Building tourism experience through identity decomposition – between local emancipation and international integration

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Abstract

The role of experience in world tourism activity resides largely in the context of the tourist, in the systemic organisation of the destination and in the process of international integration. It is intention of this study to highlight local and global operational opportunities, resulting from tourist management of identity resources. This paper is supported by a cross-check of results obtained in our own investigations between 2010 and 2017. It was concluded that local community dynamics and the process of intensification of tourist experience give raise to an opportunity of an identity decomposition and respective stratification of attributes that are configured as intensifying factors of the tourist experience. This process underlines mutual advantages for tourists and local communities and also reveals a tool of knowledge, integration and peace promoting.

Keywords

Identity decomposition; integration; local emancipation; tourism experience

Decomposição identitária e intensificação da experiência turística – entre a emancipação local e a integração internacional

Resumo

O protagonismo da experiência na atividade turística mundial reside, em grande parte, no contexto intrapessoal do turista, na organização sistémica do destino turístico e no processo de integração internacional. É intenção do presente trabalho evidenciar oportunidades operacionais, locais e globais que resultam da gestão turística de recursos identitários. Procedeu-se a um cruzamento de resultados obtidos em investigações próprias entre 2010 e 2017. Conclui-se que dinâmicas comunitárias locais e o processo de intensificação da experiência do turista suscitam a oportunidade de uma decomposição identitária e respetiva estratificação de atributos que se configuram como fatores intensificadores da experiência turística. Deste processo, resultam espaços de convergência de vantagens mútuas, tanto para turistas como para as comunidades locais dos destinos. Globalmente, o turismo, afigura-se como uma ferramenta de conhecimento, integração e consequentemente como veículo promotor da paz.

Palavras-chave

Decomposição identitária; emancipação local; experiência turística; integração

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INTRODUCTION

In international terms, tourism has been growing successively and asserting itself as a global phenomenon with cultural, social, economic and environmental/spatial/ecological impacts. The global impacts of tourism raise its multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary understanding, particularly within the areas of knowledge that have been determining its evolution the most.

In the investigations rescued for the present work it is verified that in tourism and in parallel with the diagnosis of resources there should be a strategic concern to diagnose identity attributes that are consubstantiated in intensifying factors of the tourist experience.

It is commonly assumed that tourism sells dreams that allow the individual to abandon his routine tasks, providing him with an alternative temporary reality, being the meeting with himself, in a plan of personal fulfillment and development, one of the great challenges of tourism activity nowadays.

The quality and intensity of the tourism experience are one of the great desiderates that tourism has to offer as a cultural, social and economic activity. This is a structural trend that concerns, foremost, tourists, but also tourist agents, local communities, states and international society itself.

According to Chang (2018, p. 62)

> industries should emphasize and promote the reliability of their experiential products, particularly relaxation as an experiential component. Moreover, residence is an effective factor that influences the perceived financial values of detailed experiential components because residence reflects local cultures and features. There seems to be a need to take the regional cultures of a target market into account when creating experiential products and strategies.

Globalization itself and the transnational flows of communication and information have raised the thresholds of demand around experience as a concept that allows the user the knowledge and personal development. Buying a dream is something increasingly associated with this sector of economic activity and tourism management faces the obvious challenge of creation and innovation in terms of tourist experiences. The economy of experience is, in this sense, an opportune concept that the agents of the sector can't ignore.

Based on research and own publications, this paper means to highlight the opportunities that arise in the context of the casuistic diagnosis of intensifying factors of tourism experience based on the decomposition of the identity of destiny.

The opportunity and interest of the theme are highlighted in a theoretical framework that alludes to the opportunity and interest of the theme, followed by reference to the methodological procedures that result from work carried out in the last seven years. The theoretical body consuences and reinforces the intersection of the aforementioned investigations developed to date. The authors conceptual complementarity and

publications of international reference in the scope of the present area of knowledge are also mentioned within the scope of the theoretical body.

Theoretical framework

This study emerges facing the needs of increasingly demanding tourists, the cultural, social and economic emancipation of local communities, as well as the affirmation of the image of the states themselves, which also face the challenge of rescuing tourism while integration tool.

Making tourism means getting out of everyday routines. The quality and intensity of the tourist experience are the great appealing factor of the destinations, assuming the differentiation of the intangible as a determining factor of the tourist marketing. The very image of destiny is increasingly associated with the global experience of that same destiny. Far beyond rest, fun and leisure, tourism is increasingly differentiated by the personal development that is capable of providing to tourists. The global flows of information and knowledge have been conditioning, also, the requirement level of the tourists and, consequently, the critical mass of the tourist systems:

> the scholasticism of tourism assumes the intangibility as one of the main factors that differentiate the tourist offer from other types of products (...) being the Tourist Experience a kind of primacy that has been observed as a systemic priority with influence in the very image of the Tourist Destinations. (Morgado et al, 2016, p. 2)

A tourism destination will have a more consistent image as it can implement a global experience well-articulated with the various local actors. A certain corporative sense of the local agents in favor of the tourist imagination that they want to project based on experience becomes decisive in this community attitude.

Consumption associated with cultural and social differences and the pretexts for achieving personal development and the emancipation of local communities themselves are an unavoidable reality which, without undermining the mass tourism space, constitute new visions and strategies on the part of the destinations. From the perspective of Loureiro (2014, p. 7),

> we can state that the whole process of the tourist experience begins with the search for a destination, and so a region's integrated marketing communication that considers not only accommodation, but also the region's unique and differentiating characteristics, can be a bonus in creating a remarkable experience.

The World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) vision for tourism is based on an analysis of contributions from the activity to the construction of the common good and the creation of territorial, culturally attractive and differentiated platforms, involving indigenous communities and promoting their emancipation through of an equitable and responsible tourism activity that also promotes the environment and culture.

The diagnosis of the material and immaterial identity of the destinies and involvement of the communities (that promote them as differentiated tourist products, propitiators of profits for themselves) is a process that must be managed, observing local needs of education and collective formation, adopting the most effective pedagogies for a perpetuation of complementarities. In other words, the diagnosis of identity resources, material and imaterial, is the basis for the definition of sustainable tourism products based on a holistic vision that brings together cultural, social, economic, environmental and spatial factors, as advocated by the World Tourism Organization, and that recalls the 1980 Manila Declaration itself.

The authentic, in the objective perspective of Wang (1999), the alternative to mass tourism offerings, are thus attributes associated to new and emerging tourism products and consequently the territorial and people diversity, remits the identity to a strategic role in the scope of tourist systems:

> tourism therefore faces an interventionist paradigm in social terms, not only based on ephemeral content, merely contemplative. The identity assumption of local communities (incorporating touristic offers) and the consequent materialization of their legacy (...) are admittedly factors of destination differentiation, which raises involvement, knowledge, formation and innovation. (Almeida, Pinto, 2017, p. 620)

Exoticism, interaction with other cultures and transgression are also concepts increasingly associated with the tourist imagination and new consumptions, reflecting increasingly enlightened, informed and demanding tourists. The tourist posters are endless, materializing precisely a multitude of emerging tourist experiences, some of the things that raised concern by the World Tourism Code, such as Volcano Tourism, Wine Tourism, Village Tourism, Ecotourism, Nature Tourism, Cemiterial Tourism, Black Tourism, Sexual Tourism, Tourism of Favelas, Tourism of War, etc., etc.

According to the work of Amirou (2007), in addition to a simple commercial transaction, tourism clearly presents itself as a symbolic exchange. The author states that as a counterpart to the money spent, more than hotel services, the client expects a space of game and freedom, an air of limited "irresponsibility" in which he can play under the benevolent and understanding look of the tourist institution.

Methodological procedures

The present work fits tourism as a global activity that provides the mutual knowledge of people from different origins, assuming the experience as a tool that on the ground provides this desiderato.

The work refers to tourism as a local and global tool for integration, rescuing the identity decomposition and the consequent stratification of intensifying factors of experience as emancipating elements, both from the perspective of tourists and in the context of local communities and States. Drawing on the contributions of International Relations and Tourism Sciences, it is the intention of the article to emphasize the natural and

informal complementarities between the dynamics of the international system and the world tourism activity, which is not always evident in the bibliography and academic work.

The process of intensification of the tourist experience is one of the lines of investigation of the author that provided the intersection of results in the scope of several own investigations carried out on the subject. Tourists, local communities and their representatives, tourist agents and other living forces, mayors and institutional and political leaders, are part of the list of interviews carried out in the framework of the published works that served as support for this article. It is the intention of the present work to present an original framework based on the spatial and experiential patterns investigated.

The main concern was the diagnosis of experiential coherence in the mentioned investigations that showed causal links between the intensification of the tourist experience and a protagonism of identity contributions for the sustainability of the territories and for the cultural, social, economic and spatial emancipation of the respective local communities. Tourism is a reality of international relations and, therefore, its understanding as a tool for international integration is fundamental. Its "Peace Industry" status, as advocated by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and by the United Nations itself (ONU), attests to this global importance.

The strategic direction of identity

While in the *Poder da identidade*, Castells (1999) emphasizes Identity as a kind of source of meaning and experience of a people, Bauman in his work (2005) points to identity as a continuous process of construction, always being incomplete and adjusting to the mechanics of a liquid modernity. In this last perspective, tourism, due to its size and global impacts, will be one of the phenomena that contribute most to this process of local, national and international liquefaction.

The intersection of the works of these two authors is fundamental to invoke the status quo of world tourism activity, namely in what concerns the power of the icons for the affirmation and differentiation of territories and the ease of communication, learning and integration before new ideas and values. On one hand, there is a growing symbolic appropriation of reality on the part of the peoples; on the other hand, there is also a propensity to learn and integrate new symbols, which is reflected in the progressive increase of the flows of transnationalism:

> lthough environmental, cultural and social characteristics are constitutive and differentiating elements of places, it is precisely their identity that confers originality and uniqueness to places and distinguishes them from others. It is in this context that other fundamental concepts arise for this theme: authenticity and identity assumption. (Malheiros, Lourenço & Almeida, 2016, p. 72)

Identity faces an ambivalent reality within the framework of the international system, once it is a pretext of knowledge sharing, learning and consequently constitutes a factor

of mutual respect. Nevertheless, it is also a source of competition, regionalism and ethnic conflicts. That is, identity values are both a pretext for cooperation and conflict.

Aware of this problem, ONU and, above all, ONWTO have been promoting identity as an aggregator factor of different cultures, being tourism a global tool that can achieve this goal. According to Wang and Chen (2015, p. 26),

> the significant impact of length of residence on resident's sense of place identity and its moderating effect on resident attitudes toward tourism indicate that, urban tourism planners and managers, when applying place identity theory into tourism development, should also be aware of the possible, perceptual discrepancies, which might transpire among residents of different kind.

If there is a tendency for local valuation of icons and value systems, it will be important to promote the involvement of communities, fostering the appropriation of their symbols and affirming them as sustainable products that contribute to their development and emancipation. In addition to the local diagnosis of resources, it is thus essential to diagnose social mechanisms that provide a symbolic appropriation of reality by the local communities.

Tourism, as a cultural, social and economic phenomenon, depends severely on the processes of integration between tourists and local communities, with interaction being an essential prerequisite for providing a convergent sharing environment around local tourist surplus (Salvador, Boavida & Almeida, 2016, p. 36). In tourism, it becomes essential to perceive identity attributes that can be experienced. This will be a key factor in the export of values and intangible patrimony, precisely supported by tourism as an activity that privileges exports. In other words, in addition to exporting services, tourism also faces the challenge of exporting ideas and values, thus promoting local cultures. According to Thurnell-Read (2017, p. 59) "importantly, this relationship between tourism and identity has to be narrated and performed".

The diagnosis of identity attributes that can be managed in the tourist experience, ends up becoming a kind of identity decomposition, thus providing an operational aspect to the concept of identity, which is assumed to be abstract, subjective and complex. By adding patrimony, culture (material and immaterial) and community involvement with the transmission of this collective soul that reflects the historical pulse and the present moment, conditions are met to correspond to the the primacy of current tourism activity based on the valuation of authenticity in the assumptions previously assumed:

> reside here the "Power of Identity" and the "Identity Assumption" of local communities facing a crucial challenge: taking their own destinies into their own hands. This poses the question of who should assume the identity and the most pragmatic response seems to be the one that points to the local communities themselves, since they are in the first instance able to present an essential concept to the attractiveness of the tourist destination: authenticity. (Malheiros, Lourenço & Almeida, 2016, pp. 72-73)

If, on one hand, it is undeniable a collective tourism imaginary that alludes to authenticity as a kind of primacy that is confirmed, or not, by the subjective way tourists lived a certain destination or experience, it is also true that there are tools capable of give an objective and scientific assessment of the authenticity of a practice or an object, such as carbon 14. Emphasizing Wang's (1999) perspective, according to which there is a tourist valuation of original practices and objects, it will be important to continue investigating identity attributes that are rescued by the tourist in contexts of global destination experience.

The assumptions of tourism sustainability presuppose this assumption of community responsibilities around their cultural resources, whether material or immaterial, and in this context the cultural legacy is a base of support for tourism: "beyond a logic associated with massification or, on the other hand, an attempt to affirm identities, the processes inherent to globalization generate significant impacts on various political, economic, social and cultural activities. Globalization massifies but also promotes identities" (Almeida, 2010, p. 40).

Identity is an open, transverse, composite, dynamic, and subjective concept. Its complexity will be attenuated in a perspective of analysis of the tourist motivations, above all, within the central concept "authenticity".

Identity as tourist pretext for convergence of mutual advantages

Knowledge and a desired personal and collective development are key aspects of today's tourism systems, whose social intervention spaces exorbitate the tourism reality itself: "the diagnosis of the identity matrix and the integrated development of tourism offer a shared, global and determinant experience that allows to create an attractive product and affirm and differentiate the image of destiny itself, increasing its retention capacity" (Salvador, Boavida & Almeida, 2016, p. 45).

The tourist consumption of identity attributes is signaled by a certain slowlyness caused by an intrinsic need of the tourist to "steer" in the knowledge, a vital factor that ables the retaining capacity of the touristic destiny. On the other hand, it is commonly accepted that knowledge is an essential factor of integration which configures new challenges and responsibility for tourism systems.

According to Besculides, Lee & McCormick (2002, p. 306)

> community residents can realize cultural benefits from tourism in one of two ways. First, tourism exposes the host to other cultures and can result in benefits such as tolerance and understanding. Second, the act of presenting one's culture to outsiders strengthens the idea of what it means to live within a community, thus increasing identity, pride, cohesion, and support.

Tourism has assumed pedagogical and emancipatory role in community contexts associated with non-formal and informal education. Numerous examples illustrate local practices that, in addition to providing their own income, implement vicious cycles of

symbolic appropriation of reality and, consequently, promote the collective self-esteem of these same communities:

> thus, a strategic logic of convergence of mutual advantages is approached, bringing together natives and tourists, providing economic and social benefits to the former and experiences unique to the latter. The tourist agents face (...) the double challenge which consists, on one hand, in the diagnosis of community mechanisms of involvement (...) and on the other hand, in the diagnosis of intensifying factors of the experience, living up to the primacy of the tourist experience. (Almeida & Pinto, 2017, p. 687)

This is an open process and ends up being a complex challenge as there are innumerable barriers of various kinds within the scope of what is a major challenge in world tourism: the differentiation of the intangible. Matter has been revealing complexities over the past few years and rethinking policies and strategies in destinations.

In the definition of tourism products, the community specificities, including their mentalities, end up being faced at the same level as the resources, given that this prior knowledge is decisive for adjust mechanisms of local involvement and symbolic appropriation of reality:

> hospitality itself is increasingly viewed in a transversal and composite way, incorporating a sum of experiences, whether in the field of gastronomy, in the ambit of touristic animation or in the interaction with the local community. This question inevitably influences the capacity of tourist retention and the very Image of destiny. (Xavier & Almeida, 2017, p. 328)

The systemic cohesion of destinations leads us to structural and complex issues such as mentalities and the propensity for a desirable union and articulation of efforts in the development of tourism products:

> it is therefore important to equate social mechanisms that can be triggered in tourism systems, providing new collective attitudes towards an Identity Assumption which, under certain conditions, can result in sustainable tourism and differentiated offers, thus reflecting the concentrated diversity of the Portuguese territory. Globalization is largely fueled by the differences and specificities of icons. (Almeida, 2010, p. 40)

However, the occurrence of "scenarios" for tourists to enjoy can not be ignored. "touristification" is an inescapable reality and it reveals another facet associated with the mercantile instrumentalization of attributes deviously associated with local identities.

Small tourism values and promotes identities, differences, desirably in cultural, social and economic contexts of integration. Respect for differences and appreciation of cultural and environmental specificities will, after all, be one of the great requirements to sustain tourism as an industry that encourages the people to get closer. This global reality of tourism around the search for knowledge and respect for difference ends up

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assuming a potential for unavoidable integration, an essential step for the promotion of peace on an international scale.

According to Benur and Bramwell (2015, p. 221)

> in this form of product diversification the primary tourism products in a destination are largely based on a number of niche market, small-scale products. (...) Alternatively, the destination's niche products may be used in more integrative ways, with tourists interested in several of the niche products, and with producers of these products potentially successfully co-operating together".

This vision shared by UNWTO ends up being fundamental within the framework of the international structure in which it is inserted in the belief that globalization itself should be seen as a process capable of valorizing cultural, social and environmental specificities. Structural phenomenon and deeply marked by massification, globalization should also be seen and rescued in the assumptions in which it promotes and facilitates communication processes and the valorization of identities on a world scale. Identities have never had so many opportunities to "export" through the conditions inherent in globalization.

The tourist experience as materialization of the identity

Globally, tourism has been valuing activities that favor the acquisition of knowledge, both on the part of tourists and local communities. This assumption turns out to be fundamental in the valuation of the experience as tool of personal development of the tourists and in the appropriation of the local resources like base of community development.

The Finnish School (LEO, 2009) in designing the tourism experience pyramid specifies six essential factors in the process of intensifying the tourism experience. History, Multisensory Perception, Individuality, Interaction, Contrast and Authenticity are the basis of the Pyramid and reinforce the importance of some identity attributes as factors that promote experience. This is a process of open stratification, where the management of the tourism experience should observe the opportunity of the selected attributes within the scope of each specific destination.

The present model supports a process of intensification of the tourist experience that culminates with the mental change of the tourist. Experience transforms the tourist and this transformation is as greater as the number of attributes and intensification of the experience. This way, the concept of tourism experience management is achieved within the framework of the specificities of the destination.
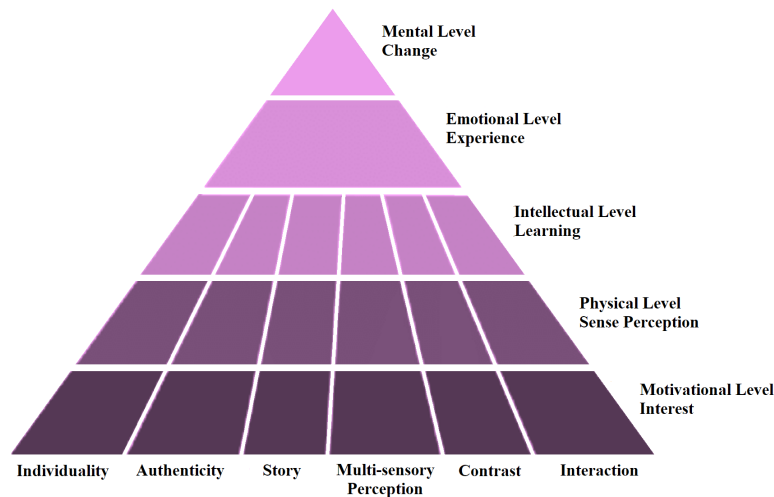
Figure 1: Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry,
LEO - Competitiveness through experiences, 2009

Source: Adapted from Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2005

Investigations carried out in the context of the Montalegre Fumeiro Fair, the Golegã Horse Fair, the historic steam train in the Alto Douro Vinhateiro, the Jewish heritage in Belmonte, typical Lisbon neighborhoods, the National Palace of Mafra and the Solemnities of the "Semana Santa" in Braga, enhance art, history and stories, traditions and popular knowledge, legends and superstitions, community dynamics and their aptitudes for involvement, interaction, sharing and integration as intensifying factors of the experience.

These are factors that, properly integrated in the processes of tourism development and properly promoted, condition the imaginary itself and can provide the desired contrast, typical of those who abandoned cold and impersonal social relations. The very correspondence of the experience to the expectations created and the final balance of the experience, can also be taken as intensifying factors of the experience:

> the decomposition of the local Identity and its materialization as Tourist Experience, presumes the evidence of diverse values, such as History and Stories, Material and Intangible Patrimony, Traditions and Popular Knowledge. Interaction and integration, based on reciprocity regimes between Tourists and Local Communities are essential to achieve an emancipatory purpose of the Tourism Offer. (Almeida, 2016, p. 281)

The tourist destination faces this challenge, which consists of its local and international positioning in function of the emotional impacts that it intends to assume in view of the aroused tourist feeling, the integration in a certain learning and the image that it intends to promote. Also of the duly articulated conjugation of all these processes results in the tourist experience, seen more and more in a complex, aggregating and strategic perspective.

The concept of sustainability of the tourist destination, observing the cultural, social, economic and ecological realities, desirably implies a kind of vicious cycle that

provokes an appropriation of sustainable practices by the communities that tend to perpetuate them according to advantageous results obtained. In this sense, it will be appropriate to approach the concept of tourism communities that are properly organized for their differentiation and sustainability, namely through a procorporate community attitude, aware of the paths to be traveled, investing, for example, in the training of the young. On the other hand, and according to Nunkoo and Gursoy (2012, p. 264),

> researchers should also understand that support for tourism is not only influenced by residents' attitudes to tourism impacts, but also by more complex factors such as their identities. Findings suggest that identities serve as a guide for behaviors which serve to verify and maintain the self-meanings associated with an identity.

Tourist experience as a tool for interaction and integration

Tourism is one of the most significant economic activities. It takes on a global role. This importance has not been accompanied by policy makers, and this is an activity with potential for social intervention on a global scale. From the perspective of Farmaki (2017, p. 537) "while political science has lend insightful theories, methods and approaches in tourism studies, tourism has been largely ignored by political scientists despite its prominence as a political phenomenon". This paradox has inhibited this interventionist role of tourism, namely in what the activity potentially represents as a tool of integration through knowledge and mutual respect of the peoples:

> identities, symbols, icons, instead of pretexts to compete and even to motivate conflicts, are (also) spaces of opportunity for sharing, for mutual knowledge and for the valorization and approximation of cultures. The symbolic appropriation of reality goes beyond competition and takes on the pretexts of sharing and convergence of mutual advantages between tourists and local communities visited. (Almeida, 2016, p. 280)

The international dimension of tourism, as a cultural, social and economic phenomenon, gives it a status of global constructor of experiences promoting mutual knowledge of the peoples, which provides diverse and generalized interactions, learning, emancipation, knowledge and, consequently, integration:

> consequentiality refers to responses that suggested some sort of personally perceived importance from the outcome of the trip. This dimension includes four main sub-dimensions – enhancing social relationships, intellectual development, self-discovery, and overcoming physical challenges. In the first sub-dimension, social development, respondents noted that it was the outcome of the interaction with others during the trip that was a significant factor in their MEs. (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1379)

The vision of the World Tourism Organization has as its fulcrum the construction of the common good and the creation of territorial platforms, culturally attractive and differentiated. In line with the Manila Declaration of 1980, the objective is to involve indigenous communities, promoting their self-esteem through a responsible tourism activity and promoting their resources based on participatory management.

According to Chen and Rahman (2018, p. 160)

> when a tourist is seeking a deep experience in regard to a new culture, the tourist will be more open to interacting with the new culture, and in the process the tourist will get to experience the culture more closely and is more likely to appreciate the culture. Moreover, there is no doubt that higher level of cultural contact is associated with higher knowledge acquired, which is another dimension of MTE. As you pursue a better understanding of the new culture, you will explore more and interact more with the culture, and accordingly, acquire new knowledge about the culture.

Moreover, in a modern vision and without any disregard for the offer of the Sun and Sea, solutions opposed to the statements would correspond to a tourist paradox, calling into question the patrimony that is, in the first line, its own reason of existance. Tourism is increasingly seen as a social activity that, under certain circumstances, can contribute to enriching the knowledge society:

> the assumption of this policy in tourism, through spheres of action of the entire tourism system, from local communities and their agents, States and International Organizations, will contribute to recover the best that Tourism can give as an international actor that contributes to the integration of peoples and consequently to an international order that progressively favors Peace. (Almeida, 2016, p. 283)

This conviction is all the more important when it is the World Tourism Organization itself, in its institutional discourse, praising the virtuosity of tourism as a "Industry of Peace", even though in technical terms we are not in favor of an industrial activity but of a kind of constellation of services:

> this growing need is progressively established in the psychology of organizations and in the actors of the International System and it affirms new forms of planning and conceptualization of products that allow the emergence of one side of our humanity, which can not take the risk of being suppressed. Therefore, the tourism supply is increasingly viewed from a perspective of experiences spaces that provides the emergence of a high state of consciousness to the respective user. (Almeida & Pinto, 2017, p. 661)

The specificity of the intangible associated with the unpredictability of the subject's most intimate realization raises ethical discussions. Offers associated with sex tourism, or tourism in the context of drug use, can not be forgotten. The fact that we observe

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certain deontological and ethical conduct, consecrated in particular in the World Code of Ethics in Tourism, should not inhibit us from studying realities that unequivocally integrate human nature, both individually and in the context of social organizations, even assuming the full conscience of the need for its eventual ethical, moral and social condemnation. The fascination of tourism in alternative environments also lies in the understanding of these phenomena, since they provide another vision, a better understanding of the human being.

According to Tung and Ritchie (2011, p. 1369)

> in brief, it is our view that due to the highly personal nature of the tourism experience, destination managers cannot directly deliver MEs to tourists since individuals recall experiences subjectively and uniquely even though tourism planners may have provided objectively equivalent services, events, and activities. Thus, it is our goal to understand the underlying essence of MEs so that tourism planners can enhance the probability of delivering to tourists those experiences that are special, cherished and truly memorable.

Final considerations

Identity as a concept that can proactively and strategically affect community lifestyle, faces an ambivalent reality within the international system. It is the United Nations that through the World Tourism Organization has made an effort to emphasize the strategic vocation of identity as a tool that aggregates cultures and promotes peace. Tourism, as a liberal, economic and exporting activity, thanks to its composite and socially transversal nature, emerges in international relations with a kind of informal actor who reaches this goal.

Identity as an integration tool ends up giving a pedagogic and emancipatory response to the conflicting and disruptive nature that the identity itself contains. The exacerbated regionalisms end up illustrating this aspect of identity conflict and for calling the very concept of nation-state, as seen recently in Catalonia. That is, if, on the one hand, identity affirmation is the cause of territorial conflicts and struggles for sovereignty and self-determination, in world tourism activity, identity emerges as a pretext for knowledge, appreciation and mutual respect between peoples and value systems and consequently integration. According to Farmaki (2017, p. 532)

> based on the premise that tourism activity is a social phenomenon, supporters of the hypothesis claim that contact brought by travel may increase understanding between people of different races, cultural and national origin. The proposition that through contact visitors' negative stereotypes of an opposing group are eradicated gave potency to the contact hypothesis within tourism-peace literature. Unsurprisingly, tourism has been heralded as a contributor to world peace.

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The global power of tourism has in fact come to rescue identity as a pretext of mutual knowledge of peoples. This integration response can continue to be reinforced and strategically implemented as destinations are able to understand and take their identities into their own hands, breaking them down by defining attributes that are said to be intensifying factors in the tourism experience. It also rests on this assumption to take advantage of the integrative potential of identities. Besides the assumed importance of the diagnosis of resources as a crucial step in the definition of tourism products, it is important to pursue this procedure in a broader way as a diagnostic of identity resources, since in this last perspective, community dynamics and involvement are assumed in the management practices in the process.Tourists and local communities are emancipated from each other and on dailybasis. The former, through intrapersonal achievement resulting from the definition and intensification of the tourism experience. The second, through the cultural, social and economic dividends that result in the tourist flows.

To diagnose and define identity attributes that are consubstantiated in intensifying factors of the tourist experience is one of the great challenges that are put to the destinies. This issue raises a local strategic vision and an international take-up of responsibilities, otherwise it will be wasted a major integration factor on a global scale. The intensifying factors of the tourism experience are deservedly observed by the manager who seeks to provide alternative experiences, which can be redeemed for development and, at the same time, enhancers of collective emancipation and integration. Thus, art, history and stories, traditions and popular knowledge, legends and superstitions, community dynamics and their aptitudes for involvement, interaction, sharing and integration are seen as intensifying factors of the tourist experience which are directly or indirectly connoted with the identity values, either in an Anthropos perspective, in an Oikos context, in a Chronos analysis or in an Ethos view.

The integration of these factors in the processes of tourism development affects the imaginary itself and may provide a contrast of experiences, characteristic of who rescues the tourist activity to temporarily abandon the social daily life in favor of community experiences. In this way, the correspondence of the experience itself to the expectations created and the final balance of the experience, can also be assumed as intensifying factors of the experience: "the spirit of (...) local community's predisposition and the organization (...) impose a formal rhythm and agenda, materialized, to a great extent, in a program (...) that also ends up conditioning the global experience" (Almeida & Pinto, 2017, p. 622).

However, we are faced with a complex and sensitive process, especially since psychographic radicalization, that is, adventure, danger and transgression, are in certain contexts factors that intensify the experience, but simultaneously must be carefully followed by tourism managers, including the implementation of legislation and the safeguarding of moral and ethical values. The differentiation of the intangible in tourism and its contributions to a more solidary global society is admittedly an emerging area of knowledge and one of the great challenges of world tourism activity.

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