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Escudero Gómez, Luis Alfonso

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Realities and problems of a major cultural tourist destination in Spain, Toledo

Realidades y problemáticas en un destino principal de turismo cultural en España, Toledo

Luis Alfonso Escudero Gómez *
 Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, España
 luisalfonso.escudero@uclm.es

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ABSTRACT:

Cultural tourism is a modality that has been expanding over the recent years, attracting many theorists. It is worth analyzing certain consolidated cultural tourist destinations such as Toledo. This article analyses a case study of one of the most relevant Heritage Tourism sites in Spain. It updates and broadens the current articles existing in the cultural tourism of Toledo. From a methodological perspective, it provides a critical analysis of diverse sources and relies on participant observation in order to explain the example of Toledo in a holistic way, studying its principal features as a cultural touristic destination and addressing the main problems that the tourist activity in the city present. Finally, from a practical point of view, any planners or managers of historic cities that may consolidate tourist destinations are provided with an example of some of the problems, measures, solutions, errors and threats to cultural tourism in Toledo, in addition to providing reflections and proposals for the future.

KEYWORDS: Cultural tourism, Heritage tourism, Tourist destination, Tourism policies, Spain, Toledo.

RESUMEN:

El turismo cultural es una modalidad que viene expandiéndose en los últimos años y que ha atraído a numerosos teóricos. Por esta razón, resulta interesante analizar los destinos turísticos culturales consolidados, como Toledo. El artículo analiza un estudio de caso de uno de los más relevantes lugares de turismo patrimonial en España. Actualiza y amplía los artículos existentes sobre el turismo cultural de Toledo. Desde el punto de vista metodológico, se hace un análisis crítico de diversas fuentes y se recurre a la observación participante con el objetivo de explicar el ejemplo de Toledo de forma holística, estudiando conjuntamente sus rasgos principales como destino turístico cultural y abordando las problemáticas principales que presenta la actividad turística en la ciudad. Por último, desde el punto de vista práctico, se facilita a cualquier gestor o planificador de una ciudad histórica que sea destino consolidado de turismo cultural un ejemplo de los problemas, medidas, aciertos, errores y amenazas del turismo cultural en Toledo, además de reflexiones y propuestas de futuro.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Turismo cultural, Turismo patrimonial, Destino turístico, Políticas turísticas, España, Toledo.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism is a modality making up one of the main branches of tourism (Kajzar & Zedkova, 2013). In a general context of the growing tourism demand, historical cities as heritage ecosystems face the challenge of offering responsible and sustainable management (López, 2005). This challenge implies several management-based problems in historical cities (Russo & Van de Borg, 2002) as well as the development of the tourist activity (Arnold, Benson & Kaminski, 2014).

The principles of sustainability have not had enough effects yet, and there is a tendency in historic cities to an irreversible process of 'touristification' (Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois, 2001). McNulty (1993) states that strategic planning with a view to sustainability needs to be addressed in cultural tourism. The evolution of the conditions and the models of tourist travel have resulted in an increased demand for cultural tourism.

AUTHOR NOTES

* Profesor Titular de Universidad de Geografía Humana del Departamento de Geografía y Ordenación del Territorio de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha; E-mail: luisalfonso.escudero@uclm.es

Compared to the more traditional tourist model, which is focused on the summer months, preferably August, there is now a tendency to take more frequent tourism trips for shorter periods of time (Fache, 1994). As a result, the holiday period tends to be fragmented and distributed over different periods of the year. At the same time, an increasing number of people choose to take advantage of weekends and long weekend holidays to take small trips (Torres, 2006). These shorter stays involve more specific visits, and cultural tourism is perfectly suited to this growing demand.

We are currently experiencing a general process of growth in Tourism, particularly in the case of international tourism. With this growth, as Richards (2007b) suggests, it is inevitable that cultural visits would also grow in the recent years, given that an increasing number of tourist attractions are defined as cultural. The broad concept of culture has led to a growing supply of cultural goods and services, along with an increase in the cultural practice. Since the 1980s, the demand for cultural activities has increased since cultural consumption has become a factor of social distinction (Pulido, 2013). In terms of types of cultural sites and attractions visited, museums, historic sites and monument were the most important. This confirms the dominant role of heritage in the consumption patterns of cultural tourists (Richards, 2007).

Also, since then, experts in tourism have begun to focus on more segmented demands and specific cultural tourism products (Brito, 2007). Today, cultural tourism is an emerging typology having a wide margin of development. In fact, there are distinct types of cultural tourists who are typically classified based on their true degree of interest in culture. McKercher and Ducros (2003) point out that there are large differences between the general and the specific cultural tourists.

The 'ideal' cultural tourist only represents a small minority of the market (Bywater, 1993). In Toledo, as we shall explain in the results section and as demonstrated by Pérez Guilarte (2014) for Santiago de Compostela, the culturally motivated tourists are a minority component and it is clear that most of tourists visit the city for primarily recreational or pleasure-based reasons.

Cultural motivation tourism, although a minority, is the one that they want to attract to historic cities for their greater expenditure and lower environmental impact (McKercher, 2002).

Thus, an increase is produced in the supply and demand, resulting in an increase in cultural tourism and the generated profitability and employment. From a geographical perspective, this development has meant a significant opportunity for all countries that can offer a cultural product (Antón & González, 2005). Because every place has an inherited cultural heritage that may be used to create a cultural tourism referent (Timothy, 2011), this is not overly complicated. In the unlikely event that this is not the case, a territory can choose from the other modes included in the broad term of cultural tourism¹, from gastronomy (Bessiere, 2013) to popular festivals, creating their own supply. Indeed, it is normal for cultural tourist destinations to combine the two, offering both heritage products (Bushell, Staiff & Watson, 2013) and the so-called alternatives.

Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois (2001) have theoretically studied heritage as a tourist resource in European cities. These authors point out that the tourism potential of historic cities is determined by a number of factors, of which obviously the presence of interesting heritage buildings is only one aspect. Prentice (1993) tackle the relations between tourism and heritage attractions (1993). In a more general way, Van der Ark & Richards (2006) focus on the attractiveness of cultural activities in European cities.

Van Asworth & Tunbridge (2000), meanwhile, have looked at how to manage the heritage city, considering the historical cities as major tourist destinations. Garrod & Fyall (2000) speak specifically about how to manage the heritage tourism. The Spanish literature has dealt with the question of the historical cities as tourist destinations (Brito, 2007;) Stephen, 2001; Troitino, Garcia & de La Calle, 2003). Cultural tourism is related to urban destinations (Esteban 2008) as well as the complementary union between heritage and tourism (Troitiño & Troitino, 2010). In particular, it has been of interest to analyze tourism in the Spanish cities which are World Heritage Site (Almeida, 2007). Tourism planning and management have also been treated in a theoretical way, both in a more general framework (Anton & González, 2005) as focusing on

cultural tourism and in the historical Spanish cities (García, 2007). In the same way, we have studied the local tourism policies in the Spanish historical cities (de La Calle & García, 2016).

We carry out a profound case study of Toledo, historical a heritage city, which is one of the main cultural tourist destinations of Spain, along with Granada and the Alhambra and Santiago de Compostela and its Way. In 1998 a detailed explanation of the problems caused by tourism in Toledo at that time was provided by the research team led by Troitiño Vinuesa. In this article, problems were already dealt with as a growing increase in the number of visitors with a majority of hikers, the excessive concentration in a limited sector of the historical centre and the problems of mobility and accessibility generated by tourism at the end of the last century. Troitino et al. (1998) related these problems to the urban reality of the city and urban planning, proposing measures to better plan for the cultural tourism in Toledo. His research is the direct precedent for this article. Other Spanish researchers have been interested in the case of Toledo. García Álvarez (2007) has analyzed the origins of tourism in the city, the first tourist policies carried out and the creation of a heritage and historical image associated with certain icons, such as the painter El Greco. Zarate (2000) has described the city as a great tourist destination due to its status as a world heritage. In this sense, Troitiño (2005) has summarized about the heritage and cultural offer of Toledo and has analyzed its tourist functionality, mainly based on the number of annual visitors who receive major heritage. The aforementioned Zárate (2007 & 2016) has also demanded strict policies for the conservation of cultural landscapes in Toledo by pointing out that it would be a good strategy, given that the landscapes could be a new tourist product that would attract more tourists to the city, and would increase the temporary stay of the same. López (2005) prefers to make a sustainable development of tourism in Toledo also based on heritage and landscape conservation, in this case by proposing a control of the growth of tourism. From the field of the economics and business, Diaz et al. (2007) have investigated the tourism demand of Toledo, segmenting it into market profiles and Esteban, Gómez & Molina (2013) have analyzed the habits and, above all, tourism expenditure of visitors in Toledo through a survey on a work commissioned by the city of Toledo and not published.

The structure of the article responds to the logical organization of introduction, methodology and discussion of the results, reflections and proposals on the open questions. In the results, we present the findings of the study and some of the practical implications of our study with a summary table showing the measures developed in Toledo to solve the problems related to tourism and with some proposals and reflections for the future of this activity in this city. After presenting our results, we offer a discussion section which includes some of the contributions and limitations of our study. Finally, a final conclusion is made.

This research structure responds to our study objectives, which are the following:

- a) To use the example of Toledo as a consolidated tourist destination in Spain, detailing its attractive features and studying basic statistical data on tourism in the city with the difficulty of really knowing how many visitors they receive.
- b) To analyze the current problems of the tourist activity in the city of Toledo, the measures that have been adopted and the local tourism agents who have carried them out, the results obtained, the errors committed and the threats remaining.
- c) To offer proposals and reflections for tourism in Toledo in the future.

Having complied with these objectives, we wish to offer a contribution for both the related literature and the public management in the tourism sector. In this sense, we wish to update studies conducted in the 1990s, and from the Spanish research literature, on cultural tourism in Toledo. The paper is a case study with discussion of problems and proposals to address them. Proposals and reflections for the future management may be of interest to policy makers and managers of the tourism sector in Toledo.

2. METHODOLOGY

This article aims to study the case study of Toledo as a consolidated destination of cultural tourism in a holistic manner. That is the main plan of analysis and the methodology conforms to it. The objectives that we set are different and involve both characterizing tourism in Toledo, as well as discovering their main problems and measures that have been made to try to solve them, as well as to make proposals and reflections for the future of tourism in Toledo. It is not a partial study of just one aspect of the cultural tourism in Toledo, but an overview of the entire issue. Many are the points that we will address and for each of them it was necessary to search for references, information and data. For each question, specific sources have been searched individually. With the obtained data we aim to respond to each one of the objectives of the article.

For this reason, we chose to resort to collecting multiple information and data from various sources and not strictly to the wide development of a single source (as Gali (2005) does for Girona analyzing tourist guides) or a single investigative technique, as for example a survey (as Richards (2007) for the study of cultural tourism in various European cities). We believe that accomplishing the goals forced us to a general effort. Other similar case studies also resort to gathering multiple sources as the one of Duarte (2015) that analyzes the cultural tourism in the patrimonial Spanish city of Córdoba. Fundamentally, the previous literary precedents that addressed the case of Toledo in general (Troitiño Vinuesa et al., 1998;) Zarate, 2000; Lopez, 2005; Troitino, 2005) also rely on extensive use of sources in their research. In our case, to be able to carry out our research we used the Hotel Occupancy Survey of the National Institute of Statistics, analyzing the city's recent tourism planning (the Tourism Excellence Plan and the 2020 Strategic Action Plan), data from the survey conducted by Esteban, Gómez and Molina (2013), figures from the Consortium of Toledo and, finally, an analysis of auxiliary sources such as tourism brochures, communications media and websites.

Also, in order to prove two issues treated in particular, the tourist attraction of the celebration of cultural events and historical commemorations in the city and the degree of tourist use of their heritages, decided to resort to two empirical papers. It is a survey carried out among visitors of Toledo at the end of the Year of El Greco in 2014 and an investigation that includes field work and interviews with visitors to assess the tourist use of the heritage listed in the city. Both studies are employed very synthetically here, a first approximation to results that are intended to expand in other works.

Literary review, the analysis of the information and data collected and two empirical exercises together with the experience and observations of the researcher in the city have been the base to understand in a holistic way the reality and problems of Toledo as a cultural tourist destination, obtain the results that we have presented and, by deduction, the main content of the study.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Toledo. A consolidated cultural tourist destination

The city of Toledo, with its medieval old quarter and unique landscapes, has been a protected site since the early 1940s, when it was designated as a National Historic-Artistic Site. With more than 120 Sites of Cultural Interest (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, 2015), it was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in November 1986. For many sites inscription of the World Heritage List acts as a promotional device and a factor that increases the number of tourists (Bourdeau, Gravari-Barbas & Robinson, 2015). The cities or historical sites declared World Heritage constitute a crucial added value to ensure the existence of a rich historical and cultural heritage that meets the demands of cultural tourists (Cordente et al., 2011). Toledo is clearly a cultural tourist destination (Figure 1),² in which the appeal of its heritage resources (Troitiño, 2005) do not require an active policy of promotion or creativity and innovation to renew its

supply. Although we shall observe that there are a number of issues arising from tourism that do require intervention, Toledo needs only to offer its resources in order to be considered a significant cultural tourism destination (Garcia, 2007).

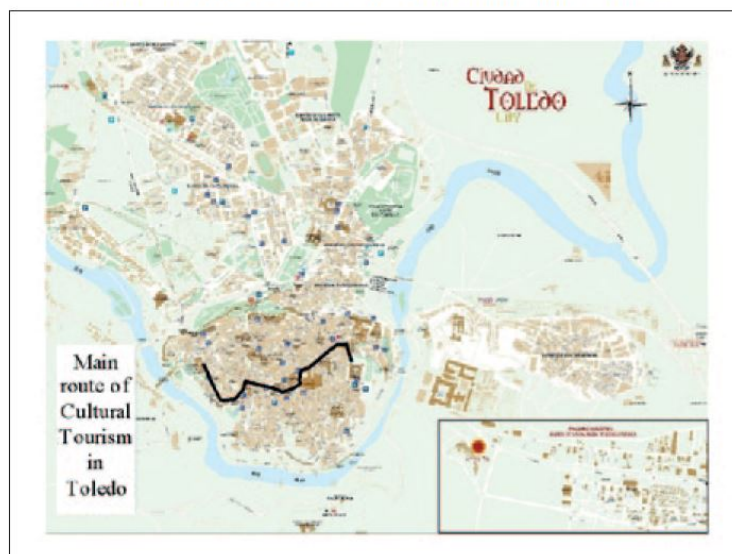
Figure 1: Toledo, cultural tourist destination.



Author's photograph.

Despite this enormous availability of heritage resources, the sites that are most frequently visited by travelers are concentrated in a few monuments that constitute the core of the tourist visit (Troitiño & Troitiño, 2010), which we can use to establish a route. This is a tourist route that basically coincides with the route followed by organized groups of visitors, mainly by tour operators, and that is repeated by most individual visitors. Although there are no complete statistics on this phenomenon, it can be seen that a great number of tourists in Toledo end up visiting the Army Museum in Alcázar or at least viewing this building from outside, in addition to the Cathedral, el Greco's painting of the Burial of Count Orgaz in the Santo Tomé Church, the house of El Greco, the Synagogues of El Tránsito and Santa María, and the Monastery of San Juan de los Reyes. Between May and July 2013, a group of professors from the University of Castilla-La Mancha, in collaboration with the Toledo Tourism Council, conducted a survey of 434 visitors to the city, with a margin of error of less than 5% (Esteban, Gómez & Molina, 2013). According to the survey, the Cathedral was the most visited monument, followed by the Synagogue of El Tránsito and the monastery of San Juan de los Reyes. Visitors to the city of Toledo move along the streets and main roads that link these milestones (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Typical visitor route in the old town of Toledo.



Source: By Author from the map of the City of Toledo.

Furthermore, as main tourist attractions, festive and cultural events must be added to the heritage values of the city. Among the festive events, we can highlight the Easter processions, declared in 2014 as a Festival of International Interest. These processions, as in many other places in Spain, attract visitors. However, in Toledo, the Corpus Christi celebration is of special note. It has been a Festival of International Interest since the first year in which the administration applied this designation in 1980. Dating back to the fourteenth century, it is the main religious event (and arguably the main social event) in Toledo, and it has become one of the city symbols of tourist attraction.

Toledo also repeatedly celebrates culturally-oriented events, using commemorations of historical significance, such as the fifth Centennial of the birth of Charles V, the fourth Centennial of Don Quixote, etc. Such is the case with the year 2014, commemorating the fourth Centennial of the death of El Greco, with a strong investment in the celebration and a clear commitment to the promotion of tourism in Toledo and Castilla-La Mancha through the Year of El Greco. The main events included the organization of two major exhibitions at the Museum of Santa Cruz, The Greek of Toledo and El Greco: Art and Craft. Furthermore, in the town, the so-called El Greco Spaces (Figure 3) were created. These spaces are heritage buildings of Toledo, with examples of its artistic work such as the Chapel of St. Joseph, the convent of Santo Domingo el Antiguo, the Sacristy of the Cathedral of Toledo, the Duke of Lerma Museum at the Hospital of Tavera, and the Burial of the Count of Orgaz in the Church of Saint Tomé (which in itself, with half a million visitors (De la Calle, 2001), is one of the main tourist attractions in any year). Undoubtedly, the Centennial of the death of El Greco has provided an extra boost to tourism in the city of Toledo, increasing the number of visitors to the city and the economic benefits they generate during 2014. According to the National Statistics Institute [INE] (2015), the number of travelers in Toledo in 2014 increased by 20.69%, compared to 2013, increasing from 491,362 to 593,028; and overnight stays in Toledo increased by 21.6%, from 738,586 to 898,547.

Figure 3: Map of El Greco Spaces.



Source: Alonso, 2014.

In order to check the impact of the Year of El Greco we conducted a survey among visitors to Toledo in December 2014. In the historical centre we made a questionnaire to 543 national and international visitors, both tourists and hikers. The results of this survey covered an investigation into the effect of events organization in cultural tourist destinations, which are still being carried out. The questionnaire asked the visitor if he knew that he was celebrating the anniversary of the death of El Greco in Toledo. 80,11% of respondents said yes, therefore the vast majority. It also asked if they had visited or thought to visit some of El Greco Spaces. 69,61% of the visitors answered yes. The percentage is lower, but still two out of every three respondents were, or thought to go to the temporary exhibition spaces designed on the occasion of the commemoration.

They were also asked what the main motivations for their visit to Toledo were, with a possibility of open response. Here, only 12.5% of the questioned said the Year of The Greco as a cause of their visit to Toledo (the most numerous response were related with the heritage and the history of the city, generally 40,88%). Overview, demonstrates the impact of The Year of El Greco in our survey, mainly on the success of their promotion, since the majority of visitors knew of the celebration of the event. However, this reason as main attraction for tourists visiting Toledo is reduced, weighing more the idea of Toledo as heritage and historical city.

Toledo, therefore, is a consolidated cultural tourism destination in Spain, on the level of other major locations such as Granada with its Alhambra or Santiago de Compostela. It is a must-see for many Spanish and international tourists. However, many of these visitors prefer to spend a day in Toledo as opposed to overnight stays, being, therefore, day trippers and not tourists in the strictest sense of the word (Alonso, 2003). For this reason, and also because of the known difficulty of finding tourism statistics on a local scale, we do not know the actual number of visitors Toledo receives annually. We do not have a diachronic series of public data from a heritage site with mandatory access through the entrance and to which the vast majority of visitors to the city go, as is the case with the Alhambra in Granada (for 2014, given the exceptionality that marked the fourth Centennial of the Death of El Greco, the Archbishop of Toledo provided an estimated figure of 900,000 visitors to the media (Diario ABC, 2015), but we were unable to access accurate data on the number of annual visitors to the Toledo Cathedral beyond the media news accounts). Of course, we also lack a way of counting visitors as is done in Compostela to track visitors in Santiago (Lois & Medina, 2003; Lois & Santos, 2015). We must use estimates that suggest approximately two million visitors in Toledo (Almeida, 2007; De la Calle, 2001; De la Calle & García, 2016; Troitiño, 2005; Troitiño, Garcia & De la Calle, 2003; Zárate, 2000).

As noted above, the Statistical Institute of Spain [INE] conducts a monthly and annual Hotel Occupancy Survey, with data from all hotel establishments recorded as such in the corresponding register of the Tourism Councils of each Autonomous Community. The survey, which is conducted at different scales, i.e., national, regional, and provincial, and by tourist area and tourist sites, is a major point of reference in the analysis of tourism in Spain. The municipalities where tourist concentration is significant are considered tourist spots, and Toledo is one of the spots studied. In the survey, with regard to demand, the number of travelers (all travelers who spend one or more consecutive nights in the same accommodation), number of nights (every night that a traveler stays in the establishment), and average length of stay are analyzed. In tourist spots, these data are broken down by month and by country of residence; on this scale, as in others, there is no information on the Autonomous Region in which the tourists live.

The statistic problems of using this source for the analysis of cultural tourism in Toledo are manifold. First, it is a survey that is conducted over seven consecutive randomly chosen days in each month so that, among all the establishments, the entire month is covered; however, as it is evident, the data are an approximation of the actual totals, given that a complete recount is not performed. On the other hand, only the travelers who stay overnight in a hotel are recorded, and travelers who stay at the residences of family or friends while visiting Toledo are not included. At the same time, not everyone who stays at hotels in Toledo perform a tourist activity since they may have other reasons and purposes for their stay. Finally, travelers who do not spend the night in the city, i.e., day trippers, which, in the case of Toledo, form a very large group, are not included in this survey.

However, understanding the limitations of the source, Table 1 shows that the number of travelers in Toledo has increased from approximately 390,000 in the year 2000 to 491,000 in 2013 and the number of overnight stays increased from approximately 568,500 in 2000 to 738,500 in 2013. Since 2003, the number of guests and overnight stays in the city has increased, albeit with different inter-annual variations, and with the exception of the years of the Spanish economic crisis (2007, 2008, and 2009) when both concepts decrease. The year 2014, as noted above, experienced a quantum leap of more than 20% as compared to 2013,

which must be directly related to the success of the commemoration of the fourth Centennial of The Death of El Greco.

Table 1: Travelers and overnight stays in Toledo, 2000-2014.

TRAVELERS					OVERNIGHTS				
Year	Total	Spanish (%)	Foreign (%)	Annual change (%)	Year	Total	Spanish (%)	Foreign (%)	Annual Change (%)
2000	389,856	-----	-----	-----	2000	568,398	-----	-----	-----
2001	391,574	-----	-----	0.44	2001	596,170	-----	-----	4.89
2002	379,302	-----	-----	-3.13	2002	590,298	-----	-----	-0.98
2003	375,985	64.49	35.51	-0.87	2003	575,804	65.48	34.52	-2.46
2004	412,495	69.25	30.75	9.71	2004	639,269	69.56	30.44	11.02
2005	434,615	72.46	27.54	5.36	2005	677,065	72.63	27.37	5.91
2006	450,669	70.77	29.23	3.69	2006	729,706	71.51	28.49	7.77
2007	465,418	71.56	28.44	3.27	2007	742,054	72.12	27.88	1.69
2008	448,007	71.10	28.90	-3.74	2008	728,138	71.93	28.07	-1.88
2009	441,644	72.82	27.18	-1.42	2009	694,483	73.20	26.80	-4.62
2010	460,795	70.70	29.30	4.34	2010	719,281	71.99	28.01	3.57
2011	462,063	67.77	32.23	0.28	2011	718,745	68.13	31.87	-0.07
2012	468,633	67.27	32.73	1.42	2012	700,796	67.57	32.43	-2.50
2013	491,362	68.24	31.76	4.85	2013	738,586	69.05	30.95	5.39
2014	593,028	70.43	29.57	20.69	2014	898,547	71.43	28.57	21.66

Source: Hotel Occupancy Survey.³

As for the proportion of foreigners in Toledo, the Hotel Occupancy Survey (National Statistics Institute [INE], 2015) shows inter-annual fluctuations; however, when analyzing the data (see Table 1), we find an approximate 30% of international tourism and 70% domestic tourism, both in number of travelers and number of overnight stays. We can conclude that Toledo is a destination that is primarily based on domestic cultural tourism, although also having a presence in international tourism.

Finally, the aforementioned qualitative survey of the researchers at the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Esteban Gómez & Molina, 2013) offers interesting information on visitor opinions of Toledo with regards to the main perceptions that they have of the city and their possible return to this destination: travelers score the city a 9.2 out of 10. They describe it as “beautiful, impressive, and monumental”, and most declare their intention to return. This positive assessment by the visitors is one of the great strengths of this cultural tourism destination; however, we shall now consider some of its weaknesses.

3.2. Problems of cultural tourism in Toledo: excessive day trips, a limited tourist use of the available heritage sites and complicated accessibility and mobility

As we have just shown, Toledo is a major destination for cultural tourism. The total number of visitors and the economic benefits produced by tourism are substantial, although they can always be expanded, and tourism is one of the main economic engines of the city.

However, the development of cultural tourism in Toledo is a major and disturbing issue, the solutions to which would result in increased productivity to the activity and would also significantly increase its quality. The great effort in 1998 by the research team led by Troitiño Vinuesa (Troitiño et al., 1998) has already

provided a detailed explanation of the problems caused by tourism in Toledo at that time. In this article, we move this situation to the present moment, also taking an interest in the measures that local tourism agents have taken to solve the problems. Here, we group these issues into three main points which are closely interrelated: first, excessive day trips; second, the limitation of cultural tourism to a few heritage sites; and third, the problematic issue of accessibility and the visitors mobility. Traditionally, visitors to Toledo have been linked to the proximity of the state capital, Madrid, located just 70 kilometers away and less than an hour away by road. Day excursions derive flow of visitors from large sources of tourist attraction to its immediate environment. Thus, Toledo, as a historic and heritage-filled city near Madrid, is an interesting destination, as other cities such as Segovia, Ávila, Cuenca, San Lorenzo del Escorial, and Aranjuez. All of these cities, like Toledo, are World Heritage Sites. Madrid serves as a place of origin from which the inhabitants of this populated area travel to Toledo for a cultural visit, mainly on weekends and holidays. At the same time, Madrid is the main destination of the interior of Spain, both in terms of domestic and international tourism. Some of these tourists decide to include a visit to Toledo as a complementary activity of their tourist trip to Madrid, either on their own or through the supply of tour operators and other travel services (according to Díaz et al. (2007), a total of 21.2% of the visitors to Toledo come from trips with tour operators that offer organized visits to Toledo from the capital of Madrid). The phenomenon of the day trip to Toledo has also increased since November 2005, when the high-speed railway line Madrid-Toledo was opened, with an ample hourly frequency, reducing travel time to less than half an hour. In all of these cases, in general, we are speaking of visitors who will spend a day or a few hours visiting Toledo and who do not stay overnight, i.e., day trippers. The total number of day trippers received by the city is very high, and together with Santiago de Compostela, they are the two World Heritage cities of Spain having the greatest number of day trips (Almeida, 2007). It is difficult to estimate the exact number of day trippers, since a considerable number of visitors from Madrid's urban area travel in their own cars and are therefore never recorded. However, in comparing the aforementioned researchers' estimate of two million annual visitors to Toledo with the figure of 593,028 travelers who stayed overnight from the 2014 Hotel Occupancy Survey, the difference is remarkable.

Day trippers from different places of origin constitute a group that is quite large but that has a clear impact on the economic benefits derived from Toledo's cultural tourism. The 2013 study by the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Esteban, Gómez & Molina, 2013) indicates that the average expenditure per person per day for visitors to Toledo is 70 euros, but for day trippers, the amount is 57 euros and, for tourists, 83 euros. Additionally, the expenditure of the day trippers is clearly limited to one day, whereas the expenditure of tourists stretches over a longer period of time.

Faced with this problem, both the private and public agents of Toledo's cultural tourism have attempted to act, claiming to increase the number of overnight stays and the average stay of tourists in the city. Thus, this was one of the objectives of the Toledo Plan for Tourist Excellence (PET)⁴ that was developed between 2001 and 2005. One of the main objectives of PET was the lengthening of the average stay of tourists, increasing hotel occupancy through an improvement plan that included promotion, encouraging night visits, and assisting the hotel industry. Currently, for the Municipal Board of Tourism in Toledo⁵, increasing the number and duration of overnight stays remains a main objective to be achieved in their promotional campaigns.

As for the private sector, the economic importance of cultural tourism justifies the growing interest of local businesses in this activity and by its agencies such as the Business Federation of Toledo (Federación de Empresarios de Toledo [FEDETO]), and, within it, the Provincial Association of Hospitality and Tourism Businesses of Toledo and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Toledo. Increasing the number of overnight stays of tourists in Toledo, with the support of the public promotion indicated, is an area of interest. The efforts of the entrepreneurs have focused on extending and improving the hotel supply, increasing overnight stays, and raising the hotel occupancy rate (Zárate, 2007). To that end, the number of

hotel rooms is on the rise, with an increase of 42.5% from an average of 3,137 rooms available in 2004 to 4,474 in 2014 (National Statistics Institute [INE], 2015), while attempting to guide the supply of hotels to a demand for higher quality. In the 1980s there were only 591 rooms (Troitiño & Troitiño, 2010). At a promotional level, the Provincial Association of Hospitality and Tourism Businesses of Toledo maintains the webpage *Disfruta de Toledo* (<http://www.disfrutadetoledo.com>), which attempts to present the city's supply of hotels and restaurants online and provide a system of virtual reservations.

Figure 4: *Tourist bracelet promotion in the Jesuit Church in Toledo.*



Author's photograph.

Even the Archbishop of Toledo (Olsen (2011) has studied the intersections between religion and tourism), owning and managing much of the historical and artistic heritage of the city, he has proposed innovative measures to promote cultural tourism in the city and expand the supply to extend the average stay of visitors. In this way, and through the project called Toledo Monumental (<http://www.toledomonumental.com/>), he has brought together six town monuments to market a shared entry ticket with the tourist bracelet product (Figure 4).

Cultural tourism in Toledo is mainly limited to a few cultural sites and the arteries that link them. Outside these streets, according to Zárata (2007), there is a considerable lack of activity, in addition to the monuments and potential tourist routes.

In order to delve into this issue (and others) we are conducting research through fieldwork and interviews with visitors on tourist use of the 111 heritages classified as monumental by the Special Plan for the Historical Center with comprehensive protection (Toledo City Council, 2007). So far, only 51 estate buildings of the catalogued have been analyzed, but some partial results are already interesting, not in a conclusive way but as explanatory references. In our research, one of the discussed aspects is the tourist adaptation of the property listed by checking if there is possibility to visit and, if so, its conditions, and also studying the external and internal signage, the materials of tourism communication in different formats (brochures, audio guides, mobile applications, etc.) and the existing services for visitors (reception, souvenir shops, bathrooms, cafeteria, etc.). From the analyzed goods, more than half, 58.9 %, do not have any kind of tourist adaptation. Of course, they remain closed to visitors. Similarly, we also analyze the tourist use of the heritages catalogued by six half an hour counts of visitors in different times and periods throughout the year, establishing profiling (gender, age, groups or isolated individuals, etc.) and conducting interviews. Simply considering that there

would be a minimal tourist use (would be enough simple external contemplation, to also include those buildings where the entrance is not possible) in those heritages that have at least 10 visitors in half an hour, we would have that 42% would not even reach that top on any of the counts made.

A clear problem for Toledo's cultural tourism is the development of the activity to a very small proportion of the city's heritage sites, leaving the remainder under-utilized. On the other hand, given that Toledo's cultural tourism is a mass activity that attracts a considerable number of visitors throughout the year, especially on certain dates such as holidays and weekends, when these tourists and day trippers concentrate on a few streets and landmarks in the historic center, a problem of mass tourism in these areas is created. This mass winds up creating a loss of identity due to the excessive tourist pressure placed on certain citizens in Toledo, a serious problem that undermines both the experience of the visitors and the cultural values of the city's heritage and its social uses beyond tourism. Finally, regarding the issue of day trippers, extending the visit to Toledo to a greater number of heritage sites would also extend their length of stay and would thereby justify longer stays in the city.

This second problem has also been detected by the managers of Toledo's cultural tourism and, in this case, being a question of promoting and improving the management of the cultural heritage available in the city for sightseeing, has been a concern primarily for local governments. These agencies have attempted to bring together new tourism products, better managerial services to host visitors such as tourist information booths, and even direct marketing. Currently, the Town Hall of Toledo undertakes programs such as Encounters with Jewry or Arab Toledo to diversify the city's cultural tourism supply and to promote awareness of a greater number of heritage sites. However, it has been noted that the infrastructure for managing municipal tourism in Toledo is actually extremely weak (García, 2007), and therefore, the task of the promotion and dissemination of these programs has been inadequate to address the problem of overcrowding and the concentration of cultural tourism in the city.

Regarding this second problem, it is more interesting to note the work that has been undertaken by another public body, the Consortium of the City of Toledo, which, since 2001, has been the management body of the Royal Board of the City of Toledo. In Spain, there are three royal boards that function as permanent professional bodies under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports: Cuenca, Santiago de Compostela and Toledo. In the city of Toledo, the Royal Board was created in 1998 with the goal of strengthening and enhancing the city's opportunities for cultural and touristic development (García, 2007). The Consortium, its managing body, has organized several tours and guided visits for unfrequented places located outside of the traditional routes of Toledo's tourism. These routes, launched in 2004 under the common name of Unknown Heritage, include free and guided visits to various monuments, archaeological sites, and other sites of particular interest that have been combined and put to good use by the Consortium (<http://www.consorcio.toledo.com>). Currently, 21 structures are included in this program, to varying degrees of exploitation. However, according to the Consortium figures, this initiative remains incipient, given that, in 2010, this unknown heritage was only discovered by 82,000 people.

The main problem is that visitors to Toledo, most of which are day trippers and not tourists, respond to the cultural tourism profile in consolidated and mass destinations. In his doctoral thesis, Perez Guilarte (2014) showed that culturally-motivated tourists are a minority component in these destinations, representing only 16% of the total visitors to Santiago de Compostela. It is clear that the majority of

Figure 5: Main car parks and escalators in the center of Toledo.



Source: By Author based on Google Earth.

tourists travel for recreation and pleasure, to the detriment of more profound learning experiences. For this reason, increasing visits to the less known cultural heritage city of Toledo is a difficult task.

Cultural tourism in Toledo focuses almost exclusively on the historic quarter, a center with a unique layout. Indeed, from a landscape perspective, its layout is one of its main offerings. Toledo is situated on a steep, rocky crag surrounded by the winding course of the Tagus River. This location creates a great unevenness. Furthermore, the main origin of this town is medieval and Muslim, and to this day it remains characterized by a labyrinthine urban layout with many narrow streets. The arrangement of the buildings in the historic center of Toledo is compact, seeking maximum use of the existing ground within the walled enclosure.

The roads make the pedestrian route somewhat complicated, with this situation being exacerbated by motor traffic, given that many roads barely have the minimum width for the passage of a normally sized car. In this urban area, there are few open spaces, squares, and parks, and therefore, there are limited parking areas available in this entire sector. Furthermore, it should be considered that we are addressing a very large historic center, having an approximate surface area of 122 hectares. However, access to the quarter is limited, with the point of entry being the ancient city wall. In short, all of these conditions alone impede access, traffic, and pedestrian mobility in the historical center of Toledo.

For example, the first difficult problem to address that of parking, given that many visitors arrive in their private vehicles and since the residents and workers of the city also need to park.

The Town Hall has attempted to resolve this problem through the progressive construction of paid underground parking areas both in the northwestern entry, in the area of Recadero, and in the northeast, in the place known as Miradero, as well as within the historic center with a parking lot next to Toledo's Alcazar, the Corralillo of San Miguel (Figure 5). Free outdoor parking areas near the Safont bus station and the newly created Azarquiel train station, both far from the historic center, have been made available.

These parking areas are also intended to dissuade car use within the old quarter. To that end and to facilitate accessibility, these parking places, through significant investment, are beginning to be combined

with escalators. The oldest is in Recadero, and in 2014, the escalator at Safont was completed. Finally, municipal policy has restricted traffic on certain streets, only permitting residents, public transportation, and vehicles delivering goods to pass, and in some cases, with a system of automatic bollards.

Despite these measures that have been undertaken in an attempt to improve access to and mobility in Toledo's historic center, the problem remains since individual drivers continue to try to access and park in the old quarter. In addition, underground car parking is paid, and many people are unwilling to assume this cost.

Finally, we should consider the newcomer's logical lack of knowledge regarding the existence of the parking lots and escalators. Focusing on this latter issue -the need to inform visitors to Toledo- the city's Town Hall, with measures outlined in the PET, built a Visitor Reception Center. It is a large reception and information center located at the entrance of the Madrid – Toledo highway. The center had a municipal information office and a parking lot for reducing vehicle entrance to the historic center with a shuttle service. It is equipped with large exhibition spaces, an auditorium, a cafe, a restaurant, and a garden, but currently, it has only sporadic hospitality business event use.

Only three and a half years after beginning activities in November 2011, the Visitor Reception Center, which never reached high performance levels, was closed. The bank mortgage debt from this project nears eight million euros. It has been a resounding failure (De la Calle & Garcia, 2016). Pedersen (2005) recommended in his manual of Management of World Heritage Tourism that instead of devoting considerable sums to large infrastructure projects such as complex centres of reception, the least expensive solutions can be more effective, for example a program that involves contact between visitors and staff management.

To summarize, in Table 2 we have presented the three analyzed problems of tourism in the city of Toledo, the main measures adopted, their results, the threats that remain and the errors committed. There is a common conclusion in all three cases, the results of the solutions carried out have been insufficient. With respect to hiking, it has been increasing the number of overnight stays and there are more hotel beds available; However the average stay of the tourist in Toledo remains low and there are still around three hikers by every tourist in this cultural tourist destination. In relation to the limited use of the heritages, the heritage places to visit have been expanded and innovative tourism products have been created, but still most of visitors concentrate on the route and popular tourist sites and tourist overcrowding is evident. And in relation to the difficult accessibility and mobility in the historical centre of Toledo, there have been significant improvements in pedestrian movements and positive deterrence with the new system of external parking; however, blockages in the traffic are frequent and the great performance of creating a visitor reception center failed.

In the inadequacy of the results of the corrective action on the problems of the tourist activity of Toledo it should be noted that there is a number of threats that hamper the success of any strategy to develop. The proximity to the urban area of Madrid, the availability of a high-speed train linking the to the State capital, one day trips sold by tour operators and the lack of involvement of the private tourist agents, make any solution for hiking difficult. Overcrowding and saturation of tourism in the main heritage attractions of the city are a very powerful force that makes it difficult to diversify the heritages that can be visited in the city. Finally, the intensive use of the car, both by residents, workers and visitors, the traffic of buses and the fact that motorists continue parking in the historical centre, together with the ignorance of newcomers from the external parking deterrent are elements that make it difficult for the success of the improvements carried out in the accessibility and mobility of the historical centre.

The difficulties are, therefore, varied and complicated and hinder solutions to be successful. In addition, in some aspects important mistakes have been made. Promotional campaigns have not been successful enough to reduce hiking, strong investments in tourist enhancement of new heritages do not correspond with the

number of final visitors in cases as the Unknown Heritage Program and the stated strategy of creating a Reception Centre for Visitors has been a serious economic and strategic waste.

Table 2: Tourism problems in Toledo, measures adopted, their results, threats and errors.

Problem	Measures	Results	Threats and errors
Day trippers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Plan of Excellence. • Tourism promotion for the increase in overnight stays. • Nocturnal visits. • Tourism bracelet. • Public assistance to the hotel sector. • Implication of tourism agents, private venues. • Increase in the offer and hotel quality. • Use of the information technologies, such as websites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase in overnight stays. – More hotel spots available. – Mean stay of the tourist. – Three day trippers per tourist, in a realistic estimation. – Insufficient results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The urban area of Madrid. ▪ High level tourism operators ▪ Lack of implication of private, non-local tourism agents (Madrid-based and global, mainly). ▪ The high speed train. ▪ Error: faulty promotion campaigns.
Limited use of heritage sites (overcrowding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourist bracelet. • New tourism products: routes. • <i>The Unknown Heritage</i> of the Consortium of Toledo Tourism promotion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Extension of the added tourism value of the heritage. – New heritage sites that may be visited. – New tourism products. – Insufficient results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overcrowding and saturation derived from tourism in the main heritage attractions in the city. ▪ Error: large investment with limited results such as the <i>The Unknown Heritage</i> program.
Complicated accessibility and mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid underground parking. • Deterrence of above ground parking, free but distanced. • Lifts to the historical center via escalators. • Traffic restriction in some areas (automatic pivots). • Outdoor areas for parking and bus unloading. • Visitor Reception Center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improvement in pedestrian mobility in the historic center. – Improvement of pedestrian accessibility. – Positive deterrence with the parking system. – Failure of the Visitor Reception Center. – Common traffic jams in the access ways. – Insufficient results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The power of the automobile as the main means of transport in our society. Visitors go to the historic center, but residents and workers with their own vehicles also do so. ▪ Buses continue to offer access to the historic center. ▪ Many drivers continue trying to park in the historic center. ▪ Lack of knowledge of newly arrived. ▪ Error: Huge mis-spending of the public investment in the failed Visitor Reception Center.

Overall, the problems continue today. Certain measures of Toledo's 2020 Strategic Action Plan undertaken by the City Hall of Toledo (<http://www.estrategiatoledo2020.com>), particularly those measures related to Toledo's tourism such as Act 8.1: Enhancing the fifth sector: culture and tourism (in line 8 of the plan: definition of an economic strategy based on the potential of Toledo), serve as proof of these shortcomings and the intention to improve local tourism policy. The objectives are to expand tourism, consolidating new products or strengthening synergies with other economic sectors, and to modernize tourist services, with a particular focus on the qualifications of human capital. The future of cultural tourism in Toledo depends upon how this new political action may alleviate the problems arising from this unique destination.

3.3. Proposals and reflections for the future for problems of tourist activity in Toledo

After having studied the problems of cultural tourism, the measures that have been developed to try to solve them and the insufficient scope of its results despite the achievements made, a set of initiatives for the future of tourism in Toledo are proposed. To do so, we start from the recognition of the limitations that make it difficult for any corrective proposal to be developed. Finally, a series of final thoughts are made on the future of the cultural tourism in Toledo from each of the three issues. In the table 3 we schematically present all these issues. As Jansen-Verbeke & Lieovois (2001) recommend, we propose guidelines for the future tourist management of Toledo, taking into account the implications and the anticipated effects of the measures, as well as a reflection on the unintended effects.

With regard to the first problem, that of excessive hiking, the limitation is marked by the proximity to the urban area of Madrid. Obviously, Madrid will always be near Toledo and will always lead to its residents and its visitors to be attracted by the possibility of travel hours to the nearby World Heritage City. Excursions to Toledo meet basic conditions, typical of this type of travel: their content is not too complex, they are adaptable to audiences with few previous cultural knowledge, they are affordable, low or medium priced, and they are very standardized in the knowledge of the public (Troitiño & Troitino, 2010). Taking this framework into account, we intend to continue with the promotion of the tourist destination of Toledo with appropriate strategies. To do this, they must analyze campaigns which have been successful, increasing the number of overnight stays and the average length of stay of tourists, and renew them. Similarly, they have to imitate successful measures of other similar destinations. We must also continue with the improvement and expansion of the hotel offer, at the same time that other residential growth patterns, such as dwellings rented temporarily to tourists are regulated. In addition, the involvement of private actors external to the city is essential to achieve the increase in overnight stays. Thus, they intend to reach agreements with operators that are offering one day trips to Toledo in Madrid so that they also sell trips with stays.

In relation to the second problem, the limited tourist use of the heritages of Toledo and the overcrowding that is generated, there are also great difficulties to overcome. The city receives a majority of visitors with a poor cultural motivation and this is a clear limit for these people to get away from the main tourist route. In the same way, given that a large part of the visitors are hikers who are few hours in Toledo they would hardly have enough time to fully access all of the rich heritage available in the city. Taking this limitation into account, we intend to continue giving touristic value to new heritages. It has to be done, in addition, not exclusively with those available in the historic center but also with those located outside as, for example, cultural landscapes, as proposed by Zárate (2007 & 2016).

Alternative tourist routes have to be created with the new heritage sites and promote them properly. In this sense, it is very important to reach agreements with operators and tour guides operating in the city so that they incorporate the new visit routes into their itineraries. Another interesting proposal is the improving of signage and channel visitors trying to avoid saturation problems.

The problem of difficult accessibility and mobility has four clear limitations to any measure: a peculiar historic site, its slopes, its great surface and few access. With this in mind, we intend to continue with more regulatory actions to improve the traffic, as those already implemented. The issue of tourist buses must clearly be regulated by prohibiting their access to the historical centre.

Table 3: Proposals and reflections for the future for problems of tourist activity in Toledo.

Problem	Proposals, limitations and reflection
Day trippers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To continue with the promotion with appropriate strategies: analyzing campaigns that have been successful and renovating them, imitating the successful measures of similar tourist destinations. b) To continue with the improvement and extension of the hotel offering, while at the same time, regulating and caring for other growing residential modalities such as properties rented to tourists on a temporary basis. c) To look for the implication of private external agents for the increase in overnight stays. For example, making agreements with operators selling excursions for a day in Toledo from Madrid so that they also offer trips with overnight stays. – Limitation: the urban area of Madrid is always there and offers a great deal of day trippers. – Reflection: In terms of sustainability, are we interested in increasing the number of tourists? Toledo is a city with less than 90,000 inhabitants who already receive two million visitors annually.
Limited use of heritage sites (overcrowding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promotion of alternative routes and new heritage sites. b) Continue to include heritage, also that which is not located in the historic center. c) Make agreements with tour guides and operators bringing groups to Toledo for new visits routes. d) To improve signs and guide tourists so as to prevent saturation issues. – Limitation: the majority of visitors have insufficient cultural motivation to extend beyond the usual tourist routes. Furthermore, many are day trippers and are not in the city for sufficient time. – Reflection: Should more heritage sites be highlighted for tourism or for society? Do we wish to increase tourist overcrowding and the cultural trivialization of new heritage spaces?
Complicated accessibility and mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To continue with the most regulatory measures to improve accessibility and mobility. b) To prohibit access to all tourism buses. c) To regulate urban bus lines so that the historic center (Plaza de Zocodover) is no longer the arrival and exit point for the majority of lines. d) To design a program that implies contact between visitors and management personnel for the visitor reception and information. – Limitation: location, unevenness, large surface area and scarce access to the historic center. – Reflection: In line with the idea of sustainable city and tourism, should the automobile be relied upon for access and mobility in the historic center?

Urban transport bus lines must also be better planned and the historical centre must stop being the area of departure and arrival of most bus lines, or at least they should not be focused almost exclusively on a single point, at Plaza de Zocodover, as it is the case today. Having the Visitor Reception Centre failed, and to the inadequacy of the existing tourist information offices, we intend to design an effective program that involves contact between visitors and staff of tourism management of Toledo for the reception and information.

A number of proposals have arisen to try to solve the problems detected in the cultural tourism in Toledo, and within the existing limitations. However, the solution to these problems does not prevent that deep reflections arise about what type of cultural tourism is really desirable for the city. Thus, if we reduce the

hiking, and increase the number of overnight tourists, the economic benefits would be obvious, but from the sustainability point of view, to what extent are we interested in increasing the number of tourists in a city with less than 90,000 inhabitants that receives two million visitors annually? Increasing the catalogue of heritage for tourist use in the city and the strengthening of new routes beyond the main one would reduce the problem of tourist overcrowding, but should we value more our Heritage for tourism or for society? If we extend the tourist flows to new spaces, do not we run the risk that they also end up being massive, given the high number of visitors that Toledo has, and that the existing tourist theming of the historical centre is highlighted (Troitiño & Troitino, 2010)? And, taking into account the difficult relationship between the authenticity and the heritage tourism (Chhabra, Healy & Sills, 2003), could not these goods end up trivialized with the presence of a large number of people with a really limited cultural motivation today outside the intensive tourist use? Would not we fall down at the real risk of upsetting the balance of the system by urban to dominance of the tourism function that Jansen-Verbeke tells us (1997)? Finally, in relation to the improvement of the accessibility and mobility of the historic centre, behind all the measures undertaken and proposed, a great background reflection arises: with an idea of sustainable tourism and city, must we continue depending on the automobile and mobility in the historical centre?

4. DISCUSSION

We have finished the section of results through some questions. They offer an open debate on the future of cultural tourism in the city of Toledo, a wide field of discussion. With regard to the results of our case study we have found matches with other similar research employing a holistic vision, as done in this article, either using a method based on the use of a survey or single-source exclusively. Fundamentally, many of our results match the study of Troitino et al. (1998). After 20 years, there have been problems such as excessive hiking, or the difficulty of mobility and accessibility that these authors explained. Others which were targeted, as the increasing overcrowding of tourism in the city, have been aggravated. We also agree with some of the results of Troitiño (2005) in his analysis of the heritage and cultural offer of Toledo and tourism functionality. This author, who employed a methodology based on multiple information, agrees on emphasizing the monumentality and uniqueness of Toledo as main tourist attractive of the city and the incidental tourist use of many existing heritages.

This essay agrees with Garcia (2005) in his theoretical analysis of tourism in historic cities like Toledo, city chosen as an example of congestion and overcrowding on the main streets, which are part of the main tourist route of the city that we have pointed out this article. Galí (2005), through the analysis of tourist guides, points out that tourism in his case study, Girona, is limited to a sector reduced from its historical centre. Outside Spain, Boerjan et al. (quoted in the Munsters, 1996) conducted a comprehensive case study in the Belgian city of Bruges, discovering that it is mainly a cultural tourist destination for hikers, and visitors to the city were concentrated in a limited area (they talk about a 20%) of the historical centre.

The breadth of the topic implies that this study has certain limitations. On a theoretical level, we have not sufficiently entered into the major terminological debate regarding the definitions of cultural tourism and the types of cultural tourists, given that we have focused more on the applied analysis. At a practical level, we should indicate that the proposals are the personal reflections of the researcher and therefore, are subjective and debatable.

Finally, from a methodological point of view, there have been some major limitations derived from the sources. There is no complete statistic telling us how many visitors come to Toledo, for example, the number of day trippers. Finally, in the face of no better reference, we have also used the Hotel Occupancy Survey, despite its flaws. There is also a lack of precise data as to how many visitors come to the heritage sites of Toledo. The use of multiple information and data is an option to give a holistic view of the case study, but it also has the consequence that we do not focus on a single source or technique in depth. The two empirical

experiences used, the 2014 survey and the fieldwork in process together with interviews in the listed heritages of Toledo, fall within this overview of cultural tourism in Toledo and they are used in a very partial and synthetic way, and an exploration of both remains for the future.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Toledo, as well as a few other examples, such as Granada or Santiago de Compostela and its Way, is one of the cultural tourist destinations that attracts millions of visitors to Spain. The unique historic center of this city, a World Heritage Site that has many significant cultural sites, combined with its proximity to the most populated urban area of Spain and the capital, Madrid, explains its success as a cultural tourism destination. Furthermore, it has been capable of strengthening its heritage resources with cultural activities such as for example, the Ephemeris, thereby revealing the great success achieved with the celebration of the IV Centennial of the Death of Greco.

However, this tourism is not free of problems, with the three most notable being: excessive day trips, the limited use of the heritage sites in tourist exploitation, and accessibility to and mobility within Toledo's historic center. Certain measures by local tourism agents, both public and private, have attempted to solve these problems, but the results have been insufficient.

World Heritage Site cities such as Toledo must operate based on a model of sustainability, but the measures that are being developed and future tourism planning clearly is relying on the expansion of supply and, ultimately, on attaining more overnight stays to increase the economic benefits generated by cultural tourism in the city of Toledo. It is true that a management that has been focusing on improving the quality of tourist services and on proposals such as the diversification of the sites that can be visited in order to reduce mass tourism is aimed, at least in part, to a more sustainable development of cultural tourism in Toledo. However, the continuous arrival of millions of visitors to the city and the constant "touristification" of Toledo's historic quarter raise doubts regarding the hypothetical future of sustainable tourism in this city.

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NOTES

- 1 Given that it is a subjective concept, the definition of cultural tourism should be sufficiently broad or sufficiently restricted (Pedersen, 2005). In the bibliography regarding the topic in Spanish, De Esteban (2008) and Pulido (2013) have collected the multiple definitions of cultural tourism. Specifically, De Esteban (2008) classified them into four types: definitions derived from tourism; motivational definitions; experimental or conceptual definitions and operational definitions. It is a complex and open issue. For our research study, we opt for a broad view of the term, defining it as the temporary transfer of individuals to a cultural attraction that is far from their normal residence, in order to satisfy their cultural needs.
- 2 Container tourist destinations are those whose positioning in the tourism market is based on the use of the comparative advantages derived from their tremendous appeal for demand (Pulido, 2013).
- 3 For the years 2000 to 2002, there is no data on travelers by country of residence.
- 4 Tourism excellence plans were an instrument developed at the beginning of the last decade of the last century by the State, in collaboration with regional and local administrations, and were valid until 2006 (Beas, 2012).
- 5 This organization is a public corporation created in 1990 by the Town Hall of Toledo, with its own legal status and heritages independent of the municipality's, to which the organization and management of municipal activities in the field of tourism is entrusted in a decentralized manner. However, it does not imply an overall separation from the Town Hall; in fact, the Chairman of the Board is the mayor.