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| **Tourism Management**  **Faculty of Adventure, Culinary Arts and Tourism** |

**TMGT 4160 Section 01**

**Tourism in a Global Environment (3,1,0)**

**Final Exam Essay**

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**How does the single story and the quest for authenticity shape tourist and local connections to place?**

Since an ancient times till nowadays the desire of exploring world outside home motivated people to travel. The passion of exploring the new culture, environment and experience moves the huge mass of tourists across the globe maintaining the multicultural cooperation and sharing authentic learning practices. In this context, “authenticity” means uniqueness by particular cultural, social, geographical features that differ one community from another. These characteristics collected in one particular authentic concept and attached individuals to their place of living. However, “knowledge” in general term is not holistic and have a numerous gaps illustrated on the example of a “single story” that Adichie Chimamanda mentioned in her lecture. In my understanding, this is a type of opinion about somebody or something based on the lack of information filled by stereotypical myths. Single story content is fundamentally different from the real facts. However it still may influence the primary knowledge source.

    Regarding the publication “Bruner, Introduction: Travel Stories told and re-told”, it becomes obvious that operating the certain skill and knowledge makes possible influencing the existing vision and totally change its essence in personal understanding. Bruners approach suggests the totally different vision on the cultural tourism where the tourism attractions considered from their purpose but not from the ordinary representation. The “metanarrative” concept implies giving the modern essence to the narrative through the analyzing the historical meaning. The results of this practice consequently could be beneficial to the tourists, partners, producers and agencies. According to the Burners observation, the majority of foreign tourists discussed particularly personal issues and tourism in general. Therefore, the idea of engaging people in the real performance and informative discussion should increase overall cultural awareness.

       Basically, the set of individual emotional background received from the cultural experiences and practices attached to the particular location reveals the definition “sense of place”, whereas the understanding and managing the cultural heritage covers the concept “interpretation” reviewed in a work of James Carter “ A Sense of Place: An interpretive planning handbook”. Generally, the interpretation directly influences on social/individual vision of the reality and creates the feeling of place. It works as a tool of providing the setting of personal narrative context to the cultural heritage through the social communication. In order to create strong relationship between locals, visitors and place, the idea should be extraordinary framed by active social engagement. The key point in creation the specific image of the tourism product delivering the primary message to visitors is the community involvement and the clear vision of its structure. It will guarantee further success in the implementation of interpretive plan.

         As we already know, the tourism sector is growing rapidly as well as growing the arguing across the influence of mass tourism activity on the cultural heritage. The controversial character of debates mostly focuses on tourism as the destroyer of place or the dynamic force of its creation. Pascal Scherrer and Kim Doohan illustrated the bright example of raised conflict between Western and Indigenous worlds in “It’s not about believing’: Exploring the transformative potential of cultural acknowledgement in an Indigenous tourism context”. The core of the conflict originates in tourism activity on Kimberley Coast in Northwest Australia as a form of expression the unrespectful attitude toward the indigenous residents. Despite the manifestations and regulations that do not allow invention the private property, local people continue to suffer from a mass tourism flow. Observing undesirable interference of tourism activity into the cultural heritage, it becomes obvious that tourism activity gains the giant sizes and becomes totally uncontrollable. The external interference leads to the separation locals from their cultural heritage vanishing the frames of authenticity and sense of place. Evidently, the local people divide them as a “self” from the foreign “others” in order to protect the cultural integrity. Such a distortion of reality implies the broad authentic loss along with reconstruction the system of values on the example of non friendly attitude to visitors.

         From the cultural perspective the mass tourism could be considering as the collision point of two different cultures, where the host community usually observed by foreign and forced to adapt the comprehensive model of Western society. In order to satisfy the standards, the local communities create an artificial impression of the authenticity that transforms cultural authentic features into the commercial resource. Consequently, the majority of goods and services are produced with a specific cultural design significantly oriented on market sales generating global commodification. Shaw G., A. Shaw, and M. Williams analyzed its causes and effects toward the cultural tourism in  “Chapter 7: Tourism and the commodification of Local Communities”. Generally, tourism commodification emerges when the destination represents itself as an artificially created marketing segment focusing on the increasing economic rates. The author’s emphasis that tourism industry becomes more engineered experienced and developed on a global level. Obviously, it increases the demand among Western consumption and the tourism culture becomes more economically oriented. Commodification creates totally different image of cultural values along with an image of place distancing locals from their origins.

          Adjusting to the modern standards under the pressure of external communities, the authentic boundaries disappear combining the features from different cultures. The cultural system generates totally different authentic world with its specific characteristics (attributes and features) reflected on a transformation of the collective and individual consciousness. The process of shaping the worldview represents a mixing of personal/others opinions, thoughts, feelings, beliefs, attitudes gathered in a one new unit of knowledge. However, this new unit is not necessarily truthful or reasonable. The wrongly directed mind risking to cause unilateral delusion as a single story or an irreversible changes in the whole meaning of the place. It is important to realize that primary referring to the artificial authenticity or oriented by wrong knowledge are the main tools of shaping the distorted meaning of the local community with all its components. At the same time, personal determination to belonginess combines physical attributes of nature as well as socio-historical values. Belonginess directly interact the self-awareness in a world and create the public consciousness. I think that our thoughts represents ourselves and our aim is to direct the way of our thinking on reaching harmony between external and internal worlds.

**References**

1)     Bruner, Introduction: Travel Stories told and re-told

2)     Carter, A Sense of Place: An interpretive planning handbook

3)     Shaw G., A. Shaw, and M. Williams. Chapter 7: Tourism and the commodification of Local Communities.

4)      Adichie,  Chimamanda, Danger of a single story.

5)     W, George, H. Mair & D. Reid.  Chapter 9: Changing the rural landscape.

6)     Deutschlander and Miller, Politicizing Aboriginal Culture

7) Pascal Scherrer and Kim Doohan  ‘It’s not about believing’: Exploring the transformative potential of cultural acknowledgement in an Indigenous tourism context.