
THE COSMOLOGY OF HERITAGE IN LATIN AMERICA: FROM EXPLORATION TOWARDS INDEBTNESS.

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Abstract

In the present essay review we discuss to what extent heritage does not play an ideological function invisibilising the real causes of events. In some respects, anthropology as well as other social sciences instilled the needs “of being there” which was conducive to the logic of exploitation introduced by colonialism. Today this submission is successfully achieved by means of heritage. What is the position of Latin America in this stage?. From the sense of exploration of 19s century towards financial indebtness, West has created an allegory of Otherness in order for its conquest to be ideologically legitimated.

Key Words: Heritage, Latin America, Tourism, Mobilities

Introduction

The politics of heritage offer a commotized version of culture that covers real history. As long as 17s and 19s centuries, Europe developed a closed image of Otherness that ideologically engaged

the Old Continent with new cultures and economies. In fact, colonialism was possible not only because of the advance of science, even anthropology, but also because natives were dissuaded on European supremacy. In this stage, the configuration of new states, their cities and borderlands were underpinned under the *discourse of rationality*. Placed at the top of a social pyramid which is based on the material level of production, Europe represented a superior ladder of civilized culture that advanced in fields the rest of humankind failed. If social Darwinism, even proclaiming by the superiority of Anglos over other ethnicities, illuminated the first steps of many disciplines as psychology, sociology and anthropology, one might realize that social science resulted from colonialism and its project of nation-state (Bauman, 2013). The discourse of rationality emphasized not only in reason as the pillar of progress, but also presented a unilineal vision of history. That way, it was associated to a much deeper logic of mean-and-ends. The degree of instrumentality, applied on a diachronic view of pastime, envisaged that rational planning would leave natives towards progress. Once the project of colonialism collapsed after 60s decade, its ideological message persisted in the fields of heritage and heritage tourism. Supported by the theory of development, many peripheral nations asked to IMF and World Bank for loans to improve their situation. Stereotyped as “underdeveloped” economies, Western ideology instilled in them the needs of overcoming towards a superior ladder of productive pyramid. Of course, needless to say, not only these countries failed to adopt rational programs of development but higher rates of interests worsened their distribution of wealth. The theory of development as it was envisaged in North-Hemisphere was widely criticized worldwide. In response to these critics, they alluded that the cultural asymmetries between First and Third world was the main reason behind failures in adopting the proposed models. Once again, rationality now conjoined to tourism served as an ideological mechanism of control for Latin America and other peripheral continents. This essay review discusses the conceptual limitations as well as evolution of colonialism which passed from “the notion of being there”, claimed by fieldworkers, to heritage tourism where cultures are commoditized.

Initial Assessment

The onset of 19s century and effects of industrialism instilled in the first anthropologists the belief that the disappearance of primitive world would be irreversible. Not only their kinship, customs, lore and traditional forms of organizations, but the social trust would be undermined by complex new more secular forms of production (Durkheim, 1976; Mauss 1979). Once colonial powers expanded their hegemony, the primitive sources of trusts plummeted. These newcomers prohibited aborigines to make the war against their neighbors, in which case a romantized image of the native emerged (Guidotti Hernandez 2011). The idea of “noble savage” as an outstanding figure which maintained far from industrial corruption invaded the literature and social imaginary

of West (Fryd 1995). The problem of heritage for academicians was enrooted in the needs of discovery and protection that cemented the possibility to paternalize non-Western cultures (Korstanje 2012). As Harris puts it, concerned in questions of heritage, gift-exchange, and inheritance the first ethnologists were lawyers (Harris, 2006). The presence of law as well as the jargon enrooted in legal jurisprudence was unquestionable in their incipient studies. One of the aspects that defined the field-work of anthropology was the efficacy to collect the lore, customs and object of primitive societies before their disappearance. Indeed, the "Other", far from being an independent entity, was subordinated to European-gaze. The European paternalism envisaged the world as an amalgam of different cultures, which evolved in different ladders depending on their economies or ways of production. Europe was conceived as the most evolutionary and refined form of civilization respecting to these "Others" who had not skills in arts and trade. This seems to be the context, where patrimony and heritage surface. From that moment on, the relation of both with development took a material connotation that suggested further trade and commercialization would be beneficial for natives. From this viewpoint, native's backwardness was explained by their disinterest for economic progress, as it was imagined by Europeans' travellers. If the colonial order connected the center with its periphery, travels paved the ways for the acceleration of colonization (Korstanje, 2012).

The rise and consolidation of nation-states was centered on a much deeper fiscal efficacy of administration to encompass mobilities within the soil (Hannam, Sheller & Urry 2006; Urry, 2012). However, a closer look validates the thesis that we live in an immobile world, which was cemented by disciplinary mechanisms of control. Originally aimed at disciplining "the Other" in Americas, nation-states centered their hegemony posing fabricated boundaries into nomads and other ethnicities into a pervasive identity. As Guidotti-Hernandez (2011) observed, to the violence suffered by natives we need to add another unspeakable violence which posed a fabricated narrative to be consumed by international visitors. The problem of heritage relates to the fact some events are blotted out as they really occurred. Nation states fabricated heritage to produce an ideological message to their new members in order to dissuade the process of homogenization they suffered were the best of possible worlds. That way, some ethnicities were forced to live together under the umbrella of same government. Meanwhile, these new leviathans appealed to construct a shared identity in order for conflict to be undermined.

In Latin America, the project of State was cloned from United States. Former president of Argentina Domingo Faustino Sarmiento experienced the myth of desert while touring US. This metaphor will shed light on the needs to connect pathways in order to stimulate the local production in Argentina. Enthralled as the cradle of civilization, Sarmiento adheres to America as a superior form of government which it is necessary to emulate. Trade, the respect for law, technological breakthroughs are some of the innovation that captivates Sarmiento's attention (Zusman, 2010). This means that the concept of mobility as it has been studied by Sheller or Urry is

enrooted in the configuration of nationhood. However, here is where the paradox lies. At the time, state exerted considerable violence to discipline aborigines to change old customs of hunters and gatherers to be subject to a new territory, mobility of goods allowed the construction of necessary infrastructure to consolidate the project of nationhood. While mobility was encouraged in one direction, immobility of aborigines was used as a mechanism of control. Nowadays, the quest of “otherness” is engaged to travels and the ideological core of Nation-state promoted by the expansion of tourism industry (Korstanje & Muñoz de Escalona, 2013).

In earlier approaches Korstanje noted that the conquest of Americas was fraught of chaos, violence and mass-death, which was ultimately sublimated not only in museums and other tourist attractions, but also in the name of streets. This happens because heritage is war by other means. Miguel Angel Centeno argues convincingly that the success of nation-states to develop efficient mechanisms to yield wealth in USA and Europe was related to their capacities to control their fiscal deficit. The supremacy of Europe over the world can be explained not only by the technological breakthroughs developed in the interwar period but in the fact they have participated actively in two “total wars”. The influence of total wars in the social institutions can be abridged as follows,

- a) The capacity to extract financial and human resources moving them to achieve a collective goal
- b) The centralization of financial capital to enhance the loyalties of diverse sectors of society
- c) A common identity

Total wars produce more richer and powerful states. The fiscal capacity of nations is strengthened by the total wars (Centeno, 2002). Centeno goes on to say,

“The destructive capacity of war is self-evident. Less so is the manner in which war, or more accurately, the process of going to war, can be constructive. War is rejuvenating. The demands of war create opportunities for innovation and adaptation. Wars help build the institutional basis of modern states by requiring a degree of organization and efficiency that only new political structures could provide.” (Centeno, 2002: 101)

The process of ethno-genesis that facilitated the configuration of nation-hood organized behaviors into specific contours which were drawn by means of warfare, violence and expropriation. At the time Foucault situates under the lens of scrutiny the concept of “economy of truth” it suggests some beliefs, ideas, and feelings were orchestrated into an all-encompassing discourse that produced the sense of reality. Far from what historians guess, the legitimacy of state is based on the abilities of elite to forge a shared notion of truth, *history*. Whether we affirm some theories gain recognition over others, or some events are part of history, we are reaching only a partial side of reality (Foucault, 1977; 2003). One might speculate that the idea of heritage, at least, should be

revisited. Whatever the case may be, in a seminal recent book, R. Tzanelli (2014) describes the complexity of capitalism to produce hypostatized landscapes of consumption, where the “other” who does not look like me is being exploited according to imagines, allegories and discourses externally delineated by West. Similarly to Colonial legacy, “The otherness” is constructed in order to be subordinated to Europeanness. It is impossible to imagine the legitimacy of nation-state should be divorced from mobilities. While accommodated classes may enjoy a World, which is based on tourism and hedonism, the Work-Force is pressed to live in the periphery. Whenever international events, that draw the attention of the World are held in countries of Third World, thousand of claimers launch to street to protest against local governments. Tzanelli adheres to the thesis that advance of capitalism not only has not improved the living conditions of locals, but it triggers old discrepancies between colonial legacy and modernity. There is a co-dependency between centre and its periphery that can be continued by an alternation of what Tzanelli dubbed, “cosmographies of riches” and “cosmologies of desire”. The discourse of centrality is formed by a hierarchical system of symbols, thoughts and beliefs consolidated by social networks. This remains even after the independence evoked not only by the needs of peripheral zones to be part of sacred centre, but in a profound desire to get the foreign cosmographies of riches. Not surprisingly, this explains why peripheral fascination for tourists coming from developed-nations. The original gift is exchanged between civilized and uncivilized worlds (Tzanelli 2014).

Last but not least, Miguel Angel Centeno gave hints on the problems of aristocracies in Latin America to control “their internal rich ethnical kaleidoscope”. As semi-leviathans, where the main threat is not the neighboring states, but the internal enemy which is depicted by the aborigine, Latin Americans failed to regulate an efficient fiscal balance. Therefore, they were historically pressed to ask for international loans and financial assistance abroad. While European states celebrated two Total Wars that improved notably their fiscal discipline, Latin Americans have developed “extractive institutions” aimed at exploiting natives instead of consolidating a shared sentiment of nation. As a result of this, the different Creole elites were accustomed not to direct the violence against other states simply because there were not serious ethnic incompatibilities. Unlike Europeans, not only they shared the same idiosyncrasy but a common language, customs and heritage (Centeno 2002). What is the role of heritage in this process?.

Tourism and Heritage

As already discussed, tourism and heritage now seems to be inextricably intertwined. Tourism scholars echo the assumptions that fresh incomes generated by this industry alleviate the poverty of natives or their living conditions. A fairer distribution of wealth, experts and public account balance give to community a substantial economic improvement. Tourism, of course, can help in such a stage. One of the benefits, these experts adhere, of tourism consists in its ability to exploit

intangible assets (as heritage and patrimony) which have limited costs for investors. In parallel, abandoned cities or communities or in bias of destruction can be revitalized by the introduction of heritage. The discourse of patrimony should be understood as an effective instrument to boost economies, communities, or even cultures. What are the commonalities of first ethnologists and modern tourism policy makers?.

At time of entering in the field, ethnographers defied the classic conception of science which experimented at desks or in controlled conditions. B. Malinowski, the founder of modern ethnography, acknowledged a clear gap between what people overtly say and finally do. Therefore, for social scientists, the needs of moving beyond where the native laid, were associated to the idea of "being there" to validate empirically what senses often captivate.

Changing the epistemological basis of discipline, Malinowski and his seminal studies showed the importance of fieldwork to expand understanding of cultures. In this vein, two main assumptions cemented the western-gaze, the concern for some cultures disappearance was conjoined to situate the supremacy of Europe as an unquestionable truth. It can be found in texts authored by many founding parents of the discipline as Tylor, Boas, Durkheim, Mauss, Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski Evans-Pritchard and other founding parents (Radcliffe-Brown, 1975) (Pritchard, 1977) (Mauss, 1979) (Boas, 1982) (Malinowski, 1986) (Tylor, 1995) (Durkheim, 2003). However, this sentiment of protection resulted in an uncanny obsession to understand (not to correct) the lives of these nonwhite others. Instead of correcting the factors that lead *Imperial powers* to exploit the periphery, heritage became in a social institution that mediate between the disciplinary violence of Europe and natives' suffering. This does not mean that anthropology was conducive to imperial order, but many of the produced knowledge served for colonial administrators to discipline "indigenous customs". This romantic view of the world, not only facilitated the expansion of colonialism worldwide, but facilitated the conditions for the rise of anthropology as an academic discipline. Doubtless, in this process, the concept of backwardness and wealth played a crucial role.

As the previous argument given, between 1975 and 1985 two senior scholars, J Heytens (1978) and Gray (1982) used the term *patrimony* to denote *development*. In this respect, tourism enables social capital to optimize wealth and resources to the extent to attract more capital investment which produces a virtuous circle. Underpinned by the proposition that further tourism equals to further development, scholarship in tourism and hospitality adopted a material conception of patrimony, as a new valuable resource to exploit that may very well help societies or human groups historically oppressed by nation-states (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009).

The interest for the *Other* corresponds with the expansion and consolidation of Empires that transformed not only the condition of production and consumption (trade), but the passage from inner-centered view to the Other-oriented view. The cosmology of Protestantism that focused on inner-life set the pace to the concept of *Other* whenever the needs of new markets arise. At a first

glimpse, civilizations have cyclically alternated three types of cultural archetypes which are, tradition-directed, inner-directed and Other-directed. Riesman acknowledges that tradition oriented subtype was ancient and rule-abiding organizations where social change rarely evolves. Rather, inner-directed societies are characterized by an internal potential to behave according to the rules of religion. At the same time, the affordable goods to consume requested for new demand, the inner-directed type passed to Other-oriented type. Industrialism revolutionized not only the ways of conceiving economy, but also introduced the "Other's view" to validate the self (Riesman, 2001). Following Riesman, it is not far-fetched to confirm that the obsession of heritage as the quest for Other's culture surfaces in context of global market expansion.

Latin America and the problem of identity

In Latin America, scholars ushered the idea of patrimony in order to preserve landscapes, environments or with others sustainable purposes. Local resources, unless otherwise resolved, should be protected from the exploitation or the interests of market. That way, the theory of patrimony suggests, natives receive the good (eluding the negative) effects of tourism. At a second viewpoint, heritage plays a crucial role by cementing the local identity. Locals not only acquire a self-consciousness that will facilitate potential negotiations respecting to the proposed programs, but they administer their own resources (Vitry, 2003) (Aguirre, 2004) (Dos-Santos and Antonini, 2004) (Mondino, 2004) (Espeitx, 2004) (Toselli, 2006). As Korstanje pointed out, though in different contexts of production and times, the spirit of colonial order respecting how the "other" is constructed, lingers (Korstanje 2012). It seems worthy noting that the channels for scientific discovery and "the concept of the Other", are inextricably linked. The empirical-research findings in tourism fields, far from questioning this connection, validate earlier assumptions in regards to heritage. While tourists seek authenticity as a new form of escapement from the alienatory atmosphere of greater cities, natives offer their culture as a product to be gazed. In this vein, Dean MacCannell and other followers offered a good description of the role of tourism in a society of mass-consumption. Maccannell conceives that tourism consolidated just after the mid of XXth century, or the end of WWII. Not only the expansion of industrialism, which means a set of benefits for workers as less working hours and salaries increase but the technological breakthrough that triggered mobilities were responsible from the inception of tourism. There was nothing like an ancient form of tourism, Maccannell notes. Taking his cue from the sociology of Marx, Durkheim, and Goffman, Maccannell argues that tourism and staged-authenticity work in conjoint in order for the society not to collapse. If totem is a sacred-object that confers a political authority to chieftom in aboriginal cultures, tourism fulfills the gap between citizens and their institutions which was enlarged by the alienation lay people face. The current industrial system of production is finely-ingrained to expropriate workers from part of their wages. A whole portion of

earned salaries is spent to leisure activities, even in consuming tourism. MacCannell believes, industrialism forged a “tourist consciousness” that revitalizes the glitches and deprivations produced by economy. Tourism would be a type of totem for industrial societies that mediates among citizens, officials and their institutions. In this context, tourism, like a chamanized totem in primitive communities, revitalizes psychological frustrations and alienation proper of urban societies. Not surprisingly, Maccannell adds, Marx was in the correct side at denouncing the oppression suffered by the work-force. Nonetheless, leisure, far from being an ideological mechanism of control (as in whole Marxism), prevents the social disintegration (Maccannell, 1976; 1984). Over recent years, he was concerned by the lack of ethics in tourism consumption. Coalescing contributions of Giddens with Derrida, he points out that globalization entails to type of mobilities. Nomads who are defined as forged-migrants are pitted against tourists who are encouraged to consume landscapes and exotic cultures. Since tourists are conferred by a certain degree of freedom, this leads them to think they are part of a privilege class, sentiment that is reinforced by the quest of “the local other”. Reluctant to contact others, tourists affirm their own self-esteem enjoying the precarious conditions where natives live. If this is not controlled tourism may produce a progressive process of dehumanization (Maccannell, 1973; 1976, 1984; 1988; 1992; 2001; 2009; 2011; 2012).

It is interesting to discuss to what extent, the discourse of heritage adopted by Latin America, never left behind the idea of rationality, as it was formulated by the founding parents of anthropology (Korstanje 2012). The discourse arrived to “periphery” in the same way, connecting to already-existent ethnicities to produce commodities which are offered to international demand of tourists, most of them coming from the same Imperial Centre (Tzanelli 2014; Buzinde & Santos 2009; Korstanje, 2012). The social trauma engendered by colonialism is invisibilized into an ethnic product which is visually consumed by first-class tourists. The Other (noble savage) is conceived in opposition to civilized European. While Europeans have reached their stage of civilization because of trade, the legal jurisprudence which is based in the principle of right and property and an organized ways for concentrating derived surplus, natives developed economies of subsistence (Posner, 1983). This allegory suggests that problems of international commerce are fixed by further investment. Therefore, aborigines who have been pressed to live in peripheral and desert areas believe in the market as a platform to launch towards prosperity. The needs of revitalizing tourists destinations by the adoption of loans and international financial aid not only validates this assumption, but aggravates economic problems simply because solicitant are unable to accrue their higher tax of interest imposed by central nations. This is exactly the resulted denounce issued by sociologists of development as Escobar (1997) Viola (2000) and Esteva (2000). Historically, the term development was coined after American President Henry Truman in 1949, when he claimed on the needs of helping others towards the trace of development. From that moment onwards, the world was divided in two, developed and underdeveloped nations. At a first glimpse, pundits asserted that development would be helpful in contributing to enhance the living conditions of

underdeveloped groups. The financial aid was the touchstone in order for West to expand their cultural values to the rest of the world. Needless to say, things do not turned out as planned. Financial assistance was issued without any type of control to governments which failed to obtain fairer levels of wealth distribution. Instead of accepting the liability, international business organizations as World Bank, International Monetary Funds and Development Bank chose for using a blaming the victim tactic. They, rather, replied that cultural incompatibilities between developed and underdeveloped cultures were the main reason that explains why the original promise of theory of development diluted (Esteva 2000; Escobar 1997). The project of development was accompanied by globalization in many senses.

As Mc Michael alerted, Europe colonized the world (even South America) by the tergiversation of allegories, which continues up to date. The exploitation of the non-European "Others" had a pervasive nature. The process of decolonization, centuries later, witnessed the rise of demands of periphery in order for central powers to allow an autonomous government. The rights of democracy becomes in a universal claim. Mc-Michael explains that imperial powers alluded to the theory of "development" to maintain the old colonial borders. Now violence sets the pace to financial dependency. The WWII end conjoined to Truman's administration led the United States to implement a wide range credit system to save the world from Communism. This program mushroomed to become in the development theory. However, this financial aid brought modification in the system of agriculture to more intensive methods. This ruined the condition of farmers who were pressed to migrate to larger urban cities. Furthermore, the imposition of new borders post WWII forced to many ethnicities to live with others under the hegemony of nation-state. This resulted in a lot of ethnic cleansing, conflicts and warfare that obscured the original ends of financial aid programs issued by IMF or World Bank. Undoubtedly, the inconsistencies of World Bank in administering the development-related programs not only were admitted but also it woke up some nationalist reactions in the non-aligned countries. To restore the order, a new supermarket revolution surfaced: *globalization*. This stage, characterized by a decentralized production, undermined the barriers of nation-states globalizing investments in those countries were working condition were more convenient for capital-owner. In this vein, two alarming situations were found. An increase in the unemployment and the decline of unionization in the North was accompanied with the arrival of international business corporations seduced by the low-cost of workers in South (Mc Michael, 2012). It reveals a clear contradiction, which remains unchecked. While global tourists enjoy from all legal conditions to travel in quest of exotic landscapes and cultures, nation-states are subject to financial dependency in regards to the financial centers. The strength-hold of this submission remains in the role played by rationality as well as how Europeanness has been constructed.

Conclusion

Today, the industry of tourism monopolizes the meaning of heritage sites, as well as the channels of consumption. Millions of tourists travel year by year looking for outstanding experiences, open to the "Other" who does not look like me. Cultural tourism and heritage have played a crucial role in integrating local economies otherwise would have plummeted. Though this seems to be the positive aspect of heritage, a dark side remains unchecked. The concept of heritage as we know now resulted from the bloody colonial past, which was accompanied and validated by Science. Not surprisingly, fieldworkers felt the need to travel abroad to validate their hypothesis, ethnography and anthropology showed epistemologically the importance of "being there" to observe natives. Undoubtedly, the expansion of nation-state originally was superseded by the construction of ways, infrastructure, and adoption of new technologies in transport and mobility fields. At this stage, the concept of "otherness" served ideologically to engage main economies to the periphery. This co-dependency, far from what some scholars preclude, still is a key factor of submission in our days. Some decades later, to be precise after the end of WWII, the theory of development cemented not only this financial asymmetry between haves and have-nots, but convinced the World, financial assistance would be a good resource towards development. Though things turned out differently than planned, spin-doctors of capitalism proposed *the cultural attachment of rationality* as the main reason of such a failure. We have debated hotly that how the concept of being there coined by ethnologists and science in times of colonial order set the pace to heritage consuming in the contemporary world. All these plans would never be materialized by the allegories of maps, and travels enthralled during 17, 18 and 19th centuries. Albeit mobility was the ideological heart of nation-state, no less true is that new settings are questioning that tourism and the industry of heritage are dying. Terrorism not only targeted tourist destinations and heritage sites to produce political instability, serious financial crisis in US has affected seriously the capacity of workers to pay for holidays. If our parents saved all year to spend in their holidays, we are now soliciting to banks for loans to pay for dream holiday.

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