

Permanent Visitors

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Tourism as a spatial and urban condition assumes an arrival, a visitation, and a departure. But what happens when the tourist doesn't leave? What urbanity emerges when the visitor settles down and becomes a resident? Originally an enclave of foreigners and now a village of expatriate inhabitants, do resort communities have a 3rd status – neither transient nor permanent, neither local nor global? Be it China, India, Spain or the Cape Verde Islands, resort communities offer relief from the cold climates of *old Europe* or *troubled America*, offering convenient lifestyles at lower prices. Seen as vacation resorts, with mild weather, abundant facilities and amenable exchange rates, many of these projects are now marketed as alternative homes for those who seek retirement to an easier life, or who relish the more open, more *tropical* lifestyle, a home truly away from home.

Enclave Tourism

In search of ever-newer locations, untouched and unspoiled (or at least, not yet inundated), tourist resorts have sprung up across the world – from the first world to the second world to the third world. In a particular iteration, and as currently evidenced at sites across the third world, resorts act as exclusive and segregated enclave compounds for tourists who desire a tropical or exotic vacation, but without the inconvenience of actually having to encounter the local population. These controlled experiences seek to provide safety, certainty, and no unpleasant confrontations with the day-to-day life in countries often beset by depressing poverty and unemployment, minimal infrastructure, basic hygiene, and dysfunctional governments.

The combination of plentiful sun, beaches (or interesting landscapes and architectures), new foods, and music, all provided at a low cost or with an exceptional array of pampered services or both, has led to the widespread development of these enclave resorts, where a visitor is both there and not *there* at the same time. In many of these locations, there are varying degrees to which these cultural and social separations are enforced or are seen as acceptable. They present the promise and paradox of interaction and exclusion. The extent to which the visit can be controlled for maximum enjoyment

and minimal disruption is a part of the guarantee of resort tourism. Within the phenomena of global tourism, it is clear that such operations do indeed inject significant foreign revenues into the local economies, provide for an enhanced job market, and offer developments that, at least on the surface, are part of an industry that is not *dirty* or overtly polluting or degrading to the environment. However, the ever-expanding field of tourism and its compounding effects suggests that this calculation be rendered somewhat differently, as the connective consequences and secondary impacts of mass tourism go far beyond the immediate development of resorts, hotels, and visitor facilities.

The Resort Community

Classic tourism implies an intrusion that clearly distinguishes the difference between the visitor and the local. Enclave tourism is a more exaggerated example, in which complete difference is maintained and well delineated. This delineation begins to blur not just when the visitors go *native* – getting into the spirit of things – but even more so when the visitor never leaves. The search for a more *authentic* experience, of an immersive encounter (often in reaction to the packaged deal) is still defined by the relationship and duration of visitation and then departure, of the tourist and the local, no matter how in-depth or affective. The progression from tourist to repeat-visitor, to expatriate and on to resident, defines a rather new condition.

Within the last three decades, a very substantial market has developed for those who not only want to experience foreign adventures, but who see resort living as a new or alternative lifestyle. It is clear that to a very large degree, the existence of these new resort communities is marked by good weather and a temperate or tropical climate above all else. Marketed extensively (if not exclusively) for northern Europeans, resorts in Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Tunisia, the Canary Islands, Turkey, South Africa, Dubai, and now the Cape Verde Islands have been or are becoming part of a large development scenario based around second-home ownership.

The transformation of large sections of the Spanish and Portuguese coastlines, first into resort developments and now into resort communities, is being repeated again and again across the Mediterranean basin, into Africa, the Caribbean, the Persian Gulf, India, Southeast Asia and China. These changes are bringing significant development impacts, far beyond the mere addition of the resorts themselves and the supporting tourist facilities. Expanded airports, new transportation links, hospitality services and support are all part and parcel of the package necessary to sustain these holiday resorts. Their transformation into communities of long-term residency also changes their nature and status, replacing one type of uncertain integration with another. The migration of *necessity* from the third world to the first, is being countered (at a reduced extent) with a migration of *choice* from the first to the third.