

TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND PROGRESS IN THE STATUS OF THE ISSUE. POSSIBLE LINKS TO TOURIST DESTINATIONS

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At present, thinking about the development of a territory means speculating about a situation experiencing profound change and uncertainty in terms of the environment, the economy and the social and political spheres (Riechmann, 2001, Murray and Blázquez, 2009, Borja and Castells, 2004). In such circumstances, social sciences have a responsibility to seek formulas that comprehensively improve the quality of life for citizens. Territorial Intelligence (TI) emerges within the context of these social problems by proposing comprehensive solutions, with a Research-Action dynamic based on three elements: (1) Sustainable Development, a concept linked to the need for human relations in the territory, that enables the conservation of the environment so that it remains productive; (2) Governance, supported by territorial intelligence, with an approach based on networks (Peters, 2006) and (3) ICT, in order to promote the dissemination of information. The actors require communication tools and techniques in order to take the local to a global level.

On the other hand, tourism is one of the most important global activities, which is defined under the rules for the consumption of leisure time, and where the commercialization of resources, standardization and homogenisation have marked its evolution over time. However, now new forms of tourism are emerging that prioritize the authentic and the pursuit of experiences, taking care of the environment and improving the distribution of profits among residents.

The objective of this research is to carry out an initial approach that creates a link between territorial intelligence and tourism. The specific objectives outlined are as follows: study the concept and evolution of TI, determine the foundations, tools and specific applications, examples that link territorial intelligence and tourism are outlined here. By way of reflection, some future lines of research are considered which may be useful in the progress of these innovative approaches within the framework of the tourism use of the territories.

The origins of TI date back to the late eighties in France (the Catalyse method) in order to address the needs of a group of actors working in planning with poverty alleviation projects (Miedes et al., 2010), given the absence of civic participation, critical approaches to sustainable development, and the ICT revolution. From 1994 onward, this project spread to Spain, Belgium, Romania and Hungary. Territorial intelligence is “*a means for researchers, actors and the territorial community to gain a deeper understanding of the territory, and also to have better management of its development...*” (Girardot, 2010: 26). This definition has two crucial aspects: the scientific approach and the actors in the community.

Territorial Intelligence uses “collective intelligence” (CI) and “economic intelligence” (EI) as references. CI produced the idea of “Territorial Knowledge Management” (TKM). In turn, EI led to the idea of “Territorial Economic Intelligence” (TEI). In some projects TI has been confused with TEI, but they differ in terms of their objectives, because TI does not view the territory as a market, but rather as a participative and collaborative space, and the actors are not at the “service” of the economy, but rather the wellbeing and development of the territory.

The tools and methods developed are based on the collaboration of the territorial actors and research teams, focused on a research-action dynamic. In Europe, *Catalyse* uses a territorial information system (*Sitra*), various software programs (*Pragma*, *Anaconda*, *Nuage*) and the creation of Territorial Observatories is very common. In Latin America they base their tools on the Territorial Understanding, Intelligence and Development (TUID) Methodological Perspective, which produces six tools: *Territorial Intelligence and Development Observatories (OIDTE)*, *Territorii Method*, *STLOCUS Method*, *Portulano Method*, *Skypa Method* and *Kinetic Method*. This research systematizes according to:

- Tools used: In Europe the Observatories, the Catalyse Method and the aforementioned tools; In Latin America the OIDTE, and Territorii Method stand out...
- Places where they have been implemented: in Latin America (45%) and in Europe (44%) mainly. In terms of countries, Argentina and Spain stand out, they account for 59% of all actions.
- Themes: they have been grouped into 19 items, where 70% of interventions have been carried out in relation to “integration of a research project”, “immigration”, “implementation of territorial observatories” and “territorial planning”.

There are not many Territorial Intelligence projects focused on tourist activities, the existing ones are concentrated in Latin America. Uruguay (Punta del Este in 2009 and Lavalleja in 2010); Argentina (La Plata in 2012, Brandsen in 2012, Santa Fé and Paraná in 2011). A key aspect on all of the projects has been the method focused on conflict resolution, proposing a model of “*micro-actions, micro-achievements and micro-transformations*” (Domínguez, 2014: 1). Of these initiatives, the two last ones have been analysed, and as with the others, they aim to be strengthened and developed by the host communities themselves (Gliemmo, 2012: 1).

The first case is the environmentally friendly “La Posada” Parador, an environmental and social centre located in Brandsen (Buenos Aires), a rural municipality. The conflict

arises out of the proximity to the tourism destination of La Plata, because this means that new resorts are located in Brandsen in rural areas, thus creating serious social polarisation, a lack of social and territorial integration of high purchasing power resorts, and the impact on the environment due to the proliferation of illegal dumps that affect the quality of life of the local people. Therefore, the proposal for intervention with territorial intelligence is a centre for the environmental restoration of one of the degraded areas. What is important about this initiative is not only the objective sought, but rather the participatory approach and how information (environmental, social and economic) helped to define needs. What stands out is the environmental-cultural study, conducting surveys with the local population, and participatory workshops, the project was agreed to at each of its stages.

The second case is the Territorial Intelligence Organisation for Sustainable Tourism in the Santa Fé-Parana Metropolitan Region (RMSP). The project arose following the detection of a problematic social context, with the following prominent aspects: economic growth processes that increase social inequalities, low levels of public-private cooperation, inadequate training, a decline in quality of life due to the loss in value of both natural and cultural resources. Following a participatory appraisal two projects were established: the creation of an Urban Biosphere Reserve for both cities, with collaboration of international organisations, academics and political actors; and the creation of the “Territorial Intelligence Organisation for Sustainable Tourism in the Santa Fé-Parana Metropolitan Region”. Tourism was approached as a key sector and three actions were suggested: (1) strategies, programs and tourism projects where sustainability is the benchmark, (2) creation of a cooperation network between all the actors, (3) the Regional Centre of Territorial Intelligence for Sustainable Development was planned as an observatory.

Both cases have different actions, but the key aspect is the method and the objectives for conflict resolution. They begin with co-construction in the initial appraisal stage, followed by co-participation in order to propose actions for improvement.

The investigation concludes with several reflections. (1) Intelligence is held by the actors in the territory, who need to understand development as co-construction, co-participation and collaboration according to what each actor can contribute using their knowledge and experience. (2) Territorial intelligence is capable of tackling the problematic issues outlined in this investigation –territorial and social delimitation, sustainability and governance–, and can be presented as a new alternative to traditional models of tourism planning and management. (3) One problem is adapting the theoretical and methodological framework to any scale and the geographic discipline can contribute its know-how; the interventions carried out have been on a micro-scale and many issues require analysis of much larger territories of a greater complexity. (4) Lastly, the relationship between territorial intelligence and tourism will be of enormous interest over the coming years, whether in terms of the new concept “Smart Tourism Destinations”, or Territorial Intelligence applied to Tourism Destinations; the important thing is to address the Smart Living dimension, which seems to be more consistently linked to a better quality of life for the population.