

BOOK. "Tourism Development and Destination Branding through Content Marketing Strategies and Social Media "

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Abstract

The turn of century has brought news on natural disasters such as quakes, floods, tsunamis, some of them caused by the climate change, but also others as lethal virus outbreaks as Ebola, SARS and Swine Flu by the lack of control of health system, without mentioning terrorism which places tourism industry in jeopardy. In this respect, policy makers and experts accept the idea that new techniques of marketing and programs are needed to protect the organic image of tourist destinations. In this vein, post disaster marketing situates as a more than interesting sub-discipline that sheds the ink on the acceleration of recovery process timeframe through the articulation of tourism and leisure consumption. This chapter discusses critically the main strengths and weakness of post disaster

marketing to offer an all-encompassing model which can be used by marketing-led scholars in these difficult times. In some respect, post disaster marketing centers on (dark) tourism to foster a positive discourse revolving around the tragedy, which is conducive to buttress attractiveness in the effaced site.

Introduction

The turn of the century brought some unexpected events, many of them not only shocking for tourism industry but also for public opinion (Allan, Adam & Carter, 2000; Littlefield & Quenette, 2007; Korstanje 2010). Anthropologists know this tendency as “*milenarism*” which consists in the individual and collective dispositions or reaction in every change of millennium. These types of states are characterized by atmospheres of extreme fears and hopes which are accompanied by emergent moral forces that lead towards radical religious reformations. In this context, the attacks to *World Trade Center* on September 11 of 2001 is only the prelude for the successive concatenation of natural and made-man disasters such as Katrina Hurricane that hit New Orleans, and the strong quakes in Haiti, Sri Lanka and Chile, without mentioning the outbreak of apocalyptic viruses as SARS, Swine flu and the frightening Ebola. Some voices called the attention on the role of mass media and journalism producing an “spectacle of disaster”, which not only served as cultural entertainment for global publics and audiences but also appealed to terror as a mechanism of political indoctrination (Kellner 2005; Klein 2007; Virilio 2010; Innerarity & Solana 2013; Korstanje 2016). What seems to be clear is that some of these disasters were caused by the climate change effects. Over the recent decades the successive failures of nations to coordinate efforts in the mitigation of green-house gases was directly proportional to the historical centre-periphery dependency which was forged in the colonial rule (Chaturvedi & Doyle 2015). While some nations struggled to reverse the effects of climate change innovating in new energy sources, others are

prone to discuss further levels of contamination to protect their domestic industries. In the mid of this mayhem, many specialists and policy makers envisaged a grim future for tourism industry. The rise of diverse risks (as already noted) that may place tourism in jeopardy, adjoined to the criticism exerted on tourism as a fresh green industry that can ameliorate the effects climate change in the economies, landscapes and cultures, paves the ways for a hotly debate that today remains open (Smith 1990; Hall & Higham, 2005; Weaver 2011). As Korstanje and George (2014) put it, policy makers should arrive to a coherent diagnosis of the problem. In so doing, it is vital not only to read the advances of specialized literature but distinguishing the invention of a culture of disaster as a form of entertainment from a real global threat.

As this backdrop, the concept of post-disaster marketing alludes to the uses of tourism and planning to help effaced communities in their recovery process. At a closer look, tourism not only generates further attraction for tourists but also for investors who are in quest of further profits. Of course, this suggests that post-disaster marketing works and dark tourism are inextricably intertwined. In this chapter we toy with the idea that post disaster marketing literature emerged as the limitations in the theory of sustainability and risk perception to anticipate disasters. These limitations operated in the horizons of what sociologists dubbed as “the culture of fear” which in the recent years become in a cultural attraction. Thousands of visitors fly to zones of disaster or war only to get an authentic experience. Besides, the epistemological borders between Dark or Thana-Tourism and post disaster marketing seem to be blurred into a confusing theoretical corpus which is hereby placed under the critical lens of scrutiny.

Disasters and Climate Change

Specialists and pundits of all stripes are not in agreement of the reasons of climate change but they agree that this phenomenon is behind the latest natural disasters that whipped mankind in the start of the century. Chaturvedi & Doyle (2015) discussed to what extent the discourse of climate change instils fear in the

population instead of laying the foundations to articulate sustainable long-lasting policies in the environmental protection. Though they are not deniers who confront with the theory climate change is triggered by greenhouse gas emission they explore the formation of a cultural discourse which is based on the needs of using terror as a disciplinary mechanism of control; in this vein, they coin the term *terror climate* to denote the orchestration of differential geographical-located programs to foster the submission of global South. Equally important, climate change is responsible for the millions dollars in material losses and lost lives causing serious disruptions in the economic organization of nations. The droughts and floods not only affect the houses and the daily life lay-peoples but also harvests which prompt a sudden process of inflation in economy that aggravates the previous state of employment West faces since 2008 (Ranjan 2011; Wheeler & Von Braun 2013). In this respect, Scott, Hall and Gossling (2012) who are authoritative voices in the study of tourism and climate change, said that it is important to discard some myths or biased information around the global warming. The concept of sustainability as it was formulated a couple of decades ago should at least revisited according to new paradigms that helps explaining the complexity of this world. Authors emphasize on climate change as a global threat that harms not only the functionality of tourism but global economy, geography and the planet as a whole. The question whether climate change happens does not resolve why its effects have been accelerated in the short-run. One thing is the quest for explaining the reasons of climate change while others consists in struggling to reverse its aftermaths. Hence it is important not to lose the sight that sustainable tourism should be differentiated from sustainable tourism development. While the former signals to those performed leisure activities in the territory oriented to protect the enviroment the latter refers to the policies tended to strengthen the community's well-being. At the time sustainability ensures a necessary balance to protect not only locals but also the interests of all stake-holders, climate changes defies the already-established sense of sustainability simply because the courses of actions as well as the rational

decision making process are made in context of extreme uncertainty and volatility. Here a more than pungent question surfaces. To what extent tourism is useful to mitigate the effect of climate change?

Cantered on the accuracy of western technology to measure risks, policy-makers should find alternative forms of sustainable tourism that develop more harmonized economies worldwide. However, as widely recognized by them, tourism industry often falls in a paradox which is very hard to resolve. The process of industrialization from where tourism historically evolved, contributes to the acceleration of greenhouse gases emissions which latter affects the performance of tourism and the world of travels. Albeit the energy sources to be changed, no less true is that serious cultural transformations are needed. This discussion was assertively resolved by Jost Krippendorff in his respective approaches. Since he retains serious concerns on ecological issues, part of his bibliographical legacy was used to discuss the intersection of tourism and ecology. Krippendorff contends that tourism works as an instrument of escapement to revitalize the daily frustrations in workers' minds. Likewise, tourism is neither good nor bad, simply because it corresponds with the cultural values of each society. In this discussion, Krippendorff offers an innovative point of entry. The individual behaviours are culturally formatted by some values which are enrooted in the productive system. The problems of ecology should efficiently treated in consideration with a substantial change of involving cultural values that caused the problem. The responsibilities of states should not be given by the action or omissions of states but they should be shared by all citizens. In this vein, Krippendorff adheres to the use of social marketing to change those cultural values which are disposing modern cultures to contaminate the planet (Krippendorff 1982; 1986; 1987a; 1987b). As stated, Ruddy & Scott (2010) interrogate on the rise of temperature worldwide and the potential risks for tourism. Their investigation pursues as main goal the needs of reassessing the claims of *much hot* for tourist destinations in the Mediterranean region. Per their outcomes, perception of temperature varies on times and culture adjusting to the

perception of holiday makers. These findings are vital for a coherent assessment or the potential implications for future impacts of climate change. Other seminal articles reveal that often the levels of awareness or familiarity of publics are slim. Basically, interviewees manifest they were familiar with the negative consequences of climate change though they remain indifferent or unfamiliar respecting to what should be done to reverse the situation (Dodds & Graci, 2009). It is important to delve in the critical approach of Peter Burns and Lyn Bibbings (2009) who envisage the end of tourism. There are serious contradictions between the patterns of consumption, which are emulated in tourism, and the needs of reacting against global warming. These complexities, of course, are given to the priority of instrumentalization as guiding cultural value over ethics and other values. While this society prioritizes consumption and mobilities as the best of feasible worlds, this perfect freedom has its costs. A rapid deceleration of the reasons behind global warming would entail the end of mass tourism as we know. Although the literature abounds in this field, offering reports that measure the key indicator at the brink of an ecological crisis no less true is that less attention is given to the real reasons behind the problem. The cult of profits and pleasure-maximization correspond with specific founding values that dissociated mankind from environment. Without changing these values, any steps would be backfired. In fact, the abundance of reports and descriptive study-cases contributed in the configuration of a great consternation of spectatorship for disasters, but nothing has been done to reverse climate change. Henceforth an increasing number of scholars and policy makers focused their attention on the role of post marketing literature to overcome the obstacles and epistemological limitations the paradigm of sustainability failed to resolve. To put this in slightly other terms, if we failed to prevent disasters, attacking their underlying causes, it is vital to work in a marketing that make from disaster and suffering a criterion of attraction. This is the rise of post-disaster marketing as a fertile option in the years to come.

Post disaster marketing.

One of the limitations of post-disaster studies remains in the lack of interest in researchers to dissociate the concept of post-disaster consumption from dark tourism. This suggests two important things. On one hand, we come across with a failure of sustainability paradigm to make more competitive destinations that balances the green-friendly atmosphere with the laws of capitalist system. On another, the substantial change of the sense of beautiness in the classic products to adopt a more macabre version of consumption. In fact, the concept of beautiness which can be observed at a landscape or the sojourn in a luxury resort sets the pace to more morbid experiences where visitors are in contact with sites of mass death and suffering which oscillates from concentrations camps (Miles 2002; Pollock, 2003; Thurnell-Read 2009, abandoned prisons (Wilson 2008; McAlister, 2013), or bewitched mansions (McEvoy 2010) to towns fully destroyed by disasters (Gotham, 2007; Chako & Marcell 2008).

As the previous argument given, dark tourism should be understood as the tendency to visit spaces whose main attraction is mass death or traumatic events that captivated the attention of society. As Stone observed, behind dark tourism habits there remain universal forces that usher visitors into their own philosophical finitude. What visitors gave seems to be something else than mere corpses nor they are moved by morbid reasons. Rather, consumers of dark sites are trying to understand death through the lens of what others have experienced. In other terms, dark tourism consists in disciplining death through others' death (Stone 2012; 2013; Stone & Sharpley 2008). Erik Cohen explains that one of the ends of dark tourism consists in giving a lesson to survivors and the community as a whole taking into consideration the accessibility to the territory where the real facts occurred is the key factor that determines these types of phenomena (Cohen 2011). The discussion revolving around dark tourism is far from being finalized. While some wave claim that dark tourism follows an alienatory nature serving as a mechanism of discipline (Bowman & Pezzulo, 2009; Tzanelli, 2016; Korstanje

2016), others toy with the belief that dark tourism mediates between the self and the future from where the notion of death operates. In this token, the curiosity for death, for these scholars, is not new, it can be found in medieval times as well as many other non-western cultures. Hence dark tourism should be equated to heritage consumption (Biran, Poria & Oren 2011; Podoshen 2013; Hooper & Lennon 2016). In a recent seminal book, Hooper and Lennon attempt to solve the dilemma between a radical turn whose position cannot be reconciled to the premises of tourism-management. Editors start from a philosophical contradiction, the terms darkness and tourism are ideologically opposed in the popular parlance. While the former alludes to the pleasure-maximization and the sense of beautiness, the latter alludes to a tragedy. Hooper and Lennon devote their time and efforts in unpuzzling what is the nature and motivation of dark tourism. Dark tourism should be defined as a recently-born tendency where tourists visit spaces of mass-death, suffering or mourning, in order to be in contact with human vulnerability. The existential fragility of others reminds how the proper life should be reinterpreted, and of course this is one of the main aspects that moulds the epistemological borders of dark tourism. This created a diversification of sites, which spans from the classic Auschwitz to new emergent zones as Ground Zero in New York. In this respect, researchers have faced serious problems to coordinate their results towards unified models that help obtaining a better understanding of this slippery matter. While the attention of the media encouraged the study of dark tourism in almost all western universities, no less true is that the proliferation of these works are not correctly sorted or unified in a coherent conceptual platform. The knowledge dispersion adjoined to the exacerbation of an economic-centered view on dark tourism obscured more than they clarify. The needs for enhancing profits should be morally reconciled by the needs of memorizing death or at least to what extent the spectacles offered by these sites represents the real facts or the background earlier than the disaster hits community. Though these points are not being clearly answered throughout the text, it is evident that both, practices which signals to how dark tourism is managed or

performed and interpretation, which reveals the motivations of tourists, should be ingrained into an all-encompassing model. We do not share Stone's position (emulated by Hooper and Lennon's assertions) that the curiosity for death we found today can be comparable to the visit of Saint's Thombs in Medieval Days. In this point, Korstanje (2016) has developed a credible and robust examination of the problems professional fieldworkers often fall at time of investigating these types of topics. First and most important, there is no archeological evidence that proof dark tourism was a timeless drive, which was practiced by other cultures. Though the curiosity for death is enrooted in humankind, dark tourism surfaces in the postmodernity as a result of substantial changes in how the otherness is constructed (Korstanje 2016). The needs of being special or getting authentic experiences would be some importance at time of explaining the rise and rapid evolution of dark tourism as trending behaviour. For others scholars, post disaster marketing plays a vital role strengthening the power of resiliency within society to overcome obstacles and difficult situations (Shondell-Miller 2008; Burnside, Shondell-Miller & Rivera 2007; Park & Reisinger 2010; Shondell-Millar, Gonzalez & Hutter, 2017). Sather Wagsfaff (2016) fleshed out a model to understand dark tourism as an opportunity to foster social cohesion among survivor. Following the example of WTC attack in New York, she argues convincingly that people make more egalitarian before death and suffering because emotions erodes the basis of political hierarchies and classes. However, in some instance officials use these types of space to produce an ideological allegory, she coins as "heritage". While dark tourism wakes up a much profound emotionality within human beings, heritage represents a biased image of facts (Sather Wagstaff, 2016). Following this, it is particularly risky to abuse from these allegories by remembering historical facts. This begs the following questions, what would know visitors from WWII or Auschwitz by visiting a museum? Or Americans on the origins of AL Qaeda only visually gazing at the Ground Zero?. Unless the real reasons of disasters to be commemorated as they happened the possibilities for disasters to be repeated are high.

Post Disaster Marketing and The Curiosity for death.

Conclusion

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