

Editorial

e-Mapping the Landscape of Knowledge in Tourism

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With the publication of this issue, *Pasos: Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural* is celebrating its 10th anniversary of successful publication! As its readers throughout the world know, the journal has reached this landmark and its wide spread step by step (or *paso a paso*), having already left many footprints on the vast and still expanding landscape of knowledge in the field of tourism. What a journey of endurance and accomplishments! Having been on this road myself, with a different start and for a different medium, I know what it takes to give birth to a journal and nurture it—issue after issue—to a progressive maturity. I congratulate Dr. Agustín Santana Talavera (distinguished professor of Universidad de La Laguna, Spain), the founding editor of *Pasos*, for this worldclass accomplishment.

Pasos and its chief editor remind me of my own case—the days I started *Annals of Tourism Research*—when even some people in the know were doubtful if this journey could continue or pay off. At the outset, I was often asked if I thought there would be a second, then third issue of *Annals*. With the passage of time, each subsequent issue answered the question, with an army of scholars gradually joining forces to define and map the then almost unmarked knowledge landscape in our field. This initial undertaking of *Annals* soon paid off, as it has for *Pasos*.

In an entirely different realm, *Pasos* also reminds me of another beginning; when I participated in the 1995 ENTER conference in Austria. Benefitting from its program, I proposed to start an information technology and tourism journal. Before the conference ended, a small group of “believers” met in a rather nice restaurant, where the food was not the centerpiece, but food for thought was. After further contemplation and search, the first issue of *Information Technology and Tourism* made its debut in 1988, with Hannes Werthner and me as its co-founding editors. Similarly, the idea for *Pasos* was also originated in a discussion on tourism publications held in Caxias do Sul, Brazil. But what is important here is that although *Information Technology and Tourism* was all about IT, it opted for the hardcopy journal option. To the best of my recollection, we even did not consider making it an e-journal.

Pasos and its founder have been bolder than *Annals* and *Information Technology and Tourism*. *Annals* took a daring chance in journeying through what was an unmapped academic terrain and *Information Technology and Tourism* selected a focus which seemed risky. But both journals opted for the traditional and well-accepted print format, *Pasos* entered the new and hardly tested electronic medium in our field. When it released its first issue, few had read an electronic journal. Like the worries at the start

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of *Annals and Information Technology* and *Tourism*, *Pasos* had to worry if researchers would choose to submit their contributions to a non-print journal. Even today, ten years after the first issue of *Pasos* appeared, there are still some who have the same doubt and hesitate to read an e-journal. *Pasos* and another e-journal, *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education (JoHLSTE)*, which debuted only a few months earlier) have opened the gate of e-publishing and have popularized this medium among tourism scholars worldwide.

Whether printed or e-journals, there are many contexts which will continue to influence the formation of knowledge in the field of tourism. Of utmost concern is where tourism research and scholarship is heading. Our present inbreeding (reweaving the same yarn in different patterns) will not do much for us. The present practice of the new generation of PhDs in tourism—who are busy conducting research on and teaching tourism as a free-standing subject—is most worrisome. Connections to (or dependence on) established disciplines is being lost and importation of knowledge from them continuously shrinking. This raises the question of where we are coming from, where we are heading to, and, significantly, with whom (in company of which disciplines) we are (e) mapping the landscape of tourism knowledge. Tourism is not anthropology, ecology, geography, marketing, management, political science, psychology, religion, sociology, and others. It is all of them. It is a phenomenon (gone industry) which can be understood if studied and treated as multidisciplinary. And this is the position that *Annals* and *Pasos* have taken. The “researchers without borders” stand has worked both for *Annals* and *Pasos*. But then *Pasos* is “intangible” and *Annals* (also available in printed format) and *Information Technology and Tourism* are regarded as “tangible”. This physical versus virtual presence is becoming less important, with the latter as the *de facto* in the immediate future. *Pasos* and those in its class are making the task of e-mapping the landscape of knowledge in tourism almost barrier free.

I would like to congratulate *Pasos* and its founding editor for this landmark in our field. The success and popularity of this electronic journal is also due to many researchers from throughout the world who submitted their papers to *Pasos*. Without quality papers and a dedicated editorial board, no journal can survive—something that I know from personal experience. I would like to encourage our fellow tourism researchers—young and old hands—to also continue submitting their contributions to the paper-free and easily accessible e-journals, *Pasos* and others in its rank. In the final analysis, our goal—individually and collectively—is to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in a field we call tourism. Let us walk with *Pasos* step by step—*paso a paso*.