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HYPERREALITY CONCEPTS IN TOURISM AND RECREATION

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Abstract

Today, along with the changes in consumption patterns, societies are oriented towards more active and more innovative products and services that touch more to their emotions. With this orientation the touristic paradigm of sunbathing by the sea left its place to new elements and activities with excursion, struggle, and even risk, which have become the paradigm of tourism, for tourist destinations. In this context, destinations and various businesses, have highlighted the hyper realities and they have built up from the beginning to the end of the experience with an integrative approach. Hyperreality is a balance element and the main element of tourism in today's conditions. The main purpose of this study is to carry out an in-depth research on hyperreality and related concepts. The data were compiled by using secondary sources in the study. Therefore, in addition to hyper realism, concepts such as simulation, simulacrum, images, enhanced reality and phantasmagoria are discussed in the context of data which is obtained from previous studies. These consepts are also discussed in terms of Universal Studios theme park.

Key words: Reallity, Hyper Reallity, Augmented Reality and Simulation.

Introduction

When the postmodernist approach is taken into consideration, the spaces that create the destinations have their meanings in the minds of individuals. In other words, destinations represent a rich sensory environment, composed of memories and meanings resulting from the events happening in it (Coyne, 2007). In tourist destinations, surrealistic items are processed into products and services with various motifs that create hyperrealism and they transferred to tourists. This transfer is done in particular with simulation and simulacrums, phantasmagories and augmented reality items. Indeed, postmodern tourists, who are in a constant formation, move their senses through these items. Thus, tourists perceive, interpret, understand and influence their environment as well as they attract their surroundings with their actions, attitudes and opinions (Karaduman, 2010).

There are various concepts emerging in the studies about hyper realism concept. Table 1 shows some of those consepts. Each of these concepts are techniques which addresses hyper-reality in a different direction in tourist destinations and they also allow to create new spaces and events. In this context, in the study, firstly the concept of hyperrealism is examined and then the concepts of simulation and simulacrum, phantasmagoria, imagery and augmented reality are defined and their usage patterns at destinations are examined. Secondly, these concepts have been evaluated through the facilities and events in Universal Studios Themed Park in America.

Table 1: Concepts Related with Hyperreality

Concept	Explanation
Simulation	With a fake appearance or an imitation, they often encourages pleasure for tourists. The simulation often represents the inaccurate truth in the themed places such as Disneyland or Las Vegas.
Simulakr	The appearance that needs to be perceived as a reality. It is a simulacrum when it is perceived as existent even if there is no event or object.
Configuration	The process of combining ideas and symbols to achieve a coherent understanding. Creating a special brand for a destination.
Marking	Communicating with signs to transfer meaning in symbolic ways. Nike's 'swoosh' is used to communicate its durability and performance.
Phantasmagoria	Amazing relationship and dreamlike images.
İmagery	The ability to design an object without it. Imaginatively design.
Augmented reality	Systems that enable objects and spaces in the physical world to be enriched by using artificial intelligence or digital technology.

Source: Fırat and Dholakia (2006), Altınpulluk and Kesim (2015)

Hyper Reality

Reality perception is precisely the result of subjective judgments of people. Yücedağ (2013) defines the reality based on the view of everyday life. Daily life is a subjectively meaningful reality in the sense of a consistent world interpreted by people. This means that reality changes in people's mind in terms of their conditions and perceptions. It may be easier to explain this change by Plato's cave analogy. This analogy is related to the fact that if you capture any person in the cave for a while his reallity will become the reflection of the cave. Those prisoners, are the chief actors of a world of fantasies and illusions. However when you relise him, his perception will change immediately. According to Platon, in this world everything is flawed and constantly changes. The world outside the cave represents the "world of being". Things that are perfect, eternal, and unchangeable are in this reality universe (Wright, 1906). This analogy shows that both the objective and subjective factors are in the core of reality (Yücedağ, 2013).

In the simplest sense, hyper realism is a concept that can be defined as supreme reality or extreme reality. The concept, first appeared in Bourdrillard's work. According to Bourdrillard (2017) there is not an absolute truth. Reality has been accepted by simulating or constructing the fake with hints and images and imagined things accepted as reality by vitalization with images. Thus, it can be said that while hyper reality is not related to reality, it is a concept that is regarded as real in the world of imagination by being portrayed through various images or icons.

The hyperrealism that emerges through the signs and symbols in the human mind has emerged and lived in different forms since the early ages. As a matter of fact, the existence of gods and goddesses and the stories about the ancient world continue to exist since the early ages. The stories of the

Greek God and Goddess can be regarded as turning point of the debate between the truth and the fake, or the difference between truth and hyperreality. However, as the stories of the Greek gods and godnesses are not taken seriously, the earthly factors and the fantastic factors interrogated and separated from each other (Karapinar, 2017).

In the post modern era, the tourism sector uses this distinction from the early ages to build a world of fantasies and illusions for the visitors. Karapinar's expressed that "The ancient was recalled, it combined the modern and built its own truth". That means; reconstructing the existing world with a new touristic perspective (Karapınar, 2017). In other words, the reality or the hyperrealism that has been glorified or idealized is revealed.

Although it is recreated, hyper realism can be perceived as the actual reality for the individual which is a formation that emerged during the process of transforming the reality with the view (Şentürk, 2003). This formation is described by Bornstein (2012) as being glorified or idealized reality. Indeed, hyper-reality creates the image of something that does not exist at all and, in so doing, sets the standards of its own reality. In this case fantasy is not the image on the surface presented with hyperrealism. And fantasy can not be separated from reality.

Imagery

Image can be described as something that is imaginatively designed in mind and sensed as a long-waited thing for fulfillment. Psychologists states that image is the analogue of an object reflected to the consciousness that sensory organs perceive from outside of the sensory organs. Atasoy (2016) describes the meanings of image in Turkish, Arabic, English and Latin as follows:

> *In Turkish the image means imagination and dream. In Arabic, the meaning of something that is thought to be true or analogous to the truth. In English it means that appears in the human spirit, a reflected image, a copy or a screen image. The Imagine and Imago words derive from the Latin imitation word. It means that an imitative object is copied in three dimensions.*

Imagination, considered by Holbrook and Hirschman as one of the reflective means of hedonic consumption, can be both creative and reflective. Reflective imagery is called historical imagery that reveals some remembrances and idioms from the past. On the other hand, creative imagery reflects the fantasy world created by one's consciousness (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

According to Baudrillard, fantasies are the forerunners of experience. The fantasy imagery presented in various destinations, in other words, non-reality-related events and experiences, creates a multi-sensory images. These features are born from glorified and idealized hyper realities and simulations. For example; a false accessibility is provided to the people in shopping malls. Some people who come to these malls actually experience the pleasure of buying a commodity. However others can only feel the happiness of touching, watching, or even experiencing to try these commodities that they can not afford.

Even if this happiness is a fake genius, it can create some hope with a momentary change and a hope that symbolizes what can be experienced in the future. Therefore the expectation of tourists is much more than ordinary imagery, so it is expected that the images will have a unique and enchanting power (Boudrillard, 2017). In this context, the person who always submits to the idea of a variable truth provides himself with an enchanting ambience at various stages.

Various stages of image specificity are listed by Baudrillard as follows:
- image as a reflection of a real reality
- an image that changes and hides a deep reality
- the image that hides the absence of a real reality
- not interested in any kind of reality, but only an image

Simulation and Simulakr

According to Baudrillard (2017), reality can be reproduced in infinite numbers by miniaturized cells, matrices, memories and command patterns. Every reproduction plays role in the emergence of simulations of reality. Moreover, every simulation of the truth leads to transfer more characteristic or symptom of the simulation to the real object. This situation causes the dream power to fall off with the simulation in time. In such a vicious cycle, simulations usually try to destroy the difference between reality- fake or real- imaginary (Baudrillard, 2017).

Disappearance of the real world with the artificiality and imaginariness, is one of the important issues that Baudrillard addresses when describing the concepts of simulation and simulacrum. The philosophy that reflects this point of view brings another important question to mind: "What shall we say to the rest, if we destroy the real world?". Güzel (2015) discloses this philosophy of Baudrillard in two points:

1- Processes of "knowledge" which are continuous and aim to pursuit the truth can not produced as an isolated subject-object relation as discussed in the modern period.

2- The reality has vanished in a vicious circle of simulacra reproduction, in a way that can never be reached. This annihilation of reality, has become hyperreality at the top of the line.

Simulations are designed much more realistic than the original one to be hyperreal. In such a service environment, everything should be in written form just like the relations between custumers and employees or the routes to visit (Williams, 2011). For example; Elgün, Babacan, Kozak and Babat (2013) are expressed airports as places not really related with reality, but in the chain as hyper real areas that are part of the simulated universe. The airports, which serve as a part of the destination, have an important place in the experience from the first moment of the journey until the last moment. In airports each employee knows what to say to the customers exactly. That is because in the airports, another world is created where the conversations between visitors and employees are determined. And this conversations seem to be realistic for customers. That provide entertainment and pleasure for the customers as well as providing transportation in the airports.

Just as in the case of the airport, the expectation of post-modern tourists is to experience simulated environments that can accommodate many functions at the same time. Indeed, postmodern consumption in the service sector is associated with the preference of tourists simulated or created hyperrealism to the expanded reality. Today, simulation is a complementary feature of contemporary service consumption, and these simulations are designed solely to encourage mass consumption that is not bound to an end or consequence (Baudrillard, 2017, 206).

Phantasmagoria

Phantasmagoria emerges with the reflection of various images, such as hallucination of a highly heated individual. It represents a complex group of sequential and rapidly changing real or imaginary icons (https://dictionary.cambridge.org). If it is evaluated sectorally, it is a matter of distorting the

exchange value of goods or services. This distortion leads to a false alienation of the visitor and leads to an illusion.

While the word does not take place in the Turkish dictionary, when it is questioned four expression are reached. These are;
- A series of inconsistent imaginations as in the dream
-Shapes that project a wall with a projector and suddenly grow and shrink
-Ghost
- A visual game created with the projector (http://www.nedirnedemek.com/)
The concept was derived from the Greek word "phantasma" and first introduced in 1801 . It was used by the French dramaist to refer the "magic lantern" display (https://www.vocabulary.com).
In the Oxford dictionary, the origins of the concept is explained as follows:

> *Early 19th century (originally the name of a London exhibition (1802) of optical illusions produced chiefly by magic lantern): probably from French fantasmagorie, from fantasme 'phantasm' + a fanciful suffix. (https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/)*

Also it has been said that the origins of the Phantasmagoria have come to life in Marx's studies of capitalism. Marx, discussion of capital fetishism describes the capitalism as a concept that offers satisfactory behavior and produces diversity, even though it is fictional in character. For him, what capitalism offers is a limited source of partial satisfaction and can not be changed with the artificial, synthetic, turbulent commodity world of the natural world. For Walter Benjamin, who worked on the phantasmagoria subject after Marx, this commodification was the construction and warning of the urban Phantasmagorya (Rojek, 2004). Therefore, according to Benjamin, the environment in which modern man lives in is a phantasmagoria. When we think the human being within the entertainment industry, people create an environment in phantasmagoria in which they feel alienated to themselves and others and experiencing a "splendid life" with the consumption it has realized (Wikipedia.org).

Phantasmagoria in tourism has been used to intensify consumption as a result of the effort to invent new means to increase consumers' interests, dreams and desires. According to Jansson (2002); Instead of physical journey, indirect spatial phantasmagoria has strengthened the desire of "first hand tourism" by contributing to the "creative hedonism" or even "hyper tourism". As a result, it has become an increasingly fascinating fantasy and phantasmagoria issue to go on seaside tourist trips or adventure winter trips.

Spatial phantasmagoria depends on a creative hedonism that potential tourists enter into the representations of marketing, popular culture, literature, photography and other socio-spatial sources of information. Through such mediators, individuals develop not only a reference framework for planning a trip, but also a scenario for how to carry out and reconstruct their identities in the desired environment. Tourism phantasmagoria also provides a combination of sensory and emotional experiences in an indirect, visual and auditory way that creates imaginative texture with touristic representations. For instance, the combination of photographic slides or animated pictures with words which describe voices, scenes and smells that a visitor expects to encounter on their journey (Jansson,2006).

Augmented Reality

Augmented reality is a technologic system which allows the user to see the real world via objects assembled with virtual world or with the objects combined with virtual world, complementing it with reality and displaying both real and virtual within the same space (Azuma, 1997). There is a

complex relationship between the virtual world and augmented reality concepts. While some scientists define augmented reality as a special issue of virtual reality state, others denote that augmented reality is a more general concept and view virtual reality as a special issue of augmented reality state.

Virtual Reality is a three-dimensional simulation model which allows to the participants to communicate with a dynamic environment created by computers that gives a sense of reality (Bayraktar and Kaleli, 2007). In augmented reality, unlike virtual reality, the real environment is not completely suppressed but still plays a dominant role. As a totally synthetic world augmented reality tries to place synthetic reinforcements into the real environment. According to Azuma, there are three important characteristic features of augmented reality. Firstly, there is an integration between real and virtual. Secondly, it is interactive with the real time. Lastly, it is registered in three dimensions.

In a virtual world, augmented reality can be used to increase the overall experience of the site and to provide a clearer perspective on specific events. For example, personalized electronic guides or tour assistants are able to mark the attractions according to the position of the individual and direct them to the attraction. Also, the augmented reality glasses can offer a variety of displays in three-dimensional imageries (Noh, Sunar and Pan, 2009).

Augmented reality is potentially applicable to all senses, including hear, touch, and smell. To create a vision-related foresight; image-forming systems can be exemplified which use a series of optical, electronic and mechanical components between the eye of the observer and the physical object to be augmented. Depending on the optics used, the image may be formed on a plane surface or on a more complex non-planar surface. (Bimber and Raskar, 2005).

On the other hand, some augmented reality applications require the addition of virtual objects as well as the removal of real objects from the perceived environment (Azuma, et al., 2001). For example, in some national parks in the United States, augmented reality practices have been used to see archeological remains in remote and inaccessible areas. While these applications have removed some of the nearby elements, they have overlaid animations, virtual animations, and other information on remote fossil remains (Fritz, susperregui and Linaza, 2005).

Discussion - Universal Studios' Theme Park

Themed parks are commercial entertainment centers where hyper-reality is introduced to the visitors in the most intensive form possible. Universal Studios serves as one of America's best known themed parks. Visitors experience the three-dimensional king kong shows, attack of Jaws and many occasions that can be seen in cinema, such as earthquakes, explosions and floods. Therefore whatever any person may have seen in cinemas, becomes memories of the real life in Universal Studios.

When the first step is taken to plan the trip, Universal's web page, a phantasmagoria about the Universal studio shapes in visitor's mind. As a matter of fact, the web site includes information about the rides and routes in the parks. With this information it becomes possible to plan the travel. This plan is the starting point of a phantasmagoria in visitors' minds. Also, along with images, sounds, smells and feelings as they travel towards the space the phantasmagoria gets stronger.

3D and 4D technologies are most widely used in the theme parks. This technology activates different sensory organs such as sight, hearing, feel and smell. In Universal Studios, The Mummy and

Transformers activity areas are examples of 3D and 4D applications. For example, in The Mummy event visitors face with insect invasion while they ride on a rail system. Transformers, on the other hand, assign certain tasks for the visitors. While visitors try to perform their jobs, bombs explode and visitors watch and feel the flames. In both activities augmented reality technology have been used to attract all the senses of visitors.

In the areas where various simulations are created by blending with the characteristics of hyper reality, each facility and activity is simulated by being removed from its real state. Even a simple boat ride changes the perception of the individual's reality with different attachments and superimposed themes. Universal Studios has created this kind of simulation with Jurrasic Park attraction. Visitors are confronted with various activities while riding boats in the water as they travel in Jurassic Park. On the other hand, with The Simpsons Ride, visitors experience the most extreme experiences that the human mind can perceive as a feeling of being in a real roller coaster.

Universal Studios created in the city or in the middle of a deep reality with full of imageries. Inside of the park, visitors do not interested at any kind of reality but only an image. In addition, every experience in the park is processed in the sensory organs and become memories. In the course of time, these memories come out both as historical imagery and fantasy imagery.

Conclusion

In an environment where there is less commitment to any product, service, or brand, constant reproduction, remodeling, repositioning and imagery is required (Firat ve Shultz, 1997). In tourism reproduction, remodeling, repositioning and imagery is essential to attract visitors. Therefore, surrealistic items are needed to be processed in products and services with various motifs to create hyperrealism in destinations. This development and change, which provides a competetive advantage, is dependent of the right implementation of techniques such as simulations and simulacrums, images, phantasmagories and augmented reality items.

Each of these techniques, which addresses the hyper-reality in a different direction in tourist destinations, allows creating the new spaces and events. As a new type of tourism that shaped in new spaces and events, Hyper-tourism emerged from hyperreality. In the most general sense hyper-tourism created via symbolic elements in a simulated environment (Jansson, 2002). These elements open the doors of an alternative life and influence the imagination of tourists (Rickly and McCabe, 2017).

In this study the concepts of hyper reality, simulation and simulakrum, imagery, phantasmagoria and augmented realities are briefly discribed and examplified in the case of Universal Studio theme park. These consepts needs to be searched to understand consumer behaviour. Tourist behaviours and tendencies are very important issues to learn about hyper-tourism and develop it.

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