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**"TOWARDS A NEW MODEL FOR THE EVOLUTION OF
TOURISM DESTINATIONS.
THE EXAMPLE OF THE "UNIVERSAL'S PORT AVENTURA"
IN SALOU, TARRAGONA."**



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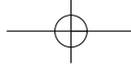


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“Stereograms are the dreams of society. Whenever the hieroglyphs of a stereogram are decoded, the foundation(s) of social reality unfold.”

Siegfried Kracauer (1929)

“Space is not a “reflection of society”, it is society.”

Manuel Castells (1983: 4)

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Martin Scheer

Towards a new model for the evolution of tourism destinations.

***The example of the “Universal’s Port Aventura” in Salou,
Tarragona.***

ABSTRACT

In the last decade important changes in the structure and evolution of both tourism destinations and the theme park industry could be observed. Facing new trends in tourism such as the aim of regions to differentiate their offer from other regions, the rising expectations of consumers, or the growing importance of public-private-partnerships in the tourism industry, the combination of different attractions within one superior complex can be detected. Concerning the current evolution of these combined attractions, important changes can be seen in the emerging possibility of developing a region through the implementation of a tourism project marked by intensive capital investments and an increasing integration of theme parks into superior structures as land utilization and zoning plans.

Considering new trends and tendencies, four special hypotheses have been extracted throughout the paper to describe the general evolution of similar projects characterized by an intensive mixture of different uses for tourism and services. These four hypotheses are mainly based on the evolution of “Universal’s Port Aventura”¹ and its position within the “Tourist Recreational Center” in Salou, Catalonia, and “Disneyland Paris” and its importance within the development of the “Ville Nouvelle” Marne-la-Vallée.

The theoretical guidelines of these hypotheses are: First, during the expansion of an integrated tourism project the attractiveness of the first dominant factor, a theme park, is constantly shifted towards other complementary attractions; second, an increasing mixture of different elements and a functional and spatial diversification within these projects can be observed in the course of their evolution; third, the development of similar destinations takes place in characteristic phases, and fourth, these projects experience a successive integration into their host regions.

Based on these hypotheses, two different spatial-temporal models are presented and discussed to describe the evolution of similar projects and the successive integration of theme parks into superior structures. The first model describes the evolution of the attractiveness of a theme park during its integration into a superior multifunctional project, and the second model schematically illustrates the polyphase evolution and the spatial and thematic implementation of the whole project into a region.

KEY WORDS

Port Aventura, restructuring of tourist destinations, tourist area life cycle, geography of tourism, regional development, Catalonia

¹ In June 2002 the project was designated as “Universal Mediterranea”. The homepage of the project, <http://www.portaventura.es/> offers an overview over the different elements and attractions. Throughout this paper, the name of “Universal’s Port Aventura” will be used more frequently.

1. New tourism trends and projects and their effects on regions

In the last decade important changes in both structure and evolution of tourism destinations and the theme park industry could be observed. Facing new trends in tourism such as the aim of regions to differentiate their offer from other regions, the rising expectations of consumers, the growing importance of public-private-partnerships in the tourism industry, as well as the combination of different attractions within one superior complex can be detected. Concerning the current evolution of these combined attractions, important changes can be seen in the emerging possibility of developing a region through the implementation of a tourism project marked by intensive capital investments and an increasing integration of theme parks into superior structures (see, for example, Richards, 1993) as land utilization and zoning plans.

Indeed, important huge tourism projects in terms of capital investments are considered to be one of the most important recent developments of the tourism industry. In this regard, the mostly enormous high capital investments are opposed to the numerous positive effects onto the region. Thereby scientific discussion concentrates on the role of these projects for the promotion of local trade and investments, the importance and ability to diversify the local economic structure and on potential effects on tourism (Beckmann, 1990; Hatzfeld, 1994; Náchér and Selma, 1993). To achieve a highly successful and exact evaluation of the potential and of the real results, both positive and negative effects have to be taken into account, as well as intensive interconnections between different processes.

One characteristic process throughout the last decade can be seen in the aim of many theme parks to differentiate their supply so that they develop from attractions visited primarily for one day towards overnight stay attractions. “During 1992 several parks were concentrating on re-focusing their market position from day out attractions toward resort or overnight stay attractions [...]” (Richards 1993: 39)

In this respect, this study tries to examine characteristic trends in the functional evolution of tourism destinations. Based on the examinations of Anton Clavé (1996, 1997a, c), the Ajuntament de Vila-Seca, Jiménez (1995), as well as on the author’s diploma thesis of the

“Universal’s Port Aventura” and its position within the “Tourist Recreational Center” in Salou, Catalonia, different models will be developed and discussed to describe general guide lines for the evolution of similar projects and to specify their successive functional and spatial integration into a region.

Throughout this paper, the Catalanian name of the project, “Centre Recreatiu i Turístic (C.R.T.)”, which comprises among a lot of different attractions and offers the theme park “Universal’s Port Aventura”² as the dominant factor of attractiveness, will be used synonymously as “Tourist Recreational Center” (“T.R.C.”). Considering this chosen example, the main innovation lies in the thematic and functional diversification of the project. The “Tourist Recreational Center” is marked by an intensive interconnection of different attractions and offers, like the theme park “Universal’s Port Aventura”, shopping centers, sport facilities, housing areas as well as hotels with facilities for conferences and other events. Contrary to the diversification of tourism offers throughout a certain region, the “T.R.C.” combines this multitude of attractions and offers within one complex. These characteristics arise different interesting questions about the regional importance of similar project, the integration and importance of theme parks into superior tourism structures, and the functional evolution of similar tourism destinations.³

² After a change in the consortium of owners, the “Universal’s Port Aventura” was renamed to “Universal Mediterranea”. The initial name “Port Aventura”, now just is used for the theme park. Throughout this study, the initial name “Port Aventura” will be used primarily because this name is intrinsically linked to its foundation and first expansion. On the homepage of the “Universal Mediterranea”, <http://www.portaventura.es/>, all current attractions and offers of the complex are presented. At the beginning of 2005, the whole complex included the theme park “Port Aventura”, three themed hotels, the “Hotel Port Aventura”, the “Hotel El Paso”, and the “Hotel Caribe Resort”, a water park, the “Costa Caribe”, as well as further leisure installations and attractions.

³ For detailed maps on the land use of the project, see <http://www.salou.org/POUM/>. The abbreviation “POUM” stands for “Pla d’Ordenació Urbana Municipal 2010” and regulates and manages the major urban developments and changes of the city of Salou. As major and most important project, the “C.R.T.” shall function on the one side as a new tourism destination and touristic landmark for the region and attract more tourists to the region, as well as more non-tourist activities. On the other side, in an urban content, it shall extend the commercial and urban space of Salou. As being a region which is primarily marked by tourism, intensive research and efforts have been undertaken to provide new and alternative economic pillars for the region. Beside different maps on the land use, detailed tables are presented for the economic dimension of the project, as well as its potential impacts on the region. Beside the presentation of economic effects, maps and tables, environmental consequences of the project are also presented. Throughout this work, this last topic will have a minor relevance.

As artificial constructions and installations, tourism projects and huge tourism complexes comprise a very elaborated set of different uses and functions, in order to meet the rising expectations of sophisticated consumer. It therefore becomes evident that this enormous diversification of installations and functions will have certain effects on the traditional offer outside these installations, on the regional offer, which has developed throughout a greater period of time. Therefore questions arise for the interaction of the traditional regional offer and the added offers and attractions the new tourism destination provides. How will the tourism complex be integrated into its host region, what characteristic ties and connections will develop, and what influence will such a project gain on the regional economic structure? This leads to the first major question:

- *How does the regional integration of tourism projects and of tourism complexes take place?*

After considering the interrelation between a tourism complex and the surrounding region, questions of the internal evolution of such a project are worth being investigated. If thematic diversification is one of the most important evolutionary guidelines of tourism offers, how does this diversification take place?

Further questions arise what happens during the construction of first major attractions, and then during the expansion of the center and during the integration of more and different installations? How will the attractiveness of the whole complex develop? Does a tourism destination experience a single life cycle, or will there be different, independent life cycles for each element within a tourism complex? These questions lead to the evolution of the attractiveness of a tourism complex. Being often one of the main attractions, how will a theme park correspond with further, added functions and uses? In what manner will develop the attractiveness of the first installation, and which interconnection will arise when further elements are added? This set of questions tries to analyze the scale of the tourism complex and the evolution and interactions of its different elements:

- *How functions the integration of a theme park into a superior structure such as the "C.R.T." (in terms of importance at the whole center, and its attractiveness during the evolution of other offers throughout the center)?*

The first two aspects dealt with the dimension and interactions of the integration of a tourism complex into a region, and on a smaller scale, of the integration and development of a theme park within a tourism complex. After these primarily spatial considerations, the last set of questions is trying to examine especially the functional and thematic evolution of a tourism complex. How can a multifunctional character of a project be achieved, what are guidelines for the thematic and functional expansion of a tourism center? Are there any uses that are developing different as others? The evolution and interactions of the different uses, attractions, and functions of a tourism complex will be treated within the third main thematic field:

- *Can there be seen any characteristic guidelines for the evolution of the different functions, offers and attractions in a tourism project like the “C.R.T.”?*

On the one side, the following contributions take the evolution of the “C.R.T.” in Salou, Tarragona, Spain, into account. Mainly the functional expansion of the center shortly is presented. During a couple of years, during different phases that have been clearly separated one from the other, the project faced continual expansion and extension.⁴

On the other side, and with much more importance, this work tries to extract characteristic guidelines of similar tourism complexes and destinations, and to develop some general theories on the evolution of important tourism projects and destinations. These theories – the four guiding hypothesis of this work as presented in chapter 3.4 – are also based on the assumption that a certain sequential and dynamical timing throughout the evolution of tourism destination can be detected. The expansion of tourism centers follows certain guidelines and trends in terms of interaction of different elements, extension and upgrading of existing elements and attractions, as well as interaction with offers and attractions of the surrounding region. In general, developing and presenting certain theories and models shall describe the sequential and dynamical process of expansion of a tourism destination.

This investigation tries to present some and foster the discussion on the evolution and expansion of huge tourism projects. Therefore the main purpose of this publication consists

in the development of different models that are able to describe the functional evolution of integrated tourism projects like the “C.R.T.”.

The initiative for constructing such a huge and financially very important project dates back to the second half of the 1980s. During that period, coastal tourism destinations experienced a major fall in demand and a tremendous loss in the number of tourists. The tourism resorts were forced to find alternatives and to initiate new strategies for regenerating and reconverting old coastal resorts and areas. This problem also has been evident for the Costa Dorada and the coastal rim in the region of Tarragona. The main regional focus therefore is based on the Costa Dorada and the development and effects of the “C.R.T.” on the region. Stamped by a long tradition in tourism, during the end of the 1980’s as many other tourism destinations, this coastal strip in Catalonia suffered from stagnating and then retrogressive numbers of visitors. This led to an intensive search for different opportunities and strategies for a revitalization of the region.

“After the mid 1980s, these resorts suffered problems due to a fall in demand and were forced to face necessary restructuring (functional, environmental, sectoral and territorial) [...]. A serious crisis was emerging, leading to a debate over appropriate strategies for regenerating and reconverting these old coastal resorts.” (Marchena Gómez, Vera Rebollo 1995: 118)

Claval (1995) also mentions a more general problem. The concentration on tourism provides various problems for regions, and increase the dependency on one, or sometimes two, seasons. In that circumstance, solutions have to be found to develop these regions and to diversify their economic structure and profile in order to attract other functions and uses and to lessen the concentration on tourism. In that sense, the project of the “C.R.T” in Salou shall lessen the concentration on the summer months, extend the visit of tourists more equally throughout the year, as well as to attract non-tourist activities. The following chapters also will try to discuss in what succession and chronology the different elements and functions are altered, modified, and how they complement one another.

“Tourist areas do, however, suffer important handicaps. First, many of them are highly seasonal, which means that the majority of their commercial and service

⁴ See also chapter 2.2, where the different phases are described more thoroughly. Altogether, the project includes a period of more than 30 years.

activities are operational for only a few months of the year. As a consequence, those high mountains and southern regions, which enjoy two seasons, are better places to attract non-tourism activities. Second, land prices are often so high that housing is more expensive than in non-tourist cities of the same size elsewhere.” (Claval 1995: 261)

With the “Centre Recreatiu i Turístic”, these strategies mentioned for regenerating and reconverting old coastal resorts and areas found their regional expression in a new spatial and thematic form of a leisure and business area, which shall be discussed throughout this study.

2. The “Tourist Recreational Center” and the “Universal’s Port Aventura” in Salou, Tarragona

The “Tourist Recreational Center” comprises the theme park “Universal’s Port Aventura” as its main attraction. Mainly Anton Clavé discussed the theme park and its regional importance⁵. This study aims to focus on the functional diversification of the project and of its regional integration. The purpose of this work therefore lies on the development of different models, which describe the evolution of different functions, and uses within new tourism destinations.

After a short introduction on the different regional effects of the project – which serves also as an introduction on the development of different models – the functional development of the “Tourist Recreational Center” is presented. The regional relevance of the complex just will be presented shortly, as a thematic introduction towards the discussion on general evolutionary trends of similar installations, and will therefore primarily serve to illustrate major thematic changes and functional expansions of the complex, and not to discuss deeply economic benefits or consequences of this inversion.

A wide range of different research and statistic data is available for the exact economic evolution of the “Tourist Recreational Center” in Salou at the Costa Dorada south of

⁵ Compare the different articles of Anton Clavé in the bibliography.

Barcelona. The responsible agency for the development and construction of the project, the City Council of Salou, offers detailed maps and statistics on the project. Academic contributions on the importance of the project for the region can be found by Anton Clavé.

2.1 The regional importance of the “Tourist Recreational Center”

The “C.R.T.” clearly responds to different actual trends in the tourism industry. The decisive point lies in the necessity of structural changes within traditional tourism regions. Based on the considerations of Marchena Gómez and Vera Rebollo (1995), these structural changes had to be undertaken because of changing patterns of consumption of the tourists. In the course of rising travel experience of tourists, connected with a more detailed comparability of offers as well as growing competition between tourism destinations, consumers demand new quality standards and develop rising expectations on the tourism product. These changed attitudes towards the tourism experience also require a reorganization of tourism space, as well as the provision of new and more sophisticated services and attractions.

“The tourist coastal territory – whether massed or confused – is, as we have suggested, a direct consequence of the Western style of economic development and of the resultant accompanying evolution of social motivations in different strata of the European population. These areas are now confronted with the need for structural reorganisation, partly because European consumers are demanding new quality standards in the coastal tourist product. It is, however, the territorial question which holds the key for reorganisation of the sector (Cazes 1992); in order for the new model of the coastal tourist product – an integrated, quality, environmentally sensitive product – to be introduced successfully, a notable reorganisation of space, as well as of the provision of services, is necessary in coastal tourism zones.” (Marchesa Gómez, Vera Rebollo 1995: 115)

The most important changes and modifications are the rising expectations towards the quality of the tourist product. This implicates the search for an “integrated, quality, environmentally sensitive product”, for integrated tourism products, which face the rising expectations of the consumers.

In this context, the “Tourist Recreational Centre”, like other great tourism projects, has to be considered in its regional relevance: as a huge tourism project with intensive and widespread consequences on the structural and spatial reorganisation of a region. Figure 1 presents an overview of the different positive and negative effects of the project onto its host region, the Costa Dorada south of Barcelona.⁶ The different influences of the project have been divided into financially quantifiable benefits and general benefits on the one side, compared with financially negative effects and general negative effects on the other side.

The main positive effects of the project can be seen in the intensive stimulation of the local as well as of the regional economy.⁷ The private and public investments entailed and contributed to an increased diversification in the range of regional services as in tourism. The enormous public and private investments induced substantial improvements on the local and regional job market, the creation of jobs within the project and also within the region by differentiated spin-off effects. These investments also provided important improvements of the general connections of the area of Salou to the regional infrastructure net. These different effects were responsible for the initiation of “urbanization and localization economies”, and therefore contributed to the aim of the project to create a diversified, multistructured local economy in order to develop the region of the Costa Dorada and to try to reduce the enormous concentration on Barcelona.

Beside the considerably positive effects of the project for the region, a range of negative factors can be seen in Figure 1. The general very high costs of the investments into the project, the infrastructure, and in the local and regional tourism industry have uncertain consequences. An increase in the regional disparities between the less developed hinterland

⁶ These effects mainly have been found and discussed throughout the author’s study thesis at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany. In this study, only the main findings and conclusion on this topic of the regional relevance and importance of the project will be presented. More attention will be laid on the thematic evolution of the complex, and the expansion and emergence of different uses during different phases of the project.

⁷ The effects of the theme park and the tourism project will be presented primarily on a qualitative basis. This is necessary in order to develop the different theories and models on the spatial and functional expansion of similar projects. Statistical data of the consequences of the theme park are shortly presented in the following paragraphs, as well as on the homepage of the community of Vila-

and the highly developed coastal rim of the Costa Dorada can be experienced. During the initial phases of the project, the investments foster an augmentation of the regional monofunctional economic structure on the tourism industry, an intensification of the dependency on the specific area of the Costa Dorada on tourism. This adaptation of the economic structure of the retail industry towards offers for tourists can be described also as a commercial gentrification, as the intensified use of local, regional, urban and natural resources and offers by intensified tourism.

Seca, <http://www.salou.org/POUM/>, and in Fernando Vera, López Palomeque, Marchena Gómez, and Anton Clavé 1997: 106-107.

Fig. 1: Effects of the “Universal’s Port Aventura” and the “Tourist Recreational Center” on the region of the Costa Dorada

<i>Positive effects of the project</i>		<i>Negative effects of the project</i>	
financially quantifiable benefits	general quantifiable benefits	financially negative effects	general negative effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Augmentation of capacity and utilization of hotels * Increasing of economic turnover in restaurants, hotels and retail industry in the Costa Dorada region * Stimulation of the local and regional economy because of the use of certain services and goods by the tourists * Improvements on the local and regional job market, creation of jobs within the project and also within the region by differentiated spin-off effects * Additional sellings of tickets for local and regional events, museums, and other attractions * Additional civic revenues for parking fees and public transport * Revenues for the three companies "La Caixa", "Universal Studios" and "Anheuser Busch" who own the project * Enormous public and private investments into the local economic structure * Sale of local and regional products in the "Tourist Recreational Center" * Improvements of the general connections within the area of Salou to the regional infrastructure net 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Public relations benefits * Increasing of the attractiveness-factor for potential tourists to the Costa Dorada area * Inhibition of "urbanization and localization economies", improvements of localization factors for companies * Improvements of the regional landscape and townscape of Salou, integration of new architectural elements by the project * Improvements within the general urban area and of the different urban functions * Positive influence on the population's social structure * Image improvements of the Costa Dorada and increasing publicity of the three large commercial enterprises "La Caixa", "Universal Studios" and "Anheuser Busch" * Enhancement in the quality of life (through general improvements of infrastructure, diversified offers of goods, services and jobs in the region) * Creation of a diversified, multistructured local economy in order to try to reduce the enormous concentration on Barcelona * Diversification in the range of regional services and in tourism * Restoration of historical buildings and infrastructure in the region * Increase of general interest in the region's cultural heritage * Preservation of historical attractions in the region * Inhibition of spin-off effects on other tourist sights and attractions of the region through thematic presentations integrating elements of cultural identity within the project (ex.: thematic presentation of a catalonian village in the "Universal's Port Aventura") * Modernising tourism on the Costa Dorada itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * General costs of the investments into the project, the infrastructure, and in the local and regional tourism industry having uncertain and potentially negative long-lasting consequences (ex.: long-ranging amortization) * Increase in the cost of living in the Costa Dorada region * Higher maintenance costs of public infrastructure because of the shared use between the local population and the tourists * Increase in regional disparities between the less developed hinterland and the highly developed coastal rim of Costa Dorada, augmentation of regional distinctions such as: infrastructure, cost of living, lease prices, job market, widening of the gap between the coast and the interior regions in terms of purchasing power * More congestion in the surrounding cities and villages and in the local and regional infrastructure, especially during the summer season * Increase in water consumption (occurrence of summery aridness and high season in tourism) * Financially forced resettlement of a population which formerly used the area for agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * During the initial phases of the project, augmentation of the regional monofunctional economic structure on the tourism industry, intensification of the dependency on the specific area Costa Dorada from tourism * Adaptation of the economic structure to the retail industry because of tourism ("commercial gentrification") * Intensified competition for space along the Costa Dorada * Permanent strain on the local population because of the intensified use of local, regional, urban and natural environments * Obstruction of economic traffic and circulation because of tourism * Closing off of large spaces due to intensified tourism

Most negative consequences therefore arise from the intensive land use conflicts the project stimulates and intensifies. Because of the implementation of the “C.R.T.” into the region, an increase in the regional disparities emerged between the less developed hinterland and the highly developed coastal rim of the Costa Dorada. A widening of the gap between the coast and the interior regions in terms of purchasing power as of other regional distinctions such as infrastructure, cost of living, lease prices, and the job market could be observed. Other negative factors could be noticed in the increase in water consumption in this highly touristic area⁸. Moreover, there can be perceived an adaptation of the economic structure to the retail industry because of tourism (“commercial gentrification”) and an intensified competition for space along the Costa Dorada.

The municipal authority of the town of Vila-Seca has published in the “Pla d’Ordenació Urbanística Municipal”⁹ of 2003 diverse statistical data of the quantitative evolution of the region of the Costa Dorada (principally the communities of Salou, Vila-Seca, Tarragona, Reus, and Cambrils) and the impact of the tourism project throughout the last decade. The theme park “Port Aventura” was opened on the 2nd of May 1995, and comprised an initial surface of 52 hectares.¹⁰ The overall costs and expenditures for development and creation of the park are estimated to reach about 300 Million Euros. The effects on the regional tourism economy are remarkable. In 1995, the “Port Aventura” already received 2.7 million visitors, the corresponding expenditures in the regional economy represented about 15 % of all expenditures in the tourism industry throughout that year. It is estimated that the theme park initiated about 1.6 Million additional overnight stays in the surrounding area.¹¹

⁸ The mainly simultaneous occurrence of summery aridness and high season in tourism intensifies this environmental problem.

⁹ The “Pla d’Ordenació Urbanística Municipal” provides detailed statistical data on the development of the region of Vila-Seca throughout the last decades. On the corresponding homepage, where the different parts of the plan are published, <http://www.salou.org/POUM/>, a lot of statistical data is available on land use, evolution of the population and economic situation of the region, environmental plans and maps, data on the development of the tourism industry, as well as other information.

¹⁰ For the evolution of the surface and the different parts and sections of the whole project, please see Figure 2.

¹¹ Some major effects of the theme park “Port Aventura” on the region of the Costa Dorada - in a qualitative as well as in a quantitative perspective - are described and explained in the regional plan of Vila-Seca, as well as in Fernando Vera, López Palomeque, Marchena Gómez, and Anton Clavé 1997: 106-107.

Considering its regional relevance, the project therefore devises an ambivalent impression. On the one side, the project supports the creation of a multifunctional pole for economic and tourism uses south of Barcelona, with the aim to lessen the excessive concentration of the Catalonian economy on Barcelona. The project also favours the diversification of the local and in parts regional economy and services.

On the other side, the project even tends to increase and to deepen the regional disparity between the highly developed coastal rim and the structurally weak and disadvantaged hinterland of the Costa Dorada. Due to the intensive private and public investments in the economy of the surroundings of the “C.R.T.”, the economic gap between the coastal rim and the interior of the region are even more intensified than before the implementation of the project. Therefore on a more local scale, the project exactly increases the economic disparities, which should be extenuated on a regional scale considering the dominant position of the agglomeration of Barcelona.

2.2 The functional composition of the “Tourist Recreational Center”

The “Tourist Recreational Center” comprises a very interesting mix of different functions. Due to the consideration of the rising expectation of the consumers and tourists, the different attractions of the center indicate a great variety of different uses and functions in order to meet rising multioptional demand.

In contrast to the traditional concept of a theme park, this center aims to connect a great variety of different but corresponding uses and functions in order to accommodate multi-structured demands of the visitors, as also to establish the center as an overnight destination. Still based on leisure as the primary use and function of the center, the “C.R.T.” additionally comprises functions and installations such as an extended hotel zone with installations for conferences and congresses, sport facilities, a shopping area, as also a residential area.

All these different uses are to be found side by side with their corresponding services. The innovation of the project now can be seen both in this intensive mixture of different functions, as also in the physical evolution of the whole complex. Considering the “C.R.T.” and its construction, there can be clearly perceived different characteristic stages of its functional and spatial differentiation. In Figure 2, these basic characteristics of the structural evolution of the “Tourist Recreational Center” in Salou, Tarragona are represented. The permanent shift from tourist towards non-tourist offers and attractions must also be considered as essential for the composition of the project and its future relevance for the regional economic structure.

Fig. 2: Basic characteristics of the structural evolution of the “Tourist Recreational Center” in Salou, Tarragona

Contents/ Different functional areas	Area/ Acreage (in hectares)	Percentage of the area of the "T.R.C." (in %)	Evolution of the different areas throughout the different phases* (in hectares (percentages in brackets) ⁵)			Overall number of jobs (already realized or still to realize) (percentages in brackets)	Permant work force (percentages in brackets)	Ratio of permanent work force to seasonal work force
			early	middle	late			
Theme Park	194	23,4	194 (100)	-	-	2550 (91)	150 (43)	1 : 17
Sport areas	307	36,8	213 (69)	94 (31)	-			
Housing estates ¹	215	25,8	63 (29)	77 (36)	75 (35)	250 (9)	200 (57)	4 : 1
Shopping centers and public services ²	52	6,2	-	38 (73)	14 (27)			
Cession of municipal space to the center ³	65	7,8	54 (83,1)	10 (15,4)	1 (1,5)			
Sum	833	100	524 (62,9)	219 (26,3)	90 (10,8)	2800 (100)	350 (100)	1 : 7

(100)

¹ Even if the evolution of the housing area is very equally distributed on the different phases, the construction of the houses and appartements is concentrated on the late phases (vgl. statistics of the Ajuntament de Vila-Seca, 1995)

² Catalanian denomination: "Zona comercial i de serveis públics"

³ Catalanian denomination: "Cessions" (Denomination of the spaces and areas which are gradually integrated into the project)

⁴ Because of the very different time periods and duration of the construction of the different functional areas, the three phases should primarily refer to the tendency of the implementation into the project. The periods are segmented in an "early" period (approx. 1989 - 1992), a "middle" period (approx. 1992 - 2007) and a "late" period (approx. 2007 - 2022).

⁵ The information of the percentages refer to the physical completion of the different areas and not to the different portions of the whole "Tourist Recreational Center".

Source: Information and data from the Ajuntament de Vila-Seca 1995: 2 - 5. Own representation by the author.

Because of the very different time periods and duration of the construction of the different functional areas, the three phases should primarily refer to the tendency of the implementation into the project. It is also mentioned by some authors that the different phases are exactly designated just until 2013, and not until 2022 (Anton Clavé 1995). Therefore, the time periods that base on the statistics of the city hall, “Ajuntament de Vila-Seca” (1995) primarily should function as basic guiding values for the functional and structural evolution of the center. The periods are segmented in an “early” period (approximately from 1989 to 1992), a “middle” period (approximately from 1992 to 2007), and a “late” period from about 2007 to 2022.

In Figure 2, the functions and installations are differentiated in the theme park, the sport areas, the housing estates, the shopping centers and the public services and the cessions of municipal space that will be integrated into the center throughout the different phases. The development of the hotel zone with the conference and congress area is similar to those of the shopping area.

In the early phase, the development clearly is concentrated on the theme park, in order to create a new pole of attractiveness and to establish the destinations on the holiday market. In terms of its extension, but not in terms of the total number of attractions, the theme park is totally completed throughout this first phase. It is the first attraction to be build, but is continually completed by other corresponding uses such as the developing sport area, the shopping center, or the housing area. Considering the functional composition of the whole project, the third column of the figure is very interesting, which represents the percentage of space of each installation at the “C.R.T.”. From the 833 hectares of the total space of the “C.R.T.”, just 23,4 % are designated to the primary leisure function, the theme park “Port Aventura”. A huge percentage of space is used by the sport area (36,8 %) (with great concentration on golf courses) and the housing area (25,8 %). In terms of its bargaining power and economic relevance, the shopping and hotel zone is very important for the whole complex, but are inheriting just a small portion of its spatial extension (6,2 %). In the early phase, the construction of these installations already has begun, but the inauguration of most elements belongs to the next phase (“middle”).

The intermediate phase is characterized by the completion of the sport area and the expansion of the housing zone. The shopping area is completed up to 73 % of its total 52 hectares. In this second phase, totally 219 hectares are integrated in the complex, which represents 26,3 %. Therefore, a clear concentration of the development of the “C.R.T.” is based on the first phase, with gradual expansion throughout the following two stages. Throughout the third stage, the housing area is completed, as well as the third part of the shopping areas. Considering these functional expansions, a shift in the integration of functions from leisure and corresponding uses towards other economic activities such as shopping and conference centers can be perceived. This tries to provide additional uses for the tourists who have visited the theme park in the “early” stage and who seek for new and alternative attractions and functions. As iteration visitors represent a major part of all guests and tourists, these tendencies have to be considered very carefully.

Beside the evolution of the different areas throughout the different phases, the last three columns represent the segmentation of the workforce in the “C.R.T.”. Most of the available jobs in the “C.R.T.” are connected to the theme park, therefore depend on its still high seasonality, and consist of a high percentage of jobs in the service offer of the park. From the total numbers of 2800 employees in the “C.R.T.”, 2550 or 91 % worked in the theme park. The ratio of permanent to seasonal work force therefore is considerably high: for one permanent job, seventeen seasonal jobs are available. Considering the other installations and offers, this changes considerably. In the hotels, the shopping and housing area, in 1995 there had been 250 jobs available, from which 200 were permanent. Most of these jobs have been created in the service sector of the theme park.

The expansion of the whole center in terms of functions, space, as well as thematic structure is very interesting, and throughout this paper one of the bases of the different models. The main questions will deal with the problem if there can be seen any characteristic trends throughout this functional evolution, and to explain why the different elements and attractions are added at different stages of the completion of a huge tourism complex. In order to describe and to characterize these multi-structured and diversified centers very exact and precise, and to explain their evolution in a very detailed manner, a new denomination was introduced: throughout this paper, the name of “polynucleid leisure

and business complexes” will be used in order to describe the characteristics of the project in the most exact way possible and to distinguish it from other tourism destinations and attractions.

3. Polynucleid leisure and business complexes as new offers for tourism and new prospects for regional diversification

The “Tourist Recreational Center” provides a lot of different uses and attractions. This multifunctional mixture of different elements within one limited area clearly distinguishes this project from other huge tourism destinations. Therefore, an adequate definition should be discussed. Based on this definition and the mentioned characteristics of a “polynucleid leisure and business complex”, the following chapters deal with the regional effects of such centers and the structuring and the hypotheses of the models presented at the end of this paper.

3.1 The definition of polynucleid leisure and business complexes

Essentially, the evolution of theme parks began in 1954 in the USA with the opening of the first theme park of Walt Disney. Prior to that date, the first installations also have been characterized by the location of different attractions within a limited area, but the first theme park of Walt Disney in California successfully combined attractions with themes, figures, and stories which were taken from Disney comics and the first movies. Several significant thematic phases can be distinguished, which are described by Kagelmann (1993)¹².

¹² See Kagelmann (1993, p. 407-415) for a detailed survey on different phases and important developments within the theme park industry. Throughout this study, these different forms just have to be taken into consideration in order to describe the multi-functionality of these projects, and to place emphasis on the evolution of theme parks towards new tourism destinations with a great variety of tourist as well as non-tourist uses, attractions, and offers.

Considering new installations and the modifications within existing projects, characteristic changes and modifications to the general idea of a theme park can be seen. Searching for an adequate definition for these new multifunctional projects, just a few proposals in literature can be found that represent the multifunctional character of these centers. Jones and Robinett, for example, define these structures as a “multi-park destination attraction complex” (Jones and Robinett 1993: 145) to indicate the successive integration of a theme park into a superior multifunctional destination. Throughout this study, this definition of a “multi-park destination attraction complex” will not be adopted, because it does not adequately take into account the multifunctional character of these projects and does not mention uses such as the organization of congresses or the implementation of housing areas. It is indeed an “attraction complex”, a complex with a wide variety of different attractions. Yet, this definition directs the emphasis too much at tourism and neglects other potential uses of the complex.

Another definition was proposed by the Catalanian Parliament and was developed exclusively for the project in Tarragona. In a law from 1989 the planned project was designated as “Tourist Recreational Center” and defined as “extensive areas of land where recreational, cultural and leisure theme park activities and sporting, shopping, hotel industry and residential complementary uses are to be found side by side with their corresponding services.” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 1989, cited after Anton Clavé, 1997c: 259) In this definition, the different uses of the project are mentioned, but then only partially taken into consideration in the name of the “Tourist Recreational Center”.

As the extensive mixture of different structures, attractions and uses for tourism and business is considered to be the main characteristic of these new complexes, the name of a “leisure and business complex” will be used throughout this study. This new type of tourist destination shall be defined in the following way:

Definition: In a limited area with a theme park or a similar facility as the core element, diverse attractions for tourism and business uses are connected to a polynucleid system. The emerging multifunctional leisure and business complex therefore is characterized by a great diversity of different uses, a high attendance of

*visitors and employees inside the complex, and an increasing interconnection with the offers and installations of the region.*¹³

Throughout the study, there will also be presented the denomination of “integrated tourism destinations” in order to describe the integration and connection of a multitude of different functions and attractions within one tourism destination. Again, this would be a very suitable characterization of the tourism infrastructure, but not for the intensive use for other functions.

Considering the offers and installations of the region, one must distinguish between two different kinds of elements: First, the elements and installations being already part of the region before the implementation of the project, which gain more attractiveness during the evolution of the whole center; and second, elements in the region that are just being built because of the project in the course of “spin-off-effects” on the region. Throughout the following development and discussion of the different models, those attraction factors of the region that form part of a concurrence to the center such as other theme parks and leisure facilities, and which eventually have to cope with decreasing numbers of visitors, will not be taken into consideration.

3.2 Regional effects of leisure and business complexes

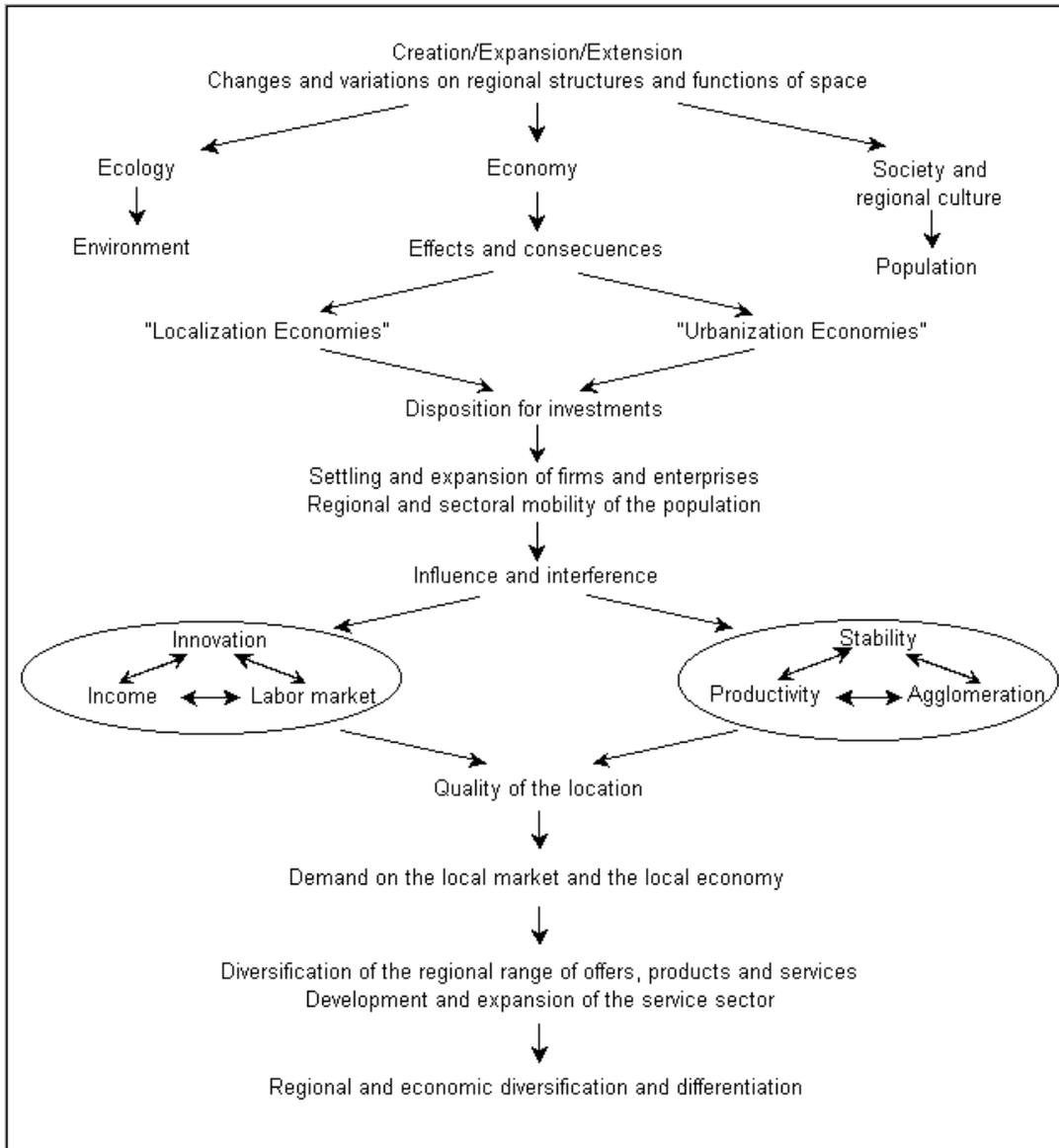
One of the main purposes of the following models is to describe regional effects of leisure and business complexes and to discuss their regional integration as also their regional relevance. Therefore, in Figure 3 different effects are described how the implementation of a huge tourism project or complex can influence its host region. The initiation of the beginning scheme of a range of cumulative growth and interference can be seen in the creation or the intensive expansion of a tourism complex. This leads to a variation of

¹³ Compare Anton Clavé (1995a), who discusses the mentioned characteristics of “leisure and business complexes” - great variety and diversification of attractions and uses, intensive circulation of visitors, workers and goods inside the complex, and increasing connection with offers and installations in the region – respectively at the different projects.

regional structures and functions considering the ecology, the economy, as well as the society and the regional population. The main focus will be laid on the economic effects of such a project.

Generally, the economic effects can be distinguished in “localization” and “urbanization economies”. “Localization economies” describe the emerging advantages because of the settlement of enterprises of the same economic branch like the creation of a homogeneous market for products, services, similar job profiles, or an intensive interconnection between the different firms and their subcontractors. “Urbanization economies” can be seen during the settlement of firms of different economic branches. This improves the general economic profile of the region, the situation and quality of the infrastructure, as well as the general disposition for investments. These “localization” and “urbanization economies” will be considered again throughout the second model, which discusses the phasical evolution of a tourism destination.

Fig. 3: Selected regional effects of leisure and business complexes



Source: Based on Voigt 1987: 41, representation and modifications by the author

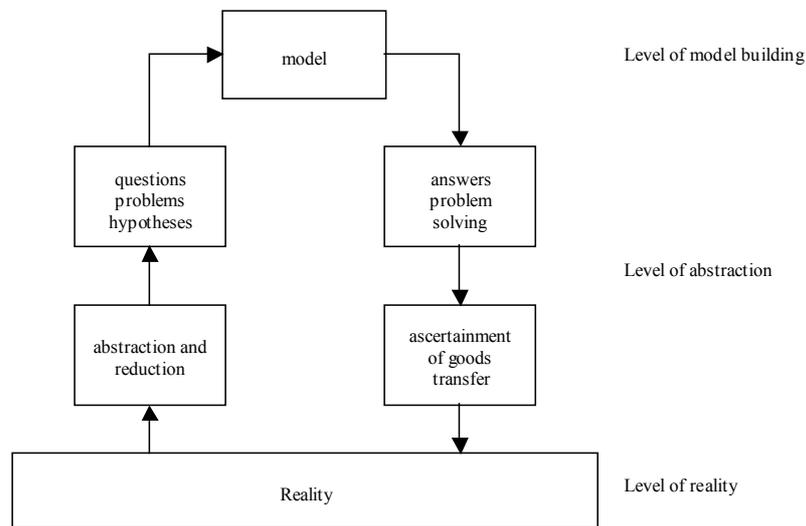
In summary, these effects lead to an improvement of the quality of the location, which increases the demand on the regional economy. The regional range of products, services

and offers increases, and leads to one of the primary aims for the public investments for important and huge tourism projects: the diversification and the differentiation of the regional economy.

3.3 Structure of the development of the models

Considering different large-scale projects such as the installations of Disney, “Universal’s Port Aventura” does not form a single phenomenon for the mixture of tourism and business facilities, but reflect a very typical way of the evolution of an area used for leisure and business. Therefore in this paper different models will be developed and discussed, in order to characterize general trends for the evolution of modern tourism and business projects and their effects on regional development. The approach for the development of the model will be orientated on the proposal of Freyer (1998) on the general phases of constructing a model (Figure 4).

Fig. 4: Possible approach for the development of a model



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source: Freyer 1998: 26, translation and modifications by the author

The thematic originator is based on the evolutionary guidelines of the “Center for Recreation and Tourism” and “Universal’s Port Aventura” in Catalonia and to a certain degree on the trends of expansion of “Disneyland Paris”, as well as other important tourist destinations, which evolution was marked by a central theme park or a similar attractions.

Besides these two representative examples, the base of the model is formed by other similar projects which combine multifunctional elements of tourism and business uses, i.e. the proceeding project of the “C.R.T.”, the theme park “The Old Country” with the connected housing and business area “Kingsmill on the James” in the USA, the different projects of Disney in Anaheim, Orlando and Hong Kong, and other projects in Europe.

In the first phase of abstraction and reduction, which was discussed in the last chapter, the different projects were combined by their typical characteristics and then defined as “polynucleid leisure and business complexes”. After this definition of these new forms of multistructured centers, four different hypotheses of the models will be developed and discussed. These hypotheses form the theoretical base for two spatial-temporal models that have been developed in order to describe the evolution of the attractiveness of a theme park during its integration into a superior multifunctional project and the spatial and thematic implementation of the whole project into a region.

The following explanations are based on the different projects mentioned above and the work of Anton Clavé (1996), Cooper (1992), Freyer (1998), Gordon and Goodall (1992), Isenberg (1995), Lundtorp and Wanhill (2001).

3.4 Hypotheses of the models

In the course of the consideration of different trends in the leisure and theme park industry, different essential tendencies can be perceived for the evolution of huge modern leisure and business projects. Based on these different trends in the tourist industry, four hypotheses can be built for the characteristic evolution of these projects, which for themselves form the base for the models developed afterwards.

Hypothesis I: In terms of visitors and investments, a theme park (or a similar facility such as a water park or an infotainment center) is the dominant factor of attraction inside the project and normally the first attraction to be built. During the evolution of the project, the attractiveness of the theme park is marked by a continual loss and a steady transfer of this general attractiveness onto other emerging factors.

This first hypothesis is considered to form the base for hypotheses II and III, which discuss the evolution and structure of these projects. In the first two models, which are constructed primarily out of the first hypothesis, the focus of the analysis is based primarily on theme parks as singular attractions. A model that discusses the integration of a theme park into a greater project will follow these two models. This is due to the dominant position and importance of a theme park in a greater project, which can be seen in examples from Anton Clavé (1997a, d), Hatzfeld (1994), Isenberg (1995), and others.

Hypothesis II: The internal spatial organization of these projects is marked by a polynucleid and mosaic structure; they contain a vast variety of different elements. These elements are normally characterized by a monofunctional structure, and orientated on one special offer. Therefore, the diversified structure of the entire project, which combines both touristic as well as business offers, will only be achieved by an intensive interconnection of the whole system. Essential elements of these projects will be considered: one or more theme parks or similar installations, hotel and conference centers, different sport, recreation and leisure facilities, shopping centers, housing areas and “reserve areas” such as parking lots, open fields and protected areas within the project.

The polynucleid structure of the internal organization can be perceived very clearly within the “C.R.T.” in Spain, but also within similar projects of the Disney enterprise. For example, the installations of Disney in the USA provide not only a theme park, but also a lot of other attractions such as hotels, housing areas or sports facilities.¹⁴ Concerning the different installations and attractions within such projects, a characteristic pattern for their evolution can be perceived, which leads to the third hypothesis:

¹⁴ Compare Canibol and Garding (1994), Hennings and Müller (1998), Milman (1993).

Hypothesis III: The extension of the project takes place in different characteristic phases. Proceeding from the main investment, normally a theme park, other attraction factors are successively integrated in the project. During this process, a typical order of temporal completion can be perceived, and the different attractions vary in terms of start and duration of their development.¹⁵

After describing general patterns in the evolution of tourism destinations, which are marked essentially by theme parks, their successive integration into the economic and functional structure of the host region must also be discussed. The integration of similar projects shall serve for local and regional economic promotion and initiate the general expansion and diversification of the regional economic structure (Hatzfeld, 1994). Concerning this fourth hypothesis, compare the different plans for the using of areas as they had already been mentioned for the “C.R.T.” and the “Disneyland Paris”. During the development of the different models, this fourth hypothesis will function as a theoretical framework.

Hypothesis IV: The projects are integrated in specified plans for the using of the corresponding area with the aim to achieve increasing benefits for the region and a wider regional differentiation. Before initiating the project, the surrounding region normally does not possess a very diversified structure of offerings for tourism and other services. These offerings and installations are gaining an increasing importance in the course of the evolution of the project due to the different spin-off effects.

These four guiding hypotheses reflect the basic characteristics of the evolution of polynucleid leisure and business centers, composing major trends in tourism and the theme park industry. To summarize the contents and components mentioned in these hypotheses, the five most important emerging characteristics of these models are:

¹⁵ Compare Anton Clavé (1997a, c), Foster and Murphy (1991), Goedecke et. al. (1991) concerning the phased evolution of these projects and the successive implementation of new attractions and facilities in emerging leisure and business centers. The corresponding situation in Japan is analysed by Makanae (1991).

- a) *The dominant position of a theme park in the beginning of the development of the complex,*
- b) *The successive shift of attractiveness from the theme park towards the emerging alternative attraction factors,*
- c) *The intense interconnection of the different elements inside the complex,*
- d) *The successive interconnection of the complex with the attractions and offerings of the region,*
- e) *The integration of the whole complex into the leisure and business structure of its host region.*

During the following chapters, these major evolutionary steps will form the base of different attempts at the construction and discussion of different spatial-functional models.

3.5 The importance of economic-geographical location theories for the construction of spatial-functional models

Before discussing the different models, different aspects of the general location of these projects should be mentioned. As mentioned above, a priori leisure projects are not fixed to a special location; they behave rather as industrial installations with a more economic concern of the location.¹⁶ Therefore, it seems possible to apply classical location theories on leisure and business projects. Location theories as the search for the lowest costs (compare industrial location after Weber), the search for the highest profit (compare industrial location after Smith) or the search for optimized spatial and locations patterns (compare location theories after Christaller, Lösch and v. Thünen) are shown by leisure projects as they can also be detected for industrial projects. Important location criteria for the industry

¹⁶ Compare Hatzfeld 1994: 48, who describes the general requirements of the location of tourism projects.

such as the availability of commodities and labour or the proximity to sales markets will be substituted by economic indicators such as the vicinity to potential pools of visitors, the situation of the infrastructure of the region or land prices.

After the implementation of the first leisure project in a region, the role and the importance of different “localization and urbanization economies” throughout the evolution of the whole area must also be discussed. These different and regionally very important “localization and urbanization economies” and the possibilities and limitations for the application of classical location theories on leisure and business projects would be interesting topics for further research studies. In this study, these theories will be mentioned briefly and parallels shown between industrial areas and tourist destinations.

4. The product life cycle of polynucleid leisure and business complexes

Any definition of polynucleid leisure and business complexes should point out that these emerging centers are responding to certain patterns of consumption. As an introduction to the development of a principally spatial model, the motivation, which leads to the construction of similar areas, should be discussed. What are these changing patterns of motivation? What are the basic guidelines for the motivation that leads to the realization of these projects?

Considering the changing attitudes of tourists towards the quality of the tourist product, it has been possible throughout the last decades to perceive a steadily growing awareness of the consumers towards the quality of products as well as towards tourist destinations. Therefore the expression of the “sophisticated consumer” has been introduced to describe the changing structures of demand and the consumer’s rising sensibility towards the quality of products. Economic growth, increasing time for leisure activities and the emerging possibility of comparisons between tourist products lead to these fundamental changes in the attitudes of the consumers, who can be described as experienced consumers, or with an even greater awareness of the quality of the product, as sophisticated consumers.

After the perception of these changing patterns of motivation in the tourist behavior, the question arises of whether or not a correlation between rising expectations towards the tourist product and the spatial organization of tourist destinations can be detected. Taking these rising requirements towards the tourist experience into account, the tendency that regions try to diversify their offers for the tourists in order to meet these rising expectations can be seen. Urry (1990) points out that a variety of strategies are required in order to meet changing patterns of consumption.

“Experience suggests that there is no single model for ensuring survival. Instead, a variety of strategies are possible based on attracting new market segments and reviving existing ones. Restructuring policies necessarily involve a continuous process depending on the size and importance of the destination. [...] There is a need to integrate innovation, technical change, rationalization, changes in the labour market, in quality and in entrepreneurship.” (Urry, 1990)

Therefore these centers can be perceived as spatial expression of diversified structures of demand, as special consequences of the risen expectations that sophisticated consumers pose on the attractions of regions. According to Kotler (1980) and Cooper (1992), these spatial and functional expansions can take place principally in three different classes of growth: as intensive growth, as integrative growth, or as diversification. The integration of these considerations about different growth opportunities of tourist destinations was taken into account in the presented models throughout this paper in three different aspects:

- a) *Intensive growth*: describes the aim for expansion of visitors, market penetration, and revenues of the project, and is integrated especially in the second principle of the first model which describes the steadily rise of attractiveness of a theme park under decreasing rates of growth.
- b) *Integrative growth*: this aspect is taken into consideration through the successive functional and spatial integration of a leisure and business complex into its host region.
- c) *Diversification growth*: describes the successive functional diversification of leisure and business complex, especially in Figure 5 and the third phase of the spatial model, the “phase of external interconnection and internal differentiation”.

These three different categories of growth of tourism destinations should be considered throughout the development of each spatial-temporal model.

Taking the development of the tourism space into consideration, the evolution of integrated tourism destinations can effectively be integrated into existing models. In Figure 5, the different development stages of integrated tourism resorts are linked to the resort life cycle model by Butler (1980), and to the model of tourism space development by Miossec (1977). It seems to be quite difficult to apply cyclical models of tourist typologies, like of Cohen (1972, 1979), Plog (1973), and Smith (1977) to the evolution of these new evolving attractions. More probably, in this “[...] relatively homogeneous mass market resort destination a normally distributed continuum of tourist types is evident, although these have fundamentally different forms of spatial behavior within the resort.” (Gordon and Goodall 1992: 43) This more undifferentiated continuum of tourist types counteracts with very different spatial development stages. Considering the resort life cycle of these combined attractions, it seems to be more appropriate to partition certain phases of the traditional model.

Fig. 5: The interrelationship of tourism space development models and integrated tourism destinations

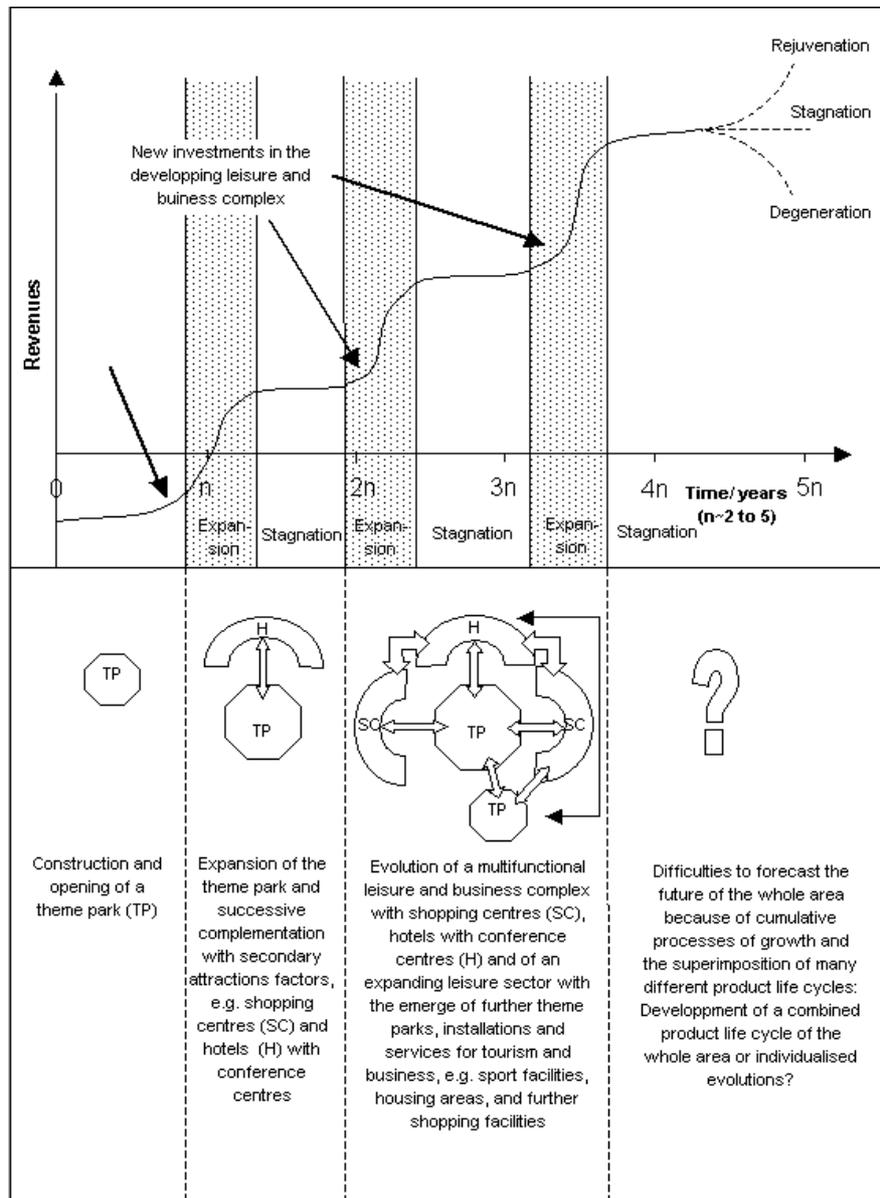
PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE	RESORT LIFE CYCLE	TOURISM SPACE DEVELOPMENT MODEL				INTEGRATED TOURISM DESTINATIONS		
	Butler (1980)	Miossec (1977)				<i>Attractiveness evolution</i>	<i>Spatial evolution</i>	<i>Regional interrelation</i>
		<i>Resorts</i>	<i>Transport</i>	<i>Tourist behaviour</i>	<i>Destination reaction</i>			
Introduction	Exploration	Traversed or Inaccessible	Transit or Isolation	No interest or knowledge	Mirage or Refusal	Monopoly of attractiveness	Pole formation	Supplementation
	Involvement	Pioneer	Opening up	Global perception	Observation		Internal inter-connection	
Growth	Development	Multiplication	Links between resorts	Perception of places	Infrastructure policy	Complementary attractiveness	External inter-connection and internal differentiation	Connection
		Initial hierarchy & specialisation	Excursion circuits	Differentiation	Demonstration effect Dualism			
Maturity (Saturation)	Consolidation	Full hierarchy & specialisation	Maximum connectivity	Spatial competition & segregation	Total Tourism	Agglomeration and inter-connection of heterogeneous attractiveness factors	Complex building and regional integration	Integration
	Stagnation	Saturation		Substitution				
Decline	Decline							
	(Rejuvenation)				Community Tourism			

Source: Own representation by the author, based on Gordon and Goodall 1992: 44-46.

Important scientific papers discussing the concept of the life cycle of tourism destination developed by Butler were presented by Cooper (1992), Goodall (1992), Gordon and Goodall (1992), Lundtorp and Wanhill (2001), and Smith (1992). An important aspect for the evolution of integrated tourism destinations can be found by Gordon and Goodall (1992: 42), where they discuss the development *ex nihilo* of special resorts. As examples for resorts that do not cycling the whole process but enter the life cycle in a later stage are presented projects such as Cancun in Mexico. A further restriction to this model consists in the variability of the life cycle for individual resorts. For integrated tourism destinations this seems to be an even more important aspects, because it is no longer possible to speak of one dominant destination, but of the interconnection of very different attractions with own life cycles combined in one superior complex. Therefore the questions arises whether or not the development of one common life cycle of the whole complex takes place, or the individualization of the different attractions, that each element of the complex has its own life cycle. Concerning the defined polynucleid leisure and business complexes and the intensive interconnection of the different internal attractions, the formation of one modified life cycle therefore seems more probable.

In Figure 6 the possible modification of the life cycle of a tourism destination is discussed. Because of the different point of times of the investments, it seems possible that there will result also a differentiated life cycle, that the expansion of the whole complex takes places in different characteristic stages.

Fig. 6: The modification of Butler's product life cycle for polynucleid leisure and business complexes



Source: Own representation by the author, based on Butler (1980)

The intensive interconnection of the different attractions seems to emerge in one life cycle for the whole destination rather than the individualization of the life cycles of the different attractions. These intensive connections of attractions, which are added in a phased process to the complex, induce characteristic modifications to the normal life cycle. Most probably, the continuous and repeated alteration of stages of expansion and stagnation throughout the phase of development can be seen. This seems to be a possible answer to continuously rising expectations of consumers and the aim of many destinations for a steadily integration of innovatory elements into their tourist offer. Especially for theme parks it is a constant desideratum to offer new experiences to the visitor.

5. The evolution of a theme park within a polynucleid leisure and business complex

During the integration of a theme park into a polynucleid leisure and business complex respective the evolving of such a complex around a theme park, different trends of the development of the importance and attractiveness of a theme park can be detected. Most important is the successive shift of attractiveness from the theme park towards other evolving attractions, under the premise that the theme park itself steadily enhances the number of visitors due to the destination life cycle of Butler (1980).

During this evolution, two main characteristics can be observed: First, the principle of decreasing growth of a theme park in dependency on the development of complementary attractions, and second, the principle of loss of attractiveness of a theme park within a leisure and business complex.

5.1 The principle of loss of attractiveness of a theme park within a leisure and business complex

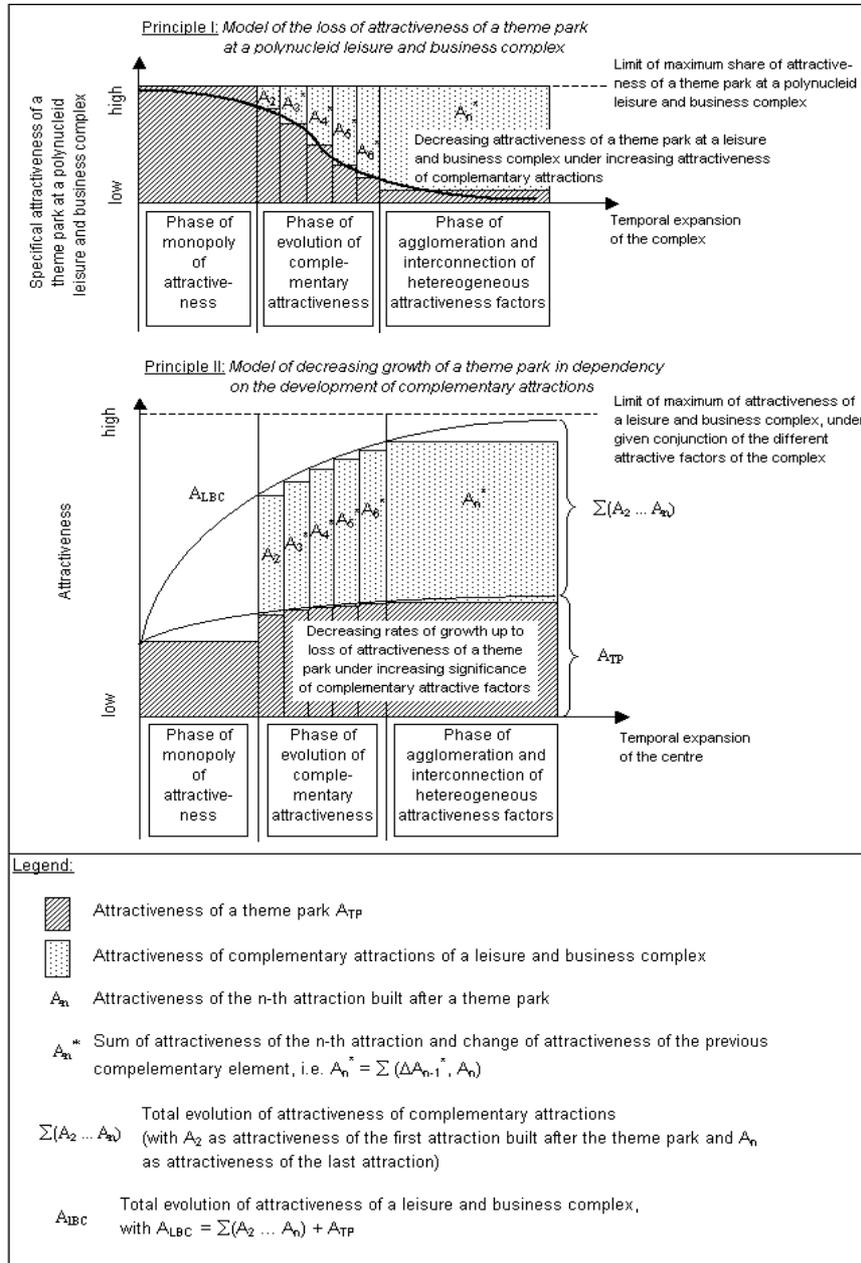
Within a leisure and business complex, a theme park normally possesses a dominant position especially in the beginning of the development of the center.¹⁷ The following explanations therefore pay attention to this position and will examine the evolution of attractiveness of a theme park during the development of the center as a whole. The change of importance of the different elements follows characteristic guidelines as shown in Figure 3. The development can be divided into three characteristic parts, the “Phase of monopoly of attractiveness”, the “Phase of evolution of complementary attractiveness”, and the “Phase of agglomeration and interconnection of heterogeneous attractiveness factors”.

During the evolution phases of the center two principles can be distinguished: First, the principle of the loss of attractiveness of the theme park within the leisure and business center, and second, decreasing rates of growth of the whole complex during his development. The first principle that is represented in the upper part of Figure 7 describes the successive shift of attractiveness from a theme park (A_{TP} in the figure) towards the emerging new elements of the complex. At the beginning of the evolution, a theme park inherits a primary function of the center, which is dispersed gradually onto the new attractions; the theme park becomes a “normal” attraction beside a lot of attraction factors. Important is the relativity of the loss of attractiveness of the theme park. It is also possible that the theme park gradually increases the number of visitors, but under the emergence of other factors and the development of the visitors of the whole area, this will always be less than the increase of number of visitors to the whole complex.

During this process, an important influence can be perceived from different synergy effects, such as the same administration, infrastructure, and stimulating effects from localizations and urbanization economies. The whole process will be described in the following paragraph.

¹⁷ Compare with Hypothesis I at the beginning of this paper.

Fig. 7: Trends of the development of attractiveness of a theme park during the evolution of a polynucleid leisure and business complex



Source: Own representation by the author

After the initial phase, when the theme park mostly forms a singular attraction, new complementary elements are integrated in the center, such as hotels or shopping centers. The attractiveness of a factor is designated as A_n . The variation of attractiveness is then designated as ΔA_n^* which forms the sum of the attractiveness of the new element and the variation of attractiveness of the preceding elements:

$$A_n^* = \sum_{i=1}^n (\Delta A_{n-1}^*, A_n)$$

Under the premise of an increasing implementation of new elements into the center and an intensive interconnection of these attractions, the “Phase of agglomeration and interconnection of heterogeneous attractiveness factors” is achieved. The different factors possess a more trifling importance at the whole center and it is easily possible to substitute them for other and new elements.

5.2 The principle of decreasing growth of a theme park in dependency on the development of complementary attractions

Beside the overall loss of attractiveness of a theme park within a leisure and business complex, there can also be perceived an intensive interconnection between the evolution of attractiveness of the different elements of the center. The resulting model, which describes the evolution of growth of the attractiveness of the whole project, has to take into consideration the synergy effects that occur between the different elements. Two essential evolutionary guidelines shall be described in the model: First, that on the one side each element is constantly expanding its capacities, but, second, that this expansion takes place with decreasing rates of growth. This effect is termed as the “Principle of decreasing growth of attractiveness”.

The whole process normally starts with the opening of a theme park, surrounded by more or less empty spaces that will be developed afterwards. During this phase the theme park or a

similar attraction is the only factor of attractiveness and the only destination for the visitors. Therefore this first phase, concerning the attractiveness of the center, is called the “Phase of monopoly of attractiveness”. Due to the product life cycle as developed by Butler (1980), the growth of attractiveness does not develop gradually but more in the way of a rising and then sloping curve, faster at the beginning with decreasing rates of growth during maturity. The decreasing rates of growth result from the increasing age and the growing saturation in the interest of the visitors. To prevent an early point of saturation and to reach a prolongation of the life cycle, new attractions are continually added to the park, both inside as well as outside the park.

The development of the number of visitors gradually approaches a certain limit of attractiveness. This boundary value represents a certain amount of visitors, but this marginal value needs to be flexible during this process, i.e. the boundary value can be escalated due to increasing and expanding capacities of the complex. There are multiple factors of limitation as the physical boundaries of the complex, limited monetary resources, the development of new leisure and tourism preferences and the economic situation of both the host region as well as of the regions of origin.

The initial state is replaced by a “Phase of evolution of complementary attractiveness”, when the attractiveness of the theme park is growing with lower rates than those of the emerging complementary factors such as hotels or shopping centers. Therefore the theme park loses its dominant position and importance within the complex and an increasing significance of the emerging complementary attractive factors can be observed.

In the course of the development of the overall attractiveness of the theme park, the questions arises if the theme park gains more attractiveness due to the opening of other elements and the emerging synergistic effects, or if the park just loses attractiveness to the new emerging factors, if a successive shift of attractiveness can be detected from the primary element, the theme park, towards the other factors.

In summary, it can be said that because of the multitude of offers, the attractiveness of the whole complex seems to be greater than the sum of attractiveness of the single elements.

6. The model of the physical evolution of polynucleid leisure and business complexes

After the examination of the evolution of the life cycle of the complex, which primarily described the changes between phases of expansion and stagnation, in the following paragraph a spatial - functional model will be developed and discussed which illustrates the evolution of a polynucleid leisure and business complex within a region.

The model principally starts with the assumption that the host region already possesses a certain diversified structure in terms of economy and tourism. Thereby the research results of Hatzfeld (1994) are taken into account, which claims a high density of both population as potential visitors and a certain attractiveness of the region itself as principal requirements for the location of an important tourism project.¹⁸ In this regard, throughout the model the trend is considered that the location of big tourism projects, which are marked by intensive capital investments, are mostly chosen near an important agglomeration to benefit from the already available number of population and potential visitors. It should also be taken into consideration that this lowers the costs for the initial infrastructure improvements in the region. After Hatzfeld (1994, p. 48), one of the most important advantages for the location of tourism complexes consists in an efficient situation of the infrastructure of the region.

Under the premises of a successive integration of the complex into its host region and an increasing interconnection of the internal attractions of the project, several characteristic stages can be perceived. These different stages have been arranged into four different phases as presented in Figure 8. Each phase is marked by a characteristic new development in terms of the integrative evolution of the complex within the region. According to the most important evolution within each phase, the different stages are named as “Phase of pole formation” (Phase I), “Phase of internal interconnection” (Phase II), “Phase of external interconnection and internal differentiation” (Phase III) and as “Phase of complex building and regional integration” (Phase IV).

¹⁸ Compare Hatzfeld 1994: 48

During the explanation of the different stages, great importance will be attached to both evolution and major changes of the functional orientation of the different spaces and areas within and outside the complex. Therefore in Figure 9, the major functions are extracted out of the model and are presented separately in order to specify the changes and the successive diversification of the different thematic functions within the complex.

6.1 Phase I: The “Phase of pole formation”

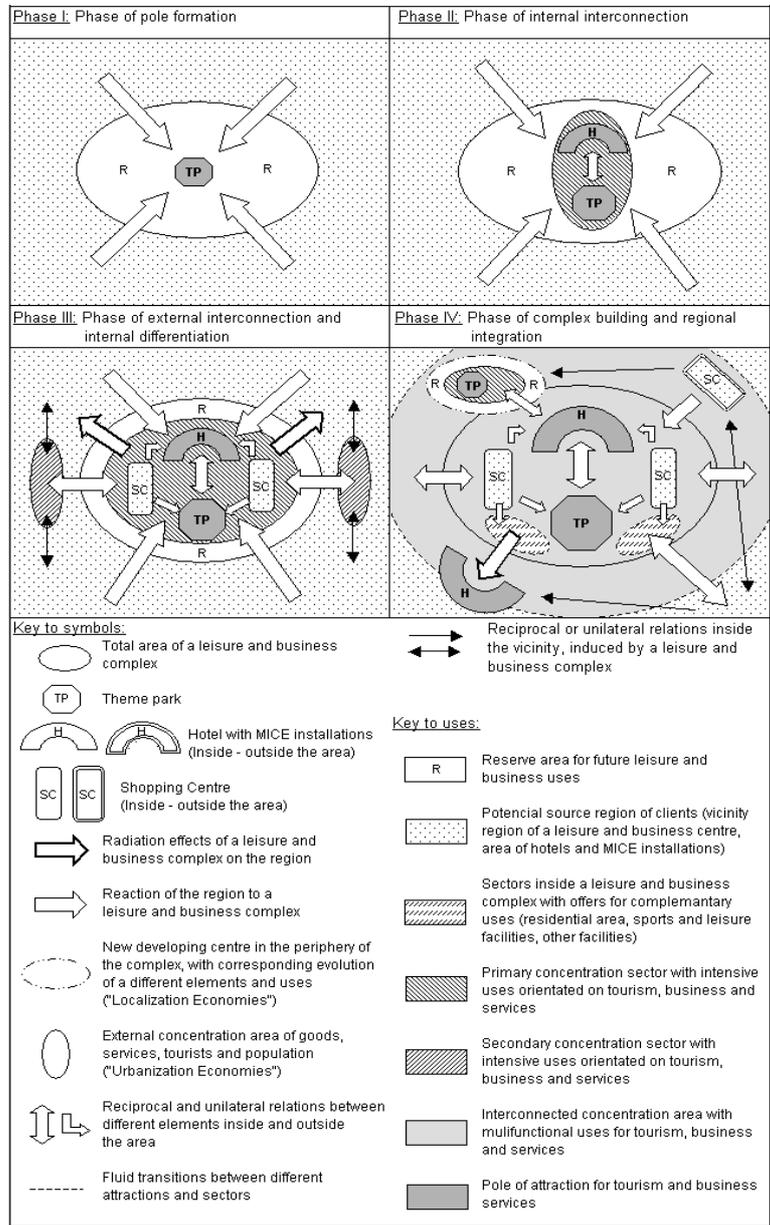
In the “Phase of pole formation” (Phase I), which corresponds with the initial phase of the product life cycle of tourism destinations (Butler 1980), the theme park forms the exclusive attraction of the area. Characterized by a central position, the theme park is surrounded by expanded spaces that initially lie idle and serve no use but the transition of goods and visitors. Therefore the only installations to be found are the basic infrastructure such as streets, train stations, and parking sites. Throughout the evolution of the center, this area successively will be developed and up-graded by future leisure and business uses. According to the model of urban expansion presented by Burgess and to embrace the changes in the functional structure of this part of the center, this fraction will be designated as “Zone in transition”.

The denomination of the reserve area as “Zone *in* transition” mainly refers to the functional changes of this fraction throughout the evolution of the complex. The other possible denomination, “Zone *of* transition”, would focus more on the physical transactions and the circulation of goods, services, and visitors who have to cross this area in order to reach the theme park and the primary concentration sector.

In the course of the expansion of the theme park and the emerging primary concentration sector, which will be described in Phase II, the reserve area will continuously become smaller and functionally differentiated.

The primary use of the whole area in this first phase consists at the “experience” of the theme park, the frequency of the visitors to the attractions and installations within the theme park. Therefore it is possible to term this stage as “Phase of monopoly of attractiveness”, concentrated on the theme park, as represented in Figure 7.

Fig. 8: The physical evolution of polynucleid leisure and business complexes



Source: Own representation by the author

As an example for the possible restructuring of the reserve area can be mentioned a new parking block in the Disneyland in Anaheim, California. Finished in June 2000, it's been the biggest parking block in the world, according to the Disney enterprise. It has over 60.000 parking lots, spread over six floors. The emerging free spaces in the "Zone in transition" will be used for the further development and construction of the whole area. Therefore it serves as an example of the expansion of the internal concentration sector at the expense of the reserve area that becomes steadily smaller in the course of the evolution of the complex.¹⁹

The German theme park "EuropaPark Rust" has to face the same problems of lacking space for further evolution and necessary restructuring of its "Zone in transition". In this example, the spatial expansion of the theme park has led to the circumstance that one of the roller coasters was built partly over the parking sites.²⁰

6.2 Phase II: The "Phase of internal interconnection"

The second phase starts with the inauguration of additional elements within the area. Most often, hotels and shopping centers provide first complementary utilization possibilities for the leisure and business complex, in order to keep secondary expenses of the visitors within the leisure and business complex as well as to provide supplementary attractions. The

¹⁹ Compare Ahius 2000, <http://uranus.ecce-terram.de/test/facts/intern/projekte.html> [Date: 15.7.2000]

²⁰ On the homepage of the "EuropaPark Rust", <http://www.europapark.de>, an extended archive of press releases about the history, the activities and the expansion of the theme park can be found. During the last as well as during the coming years, the park faces major expansion, thematically as also of its spatial extension. In the beginning of 2002, a connection to the highway system was completed. Actually, two hotels with a "Confertainment Center" are available for both tourism use as also for conferences and congresses. A third themed hotel in Andalusian style will open within the next years. During the last years, the enterprise required an option for an enormously expansion of the whole area towards the south east, towards the connection to the highway. Other activities of the enterprise and the "EuropaPark Rust" include the organisation of events and festivals within the theme park, the fabrication of roller coasters and other technical infrastructure for theme parks, as also the production of TV shows and concerts. Altogether, the "EuropaPark Rust" presents an ideal example of both the spatial and functional evolution of a tourism destination, which beginning was marked by a single theme park, as also the enormous diversification and differentiation of the economic activities of the whole enterprise throughout the last decades.

theme park still attracts most of the visitors, as represented also in Figure 7, but relatively with a declining tendency.

Through the evolution of complementary attractions, the visitors can choose between different attractions. In postmodern tourism, major characteristics as rising expectations on the offer, shortened life cycles, fast changing trends, as well as the necessity to provide an extensive offer from which the visitor can choose put a high expectance on each new installation. These new characteristics of the demand of the visitor also have to be taken into account throughout the construction of new areas. Marchena Gómez and Vera Rebollo also underline that configuration, conception and structure of new areas represent a corresponding answer and reaction on changing social values as well as in the motivations, behavior and practices of tourist consumers.

“The processes of configuration, consolidation and restructuring of these areas represent a response to changes which have occurred in social values and, more specifically, in the motivations, behavior and practices of tourist consumers.” (Marchena Gómez, Vera Rebollo 1995: 116)

Within new attractions and destinations, special attention therefore will be laid on the spatial dimension and that attractions are built close to one another in order to minimize the transaction paths between the different installations, and to guarantee that the visitor can choose out of a great variety of offers. These emerging installations are marked by an intensive interconnection due to spatial closeness and disposition of subsidiary and complementary uses for the visitors. Therefore it's possible to speak of an emerging “Zone of internal interconnection”, which should describe a primary concentration sector with intensive uses for tourism and services. This part is clearly separated from the reserve area, which becomes smaller due to the expansion of the inner concentration sector.

Through the connection of the first elements of the system, a “Primary concentration sector” inside the center emerges, both in terms of visitors as of the circulating goods and demanded services. This “Primary concentration sector“ shall principally be defined by the time of its evolution. This sector still is surrounded by a reserve area, which is already smaller than during the first phase. In distinction to the “Secondary concentration sector”, which emerges throughout the next phase, this zone can first of all be defined by the means

of its earlier appearance. Furthermore, in the course of the development of the model, due to the demand it creates, this first concentration sector within the leisure and business project also determines the development of external, secondary zones of concentration, which emerge in the adjacency of the complex.

These characteristics in terms of localization, utilization, and time of the implementation of different elements into the leisure complex can also be seen within future projects. As an example, a still unnamed project in Mississippi in the USA can be cited, which should be opened in 2004 on an area of 800 hectares. Starting from a theme park, which thematically treats the different states of the USA, different complementary attractions such as a water park, a shopping mall, several restaurants, hotels and golf courses will be implemented successively into the complex. A purchase option on another 1.200 hectares in the adjacency of the park serves as an expanded reserve area.²¹

6.3 Phase III: The “Phase of external interconnection and internal differentiation”

The third stadium, the “Phase of external interconnection and internal differentiation”, starts with the emergence of different radiation effects of the leisure and business complex on the region. At this point, the complex changes from a primarily touristic destination to an integral functional offer of the region. Essential during this phase is the fact that the complex becomes both a destination and also a source, an emerging area for tourists.

Already in the two earlier phases, different effects of the complex on the region could be detected, such as the investments in the regions, or the labour required from the region for the construction of the installations. Due to the opening of internal accommodation, and even stronger in the next phase with the inauguration of the housing area, the complex itself becomes an emerging source for tourists and consumers to the region. Within the scope of a

²¹ Compare Ahius (2000), <http://uranus.eccc-terram.de/test/facts/intern/projekte.html>, Date: 15.7.2000.

successive diversification in order to meet rising visitor expectations, the uses and functions inside the complex will be completed by complementary uses such as “working” and “accommodation” (compare Figure 9), which find their expression in emerging conference and shopping centers, further hotels, restaurants and sport facilities.

Considering the often enormous capacities of the hotel area of similar projects, these radiation effects and impacts on the region must be concerned as important for the level of demand in the corresponding city or region. For example, compare the “Walt Disney World” in Florida, USA with 22.000 beds in 26 hotels in 1995 (Jahrfeld 1996: 193). These numbers do not include further potential visitors from the leisure and business complex to the surrounding areas such as the residents of the housing areas of those projects, e.g. of the “Celebration City” inside the “Walt Disney World”.

Physically this process can be observed by the creation of different urban axes that connect the region or a surrounding city with the complex, e.g. primarily different parts of the regions with special offers and attractions within the complex. As an example, the planned prolongation of the city center and the main shopping street of Salou, province of Tarragona, can be cited, which will be directly connected with the theme park and the shopping center of the “C.R.T.”.²² The evolution of three different axes connecting the complex with the region can be clearly perceived: First, the mentioned prolongation of the main shopping street of Salou, crossing the leisure and business complex between the planned shopping area and the theme park and on the same time establishing a connection with the second closest city, Vila-Seca; second, a corridor in the south of the theme park, traversing the complex south of the theme park and north of the sports facilities and the housing area and connecting the area with the region east of the complex and city of Tarragona; and third, the second prolongation of Salou’s main street towards the coast and the tourist destination and beaches of La Pineda.

The evolution of different functional urban axes can also be perceived in the central part of Florida in the USA. Initiated by the inauguration and successive expansion of the “Walt

²² For the spatial connection of the complex with the surrounding region, see Anton Clavé 1997d: 258.

Disney World” in Orlando, an intensive urban spread could be perceived in the following decades in this former fallow region. Remarkably, this expansion didn’t take place in an evenly distributed spatial pattern but in the form of certain corridors of intensity due to the high mobility, infrastructure improvements and the connection of the region to important airports such as Miami and Tampa and the fast growing land values in the proximity of the “Walt Disney World”. This evolution of aligned attractions also can be described as “strip development”.

Considering these influences, it’s also possible to speak of “segmented radiation effects” in order to describe the effect that the impacts from the complex primarily are concentrated on areas which already possessed a certain business and leisure structure before the project was initiated. The effects on the region therefore cannot be considered to be evenly distributed, but marked by a mosaic spatial structure. In Figure 8, this is taken into account by the secondary concentration sectors outside the complex as external areas of expansion, circulation and intensification.

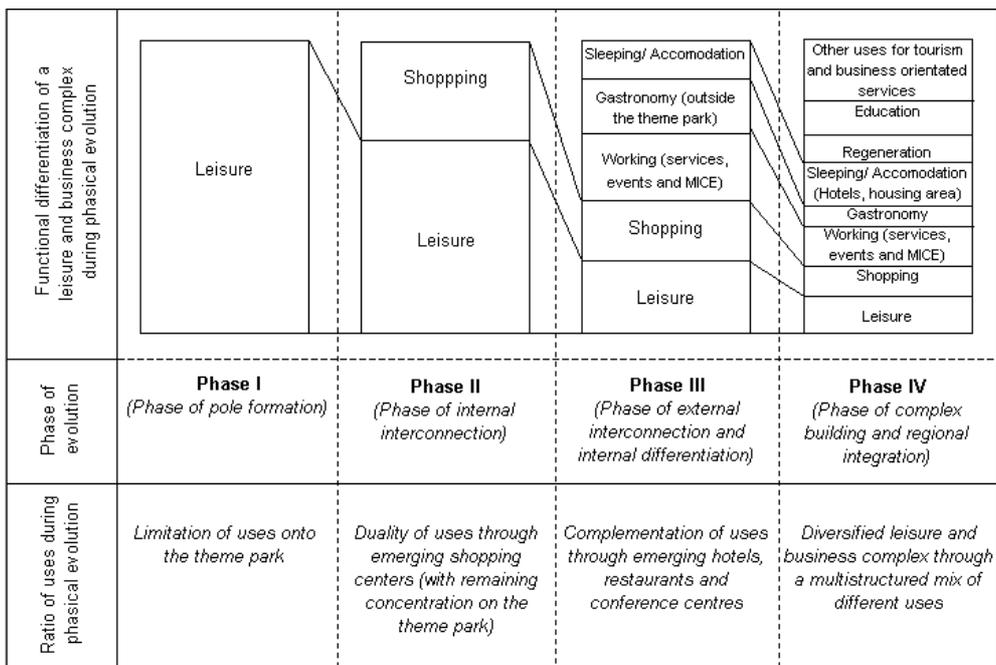
In addition to that, the “Secondary concentration sector” emerges due to the radiation effects of the leisure and business complex on the region. While the development of the “Primary concentration sector” normally takes places in a former fallow area, in the “Secondary concentration sector” there already existed a certain diversified supply of services, goods, and tourist infrastructure before the initiation of the project. This supply experiences a noticeable revalorization due to the radiation effects of the complex, such as the expenditure of the visitors and the hotel guests of the complex as well as also the internal residents in the local economy. Therefore, due to the emerging complex, a revalorization of the existing leisure and business structure of the region can be seen. The secondary concentration sector describes the spatial concentration of the radiation effects of the complex onto the region, i.e. the effects of the projects onto the economic structure of its host region.

Most probably, the primary connection of attractions and offers of the leisure and business complex with installations and offerings in the region which already possessed an elevated importance for leisure and services and which will experience an increased valorization through the implementation of the project can be seen. These zones of circulation and intensity are marked by an intensive concentration of local residents, a high density of

services, an excessive circulation of goods and an increased frequentation of visitors from outside the region as also from the leisure and business complex.

In Figure 9, the diversification of uses inside polynucleid leisure and business complex during phased evolution is illustrated. The major functions are extracted out of the model as presented by Figure 8, and are presented separately in order to specify the changes and the successive diversification of the different thematic functions within the complex.

Fig. 9: The diversification of uses inside a polynucleid leisure and business complex during phased evolution



Source: Own representation by the author

Therefore, during this phase, the characteristic changes on the one hand consist of the increasing internal differentiation of the complex and its functional diversification, and on the other hand of the successive connection of the attractions of the project with the different installations of leisure, business and services of the regions and the successive integration of the leisure and business complex into its host region. Therefore it is possible to speak of a “Phase of internal differentiation and external interconnection”.

6.4 Phase IV: The “Phase of complex building and regional integration”

The transition to a preliminary last stage, the “Phase of complex building and regional integration”, is considered to be more valuable than the previous ones. The integration of the complex into its host region is completed successively, and the inner functional and spatial structure of the complex itself is completed to such an extent that the reserve area mostly disappears. Important differences to the previous stage also consist in the evolution of new attractions outside the complex, initiated by the greater economic potential created by the leisure and business complex. Different new attractions within the region emerge, such as new shopping centers, hotels, conference centers, housing areas, and new installations for leisure and recreation due to the spin-off-effects of the project onto the region.

As example for integration of a housing area can be mentioned both the “Celebration City” within the “Walt Disney World”²³, and the planned housing area of the “C.R.T.” in Catalonia. The implementations of Jahrfeld (1996) can further serve as an empirical base for the adaptability of the developed models on the evolution of the Disneyland in California and the offers of the Disney Enterprise in Florida.

Considering different examples of similar projects, such as the attractions and leisure areas created by the Disney enterprise, often the appearance of new theme parks or similar attractions near the theme park can be seen. This evolution should be taken into account by

²³ Compare Jahrfeld 1996: 193 - 195

the new leisure and business complex emerging close to the first project, as it is represented in the graphic figure of this fourth phase.

This new evolution principally can take place in two different spatial models: First, as it is represented in Figure 8, the authorities of the leisure and business complex acquire a new property connected with the area, which is already developed. In this case of available space and sufficient benefits from the installations already constructed, a similar evolution can take place surrounding a new created pole of attractiveness, a further theme park or a similar attraction. This new attraction also would be integrated into an area with the possibility for further expansion. In the graphical representation of this fourth phase, this possibility for evolution from the same enterprise is taken into account through the overlapping of the new project with the existing leisure and business complex. And second, in the case of the evolution of a similar project of another enterprise, this overlapping would take place; therefore the two areas would have to be separated. These considerations are based on the different forms of expansion of existing leisure centers during the last decades.

Taking the two main installations of the Disney enterprise in the USA into account, there can be clearly seen two different ways of spatial evolution. The first theme park, Disneyland in Anaheim in California, was marked by a relatively restricted spatial expansion a limitation to acquire further portion of land close to the park. Therefore, a lot of the further development of the zone took place outside the area acquired by Disney, thus showing the possibility of the second way of the further expansion of a leisure and business complex. In opposition to that situation, the area acquired from this enterprise in Florida was far more extended, giving space to further expansion. This possibility should be taken into account through the first explanation, as it is graphically illustrated in Figure 8.

As example for the development of a new complex in the adjacency of the first project, a planned new theme park that shall be opened in 2004 beside the “Universal’s Port Aventura” can be mentioned.

7. Conclusion

This study has aimed to develop new models for spatial and functional evolution of new destinations in tourism. Considering the projects and processes of the tourism industry discussed and mentioned throughout this paper, the proposed models seem to be able to describe new general and transferable tendencies in the evolution of tourist destinations. The “polynucleid leisure and business complexes” mentioned therefore either might be treated as a new form of tourist destinations, as integrated tourism destinations or as modifications of yet existing tourism urbanizations.

Considering the utility of these two models, it is yet uncertain if they may contribute to theoretical concepts in tourism studies. Nevertheless, three principal uses of these models can be detected: as a conceptual framework to analyze evolutionary trends of new tourist destinations, as a theoretical device to forecast spatial and functional evolution, and as a guide for strategic regional planning, as Cooper and Jackson (1989) also stated for the utility of the life cycle approach in tourism studies.

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