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Digital history in Italy

- 1 The digital turn is impacting tourism history in many ways. First, it has changed tourism itself by fostering new commercial, marketing, and organisational models, and has made it easier to shape new tourist experiences in terms of education, promotion of cultural diversity, and accessibility. It has done this also by exploiting the many opportunities provided by the re-conceptualization of cultural heritage and culture. The interaction of commercial and cultural dimensions is producing a re-design of tourist destinations. Secondly, the digital turn has influenced the way historians do their job, by increasing the role of digital sources and tools in designing research methodologies; innovating dissemination activities as suggested by public history; and devoting time and resources to the digitalisation process to build historical maps, datasets, digital collections, etc. Finally, access to a variety of online archives as well as the emergence of new social, economic, and environmental challenges is stimulating new research questions and interpretations.
- 2 The tourism field is not a special case, as all history disciplines are facing a profound transformation. In addition, the pattern of changes varies in different countries. For instance according to Simone Lässig (2021), there are two main differences in digital history between North America and Europe: 1) in the former, research infrastructure and initiatives are bottom up and usually funded by private undertakings, while in the latter, state and public projects play a pivotal role; 2) in the former, digital history

arose out of public history and, consequently, initially focussed on websites, databases, network analyses, digital imaging technologies, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), that is, all the tools needed to reinforce the communication of history, whereas European historians initially focussed on tools that enable the analysis of great quantities of text.

- 3 Finally, to complete the picture it is necessary to draw attention to economic history, which was one of the first disciplines to include computer and digital tools in its methodological approaches. In the United States, in the 1960s, a group of economists created new datasets and applied econometric tools to historical analysis. After many years the most prominent of them, Robert Fogel, was awarded the Nobel Prize along with the institutional economist Douglass North. In the meantime, the so-called cliometric approach spread in the United States and helped to bring economic history closer to economics and farther away from history. Its evolution was not linear, however. In the 1960s and 1970s, the new approach became dominant in the United States and Canada, then during the 1980s and 1990s, spread to the UK and then to continental Europe. Subsequently, US economists' interest in the cliometric revolution rapidly vanished, such that economic history teachings were no longer included in economics PhD programs. Only recently, thanks to the diffusion of a new approach called "persistence studies", there has been a revival of economists' interest in history and an increase in the number of economic history articles in economic journals. Recently various papers have dealt with the unsatisfactory relationship between economic historians and economists and the emergence of the new approach of historical economics, which marks the complete abandonment of historical methodologies in favour of economic ones (Cioni *et al.*, 2022). Since the beginning, the cliometric approach stimulated a vivid debate among Italian economic historians, that is still undergoing. Over the long run, the main result has been a decline in the number of economic historians in the economics department and an increase in the number of economists who publish papers based on historical data.
- 4 The development of digital history (economic history included) in Italy is not far from the general trend described by Simone Lässig for Europe, and can be chronologically framed with three dates corresponding to the establishment of three new scholarly associations: the AIUCD – the Italian Association for Digital Humanities and Culture in 2011; the ASE – the Economic History Association in 2015 (although quantitative history in Italy extends back to the 1990s); and the AIPH – the Italian Association for Public History in 2016.
- 5 Since 2017, the AIUCD has published *Umanistica Digitale*, a scientific journal based at the University of Bologna, which fosters debate on the challenges and opportunities of digitalisation by proposing papers ranging from the theoretical and methodological foundations of computational models in social science to the development and application of computational systems and digital tools in the humanities; and from the study of new phenomena in internet cultures, to the analysis of changes happening in scientific communication and in research infrastructure.
- 6 ASE fosters and encourages quantitative history projects and publishes the *Rivista di storia Economica* (RSE) [Italian Review of Economic History], although it also welcomes papers using qualitative methodology. This association gives visibility to the quantitative approach (cliometrics) whose diffusion in Italy dates back to the 1990s.

- 7 The most recent of these associations is the AIPH which has 478 members including scholars and professionals, and aims to promote historical knowledge, encourage multidisciplinary dialogue, and enhance practices and experiences that focus on the active involvement of groups and communities, also in the digital world. Like in North America, in Italy public historians contribute extensively to the use of digital tools, particularly web and multimedia (Salvatori, 2021).
- 8 Following Douglas Seefeld and William G. Thomas, we can say that two of these Italian associations focus on the methodological level (the ASE and the AIUCD), while the third, the AIPH, more on communication and citizens' science of the past.
- 9 Until now, tourism historians have marginally contributed to these associations' conferences and scientific journals: in *Umanistica Digitale*, no paper focusing on tourism history or cultural heritage valorisation has ever been published; the Italian Review of Economic History has received only one paper which focused on the reconstruction of the invisible part of the Italian current account from Unification to WWI (Incerpi, 2019). We will come back to this essay later. As for the AIPH, although tourism studies are not public historians' primary target, the association's annual meetings usually feature papers dealing with the tourism valorisation of history and cultural heritage. For instance, in the first conference in 2017, tourism was the focus of three Sessions: "History as a reference for research and design of new cultural tourism products"; "The Liberated South: for a new narrative of South between tourism and business"; and "Cultural tourism". Three sessions were dedicated to tourism issues also in the 2018 conference: "The valorization of the cultural heritage through the cultural itineraries as an element of touristic promotion of the territories"; "Moving in space in order to travel in time: widespread museums for contemporary history in Italy"; "Co-Heritage: examples of enhancement of the cultural heritage in Lazio Region". The last Conference in 2022 experienced a further diffusion of tourism related topics. In conclusion, on the basis of the Italian journals promoting the digital turn in the humanities and economic history fields, so far tourism history has played only a marginal role.
- 10 The picture doesn't change if we take into consideration the other main Italian historical journals or Italian historians' international publications released in the last 15 years, both in Italian and English. The first decade of the new millennium saw the major development of tourism history in Italy, particularly due to the engagement of the Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano (Institute for the Italian Risorgimento/Unification, Naples committee), that from 2000 to 2018, published the *Annali di Storia del turismo* (editor Annunziata Berrino 2013, 2016, 2018) on a biennial basis. However, apart from this publication, very few articles on tourism history have been published in other Italian history journals. We can mention *Diacronie*, which in 2018 published a monographic issue on tourism history (n° 4), and more recently *Italia Contemporanea*, where some papers were presented from 2020 to 2022.
- 11 To complete the picture of Italian historians working on tourism, we need to include a few papers published in international journals (*Journal of Tourism History*, *Business History*, *Revista de la historia de la economia y de la impresa*, *TST -Transportes, Servicios y Telecomunicaciones*) and a dozen books. However, very few of these papers and books used digital tools or can be categorised as digital history. We will come back to these publications in the next section.

Tourism history in a digitalised world

- 12 Regarding tourism history in Italy, the digital turn seems to have particularly stimulated the use of online archives and contributed to the comparison of multiple sources, in order to strengthen interpretations or broaden research questions. Take for instance *Il turismo e la costruzione dell'Europa: le politiche turistiche dei paesi europei tra sviluppo economico e soft power* by Elisa Tizzoni (2021a), investigating the contribution of tourism to the building of Europe. The author chose a world history approach which required consultation of many different international and national archives, the digitalisation of which facilitated the research. We can mention the Assemblée nationale and the Sénat archives in France¹; the House of Commons and House of Lords archives in the United Kingdom²; the League of Nations archive³.
- 13 Most papers and books published over the last 15 years have used a mix of analogue and digital archives (Tizzoni, 2021b; Pasini, 2022; Gregorini and Semeraro, 2022; Battilani, 2020; Battilani and Fauri, 2020) albeit in some cases with a preference for digital collections (Tizzoni, 2021a; Battilani, 2016; Battilani and Strangio, 2020). For instance, the paper by Battilani and Strangio (2020) explores the role of the Cassa del Mezzogiorno (the national agency for the economic development of southern Italy) in promoting tourism development in the south, by using its digitalised archive⁴. The 2016 paper by Battilani focusing on the evolution of large Italian hotel companies is based on the dataset made available by the project IMITA.DB, providing information on the balance sheets and board members of all the largest Italian companies⁵. However, in both cases analogue sources have also been consulted.
- 14 Based on these observations we can say that a pattern of complementarity between digital and analogue collections has emerged. In this picture, the availability of digitalised materials and a centralised online catalogue including almost all Italian archives seems to have stimulated research and the discovery of new sources, more than replacing analogue archives with digital ones, at least for the time being.
- 15 Some digital collections are now extremely popular and widely used: 1) the Italian Parliament Archive platform, launched in 2011, allows for the consultation of parliamentary debate, and draft versions of new laws and reports from 1848 to the present⁶; 2) the *Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia* (the Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Italy, and since 1946 of the Italian Republic), which is the repository of all Italian laws, in the versions originally approved by Parliament⁷.
- 16 Equally popular are the digital archives of Italian newspapers, even in the absence of a unified platform, as in the case of the Australian Trove⁸. The main Italian newspapers have separately digitalised their own collections and have set out different access policies: the archives of *La Stampa* (since 1867) and *La Repubblica* (since 1984) can be accessed for free⁹, while the *Corriere della Sera* (since 1876) is only available to subscribers¹⁰. In Italy, there is also a great tradition of local newspapers, extremely important for the history of tourist destinations, and these have only recently become partially available with the implementation of the *Digital Library*. This project started in 2018, with the aim of building an aggregator for digital repositories, realised over time by local libraries and archives of various origins and specialisations. From the user's point of view this portal is very rich and has great potential.

- 17 The *Digital Library* is also leading the National Plan for the digitisation of cultural heritage, which entails a massive digitisation of historical materials: post-unification newspapers (from 1861 to 1955); cadastral maps (held in 17 state archives); the photographic archives of the archival superintendence offices; and materials stored in museum deposits. This project is part of the Italian Recovery plan funded by the European Union during the pandemic.
- 18 Other digitalised collections are quoted only occasionally by tourism historians. Worth mentioning is the Archive of the Istituto Luce (the acronym of the Educational Film Union), which in 2013 obtained Unesco recognition as Memory of the World. The Luce Institute was an Italian film corporation, created in 1924 and based in Rome, which produced and distributed films and documentaries intended for screening in cinemas. It was an important propaganda tool for the fascist regime. The historical archive of this organisation contains documentaries, newsreels, and collections, many of which are of great interest for the history of tourism¹¹. However, so far this archive has been used more for exhibitions than for historical research on tourism.
- 19 Other archives used by tourism historians are the Ufficio Italiano Brevetti e Marchi [Italian patents and trademarks office]¹², the Rete Archivi Piani Urbanistici (RAPu)¹³, and the Archive of the Cassa del Mezzogiorno, the Italian agency for the economic development of the Italian Southern regions¹⁴. The first is a collection of all the logos and patents registered by Italian companies from 1855 to 1965 and allows for the investigation of the rate of innovation in the tourism value chain. For instance, in this collection mountain tourism historians can find patents registered for ski-lift, cable car, or leisure boat companies. The second makes available the urban plans of many Italian cities including some important tourist destinations.
- 20 Less satisfactory is the accessibility of collections specifically focussing on tourism, such as the Archive of Enit (Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo), and the Italian National Agency for Tourism, set up in 1919, which includes newspapers, advertising, reports, and official documents. The digitisation of this archive is only in its infancy and has so far only entailed photographs and posters¹⁵. The comprehensive digitalisation of this archive would be particularly welcome due to the difficulty of accessing the analogue archive. The digitisation of the Italian Touring Club archive¹⁶ is more advanced, so far making available its inventory, photos, and magazines. In this context, one can consult online the *Rivista mensile del Touring Club ciclistico italiano* (1871-1920), *Le vie d'Italia* (1921-1990), and thousands of photos. The main limitation of this digitalisation is the adoption of unsatisfactory selection criteria, which essentially only makes specific categories of documents, usually pictures and journals, available.
- 21 Even less digitalised are the archives of the local agencies for tourism promotion, such as the Aziende di Soggiorno and the Enti provinciali del turismo (the forerunners of the DMO-Destination management organisations). Since the end of the 1920s (Royal decree law n° 765 of 15 April 1926), Italian cities could count on local DMOs, called Aziende di soggiorno cura e turismo, for tourism promotion. In 1936, provincial entities were introduced to coordinate the activities of the municipal agencies: the Enti provinciali del turismo (EPT). In the 1970s, when regions became responsible for tourism promotion, both Aziende di soggiorno and EPT were replaced with a new generation of province-based entities, the Aziende di promozione turistica. Then towards the end of the 20th century, regional agencies were set up to take over provincial control. Traditionally, the consultation of all these archives, situated and under the

responsibility of different institutions and cities, has been very difficult. Recently the completion of SAN, the National Archive System, has simplified the consultation of the analogue archives, enabling access to their catalogues through a unified platform.

- 22 Due to its importance, the SAN project should be mentioned. The Italian archival system is chronologically very extensive (about 1,500 years) and polycentric, in the sense that archives are created, owned, and managed not only by the Italian state and the Catholic church but also by thousands of other private and corporate bodies. The system for protecting the archives is headed by the Ministry of Culture, where there is the General Direction of the Archives, which leads and supervises an extensive network of public institutions including: 1 central state archive in Rome, which keeps documentation produced by the central state organs; 101 state archives (distributed throughout Italy which preserve documentation created by local public administrations and notarial deeds); and 17 archival superintendence offices, in charge of supervising, protecting, and verifying the inventories of the archives of both territorial public bodies (regions, provinces and municipalities) and private local archives considered of historical interest. The computerisation of this articulated system began in the early 1990s, stimulated by the new challenges launched by the Single European Act of 1986. Over time, various systems were developed (SAIS, SIUSA, General Guide) which then merged into a single platform, called SAN, the National Archives System. On this platform, it is possible to obtain information on historical documents and on the accessibility of all Italian archives, public and private, which are cared for by the state archives and the superintendencies of archives. Today, the platform is available to researchers and if one searches with the keyword “turismo”, one obtains information on 454 archives. The national archives system has so far implemented a digitalisation strategy aimed mainly at increasing knowledge of the archives and collections distributed across the country, making digitised documents available. In addition, the open attitude of SAN, which can dialogue and also import information from new public or private archives (according to a precise procedure), avoids the risk of marginalising new sources or collections that are not yet integrated.

New research approaches: building datasets, maps, and dissemination paths

- 23 The digitalisation of historical materials has deeply impacted methodologies and approaches. In Italy, however, until now, tourism history has only been partially influenced by this wave of innovation. Regarding methodologies, we can highlight that none of the tourism history publications we mentioned before have used tools for automatic data extraction or analysis, although software such as Nvivo for semantic analysis or Gephi for network analysis are often used in historical investigation. The use of Stata or other software for statistical or econometric analysis has been more frequent.
- 24 This leads us back to the importance of building datasets and making them accessible. In Italy, Istat (the Italian Central Institute for Statistics) and the Bank of Italy have historically been the main producers of official statistics on tourism: figures on tourist arrivals and overnight stays have been available from Istat since 1924 (in the beginning in collaboration with Enit), while estimates of international tourism and revenues have been promoted by the Bank of Italy since the end of the 19th century. An early

summary of these data can be found in the *Annuario statistico italiano*, now available online in pdf format¹⁷. Moreover, the Istat website's historical section also provides historical data on tourism in Excel format (<https://seriestoriche.istat.it>), but only at the national level.

- 25 The dataset of official surveys undertaken in recent decades are available on the Istat platform. For instance, Istat travel and tourist data on Italian families are available from 1997 onwards in Excel format¹⁸. Bank of Italy information on travellers crossing Italian borders (road and rail crossings, international ports, and airports) is also available online¹⁹.
- 26 In addition, there are datasets built from specific research projects such as the reconstruction of the Italian GDP series from 1861 to 1951 realised by the Bank of Italy. However, due to lack of data, the research group in charge of estimating the new GDP series decided to measure the value added of the tourism sector as a percentage of the retailing sector, which in turn had been estimated on the basis of goods consumption. The hypothesis that goods and tourism services consumption had followed the same pattern seemed to make sense. In addition, no distinction was made between hotels and cafes, restaurants, or public places in general. The weakness of this reconstruction can easily be seen in the following charts (Fig. 1). The series highlights an increase in the added value of tourism during the First World War, in contrast to the qualitative information, and the scarce quantitative data available for specific destinations. Furthermore, in the interwar years the trend of this series contrasts with the ISTAT data on overnight tourist stays (Fig. 2).

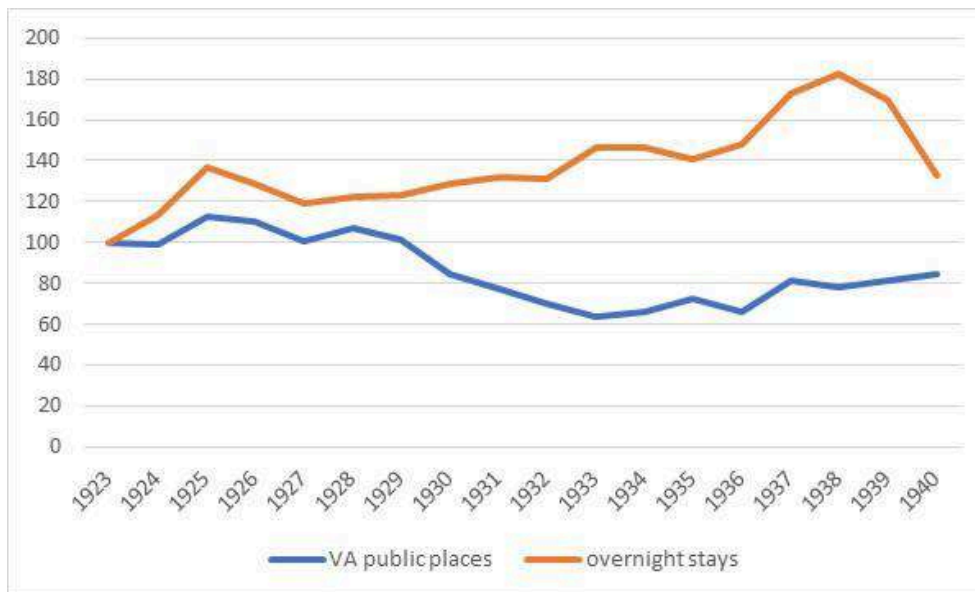
Figure 1. Public places value added (cafes, restaurants, hotels, etc.), 1861-1951 (millions of euros)



Value adjusted by Istat's lira coefficients (2022) and then converted to euros.

Source: our estimation from Battilani *et al.*, 2014.

Figure 2. Public places, value added and tourist overnight stays, 1923-1940



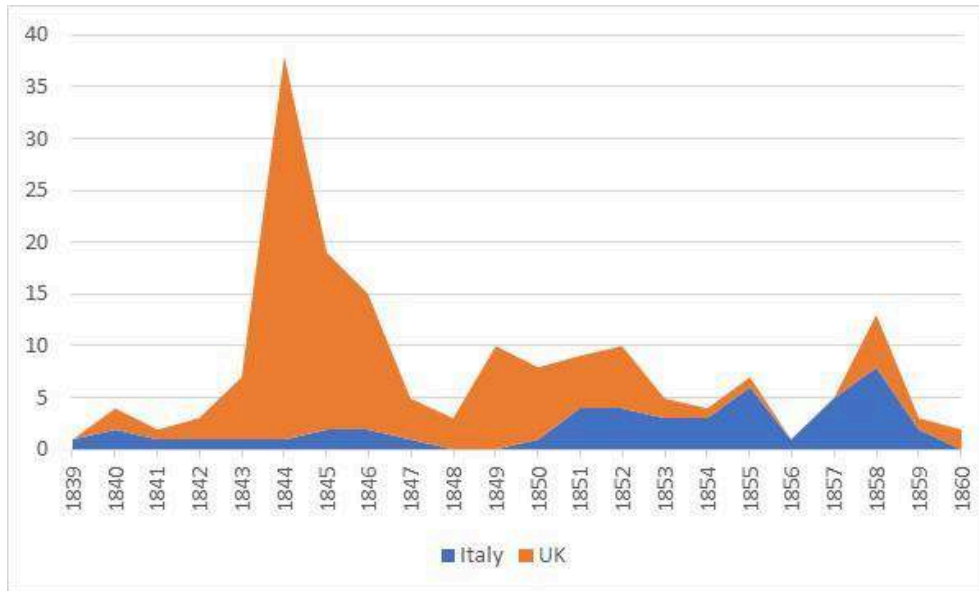
Index: 1923 values =100.

Source: our estimation from Battilani, 2020 and Battilani *et al.*, 2014.

- 27 On the contrary, the international tourism revenue series is available, thanks to a paper by Andrea Incerpi, who estimates the invisible part of the Italian current account from Unification to WWI. According to this reconstruction, tourism provided 1% of GDP at the time of Unification, which jumped to around 3% at the end of the 1880s and reached 3.5% on the eve of WWI. The new dataset confirms that tourism played a pivotal role in Italian industrialisation by balancing the Italian current account during the first 50 years of unification. Moreover, its role was much more important than the one played by migration remittances. For the postwar period, the Bank of Italy provides the 1947-1999 series of the Italian balance of payments, where data on travel revenues can also be found²⁰. This data shows the important contribution of tourism revenues to the Italian balance of payments.
- 28 Apart from the macroeconomic series (GDP, balance of payments), digitalisation has also fostered the creation of new datasets focussing on specific tourist products. Here we can mention ongoing research on the 19th-century origins of conference tourism, more precisely of scientific conferences. Due to its fragmented nature, it has long been impossible to understand the role it played in the 19th and 20th centuries through the use of analogue archives. In this context, the emergence of digital journal platforms such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, Pubmed, and NCBI have opened up new opportunities to study this type of tourism since these conferences were obviously advertised in scientific journals. By focussing on two countries (Italy and the United Kingdom) from 1840 to 1860 and on the medical sector, Roberta Limongi extracted all scientific conference announcements and built the first database with about 130 conferences held in various UK and Italian cities. In the UK, the most attractive cities were London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Sheffield. In Italy, the cities which hosted the most events were Milan, Turin, and Genoa. This research, which has not yet been published, shows that the medical-scientific conference movement was already present and well-structured in 1840. Secondly, June, July, September, and October were the preferred

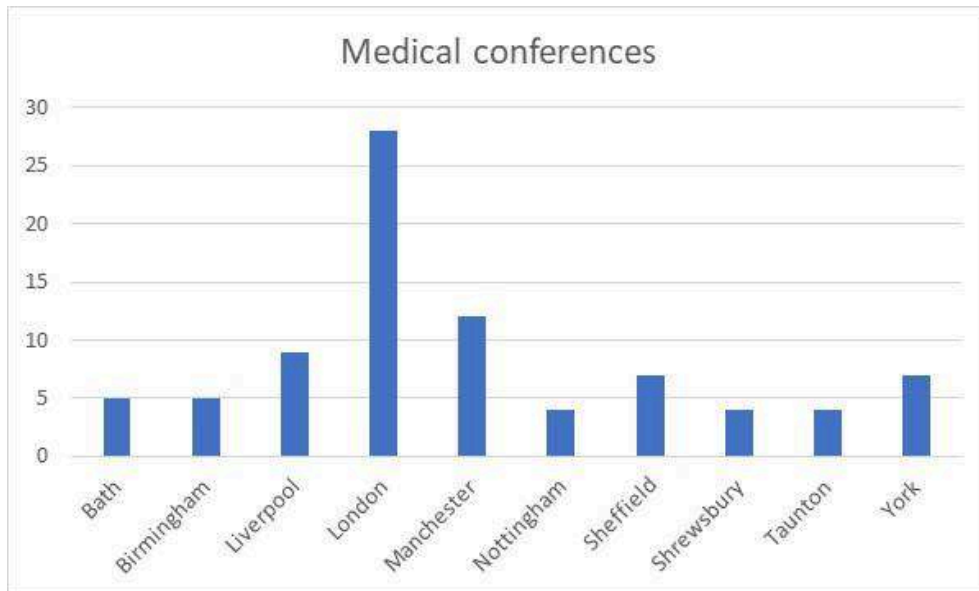
months for organising events. Finally, the cities with important universities hosted a greater number of conferences; however, more data on other features of host cities could strengthen the econometric analysis, which is now based on a limited dataset (Limongi, 2012).

Figure 3. Medical conferences held in Italy and the United Kingdom, 1839-1860



Source: Limongi, 2012.

Figure 4. Cities in the UK with more than three conferences, 1839-1860



Note: No Italian cities hosted more than two events.

Source: Limongi, 2012.

- 29 As evidenced by these projects, the digital turn has not promoted new quantitative methodologies with respect to the history of tourism. Until now, scholars have

exploited the possibility of building new datasets within the framework of traditional cliometrics.

- 30 A second interesting approach is the application of GIS to tourism history, as in Giuliana Geronimo's dissertation of 2008. This research has only been partially published in the form of a business history article in 2011 in the journal *Annale di Storia del Turismo*, focussing on enterprises. However, the dissertation included a complete mapping of 1914 Milan and three historical maps (from 1844, 1866, and 1884) with information on all the renovation, restoration, and new buildings in the hotel sector. By using GIS, the dissertation provided a georeferenced map of the historical evolution of the hotel sector in Milan from 1844 to 1914.
- 31 Despite the early use of GIS in tourism history, at present historical GIS seems to have influenced more the design of cultural experiences for tourists than the investigation of tourism history. GIS, historical sources, and 3D virtual reconstructions were used to enhance the transhumance landscape, which in 2019 was included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list (Meini *et al.*, 2018).
- 32 This leads us to a third issue, the importance of new technologies for the dissemination of historical contents. The digital turn has made possible the design of many "edutainment" experiences for visitors, very often based on virtual or augmented reality. Over the last decades many European projects have designed tourist experiences by mixing virtual technologies and historical knowledge, for instance, Rurallure²¹ with its historical podcasts promoting destinations along some European cultural routes, or Recolor²² with its virtual reconstruction of the ancient Cividale del Friuli. In addition to that, as mentioned in section 1, a growing number of papers are presented at the AIPH annual conferences.
- 33 Generally, the digital turn requires acquisition of mixed competences, which in some contexts has stimulated the collaboration between disciplines. The collaboration between historians and geographers has been very productive; it has taken the shape of historical GIS and has multiplied the mapping of historical information. Moreover, the digitalization has stimulated collaboration between history and the creative industries to disseminate historical contexts through the design of new cultural tourism experiences. Finally, as we mentioned before, it has fostered a return of interest in history by economists who have seen the possibility of applying models and statistical techniques to historical analysis. The persistence studies changed the research questions and the methodology by using historical data to test models or estimate parameters aiming at understanding economics more than history. However, the new approach did not bring a closer collaboration between economic historians and economists, but a substitution of "traditional" economic historian with economists.
- 34 In conclusion the digital turn has stimulated the building of new datasets, the implementation of historical GIS methodologies, and an approach to dissemination based on edutainment. Although it does not mark a significant break with the past, it is certainly designing a new path also for tourism history.

Some concluding remarks

- 35 **The present situation.** We can now go back to the initial issue of the impact of the digital turn on tourism history. As evidenced by previous sections, digital tourism

history is in its infancy in Italy. It has stimulated the use of multiple sources, the development of public history projects and occasionally the building of new datasets and the implementation of historical GIS. In this context the digital turn seems to have been an opportunity more than a threat: analogue and digital sources have been mixed to provide deeper and more extensive interpretations; new datasets have been made available to the public and could be used by scholars of different backgrounds. However, until now, digital tools and methodologies have not played a pivotal role in producing new interpretations and conceptualizations. There was no shortage of essays proposing innovative research questions and providing new conceptualizations. We can mention the publications of Tizzoni (2021b) and Caputi (2021), which connect tourism and environmental history, or the essays by Battilani and Strangio (2021) that explore the social sustainability of tourism in terms of participatory tourism planning. However, these scholars implemented traditional methodologies.

- 36 **The unavoidable change.** Until now, tourism history has not experienced the change of thought, scholarship, and practice foreseen by Ash, Kitchin, and Leszczynski. However, tourism history is entering the world of Big data, although gradually. A growing number of historical collections have been digitalized and scholars trained in other disciplines have already started to analyse them by using new methodologies and tools. Take for instance economists and the persistence studies. Moreover, historians of the next generations will analyse and discuss the information we are now producing when we use the web. It is a fact that a country which does not digitalize its historical material and does not create the possibility to preserve what is digitally produced in the present, risks being excluded from the “Memory of the world”. Quoting Italo Calvino, “What remains outside is as if it never was” (Calvino, 1968).
- 37 In this context the first programmatic perspective for historians is to look for new tools and methodologies able to combine source criticism with the opportunity provided by Big data (defined as data containing greater variety, arriving in increasing volumes, and with more velocity). In the years to come, the archival collections will be based on the digital data we are producing in the present, and consequently, historians will have to process them in their research. For a discipline whose scientific methodology is based on the critical analysis and validation of sources, the world of Big data will be particularly challenging.
- 38 **New tools and new media.** Over the last years dozens of different tools have become available to historians. They are useful for the analysis of quantitative data (Stata, for instance) or qualitative information (Voyant). They can provide OCR services for scans or printed documents (Transkribus or Adobe scan). They make it possible to design cultural experiences aiming at disseminating the historical knowledge as walking tours (Clio) or digital exhibitions (Omeka). The invention of the printing press paved the way to the diffusion of books, which became a pivotal tool for knowledge transfer. It is clear that the same happens with the digital turn. In this context a second programmatic perspective could be to combine historical research with dissemination, publications of books and research papers with digital exhibitions or walking tours. In this context the building and management of digital infrastructures can be crucial for both research and dissemination. Take for instance Europeana and the role it can play in providing digital collections to be used for historical research as well as for designing cultural experiences.

39 **The new research questions and the new research teams.** Our society is facing many challenges, the digital turn is one of them. However, environmental sustainability, social cohesion, community empowerment, and gender balance are all important as well. Until now tourism history has only marginally investigated these topics. The interaction between the different dimensions of sustainability and the digital turn has been explored even less. In this context, we need to go beyond the reconstruction of tourism value added and develop research projects aiming at assessing the social, cultural, and environmental impact of tourism in the different historical phases. The digitalization of historical collections could help in building the necessary dataset and index. However, the design of new research questions and a profitable and innovative use of digital technologies, require not only proper training courses for historians but also multidisciplinary teams, to which historians can bring their ability to understand the past and historical evidence.

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ABSTRACTS

The essay aims to analyse the impact of the digital turn on tourism history in Italy by adopting a multifaceted approach and answering the basic research question of whether or not Italian tourism history has fully experienced the digital turn and what the consequences have been in terms of methods and contents. Our starting point is that the transformation we are facing is comparable to the invention of the printing press and the mass production and reproduction of books and documents (Dittmar, 2011); in the words of Ash *et al.*, “digital pervasively inflects thought, scholarship, and practice” (2016, p. 25). As noticed for other disciplines, this turn implies not only the use of digital devices, software packages, and digitalised archives, but also new conceptualisations, narratives, and logic. To see how the digital turn has impacted tourism history in Italy, we will briefly describe the state of the art of digital history (section 1), discuss the relationship between the digitalisation of archives and new publications (section 2), and finally, we will provide some examples of the innovative use of digital technology for the history of tourism (section 3). Some concluding remarks and future perspectives for tourism history will be discussed in section 4.

Cet article vise à analyser l'impact du « tournant numérique » sur l'histoire du tourisme en Italie via une approche multisituée et en s'efforçant de répondre à la question de recherche suivante : l'histoire du tourisme italien a-t-elle pleinement opéré ce tournant et quelles en ont été les conséquences en termes de méthodes et de contenus ? Notre point de départ est que la transformation à laquelle nous sommes confrontés est comparable à l'invention de l'imprimerie et à la production et reproduction en masse de livres et de documents (Dittmar, 2011). Nous estimons donc, avec Ash *et al.*, que « le numérique infléchit de manière généralisée la pensée, l'érudition et la pratique » (2016, p. 25). Comme cela a été constaté pour d'autres disciplines, ce tournant implique non seulement l'utilisation de dispositifs numériques, de logiciels, d'archives numérisées, mais également de nouvelles conceptualisations, récits, logiques. Pour voir de quelle façon le tournant numérique a impacté l'histoire du tourisme en Italie, nous décrirons brièvement l'état de l'art de l'histoire numérique (section 1), nous aborderons la relation entre numérisation des archives et nouvelles publications (section 2) et nous donnerons quelques exemples d'utilisation innovante des outils numériques par les historiens du tourisme (section 3). Nous formulerons enfin quelques remarques conclusives et esquisserons des perspectives futures pour l'histoire du tourisme (section 4).

INDEX

Mots-clés: numérisation, base de données, conférences médicales, Italie

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