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Reflexivity of Tourism on Cultural Performance As Seen By America's New York City

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I. The Tourist Gaze: Recognition and Commodification

A. Forming the Tourist Gaze

Often used interchangeably, "tourist" and "traveler" are similar in meaning, yet provide different connotations. Everyone wants to be considered a traveler and never a tourist. The reason being is that being labeled a traveler suggests someone who focuses on immersing themselves in other cultures and ways of life for relatively long periods of time. On the other hand, tourists typically travel for shorter periods of time for pleasure and to enjoy popular activities, usually along checklists or itineraries. There are expectations of leisure and change of pace when someone is a tourist; they seek something new and interesting.

"Tourism trades in an intangible commodity; it belongs to the experience economy." (D'Eramo)[1] The tourist industry brings attention to leisure, while also commodifying it. Enabled by the gateways opened by globalized connections create opportunities for the values of others to be shared and recognized. Cultural exchanges that enriches connections and perceptions of all parties involved. This face value interpretation that becomes the leading, most well known, image of a certain identity can secure a solid spot in the world. The consistency can uphold relationships with people outside of the community, while at the same time, it can lead to stagnation and holding the culture back from the natural course of evolution ever so present in the modern world. These factors work together in shaping expectations for visitors when they travel somewhere.

"Our way of perceiving reality is changed when we view the world through the lens of the tourist." (D'Eramo)[2] The sociological concept of the "tourist gaze"[3] addresses expectations and preconceived notions that tourists go into their travels with to the places that they visit. This refers to the way people, namely tourists, perceive and consume the places they visit, often leading to commodified and superficial understandings. "It is always the gaze of the person doing the tour, not someone from the place being toured." (D'Eramo)[4] This idea separates the tourist's perspective from that of the locals, in the way that the tourist's destination is out of the ordinary as they search for a new window of authenticity. This perspective can be swayed by cultural narratives, media portrayals, and individualistic personal expectations. City and

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[1] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[2] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[3] This is a term coined by John Urry in his 1990 book "The Tourist Gaze"
[4] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*

nationwide development creates an attractiveness that feeds into their power. Exemplifying this is the attention of foreigners that manifests into the tourist industry.

B. New York City: A Tourist City

Large on the map with large reputations, housing the lives that cultivate the identities being perceived are more notably the big cities. While a sense of home is provided to some, a glimpse of other cultures is provided to others, as big cities can be seen as pinpoints of reference for social identities. Such concentrated areas provide connection and comfort with those of shared identity; alongside being in the midst of highly populated locations, these greetings are extended by welcoming others through tourism. Well known cities typically attract attention which contributes to national development and the perceptions of culture from locals and foreigners. The interest they distill in people can manifest into an influx in visitors. The popularity has become something to feed off of that embraces the tourist attraction. When a city becomes one "with an annual number of visitors that supersedes the number of inhabitants" (D'Eramo)[5], it becomes what is known as a "tourist city" (D'Eramo)[6].

"The tendency of people to attract more people is the central idea of urban economics, and nowhere is that more obvious than in the case of America's largest city." (Glaeser)[7]. Highlighting its presence on the map, the US houses one of the most visited cities in the world, New York City, that can be seen as exemplifying the cultural makeup of the nation. 2023 reported just about 8.26 million residents and yielded over 64 million in visitors.[8] Tourist rates like these are typical for the city, earning it a title as one of those tourist cities. It is like a magnet, and the attraction it holds is a power that can and has been taken advantage of. "The Big Apple," "The Empire City," "The City That Never Sleeps." "New York's success for centuries has been connected to its edge as an idea(l) city." (Glaeser)[9] It presents the dynamics between cultural diversity, concentration, and their combined effect on global reputation and representation underscore how these factors affect spheres of influence and group perception. Shopping, arts, dense diversity- by looking at this location, we can see that there is an attraction to diversity, concentration, and concentrations of diversity, that compounds with the successful attraction of America through Americanization, in attracting visitors.

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[5] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[6] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[7] Glaeser, Edward L. "Urban Colossus: Why Is New York America's Largest City?" SSRN Electronic Journal, 2005. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.732423.
[8] "Welcome to New York City Tourism + Conventions." New York City Tourism + Conventions. Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.business.nyctourism.com/#.
[9] Glaeser, Edward L. "Urban Colossus: Why Is New York America's Largest City?" SSRN Electronic Journal, 2005. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.732423.

C. Authenticity Market

In our current world, with webs of international points of connection, there is an increased emphasis on exploring, further recognizing, and more consistently appreciating cultures and their intersectionality. This approach impacts the perception of group identity, amongst both the hosts and visitors. While tourism is meant to reflect local culture, local culture, and offer something new to visitors, it can also reflexively reflect tourist values. "Authenticity has become one of the words that's trotted out in marketing campaigns galore, and along the way it's lost its meaning" (Hardy).[10] The essence of this multifaceted process has furthered international connections while highlighting the importance of the individual and collective identities in the global landscape. In the midst of the multidimensional affairs and creating the group identities we perceive today, global recognition and stabling reputation prompt further attention in the perceptions and representations of modern cultural identification. The way a nation presents itself influences the definition of these concepts, alongside how they are perceived by themselves and others. Furthermore, it facilitates globalization by encouraging cultural exchange. Travel manifesting through the tourist industry introduces a formulation to the importance and usage of social distinctions. The world is constantly opening up to itself and evolving. A national narrative creates a collective identity, a communal culture, global status, and international following.

When it comes to establishing identity, especially as context for a societal culture, constructs from outside peoples "can pressure culture, socially, to behave in line with societal expectations." (Hardy).[11] This collective act builds a community at the heart of it all. Presentation on a global stage shapes the international audience, the flow of tourism, and investments of cultural exchange. Further interpretation of these performances have potential to create oversimplification and stereotyping. Stereotypes are generalized ideas about certain groups based on identity characteristics. Often formed with limited and inaccurate information, these generalizations can produce bias and prejudice. Their focus and behavior can be skewed to align with their prior knowledge, prompting potential overlook of other cultural aspects of local culture. Unequal distribution of attention and resources based on these predispositions can affect the tourist authenticity and tourist perceptions of authenticity.

Moreover, as an industry itself, tourism plays a role in the enforcement of these stereotypes in order to attract tourists. The cultural performance with this in mind isn't fully representative of the local population's realities. The foreign attraction to something new and unique creates hyper representation and places really extend what they can get from working with their resources and city staples. The key characteristics can become diluted by the attention and turn into tourist traps. Understanding local cultures alongside tourist experience is a nuanced relationship that has confines within such practices. In the process of cultural expansion, elements can be less distinct in some instances. Aspects of the original locality can be adapted to better cater to their foreign audiences. Since the main market for goods and services becomes the temporary

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[10] Hardy, *Making Space: How to Live Happier by Setting Boundaries That Work for You*
[11] Hardy, *Making Space: How to Live Happier by Setting Boundaries That Work for You*

tourists in the tourist cities, it becomes shaped to cater to paying visitors. "Tourists eat in restaurants catered to locally," while "locals must eat at restaurants aimed at tourists." (D'Eramo)[12] "These local enhancements can risk reliable perceptions of the original cultural identity. Consequently, the city centre belongs to affluent visitors rather than to residents." (D'Eramo)[13]

The dynamics between cultural diversity, concentration, and their combined effect on global reputation and representation underscore how these factors affect spheres of influence and group perception. Regardless of whether these phenomena are more ideological or more industry driven, they serve as narratives to guide public perception and are meant to present appealing representations of their respective communities. By having assertion through these images, there is focus on the development of cultural identity in regards to fostering recognition and appreciation of social groups and local communities.

II. New York, New York

A. The Beginnings of a Commercial Hub

From the start, New York was a hub. It was a blue to grow into the state it is a t today because it was seen as an ideal location to develop. New York City held the title of the United States capital from 1785 to 1879, marking it as the country's first capital. Although the title transferred to the current Washington DC residency, the city's power in regards to national affairs did not tarnish; if anything, it became an enhancement. Slightly after its brief nationalistic reign, it became a blueprint of a new type of industry aside from agriculture. The industrialization efforts combined with the geographic placement within trade routes centered it into a commercial hub. It was evolving into an industrial city. Displaying such progress and opportunity attracted many people; soon enough, the rapid rates of population and immigration matched that of industrial progress. The influx of immigrants through Ellis Island stitched together the metropolitan melting pot everyone knows today.

In the early 1800s, early industries had been established in the city, including sugar refining, printing, publishing, and garments; some, in which, are still practiced today and and are especially tied with some of the city's claims to fame. It was chosen to develop due to its geographic location; it is in the prime location between waterways as it is open to international trade due to the Atlantic Ocean, has rivers leading inland into the US, and the access to Canada through waterways that connect with the Great Lakes. It was central to trade and distribution, proving to be desirable for more than just business. What was once a port city soon became a

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[12] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[13] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*

commercial hub. The infrastructure improvements and low transportation costs helped attract traffic into the city. The traction gained from the increase in trade developed into manufacturing and creating goods. This production led to the need for people to carry out services. Due to the growth of markets, seeking to reap the opportunities present, people were drawn into the city to join the action past.

There was business and there was immigration. The economic and political ties outside the city presented an open door for more than just those with wealth and those already entangled in the trade game. In 1892, immigrants started arriving on Ellis Island. Prior to the appointment of Ellis Island, states had some of their own regulations when it came to immigration, even though most immigrants went through New York Harbor. The island was previously used as a buffer between inspection of different classes upon entering the country before it was rebuilt and designated at the New York immigration station able to withstand the influx of people from abroad. As its function as an inspection entrance, it earned the names "Island of Hope" and "Island of Tears" for it marking a gateway to opportunity and a place where some families were separated. (nps) that being so, to aid adjustment to the city, "ethnic neighborhoods made the transition to the new world easier." (Glaeser)[14] Those who settled during this time, and the city center that resulted from this history of the early 1800s, lay as the base of what is now modern day NYC in the 2020s.

B. Building Modern Day NYC

Back in the 1800s, like discussed earlier, New York was a commercial hub. The area was building reputations in the trade and industry sectors of life, and people were moring there for work and opportunity. Seeing as it was largely the working classes holding residency there, there were not yet many developments in the recreational departments of life.
Tourism started amongst the higher classes and were travels of leisure. It is reported that the first tourists in New York City visited sometime in the early 1820s and stayed near Broadway. (Gassan)[15] "Broadway (now West Broadway) was New York's main commercial thoroughfare, lined with a vibrant mixture of integrated attractions, including shops, theaters, and hotels." (Gassan)[16] This remains consistent with the city's current sense of tourism, especially along Broadway and new Times Square. In 1880, what was once a quaint residential square became an electrifying public space. What was once apartments with a few shows and posted advertisements turned into a dense shopping area constantly lit up by stacked, light up billboards. Times Square has come so far that it even hosts New Year's celebrations, largely consisting of tourists that travel to New York solely for the Times Square celebration. Moreover,

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[14] Glaeser, Edward L. "Urban Colossus: Why Is New York America's Largest City?" SSRN Electronic Journal, 2005. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.732423.

[15] Gassan, Richard H. "Tourists and the City." Winterthur Portfolio 44, no. 2/3 (June 2010): 221–46. https://doi.org/10.1086/653731

[16] Gassan, Richard H. "Tourists and the City." Winterthur Portfolio 44, no. 2/3 (June 2010): 221–46. https://doi.org/10.1086/653731

"Rising numbers of tourists led to a steady growth in both accommodations and entertainment" (Gassan).[17]

Alongside Times Square, New York City has some of the most recognizable landmarks in the world, thanks to the emerging interest in leisure and travel. "Beginning in 1858 to address the recreational needs of the rapidly growing city," Central Park was created, marking a "masterpiece of landscape architecture." (Central Park NYC)[18] It spans 843 acres as a green space in the middle of Manhattan. It offers leisure space, like open fields and sports fields, while providing a natural, ecological environment to the cityscape.

While Times Square is the prime commercial zone and Central Park displays the dynamic infrastructure, New York is also home to one of the largest art institutions in the world and the largest in the United States- the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Not only does it house priceless pieces, but it also hosts an exclusive gala, the Met Gala, in order to support the arts and design. Celebrities and designers from all around the world are invited to walk the red carpet and support the arts.

While commerce, infrastructure, and the arts are three key points of the Big Apple's identity, there is one more overarching, defining aspect. The most discernible element of how New York physically manifests is the skyscraper. The wonders of the city have become so captivating and of interest that the skyline itself is considered an attraction. Being able to view the city from outside the top of a tall building, or simply even looking down a street with clear views, attracts people and contributes to the identity of the metropolis.

While experience is one part of traveling, so is the proof. In addition to its experience based offerings, regardless of time spent or not, merchandise representing the Big Apple has left its own mark. T-shirts, postcards, magnets, mugs, practically anything with a surface can be and had been marked with "NY" as a souvenir. The infamous "I *heart* NY" t-shirts and other apparel can be found practically anywhere and has even started a trend for other big cities and their own products. "The message resonated with New Yorkers and people from around the world. It was a love letter to New York, a city unlike any other in the world."(9/11 Memorial)[19] A similar trend can be seen with the New York Yankees logo. These images have exceeded the outlines of symbolizing the brand they were meant to represent, and have thus become a fashion statement. The ability for the "NY" initials to become recognized as a design element displays the extent to which the city transcends its influence; it is seen everywhere, and it furthered international recognition of the city.

[17] Gassan, Richard H. "Tourists and the City." Winterthur Portfolio 44, no. 2/3 (June 2010): 221–46. https://doi.org/10.1086/653731

[18] "Park History." Central Park Conservancy. Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.centralparknyc.org/park-history#:~:text=New%20York's%20Central%20Park%20is,of%20the%20rapidly%20growing%20City.

[19] "The Story behind the Iconic Post-9/11 'I Heart New York More than Ever' Logo." The Story Behind the Iconic Post-9/11 "I Heart New York More Than Ever" Logo | National September 11 Memorial & Museum. Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.911memorial.org/connect/blog/story-behind-iconic-post-911-i-heart-new-york-more-ever-logo.

Evidence of the appeal, as of 2023, New York City reports around 8.26 million estimated residents. (NYTimes)[20]. Adding onto the number of people, that same year welcomed roughly 64.2 million visitors.[21] On the same note, in the following year, 2024, the city anticipates increasing their numbers to 64.5 million visitors.[22]

Because of the pandemic shut down in 2020, city living, like everything else, took a hit. There was a massive decline in population, as some people were forced back home and others left to get away from the overcrowding of the virus. That being said, seeing as the pandemic has reached an end and the city predicts an increase in tourism rate, the city seems to have bounced back and officially reopened.

III. In and Out Groups: the Grass is Greener

A. Group Membership Formation

At the heart of it all, "a given society is the sum of its members: it's the coming together of people who reside in the same place geographically and who share a similar culture and similar behaviors" (Hardy)[23]. There is no one definition of what makes a New Yorker, yet all the people who contribute to the local society help New York form its own personality. When people think about what constitutes an identity marker, they think of what characterizes people of a certain social group and what affirms their own belonging to that group. Within and defined by geographic borders, various ethnic and cultural groups can be found providing their own perspectives into societal consciousness. These integrations help shape perception of oneself in a global context, alongside the rest of the world and the interactions that are enabled. Especially with the intermingling of the world, identity and community have become increasingly important in the sense of recognition and acceptance.

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[20] Hu, Winnie, and Stefanos Chen. "New York City's Population Shrinks by 78,000, According to Census Data." The New York Times, March 14, 2024. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/14/nyregion/nyc-population-decline.html#:~:text=The%20Latest&text=The%20city%20lost%20nearly%2078%2C000,which%20were%20released%20on%20Thursday.

[21] "Welcome to New York City Tourism + Conventions." New York City Tourism + Conventions. Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.business.nyctourism.com/#.

[22] "Welcome to New York City Tourism + Conventions." New York City Tourism + Conventions. Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.business.nyctourism.com/#.

[23] Hardy, *Making Space: How to Live Happier by Setting Boundaries That Work for You*

There is a complex system of relationships between what people believe and practice, and the intertwining of influences and experiences. Any and all distinctions affect the perception of others' value and legitimacy. Paralleling global integration, the importance and complexity of social classification and accurate identification has increased. Association with cultural ties plays a crucial role in shaping individual identities, collective identities, social categorization, and the perception of such. Cultural affiliations such as shared history, traditions, and language often guide how people guide self identification. Binding people together through shared experiences and values, these ties foster a sense of belonging and community.

Furthermore, such group identity associations establish in-group and out-group categorizations. These terms are valuable for understanding concepts in social psychological and sociological viewpoints, and they are used to describe the extent to which group association influences inter-group relations. The concept of an in-group refers to the social group that a person psychologically identifies as being a member of. Being a part of an in group offers a sense of belonging and communal identity, and reinforces shared values, beliefs, and norms. On the other hand, an out-group refers to a social group that a person does not identify as being a member of. Those viewed as being in the out group, or out of the group, are seen as different from those in the in-group, and the out-group identity is often less understood. These categorizations can influence behaviors and attitudes, and they can result in bias and prejudice, affecting in and out-group interactions.

B. New York's Concentration and Diversity

When looking at the makeup of New York City, group identities and personalities can generally be separated into the five boroughs - Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. According to visittheusa.com, Manhattan is iconic with world class attractions, the Bronx is historic and culturally diverse, Brooklyn is trendy and eclectic, Queens is artsy with an international influence, and Staten Island is outdoorsy and historic.[24] On top of that, there are ethnic neighborhoods scattered throughout- notably, Chinatown, Little Italy, and Harlem. While just about any culture is present in the Big City, as a result of the influx of immigration back in the 1800s, discussed earlier, immigrants organized themselves throughout the city to comfortably live nearby people who come from the same place and understand their culture. The concentration of communities provides reinforcement of cultures, and the presence of such a variety of cultures upholds diversity. New York has a culture of cultures, and a society consisting of such engagement further creates a new culture- that of New York City. Tourist or not, the extent of diversity making up the population invites people from anywhere and everywhere with open arms. While this can be considered true, different backgrounds and

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[24] Gkikas, By: Idoia. "Essential New York City: Exploring the Boroughs and Neighborhoods." Visit The USA. Accessed March 20, 2024. https://www.visittheusa.com/experience/essential-new-york-city-exploring-boroughs-and-neighborhoods.

different homes mean different behaviors. Just because someone is able to find similar relations in a place, it is a new place for travelers.

People live in NYC, and people visit. People call the city home, while others treat it as a destination. There are those who are born and raised, those who go for a city getaway, students, those who relocate for work, those visiting for work, and so many others. With compilations of such factors, the versatile inclusive nature makes way for appreciating all the ins and outs of its society.

NYC is a worldly city. There is a certain charm for taking cultures to create its own while still valuing them individually. Alongside being such a diverse area, like any other social identity, pinpointing distinct characteristics for the population isn't a direct reflection. Like the city's overall dynamic, there is not a singular defining characteristic of the variety of social groups that contribute to the location's ecosystem. The variety of backgrounds of those making up the city highlights the importance of intersectionality. The concept of intersectionality[25] provides a deeper, more enriched perspective of this understanding. It recognizes that identity is multifaceted, and each identity someone embodies coexist and shouldn't be seen as unrelated. Social categorizations, such as race class and gender intersect, interact, and influence how people perceive themselves and others. When discussing the relationship between soft power, tourism, and identity perception in the twenty-first century, there are many intersections, but the overlaps between national, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds are the most notable. Especially when looking at a progressive location such as New York City, while identity can be distinctive and highlighted, communities aren't solely exclusive and consistently are tied together to create the metropolis that is known and loved.

As ethnic diversity is important, nationalistic blending is just as relevant. For starters, people from all around the world go to New York City to enjoy the ambience the Big Apple has to offer. As far as the exemplification of national trends, Americanization, being the inviting city it is, it can be seen that the relationship between the national and metropolitan cultural identity reciprocates each other; national norms can guide the practices of ethnic groups, and the beliefs of ethnic groups can influence the formation of national values. Both can be regarded as a box someone is placed into at birth, but an important distinction between the two is that nationalism is a socially constructed identifier that can be changed, while ethnicity more innate stems from descent. The different perspectives overlap to form one unique point of view, but they can present conflict when separated.

Being such a key element of New York, identity and diversity is a strong soft power. Like previously mentioned, the States are painted with ethnic diversity. For America, this identification is very important in the nation's historical priority of democracy, leading to its image

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[25] Coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in her 2014 book, "On Intersectionality: Essential Writings," describing how individual characteristics or race, class, and gender intersect to create individuals' identities and perspectives

of democracy. Multiculturalism is an attractive soft power of the US[26]. Throughout the nation's history, people have immigrated and visited, requiring much attention from the government to the people in order to offer its own rendition of home and nationhood while upholding its democratic principles. The unique makeup of a population, region, or nation can pique the interest of foreigners. The diversity and concentration of specific areas create a distinct identity. Even if these diverse and homogenous labels can be applied to other places, it is special because it is a different ethnic makeup and a different nation with different lifestyles. This psycho-social effect creates the Grass is Greener mindset.

C. Grass is Greener

Regardless of if visitors are traveling to a well known tourist destination or just the next town over, the idea of possibilities outside one's circle is intriguing. The idea that "the grass is greener on the other side" is a saying that directly refers to the boundaries established that differentiate between an in group and its out groups. "The grass is greener on the other side." There is an idea of fantasy and an idea of fear. This regards the thoughts of possibilities outside one's own realities. Applying this to tourism, the satisfaction of the fantasy from the idealistic aspects of the destinations without the commitment of making a permanent change in lifestyle. Traveling is temporary and can be seen as a break in the routine of everyday life. Traveling, specifically referring to the tourist industry offers the opportunity to see what other lives are like, what life looks like for other people, and what more outside of one's sphere of living has. This mentality leads to projection that places people in a new external environment. In a physical sense, national boundaries define the divide that sets the foundation for traveling and tourism. "Because spatial perception and psychological distance are tightly intertwined in the human mind, spatial distances can be systematically distorted by social distance and vice versa" (pnas), and tourism can play with this association as leverage when establishing a sense of cultural power. People will always be doing something differently no matter the location. For the most part, traveling and doing out of the ordinary things are out of the ordinary, and locals don't do those things every day. The different locations, different weather, different resources, different neighboring communities, different history, different values, and such along those lines offer the idea of a new sense of satisfaction outside of the society a person typically lives within. The change is enticing, while at the heart of it all, everyone is generally living their lives in a society that has established norms comparative with those of one's own in group. The in and out groups can turn into being labeled as locals and tourists, hosts and guests. The ratio of these distinctions further contributes to the location's identity.

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[26] U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts: United States; as of 2022, America's racial makeup, as listed in the official governmental data, is measured as follows : 75.5 percent White, 13.6 percent Black or African American, 1.3 percent Indigenous Americans, 0.3 percent Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 19.1 Hispanic or Latino, and 3.0 percent two or more mixed raced

IV. Performance Culture and Performance of Culture

A. Cultural Tourism

Like touched on earlier, people attract people. There is a difference between cultural tourism and tourism culture. Characteristics of ways of life such as beliefs, history, customs, attitudes, artistic institutions, material products, social institutes, roles and anything consistent within the civilization that can separate it from others is what is included in defining culture. (Csapo)[27] Feeding off of that, the concept of cultural tourism generally refers to traveling for the purpose of learning about or experiencing such aspects of life, as it would be a new environment being offered to the traveler. While there can be many specifications of further defining this type of travel, such as leisure travel traveling to gain better understanding and appreciation of the place being visited, it is largely travel motivated by social activity and interactions. (Csapo)[28] Cultural tourism can be misinterpreted as sightseeing and visiting a few culturally significant landmarks, when it should have more emphasis on such social dynamics can lead to an emphasis of such norms and local distinctive markers. Along these lines, communities work with what they have, whether that's what has been given to them by geographic placement or what they have built for their society, in order to attract people, which comes with the potential of disrupting identity perception and perception formation between groups outlined in the previous section.

B. Playing the Part on the Global Stage

"Walking along our streets we're met with a sea of devices, and everyone is looking down at what's in their hands. When we're not online, we experience FOMO (fear of missing out)… (Hardy)[29]. In the era of connectivity, there is a blurred line being the media and the public world. The internet is a primary source of information, and the content posted online sets precedent for anything and everything outside of an individual's life and direct relationships. The world is even more open, and thoughts are even more guided. So when it comes to information about the rest of the world, there is a range of instant media as an outlet. Seeing everything, hitting all the spots, and checking off all the items on the list keeps people encouraged to stay connected,

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[27] Csapo, Janos. "The Role and Importance of Cultural Tourism in Modern Tourism Industry." Strategies for Tourism Industry - Micro and Macro Perspectives, April 20, 2012. https://doi.org/10.5772/38693.
[28] Csapo, Janos. "The Role and Importance of Cultural Tourism in Modern Tourism Industry." Strategies for Tourism Industry - Micro and Macro Perspectives, April 20, 2012. https://doi.org/10.5772/38693.
[29] Hardy, *Making Space: How to Live Happier by Setting Boundaries That Work for You*

constantly consuming, and opening up to new experiences. Everyone wants to be relevant-individuals, communities, and nations. Despite all of the information put out onto the internet, they are not always entirely definitive of the world, as a whole across spheres. Everyday realities coexist with intentional online identities. This new digitized link, that can aid the international links, influences perceptions and interactions with the world. Being plugged into devices can enhance navigation through the world beyond what can be seen on screens. The portrait continuously being painted of various social groups and identities leads to an image to either uphold or change. This framework leads to a performance.

Each city has its own essence that it is known for. Characterized by iconic landmarks, rich history, distinctive food; these staples are important elements that form the identity of each location. "Every city must 'play' itself; Rome must act out its Rome-ness and Paris must perform the role of the American image of Paris."(D'Eramo)[30]. History, food, art, anything remotely exclusive to an identity becomes a staple that makes the experience and influence. That being said, there is the possibility that these performances can overshadow the realities being lived inside the cities. To entertain the new audience, important city monuments also become known as tourist attractions. Referring to previously discussed cities, they have many attractions to show off to tourists. This kind of attention creates an opportunity for the national and local states to show off patriotism. They both also possess monuments. They both have a rich history that highlights their spot on the map. All of the defining traits of the cities mentioned earlier contribute to locking in a general thought of its specific identity. These presentations create gaps between perception and reality, disparities amongst the ingroups and outgroups. Moreover, these performances aren't completely centered around satisfying the tourists because at the same time, this role is crucial in shaping the cities' global reputation and identity. "The individual thus displays themselves on a 'frontstage' while at the same time reserving a 'backstage' for rearranging the presentation, rehearsing, preparing the costumes, learning the lines of just charging his batteries." (D'Eramo)[31] The persona that is presented to the world is curated and influenced by societal norms and expectations. This version being presented is typically tailored and polished to fit daily roles. Going back to the Grass is Greener effect, to some extent in terms of image and reputation, if a certain image is attractive, then upholding it becomes the goal. Since the world doesn't stay the same, presenting a foundational idea being upheld becomes a performance, regardless of how it changes.

In this case, first and foremost, NY has the nickname, "the City that Never Sleeps." The busy lifestyle is emphasized and romanticized, and there is always some event being hosted. The origins in business and garments pressurize the work, wealth, and shopping is seen among the best in the world, therefore shopping districts, distinct styles, and high end brands must stay present. In a different life sector, the importance of the boroughs adds additional layers to this, as the city and the boroughs have overlapping reputations to uphold. While creating their own environments, each of these areas house their own recognizable attractions, Manhattan with Times Square and Central Park, the Bronx with Yankee Stadium, Brooklyn has the Brooklyn Bridge and Coney Island, Queens "distinctive neighborhoods" and the city's primary airports,

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[30] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[31] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*

and Staten Island is home to the historic St George neighborhood and Greenbelt parks. The people of these parts take pride in their home as much as tourists take pride in their visits. And most importantly, for the sake of the tourist industry and tourists' itineraries, landmarks must uphold the reputation built up by their historical contexts and media attention.

C. Producing New Authenticity

Traveling has come a long way since discovering new parts of the world for the first time. The new layer of the modern world is accessibility; the accessibility of travel and communication. While each culture has its own culturally significant staples, such as items, food, and landmarks, tourism always pushes for something more. Reimagining traditional objects can open the door for tourism and culture. By reimagining new uses to adjust with modern times, the tourists get their satisfaction of new, elevated experiences, while the members of the specific cultures can carry a new sense of bonding significance in something that has been passed down for generations.

As previously stated, "authenticity has become one of the words that's trotted out in marketing campaigns galore, and along the way it's lost its meaning" (Hardy).[32] "The tourist never never stops chasing that behind the scenes authenticity, yet by the time they get there the behind-the-scenes has itself already been staged, 'marked' and, thus, rendered inauthentic." (D'Eramo)[33] To satisfy these expectations and embody the reputation that has been created, there is the risk of hyper representations, exaggerations in order to keep up generalizations and ideas of the reality of something, like social group identities. "Authenticity is visible to a tourist only where it is 'marked' by something specific, 'overexpressed', or even staged'." (D'Eramo)[34] This staging creates something new.

At this point, there becomes a paradox. In the attempts at offering locality, immersion into history, and other experiences that offer inclusion of culture to outsides, the enhancements made to better provide this begin to do the opposite. Around the topic of the demand of authenticity when traveling, D'Eramo brings up the practice of "creating traditions." (D'Eramo)[35] this goes along the lines of how "attempts at cultural preservation inevitably alter, reconstruct, or invent the traditions that they are intended to fix," (D'Eramo)[36] and how performances of one culture then turn into a new culture in itself. Like how the inclusive nature of tourism is already meant to be, "the concept of 'staged authenticity' opens up new perspectives." (D'Eramo)[37] The tourist industry is completely consumer based. Especially in such lively cities like New York, there are constant cultural exchanges and developments to what has already been established. This sets the table for new perspectives to be shown and shared with the audiences.

[32] Hardy, *Making Space: How to Live Happier by Setting Boundaries That Work for You*
[33] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[34] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[35] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[36] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*
[37] D'Eramo, *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age*

To continue the appeal and interest from others, new elements of experiences, and sometimes even new experiences themselves based on untouched aspects of history or life get developed, and new experiences are made. While the meaning of the experiences change through this process, a new meaning is created. Such developments can either be seen as in genuine tourist traps or representations of new perspectives resulting from cultural exchanges. New York is a prime example of both of these directions being portrayed and still portraying the well known image of the city.

V.   Power and Exposure

A. NYC's Americanization

When looking at the United States as a whole country, it has a large amount of potential for entertaining foreigners, and even citizens to other parts of the country. The United States of America is geographically large and can be viewed as ecologically diverse as it is socially diverse. It has fifty states that aren't even all necessarily attached to the same body on the continent; just one city cannot be representative of the country entirely. That being said, one of the cities the US is best known for, and one of the most well known and visited locations in the world, is New York City, also known as "the Big Apple." While Washington DC being the capital city of the United States, New York is the most recognized city in America, as it is a place that can be seen as a concentrated hub that highlights major elements of US culture. The concrete jungle is generally known for its tall skyscrapers, such as the Empire State Building and the World Trade Center, as the physical composition is a display of literal and ideological progress. Times Square and the Statue of Liberty are infamous locations to visit in NYC and us as a whole. It is the city that never sleeps, the city with people all around the world present and represented.

America's soft power can be tied to the general trends of westernization, but it can specifically be referenced by Americanization. Westernization is the process of adopting or adapting to western values and practices. "Western" usually refers to Europe, including their territories, and America. The United States is a leading example of this, and its deep incorporation to the rest of the world has led to the specifying its own reach called Americanization. Spanning from media, cuisine, business practice, and pop culture[38], the nation has expanded into markets all over the world and has developed adaptations to better integrate with the varying audiences. The scale of prosperity has encouraged distributing its resources and opportunities outside of the country itself. American impact has permeated just about every area in the world. The spread of this ideology outside of the nation's borders becomes what is known as Americanization. Americanization refers to the influence of American culture and business on other countries. It

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[38] Examples such as Instagram, McDonalds, Netflix

can also include the adoption of American ideals, values, and norms. American food, technology, music, and movies are accessible all around the world and introduce American values to others[39].

One of the most globally recognized landmarks planted in the city that is important to New York as a city and the United States as a whole is the Statue of Liberty. "'Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,' stood as a beacon of hope to oppressed peoples around the world," (pbs.org) marking international relations and the vision of America. Solidifying the importance the city exerts on the world, it became the world's capital by becoming the home of the United Nations' headquarters in 1949. (pbs) An optimistic vision with a prosperous nation that is meant to cultivate it and aided by connectivity advancements, the appeal he spheres of influence expands. It is a nation that strives to present itself as somewhere that anything is possible and all can be satisfied. America has a strong government, but the coverage of political influence has also brought the ideals and practices of America to others abroad[40]. Through America's hard assistance during the wars, soft power was also transferred but their democratic values and share of western entertainment.

An optimistic vision with a prosperous nation that is meant to cultivate it and aided by connectivity advancements, the appeal he spheres of influence expands. It is a nation that presents itself as somewhere that anything is possible and all can be satisfied. America has a strong government, but the coverage of political influence has also brought the ideals and practices of America to others abroad[41]. Through America's hard assistance during the wars, soft power was also transferred but their democratic values and share of western entertainment. To a certain extent, Americanization relays a sense of the idea of the American dream. While the concept is outdated and not uniformly envisioned, it was first conceptualized as emphasizing how a perfect life can be created in america. Being such a recognized and respected city, the opportunity has been taken up to display successful corporations, small business, people living satisfied lives, and, most of all, freedom and opportunity. In a more concentrated sense, there are the cities within each nation that are largely recognized. One city that has largely contributed to the development of the nation and remains to be one of the most well known places nationally and internationally is New York City. The presence of Americanization in New York is just as prevalent as New York is in reinforcing the influence of Americanization.

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[39] This influence can be seen by looking at the coverage of companies such as McDonalds, Apple, and Disney.
[40] One case of this is how the United States played a pivotal role in South Korea's development through political values and American entertainment. This will be discussed later in the paper.
[41] One case of this is how the United States played a pivotal role in South Korea's development through political values and American entertainment. This will be discussed later in the paper.

B. Tourism as a Soft Power

A community's performance for foreign audiences doesn't only apply to direct attraction of consumers. A manifestation of globalization, tourism opens international doors and further incites global integration. Consistent with the rapid evolution of the modern world, due to generations, relocation, and integration, some cultural aspects evolve alongside. In an industrial context, attracting people beyond one's own culture can translate into introspection within the host society and its members into the host society regarding what they have to offer and how they are perceived to the world. Economic considerations and global reputation may equate to compromising cultural depth to an extent in order to cater to the outside audience. Having a unique specialty within the world is a natural aspect of life and is important in keeping the world in motion. It presents opportunities. Resources, ideologies, practices, beliefs, ethnicities, and many other factors creating the motions of the world and the nations that exhibit them. Tourism opens the world to experience and reputation.

Tourism is considered a soft power, and it can be used to reinforce reputation and enhance global standing, while visitors want to make sure they do everything they can with this opportunity of travel. "National identity is one of many social identities that influence how people engage with the world" (Schildkraut)[42], and "what makes national identities unique relative to other social identities is that they are associated with a government that can make formal demands of its members and set formal boundaries for membership" (Schildkraut)[43]. National identity is largely embedded in political autonomy, but it is also about forging grounds to formulate shared experiences, values and aspirations of its people. Looking at the nation itself, as a way to classify a nation and how it channels its contributions to the international community. The rise of human migrations has transformed population identities and membership to national communities. Whilst a single city or town can't be the sole representative of a nation, identifying a deity, especially a popular one, can create an idea of the cultural, societal, and national identities; all of them related to one another.

A country's capacity for creativity and innovation can trump its possession of armored divisions or aircraft carriers, and new hi tech tools can greatly enhance that reach of military and non military influence" (Wilson III)[44]. While soft power is not as direct in intentions as hard power, the influence it lays makes it a distinctive aspect of global strategy. The authority of governments create expectations and boundaries for a national identity that further seeps into the perception of other social identities. From a government's policy driven perspective, classifications are important for understanding social trends, policy making, and overall reputation and international standing. While there can be some city specific features that direct attention, the cultural exchanges facilitated through travel can lead to nation and cultural developments of identity. Economic and political opportunity serves as the initial appeal of travel and continues to steer interests today.

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[42] Schildkraut, *Boundaries of American Identity: Evolving Understandings of "Us"*
[43] Schildkraut, *Boundaries of American Identity: Evolving Understandings of "Us"*
[44] Wilson, *Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power*

Some of the ways being used to build and represent a nation and its people largely revolve around public image. These approaches promote appeal but direct representation to the role it's formulated to act as. Tourism holds a reflexive power, as it is a soft power and has its own soft power of its own through identity formation. Tourism has the power, the soft power, to significantly influence shaping the perception of identity and social group perspectives. The use of tourism as a soft power affects the perception of identity for the hosts and foreign audiences. The same factors that inhibit globalization are especially tied with tourism. On a large scale, it promotes globalization by making big money and establishing dominance by proving the appeal of culture. Tourism is a manifestation of soft power that shapes perceptions and relationships on a global stage, as it offers insight into these new worlds and experiencing the lives of various identities everyone lives alongside. People, commodities, ideas, and values have been diffused and infused all around the world. The progression of the globalized world has been facilitated by advancements in technology, communication, and transportation. Economic markets have crossed territory lines and oceans, opening use and practices of varieties of goods and services, and traveling domestically and internationally has become commonplace. The world has become more accessible to itself. This ability of movement transpires into openness to culture. The extent of the spheres of influences encourages others to further adopt referenced norms. It is a motivated, overpowering cultural exchange. This industry enables travel to engage with people, history, and traditions, enhancing cultural exchange and exhibiting soft power.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, the tourist industry serves as a dynamic, multifaceted mode keeping the world intertwined, establishing direct and indirect new approaches for cultural influence. Tourism activates societal performances. The added element of anticipating social judgment makes the tourism industry and its effects on society really distinctive. More so than simply providing an outlet of expanding knowledge and enjoyment, it instigates how identities are shaped and interpreted. Society is purposely put on the front stage and has a spotlight cast upon it through the industrialization of traveling. Any and all traveling anticipates a cultural exchange to some extent, whether that is viewed as a temporary or adoptable interaction. The effort being relayed is generally taken at face value to further display reality. The exchanges being aroused are more than accommodation and insightful in regard to the hosts and visitors. A performance is being created and the perspectives of the tourist gaze and the anticipation of being within view of the tourist gaze, creates the introduction of a brand new culture. There becomes a performance of culture, often exaggerated or emphasized to be ideal, sharing an enhanced version of life. There is a new tone set for the standards and reputations of lives that are to be appreciated in news ways with the interest of visitors. It is often overlooked how manufactured it could all be, while being disguised as reality, someone's reality. The fixation on touring creates a new dynamic to what is meant to be shared. Due to the deep entanglement of the world, as seen through various types of relations, tourism can simply be viewed as another connection point. Not only should this be confined to being viewed as a tool for power and reputation, it should

also be recognized through its subtle, often overlooked, influence on identity and reality perception.

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