SSOAR

Open Access Repository
www.ssoar.info

Sociology of tourism

Talos, Ana-Maria; Brumaru Paul Alexandru

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Talos, A.-M., & Brumaru Paul Alexandru (2011). Sociology of tourism. *Cinq Continents*, *1*(2), 184-193. https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-290357

Nutzungsbedingungen:
Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY-NC-ND Lizenz (Namensnennung-Nicht-kommerziell-Keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.de

Terms of use:
This document is made available under a CC BY-NC-ND Licence (Attribution-Non Comercial-NoDerivatives). For more Information see:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0

gesis
Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Mitglied der
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

CINQ CONTINENTS
REVUE ROUMAINE ELECTRONIQUE DE GEOGRAPHIE

Volume 1 / Numéro 2
Été 2011
ISSN: 2247 - 2290
p. 184-193

SOCIOLOGY OF TOURISM

Paul Alexandru BRUMARU
Ana-Maria TALOŞ

Master Std.
Faculty of Geography, University of Bucharest
paul.brumaru@gmail.com, talos.ana@gmail.com

Contents:

1. INTRODUCTION 186
2. HYPOSTASES OF TOURISM 186
3. TOURISM AS A RESOURCE 187
4. TOURISM AS A RISK FACTOR 188
5. TOURISM AS A SOCIOLOGIC PHENOMENON 190
6. CONCLUSIONS 192
6. REFERENCES 193

Cite this document:
Brumaru, P. A., Taloş A. M. 2011. Sociology of Tourism. *Cinq Continents* **1** (2): 184-193 [Available online]| URL: http://www.cinqcontinents.uv.ro/1/1_2_Brumaru_Talos.pdf

Sociology of Tourism

Paul Alexandru Brumaru, Ana-Maria Taloş

La sociologie du tourisme. Le tourisme, en tant que phénomène de masse, n'apparaît qu'au début du 19e siècle. Bien que sa période moderne de développement soit courte, le tourisme a connu beaucoup de transformations allant du tourisme balnéaire au tourisme culturel et industriel. À présent, le tourisme se définit sous trois aspects interdépendants : comme ressource, élément de dangerosité et phénomène social. En tant que ressource durable ayant une valeur de marché, le tourisme représente une opportunité de développement régional. En outre, l'impact du tourisme sur la société peut se transformer en un élément de dangerosité dont les effets seront ressentis à long terme. En tant que phénomène social, le tourisme peut devenir un prétexte de socialisation, une alternative au quotidien, un moyen d'éducation. Sous aspect ethnique, le tourisme peut perpétuer ou aggraver les conflits interculturels. Au niveau de chaque individu le tourisme est perçu de manière subjective.

Mots clés : tourisme, poses, ressource, élément de dangerosité, phénomène social, sociologie

Sociologia turismului. Turismul, ca fenomen social de masă a apărut abia la începutul secolului XIX. Deşi perioada modernă de dezvoltare este relativ scurtă, acesta a cunoscut numeroase transformări, de la turismul balnear la cel cultural şi industrial. În contextul actual, turismul cunoaşte trei ipotaze interdependente: resursă, element de periculozitate şi fenomen social. Prin ipostaza de resursă durabilă cu valoare de piaţă, acesta este o oportunitate de dezvoltare regională. De asemenea impactul turismului asupra societăţii se poate transforma într-un element de periculozitate cu impact pe termen lung. Ca fenomen social, turismul poate deveni pretext de socializare, alternativă la cotidian, mijloc de educare. De asemenea poate îmbrăca aspect etnic, prin menţinerea/agravarea conflictelor interculturale. La nivel de individ capătă valenţe strâns legate de subiectivism.

Cuvinte cheie: turism, ipostaze, resursă, factor de risc, fenomen sociologic, sociologie

1. INTRODUCTION

The first forms of tourism appeared in the Roman Antiquity, once with the travels of the aristocracy for visiting Egyptian monuments. The classic concept of tourism appeared in the 17th century, once with the European British Tours, practiced by nobles. The modern concept developed during the Industrial Revolution. Since at its beginnings, tourism was perceived as a leisure time activity, in time it became a more and more complex phenomenon, a sociologic one. In contemporary context, in the analyze of tourism it is important to perceive it from three facets: as an economic resource, as a risk factor, and as a sociologic phenomenon.

The methodology used in the approach of the theme, is based on the bibliographic method, used for the clarification of the terminology of risks, sociological phenomena. It was also used the statistic method in order to gather statistic. Complementary it was used the cartographic method, to interpret different sociological aspects of tourism.

Lanfant [1] considers tourism as a free-time activity exclusively and Lanquar [2] sees it as a wider phenomenon that includes all the people moves, no matter what reason. The object [3] of sociology of tourism is to analyze the tourist migrations in terms of both point of view (local community and tourists).

2. HYPOSTASES OF TOURISM

As stated above, tourism nowadays is a complex phenomenon, which must be perceived from three different hypostases: as an economical resource, as a risk factor, and as a sociological phenomenon, like in Figure 1.

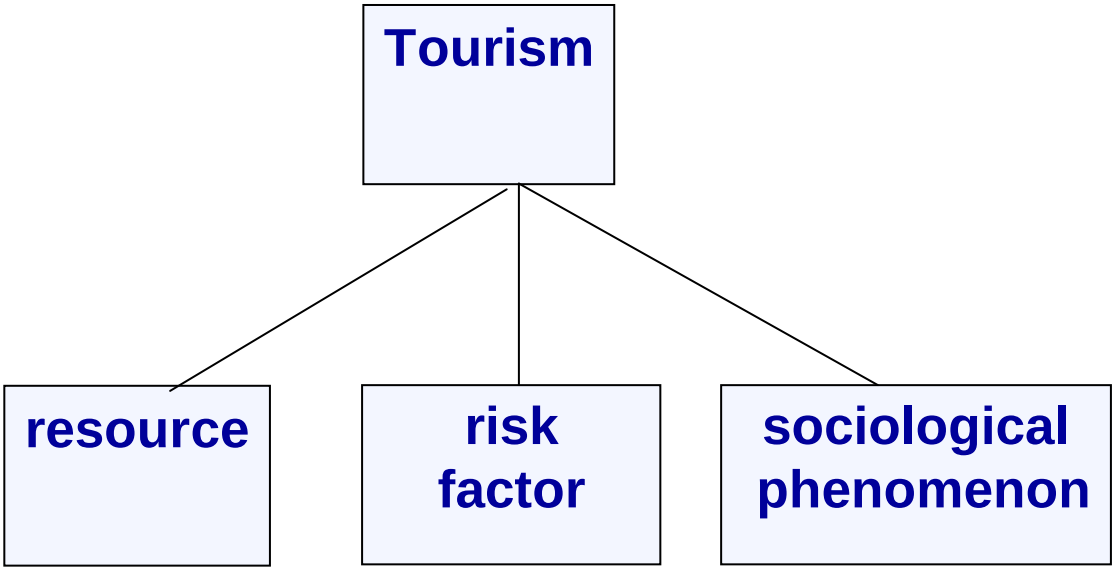

Figure 1. Hypostases of tourism

3. TOURISM AS A RESOURCE

Nowadays, everybody study different aspects of the touristic resources (those objectives that are exploited in the touristic industry). However it is rarely studied tourism itself as a resource. Usually, a resource is perceived an element with economical value; we consider that resource is to be perceived as an element with a specific value (not only economical, but cultural, scientific, etc). The trigger of this resource is the need for diversity, felt by most of the people. According to Taylor, Saarinen considers that "Desire does not desire satisfaction. To the contrary, desire desires desire" [4]. This shows that the motivation is highly subjective, so the tourist's motivations are continuous. It is known the fact that people consume tourism through all the senses, so, the perception of it is heterogeneous, and very different on tourists. Due to this fact, tourism as a resource can be treated from many different angles, according to the expectations of tourists.

First of all, in this matter, tourism is an opportunity of development for different areas without other economic resources. This is the case of countries as Laos, Ethiopia, Maldives, and others. It can be the only solution in the insurance of local population survival through hospitality, promoting traditional artistry and crafts. However this development has to be controlled in order to follow the principles of durable development. Intensive exploitation can damage the local communities, though a negative impact in the environment and cultural pattern.

Tourism is also a resource of economic reconvert for the former industrial platforms (Figure 2a). Although it is not the only alternative for the reconvert, it is the most easy to implement. So, the former industrial axes and platforms are transformed into touristic attractions (Ruhr Basin in Germany is probably the best example). Of course, this is not valid for all former industrial sites; only for those with some interest- cultural, technical, and historical.

Another perspective on this problem is tourism as an urbanism resource. Touristic urbanism [5] is the direction of city development based on touristic principles. Tourism can be treated as a resource of this kind if it was the reason why the city developed. One of the best examples in this case is the city of Dubai, in the UAE. There the city was developed on touristic principles, because the main goal was the increasing of the touristic incomes.

Tourism is also strongly connected with the illegal immigration [6]. This is why we consider that it can be treated also as a resource of immigrants. One of the best examples is Romania in the early 1990. It was a common practice then that many tourists left the country after buying a touristic package, but never returned.

Another perspective on tourism as a resource is the scientific one- tourism as a scientific resource. Touristic interpretation [7], as a tool in managing touristic space and resources plays an important role. Through it, historic and archeological sites are evaluated, interpreted and arranged according with the touristic interpretation principles. The final goal of this actions is the reconstruction of a site- in the place of some stones, there is partially or integrally the objective. A good example is the archeological site of Truva in Turkey from Figure 2b (here are located the ruins of Homer's Troy). After rearranging the site according with the interpretation principles, the scientific resources became more complex due to the fact that they finally had a perspective on the site.

a. b.

Figure 2. a.industrial tourism; b. site of Truva, Turkey (source: Internet)

4. TOURISM AS A RISK FACTOR

The risk [8] is an exposure possibility at extreme acts, and the second as a pre-phase of the risk, a probability that the area's phenomena to become extreme and to be a potential danger for man and environment.

Tourism as an activity can be considered as a risk factor through the ideological conflict between the tourists and the natives. This is materialized by practicing gestures, habits and practices that are not tolerated by the local community. Most of the times these risks appear due to the lack of intercultural communication, lack generated by carelessness or ignorance. In this matter there can be identified several different situations: when the tourist doesn't care and doesn't want to know about the local habits and practices, although he knows that they exist; when the tourist simply doesn't care about this thing, or when he doesn't know, simply because nobody have told him what to do, and what not to do. In order to illustrate this point, the best example are the conflicts emerged between tourists and locals in the Muslim countries.

The tourists practices things that are not tolerated there: kissing in public, drinking alcohol, women wearing inappropriate cloths, etc. the risk, a social one, emerges when, after practicing these gestures, the local community becomes hostile, and the situation can degenerate into an open conflict. Of course, it is difficult to low the tensions inside and between cultures, especially the religious ones. However, a great part in the conflicts is generated by tourism, which must not be seen as an inter-religious conflict, because there is no latent hostility between the tourist and the native, it is the tourist who disturbs. By practicing wrong habits, aware of not of the consequences, as shown above, tourist offends the native, and the conflict emerges- in this point tourism becomes a risk factor.

Intercultural management, through intercultural communication is to be considered the optimum way to break the chain described. It is useless to draw laws and rules - a tourist can break them easily. By explaining and illustrating the tourist what is to be done, and especially what not to be done, he can be taught to act responsible in the presence of natives, and to understand and accept that basically he is the guest, and the natives are the hosts, and the very first law of hospitality and good manners is to respect your host, because, if you do not, he/she is rightful not to allow you to visit anymore.

The other facet of tourism as risk is the perspective of the local community. There can be identified two degradation types emerged from tourism: socially degradation was described above. Spiritual degradation should be considered as the most important impact that can emerge from the tourism. It can be described as the modification of the perception of tourists over an objective: ex. The Milan Dome- nowadays people visit it because it is the biggest gothic cathedral, and not because it is a cathedral. So, the motivation changes too, from a spiritual one, to simple curiosity; the objective looses its sacred character, and become a simple objective. These degradations are the reason why it is essential to draw a good management plan, and especially to draw the limit between the religious and touristic exploitation.

All this facts can be resumed in the figure below.

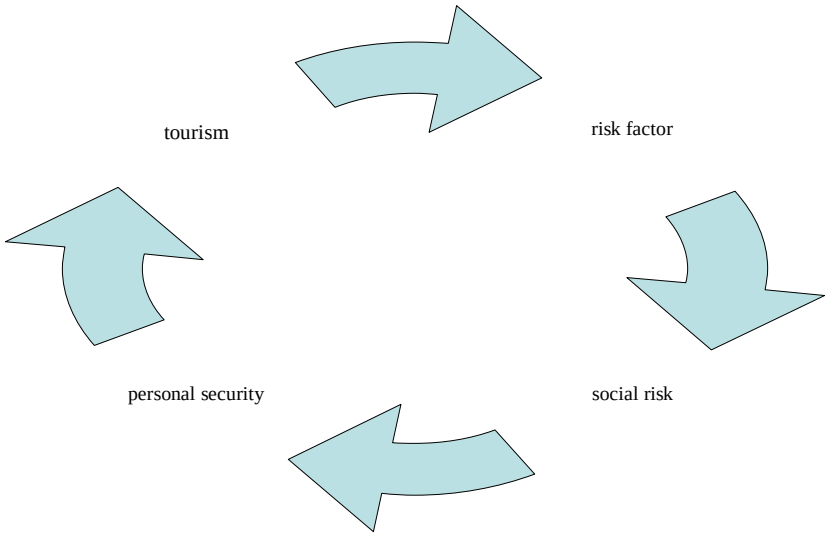

Figure 3. Tourism as a risk factor

5. TOURISM AS A SOCIOLOGIC PHENOMENON

First of all, tourism must be perceived as a mass phenomenon (Figure 4a), due to its wide spread though all over the world, and all social classes. Tourism is first of all a cultural phenomenon for the masses. Nowadays, the tendency in the theory of culture is to describe and define culture as high culture, and low culture. The firs one refers to the classical culture (classic art, theatre, opera and so on), meanwhile the other gathers all concepts related to the street culture. Through tourism, culture becomes accessible to everybody- by visiting different locations and cultural sites the tourist gathers information that he normally would pass.

According to UNWTO [9], in 2002, 20% from the international touristic incomes were youth tourists (140 millions). In 2005, the number grew up to 150 millions. Most of the specialized programs are in Asia and Southern America. This touristic niche is very important due to the fact that through it, tourism must be also perceived as an educational phenomenon. The main reason is that the youth usually has different motivations to perform the trip: study, work, travel, volunteer, search of adventure. This was also the niche with the most spectacular grew after the crisis. Many countries don't have a specific politic regarding this niche (exception Australia, New Zeeland and Thailand). Countries as Nepal, Mauritania or Honduras developed programs for youths for discovering and exploring local resources. This proves the fact that tourism can be perceived as an educational phenomenon. According to UNWTO statistics, 80% of the youths return home more tolerant and respectful. In Malta, the linguistic tourism grew significant. English and French are the most important languages in this type of tourism, but there are also countries which

promote own languages, as Syria, where tourists go to learn Aramaic. In countries as Portugal and Pakistan the intercultural exchanges are encouraged in order to develop understanding each other, promoting the friendship relations between countries. In New Zeeland, youth tourism is defined as that form of tourism that is practiced by the youths that visit a country with educational purpose, and who stay there less than a year. We can say that the main characteristics of the youth tourism are that it is practiced by people between 15-26 years old, it is a niche industry, it has an educative purpose, and it represents an international instrument of exchange, peace and tolerance. An example of youth association regarding traveling is EGEA (European Geography Association), that has a logo (Figure 4b), a website and a great community of young geographers.

a. b.

Figure 4. a.mass tourism at Vatican; b. Egea's logo

Tourism is also a fashionable phenomenon, at the level of the motivation. There is a tendency at the level of the human perception to follow a trend- the fashionable destination in a year is Greece, in another is Turkey or Egypt. Usually the trend is set by stars and public figures. For example Angelina Jolie visited Bali, so, Bali became a fashionable destination. Another example is the tourism in the Emirates, especially in Dubai. Although it is a luxury destination, there appeared also cheaper facilities for the wide public. So, nowadays it is a fashionable thing to visit Dubai, and other exclusivist destinations.

Nowadays, tourism is a pretext of socialization [10], in the interior a social group, or between groups. By a social group we understand families, a work collectivity or a circle of friends. In present times there is a general lack of communication, even inside of a social group. In these circumstances, tourism, as a way of spending leisure time becomes a bridge in communicating. There have been developed special touristic offers for families, but probably the most illustrative case is the increasing demand for teambuilding packages. This modern concept illustrates precisely the concept of tourism as a mean of

communication; the very purpose of a teambuilding is the development of the relations between the members of the team through communications in a pleasant environment.

Tourism is also a special economical phenomenon. Tourists tend to spend more money than they have. If they don't have enough money, they apply for a bank loan, or take a mortgage [11]. During holiday people tend to buy things they usually wouldn't buy; this is why tourism is a special economical phenomenon.

Tourism, although is basically a method to relax, it can be a stress factor too [6]. In this situation there can be identified two main situations. The pre-holiday stress, which appears before departing due to the rush and tasks that must be performed in order to ensure a suitable holiday. The other situation, the post-holiday stress appears at the final of the holiday, or very soon after it. This appears as some sort of depression, generated by the obligation of returning to work.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In the contemporary context tourism must be treated from three different perspectives: as a resource, as a risk factor and as a sociological phenomenon. These are not independent, but strongly connected.

Tourism must be perceived as a resource, but not an economical one exclusively; it is a development resource, an immigrant's resource, but also a scientific one. It must be treated as a risk factor also, with influences on tourists, generated by intercultural conflicts, but on local communities too, by an over exploitation of the area.

Finally, tourism is a complex sociologic phenomenon, with multiple facets: it spreads the mass culture; it is an educational phenomenon with impact on the youths. It is also a fashionable one, with huge variations from a year to another, due to the change of the trend of the year. It is also a pretext of socialization and development of the inter-human relations. It is a special economical phenomenon, as the tourist tends to spend more money than they have. Strangely, it is also a stress factor, especially after the ending of the journey.

Tourism can be seen as a travel system as each hypostases of tourism have effect on the individuals, family and society, and as a result is a circuit with dependent elements.

7. REFERENCES

[1] LANFANT M. F. Sociologie du tourisme. Paris: France Publication; 1978

[2] LANQUAR R. Sociologie du tourisme et des voyages. Paris: France Publication; 1985

[3]SOCIOLOGY OF TOURISM [Internet] 2010. Available from: http://www.dictsociologie.netfirms.com/S/Termeni/sociologia_turismului.htm

[4] FRANKLIN A. Tourism: An introduction. London: SAGE Publications Ltd; 2003

[5] SIMON T., TĂTARU A., CÂNDEA M., BOGAN E. Turism rural. Turism urban. Bucureşti: Transversal Publishing; 2009

[6] COMMENTS ABOUT TOURISTY EXPERIENCES [Internet] 2010. Available from: http://soc.sagepub.com/content/13/2/179.abstract and http://csrc.lse.ac.uk/asp/aspecis/20070171.pdf

[7] TILDEN F. Interpreting our heritage. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press; 2009

[8] GRECU F. Hazarde şi riscuri naturale. Editura Universitaţii din Bucreşti; 2009

[9] SPAIN. World tourism Organization. UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Madrid: UNWTO; 2010

[10] BLYTHE J. The essence of consumer behaviour. Simon & Schuster Company: Prentice Hall Europe; 1998

[11] HOW TO TAKE A BANK LOAN FOR VACATION [Internet] 2007. Available from: http://www.vreaucredit.ro/comunicate/25-de-banci-ofera-credite-pentru-vacante-prin-goovel-net-si-vreaucredit-ro-I5