

Disintegration Due to Mass Tourism Case of Coastal and Internal Zones of Northern Aegean District

Introduction

Although several definitions had been introduced to explain the tourism phenomena, basically it is defined as “the act of travel for the purpose of recreation and business, and the provision of services that can alleviate poverty through its capacity to create wide range jobs especially in rural areas and indigeneous people” (WTO, 2005). Recently, the central governments incentives accelerated the international tourism and had became the world's largest export earner and an important factor in the balance of payments of most nations (Romaya & Alden, 1995:5, WTO, 2006).

Mainly, after the Second World War;

- the ease in global economies,
- improvements in technology allowing the transportation of large numbers of people in a short space of time and
- increasing number of people traveling

have propped up the international flows and turned into large scale tourism referring to popular form of leisure called mass tourism (Baud-Bovy & Lawson,1977:6-8, Inskeep, 1991:8-9, Beech & Chadwick, 2005, glossary).

Tourism which is a creative and one of the most rapidly developing economic sectors is also found acceptance in corroborating the underdeveloped local economies meanwhile preserving and perpetuating the existing potentials in an efficient way. However, rising tendency it is perceived that tourism has both benefits and problems on the vital surrounding especially on natural and social environment because of the revenue which is pitched on a strategy to market the source for the maximum number of tourists (Inskeep, 1991:340-374, Schaller, 1996). Furthermore, the providential hegemony of tour operators and their arbitrage about the spot options performing daily trips in the program of mass package tours appear as other contradiction over the stability of socio-economic environment. Literally Smith (1992:3) has put forward “the sea-side (beach resorts) and urban historical-archeological sites as two main key aspects of attractive destinations” for the massive tour organizations. In this way, spontaneously coastal zones are to be faced with the compulsive influence of accommodation oriented to mass tourism which omits other potentials especially at the internal zones to be disintegrate or to be spoiling without a tangible economic input (like daily visits to the ruins expecting in the scope of heritage tourism). In fact, these excursions eventuate in an abstracted environment and can not adopt as heritage tourism which take place in a very short time of perception. This brings out also the very pathetic circumstance of heritage tourism besides the regional economic imbalance yield by mass tourism.

Relatively, this article aims to discuss the paradox of mass tourism and its reflections in disintegration of different scales of areas within a case in North Aegean District where Hellenistic city of Pergamum situated on a steep hill next to Bergama, as a famous destination heritage spot that is included in most of the massive excursions. Unfortunately, from these massive travel tours to Pergamum within (internal zone of) Bakıray Plain consisting distinctive tourism alternatives where Bergama is a dominating modern city and including an urban conservation area (possessing potentials) could not benefit and let to be neglected. Thus, tourism can not

secure the desired effect on the local economy. Because actually, tourism as a fact has to be a tool for decreasing the inequality of income by the help of a comprehensive plan and corroborative management policies predicting alternative actions for a sustainable social, environmental as well as stable progress for regional economy.

According to this scope, the paper is organized in three sections. The first section overviews the disintegration of coastal and internal zones in accordance with the contradictions obtained from tourism statistics of flows, gates for the destination areas, and tour systematic in proportion to different scales (Mediterranean Region, Turkey and North Aegean District) due to mass tourism. Following the discussions on different scales, in the second section Pergamum, Bergama and Bakırçay Plain will be introduced and the data concerning tourism events will be put forward including the neglected potentials in Plain (Bakırçay) scale and town (Bergama) scale. Finally the evaluation of alternative outcomes appraises.

1. Mass Tourism and Destinations in Turkey / North Aegean District

In the history of tourism, Mediterranean region including Turkey had became one of the most preferential destination for tourism activities since after the mid 20th century and lately hosting around “240 million tourists which is comprehending 1/3 of all global tourism arrivals in 2004” (WTO, 2004). The natural sources like climatic conditions and sea as well as nearby location and conceivable transportation possibilities are very essential characteristic reasons for the growing rate of tourism in Mediterranean. Relatively, in 2020 the numbers of international arrivals are estimating to reach 350 million in this part of the world (WTO, 2005). Conversely, according to 2003 tourism income data of WTO claimed that in Mediterranean Region 2/3 of the tourism income returned to the hands of less than 10 tour operators from Northern Europe (WTO, 2003). Thus fundamentally points out the unprofitable use of mass tourism economy in the hosting region.

As in case of other Mediterranean countries, besides its very moderate and different climatic conditions Turkey performs;

- interesting geography of landscape, natural habitat and rich natural sources for any kind of activities,
- 8.333 kilometers of coast line,
- numerous traces belong to the rich cultural heritage dating since Neolithic age and
- various distinctive socio-traditional groups of life styles and built environments

so that recently earmarked and “foreign visitor arrivals increased substantially in between 2002-2005 from 12.8 million to 21.2 million which made her a top 10 destination in the world” (TÜRSAB, 2005). In order to prove this indicator in numeric with the concentration area, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism statistic datas show that in 2004, 8.580.852 million foreign visitors (half of the total arrival number from the international doors) among 17.516.908 million had been entered from Antalya, Muğla and İzmir airports situated in southwest of Turkey where the coastal

line assumed as Turkish Riviera (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005) (Table 1). Recently the assest tourism flows bring out Turkey and her position in international tourism to be realized as a destination for mass tourism and fixed facilities. Paralel to these ascertainments in Turkey; Aegean, Mediterranean and Marmara Regions also appear to be the most attracting destinations for the majority of 17.372.114 million citizens in 2004 which is approximately close to the total number of foreign visitors (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005).

In terms of the investments and predominantly oriented coastal tourism policies, most of the foreign visitor arrivals are being actualize directly to the coastal areas (mentioned above) like resort-hotels for accommodation and entertainment by tours. According to a research about the aim of foreign visits and the organization of travel, in 2001, % 63.4 of foreign visitors arrived Turkey by tours for entertainment and travel purposes, only %8.1 of foreigners had visited Turkey for culture (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2001). This tourism statistic data basically displays the concept of tours predicting a conflict between the rich potentials (history, built environment, natural resources, geography, landscape, cultural and so on) of Turkey and the context of culture and natural heritage that can be benefit. Because mass tourism generally involves accommodation and excursions of crowded groups organizing by tour operators disregards the recognition of visiting regions' culture, life styles, on the account of perceiving, learning and satisfying the demands in the aim of heritage. In this scope of tourism comprehension, while coastal zones accepted as potentials for accommodation, sun, sea, sand and other entertainment activities, on the contrary a short period of visit is leaving for the excursions in the package program. Moreover, the guests (included in "all inclusive package program") are mostly orienting to lounge within the resorts-hotels performing several kinds of interests in group (behavior) mode. However, tourism counted this way hinders the local communities' advantages. In fact, "the history, architectural features, buildings, way of lives, foods, believes, hand-skills, landscape, traditional fabric and other features constitute sources for tourism (Jansen-Verbeke, 1995:218). Therefore, what is expecting from tourism is to corroborate the progress of "local communities that should benefit both economically and culturally" besides the tour operators (WTO, 2000).

Table 1: Top Five International Gates in Turkey and the Number of Foreign Visitors Arrivals – 2004

International Gates	Number of Arrivals
Antalya Airport	6.047.246
İstanbul Airports	3.473.185
Muğla Dalaman Airport	2.526.407
Edirne Border Gate	2.177.305
İzmir Adnan Menderes Airport	634.586
Total num. of Arrivals:	14.858.729

Source: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005

When we demote the explicate analysis of tourism flows data in case of İzmir province, it is analyzed that most of the international arrivals performs by air flights rather than land and sea transport. In 2004, İzmir airport appears to be the fifth international gate according to the foreigner number of arrivals (Table 1 & Table 2). Said in these documents, the concentration of most of the tours' initial points and accommodation destinations fronts southwest coastal settlements and İstanbul. As a result, in 2004 arrivals to accommodations points out İzmir province (including the towns in its governance) as a destination spot dominantly for local tourism (Table 3).

Table 2: The Sea Port Gates and the Number of Foreign Visitors Arrivals in İzmir and Northern Aegean District by Provinces and Towns – 2004

Sea Port Gates	Number of Arrivals
Kuşadası Sea Port	257.774
İzmir Sea Port	78.225
Çesme Sea Port	42.610
Ayvalık Sea Port	26.581
Dikili Sea Port	9.237
Çanakkale Sea Port	6.823

Source: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005

Table 3: The Number of Citizens and Foreign Arrivals, Average Length of Stay by the Municipalities by Provinces and Selected Towns in İzmir and Northern Aegean District - 2004

Province or Town	Number of Arrivals (Accommodation)			Average Length of Stay		
	Foreign	Citizen	Total	Foreign	Citizen	Average
İzmir (total)	516.516	1.133.639	1.650.155	3.5	1.9	2.4
İzmir (center)	107.109	548.368	655.447	2.0	1.6	1.7
Ayvalık	242.886	173.953	416.839	1.4	2.0	1.7
eşme	76.011	157.435	233.446	4.7	2.4	3.2
Dikili	5.679	20.656	26.335	4.0	2.9	3.2
Foa	36.606	53.675	90.281	3.6	2.2	2.8
Bergama	14.325	11.072	25.451	1.2	1.2	1.2
Aliađa	841	9.777	10.618	3.6	1.5	1.7

Prepared by taking into account the data of "Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005"

2. Case of North Aegean District: Bergama / Bakıray Plain

Bergama, the district of İzmir province is an ancient civilization center founded in Bakıray Plain and surrounded by Kınık, Dikili, Aliađa towns and Balıkesir, Manisa provinces. Topographically, Bergama is surrounded by Geyikli, Kozak, Soma and Yund Mountains restricting the Bakıray Plain where the river gave its name to the fertile fields, located leaning against the fascinating steep hill of Acropolis, Pergamum.

İzmir as a cultural and commercial center of western Anatolia, consequently Bergama, have always had advanced communication possibilities throughout the history. The city is located in north of İzmir and has 7 km. distance to İzmir-anakkale highway. Also it is approximately 100 km. to Manisa and Balıkesir provincial centers. According to different transportation modes, the nearest coast and port of Dikili is 27 km., railway station of Soma is 42 km. and the İzmir airport (Adnan Menderes) is 100 km. at a distant to Bergama.

Bergama also respectfully presents tourism possibilities with its natural resources and cultivable lands besides the locational advantages. Grand Madra and Kozak Mountains constitutes the origin of the natural attractiveness with developed transportation infrastructure, existence of interesting rural settlements and developing transhumance facilities. Also the Yund Mountain on the south of Bergama is similarly covered with forests and convenient for jogging, trekking picnic, bicycle tours, walking and camping.

Tourism and the industrial sectors are growing rapidly in Bergama while agriculture has been the leader source of income for a long time. On behalf of cultivable land on Bakıray Plain % 51 of 106.536 total populations live in rural area of Bergama. In spite of tobacco, cotton, wheat and olive as the main agricultural product of villages in the Plain, forestry and stone pine are the important sources of income in mountain villages of Kozak Plateau.

Due to rich unique agricultural products Bergama serves as the commercial center of Bakıray Plain. Instead of dominancy of agriculture in the rural area, economy in the Bergama District center is based on service sector (% 64 of 14821 total labor forces) (SİS, 2000). On the other hand

service facilities are based on public services, wholesale and retail trade for Bakırçay Plain indicating that tourism facilities has not been developed yet. Besides the service sector, small and medium sized agricultural industry based on foodstuffs and industry based on cotton embroidery has been developed on account of agricultural products of Bakırçay Plain and closeness to the port in Dikili.

Besides developed agricultural economy and agriculture based industrial facilities, unfortunately, tourism in Bergama is limited with the visits to historical ruins so that, the local economy of district center can not profit. Visitors of historical ruins and Bergama museum are extremely higher than the number of accommodations (Table 4) fairly limited due to the number of visitors that prefer to spend night at Bergama (Table 3) (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005). There are 2 ministry and 10 municipality licensed accommodation centers which have no activity except dining halls with a total number of 612 capacity. It is almost insufficient when compared with capacity of Dikili (2097), Foça (3540) and Ayvalık (12942) considering the number of arrivals to Bergama (Bergama Chamber of Trade, 2004).

Table 4: Distribution of Visitors Strolling the Bergama Museum and Other Historical Ruins

	CITIZEN	FOREIGN	GROUP *	TOTAL VISITOR
MUSEUM	15.205	6.002	1.640	22.847
ACROPOLIS	51.339	51.039	109.185	211.563
ASKLEPION	19.228	31.859	78.643	129.730
BAZILICA	5.735	6.213	2.724	14.672

Source: Directory of Bergama Museum, 2005

(* Number of visitors requiring group discount)

In addition to the lack of capacity mentioned above; Table 4 obviously indicates that, visitors (especially foreign visitors) of mass tourism spend a very short time in Bergama only for visiting Acropolis and Asklepion. Moreover, they do not visit the historical center and urban conservation area with a very special neighbourhood structure having characteristics of Ottoman Period where Rum (Anatolian Greek), Armenian, Jewish and Turkish people lived. They even do not stroll the Basilica and Bergama Museum. Apart from the inadequate accommodation possibilities, short span of time of the tour programs is also related with less developed catering facilities thus Bergama can not handle the benefit of mass flows of visitors.

Regrettably, ensuring visitors to spend the night in Bergama could not be achieved. However Bergama exposes an entire geography with other towns and settlements in the Bakırçay Plain (Figure 1). So, if tourism activities are taken on a comprehensive plain scale, it will be noticed that there are many potentials for altering mass tourism. Besides these famous cultivating destinations (Acropolis, Asklepion), Bergama originally performs a lot of distinctive and interesting cultural, natural beauties and sources which can attract visitors to stay by referring alternative (rural, nature & transhumance, thermal, cultural and coastal) tourism activities.

When we classify the potentials for alternative tourism in Bakırçay Plain;

- **Rural Tourism:** Bakırçay grassy plain and Kozak Plateau, Yund Mountains possesses very favorable climate for several kinds of cultivate products like stone pine, olive, cotton, wheat, different kinds of vegetables and fruits over its fertile wide fields. Through the extent of rural tourism, variable harvesting and processing of various agricultural products can create attraction for visitors in different seasons. Participating to these activities and festivals people can experience both rural and cultural tourism.

- Nature and Plateau Tourism: Madra Mountain range including Kozak Plateau and Yund Mountain due to their natural (flora-fauna), historical, cultural and folkloric attributes, proximity to focal points (main transportation corridors İstanbul-Edirne-Çanakkale-İzmir) and well-arranged roads presents convenient environment and atmosphere for sports, trekking, cycling, hunting, picnic, celebrations and other recreational activities. Currently, in terms of rural tourism, Kozak plateau and its environment serves for recreational activities at the weekends and official holidays. What is more, every year on the last week of May and first week of June, the second day of Bergama Kermes is spent on Kozak Plateau for picnic and marching activities. In this frame, mountains and plateau also consists potentials with rich landscape and traditional settlements compatible for accommodation.
- Thermal Tourism: Thermal oppurtunities are one of the very basic essential resources of Turkey that diversfies the types of alternative which can be dispersed to all year. In Bakırçay Plain, there are 23 spring water points between Bergama and Dikili geothermal area. “Bergama Güzellik Ilıcası” (Kleopatra thermal) and Asklepion which is known as one of the first hospital where the patients cured with therapy and inspiration methods are the famous thermal places since the antic periods.
- Cultural Tourism: Since the establishment of human settlements, Bakırçay Plain has been perceived as one of the centers of civilizations that benefits the transition in an adequate geopolitic situation possessing moderate climatic conditions and rich natural resources for different kinds of human activities. Therefore, advertising only the Acropolis, Asklepion and Bazilica will be unfair and disrespectful for fundamental history of the region and existing potentials (Apollonia, Gambreion, Kanai, Atarneus, Perperene, Parthenion, ...), Allianoı, the most famous one dating since second century, is now under the risk of floating because of being in a barrage drainage area (Eriş, 2003:5). On the other hand, Bergama as a historic-city ⁽¹⁾ includes an urban conservation area perpetuating the Roman, Byzantine, Seljuks and finally the Ottoman periods’ impressive monuments (gates, bridges, mosques, inns, baths, fountains ...) architectural civic buildings, houses and an interesting, huge bazaar. Furthermore, villages in the rural areas of the Bakırçay Plain and the plateaus constitutes distinctive traditional community atmosphere for visitors who is fond of local way of lives and cultures.
- Coastal Tourism: Plain also presents typical characteristics of Mediterranean climate of coastal landscape and topography adorned by olive and pine trees. Besides the long sandy beaches and adequate summer season, wavy bays at some parts of coast line performs magnificient view of Aegean Sea.

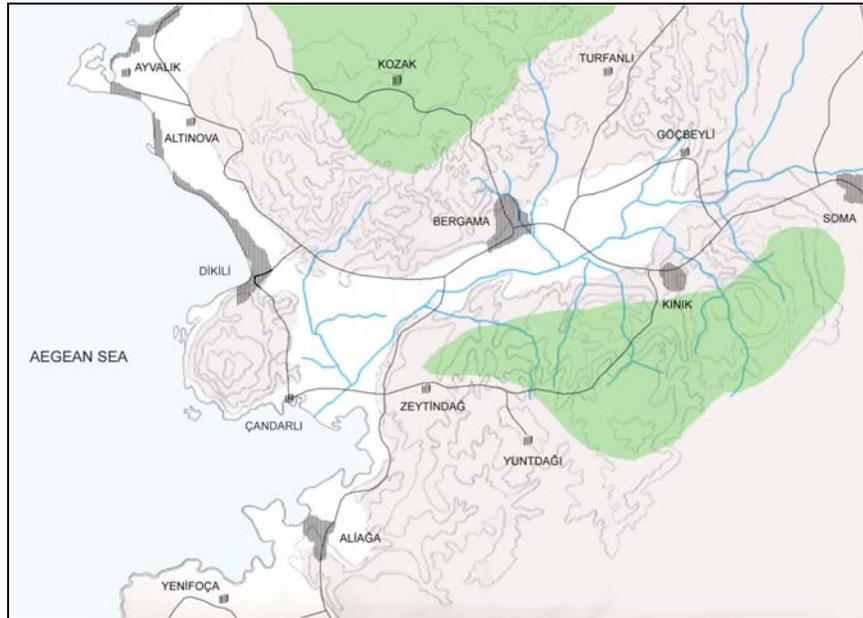


Figure 1: Bakırçay Plain

Evaluation

In the mean of cultural tourism tour packages orienting Aegean coasts includes a short, impetuous visit and catering facility at a nearest destination to the ruins. Since the market of “sea, sun, sand” products has reached of a stage of saturation, a growing interest in alternative tourism as a potential tourism resource (Jansen-Verbeke, 1995: 214) arises. According to centrally organized tourism development effort, the contemporary scale of tourist resort development world-wide, related particularly to warm beach environments, marketing historic relics besides unspoilt sandy beaches of Aegean Sea, functionally and spatially.

Whereas, the diversified geographical environment of Anatolia presents richness and variety in potential of perpetuating both local cultural features (folklore, religion, landscapes, ruins, monuments, art ...) and the diversity of motives and historical urban patterns due to her history of settlement culture. The growth of tourism and its increasing orientation to ‘heritage’ is generating ‘cultural tourism’ allowing for a wide product differentiation which is needed to meet the growing market segmentation and such market demands are used to enhance or contrive historic resources. And this manner creates perspectives for new destinations which are competitive, unique and attracting different target groups.

The common feature relevant to the “tourist-historic city” is that a recreation-seeking market is available for the consumption of historic tourism resources, if these can be successfully incorporated within the wider tourism package. In addition, from the standpoint of the beach resort region, excursion attractions based on historic, thermal, rural ... settlements not only widen the holiday experience but may also aid its deconcentration in space and time. Historic attractions are likely to be less dependent on fine weather and are likely to be located in places other than beach facilities. Thus both holiday season and region can be extended by the addition of supplementary historic and cultural elements in the holiday (sun) package (See: Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000: 191, 135).

The geographical environment of Bakırçay Plain in which several visitor generating places tend to be found, is a “tourist resort region” in direct response to these demands (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000: 135, 179). Furthermore Bakırçay flows to Aegean Sea, which creates the tourist-demand base represented by the proximate coastal amenity. Excursions to relics of the Plain (Apollonia, Kanai, Atarneus, Perperene, Parthenion, Acropolis, Asklepion, Basilica, Bergama Archeology Museum, Allianoı ...) may be included in beach packages or to organize heritage tourism package as a separate segment of tourism market. Natural, historical, cultural heritage that were survived largely by chance occurrences, and culturally distinctive, lesser known, pre-industrial settlements (Kozak Plateau and its villages, rural area of Bakırçay Plain in order to observe processes of agricultural products, historical center and urban conservation area ...) relatively untouched by urban development pressures may be marketed to tourists as part of an overall package of attractions. Thus, besides other contemporary uses, tourism and the historicity of Bergama make different contributions in different ways to a number of different synergies: the tourist-historic city can be part of ‘the tourist city / village’, ‘the culture city’, ‘the shopping city’, ‘the gastronomy city’, and so on (See: Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000: 136).

In Bakırçay Plain it is important to put the wider geographical role of Bergama in the regional, social and economic development due to avoid the effect of mass tourism on interregional disparity. Being one of the longer established old cities at the North Aegean District, Bergama can serve as the tourist-historic city and as a center for services also for the greater İzmir Metropolitan City. Besides the economic role, putting the alternative tourism potentials of Bakırçay Plain in use will also balance the relations between other settlements that currently live together in terms of economic and social life and transportation links. It is fairly possible to extend the duration and holiday season of visitors by exploiting the potentials in a triangle shaped region consist of Bergama-Dikili-Kınık.

Parallel to suggestions for Bergama and Bakırçay Plain;

- Regulatory policy concerning responsible and strategic resource management should be taken into account by keeping in mind that the conservation policies and environmental protection conflict with the marketing of heritage as a tourist product,
- For establishing long term (management) strategies in order to avoid damage to the quality of the site and the very nature of the cultural resources and (heritage) characteristics; it is a must to develop monitoring systems and criteria for tourist carrying capacity making the balance between economic benefits and socio-cultural costs (See: Jansen-Verbeke, 1995: 231),
- It is important to maintain these less developed “pleasure peripheries” (See: Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000: 191, 135) where the potential for development is largest, by detailed regulatory planning for the sake of preservation of historic fabric, of natural sources and environment, of local traditions and so on. Such a complex process involving change in many socio-economic elements and a variety of influences (e.g. changing demographic structure) must be interwoven with revaluation of the settlement as a heritage source / environmental amenity (See: Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000: 179, 199, 280),
- On the other hand; in the local level; variety of goals and objectives and this diversity of functions, introduces a multiplicity of organisations with an interest in and responsibility for, the shaping and operation of the tourist-historic city (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000: 136-7)

should be a starting point that may lead to a reasonable tourism development.

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¹ See: E. Örnek Özden, B. Yerliyurt, E. Sekin (2006), "Continuity of the Spirit of a Place – Case of a Historic Town", paper prepared for the 42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006.