



Gender matters: Rethinking violence in tourism

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ABSTRACT

The intersection of violence and gender matters in tourism, with violence being both a cause and consequence of gender inequality. This article establishes a conversation with the works of Judith Butler and Slavoj Žižek to rethink theories of violence and to develop a theoretical framework that captures the nuances and complexities of gender-based violence. Violence does not happen “elsewhere”, rather the potential for violence forms part of human relations. However, the violence inherent in tourism relations is seldom named. This article develops an original proposal of how to rethink conceptualizations of gender-based violence challenging the divide between subjective and objective violence to move the often obscured and ignored silences of gendered vulnerability centre stage to discussions of violence in tourism.

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Introduction

Violence against women and girls has been called the shadow pandemic of the current times (UN Women, 2020). While there has been an increasing attention on gender-based violence globally in the wake of the #MeToo movement, we still lack a consistent theoretical framework to capture the multiplicity of forms and their complex embedding in different social, economic and cultural tourism contexts. This might be partly due to the elusive character of violence, which emphasizes the need to adopt multi-level frameworks to study gender-based violence. However, violence and especially gender-based violence is seldom studied in tourism (Andrews, 2014a; Büscher & Fletcher, 2017; Eger et al., 2020). The aim of this paper is to explore the interrelationship between gender and different forms of violence in tourism. While tourism alone does not necessarily create the conditions for violence to happen (Devine & Ojeda, 2017), it often contributes to intensifying, rather than decreasing inequality (Koppa & Duffy, 2020). Responding to recent calls for an “explicit gender-based analysis of violence” (Devine & Ojeda, 2017), the purpose of this article is to step back to analyse how such violence comes into being both in tourism production and consumption.

The tourism industry constitutes one of the main employers of women, especially in developing countries (UNWTO, 2011), providing women with an independent income, more power as breadwinners and increased (social) mobility (Tran & Walter, 2014). However, the prejudicial terms and positions through which women enter the tourism workforce influence the emancipatory prospects of their employment (Chant, 2002). Women are over-represented in occupations and workplaces with lower average wages (Carvalho et al., 2014; Pritchard et al., 2007) and experience a high prevalence of sexual harassment (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017). There is also a form of violence inherent in gendered risk perceptions and safety measures, which influence women's journeys and their experience in destinations (Yang et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2020). These gender differences lay bare different forms of subordination and gendered vulnerability, which serve to facilitate and legitimize gender-based violence. The silencing of violence becomes even more acute when we consider the complex intersection of violence and gender with other forms of identification such as religion, sexuality, or race.

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While sex role theory and status theory provide important points of departure to understand this phenomenon, its complexity is rooted in the performative nature of violence. Two recent edited books have started to explore how gender-based violence is (re)produced in tourism, pointing to the multiple forms of violence underpinning this complex phenomenon. The edited volume by Vizcaino et al. (2020) focuses on the intersections between gender-based violence and tourism addressing specifically tourism-related causes, while acknowledging their broader embedding in social structures of gender inequality. Platt and Finkel (2020a) depart from the premise that the liminal/liminoid space of festivals and its supposed temporary subversion of societal norms overlooks persistent hegemonic forms of gendered violence. However, serious questions remain of how to understand, approach and study gendered violence, with the continued disempowerment of women in tourism (Chambers & Rakić, 2018) testifying to the pressing need to advance knowledge on and theorizations of this intersectional phenomenon.

In line with recent calls for gender-aware and feminist epistemological approaches to tourism research (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015), this article contributes to advancing knowledge in two main areas. First, it introduces a performative lens to study gender-based violence in tourism production and consumption to elucidate the complex constitution of gender and violence. In the process, it develops a novel theorization of its different dimensions by integrating a feminist lens with theories of violence. This allows us to see the relationship and interdependencies between objective and subjective forms of violence. Second, through the combination of feminist theories of “doing gender” with philosophical perspectives of “doing violence” this research develops the theoretical conceptualization further to challenge dominant conceptions of violence and their applicability to this complex phenomenon, reconfiguring the current debates on this issue in tourism.

Theoretical framework: violence, performativity and gender

This conceptual article develops five dimensions of violence to explore the complex constitution of gender-based violence in tourism. To do this, it employs Žižek's (2008) differentiation between subjective and objective violence. Subjective violence is violence that is perpetrated by a specific actor, such as in the case of rape. Objective violence is the already present violence which we do not perceive as such, but rather it is the violence inherent in the status quo (Žižek, 2008). Büscher and Fletcher (2017, p. 652) provide an interesting perspective thereon through the lens of structural violence, described as “that inherent in societal forms to which many people contribute indirectly but for which no particular person is directly responsible”. Objective violence often remains invisible and normalized, but intimately connected to individual acts of violence. This article advances an understanding of objective violence rooted in the essence of gender ideology and its performative effect. The performance of gender is historically contingent and constituted through its repetition and embodiment (Butler, 1990), intersecting with other visible and invisible identifications, such as race, class, and sexual orientation (Crenshaw, 1991). It takes place within a normative horizon, where the repetition of norms serves to (re)construct the subject (Butler, 1993), alluding to the entanglement of physical forms of violence and wider ideological processes (Salazar, 2017).

Violence has deep theoretical roots, which have been differently applied in tourism research. The edited collection by Andrews (2014c) traces the complex linkages between tourism and violence, advancing a notion of violence not as extraordinary, but as part and parcel of everyday tourism practices and development. Roberts (2014) draws on the violence of neoliberalism to show how extraordinary forms of violence become part of the ordinary, routinized into the disavowal of affective responses. The deep connection between everyday sociality and violence is captured in Bourdieu's (1977, p. 192) concept of symbolic violence as that “gentle, invisible form of violence, which is never recognized as such, and is not so much undergone as chosen”. Andrews (2009, 2014b) engages with Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field to allude to the symbolic inscriptions that characterize gendered spaces and practices. Devine & Ojeda (2017) further elaborate on the symbolic and epistemic violence inherent in different tourism practices, describing it as “violence that defines who belongs, who does not, what counts or does not count as history, and how subaltern culture are commodified and identities performed”.

Violence intersects in complex ways with tourism and takes on particular forms when considering different dynamics, such as capitalism (Büscher & Fletcher, 2017; Devine & Ojeda, 2017), colonialism (Enloe, 2000; Lozanski, 2007, 2015; Beauvoir, 1989 [1949]; Van Eeden, 2007) and tourism imaginaries (Andrews, 2009; Salazar, 2017). While authors have acknowledged the multi-dimensionality of violence, seldom these dimensions are specifically applied to understand the intersection of violence and gender. Žižek's (2008) differentiation between objective and subjective violence provides an original approach to address the conundrum underpinning many gendered experiences in which violence is often justified or silenced, for example through practices of victim blaming (Frohlick, 2010), organizational collusion (Fernando & Prasad, 2018; Finniear et al., 2020), or legislation (Kyriazi, 2020). In turn, gendered violence becomes (re)produced, through different mechanisms. Identifying and addressing these particular mechanisms requires a close examination of the interlinkages between individual acts of gendered violence as a reflection of wider structures of inequality and gender ideology, as well as, their complex embedding therein. This approach to gender-based violence connects with existing work on practices of gender (Andrews, 2009; Carvalho et al., 2014; Tucker & Boonabaana, 2012), embodiment (Frohlick, 2010; Harris & Wilson, 2007; Johnston, 2001; Jordan & Aitchison, 2008; Pritchard et al., 2007) and performativity (Nelson, 1999; Platt & Finkel, 2020b), but goes further to analyse objective violence as residing in the very essence of gender ideology and its performative effect.

Violence “which is not one”

We tend to judge individual instances of subjective violence, while ubiquitous forms such as institutionalized sexism and racism – and their intersection – are not perceived as such. Rather, they form the background – an invisible form of violence –

against which we judge subjective violence. The same occurs when we examine gender-based perspectives on violence, which are often equated to physical force taken against a person. While this captures the embodiment of violence, this article aims to question the very substance of violence to allude to the self-dispossession inherent in our being “already outside ourselves” (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 4). Butler and Athanasiou (2013) explore the central question of what it means to be dispossessed. They trace the first sense of dispossession to the limits of a subject’s autonomy – exposing the vulnerability of the self and other, whose relationality and dependence are reflective and projective of their co-constitution. The second sense of dispossession alludes to the terms of subjectivation as being bound by norms and normalizing violence. Norms define how individuals are recognized in society, and how others can be recognized. While the realms of dispossession transcend issues of gender, “one of our many dispossessions is by the norms of sex and gender, which precede and exceed our reach, despite the normalizing claims to original and stable proprietary bodily schemas” (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 56).

This form of relationality rooted in dispossession also entails the structural configurations of norms that define the intelligibility of gender and the dispossessions that these incur. This connects with Beauvoir’s (1989 [1949]) argument that woman is described as relative being, not in herself (already outside herself) but in relation to man. Only the feminine gender has been identified as such, while the masculine gender has been taken as the ‘universal personhood’. By being reduced to their sex, women become the one that is not the master subject – the Other. Similarly, Irigaray (1985, p. 23) contends that “[f]emale sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters”. Irigaray goes on to argue that women are not represented at all; they are the sex “which is not one”. This echoes arguments that “masculinity is performed homosocially: it is performed to convince other men of one’s masculinity” (Lozanski, 2015, p. 31). It is the fear of being “emasculated” that, in turn, functions to maintain exclusionary forms of masculinity (Kimmel, 2013). The pervasive othering of the female sex, which these theories allude to, is deeply anchored in prevailing heteronormative discourses and the dichotomous outcomes these produce.

In tourism promotion, women are often depicted as sexual object for men in female landscapes, while they are not present, nor addressed (not ‘one’) in male landscapes (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000b). The reduction of the feminine subject to her sex is explained as the sex “which is not one”, because it can be argued that you cannot “be a sex” (Butler, 1990). These imaginaries serve to (re)produce specific masculinities and femininities, as illustrated in destination branding campaigns emphasizing ‘straight’ forms of tourism (Frohlick & Johnston, 2011). “Consequently, strategic branding decisions must simultaneously be ‘true’ and do violence to the realities they aim to promote” (Büscher & Fletcher, 2017, p. 658). This alludes to a form of performativity of the discourse itself which assumes certain values and normative cultural scripts that (re)produce dominant perceptions of gender.

Sexuality and its interrelatedness with gender in the labour market have been largely denied. Adkins (1995) traces this rejection of sexuality within work relations to the 1980s, where different frameworks were applied to studying gender within the labour market and sexuality. Prevailing gender stereotypes play a key role in shaping tourism employment through “the normative privilege given to heterosexuality in the social construction of gender relations, including its routine reconstitution through the daily, taken-for-granted performance of ascribed gender roles in production and reproduction” (Kabeer, 2014, p. 64). Research on sexual harassment in workplaces began in the 1990s but did not develop as a field of study until the 2000s (Finnear et al., 2020). Sexual harassment is particularly pronounced in tourism environments described as “hot” climates, where women are often “positioned as the site of spectacle, display and consumption” (Van Eeden, 2007, p. 201). Many service roles entice female employees to leverage their sexuality and to engage in emotional labour to please customers (Gilbert et al., 1998). Women’s identities in the workplace are shaped through these processes constituted through the sexual notions underpinning “women’s work”.

[T]hese identity practises are rendered intrinsic to women workers through relations of appropriation. That is to say, the gendered relations of production in these sites ensure that women’s labour (including the production of workplace identities) is always embodied as part of their selves. (...) In this sense they are not individuals at work, but rather they are gendered workers, that is, the social group ‘women workers’.

[Adkins and Lury (1996, pp. 220–221)]

This provides the foundation for doing violence and the subjective violent acts inherent in sexual harassment, which can have severe negative impacts on mental well-being, physical health and work productivity (Cheung et al., 2018; Gilbert et al., 1998). Perpetrators are often positioned in higher hierarchical positions which elevates power disparities (Gilbert et al., 1998). While it is often assumed that sexual harassment is primarily associated with sexual desire (Berdahl, 2007), it encompasses a wide spectrum of behaviours, including unwanted sexual attention, sexual coercion and gender hostility (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). Hostility toward victims goes beyond sexual motives, encompassing bullying behaviour such as gaslighting – a form of “manipulative emotional and psychological abuse in which the harasser engenders doubt and uncertainty in the target” (Finnear et al., 2020, p. 34), but also indirect discrimination and subtle actions, like spreading rumours and gossiping. These distinctions are important, to capture the diverse behaviours that are employed to stratify the differential valence of genders.

Sexual harassment is also committed against female travellers, in the form of unwanted sexualized advances, sexualized gaze (Jordan & Aitchison, 2008), street harassment – termed the language of sexual terrorism (Kissling, 1991) and sexual assault (Yang et al., 2018). Historically, travelling has been perceived a men’s domain and sexual harassment has “long been a permanent feature across the tourism landscape” (McElroy et al., 2008, p. 97). While data on sexual harassment committed against female travellers and sexual minorities are scarce (Pritchard, 2014), recent studies show how this form of violence serves to restrict individuals’ use of space requiring them to adopt coping mechanisms (Díaz-Carrión, 2020; Yang et al., 2018). Research with gay and lesbian travellers, for example, shows that there is a

strong preference for discrimination-free and safe travel destinations (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016), with LGBTQ+ individuals being criminalized across 72 jurisdictions globally (Human Dignity Trust, 2020).

There are also spaces of empowerment and resistance created within the practice of tourism, challenging stereotyped notions of femininity and masculinity, as highlighted for example in solo independent and business travel (Harris & Wilson, 2007) and queer mobilities (Puar, 2002). However, little progress has been made to raise awareness about the longstanding tradition of violence against female travellers (Yang et al., 2020), sexual minorities, and in the industry more widely (Poulston, 2008). The violence “which is not one”, refers to the objective violence underpinning the expected sexualized appearance and performance of subjects – the hypervisibility of the feminine body, which simultaneously conforms to traditional gender norms and roles underpinning heterosexuality (Adkins, 1995) and contested bodies – alluding to the worker “which is not one”.

Otherness and violence

The other is a prominent figure in reflections on violence. Western hierarchical dualisms and disembodiment have prevailed in tourism research, with the Self/Other constituting a key dichotomy (Johnston, 2001). Tourism “constructs ‘Others’” (Johnston, 2001, p. 181; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000a) and it is the dissociation from the indeterminate other that often characterizes violent actions (Büscher & Fletcher, 2017). By not identifying with those who are suffering from violence or perceiving them to be far remote from one’s own reality – by attributing violence as intrinsic to particular cultural norms and practices, violence is perceived as “elsewhere” (Lozanski, 2014). The exclusion of certain versions of reality, where we grieve the life of some but not others, raises the question of “our responsibility toward those we do not know” (Butler, 2016, p. 2). This conception of the *unknown* other questions “the degree to which an individual is fully regarded and recognized by others” (Settles et al., 2019, p. 2) – a limitation of ethical concern that runs counter to the egalitarian belief that human beings are equal in worth and dignity.

The politics of recognition underpinning violence, according to Žižek (2008, p. 36), are not governed by our ability of abstract reasoning, but instead are defined by an emotional-ethical response “conditioned by [...] instinctual reactions of sympathy to suffering and pain that is witnessed directly”. This raises the question, whether individuals can belong to others in a different way, and whether they can then also belong to others – a form of moralization of the act that disavows the violence it may inflict. One-third of women globally have experienced gender-based violence (WHO, 2013). Hence, this is a pertinent question across disciplines, but especially in tourism, where the service encounter is characterized by the idea of the customer as being always right and serving others, which has links to feminine professions and the power imbalances therein (Yagil, 2008). Tourism consumption is characterized by conceptions of *freedom to* travel and to enjoy oneself and *freedom from* everyday constraints, which overlay (in)visible power relations (Caruana & Crane, 2011) and the violence inherent in these. However, seldom we ask questions about the *freedom from violence* in tourism and more importantly, the *freedom to become and do* what a person aspires to (Eger et al., 2018; the capability approach as in Sen, 1985).

Notions of *idealized* travel are associated with hegemonic masculinity (cf. Connell, 2005), in which *freedoms* “are only open to men or, at least, only available to women via a more complex negotiation of problematic assumptions about the nature of danger, risk and (in)dependence when travelling” (Casey & Thurnell-Read, 2015, pp. 1–2). Normative masculinity casts a specific light on agency, one in which bodies become differently exposed to violence (Gavey, 2005). The dialectics of recognition underpinning normative masculinity contain hegemonic racial, gender and sexual norms that regulate the performance of accepted manhood (Connell, 2005), in which sexuality acts as a status characteristic (Pritchard et al., 2000). Katsulis (2015) describes risk-taking, in the context of sex tourism, as an *individual entitlement* and *choice* exercised by men. This sense of entitlement is acted out on a hierarchy of social status and power, by individuals who often lack the same privilege elsewhere. While there exist multiple masculinities and differences as well as inequalities among men (Connell, 2005), it is these dominant versions of manhood that become implicated in violence.

Dominant gender norms are based on a heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990), underpinned by unequal conceptions of status and power differentials – which become further emphasized at the intersections with other differences – serving to legitimize violence. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women demands governments to redefine dominant gender norms to eliminate women’s discrimination (Merry, 2011). While a reversal of these gender norms does not solve the dilemma, it might open up new forms of imagining gender, as argued by Gavey (2005, p. 194): “if we are able to imagine, and recognize, such possibilities then there is room to seriously disrupt the dominant discourses of heterosexuality [...] which [...] work to support the material construction of women as victims and men as agents of sexual coercion and sexual violence”. Žižek (2008, p. 180) refers to a “‘social nothing’ (the stasis of a system, its mere reproduction without any changes) ‘costs more than something’ (a change).” The strong persistence of gender-based violence testifies to this, but sometimes the change itself – the anger – cannot be expressed with mirroring the same thing we are trying to heal, i.e. a form of retribution – violence for violence.

According to Berdahl (2007, p. 641), the primary reason underpinning violence “is a desire to protect one’s social status when it seems threatened, a desire held by men and women alike”. However, conceptions of status are “stratified by a system of gender hierarchy” and almost “all societies tend to confer a higher social value on men than women and a range of norms and powers derive from this” (Jewkes et al., 2015, p. 1581). The conception of power encapsulated in the exercise of violence reflects the capacity to systematically and persistently limit what a person can become or do. The denial of vulnerability in hegemonic constructions of masculinity represents a key problem (Gavey, 2005), especially, when we consider that it is in contexts where men suffer from violence and where interpersonal violence among men is high that gender-based perspectives become more pronounced (Jewkes et al., 2015). The common absence of vulnerability in men’s travel narratives is illustrative and stands in stark contrast to the common experience of sexual harassment by female travellers (Lozanski, 2015).

The connection between masculinity and violence lies in gender and gendered constructions of vulnerability. Lozanski (2007) complicates this argument further, showing how the construction of a racialized and sexualized Other serves to maintain aforementioned discourses of gendered risk, and reproduces inequality regimes of patriarchal colonialism in India. An Orientalist premise endures in travellers accounts of gender-based violence. Perceived anomalies are to be found in the (predatory) Other, shoring up the integrity of the (Western/civilized) traveller, while local women are often erased from these accounts (Lozanski, 2007). Bowman (1989) provides a detailed discussion of the inversion of power in the relationship between female tourists and male vendors of souvenirs in Jerusalem. The study shows how male vendors assert their potency through the conquest of female tourists, partly in response to their own vulnerability in political, economic and social terms. Bowman (1989) and Lozanski's (2007) study question the subject of violence, showing how objective violence can give meaning to interpersonal violence.

Across these accounts women's bodies often serve as a referent. Andrews (2009, 2014b) alludes to the mechanisms of dehumanization that accord women with a "less-than-human status" based on women's "consumability" (Andrews, 2009, p. 167). However, the sexualization and commodification of women within tourism relations is contextual, and contrasts with the conflicts resulting from tourism development in many Muslim-majority countries. Tucker and Boonabaana (2012) explore women's employment in Göreme, Turkey, where women have had limited access to the public sphere. While these boundaries have slowly shifted, women's employment in tourism continues to conflict with local norms of virtue and honour. Women's Otherness within the organizational sphere represents a cultural barrier that has to be understood not only as external, but also as an influential factor on women's self-perception and beliefs. Women might choose not to work in tourism, because working in public spaces and interacting with men is against social norms. A form of patriarchal control of women's labour market participation that is similar to other contexts, such as Morocco (Eger, 2020).

Patriarchal structures are mobile, they travel with and within the tourists, with female tourists exhibiting choices and travel behaviours where they negotiate religion- or cultural-based norms (Yang & Mura, 2016). This also refers to a negotiation about being or not being conforming and therefore reproducing norms through travel choices and behaviour, reflecting either a form of conformity and silencing or a form of micro-rebellion. The violence of the colonial past further complicates these experiences (Lozanski, 2007, 2015), with Devine & Ojeda (2017) referring to the spatial fetishism accompanying much tourism development. This suggests that violence requires a focus on its historical contingency, social processes, agency and status to elucidate the complex ways in which it denies human beings their humanity. This existential condition is circumscribed by the violence of recognition, determining what and who is to be respected.

Doing violence

Violence and harassment serve to control gender-role deviances (Berdahl, 2007). "[F]rom a performative perspective, doing violence is a way of doing gender. In some situations and contexts, the performance of gender identities means acquiescing to violence or being violent" (Merry, 2011, p. 36). While the introduction stated that tourism does not necessarily create the condition for violence to happen, sometimes it does. For example, when we consider the complex links between human trafficking and tourism, as illustrated by Ugarte et al. (2004) in Mexico, where the mobility and anonymity inherent to tourism allows for specific forms of prostitution. The most pronounced example of doing violence relates to the sexual commodification of subjects in tourism (Ambrosie, 2010; Kibicho, 2016; Sanders-McDonagh, 2016). Sex tourism, or "prostitution tourism" (Jeffreys, 1999), highlights the complex ways in which tourism contributes to the globalization of sexual exploitation. The development of sex tourism has thrived through its active demand and supply in international travel, becoming part of the tourism "menu" in many Southeast Asian destinations (Enloe, 2000). "The process of sexual commodification involves turning sexuality, in all its forms, from reproduction to bodies to sex acts, into objects of economic desire for exchange in the market" (Horley & Clarke, 2016, p. 147). This sheds light on the capitalist politics of sex tourism development, which has not been discouraged by governments seeking foreign exchange (Hall, 1994).

Sex tourism landscapes are (re)constituted through the intersection of colonial, military and tourism routes (Enloe, 2000), and their on-going development in neo-colonial fashion goes beyond a capitalist system (Devine & Ojeda, 2017). Enloe (2000) offers an insightful exploration of the gender relations governing prostitution and sex tourism highlighting the unequal treatment of prostitutes, particularly through law and regulations, compared to those consuming their sexual services. The growing number of victims from trafficking indicates a rise in tourist consumption of sex tourism (Ambrosie, 2010). Traffickers rely on the tourism industry's infrastructure and operational networks with victims often being recruited through deceptive promises of jobs (Kyriazi, 2020). This undignified 'trading' of unfree labour reflects the "wider inhumane power geometries of commercial sex" (Eger et al., 2020, p. 5). While "not all sexual [...] exploitation equals trafficking, as the latter must involve coercion, fraud, use of force or other illicit means of recruitment and transportation" (Kyriazi, 2020, p. 98), women constitute the primary victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

The normalization of othering and victimization are strongly present in sex tourism, with prostitution representing one of the "only kinds of 'work' that require only that a woman's body be present" (Jeffreys, 1999, p. 181). Büscher and Fletcher (2017) argue that the focus on the body in sex tourism unites the three forms of structural violence identified in their article: inequality, waste and spaces of exception. Sex tourism provides a liminal space – a space of exception and a "socially assigned disposability" (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 19) – in which hegemonic forms of masculinity become reified, while obfuscating the structural risk inherent in these practices (Katsulis, 2015). This precarity "proves fundamental to the neoliberal regime as well as to various modalities of valuelessness" (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 19). Prostitutes often blame themselves for the violence they suffer, feeling valueless, being more prone to commit suicide and suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders (Jeffreys, 1999) –

reflecting the close intertwined nature of objective and subjective violence. The individual is bound to her acts, already outside herself (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013), hence she is not an individual at work but a commodity for exchange affirming the wider structural and systemic violence inherent in sex tourism.

Sex tourism can be described as a nexus between tourism and human trafficking (Kyriazi, 2020). Technologies, while often used by slave operators and a global clientele (Katsulis, 2015; Ryan & Hall, 2001), could be harnessed to enter those often-inaccessible spaces to trace the perpetrators. However, we also need to consider how to reconstruct a human condition, questioning the objective violence inherent in processes of recognition and the ethics thereof in oppressive and undignified conditions. In turn, we need to reflect on how gendered vulnerability is (re)produced in the first place, and how this contributes to processes of silencing that make it almost impossible for individuals to exit this dehumanizing situation.

Silencing violence

The interdependency of gender-based violence and social control and compliance mechanisms forms the moral boundaries along which norm perceptions contribute to the silencing of violent acts. To (re)gain subject's voices in an often-neglected, understudied phenomenon in tourism, characterized by victim-blaming and vertical and horizontal spirals of silence, it is important to listen to individual experiences and to consider how individuals can be supported (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003). Inhibition to speak may stem from multiple axes of discrimination, through the possession of attributes stigmatized as "deviant". This includes "invisible" minorities, such as the LGBTIQ+ community, or the "hypervisibility" of marginalized groups (e.g., Black women), which renders them "difficult to categorize and easy to overlook" (Smith et al., 2019, p. 1707). This represents a form of intersectional invisibility (cf. Smith et al., 2019), with sexual orientation, race, class and other forms of identification influencing the context of voice and silence. The invisibility of violence multiplies the initial harm inflicted and inhibits our political ability to act. However, research on the level and nature of intersectional violence, especially violence perpetrated against sexual minorities, is limited in tourism (Eger et al., 2020).

Vulnerability can be described as an equally shared existential category of precarity, but it also refers to "a condition of induced inequality and destitution", i.e. precariousness (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 20). This opens up the question of how vulnerability is differently normalized, regulated and "distributed" among subjects. The underlying process of being gendered forms part of being laboured and this serves to limit women's power within the labour market, being at the same time a central feature of gender-based violence. "This control also includes punishments of acts of resistance to, or transgression of, gender norms (e.g. anti-lesbian violence)" (Jewkes et al., 2015, p. 1582). This raises the concern, whether by not speaking up against gender discrimination and violence, different actors become complicit in the reification of gendered violence and precariousness.

The embodiment and social attribution of shame explains why some victims might turn blame against themselves (Eger, 2020), indicating a close link between the ways in which objective violence can serve to undermine the experience and voice of subjective violence. In Muslim communities, for example, "[f]emale modesty and inhibition is commonplace. A female employee will rarely accept that she has been subject to sexual harassment or any other abuse" (Özbilgin et al., 2012, p. 355). The cultural expectations underpinning tourism work entail the "(re)production of the social structure" (Adkins, 1995, p. 7). This requires an increasing attention to the behaviour and type of recourse considered acceptable, to avoid the loss of reputation and encourage subjects to speak up against violence. Cheung et al. (2018), for example, show how the prevailing collectivist and patriarchal culture in China contributes to processes of silencing. Female tour leaders, who have become victims of sexual harassment, are less likely to speak up against their harasser and rather choose passive forms of coping.

Employees working in different tourism environments are often expected to accept sexual harassment as "part of their job" (Yagil, 2008). Structural and managerial causes as well as popular norms serve to (re)produce gender-based violence in tourism (Ram, 2018). Poulston (2008) refers to the longstanding tradition of sexual harassment in the hospitality industry, showing how objective violence becomes reified in working conditions and job descriptions. Fernando and Prasad (2018) develop the term "reluctant acquiescence" to describe how employees are silenced and made to conform, identifying three key themes of silencing:

- (a) *"people can challenge the system only if their issue is uncommon and significant"*
- (b) *one should trust the system to accord justice and*
- (c) *negative consequences follow to those who challenge the system."* (Fernando & Prasad, 2018, p. 10).

These themes illustrate how objective violence is factored out of these accounts, as it is the common taken-for-granted violence that is embedded in the system, which cannot be challenged. Speaking up might further come at a significant social cost to the individual with the maintenance of the social order relying on conformance to the system – silence. Arguments that it is individual's choice to speak up are victim-blaming (Jeffreys, 1999), as they remove responsibility from the harasser and the third-party actors involved in obscuring sexual violence. Finniear et al. (2020) highlight that almost £90 million have been spent on non-disclosure agreements by UK Universities between 2017 and 2019, serving to permanently silence the victims.

The temporality of violence

The temporality of violence draws lines ahead of time, while simultaneously being deeply rooted in the past. The history of violence "is an embodied history" (Roberts, 2014, p. 16). The marginal number of studies on violence against women have given primary attention to individual risk perceptions of women in travel and tourism (e.g. Díaz-Carrión, 2020; Yang et al., 2018), showing how risk perceptions shape individuals' travel behaviour and patterns. Gendered risk perceptions influence

individual's anticipation of violence. Roberts (2014) describes the spatiotemporal *moment* of violence as a complex process that can leave physical, emotional and memory imprints. However, subjective violence is usually only visible after and seldom before it has happened. Butler (2016, p. 8) argues that “the ‘subject’ proves to be counter-productive for understanding a shared condition of precariousness and its injury (past) and injurability (present and future)”. The objective form of gendered violence lies in the ways in which it delimits the status of individuals and groups with the core characteristic being its muting effect, as a direct questioning of the subjective violent act tends to be silenced by a form of epistemic inequality.

New embodied forms of social activism, such as the #MeToo, #NiUnaMenos and #Time's Up movement, as well as recent edited collections on gender-based violence in tourism (Platt & Finkel, 2020a; Vizcaino et al., 2020) have started to challenge these silences. The #MeToo movement highlights “the need to conceptualize the antecedents of silencing experienced by victims of sexual harassment” (Fernando & Prasad, 2018, p. 2). Yang et al. (2020) analyse how female travellers have engaged in the #MeToo movement by sharing their experiences of sexual harassment during their journeys. The agentive power of collectives, including the gathering of experiences among women travellers (Yang et al., 2020) and academics (Munar et al., 2017), rests on a shared condition of gendered vulnerability.

Each of us is constituted politically in part by virtue of the social vulnerability of our bodies- as a site of desire and physical vulnerability, as a site publicity at once assertive and exposed. Loss and vulnerability seem to follow from our being socially constituted bodies, attached to others, at risk of losing these attachments, exposed to others, at risk of violence by virtue of that exposure.

[Butler (2004, p. 20)]

While the #MeToo movement indicates patterns of violence, by focusing on (aggregated) instances of subjective violence we could miss to capture the origin or emergent cause of violence – the antecedents of these silences. There is a violence inherent to gender discourses as well, which often implicitly adopt a heterosexual matrix and a conception of the missing other half as being non-racialized, governed by representations of Third World woman as victim in tourism (Chambers & Rakić, 2018). It is important to challenge the social construction of the “vulnerable” women and implicit heteronormativity. Otherwise, we might miss important differences “such as violence in lesbian and gay relations, or considerations of classism, racism and ableism” (Eger et al., 2020, p. 3) and risk (re)producing an essentialized vulnerability.

This article advances an understanding of gendered vulnerability as rooted in the performative enactment of gender, acknowledging that to consider gender separately from intersectionality is political. It expresses the violence of non-recognition, which influences wider political imaginations and discourses. Recognizing the intersectional complexity of gender-based violence may start with a recognition of the normalization of heterosexuality, unmarked whiteness and the colonisation of time with the colonial past seldom figuring in analyses of gender in tourism. Acknowledging the temporality of violence hence represents an important step in contextualizing objective violence within a specific situation, to show how violence is perpetuated through systemic injustices. Otherwise, a focus on objective violence – as a complete detachment of the act itself – might risk dehumanizing studies on gendered perspectives of violence.

Discussion

In liberal societies, there tends to be an emphasis on all forms of violence as morally reprehensible, though, we need to acknowledge that who is grievable and who is not, raises and defines questions of who we are (Butler, 2016). The potential for violence forms part of human relations alluding to the complex intersection between violence and gender. This article proposes five analytical dimensions to capture the complex politics of gender-based violence, which due to their pervasiveness, elude a clear definition. Viewing all forms of violence as reprehensible removes the question whether we also view all victims as equally grievable (Butler, 2016). This represents an ideological action, “a mystification which collaborates in rendering invisible the fundamental forms of violence” (Žižek, 2008, p. 174). Žižek (2008, p. 1) suggests that we should take a step back to recognize the violence “that sustains our very efforts to fight violence”. Butler (2016) further contends that in challenging violence, we need to accept the very possibility of our own violence, which came to the fore in Lozanski's (2007, 2015) account of female travellers' retribution of sexual harassment.

These reflections are crucial to an understanding of Othering of violence, by acknowledging that the potential for violence forms part of human relations, we recognize the violence inherent in Othering. Woman's Otherness in organizational space is sustained through her positioning in the organization, but not of the organization (Tyler & Cohen, 2010). The Self/Other, as a key dichotomy in tourism research, has been studied from a predominantly disembodied lens, which disavows that bodies matter (Butler, 1993). This has been traced by Adkins to the different theoretical lenses applied to studying gender in the labour market compared to sexuality. While the theory of performativity has been critiqued for losing the subject/agency of gender (Nelson, 1999), the Otherness of women highlights that the subject and her agency has long been lost as she is not the master subject. The voices of Beauvoir and Irigaray pertain to the first waves of feminism but have not rescinded in importance when we consider the ways in which the worker “which is not one”, is (re)produced through the sexual objectification of “women's work”.

The violence “which is not one” further deepens our understanding of how subject's Otherness is differently constituted in the tourism industry, both as consumer and producer of tourism services. The objective violence underpinning sex and gender discourses is seldom acknowledged, as it is normalized, becoming routinized performances of gender – doing violence – as part of the job (Yagil, 2008). Gender role deviances are policed through control and compliance mechanisms, which become intensified in the light of gendered vulnerability – as showcased in the example of sex tourism. The violence inherent in the global sex trade

affects the ways in which we understand human dignity – with prostitution being neither sex nor work. The absence of human dignity influences our perception and our experience of gender – alluding to an absence that cannot be healed. Doing violence hence becomes an inherent expression of the myriad of ways which constitute doing gender.

We need to pay attention to the silences in this process, recognizing that subjective violence often blinds us to the objective violence beneath, in which the doing of violence emerges as part of a wider power geometry. Intersectionality emerges as a crucial concern – as it is the intersection of multiple axes of oppression that serve to intensify the silence we experience. The violence of structures, such as structural racism, questions the benevolent belief that the system will accord justice. The performance of gender and the enactment of dominant norms serves to (re)produce the status quo – legitimizing violence. This was illustrated in the murder of two young Argentinian tourists in the town of Montañita, in Ecuador which created a wider protest movement under the hashtag #YoViajoSola. This double femicide figured widely in the Latin American news with many commentators adopting strong overtones of victim-blaming (Eger et al., 2020). The fact that they were two women travelling together, still constituted solo-female travel in the eyes of society, as they were not accompanied by a man. Similarly, Frohlick's (2010) analysis of the murder of two young American women in Costa Rica alludes to the symbolic violence inherent in the media accounts' fixation on their bodies. Here we see the multiplicity of silences, and in this case, we encounter a type of silence which is not a passive one – but it is a silence that functions to reify the objective violence inherent in the status quo underpinned by gender ideologies that limit what a woman can become and do.

The temporality of violence illustrates how risk perceptions become normative to individuals' work and leisure experiences, shaping their understanding of self and daily mobility. Notions of *idealized* travel serve to reify normative masculinity adhering to an understanding of risk as agentive for men (Casey & Thurnell-Read, 2015; Katsulis, 2015). This contrasts with women's experiences, who learn to consider their social interactions and movements through an internalization of risk, to keep safe. While these assumptions are also being challenged, for example in sports tourism (Díaz-Carrión, 2020), they become reinforced and institutionalized through various discourses, such as travel guides inferring that it is women's responsibility to fend off sexual harassment through appropriate behaviour and dress (Lozanski, 2007). This shared condition of precariousness is often countered through a "focus on women's responsibilities for the safeguarding of their own security when working in tourism or travelling (...), which does little to disrupt or transform gendered norms and stereotypes" (Eger et al., 2020, p. 7). Rather, we need to acknowledge the performative, intersectional and temporal character of violence.

Conclusion

This article advances a conceptualization of gender-based violence as performative, identifying five key dimensions that characterize the complex intersection of gender and violence: The violence "which is not one", Otherness, temporality, as well as doing and silencing violence. Understanding the multi-dimensionality of gender-based violence can give us an insight into its wider geographies and the ways these shape daily mobility and travel patterns. This original conceptualization can function as a platform for future research to explore each dimension of violence in more depth and to determine how these become differently embodied and institutionalized across geographical contexts. The main critique may lie in the fact that if we start naming all the different incidences that together function to reify gender inequality as violence, we might lose sight of what it actually constitutes. However, this article contends that a primary focus on gender-based violence as subjective violence, while allowing us to look at what has happened and to quantify that violence, limits our possibility to understand the violence "which is not one" – the self-dispossession inherent in our being "already outside ourselves" (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 4).

We cannot comprehend violence without exploring its interconnectedness across several levels of understanding, including the paradoxical and the dialectical. The concept of relationality captured in Butler's work allows us to examine how we as human become subjects through our relations, and how violence is always constituted as relational, sometimes at micro levels and other times through the psychic integration of our belief and emotional systems, in the internal talk and negotiations that happen inside each of us. However, there remain experiences that are unspeakable, including the micro-aggressions we live in our daily life (Fatima, 2017). In addition, we cannot speak of violence that has not happened, but the possibility thereof – the risk – is materialized in individual's travel patterns and working lives. This form of non-referentiality of violence is not only property of individual acts, but rather of their complex embedding in a context and their connection with larger patterns of discrimination in society.

We need to be sensitive to this form of non-referentiality of violence to open up to the many shades of violence and their multiplicity. There is also an element of our inability to express all the different senses that are violence through language – the smell, the tears, the shouts, the ashes. Gerhard Richter captures the unimaginable violence of the concentration camp with grey colour in his Birkenau series. There are no words, there are no pictures, there is no figurative depiction of the horror possible. It is this embodied invisibility and unspeakability of violence that captures the silences that will not protect us, in the words of Lorde (2017). Do we need to abandon our craft of thinking our way of writing to be able to research and capture the meaning of violence, as Richter did in his paintings? When words fail us, also the factual and figurative fails us, when everything fails, what is then left?

Violence affects our wholeness, our human dignity. It encapsulates the silence that cannot touch nor heal the wounds that we cannot name. We all too often do not speak of the violence that has happened resting on the socio-historical imbalances between genders and their intersections with other forms of difference. This is a sociohistorical imbalance that carries the injury of the past, which further influences perceptions of our injurability – present and future. This imbalance speaks to the objective violence of lives being differently grievable, it speaks to the commodification of life and to the avoidance of violence by making it invisible

at the societal level. Listening to violence hence emerges as a crucial political and ethical task in tourism, questioning our approach to writing knowledge, to embrace the phenomenon as that which matters the most.

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