

## **DYNAMIC EVOLUTION AND PATH DEPENDENCE IN COASTAL TOURIST DESTINATIONS**

### **The Role and the Perception of the Local Agents from a Comparative Point of View**

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*Models that describe the evolution of the tourist destinations and the interpretation of coastal tourism as a global, central-peripheral process have played down the importance of the diversity of the local situations and the role of the agents as a key part of the evolution of the tourist destinations. This paper analyses the role of the local agents into the destinations evolution within the context of the traditional evolutionary models and the new theoretical contributions concerning to the tourist destination concept and its transformation. The theoretical study is complemented by a primary qualitative study with in-depth interviews held with local agents in Balneário Camboriú-Brazil and Benidorm -Spain. The different path of these two destinations explain the typical processes of the path dependence and point out the importance of the perception and the role of the stakeholders to understand the evolution of the tourist destinations. The interpretation of the maturity of the tourist destinations as a dynamic process adapts better to the evolution of the two tourist destinations compared. From this perspective, the uniqueness of each tourist destination is definitely important, and it cannot be separated from the global-local interaction and the relevance of the co-evolutionary dynamics.*

**KEYWORDS:***tourism area life cycle, path dependence, dynamic evolution, stakeholders, coastal tourist destinations.*