

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is defined by the World Tourism Organization as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment, for personal or business/professional purposes. Tourism has, therefore, to do with visitors' activities.

The aim of this volume is to analyse tourist promotion in different countries and from a sociological and historical perspective, with an interest on the type of language used to attract both domestic and international tourists and excursionists.

The promotion of a destination is strictly interrelated with cultural aspects. As Herbig suggests (1998: 1), customers' needs vary from culture to culture: what is absolutely relevant for an Italian tourist may be amazingly useless for a British or a Japanese visitor. Unfortunately, too often, institutions, travel agencies or tourist facility owners seem to ignore or forget this obvious fact.

The Salentine peninsula, which is becoming an ever more popular and international holiday destination is frequently advertised with the following description: "Salento: Sun, Sea, and Wind". These three distinguishing features of the area are used by local tourist promoters as the key to every culture. However, they may not always be the right key for everyone. Some cultures may not be interested in the wind or even in the sea. The former, which is almost always present in the area and can indeed be considered a specific feature of the Salento, is mentioned in the Italian version principally because it rhymes with Salento (*Salento-vento*). However, in its translated version into English, both rhyme and meaning get lost, needless to say its promotional effect.

Many tourism experts and sociologists (Herbig 1998; Prime 2003) have described ethnocentrism as the cause of many overwhelming failures. Ethnocentrism is the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one's own ethnic culture. In other words, being ethnocentric means thinking that if *sun*, *sea* and *wind* work for southern Italians they will work perfectly for northern Italians and the rest of the world alike. With this, we are not assuming that the features of a place should be changed or even altered to please international tourists, but rather that different features of a place should be more or less emphasised depending on the culture which is being targeted.

As Llorens Bahena (this volume) suggests, creating a country or a destination brand is a hard task which requires not only the cooperation of government, institutions, companies, and citizens, but also strategic planning and cross-cultural communicating abilities.

The current volume includes nine chapters. The first five discuss tourist promotion from a cultural and historical perspective by illustrating the role of stereotypes, cultural specificities and cultural training in the creation of new tourist destinations and/or in adjusting the reception of foreign tourism. The remaining ones analyse the language used in tourist promotional discourse, be it printed brochures or Internet websites.

Llorens Bahena's contribution focuses on the tourist promotion of Spain from a historical perspective. He describes a series of stereotypes which have been used to create Spain's international image over the centuries and provides an analysis of how these stereotypes have been used in tourism starting from the 1960s. The reputation of a country depends on a number of variables which are

conditioned by collectively-held stereotypes. These may be positive or negative and may inevitably be interpreted differently by different cultures, with obvious implications on tourist promotion.

Similarly, **De Rosa** illustrates the stereotypes and clichés at the basis of the tourist imagery of Brazil. The author analyses the image of Brazil as it has been developing both in the Brazilian mindset and internationally. The two decades object of analysis go from 1964 to 1984 and the description focuses on the communicative strategies of *Embratur*, the Brazilian national board in charge of promoting tourism, which played a major role in the strengthening and spreading of a specific tourist image of Brazil, both nationally and internationally.

De Carlo's contribution describes tourism in Poland starting from the 1990s to nowadays. Recent investments on infrastructures and tourist promotion activities has led to a growth in the Polish tourism sector. The type of tourist promotion developed in Poland tends to invest on various and alternative forms of tourism in order to attract both domestic and international customers. Poland is working to become an ideal tourist destination with offers ranging from more traditional forms of tourism such as urban as well as rural tourism, ecotourism, lake and beach tourism, and winter tourism, to more alternative types of tourism, such as health and medical tourism.

Lelli analyses the potential of Apulia to attract different segments of American Jewish tourism. The idea of promoting new tourist destinations targeting Jewish travellers comes from a recent increase in those tourist offers which are specifically tailored for Jewish travellers who wish to visit the European places where their ancestors or themselves moved from before taking a new residence overseas. For these customers a specific sector of tourism has been developed, offering visits to small villages and towns in Sicily or other Italian regions that were involved in mass conversions to Catholicism, starting in the 16th century. Lelli examines the tourist offers of those geographical areas that have a well-established expertise in Jewish tourism and provides a number of suggestions for Apulian tourist businesses interested in attracting Jewish guests.

Sportelli's paper focuses on Italy as a destination for Chinese tourists and describes the features that tourist marketing for Chinese visitors should have. The author explains that tourist marketing for the 'Middle Country' requires specific cultural adjustments in order to meet Chinese taste and habits. Furthermore, cultural peculiarities, prejudices, lack of cross-cultural training, and language are some of the barriers which make the relationship between Chinese tourists and Italian tourist business owners difficult. For this reason, Italian tour operators, hotelkeepers, sales personnel, as well as all the human resources offering travel services should be well-trained in the Chinese culture and customs, in order to take the greatest advantage from Chinese incoming tourism in Italy.

The last four contributions to the volume offer a socio-linguistic approach. Language is a major feature of tourist promotion, along with culture, and dramatically changes from culture to culture in the way it is used to describe apparently similar concepts.

Zuliani's contribution analyses the official tourist promotion of *Turismo de Portugal* through its web portal www.visitportugal.com. The description of the features of Portuguese tourism and its development across the years starts with a brief discussion of the *Estado Novo* tourist policies which promoted a tourist image of Portugal based on cultural and geographical unity and continuity. Over the years, the tourist promotion of Portugal has undergone a number of changes and these changes are mainly visible in a marketing communication which is

increasingly adapting to the new dynamics of socialization, and making a massive use of major social networks. This paper also describes the web portal of *Turismo de Portugal*, both in its formal contents and through a comparative analysis of the Portuguese and Italian versions. The comparison focuses on the use of slogans and on some stylistic and rhetoric elements which are recurrent in the language of tourism, such as the use of the imperative, adjectives, and key words. Zuliani's contribution shows the relevant role of web resources in tourist communication. Contents on websites and social networks can be constantly updated and made easily accessible to potential visitors, thus improving the quality and the accessibility of promotion.

Spinzi's paper focuses on ecotourism. In particular, she analyses metaphors in English and Italian ecotourist holiday promotional material. Her corpus-based contrastive approach help understand the ideological framing of this type of discourse. Interesting insights arise from the analysis. Results suggest that this type of holiday is conceptualised in terms of weightlessness, discovery and relation. The metaphorical expressions seem to be largely conventionalized across the British and Italian cultures, with interesting cultural and linguistic differences in the way companies promote ecotourism in the two countries.

D'Andrea focuses on music tourism in France. The theoretical framework she adopts combines some basic principles of rhetorical analysis, with Benveniste's theory of enunciation (Benveniste 1966, 1970), as well as recent developments in French discourse analysis (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1980, 1986). The analysis is carried out on a website called *La Fugue – Europera*, set up by a French tourist agency specializing in musical trips. In particular, she analyses the texts contained in the website from a linguistic and communicative perspective and illustrates the strategies adopted to achieve the desired perlocutionary effect.

Finally, **Manca** offers a linguistic and cultural analysis of the strategies adopted by British and Italian tourist facilities, such as farmhouse holidays, hotels and campsites, in their websites. The methodological approach used for analysis (Manca 2008, 2009, 2012) starts from the identification of word patterns according to the Corpus Linguistics approach (Sinclair 1991, 1996; Tognini Bonelli 2002) and interprets the functionally complete units of meaning thus identified through the cultural filters elaborated by Intercultural Studies theorists (Hall 1989; Hofstede 1991, 2001; Katan 2004, 2006). The node words considered for analysis belong to the semantic field of the five senses which, as the data suggest, are frequently used by Italian tourist websites to promote tourist products. Results show that Italian and British tourist websites have two different approaches to tourist promotion and that language and culture are strictly interrelated.

As can be seen from the brief descriptions reported above, tourism and tourist promotion are approached from different perspectives and theoretical frameworks. From historical and sociological analyses, to marketing strategies and discursive features, all the contributions included in this volume show the complexity of this phenomenon. Successful tourism and tourist promotion can be, therefore, achieved only if all these aspects are considered together as interdependent and interrelated.

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