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Opiniones y Ensayos

Marxism and Tourism: a difficult relation

Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje*
University of Palermo (Argentina)

Abstract: This essay review centers on the role of mobilities within the nation-state, as well as the conceptual limitations of Marxism and Marxists to understand the genuine nature of tourism. Marxists, since they never turned their attention to ancient forms of tourism, grasped the possibilities tourism would serve as a platform for alienation and submission. Here we place such a posture under the critical lens of scrutiny, laying the foundations towards a new conceptualization of tourism.

Keywords: Tourism; Consumption; Rites of Passage; Modernity.

Marxismo y turismo: una relación difícil

Resumen: Este ensayo se centra en el papel de las movilidades dentro del Estado-nación, así como en las limitaciones conceptuales del marxismo y los marxistas para entender la naturaleza genuina del turismo. Los marxistas, como nunca se fijaron en las antiguas formas de turismo, comprendieron las posibilidades que el turismo serviría de plataforma para la alienación y la sumisión. Aquí ponemos esa postura bajo la lente crítica del escrutinio, sentando las bases para una nueva conceptualización del turismo.

Palabras Clave: Turismo; Consumo; Ritos de Paso; Modernidad.

Over years of widely recognition and fame, Marxism explained the ebbs and flows of capitalism, the crises which were originated in a much deeper contradiction in the ways wealth is accumulated (Hofrichter 1987). As Eric Hobsbawm (1995) puts it, the world of economists was historically debated on two extreme waves, capitalism and Marxism, likely overlooking other economic organizations in the globe. While Marxism focused on the material limitations of capitalism to orchestrate the logic of accumulation with a sustainable production, no less true is that after the stock and market crisis that whipped Europe and the United States in 30s decade, Marxism was not only the preferred ideology for many economists, but also USSR was admired as a real model to follow, which succeeded through the articulation of rational programs. Once the collapse of Soviet Union was a fact beyond objections and speculations, Marxism fell in discredit (Hanson 1997). For some reason, in tourism fields Marxism has not been captivated the attention of Academy and scholarship. The economic-centered paradigm toyed with the idea that tourism as a complex socio-economic force resulted from the advance of industrialism and capitalism. In this respect, despites his genius, K. Marx was lately introduced in the discussion of academicians lest by the earlier works of youth MacCannell (1976) who combined the theory of alienation and consumption with the recently-based advances of structuralism and goffmanian literature. He holds the thesis that far from being a naïve industry, tourism played a crucial role in the configuration of capitalist society, to the extent, it represented the continuance of totem, which centralized the symbolic authority of chiefdom in tribal organizations, by other means. In this chapter, not only we discuss critically the main strongholds and weakness of Marxism but also the disinterests of scholars in understanding Marxism beyond the borders of materiality. Equally important, though MacCannell adopted the the thesis that tourism and leisure

* University of Palermo; E-mail: maxikorstanje@hotmail.com

industries derived from the maturation of industrialism, at the best subordinating workforce to the lens of capital-owners, alienation worked by commoditizing cultures, peoples and ethno-merchandises in an hyper concentrated global economy. As a result of this, other more ancient forms of tourism as archeological evidences showed were glossed over. Marxism starts with a vice of origin, which means that tourism serves as an ideological mechanism of discipline, organized by the ruling elite and internalized by rank-and-file workers.

One of the aspects that define neoliberalism is free trade; however, it is not limited to the free exchange of commodities alone. Neoliberalism has many interpretations and connotations. As originally opposed to neo-pragmatism, neoliberalists suggest that the world should be united by action of the trade, in which case, one might speculate the economy plays a leading role in the configuration of neoliberal minds (Ong, 2006; Harvey, 2007). In this respect, Stilz (2009) reminds the intersection of mass-consumerism and nation-state was from its inception the ideological core of capitalism. As a first point of entry in this discussion, the book *Liberal Loyalty* which is authored by A Stilz (2009) seems to be of paramount importance. She coins the term "liberal reasoning" to describe the loyalties of citizenries to their states. From Hobbes to Levi-Strauss, thinkers have theorized on the factor which keeps society united. While the possibilities some discontents emerge are often possible, framers turned their attention to develop the necessary conditions to scrutinize citizens at the same time, the conditions of frustrations were dully regulated if not reversed. Stilz interrogates critically on to what extent can we blame US or UK citizens by the military actions performed by these two nations in Middle East?, by change are elections a valid form of renovation or simply an ideological justification to blame others by our passivity?

In the mid of this mayhem, Stilz acknowledges that the citizens of modern democracies are simply educated to think while they work and pay taxes, they are good boys. This logic leads to a philosophical dilemma because citizens are handtied to prevent the passing of unjust laws. The Hobbesian conception of state signals to the doctrine of security as the platform all citizens agree, the collective rights are redeemed in view of a much broader goal. She proffers an interesting model to understand the loyalties of modern citizens to nation states, escaping to the ethical burdens of what politicians do. For the sake of clarity, nationality plays a leading role limiting the loyalties of individuals into a specific law-making. Lay-citizens should be prone to abide their laws but only when they stay in their native soil. While traveling, they are subject to new jurisdictions and laws. As Stilz observed, the concrete discourse of liberalism succumbs when we imagine the situations some unjust laws, which are passed in the parliament with a majority should be abided. At this point, the principle of redistributive justice not only does not work, but also turns counterproductive. If citizens are morally pressed to obey a new emerging dictator (as Hitler, or Stalin), how does they supposedly behave?, are they reliable for the political crimes of their new regime or simply companions of such a unmoral acts?

To resolve this dilemma, the liberal thought applauds that the concept of civil obligation, which assumes residents should be abiding laws, does not suffice nor the separation of states. Only moral obligations, which are externally designed, can be followed when they come out from a universal nature, which means when involves all men. Lay-people are educated to think they are good boys, if taxes are paid and they are involved in elections.

In consonance with Mayer´s account, Toby James professor at University of East Anglia (UK) exerts an interesting criticism on the current system of elections in modern democracies. Dotted with rich information in legal procedures and administrative steps in elections, he cautions that elite manipulates often the rules of the democratic game in its favour. Whether democracy seems to install a false dichotomy respecting to who really governs, changes in election administration are monopolized by professional politicians many of them appertaining of the same class. While we have voting as a sacred-rule James adheres to citizens are unfamiliar of the silenced operational changes governments conduct to keep the power. His analysis is based on the study cases of US, Ireland and United Kingdom.

What this study reflects is that elections result can be manipulated in an explicit way, by fraud, or implicitly restricting or broadening the rights of some minorities to vote. At its discretion, elite manipulates election-process to conserve their privilege position in regards to pressing groups, or other parties. Even in democracy, we should not leave behind that such a party in the presidency has all resources of state to protect its interests, the necessary information gathered from polls, security-agencies, or even security forces (James 2012).

As Anthony Pagden observed, the sense of nationhood as it is widespread in western civilization seems to be new. It derives from the conquest of Americas, and the doctrine of mobilities (*hominem viatores).*

For some reason, which is hard to develop here, Americas was discovered and rapidly conquered by Spain during 16th century. French and England exerted a radical criticism to the Catholic Church as well as the ways Spain disposed the aborigines´ lands. Though this debate took long time, it was finally closed when scholastic school realized some aboriginals did not honor the sacred-law of hospitality. Since they were incognizant of hospitality, which belonged to the universal law they were catalogued as sub-humans. Spain, invoking the right of hospitality, legitimated one of the cruelest forms of domination history witnessed (Pagden 1998). The authority of nation-state emanated of its capacity to allow the movement of citizens.

Last but not least, in a new recently published book, Korstanje (2017) holds the thesis that beyond the theory of mobilities an ideological message, which is created to control not only the rank-and-file workers, but also the privileges of ruling elite. At a closer look, the history of nation state suggests that many nomad ethnical minorities were disciplined, castigated and forced to live within the authority of nation-state. Modern capitalism alluded to mobilities to figure a false sense of movement whereas at the bottom real nomad groups were silenced, exterminated and forced to accept the authority of Leviathan. In this context, tourism offered a fertile ground to the introduction of leisure consumption, which dates back to the WWII end. This is a point Marxism never reflected in tourism studies and this short notes of research liked to unearth to the dust of oblivion. Paradoxically, Marxist scholars devoted their efforts in deciphering tourism as an activity towards ossification and alienation, in which case, it prevented the maturation of discipline as a serious option in the academic circles. I say "paradoxically" because there was no other critical posture that reflected the nature of "modern tourism" than Marxism. When I use "modern tourism" I mean other types of tourism can be found in the history of mankind. In fact, there is plenty of evidence that proof Romans practiced a similarly--minded form of tourism as we do today. Even the term *Feriae* was widely used in the Empire to endorse a temporal licensee to Roman citizens for three months by the end of the year. This permit was broadly used to visit relatives and families at the peripheral provinces of empire. From *Feriae,* other two terms closely related to holidays derive *Das Ferias (Portuguese) and Die Ferien (German).* This seems to be a reminder that likely Marxist would turn their eyes to Ancient history. Historians of tourism, a recent field within tourism studies that supported the legacy of Marxists, never examined or at the best discussed the nature of tourism beyond the Medieval Age. For them, tourism was a modern activity, which resulted from the end of WWII. Of course, the unremitting state of conflict that characterized Middle Age led them to think there were no other ancient forms of tourism earlier than Modernity. Needless to say they were wrong in the same way are Marxist when they argue tourism serves as a platform of domination. Tourism can be defined as a rite of passage, which revitalizes the social frustrations happened in daily life.

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