



Belgeo

Revue belge de géographie

3 | 2012

**Géographie des guides et récits de voyage/A
geography of guidebooks and travel narratives**

Guides to a geography of tourism

Guides pour une géographie du tourisme

Bosse Bergman



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/belgeo/7176>

DOI: 10.4000/belgeo.7176

ISSN: 2294-9135

Publisher:

National Committee of Geography of Belgium, Société Royale Belge de Géographie

Electronic reference

Bosse Bergman, « Guides to a geography of tourism », *Belgeo* [Online], 3 | 2012, Online since 18 March 2013, connection on 30 April 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/belgeo/7176> ; DOI : 10.4000/belgeo.7176

This text was automatically generated on 30 April 2019.



Belgeo est mis à disposition selon les termes de la licence Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.

Guides to a geography of tourism

Guides pour une géographie du tourisme

Bosse Bergman

- 1 Almost all branches in society could probably claim a geography of its own. For tourism however it is the essential frame : a stable offer of hits and timeless heritages combined with a constantly changing set of popular and cheap destinations and hardly recalled favourites – at global as well as local levels. How did it start, evolve and reach its enormous impact of today, when almost every place seems to market itself with tourism as a prime attractor or at least as a contribution to the package ? Of course it is grounded in the general development of urban-rural relations. But in pace and line with its success in western societies, tourism has also introduced new targets, centres and resorts, expanding and modifying its own geography of places.
- 2 All tourist practices could be inscribed in a geography of tourism, representing an ongoing spatialisation of tourism economically, socially and culturally and in a context combining both materialised and measurable flows as well as mediated and imaginary spatial formations (Shields, 1991, pp. 30-32). This article is mainly limited to the latter and to a genre of literature that almost goes hand in hand with the practices of tourism : the guidebooks. The ambition is to initiate a reflection on how these handy books once contributed to the articulation of a tourist geography (or geographies) up to the breakthrough of mass-tourism between the world wars. However, since the forms, methods and techniques of mediation are in focus, the geographical set-up will be far from systematically outlined.
- 3 Tourism is here interpreted in its widest sense : travelling by free will and with ones own comfort, joy, lust and experiences as the main purpose. In practice this concerns mainly space and place beyond people's home and everyday ground. That, of course, does not mean that the formation of a specific tourist geography mainly takes place among people on tour or holiday. On the contrary, geographic imaginations with foreign settings as the common denominator to a high degree develop at home, work and school – talking, reading, dreaming, longing. Guidebooks are however mainly written for travellers and usually consumed during journeys, let alone their role as souvenirs, preparatory manuals

or even companions on fantasy tours in the armchairs at home. Surely their contribution to geographical imaginations is less important in the massively mediated world and “googled” earth of today than during earlier periods of modernity, mainly even before visual media included photography and the mass production of postcards. However, like many other impulses and characteristics of modernity, the impact of guidebooks on geographic imaginations has never been possible to integrate in simple analyses of matter and cause.

- 4 First, though, it seems necessary to make a difference between two types of guidebooks as well as the two kinds of tourism they aimed to promote. Both are inscribed in the conventional history of tourism as the main sources of development, still today forming the two main tourist practices, though reversed in importance (Boyer, 1996 ; Vaughan, 1974 and Withey, 1997). I refer here to “the grand tour”, i.e. the long educational trips to the European continent by wealthy young Englishmen from around 1700, followed by many other social and national categories of travellers later on, and, secondly, to mainly affluent people during the same epoch beginning to spend weeks and months at the increasing number of health resorts and watering-places, either for cure or pleasure, or both. In other words, it is from now on possible to register a growing taste for both touring different countries and new ways of recreation and pleasure in places equipped for this. Of course these two types of experiences (travels and stays) temporarily overlapped. But in the same way as the practices, routines and concerns were rather different in the two cases, the guidebooks which were adjusted to them were of different character. Regional guides differed from local ones, like travel guides from guides to specific destinations. The former were occupied with practicalities for touring and disposed according to relevant routes covering the regions and countries in question, the latter filled up with descriptions of amenities and curiosities of only one town or area. Probably the former nourished imaginations and fantasies of a broad setting of different cities, cultural centres and landscape types, loosely related to one another, while the destination guides were more used by the visiting public to make its experiences fit into the comparisons between functionally rather similar – and rivalling – resorts.

Sophisticated mediations

- 5 Focusing on guidebooks it is necessary to remember the hybrid character of this type of books, which use many different forms of text, images and maps to both promote physical outcomes, i.e. visits, and mediate imaginative geographical constructs and set-ups. Therefore I will try first to identify the specific means to do this and worth commenting separately :
 1. Pinpointing destinations (already in the titles of the books) : countries, regions, districts, cities, towns, natural and cultural curiosities, historical sites, battlefields, etc.
 2. Textual descriptions of the destinations, representing and supporting a textualized geography of hits, “necessities not-to-miss”, “if-time-enough”, “passing-bys”, etc., including place-related descriptions of manners, customs and life-styles.
 3. Scenic, symbolic and mythological images and illustrations supporting and reinforcing the intentions of the text.
 4. “Inventions” and conceptualisations of new configured and named spatial contexts.

5. Textualized mappings, i.e. combinations of names, figures, abbreviations and shortened instructions corresponding to – and possible to transform into – visual spatial representations and maps, for instance textual route sketches and distance tables.
 6. Maps, i.e. outcomes of conventional cartography regarding landscapes and urban settings, illustrating topographic and topological properties.
 7. Reduced, simplified and geometrical maps.
 8. Physical forms and packages of maps (i.e. in guidebooks of course).
- 6 The descriptions and physical images of places in guidebooks will however only be commented occasionally here, both since they are always the quoted parts of guidebooks in literature on tourism, but mainly because most of them could be found in many other, often more widespread medial genres: travelogues, novels, picture albums, paintings, reproductions, newspapers, advertisements, magazines, etc. Already around 1800 six thousand books related to geography had been published only in the German language, of which perhaps at most some hundreds could be called guidebooks (Koshar, 2000, p. 23). So, with the probably minor influence on imaginations of tourist destinations, routes and “beaten tracks”, the mass of texts and images of the guidebooks will be left out from the discussion here.

Pinpointing the field

- 7 The appearance of guidebooks to different places and countries were of course a contribution to the tourist driven spatialisation of the world, favouring tourist flows to certain sites and areas, leaving others aside (thereby of course contributing to also social divisions more generally). Even if guidebooks were rather rare before 1800, and the word tourist hardly yet used, we must reflect on the consequences of all kinds of travelling as well as the guiding literature that rather early developed a sphere of imaginations about both real places and remote paradises. The well known old routes of pilgrims to Jerusalem, Santiago di Compostela, Trondheim, Mecca, Rome and other sanctified places were soon, by trade and colonial expeditions, supplemented by destinations with other blessings to offer. But actually it was first with the dependency between industrialism, the steady rise of the middle-classes and regular tourism that a more stable and structured geography of tourism emerged. It was therefore more or less predictable that the first nucleus for this was England, followed by France and Germany. It was in these countries between the 1830s and 1870s that the large series of guidebooks appeared and soon secured a dominance on the market, all in their own uniform design and labelled after their initiators, e.g. Murray, Baedeker, Black, Cook, Grieben, Hachette/Joanne, Conty, Meyer and Woerl, around 1900 followed by dozens of imitators. Rather quick the former covered the most popular countries and areas of Europe, and later of other continents, with Alger-Tunisia, Egypt and Palestine-Syria first in the row, and thereafter “The Far East”. The English publishers were the most influential in the beginning, with John Murray first at place in Egypt, India and Japan with the support of Thomas Cook’s travel agencies, organizing World Tours already from 1875. Market decisions immediately penetrated the branch and some countries therefore had to wait being explored in pace with the tourist flows themselves. In Europe, for instance, it took almost another half century before the Iberian peninsula, Balkan and Russia-Poland appeared in most of the main guidebook series, while Italy and Switzerland were at all lists from the start. With the abundant English production for the home market it for instance also took a long

time for German publishers to challenge it even in German languages (with London as an exception), and some of them even gave up after a short effort, as for instance Meyer in the 1870s.

The mystery of marketing

- 8 Inspecting the guide- and handbooks, their titles conformed to a common practice that seemed refreshingly straight-forward, but also a certain mystery, neutralising the books in the competition with each other. For instance, their titles already from the first appearance of guidebooks only consisted of the name of the destination in combination with a generic catchword of the genre : guide, handbook, manual, wegweiser and some rare variations as ciceron, conducteur, indicateur, vademecum, calendar, directory, etc. – and, when necessary, an added word for special target groups, i.e. wanderers, archaeologists, geologists, etc. Never “the famous, outstanding, loveable, sunny or adventurous” country or city in question. Italy was held as “the cradle of European culture” and Switzerland “the playground of Europe”. But was this seen in any titles ? No! Exceptions appeared of course, mostly in local guides, especially in those totally dependent on visitors : Ostend was launched as the “Queen of plages”, Vichy as the “Queen of resorts”. The habit of British guidebooks to announce countries and cities in their titles with the prefix “picturesque” could also be mentioned here, although it hid an ambivalence : did it aim at the whole subject or only the parts of it held as picturesque. But here we are summing up centuries and tens of thousands titles not “breaking the code”. The only epithets that always were sufficient for a title, and perhaps used in one or two out of ten cases, were “The holy land” and “The Eternal City”.
- 9 Did the publishers lack all sensitivity for marketing ? Of course not. Like any tourist agents they used ads to make themselves known. In their own prefaces they seldom missed a chance to boast about their achievements. But in the titles : Never! Could the reason have been :
 1. Already the publishing of more or less comprehensive guides to certain places made people understand that there probably was something special there to see and visit.
 2. As long as guidebooks and touring for pleasure were rather uncommon and guides to different countries and places were not too many, publishers could rather safely expect the titles and name of those countries to be interesting and thrilling enough.
 3. In mid 19th century the development of guidebooks went through a process of standardisation, led by the large publishers and to a large extent made possible by the technical revolution of the graphic and printing industry. Except for a more uniform format, a clearer disposition of the material and variations in layout, grading, textual styles, highlighting, etc., these processes also involved a step away from long descriptive colourful surveys of landscapes and personal views towards a more restrained, neutral and kind of official way of writing. The most comprehensive guides almost got the status of an encyclopaedia. Titles without attributes, superlatives and slogans were simply a response to these changes and an effort to distinguish guidebooks from travelogues and novels by levelling out all expectations of a personal form of literature.
- 10 So the answers were many, but nevertheless with an unsatisfying conclusion and quest for further investigations, especially since the same practice sustains among guidebooks of today, though more often challenged by flashy subtitles.

The nationalist turn

- 11 Tourism was travelling and visiting other places, expanding the public geography both nationally and internationally. Indeed many of the most prominent regional guidebooks during the 18th century and up to mid 19th century were strongly affected by touring and could therefore in one and the same volumes describe routes covering the half of Europe. However, due to the change of tourism the heydays soon passed for this kind of singular guides by publishers as Reichard, Wagner, Murray, Jahn, Coghlan, Lenz and Morin (later Grieben). Most people, especially from the middle class, did not any longer have time for educational “grand tours”. They were quite satisfied with some weeks in a foreign country, preferring more comprehensive guidebooks than a few pages of each country in any “European traveller”, a type of guide which mainly retained its popularity among American tourists. Besides, the process of industrialisation and modernisation during the 19th century was also part of a development that no publisher could ignore: the strengthening of national states. This did not only involve a development of appropriate institutional systems at different levels, but also the promotion of national cultures and values, indeed a perfect task for domestic tourism campaigning with slogans as “know your own country”, “See America first”, etc., a national perspective also relevant for visits to colonies and protectorates (Bergman, 2009, pp. 94-96). The success of the large guidebook series could actually more or less be explained by their adequate response to these major societal changes, with most of their titles connected to well defined regions, countries and cities.
- 12 Did this “national turn” not contradict the internationalisation of tourist Europe, expressed by the earlier handbooks? It is a relevant question, since we know the guidebook as one of the most opportunist and streamlined genres of literature, never challenging the dominating values of its supposed readers? Although prejudices and racist comments regarding foreign customs and mentalities were common in earlier guidebooks, those however seldom transformed to pure nationalist tributes. They were usually written in a language and for a public of different nations and even classes, avoiding controversial questions by a prescribed, rather neutral tone. Normally they satisfied themselves with a programmatic defence of Western culture, and domestically fairly well balanced their affection to national history and heritages with adjustments to current nationalist trends. Some current researchers, probably with all rights, even hold the Baedeker-guides to different parts of Germany as important contributions to the unification process of the country (1871), later even more when they also were compressed into one volume (Koshar, 2000). Much later the fascist regime in Italy even supported the production of ambitious regional guides in several hundreds of thousand copies (Touring Club Italiano), all in order to speed up the nationalisation process, particularly the adjustment to an official language in the many districts depending on different local languages. In Central Europe the outcome of regional guides were precisely the opposite, mobilizing the Bohemians, Hungarians, Italians, Czechs, etc. against the cultural patchwork of the Habsburg Empire, the latter of course not without its own guidebooks, e.g. Baedekers 13 editions of “Austria-Hungary” 1873-1913. At the same time countries connected by language, culture and history were often described in the same volumes regardless to current national policies, most commonly Belgium-Holland, Spain-Portugal, Norway-Denmark-Sweden, Algeria-Tunisia, and Syria-Palestine, not to mention

all larger multicultural topographic configurations such as The Alps, Balkan, The Mediterranean, Danube and The Rhine, with the guides to the latter being popular in all the main tourist languages during the 19th century.

- 13 Besides, many publishers could not resist proposing short excursions to destinations close to the presented countries, thereby also getting a good excuse to expand the subtitles in an attractive direction. For Baedeker “nebst” (“and also”) was almost compulsory, to Teheran and Peking in the Russian guide, Cuba and Mexico in the North American, Burma, Siam, Singapore and Java in the Indian one, etc. Even the cities of departure to the countries in question could be really well described, like for instance in Joanne’s guide to Athens, which opened up for a day or two in Marseille. Many guides to different countries actually contained a kind of spider’s web of wider geographical references, transgressing national borders and slightly reinforcing the role of these additional places as tourist nodes.
- 14 Therefore, looking at the ten largest European publishers, each own annually publishing ten, twenty or even more new and updated titles from the 1860s or 1870s, also in different languages and to the colonies, it would be totally wrong not to stress their support to the internationalisation of tourist flows and destinations.

Widened geographies

- 15 Due to military conquests and geopolitical claims fairly unknown territories were incorporated in the Western hemisphere and became new spatial formations affecting mediated geographic formations. In stable and since long developed societies these processes involved a differentiation of more elaborated geographical imaginations and compromises. Imagine for instance the emergence of Europe, an idea with a projection on the ground not mainly agreed on until the 17th century (Foucault, 1978, p. 268), but after that with a diffuse border moving eastwards, at every instance with rather diffuse imaginations of its reach among different populations. Probably there is no general clue to how these processes work, but they certainly affected the practice of tourism. However, sometimes tourism could detach itself from the political and economical conditions, since it belonged to a sphere of imagination, fantasy, play, experiments and curiosity that did not have to justify itself by national policies or a logic of its own. Especially for the publishers of guidebooks this field for experiments, trials and errors always laid open.
- 16 Like the tourist agents, also publishers of guidebooks were therefore engaged in the construction of tourist goals with new spatial reaches, meanings, names and labels. Surely tourist practices in themselves continuously led to a widening of tourist areas, transforming for instance a whole island into a tourist destination, which earlier only housed one or a few extraordinary places catching the curiosity of strangers (Sardinia made it, but never Sicily). Actually market-driven publishers of guidebooks became more and more alert about these possibilities, as already the titles and subtitles “and its environs”, “nebst” and “with excursions to” indicated, and in some cases with real enlargements as a result, also dedicated new guidebooks. Therefore the focus here was also on the emergence of spatial configurations with new meanings due to the active interventions and “inventions” of guidebooks and also naming them and giving them a more permanent place in the geography of tourism. A good example of this is how coasts with an expanding seaside tourism were marketed. Côte d’Azur, for instance, was a poet’s

invention 1887, that rather soon became the common nomination for the eastern part of the French Mediterranean coast. Similar more or less popular names followed later, e.g. Côte d'Argent, Costa Brava, Costa del Sol, etc. The most well known among them all was the Riviera, referring to both the French and Italian parts, if not defined otherwise (the Italian was even divided in two). In this sense *The Riviera* was a construction by the tourist industry, not the least by the guidebooks, highlighting the name in their titles in the late 19th century, before it due to the extreme popularity of the area (especially among Americans) was integrated into all prominent guidebook series. The word itself only means a coastal area where land meets sea. Therefore this linguistic invention soon saw named Rivieras appear along many coast-lines, all of course with the intention to trigger associations to sea-side resorts and the “main” Riviera, though making the necessary distinction by their own names : Riviera Gardone, The Austrian Riviera, The Riviera of Ragusa, etc.

- 17 Also coasts named “by the compass” saw their denominations change, reflecting a new tourist meaning connected to it, and releasing a rush by locals to meet the new challenges. In Sweden, for instance, the western coast in this sense became *The West Coast* in the end of the 19th century, a conceptual transformation clearly shown by titles of guidebooks from the period. Notified, discovered and invaded by tourists, not the least with the help of guidebooks, some coasts found themselves conceptually transformed to continuous maritime tourist strips crossing national borders even before halfway developed towards such an identity (for instance the expanded German East and North Sea coasts).

Textualized mapping

- 18 The use and reading of guidebooks developed in parallel with the growing amount of maps in the books. However, before commenting on these cartographic representations, we also have to consider a special kind of textualization of space for travellers and tourists in route guides from the 17th century, a kind of forerunners to travellers' handbooks. They consisted of a page-consuming way to illustrate spatial relations, so called *route sketches*, which for a long time survived in compressed form among the much more voluminous descriptions of later guidebooks. In these sketches the important routes in a country one after the other were presented as an enumeration of places in the form of a table, with the distances between them marked in separate columns, and at the side of them often also the accumulation of increasing or decreasing distances between start and goal. Places passed along the route could also get some notes regarding sights, inns, standard of roads, river crossings, costs for beds, horses to hire, etc. Of course those route guides gave the user a certain idea and image of the geographical context, depending on and structured by routes and the succession of named places, at the same time as the large areas in between were left blank and perhaps only known from hearings, images or whatever, if mentally present at all.
- 19 These route guides were however supplemented and rivalled by a growing amount of route maps from the end of 17th century, soon also with marked distances between places, and later also framed with engraved sceneries, giving a more contextual idea and image of the whole territory at stake. They were indeed a real improvement for travellers, who still during the first decades of 18th century were often depending on the more common topographical maps without marked roads, and with places and stereotypically profiled

rivers rather inexactly spread out – “the Homann maps” were probably the most widespread. As early as in the 17th century the guiding ambitions also gave “birth” to another geographical invention still in use, due to its exactitude often supplementing contemporary maps, namely *the distance tables*. We all know them from car- and road atlases of today and every person with some fantasy understand that each one of them represent a unique network of places and distances, i.e. a kind of map, no matter how many places and entrances were chosen.

- 20 Also the route sketches survived, not the least in the form of time tables for steam boats, trains, street cars and trams, though with the distances not always trustworthy in relation to the schedules of time given. But since they so easily could be transformed to corresponding visual geographical representations, they took all kinds of visual forms, from straight lines with marked places, and perhaps also height profiles (contours), to roads drawn with curves and more detailed landscapes, all the way followed by the registered distances. Such simplified road maps appeared in many different guides and indeed saw a kind of renaissance later in automobile guides and atlases, especially in sections where proposed tours and routes were presented. In competition with the ordinary maps they usually disappeared in the 1930s, as for instance in the guides of the most famous Swedish automobile club (KAK). They survived longer in US, where also single route and strip maps on hard paper, with relevant information on the back, were popular much longer than in Europe.
- 21 These linear configurations, experienced by so many travellers, either as representations of one certain road, river or railway line, had since long also been published as separate guidebooks. But it was first with the steam engine for boats or trains that they got rather popular and even some publishers produced them in long series towards the end of the century. As separate guidebooks to one specific line they affected people in another way than the much shorter descriptions of many different lines that formed the regional travel guides discussed above, and therefore they probably had a greater potential to become structuring components of the geography imagined. Most travellers with such a guide in the hand at least caught some contextual facts : e.g. that the railway line Paris-Marseille passed Lyon, The Rhine connected many European countries, The Orient Express formed a string of urban centres, etc.
- 22 The reason for the survival of the single route map was probably, that among all the senses sight was the main one encouraged and to be trusted in a modern society, where mobility, speed and a mass of kinetic impressions characterised daily life : mentally it was easier to store a route sketch in visual than textualized form. Of course it is difficult to comprehend how this kind of mappings affected the geographical imaginations on a general cultural level as well as for instance how speed and a multitude of impressions affected people’s ways of seeing, mental ordering and behaviour, overall a classical theme among philosophers of modernity since the German sociologist George Simmel scientifically opened up the field for inventive studies (see for instance Walter Benjamin, Richard Sennet and Marshall Berman). However, the bearings of Simmel’s conclusions on city-life of today are far from sufficient and sometimes irrelevant. This is also evident by reading the German researcher Wolfgang Schivelbusch’s intriguing argument in the same tradition about how the speed of trains forced passengers to move their focus of sight towards the horizon, enhancing their trust in more panoramic views, and that this could enlighten the fact that people navigating among the masses in streets or

department stores mainly kept their eyes a few steps ahead, leaving the foreground momentarily blurred (Schievelbusch, 1977, chapter 4 in the Swedish version).

Cartographies and networks

- 23 With the radical and fast development of the graphic and printing industries during the 19th century, especially regarding lithographical techniques and mass production, maps and town plans became one of the most welcomed ingredients of guidebooks, especially when more often printed in colour from the 1880s. Their presence in guidebooks may perhaps not be expected to have had any different impact on the geography of tourism than other maps. However, we have to remember that maps, plans and cartographical representations were not a common part of people's life before 1900, with exception to their appearance at schools, in the hands of professionals (geologists, biologists, geographers), in homes of affluent people or as cheap reproductions of celebrated or exotic parts of the world. With the guidebooks middle-class tourists could get in touch with a manifold of maps of almost any country and city they wanted to explore, and when travelling also actively used these maps not only as nice images to look at.
- 24 Almost all maps of guidebooks usually presented natural areas and landscapes with villages and towns marked as dots and roads as lines. The topographic properties and qualities were often marked: rivers, mountains, forests, etc. Administrative borders of different kind were common and often noticed at first sight. The graphic techniques to accentuate all these ingredients were many and could underline very different relations and meanings (cultural, social, economical, etc.). Especially city maps were used to register all kinds of facts, becoming operational tools for regulations, of epidemics, crime, slum-clearance, etc. Cartographers serving the publishers of tourist guides were of course pushed to develop maps that first and foremost responded to tourists' quests for attractiveness, legibility and relevance in regard to what was to be seen and visited, in particular since it due to copyright rules had become more and more difficult to use suitable prototypes found in other sources, which earlier had been a rather common and disturbing practice.
- 25 Being people on the move to and between many different destinations a main concern was of course how to find the smoothest routes, though with remarkable sights not left out. So among all these topographic formations with recommended views and visits, mainly routes and stops that had to be clearly shown and preferably highlighted in regard to their importance, mainly made by the thickness and size of lines, dots and lettering. The result was that the importance of the visual impression of roads and cities increased in relation to the surrounding landscapes tended to form a network of nodes and connections, partly steering travellers' choice of routes. The railroads of course made this much more distinctly since the journeys between stations necessarily passed without possibilities to change destinations. With the railway the disposition of guidebooks also became more bound to presentations of linear routes, actually already in the 1840s and 1850s. At the urban level especially the so called monumental maps, with important buildings drawn in three dimensions and placed in the networks of streets, visually a kind of tourist short cuts, conducted people's spatial imaginations in the same direction. Nodes of the urban systems for public transportation more naturally played the same role, of course.

- 26 It was also the railroads, clearly marked on the maps, which towards 1900 opened up for a real shift in cartographic representations. Networks now began to appear as mainly straight lines between nodes, primarily illustrating topological qualities by reducing topographic considerations to nothing else but necessities, for instance a marked coastline or a mountain to avoid. Thus the network almost took the form of a system, a geometrical diagram and schedule of connections, of course still with a correspondence to geography by proportional distances. Interestingly enough an early example of the latter is to be found in a French road map by the Parisian firm Hocquart as early as 1837. However, these reductions first became common half a century later, mainly produced for the directories and timetables of the railway companies, with appearance in guidebooks when connections between some nodes were to be commented on. The real common field for these kind of geometric representations of spatial networks was of course all different distribution and transportation systems in cities. One of the real breaking points in the development of this kind of topological representations was the engineer Harry Beck's public map of the Underground in London 1931. It was inspired by the city's schedule of electricity and drawn with no other topographic surface details in favour of legibility than The river Thames – people in the streets did not anyway see much of “the tube” (Elliman, 2006).

Challenging complexity

- 27 Regarding urban maps and traffic systems publishers of Guidebooks indeed fought a long struggle to make them legible and easy to use, but were of course obliged to rely on topographical maps when tourist sights and qualities related to nature and landscape were at stake. At the same time another challenge appeared with new ways of travelling: the automobile. The car immediately altered the conditions for touring according to new logics (like also biking). Not so dependant on proposed routes as before, travellers could now choose shortcuts and detours almost as they wished, wherever the roads were open for car traffic of course, which not always was the case (Switzerland was for instance famous for its road regulations up to the 1930s). This radical change was however only affecting standard guidebooks by small steps. Instead it was the new automobile guides that adjusted to the new conditions, and already from the start gave the networks of roads, proposed linear routes and described cities new forms of presentation. Following the publishers' standard comments in most guidebooks since 1700, that it in the end was up to everyone to construct their own routes, the automobile guides made this the main principle for the disposition of the books. Certainly the guides were expected to contain maps of both networks of roads and proposed tours, but they did not form the bulk of the material. This was now instead made up by facts about cities, villages and sites in a separate section, alphabetically ordered, since the whole idea of elaborated descriptions of cities bound to linear routes, as along railway lines, were seen as obsolete regarding the logic of travelling by car. Such a disposition was also chosen by the tire firms Michelin and Continental from their first editions of guidebooks 1900 and 1902, and they were later partly followed by swarms of other automobile guides (by Ravenstein, Taride, Campell, Rand McNally in US and all automobile clubs). Established publishers of guidebooks, however, spent years to adjust and for instance still in the 1920s and 1930s proudly presented the first new autostradas and autobahns in the traditional linear fashion. But

at last even Baedeker capitulated when making national automobile-guides for the nazis in the end of the 1930s.

- 28 On the other hand, with the increasing mobility, network properties as well as road standards got more important than ever before. Railway travels were still increasing and express-trains introduced, ocean liners cut their days at sea and soon the first aeroplanes began to cross the continents according to lines almost totally independent of topography. Since speed from “the start” was put on the top of the agenda for cars, with especially one new type of maps urgently introduced in road atlases and guidebooks as a remedy for disoriented car-drivers on tour : town plans with marked thoroughfares and by-passes. There were even guidebooks and atlases that only contained this kind of maps, promoting a clear division of local streets and regional routes, reinforcing the imagination of networks of different orders, which in a certain sense was ventured by the independent encyclopaedic presentation of cities according to the “Michelin-model”.

Networking geographical imaginations

- 29 The main question is of course if and how these successively emerging configured networks affected spatial imaginations and geographies of tourism. From the point of view of travel agencies and publishers of guidebooks the answer is evident, since they drew, highlighted and all the time reminded their customers and readers of those contextualized webs, making them really an essential and effective part and tool of the tourist industry, by which relations, combinations, proposed tours and ranking of destinations were temporary defined. But did they also, geometrically simplified or not, catch the imaginations of the tourists – or common people, for that sake – more than as simple images ? Did individuals really included them as influential constructs ? Many circumstances determined that, of course. But it would for sure in most cases be an illusion to think that these networks *only by sight* were adopted by peoples’ minds, memories and visions as active and working relational systems. However, they could probably in certain parts be remembered and “activated” through all kinds of impacts and impulses, with a wide range of outcomes as a result, not the least how they afterwards were “stored”. Like the “mental maps” that many researchers today put some trust in since Kevin Lynch long ago gave them the status of useful tools detecting peoples’ common spatial configurations and “images of the city”, they usually materialised visually only when asked for, for instance in quests for drawings. After a procedure like that they probably had a better chance to be kept as more contextual figures. Therefore, the more those perceived maps and networks were confronted, set in motion and reconfigured they probably became more active parts in people’s continuous processing of geographical imaginations. That does not of course mean that not also maps memorised as pure images and ready-mades could impede the flexibility and mobility that is so vital for the kind of mental processes that are at stake here. One possible conclusion, however, is that these reconfigurations often engage at least the touring public, crossing new landscapes and probably occupied by at least some of the maps in the guidebooks. For the destination tourist, however, the imagined geography was more bound to places of attraction, fantasy and longings when they appeared in posters, ads, stories and talks, with at best distances and some referential nodes always in mind.
- 30 The impact of the urban cartography was probably only indirectly a part of this, training people in reading and handling predominantly geometrical maps and spatial

configurations, especially those representing systems of transport and mobility, also in practice helping many to organize geographical contexts. But of course some urban maps also carried information about regional contexts that could affect the overall geographical imaginary.

- 31 Almost all cartographic representations highlight the crucial relation between topology and topography. In both cases distance, scale and metric measures are usually important, but could also be totally irrelevant, with an absolute relevance only in geographical imaginations overall. The potential of topology and networks has been commented on above, as also the linear connections, which however for certain also could be rivers, coastlines, ridges, valleys and other natural irregular, rather non-geometrical formations with diffuse borders. This shows that also the latter, like mountains, lakes, deserts, etc., could have the same importance in structuring and contextualizing tourist geographies, perhaps even greater since these formations are the primary attractions and more in focus in tourist guides than networks. It is for sure two different settings at play, affecting peoples' imaginations in different ways, possible but also to risky to keep apart in order to produce a meaningful understanding. Our latest transportation system of individuals is a wonderful illustration of this. At the same time as the graphically represented geometrical system of airlines reduced the importance of topography to practically nothing, the travels themselves could open up for experiencing the latter visually in all its beauty and majesty, but not in touch. Which one of these dimensions decides in these moments the forms of our imagined geography ?
- 32 The latest point connected to the cartography of the small compact guidebooks concerns how the maps are presented physically. Without any detailed comments on this, it is possible to give a hint of its importance, namely that it is easy to imagine that at least some different impressions follow from studying the same map shown 1) on one large unfolded sheet, 2) divided into three or four unfolded strips, each with the height of the small guidebook or 3) cut into sections and stored in a supplementary pocket-atlas. The tourist is usually familiar with them all.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BERGMAN B. (2009), "Guide to guides on the threshold of modernity", in ADOLFSSON P., DOBERS P., JONASSON M. (eds.), *Guiding and Guiding Tours*, Gothenburg, BAS Publishers.

BOYER M. (1996), *L'Invention du tourisme*, Paris, Gallimard.

ELLIMAN P. (2006), "Signal failure", in ABRAMS J. & HALL P., *Else/where : Mapping New Cartographies of Networks and Territories*.

FOUCAULT M. (1978), "Lecture at Collège de France, March 12, 1978", *Säkerhet, territorium, befolkning. Collège de France 1977-1978*, Stockholm, Tankekraft Förlag (Translation of Sécurité, territoire, population).

KOSHAR R. (2000), *German Travel Cultures*, Oxford, Berg, Oxford International Publishers.

SHIELDS R. (1991), *Places on the Margin. Alternative geographies of modernity*, London & New York, Routledge.

SCHIVELBUSCH W. (1984), *Järnvägsresandets historia*, Stockholm, Gidlunds (Original 1977, Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise. Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit in 19. Jahrhundert, Carl Hanser Verlag, München).

VAUGHAN J. (1974), *The English Guide Book c 1780-1870. An Illustrated History*, London, David & Charles.

WITHEY L. (1997), *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours. A History of Leisure Travel 1750 to 1915*, New York, William Morrow and Company.

ABSTRACTS

Guidebooks are a part of a branch that is driven by market decisions as well as more unpredictable mental and cultural constructs. One of them is a geography of tourism, to which the guidebooks contribute by affecting both choices of routes and destinations, but also by mediating many types of spatial configurations with relevance for this imagined geography and the decisions it leads to. To describe and understand better how guidebooks work regarding these processes is, as this article could give the impression of, not solely a historical task, since these kinds of books in rather traditional formats and types still fill up substantial parts of the shelves in the bookstores of today.

Les guides appartiennent à un domaine régi certes par les décisions du marché mais aussi par certaines constructions mentales et culturelles plus imprévisibles. Parmi celles-ci, la géographie du tourisme, à laquelle ils contribuent en influençant non seulement les choix d'itinéraires et de destinations, mais aussi en tant que médiateurs de multiples types de configurations spatiales pertinentes par rapport à cette géographie imaginaire et aux décisions que celle-ci induit. Décrire et mieux comprendre le rôle des guides dans ces processus n'est pas uniquement, comme le présent article pourrait le laisser entendre, une tâche d'historien. En effet, ce genre d'ouvrages, de formats et de types assez traditionnels, continue de remplir de larges rayons d'étagères dans nos librairies.

INDEX

Mots-clés: cartographies touristiques, topographie vs topologie, réseaux, cartes mentales

Keywords: tourist cartographies, topography vs. topology, networks, mental maps

AUTHOR

BOSSE BERGMAN

Royal School of Technology, Stockholm, bosse.bergman@infra.kth.se