
Towards the end of Tourism?

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The present issue of the International Journal of Safety and Security in Tourism and Hospitality selects three high quality papers authored by well-versed authors as Cyril Peter –from New Zealand- and Peter Tarlow –the United States-. By this end, it is vital to bring reflection on the dangers tourism is now exposed. John Urry –jointly Scot Lash- argued that the end of tourism was not only a question of time, but also the direct result from the process of decentralization, which is proper of a new reflexivity (Lash & Urry 1993). Tim Gale has adamantly interrogated on the end of tourism as a multiple and complex landscape where the inflation of new risks intersect with the rise of virtual reality (Gale 2008; 2009). I have theorized in earlier works as *Terrorism, Tourism and the end of Hospitality in the West* (Korstanje, 2017) and *Mobilities Paradox, a Critical Analysis* (2018) on the grim future of hospitality, as an ancient rite of passage and tourism in the years to come. Per my viewpoint, Western civilization expanded worldwide by subordinated some peripheral cultures, but in so doing, a new emergent archetype of the alterity was created. The other was considered from a paternalist way, emulating the ideal of “noble savage” where Europeaness situated as the top of a civilizatory pyramid. Subordinated to the European culture, natives represented the origins of Europe, which evolved through decades of progress towards more reified forms of life. In the ancient history, Europe faced a pre-industrial stage of production which left traditional ways of existence. Industrialism not only changed this, but also unfolded productive forces towards development and progress that placed Europe as a superior civilization respecting to other non-western societies. Although natives were symbolically-catalogued as primitives, they escaped from the advance of alienation and the negative effects of industrialism. From eighteen and nineteen centuries on, travel literature reminded the importance to live in dialogue with nature in the same way primitives do (Mansfield 2005; Busby, Korstanje & Mansfield, 2011; Korstanje 2012). Doubtless, such a dichotomy, which rested on European paternalism, paved the ways for the surface of new lifestyles, where travels performed as mechanism to escapement to avoid psychological frustrations. The binomial leisure-work is enrooted in the ideological core of capitalism, which contributed to the expansion of Europe. In this guest-host’s encounter hospitality played a vital role but with the rise of modern terrorism, the borders of Western civilization have been unilaterally closed. In this vein, Jost Krippendorf (2010) discussed critically the function of tourism beyond the economic-centric paradigm. In retrospect, tourism, far from being a leisure industry, represents the basic touchstone of society, which impedes social fragmentation. Equally important,

¹ University of Palermo, Argentina. mkorst@palermo.edu

Krippendorff acknowledges that there is no good or bad version of tourism, lest by the use people make from it. The current levels of contamination sometimes tourism accelerates results from the cultural values of society, which prevails possession and profits over other criteria. Towards a more sustainable tourism, citizens should change the mainstream cultural values (Krippendorff 1982). This visionary principle leads us to think that tourism and society are inextricably intertwined. Other authoritative voice, Dean MacCannell contends that the acceleration of secularization, which was successfully prompted by capitalism, not only eroded the basis of trust but legitimated exploitation over the workforce. Combining some contrasting theories as structuralism and Marxism, MacCannell said that the role of totem in primitive life, which articulated the political authorities of chieftdom with religiosity, sets the pace to tourism as a mediator between citizens and their institutions (MacCannell 1973; 2001; 2013).

It is unfortunate that the attacks to World Trade Center and the turn of a new millennium brought many unexpected changes, which not only placed tourism in jeopardy, but also shifted the lifestyle of society (Timothy & Boyd 2006). The stock and market crisis in 2008 created a climate of anxiety and uncertainty as never before. The theory of risk, which was historically based on the precautionary principle, failed to explain the future of tourism as well as it miscarried the protocols of securitization and prevention which after 9/11 showed some inefficacy in forecasting global risks (Innerarity 2016). In *The Rise of Thana Capitalism and Tourism*, I reviewed the limitations of risk theory, in view of the new stage of production modern capitalism took. Unlike other ages, government showed a minimum intention or no need to prevent the surrounding dangers. Instead, policy makers emphasizes on the needs of achieving a much deeper adaptation to an uncertain and ever-increasing risky environment. Specialists and pundits of all stripes focused on the post disaster theory, which suggests that tourism would be serve as a mechanism of resilience to help in the recovery process once the disaster takes hit (Ladkin et al 2008; Seraphin et al, 2016; Walters & Mair, 2012; Korstanje 2016; Seraphin, Butcher, Korstanje 2017). As a result of this, innovative forms of tourism consumption, more prone to morbid consumption are replacing to the classic products. In a wider specter which oscillates from dark tourism to war or slumming tourism, these new morbid types commoditize the other's suffering as a tourist attraction. Here is exactly where the voices are divided. While some scholars thematized dark tourism consumption as a mode of reflexivity which helps to think in the own finitude –through the lens of others- (Strange & Kempa, 2003; Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Hartmann 2014; Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011), a more critical turn defined dark tourism as an instrument of colonial domination that creates allegories to make from disasters a culture of entertainment (Korstanje & George 2017; Korstanje 2016). Most certainly, this opened the Pandora Box simply because there are some risks that the message or the lessons given by disasters are politically manipulated. When this happens there is serious danger the disaster takes hit anew. Joy Sather Wagstaff (2011) in her book *Heritage that hurts* cites the example of 9/11 and ground-zero as the epicenter towards a

new solidarity among victims. In this token, dark tourism offers not only a space of understanding and negotiation, but the best course of action to social cohesion. In view of her own self-ethnography, she holds the thesis that dark tourism evokes sentiments of mourning and loss that makes peoples equal but at the same time, governments devote considerable efforts to intervene in the genesis of dark tourism sites, through the articulation of heritage. In this respect, since death is not only irreversible but inevitable, as Sather Wagstaff adds, solidarity invites to visitors to feel what victims felt. As she puts it, once the US was under attack the World exhibited outpourings of genuine sympathy for the victims and survivors. Since death functions to strengthen the social bondage, the introduction of human suffering dislocates the influence of ideology. However, once the government imposes the heritage, which means a biased story of the facts, the pain is commoditized to control citizens.

Last but not least, the hegemony of virtual reality and the current technological breakthroughs adjoined to the anti-tourists movement, press tourism to change towards unsuspected forms. Not surprisingly, on 2 February of 2017, Wonderful Copenhagen, which is the legal organization for tourism in Denmark, claimed “the end of tourism as we know it”. In the years to come, tourism may be affected by serious changes. Our ancestors enjoyed of paradisiacal landscapes, most of them situated geographically in islands or bubble destinations, but now it has welcomed new forms of consumption where death is the main commodity to exchange. Korstanje (2016) has coined the term “Thana-Capitalism” to express the gap between risk society as it was imagined by postmodern sociologists and a new more global society where the other’s death is packaged, advertised or disseminated through the media to global audiences. This means that not only we gaze death, but also capitalism made from death a criterion of creative destruction which perpetuate the conditions that led to disaster. The renovation through destruction seems to be one of the main aspects of status quo to keep its privileged position. As Krippendorf brilliantly noted, tourism reflects the underlying values of society, revitalizing not only the daily frustrations but also renovating the trust of citizens in the modern nation-state as a cultural project.

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