rate** of expansion.

#### 5.2.3.4 Himarë



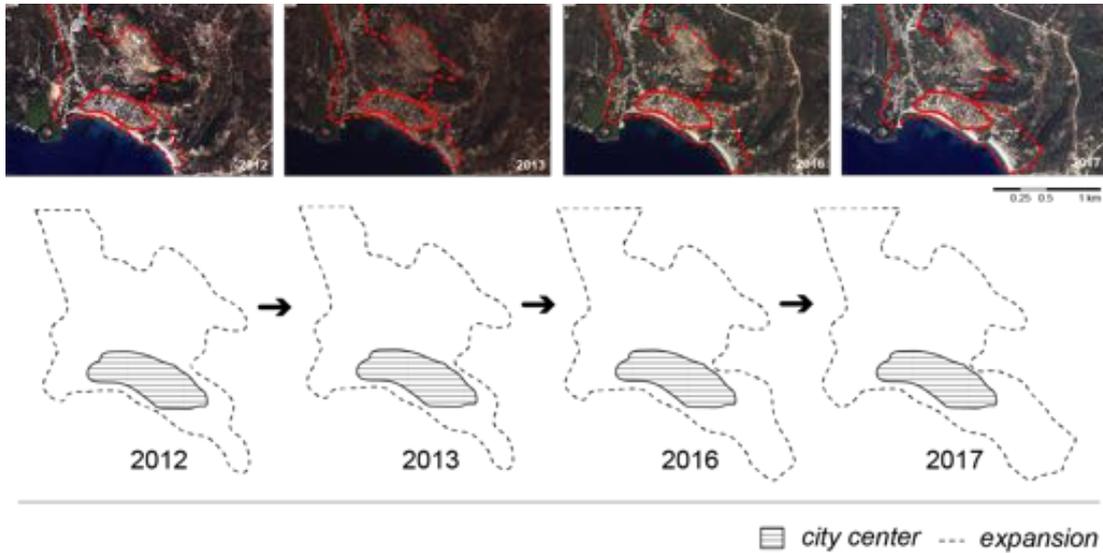
Figure 5.28 Himarë old village and coastal expansion (source: author, based on Google Maps 2018)

*‘Sempre in mezzo a ricche culture e con panorama sempre vario e sempre bello, si giunge a, km.72, Chimara o Himara, m. 200, ab.1550 circa, sottoprefettura e centro della riviera omonima, nota per la sua bellezza. [...] In mezzo ad aranceti si scende al borgo marino di Chiamara, Spila o Porto Spilio, ove sono gli uffici, la posta e il telegrafo ed un modesto caffè’ (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).<sup>46</sup>*

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<sup>46</sup> Translated from the Italian: ‘Always in the middle of rich cultures and with varied and beautiful landscape, you can reach at km.72 the town of Chimara or Himara (m. 200, ab.1550 circa), which is sub-prefecture and center of the homonymous riviera, known for its beauty. [...] In the middle of orange groves you go down to the seaside village of Chiamara, Spila or Porto Spilio, where are the offices, the post office and the telegraph and a modest coffee bar’ (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 206).

Himarë is the main urban centre for the entire Riviera and plays host to the most important tourist facilities with hotels, apartments, restaurants and bars all around. Himarë is divided into two areas, the old village on the hill and the coastal part. The coastal expansion, a further object of the study, had already started its development in the last century.



*Figure 5.29 Himarë village evolution (source: author, based on Google Maps 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017)*

The maps, available only since 2012, show a **low rate** of expansion, but a **high rate of densification**. The town is in fact developing in a more compact and denser approach than in other areas.

### 5.2.3.5 Qeparo



Figure 5.30 Qeparo old village and coastal expansion (source: author based on Google Maps 2018)

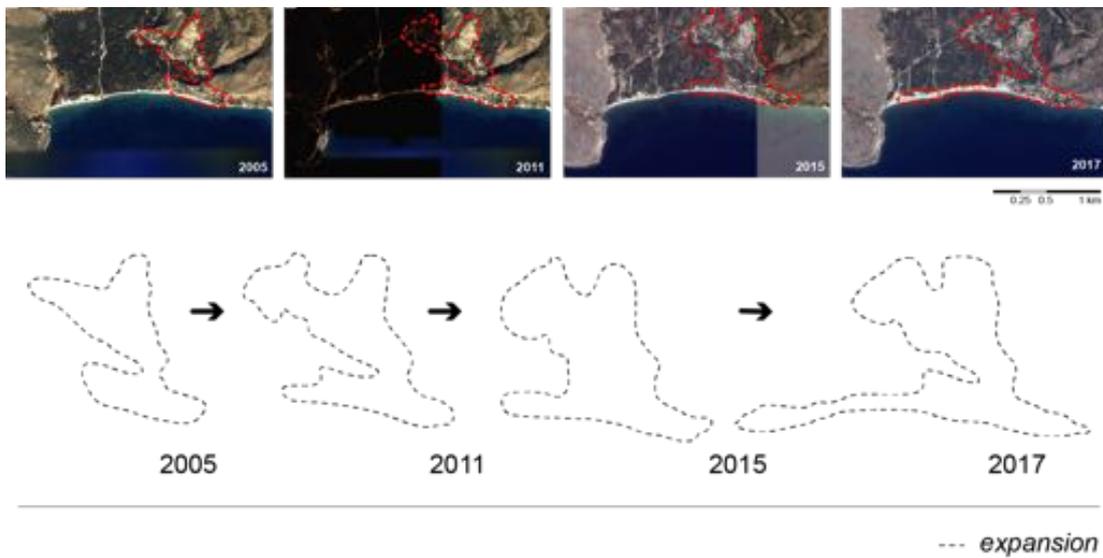


Figure 5.31 Qeparo coastal area evolution (source: author, based on Google Maps 2005, 2011, 2015, 2017)

'A 5 km. De Borsh on est à Qeparo, une bourgade accueillante et très belle. Situé sur une gorge de montagne, Qeparo est sis entièrement sur un promontoire

*rocheaux. Actuellement une nouvelle bourgade est en train de substituer la première dans la petite plaine sur le littoral' (Albturist, 1958, p. 187)<sup>47</sup>.*

The area of Qeparo is divided into two parts - the old (also known as *Qeparo fshat* - the old Qeparo) and new area on the coast. The entire alluvial plain, which hosts the Qeparo village, is characterized by an extended olive trees cultivation. For this reason, the entire area was named "Kiepero" or "Kiparos", which 'derives from the Greek word "kipos", meaning garden' (Gregorič, 2011). For the purpose of the study, the area taken into consideration is the coastal one.

The new Qeparo shows a **medium rate** of expansion. Until after 2010, touristic facilities were built in the coastal area in front of the main village, leaving the long pebble beach free from construction. The opening of a big hotel (Valta Hotel, whose case is presented in the following paragraph) started a process of cementification of the entire coast in order to create a promenade where more and more facilities will be built. The model proposed and presented will lead to intense future expansion.

#### 5.2.3.6 Borsh

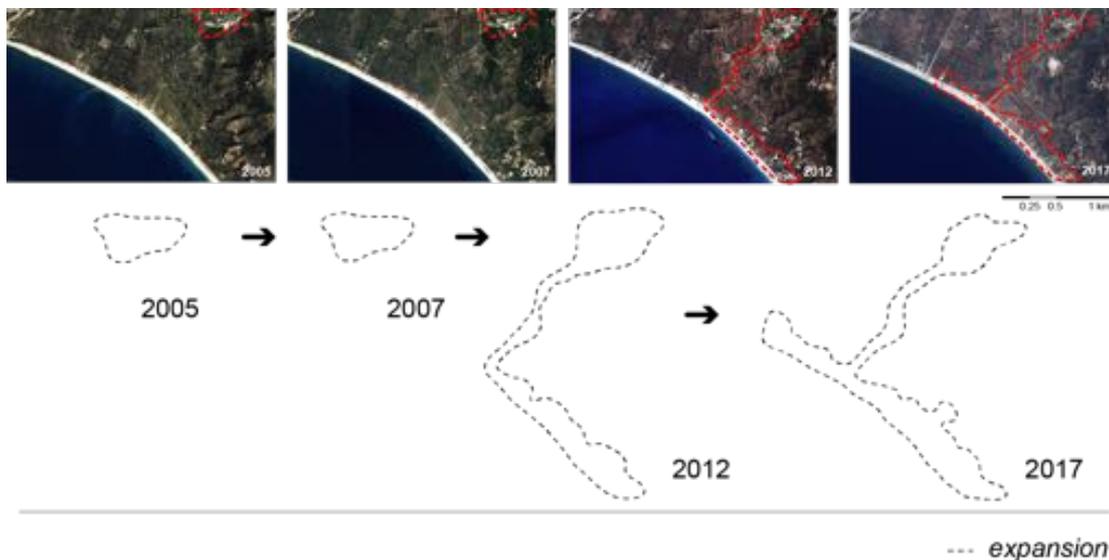


Figure 5.32 Borsh village evolution (source: author, based on Google Maps 2005, 2007, 2012, 2017)

<sup>47</sup> Translated from the French: 'At 5 km from Borsh, there is Qeparo, a welcoming and beautiful village which is located on top of a mountain. Qeparo is located entirely on a rocky promontory. Currently a new village is replacing the first in the small plain on the coast' (Albturist, 1958, p. 187).

*'Superato il promontorio meridionale della baia, si scende in uno dei tratti più ricchi di colture di tutta la regione. Ulivi, aranci, fichi d'India e agavi, in mezzo alle quali fioriscono gli oleandri, fanno corona alla strada fino a Borshi (km.98.5)' (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 207)<sup>48</sup>.*

Borsh is the last maritime village in the former Lukovë municipality, before the main road goes inland. As the previous case of Qeparo, Borsh is also in an alluvial valley full of olive trees, citrus groves and agave.

The village is located inland, along the national road, and only around 2010 has it been connected to the sea with a vehicle accessible road. This led to touristification of the coast that is happening following the most used linear model. Until today, the village shows a **medium rate** of expansion, but due to the long coast available it is destined to fastly grow as Qeparo.

#### **5.2.4 Touristic facilities in the main urban centres**

In order to quantify the impact of the touristic facilities on the Riviera, research on the most important touristic search engines (www.booking.com for the hotels/B&B/hostels, www.airbnb.com for the Apartment for renting and www.eurocampings.co.uk for camping and campsites) was done.

To then calculate the number of lodgings based on structures, the following calculus have been done:

- I. Hotel / B&B – considering the average, the structures on the Riviera are small/medium hotels with circa. 10 double rooms. The number coming from booking.com has been than multiplied by 20 (10 rooms \* 2 people each);
- II. Airbnb Apartments – it has been considered an average of 4 people per apartment;
- III. Camping – the dimension of campsites is medium, for this reason 100 lodgings have been considered of each (including both the campsite and the camper area).

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<sup>48</sup> Translated from the Italian: *'After passing the southern promontory of the bay, it is possible to go down into one of the richest agricultural area of the entire region. Olive trees, orange trees, prickly pears and agaves, among which oleanders bloom, crown the road up to Borshi (km.98.5)' (Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1940, p. 207).*

Study area	Hotels	Airbnb Apartments	Campings	Total lodgings
Palasë	2	14	-	96
Dhermi	7	10	-	180
Dhrymades	37	67	3	1308
Vuno	4	3	1	192
Himarë	82	163	3	2592
Qeparo	23	42	1	728
Borsh	25	37	-	648
<b>total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5744</b>

Table 5.1 Touristic facilities and lodgings available by village/area (source: author, based on booking.com, airbnb.com and hostel.com [accessed on July 2018])

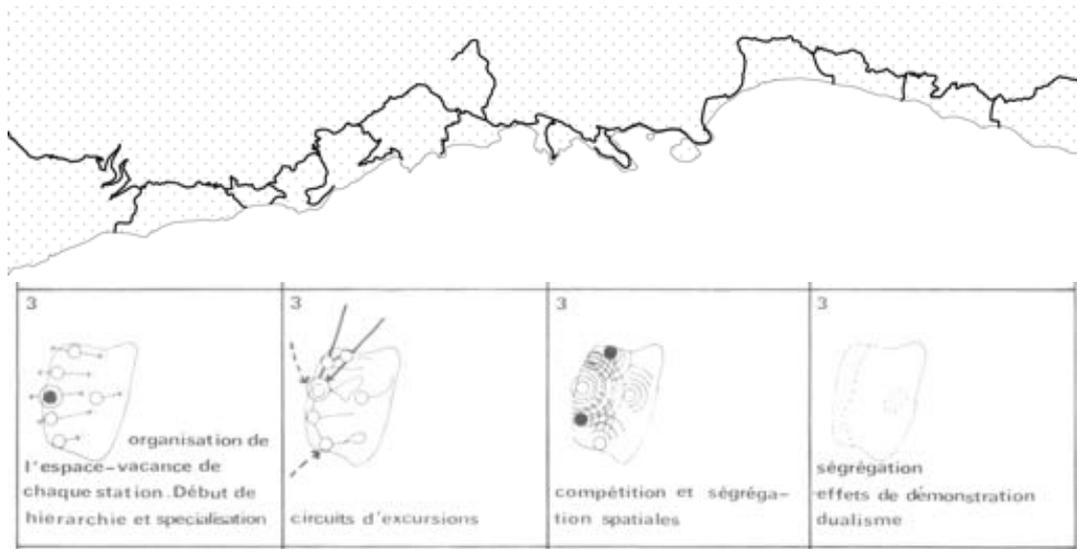
From this data, Himara is confirmed as the main tourist centre of the Riviera with circa 2600 lodgings, doubling Dhrymades with its 1300. The new tourist centres Qeparo and Borsh have been increasing the number of lodgings in the last year, both now around 700. The old villages have under 200 lodgings each, probably due to the lack of building surface in such compact areas.

### 5.2.5 A discontinuous Riviera: stations ex nihilo and infrastructures extention

From the six case study maps, it can be concluded that:

- I. The surface of the villages not in direct contact with the seaside has not significantly increased, such as Palase, Dhermi, Vuno, Qeparo and Borsh;
- II. Around 2010, the first infrastructures were built to connect the main road and the old villages to the beach – creating a comb structure;
- III. As an effect of these links, new urban agglomerations raised on the coast. At first they appeared as satellites of the old villages that then conquered their own independence, such as Dhrymades and the new Qeparo. Those are considered tourist stations-built *ex nihilo*;
- IV. Himare is the only case in which the increment of tourist activities did not impact the total surface of the centre;
- V. Most of the new touristic structures and infrastructures have been de-centralized and built directly on the coast in order to enjoy better views and a wealthy location.

The new secondary infrastructures created a comb-structure which will assume a main role for the next touristic (and non-touristic) expansions. This structure reminisces the diagrams of the third phase of Miossec 's model when the stations started to organize and a hierarchization and specialization process begins.



*Figure 5.33 Map of comb structure and stations / Miossec's model phase 3 (source: author and Miossec, 1977)*

Referring to the touristic space classification by Lozato-Giotart (2008), the area does not fully fit the definition of “multipolar beach region – dense and diversified”, nor the “specialized region with polar discontinuity”, the area finds itself in between the two. From an infrastructural and geological point of view, the area follows the first category's features – being “mainly rocky, where tourism developed spontaneously through the extension of existing infrastructures”. While concerning the tourist stations, most of them – especially the ones on the coast – have been built “ex nihilo”. This drove the area in the last category of specialized region with polarity discontinuity. In addition, the area shows an alternation of touristic and non-touristic spaces, which emphasizes the discontinuity feature.

The case of the Costa del Sol is assumed a reference for the first category, although it is considered a “neo-Riviera” due to its coast being less rocky and some of the tourist stations built ex-nihilo. The main feature is its continuous concrete waterfront.

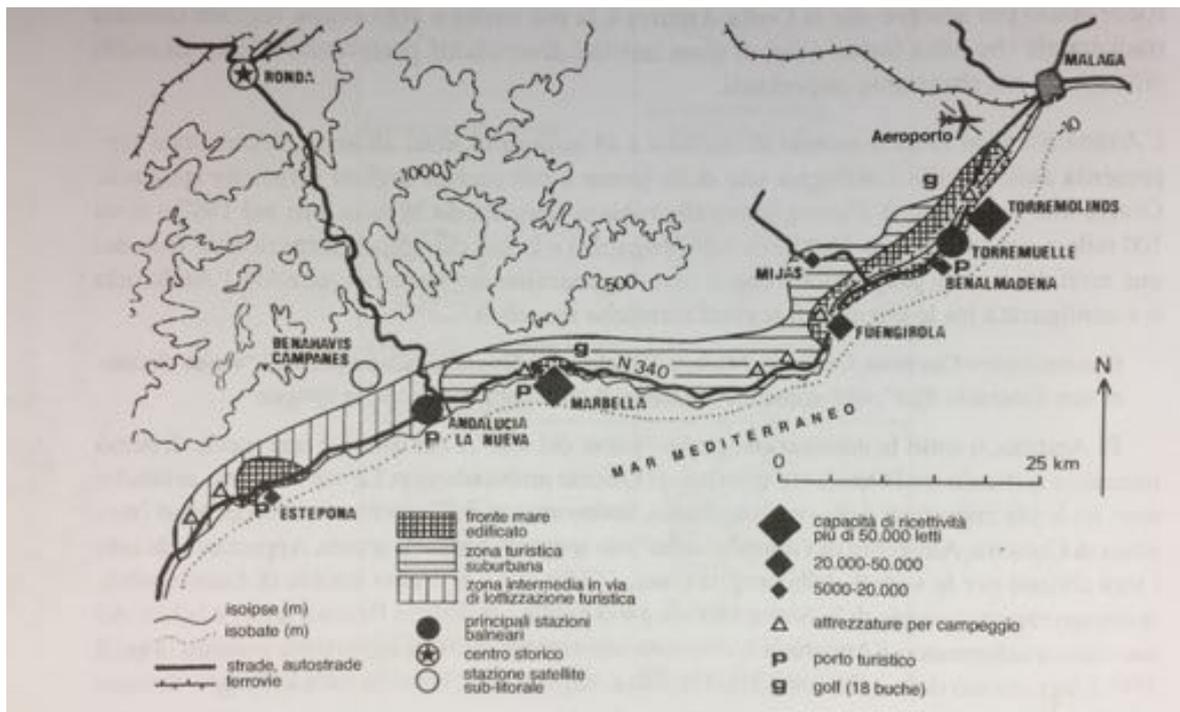
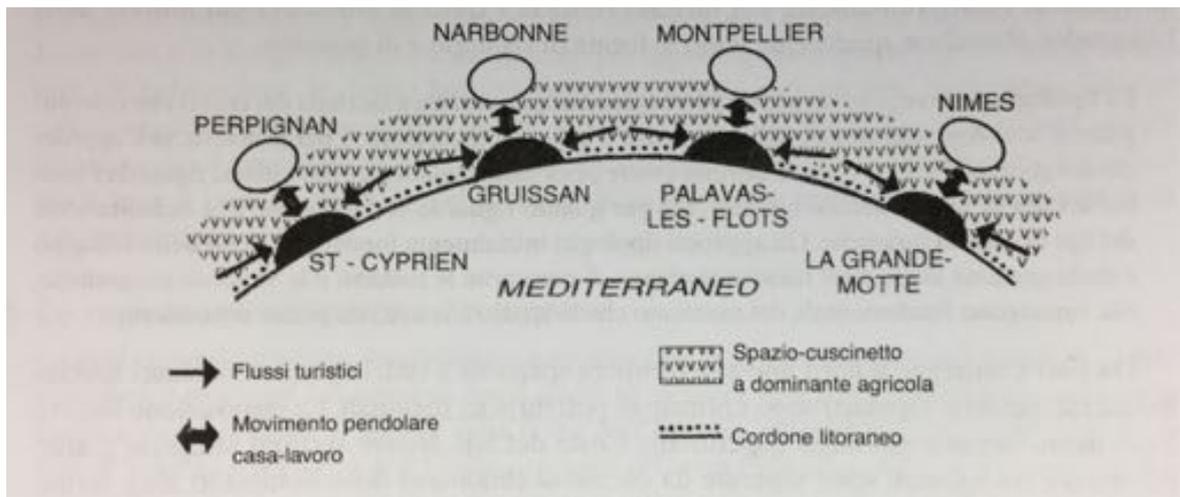


Figure 5.34 Costa del Sol, continuous and multipolar touristic beach region (source: Lozato-Giotart, 2008:124)

The Albanian Riviera looks like the Costa del Sol only from an infrastructural point of view. In fact, there is only one way in and out, with two exceptions representing the main access, Malaga and Andalucia la Nueva.

The case of Languedoc has been used, on the other hand, as reference for the specialized region with polarity discontinuity. In this type of region, the alternation existing urban centre – tourist stations ex nihilo is strong. If the buffer area between them resists the double pressure of the urban anti touristic expansion, the tourist stations confirm autonomous tourist satellites in relation with the nearby big urbanization (Lozato-Giotart, 2008, p. 128).



*Figure 5.35 Touristic fluxes, cities and satellite stations of Languedoc's model (source: Lozato-Giotart, 2008:128)*

The Albanian Riviera's structure is more similar to this second example, with the exception that the buffer space is not agricultural land but rocky and mountainous areas. This last characteristic makes this area more pleasing for its natural spotless landscapes.

### **5.3 The blossoming of isolated and autonomous touristic facilities**

From the previous maps and furthermore with several field trips by car done in August 2017 and May 2018, an interesting phenomenon has been observed: the "blossoming" of autonomous touristic facilities, mostly isolated from the existing centers. The construction of those structures imposes the creation of integrated infrastructure systems that go from water to power and mobility. Their impact on the environment, landscape as well the visual impact is the most unsustainable.

#### **5.3.1 The touristic landmarks**

From Llogarà to Borsh, eleven touristic "landmarks" have been individuated. Most of them are recently built hotels/restaurants or resorts under construction:

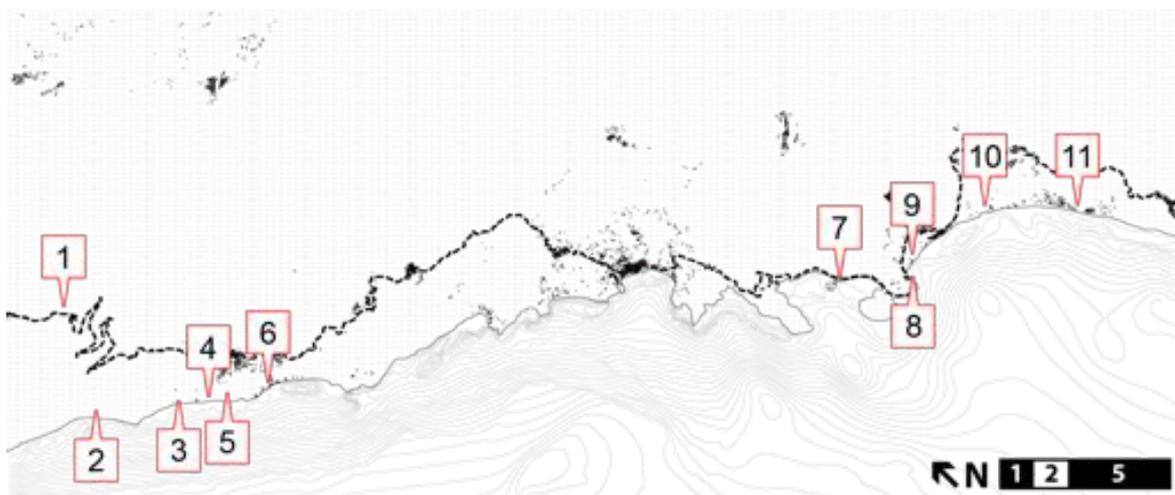


Figure 5.36 Map of the study area with the eleven touristic landmarks marked (source: author)

1. Bar restaurant Dervishalliu (Llogara) – one of the first structures which the tourist can see after having passed the Llogara Park, at the beginning of the SH8;
2. Green Coast resort (Palasë) – the new resort that will be ready in 2020 and counts around 250 villas (22 Elite villas, 21 Individual villas, 65 Twins villas and 136 Apartments) surrounded by many facilities such as restaurants, supermarkets, common swimming pools, medical centres and car parks). The resort extends to more than 20 hectares of land including villas and apartments, a 5 stars hotel, integrated services and entertainment facilities, and a promenade along the seashore (Green Coast, 2018);
3. Summer Dream Hotel (Drymadhes) – a small double building hotel on the beach which clearly plan to expand due to the infrastructural works done over the last two years;
4. Morina Palace (Drymadhes) – composed of two multi-floors buildings;
5. Kompleksi Hildon (Drymadhes) – the residential complex counts 34 villas and 6 apartment buildings, although the official website ([www.kompleksihildon.com](http://www.kompleksihildon.com)) mentions only 4;
6. Apartment Sea Side complex (Dhermi) – composed of eight main apartment buildings and three additional ones;
7. Porto Palermo restaurant (Porto Palermo) – a complex of eight villas;
8. Stone Beach (Qeparo) – a hotel in building phase;
9. Valta Hotel (Qeparo) – demolished during the last Rama government mandate due to its proximity to the sea, it was rebuilt in 2015 with an additional extension of the close town promenade;

10. Sole Luna Hotel (Borsh) – a multi-floor building standing out against the olive grove;

11. Hotel building (Borsh) – a multi-floor building not in function.

**1 / Bar restaurant Dervishalliu**

location / Llogara pass  
total surface / 1'500 sqm  
number of buildings / 1  
number of floors / 2



**2 / Green Coast resort**

location / Palase  
total surface / 200'000 sqm  
number of buildings / 250  
number of floors / 2-3



**3 / Summer Dream Hotel**

location / Drymadhes  
total surface / 7'000sqm  
number of buildings / 2 + surface in expansion  
number of floors / 4



**4 / Morina Palace**

location / Drymadhes  
total surface / 16'000sqm  
number of buildings / 2  
number of floors / 5



**5 / Kompleksi Hildon**

location / Drymadhes  
total surface / 23'500sqm  
number of buildings / 36 villas + 4 multi-floors  
number of floors / 3-5

**6 / Apartment Sea Side complex**

location / Dhermi  
total surface / 5'500 sqm  
number of buildings / 11  
number of floors / 3-5



**7 / Porto Palermo restaurant**

location / Porto Palermo  
total surface / 1'100 sqm  
number of buildings / 8  
number of floors / 2



**8 / Stone Beach**

location / Qeparo  
total surface / 2'500 sqm  
number of buildings / 1  
number of floors / 3-4



**9 / Hotel Valta**

location / Qeparo  
total surface / 3'800 sqm  
number of buildings / 1  
number of floors / 5



**10 / Sole Luna Hotel**

location / Borsh  
total surface / 1'800 sqm  
number of buildings / 1  
number of floors / 5





Figure 5.37 Site plan of the touristic landmarks with the main important dimensions (source: author, based on Google Earth)

These touristic facilities can be easily grouped into two categories: the multi-storey buildings, which mainly use the same infrastructures as the nearby urban centres, and the self-standing complexes, which raise out of the existing centres, composed of many buildings with different dimensions and whose autonomy entailed a number of previous infrastructural works.

Building	Surface (in sqm)	Height (in floors)	Infrastructure (Existing/New)
1. Bar restaurant Dervishalliu	1'500	2	E
2. Green Coast resort	200'000	2-3	N
3. Summer Dream Hotel	7'000	4	N
4. Morina Palace	16'000	5	N
5. Kompleksi Hildon	23'500	3-5	N
6. Apartment Sea Side	5'500	3-5	E
7. Porto Palermo restaurant	1'100	2	E
8. Stone Beach	2'500	3-4	N
9. Valta Hotel	3'800	5	N
10. Sole Luna Hotel	1'800	5	E
11. Hotel building (Borsh)	1'500	6	E

Table 5.2 Comparative table of the touristic landmarks' dimensions (source: author, based on Google Earth)

With the exception of the three resorts/complexes (2, 4, 5), all the other buildings have a limited surface dimension, a similar consideration is for number of floors, which average 4 with a number of exceptions going over (4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11).

But the most important consideration needs to be made concerning the infrastructure system work done to realize the facilities, which are the most impacting interventions.

The Green Coast resort implied the construction of 2.5km of road in the area of the river delta, which means extra-restraint interventions, plus the power and water connections. To connect the Morina Palace and Kompleksi Hildon in Drymadhes, circa 1km of road has been built, while the Summer Dream hotel is connected by a 700 metre promenade from Drymadhes, plus another 250 metres that allow access to the small northern beach close to the river delta.

Two other impacting interventions have been done for the connection of Stone Beach and Valta Hotels in Qeparo. In both cases, the buildings were built on the other side of the town bay, implying the construction of a 1.5 km promenade and two parking areas, which have strongly impacted the coastal ecosystem that was an unicum from the olive tree cultivation by the sea.

To evaluate the impact of these structures on the landscape, it is important to include those last considerations.

#### **5.4 The impact of tourism on the Albanian Riviera**

*'Tourism and landscape form part of an interactive binomial of dependence: there is no tourist development without a landscape; it also seems that landscapes, especially those called cultural landscapes, need tourism as an economic activity to be sustained. Their relation is also that of contradiction. Tourism, as an economic as well as a leisure activity, belongs to the abstract space of globalization, where one loses orientation, distances do not exist and one's relation to places is none. On the other hand, landscape is a locality per excellence, conceptually related to local identity and culture'. (Goula et al, 2012).*

What is a touristic landscape? Today the concept of landscape evolved significantly. Landscape is not anymore the natural area "mold" by the agricultural practices, but an area which *'form reflects consumer demand and recreation, tourism and even nature conservation combine to model the "new aesthetics of nature"'* (Wilson, 1992).

To check the impact of those structures on landscape, they have been analyzed through two different methodologies: Google Earth's Viewshed tool and pictures taken *in situ* during a number of field trips further analyzed with the GLVIA methodology. The analysis

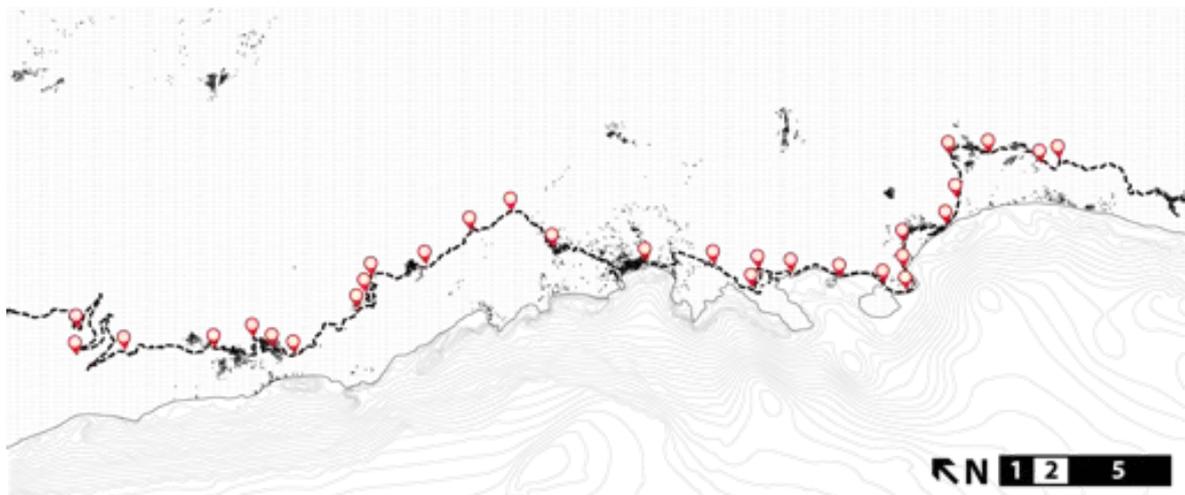
of the percentage of coastline invasion, together with the data related to potentialities (state of art) lead to the first round of conclusions that will be better discussed in the last chapter.

#### **5.4.1 The coastal invasion: the visual impact of tourism on the whole coast**

*The highway experience varies with the user, the tourist sees the landscape with a fresh eye; he attaches relatively few personal meanings to it, but is urgently engaged in orienting himself within it (Appleyard, et al., 1964).*

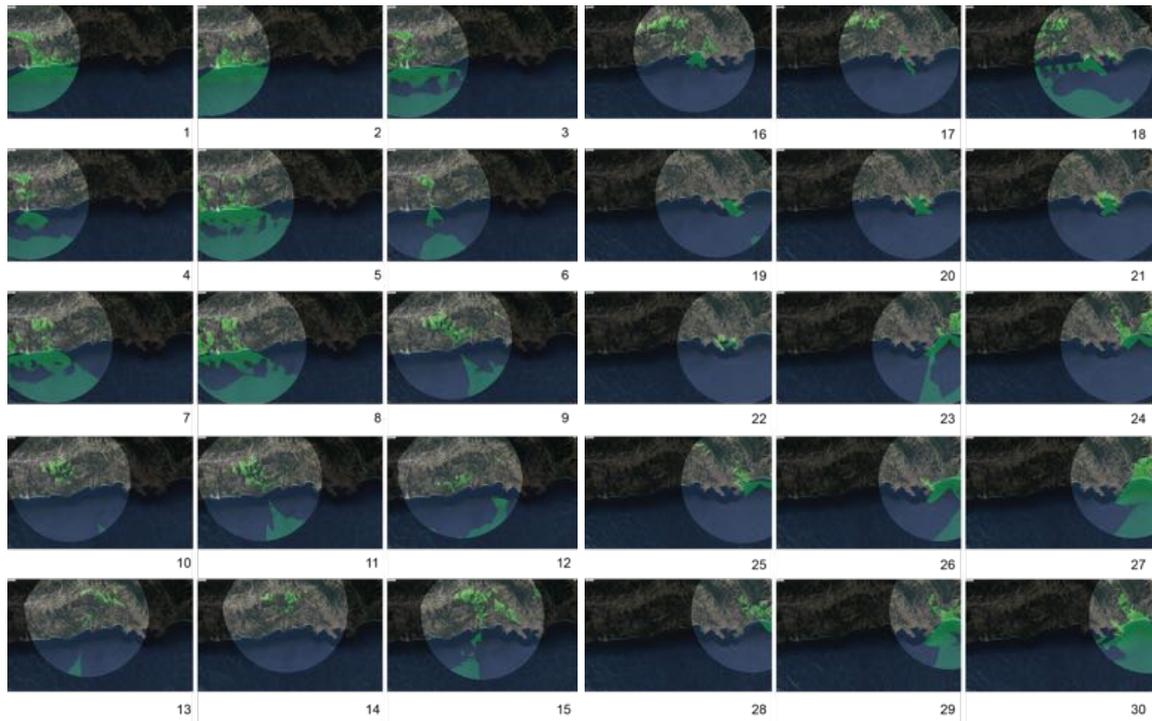
The visual impact of tourism on the Riviera landscapes is measurable only through a precise point of view, or better, a series of points represented by the national highway SH-8. Following the methodology proposed and adopted by Appleyard, et al., the whole road has been segmented following *'the movement along the road [which] consists of a succession of approaches to goals, which may be prominent landmarks, focal points, or other paths to be attained'* (Appleyard, et al., 1964, p. 23).

Travelling by car along the Riviera, it is possible to stop in 30 locations in order to enjoy the views. After having mapped those points, the Viewshed of the coastal area has been calculated, and joined on a unique map.



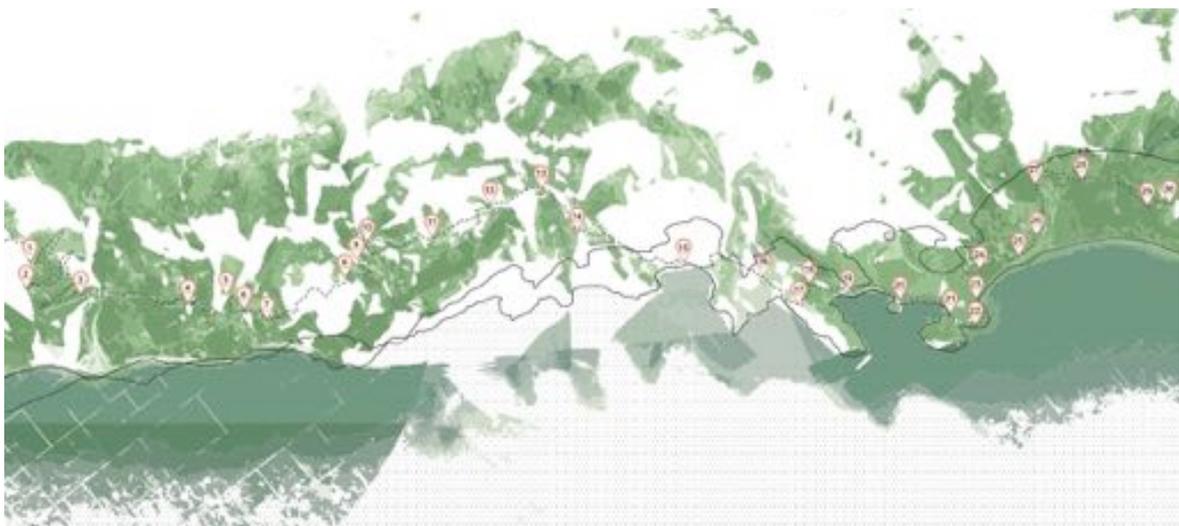
*Figure 5.38 Map of the 30 points where the Viewshed tool has been applied (source: author)*

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.39 The visibility from each one of the 30 stops (source: author, based on Google Earth)*

The main goal of this map is to understand the “blank areas” of the Riviera. A “blank area” is a portion of the territory invisible to the majority, those areas are considered the most suitable for touristic development due to their low impact on landscapes. This consideration should obviously be supported by other factors, like the ecosystem safety, infrastructures and accessibility, etc.

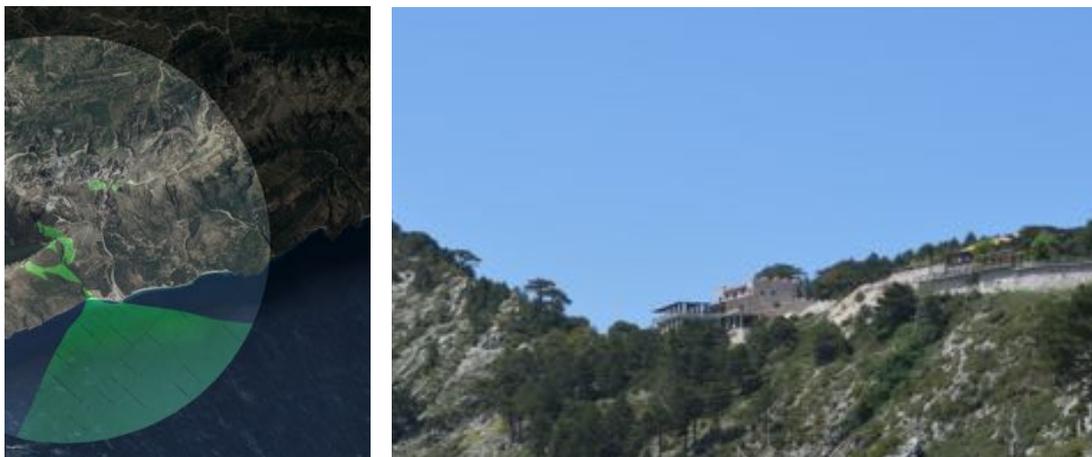


*Figure 5.40 The visibility from each one of the 30 stops (source: author, based on Google Earth) / see the Appendix section for the full-page version*

The final map shows that the “blank areas” are mainly located where there is a sudden level drop, while the flat territory portions are mostly visible from each side.

#### **5.4.2 The visual impact of isolated touristic structures**

The reverted process has been adopted by the isolated touristic architectures (presented in the previous paragraph). The Viewshed was calculated starting from the building itself in order to verify where those buildings are visible from.



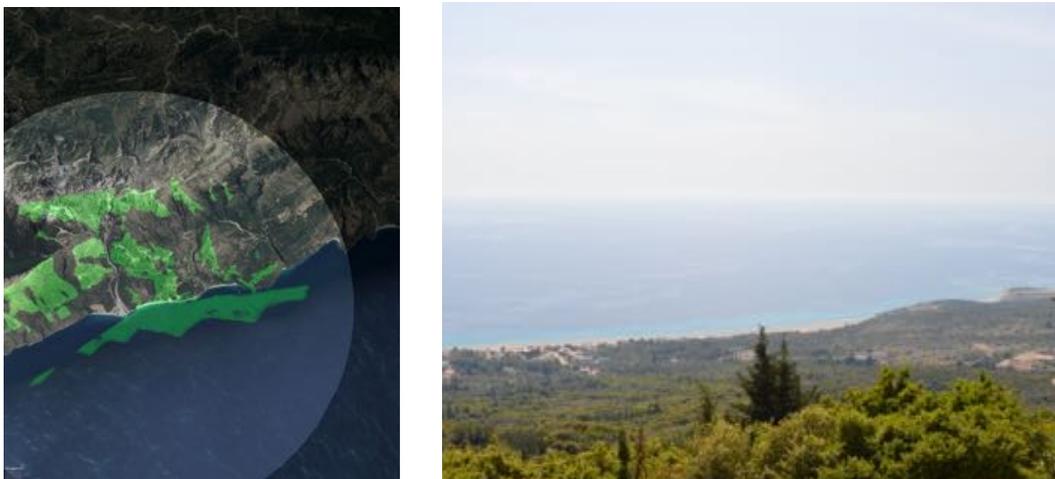
*Figure 5.41 The Viewshed and photo of case 1 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

Case 1 – Dervishalliu bar restaurant– is visible from few places due to its position on the top part of the Llogara Pass. In fact, after the first two bends the building disappears. The further the visitor goes, the more difficult it is to distinguish the building wall from the rock, while the battlements of the upper part of the buildings are well recognizable. The bar restaurant Dervishalliu is composed of one main building and a car park.



*Figure 5.42 The Viewsheld and photo of case 2 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

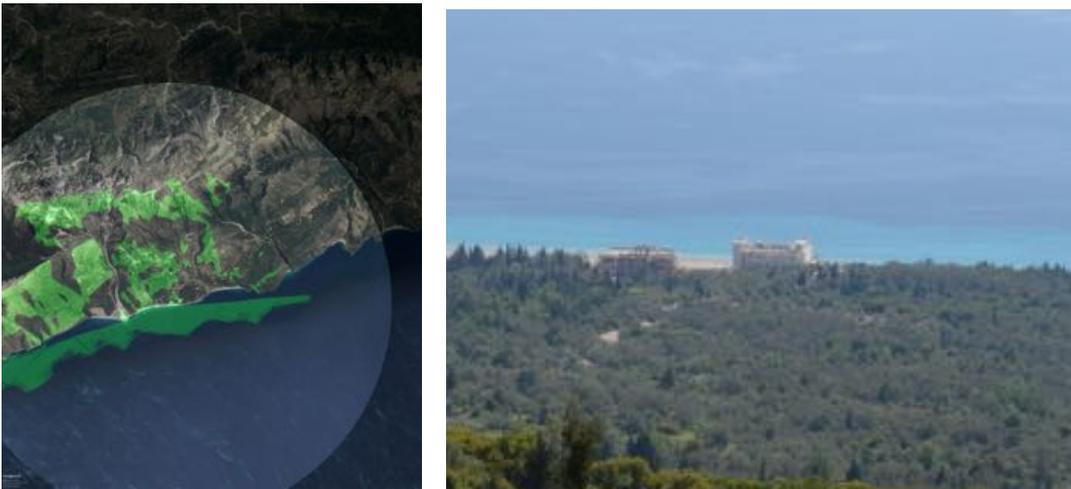
Case 2 – Green Coast Resort – one of the most visible interventions in the entire Riviera. Due to its dimensions and strategic position, it is the first panoramic view that a tourist has on the Llogara Pass. The old delta of the river has been completely modified by its construction and the related infrastructure. The project is visible from above and along the whole path to the following bay.



*Figure 5.43 The Viewsheld and photo of case 3 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

The third case is the Summer Dream Hotel. Still under construction, it is not currently visible from the main road, but due to its dimensions it will be soon. It will also be visible from the previous and following bays.

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.44 The Viewsheld and photo of case 4 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

The Molina Palace – case 4 – stands in a cultivation area. Due to its height and its “medieval” style, the building is visible from the SH8 and represents a landmark of the entire area.



*Figure 5.45 The Viewsheld and photo of case 5 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

Case 5 – Kompleksi Hildon – is a complex of villas with a wide extension. It is barely visible from closeby due to its reduced height, but it is clearly visible from above. The picture is taken from the Llogara Pass, more than 25km far away.



*Figure 5.46 The Viewsheld and photo of case 6 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

Similar consideration is taken for case 6 – the Sea Side complex – standing in a residential area for its compactness. Although from close, the complex is integrated in the surrounding landscape.



*Figure 5.47 The Viewsheld and photo of case 7 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

The Porto Palermo's villas – case 7 – are small-prefabricated buildings on the hill slope. Due to their reduced dimensions, the complex barely impacts the view. In addition, they are well surrounded by vegetation, helping camouflage their presence.

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.48 The Viewsheld and photo of case 8 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

The Beach Stone Hotel – case 8 – is on the way to Qeparo town and located below road level, so it is visible only from the other side of the bay. Although its dimensions make it quite visible from pretty much everywhere.



*Figure 5.49 The Viewsheld and photo of case 9 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

Due to its central position in the bay, the Valta Hotel – case 9 – is one of the most impacting buildings of the Riviera. Its isolated position from the town makes it even more visible. The presence of a promenade, built by the hotel's owners, emphasizes its importance.

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.50 The Viewsheld and photo of case 10 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

Case 10 – Sole and Luna Hotel – an isolated building in the middle of Borsh bay. Due to its dimension the hotel stands clearly visible from most of the surroundings.



*Figure 5.51 The Viewsheld and photo of case 11 (source: own photo and GoogleEarth)*

The last case is the Borsh hotel. Still unfinished, but its shape and height make it clearly visible from the main road and the surroundings.

In conclusion, the most impacting landmarks are not always the biggest ones in extension or height, but the ones that lie on non-urban areas. Those last ones are in fact the ones that stand out easily and which need a number of infrastructural works and interventions that most affect the landform.

### **5.4.3 Assessment of landscape and visual effects of isolated structures**

To evaluate the impact of touristic buildings/facilities on the landscape, the GLVIA – “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment”, methodology has been chosen. The methodology has been elaborated by the Landscape Institute of London (The Landscape Institute, 2002). This methodology of evaluation is not the only possible one, but it was chosen for its ease of application. In fact, it is mainly based on direct observation more than data analysis and this perfectly answers this research limitations (due to lack of technical information available in the Albanian context). The main method is to modify the current pictures and erase the intervention to make an analysis, restoring the *status quo antes*. From the comparison between the current version (*status quo*) and the previous one (*status quo antes*), it is possible to evaluate the building's impact.

In the introduction, the authors stated '*in both urban and rural contexts, the landscape is important because it is: (i) an essential part of our natural resource base; (ii) a reservoir of archaeological and historical evidence; (iii) an environment for plants and animals (including humans); (iv) a resource that evokes sensual, cultural and spiritual responses and contributes to our urban and rural quality of life; (v) a valuable recreation resource.*' (The Landscape Institute, 2002, p. 9). Keeping in mind this definition, in this final paragraph, the intention is to see the impact of tourist facilities on coastal landscapes, comparing the *status quo* and the *status quo antes*. For this comparison, the *status quo* pictures are taken in situ, while the *status quo ante* have been edited in Photoshop.

Five categories have been adopted for the analysis, two aim to better define the case study (Importance and Nature of the effect), while the others evaluate its impact (on landscape and on visual). These last three (Magnitude, Sensitivity and Significance) are repeated twice, for the landscape and the visual effects. The five indicators are:

**1. Level of Importance** (International, National, Regional, District, Local), according to the scale of the interventions and impact on the area.

**2. Nature of the effect** (“Direct / Indirect”, “Short Term / Long Term”, “Reversible / Irreversible”; in the specific case of Indirect effect, it is also possible to specify whether it is “associated” and/or “cumulative”). This category intends to better define the effect of a specific touristic building construction. A direct effect can be '*loss or removal of an element or feature such as a hedgerow or a prominent group of trees*', while an indirect

one is the 'alterations to the drainage regime in the vicinity of a site, such as a quarry, [which] could result in changes to the vegetative cover' (The Landscape Institute, 2002, p. 84). For "cumulative" is intended a set of effects that may be insignificant individually, but when together they might over-reach a level of adverse effect on visual perception.

**3/4. Magnitude** (High, Medium, Low, Negligible) **and Sensitivity** (Significant, Moderate, Slight) concerns the evaluation of the landscape change, due to the action nature and its duration (permanent or temporary). The "magnitude" is a quantitative indicator that 'may be helpful to rank or quantify individual effects' (The Landscape Institute, 2002, p. 87), while sensitivity is a qualitative indicator, aiming to evaluate 'the degree to which a particular landscape type or area can accommodate change arising from a particular development' (The Landscape Institute, 2002, p. 87).

<b>Magnitude</b>	<b>Typical criteria</b>
High	Total loss of or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape or view and/or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape or view and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Low	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape or view and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape or view and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape – approximating the 'no change' situation.

Table 5.3 Table of the evaluation magnitude (source: The Landscape Institute, 2002:145)

<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Typical criteria</b>
Significant	Where a <b>sensitive</b> viewpoint or feature is subject to great or moderate change.
Moderate	Where the change is moderate, and the view or feature is <b>moderately sensitive</b> .
Slight	Where the change is small, and the view or feature is of <b>low or moderate sensitivity</b> .

Table 5.4 Table of the evaluation sensitivity (source: author, based on *The Landscape Institute*, 2002:145)

5. **Significance** (Low, Medium, High): The elements which define the level of “significance” are (i) “the scale of effect” and (ii) the “environmental sensitivity”. *‘No such formal guidance exists for the assessment of significance for landscape and visual effects and the assessor must clearly define the criteria used in the assessment for each project, using his or her skill based on professional judgement’* (The Landscape Institute, 2002, p. 94). The significance is then considered the final indicator to average the previous ones.

The criterias adopted for the evaluation of landscape effect are:

<b>Significance</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Severe adverse</b>	<p>The proposed scheme would result in effects that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are at a complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>would permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued characteristic features, elements and/or their setting;</li> <li>would cause a very high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.</li> </ul>
<b>Major adverse</b>	<p>The proposed scheme would result in effects that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a severe adverse effect;</li> <li>are at a considerable variance to the landscape degrading the integrity of the landscape;</li> <li>will be substantially damaging to a high quality landscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate adverse</b>	<p>The proposed scheme would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be out of scale with the landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform;</li> <li>will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Minor adverse</b>	<p>The proposed scheme would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape;</li> <li>affect an area of recognised landscape character.</li> </ul>
<b>Neutral</b>	<p>The proposed scheme would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>maintain existing landscape quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Minor beneficial</b>	<p>The proposed scheme has the potential to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improve the landscape quality and character;</li> <li>fit in with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>enable the restoration of valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate beneficial</b>	<p>The proposed scheme would have the potential to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fit very well with the landscape character;</li> <li>improve the quality of the landscape through removal of damage caused by existing land uses.</li> </ul>

*Table 5.5 Table of the evaluation significance criteria of landscape impact (source: The Landscape Institute, 2002:140-141)*

According to the The Landscape Institute (2002), the criteria adopted for the evaluation of visual effects are listed in the table below.

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Substantial adverse impact</b>	Scheme would cause a significant deterioration in the existing view
<b>Moderate adverse impact</b>	Scheme would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view
<b>Slight adverse impact</b>	Scheme would cause a barely perceptible deterioration in the existing view
<b>Slight beneficial impact</b>	Scheme would cause a barely perceptible improvement in the existing view
<b>Moderate beneficial impact</b>	Scheme would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view
<b>Substantial beneficial impact</b>	Scheme would cause a significant improvement in the existing view
<b>No change</b>	No discernable deterioration or improvement of the existing view

*Table 5.6 Table of the evaluation of the visual effects (source: The Landscape Institute, 2002, further elaborated by the author)*

#### 5.4.3.1 Assessment of the study cases

This paragraph includes the assessment conclusions of the above case studies. For the complete Assessment Sheets, see Appendix section (pag. 244). It was considered necessary to add three more cases, important for their uniqueness: Himare Waterfront (in order to evaluate the impact of an entire touristic agglomeration system on the landscape), Llamamit beach (characterized by temporary structures which strongly affect the views), Hotel Café Lukova (already out of the study area but is interesting for the choice of the location).



*Figure 5.52 Assessment of Case 1: Restaurant Dervishalliu (source: author)*

Case 1 / The bar restaurant Dervishalliu is composed of one main building and a parking lot. Due to its position on the top part of the Llogara pass, it is visible from few spots. In fact, after the first two bends the building disappears. The further the visitor goes, the more difficult it is to distinguish the building wall from the rock wall, while the battlements of the upper part of the buildings are well recognizable. Due to its scale, the proximity to the infrastructure which did not imply building new ones, the impact on the landscape has been evaluated as **Minor Adverse**, in terms of significance. While concerning the visual effect, it has been evaluated as **Moderate Adverse** in the closest viewpoint and **Slight Adverse** in the second point.



*Figure 5.53 Assessment of Case 2: Green Coast resort (source: author)*

Case 2 / The Green Coast resort, at 200'000 sqm, is the biggest building in southern Albania. Located at a strategic point considered one of the best views of the Riviera, it irreversibly impacts the landscape and view. The magnitude of the project is **high** due to its dimension and the number of structures. The sensitivity is **significant** due to great change of the viewpoint in the three images analysed, especially in the Viewpoint B, the impact of the resort is highly visible. While for the landscape significance criteria, all views have been ranked as **Major Adverse**, when it goes to the visual significance evaluation, the Viewpoint B scored **Substantial Adverse** because "a very high quality landscape has been permanently changed and its quality diminished". The other two Viewpoints (A and C) can be partially mitigated due to a different view angle. This case study has been considered of **District** level of importance due to the fact that it is possible to see it from almost all the municipality surface.



*Figure 5.54 Assessment of Case 3: Summer Dream Hotel (source: author)*

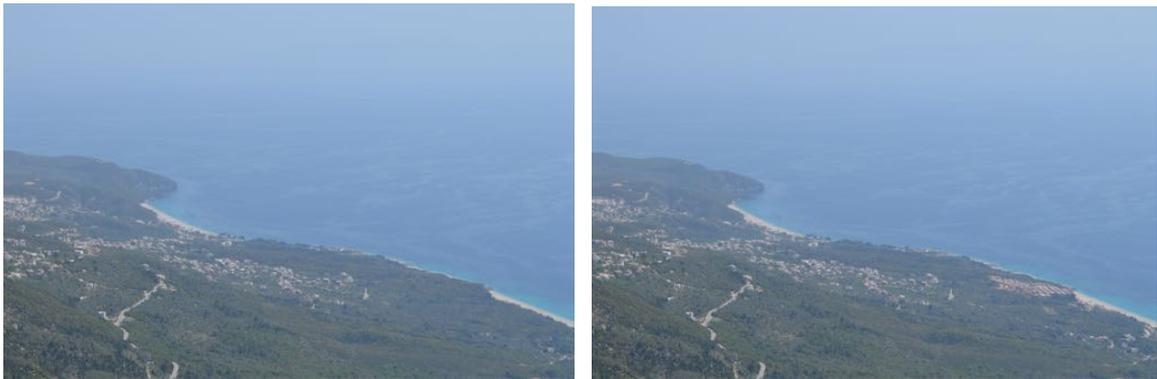
Case 3 / Evaluation N/A. Impossibility in evaluating the impact due to the absence of project information. Considerations can be made only based on the building site in plan (picture taken from Google Earth), but the visual and landscape effects cannot be evaluated.



*Figure 5.55 Assessment of Case 4: Morina Palace (source: author)*

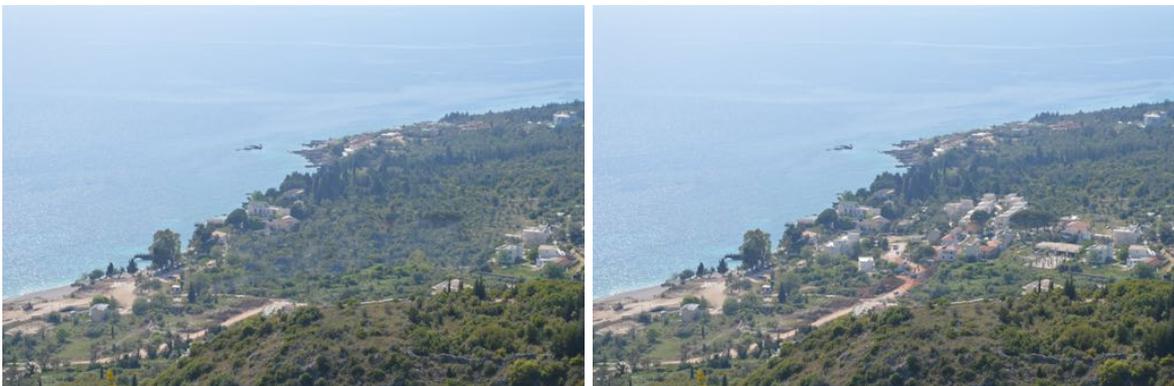
Case 4 / The Morina Palace building is an isolated construction at less than 100m from the sea. Due to its height, it stands in a non-urbanized area making it even more visible. Although from a more general point of view its impact on landscape is **medium** as far as sensitivity is concerned. The building introduction in the landscape is, in fact, "prominent but not necessarily considered substantially uncharacteristic. Similar consideration for the visual effect, which significance is **slight adverse** because the hotel causes "a barely perceptible deterioration to the existing view".

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.56 Assessment of Case 5: Kompleksi Hildon (source: author)*

Case 5 / The Kompleksi Hildon is an extended tourist villa complex at 150m from the seaside. Due to its strategic position and height of the buildings, it is clearly visible only from a higher viewpoint. The complex is out of scale for the surroundings and it leaves an adverse impact on recognized quality landscape (**moderate adverse**). From a visual point of view, the building has a moderately **adverse impact** on views. It in fact causes a noticeable deterioration to the existing view.



*Figure 5.57 Assessment of Case 6: Sea Side apartments (source: author)*

Case 6 / The touristic apartment complex, Sea Side, in Dhermi/Drymadhes is a standing construction, both by extension and height. From landscape effect point of view, the complex scores average. An adequate distance from the sea (150m) is the main cause of **moderate adverse** evaluation. On the visual approach, the impact is far higher. Comparing the two pictures, it is clear that the buildings create a **substantial adverse** effect.



*Figure 5.58 Assessment of Case 7: Porto Palermo villas (source: author)*

Case 7 / The Porto Palermo villa complex is a small system at the back of the only restaurant of the bay. The villas are prefabricated, making their dismantlement easier and **reversible**. Due to its restrained dimensions and volume, the complex scores under average in all criteria. Concerning landscape effects, its presence is quite **neutral** and from a visual point of view, it causes a barely perceptible deterioration to the existing view (**slight adverse**).



*Figure 5.59 Assessment of Case 8: Stone Beach Hotel (source: author)*

Case 8 / The hotel Stone Beach, still under construction, is a multistorey building visible from the other side of the bay. Its compactness and proximity to the main infrastructure allows it to be evaluated as **medium** impact on landscapes. From a visual point of view, its shape causes a noticeable deterioration to the existing view (**moderate adverse**).

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.60 Assessment of Case 9: Valta Hotel (source: author)*

Case 9 / The Valta Hotel building impacts the landscape mainly due to its isolated position from the town of Qeparo. The system of structures that allow it to be reached emphasizes it even more and are the main reason why it has been evaluated for its **high** effect on both landscape and views with **severe adverse** impact on it. In fact, the building completely changes the landform, permanently altering the quality of the natural landscape.



*Figure 5.61 Assessment of Case 10: Sole and Luna Hotel (source: author)*

Case 10 / The Sole and Luna Hotel is a multistorey building in the Borsh valley, well visible from the main road. This is the case where visual impact is stronger than the one on landscape. Concerning the landscape, in fact, the impact is **major adverse** due to its contained dimensions and the use of existing structures, instead its impact on the landscape causes significant deterioration to the existing view (**substantial adverse**).



*Figure 5.62 Assessment of Case 11: "Borsh" Hotel (source: author)*

Case 11 / The Hotel building in the Borsh valley is standing for its height and position in an isolated context. The impact on landscape is **medium**, with a **moderate adverse** significance due to its being out of scale in contrast with the landscape. The visual effect is also **moderate adverse**, since it causes noticeable deterioration of the view.



*Figure 5.63 Assessment of Case 12: Hlmarë waterfront (source: author)*

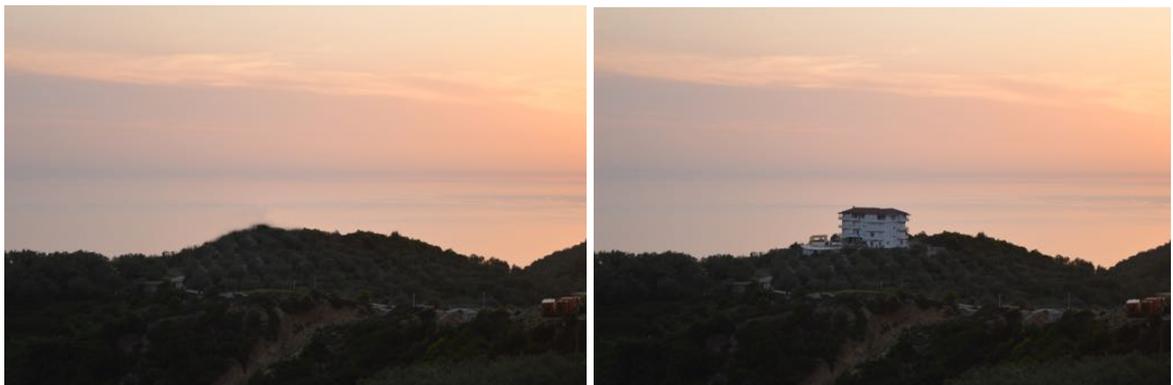
Case 12 / The case of the Himare waterfront has been considered due to its complex impact on the district landscape. This is the case where the effect is caused by an urban system, more than a single structure. Comparing the images, the **high** impact both on landscape and visibility is noticeable. The entire system has a **severe adverse** impact on landscape, causing a complete variance of the landform and a significant deterioration of the existing view (**substantial adverse**).

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 5.64 Assessment of Case 13: Llamanit Beach (source: author)*

Case 13 / The case of Llamanit beach has been considered for its distinctiveness. The system built is in fact one of the few **reversible** and **short-term** project on the entire coast. It is indeed a temporary settlement with a high impact on the landscape, which causes a **neutral** impact due to its temporary feature. On the other hand, the visual impact is **substantial adverse** due to significant deterioration of the existing view.



*Figure 5.65 Assessment of Case 14: Hotel Café Lukovë (source: author)*

Case 14 / The Hotel Café Lukove is the last building visible on the coast from the SH8 road. It stands on an isolated hill, causing clear and quick identification. Its own infrastructure system ranks it as severe **adverse impact** on the landscape with similar consideration for visual impact, evaluated as **substantial adverse** due to its significant deterioration of the view.

#### **5.4.4 Conclusions**

From the comparison of the assessment forms, it is possible to assume a set of conclusions, which will be then useful for the design of the touristic development model mentioned in the final chapter.

1. The impact on landscape and the visual impact do not always correspond. In fact, isolated buildings of small/medium dimensions (such as cases 3, 4, 9, 10, 11) can have a low impact on visual, but high impact on landscape due to the need of building a certain number of structures;
2. Cases with a really high visual impact (such as cases 1, 6, 7) can have a reduced impact on landscape. Although it has been necessary to build structures, those cases include more than single buildings (case 1 is a full resort) their touristic capacity and compactness can justify the infrastructural interventions;
3. The structures play an important role both for landscape and visual impact. In fact, their design and the way they are built often destroy portions of the territory – like cultivation and drainage area, and even wetlands which should not even be part of a tourism project. An illustrative example is the Valta Hotel (9), where the promenade built for connecting it to the main town actually destroyed the original ecosystem composed of a small wetland, now a car park.
4. Reversibility of an intervention is one of the most important features (13).





## **6 Conclusions / The bubble model for the Riviera Protected Landscape Park**

On the basis of the analysis conducted, the theories analysed and their critical review, the case studies presented, this conclusive chapter aims to define a site-specific development model combining natural and human ecosystem features in the Albanian Riviera.

The entire study area is considered an ecosystem, unique in comparison with other coastal areas of Albania, both north and south. This ecosystem is composed of a number of territorial scopes, some environments more natural and others more man-made. The model proposed in the following paragraphs aims to relate those two scope typologies - and all their shades – in order to create a balance in this new ecosystem that includes tourism as a vital element.

In the first phase, the landscape components by Dramstad, et al. (1996) are integrated with a touristic value through a comparison with the previously presented case studies. The new components generated will later be assembled to form the territorial model, characterized by the “bubble” shapes – a 3D upgraded version of the patches. The model is therefore applied to the study area in order to verify both feasibility and validity. The entire process is illustrated with exemplary schemes and maps, while the full definition map is included in the appendix section.

## **6.1 From theory to conceptualization**

The proposed model based on the bubble concept is the result of a reflection of the theories analyzed and presented in the third chapter, supported by the specific case studies. In the following paragraphs attempt to join ecosystem behaviours with the touristic attitude of a territory, starting with the specific case of the Albanian Riviera.

Firstly, tourism is considered positive perturbation, trying to find its space in the Adaptive Cycle model (Hollings, 1986). Therefore, the territorial analysis and interpretation according to Dramstad, et al., (1996)'s landscape categories led to the bubble concept – which substitutes the former patches with a more three dimensional element. The conclusive step of the model definition comes from the combination of Dramstad, et al. (1996)'s patch, Spontaneous Riviera by Barbaza (1970), the spatial model by Miossec (1977) and the buffer areas in Languedoc model described by Lozato-Giotart (2008).

### **6.1.1 Tourism as positive perturbation**

The introduction of tourism in a natural ecosystem can be considered the “creative destruction” phase of the Adaptive Cycle model<sup>49</sup> (Holling, 1986).

According to Holling (1986), it is possible to renew the ecosystem only by passing through this destruction phase. *'Organisms are destroyed, but this is because of their very success in competing with other organisms and in appropriating and accumulating prime energy, space and nutrient resources'* (Holling, 1986, p. 93). Giving a territorial dimension to this definition means considering the players acting on a territory like those “organisms” who compete with each other. In a touristic ecosystem, those organisms are the natural elements that appear in landscape form and the human presence, as both local communities and temporary tourists and such organisms have to find a balance to start the renewal process of the ecosystem which can be reached through the introduction of an innovative territorial development strategy.

Another possible interpretation of this phase is related to the biology theory of disturbance which refers to external change – the disturbance, which modifies the *status quo* of an ecosystem that is then obliged to find a new balance through a series of internal actions.

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<sup>49</sup> See paragraph 3.3.2.

In ecology, scientists have longly discussed its definition and application, concluding that disturbance *'cannot be limited by size or timing, as these factors are relative to the systems being evaluated'* (Rogers, 1996, p. 1). White & Pickett (1985) narrowed the definition, listing two types of disturbance: "perturbation" and "catastrophe".

*'White and Pickett (1985) also clarify the use of "perturbation" and "catastrophe" as covering the rare small and large events, respectively. Perturbation refers primarily to specific alteration of systems that are clearly and narrowly defined. Most often perturbations are purposeful human manipulations that can be measured in totality. Catastrophes, on the other hand, are rare events, especially destructive ones, and are unlikely to be repeated with regularity' (Rogers, 1996, p. 2).*

According to this definition, tourism falls under "perturbation". The aim of the model later proposed is to plan the touristic perturbation in order to make it productive and positive for the ecosystem's development.



*Figure 6.1 Upper Qeparo village, September 2016 (source: Eranda Janku)*

Until present, tourism has had double effects – both positive and negative, on the Albanian Riviera ecosystem. The entire region was abandoned during the year immediately before the regime collapse – the 1990s – and it stayed in the same or worse situation until the 2000s. The lack of maintenance and attention on the area caused the total impairment of old urban agglomerations and infrastructures, often leading to partial structure destruction. Similar considerations need to be made for the natural resources. Due to temporary floodings, landslides and other minor phenomena, the coastal area has been often covered by residual deposits which affected local ecosystems. The presence of tourism slowly stopped this degradation, although other issues might have come out.

“Pioneer” tourist activities are opportunities to disclose a territory and attract future investments. A successful example is the South Outdoor Festival organized by GIZ - German Development Cooperation - through “Integrated Sustainable Development of the Southern Coastal Region” Programme. Every year the festival is organized in a different village along the Riviera, promoting different experiences and local communities. The 2018 edition took place in Vuno and during the three day festival a number of activities were organized (hiking, cycling, climbing, canyoning, paragliding as well as yoga, cultural tours and oil tastings, games and entertainment, workshops, etc) with the aim of *‘highlighting the strong connection between the sea and the mountains in the hinterland’* (GIZ, 2018). The villagers made accommodation available as well as organic food in order to promote their local products.



*Figure 6.2 South Outdoor Festival map, April 2018 (source: GIZ, 2018)*

This is a case in which tourism can be seen as positive perturbation, an opportunity to “manipulate” the local stagnation and promote its uniqueness. In fact, after this experience Vuno passed from being a ghost village to a small touristic cluster. In one year, the tourist facilities went from zero to 5 airbnbs, 4 small hotels and 2 hostels. Most of them located in existing, though renovated buildings.

### **6.1.2 From mosaic to patches – disassembling the model components**

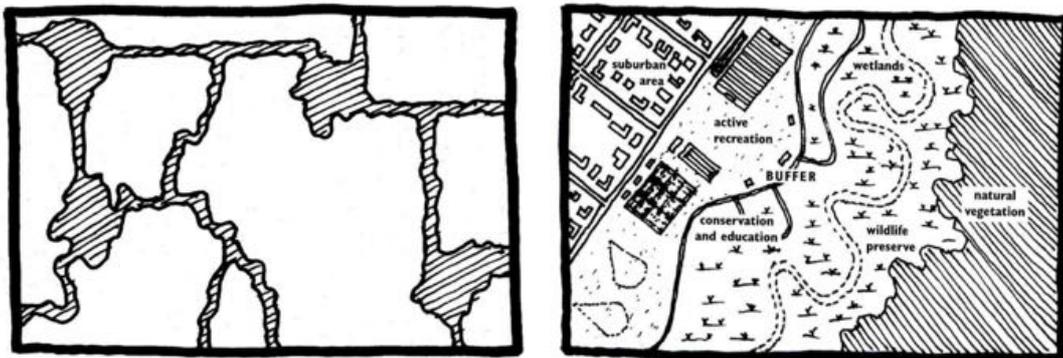
In this paragraph, the basic landscape elements by Dramstad, et al. (1996) are re-interpreted from a tourism view, zooming in from the territorial scale to the architecture. This process aims to define the final model components and envisage their behaviour, based on case studies. The components are later re-assembled after having being integrated into the author's reflections, in order to materialize the model shape and behaviour.

"Riviera mosaic" is composed of a number of patches which are mostly isolated from each other, surrounded by enormous buffer zones and connected by one main corridor.

#### **6.1.2.1 Buffers**

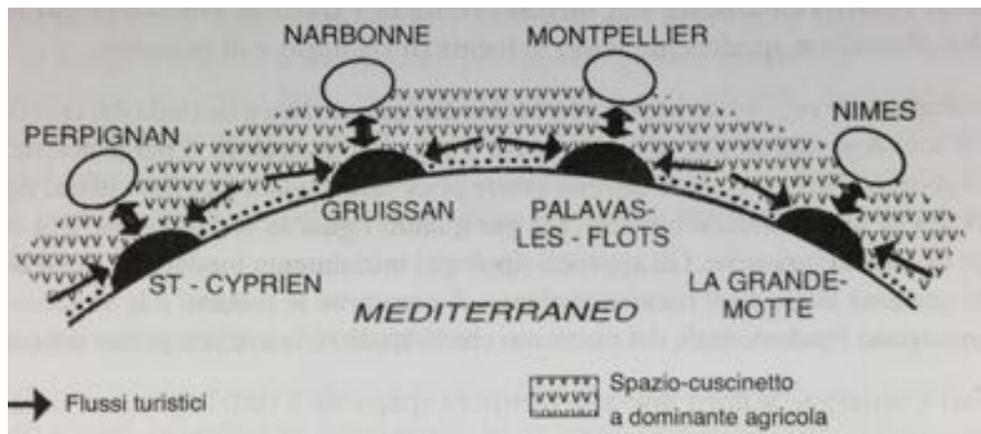
Following the Dramstad, et al. (1996) categories and landscape elements description, the Albanian Riviera territory can be considered a continuous mosaic of different, small patches, in particular a "dispersal and small connected patch" (Figure 6.3). Small patches or nodes along an existing network are effective in providing habitats for individuals to pause and/or breed, resulting in a higher survival rate (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 43).

As previously mentioned, isolation played a key role in protecting the Riviera landscapes, but in the last year the touristic coastal invasions promoting short-term touristic investment not caring about quality and landscapes protection. Mosaic no.9 (Figure 6.3, right) showed a possible strategy for "landscapes undergoing suburbanization", stating that 'a biodiversity or nature reserve may be protected against damages by invaders using a (buffer) zone' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 44). Considering M6 the state of art and the (touristic) urbanization as an on-going process, the introduction of buffer zones is a key component of the model.



*Figure 6.3 Left: M6. Dispersal and small connected patch. Right: M9. Suburbanization, exotics and protected areas (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996:43-44)*

Buffer zones in touristic territories have already been found in the Languedoc-Roussillon case study (page 167), where areas between the touristic stations are mainly characterized by agricultural landscapes.



*Figure 6.4 Buffer areas in the Languedoc-Roussillon case study (source: Lozato-Giotart, 2008:128)*

The buffers are used to keep the touristic stations apart and to avoid the creation of a continuous urbanized coast, as is the case of the Costa del Sol (page 166). This helps in controlling the expansion process and to preserve natural resources. For reasons other than protection, nowadays the Riviera is still rich in untouched areas which can easily be assumed as future buffer areas.

#### 6.1.2.2 Patches

Zooming in, the Albanian Riviera patches appear small, differently distributed and characterized by vocation. Dramstad, et al. (1996) identified four origins for patches: remnants, introduced, disturbance and environmental resources. None of them include the human presence, but only consider it as an external factor. Having introduced tourism as a full element of the coastal ecosystem, it is also necessary to consider the human presence in the patches. Including tourism in the same system means including another component "inside" the patch.

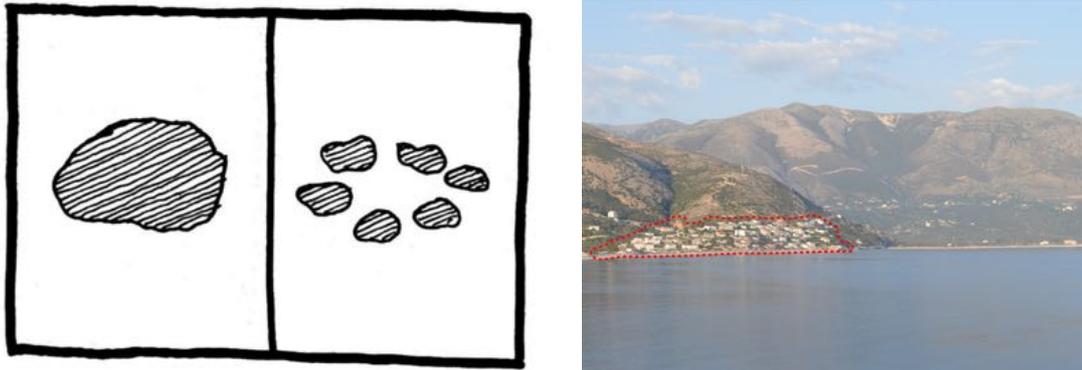


Figure 6.5 Left: P8. Small patch benefits (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996, pág. 22). Right: Riviera bubble (source: author)

*'Small patches that interrupt intensive stretches of matrix act as stepping stones for species movement. They also contain some uncommon species where large patches are absent or, in unusual case, are unsuitable for a species. Therefore small patches provide different and supplemental ecological benefits than large patches' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 22).*

Introducing tourism as patch components means creating new patch categories. Based on direct observation of the area, the proposed ones are summarised in the table below.

Category	Characteristics
<b>Environmental resource</b>	Recovered from Dramstad, et al. (1996), this category includes all the areas which are spotless and preserve their biodiversity and high environmental value (e.g. Canyon of Gjipe).
<b>Cultural semi-abandoned</b>	An area that is mostly characterized by old buildings and/or ancient ruins, with low density of inhabitants, and in high state of degradation (e.g. villages of Vuno, Dhermi, Pilur, Qeparo Fshat)
<b>Urbanized</b>	Area with higher density of inhabitants and buildings or with strong vocation to urbanization (e.g. Saranda, Qeparo).
<b>Touristic urbanized</b>	Area which expansion is mostly caused by tourism and in which it represents the main (or only) economic resource (e.g. Drymades, Palasë beach)

Table 6.1 Riviera bubbles' typologies (source: author)



Figure 6.6 Riviera's urbanized patches (source: author)

Concerning the amount of patches and the type of interaction, the idea of having them organized in groups to create specific habitats meets the natural complementarity of Riviera villages. Their interdependence is fundamental in creating a more solid system. According to Dramstad, et al., (1996), 'some relatively generalist species can, in the absence of a large patch, survive in a number of nearby smaller patches, which although inadequate, are suitable nonetheless' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 21), (Figure 6.7, left). Those new patches behave in similar ways, creating strong interdependent connections based on solidarity and complementarity (such as the case study of the Costa Brava - paragraph 1).

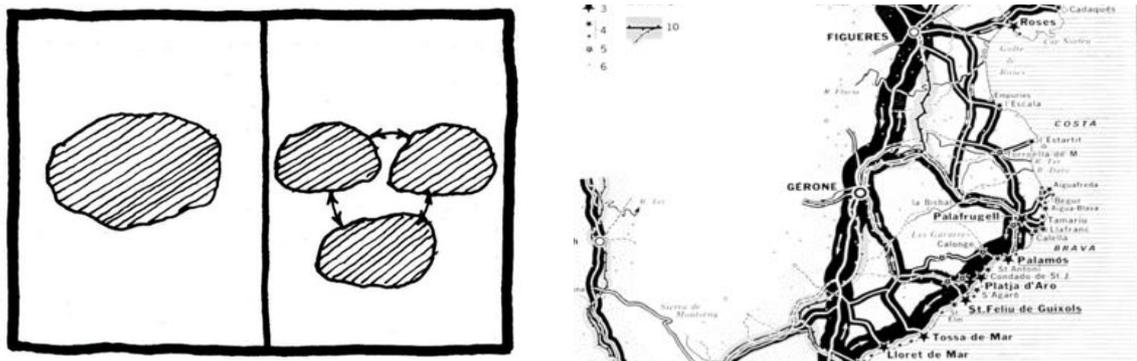


Figure 6.7 Left: P12. Grouped patches as habitat (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 23). Right: Costa Brava before 1950s (left) and in 1964 (right) (source: Barbaza, 1970:452-453)

Due to their differences and variety, patches have different internal issues. Some might run into transformation due to external pressure, it is then necessary to define which need further attention for their natural and cultural value and this can be done introducing the concept of conservation.

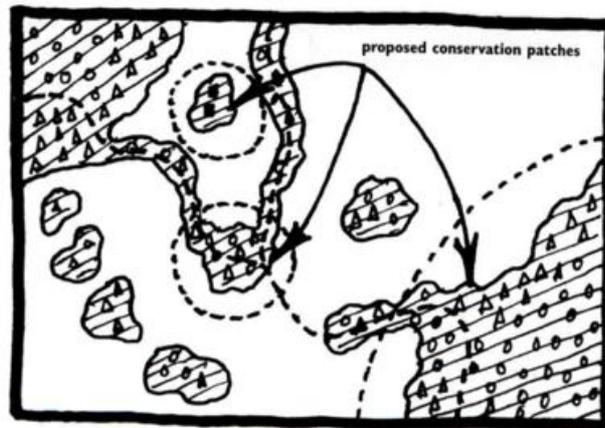


Figure 6.8 P15. Patch selection for conservation. (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 24).

According to Dramstad, et al. (1996), the selection of patches for conservation should be based on the 'contribution to the overall system' and the 'unusual or distinctive characteristics' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 24). For example, in the Riviera, the Gjipe Canyon patch definitely needs its own conservation strategy because of both its unique characteristics and its contribution to the system. Damages to the canyon biodiversity are not only a loss for ecology but also for tourism, which would in turn be a loss of one of the area's main attractions. The patches belonging to the "environmental resource" category are generally the ones which requires more attention.

### 6.1.2.3 Connections

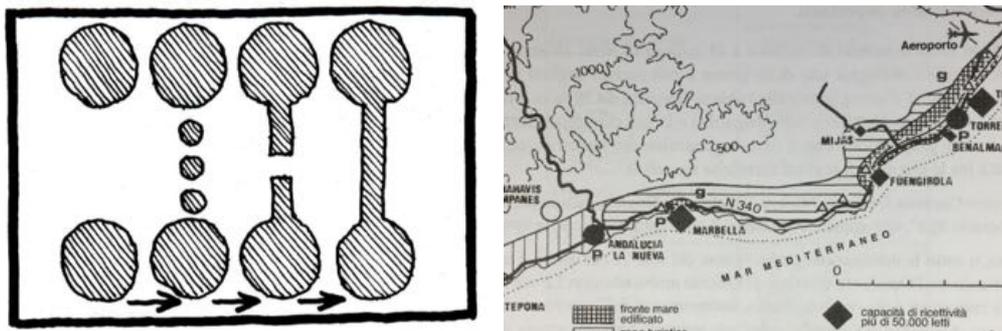


Figure 6.9 Left: C4. Stepping stone connectivity (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996:37-38). Left: Costa del Sol (source: Lozato-Giotart, 2008:124)

The connection between patches is significant and a critical issue at the same time. The evolution of patches' connections or their own extension can lead to the creation of a continuous corridor (Figure 6.9, left), which is comparable with the case study of the Costa del Sol (Figure 6.9, right). 'The optimal spatial arrangement of a cluster of stepping stones

between large patches provides alternate or redundant routes while maintaining an overall linearity-oriented array between large patches' (Dramstad, et al., 1996, p. 38).

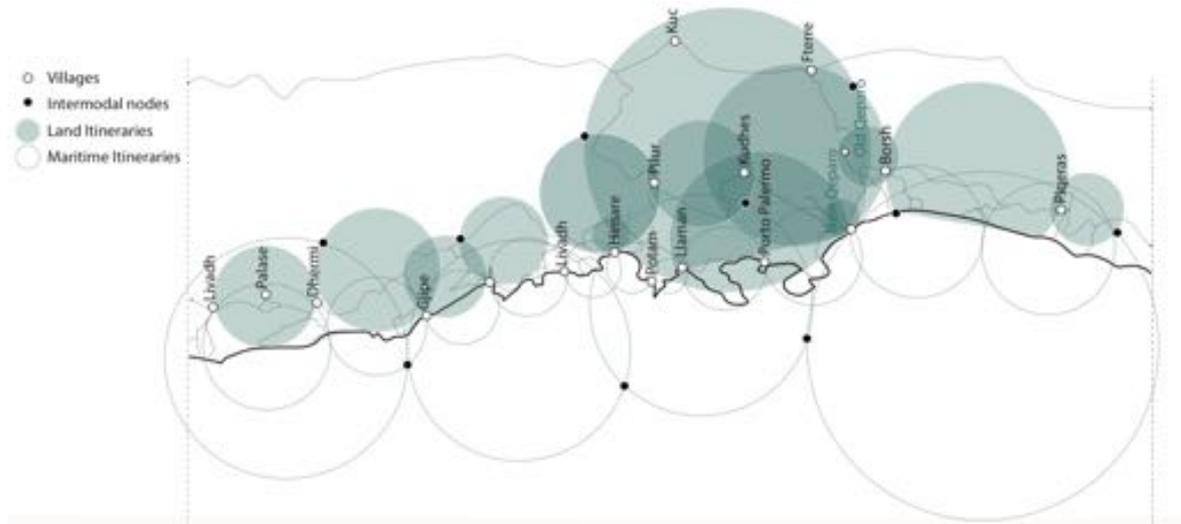
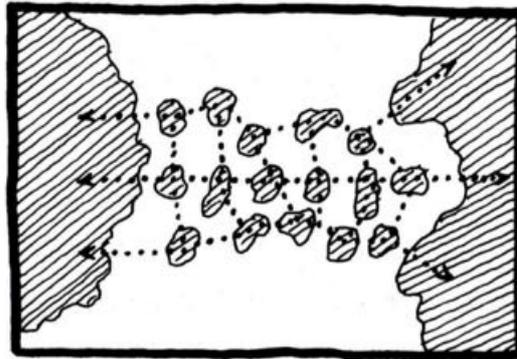


Figure 6.10 Mobility connections between villages and landmarks (source: author during the PhD international workshop Rivieralab, organized and tutored by the author and Eranda Janku in Qeparo from 10th to 25th September 2016)

During the international PhD workshop “Rivieralab” in 2016, the connection issue was assimilated to mobility. The proposal ended with the creation of a circular infrastructural model, based on themed itineraries interacting differently between each other. Putting apart the shape, it is interesting to reflect on two main actions: the creation of themed itineraries and their touristic hierarchization. It is also significant to pause for a little thought on time which, especially in this case, is a critical factor.

*‘The idea of a “light infrastructure”, based on a multimodal network across the coastline, aims at developing an effective system within a short period of time, allowing different time-based experiences of the coast. According to this vision two possible ways of travel are suggested and explored as they effect the landscape and the touristic offer itself: “slow-motion” and “time-lapse” ’ (Lobosco & Lang, 2016, p. 143).*

According to Lobosco & Lang (2016), the SH8 is not only a scenic road but a proper tourist attraction that with its “slow” travel time allows the tourist to enjoy the breath-taking views.



*Figure 6.11 C7. Cluster of stepping stones (source: Dramstad, et al., 1996:37-38)*

In order to enjoy and experience the landscape without creating new infrastructures, the idea is to differently connect patches to one another (Figure 6.10, right), avoiding giving more importance to one or another, which would cause its consolidation and development of one to be prioritized.

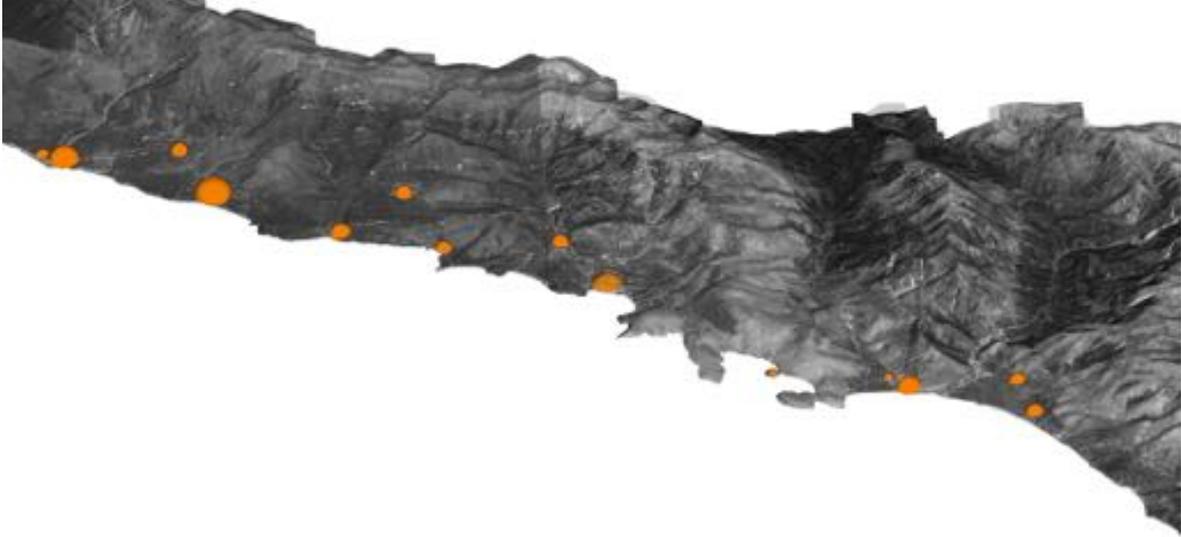
### **6.1.3 Assembling the bubble model**

The model has been now disassembled into three elements: patches, connections and buffers. In this paragraph those elements are re-interpreted and site-contextualized in order to provide a new landscape tourism model for the Riviera resulting from other Mediterranean countries' experience (both positive and negative) and reflections coming from direct observation of the territory and described in previous chapters.

#### *6.1.3.1 From patch to bubble*

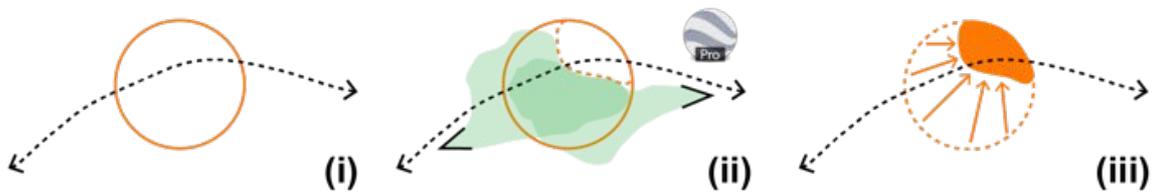
Already in the previous phase, the concept of Dramstad et al. (1996)'s patches has been updated due to the introduction of man as full actor. In this way, patches pass from a 2-actor (territory-nature) to 3-actor (territory-nature-man) concept which is the first change. The second main reflection concerns the three-dimensionality of the patches. Keeping in mind that the model is a development tool, the definition of the patch area deals with the territory's future transformation. So, the factor "visibility" is now introduced. The studies done in the fifth chapter resulted in some reflections (0) which brought up two fundamental criteria in evaluating tourism: environmental and visual impact on landscapes. Those two criteria are the guidelines for defining edges, no longer limited to a bi-dimensional surface

which was the patch, but to a tri-dimensional volume, that from now on will be referred as the “bubble”<sup>50</sup>.



*Figure 6.12 Example of bubble in the Riviera (source: author)*

The bubble is a closed and delimited volume permeable for temporary transition but closed in shape and function. For example, an urbanized bubble (or a turistic urbanized bubble) cannot expand outside the edges, as much as a natural resource bubble cannot be “invaded” by construction and/or infrastructure, but it remains accessible to tourists by specific paths. The three-dimensional property is related to the borders. In fact, to define the borders of a bubble, the factor “visibility” is introduced by the GoogleEarth Viewshed tool.

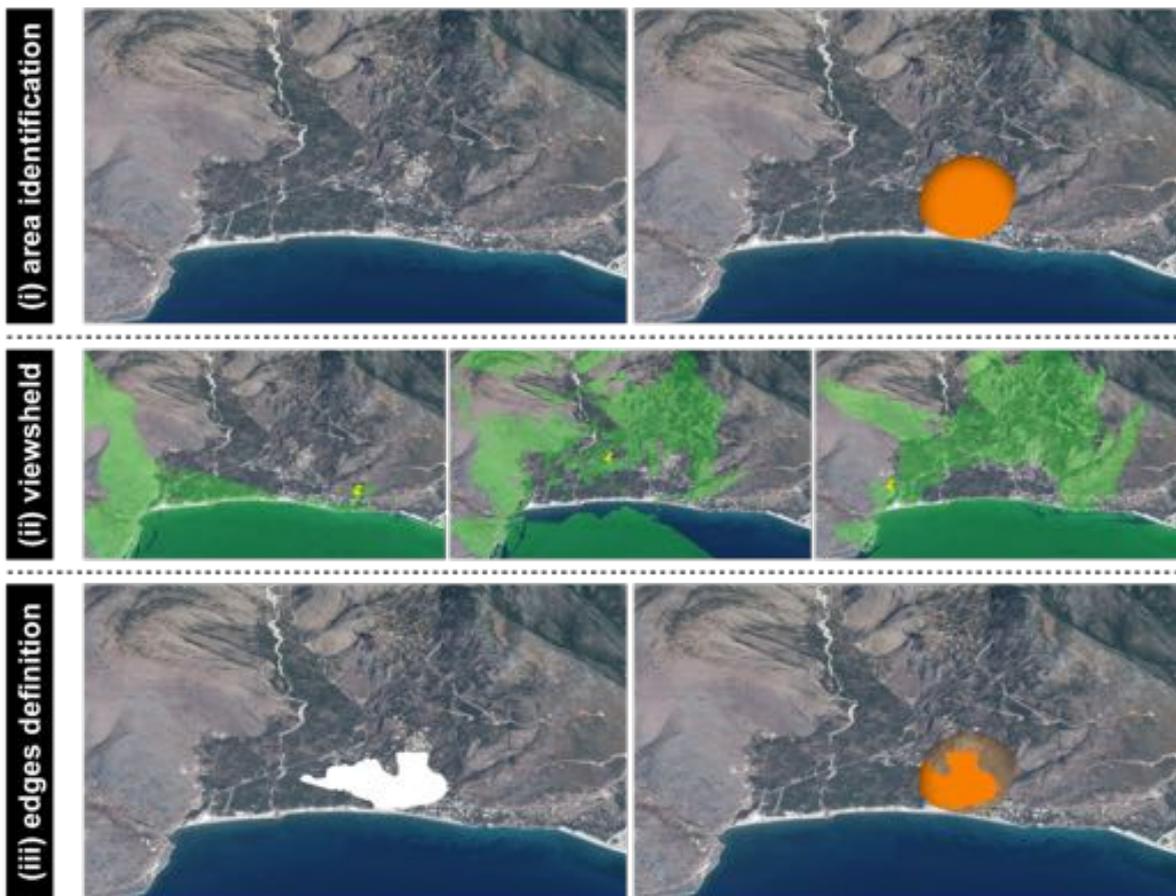


*Figure 6.13 Definition process of a bubble (source: author)*

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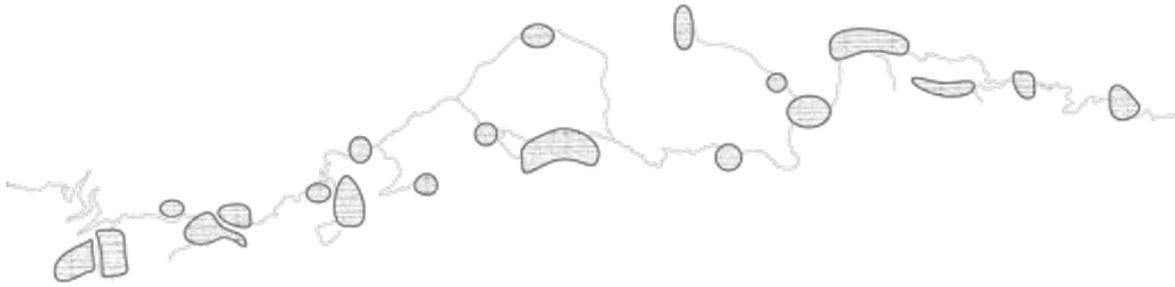
<sup>50</sup> The concept of “touristic bubble” presented in the next paragraph should not be associated to the one formulated by Judd and Fainstain in 1999 in their book ‘The Tourist City’. Their concept of bubble refers to the sensation of protection that a tourist feel while visiting specific areas of a city which have been built for this purpose – such as the “two Baltimores” (Judd, 1999, p. 36)

The process of definition of a bubble is divided into three phases: (i) identification of the gross area and definition of its vocation - environmental resource or urbanized area; (ii) selection of the main viewpoints and viewshed reckoning; and (iii) modulation of the bubble edges. In the case of (touristic) urbanized areas, this last step aims to narrow the development area in the less visible part of the territory, in order to minimize visual impact on landscapes. The environmental impact should instead be regularized through a specific development plan, drafted with more traditional planning processes (see application example, Figure 6.14).



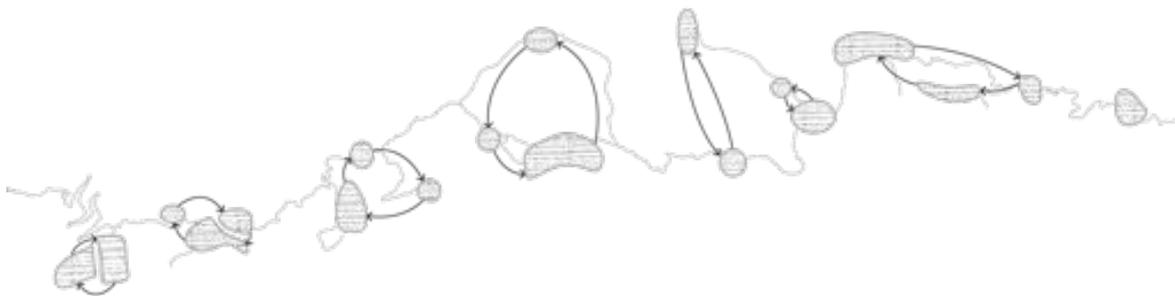
*Figure 6.14 Example of application on the area of Qeparo (source: author, based on Google Earth viewshed)*

As for the patches, there are many benefits of small-dimension bubbles: (i) ease of expansion and (ii) tourist flux control, (iii) low impact on landscape, (iv) preservation of original features, (v) easy coordination with other bubbles. In the case study area, twenty small bubbles have been identified, mostly connected by SH8 and other secondary roads (Figure 6.15).



*Figure 6.15 Riviera's bubbles (source: author)*

A large territory characterized by isolated cultural and natural resources can end up in a joint area dominated by one main economic driver: tourism. This behaviour will definitely lead to the collapse of the area due to a monothemed typology of development. The preservation of small scale bubbles is comparable to the segmentation of the touristic offer. Substituting ecological with touristic, it sounds as if 'small bubbles will provide different and supplemental touristic benefits, creating a discontinuous complementary system' (Dramstad, et al., 1996).



*Figure 6.16 Riviera's bubble interaction based on complementarity (source: author)*

Interaction between bubbles is based on a principle of complementary and solidarity function, such as the Gjipe Canyon, Vuno village and Jala beach bubble systems. Those three bubbles, physically close to each other, are complementary for their vocation and structure. The Gjipe Canyon is a stunning natural resource, which represents one of the main attractions of the whole area. The Canyon bubble is under the category of "environmental resource". Vuno is a small traditional village (semi-abandoned urbanization bubble) on the SH8, famous for hosting one of the biggest Greek-speaking communities. Jala beach, nowadays a "touristic urbanization" bubble, has become a well-

known summer resort attracting tourists due to its exciting nightlife. The combination of the three bubbles is perfect in terms of the tourism market (segmented activities and targets) and territorial organization. The main accommodation facilities might in fact be located in Vuno, easily connected by the SH8, rivitalizing the existing village and restoring the local heritage and activity offer is then split between the sport-adventure trails of Gjipe Canyon and the quiet atmosphere of its beach, and the parties of Jala's nightclubs and daytime sea activities (e.g. windsurfing, kayaking, sailing).



*Figure 6.17 The interaction between Gjipe-Vuno-Jala bubbles (source: author)*

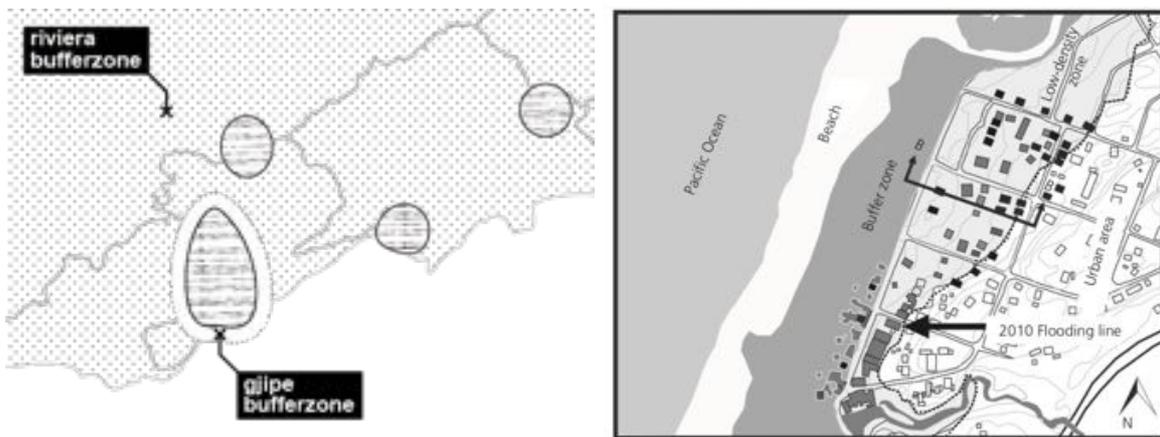
### 6.1.3.2 The bufferzone



*Figure 6.18 Riviera's bufferzone (source: author)*

The areas between bubbles is considered a “buffer zone”, which is not thought of as a physical obstacle, but rather an area where transition is allowed as much as touristic and agricultural activities with zero environmental impact. In such perspective, buffers represent the physical context in which promotion and preservation actions can be properly developed without threatening ecosystems but rather capitalizing on their features and remotely increasing their defences<sup>51</sup>.

Those buffer areas can be involved in both tourism and protection processes according to their vocation, e.g., the buffer area between Qeparo, Old Qeparo (Qeparo Fshat) and Kudhës is rich in olive tree cultivation. Their use for olive oil production as much as olive-tasting activities plays a significant role for the area’s economy and again the strict interdependence of buffer areas and bubbles.



*Figure 6.19 Single bubble's bufferzone and the zoning plan of Mariscadero, Chile (source: author; (Silva, et al., 2017, p. 11)*

Buffer zones have two different scales: territorial and local. Figure 6.18 shows the Riviera’s buffer zone at territorial level, which is basically the area between bubbles but specific buffer zones can also surround a single bubble in order to strengthen its edges (Figure 6.19).

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<sup>51</sup> The bufferzone concept has been the object of an EU project proposal titled “BUFFERSCAPES. Buffer zones' tourism management for promoting and protecting underwater landscapes” and presented the June 2018 call of ADRIION programme. The proposal joined ten partners, including the sealine departmental research center of UNIFE and Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development, which the author has collaborated with for proposal design and drafting phases.

### 6.1.3.3 The connections

In order to complete the model, it is necessary to investigate the element connection. Since the main transforming actor is tourism, Miossec's theory (1977), which deals with the structural evolution of touristic regions, is used as a reference (paragraph 3.4.1). Assuming the Riviera as a touristic region, it is today going through the third phase. The last century was characterized by a continuous alternation of phases 0 and 1, in which the first "timid touristic stations" were appearing and used for a while and then abandoned. The second phase took place in the last fifteen years (from the 2000s) and it led to the multiplication of the touristic stations as much as the volume of tourist fluxes.

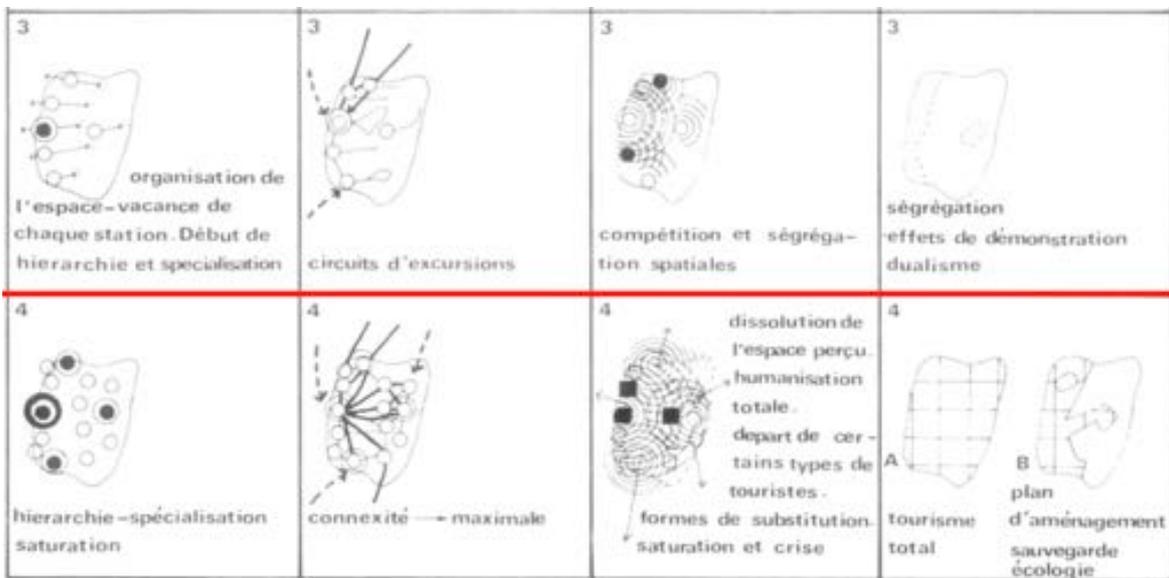


Figure 6.20 Miossec's model, phases 3 and 4 (source: Miossec, 1977)

Since a couple of years ago, stations are slowly organizing their activities, starting a spontaneous process of segmentation. The area of Himara and Jala are well known for their nightlife, with the most active summer party of the entire country. Vuno, Gjipe and Qeparo deal with sports, while other stations still have to find their own strong point to invest in. If this process is not properly organized, what is likely to happen is an overlapping of functions and further saturation. The fourth phase is described as 'a consolidated pyramidal system of hierarchical stations, connectivity of communication channels tends to maximise recreating landscapes cluttered with structures that the tourist flees to' (Miossec, 1977, p. 46).

In order to avoid this possibility, the infrastructural system should be organized on a hierarchical basis, with a main road crossing the region from north to south (the existing SH8) and secondary roads interconnecting the bubbles. A third category of links are themed itineraries (hiking, climbing, etc) which have to be strongly potentialized and able to answer the specific tourist target needs.

## **6.2 From conceptualization to practice**

*'En los últimos años y debido al reconocimiento de los impactos turísticos y impactos medioambientales causados por otras actividades como la industrialización, cada vez son más los espacios que desde los gobiernos se han visto obligados a proteger, para que su degradación no siguiera en aumento' (Ferrandis Martínez, et al., 2018, p. 221) <sup>52</sup>.*

The “bubble model” needs to be applied. In this paragraph, the model passes from being a purely theoretical speculation to a proper territorial application, finding its translation tools in the existing legislation. As previously stated, the main challenge of the “bubble model” is to control expansion of the touristic stations and preserve the buffer areas both for their ecosystem and touristic value. Both goals can be reached through the application of protection and conservation protocols.

The reference is the Protected Areas system or area management and in particular the “Protected Landscape/Seascape”, defined by the IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature as following:

*'Category V: Protected Landscape/Seascape. A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values'. (Dudley, 2008, p. 20).*

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<sup>52</sup> Translated from the Spanish: *'In recent years and due to the recognition of tourism impacts and environmental impacts caused by other activities such as industrialization, governments have been forced to protect more and more spaces, in order to stop their fast degradation' (Ferrandis Martínez, et al., 2018, p. 221).*

This type of Protected Area allows the human presence as far as the touristic activity, making the ecosystem even more open<sup>53</sup>. *'Nelle categorie IUCN la nuova Categoria V riassume un poco tutte le idee dei nuovi paradigmi per le aree protette, e sono quindi il "contro altare" dei tradizionali parchi nazionali di Categoria II, che per lungo tempo sono stati considerati i "veri parchi"'* (Tallone, 2007, p. 109)<sup>54</sup>. The Protected Landscape Park acts as a complex ecosystem, which is part of a territory and interacts with the surrounding natural and human realities (Giacomini & Romani, 1982).

The model proposed aims to introduce tourism into the territory in a more radical way, emphasizing the strong bond of interdependence between territorial exploitation and conservation. In a similar way, as previously mentioned, tourism and landscape are linked. There is *'no tourist development without a landscape; it also seems that landscapes, especially so-called cultural landscapes, need tourism as an economic activity to be sustained'* (Goula, et al., 2012).

*'I parchi devono porsi in modo proattivo, cercando di coinvolgere direttamente nel loro progetto non solo i cittadini desiderosi di luoghi ameni nei quali trascorrere il tempo libero, ma anche le popolazioni locali che su quei territori sono abituate a realizzare attività agricole, forestali ed utilizzi di vario genere'* (Tallone, 2007, p. 98).<sup>55</sup>

Since the establishment of the first national parks in the USA in the 1970s<sup>56</sup> the core concept of a protected area was "public enjoyment". The idea behind the new parks is then to extend this enjoyment to local communities that are used to doing agricultural and other activities.

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<sup>53</sup> By definition, an ecosystem is an open system where both matter and energy are exchanged between the system and its surroundings environment.

<sup>54</sup> Translated from the Italian: *Among the IUCN categories, the new Category V summarizes all the ideas of the new paradigms for the protected areas, and serve as rival attraction to the traditional national parks of Category II, which for long time has been considered the one including the "real parks"'* (Tallone, 2007, p. 109).

<sup>55</sup> Translated from the Italian: *'The parks must be proactive, trying to directly involve in their project not only the citizens who want pleasant places to spend their free time, but also the local populations who are used to read those territories only as opportunity for agricultural activities, forestry and the use of various kind'* (Tallone, 2007, p. 98).

<sup>56</sup> Leaving aside the antiquity (sacred woods of the Romans) and the Middle Ages (the forests as noble hunting resources), the modern idea of protected areas was born in the United States of America (Tallone, 2007: 75).

The model aims to preserve *in situ* the existing species and ecosystem dynamics, without trying to restore the *status quo antes*, and define actions to combine them with surrounding touristic development. The areas with natural value are classified by risk margin, while the man-made/touristic ones on one of exploitation and irreversibility. In a pessimistic view, all the areas deeply damaged by touristic activities are the most appropriate ones to be implemented. This will allow restricting tourist actions to a limited area, although it will also make restoration impossible.

### **6.2.1 From sustainable to ecotourism**

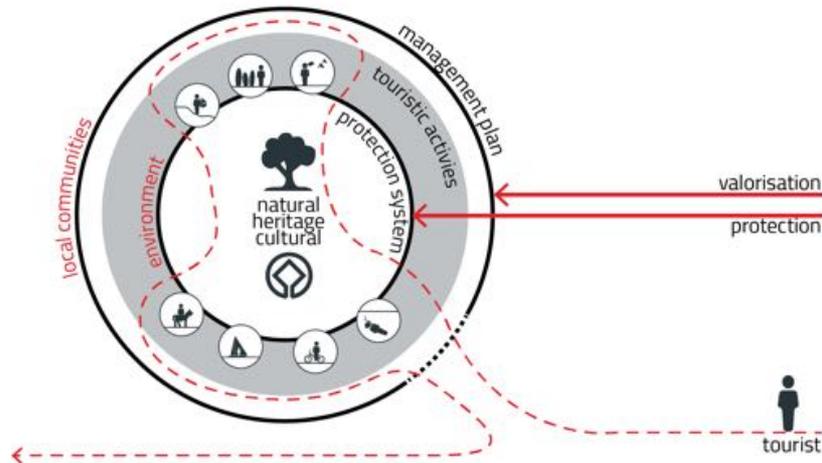
The word sustainable has been appearing everywhere for some time. If in other fields it be a mere pretext to legitimize a more or less morally correct initiative, in the tourism industry it is a real challenge (Vallarola, 2013). Sustainability is a broad concept and is often used without full awareness. But what happens when it is associated to tourism?

The adjective sustainable officially appeared associated to tourism in 1995 during the World Conference of Sustainable Tourism held in Lanzarote, Canary Islands. The "Lanzarote Charter" states that touristic development should be based on sustainable criteria, both from an ecological perception, economic development and ethical respect. It also has to consider its effects on natural and cultural heritage, respecting the weak balance of tourist destinations.

The most important issue is the recognition of tourism, for the first time, as a powerful instrument of development (UNEP, 1995) to include in sustainable development strategies, but when referring to protected areas and natural heritage, the tourism introduction process is still a fragile topic. So in 2000, the Institute for Policy Studies stressed the need to identify an "ecological" branch of sustainable tourism in the Mohonk Agreement: ecotourism. According to the conference participants, '*ecotourism is sustainable tourism with a natural area focus, benefitting the environment and communities visited, and fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation, and awareness*' (IPS, 2000).

The official recognition happened in Quebec's Ecotourism Declaration, during the UN International Year of Ecotourism in 2002 organized by the UNEP – "United Nations Environment Programme", and the WTO – "World Tourism Organization". On this occasion, ecotourism was defined as the sustainable tourism in natural areas, creating

benefits for both the environment and the communities visited as well as promoting culture, knowledge and respect for the environmental and cultural aspect (UNEP, 2002).



*Figure 6.21 Ecotourism activities beneficiaries and territorial development actions (source: author)*

The development of an ecotourism program aims to create benefits both for the environment and local communities through two simple actions: protection and valorization. So, the two main beneficiaries are the environment and local communities, while tourism and tourists represent economic resources for development processes.

The protection action directly benefits the natural and cultural heritage and consists of all the interventions aiming to preserve and monitor its transformations, reducing human pressure to a minimum. Protection is not considered a profitable economic activity since it has a cost and it does not provide any direct profit. Tourism and tourists are indirect beneficiaries.

The valorization process is the proper economic activity and aims to enhance territorial features through tourism. Direct beneficiaries are tourists – that experience the natural heritage and the touristic services – and local communities – responsible for providing and managing tourist services. The natural and cultural heritage benefits in terms of investments since part of the income gained through touristic activities are re-invested to protecting the natural heritage.

The two actions need to be well balanced, in order to avoid negative impact on the environmental quality. This balance can be reached if priority is given to protection

processes, that at the end have an indirect influence on valorisation actions. To develop a correct ecotourism program in a specific territory there are four main elements to be considered: heritage and its protection system; and touristic offer in terms of structures and activities.

### **6.2.2 Ecotourism in protected areas**

Tourism *'in protected areas produces benefits and costs [and] these effects often interact in a complex way'* (Eagles *et al*, 2009). Although the environmental risks are high, touristic activities should not be avoided, but rather constantly monitored and well managed. Luckily, there are a lot of best practices that subvert the negative opinion of touristic development. The new trends of sustainable, responsible, ecotourism started being discussed in the 90s, but there are many different points of view. Ecotourism, for example, is defined as *'sustainable tourism with a natural area focus, benefitting the environment and communities visited, and fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation, and awareness'* (IPS, 2010). In the last few years, ecotourism is becoming nothing more than a *'kind of environmental show business'* (Hintze, 2008). So how can this risk be avoided?

Touristic activities are often presented and sold as "eco", but then in reality they strongly impact the environment, but it is also clear that *'tourism planning and development aims to take advantage of the interest shown by tourists as to: (i) enhance economic opportunities, (ii) protect natural and cultural heritage, and (iii) advance the quality of life of all concerned'* (Eagles *et al*, 2009). In the same time, many of the activities of maintenance and management of the ecosystems surroundingus imply the constant scheduling of infrastructural interventions, strongly affecting the built environment, the shape of landscape and its overall adaptability to the variable anthropic-environmental phenomena (Di Giulio, *et al.*, 2018, p. 92). In order to develop the correct touristic strategy to include in the park management plan, the natural and cultural features of the area should be clearly identified and categorized according to IUCN protected area management categories. The following figure (Figure 6.22) defines the priority of "tourism and recreation activities" according to the IUCN Protected Area classification.

<b>IUCN category</b>	<b>tourism priority</b>
Ia - Strict natural reserve	-
Ib - Wilderness Area	2
II - National Park	1
III - Natural Monument	1
IV - Habitat/Species Management Area	3
V - Landscape Park	1
VI - Protected Area with sustainable use of natural resources	3

*Key: 1 = Primary Objective; 2= Secondary Objective; 3 = Potentially applicable objective; - = not applicable.*

*Figure 6.22 Tourism and recreation activity priority in protected areas according to the IUCN categories (source: Eagles et al, 2009).*

The combination of tourist activities and protected areas is possible only if allowed by relevant legislation and IUCN reference category. In the areas belonging to IUCN cat 1 (1a – “Strict Natural Reserve” and 1b – “Wilderness Area”) and II (“National Park”), human visitation is reduced to a minimum except for indigenous communities who have the right to continue their activities on the territory. Categories III and IV are similar in objectives and different in subjects. IUCN cat 3 – “Natural Monuments” – includes small sites which are important mainly for their cultural heritage associated to significant biodiversity needing protection, while the IV category (“Habitat/Species Management Areas”) has a more biological objective. In the last categories – V (“Protected Landscape/seascape”) and VI (“Protected Areas with sustainable use of natural resources”) – the human and natural interaction is significant, favouring the development of ecotourism programs.

#### *6.2.2.1 Protected Areas in the Balkans*

Balkans countries are rich in natural and cultural heritage - which represents a main potential economic resource, although every single country has a completely different approach to this issue. The following figure shows the differences in protected areas' extension in the Western Balkan countries facing or close to the Adriatic and/or Ionian Sea.

### Protected Areas Coverage

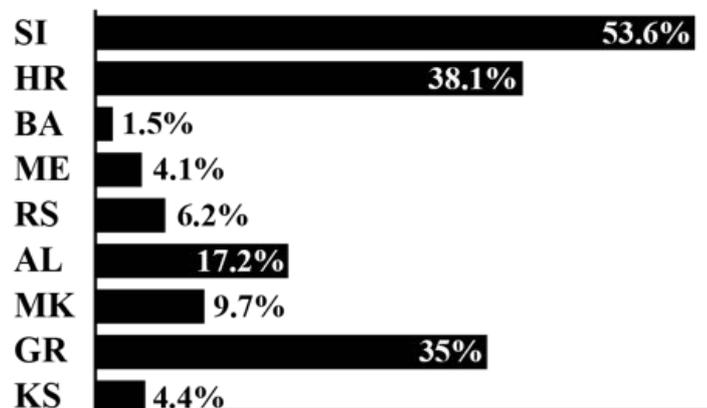


Figure 6.23 Terrestrial protected areas coverage expressed in percentage (sources: Porfido, 2017; based on protectedplanet.net and Mustafa, 2011)

Slovenia clearly represents a unique case not only for the Balkan region, but worldwide. With its 2407 Protected Areas, more than half of its territory is protected by law. Those PA mainly belong to the IUCN category III - Natural Monuments (1159), Natural Reserve (59) and Landscape Park (43). Croatia and Greece both follow with a high percentage, but with different features. Croatia has 82 Significant Landscapes (IUCN cat V) and 81 Natural Monument (IUCN cat III), while Greece counts around 600 Wildlife Refugees (generally allocated in the IUCN cat IV). Albania ranks forth with a total of 60 areas that belong mainly to IUCN cat IV (23) and II (15) (Albanian Ministry of Environment, 2014). In Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia and Kosovo there is a prevalence of Protected Areas in IUCN cat III.

IUCN category	hard ecotourism	soft ecotourism	other forms
Ia	no	no	no
Ib	yes	no	no
II	yes	yes	no
III	yes	yes	no
IV	yes	yes	no
V	no	yes	yes
VI	no	yes	no

Figure 6.24 Compatibility/suitability of forms of tourism with IUCN's Protected Area Management Categories (source: Porfido, 2017; based on Eagles et al, 2009)

As previously mentioned, the IUCN categories depend on the natural and cultural features of the site and influence any possible activities being done there. According to the figure above, there are three possible typologies of tourism possible in protected areas: hard ecotourism, soft ecotourism and other forms. Hard activities are considered the adventurous and wilderness outdoor experiences with few comforts, while soft ones are more casual with some comforts (Eagles et al, 2009). By other forms, it is meant that all other typologies that do not perfectly fit the “ecotourism” definition. The most rigid category is obviously the 1a, which does not allow any of them. All the others allow only hard and soft tourism. IUCN cat V – Protected Landscape is the only one to allow other forms of tourism in its territory and is considered the most flexible, due to the fact that it often includes broad territories.

#### 6.2.2.2 Protected Areas in Albania

Today Albania counts 59 Protected Areas, 4 of them under RAMSAR protection. In the past 10 years, the protected areas’ total surface has tripled, going from 5% to the 17.2% (www.natura.al).

<b>Albanian Protection Categories</b>	<b>IUCN</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>tourism</b>
a) Strictly natural reserve / scientific reservation	I	2	no
b) National Park	II	15	yes
c) National Monument	III	6	yes*
d) Natural managed reservation	IV	23	yes*
e) Protected Landscape	V	5	yes
f) Protected area of managed resources / with multi-purpose utilization	VI	4	no
-) Emerald Areas	-	25	-

*\*only with previous authorisation issued by the responsible body.*

*Figure 6.25 Albanian Protection Categories and Areas, in correlation with IUCN categories (sources: Porfido, 2017; based on Albania Ministry of Environment and Law on Protected Area)*

Focusing on ecotourism potential, the protected areas’ law listed 59 protected areas divided into six protection categories (see Figure 6.25: “Strict Nature Reserve”, “National Park”, “Nature Monuments”, “Managed Natural Reserve”, “Protected Landscape”, “Protected Area of Managed Resources”) and 25 ecological “Emerald Areas”. The National Park category allows performance of seasonal touristic activities, as well as

sailing boats and canoes, flying non-military helicopters, aerostatic balloons and delta-planes, mountain climbing and other outdoor activities. For Natural Monuments and Managed Natural Reserves, a special ministerial permission needs to have been issued. Protected Landscapes are territories larger than 1000ha with specific landscape features, where activities are allowed. While in the Protected Area of Managed Resources both access and interventions are strictly monitored due to high environmental risk.

Touristic activities are recognized and allowed by law in four Albanian protected areas' categories, although two of those require previous authorization issued by the responsible body. It is worth underlining that 53 of 59 Protected Areas belong to such categories. In the entire country, only 6 areas restrict access to authorized personal only. This is evidence of a great opportunity to transform natural resources into fundamental economic ones.

### **6.2.3 Case studies**

#### *6.2.3.1 Sečovlje Salina Nature Park in Slovenia*

Slovenia is considered a best practice in the field of sustainable tourism in protected areas, not only for the percentage of area coverage, but also for the effectiveness of its management plans. The case study of Sečovlje Salina Nature Park is presented here to better explain the positive relationship between touristic activities and landscape protection. The data reported is the result of an interview with the director of the Park Klavdij Godnic by the authors (K. Godnic, personal communication, March 16, 2017). The Sečovlje saltpans are fascinating wetlands that present an interesting combination of amazing natural heritage and anthropic cultural landscapes with over one hundred saltpan houses.



*Figure 6.26 Sečovlje Salina Nature Park (source: Peter Malovrh, available on flickr.com)*

The Sečovlje Salina Nature Park in Slovenia is a Landscape Park - IUCN cat V - which is *'an area with intrinsic natural value where the influence of people in shaping, maintaining and caring for the environment is evident'* (Nature Conservation Act, 1999). In the objectives of this category we can find *'the creation of opportunities for enjoyment, well-being and socio-economic activity through recreation and tourism'* (Stolton et al, 2013). The Sečovlje Salina Nature Park is a good experience in terms of management. The fact that this protected area belongs to a category that allows organization of activities and events is the starting point for any touristic development process, supported by Management Plans that clarify duties, responsibilities and limitations. In this specific case, touristic activities are related to sport and the environment.

In the last two years, the number of tourists increased by 24% - from 32'000 visitors in 2014 to 42'000 in 2016. This phenomenon is mostly related to the great number of activities organized in the park, such as guided tours, creative workshops, educational programs and sporting activities (e.g. biking, rowing, parachuting, surfing, sailing, etc.). It is worth noting the fact that, according to the MP, all people who decide to take part in sports or educational activities are considered "paying customers", although they do not enjoy all the park's traditional touristic services.

Those activities generate an income of 200'000€/year that, summed up to 250'000€/year received from the government, is used to pay the 15 employees' salaries and for the park

maintenance machines. The main difficulty in the economic management is the financial split of private and public activities, due to the fact that the park is officially one body with one financial account. From an environmental point of view, the main risk is related to the possible pollution of the Adriatic Sea water in the coastal area of the park.

#### *6.2.3.2 Brijuni National Park in Croatia*

Brijuni Park's touristic development is interesting. Due to historical events, the park has been widely transformed by human presence. Its flora and fauna are a combination of Mediterranean features, with more than 600 exotic species having been imported, both plants and animals. Roman villas, archeological sites and architectural objects of different ages, natural science and archaeological museums represent the wide cultural heritage, which includes underwater patrimony and paleontological findings. For its strategic position close to the Istrian Peninsula, the archipelago of fourteen islands - known as Brijuni Islands - changed its landscape due to human presence. First, the Ancient Romans, then the Venetian invasion, then Napoleone, the Austrian Empire and ending with Paul Kupelwieser – an Austrian businessman – who bought the islands and transformed them into an exclusive beach resort in 1900. The two World Wars saw the islands passing from Italy to Yugoslavia, when they were used by Tito as his personal summer residence. Only in 1983, after Tito's death, the park became National Park of Yugoslavia. The park also played host to a zoo with many species imported from all over the world, such as chital deer, fallow deer and Asian elephants. Since the XX century, it has hosed a Safari park, a tourist attraction for European travellers.

The Brijuni National Park is an interesting case where the tourist "invasion" caused major changes in the natural environment and seriously influenced the local ecosystem with the transformation of the archipelago into a tourist resort in 1900 reshaping the natural landscape, but once declared a protected area, policies changed. Touristic structures are strictly limited to some areas, the previously built ones as well as the remaining areas are under protection and activities are continuously monitored. The protection "label" cannot change the transformations that happened in the last century and the consequent environmental damage, but it can stop further human interventions and educate the tourism fluxes to taking an environmentally friendly approach through programs and activities.

*From isolation to 'pleasure periphery': the Riviera perspective.*



*Figure 6.27 Historical representation in the Brijuni Park (source: [www.np-brijuni.hr](http://www.np-brijuni.hr))*

Nowadays the Brijuni park belongs to IUCN category II, of which the main objective is *'to protect natural biodiversity along with its underlying ecological structure and supporting environmental processes, and promote education and recreation'* (Stolton, 2013: 478).

#### 6.2.3.3 Torre Guaceto Management Consortium

*'Both globally and across Europe, MPA designation is evolving towards the construction of more representative and ecologically coherent MPAs networks: from the protection of singular sites, presenting vulnerable and essential features, to a more holistic assessment and design of entire MPAs networks, based on ecosystema approach'* (Emanuelli & Lobosco, 2016, p. 140).

*'Marine protected areas (MPAs) have become popular tools for ecosystem conservation and fishery management worldwide'* (Guidetti & al, 2008, p. 699). Among the Mediterranean MPAs, Torre Guaceto located in Apulia is often referred to as best practice and is involved in many EU projects concerning Blue Growth and Sustainable Tourism, for this reason and for similar geographic features, it was adopted as a case study for this research.



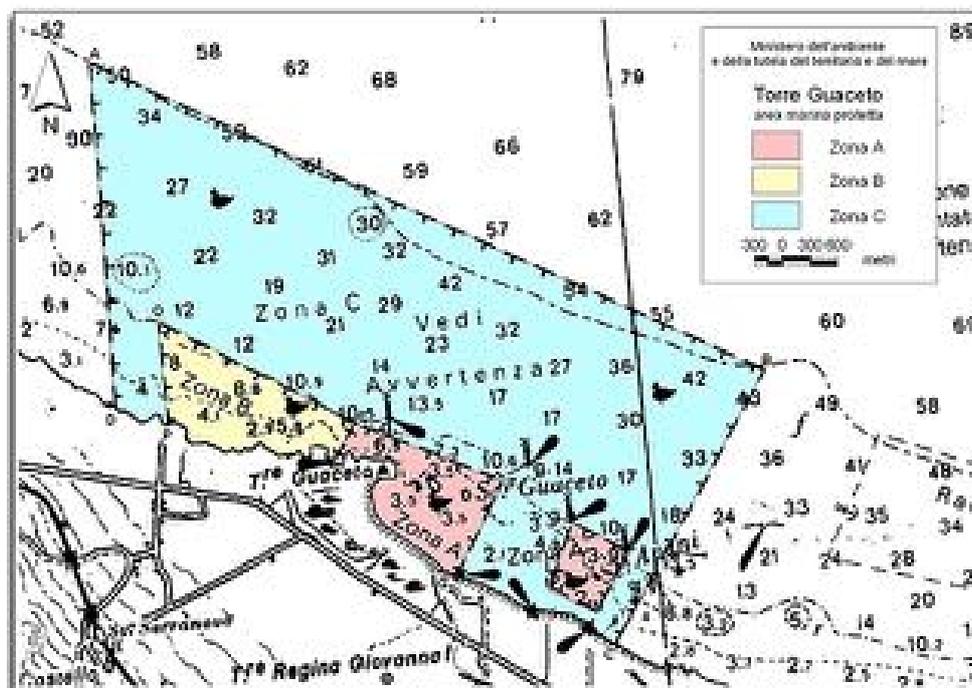
Figure 6.28 Torre Guaceto entrance signal (source: riservaditorreguaceto.it)

Torre Guaceto is an atypical reserve for the multifaceted management related aspects. The area includes a Natural Terrestrial Reserve, with a surface of 1.016ha, and a Marine Protected Area, of 2.227 ha, overlapping with a Special Protected Area for Bird Directives and forming a Special Area of Conservation for Habitat Directive. The Marine Protected Area of Torre Guaceto already applies EMAS II - Eco-Management and Audit Scheme<sup>57</sup> - for the monitoring of the achievement of environmental improvement. The application of this tool has allowed, in addition to improved management effectiveness, the improvement of relationships with stakeholders and communication outside of the conservation objectives achieved, further increasing transparency of management policies undertaken. The Management Consortium of Torre Guaceto has a decade-long experience in carrying out actions to preserve natural and environmental values. Specifically, the Body made the following interventions:

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<sup>57</sup> EMAS is a voluntary environmental management tool developed and promoted by the European Union. The areas undergo voluntary through a process of auto-evaluation first and AUDIT after, reporting on key performance indicators of six areas (energy efficiency, material efficiency, water, biodiversity, emission, waste).

1. To monitor and disseminate scientific research interventions so as to ensure systematic knowledge area through: (i) Realization of a scientific publication database; (ii) High Resolution Morphobatimetric Survey; (iii) Biocenotic and terrestrial habitat Mapping; (iv) Monitoring of Benthic Communities; (v) Monitoring of focal species; (vi) Monitoring of Fish and Fisheries; (vii) Monitoring of *Posidonia Oceanica* grasslands;
2. Conservation programs for inland and marine habitats;
3. Involvement policies with farmers and fishermen to create a Sustainable Community of producers;
4. Obtainment of European Charter for Sustainable Tourism by Europarc Federation.



*Figure 6.29 MPA Torre Guaceto map (source: Ministero dell'Ambiente, 1992)*

The MPA hosts the visitor centre “Al Gawsit”, the service areas Punta Penna and Apani, a number of ecological stations and the “Luigi Cantoro” Recovery Centre for Marine Turtles. Those centres are really dynamic with activity organization, such as sea-watching, bike trekking, trekking, diving sessions, sailing and windsurfing courses, cultural and gastronomic events, summer camps and workshops. Activities are regulated by internal Management Plans according to environmental education and research activities, as well as general access being subject to permission. The management consortium organizes educational days as “La via Traiana” - focused on the archeological heritage – and

“Discover the reserve with the fishermen” - a project with Lecce University and Slow Food on environmental awareness and sustainable fishing.

The Marine Protected Area and National Natural Reserve of Torre Guaceto is an exemplary reference for tourism activities developed according to natural heritage protection. The partnerships established with universities, local and international institutions and the development of profitable projects, such as the Slow Food project regarding the recovery of a typical tomato species “Pomodoro fiaschetto”, allowed the consortium to economically manage protection interventions.

### **6.3 The application of bubble model: Riviera Protected Landscapes Park**

*‘A variety of suggestions that have been made for urban systems are analogous to ecological control schemes in nature. They revolve around smaller scale interventions and decentralized efforts rather than large-scale monolithic approaches’ (Holling & Goldber, 1971, pp. 227-228).*



*Figure 6.30 Albanian Riviera (source: Angelo Pedrotti, available at panorama-photo.net)*

‘Defining a tourism development strategy means to set targets and limits at the same time: the accommodation capacity, for instance, should be planned according to the existing supply and to a careful assessment of all its repercussions on the environmental and infrastructural network’ (Emanueli & Lobosco, 2018, p. 12). This final paragraph analyses the possibility of making the whole Riviera a protected area, adding a layer of security to

the already existing legal restrictions. The following maps will, therefore, define the park limits, the areas to develop and the accommodation capacity.



Figure 6.31 Riviera Protected Landscape Park total surface (source: author)

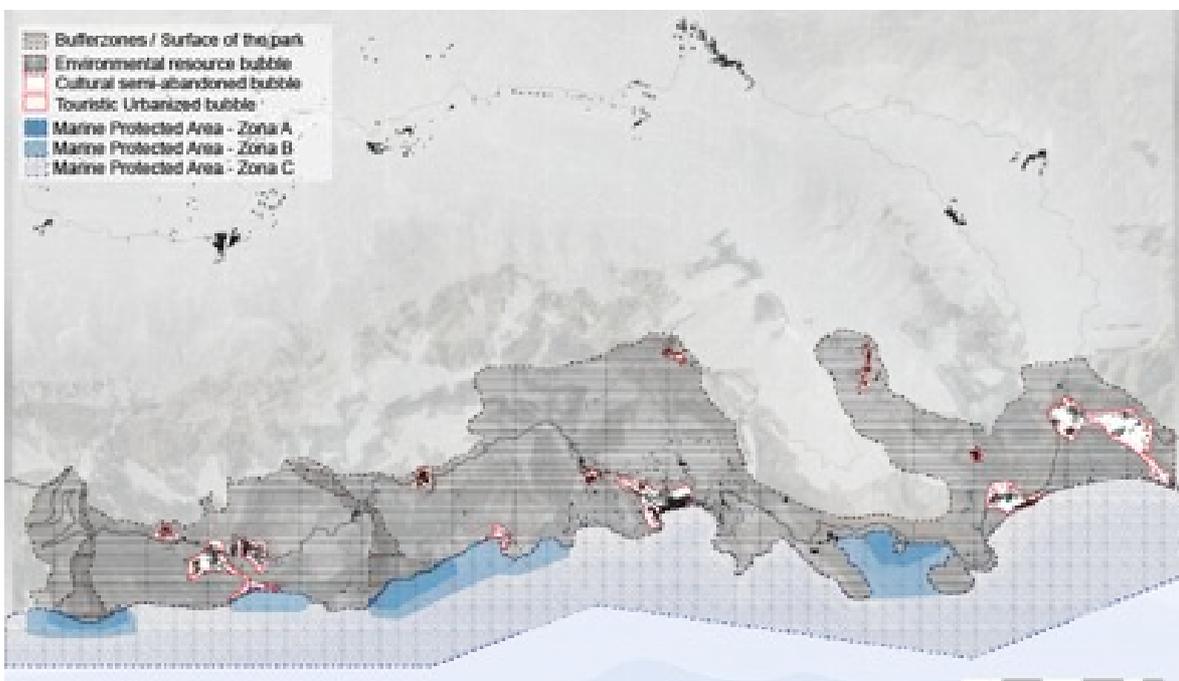


Figure 6.32 Riviera Protected Landscape Park map (source: author) / see the Appendix section for the full-page version

From a technical point of view, the IUCN category V - Protected Landscape perfectly meets the Riviera features and needs, joining the necessity of protecting both natural and cultural heritage and introducing economic activities as a tourism boost to local development. It is also in line with Albanian Law for protected areas (Republic of Albania, 2002).

*A Protected Landscape is protected area where interaction between humans and nature over time has produced an area with a distinct character as well as significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value, and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to the protection and support of the area and its associated values (Stolton, 2013: 478).*

As in the case of Sečovlje Salina Nature Park in Slovenia, this category allows for creation of 'opportunities for enjoyment, well-being and socio-economic activities through recreation and tourism' (Stolton *et al.*, 2013).

This strategy is based on two main actions, developed according to the IUCN category assigned: (i) natural landscape *protection* and (ii) cultural heritage *valorization* and re-use.

### **6.3.1 Natural landscapes protection**



*Figure 6.33 Environmental resource bubbles and their protection (source: author)*

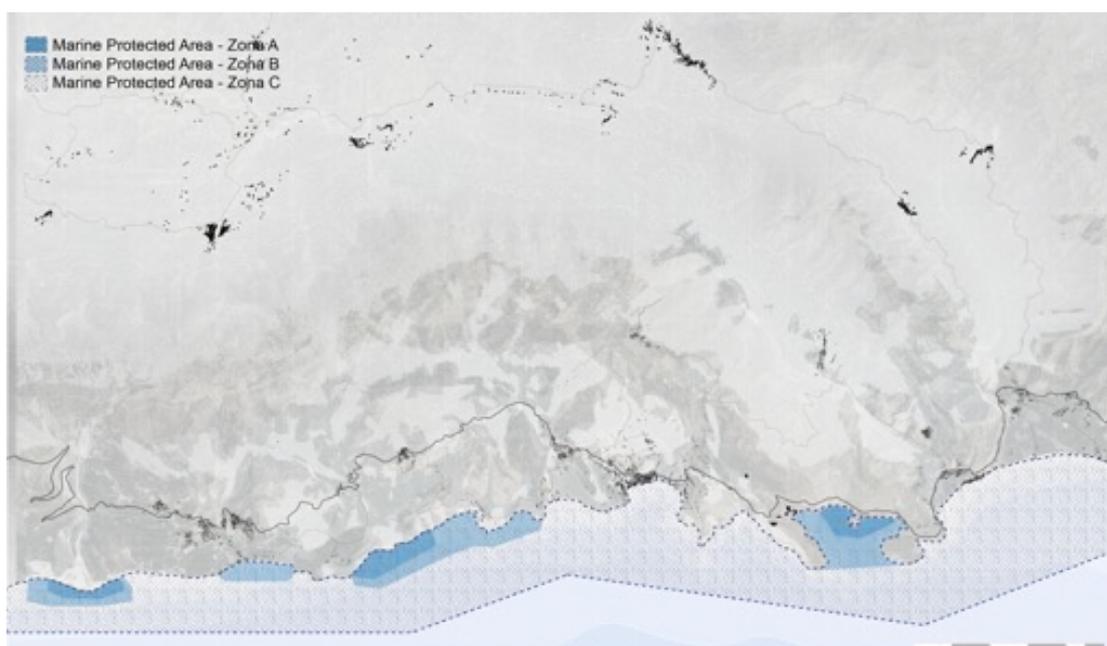
The first action involves the area's main resource: natural landscapes. Once the model's bubbles have been identified, the ones belonging to the "environmental resource" undergo

an environmental evaluation. If they are at risk, another level of protection can be applied. The entire bubble or a portion can be further protected by additional protection categories. For example, the already mentioned Gjipe Canyon and the delta of the river close to Palasë could fall into the category of "Habitat/Species Management Area" – IUCN category IV.

**Category IV** protected areas aims to protect particular species or habitats and management reflects on this priority. Many category IV protected areas will need regular, active interventions to address the requirements of a particular species or to maintain habitats, but this is not a requirement of the category (Dudley, 2008, p. 19).

This category has the main objective of protecting biological conditions of the area, prioritizing the wellness of local flora and fauna. Meanwhile, hard and soft ecotourism activities are allowed (see Figure 6.24). In Gjipe Canyon, sports activities such as climbing, canyoning and kayaking would continue, but construction and infrastructural implementation would no longer be allowed. This will help the protection of biodiversity and keep the scenic landscapes which represent an important touristic attraction untouched. The area of Palasë delta has a less visual importance, but its environmental impact is significant for the entire area. Due to its almost enduring dryness, the river seems inactive (except when heavy rains fall), but the riverbed is clearly visible.

Throughout the last two years, the project "Green Coast resort" (Figure 5.42) has been built just alongside. A major infrastructure was built to reach the resort, crossing and diverting the natural water flow. The establishment of protection for this area – although it may be too little, too late, would reduce risks caused by further foolish interventions, especially in the case of flooding or landslides. In such case, the protection is not applied to a specific species but to a new habitat, created brand new by ambitious man.



*Figure 6.34 Marine Protected Areas (source: author)*

The protection of natural resources should also be intended for water resources and hence protection strategies should be extended to the sea.

*Any area of intertidal or subtidal terrain, together with its overlying water and associated flora, fauna, historical and cultural features, which has been reserved by law or other effective means to protect part or all of the enclosed environment (Kelleher & Kenchington, 1992, p. 25).*

For the maritime areas, three levels of protection are established: A, B and C. Following the Torre Guaceto Management Consortium guidelines included in the joint ministerial decision of 6<sup>th</sup> December 1991 (Ministero dell'Ambiente, 1992), three categories of protection are applied to the sea: (A) integral protection, (B) general reserve and (C) partial conservation. In the "integral protection" areas, navigation, access and stopping of ships and boat of any type are not allowed, with the exception of those duly authorized for scientific research and guided visits though it is prohibited to swim, fish or collect findings from the ocean floor. In the general reserve (B) areas, all previous prohibitions are valid, but swimming is allowed "from sunrise to sunset". In the areas of partial conservation, navigation and stopping of boats, both sailing and rowing, is allowed as long as they are not motor-powered; fishing is authorized subject to notification of the management body. The water zone from Palasè beach to Qeparo has been hypothetically divided according to these categories, as shown on the map Figure 6.34.

The control of water traffic is functional in the monitoring of tourist fluxes, to provide a better organization of the tourist activities and at the same time protecting the water heritage, both natural and cultural, due to the presence of archeological findings (e.g. the area of Porto Palermo). The two main activities' incomes – tourism and fishing – are used for maintenance and further investment, allowing the self-sustainment of the area.

### **6.3.2 Cultural heritage valorization and re-use for touristic facilities**

The issue of built heritage follows two entirely different trends. On one hand there are the Touristic Urbanized bubbles – those urban centres developed mainly for touristic reasons on the coast – expanding horizontally with no criteria, while on the other hands, the old ancient villages – with their historical buildings – are living a process of abandonment (Cultural semi-abandoned bubbles). Two strategies are needed for correcting such trends, which will otherwise lead to an unstoppable exploitation of territory resources and the complete deterioration of the building's heritage. The common goal is the reduction of construction of new accommodation and services purposes and invest more in the existing ones, boosting a process of recovering and valorization of settlement heritage. This action is in line with the idea of starting long-term processes aligned with sustainability requirements, to which effects will not be immediately visible.

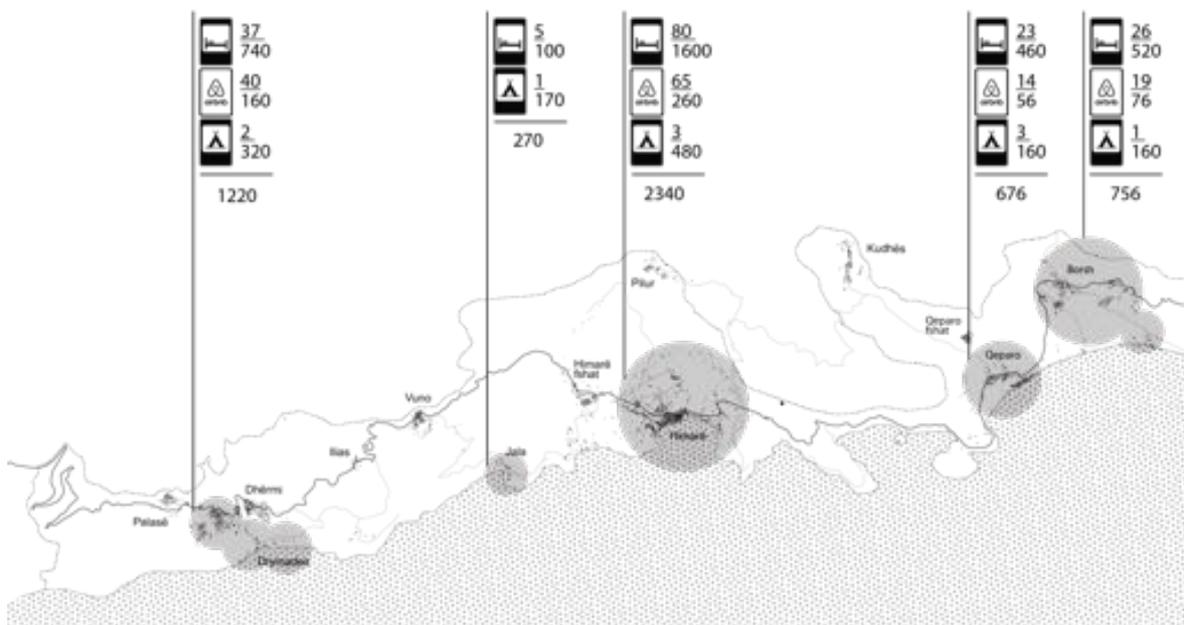
#### **6.3.2.1 Touristic Urbanized bubbles and alternative touristic facilities**



*Figure 6.35 Touristic Urbanized bubbles (source: author)*

In the Touristic Urbanized bubbles, borders should be carefully drawn and respected. The main principle to apply to new construction is compactness, avoiding the waste of space and promoting more sustainable land use. In addition, referring to unwritten laws on building and landscape in the communism period, “buildings on the coast should not be higher than the trees” (Dhamo, 2018). Obviously, this rule should be updated to our times, but the meaning is still the same: to not exceed in height and respect the visual impact on the landscape. The study of visibility made in chapter 5 and the example of borders definition (Figure 6.14) are the two tools provided to start this new planning process.

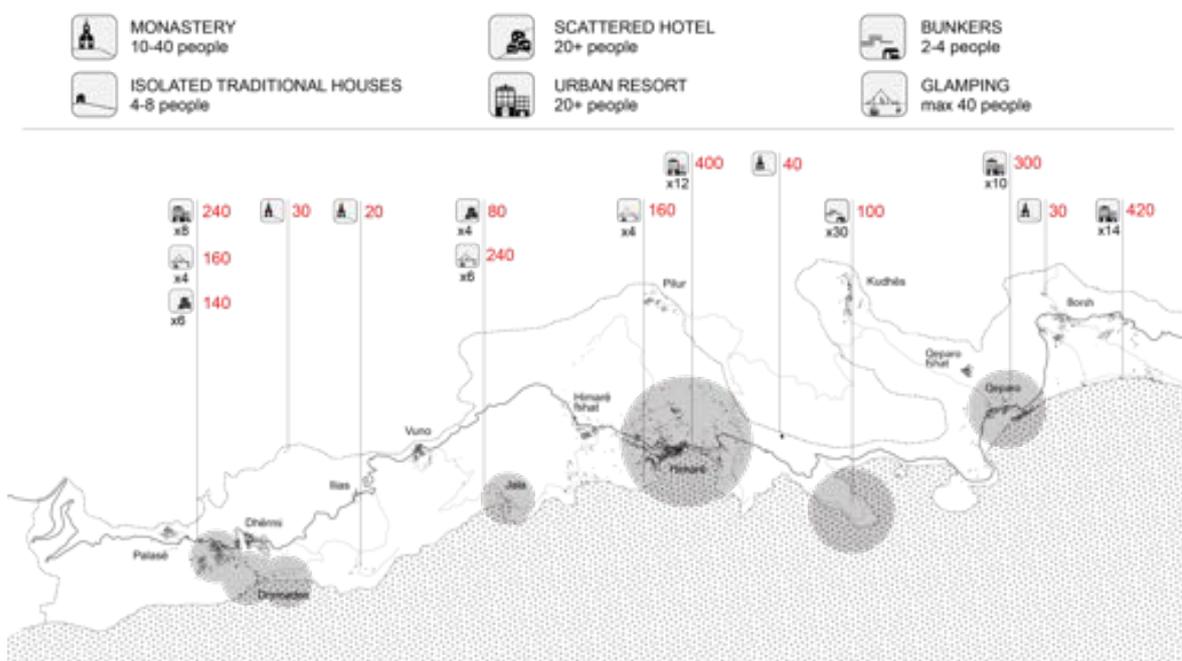
Today the number of beds is increasing rapidly year by year. In October 2017, the main websites of tourist facilities (booking.com, airbnb.com and hostelworld.com) were consulted and an approximate number of structures listed. In the case of hotels, the number of beds was calculated according to the ratio 1 hotel – 20 beds. In fact, the structures are mainly medium-small with an average of 10 double rooms. For the Airbnb apartments, an average of 4 guests each was calculated and where campsites are concerned it was possible to obtain more information thanks to the official websites.



*Figure 6.36 Amount of beds in the Touristic Urbanized bubbles (source: author, based on booking.com, airbnb.com and hostelworld.com 2017)*

In 2017, there were 5252 beds. To increase this number, it is proposed that advantage is taken of alternative tourist facilities in the same urban centres or in the immediate

proximity. Places such as monasteries and isolated rural houses easily attract tourists, offering a new travelling experience. The small houses in towns could be joined in “scattered hotels” or in urban resorts. Old military bunkers can be converted into small accommodation spots, representing an innovative transformation of an Albanian symbol. Another facility type which became famous in the last year is “glamping” – a luxury version of camping, where tourists are hosted in unique locations, such as bungalows on the beach and bell tents in the olive tree grove, with high standard services, but with a low and reversible impact on landscapes (Cvelić-Bonifačić, et al., 2017).



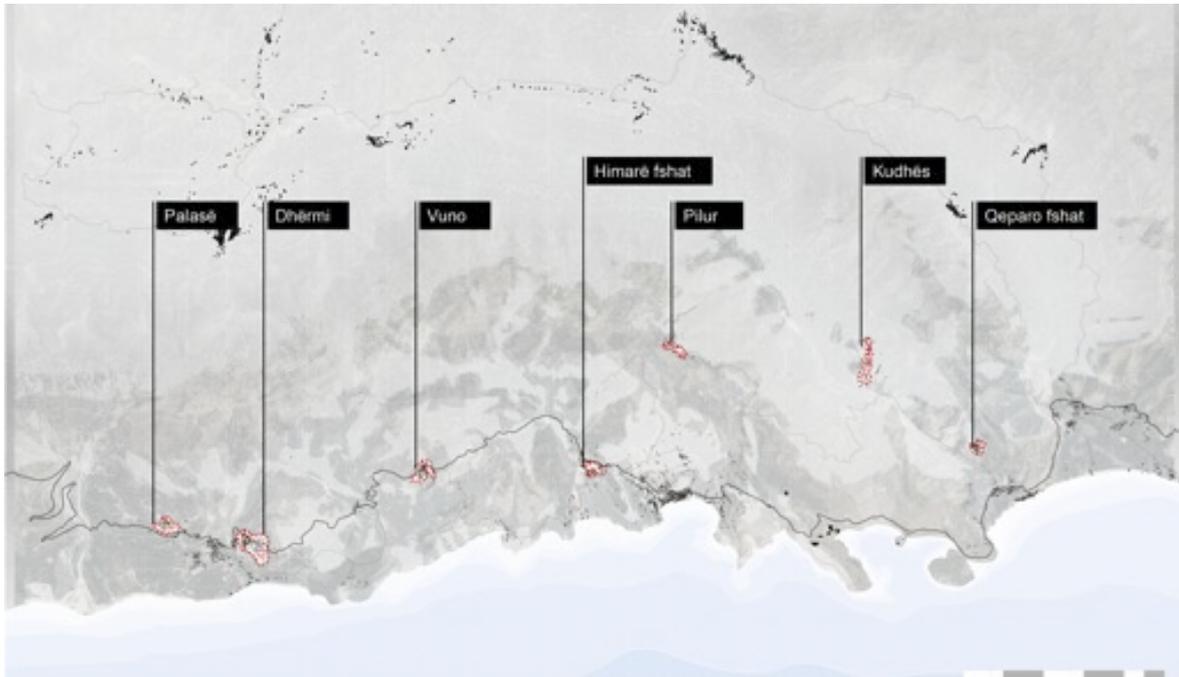
*Figure 6.37 Alternative touristic facilities to include in the Touristic Urbanized bubbles (source: author)*

During field trips, a number of structures were counted, and a proposal developed according to the following structure capacity: monasteries (between 10 and 40 people), isolated traditional houses (4/8 people), urban resorts and scattered hotels (20 people), bunkers (2/4 people) and glamping (40 people). A total number of 2360 beds were added following this first strategy.

### 6.3.2.2 *The old villages and the re-hab process*

The old villages have great hidden potential, in terms of position and touristic development, all of them are located a slightly above sea level, offering an interesting view of the Riviera. Their heritage is built with local materials and technique, providing the

rural taste contemporary tourists are looking for, but most of them are in dire need for restoration. The application of an innovative policy, like the one promoted by Vittorio Sgarbi for the Sicilian town of Salemi – selling them for 1€ with the obligation of restoration and use, could be a reference to rehabilitate this otherwise lost heritage.



*Figure 6.38 Cultural semi-abandoned bubbles (source: author)*

Through Google Maps, a calculation of the abandoned houses and gardens (in square metres) for each of these villages has been done. Rehabilitation of those buildings would lead to the creation of circa 2500 beds (50% of the current available number in the entire Riviera).

The approximate formula used is based on the Neufert guidelines for tourist accommodation. each tourist requires 25sqm to split between sleeping areas, common spaces and services. Starting with the number of buildings visible from Google Maps and assuming an average of 120sqm per building (on two or three floors), it is possible to transform each one into a 4-people tourist apartment.

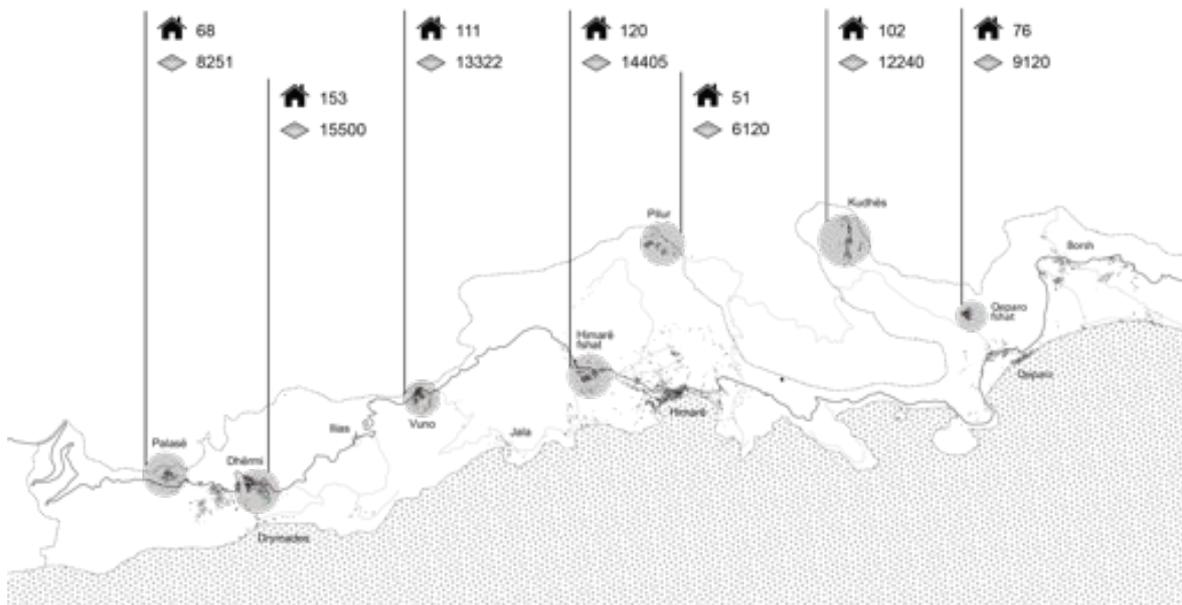


Figure 6.39 Amount of possible beds to install in the cultural semi-abandoned bubbles (source: author, based on GoogleEarth and field trips)

In the seven old villages included in the study area, a total surface of 78'958sqm of abandoned buildings has been calculated. Dividing it into 120sqm apartments, means to rehabilitate 658 buildings for a total of 2632 beds. Those investments, despite possibly costing more than new buildings, are thought of as a long-term strategy, promoting a more sustainable development and more importantly, respect for the existing heritage.

In the last year, this approach has been widely promoted by international workshops and competitions. In 2016, the Dutch office "openfabric" proposed a model based on agrotourism for the town of Qeparo. The model is based on agriculture, tourism and spatial planning and the main intervention is the restoration of an old irrigation system.

*'By restoring the water inlet, the channel can feed the terraces and becomes a tourist attraction as well. In fact, a very simple path can run along the infrastructure rendering it accessible and becoming a new alternative pedestrian connection to link Qeparo with Borsh' (openfabric, 2016).*

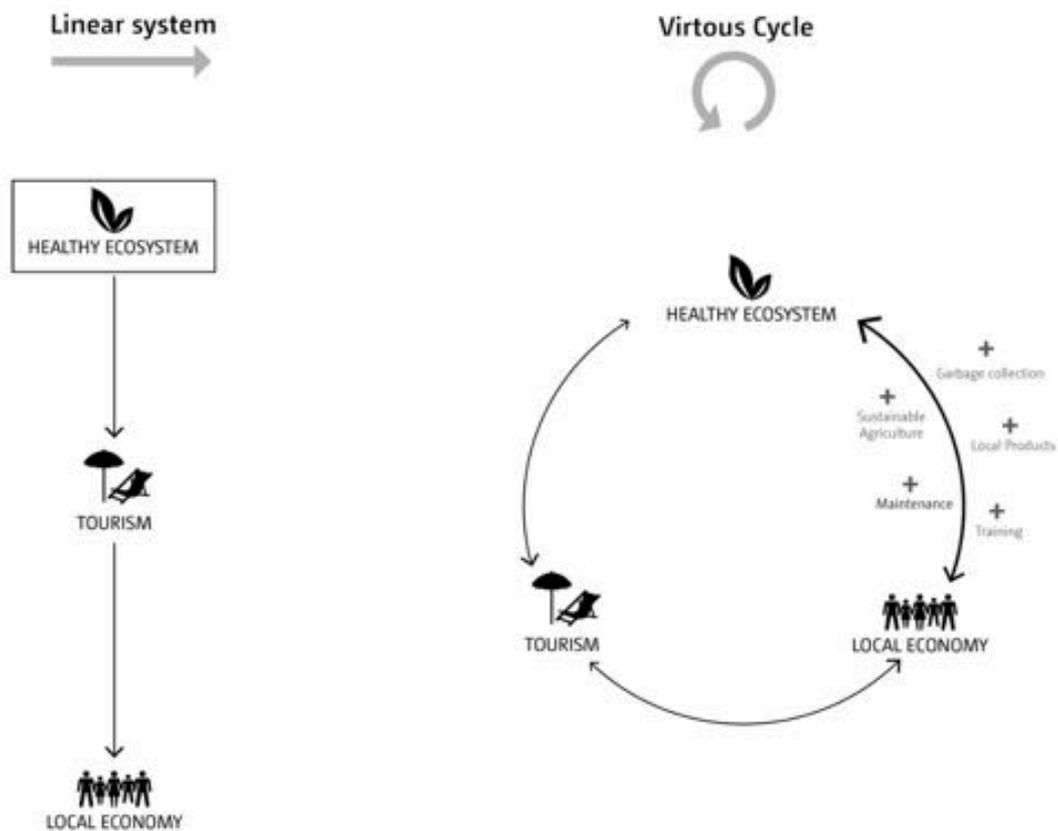


Figure 6.40 Linear system of Virtuous Cycle models proposed for Qeparo rehabilitation (source: [openfabric.eu](http://openfabric.eu))

During the Rivieralab workshop, the group in charge of the settlement system proposed a modular construction system will facilitate the repopulation of the ancient villages (Figure 6.41). Each element is based on a 3 metre module, which is a general measure that could fit with the standard dimensions of the Riviera's traditional architecture. The structures are meant to be installed within the existing walls of abandoned houses, that often still remain in good structural conditions. The new plug-in architecture is, however, structurally independent. Beams, pillars and panels are made of pine that is easily found all over Albania; knots are made out of steel; the shading panel reuses the roof tiles that are dismantled and each module can also be implemented with a recollecting water system.



Figure 6.41 Proposal of modular construction system for the buildings of Qeparo village (source: Eranda Janku, Gabriele Stancato, Matteo Baldissarra, Mikel Tepelena, during the PhD international workshop Rivieralab, 2016)

With these two strategies, based on recovering and converting existing heritage, it is possible to create circa 4'992 new beds, doubling the existing number (5252). In addition, due to the differences between the typologies proposed, the target groups are already strongly differentiated.

In conclusion, the use of protected area designation aimed at slowing down exploitation processes is not considered a substitute for traditional urban standards but rather an additional tool reinforcing such standards.

#### 6.4 Future discussion / towards a hybrid Riviera

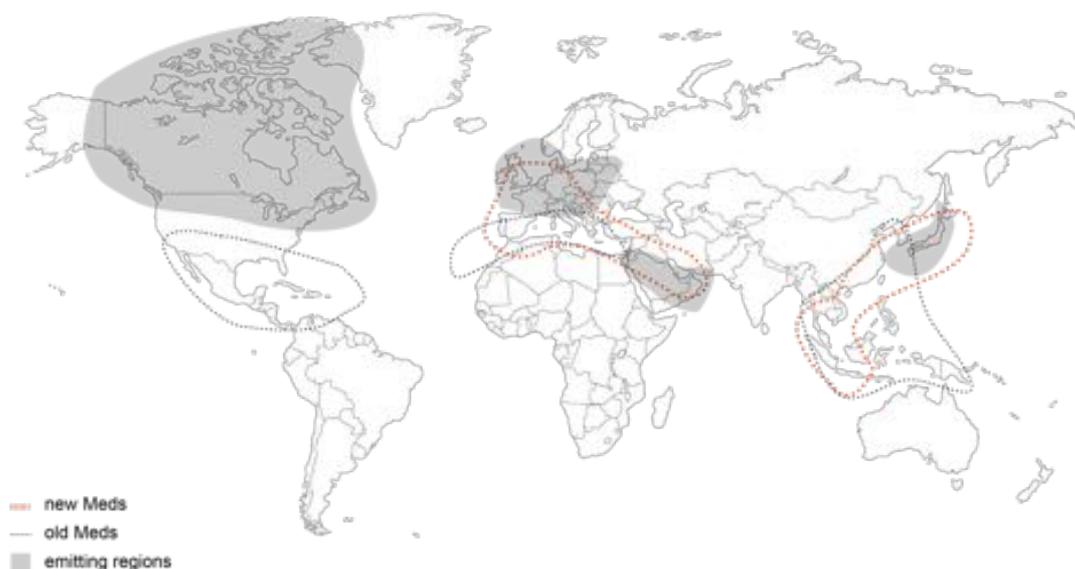
*Tourist operators cannot invest too much effort into an area in which war is always about to break out. Then there are the socialists in Algeria and the communists in Albania who are hostile to foreign investment and, in the case of Albania, try very hard to do without any tourists at all (Turner & Ash, 1975, p. 100).*

In 1975, Turner and Ash presented Albania as a place which was fighting to not receive any tourists. A few years later, the geographer Rosemary Burton (1991) described a country with 'great potential for tourism', which was 'cautiously beginning to open up to Western travellers'. This caution has been quickly lost, leaving room to rapid and unregulated tourist development often with a short-term vision.

In recent years, too many economic interests have been driving the “tourist cause” and the main local actors are often not ready, nor trained for it. The tradition of hospitality is the strong point everybody is hanging on to, but often there is no knowledge about facility management, investments and business plan creation, etc. This lack is caused by a complete absence of hospitality training institutes and a tradition sized at a family level. In addition, the building industry and the foreign investments are speeding up a process which Albania is still not ready to go through.

On the other hand, Albania can count on different “pro-tourism” aspects. First, the new world trend of discovery tourism and ecotourism fully meets Albanian natural and cultural features, without needing to fake the tourist offer. Local people are easily speaking three or more languages (Albanian and English are the basic ones, then there is Italian, Greek, Macedonian, Turkish and German) and they are famous for their friendly and hospitable attitude. Furthermore, the EU admission process – which Albania is facing, helps the definition and achievement of European standards in different fields. Lastly, Albania has at its disposal an enormous number of case studies of tourist destination experiences along Mediterranean coasts which it can refer to so as to avoid similar mistakes and learn from the best practices.

Despite this positive hint, Albanian tourism seems to be following the same paths as its neighbours. The development analysis and the touristic impact evaluation showed a similar behaviour to all the case studies presented here, ending in the creation of massive coastal tourism regions. Mass tourism is spreading, and the arrival of low-cost will not be delayed by much. From the dissertation studies, the complete lack of national legislation on landscape also emerges. The impact of those two factors on the territory can be catastrophic. It urges the drafting of a landscape protection plan and a strong tourism strategy, based on identity, education, training and sensibilization, rather than investments and branding.



*Figure 6.42 The new Mediterraneans (source: author)*

As shown in Chapter 4, Albania and the entire Balkan region is part of the contemporary pleasure periphery, which will become one similar to that of India's tourist growth (see paragraph 4.1.4). This does not mean that Albania must get on board the moving train of massive tourism, but surely it has to consider the positive moment for its development.

The study of tourist fluxes in Figure 6.43 draws the Albanian touristic periphery, comparing it with the touristic maps of the last centuries, a change of trend is evident and emphasizes the high attraction of coastal areas. There are a few inland zones resulting attractive in the current condition, though most of them do have high touristic potential (see paragraph 4.3.7). For example, the Albanian Alps in the north are one of the most attractive resources in the whole country, but the infrastructural difficulties to reach them represent a major obstacle for touristic development. On the other hand, as for the Albanian Riviera a few years ago, the underdevelopment of infrastructure played a key role in protecting the landscapes and territories. This issue represents an open question of this dissertation and assumed that infrastructures can be used as main tools for controlling tourist fluxes and their implementation act as a tourism accelerator, but isn't it better to restrain them to protect territory from the tourist invasion? This approach would help in slowing down the process and buy time to plan a better strategy for touristic development.



*Figure 6.43 Albania's Touristic Periphery (source: author)*

In this sense, the “bubble model” proposal joins the awareness concerning the impossibility of stopping the touristification process and the positive and profitable experience of eco-tourism. With the differentiation of bubble categories, few are left to the touristification process (Vlorë, Sarandë, Himarë are already big touristic centres), while others are strongly monitored and protected in order to guarantee valorization of natural resources and establish a “virtuous cycle” tourism-landscape.

The recurring characteristics of other Mediterranean experiences, its variety of landscapes, cultures and languages, its geological differences and alternation of rocky

and sandy beaches and its incredible historical heritage located in empty landscapes made the Albanian Riviera a “hybrid Riviera”. The extension of this hybridation process to the tourism system would strengthen its potentiality in terms of offer, protections and valorization even more. A similar neologism has been used by Emanuelli & Lobosco (2016) as a ‘way to explain the attempt to change attitudes while addressing some fundamental issues like great territorial transformations induced either by tourism or by the realization of new infrastructures, defence or reclamation works’ (Emanuelli & Lobosco, 2016, p. 42).

This proposal is in line with the most contemporary ideas on protection, emphasizing the negative aspect of an extreme conservative approach against the basic law of ecology (e.g. the Adaptive Cycle, often referred to in this text) and the opportunities which the introduction of tourism will open to the same landscapes. The application of the bubble model shows the possibility of joining different objectives such as tourism development, environmental protection, territory connection and blue growth to answer the need of our coastal complex ecosystems. In addition, it can be applied to different territory typologies due to its programmable flexibility. On a nationwide scale, the process can easily be applied today to the mountain area of the Alps or the lagoons of Karavasta-Divjaka and Shköder.

The number of issues faced in this dissertation - and left unanswered due to a natural process of narrowing the main research question – offers many starting points for future research. Can the Balkans together represent a new pleasure periphery where destinations are complementary and not in competition with one another? How will the legalization and systematization of tourist facilities impact the national market? What indicators define the expansion of a touristic urbanized bubble? Is it possible to control the tourist fluxes with a slow infrastructure planning system? This last question particularly deserves to be looked into sooner rather than later. If implementing infrastructure means accelerating processes Albania is not yet ready to face such intentional neglect may drive it back to an isolated condition, what are the possibilities of exploring promotion of sustainable tourism development?

To conclude, the introduction of visibility as a key factor in the model is the joining point within planning and architecture. The definition of the bubble and its edges in fact acts as a physical and conceptual limit between landscape planning solutions and architectural design processes, which is permeable but inflexible.



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