



## Phenomenological reflections: beyond the technification of tourism and marketing.

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**Esteban Arias Castañeda**

Faculty of Tourism and Gastronomy. Autonomous University of the State of Mexico. (MEXICO).

CE: esteban.arias.castaneda@gmail.com / ORCID: 0000-0001-7068-061X

**Roberto Mexía Valenzuela**

Accounting Department. University of Sonora. (MEXICO).

EC: roberto.mexia.val@gmail.com

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### SUMMARY

The essence is nothing other than, in addition to being a phenomenological act, is the interpretation and mental exercise. This exercise answers what makes tourism tourism? And what does marketing do is marketing? The objective is to outline the essence of tourism and marketing from phenomenological reflections. The phenomenological method is the study of intentional analysis, as an intuitive act of reflection. The essence of tourism and marketing, as well as of anything, is not limited to its mere purpose or usefulness, that is, it exceeds the *sine que non* conditions of the thing.



**Keywords:** Heidegger. Essence. Think. Know. Project.

## ABSTRACT

The essence is nothing other than, in addition to being a phenomenological act, it is the interpretation and mental exercise. This exercise answers what makes tourism tourism? And what makes marketing be marketing? The aim is to try out the essence of tourism and marketing from phenomenological reflections. The phenomenological method is the study of intentional analysis, as an intuitive and reflective act. The essence of tourism and marketing, as well as of anything, is not limited to its mere purpose or utility, that is, it exceeds the sine que non conditions of the thing.

**Keywords:** Heidegger. Essence. Think. Know. To project.

## Introduction

Today, obtaining foreign exchange is vital for all nations, and to increase their number, techniques or strategies are employed to achieve this. In this way, experts in economic sciences have been responsible for uniting tourism and marketing (Altamira and Muñoz, 2007; Martos, 2015; Parra and Beltrán, 2016; Papadopoulos, 1987; Kotler, et al, 2017), where the second (marketing) favors the first (tourism) to obtain more wealth by taking advantage of the country's resources.

Now, as far as fields of knowledge are concerned, it must be done, as has happened with philosophy, which has engendered, from what were once small appendages, more independent and consolidated sciences, such as mathematics or biology; and that disciplines such as marketing or tourism have been made possible very recently as fields of knowledge of a multi and interdisciplinary nature, due to the –still– weak scaffolding of their own methodological theoretical body and, consequently, their dependence on economic-administrative sciences, such as communication or geography, until more recently the introduction of clinical neurosciences.

In this sense, both tourism and marketing have been considered technical fields or as strategic measures of a profitable nature, minimizing the reflective-thinking effort that tries to propose arguments outside of positivism.



With the passage of time, both tourism and marketing knowledge have been fed by deeper and deeper reflections, which are trying to provide another vision different from the traditional empirical one; therefore, the objective of this essay is to outline the essence of tourism and marketing from phenomenological reflections.

The search and proposal of the essence is nothing other than, in addition to being a phenomenological act, it is the interpretation and mental exercise of those who write this text around two fields, of which, little by little, their theoretical *corpus* has been expanded, showing the imperative need to resort to philosophy to remove the veil hidden by these –still– monetized devices, better known as Tourism and Marketing.

So, for this exercise of thinking, the attempt to answer what makes tourism tourism? And what does marketing do is marketing?, overcoming all superficial judgment of *sine qua non* conditions.

It is important to mention that talking about the essence of these things has become an *annihilation* (in Heideggerian terms), because the essence of the thing does not appear, that is, according to M. Heidegger (2003) it does not reach language, because for science or technology it is not relevant as it does not generate economic growth or solve socioeconomic problems.

## Methodology

The phenomenological method is the study of the fact called intentional analysis, this means that, in addition to being an intuitive act of essences, it is the exercise of a reflection (San Martín, 2002).

The premise of this method is the well-known phrase "back to things themselves", for that, intuition must be taken as a basis, so that it constitutes a type of knowledge that puts the researcher directly before the thing.

When we talk about going to the thing, it does not refer to the objective return that science would use, but it is about the liberation of all prejudice in order to reach the thing, letting them present themselves or show themselves (San Martín, 2002).



To fulfill the objective of this study, the phenomenological arguments of M. Heidegger (2003) will be used in terms of thinking about the essence of things "we only arrive at the thing itself when our thinking, at least, has first reached the thing as a thing" (Heidegger, 2003, p. 226).

The methodological path of phenomenology must be guided by the so-called reduction or *epojé*, that is, in the words of R. Audi (2004, p. 356), it is "a radical change of attitude by which the philosopher turns from things to their meanings", that is, the researcher must take a distance or move away from the thing a little to see it – as a work of art – without judgments or prejudices or subjected to inadequate laws, thus leading to both a destructive and constructive event (Waldenfels, 2017).

### **From the technification of tourism and marketing to thinking about tourism and marketing**

This section aims to relate, through Heidegger's eyes, the scope of technification and the importance of thinking. This philosopher of German origin, is distinguished by posing the most relevant questions for philosophy, for example: being, time or thing.

One of those questions is about technique, and that he [Heidegger] sums up in the manipulation, both of nature and of humanity itself. It is technology that originates or creates modern exact science, in the understanding that it is the means to an end, since in its structure it contains rest on technical devices, and likewise, the progress of the construction of all kinds of devices, which focus on making nature the *service station* that serves as a source of energy for technology and industry (Heidegger, 1955).

Now, how is this technique linked to tourism and marketing, if both do not develop devices? It is understood here that the manipulation, both of nature and of man occurs from marketing, through tourism and vice versa, so that one depends on the other, since, as a technique, they become a means to achieve an end, and this end is none other than the economic.

Heidegger (1994) also comments that technique leads to dehumanization, because, according to Arias:

In the human eagerness to want to know, examine and predict everything, it has fallen into an idea of anthropocentric sense that is characterized by the premise of man's dominion



and control over nature for the sake of well-being and progress; which results in the imminent loss of original meaning and triggers the so-called dehumanization. It is precisely the technique, which, as part of man, turns against him and distances him from his own essence to place him in an apparatus. (2017, p. 252).

In this sense, and continuing with the argument of Arias, tourism is not exempt from this dehumanization, while modern tourist services are being designed to increase a kind of self-absorption of the human being, when he himself faces the technology that dispenses with his services and instead places devices, that, for example, a robot receptionist welcomes you to the hotel or an application serves as a guide within a museum.

Marketing is not far behind, since the increasingly competitive market has forced to carefully analyze the environment and motivates in order to achieve returns in for-profit and non-profit organizations. According to L. Alvarado (2013), knowing how we decide and, in particular, knowing which "button" within the brain activates the purchase, is the dream of every company. In this regard, digital *marketing* is an example of something that has permeated in a vertiginous way in the daily lives of people; since it has been responsible for taking advantage of contemporary technologies generating innovative strategies to reach customers, especially in the current context in which confinement and work at home, As a result of an unprecedented pandemic, they have pushed companies to develop strategies using all possible means.

Today more than ever, the dehumanization of marketing is a reality, from the use of so-called chat *bots*, which are stored twenty-four hours a day on a *webpage*, to data mining that makes it possible to manage Big *Data* as a prediction tool, artificial intelligence, social network algorithms that select the content that their users see transforming the perception of reality. the same, and an increasingly long list of techniques that are being developed year after year. With the constant advance of communication tools, information processing, the recent adoption of the applied model of neurosciences, the multidisciplinary state of *marketing* has highlighted the need to ask more reflective questions, in particular and that concerns this writing What makes marketing marketing?



The second part of this section involves thinking, but what is thinking, according to Heidegger? It is nothing else, but "to meditate on something that concerns each of us directly and constantly in our own being" (1955, p. 1). It is necessary to dwell a little on this point and distinguish the two forms or types of thinking; the first of these refers to calculating thinking, and the second to meditative thinking (meditative reflection). The first always has given circumstances, when, for example, a company is created or something is planned; these circumstances, according to Heidegger (1955), are considered on the basis of an intention calculated according to the established goals; this means that certain results are available in advance. This does not imply that these should be numerical issues, but that, "the thought that counts, calculates; it calculates continually new possibilities, with increasingly rich and at the same time more economical perspectives" (Heidegger, 1955, p. 2). So, this kind of thinking does not stop and does not reach to meditate.

As far as meditative thinking or meditative reflection is concerned, the one to which man usually flees, while denying usefulness because he lacks time (thanks to calculating thinking). Meditation, says Heidegger (1955, p. 2) "is useless for ordinary business. It does not help the action at all", since it demands greater effort. Here it should be noted that anyone can follow in their own way and with their limitations the paths of meditation to reveal the essence of the thing in question.

In this sense, both tourism and marketing have been thought of in a calculating way, because, given their economic and measurable trend, they imply goals and results are expected depending on their planning. This means that, for the monetary purposes of countries, meditative thinking is unattractive, since the task of thinking does not lead to lucrative action.

### **What is phenomenology?**

Although, the idea of phenomenology is not something recent, since since the SEVENTEENTH CENTURY this term has been used in thinkers such as I. Kant and G. Hegel, and in the twentieth century, E. Husserl and his followers took up phenomenology; however, says Audi (2004) it does not belong to a school or current of philosophy, but it is a movement driven in different directions, having with this, different meanings for different intellectuals.



Being a thinking movement, it is reasonable to consider that, over time, doctrines have been formed, even for the disciples of one of them, such is the case of Husserl and the phenomenologists who followed him (Scheler, 2011; Hartmann, 1934; Heidegger, 2012; Sartre, 1989; Merleau-Ponty, 1994), that for them, phenomenology has different meanings.

In a generalized way, it has been argued that phenomenology tries to directly describe the existence of things "as they are in themselves" (Audi, 2004, pp. 356), leaving aside their psychological origin and their causal explanation. This means that it is responsible for answering the question about the meaning of the Self. So "phenomenology is actually the study of essences, but it also attempts to place essences in existence" (Audi, 2004, p. 356).

However, the essence of the thing, according to Heidegger (2003), does not lie in being a represented object, nor should it be delimited from *the objectivity of the object*,<sup>1</sup> since there is no path that leads to the objectivity of the object, and from the independent to the *cosity*<sup>2</sup> or essence of the thing. This means that the manufacture or material from which the thing is made does not represent its essence; for example, a jar that is made of glass, which is obviously shaped like a jar and is named as a jar, does not mean in that set the essence of the jar, that is, its name, form, function or material are not its essence. The cosiness of the jar lies, according to Heidegger (2003), not in containing, but in pouring, and rather in sacrificing, offering and therefore donating.

Now, this is understood when one thinks of the cosity or essence of tangible things, but what happens to the essence of intangible things? To try to outline an answer, it must be considered, again, that the essence is not equivalent to the *sine qua non* condition that constitutes the thing and in this exercise, tourism and marketing will be thought of.

## Phenomenology of tourism

<sup>1</sup> It is understood that the objectivity of the object in Heidegger, denotes an interpretative sense in which it refers doubly to the object itself, taken from its character of mere object to its phenomenological character.

<sup>2</sup> For Heidegger, the words ending "dad" refer to the possibility of being.





Talking about the philosophy of tourism is not something new, since, as a binomial of research interest, it has already had some production in both English- and Spanish-speaking literature; and as an example of this, D. Comic (1989) recognizes the breadth of themes and disciplines that have approached tourism, however, it also highlights that the philosophical approach to tourism is non-existent. Later, A. Panosso Netto (2008) expresses the need to study tourism with the help of philosophy. In the same way J. Tribe (2009) enunciates the principles of philosophy (virtue, truth and beauty) and with them elaborates a superficial description of tourism; later, in a similar approach, E. Arias (2012), carry out a deep interpretative exercise of those same principles applied to the epistemology of tourism.

Finally, E. Cohen (2018) – in the manner of Tribe (2009) – mentions that philosophical studies of tourism have advanced, so that he cataloged the production in studies on philosophy, ethics and theology of tourism; which cover both scientific production and the tourism industry itself.

Now, with regard particularly to phenomenology and tourism, It is necessary that Cohen (1979) made a study of phenomenological sense in which he proposed five types of tourist experiences (*1 the recreational mode; 2 the diversionary mode; 3 the experiential mode; 4 the experimental mode; 5 the existential mode*) based on the vision of the tourist. In this sense, Panosso Netto (2008) makes an empirical analysis using the phenomenological method to approach essential issues of tourism through a case study; likewise G. Szarycz (2009) mentions the frequency of use of phenomenology as a study method in tourism research; for his part, T. Pernecky and T. Jamal (2010) propose a conceptual and methodological argument to study the experience and understanding of tourism, from postulates of E. Husserl and M. Heidegger; later, Arias (2015) proposes the hermeneutic vision of tourism, emphasizing the sense of experience, all through the theoretical position of M. Heidegger; and also, M. Gisolf (2020) approaches the hermeneutic phenomenology of M. Heidegger.

With regard to the search for the essence of tourism, arguments have been found and studies have been carried out, which vary in arguments and foundations both philosophical and theoretical; and to illustrate this we have to say that for D. MacCannell (1976) the essence of tourism is the search for authenticity; for Panosso Netto (in Tribe, 2009) the essence of tourism is the tourist experience;





identity is for L. Tejeda (2017); on the other hand, it is love, friendship, respect and peace according to E.Castillo, Vázquez and Martínez (2016); for the Ibero-American Forum on Sustainable Tourism (Fits, 2014) it is sustainability, entrepreneurship and social innovation; and for Ruiz (2006) and Ighina (2018) it is leisure.

Leisure, free time or sustainability can be considered as the conditions for tourism to exist, however, not as its essential character, since the thing called tourism, although it is a human phenomenon, human enjoyment is just its function. On the other hand, tourist services, which facilitate the stay, at the same time represent wealth for those who provide them, become the technique of tourism.

The essence of tourism should comprise the three parts of the experience: preparation of the trip, the stay and the return. The latter is what allows the existence of tourism, and if it were not for it, it would be a migratory phenomenon. Well, of these three parts, the human being collects and keeps what has been experienced and stays inside as knowledge. This *knowledge* will give growth and training to the tourist, but there is no talk of academic or scientific training, but human, of intellectual enrichment.

That *knowledge*, as the essence of tourism, is deposited inside, in the bowels of man. Here it should be mentioned that this knowledge is not of a practical or applicable type in any field, since it only serves as a reference for those who live the experience.

To try to illustrate this point, there is the anecdote that Kant -considered the best non-traveling traveler-, who had not left his locality, however, was a great connoisseur of the world, because he spent time reading about other cities. The relevance of this story is the knowledge or wisdom that the thinker obtained through those trips-not trips and that, by the way, now tempts about the concept of tourism, which, according to the above, physical displacement may not be imperative, but the mental or imaginative displacement of the reader-tourist must be considered; but that will not be discussed in this essay.

## Marketing phenomenology



Marketing has inspired reflections from thinkers such as Deleuze (1999) and Bauman (2007), where, usually, the issue has been approached from a skeptical attitude due to the clear intentionality of companies or governments, and the nature of the tools used. B. Ardley (2011) uses phenomenology, with a critical approach, to question the *mainstream* or traditional theory of marketing, which, he argues, has neglected the human side. This is because it is based on questionable assumptions about the nature of man and the handling of the practice. In this methodological line, it is necessary, as a semi-structured interview, to interrogate different key informants about their experience or opinions on a topic for a public or private initiative project (Lara, et al, 2018); on the answers to the questions, the researcher proceeds to make the conclusions of the study, it seeks to apprehend the perception of the interviewees – to create a profile – in order to use that classification to generate a strategy in which the organization can obtain benefits, capitalizing on the knowledge, in other words, it is a market research. In the words of Kotler and Keller (2012, p. 98) market research is "the systematic design, collection, analysis and presentation of data and conclusions relating to a specific marketing situation facing a company", which can be compared to what Heidegger calls "calculating thinking", mentioned in previous lines; Finally, this application of phenomenology is at the mercy of the technique, as a mere computation and analysis of data, that is, the study restricts itself, since the researcher is not the thinking figure who is responsible for the execution of the reflection, but is limited to managing the fieldwork. In this application of phenomenology you do not access the thing itself.

The essence of marketing has merited different arguments, although reduced in number; for example, for the Catalan B. López-Pinto (2001) the central element of marketing is exchange; while, for the also Spanish, F. García (2015), through "the four pes", recognizes as an essential character the seduction; for his part, C. Carranza (2020) defends clarity as the essential character of *marketing*.

Although exchange is the end of any company that employs marketing, the real exchange occurs between the customer or the final consumer and the company itself; In addition to this, not all individuals involved in the marketing of a company enter the dynamics of exchange.



Clarity, on the other hand, is an important point in communication strategies. In *marketing*, clarity is used only if it is needed. Intrigue, mystery, or unintentional clarity are just as important and useful tools for marketers as clarity itself.

Finally, as far as seduction is concerned, it would also be considered as a useful tool, like repulsion itself (Priestman and Smith, 2018).

Now it's time to answer what makes marketing marketing? The word marketing is usually used to refer to only one of its functions, whether in sales, advertising, public relations, etc., which has naturally and passively buried the real meaning of marketing. To glimpse the essence of marketing, we must take into account its main components, which from 1960 to the present day have been criticized, but never stopped using or teaching in higher education programs. It is, through the so-called 4 P: product, price, place and promotion (McCarthy and Perreault, 2011), that marketing strategies are created, and with them, the parts of a company are included. From the price, to the means by which a product is distributed, are decisions that correspond to *marketing*. This unification sought by marketers between such different parts of a company has as its purpose the control over the flow of information that radiates the project to be managed. It is about controlling the perception that is generated with this information, cutting with the natural flow of the impressions that the publics, both internal and external, have.

Marketing, for non-marketers, translates into reinforcing or changing beliefs. From the employees, customers, suppliers and external collaborators, to the company itself, are taken into account when devising marketing strategies. They are the manifestations of *marketing*, which, as its efforts to control have their root in the *projection*; which is taken here as the essential character of marketing and can be understood as enlarging an image or a reality, or also as the shadows of Plato's cavern, a reflection of the objects that illuminate the sun, that, although there is an abyss of difference between the shadow and the object, they are participants in the same reality.

## Final Thoughts



Beyond the fact that both tourism and marketing are considered as techniques or tools that are used to increase the profitability of a destination or a product, and that curiously – and it depends on the case – work together (tourism and marketing) given their potential to increase economic indicators.

It is well known that both fields (of knowledge) have remained comfortable in the economic-administrative sciences, given their characteristics and benefits in the capture of foreign exchange, they have even been considered as development strategies and that over time they have been institutionalized; so, for the scientific community, raising phenomenological perspectives is something that has little relevance, however, it is important to think and re-think and thus find the meaning of two objects that have suffered from intellectual reductionism.

So, the essence of tourism and marketing, as well as of anything, is not limited to its mere purpose or usefulness, that is, it exceeds the *sine que non* conditions of the thing; as far as tourism has to do, it must avoid being reduced to leisure or love, but its phenomenological character (essence) lies in *knowing*, because the tourist (beyond the experience) knows the destination and the enrichment or intellectual growth that is generated is of human sense and not scientific.

Similarly, the phenomenological character of marketing has its birth in the idea of *projection*. Every marketing exercise aims to control and manipulate the image of an organization through different instances beyond communication. But like any projection exercise, the projected objects are always closer to the human being, even if they are not, strictly speaking, the objects referred to.

Undoubtedly, with the passage of time, tourism and marketing increasingly expand the field in which they develop, culminating in an issue that points to the importance of rethinking the bases on which assumptions rest.

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