

Response summary of john urry's globalizing the gaze



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" Globalizing the Gaze" by John Urry is a chapter that discusses the implications of globalization in tourism and travel, examining the ways in which tourism has changed since technologies like mobile phones and the internet have pervaded global communities. The chapter chronicles how the nature of tourism has changed drastically with the rise of these technologies and their ubiquity across the planet. For one, there is the increased scope of travel- it is no longer restricted to the wealthy, white, males or the Western world.

Then there is the increase in the quality and reach of various infrastructure technologies that allows people to go far beyond what was once believed possible. For example, I discussed this article with my mom and she was saying that in her generation, a road trip to a neighboring city or state carried the same excitement and was just as common as the present-day trips to neighboring countries or continents.

In writing this chapter, the author wanted to highlight these developments, and specifically the way globalization has contributed to the increased scope of travel. With new inventions and improvements to global infrastructure, the identity of those who travel has also shifted from a small group to a complex and dynamic group comprising populations around the globe- including those from locations that were traditionally visited by Western cultures (Urry, 143).

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In addition to the evolution in the identities of those who travel and the technologies available for travel, Urry outlines another important development in where people travel. Whereas tourism in the past was

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dominated by tropical getaways and exotic adventures, travel in the globalized world has come to include less-traditional destinations with substantial meaning in their given setting. For example, places that have been drastically shaped by their history or certain historic events such as Northern Ireland or former Nazi occupation sites (142).

The author contributes this diversification of travel destinations to the rise in certain technologies (cellphones, tv, internet) that have increased the number of stimuli that people are now exposed, where unique locations and cultures throughout the globe are introduced and showcased by the various channels which we encounter through the media on a daily basis. What I found most interesting was the author's observation that the definition of travel has changed, and with it, the ways people travel.

While people may be traveling to more culturally-rich places than a place swarming with tourists, they often opt for spending a relatively short amount of time taking in the new sights/ sounds/ people/ etc. of their destination-culture. As a result, though people are increasingly seeking out more culturally and historically-rich destinations, they still return home after something like a week-long experience or adventure without having much knowledge about the complexities, sensitivities, specialties, and overall identities of the place and the people they were visiting.

Nowadays, we have access to much more diversity and deep connection with a huge spectrum of cultures that was previously unavailable to people before this decades' innovation and the strong motions of globalization. However, this does not mean that people are taking advantage of these tools or their

travels to better understand a culture and become more culturally-competent. I have traveled extensively since I was in the fifth grade, though always as a tourist or a brief visitor looking for short-term enjoyment; only recently, with my long-term excursion to the Philippines, was I able to explore my desire for deeper connection.

It is this experience that finally showed me the real, lasting purpose of travel: to connect with others, to develop ourselves, and to better understand the diversity and complexity in the world- and the specific styles of communication and interaction that our intercultural planet necessarily requires. Urry, John. " Globalizing the Gaze. " The Tourist Gaze. http://books.google.com/books/about/The_tourist_gaze.html?id=bhhtg1sz0YAC