

## ITM Bachelor 1. Sem 8029: Introduction International Tourism Management

### DEMAND SIDE: Leisure Tourists Behaviour

#### Guest -Hosts and Guest - Guest Relations

Tourists and hosts: From personal hospitality to commercial hospitality

Example: Austrian mountain farm



Tourists and hosts: The Tourist Gaze and Hosts reactions

Example: Maltese festa



Tourists and tourists

Other tourists seen as:

potential friend/partner

travel companion

helper

security guard

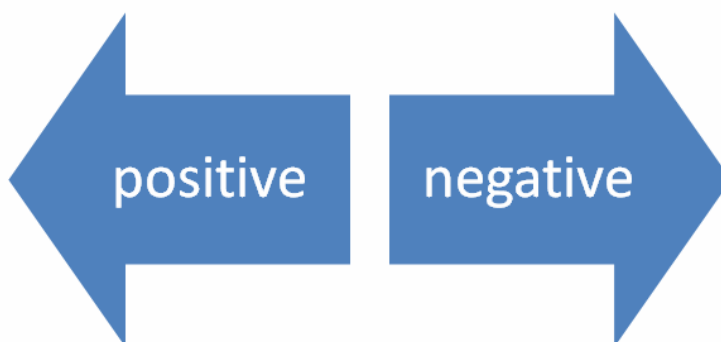
stimulation

scenery

stranger

disturber

competitor



Depending on own demand and behaviour and surroundings/situation:

Crowds are

nice at the Times Square New Years Eve party,

but spoiling the fun at the beach.



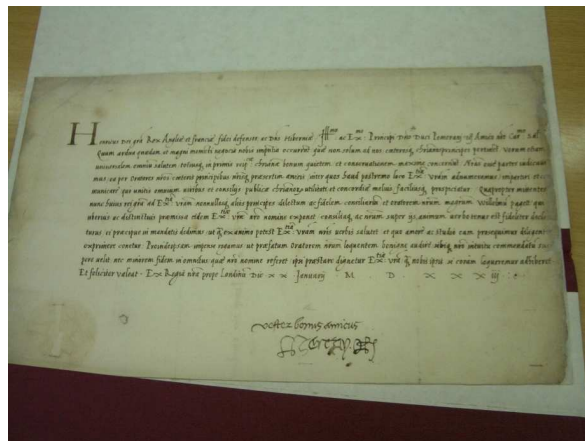
**On-Site Experiences:**

**Search for Authenticity**

In the study of tourism, the conception of authenticity has undergone three shifts over the past 40 years, with objectivist framings giving way to a social construction perspective and, later, existentialist conceptions. The shift to an existentialist understanding reframes authenticity in terms of the tourists rather than the cultures he or she encounters while touring.

The three steps can also be described as looking at the authenticity of

- the observed tourist object
- "object-related authenticity":
- (1) "objective object-related authenticity"



(1) Schreiben Heinrich VIII an Pommern-Fürst

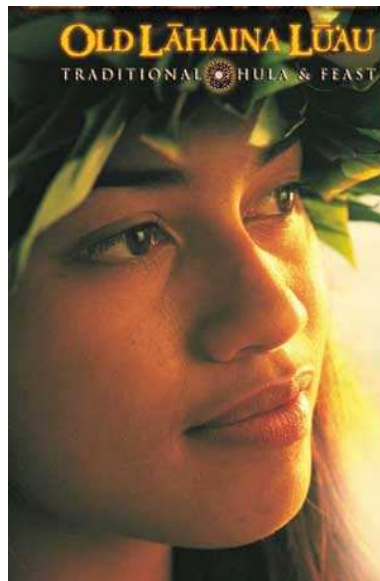


(1) Ise-Shrine 2008 (first constructed in 690, reconstructed every 20 years, next time in 2013)

and



(2) "constructed object-related authenticity"



and

(2) Hawaiian girls

the tourist's first-person experiences



(3) "activity-related authenticity"

(3) Hula Contest



(3) Honolulu tourists

"Objective authenticity of toured objects" (Boorstin / MacCannell) treat authenticity as a property inhering in toured objects one that can be definitively measured.

Boorstin denied that tourists had either the wherewithal or motivation to do so. Travel, he lamented, was a "lost art," that had become "diluted, contrived, pre-fabricated":

"Formerly, when the old-time traveler visited a country whatever he saw was apt to be what really went on there.... Today what [the tourist] sees is seldom the living culture, but usually specimens collected and embalmed especially for him, or attractions specifically staged for him" (Boorstin 1961:102).

"The American tourist in Japan looks less for what is Japanese than what is Japenesey" (1961:106).

MacCannell (1973) disputed Boorstin's assertion that tourists prefer contrived pseudo-events to authentic cross-cultural encounters, suggesting instead that touristic space is structured to satisfy the "desire for authentic experiences" that motivates "touristic consciousness". MacCannell argued that "back regions" are staged for tourists to enable them to feel as if they are penetrating beyond a false front. Like Boorstin, however, MacCannell questioned

the ability of tourists to actually encounter what is authentic in foreign cultures. The "staged authenticity" ends up undermining the tourist's goal: "The idea here is that a false back may be more insidious <sup>(heimtückisch)</sup> than a false front, or an inauthentic demystification of social life is not merely a lie but a superlie." (1973:599).

Constructivist conceptions of authenticity can be condensed to five features:

- There is no absolute and static original or origin on which the authenticity of originals relies.
- Our notions of origins are constructed to serve present needs and are contested.
- The experience of authenticity is pluralistic.
- Things are often labeled authentic when they conform to stereotyped images. Authenticity is, in this regard, a projection of tourists own expectations.
- Things once defined as inauthentic can be redefined over time through a process of "emergent authenticity."

The constructivist position transforms authenticity from a property inherent in toured objects to a set of socially-constructed symbolic meanings communicated by the objects.

The second shift in scholarly emphasis involves a downgrading of the debate over the authenticity of toured objects in favor of a redefinition of the term to refer to the tourist's own first-person experience: "activity-related" or "existential" authenticity.

"Existential authenticity, unlike object-related version, can often have nothing to do with the issue of whether toured objects are real. In search of tourist experience which is existentially authentic, tourists are preoccupied with an *existential state of Being* activated by certain tourist activities.... They do not literally concern themselves about the *authenticity* of toured objects.... They are rather in search of their authentic selves with the aid of activities or toured objects." (Wang 1999:359-60).

This has been summed up also in the term of "post-tourists" (Feifer), tourists who are fully aware of and actually delight in the inauthenticity of the normal tourist experience.

A layer approach to the authenticity quest could look like this:

**First layer:** Cultures are constructed, there is no static, "traditional" and therefore no authentic culture. Especially the construction of "national cultures" in the last two centuries has invented typical characteristics without reference to tourism: Examples: *Swiss, German, Malayan* culture.

Notions of Authenticity differ across cultures: Example: A building is authentic if it existing with original materials, even so the way it looks like has changed (Western), a building is authentic if it still looks like when it was build, even if the materials are new (Chinese).

Ways of perceiving the world have been changed by industrialization. Example: Nobody in the western world can see the sky as it was seen 200 years ago because of the classification ("invention") of clouds.

**Second layer:** Elements of cultures are constructed and cemented by touristic usage, sometimes feeding back into the host culture. Examples: Most Swiss do believe that Alphorn playing is a traditional Swiss activity, most younger Italians do believe that Pizza with different toppings is an Italian dish. Dominant themes structure the perception of specific places (f.i. palm-lined beach, Heritage sites).

**Third layer:** Tourism is killing authentic places: A town with an organized way of non-family or otherwise person-related accomodation is by definition not authentic anymore, especially with the increase in numbers of visitors.

Tourism is by definition based on a "return-ticket" visit. Authentic experiences require background knowledge (incl. language), time and the perception of open-endedness.

**Fourth layer:** Mass Tourism requires standardised, foreseeable, commodized, easy-to-consume situations, the opposite of real life.

**Fifth layer:** No experience is artificial, all experiences are authentic within the person experiencing it.



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