

TOURISM IN ANTHROPOLOGY: AN APPLIED ASPECT

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ABSTRACT

The principal aim of all sciences is to apply the results of scientific investigations in the services of mankind. This applied concept in anthropology is not a new introduction. The results of investigations of anthropology in general have been harnessed for getting practical benefit in various fields .Like this tourism is relevant to many theoretical and real-world issues in anthropology. The major themes anthropologists have covered in the study of tourism may be divided conceptually into two halves: One half seeks to understand the origins of tourism, and the other reveals tourism's impacts. Thus tourism anthropology although not a new arena is still in its infancy, and a lot is yet to be discovered.Tourism Anthropology explains how anthropology is the window through which tourism dynamics may be properly analyzed and evaluated.

Key Words: *Tourism, anthropology, Interaction, humankind.*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is widespread in human society. There are very few places left on our planet that have not been reached by tourists, and increasingly fewer people who have not travelled. Consequently, tourism has the potential to effect all of humankind. In addition, tourism involves contact between cultures and subcultures as tourists travel to places outside their normal places of work and rest. Finally, it cannot be denied that tourism contributes to the transformation of societies and cultures. It may not be the sole cause of such transformation, but doubtlessly plays a role regardless of the size or location of the society or culture being transformed.

Anthropology on other hand is a science of human kind .It studies all facets of society and culture.It studies tools, techniques, traditions ,languages beliefs, kinships, values, social institutions, economic mechanisms, craving for beauty and art,struggles for prestige etc.It describes the impact of humans on other humans.With the exception of physical anthropology discipline, Anthropology focuses on human characteristics generated and propagated by humans themselves.

Anthropology at its very core is concerned with the holistic and comparative study of human societies and cultures. Its aim is to look at all the components of, and influences on, those societies and cultures. Anthropology offers a valuable approach to the critical analysis of tourism through

its holistic and comparative framework; that is, the ability to bring the local and the global together by recognising the interconnectedness of social, cultural, environmental, religious, political and economic domains (Burns 1999:88).

Tourism is both a component and influence for many peoples around the globe today. The industry has taken major shifts toward goals of economic and ecological sustainability, local participation, and environmental education. Just as the industry has changed, so too should our research objectives.

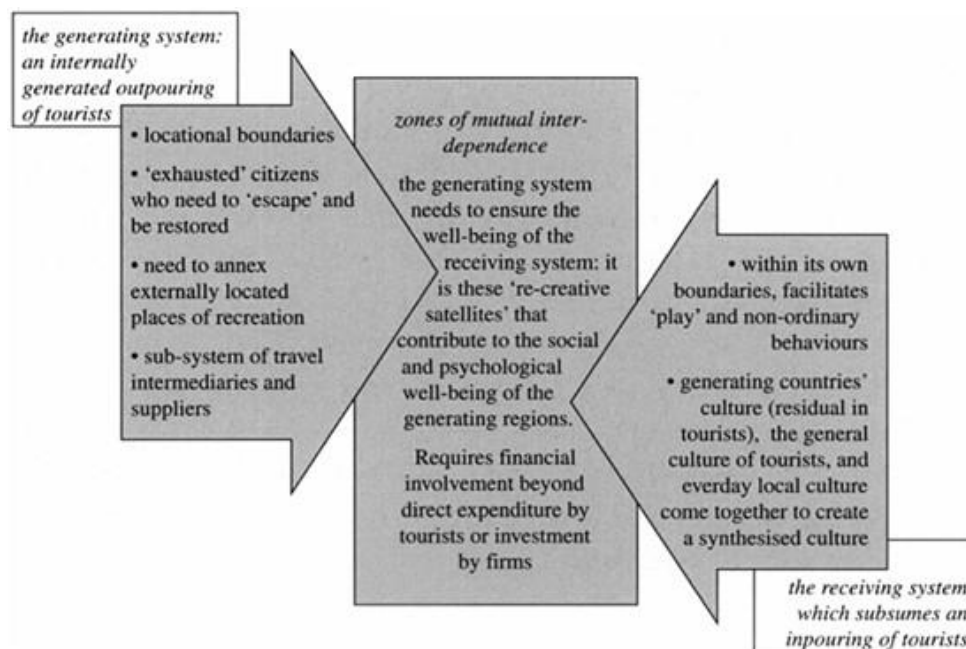
Anthropology and tourism (as a field of knowledge) have obvious synergy. Both seek to identify and make sense of culture and human dynamics. Because tourism is a global set of activities crossing many cultures, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the consequences of the interaction between generating and receiving tourism societies

In 1993, Przeclawski proposed an interdisciplinary approach to the study of tourism, in which issues can be examined from different viewpoints. This approach stressed that tourism is a very complex phenomenon, encompassing issues that are:

- Economic (to do with supply and demand, business, and markets.)
- Psychological (such as need and motivation.)

- Social (roles, contacts, and ties.)
- And cultural (where it can transmit knowledge, and be a factor in change.)

To understand this complexity, an integrative, interdisciplinary approach seemed appropriate and important to provide a holistic view of tourism. J. Jafari has tried to present an anthropological understanding of tourism. He described that tourism is a connection between the host culture and tourists i.e. people of two different regions, states, or countries meet to fulfill the needs. Anthropology of tourism seeks the first-hand experience of human being in their natural setting. As Smith has rightly suggested, ***“Anthropology has important contributions to the study of tourism, especially through...basic ethnography...as well as the acculturation model and the awareness that tourism is only one element in culture change.”*** In Peter M. Burns book: ***“An Introduction to Tourism and Anthropology”*** Nash further suggests that cross cultural encounters and the consequential social transactions provide the key to anthropological understanding of tourism. He also emphasizes that in such an encounter one group (tourists) are at play while the other group (tourism employees) are at work. As tourism continues to expand across the world, not just in terms of numbers of arrivals, but also in the types and forms that the phenomenon assumes, so too does its impacts and global importance increase. Concurrently, the potential for the anthropological study of tourism grows.

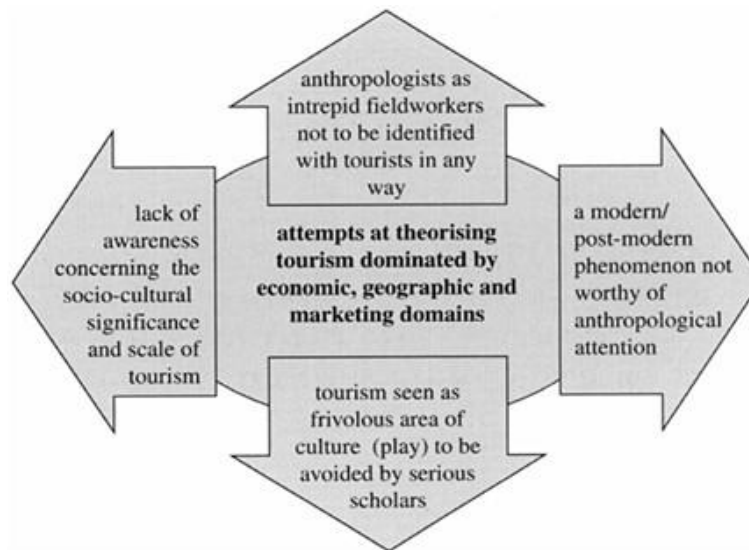


An anthropological view of a tourism system

Source: after Jafari (in Witt and Moutinho), 1995

Tourism is one of the world's largest industries and, as such, has profound and multifaceted importance in contemporary settings (Tisdell 2000). As noted by Nash (1995:179), any human subject of such magnitude cries out for anthropological analysis. Despite its widespread global influence and constant expansion, however, the phenomenon of tourism has, until quite recently, rarely occupied a central

focus in anthropological research and writing. Tourism itself is, of course, by no means a new phenomenon and has long been analyzed by economic and marketing scholars; its history of study in these disciplines arising because tourism was primarily seen as an activity of economics, rather than of people.



Anthropologists in denial !

Source: after Nash, 1981

Today, there are many types of tourism, and they are increasing. As this happens, more understanding of the tourism industry, from all angles, is needed and it becomes apparent that different disciplines have specialized expertise that can be applied to different areas of the tourism system.

ALTERNATE FORMS OF TOURISM

- **Eco Tourism**

It means travel made out to places having a great result of exotic natural environment. It includes visit to places of very high ecological importance like places having big & unique wildlife and plant reserves. These place provide a reason to observe and also to appreciate nature. It not only involves such a place of ecological importance but also has important natural environment and make efforts to bring all together for broader development of area where such reserves are found.

Today, such ecological significant places have become important as, it not only provide active tourism and increase in revenue or employment but also serves for fulfilling the larger goals of sustainable ecological development.

Eco tourism is largely carried out in those places which are relatively undisturbed natural areas. The concept of eco-tourism was started in the decade of 1970s and 1980s at the International level, the agency which is related to eco-tourism is called Eco tourism Society.

According to International Eco Tourism Society (ICTS), Eco tourism is a natural areas that conserve the environment, sustain the wellbeing of the people and involves entertainment and education.

Eco tourism has 3 important pillars which provides holistic understanding of this concept:

1. Conservation
2. Community
3. Interpretation

- **Ethnic Tourism**

Ethnic tourism is a travel motivated by search for the authenticity & sometimes to have intimate contact with people whose ethnic or cultural background is different from the tourist. Ethnic Tourist are driven by the desire to see something different from their cultural background. The ethnic tourists try to get first-

hand experience of the practices & behavioral pattern of ethnic culture.

This may include ethnic cultural performances of indigenous communities in a broad prospective under ethnic tourism, travel related information about the cultural details of another group wisdom.

The main point in ethnic tourism is that it is enabled by ethnic & cultural diversity especially of those groups which have largely remained in isolation. As a result of this, they have been able to maintain their distinct pattern of culture over a long period of time. Government of countries specially those where ethnic communities are more in number and recognize the potentialities of ethnic tourism by adding to social & economic development.

Ethnic tourism provides an opportunity to the community that is the center of tourist's attraction to strengthen its cultural identity.

By the means of ethnic tourism, it is tried to understand the specificity of an indigenous isolated community. It is taken into consideration that only positive impact of tourism are brought about in the cultural area visited. There are a few things necessary in context of ethnic tourism: commodification, standardization and lack of authenticity.

- **Cultural Tourism**

It is a type of tourism which is concerned with the country's region, culture, heritage, history, art, etc. Cultural tourism is associated with tourism in urban areas. G. Richard in 1996, in his book: **Cultural Tourism** in Europe has stated that 'movement of person away from normal place of residence with the intention to gather information & experiences to satisfy their cultural needs'. It may also be defined cultural tourism as a genera of special interest tourism based on the search for and participation in new & deep cultural experience, whether aesthetic, emotional and psychological.

Cultural tourism can be defined as "an activity which enables people to experience different ways of life of other people. Thereby, gaining a first-hand understanding of their physical environment & tradition of those places, architectural, historic & archaeological or the other cultural significance which remains from earlier times."

One type of cultural tourism destination is living cultural areas, historical sites, modern-urban districts, theme parks, country clubs, etc.

Cultural tourism is one among the fastest growing global tourism market people associated with cultural tourism industry to promote destination and enhance their competitiveness and attraction.

- **Health Tourism**

Health tourism is commonly known as Medical tourism. In it, the travel of the people of one country to another takes place for the purpose of acquiring medical & health care facility in that country.

Earlier, it was found that the people from less developed country used to travel developed country for seeking high standard health care facility. However, since last few decades a new trend has been found, it can be seen that people from developed country come to less developed countries for seeking medical & health care facilities.

Today in many of the developed & developing countries, advanced medical & health care facilities are available at a cheaper price. Besides this another reason for rise in health tourism is that there are certain treatments that are illegal in one's country but are legal in the country visited. Example in certain countries, fertility treatment is either extremely expensive or are declared illegal. Medical tourism is undertaken for several types of treatments like medical surgeries, psychological treatments, and alternate treatments. Some important & popular medical

treatments includes in countries like India, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Turkey, Israel, China.

In recent years, a whole industry has come up to cater to the needs of health & medical tourism. There are some intermediaries developed by health tourism which interacts with the medical tourist with health services providing hospitals, etc. they also provide follow up card to patients. Medical tourism did not had a big share in tourism until the last few decade. Health tourism has certain level of risk associated to exposure of infectious diseases. Certain countries have infectious diseases which may not be found in other countries

- **Sports Tourism**

This tourism refers to the travel undertaken to engage in or view sports events. This requires staying away from the usual environment.

There are three types of sports tourism:

- (i) **Active Sports Tourism**

The individuals who travel to participate in sporting games, come under active sports tourism.

- (ii) **Sport Event Tourism**

It includes hallmark events such as Olympic, World Cup Championship, etc. In this type of tourism, tourist visit to a particular place where the event is supposed to be held.

- (iii) **Nostalgia Sports Tourism**

It involves travel to famous sports related place, like 'Hall of Fame', and meeting with sports personalities. In recent years, this kind of sports tourism have become highly popular & one of the taste's growing in tourism industry. Sports tourism has become very important part of global economy. Active participation of Government of various countries, policy makers, economists can be seen today in

promoting sports tourism to generate & develop growth in local economy and also to increase employment opportunity.

The presence of sports tourists definitely affects the local community as higher exchange of cultural values could be seen. It can be either positive or negative. The positive impact is that local communities organizing sports events are able to experience & increase employment opportunities, besides this, locale also promote their culture. The negative impact of sports tourism on local community is that, they feel uncomfortable with a large group of people coming out of their cultural community.

Sports tourism also have negative impact on environmental conditions due to developing infrastructure for accommodation, means of transport is increasing, etc.

- **Religious Tourism**

Religious tourism is the earliest form of tourism & the most common form of tourism not only in India but in various countries as well.

Like Hindus visit to **AmarnathDham**, **BadrinathDham**, etc and Muslims visit to **Mecca Madina**, etc. People belonging to different religion visit the religious places, in the recent years with the increase in means of transport, religious tourism has also increased. Religious tourism does not mean that the travel undertaken by solely for religious purpose, rather, it also includes the travel of people to such places to witness the significant features for which the places has been known for. It can be seen that religious tourism takes place on large scale. It is so because, religion is having the highest value in life of people all over the world. Religious tourism is also known as Faith tourism. Religious tourism takes place within the whole of a country ad also in another country. Religious places improve those places which have some kind of historical or mythical significance. Today it can be seen that

Government of different countries have taken Religious tourism seriously. They desire to achieve maximum number of tourist. In order to generate revenue & also employment opportunities in area, state or country. In present times, many travel agencies offer packages to such religious places.

- **Adventure Tourism**

Adventure tourism is a kind of pleasure activity that takes place in an unusual exotic & remote destination. It tends to be associated with high level of outdoor activities by the individual. In order to improve this tourism sector, the Government in various countries, like the Government of India, are trying to diversify tourist in this sector. According to Adventure Travel Trade Association (USA), adventure travel is any tourist activity which includes three components – Physical activity, Cultural exchange & engagement with nature. Adventure seeps out for places which are less explored & have certain limit of risk associated with, which may require them (individuals) to come out of their comfort zone. Example, mountain climbing, trekking, river rafting, etc. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has formulated a set of guidelines on safety & quality for adventure tourism which is been checked and revised at a regular period of time under the supervision of experts. Adventure tourism is a taste in the genera of tourism that is growing at a higher rate. Many countries promote and enhance tourism to raise revenue and also let people to explore the unexplored part of the world.

THE DAWN OF NEW ARENA

The rise of the anthropological study of tourism can be traced through key journals in both the fields of anthropology and tourism. For example, the *Annals of Tourism Research* (ATR) started in 1973. It is the official journal of the Society for the Advancement of the Tourism Industry and remains one of the most important tourism journals. A first article on tourism

and the social sciences was published in this journal in 1974 and, although the first article with 'anthropology' in the title was not published until 1977, the work of anthropologists had already appeared in the journal. For example, Smith wrote on tourism and cultural change in 1976 and 1977. Greenwood's work also appeared in 1976, on tourism as an agent of change, and by 1979 Jafari (the editor of ATR) was able to put together a 45 page bibliography on 'tourism and the social sciences.' On its tenth anniversary (1983), ATR devoted a special issue to the anthropology of tourism and this served to clearly separate the involvement of anthropology in this field from the involvement of other social sciences. In anthropological literature today, few texts are dedicated entirely to the anthropology of tourism exceptions include Burns 1999, Chambers 1999, and Smith and Brent 2001, though authors of ethnographies sometimes include a section on tourism ,as they used to include sections on colonialism and its effects

Anthropologists writing about tourism in anthropology journals was slower to emerge. Although anthropologists were publishing in tourism journals (such as ATR) in the 1970s, it was a decade later before such publications appeared in the anthropology journals.⁹ A significant event was the *Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers* dedication of a special edition to tourism in 1988. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* produced similar special editions in 1990 and 1999. Prior to the development of a recognisable anthropology of tourism, elements that now form part of it were being explored by sociologists.

The application of an acculturation model of contact between different cultures to the study of tourism was the first thing to be investigated in anthropology. It was the topic of Nunez's 1963 paper, in which he showed that although tourism was a relatively new subject of scholarly study it was, nevertheless, possible to apply to it traditional methods and theories (Nunez 1989:274). Graburn (1980) also recognised the usefulness of the acculturation model, and in fact 'much early work by

anthropologists began as a spin-off from other research on acculturation or development' (Nash 1995:181). Tourism has also been studied by anthropologists as a form of cultural commoditisation and/or cultural commercialism.

PROGRESSIVE HOPE OF TOURISM IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology has established a base in tourism studies. It would appear that anthropological theories informing tourism research and analysis have progressed over the last 30 years. As the types of tourists, and forms of tourism, change, and focus shifts from economic and marketing justifications to considerations of environmental and cultural implications, the voice of the host community is increasingly being heard and the applicability of traditional ethnocentric theories diminishes.

Relationships between hosts and guests, how they form and change over time, have been of profound importance to the anthropological study of tourism, and should continue to be (Ryan and Huyton 2002), there is, however, much more about tourism that anthropologists could, and should, examine in a critical and theoretical fashion. Burns (1999: cover) claims that anthropology is the 'window through which tourism dynamics may be properly analysed and evaluated.' Tourism has become a set of global activities crossing many cultures, and in doing this has forced itself into the traditional domain of anthropological study.

The challenge for anthropology is not to shy away from tourism as a legitimate area of research as appears to be the case with many conservative faculties of anthropology, but to ... help us better understand the complexities of the tourism system.

It is not just suitable for anthropology to study tourism. It is necessary. In fact, as anthropologists persist with their avoidance relationship they are in danger of being pushed out of areas that traditionally 'belong' to their discipline. For example, in a 1999 publication on tourism and

culture (Robinson and Boniface 1999), just two of the thirteen contributors are anthropologists.

Tourism is essentially an applied topic. It involves real people in real situations. Anthropology, like other social science disciplines, needs to become more applied to satisfy the needs of tourism. It needs to become more applied both in its theoretical orientation and its practical reality, a call that has been made before. Gardner and Lewis (1996:158-160) discuss the application of anthropological methodology, skills and expertise in the development context, arguing a place for anthropologists to 'work within' the large industries that impact on the lives of indigenous people. Anthropology needs to meet this challenge in the tourism arena, as it has done with the wealth of work on Native Title and Land Rights, for example. There is a need to operate competently and effectively in the tourism area, and not hide behind past notions of avoidance and the theoretical jargon that isolates us from potential practical intervention.

The future challenge for anthropology is to increase its contribution; to expand its analytical work on tourism. As the practice of tourism becomes more focussed on hosts (Burns and Sofield 2001), not just as objects or commodities but as active participants, the demand grows for anthropology to apply its specialised knowledge and generate new theoretical frameworks. Such application can assist not only the host communities, but also the tourists and the tourism operators that comprise the whole tourism system.

Ultimately, anthropology is about people. So is tourism. Anthropologists are both tourism participants and observers, whether they like it or not (Nash 1995:175). In anthropology, the wide range of possibilities for the study of tourism are only just being realised. It is an exciting and challenging time. It is also an important one, as anthropology and tourism need to be engaged correctly for the future of both.

As tourism continues to expand across the world, not just in terms of numbers of arrivals, but

also in the types and forms that the phenomenon assumes, so too does its impacts and global importance increase. Concurrently, the potential for the anthropological study of tourism grows.

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