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## **Election and exclusion in the Udaipur Urban Space: implications on tourism**

Nicolas Bautès

UMR ESO 6590 – ESO CAEN

### **Introduction**

This chapter analyzes various spatial aspects of tourism growth in the city of Udaipur in southern Rajasthan. It examines the political, social and economic relationship between tourism and territory, in particular the impact of tourism on the city's urban layout, the resulting uneven economic development and its political consequences. It discusses tourism as a social phenomenon encouraging the economic specialization of particular areas and modifying social relationships between those involved in tourism and others. Territory is seen as the spatial dimension of power<sup>1</sup> in this instance under the impact of the growth in tourism.

An examination of local districts in Udaipur, using tourism as key, gives a good idea of recent changes in the local power structure and its impact on town planning. It also highlights the negative impact on this spatial system, examining the effective dismemberment of the urban area. This is a direct result of the importance of tourism in the local economy and its key role in particular districts. The development of tourism in Udaipur should be seen in the light of various strategies aimed at territorial control.

The chapter also examines town planning in Udaipur in the light of the need to preserve and enhance the local heritage in areas attracting tourists; a similar phenomenon to that taking place in other similar cities in the world, although obviously varying in detail as the site and type of society involved.

By analyzing the impact of tourism and comparing its effect on the attractive urban heritage areas with those lacking such assets, we have attempted to assess tourism's impact on the townscape as a whole. It would appear that the projects implemented by the dominant social groups tend to be linked to changes in the dynamics of the local districts. The protagonists have chosen their strategies to increase their power and reinforce their position in the social system. However, projects directly or indirectly related to tourism also provoke changes that inhibit the balanced development of the urban territory as a whole and by and large fail to influence the nature of tourism and ensure its development in the medium term. Positive policies encouraging balanced development are essential to Udaipur's social equilibrium and that of the region it serves.

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<sup>1</sup> Territory has been defined in several ways: this Article uses Noëlle Demick's definition after that in Raffestin, Claude. 1980. *Pour une géographie du pouvoir*. Paris: Librairie techniques: "Territory can be considered as the spatial dimension of power.", Research in support of an application for authorization to supervise research, 1, *Space, power and society: a contribution to the study of territorial structures in Central America*, 43, October 2002. Paris : Denis Diderot – Paris 7 University.

Our basic thesis is that tourism plays a significant role in the way space is organized in Udaipur, in the way its protagonists present this space, and in their related activities. The growth of tourism is a major factor in urban development, tourism being the economic sector in which the interests of the dominant social forces in the city converge and its control is a major objective for numerous organizations. Many private individuals and public institutions are aware that it makes a major contribution to economic development, that it is a way of promoting the city, of attracting visitors and encouraging innovation. By highlighting and selling the city's "fascinating history", primarily its architectural heritage, tourism helps redefine the local population's relationship with the districts in which they live. However, by basing the local economy largely on activities requiring the preservation of particular aspects of the town, tourism tends to reinforce existing social and spatial disparities. In our view Udaipur's territorial dynamics can be seen as a process of selection and exclusion of particular areas.

This chapter is based on information collected between 1999 and 2002. The data comes from a variety of sources: Town Planning documents, Rajasthan Ministry of Tourism publications, statements by municipal officials, discussions with members of NGOs working on projects encouraging sustainable town planning in the city, with Indian and non-Indian tourists, tourist industry professionals (hotel managers, tourist guides, businessmen, etc. . .) and with numerous inhabitants. Our conclusions are based on data collected during these interviews and on local and regional sources and press cuttings that were all carefully assessed, discussed and analyzed. The chapter is in three parts, each dealing with a particular aspect of tourist-linked urban change in Udaipur in the light of its contribution to tourism and to the town's development.

## 1 Tourism in Udaipur: an image and site-based system

### *Approaching the city: a visitor's first impression*

The approaches to the city of Udaipur is often presented as an aesthetic experience. From Ahmadabad in the south, the traveler is fascinated and impressed by endless mountains, valleys and twisted geological formations. From Delhi in the north, the route to southern Rajasthan goes via Ajmer and Nathdwara, through wild and rugged country, taking one of the few narrow passes (*-nal*) through the Aravalli mountains. Approaching Udaipur, at the end of the journey, the traveler sees an increasing number of billboards lining the track, announcing the train's imminent arrival to a tourist region. Many of them advertise marble companies near Udaipur, hotels in and around the town, and boast of the region's tourist attractions, mostly showing the ancient royal city and its natural environment, the palace and the lakes, highlighting the same images and attractions as those promoted by tour operators and informing that the traveler is entering a "tourist zone".

As for many large cities, the actual entry into Udaipur is in complete contrast to the journey and to travelers' expectations, provoking a certain reserve, even amongst the most enthusiastic visitors. Heavy traffic, pollution, the whole urban landscape appear to have fallen into the side effects of a recent and uncontrolled urban development. Their deception does not last however, for as soon as visitors go through the somewhat battered gates to the city *intra muros*, they are surrounded by the long-awaited sights, ignoring the problems facing its half-million inhabitants. Narrow, winding roads lined with temples and typical Rajasthan houses, a palace on top of a hill dominating the town, *ghats* (steps) leading down to a lake, the town laid out along its shores and climbing up into

the surrounding hills: the images in the tourist brochures and in the visitor's imagination are confirmed. The imaginary map in the tourist's mind comes to life, as noted by Mentzos<sup>2</sup> when he/she sees it on the ground. However these pre-existing images tend to condition the places tourists visit in the city.

### *Tourist images and practices as agents of space-election*

Although these images are not the only factors influencing tourist activities and determining the sites the tourists visit, they play an important role in the system as a whole. In effect they become a substitute for the sites and build reputations often leading to world-wide notoriety, on occasion acting as catalysts in their economic development and on occasion as obstacles to development and change. In fact tourism is largely conditioned by the sites' imaginary, symbolic nature created by words and images.

Urban tourism in Rajasthan depends on a number of evocative places that particular writers have defined as outstanding sites.<sup>3</sup> They are the territory's symbolic sites in that they have often played key roles at particular moments in the region's history. In the tourists' imagination the territory is represented by these outstanding cultural, heritage sites that are today considered to have a genuine tourist vocation.

Tourist sites are specially selected areas, often with a certain exotic fascination, described in detail in tourist guides, in travel agency advertisements world-wide, and in newspaper and magazine articles. These areas are developed and promoted *in situ* by one or more economic and/or political agents. By selling these sites in brochures produced by local tourist industry organizations, reinforced by the complimentary remarks made by foreign tourists on their return home, particular protagonists tend to select the sites that determine the way tourists explore and use the town.

Udaipur is one of a number of places in the world that are considered romantic. This is certainly due to the nature of the site: in a valley surrounded by high hills, with several man-made lakes, the landscape is considered beautiful. It has been called the "Venice of the East" on account of its similarity to the famous Italian city, thus adding to the romantic appeal of the Indian town that "*the Impressionists would have saved if they've known it.*"<sup>4</sup> The accuracy and representativeness of these images is questionable. In reality it is based on imaginative descriptions by earlier explorers, subsequently enhanced by the tourist industry in the town and elsewhere. Udaipur has a number of problems: buildings in disrepair, pollution, lakes drying up... Nevertheless, the impression that visitors have of the city is still positive, and the descriptions and images provided by the media have not yet had to be modified to take account of the actual state of the town today. This lack of realism and the image of a region that is frozen in time can be seen even in the most respected national and international newspapers, while the problems facing the people of Udaipur are carefully avoided, as can be seen, for example, in the article in the national daily, *The Hindu*, on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002, entitled, "The House of Mewar". It dealt with the situation of members of the former

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Travlou, Penny. "Go Athens: A Journey to the Centre of the City", Coleman, Simon. Crang, Mike. 2002. *Tourism : between place and performance*. New York : Oxford : Berghahn Books.

<sup>3</sup> "Outstanding sites", *hauts-lieux* have been defined in several ways. For this paper I have used that of Debarbieux, Bernard. 1995. "Les hauts-lieux": *L'espace géographique*, 2, 95: "an element of a system of expressions territorially materialized of a systems of values".

<sup>4</sup> Such descriptions are very symptomatic of the image of Rajasthan as it appear in tourism operators magazines and in the websites promoting the city. See the paper of Carol Henderson in this book. Available from World Wide Web: (<http://www.yantram.com/cities/DispCityInfo.asp?City=Udaipur>).

royal family in independent India today: *“As the voices of the devotees chant “Jai Jagdish Hare” in ragged unison, the mind is calmed by the faith of the simple people who are gathered there and who have made royalty what it is. And when you leave for the nearly 30 km drive to the airport, you can’t resist throwing backward glances at a city so beautifully preserved that neither feuds nor factionalism can destroy its charm.”*<sup>5</sup>

The images produced by the tourist industry and other references to the area are almost invariably based on the role it played in history, and on traces of this history visible in the city today. Reference is often made to its physical characteristics, its geographical situation, and more often than not to the hills and lakes that make this an idyllic city. Even recent history books by local historians<sup>6</sup> pay homage to the town’s defensive role during the numerous invasions of the Mewar region.<sup>7</sup> These images of Udaipur, supposedly of the town, in fact merge into those of Rajasthan, seen as “the abode of princes”, that over long periods in its history, was frequently invaded, thus strengthening the area’s sense of regional identity.

Udaipur both appears to identify itself with history of the Kingdom of Mewar, the city was its last capital, and to see itself as representing the region of Rajasthan as a whole and its culture based on Rajput values and principles. Udaipur’s history as presented is that of the Kingdom, emphasizing the Rajput heritage that is a major tourist attraction and the basis of the local tourist industry. It is a highly selective history, incomplete and biased, which selected certain outstanding sites that have come to symbolize the territory, and excludes others. Penny Travlou, in a study of the Greek city of Athens remarks that *“this praise some casts a veil over the city as a whole, making it uninteresting, even invisible to the tourist”* (Travlou 2002). By highlighting particular monuments on which the local tourist industry depends, seen as the most historic and spectacular, the rest of the city is excluded.

In Udaipur, as is frequently the case with medieval cities (in this respect the classic Hindu city falls in that category), spatial exclusion is apparent in the town’s physical layout. The ancient city center is the most sacred area, all aspects of the town’s administration and life lead there, and as one leaves the center one enters a void, an area seen as dangerous and unhealthy (Malamoud 1989, Cadène 1998). This way of seeing the town, based on ideas and principles derived from sacred Hindu texts, no longer explains the way in which urban space is organized today. Tourism appears to have accentuated the classical divide between center and periphery. The tourist industry looks for symbolic sites and has mostly found them in the historic city center.<sup>8</sup> André Micoud defines this process of recognition as the social construction of exemplary models, *“People build monuments to recall significant periods whose reputation has stood the test of time. Their construction, or more simply the choice of a particular site, indicates that something essential and enduring remains or that something important is about to begin.”*(Micoud 1989).

Thus the complexity of the urban territory, in terms of its layout and the many forms of social interaction this represents, is obscured and replaced by a single image in which the Rajput community dominates. This was confirmed by the field work which consisted of a questionnaire-based survey and a series of interviews with 140

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<sup>5</sup> *The Hindu*, on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002, entitled, “The House of Mewar”. Available from World Wide Web : (<http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/mag/2002/07/28/stories/2002072800240800.htm>)

<sup>6</sup> See Carol Henderson

<sup>7</sup> For more details on the construction of Mewar in history, see for example Manakekar, R. 1976. *Mewar Saga*. Delhi : Vikas Publishing House.

<sup>8</sup> The Ahar archaeological complex, site of the cenotaphs of the former Kings of Mewar, is a good example of an outstanding site. In this case, few tourists visit the site on account of its geographical situation, three miles from the historic city center. This calls into question the nature of tourists’ usual behavior in urban areas, so-called cultural tourism, and its superficiality.

tourists, 64 Indian and 76 foreign. It also established which sites, in the tourists' view, best reflected their image of Udaipur. The field work then examined the tourists' behavior on these outstanding sites to determine the various aspects of the process by which the sites had been chosen.

An analysis of the data collected enabled a typology of places likely to be chosen as outstanding tourist sites to be produced in the light of their importance as part of the local heritage. The typology was established prior to the development of tourism in these areas and before tourists and tourist organizations had transformed them into tourist sites. The study shows how visitors from different backgrounds select a minute part of an urban area as representative of the town as a whole to the exclusion of others. This applied regardless of the site on which the interviews were carried out.<sup>9</sup>

## 2 Places elected by tourists

*“Le haut lieu s'apprécie par rapport à ce qui l'environne, qui ne l'est pas. Il naît de la différence et se maintient par la distinction”.*

(Pierre Gentelle, 1995).

### ***The Lake Palace Hotel and Pichola Sagar: an “outstanding site”/lieu-attribut of a unique image***

The monument most frequently chosen to represent Udaipur was the Lake Palace Hotel on Jag Niwas, an island in the middle of Lake Pichola. When asked to describe the city and what best represented their stay there, most tourists referred to this group of buildings and the surrounding lake, *“We went to Udaipur to enjoy the calm and peaceful atmosphere there and to see the superb view of the Lake Palace Island.”* (M.N., Spain). This was confirmed when they were asked to cite the particular aspect or site that best symbolized the town, or the site most often mentioned prior to their visit to Rajasthan (only 11 did not mention the Lake Palace). A closer examination of the replies suggests that for both Indian tourists and Westerners the town as a whole was most often associated with this particular palace, considered to be one of the remaining, visible parts of the local heritage reflecting the wealth of the Mewar Kingdom. It was the former ruler's summer palace, transformed into a hotel for wealthy Western tourists in 1963. Today, in spite of the development of tourism and the many other luxury hotels, the Lake Palace is still the site most often referred to, probably because it remains inaccessible to most visitors. It has become what Bernard Debarbieux calls *lieu-attribut*, a territory's “outstanding representative site” (Debarbieux 1995).

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<sup>9</sup> The place where interviews are carried out plays a determining role in the places cited. This needs to be corrected by the survey methodology. In this instance a number of sites were chosen to correct possible bias under influence of the specific site where the questions were asked.

### ***The former royal fortress and “tourist town”***

The second site most often referred to as representative of Udaipur was the former center of royal power. Known locally as the City Palace, it was the site on which the town was founded, and embodies the eventful history of the Sisodia royal dynasty and the kingdom of which it was the last capital. Its role in history has become an essential part of the general tourist presentation of the city. In addition to the important role it plays in the tourists' imagination, this complex of monuments also draws tourists on account of its location in the center of the ancient capital, on a hill overlooking the rest of the town and Pichola Lake. The size of the site also has a significant impact: it consists of several buildings separated by *chowks*, courtyards with hanging gardens. Seen from the outside, the arches, crenellations and domes, and the walls with their vast façade, are in stark contrast to the interior: two luxury hotels, Shiv Niwas and Fatehprakash, now occupy the royal complex; Hawa Mahal, Dilkusha Mahal, “the Palace of Joy”, Moti Mahal, “the Palace of Pearls”, and Sheesh Mahal, “the Palace of Mirrors and Glass”, all evoke the wealth and beauty of the former kingdom.

The vast collection of buildings forms a city within the town, and given its size and the range of services it offers (a post office, a bank, travel agency, numerous craft shops, even a World Wide Fund for Nature India boutique), it tends to attract and retain tourists. The historic buildings are owned by the Mewar royal family whose representative manages them personally and through a series of Charitable Trusts. The site includes part of the lake, the Lake Palace island itself, and Jag Mandir, “the Lake Garden Palace”, which can be visited by boat from a *ghat* within the royal complex.

Most tourist activities, the way tourists visit the area, and related economic aspects all by and large take place within the walls of this ancient center of power, in what could now be called the “tourist city”. The town's most important symbols are there: the various magnificent buildings are points of special interest that strike the imagination and have a direct impact on the nature of the tourism. This central area attracts a stream of tourists thanks to its special place in the collective imagination and several more practical aspects, thus providing form and content for Udaipur's tourist image.

### ***Udaipur intra muros: outstanding characteristic sites constituting a dominant image***

In addition to Lake Palace and the royal complex, a large part of the historic center is presented as closely linked to Rajput history. The historic, medieval city, with gates at each cardinal point, is the area most frequented by tourists. This is the “tourist city”, although tourism is not the dominant economic sector throughout the area. From the royal palace enclosure it follows the main road, City Palace Road, as far as the main temple, Jagdish Mandir.<sup>10</sup> It also includes other roads fanning out in all directions from Jagdish Temple Square, as far as Lake Pichola and the town gates. Jagdish Chowk is in fact the main feature in the layout of the old town. It is a public square that has had religious, political and everyday social functions since time immemorial and is the point at which many large and small roads meet. Today it is one of the most popular sites in town, with innumerable rickshaw drivers and guides offering their services, and much frequented by groups of tourists.

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<sup>10</sup> *Mandir* : temple in Hindi

The socio-spatial disparities, at least partially created by tourism, can be seen in the degree of economic specialization and relative dynamism of the various businesses in nearby streets. Shops directly involved in tourism appear to be successful both on account of their original activities and of their proximity to areas that interest tourists; however, their nearness to the most popular tourist sites appears decisive.

Facing Tripolia Gate, the northern entrance to the royal complex, the shops lining City Palace Road are mostly held by craftsmen, book-binders and miniature painters, or sell textiles and antiques. This is one of the city's main commercial thoroughfares and leads to the nearby bazaars. It is lined with numerous *dhabbas*, stands selling fruit juice or tea, and other informal sector <sup>11</sup> hawkers selling a variety of items to tourists. The ground floors of the houses are mostly occupied by specialist shops rented from the Ministry of Cults and private Religious Trusts. This street is the center of the tourist industry in town. Towards north, City Palace Road leads to Hathi Pol, less frequented by tourists, and where the shops are less tourist oriented. (Tourists usually explore the town on foot and this district is some distance from the center.)

Near the Clock Tower, symbolizing commerce and trade, the tourist industry is more intense and more specialized. There are numerous jewelers shops, some catering to the tourist trade and others producing articles for local consumption. The present-day nature and structure of businesses in the district is a relic from the past, the shops belonging to merchant communities whose houses, often in the form of a *haveli*, are situated nearby.

In this district, rather than forming their main market, tourism gives shopkeepers the possibility of diversifying. Lake Palace Road goes south from Jagdish Chowk to an entrance to the royal complex that leads to the hotels and the lake. The street has a number of shops selling textiles and craft-goods, craft workshops, painting and decorating cooperatives, travel agencies, shops renting bicycles, and others selling various items to tourists (bottled mineral water, books, films for cameras...).Gangaur Ghat Road runs east from Jagdish Chowk to Chand Pol, <sup>12</sup> the Moon Gate, then along the shores of the lake on the edge of the Brahmपुरi district. As far as the Badi Pol, the street is popular with tourists even if there are fewer shops. As the lake is nearby it is mostly lined with hotels, and these constitute the main economic activity in the area.

Given the image of the district, tourism is the main economic activity although tourists do not appear to be particularly interested in the buildings lining the streets. According to the survey, not many tourists visit the temples there; of 140 tourists questioned, only 76 had actually entered a temple in the town center. Some 52, both Indian and non-Indian, visited Jagdish Mandir, essentially because it was the most important in town and the best situated regarding their trip to City palace. Of the Indian tourists who visited a temple during their stay (54), almost all were Hindu (49). They visited these buildings as tourists however, and not to participate in *darshan*<sup>13</sup> ceremonies or for a *puja*<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The informal sector, sometimes called the non-organized sector, comprises all economic activities that are not declared under the Law of 1948. With the rapid growth in subcontracting and industrial diversification, the boundaries between the organized and non-organized sectors have become vague. By the 1990s, the non-organized sector would appear to cover 90% of total production. For more details on the subject see Heuzé, Gérard. 1992. *Pour une nouvelle compréhension des faits et des hommes du secteur non-structuré*. Paris : Editions de l'ORSTOM.

<sup>12</sup> *Pol* : gate in Hindi

<sup>13</sup> *Darshan* : In hindouism, it is a glimpse of a God or an idol. It can also be, in the context of a kingdom, a public fonction of a king giving his appearance to people.

<sup>14</sup> *Puja*, or, in hindi, *pooja*. act of showing reverence to a god. It generally includes offerings of flowers and food, and retrieving the blessed food and consuming it. This act aims to create a relationship with the divine.



The architecture in this district is not really considered of particular interest either. In general tourists visited the site in general and the main buildings. The sole exceptions were the Jagdish Temple, the most important temple in the historic center, dedicated to the Garuda bird, a manifestation of the god Vishnu, and the Bagore-ki-Haveli, today the West Zone Cultural Center. If tourists do not pay particular attention to the architectural details of the buildings in Udaipur, the international tourist agencies and the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation promoting tourism locally, do not make any special mention of the subject either. They concentrate on selling the urban area as a whole as represented by the dominant culture, and the buildings are merely part of an outstanding townscape. For example, apart from the Jagdish Temple and the WZCC, no other monument in the district is referred to in guide books or shown on the tourist maps prepared by the Tourist Office; the Lonely Planet Guide, for example, has a number of sections on the town center, but only describes the architecture of the City Palace. Once again it is a question of the city's image, and virtually all guide books insist on the royal image at the expense of the cultural diversity actually found on many sites.

The historic town center as a whole benefits from this royal image, above all because the entire town is associated with the power of the Rajputs: Udaipur would not exist without the dynasty that founded it. The city was built and fortified on the same principles as the Chittor citadel, and the divinity protecting the city, Sri Eklingji, whose temple is some 50 kilometers away, is locally incarnated in the Maharana. The image of this ancient power has come to represent the territory and all its elements as a whole. This is reflected in the many old buildings that have been converted into hotels on the lines of the palace, thus further consolidating the image retained by tourists. Both conversions and newly built hotels are considered part of the local Rajput heritage whether or not they belong to Rajputs.

The old town and the districts within the town walls, with their more complex and diverse social system, should be added to the royal complex, directly associated with the ruling community. However, all the districts in Udaipur's main tourist area, in spite of a few paradoxes and contradictory trends, are represented by the image of the most popular tourist site.

Thus the main tourist areas and their symbolic images have come to represent the town as a whole. This has encouraged developments in particular districts: the old town and the royal city are gradually reassuming functions they lost with the demise of the feudal system in 1948, a change that in fact started in the early 19<sup>th</sup> C when the town's rapid growth outside the walls changed its center of gravity.

The series of follow-up questions, interviews and other field work established the main images representing the town. They confirmed certain trends, similar to those observed elsewhere in the world, and defined them more precisely, in particular that the development of tourism goes hand in hand with the selection of particular target areas. This in turn encourages the specialization of zones near these main tourist areas. The specialization is both economic and social, as the people and groups concerned often play significant roles in other ways and on other levels. The process highlights and accentuates existing spatial divisions, creating new disparities that have a significant impact on the social changes taking place.

The heavy selling of particular areas leads to others being excluded and to various different types of exclusion in the areas selected. This can be seen in the locally produced tourist information: the advertising copy and images omit large areas of the town and the activities there so as to better target a cultural tourism whose criteria are geared to precise overall objectives. Tourist organizations tend to follow the latest trends in international tourist advertising to best sell their local heritage. However, in this instance the tourist information unwittingly reveals the

difference between the proposed urban developments and what is actually happening on the ground which tends to increase rather than reduce this exclusion. Many businesses and tourist organizations are also active in other ways that affect the urban management of the town as a whole. The tourist zone is thus the key area in the town and subject to a continuous struggle for its control.

Two main factors determine the areas of intense tourism and related facilities: the images projected and the main protagonists at various different levels in the territory, both those active on local sites and on outstanding tourist sites. The images they produce superimpose an imaginary town on the real one. Exclusion thus occurs at source, in the promotion of tourism. Using similes and metaphors, tourist organizations and agencies select particular areas on the strength of their evocative nature and tourist potential. If the metaphors are not relevant to the site, or no longer attract tourists, promoting tourism becomes problematic and new, more successful images have to be created<sup>15</sup>. Who creates these images? Who benefits from the images created to encourage the flow of tourists to the town and surrounding region? This is dealt with in the next section. In it we examine the strategies of the various protagonists in the local tourist industry as they give a good idea of likely trends in the territory as a whole. We assess their probable impact on tourism, bearing in mind that exclusion goes beyond the simple selection of particular areas and has a significant effect on society.

### 3 Processes of exclusion, territorial management and protagonists' actions

Since the research done by geographers such as Bernard Kayser and Roger Brunet or sociologists like Alain Touraine, it is generally accepted that control of space is a major issue in relations between social groups.<sup>16</sup> It is the main factor determining the way the territory is managed. This is more than obvious in Udaipur: since the 1980s, tourism has been one of the most dynamic sectors in the local economy. Its rapid growth can be seen in the numerous services and products for tourists, and by the fact that certain districts in the town have specialized in businesses linked to tourism. However, only a very small portion of the territory is concerned by these changes, while a large part of the town is effectively excluded from the tourist trade, and thus from the sector that has for many years been seen as the best way of earning money. In general, this appears to be due to the role heritage-linked real estate plays in the territorial dynamics. In addition, the tourist areas themselves are suffering from the effects of a growth in tourism whose impact on the ground appears to have been ignored. This complex situation, the end product of a number of contradictory forces, has accentuated the splitting up of the town and has had a significant influence on its future.

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<sup>15</sup> For a study of metaphors in tourism, see Chaney, David. "The Power of Metaphors in Tourism Theory": Coleman, Simon. Crang, Mike. 2002. *Tourism : between place and performance*. New York : Oxford : Berghahn Books.

<sup>16</sup> For details on the work of these major French scholars, see for example Brunet, Roger. 1991. *Le territoire dans les turbulences*. Montpellier : R.E.C.L.U.S., Kayser, Bernard. 1990. *Géographie : entre espace et développement*. Toulouse : Presses Universitaires du Mirail. and Touraine, Alain. 1965. *Sociologie de l'action*. Paris : Editions du Seuil.

### ***Local heritage, town planning and the exclusion of territorial authorities***

At the same time as the tourist districts have been developing and growing richer, they have been, and are likely to be affected by a number of dramatic changes. No major transformation has occurred in the physical layout of the historic center since the early 19<sup>th</sup> C, and this has put a definite brake on its economic development. This development has been and will above all be limited by its physical layout and the high population density. The lack of vacant plots suitable for development seriously limits the potential redevelopment and other improvement schemes that are essential to avoid the public areas becoming saturated. A global urban redevelopment plan is needed to clear the center for future development and to handle the growth in population and in the number of tourists.

Economic growth, based on the development of tourism, is by and large determined by demand depending on the existence of products linked to the territory's historic and cultural heritage and a few quaint local features. The tourists' consumption of these historic, cultural sites has obliged the protagonists not only to preserve and restore certain parts of the town, but also to concentrate on providing tourist products with a high semiotic and aesthetic content characteristic of the Rajput culture, considered the most important part of local culture.

The emphasis on these sites involves the exclusion of others as can be seen in physical appearance of the town. This in turn restricts both physical change and business dynamics in the area inasmuch as the only business activities considered viable are those satisfying the demand for heritage-linked products. For most of the local population this is taking place in a general context in which tourism is one of the few sectors creating jobs. More and more people are drawn into tourist-related activities on a number of different levels. The tourist area itself suffers from this excessive specialization which inhibits innovation by restricting production to specific product types. This apparently all-pervasive heritage, in fact a combination of sites and products, is not shared by all the inhabitants of Udaipur. It has not been "*developed by all, for all*"(Lassave and Querrien, 2002), but is on the contrary a heritage owned by a fortunate few. This has a negative impact on the town as a whole as it prevents any real examination of the role to be played by this heritage, and of the best options and related policies on what should be preserved and enhanced for the tourists and what can be developed for other uses. The area in which tourism and tourist activities are omnipresent thus tends to specialize even more in this single activity, such that it is likely to be confronted by two conflicting objectives: whether to encourage further economic development to satisfy tourism's future needs, thus requiring the preservation of the historic urban layout and buildings, or whether to concentrate on urban redevelopment and create innovatory business activities.

The situation today is largely due to private initiatives which, given that the public authorities appear incapable of coherent town planning for Udaipur as a whole, are effectively planning the town's future on the strength of their own hereditary political legitimacy and arguing that the improvements satisfy sustainable development criteria.

To make the process more comprehensible we have described some aspects of Udaipur's territorial management in more detail.

*“The city within a city”: an exclusive view of territorial development in the absence of institutional action*

The development of tourism in the town is part of a set of complex dynamics: the territory has evolved rapidly as a result of changes in its economy; this in turn is influenced by the way tourists actually use the area and by such town planning measures as have been implemented. Several protagonists seem to have been influential in these changes. Their initiatives have an impact far beyond their own local environment and are in fact veritable urban projects that will determine how the whole territory evolves in the future. A few years ago a development project was proposed by the representative of the former royal authorities, Maharana Arvind Singh of Mewar. Basically the project splits the royal palace complex off from the historic town center and thus from the rest of the town. We will not attempt to assess its intrinsic value, nor present the view of the territory it embodies. We will limit ourselves to a brief description of the project to better understand the nature of the territory and assess the way it is changing. Through the Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation, Arvind Singh, a descendant of the Rajput Sisodia dynasty and the Foundation's trustee-in-chief, hopes to achieve what he calls “the renaissance of Udaipur”, (Maharana Mewar Charitable Foundation 2002). Fully aware of the development potential of the royal family's heritage, and having an excellent command of the various techniques of communication on an international level, he has implemented a vast project for the restoration of the ancient royal palace complex. Started in 1991, the project is financed by a partnership consisting of several trusts he manages and a few external partners for whom a call for proposals has been issued. The work, already started, will restore certain buildings, preserve the historic archives and revitalize the museums and art galleries. All the work planned for what is presented as a new phase in the history of Udaipur, will be limited to the royal palace complex.

His view of the need to ensure a balanced development of the territory by maintaining these buildings, in a project that clearly separates the complex from the rest of the town, is not set out in any of the speeches or documents. However, the title of the project, “The city within a city” is more than revealing. According to Sri Arvind Singh, the town surrounding the royal city is just a town like many others: the real city is the royal fortress built around his Foundation's temple, Dunya Mata, which for many years marked the political limits of the ancient kingdom. The use of the definite and indefinite articles, “the” and “a”, in his texts gives a good idea of his insistence on the royal city to the deliberate exclusion of the rest of the town for whose management he is no longer responsible. This series of projects, backed by large financial resources, is based on a kind of auto-legitimization on historical grounds and on Arvind Singh's real ability to mobilize both private and public organizations in support of his cause, using a communications policy that emphasizes the “preservation of our heritage”, and “sustainable development”. It will effectively determine Udaipur's future. By “the protection of our ancient heritage”, “the continuity of our architectural heritage”, “the establishment and continuous revitalization of a number of centers of excellence”, “the promotion of local arts and craftsmen”, “environmental and ecological management” and the “development of safe tourism”, the representative of the Sisodia dynasty is effectively establishing a private zone which will, on its own, represent Udaipur, thus ensuring his permanent control over the town's image. It will also enable him to reinforce his own economic power and his position at the top of the local social hierarchy. Those who were previously in powers under the former social system are taking power again today on the strength of their territorial control (control of space) based on splitting up the town.

By its sheer size, the project gives an idea of the means employed, and of his ambitions for the development of Udaipur. These ambitions are based on the Mewar Group's financial and socio-political power. It is now UNESCO's sole partner for all future projects involving Udaipur, Chittor and Kumbhalgarh; major restoration projects are

planned for the latter two that both played a major role in the history of the Mewar. UNESCO has commissioned the same group to advise the Archeological Survey of India in its reflections and on the actions to be taken to preserve these sites. It is also involved in other actions under the European Union's Asia Urbs program in which Udaipur will be twinned with Venice in Italy, and on the joint applications of Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur for the title of World Heritage City.

### *The absence of regulation as a factor of exclusion*

Neither the local representatives of the national government nor the municipality have show any reaction to these proposals. They have not mounted any complementary project, nor for that matter any other project in response to those proposed by the Mewar Group. Interviews with senior officials in local town planning services (town planners of the Urban Improvement Trust, Municipal officials), and those responsible for the development of tourism in the town and the surrounding region (Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation Tourist Officer, Udaipur Office) have been unable to produce any analysis covering the local area as a whole or even to collaborate - a very basic requirement – with officials managing the town's heritage or, more generally, the urban territory. The main reason appears to be a lack of financial resources for large-scale projects, the lack of precision in the way the responsibility for tourism and town planning has been allocated, the public authorities failure to react to the shortage of real estate and to pressure from the major protagonists in the private sector, all of which tends to inhibit the realization of even the smallest rehabilitation or development project.

However, improvements could be made by sign-posting tourist sites, and by making the layout of the town more coherent by, for example, providing information on the main roads and the circuits taken by tourists in the historic city center, by sign-posting directions, displaying the names of the gates to the city... This would all be useful information for visitors and would add to their knowledge of the sites and enhance their use, helping modify the tourist sector, and providing the local inhabitants with additional opportunities. Instead, the walls in the city center are covered in billboards advertising local shops and hotels, selling the local heritage area to such an extent that they provoke negative reactions from tourists and a number of local inhabitants.

Thus, while a few selected buildings in the royal palace complex, a tiny part of the territory, are being redeveloped on a planned basis, and urban development as such is limited to residential areas required by the town's rapid growth in recent years, town planning for the major part of the area attracting tourists appears to have been left to the most powerful local organizations and citizens. Shopkeepers and tourist guides, deeply involved in this part of the town that provides their major source of income, do not appear ready to join forces to make general improvements to enhance the tourists' access to and use of the area. This is true even though a number of them stated in interviews that they were concerned about social life in the historic districts, and appeared to be aware of the issues raised and the possible future impact of the proposed developments on their professional lives.

The lack of any official reflection or planning in the territory has left the way free for independent individual actions that tend to further split up the area, and in the case of the "City within a city" project, to legitimize this division using local history and the traditional organization of the territory in ancient times as justification. However, this lack of any overall plan is likely to have negative consequences for tourism as whole.

### *Specialization and social exclusion*

The selected sites have been chosen by those who hold power locally; not those holding power officially, but the most powerful in the social system: the choice of sites on an ideological basis not only excludes others, but acts as a form of social exclusion on several levels. The present policy is to encourage wealthy foreign and Indian tourists, using the noble image of the ancient capital, as it did to attract visitors in times gone by. This will essentially be a foreign elite. The choice is to stick to “safe tourism” as Arvind Singh calls it, a tourism in well-preserved heritage areas, separated from a surrounding urban environment that is steadily deteriorating and has been adversely affected by economic competition. The main existing project for the center of the town of Udaipur is part of a major process that will significantly affect local urban dynamics. Through this project certain local protagonists have managed to take over part of the town for their own economic interests. The town continues specializing in tourist activities, varying in intensity as the district, and has chosen to retain a spatial layout based on the city’s historic image enhanced by the area’s architectural and cultural heritage. This is further accentuated by private initiatives that are involving more and more people in the heritage tourism sector without offering any alternative. The historic center is becoming what Roger Brunet, Robert Ferras and Hervé Théry (Brunet, Ferras, Théry, 1992) call an “exclusive zone”, based on a single economic sector with a high degree of specialization, where innovation is limited to imitation. While earnings from tourism are significantly above those in other sectors, they are nevertheless dependant on a variable and, more recently, unpredictable flow of tourists that appears to be declining. The result is a local economic crisis that has led to a number of tourist establishments being closed with a corresponding fall in income throughout the local economy.

Specialization in tourism has inhibited the development of other economic sectors and jobs in the area as tourists have specific needs and have been happy to pay significantly higher prices than elsewhere in town. This exclusion can be seen on the effect of this trend on local inhabitants who no longer have access to services or to the prices that are available in non-tourist districts. The emphasis placed on local heritage has also encouraged more and more of the town’s inhabitants to see themselves as legitimate heirs to a magnificent past that it is their duty to perpetuate. More and more local inhabitants, whether or not they are Rajput, consider they have an obligation to pass on this heritage. However, this identification does not appear to be based on any real awareness of their heritage, as there is in western countries, but rather to have a purely economic objective: heritage tourism is the best way of earning a living, and at the same time gives its protagonists a role in society’s dominant sector. However, competition is fierce on the job market, such that the majority of those who work in tourism are in unstable if not precarious situations: jobs are often part-time, without any fix amount or a salary of 50 ruppies a day only (Bautès 2000. Survey based on a sample of 150 tourist shop employees). The situation is just as difficult for local businessmen in the tourist sector who suffer from the dramatic swings in demand and growing competition. Social exclusion is clearly visible in the tourist areas: in 2000, 325 people under the age of 30 did not have regular jobs. In most cases their only income was their markup on products they sold to tourists in the boutiques, for the transport they provided, and occasionally as tourist guides.

Tourism appears to be a short-cut to economic development. For its protagonists, it involves specific ways of seeing themselves and of managing space, and specific attitudes to modernity and economic development. But in a sense tourist areas are also social exclusion zones. While tourists are obviously not directly responsible for the situation, they consume the local products and look for a certain aesthetic approach... In doing so, they exclude other styles, business activities and types of behavior. Exclusion thus appears to be a complex and endogenous process linked to the strategies of and actions by the dominant protagonists, rather than an exogenous process forming part of a general trend.

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[www.indiagov.in](http://www.indiagov.in) : Website of the Government of India. Provide links with other gouvernemental websites.

[www.indiatourism.org](http://www.indiatourism.org) : Indian Ministry of Tourism.

[www.investrajasthan.com](http://www.investrajasthan.com) : Website of the Government of Rajasthan, providing information about economic trends of the State, Main objectives of development and investment potential.

[www.mewarindia.com](http://www.mewarindia.com) : Mewar Group.

[www.ucciudaipur.com](http://www.ucciudaipur.com) : Website of the Udaipur Chamber of Commerce and Industry.