

EPISTEMOLOGICAL EVOLUTION IN STUDIES ON TOURISM

Daniela MATEI¹

e-mail: daniela_matei2004@yahoo.com

Abstract

Research on tourism has gone, in the last two decades, several steps interest and enthusiasm in a first phase, followed by apathy and distrust, culminating in the present moment, with a regained interest and confidence in view of tourism as a promoter of integrated development, sustainable peace. As a result, studies on tourism are beginning to occupy a space complex intellectual, prolific and interesting, and a number of researchers foreign yet, report the development of innovative methodologies and the need to address broader studies on tourism. We find, thus changing the ontological and epistemological characteristics of tourism to a critique, the role of tourism is stuck in an interdisciplinary vision.

Key words: epistemology, tourism, interdisciplinary approach

After more than four decades of scientific research, tourism has reached a certain degree of maturity, meaning that many cases have been researched, theorized and conceptualized. Research on tourism has gone, in the last two decades, several steps interest and enthusiasm in a first phase, followed by apathy and distrust, culminating in the present moment, with a regained interest and confidence in view of tourism as a promoter of integrated development, sustainable peace

As a result, studies on tourism are beginning to occupy a space complex intellectual, prolific and interesting, and a number of researchers foreign yet, report the development of innovative methodologies and the need to address broader studies on tourism.

We find, thus changing the ontological and epistemological characteristics of tourism to a critique, the role of tourism is stuck in an interdisciplinary vision.

The issue aims to offer the argumentation in favor of a comprehensive approach, interdisciplinary studies on tourism future. The first part is a brief description of fundamental knowledge in the field, followed by a series of perspectives on the current level of epistemological development of the field. We treat the phenomenon of tourism, on the assumption that, we live in a purely social and cultural world and therefore, any investigation that aims to study tourism issues must take into account the interdependence situations (legal, political) places and people that shape the current tourism market.

"New" Research on tourism has originated mainly in the way of qualitative inquiry and is supported largely by debates in sociology, anthropology and cultural geography.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Analyzing literature, some authors (Goethe, 1969) believes that up to `30 years, only historians have made a number of contributions in the field of tourism, then drawing the attention of geographers and then economists, planners, etc.

Since the early 60's, emphasis began to grow tourism and thus, other disciplines began to be interested in specific issues of tourism: from anthropology to sociology, ecology studies related to recreation and leisure, and political science.

A distinct and most important step in the `80 starts, during which tourism began gradually to become a research topic standing out as the establishment of international scientific research publications, the acknowledged: *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, or *Tourism Management* (Graburn, Jafari, 1991).

So-called "first generation of researchers" is observed since the early 70's and '80s, contributing and establishing the foundations of tourism as a legitimate area of research (Pritchard & Morgan, 2007).

It should be noted that the analysis developed by Graburn tourism and Jafari, the special edition of the *Annals of Tourism Research* in 1991 was achieved in a time when it was still possible to assess the depth of field in terms of scope and scale of since there are only six magazines in the '80s.

¹ Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch

In the past 20 years, academia space has become a very prolific area, remarking an increase remarkable number of publications, currently there are over 70 travel magazines, of which 40 are recognized internationally.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After more than four decades of scientific research, tourism has reached a certain degree of maturity, meaning that many cases have been researched, theorized and conceptualized.

Study authors concluded that critical Tazim Jamal B. Everett and Jeff confirmed that the manner of approaching or addressing specific business functional / applicative dominated studies on tourism and "camp-saving externalities" (appearance orientation industry) has overshadowed to some extent "camp- internalities / relations impacts (social and cultural aspect).

Regarding discipline, sociological explanations of tourism have focused largely on the world in a division with a non-tourist activities and tourist activities (Franklin, 2007). Anthropology, for example, had their own point of view - treating tourism as a cultural phenomenon (Nash, Smith, 1991). These authors also stated that from an anthropological perspective, tourists are allowed as guests or passengers who take part in the tour and which have an impact on host countries.

In terms of geography, tourism is considered a phenomenon of nature space (Franklin, 2004). After L. S. Mitchell, P. E. Murphy (1991) "*environment is all tourism activities incorporating natural elements and landscape changes produced by the company and resources*" so that attention was paid to the travel patterns of environmental and resource allocation, urban tourism tourism, social development and tourist destinations.

From the above we can see that a number of authors believe that the study of tourism can be charged as a result of the orientation of different disciplines whether sociological theory on production company (work, employment, social reproduction of labor, etc..) anthropology attention on the impacts of tourism and tourism focus of geography as a spatial phenomenon.

Another characteristic point of view tourism as a theory devoid of its own, complex (Apostolopolous, Leivadi, Yiannakis, 1996) it being in a position to embrace the paradigms of social science research.

The consequences of tourism are the implications on the theory that tourism has become an economic concept (Franklin, Crang, 2001). Other authors (Crouch, 2004) points out that tourist sites continue to be inadequately appreciated, only

through the period of product and that scientists must overcome the optimistic assumption of the business exclusively on tourism policies, investors and hosts, on the one hand, as producers and tourists, on the other hand, as consumers. Basically, the common conclusion is that, to properly conceptualize tourism researchers thinking must emerge from the economic sphere and to assess the relationship between tourism, leisure and recreational activities in relation to other social practices (Hall, Williams, Lew, 2004).

There is nothing surprising in this conclusion: as a complex phenomenon becomes we realize that the method of analysis and understanding the essence of change.

While so-called exact sciences aim is to seek scientific regularities, which forms patterns in the studied material, human sciences is to understand individual phenomena. However, the boundary between areas of sciences and humanities their instruments various research and knowledge, however, is not easily defined.

As the approach to observable life, scientific instrument easily, strictly objective based on quantification and numbers and specific language can not be used for single but must be combined with the language of human sciences.

For example, it is considered that political economy and sociology, based on the use by them of accurate instruments of measurement, are strictly science, despite the fact that people are most often strictly rational individuals, and the degree of consumer satisfaction measurement is difficult to measure defined scale.

Finally, due to research that touched the phenomenon of tourism, researchers in this area is necessary to leave the economic sphere and to assess the relationship between tourism, history, sociology, psychology, economics and other sciences, that require interdisciplinary study for a proper understanding of issues of interest.

The efforts of researchers in the field of tourism seem to follow the example of entering the social sciences and what Tribe (2004) calls the "new" research in tourism or what Ateljevic, Pritchard & Morgan (2007) describe as "critical turn" in studies on tourism.

According to Tribe (2005), recent works which reflecting this change of direction are represent by the *Theorizing Other Discourses of Tourism, Gender and Culture: Can the subaltern Speak (in tourism)?* Aitchison's (2001), *Narrative Autoethnographic on Tourism Research Epistemologies* Botterill's (2003), *Narrative of Travel: Desire and the Movement of Feminine Subjectivity* a lui Fullagar (2002) and the *Surveillance of the Worlds of Tourism: Foucault*

and the *Eye-of-power's Hollinshead* (1999). Another publication, the Tribe's view indicates a mainstream publisher interest in new approaches to research in tourism, is *Qualitative Research in Tourism: Ontologies, Epistemologies and Methodologies* Phillmore and Goodson's (2004c)

"New" Research on tourism has originated mainly in the way of qualitative inquiry and is supported largely by debates in sociology, anthropology and cultural geography.

Another example constitutes the recent publication *Blackwell Companion to Tourism*, published by Hall et. al. (2004), which brings together a variety of critical tourism research.

Some of these theories based on social science subjects include: post-colonialism (D.Hauteserre, 2004), gender and sexuality (Pritchard, 2004), reflective mode of postmodernism (Oakes & Eat, 2004) bringing together a variety of critical tourism research, cultural tourism geographies (Crang, 2004), cultural tourism circuits (Ateljevic & Doorn, 2004) as well as marketing promotion issues (Morgan, 2004).

This plan represents a change in ontological analysis, epistemological and methodological approach to study tourism and is an upper stage of investigation and interpretation of scientific, practical developments in their field.

Basically, the knowledge obtained in studies on tourism remains confined in the paradigm, ontology and epistemology varied, while the researchers are moving to more directions simultaneously. Some of These theories based on social science Subjects include: post-colonialism (D `Hauteserre, 2004), gender and sexuality (Pritchard, 2004), reflective mode of postmodernism (Oakes & Eat, 2004) Bringing together a Variety of critical tourism research .

Very recent literature reveals a growing number of researchers that use innovative approaches to tourism (Gale & Botterill, 2005), opening new lines of research: *actor-network theory* (actor-network theory) (Johannesson, 2005 , Van Der Druim, 2007), *mobilities* (mobilities) (Hall et. al., 2004, Hanna, 2009; Kevin Meethan, 2003), and *worldshaping worldmaking* (creating and shaping the world) (Hollinshead, 2004b), and *the shaping of destinations and remaking places* (destinations modeling and restoration sites) (Crang, 2004). From these points of view, tourism

REFERENCES

Aitchison, C., 2001 - *Theorizing Other discourses of tourism, gender and culture: can the subaltern speak (in tourism)?*, *Tourist Studies*, 1(2), p. 147 – 233

can be correlated with a variety of specific effects of globalization and cosmopolitanism, consumerism and the creation of sites.

Tourism has become an important factor of modernity and of global society, which results in a matrix of order effects. Recently emerging paradigm of mobility (Urry, 2006) determined the researcher to address locations in a different way, claiming in fact a critical and reflective approach to thinking about understanding the meaning and reality of a settlement. Hollinshead, Ateljevic and Ali (2009), for example, has tourism as a mobile switching - "*worldmaking agent*" ("a creation of the world's mobile") that creates, but also can recover and dismantle settlements (sites).

CONCLUSIONS

The views expressed throughout the paper reveals a rethinking of some elements of the tourism phenomenon:

- the future in tourism research field does not lie, we believe, in a series of stories "right", "believes", "valid" for tourism, but rather the multiplicity of meanings interpretations are possible only by transcending disciplinary boundaries and rigid structures traditional domain;

- is necessary for researchers to become interpreters and not just objective and neutral observers of a single truth;

- it must be mentioned that it would be a mistake to believe that traditional models of investigation and attention given to passengers taxonomies have no place in studies on tourism. Positivist approaches to the phenomenon of tourism are extremely valuable; they should only allow and explore other ways and ideas to open a new space (framework) of thinking about tourism, expanding the borders of ontology and epistemology.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper was made within The Knowledge Based Society Project supported by the Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD), financed from the European Social Fund and by the Romanian Government under the contract number POSDRU/89/1.5/S/56815.

Apostolopolous, Y., Leivadi, S., Yiannakis, A., 1996 - *The sociology of tourism: Theoretical and empirical Investigations*. Londra, Edit. Routledge.

Ateljevic, I., Pritchard, A., Morgan, N., 2007 - *The critical Turn in Tourism Studies: Innovative Research Methodologies*, Amsterdam.

Crang, M. 2004 - *Cultural Geographies of Tourism*, Oxford: Blakwell Publishing Ltd., p. 74-84.

- Franklin, A., 2007** - *The Problem with Tourism Theory* în I. Ateljevic, N. Morgan & A. Pritchard (coord.), *The Critical Turn in Tourism Studies: Innovative Research Methodologies*, Amsterdam, Edit. Elsevier, p. 131-148.
- Franklin, A., Crang, M., 2001** - „The trouble with tourism and travel theory?” în *Tourist Studies*, nr. 1, p. 6.
- Goethe, J. W., 1969** - *Călătorie în Italia*, Editura pentru literatură universală, București.
- Graburn, N. H., Jafari, J., 1991** - *Introduction; Tourism Social Science*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18, 1-11.
- Hall, C., Williams, M., Lew, A., 2004** - „Tourism: Conceptualizations, Institutions, and Issues” în A. Lew, C. M. Hall & M. Williams (coord.), *A Companion to Tourism*, Oxford, Ed. Blackwell Publishing Ltd., p. 3-21.
- Jamal, T. B., Everett, J., 2007** - *Resisting Rationalisation in the Natural and Academic Life-World: Critical Tourism Research or Hermeneutic Charity?* în I. Ateljevic, A. Pritchard & N. Morgan (coord.), *The Critical Turn in Tourism Studies: Innovative Research Methodologies*, Amsterdam, Edit. Elsevier, p. 57-76.
- Mitchell, L. S., Murphy, P. E., 1991** - „Geography and Tourism” în *Annals of Tourism Research*, nr. 18, p. 59.
- Nash, D., și Smith, V. L., 1991** - *Anthropology and Tourism* în *Annals of Tourism Research*, nr. 18, p. 12-25.