

Cruise Risks, Threats and Dangers: A Theory

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The present paper explores the world of cruise tourism considering not only the sociological aspects for what many consumers select these types of mobile hotels for their holidays, but also providing with an all encompassed framework to expand the current understanding of risk and mobilities in our times. The modern world, results in an aplitic tendency not necessarily due to the inevitability of risk, but because it introduces new risks for which the past does not provide us guidance from which to find solutions. From this perspective, modernity' tendency to produce rapid change and with it to introduce ever more challenging risks has greatly changed the role of the tourism security expert. The cruise-related tourism combines the classical order of control with the creation of new risks. Cruises, like all forms of tourism, are a perishable product and the result of a danger that comes to fruition is a new economic danger and risk to a business in particular and a society in general. This paper gives to reader practical suggestions to create and improve the policies aimed at protecting passengers on board.

Keywords: risks, accidents, cruises, tourism, hospitality

Introduction

Cruise tourism is a globalized phenomenon that experts and tourism scholars have studied from multiple perspectives. A general overview is needed to expand the current understanding of cruises in our modern societies. As the industry has grown so too has the scientific interest in it. Sociologically speaking, one of the aspects that historically characterized this form of tourism has been isolation; travelers seek cruise-tourism as a mechanism of escapement (Wood, 2000; Wilkinson, 1999). The lack of commitment of cruise-tourism consumers to local economies and habits produces troubling points, discussed in specialized literature. Cruise-tourism specialists have evaluated the industry in terms of its impact on local economies (Dwyer and Forsyth, 1996; Peisley, 1992; Forsyth and Dwyer, 1995; Lester and Weeden, 2004). From 90s decade onwards, the concern for economic multipliers and economic impacts set the pace regarding the question of sustainability. From this viewpoint, cruise shipping helps communities to preserve their natural resources. Ecological destinations such as Antarctica and Australia have been offered to provide international demand of ecological consciousness (Dowling, 2006; Stewart & Draper, 2006; Klein, 2006; Dobson & Gill, 2006).

However, in the last years, to be more exact after the attacks on New York's World Trade Center, cruise related tourism has been seen as one of the safest ways to experience foreign travel. The current period has been challenging to the tourism industry. From virus outbreaks to terrorism, the onset of this new millennium produced many problems for the tourism industry. Under such a context, many policy makers insisted on the need to improve the sense of safety at tourist destinations. The intervention of national governments, in this process, was of paramount importance by identifying and tracing those elements that jeopardize the societal order. Starting from the premise that cruise consumption mirrors the feeling and political contexts of societies, this conceptual review essay emphasizes on cruises as modern dispositive where travelers are protected.

Security has been commoditized and is offered as a product. Cruises combine not only aspects of security and curiosity, but also represent a valid alternative to integrate hospitality and mobilities, but unless otherwise resolved, cruise tourism in case of accidents may become a trap. From Titanic to Costa Concordia the degree of vulnerability of passengers may actually be higher in cruises than other means of transport (first and foremost whenever a strange virus surfaces and expands rapidly on board) (Miller et al, 2000; Lois et al, 2004). This paper provides readers with an all-encompassing view of risk and practical suggestions to be followed to mitigate the risk on the

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high seas. Particularly, the question of technological mobility engenders new threats to be seriously re-considered. Safety related studies of cruises seem to be in their infancy. To fill this academic gap in the literature this review examines not only the historical roots of mega-cruise accidents, but also the conceptual discussion of risk re-production in sociology.

Preliminary Debate

Beth J. Harpes writing for the Associate Press notes that 1912 the sinking of the Titanic was one of the world's great tragedies. Today, one hundred years later the Titanic's sinking is a form of "dark tourism". Harpes writes: "A hundred years ago, the sinking of the Titanic was a tragic disaster. Today, this disaster has become nothing more than an entertaining family outing. There are replica ships in Tennessee and Missouri, graveyard tours in New York and Nova Scotia, traveling exhibits from Las Vegas to Atlanta, and two brand new museums in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and Southampton, England. Hotels and restaurants are serving Titanic dinners, and ships are even heading to the disaster site — including an anniversary cruise that slashed prices last-minute from nearly \$5,000 to \$1,000." (Newslader com, 2012).

The facts surrounding the ill-fated maiden voyage permeate popular culture. The disaster has spawned countless books, television specials and movies -- perhaps none more famous than James Cameron's Oscar-winning film "Titanic," one of the highest-grossing movies of all time. To coincide with the anniversary the epic film has been re-released in 3-D. The Titanic tragedy has even spawn reproductions. Thus, not only is there a museum in Belfast, Northern Ireland, but there are also sister Titanic attractions in places far from the sea such as Branson, Missouri, and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, catering to the fascination of American audiences. What is it that makes the Titanic so intriguing and universal to so many people? What fascinates us to the point that Northern Ireland is using the sinking of the Titanic as a centerpiece for its tourism promotion?

Although cruise problems and tragedies are not new and have been with us, perhaps since the beginnings of recorded history, the Titanic's sinking acts as not only a metaphor for cruises but also as a metaphor for tourism risk and dangers. Even a superficial study of perhaps the world's most famous cruise tragedy reveals much about the tourism industry and its sociology. Recently the cruise ship population has increased by leaps and bounds.

Despite increased safety and security measures, as the number of cruise ships has grown so too has there been an increase in cruise ship incidents. This article seeks to discuss some of the theory behind cruise risks and dangers. We present our material against an historic backdrop and then move into theory and recent cruise history. This article then seeks to open the topic of cruise risk management, dangers and disasters for discussion and to encourage further research in this area. The article then seeks to tie the ideas of danger and risk to the concepts of dark tourism and to human being's fascination with daring the vastness of that part of the planet which remains its last unexplored and least well understood frontier (Timothy, 2006).

Sea Travel in History

Ever since Biblical times human beings have been traveling. At times these travels have been for specific purposes such as business or to flee an advancing army. Later humans began to travel for pleasure. We may argue that tourism began only after the age of urbanization had begun. People in agricultural societies had neither the leisure time nor the resources to for pleasure travel, but with the dawn of urban centers travel for reasons such as spirituality and then pleasure became possible. While travel by ship is an ancient form of travel it is only with the dawn of the nineteenth century that tourism, as we know it, came about. This new phenomenon was unique in that it was born of an urban perspective. Tourism has often sought to emulate or mimic the dominant elite's lifestyle. As such in the world of tourism, economic status subordinated territoriality. For most of world history tourism merely "was"; it was rarely a subject of a serious academic study. As scholars began to study tourism they noted two consisting sets of values that produced one of tourism many social divides. Just as the Biblical text often subliminally divided the world between the world of agriculture and nomadic herders, the tourism literature often demonstrated a divide between "the intelligent well-to-do" and the "less sophisticated common folk "whose spending habits were far from desired.

Scholars then have noted that tourism slowly transformed itself from an elite pleasure to one of mass consumption. For example, Cursak describes the transformation of the Irish coast into a place of tourism. Cursak demonstrated how Anglo-Saxon ideals infiltrated the local norms, often by means of conspicuous consumption, thus generating a "locale-within-a-locale" thus reducing opposition to Anglo-Saxon principles to a minimal. Cursak argued that

tourism produces norms and codes that govern multiple aspects of life. From this perspective classical tourism acted as an agent connecting the local aristocracy to the foreign aristocracy in a place ritualized by luxury and eccentricity that stood far removed from the practical necessities of most common people (Cusack, 2010).

As noted above not all travel has been land based. In fact multiple sea images have crept into our land based vocabulary, thus the camel is called the ship of the desert, and an economic rescue package is called a bailout. Despite the inherent dangers in sea travel human beings have been fascinated with the sea and have set sail upon it since the dawn of time. From the Biblical literature to the Icelandic Sagas, human beings have shown a fascination with the sea. For many the sea was and still is a symbol of eternity, of unbridled power, of adventure and at test of man against the elements. The sea has become a symbol of our love-hate relationship with that which we cannot control. Although the centuries have turned into millennia, humanity's love for the sea and our sense of awe is still very much with us. The ocean's are very much part of what Urry and Larsen (2011) call the tourist gaze. Urry and Larsen write of various forms of tourist gazes including: (1) the unique- object-gaze such as the Eiffel Tower, (2) genre-gaze such as American skyscrapers, (3) the uniqueness-of-the-familiar gaze (visits to museums that tell the story of ordinary people in extraordinary ways), (4) the gaze-of-the-unusual-ordinary, for example seeing how domestic tasks are carried out in another society, and (5) the gaze of the ordinary-extraordinary, such as a rock from another planet of from the moon (Urry & Larsen, 2011, pp.15-16).

Cruises and Modernity

One way that we live the "tourism gaze" is through the relatively modern phenomenon of cruises. In fact the modern cruise acts a unifier of many of the forms of the tourist gaze about which Urry and Larsen write. We go on cruises, then, to gaze at others and to be gazed at, to see unique sights, and to see categories of sites, to gaze at the ordinary lives of people whose lives are different from ours, and to gaze at unique experiences. Both classical tourism and cruises for the rich existed prior to World War II, however, the middle class phenomenon that we know as "mass tourism" only began in the years after the close of the second World War. Delp writes: "Cruises as we know them today are really only about 50 years old, but the tradition goes back more than a hundred years when passengers started booking travel on mail ships crossing the Atlantic." (News Travel, 2012)

Although cruises existed in many parts of the world, the modern cruise is principally a North America phenomenon that reflects the ideals, strengths and weaknesses of US middle class society of the 1960s and 1970's. By this point in history, cruises for the masses had become so accessible for North Americans in the late 1960s, that they were also cannibalizing other forms of tourism. For example, New York's Catskill Mountains resorts, known as the *Borsht Belt* and famous for being the launching pad for many comedians, was not able to withstand the onslaught of the Caribbean Cruise industry. The modern middle class cruise was highly comparable to the all-inclusive Catskill Mountain resorts and offered the additional advantages. As in the case of the Catskill Mountains, cruises offered unlimited food, snacks, in many cases, liquors and non-stop entertainment.

The Caribbean tourism region also provided relatively tranquil and romantic waters upon which to gaze, a variety of ports-of-call to see, social status in which to be seen, and a sense of adventure and danger. The Caribbean's chronic problems of crime turned the ordinary into the extraordinary by harkening back to its history of piracy.

Thus, quoting Schroeder (2002:73) Urry and Larsen note: "there are many examples of the attraction of tourists for criminals, for muggings, prostitution, pickpocketing (sic) and illegal businesses relating to the addictions of visitors. Part of the allure of the Caribbean is the said to be that 'danger' is just around the corner, just beneath the veneer. Tales of Pirates, Rastas, drugs and Yardies all contribute to the performing of 'dangerous tourism' in these paradise islands of the Caribbean (Urry and Larsen, 2011, 220). Last but not least, the French philosopher, George Amar (2011), argues that humankind is experienced a new paradigm respecting to mobilities where freedom and security converge. The technological advances, enrooted in modernity, have created mobile hotels (cruises), which focused on the social bonds of travelers. Most certainly, the old paradigm of mobility as an alienable mechanism of indoctrination is being radically altered. Today, thousand of people select these transports to connect with partners, and new friends.

Review of the Theoretical Literature

Maximilliano Korstanje has written extensively about the sociology of dangers, threats and risks (Korstanje, 2009; 2010; 2011 and Korstanje and Tarlow, 2012). Korstanje notes that scholars have long asked the question: how do we define the notion of threat and what determines that something (or someone) is a

risk? Defining threats and risk is not a simple matter. Authors have long sought to define the concept and to determine when and how a risk becomes a threat. What are the cruise industry's risks and at what point to these risks become threats?

To complicate the issue, Korstanje notes that threats carry risk and risks may produce threats. Thus, there is a cybernetic interaction between risk and threat. Furthermore, there is no agreement on what conditions produce a risk. In our highly complex world composed of real, partial and false information both the scholar and the cruise passenger rarely are sure of reality. In the case of cruises, as in other areas of tourism we note that there are threats judged to be external, such as piracy, a terrorist attack or even a hurricane, others that are internal, such as the norovirus or the threat of passenger on passenger, crew on passenger or passenger on crew sexual assault. The threat of illness is so great that the *Los Angeles Times* ran a headline on February 4, 2012 stating: "2 Florida cruise ships riddled with norovirus, Anyone surprised?" (Nation Now, 2012). Korstanje (2011) notes that currently we lack a theory that permits us to understand when a risk becomes a threat and/or a threat becomes a risk. He further notes that we do not have a clear demarcation between these concepts.

This problem is best analyzed by reviewing the literature of several scholars in the field of risk/threat. We begin by analyzing the work of the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (2006). Luhmann argues that society is not constructed from a collection of individuals, but rather through the communicative processes that interact between these individuals. He further posits that society cannot function without articulating mediating elements that produce uncertainty such as love, money and power. Cruises are symbols of this articulation, thus, the cruise is a sign of danger; it is often portrayed as a place of romance, and it symbolizes a certain level of both wealth and power. Luhmann argues that a society does not maintain itself by repressing these emotional symbols, but by interaction complexities that interlock a society's subgroups. Thus, the cruise represents a place where the unstated emotion becomes signs of an interlocking transient society that exists at the ephemeral level.

From Luhmann's perspective, the cruise's potential risks then permits societal agents uniting in such a manner that they produce institutional confidence. For example, the lifeboat symbolizes confidence and the belief that the crew will be the last to abandon ship acts both as a confidence building measure and as a means to establish a social order. As in other social systems, the cruise system's own complexity is framed by the notion of trust and

the exercise of authoritative power. Based on the contributions of structuralism, Luhmann understands that without power (which he defines as a chain of sub-codes) the subject (in this case the passenger) cannot communicate nor form links with its institutions (the cruise liner). Unlike other sociologists, Luhmann openly questions an agent's rational reasoning by taking into account that agents often act in ways other than what they rationally believe but rather act on instincts, outside influences or their gut reactions.

Following this approach, risk is not based on the possibility of damage but rather it is a rational outcome from the subject's thought process. Risk can then only come into being when there exists a previous decision on the part of the involved party in which this rational reasoning permits the capability of avoiding a decision's consequences (the principles of self-restraint). All risks imply the possibility of avoiding the risk at the same time that it calls upon (other) faculties to predict the risk. For this reason it is not possible to consider chance risks when the victims do not have: 1) participation in the event's creation 2) the possibility of avoiding it, or of reversing its impact. For example, a cruise accident or terrorist attack must not be considered risks but rather dangers. To claim, as does Beck (2006) that we can create a fictitious bridge between predictability and risk is a clear defect that results in "alarmism." Risk does not come about as a probability but as a communicative quality of those who assume authority in a society's power structure.

Luhmann further argues that as a general principle, those who create risks rarely suffer the risk's consequences. It is not the cruise's staff that creates the risk, but those who control the cruise from afar. We can then define the conceptual division between risk and danger. The cruise tragedies noted above are not risks for those on board but rather dangers (for the passenger and crew). These incidents, however, represent risks for the cruise line's corporate management or for the builder of the boats.

Examples are: the cruise ship sinks, the passengers are robbed or assaulted, or a passenger dies not due to Divine Providence, but because those who direct the company did not provide proper oversight (Luhmann, 2006). For there to be risk then, there must have been a calculation of future loss and/or benefits measured against the probability of an occurrence (that is to say, that the danger was seen as avoidable) (Korstanje, 2009; 2010; 2011). Likewise D. D'Andrea (2011) suggests that threats become real when there is the danger of not taking counter measures to stop them. Seen from this perspective, risk refers to the potential danger brought about by a

decision (or a decision not to make a decision). Can it be argued that not to make a decision implies a danger; to make a decision implies a risk? Luhmann argues that “with a threat, something must occur (and we do not know if it will happen) in such a way that what has been produced or may be produced may never occur. A threat refers to the idea that something is inevitable unless something else occurs or interrupts the process that has already begun” (D’Andrea, 2011: 90).

A Giddens (1991) offers another perspective. Giddens argues that modernity contains a dilemma in which the process of reflective thought is tied to risk. According to Giddens, the issue of risk does not lie in its effects or in the decision-making process, but in the level of the social agent’s knowledge. For Giddens, then, the problem of risk starts from the organization between the agent and its primary security basis, the relationship between the agent’s caretakers or in the case of the cruise, its crew. From this perspective the tragedy of the Costa Concordia is not only in the loss of life and property but also in the breaking of a covenant between the crew and its passengers. From Giddens’ perspective order is based not only in rationality but also in doubt. Security then depends on how a problem is understood and what the calculus is for its solutions. These two indicators carry the original idea that trust becomes “defensive cloak” in our social life. The nexus between a passenger and his/her caregivers (the crew) produces trust-ties where the passenger is supplied with the adequate tools (lifeboats, information etc.) so as to be able to confront potential threats. When there is a lack of discipline and proper information then doubt enters into the equation and thus accelerates risk. This acceleration blurs the boundaries between the passengers’ sense of past, present and future. Giddens (1991, p. 4) writes on one hand that, modernity lessens risk in certain aspects of life, but in other areas of life it generates new risks.

The modern world, results in an aplitic tendency not necessarily due to the inevitability of risk, but because it introduces new risks for which the past does not provide us guidance from which to find solutions. From this perspective, modernity’ tendency to produce rapid change and with it to introduce ever more challenging risks has greatly changed the role of the tourism security expert.

The classical order of control, as seen on a cruise ship, is based on the fixing of clear boundaries within time and space. Space permits the monopolizing of force and legal coercion. Thus, a ship’s captain is often isolated from the cruise’s passengers and to sit at the captain’s table is not only a sign of prestige but of social stratification. The cruise’s staff, like all

bureaucracies is oriented toward controlling interpersonal special and temporal relationships. Giddens argues that post-modernism has begun a process of reflection where time and space relationships are not only clarified (connecting absences with being present) but also that demonstrates a crisis of jurisdictions and legitimacy that invades all aspects of life on the cruise. For example, the cruise company offers us the chance for relaxation and rejuvenation coupled with fun almost as if the traveler were to find him/herself in a medical situation. The cruise staff “sees” us for a certain price, and just as in the case of risk management these “experts in relaxation” try to capture of mitigate outside risks within societal limits.

From one perspective, this risk mitigation is positive because it gives the traveler autonomy but it also generates new risks. Thus, the freedom to be oneself on a cruise may lead to the risk of socially unacceptable behavior in the eyes of another, and as such promote conflict within a confined world of both space and time. The excessive increase in perceived risk, Giddens admits, is a product of societies based on industrial consumption. Does this concept of consumption apply to the leisure world of cruises and travel?

From the perspective of this paper we can note that Giddens’ contributions are as follows: a) Scientific advances permit the reversal of exterior risks, but generates new risks that can lead to a system wide collapse as undermines the system’s functionality; b) The modern world is not only rationally complex but is tied exclusively to the future. The cruise passenger travels not only in the present but also in the hope of obtaining memories in which the past intersects with the future. As in Hebrew grammar, the past is in reality a future; c) Risk facilitates the conditions necessary for the introduction of rationality in an individual’s life as it obliges that person to make decisions or to permit others (experts, staff members, and travel professionals) to decide for him/her; d) The process of reflexive thought generates a lack of authority during a crisis; each person may challenge the staff’s decision; e) The cruise industry must take into account that modernity is an irreversible phenomenon that impacts the subject’s identity isolating him from institutions and making him more vulnerable; f) With the passage from hierarchical logic based on authority to reflexive thought used by both crewmembers and passengers there is a systematic increase of new risks. Thus the passengers on the Costa Concordia chose not to believe crewmembers and made what they considered to be rational decisions; g) In modernity there is no option of non-decision.

Alternative Views of Risk

Another view of risk comes from the work of Cass Sunstein (1994; 1995; 2005). From his prolific literature, risk and reason is the book more interested to work in this matter. Sunstein warns that there are two mechanisms through which minor risks are treated as if they were major risks while major risks are ignored. These are: a) the heuristic of availability and b) the probability oversights. The first case refers to mental references to similar events but have a low chance of happening again. When this happens the public has a tendency to overvalue the risk and becomes alarmed demanding actions. Such an example may be the issue of shark attacks that have low probability of occurrence but create a great deal of publicity and also the issue of major cruise ship disasters.

Although these mishaps are well publicized the fact is that the number of occurrences is low. On the other hand, the ignoring of a probability occurs when the public is shown to be highly sensitive to the risk's impact and ignoring the risk's potential for occurring. Sunstein states that when emotions rule probabilities of occurrence are often discounted. He further argues that panics occur from a combination of both phenomena. The media saturate the public and thus create emotional states that destabilize the situation. Thus, Sunstein acknowledges that people tend toward mental shortcuts that frequently function well but also can produce errors and miscalculations. People adopt an intuitive toxic position that leads to unsupportable fears. Its emotions can take (the public) well off course. In too many cases it (the public) does not see the need for adjustments. The public is susceptible to the social influences that lead to bursts of fear and abandonment.

Risk and Danger Theories

The Swedish historian T. Kaiserfeld (2010) describes tourism as a massive phenomenon that came forth due to transportation price reductions that came about with the introduction of the airplane coupled with paid vacations and the rise of German and Italian nationalism which emphasized the need to visit the homeland. Tourism succeeded in expanding itself that to all-inclusive tours and the rise of the travel agent as a travel expert.

Kaiserfeld is interested in understanding the rise of the all-inclusive vacation. These type of tourism that allowed the visitor to enjoy cashless travel meant not only greater security but also permitted a more refined form of tourism consumption. What is important here is that the cruise ship is a travel hotel

that must deal with everything from entertainment to issues of security and safety. Unlike the dominant form of post WWII Anglo-Saxon tourism, in which the detached tourist interacted with the foreign world in which s/he found himself, in the inter-war period Central European countries provided all inclusive tours. Inevitably this tendency created a bubble which isolated the visitor from their host communities. In this sense, P. Brunt y P. Courtney indicate that tourism may be defined as a socio-cultural event that modifies values and conducts for both tourists and local residents. In some cases this interrelationship may cordial due to the residents' economic dependency on the tourist, in other cases there are serious problems between both resident and visitor. In this regard the literature has focused on three main aspects that define the visitor-resident relationship: (1) community development, (2) the host-guest link, and (3) cultural impacts (Brunt y Courtney, 1999).

Although modern globalization connects people in less time than in former periods of history, it produces the (manufactured) tourism risk of the visitor being at risk for an event in which s/he is nothing more than what we might call the outsider. For example, Western tourists in the recent years, have become victims of terrorist attacks in Bali, and in Middle Eastern countries as Egypt (Bianchi, 2007). While the tourists were the victims, the terrorists' real intentions were to harm a local economy by attacking that economy's visitor industry. Due to these terrorism attacks, at least until recently, tour operators turned to cruises as a way of selling "safe adventurism" and a "place" where the consumer is consistently isolated from the actual destination. Just as in the case of the Titanic these "traveling places" provide everything needed to create ostentatious consumption. The cruise ship becomes a maritime mega condominium, a moving luxury hotel where that provides luxury while separating the passenger from the local population.

From this perspective the trip is truly the journey. It has long been held that travel from one place to another facilitates interpersonal encounters, on cruise ships, however the opposite occurs. These ships enclose the passenger in a secure womb separating the passenger from the cultures that s/he is to gaze upon in each port-of-call (Pizam, Reichel Stein, 1982; Mathieson & Wall, 1982). No matter how carefully prepared and orchestrated the journey may be unexpected events do occur. When the tourist is the victim of an unexpected event, for example, an accident of the type that recently occurred on the Costa Concordia then the accident brings the cruise passenger from a sequestered state to a new state of actual reality.

Phillip Vannini classic work *Ferry Tales* presents some of these same dilemmas in his “mobile ethnography” studies on the continuous departures to Canada’s West Coast. In the introductory chapter, Vannini described to his readers to the panorama of a disaster whenever the Queen of the North sank one Wednesday Morning. In his findings, Vannini reports that the tragic news not only shocked the community, but also raised a great deal of questions respecting to the security of Vannini’s friends.

This feeling of uncertainty triggered by the types of events described by Vinnini does not correspond with our daily sense of safety. The reasons for this tragedy were unknown, and this lack of certainty becomes its own reason to travel there. It is not surprising that travel agents and tourist operators do not advertise a voyage’s pain or suffering, they rather encourage the consumption of an amazing landscape or transform danger into adventure. Vannini’s experience not only reminds us of the existential concept of seeing travels as human displacement to nowhere.

In Vannini’s work the Queen of the North never arrived safely to its destiny, and thus symbolizes the connection between mobility and uncertainty. Vannini calls life a continuous movement. Using this concept we see in Vannini’s work the idea that the nature of life and its vibrancy is often represented by the accident. This means that our dependency of machines, not necessarily should be a result of accidents, but “road accidents” warn us about our symbolic dependency on mobility and speed. Vannini’s concept seems to come to life when we read the Captain of the Costa Concordia’s account but also when we examine other cruise accidents.

The *Ferry Tales* explores affective dimension of movements to the extent of recreating a new type of understanding about our excessive trust in technology. The book forces us to consider if dialectic relations does not determine the connections between consumers and machines. This research of mobility in urban anthropology has helped scholarship to see that concepts as nationality, boundaries, sovereignty are in ongoing re-negotiation, this means on movement!

Cruise Disasters

Cruises then represent not only a potpourri of tourist gazes, with passengers gazing the sea each other and the staff while at the same time becoming gazed at objects, but also symbolic of man’s love and fear of the sea. As such cruises have provided great moments of luxury and also tragedy, of safe and pampered travel mixed with the reality that the sea both gives and takes, and the lands visited are exotic

and filled with manageable dangers. The 1912 Titanic disaster serves as an historical reminder of the sea’s romance and dangers. As in the case of the Titanic, currently being celebrated in Northern Ireland, modern cruises are less about what happens on land than at sea. As such, the cruise is more about the experience of travel than about the destination of travel. It is the journey that the passenger seeks rather than merely a means of transportation.

As the cruise industry grew, so did its problems. Despite the rare exceptions such as the Titanic or the SS Andria Dora (1956), cruise passengers rarely worried about security. Being on the high seas in a time when piracy was considered to be a “thing of the past” cruise passengers considered themselves to be safe. The cruise was a place to wear one’s fine apparel, to be pampered, and to seek adventure while enjoying the comforts of home.

Most passengers were unaware of shipboard medical issues, if sexual assaults took place, almost no one knew about them, and passengers assumed that ports-of-call were safe. With a few exceptions such as the 1985 attack against the Italian Ship, *Achillie Louro*, where Palestinian terrorists threw an old invalid man into the sea, most cruise passengers never considered the issue of terrorism against cruises. The dawn of the twenty-first century, however, has changed that perspective. With the dawn of the modern age of tourism terrorism and continuous news programs, the public now knows when and how passengers and crewmembers are victims to crimes and acts of terrorism and piracy at sea. Here are examples of people who have been lost at sea on recent cruises and never returned:

- Tomas Mendoza (2012), a crewmember on the Costa Concordia,
 - Walter Bouknight died after falling on a Carnival Fantasy Cruise in January of 2012.
- Many of these “deaths” are still mysteries. Just one of many examples is that of George Allen Smith IV of Connecticut, USA who went “missing” on his honeymoon cruise. From the perspective of safety and security these last years have been challenging one for the cruise industry. On a worldwide basis cruise ships and/or cruise passengers have experienced multiple problems, not only on the high seas but also upon landing during shore excursions. Below is but a few examples of these high profile cases:
- Tourists robbed on shore excursion on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts (November 2010)
 - Attacks in Matzalan (Jan. 2011) caused cruise ships to drop that city as a port-of-call. Just prior to the elimination of Matzalan as a port of call, there were three reported robberies involving passengers or crewmembers.

- In Puerto Vallarta, some 22 cruise-passengers were robbed (February 2012) while on what appears to be a cruise sponsored shore excursion.

The situation on the sea has also been challenging for cruise companies. In the last few years, cruise ships have had numerous mechanical and technical problems. Among these are:

- Fire on the high seas (Carnival Splendor, November 2010)
- Unexpected repair stops (Carnival Magic, November 2011)
- Cruise collisions (Carnival Fantasy and Carnival Imagination in July of 2011)
- The grounding and subsequent sinking of the Costa Concordia in January of 2012 resulting in the loss of life
- The Costa Allegra becoming inoperative in February of 2012 in Indian Ocean waters, making it a sitting duck for pirates who regularly ply these waters.

These recent cruise disasters are part of a long history of famous cruise liner disasters. Among these are:

March 6, the death of 440 passengers on the Spanish ship Prince of Asturias that became shipwrecked off the coast of Brazil

July 24, 1956 the sinking of the Italian cruise liner in the waters off of Nantucket (Massachusetts, USA), after colliding with the Swedish vessel "Stockholm". The accident resulted in the death of fifty passengers.

December 1988 some 55 people died aboard the "Bateau Mouche IV" just off of Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach. The ship was carrying 127 New Year's holidaymakers.

On October 4, 1997 some 700 people on a romantic cruise were rescued off the coast of Cypress. Some 1,706 people were rescued from a French liner in February of 2001 in the Caribbean waters of Nevis (Caribbean sea). Also in November of 2007 off the coast of the Shetland Islands in the Antarctic Ocean 100 passengers and 54 crew-members were rescued after the cruise ship collided with an iceberg.

This list is not exhaustive, and it does not touch upon health problems or upon on-board errors or on-board petty crimes. Such negative events, threats and dangers, be they real or perceived, may discourage more risk-adverse potential cruise passengers from embarking upon a cruise experience. This fear of travel may be especially true for that segment of the cruise industry that is older and more fearful of travel. Despite the high profile negative publicity in the world's media that a cruise ship or cruise excursion problem may engender, it should be emphasized that most people have incident free

cruises. The above-mentioned incidents then may be the exception rather than the rule, but they symbolize that travel is not ever without risk, and that the threat of danger turned into reality is ever present. Life carries risks; to be alive means to understand the threats that each living being must face as s/he journeys through personal time and space, and to discover ways to manage the risks inherent within these threats.

Adaption of Theory to Practice

Adapting this theoretical perspective to tourism and cruises in particular the work of Lash and Urry is helpful (1998). They postulate that risk is born from communication. For example, when a professional warns his/her client about a specific risk what s/he is doing is creating a hypothetical situation where his/her knowledge is communicated with prevention in mind and to avoid post-event problems. The professional cannot define exactly how the risk will manifest itself in the near future, but he fulfills a defined role of interpreting an unpredictable future.

From the opposite perspective Castel (2006) proposes that the market creates necessary risks (not to generate a zone of cohesion) but precisely to break the existent social bondage. As risk increases the tourism industry appears to be less potent and non-existent risks become greater. Risk inflation is then explained in the following way.

In antiquity humanity lived plagued by insecurities, by clear and tangible dangers to its existence but it had the protection of faith. He argues that progressively life has become more technical and that this "technification" has brought about material wellbeing but at a high cost, thus fragmenting trust relationships between actors (Castel, 2006). This lack of trust has turned in the anxiety of risk. Thus there are moderns who prefer not to have children so as not to fear that they may die or not to marry for fear of divorce. These fears leading to a social form of chaos eventually connects humanity to the mechanical-machine that is then turned into an article of consumption. It becomes preferable not to decide so as to avoid potential negative fall-out from a decision (Bauman, 2008). What comes into play then is not the need for protection but narcissism that seeks constant gratification. Needless to say that these theories lead to the question that if man is rational how come he has the tendency to take risks? Are cruises and other forms of tourism means of transportation or ends unto themselves?

Do we travel to specific locations or is the experience not in the destination but rather in the journey. As such are the journey's risks not part of

the tourism experience? According to Virilio (1996; 2007) it is not inconceivable for travelers to go on journeys without moving. Is Virilio not speaking about the cruise? Virilio's message when interpreted in light of tourism is that transportation's depersonalized acceleration results in the uninhabiting of territory. The cruise then is the re-inhabiting of territory while using travel as a form of re-personalization. Theory, however, must be put into practice if it is to be "living" and useful. We can see the cruise industry as an industry unto itself or we can choose to see it as symbolic of the travel industry and as a metaphor for risk. Using cruises then as a symbol of the total leisure travel industry, tourism professionals would do well to consider that:

Twenty-first century travel and tourism industries such as the cruise industry must make tourism security not only a major part of their marketing strategy, but must also be cognizant of the fact that mishaps may well end up in the courts of law. European, American and British legal systems all have developed systems to allow disgruntled passengers to sue. As such what happens on the high seas may have repercussions on land. Here are just a few examples of the way that the tourism and travel industry and those who work in port security need to assimilate this paradigm change into their planning and thinking.

Using the cruise industry as a metaphor for travel and its ports-of-call as symbol for places of landing, it our journey through the theory of risk, threat and dangers teaches us that it is essential that cruise companies and ports-of-call establish clear guidelines as to standards-of-care, what constitutes negligent behavior and what is the company and its subcontractors' duty of care.

Recommendations

Turning then from theory to practice the authors offer the following recommendations to tourism professionals.

- Cruise and port officials must assume that that ports-of-call are not only potential terrorism targets. Visitors to these ports-of-call may be assaulted or even kidnapped. This statement does not mean that every port or off shore passenger will be attacked, but it does mean that we no longer can afford to be naïve and that the cruise industry must deal with a much more dangerous world.
- The media today is highly conscious of port security. When tourists are assaulted it not only reflects poorly on the cruise liner but on the port-of-call. In a world in which the twenty-four hour news

cycle is part of everyday life, what happens in one place is known in every place.

- Cruises professionals, like other tourism professionals, must be cognizant of the fact that both ship employees and other passengers may not always be of the highest moral standards. All too often people tend to leave the inhibitions on shore. Cruise staffs are often composed of multinational staffs. While this multi-nationalism provides a sense of the exotic to the cruise, it also means that there may be a mixture of attitudes among the staff members when dealing with the public.

- The cruise industry must not create a false sense of security. While cruise officials should not panic people, they must deal with safety and security issues in the most professional manner possible. People begin to panic not when cruise officials take precautions in a professional manner, but when they fail to take precautions.

- Just as in other areas of tourism cruise and port directors must develop security coalitions with all components of cruise community. This community creation means that there must be an ongoing dialogue with passengers, with on-shore personnel, with local tourism officials, with local law enforcement and health officials. Neither cruise ships, nor the ports in which they dock, are stand-alone communities; they are part of the total tourism industry. They must see that their port security/police department is well trained and understands tourism, and that the local tourism industry understands how it needs to cooperate with port security officers. In too many cases port security personnel, cruise and tourism personnel do not even know each other's names.

- Cruise and port security officials cannot accept the risk of denial. The best crisis management is good risk management. Recognize that no part of the world and nor any sea or airport is immune from crime and/or a terrorist attack. Cruise liners and ports of call, as in too many other parts of the travel and tourism market; have often pretended that bad things happen to others.

- Cruise personnel and port security personnel must know their weak points. For example, as people line up at ticket counters are they secure. Is there a proper standoff distance between check-in and drop-off areas? How easily can baggage areas be targeted and can baggage easily be stolen? How many immoral people wait for unsuspecting passengers as they visit a new port for only a few hours.

Conclusions

Cruises, like all forms of tourism, is a perishable product and the results of a danger that comes to fruition is a new economic danger and risk to a

business in particular and a society in general. The consequences of such dangers may take years to heal. A hundred years have gone by since the Titanic has sunk, lives and fortunes were lost. It is our job to respect the dead by assuring the safety of the living. The modern era has brought about new security innovations and at the same time, the twenty-first century sea-voyager has new challenges.

Today's traveler must face an often more sophisticated form of danger from advanced piracy to terrorism on the high seas. Sea travel security then must be developed in ways to face these new and often daunting challenges. Danger and risk are a part of life. To face these ongoing challenges we must understand our past to begin to predict our future. To ignore the past, to run away from danger and to avoid facing the risks is simply too costly not only in monetary terms, but in our most valuable asset, life. The cruise and tourism industry cannot forget that cruises are about people and that each life lost is a world destroyed. Life has risks and dangers, but it also has people who seek to minimize these dangers and thus choose life.

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