**2.928x0,117=341,5 + 35**

**2.928x0,042=123 + 35**

**19.124**

**The consumption of tourism under postmodernity or liquid modernity**

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**Tourism and modernity**

According to Korstanje and Seraphin (2017) the sociologists who studied tourism originally “did not pay attention to ancient history. For them, in sharp contrast to archaeologists, tourism is modern issue which was never present in other ancient civilizations. Needless to say this is a big problem for them to see beyond the boundaries of Middle Ages.” So tourism tended to be connected for many social scientists to the industrial era and the rise of modern society. One of the characteristics of modernity is a differentiation between spheres of life such as work, family, culture and leisure. These spheres tended to be relatively autonomous, and there was also differentiation within these spheres, for example between:

* High and low culture
* Elite and mass consumption
* Mass tourism and independent travel

As industrialisation proceeded in the developed world, workers won more time off work, until their leisure time became sufficient to allow them to take regular holidays (Richards, 1998). These were still restricted and tended to be taken at the same time, leading to the development of mass tourism, for example at seaside resorts.

Under conditions of modernity, tourism was largely controlled by a dedicated, narrow value chain. Tourists went to hotels run by tourism companies, transported there by trains or planes run by transport companies and consumed animation provided by dedicated tourism staff. Gradually, however, things began to change as modernity itself was transformed from what Rojek (1995) termed ‘Modernity 1’, in which life is organised around universal binding order of things (such as family, tradition or religion) into ‘Modernity 2’, in which life became more disordered and there was a rejection of the rigidities and grand narratives of modernity. Bauman (2013) also referred to this shift as the advent of ‘liquid modernity’, characterised by frequent change and transcience, in which people find it increasingly hard to stick to one thing, or to stay still. This is one of the driving forces of (post)modern tourism.

The shift from modernity to postmodernity is clearly visible in the field of tourism studies. Pioneering work on tourism by Dean MacCannell (1976)positioned mass tourism as a consumption of the differentiations of modernity, in which certain sights were marked out as worthy of visitation according to their supposed authenticity. He argued that tourist sights became ‘sacralized’, in the same kind of process that marked out religious shrines as pilgrimage sites in the past. This system is reproduced in modern tourism, for example through the selection of places to visit listed in guide books or the creating of tourist trails. Modern tourism therefore generates a hierarchy of sights, in which the ‘must-see’ attractions represent the pinnacle of the tourism system. This is the process by which millions of tourists are drawn to see the Mona Lisa at the Louvre in Paris, or to visit the Parthenon in Athens.

However, Urry (1990) argues that there is an important aspect of modernity which was ignored by MacCannell – reflexivity. Modern people are arguably able to monitor and think reflexively about their world. Mobility is central to this reflexivity, because it extends our knowledge of the world, and enables us to place ourselves in a geographical and/or historical context. The growth of reflexivity can in turn be linked to recent debates on postmodernity, which challenge the authority of legitimised sources of knowledge, which have now been replaced by myriad interpretations, as suggested by Lyotard (1979).

Urry (1990) argues that this has been reflected in tourism by the undermining of ‘authorised’ guides (Baedeker, Michelin, etc), and the prevalence of interpretation and the democratic nature of tourism consumption. According to Urry, the modern subject is a subject on the move and the social organisation of travel has changed the way in which we experience the world. The attention of the tourist is organised into the ‘tourist gaze’, or a particular way of seeing what is different from everyday life.

Ritzer (1993), in contrast to Urry, argues that tourism is becoming increasingly like the rest of our lives – therefore undermining the very reason for travel. Ritzer argues that tourism is in fact one of the new ‘means of consumption’ which support the consumer society. He suggests that modern tourism is subject to ‘McDonaldization’. He cites Disney as the epitome of this process:

Rationalization in Disney is seen in set prices, indications of the length of wait (calculability), clean, no surprises (predictable) and the use of technology (rides, etc).

Ritzer argues that McDonaldization leads people to want more predictability, rather than less. People increasingly travel to experience what they experience in their everyday lives in terms of:

1) Highly predictable holidays

2) Highly efficient holidays (seeing a lot in a short time)

3) Highly calculable holidays (knowing in advance what you will spend)

4) Highly controlled holidays (safe, homogenous places)

Ritzer further argues that MacCannell’s idea that people are searching for authenticity is also suspect. Accustomed to the inauthenticity of McDonaldization, “The tourist would not know an ‘authentic’ experience even if one could be found. Why should one scrabble at the campfire when you can eat at Rainforest Café?” In contrast to MacCannell, therefore, Ritzer argues that tourists are in search of inauthenticity, which explains the popularity of Disney. This is one of the points of departure for the identification of ‘post-tourism’.

**Tourism and Culture in postmodernity**

Modernity produced the separation of tourism and culture, and arguably postmodernity is bringing them together. Postmodernity is characterised by increasing de-differentation of social, cultural and economic phenomena. This causes our notion of what is ‘cultural’ to expand far beyond the modern bounds of authorised, high culture. So we no longer visit Barcelona just to see the Sagrada Familia, but also to visit FC Barcelona. In fact, the Barca Museum at Camp Nou is one of the most visited ‘cultural’ attractions in the city.

Rojek and Urry (1997) argue that under postmodernity tourism and culture increasingly overlap because of the culturisation of society and the growth of tourism as a cultural practice. The cultural sights that tourists can consume have also expanded to encompass popular culture and everyday life (Richards, 2011). The expansion of cultural signs to consume and the rise of digital culture also mean that consumers are increasingly able to circumvent the tourism supply chain and become actively and creatively involved in the production of their own tourism experiences. The embeddedness of tourism experiences is often underpinned by a claim to experience ‘everyday life’ in places visited. Recent studies have indicated that the consumption of everyday life is one of the most important travel motivations for the new cultural tourists or creative tourists (Smith and Richards, 2012; Maitland, 2007; Pappalepore et al, 2014; Richards, 2011).

This idea has also been specifically explored in the concept of ‘creative tourism’ (Richards and Raymond, 2000; Richards and Wilson 2006, 2007). Richards and Raymond (2000:18) first defined creative tourism as:

Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken.

The important point in this definition is the suggestion that creativity is not just a requirement of the tourist, but also of the destination, since the places developing creative tourism have to think creativity about ‘characteristic’ elements of creativity that can be linked to specific places. Creative tourism depends heavily on locally embedded creativity, which potentially puts the local creative in a position of power. Creative assets, far more than traditional cultural attractions, depend on the local networks of knowledge and creativity that form the basis for the embedded creative economy (Potts et al., 2008). The exchange of knowledge and skills, either formally or informally, plays an important role in the maintenance of local ‘buzz’ or atmosphere (Bathelt et al., 2004). Maintaining this buzz also depends heavily on face to face contact between key actors, a fact that shapes creative spaces and also provides potential entry points into the local creative field for tourists. Examples include the ‘ruin bars’ in Budapest (Lugosi et al., 2010), emerging creative clusters in Berlin (Lange, 2012) and creative events such as SXSW in Austin, Texas (OECD, 2014).

The buzz linked to creative and alternative culture and creativity is actively provided for tourists nowadays. As Zatori and Smith (2014) emphasise in their analysis of alternative tours in Budapest, there is a focus on surprise and novelty and self-development in terms of the presentation and content of the tours. The element of surprise is developed by framing the ‘everyday’ and the ‘local’ in new ways for the visitors:

The alternative tour providers believe that escapism is the most important type of tourist experience, because “the tour allows non-locals to become a local during the tour” (interview with Unique Budapest, 2013). It proves that the aim of the alternative tour organizers is not to mediate a tourist gaze, but support the formation of local perspective.

The creative reproduction of everyday life for tourists involves considerable emotional labour on the part of tourist guides and others involved in the production and consumption of such spaces. This emotional labour now extends to the residents who act as hosts on Airbnb and other ‘sharing economy’ platforms. They are even trained by Airbnb on how to present their homes as attractive and cool places to stay for tourists (Bialski, 2016). The recent rise of Airbnb has transformed the tourism face of many cities. In Barcelona, for example, in May 2014 there were 12,300 Airbnb listings (Arias Sans and Quaglieri Domínguez, 2016), and by November 2016 this had grown to 23,000 (Kester, 2016). This means a large number of Barcelona residents have been co-opted into the tourism industry, and their everyday lives and their private homes have also become an object of tourism consumption.

As the roles of ‘tourists’ and ‘locals’ change, so do the meanings attached to ‘tourist’ practices. One apparently paradoxical and unintended consequence of tourism development is that it stimulates new forms of tourism that arise in opposition to tourism itself. One interesting example is the Alternative Athens programme. Alternative Athens was founded by two architects and a lawyer with the aim of showing tourists a different, and more creative side of the city.

Tina Kyriakis from Alternative Athens (alternative-athens.com), says “The city is changing - in many ways for the better. Greeks are being forced to be creative, to work together for the first time. It's collaborative.” Local groups have been transforming the landscape, with tech start-up incubators, new brands and boutiques, a shoestring arts scene and co-operative cafés. Sounds like our kind of place. (Warwick, 2014)

As Ioannides et al (2016) point out, the development of such alterative spaces in Athens are a direct result of the crisis, political unrest and economic marginalisation in the Greek capital. The dream stimulated by the 2004 Olympic Games, which posited a modernisation and commercialisation of large spaces in the city, has now been replaced by a duality of spaces:

A “mainstream” space of the city, with large parts of it shaped by neoliberal ideals, and which the state seeks to defend at all costs, and a “marginalized” space of the city, an amalgam of areas abandoned by capital, which have become scenes of a multitude of forms of rebellion or resistance, such as graffiti, street art, and squatted buildings, urban gardens and pocket parks. (Ioannides et al., 2016)

By being given the opportunity to occasionally participate in activities such as painting the walls of a dilapidated street the visitors can also become actively involved in creative attempts to transform the urban landscape.

These examples show that the new sites of tourism subvert the traditional system of cultural attractions. In place of the museum as font of meaning, local experience of the streets is taken as the marker of authenticity. In place of the traditional relations of the tourism industry, the host is no longer just the local, but a para local, at once connected to the host culture and the tourist culture. This requires more creativity, both on the part of tourists and their hosts.

**Conclusions**

Tourism as a social practice has changed dramatically, shifting from a largely top-down Fordist production system into a much more dispersed nexus of experience production and consumption. The desire to live like a local, combined with the desire of locals to become producers of tourism experiences, has stimulated a new ‘live like a local’ trend that has been met by a range of bottom-up products and experiences.

In terms of skills, consumers need to become more adept and creative, and the gap between producer and consumer is narrowing. Because the consumption of tourism increasingly involves the everyday, the types of skills required become more closely aligned to skills gained from other fields, enabling an expansion of the provision of such experiences by those with no experience of tourism. There has also been a vast increase in peer-to-peer provision of information and skill development, so that the professional gatekeeping function has become far less important.

The meanings attached to the practice of tourism have also shifted as more people have become tourists and many of us are engaged in supplying tourism. Tourists used to be welcomed purely on economic grounds, but they now have a wider range of roles (temporary citizens, members of the mobile creative class). This change has been reflected in a general move away from traditional forms of cultural tourism, based on gazing at sites related to high culture, towards creative tourism based on the interstitial consumption of everyday life.

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