Discourses and images of cultural tourism

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Discursos e imagens do turismo cultural

Scope and aims

Cultural tourism (Richards, 2007; Smith, 2003) is recognized as a growing area of the global cultural industry. Initiatives and strategies around the world to develop this type of tourism, and to make it more accessible, inclusive, creative and sustainable, are numerous and very diverse (WNT, 2018). The realities of tourism industry and policy in Portugal are no exception, as it is clear from the plan defined for tourism in Portugal, *Visão Estratégia Turismo 2027*, which defines the "valorization of the territory and the communities" (ET27, 2016, p. 51) as a strategic axis of future action.

In the context of the dynamics and changes that have crossed the so-called cultural economy (Yúdice, 2007), the official discourse of cultural tourism has been expanding its objects, being evidently marked today by an understanding of culture (Cunha, 2015) that lends it anthropological tones – "lived cultures", "culture of everyday life" appear alongside with classic resources such as patrimony, museums and the so-called erudite arts (UNWT, 2018, p. 11) – articulated under the logic of experiential marketing.

In the academy, the interest of social science researchers in cultural tourism, in its various forms, has also been growing and gaining new dynamics (Richards, 2018; Smith & Richards, 2013; Smith & Robinson, 2005), expressive of the epistemological porosity of the knowledge produced in the field, as well as of the instability, fluidity and contradictions that mark contemporary societies.

It should be noted that in Portugal the interest that the theme arouses in the fields of Cultural Studies and of Communication has been small and is relatively recent (Brambília & Baptista, 2016; Cadavez, 2017; Noval & Serra, 2018; Sampaio, 2017), being clearly differentiated in this matter from the investment in done in other research fields, such as Anthropology (Pereiro, 2009; Pereiro & Fernandes, 2018; Silva, 2010), Sociology (Andrade, 2017; Fortuna, 2008; Joaquim, 2015; Marújo, 2014) or Geography (Fernandes, 2016), perhaps due to the particularities of the emergence and expansion of the Cultural Studies field at the national level (Martins, 2015; Sampaio, 2013).

With the organization of this issue of the *Lusophone Journal of Cultural Studies*, dedicated to tourism that is defined as cultural, we intend to emphasize the relevance of researching the theme in Portuguese-speaking contexts – and in other contexts marginalized by the traditional hegemony of Anglo-Saxon literature (Dann & Parrinello, 2009) –, anchored in precepts of openness and fluidity, that is, situated in the world and always

linked to critical questions about the relationship between culture and power (Martins, 2002, 2007).

The analytical interrelationship that we place at the centre of discussion – the relationship between discourses and images and the regulation/ shaping of touristic experience and activity – has already accumulated a vast theoretical and critical work in the contexts of sociological and anthropological debates, and it has also been studied in the research fields of discourse analysis (Francesani, 2014; Heller et al.; 2014; Jaworski & Pritchard, 2005; Moore, 2002), visual culture (Burns, Palmer & Lester, 2010) and literature (Culler, 1989). The same is not true when we consider the issue of tourism promoted as cultural, from a critical point of view, attending to mobilities (Araújo, Cogo & Pinto, 2015; Urry, 2007) and to the progressive technologization in the contemporary world of the aesthetization of experience (La Rocca, 2017; Martins, 2002, 2007).

This collection brings together contributions that discuss common issues in the critical cultural research agenda on the tourist experience, that approach it as an experience mediated by various semiotic, cognitive and affective mechanisms and communicated by various media, both vertically and horizontally. In focus are the construction of representations of places as tourist destinations and their local and individual appropriations, as well as the construction of tourists, travellers and travelling, the commodification of cities (Pires, 2013), consumption and cultures (Silva et al, 2011), the dynamics of the touristic gaze and of identities, imaginaries (Miranda, 2002; Gonçalves & Rabot, 2010), memory and technological mediation (Carmelo, 2002).

This issue integrates studies of an empirical nature, related to cases circumscribed in space and time, using data gathered from various sources (posters, videos, interviews, surveys), but also theoretical reflections of a fundamental nature and essays illustrated with examples from the travel literature. From our contributors' institutional affiliations, we can see the diversity of their disciplinary provenance, (Geography, Anthropology, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Communication, Media, Tourism and Leisure, Tourism Studies) and of their geographical origin, which includes Spain, Brazil and Portugal.

Discourses and images in tourism studies: dimensions of the socioanthropological debate

For the Italian anthropologist Alessandro Simonicca (2001, 2007), in the studies of tourism – and in particular regarding the socio-anthropological perspective –, two models can be distinguished: the one of *leisure* (*loisir*) or *political-economical* and the *semiological* one. The first approach emphasizes leisure and its material preconditions as necessary statutes for tourism, including considering the necessary and inescapable asymmetry that marks the tourist activity. And the second approach underlines the symbolic meanings of touristic activity and its unfolding, within the framework of the *touristic gaze* modelling.

The touristic activity in the political-economic perspective is fundamentally a circumstance derived from the free time made possible by more general social and economic

factors. From this point of view, it becomes particularly important to verify the mechanisms of mediation between the societies that generate and the societies that receive tourists, in the context of an international division of labour and political and economic asymmetries at the global level. Such asymmetries would result from the very structuring inequality that marks the relationships between visitors and hosts, as a metaphor for the wider economic and political context (in a first and third worlds figurative configuration).

Nash's (1996) work is exemplary in this regard. According to this author, tourism is an emulation of imperialism, a sign of acculturation and an instrument of political-ideological power in a world organized according to a centre-periphery model, where tourist zones are places of relaxation and tension release accumulated in metropolises emitting tourists.

The political-economic approach highlights the ideological formatting of the tourist destination through narratives and images aimed at the full satisfaction of the tourist. The necessary condition of this process is the establishment of a transitory and unequal relationship between those who work and those who enjoy, thus reinforcing a subservience character through the domination and control of the destination territory by the local elites in the service of the international tourist apparatus (Crystal, 1992; Jurdao Arrones, 1992; Nash, 1989).These devices of surveillance and domestication are expressed in the obvious boss-employee-customer / tourist relationship, but also in the very design of the territory as a tourist space, reinforcing patterns of domination and political control (Chambers, 2000; De Kadt, 1991, Gascón & Cañada, 2005). Thus, according to some authors, there is a symbiosis between tourism and conservative and totalitarian political regimes, in the sense that they are interested in maintaining and controlling the social order and in the projection of a uniform, traditional and unique image of national states, elements that are almost conditional on the development of tourism and the invention of traditions (Anderson 1983, Hobsbawm & Granger 1983)[1].

The model based on the prominence of the tourist gaze or semiotic model presupposes, starting from the primordial work of MacCannel (1976), that the genuine touristic activity results from a deep transformation of the modernity, when the visual perspective is projected like a cognitive and social privileged device. It would be, therefore, through the eye that the modern subject would come to relate to the world from an ocular sensibility, capturing it as an overlapping of heteroclite images (Appadurai 1995; Baudrillard 2007; Featherestone, 1995; Jameson, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994; Rushdie, 1991).

Within this incessant flow of images, the ethereal and fugitive notion of landscape is distinguished as the projection of an exotic and exoticized space according to a circular relation: the territory meant as landscape would be a geomorphological fragment oblivious to the everyday world of those who project, idealizes and represents it and that, for this very reason, acquires singular and extraordinary characteristics. The Simmelian perspective is emblematic in this sense. For him, the landscape is defined according to

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[1] Tourism and the tourist image inscribed in the Salazar dictatorship in Portugal, for example, emphasized, within that project of nation, a traditional world in the guise of a "paradise lost on the shores of Europe", projected as a "rural, picturesque, traditional typical and almost puerile country "(Pires, 2003, p. 36) and as "a garden in Europe" (Ziègler quoted in Pires, 2003, p. 50).

a kind of total foundation or determination (*Bestimmtheit*), a state or disposition (*Gestimmtheit*) for an act of the spirit by which the subject models a group of phenomena to integrate it into the category of landscape. Simmel (1913/1996) compares a landscape to a library: just as "a lot of books do not constitute a library but become one, without a volume being withdrawn or added, from the instant in which a certain unifying concept surrounds it and confers a form". The landscape would thus be shaped by the meaning attributed to the imagined physical space. Accordingly, the sightseer-tourist is modelled upon a relation of alterity generated by the exotic (and panoptic) gaze through which he or she approaches space.

The semiological paradigm can be nuanced by underlying two traditions, both starting from the assumption of a cleavage of a symbolic-cognitive nature proper to the industrial West. In the Anglo-Saxon perspective one has the prominence of the tourist gaze, that is to say, an orientation for an analysis on the formation of images from the point of view of the tourist (Chambers, 2000; MacCannel, 2006; Urry, 1990). The "French" perspective, as it were, goes in the opposite direction: it emphasizes the configuration of the imaginary of travel and tourism through the mediatic massification of social life (Augé, 1998; Lagunas, 2007).

At the centre of the semiological model is the lively debate about authenticity. According to Reisinger & Steiner (2005), this theme can be approached from three perspectives: the first of them situates it as a modernist problematic, inaugurated by the quarrel between Boorstin (1961) and MacCannel (1973, 1976), and marked by the idea of authenticity meaning the traditional and the genuine as universal values, in a romanticized and static view of non-industrial societies.

While for Boorstin the whole tourist experience is superficial and inauthentic, marked by pseudo-events, because it is a reflection of the very world of consumption of the mass society, for MacCannel (2003) the tourist, an ideal type situated in the middle classes of the industrial West, seeks in otherness – of nature, of the past, or of the other "ethnic" – an authentic world non-existent in their daily lives. And it would find it commercialized and staged in the tourist destination (Greenwood, 1977), that is, in the scenery set up for tourist satisfaction (*frontstage*).

The second perspective can be classified as constructivist and presupposes that the authentic results from reality configured from the observer's gaze and projected through Western stereotypes about the other. Thus, the authentic is situated not in the spaces themselves, but in their meanings, being the media and advertising appeals important agents in this process.

The third perspective is inscribed within a postmodern matrix, for which authenticity does not have relevance for tourist enjoyment, which is much more touched by the breakdown of everyday life in the search of an *intense hedonistic experience* than by a search for a *deep existential experience* in the sense of an excitement in leisure through a controlled uncontrolled, getting closer to the propositions of Elias and Dunning (1992). This point is a criticism of MacCannel, both by the fact that not only can one not empirically infer the condition of the tourist as a "spiritual nomad" or as an "archetypal structuralist in search

of the other and authentic self" (MacCannel 1976; Selwyn, 1996), but also because the search for authenticity is not a necessary condition for the practice of tourism[2].

Thus, tourists may well go to such or such a destination motivated by a "5S" (sun, sea, saving, and sex) model, establishing minimal contact with the local population, as they are protected by an "environmental bubble" promoted by institutional intermediaries of tourism. In fact, this is the most recurrent model, according to the specialized literature (Cohen, 1988; Crick, 1992). In addition, the tourist subject is often aware of locally promoted scenarios of authenticity, and thus seems to be much more predisposed, as Graburn and Barthiel-Bouchier (2001) and Jafari (2007) argue, to the enjoyment of the touristic stay within a ritualized framework than to its fruition as a mythical actualization. Although both perspectives are not necessarily self-excluding.

Franklin and Crang in the 2001 launch of the *Tourism Studies Journal* note the development of new ways of approaching tourism by the bias of semiotics shaped by the *performance* metaphor introduced by MacCannel in tourism studies. In these researches, vision is considered as only one of the senses involved in the tourist experience, and not as having a determining role in the semiosis process. These studies, which approach tourism as a productive system that fuses "discourse, materiality and practice" (2001, p.17), account for changes in tourist cultures that are increasingly focused on the incorporation of experiences (Edensor, 2009).

As seen, the production of meaning and therefore the semiotic mechanisms used in tourism as a socio-cultural and economic practice have long been a central concern in the study of tourism. The most common understanding has been that of discourse not as the use of verbal, visual, or other semiotic resources, but rather as a vehicle that structures and is structured by social and political processes, truth / visuality regimes and collective imaginaries. The same is true of images, understood essentially as representations that mediate, shape and result from the tourist experience and as spaces of articulation of more or less regulatory discourses. Thus, the uses that, in the context of the *tourist linguascape* (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010), tourists (McCabe, 2005) and the touristic system make of linguistic, visual and other resources, in specific cultural and interactional settings, to construct the touristic experience and to communicated it through different media, remain underexplored. Studying these practices more would not only reveal common aspects of what it means to be a tourist and act as such, but also local and individual variations, dynamics and differences. In this way, instead of giving as certain or fixed the meanings of categorizations that have structured the problematization of tourism, we would be giving due importance to the fluid and contingent aspects of the production of meanings. That is, we would be closer to the touristic reality.

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[2] The post-tourist figure corroborates this, by being exactly the subject who seeks the enjoyment of experiences based on clearly inauthentic scenarios (Rojek & Urry, 1997; Urry, 1994) in a framework of kitsch, pastiche or pure scenario replication which refer to "originals" that would be in themselves simulacra, such as the Thai cowboys described by Cohen (2005).

Introducing the articles

The first segment of this volume includes texts focusing on the processes of image construction of places as tourist destinations and on the processes of its perception. Images are here understood as a material semiotic representation and also as a cognitive and affective representation. In question are the discourses expressed and (re) produced by these images and their sociocultural meanings.

In the first article, Luis Alfonso Escudero Gómez, Spanish brings to the discussion the well-known problem of the spectacularization of the cities associated with institutional marketing strategies to promote them as tourist destinations. In these efforts to create brand value, selective elements of cultures, heritage and history are mobilized in the construction of cities as tourist destinations and in search of images that identify, distinguish, position and guarantee them a safe place in the memory of the consuming tourist subjects. Starting from the concept of image as a mental representation, the concern is on its impact on the motivation and decision making of the tourist, starting from a case study. Toledo, a Spanish city, is the chosen example. The main issue of the article is to find out if the promotional image of Toledo determines visitors' decision regarding the choice of destination. Based on an analysis of the contents of the promotional image of Toledo and the results of an empirical investigation of the perception of its visitors, the geographer concludes that there is a convergence between the constructed cultural image and the perceived image. That is, the visitor seeks, expects to find, find, receive and recommend Toledo to others precisely on the basis of stereotyped fundamental features of Toledo's image as a cultural destination.

In a critical tone, the author emphasizes that this image, based on a fragmented vision of history and the picturesque character of the heritage, conceals the social reality of the city. The article concludes with an alert to producers of brands and images of tourist destinations for the need to counterbalance marketing and merchandising objectives of the cities with concerns of "preservation of the urban essence" in order to avoid risks associated with tourism monoculture.

The second case in point is the promotional image of Rio de Janeiro. Maria Alice de Faria Nogueira and Luiz Flavio La Luna Di Cola question the role of media images in the process of building a "tourist gaze" that regulates performances in urban spaces promoted as tourist destinations and even understandings of ways of acting as a tourist.

The discussion is based on a comparative analysis between the contents of air companies' travel posters created between the 1910s and 1970s and the television images of the Opening Ceremony of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. It is an analysis where the sociohistorical context of production assumes special relevance. The authors argue that the vision of the tourist who for decades shaped the image of Rio de Janeiro as a tourist destination, associating it with the idea of paradise, a "Marvelous City", was a "foreign gaze", shared largely by the city dwellers. Compared to this gaze, the images of the opening ceremony of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, which project the image of Rio as "Olympic City", constitute a new tourist gaze that integrates the perspective of the inhabitants, highlighting a vision of a more urban and performatic Rio, in which the traveller lives the experience of the culture and of the place as an inhabitant of the city.

The case that closes this part of the volume dedicated to the images of cultural tourism is brought by Patrícia Lima. In this text, tourism is approached as a consumption activity and a phenomenon of contemporary mass culture, part of the mobility phenomena that mark the experience of globalization. An interpretive reading of an advertising film promoted by Turismo de Portugal is proposed, which integrated an online campaign, launched in 2017, aimed at international audiences. What representation is at stake in this construction of Portugal as a tourist destination, is the leading issue of the exercise. The concept of the consumption of experience is mobilized for discussion, where what is at stake is not the practice of consumption but the experience of consumption, and therefore experience is itself the object to be consumed. It is argued that in the promotional discourse promoted by the quoted campaign the values of experience and emotions associated with the idea of travel have a central role. It is through this bias that are defined the attractions already disseminated previously of Portugal as a tourist destination. Patrícia Lima claims that choosing this type of strategy, which we see repeated in other contemporary tourist campaigns, lives on the possibilities offered by the screens, and she interrogates the tendency of individualization and personalization characteristic of the promotional efforts of tourism in the present time.

In the article by Agustín Santana-Talavera the interest in the images of tourist destinations materializes itself in a proposal of a model of understanding the processes of creation and control of this type of images. Conscious of the impossibility of distinguishing the power of the images constructed by the tourist system from the power of the images disseminated by the media without any intention of tourist promotion, the author nevertheless considers its importance in western culture to be undeniable by making each subject a passenger desirous of experiencing her or his "Private paradise".

In order to comprehend this power in a global way, it is necessary, from the author's point of view, to start from a procedural systemic approach in which we distinguish the institutional and collective processes of construction of the promoted image from the individual processes of its perception and interiorization. Around the various dimensions aggregated in the concept of image (self-image, projected image, perceived image and shared image), Santana-Talavera critically points out what has been done and what needs to be done in terms of research and discussion in this area. He stresses that the incorporation of the self-image, that is, the one perceived by the residents of themselves, in spite of not being unique, can add veracity to advertising campaigns and that the understanding of the processes of image perception must be complexified, since there are many factors that can affect them.

The second set of articles deals with the discourses of cultural tourism that construct the patrimonial heritage of the places reinventing therefore local and national identities. Memory and its recovery occupy a central place in contemporary societies and the discourse of cultural tourism contributes to this importance. As Richards (2018, p. 6) points out, one of the main foundations of cultural tourism has been the material and symbolic resources that make up the patrimonial heritage of places that are contemplated and visited.

In her article, Ana Isabel Inácio focuses on the case of wine museums in order to understand how they reconstruct the oenological heritage of territories and their role in the phenomenon of wine tourism. It presents the results of a study related to the oldest demarcated wine region of the country, founded in 1756 and situated in the Douro region, where she wanted to highlight how identity and oenological heritage are promoted and communicated in this type of sites.

The author emphasizes the idea that wine museums are "guardians" of memory and discourses about the past and the present winemaking of the regions they represent, but also spaces of selection and exclusion that often allow the (re) construction of the past. Through a content analysis of the existing exhibitions in the various sites selected, the researcher argues that the discourse of these museums, by focusing on productive processes and economic dynamics, disregard social issues, such as gender or social hierarchy, promoting therefore an identity that is to some extent "peaceful".

Belmira Coutinho et al. bring us another case, still concerning the Portuguese territory, of how history has been transformed and transmitted as an inheritance. In question are the uses of the legacy inherited from the dictatorship in Portugal. The purpose of the article is to look at this type of heritage in the light of the concept of dissonant heritage and to interrogate the relations that the same entertain with the so-called tourism of death and suffering. From the analysis carried out it is concluded that the tourist use of the patrimony of *Estado Novo* is made with the loss or even the erasure of the characteristics that connect these spaces to their past during the dictatorship. The authors wonder if sites that have been converted into hotels could not integrate tourist information regarding their dissonant past.

The third block of articles focuses on travellers, their subjectivities and practices and processes of their discursive construction. Starting from the idea that the tourist fact is a total social fact, Christine Escallier, an anthropologist from Portugal, reflects around the motivations of the traveller, showing, through literary citations, the evolution of the profile of the traveller and what it became in the early twenty-first century.

According to the author, at the turn of the century, two significant trends can be seen: tourism influenced by ethnic fashion and solidarity tourism. In the exercise of the diachronic analysis, the researcher questions the validity of the classic distinction between traveller and tourist, professional and amateur, with the argument that the journey is self-sufficient: the experience of travel, she claims, has in itself virtues linked to the knowledge of self and other and other places. It is pointed out that Anthropology may make a contribution to tourism education in order to foster a shared reflection between tourists and natives on the discovery of other cultures.

Within the approach of the act of travelling as a significant experience for human enrichment, Camila Aparecida Leves Maneze and Reinaldo Tadeu Boscolo Pacheco analyse the evolution of the figure of the independent traveller, based on reports from fictional and real travels, with the aim of highlighting how travel experiences can result in a discovery of self and other. They place the emergence of the figure of the independent traveller in the scenario of the contemporary world where travels are no longer just symbols of status and are instead a part of the daily generalized search for experiences and sensations.

In contrast to the figure of the independent traveller, both the figure of the tourist and that of the epic traveller, the authors emphasize that this form of travelling, whose central feature is autonomy, allows us to recover the meanings of travel and affirms itself as a simultaneously sacred and profane time, resulting from the freedom, adventure and wandering that characterize this way of traveling.

Considering that the collection of visits to places may not be the main motivation of travel, but still constitutes, together with place counting, a social practice that lends prestige and legitimacy to those who collect visited places, João Sarmento and Patrícia Lopes focus on this practice to delimit and propose a way of counting that integrates variables usually discarded in the existing forms of counting travels.

Interviews with experienced travellers, selected for convenience, form the basis from which the authors discuss and adjust the proposed model, which also includes a proposal for a partition of territories on a global scale. They emphasize that their aim is to promote the discussion about the practices of counting visited places and of the territorial division of the world, while accounting for travel as part of a collection process.

The third theme addressed in this volume concerns the relationship between cultural heritage tourism and digital technologies. Pedro Andrade presents a summary of an empirical study on the mobility of museum visitors, developed within a framework of a project on public art communication, which involved the application of a questionnaire to visitors to a museum in the context of an exhibition of art. The author gives an account of three of the many dimensions of mobile cultural tourism (space, time and speeches) and proposes a methodology based on them.

Fernando Augusto Silva Lopes approaches virtual visits to museum as a mediated touristic possibility of access to culture. The featured digital tool is Google Arts and Culture, approached as an instrument that creates a new cognitive way of producing and consuming symbolic goods and as a form of mediation. The author discusses the displacement of the place of the culture that derives from it. Based on the results of an empirical study involving the formation of focus groups, he argues that virtual museums seem to be a valid form of access to arts and a representative cultural experience, thus creating a real tourist possibility, worthy of being explored with more attention.

We conclude the volume with a text by António Sérgio Araújo de Almeida where tourism is considered as a global activity of international integration, through knowledge and mutual respect of peoples and as a local integration activity. Starting from the central place that the value of the experience acquired in tourism, the author argues in favour of its intensification through the strategic exploration of identity traits, a strategy that, according to him, can contribute to the sustainability of the territories and to the emancipation of the local communities.

The "Varia" section integrates a text that explores the relationship between architectural heritage, memory and environmental preservation. Hermes de Andrade Júnior et al. brings us the case of the fortifications of Guanabara Bay in Rio de Janeiro and the experience of environmental education developed with military students. Using semi-structured interviews, they demonstrate the environmental attitudes of conservation

agents in Leme' s environmental protection area and the results of their use in the context of an environmental awareness exercise.

In the edition of this volume, we wanted to know the opinion of our colleagues about the state of the art in Brazil and Portugal of the research in cultural tourism. Susana de Araújo Gastal, titular professor and researcher of the Postgraduate Program in Tourism and Hospitality of the University of Caxias do Sul (Brazil), author of several books and articles related to culture and tourism, and Carlos Alberto Steil, Permanent Teacher of the Postgraduate Program in Social Anthropology and of the Graduate Program in Public Policies of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), author of several works related to the anthropology, religion, politics and human displacements, were the researchers who kindly accepted our invitation, responding in writing to the questions asked. These are two contributions that are part of the journal section dedicated to interviews.

The volume closes with "Readings", where we include the critical review that Daniel López Zamora does of the book *Instagram and contemporary image,* published in 2017 by Lev Manovich, professor of Computer Science at City University of New York and a world reference theorist in the field of digital culture and arts, which makes evident the pertinence of investigating in the cultural tourism field the uses of this medium.

Translation: Zara Pinto-Coelho

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