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UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE AS THE ROOTS OF PHYSICAL DISPLACEMENT: THE ORIGIN OF TOURISM

Popular Wisdom valorizes tourism as an industry inextricably intertwined with physical displacement. Whereas academicians emphasize that tourism was a product of technological revolutions linked to mass-transport which accelerated and improved the ways of traveling, less attention has certainly been given to the real origin of tourism. The present paper explores the influence exerted by the Bible (Old and New Testaments) in the configuration of modern tourism. Based on exegetical methods, this work shows how workers are frequently socialized in a diversity of norms (commandments). Tourism, which is characterized by a physical movement, allows these workers to break temporarily these duties to be cyclically reintroduced to their daily obligations once they return. This aspect of modern tourism can be very well compared with the ritual of confession or the purification of the soul. The guilt derived from the repression of the father in Freudian terms claims for a sacrifice to resume the time of sin with forgiveness. That way, visitors who launched to explore paradisaical places situated in faraway parts of the world experience an unavoidable need to come back home. This is because “holidays” purify the sins (duties) that burden people at work whereas, once they have expiated their acts, they are available to be driven to their societies once again.

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Introduction

The German sociologist Georg Simmel argued that curiosity is one of the aspects that characterize the human spirit regardless of the culture or religious affiliation. This feeling moves our species towards the fields of the unknown (Simmel, 2002: 17) looking for a better place to be. One might consider that uncertainty triggers the need for displacing as a universal psychological basic drive. At the surface, the holiday season is witnessed as a thousand urban citizens leave their homes with the aim of amusement in remote and sparsely populated places. In such a context, many scholars have devoted their efforts to studying the relationship between displacement and tourism (Knebel, 1984; Krippendorf, 1987; Gunn, 1994; Molina, 1986; Khatchikian, 2000; Schluter, 2000; Castaño, 2005; Santana-Talavera, 2006). Tourism and displacement are inextricably intertwined.

Based on exegetic methods which connote the benefit to enhance qualitatively the understanding of myths, the present paper explores the roots of tourism and displacement as a social institution created by founding texts not only in the Old but also in the New Testament. There is an enticing and interesting linkage between religion and tourism.

Valuable and interesting works have in the past focused on the relationship between religion and tourism (Cohen, 1972; Maccannell, 2003; Graburn, 1983; Digance, 2003; Santana, 2006; Castaño, 2005; Boissevain, 2005; Scantlebury, 2008; Gil, 2008; Andriotis, 2009). It is safe to recognize that these papers emphasize the strength of certain religious or sacred places to attract a considerable volume of tourists or the experience these visitors manifested after travel. However, few theoretical precedents can be found regarding the influence exerted by the Bible in the configuration of postmodern mass-transportation and tourism. Assumptions that tourism is a natural institution related to human basic needs of exploration do not suffice for answering these concerns.

The question as to why workers need psychological displacement for further resting or amusement is unresolved in the current specialized literature. Basically, our hypothesis refers to the modern belief that pleasure travel seems to be enrooted in the ancient mythical narration of Genesis in Judaism and, later, in Christianity. The displacement for these cosmologies is considered a pathway towards a potential change; in other terms, a way for altering the conditions where people stand, and of course a type of symbolic escape. However, it was not until the advent of Christianity when the classical Hebrew concept of journey (negatively linked to the sin) has been changed forever.

Exegesis corresponds to an objective anthropological methodology intended to interpret the meaning of certain texts to determine to what extent social behavior and mythology are interconnected. Starting from the premise that classical qualitative approaches with interviews or questionnaires fail to comprehend the divergence between what people say and do, exegesis assesses the extent to which sacred texts determine present social customs.

Preliminary Discussion about Myths

Opposed to logos, which signifies the possibility of advancing in the fields of knowledge, the term myth stems from the Greek *mythos* which means a classical narrative associated with what has never taken place. The concerns about the influence of myths on day-to-day life began with the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes who realized human beings showed a propensity to guess everything in the world had an origin, a reason to follow or rational causality. Founding Myths played a pivotal role in explaining the causality of events in a world that is not always hospitable (Hobbes, 2004: 78). For Marcel Mauss, myths and rituals share similar roots since both are part of a much broader system known as religion. Following this, myths should be interpreted as symbolic patterns whose ends permit human beings to intellectualize ambivalence (Mauss, 2006:270). By the way, Evans-Pritchard

contends the power of myths in social life is unquestionable. They almost always refer to events held in an extemporal realm where gods and humans coexisted in harmony and peace. A narrative of this caliber legitimates the current habits and behavior of tribes and communities (Evans-Pritchard, 1977: 125).

To wit, Lévi-Strauss brought into attention that mythical narrative intends to intellectualize what is not understandable in our mind. The ambivalence of nature which alternates bipolar meanings is apprehended by means of religion and mythical archetypes. As a narrated tale that justifies not only the proper practices but also the contradictions of the future, a myth represents a relation of homology between two antagonist aspects: life and death. These constructs are often characterized by the articulation of semiotic contradictions with emphasis on the problem of human transcendence and immortality (Lévi-Strauss, 1991; Lévi-Strauss, 2002).

The mythical system of societies provides subjects with clearer models to understand nature. This means that human practices, religious beliefs and cosmology are inextricably intertwined in a deep-seated process which turns real for the social imaginary. This point has been underpinned in the anthropological academy by a set of numerous ethnographies ranging from Malinowski to Levi-Strauss (Malinoswski, 1998:27) (Leach, 1954) (Leach, 1965) (Morris, 1995) (Balandier, 2004:104) (Lévi-Strauss, 2003:139). Whenever a society envisages its own founding myths as a natural or taken-for-granted explanation of events, we are in presence of ethnocentrism. One can see in Greek Navajo or Norse myths fantastic narrations that have nothing to do with the modern times we live in but as Castoriadis put it, an Ancient Greek would feel the same of a religion which encourages that their god-son was born from a virgin woman. As a whole, mythical structures are instruments that allow the reconfiguring of the relationship of humans with their environments in a broader sense (Castoriadis, 2006). Myths today represent a powerful and valuable instrument to delve into

unabated nets of symbolism in primitive and industrialized societies.

Considering the Roots of Displacements

A considerable and abundant literature addressed the motivations of travelers in pilgrimages and sacred experience linked to religion or festivals. Under this perspective, Graburn (1983) originally identifies tourism as a sacred journey where people can find the sacred value they look for. Centered in the Durkheimian thesis, Maccannell (2003) realizes that the development of tourism entails a much broader sacralization process in which an object can be very well disclosed from the mundane essence. His perspective is aimed at stimulating the debate about the progress of touristification and what he calls “the staged authenticity”. Typically, alternating previous sociological theses of Marx, Levi-Strauss, Goffman and -of course- professor Durkheim, Maccannell elaborates effective guidelines for studying the consumption of sacred objects. The tourist experience is encompassed of three components: a) a staged front which reflects the superficial interaction between hosts and guests such as infrastructure, media events, festivals or landscapes, b) deeper subjective emotions which converge with fear, tenure and illusions and c) the convergence between emotions and stated reality inside the involved visitor. The experience is also forged in the traveler’s mind once returned to home (Maccannell, 2003). Maccannell’s contributions have been applied to countless other investigations that explored the existent relationship between sacralization and authenticity (Dann, 2005; Helpburn, 2002; Azeredo-Grunewald, 2002; Wickens, 2002; Lane and Waitt, 2007; Haug et al, 2007; Belhassen, Caton and Stewart, 2008). However, one of the problems is that Maccannell trivializes the role of mythology as well as the rite of passages in travel and tourism.

To address this shortcoming, Dos Santos examines Victor Turner’s contributions to the study of travel. The encounter between hosts and guests is done by means of communication processes. Rites of passages play a pivotal role in the understanding of

tourism because of two main reasons. The tourist experience can be deemed an outstanding event that breaks the humdrum routine with the end of leading involved visitors to a new status when they come home. Rituals consist in a preliminary facet of liminality characterized by the disconnection of people with day-to-day life. Secondly, individuals weave new temporal bondage and alliances with other members of the group. Ultimately, tourists are reintroduced in their societies with an upgrade of status (Dos Santos, 2005). Other scholars agree with Turner's understanding of the rites which represent pleasure travel (Bruner, 1991; Nash, 1984; Cohen, 1992). However, Turner was indeed concerned with research of social and tribal conflicts and how processes of this nature are daily re-accommodated so that groups prevent a broader disorder and fragmentation. To what extent holidays may be considered in parallel with an initiation rite of a warrior should be a questionable point of discussion, or at least seen as troublesome.

Conversely, one of the best approaches in this field corresponds with Mircea Eliade who shed light on how the ways of economic production converge with culture and religion. For this scholar, mythology is a complex net of symbols compounded by a departing and a return. The efficiency of rituals corresponds with a reality that operates in the present associated with territorial possession or exploration and movement as a search for a new situation. That way, the territorial possession calls for a set of ritual processes which comes from the founding myth of creation. Symbolically, the discovery of new lands is equaled to an acting of creation, a kind of baptism wherever the divine and profane order are situated (Eliade, 2006: 22). After all, lands as well as people need names to be identified, recognized and expropriated.

In sharp contrast with Turner who argued myths are pursued in an on-going process, Eliade contends myths are cyclical. In a similar manner, the founding myth expresses the nature of human beings while eschatology symbolized the latter-day. Analogically, the

modern work and vacations are two concepts which are connected. Whereas the former represents the harvest, the latter is related to the posterior cut for a new harvest and so forth. The travelers do not change their own status. They are re-introduced in the similar status prior to departure. From an anthropological perspective, Eliade provides us with a coherent and insightful framework to understand the problem based on three variables: the quest of novelty, resting, and a regular return to home.

History of Tourism (Departure and Return)

Although Ancient Greeks and Romans devoted considerable attention to leisure, pleasure, and travel, even they had a concept associated with vacations, the *feriae*; the point is that mass-tourism emerged as a result of combined factors which at a first glance predisposed more time to travel and less working time for consumers. Korstanje traces the origin of tourism in etymological fields; the word tourism comes from the Ancient Saxon *Torn*, a term used by farmers in the England of the XII century B.C. to denote travel in a circular direction. This thesis was originally coined by Fernandez Fuster who argued that *the Torn* (denoting to whoever gives turns) was applied almost always under the conditions the traveler goes back to. Evolution of this word was undoubtedly related to France and its language (Korstanje, 2007: 102-103).

Following this, The Grand Tour surfaces as a politic need to indoctrinate landowners and learn about the sovereignty issues. For instance, albeit the thesis of Fernández-Fuster (1978) seems to be illustrative, it is important to mention that he precludes the need of return as a classical value of Anglo-Saxon (Norse) Culture. Readers should remember that Christianization was achieved along Scandinavia and Germany (including Great Britain) and the rest of Europe through the Fifth and Sixth Centuries B.C. Hence, the predisposition of Saxon farmers with respect to *Torn* had older roots (Fernandez-Fuster, 1978).

From our perspective, the genesis of displacement as a form of amusement relates to Judaism and Christianity (Old and New Testament respectively). This section reflects that to some degree tourism is related to the need of return. In the next section we will discuss the contributions of Mircea Eliade to the procedural performance of myths as well as the importance of exegesis in an all-encompassed understanding of travel. By the way, Derrida considers that one of the pre-requisites for hospitality is foreigners do not take root in the visited lands. The sojourn of guests should be temporal. Otherwise, the guest becomes in “a personage” who should be traced and expelled towards the boundaries of nation-hood (Derrida, 2006). For that reason, the traveler’s status is not defined exclusively by the reasons to travel but also by the preexisting rules and procedures applied by Nation-States. Whatever the case may be, the main thesis of Derrida is that tourists are determined by the compulsory need of coming back to their homelands. A thin boundary separates migrants from tourists. History also plays an important role in explaining not only how the Nation-State shaped the nationality as a common value to defend but also that hospitality means the temporary permission bestowed to strangers.

The Genesis and the Principle of Rest

The convergence between rituals and founding myths needs a broader articulation which provides legitimacy. Beyond the need of biological restitution inherent of work, the displacement as a form of betterness seems to be a creation of Judaism. In Genesis chapter (1 and 2) God created the earth and heaven and separated the light from darkness. On the sixth day, Adam and Eve were placed in Eden to administer the creation of the Lord. Power and free-will played an important role in the corruption of the founding parents. Ultimately, God saw his product was perfect and rested on the seventh day (the cabalists insisted throughout their texts on the importance of this number as a sign of perfection). Genesis in the Old

Testament announces the inception of humanity associated with a bipolar logic, work and rest, both subject to the logic of free-will.

Underpinned in the proposition that rest was a sacred commandment that Hebraic faith followed verbatim, Christianity sanctified rest as a “sacred right” as well. Similar meanings can be found throughout the Old Testament in a diverse net of verses such as Exodus, where Moses ascends Mount Sinai hill to embrace the tables of laws. At that instance, God explained to Moses that resting should be honored as a sacred value gained in favor of humanity because of its sacrifice. No need to say that necessities of rest were universal because of biological conditions; of course, we are not contradicting this. Rather, our thesis dwells on the cultural expression mythological narrative legitimate and how it operates in daily modern life. After further examination, the word holiday can be detached in two terms: holy and day. However, few questions immediately surface: What is the relationship between the sacred bible and tourism, and of course, What should be the connection between displacement, sin and forgiveness?

Confession, Sins, Forgiveness and Tourism

A coherent definition of sin can be associated with the corruption or even with deviation in respect to certain rules. In the ancient World, sin was expiated by means of an exile or the displacement to remote hostile lands. The propensity of humans to sin was exemplified in Genesis (chapter 3, verses 21 to 24) at the time Eve tempted Adam to eat of the apple from the Tree of Knowledge. Condemned to work for survival, the first man was punished with the mandate to stroll throughout the world product of his imprudence. The shame combined with the banishment portrayed the symbolism the Western world follows according to sin and expiation. Implicitly, the displacement was a result of the juxtaposition between guilt, sin and forgiveness. This underlying element is inherited from Judaism and its

own cosmology; undoubtedly, it cannot be tracked to Norse, Celtic or Greek mythological structures.

The same model repeats with the assassination of Abel at the hands of Cain where the latter was exiled to a hostile and unknown land. Abel and Cain symbolize the relationship between self-identity and otherness expressed in the figure of foreigners. To some degree this coincides with the Penteo's and Bacchus Myth in Hellenic Culture, or even in Genesis chapter 11 when people opted to build a large tower to access heaven. The human pride (as a form of sin) resulting in a diversity of languages that prevented the enterprise from being successfully achieved. As in previously mentioned cases, in this case the rage of Lord placed subtly to all involved workers to the four angles of the globe. Not only Cain, Abel, Adam but also Babel's workers maintain certain resemblances, they were punished because of their pride and rushed to displacement according to a much broader sentiment of self-humiliation. Analogically, the bridge between sin and tourism is significant but does not explain why we should return to home.

The culprit was the key factor to justify why people should abandon their homes. In this sense, there is an analogy between work and sin. After all, we work because we are born with original sin. This is the explanation why we should work to survive, the main reason why we and our brothers have been expatriated from paradise forever. Nonetheless, the hard work of Cain has nothing to do with pleasure. Here it is necessary to dissociate the structures of Ancient Hebrew mythology (Old Testament) and Christianity (New Testament). For Judaism the displacement is inextricably intertwined with forced migration. It can be said that Christianity historically divorced from Judaism creating a new kind of dogma, rituals and practices oriented to salvation as a form of redemption. The advent of Christ not only shortened the distances among God and his sons, but also reconsidered the ways of coping with sin, culprit and punishment.

Founders of Christianity have seen in the sin and forgiveness a mechanism of cyclical renovation in the terms of Eliade. The sacraments as well as the salvation or the crucifixion are aimed at emphasizing the return to home (to the eternal lost paradise). The continuous quest of a new paradise explains in part the tolerance of suffering characterized to Middle Age societies (Eliade, 2006: 192-193). It is important to see how Christ personified in a human and executed only returns at the end of days. The logic of Christianity has certainly replaced the classical belief of Judaism that displacement should be associated just with sin. For Christianity, the sins (which are burdens) should be expiated or forgiven if the involved sinner settles his/her debts (this is the aim of the ritual of confession which can be seen in analogy with tourism). The confession as pleasure travel works in connecting two contrasting worlds, the sacrifice derived from culprit and leisure stemming from the forgiveness.

Ultimately, Christianity will encourage a new logic enrooted in necessities to move for relaxation to come back later to the same point from which the traveler departed. Basically, the logic of work is triggered by the presence of sin whereas the rest means a posterior reintroduction, a renovation that explains the prosecution of forgiveness. For Hebrew mythology the displacement turns to a pejorative and negative meaning (because it stems from the evilness) while for Christianity the culprit that gives origin to displacement became positive thanks to the interconnection of expiation, sacrifice and punishment. Exactly, this was the logic accepted by reformers and Protestants in the Middle Age. Work and leisure started to be considered with a positive connotation (Weber, 1985; Sombart, 2005).

With this previous argument given, Eliade is not wrong when he argues that workers in our postmodern world are frequently socialized in a diversity of norms (commandments). Tourism, which is characterized by a physical movement, allows these workers to break temporarily these duties to be cyclically reintroduced to their daily obligations once they

return home. This aspect of modern tourism can be very well compared with the ritual of confession or the purification of soul. The guilt derived from the repression of the father in Freudian terms claims for a sacrifice to resume the time of sin with forgiveness. That way, visitors who launched to explore sparsely populated places experience an unavoidable need to come back home. This happens because holidays metaphorically purify the sins (duties) that burden people at work whereas, once acts are expiated, the tourists are driven once again back to their societies. The New Testament reveals in the Revelation book of John, as well as in the five gospels, the imminent advent of Christ and divine order to the earth (for further details see Mateo, Chapter 24 verses 47-50, John, Chapter 4 verse 3-7 and Luke Chapter 15, verse 4 and 5).

Conclusion

To cut the long story short, we can conclude that renovation of norms that entails the return is enrooted in the figures of baptism, guilt, sacrifice and expiation. This moral process can be compared with social duties or rules visitors abide by every day. These forces not only determine individual behavior but also pave the pathways towards a new reinsertion. This eternal return to day-to-day life (once the vacation is over) demonstrates an ambivalent nature. On the one hand, we change in some way but certainly it is unquestionable that we were subject of a process of forgiveness. On the other hand, there is continuity because we were introduced in the same realm before our departure. In this point there is convergence of the contributions of Eliade, Turner and Van Gennep (Gennep, 1986; Turner, 1999; Eliade, 2006). This type of amnesty is hermeneutically linked to our dreams, expectations, frustrations and obligations which overwhelm us in our life. The process of renovation takes specific slots in the sphere of beaches, museums, mountains, landscapes and the like. For that reason, tourism as a social institution (commercialized view of the necessity of novelty and

rest) is legitimated by the essence “of sacred founding texts”.

With this background in mind one might speculate tourism operates in a finite boundary across time and space. Once returned, the involved traveler will be reintroduced into the same before-departure status. This means no other thing than after a period of hard work, any tourist will dispose of their endeavors to make from the holiday a memorable moment; however, postmodern pleasure or excitement is often framed in a lapse of time. One of the characteristics of paradise, in a biblical sense, is the limited access for humans. It here is note-worthy that temporal lapses of mythical archetypes do not correspond with chronological time. In perspective, psychological needs of relaxing do not interfere with status visitors gain when the vacations end. The restitution of being is the primary goal of vacation as a social institution. It is important here to reconsider the connection of Genesis with the necessities of escape and amusement.

Western culture poses a great challenge in tourism as a form of improvement of societies or as a mechanism to accumulate wealth. The essence of tourism corresponds with the following aspects: a) a founding myth which reformulates rest in a day of the week (Seventh one) as a commandment; b) humans not only rest because it has been ordered by God, but also travel to other territories and lands with the end of freeing themselves from any obligations (forgiveness of sins). This style of reinvention permits social imagery to be perpetuated or replicated at the time it prevents any kind of disruptions or disputes that can jeopardize order. Finally, reinsertion into the daily environment reinforces the cyclical process of production. As farmers cultivate their lands for a new seed at a later period, tourism reproduces the logic of economic production, revitalizing the necessary veins and tendon of modern workers.

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