

# A PRODUÇÃO DO ESPAÇO E A DINÂMICA EVOLUTIVA DA HOTELARIA CURITIBANA: ESTUDO EM 'GUIAS QUATRO RODAS' DE 1966 A 2014

*PRODUCTION OF SPACE AND THE EVOLUTIONARY DYNAMICS OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY OF CURITIBA: A STUDY IN 'GUIAS QUATRO RODAS' FROM 1966 TO 2014*

*LA PRODUCCIÓN DEL ESPACIO URBANO Y LA DINÁMICA EVOLUTIVA DE LA HOTELERÍA CURITIBANA: ESTUDIO EN 'GUIAS QUATRO RODAS' DE 1966 A 2014*

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**RESUMO:** A localização é considerada um dos fatores para instalação de empresas ligadas à atividade turística, dada que a mesma exerce influências competitivas como aspectos de acessibilidade, facilidades, promoção turística da cidade, entre outros fatores interligados à atividade turística. Portanto, propõe-se como problemática de pesquisa a questão: "existem relações entre contextos e eventos históricos vivenciados pela cidade de Curitiba e a dinâmica evolutiva de sua hotelaria entre 1966 e 2014?", e fica estabelecido como objetivo geral de estudo identificar se existem tais relações. Para tanto, esta pesquisa quantitativa de característica analítica adotou como método as pesquisas de palavras-chave escolhidas em artigos, teses, livros e documentos *on-line* para a formulação das seções teóricas de estudo, que embasaram a análise dos dados da hotelaria curitibana obtidos por meio de Castro Ramos (2010) e atualizadas por meio do Guia Quatro Rodas Brasil 2014. A análise buscou compreender a dinâmica evolutiva da hotelaria da cidade de Curitiba, com especial atenção a 3 acontecimentos históricos transcorridos na cidade e suas possíveis influências aos hotéis. Ao final, observou-se que os números da hotelaria local apresentaram sinais de influências em face dos acontecimentos históricos, resultando na distribuição espacial de hotéis por Curitiba, a chegada de redes hoteleiras na cidade, geração de conhecimento e inovação e estratégias adotadas por *stakeholders* em busca de melhores resultados nos contextos estudados, observando-se o fenômeno de Path Plasticity.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Produção do espaço; Geografia econômica evolutiva; Inovação; Hotelaria; Curitiba.

**ABSTRACT:** Location is considered one of the factors for the installation of companies linked to tourism, generating competitive influences such as aspects of accessibility, facilities, tourist promotion of the city, and other factors. The following question was proposed as a research problem: "Is there any relationship between contexts and historical events in Curitiba and the evolutionary dynamics of its hotel industry between 1966 and 2014?". The main objective of this work, therefore, was to identify whether such relationships exist. A quantitative/analytical study was conducted, using keywords selected from articles, theses, books and online documents for the formulation of the theoretical sections of study. The study analyzed data on hotels in the city, obtained through Castro Ramos (2010) and updated through the Guia Quatro Rodas Brasil 2014, published by Abril. The aim of this analysis was to understand the evolutionary dynamics of the hotel industry in the city of Curitiba, focusing specifically on three historical events that have occurred in the city,

and their possible influences on its hotels. In conclusion, it was found that the local hotels showed signs of influence from these historical events, resulting in the spatial distribution of hotels in Curitiba, the arrival of new hotel chains, generation of knowledge, and innovation, as a result of strategies adopted by stakeholders seeking better results in the contexts studied, and observing the phenomenon of Path Plasticity.

**KEYWORDS:** Production of Space; Evolutionary Economic Geography; Innovation; Hospitality.

**RESUMEN:** La ubicación es considerada uno de los factores para la instalación de empresas relacionadas al turismo, dado que ejerce influencias competitivas tales como aspectos de accesibilidad, instalaciones, promoción turística urbana, entre otros factores turísticos. Por lo tanto, se propone como problema de investigación la siguiente pregunta: "¿Existen relaciones entre contextos y acontecimientos históricos experimentados por Curitiba y la dinámica evolutiva de sus hoteles entre 1966 y 2014?" Se estableció como objetivo general, "identificar si existen vínculos entre contextos históricos y eventos experimentados por Curitiba, con la dinámica evolutiva de su sector hotelero en el período 1966-2014." Para ello, este análisis cuantitativo de característica analítica ha adoptado como método la investigación por las palabras clave elegidas en artículos, tesis, libros y documentos *on line* para la formulación de las secciones teóricas de estudio que apoyaron el análisis de los datos obtenidos en hoteles curitibanos por Castro Ramos (2010) y actualizados para 2014 por intermedio del *Guia Quatro Rodas Brasil 2014*, cuyo análisis tuvo como objetivo comprender la dinámica evolutiva de la hotelería en Curitiba, con especial atención a tres acontecimientos históricos ocurridos en la ciudad y sus posibles influencias sobre los hoteles. Al final, se observó que las cifras locales de hotelería mostraron signos de influencias frente a los acontecimientos históricos, vistos en la distribución espacial de los hoteles, la llegada de cadenas hoteleras a la ciudad, la generación de conocimiento y la innovación, frente a las estrategias adoptadas por *stakeholders* para la búsqueda de mejores resultados en los contextos estudiados, observando el fenómeno de *Path Plasticity*.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Producción del espacio; Geografía económica evolutiva; Innovación; Hotelería; Curitiba.

## INTRODUCTION

The scientist Charles Darwin, in his studies on the evolution of the species, observed that the space where these beings live somehow selects, from among the strongest, the species apt to survive in that environment through their adaptation capacity, as well as their self-defense abilities against other animals. This would lead to evolution, given that the reproduction and continuity of these beings would require the acquired knowledge to be passed on to their descendants, as well as the acquired capacity to survive in a certain place.

History, and its influences on the economic world, has shown that Darwin's theory is not restricted to the survival of the species, but also applies to the survival and continuity of business enterprises, in the locations in which they are installed, as well as their continuity in the market, stamped by competitive processes in which those that present advantages valued by their customers will be naturally selected to remain active. In view of this context, the following question is proposed: Is there any relationship between contexts and historical

events in Curitiba and the evolutionary dynamics of its hotel industry between 1966 and 2014?”?

The main objective of this study, therefore, is to “identify whether there are any relationships between the socioeconomic evolution of the city of Curitiba and the evolutionary dynamics of its hotel industry the period between 1966 and 2014”.

Studies of hospitality dynamics in light of social contexts enable us to understand the direct and indirect effects in one of the main stakeholders of the tourism activity, as this understand will aid in decision-making processes, creating conditions based on the history of the studied space for future actions.

Theories based on path dependence are understood within the area of evolutionary economic geography, as one of the concepts used in this study, seeking to understand the dynamics of the space, based on its social, economic and cultural production. The city of Curitiba (capital of the state of Paraná) was selected as the study object, due to its media reputation as a model city that showcases sustainability and innovation, positioning it as fundamental for Brazilian tourism.

In a study that aims to understand the process of evolution of hospitality, the choice of Curitiba was designed to find out whether its innovative rhetoric is also reflected in its entrepreneurial tourism sector focused on hospitality. The existence of previous studies on this subject, from the Federal University of Paraná, is also highlighted. These studies were broadly used in the present article, and are described in the ‘Methods’ section.

## METHODS

This study was developed in two stages; the first involved research in articles, theses, books, online documents, newspaper texts and other works, from bibliographic references, searching on the chosen keywords, and establishing the thematic sections “Space production and tourism”, and “Evolutionary economic geography”.

The second stage involved a study of research conducted and published through Castro Ramos’s doctorate thesis (2010), made in the *stricto sensu*

program in Geography at Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), in which he considered information available about Curitiba's hotel industry in the Guia Quatro Rodas from 1966, 1972, 1978, 1984, 1990, 1996, 2002 and 2008, published by Abril, this study being responsible for updating the data according to Guia Quatro Rodas 2014.

However, it is worth highlighting that of the studies that generated the annual guides, for editorial reasons, Guias Quatro Rodas does not consider Curitiba's hotels in their totality. According to the publisher, Peixoto (2013), this option was because:

We selected the best for the reader (...). This may be owing to several factors, such as the low cost-benefit ratio, poor conservation and inadequate service – which we identified in loco as anonymous customers. There are hotel owners who disagree with our classifying methods and ask to be excluded from our publishing – and are promptly attended to, in case they insist on it, even after contacting the publisher responsible.

Therefore, the historic and economic evolution of Curitiba was analyzed through the data obtained, focusing on the capacity of knowledge generation in management by hotel stakeholders, which try to take advantage of historic moments to innovate and obtain better results before the existing possibilities, as well as observations about the use of technologies.

Transversally, three moments, or events, were considered during this study, especially those taking place in Curitiba, and responsible for changes in the space of the city, evolutions in the spatial distribution of enterprises in Curitiba, as well as those responsible for bringing visibility to the city, which is lacking new investments and public policies in infrastructure and promotion. These three events were: (1) The creation of the Industrial City of Curitiba, in 1972; (2) The establishment of automobile plants and the transfer of multinational corporations to Curitiba and its metropolitan region in the second half of the 1990's; (3) The FIFA World Soccer Cup in 2014, with Curitiba being one of the host cities.

The collected data were organized in charts and figures, divided and updated as presented in Castro Ramos (2010), to enable the analysis of the evolutionary dynamics of the hospitality industry over time. This information was also cross-

referenced with the theoretical landmark of Evolutionary Economic Geography, paying special attention to path dependence, validating the theory through the observed reality, a method that Laville and Dionne (1999) call pairing. At the end of the study section, an "Analysis of the Curitiba's evolutionary dynamics from 1966 to 2014" was produced.

It was possible to observe that some data present in the charts and figures of Castro Ramos (2010) were not included or updated in the Guia Quatro Rodas Brasil 2014, having the acronym "n/i" added, which, for the purposes of this study, means "no information".

At the end, the final considerations are presented, answering the initial research question, and thereby achieving the general objective of the research. Some suggestions are also given for further research.

## SPACE PRODUCTION AND TOURISM

According to Santos (1982), space is not an end itself, since it is not dependent of social and economic relations, which elapse over themselves. The author cites four categories that must be considered for the analysis of the geographic space as for the spatialized social totality to be understood (Santos, 1982), namely:

- Shape: Visible aspects, the outside of an object;
- Function: Activity or role of a created object;
- Structure: The way objects are organized, and the interrelations among them;
- Process: Continuous action, involving changes;

Hence, space production occurs through social and economic relations elapsed over themselves, as a result of the appropriation of space, in a process of continued reproduction of life (Carlos, 2016).

Lefebvre (1981 as cited in Schmidt, 2012) highlights that space production is the result of a series of institutions and relations occurring through time, such as the chairmanship of the State, wisdom and knowledge, social relations and general institutions of society. It is emphasized that:

[...] the production mode organizes, produces, at the same time as certain social relations, its space (its time). This is how it comes true, as the production mode projects these relations over its ground, without, however, considering what reacts on it. (Lefebvre, 1981, p.vii as cited in Carlos, 2016, p.57)

The notion of production of space also lies in the idea, according to Limonad (1999, p.81), of strategies connected to the reproduction of capital and work, as well as social practices that aim as much at keeping the social space as is, as at changing it abruptly and radically.

Paiva (2008) indicates that space is also a consumable product, whereas activities such as tourism embrace it, causing changes in space in both the host and sending destinations, without ignoring the travel space of the tourist. Thus, according to the author, tourism develops through the indiscriminate use of space, subtracting the dichotomy of the urban and rural landscapes, occurring in several fronts, such as rural tourism, urban tourism, "sun and sea" tourism, among others.

Urban space has been the subject of interventions, while certain activities are developed within it, such as the consumption of space for leisure and tourism, through the construction of cultural scenarios that take advantage of the scenic assets in order to boost commerce and the provision of services. The justification used for tourism intervention in space is the rebuilding of the image of ancient urban centers, for the capitalization and composition of new centralities (Franca, 2016).

Hayllar *et al* (2011, p.4) define these spaces in which tourism-related activities occur as "functional tourism areas", especially those located in urban areas which, according to the authors, are geographically small and well-defined regions, with concentrations of services related to tourism, and with distinct spatial, cultural, social and economic identities.

In this sense, Coriolano (2009) explains areas of concentrations of interrelated companies in regions geographically defined as clusters, and local productive systems, and local productive arrangements, among other classifications, differing only in size and stage of development and cooperation. This is based on the studies of Porter (1999), who addresses the concept of a cluster as a geographically concentrated group of interconnected and interrelated companies in a determined area, bound by common and complementary elements.



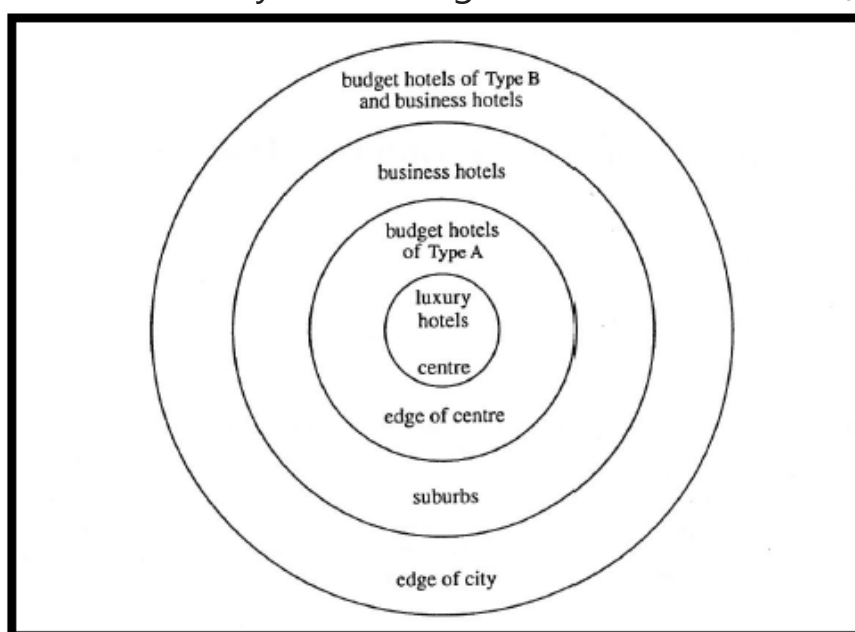
Among the enterprises considered as sub-segments of tourism, hospitality is the activity of hosting tourists, as well as offering comfort and diverse activities to the visitor during his lodging period.

These enterprises are therefore influenced by the locations where they are situated, according to the concentration of companies considered complementary to tourism, and the mode of consumption of the space by tourism itself, defining its public segmentation and, consequently, its infrastructure to serve its clients/hosts, becoming a factor of construction and appreciation of the touristic image of a given city (Pereira & Spolon, 2007).

Nunes (2014, p.327) stresses that space production for tourism:

[...] necessarily includes the increase of the flow of the territory and the production, and consequently, of better circulation conditions. Such attitudes do not guarantee only the traveling and mobility of tourists and residents, but in particular, the mobility and flow of financial capital, investors, who make use of the actions of the State, which value certain regions and, hence, value their enterprises.

These influences of location on hospitality are understood with reference to Egan and Nield (2000), through the identification of hierarchies of hotels according to their installation points around the cities where, according to the authors, the most luxurious hotels are located in the centers of the cities, with the accommodation hierarchy decreasing as the circle widens (figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Spatial hierarchy of types of hotels

**Source:** Egan & Nield, 2000, p.612.

According to the above figure, it can be seen that in the author's view, the accommodation hierarchy is defined by: 1) luxury hotels (4 to 5 stars) located in the centers of the cities; 2) Type A budget hotels (4 stars) located on the edges of urban centers; 3) business hotels (generally 3 stars) located outside the city centers, although in nearby areas, such as business districts and; 4) Type B budget hotels and business hotels, located near the main highways entering and exiting the cities (Egan & Nield, 2000; Castro Ramos, 2010).

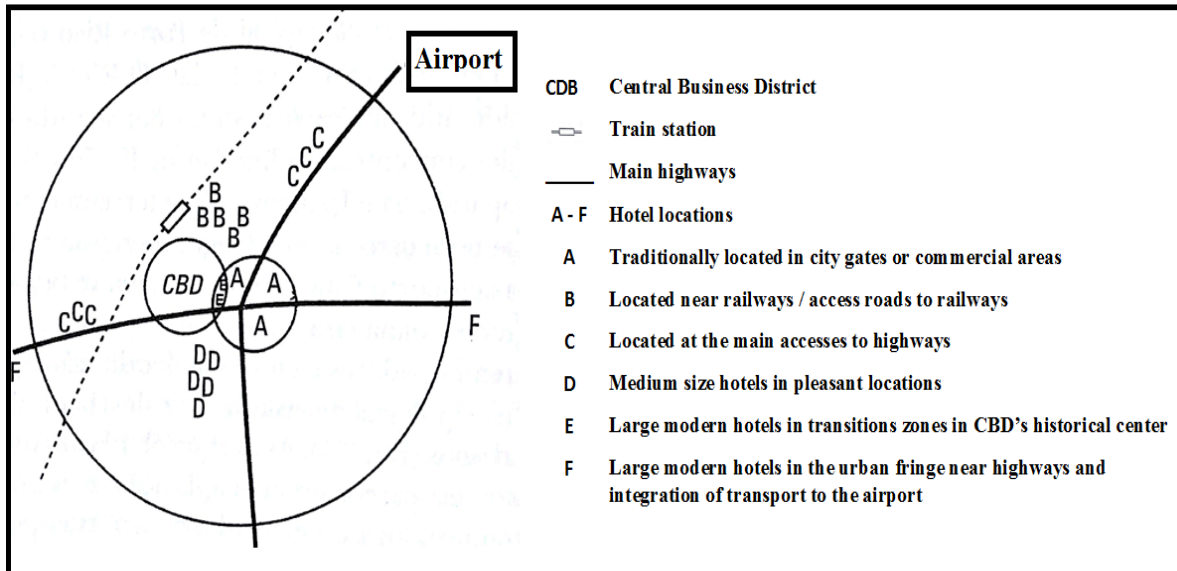
From the corporate point of view, the definition of hierarchies for the location of hotel businesses is identified by four items: i) accessibility to the city center, given that this is seen as the most accessible part of the city in terms of transportation, work and commerce; ii) special accessibility, usually linked to the concentration or agglomeration of economies and complementary companies, or of relevant spaces for the traveler on vacation or business; iii) other factors as historic, topographic and city size influences, as well as market and capital influences which, as described before, offer the visitor a series of mobility facilities, restoration, leisure and entertainment and others; iv) dynamic issues related to changes in choices relating to trips, lifestyle, search for leisure among others, with most of these spaces being linked to the diverse tribes and a preference for the city center (Harvard, 1996 as cited in Egan & Nield, 2000, p.614).

The location of a hotel directly influences tourists' choices since, as described above, it allows them to be near the most relevant places for their visit. Shoval *et al* (2011) emphasize that the areas of a city that have more tourist attractiveness are those that are anchored to commercial agglomerations, touristic attractions, shopping and entertainment spots, central business districts or areas, and the presence of other types of accommodation.

Another distinct factor related to "location" is the proximity of the accommodation to convention centers, as this generates hosting potential for nearby hotels, which will be the first to receive visitors from the events held there. Other influence spots for urban hotels are proximity to access points to the city, such as bus and railway terminals, or the airport, as this is an aspect that meet the needs of both leisure tourism and business and events tourism (Hocayen-da-Silva & Teixeira, 2007, p.29).



Asworth and Haan (1985), cited in Pearce (2003, p.314), detail hotel distribution in a general context, while observing its specialty for historical-tourist cities which, even so it is worth the emphasis, characterizing and pointing to the center of the map the historical center of the city and its central business district (CBD).



**Figure 2:** Typology of the location of urban hotels

**Source:** Asworth & Haan (1985 as cited in Pearce, 2003, p.314)

According to the authors, the hotels analyzed are located near points of accessibility to the city, such as railway stations, airports, and highways (location-oriented, represented by hotels B, C and F), or close to central areas, such as the historic center and business districts (market-oriented, represented by hotels A, D and E) (Asworth & Haas, 1985 as cited in Pearce, 2003).

A downtown hotel caters for a whole range of urban visitors whose stay is usually short, generally two to four days. Many business travelers value the proximity to the CBD so that they can do their business in an efficient way. Here, the visitor focused on shopping will find a wide range of sophisticated shops. It is also downtown where the tourist visiting attractions will find many of the historic buildings and monuments, and other cultural options of the city (Pearce, 2003, p.306-307)

In the following sections, we aim to understand the influences of space on the evolution of the management and innovation in tourism and, especially, in hotel companies applied to the reality of Curitiba (Paraná), through analyses of the economic production of the spaces of the city, the influences of the evolutionary dynamics of the space on their economic actors related to tourism, from the

point of view of the theory of evolutionary economic geography, leading them to make decisions based on the access and urban historic contexts, among other aspects.

## EVOLUTIONARY ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

The object of study of economic geography is surface of the Earth, in terms of its economic aspects, taking as a starting point the analysis of spatial relations based on the economic world, and the capacity of the space to produce and reproduce capital (Chorincas, 2001).

Through economic geography, theories, formal models and methods of economic analysis for the comprehension of economic phenomena of space are sought, attempting to understand the economic development of regions, in the spatial organization of economy, the distribution and consumption over time and, they way in which spatial structures produce feedback to influence the driving forces of the evolution of economy (Domareski Ruiz, Miki & Gândara, 2014; Boschma & Martin, 2010).

Thus, the main focus of economic geography is to understand changes that take place in the space as a result of economic influences, the influences generated by capitalism observed in companies, products, new technologies, industries, and work positions, and their disappearance due to territorial and economical contexts (Boschma & Martin, 2010).

Among the theories of economic geography, evolutionary theories appeared in 2003, arising from the evolutionary economy. These theories address the constant production of knowledge, and the influences of historical contexts and processes that occur in regions, on economic changes over time (Domareski Ruiz, 2015).

Frenken (2007) describes evolutionary economic geography is the area of geography that approaches economy as an evolutionary process which unfolds in space and time. Ergo, through evolutionary economic geography, we sought to understand the interdependences among stakeholders of economic processes occurring in determined regions, subdividing them in three pillars according to figure 3:

Evolutionary Economic Geography			
Path dependence		Complexity Theory	Generalized Darwinism
Context Contingency Historical Facts Institutionalization Critical Moment Decision Strategy		Appearance Self-organization Adaptation	Novelty Variety Selection Continuity
Path Creation	Path Plasticity		
Stakeholders Human and Social Relations Innovation	Technology Evolution of knowledge Incremental Changes Continuity Innovation		

**Figure 3:** Evolutionary Economic Geography Pillars

**Source:** Adapted from Domareski Ruiz, 2015

One of the pillars of evolutionary economic geography, the theory of complexity, was studied for the first time from the point of view of thermodynamics and later applied to economy. From this perspective, it is understood that the economic scenario presents common characteristics with complex adaptive systems. Thus, its evolution may be explained by processes of occurrence, self-organization and adaptation (Domareski Ruiz, 2015).

Munné (1995 as cited in Torres, 2005) shows that reality “is non-linear, and therefore chaotic and diffuse, being characterized by systems whose implications do not follow a pre-established order and, thus, small alterations do not necessarily produce small effects, but can cause great differences. The term “evolutionary” is therefore used, as there is no way to revert such changes (Byrne, 1998).

Hence, it is possible to understand, through the theory of complexity, that the access dependence co-evolves through different local industries, just as companies of different technologies and activities evolve, with each one having a different way and different visions of evolution within their possibilities, resulting in an economy of open systems subject to constant dynamic interactions of stakeholders. This suggests that these companies’ evolutions may not necessarily correspond to the institutional path of the region itself, but allow the development of new technologies and industries to coexist with the already existing paths (Brouder & Eriksson, 2013).

Generalized Darwinism is the theory that is most commonly used by evolutionary economic geography. It makes use of Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory of natural selection, in which the organisms most adapted to the environment will have more chances of survival, being selected for that environment, in contrast to those less adapted (Domareski Ruiz, 2015).

Therefore, Darwinism applied to the economy results in the study of competition among agents of a given region or environment, taking into account their capacity to innovate and presentation of novelties, varieties, selection and continuity (Brouder & Eriksson, 2013).

Aldrich *et al* (2008) emphasize that without the principle of selection, we cannot explain how one entity prevails over another. The authors highlight that Darwinism applied to the corporate environment considers comparisons among competitors, resulting in competitive actions aimed at creating new products or industries in different geographic or industrial contexts, leading to the creation of a new environment and the relative isolation of a group from the other competitors, thus creating new opportunities through variation.

Finally, access dependence appeared in technology economy, and is developed based on the observations made and compared in political science through historical trajectories (Fernandes, 2002), furthering comprehension and the political decision-making of a given region or country. This is in accordance with Kato (1996 as cited in Fernandes, 2002), who asserts that "past events influence the present situation" (Kato, 1996, p.1 as cited in Fernandes, 2002, p.79)

Thus, through path dependence, we aim to show importance of the context or historical events on a given economic process, as well as their influences on the stakeholders of a given region that is influenced by or influences it, be they public or private institutions, among other actors (Bernardi, 2012).

The theory of path dependence is considered a central concept in evolutionary approaches, as it helps explain how the set of strategic decision is connected to equally important decisions made in the past that, in turn, are divided in path creation and path plasticity (Domareski Ruiz, 2015).

Path creation, in the words of Garud and Karnoe (2001), is considered a contrasting concept to the model of path dependence, although both use

phenomena or events able to reflect or mold future actions. Nonetheless the biggest difference between the two concepts is that in path dependence, its stakeholders are considered passive observers of events in history, whereas in path creation, those same stakeholders act during its occurrence (or in real time, according to the authors) to create new ways, targeting new exploration fields that interrupt the normal development of a process, through a new strategy. Even so, mistakes can happen and, by such actions or events, assertive actions need to be identified so that, eventually, advances will be achieved.

On the other hand, the concept of path plasticity, according to Strambach and Halkier (2013), also involves dynamic changes brought about by stakeholders in random processes and phenomena. But unlike in path creation, in path plasticity these are characterized by keeping the normal follow-up of a dynamic process, applying strategies that redraw its rules through technology or innovation, ultimately guaranteeing the success of this path (Domareski Ruiz, 2015).

Strambach and Halkier (2013) points that evolutionary economic geography plays an important role in path plasticity, as the dynamic processes of regional development enhance the processes of innovation, and the importance of the integration among social actors, and take into consideration the regional development, besides knowledge, innovation, technology, and the economy itself.

Studies in evolutionary economic geography make way for the comprehension of tourism, and its effects on the space where this activity happens, given that it involves social actors, public policies, promotional efforts and financial investments, aimed at the dynamic development of regional economy (Ioannides, Halkier & Lew, 2015).

## **THE EVOLUTIONARY DYNAMICS OF THE HOTEL INDUSTRY OF CURITIBA FROM 1966 TO 2014.**

According to IBGE estimates for 2016, more than 1.8 million people live in Curitiba, capital of the state of Paraná. This population is made up of Brazilians from different regions of the country, as well as immigrants from Germany, Italy, the Ukraine, Poland and other countries. The city has a rich culture, gastronomy

and leisure options in green areas, and also offers business opportunities in special business events or companies in the city (Curitiba Tourism).

This growth and visibility were acquired over time, turning Curitiba into a stage and transforming its urban space and the daily lives of residents and visitors, emphasizing the urban infrastructure, competitiveness in business and tourism, the expansion of the influence of the city in the national and international scenarios and, above all, as emphasized by Pereira and Spolon (2007), helping to construct the tourist image of the city.

Therefore, the possible influences in the hotel sector of Curitiba, especially in terms of strategies for permanence and survival in the market, as indicated in the tables below, are analyzed through the historical contexts occurring mainly in Curitiba, allowing analysis linked to periods of events.

Table 1 considers some historical moments in Curitiba and shows a doubling of the number of hotels between 1966 and 1972 (installation of the Industrial City of Curitiba). There were a total of 54 hotels in 1990, the same number in 1996, and a small decrease of 2 hotels (a period when car manufacturers and multinational corporations arrived in Curitiba and the metropolitan region).

However, in this same table, the number of hotels evaluated in the city during 2014, when the FIFA World Cup was held, was 70, almost the same as in the previous period, in 2008. This finding is in accordance with the study called "Placar hotelaria", developed by Forum of Hotel Operators of Brazil (FOHB) in partnership with Hotel Invest (2015), which showed that among the Brazilian cities that hosted 2014 FIFA World Cup matches, Curitiba was one of the only ones that had a sufficient number of hotels to accommodate the demand caused by the event, keeping its hotels at healthy levels, with adequate operating margins and profitability for the investments made (Fohb & Hotel invest, 2015).

Trotta, Strehlau and Turolla (2015), in their study on the image of the city during mega events, included articles about the city that appeared in newspaper articles, especially during the 2014 FIFA World Cup, and emphasized that Curitiba obtained greater journalistic projection for its infrastructure and sustainability. The authors hypothesized that one of the reasons why FIFA chose the city of Curitiba as one of the host cities for the games was its



internationally recognized urban infrastructure, achieved through innovative solutions to problems related to transport, sustainability and recycling. For these factors, it is compared to cities such as Madrid and Singapore (Trotta, Strehlau & Turolla, 2015, p.295).

Meeting tourists' expectations during their first visit is essential to retaining customers. Therefore, it is necessary not only to create products and services, but also to understand them, and develop strategies and actions that will take advantage of the potentialities of the destination, to exceed tourists' expectations (Oliveira & Gândara, 2015).

However, in relation to the hotel sector, the same reality was not observed in other cities where the games took place. New facilities had to be constructed to meet the demand generated by the games, resulting in an abundant hotel offer immediately after the games, when the demand for hotels in those cities no longer reached the new number of available units (Fohb & Hotel invest, 2015).

NEIGHBORHOOD	1966	1972	1978	1984	1990	1996	2002	2008	2014
Centro (downtown)	7	15	36	40	46	43	50	42	39
São Francisco	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	1
Centro Cívico	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	3
Alto da Glória	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Alto da Rua XV	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2
Rebouças	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Água Verde	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Batel	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	14	15
Bigorrião	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Prado velho	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Portão	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Campina do Siqueira	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Bairro Alto	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Santa Felicidade	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Cidade Industrial de Curitiba	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2
Uberaba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Campo Comprido	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Mercês	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total of hotels:	7	16	38	44	54	52	62	71	70

**Table 1:** Growth of the hotel sector in Curitiba.

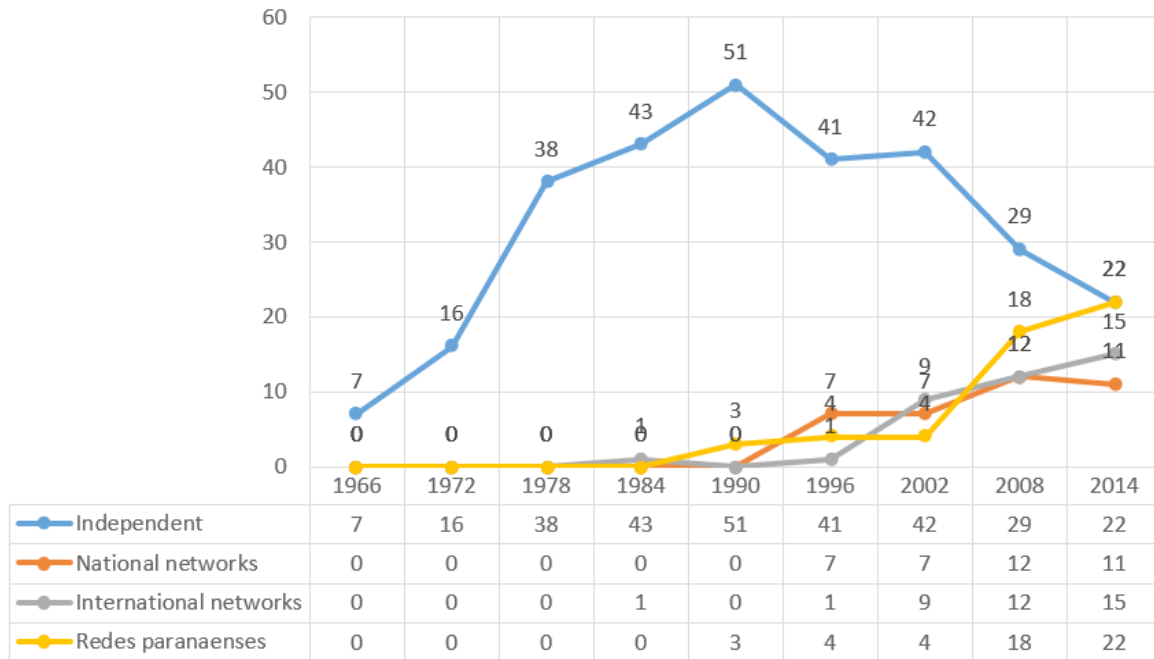
**Source:** Adapted from Castro Ramos (2010)

Table 1 shows that the central part of the city has remained the main lodging center over time, in terms of the number of hotels. This is no doubt due to the ease of access to the city through the central region, as well as the conformation of a center near the bus/train station, where buses that connect the city to cities in the State of Paraná and beyond arrive and leave, besides being near Afonso Pena airport in São José dos Pinhais and an access road to the city, it is close to the central region (Comendador Franco and Das Torres Avenues, in sequence), important points of arrival and departure from Curitiba. It is worth mentioning that even though it is in São José dos Pinhais, the conformation of a cluster of hotels near the airport is another relevant element.

Although the city center of Curitiba is the region with the highest number of hotels, a decline in the number of business hotels in other neighborhoods has been observed since 2008. Although close to the center, with emphasis on the Batel district, due to its intermediate location between the city center and the Industrial city of Curitiba, and as a central business district, installed in the city in the early 1970s, corroborating with Boschma and Martin (2010), which has already been discussed, paving the way for economic development of other regions of the city, through the spatial distribution of consumption over time.

The significant growth of hotels in the central-historical district of Curitiba, Batel (its central business district), and the points of access to the city, corroborate with the map of locations of urban hotels given by Ashworth and Haan (1985 as quoted in Pearce, 2003), since its business and event tourists represent more than 50% of the visitors received in the city, with relatively short stay periods. This is why the Curitiba Convention & Visitors Bureau has invested in programs like "Enjoy Curitiba for 2 more days" (Curitiba, region and coast Convention & Visitors Bureau, s / d).

Curitiba has also received network hotels from the state of Paraná (using the city as a base) and national and international networks, as well as the independent hotels i.e. those that are not part of any chain. The evolution of these hotels during the study period is shown in the figure below:



**Figure 4:** Hotel organizations

**Source:** Adapted from Castro Ramos (2010)

This figure shows the leap in the number of independent hotels in 1972 (when the Industrial City of Curitiba was first founded), reaching 38 hotels in 1978, and remaining above the number of national and international network hotels in Paraná until 2014, when the number of network hotels takes the lead in the chart, due to the installation of new hotels and also the significant decline in the number of independent hotels after 2002.

It is worth mentioning that if the number of network hotels of Paraná were added to the national network, the number of independent hotels in 2014 would have been exceeded since 2008, totaling 30 Brazilian network hotels versus 29 independent hotels. In 2014, this difference would jump to 33 Brazilian network hotels, against 22 independent hotels, raising the hypothesis of formerly independent hotels becoming part of Brazilian and/international hotel chains as a strategy for survival and continuity in the market, in order to take advantage of the demand for the FIFA World Cup 2014.

Figure 2 shows the first international hotel network arrived in 1984, but it was only after 1996 that these networks fortified their business in the area. On the other hand, Brazilian networks entered the city of Curitiba (many of them founded in Curitiba) from 1990 on, showed growth within the next years, reaching majority participation from 2008 on, and became consolidated in 2014.

Another issue that was analyzed in the hotel industry is the evolution in the provision of lounges for guests, complementing its lodging experience and transforming the hotel from a place to rest and stay overnight to a space for dining, and social interaction with other guests and/or other visitors, as well as business and event areas, as observed in Tables 2 and 3 below.

LOUNGE	1966	1972	1978	1984	1990	1996	2002	2008	2014
Restaurant	3	6	16	23	37	43	58	58	57
Bar	6	12	25	32	41	36	44	52	n/i
Garage and parking lot	0	8	8	35	47	36	53	71	69
Convention Hall	0	0	0	24	35	36	53	56	55
Sauna	0	0	0	3	7	14	4	35	n/i
Business center	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	43	s/i
Press Room	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	n/i
Ofuro bath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	n/i
Hotels	7	16	38	44	54	52	62	71	70

**Table 2:** Number of hotels and lounges, from 1966 to 2014

**Source:** Adapted from Castro Ramos (2010)

Table 2 shows the first convention halls in 1984, and they are present in most of the hotel listed in the guides during the following years, while the business centers are present from the year 2002 on, albeit in smaller numbers, demonstrating that business tourism is also a segment looking for hotels in the city of Curitiba, reflecting the visibility in business that the creation of the Industrial City promoted, and the arrival of car manufacturers and multinational corporations to the city and region. The supply of saunas in the hotels of Curitiba was also evidenced. Despite the lack of information in 2014, this number was significant 2008.

Despite the lack of information on some of the items recorded in 2014, food and beverage establishments are present inside hotels, becoming a gastronomic option for their guests and allowing them to have different experiences within hotels, as well as garages and parking options for guests traveling by car or hiring a car at the destination.

LEISURE AREAS	1966	1972	1978	1984	1990	1996	2002	2008	2014
Swimming pools	0	0	2	5	10	16	25	27	30
Game rooms	0	0	0	6	2	1	0	0	n/i
Fitness Centers	0	1	1	0	0	4	29	43	44
Soccer fields	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	n/i

Playground	0	0	0	3	4	1	1	1	1
Tennis/Squash/Paddle	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	1
Multi-sports courts	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	1	n/i
Horses	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Night Clubs	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Minigolf	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Barbecue places	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Hotels	7	16	38	44	54	52	62	71	70

**Table 3:** Number of hotels and leisure areas, from 1966 to 2014

**Source:** Adapted from Castro Ramos (2010)

We should to highlight another aspect – leisure areas - which is presented in table 3, although there are no updates for 2014. We note the evolution in numbers of swimming pools and gyms in hotels in Curitiba.

Thus, using the tables and figure previously presented, the actions and strategies to offer comfort and well-being to the guests during their stay in hotels, such as extra lounges and differentiated services and technologies in the accommodation units, emphasizing that the set of innovations practiced by the hotel industry of Curitiba, also reflects the city's competitiveness as a tourist destination that, as indicated by the competitiveness index of the 65 inductive destinations of 2014, places Curitiba in the leading position in many aspects and in fourth place in the general index (Brazil, 2014).

The process of technology and innovation development which was observed in the hotels of Curitiba and evaluated by Guia Quatro Rodas in the selected period in relation to historical events and contexts, reinforces the phenomenon of path plasticity that, according to Strambach and Halkier (2013), is characterized by stakeholders' actions in response to events and dynamic phenomena that occur in the space, through innovation and technology, opening ways to new explorations, without changing the natural path of this phenomenon, but creating new rules to generate economic and regional development, through tourist activity.

Therefore, tourism and business activities, which were leveraged by the arrival of multinational corporations, the establishment of Curitiba Industrial City, as well as FIFA World Cup 2014, sports events developed dynamic opportunities for the economic evolution of Curitiba, as observed during this period of time,

reinforcing localized learning processes through mechanisms of knowledge development through interaction among stakeholders, as highlighted by Strambach (2008 as cited in Domareski Ruiz, 2015)

The observations made through the data study of the hotel industry of Curitiba, validates the theory of path dependence, which emphasizes the knowledge generated by contexts or historical moments for the regional economic development, through stakeholders' actions, resulting in innovation and assertive decision-making processes (Bernardi, 2012).

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the theory of evolutionary economic geography, the evolutionary dynamic of the hotel industry in Curitiba was understood, as well as the influences of the stakeholders, especially the search for innovations and new knowledge related to hotel management strategies for their survival in the market, creating a competitive cycle between competitors in which one hotels attempts to stand out or differentiate itself from the others, whether in relation to price, equipment, functionalities, design or innovation, among other factor.

In this evolutionary process, we see a concern of hotels to offer even more activities to guests within their properties, such as restaurants, bars, leisure and sports activities, gyms, as well as equipment considered obligatory, e.g. wi-fi, cable TV, and air-conditioning, whereas certain other factors were not always contemplated by the hotels, such as rooms adapted for disabled and/or elderly guests, a favorable location for guests, close to access points to the city (Rodoferroviária and Afonso Pena Airport), and close to interest and leisure points (central area and intermediation).

Therefore, as a response to the study problem (is there any relationship between the socioeconomic evolution and the dynamics of evolution of the hotel industry of Curitiba between 1966 and 2014?), it is seen that there were historical times when the number of hotels increased. Namely: (1) the creation of the industrial city of Curitiba and; (2) the arrival of car manufacturing plants and multinational corporations to the metropolitan region. However, a similar increase was not



observed prior to the FIFA World Cup 2014, since the hotel industry in the capital of Paraná was already considered sufficient to host visitors to the event, and as a result, there was no problem of hotel surplus after the event.

It was also noted that the construction of new hotels in the city followed the evolutionary dynamics of the Brazilian economy, while tourism activities gained more visibility due to democratization of vacation and business travel, especially after the period of economic instability and hyperinflation during the 1980s and 1990s.

The evolution of the hotel industry in Curitiba, observed during the data analyses, is a continuous process, based on innovation and on the search for new market segments, taking advantage of contexts and economic moments, with the aim of gaining knowledge in management and decision-making processes, providing resources for future moments due to its dependence on path, as a way to protect its own survival and continuity in the market, as well as competitive differentiation.

The results and data obtained within the framework of this study do not exhaust the subject of the dynamics of the hotel industry from the perspective of the theory of evolutionary economic geography, but rather, open paths to new research. It is suggested, for example, that this phenomenon be observed in other capitals and/or cities of Brazil, to determine whether historical processes have leveraged or contribute to the evolutionary, innovative and competitive process of the hotel industries of those cities.

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## CONTRIBUTION OF THE AUTHORS TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ARTICLE

**GUIZI:** Research and writing

**GÂNDARA:** Research and guidance



