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### **The Origin and meaning of Tourism: Etymological study.**

This paper is related to stress a discussion between the concept of tourism and tourist patrimony. Even though many researcher have investigated this issue just a few have questioned the meaning indeed. Most likely, there would be some aspects and limitation which were not be considered on this etymological study. If so, they will be pending for futures essays (approaches).

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### **Biography**

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Contribuciones a la economía - University of Malaga (Spain), Atenea digital - University of Barcelona (Spain), 5Campus – University of Zaragoza (Spain), Revista de Antr. Experimental – University of Jaen (Spain), Procesos Historicos – University of Mérida (Venezuela), Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales – University of Manizales (Colombia), Revista Patrimonio lazer and turismo – Catolic University of Santos (Brazil), Estudios y Perspectivas en Turismo – (CIET), Revista A parte Rei (filosofy) – University Ramon Lull (Spain) and Gazeta de Antropología – University of Granada (Spain).

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## **Tourism: Origins and Meaning.**

### **The influence of Greece and Rome**

In the old Greece (5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD) two types of social strata existed: the aristocrats and the slaves. The aristocrats enjoyed the privilege of the *Scholé* or *leisure*, the slaves the *a-scholé*. The Roman civilization applied similar parameters to make the distinction between the citizens and the non-citizens: the citizens had the opportunity to practice the *otium* (leisure) while the slaves practiced the *neg-otium* (negation of the leisure, business) (Guzmán, 1986:25)

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> century in Rome, the *civis* (citizen) were engaged in two activities: the *occupatio*, (engagement in trade, handling administrative issues etc), and the *otium*, which was similar to the *a-scholé* who devoted their time to the *otium illetteratum* (arts and poetry etc.). All these activities were characteristic of the nobleman (*nobilis*) whose activities included active leisure (*mutatio laboris*), which were distinct from the athletic games, the hunt, the bathrooms of vapor, all characteristics of the *profanum vulgus*, or passive leisure. The Romans created the Forum, the Coliseum and the Spas inside Rome, and similar to the Greeks, they gradually began to displace their centers of pleasure, toward places located outside the main cities (peripheries). Centumcellae and Hadriana were among the first villages established as pleasure peripheries. This resulted in building an entire chain of villages for leisure purposes in the outskirts of the big Roman cities, where patricians and noblemen would rest and seek pleasure (*profanum vulgus*).

After the fall of the empire, the *renascimento* (15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries) introduced the concept of the “humanist trip”, which was an attempt to invigorate domestic culture with acquisition of customs and manners of other towns. The trip is conceived as a source of knowledge by a threatened monarchy. One such trip was the “grand tour” (England - France -

Italy - Germany and Low Countries), participants on this tour came from the noble and the bourgeoisie.

Getino has observed that "...in the old Europe, leisure was an ideal...practiced by the cultured elites and people in power...conceived as a necessary time for the enjoyment of privileged few...lasted until the weakening monarchy in the 18th century." (Getino, 2002: 26). In this statement, we find a conceptual separation, i.e., to travel doesn't imply to be a tourist, and likewise tourism is associated with non-touristic activities. It won't be until 1841 that Thomas Cook offers the first trips for pleasure (in the modern sense of travel and recreation) for the elites. However, it was only in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that tourism took the form of mass pleasure trips. At this instance, both senses will have to fuse in one alone; the trip like synonym of pleasure or *loisir*.

In 1900, France reduced its daily labor to 10 hours, and in 1936, its labor law recognized the rights to earn paid vacations. Around 1960, legal reforms and technological revolutions made more free time available to laborers, and the notion of mass tourism gained strong support in contemporary society. (Houlot, 1961; Boyer, 1982; Lanquar, 1981; Jiménez Guzmán, 1986).

### **Etymological discussion**

We can surmise that the roots of the word "tourism" comes from the old Saxon term *Torn* (England). This word extends to *Torn-us* (what gives turns) and *Torn-are* (to give turns). The meaning of the word "torn" can be roughly translated as a "departure with the intention of returning". In practice, it referred to the rest (vacation) trips taken by peasants during the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Fernández Fuster, 1967). By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the English noblemen used the term "turn" to refer to the trips undertaken for education, search and culture exploration. In reality, the purpose of the noblemen's trip to the different parts of

the kingdom was to acquire knowledge that was useful for governing these areas (e.g., asserting power, imposing rules and regulations, etc). The genesis of the "*Grand Tour*" lies in the early tours taken by the nobility. The term "turn" is abandoned in favor of the "tour", a French influence.

In Saxon, the nouns of the original verbs are denominated with the suffix - *er* (writ-*er*, speak-*er*, etc). It is believed that during the 12<sup>th</sup> century a nobleman who goes on a trip and returns to his/her place of departure would be called a *Torn-er*. Centuries later, during the era of the bourgeoisie (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) the term *er* was substituted by Latin *iste* and Greek *isme*. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the term "*tour-ist*" and the act of touring "*tour-ism*" are conceived. These terms are widely adopted in Spain. (Jiménez Guzmán, 1986:32) (Fernández Fuster, 1978) (Boyer, 1982)

But not all researchers agree with the above explanation, for example for the *Semitic School* whose main proponent is Arthur Houlot (1961), the term tourism doesn't derive from the Latin language but from the old Aramaic. According to Houlot, in old Aramaic, the term *Tur* was used for the trip, exploration and movement of people. This word had been used, for the first time, when Moses begins his expedition to the lands of Canaán. Disagreeing with Fernández Fuster (1978), Houlot argues that the term *Tur* became widely adopted, almost at a similar time period, by the Latin European languages and Saxon.

Nevertheless, another school of thought - the *Onomastic School* - considers the origin of the concept not from a linguistic perspective but rather links it to the last name of the French aristocracy *Della Tour*. According to this school, after Carlos V signs a treaty with England in 1516, in celebration of this event, the future king gives the Della Tour family exclusive rights to conduct commercial transport and related businesses. Thus, Leiper (1983) states that this family organized the first trips of English merchants to continental Europe.

Theoretically, in this case tourism refers to an activity linked to commercial displacement (Jiménez Guzmán, 1986).

The origin of the word “travel” is even more controversial. In English, the term travel is derived from *half travailen* (from the verb to toil), which is originally from the French *travailler*. Similarly, the word “journey” is derived from the old French “jornee”, which in turn originates from the Latin vulgar *diurnata* (*diurnum*), hence the term *jour-ney-er* (traveler). In Italian, the term “travel” is translated as *viaggio*, which is derived directly from the French word *viatge* that has its origin in old French *veiage* (voyage). The road finishes (finally) in the term Latin *viaticum* (with you in the trip). This way via that means road it is annexed to with you it passes to form the idea of provisions for the trip, or *viático*. Thus, it is clear that the etymology of the term tourist and tourism is influenced by three classic languages. But considerable disagreement exists among scholars of tourism as to the origins of the concept and its interpretations.

### **Interpretation from an economic perspective**

When analyzed from a purely sociological point of view, the displacement of people (trip, migration or diáspora) has an element in conjunction with tourism. The migrant leaves his/her place of habitual residence (home) in search of tangible or intangible resources which cannot be found in the home environment. In a similar way, the tourist is (self) displaced in search of finding something exotic (landscapes, customs, etc) that cannot be found in the home environment. However, this does not mean that an “epic adventure” can be considered in the same line with a tourist vacation. For this reason, it is necessary to examine the distinction between the “trip” and the “tour”.

Historically, “trips” have arisen out of economic necessities. Jiménez Guzmán (1986,35-40) has proposed a conceptual history of the trip. This concept proposes five

developmental phases. The first phase is the *nomadismo (homo)* phase, in which the man is yet to appropriate a (physical) space. He begins to perfect his hunting tools and techniques and gradually adopts cultivation, for which establishing a more permanent dwelling becomes a necessity. During this lapse of time, his trips had a very specific function, i.e., searching for food. As the main activities were associated with hunting, it was not convenient to establish a fixed territory; hunters pursued in the direction of their preys.

In the second stage, the *homo pater familias* establish the division of work and specialization. The main activity of this group is agriculture, for which a social organization based on the clan and the exchange system is established. This organizational form begins to produce a surplus of goods and services. They enter into a period of crisis (or opportunity?), as they realize that some people have the opportunity to become rich, and to take either a part or whole of that surplus. This gives rise to entrepreneurship and commerce.

During the third phase - the *artesanado (homo faber)* period – a culture of servility begins to take hold (i.e., nobility vs. ordinary). The notion of "aristocratic rest" is gradually established. The social organization is founded based on a principle, where the “being” prevails. The organization takes a highly feudal character. The displacement for leisure for a privileged group starts to occur.

In the fourth phase, capital accumulation requires investments to extend the production (commodity) chain. The result is industrialism (*homo proletarius*) which introduces the ideas of work, bourgeoisie and of proletariat. This process not only creates a new social strata, it also breaks up the entire logic and social structures, which no longer rotate around the “being”, but around “possessions”.

The fifth stage - socialism (*homo partner-turisticus*) – is characterized by the conflicts between the privileged (bourgeoisie) and the laborers (proletariat). The struggles led to economic prosperity and leisure time for the masses, and a democratic form of recreation and

tourism begins to hold grounds in the society. This eventually turns leisure and travel into unprecedented levels of global movement and activities.

Jiménez Guzmán (1986:39) concludes that "*...from these points of view we can assure then that there was a stage in the human being's life in that the word tourism didn't mean absolutely anything; it is a non-tourist stage whose social facts of displacement were tourist, but the history shows us that the social facts of displacement constitute the antecedents of tourism...today, we live at a time in which the social facts of displacement for recreation and rest are called tourist facts.*"

### **Conclusion.**

Today the term tourism is widely used in reports, research work, congresses, symposia and publications related to social sciences. No doubt, they have been lured by the phenomenon in the past decades. Mass media also uses this term on a daily basis. In some instances, tourism is so called "the no-stack industry." However, there is not yet a clear definition about what tourism is about and where to trace back its origins.

Etymologically, three schools intended to study the problem but even though they had plentiful evidence no consensus has been unfortunately reached. The Latin School believes the term tourism dates back to the Saxon term, *torn* – which result confronts it with the Semitic School which believes the term tourism is rooted in the old Aramaic term, *turn*. A third school is involved in this discussion; it is the Onomastic or British School where the root of the term goes back to an old pact between Charles V and the Dellatours'.

Beyond this debate on the etymological origin of the term, it is said that the ancestors of today tourists are the old travelers, emigrants, and conquerors of the past centuries. This assumption might be relatively enticing, but it is undoubtedly fake. The underlying motives

of the old travelers followed dynamics and interests quite different from those of the modern tourists.

In this connection, the theoretical model of Jiménez de Guzmán has been used to set the scopes and limitations for defining the different evolution levels developed in mankind until the stage where tourism consolidates as a business and industrial activity.

Against this backdrop, it is worth underscoring that tourism is an activity including traveling, however not all traveling would be deemed a tourist fact. Some questions which need further research are immediately raised: Is tourism an industrial phenomenon? Which scientific bases and evidence lead to such statement?



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