

Knowing Tourism and Practices of Vision

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Events, Knowledge and Practice:

Tourism is often spoken of in terms of the economic effects it generates, the cultural and environmental impacts it may cause or the system of values it promotes. In this essay I want to suggest that all of these approaches lack a sense of tourism as practice. That is because, with one major exception, they lack an open-ended theory of social events. I want to try and sketch out what such an approach might look like by thinking about the practices of photography, taken from my own work on heritage attractions. The essay focuses on photography for two reasons. Firstly, ideas about images and sight have become paradigmatic in talking about tourist experience. Secondly, accounts using these ideas seem to rapidly pacify tourists -- that is they tend to experience, perceive, receive but not do. To rectify this tendency, this essay will suggest we need an open theory of practice. Currently tourist practices tend to be reduced to either bald accounts of structure and values, as though these stand apart from the activities, or to empirically measurable content. In the latter case, it may seem odd to say tourist studies tend to lack a sense of events. Indeed one could say that, in their often empiricist vein, they are totally limited to an event ontology -- where all that is admitted as being real or significant are transactions, movements, arrivals, departures, entrance numbers, or over-night stays. However, in all these cases the 'events' are closed replicable actions. They become black boxes into which all the untidiness of life can be quietly stuffed away out of sight. All sense that events might be about change and transition seems lost.

The exception to all this is a processual form of anthropology based around the work of Victor Turner (1980, 1982). I draw some inspiration from that school but in itself it has too often served to reduce action to structure -- where every event becomes a controlled

transformation moving from one predetermined state to another -- producing, appealingly for geographers, a symbolic landscape marking particular states and transformations. Thus even the category of the ludic, that most necessarily slippery of states, defined as an interstitial time, becomes contained and constrained. It may be argued that this process of control reflects the system on the ground but it seems a predilection of tourism theories to find order. Perhaps due to a sort of intellectual inferiority complex there is a 'more scientific than thou' feel about some studies. This insecure scientism seems manifest in the wish to create a vision of ordered practices and an orderly practice of academic vision. Let me recount an anecdote, where I attempted to write a piece about reflexive heritage practices for the Annals of Tourism Research. I emphasised that the piece was in the first person to show that my reflections on events were just as embedded in the situations as those of other actors; I did not stand over the field I studied, my interpretation was part of the same field of practices (both figuratively and literally). The proofs returned all neatly copy edited to the third person -- including the memorable phrase 'for this reason the author has written the piece in the first person'. Increasingly sharp exchanges produced a modified concession (see Crang 1996b). The reason given for the obduracy was that the fledgling discipline sought scientific credibility -- even if the editor was sympathetic. We might say the effect is to create a proper place from which to view tourists, but with the side effect that only proper behaviour is visible -- in what Michel de Certeau called the 'empire of the evident' (1984:201). Interpretive practices are set apart from the field they comment upon and stand over it serving to 'purify' both. The result is a loss of the sense of temporality as eventfulness from both theory and the world.

Instead this essay tries to reincorporate a sense of temporality in events. To give a specific focus, the events are photographic ones. In part as I have suggested this is to pick up on what

are often remarked upon as key dynamics of tourism as part of an 'image-society'. The argument comprises three main axes of questioning; first the role of photography and images in tourist sites; second, the role of photography in tourist practice; third, the role of photography in assembling a sense of self. Moving along these lines I hope to open up some ideas about tourism as a knowing practice. I choose these words with care since while it is common to see debates of education versus entertainment -- or even concepts of infotainment -- I want to stress that tourism is about producing knowledge. I want to suggest that even if we accept, and I am not sure that I do, Urry's (1990) division of mass and romantic tourism, then the former still produces knowledge -- though not of a kind generally recognised in academic accounts.

Sacralising Sites

Following the work of John Urry (1990), one of the recently more fruitful avenues of research into tourist experience has focused on the role of sight, images and pictures. So obvious a part of tourism as to be taken as read, recent work has problematised 'sight-seeing'; the visual practice and basis of what Urry called the tourist gaze. This turn has picked up threads of other work from anthropology on the mythical and from cultural studies on the semiotic economy of tourism to produce a fascinating mixture. Tourism is seen as an activity embedded in webs of signification. Rather than a narrow motivational psychology, founded on behaviourist ideas of the subject, these approaches have opened up ideas about the entanglement of the social and psychological. Notably this has been the effect of MacCannell's (1976, 1992) reworking of Goffman's ideas about regionalised performance, into back and front stage, to look for a structure of knowledge and desire in tourism.

MacCannell takes the Tourist as an ideal type for western society. This blurring the individual and social allows him to suggest that the modern world offers fragmented and chaotic stimulation. MacCannell argues it creates a deep seated need for holistic experience -- a quest for authenticity. This maps into and is reproduced through the symbolic economy of tourism. I will briefly outline the ways tourism might create 'sacralised' sites through the semiotics of marking and the practice of photography to suggest how each has contributed to this vision of tourism.

Spatial Semiotics

Tourism can also be seen as a more static spatial semiosis marking out places and objects for special attention, defining the sights to be seen and thus making sights out of sites,. This has been linked into accounts of signification deriving from Saussure, the whole assemblage of directed gaze and object forming a sign composed of a signifier and signified. In the case of tourism the signifier is some form of marker which directs a gaze onto an object; a guide, a brochure, or a plaque would all serve. If tourism is about attaining some knowledge of a world which is not so fragmented as the contemporary melange then typical objects would be those located in pre-modern society, those from exotic cultures defined as non-modern -- and we have something close to theory of 'auratic objects' where tourism is about seeing the genuine article. The sense of 'genuine' is thus articulated in opposition to a sense of mass production and replication (Benjamin 1979). The auratic object, and Urry's idea of romantic tourism, fit together rather well with ideas of unmediated and direct experience which draw on an upper class aesthetic (Bourdieu & Darbel 1991). And yet, it is reproductions that define senses of what is genuine, as where Albers & James (1988) sketch out the importance of picture postcards in creating the expected appearances of "Othered" peoples (see also Edwards 1996; cf. for the role of different kinds of images Bate 1992, Fryckman & Löfgren

1987:129). The system of signification sketched out thus forms a paradox. On the one hand it points out what ought to be seen, what is significant. On the other, it intrudes as a sign of mediation, indeed the very presence of other tourists can threaten the object's aura. The auratic object thus forms an unobtainable goal, and tourism can be seen against this vanishing horizon of authenticity (Culler 1981, Frow 1991). In many ways tourism becomes a pilgrimage to mourn what it itself destroys. It also through this action sets up the expansive spatial economy that marks out its modern incarnation.

Morris (1988) suggests that the intrusion of markers helps explain the sense of events no longer being self-sufficient. There can be no self-present auratic experience or object. They are constitutively split between the signified and the signifier. Thus we may set out to see something new but all we see are more markers of tourism. MacCannell (1993) offers a different inflection of this process. He suggests that another displacement of this lack is into seeking the backstage as the authentic and unsigned. Of course, this results not only in the encroachment of tourism into ever more spheres of life, but also the staging of authentic scenes. We can follow a well worn argument that putatively spontaneous, back-stage, traditional or whatever events become as carefully scripted and put on with just a careful eye to the tourist audience as anything else (see Greenwood 1977). The outcome is to allow the slippage of signified into signifier. The appearance or signifiers of authenticity become as important as anything else -- and hence to themed heritage experiences and museums without collections (Hewison 1991). However, the critical game of trying to establish 'academic' authenticity is akin to the tourist field rather than its antithesis, being one more attempt to define the auratic object (Crang 1996b).

Photographic Economies:

It is here that photographic practices often seem to amplify what we could call a vicious hermeneutic circle. They set up expectations or frame what will be seen and the visited sites are measured against the prior expectations. Images of a destination (classically the brochure) set up what is significant. The tourist then departs to actually view what is shown as significant, taking pictures of themselves in front of it. These pictures, or more professional postcards, are then taken or sent home to memorialise the visit. A structure is created, where the pictures circulating around sights are more important than the sights themselves, contributing to "a kind of alienation which has become prototypical hallmark of photographic "seeing" in tourism" (Albers & James 1988:136; cf. Redfoot 1984). A simple anecdote may help here; one of the most famous icons of Vancouver are the 'totem' poles or painted lodge poles which have been on display in Stanley park since times when exoticising First Nations was regarded as far more acceptable. The poles stand in one rather over-walked corner of a very large park with beaches and woods yet dominate the postcards. Wandering in Stanley I purchased one such card showing the poles set in a misty background. As I turned to look at them there was a family group arranging themselves to be pictured standing in front of the poles. (Of course I did what any reflexive academic would do and took a picture of this process too (figure 1)).

The signs that mark out what is to be looked at become as, or more, important than the sites themselves. The signifier slips free from the signified and it is the markers that create the experience, rather than any authentic engagement with the landscape. I have elsewhere (Crang 1996a) used the vignette of the most photographed barn in America in Dom Delillo's White Noise to illustrate this. The characters approach 'the Most Photographed Barn in America', stand at the prescribed viewing point, along with many photographers, and have the option of buying a postcard taken from the spot. Gradually it becomes clear that the signs

proclaiming that this is the most pictured barn are not matters of record but part of the cause. The pictures taken do not record an auratic object so much as create one. It is not too hard from here to see connections to theories of an image based society where all sense of a referent is lost. In Eco's (1987) phrase a 'hyper-real' world where the pictures and simulations have greater significance in the system than the event itself.

The arguments over authenticity then come back with renewed force. This loss of authentic life is linked to the mediation of existence by images. The spectacle has particular spatial consequences organised through tourism. The world coalesces on a logic of reproducibility (Stallabrass 1996). Sites become marked in terms of their inadequacy to pictures, that then circulate in an intertextual world. This sort of regime means that flows of visitors ostensibly visiting authentic, original sites are actually "fundamentally nothing more than the leisure of going to see what has become banal ... The same modernisation that removed time from the voyage also removed it from the reality of space" (Debord 1967, th168: cf. Robins 1991). A world is created comprising multiple fragments; each site becomes a point in an endless signifying chain of sights, till all it can signify is its incompleteness -- an effect Dienst, drawing upon Derrida, called "programmatology" (1994:138). This is a vision where media serve to deterritorialise society -- converting places into exchangeable sights. Each sight becomes a fragment subject to exchange which means not only are they substitutable but none actually stand as an originary object. Rather than the global village of organic wholeness, the global media produce a sense of the serial distance of each sight from the next. Deleuze (1993) argues this practico-inert conception of space allows a model of quantitative, replicable instants, which differ only in terms of their location, to become the model for a kind of time marked as infinitely divisible and infinitely extendible (Adam 1995, Castoriadis 1993). This kind of time and space lies behind the fragmentation of the world into

scenes that offer 'an uninterrupted field of potential pictures' (Galassi 1981:16-24). This means time works not only to create events in time, that is temporally locate them as part of sequences, but also to frame the events as being of particular kind of time (Adam 1995).

Indeed this re-casting the experiential world might be thought of as a transformation of landscape (figure 2). The estimated sixty billion pictures taken each year would be points of light on the globe, densely clustered round iconic sights and trailing off into a darkened periphery (Stallabrass 1996:13). The bright lights of touristic knowledge would reveal, and obscure, a different version of the landscape. The strength of MacCannell's ideal typical Tourist is that it is a figure for a wider state of society. Tourism is perhaps then the ur-text of modern living -- connecting to visions of global media and an 'information society'.

However, I find this extrapolation rather dissatisfying. It says much that appeals and serves to move beyond simple behavioural models of motivation, and yet it erases the activity and knowledge of tourists. The emphasis on the regionalisation of semiotic economy -- into marked sights, into back stage and front stage and so forth -- is surely part of the tale but only part. These spectacular spaces are linked to accounts of bombardment by images, flows of information and tourists. We have an analytic effect where the actual tourists become rather marginal to the model. Analysts like Deleuze or Debord have in effect 'put phenomenology in reverse, spewing the inward outward, forcing consciousness to become a wandering orphan among the things called images' (Dienst 1994:148). We have to try and distinguish between the de-territorialising effect of reducing sights to photographic symbols and the de-territorialising effect of a certain interpretive optic.

Even descending from the grand sweep of high theory, the practices of tourism still tend to disappear in accounts which prioritise the images produced rather than the practices

producing them. This is the typical strategy of a content analysis of tourist brochures or postcard or, more rarely, the actual pictures themselves (Dann 1996; Löfgren 1980, 1985). Even iconographic accounts drawing on the grand traditions of anthropological structuralism, interpreting visual and material culture (Ball & Smith 1994) also stop at this point. Stopping at the frozen image, leaves us with at best the trace of practice that occurred or occasionally then with some a study drawing on comparative mythology and iconography. It was this conundrum that faced Michael Lesy in his study of family pictures:

"If you look at a couple of hundred thousand snapshots in various regions, under various circumstances, over a long enough period of time, you begin to lose track of people's individuality and freedom of choice as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. You begin to lose track of specific faces and places, and you begin to think about genotypes. In between the howls and the whispers and the cosmic laughter, you catch yourself short and start thinking about pictures as symbols; and once you start on symbols, you get into a lot of trouble with most civilians. Because it is not long before you start reading comparative mythology. Which does about as much good as the study of chivalry did Don Quixote." (1980:xii)

Rather than thus seeing pictures as symbols of some hidden meaning, we can think about the practices involved in producing them. Restoring some sense of eventfulness to the pictures can then be achieved without being seduced by the amnesiac geographies of flows, where the experience of the actual tourist seems all too easily erased. Virilio's (1989) account of the geometrification of vision through media of differing sorts thus tends to reduce places to image sites. To use de Certeau's (1984) terms, current models all too often offer places for

actions that are somehow drained of temporality, and flows that come adrift from the events that produce them. Instead I want to reinscribe tourism as a space of activity, as a practice producing knowledge not necessarily in the form registered by a theoretical gaze.

Practices of Observation

A richer account of viewing practices comes from the work of Krauss (1988) and Crary (1990, 1988) where the focus is on how differing technologies of viewing, comprising the material instruments, their ideologies and the comportment and disposition of viewers, create economies of truth and knowledge which go on to become distinctive, rather than unified, forms of visual consumption. The changes in modes of representing the world become part and parcel of changing social formations and practices (Green 1995). At its simplest level, the practices of observation reveal the social dynamics of tourism. In a straightforward manner we might explore the varying permutations of observation in the tourist situation and its mediation by the presence of a camera. Cohen, Nir & Almagor (1992) examine in detail the possible interactions of strangers and locals in photographic practice, highlighting the way any idea of a singular gaze needs considerable qualification. While assumptions tend to be that pictures are taken of unwitting locals or oppositely of locals performing especially for the tourists, we should also remember the possibilities of guides or tourees shaping pictures. More importantly we should recognise that the tourists are very often the objects of their own gaze -- where tourists depict 'life on the road' or they or locals take pictures of their act of visiting. This is not necessarily celebrating the spectacle of tourism, with the ironic social reflexivity of the post-tourist, but also the common picture of tourists in front of a well known symbol of the area visited. Thus Bourdieu (1990) notes how the scene can dominate the visitors, since fitting in the scene is more important in composing the picture than clarity

about the visitors. Although the tourists are the objects, the scenery functions to authorise the visit, and the activity depicted is not one of gazing on the landscape but turning backs to it and returning the gaze of the camera (Redfoot 1984). The photographic subjects of a travel album may well not be the album's theme, rather their significance to the album maker (who may or may not be the photographer) is the real subject of album. (Walker & Moulton 1989:173). It can be useful and informative then to think through the multiple permutations of who is picturing, what or whom, where and with what context of later exhibition, circulation or display, either in mind or happening as the researcher comes across the pictures (Cook & Crang 1995; Chalfen 1987). Whereas typologies of interaction scenarios and pictures boil the event of visiting to its bones, I want to use them as an entry point to open up the times and spaces of practices. We have a sense of audience and performance here. The visitors are using the picture to say something, as a communicative tool, to reach people distant in space and time. Tourist photography is a practice directed towards these people and places as much as towards the landscape in front of it. The landscape depicted is thus, as noted above, one marked and composed for tourism. It is a process that requires a more attentive study of practice.

If we think of the role of markers and signs it becomes clear that the landscape to be observed is shaped in particular ways something carved out as an object, where sights are located and em-placed by a particular gaze. There is a connection between the scenic postcard or picture and ways of seeing in terms of detachment and objectification of the landscape (Green 1995:37-8; Löfgren 1985:92). Touristic pictures promise a world where the 'co-ordinates of cultural identity and comparison are fixed in small easy-to-carry squares. It is as if a great reduction machine were at work turning life into a billion minatures' (Hutnyk 1996:147). The creation of this landscape through ways of seeing can be conveyed through Heidegger's

terms enframing or enworlding. Heidegger's schema moves us forwards since neither knowing nor known are independent terms, but instead the form of knowledge is linked to the practices through which it is created. In this sense he alerts us to a pre-ontology of what is made visible or apparent by a particular practical stance offering some purchase on the predisposition of tourism, as outlined above, as well as the process itself. That is, objects are offered up to be known in particular ways linked to how they are approached. The work on the general semiotic economy of tourism emphasises the cutting out of places from their original context by the markers of tourism, their reframing in the specifically created contexts of tourism. This commodification and presentation in Heidegger's terms is making places 'occurrent'. This has a particular significance since occurrent indicates something not merely occurring but set out as a specific thing to be experienced -- it is in his terms 'inauthentic'. It is related to a way of being-in-the-world that carves out events from their embedded context. The idea of occurrence thus suggests events do not simply happen but are set up to happen.

Creating Spaces through Practice

The idea of an occurrent landscape suggests seeing the creation of sites as a creation of events waiting to happen. Certainly we need in some way to reflect that, despite being a practice with very little formal coaching, there are few cultural products more standardised and less reflective of the anarchy of individual intent than photographs (Bourdieu 1990). Some have used this as a reason to look for a basic psychological grammar (Hirsch 1981; Ziller 1990). Instead Bourdieu finds a logic in the practice that avoids a retreat into ahistoric essences. As he points out, the manuals of tourism and photography coalesce into a call for a sort of constant curiosity that differs markedly from everyday inattentiveness. This discourse does

not stand apart from the practices but enters into them -- in the form of not just guides about what to look at, but scripts of how to do so. Thus photographic companies have spent almost a century telling the public how to compose pictures and assess their function. This is a social scripting working through the way we have learnt to use a technology, the way sights are set up and how we shape events to provoke its use (figure 3). It is thus a matter of historical evolution and change where the logic of the photographic industry is also involved. As Crary (1990) has argued, there is no one simple master story about ways of seeing but rather a densely patterned interlocking web of technologies of vision and practices of observation that form a complex historical-geography of sight. The photographic industry makes most money from film rather than hardware. The effect of which is to make it more profitable to get average users to use average cameras a little more rather than promote aesthetic or technical innovation. The interests of the industry have produced an advertising and marketing direction that has consistently stressed features that make camera easy to use. Kodak went global with the slogan 'Point. Shoot. We do the rest' almost a century ago. Nowadays most advertising still highlights features such as auto-focus. The century has not been about campaigns of technical training or skills but simplicity and instantaneity of use marketed through the idea of self- expression.

It has also served to colonise more and more experiences to produce a growing market under the rhetoric of spontaneous snapshots. From formal portrait photographs to holiday snaps to domestic rites of passage to family events the amount of life enframed by photographic vision has increased, and while less and less is formally posed we might wonder whether more and more is not always ready to be snapped. There is what Tagg (1990) calls the dialectic of self-expression and colonisation of the lifeworld. However, in restating this trend we risk repeating a quest for authenticity -- where we nostalgically appeal to some authentic

unmediated type of experience as a contrast. We risk moving from seeing representations and images overwhelming sites to seeing a form of photographic practice corrupting some original model of experience. I want to suggest instead going with the grain of practices by looking at tourist photography as a knowledge producing practice, undeniably situated in specific ways but which needs understanding rather than denunciation. In this sense I want to develop a notion of reflexivity both within the practice, it is a self-knowing operation in the sense of constructing a story of the self, and between it and academic understandings where we might look to the parallels of two knowledge producing systems. Trinh Minh-ha (1989) has argued that we might usefully see anthropology as 'gossip', in terms of a profuse idle chatter about someone -- a production of knowledge through chatter (cf. Crick 1992). Likewise we have to note the chattering and storied nature of tourism, both in meetings of travellers and in later recountings of events. The idiom and props for this sort of knowledge production is often photographic (Hutnyk 1996:62-4, 145; Murphy 1993). Perhaps then, we should look at pictures as opening up narratives around the moment captured (Price 1994:40; Walker & Moulton 1989:168). I want to argue that relationships of time and space are configured in a particular manner through this knowledge production system.

Time and Space

The creation of an occurrent landscape is though only one element of the times and spaces of tourism. It is the creation of so many places, whereas after de Certeau (1984), we might see space as practised place. Analysing inscription and marking, without looking for practices, can only produce a mortuary geography drained of the actual life that inhabits these places. Interestingly though this sense of time lost seems as though it could be used productively to tell us about tourism. Photographs are often argued to be a necessarily elegaic object --

tearing a moment of the past out and preserving it into the future. We might see obvious parallels with the sort of temporal manipulation engaged in by museums or recreated tourist experiences (Crang 1996b) and indeed with the fortuitous moment when a visitor shows a picture of York in fog which manages to crop out most 'modern intrusions'. But the ways in which photography connects personal time to tourism seems a more rewarding avenue to pursue here. Tourist photography, replicates the semiological economy outlined above, in the way it denies any given moment's self-presence. Tourism is often criticised for the way it generates inauthentic, other-directed behaviour among locals -- where the event or culture stops being-for-itself and is directed for outsiders. Photography also enters into events so they are not for-themselves. Pictures do not simply record events; the practices of photography are part of them. The events become mortgaged to the future, where self-presentation is not simply about current companions or audiences but future ones removed in space and time (figure 4). Photography provides a technology through which space and time bound events can be made spatially and temporally portable.

This spatio-temporal displacement needs to be followed through carefully. The times and spaces involved can be varied and complex in both empirical and theoretical senses. If we sketch out some of the lineaments of this topology we can though see some key trends. We need to think of the intended audience. These may be the participants themselves -- in terms of using mementoes and souvenirs to bring back memories. The picturing acts to make the present appear as a foreshadowing of its own reminiscence. This is very much the message of successive advertising campaigns by companies like Kodak, with slogans like 'don't let these precious memories slip away' and visuals showing depicted matter fading to grey, evoking the transitoriness of experience against the relative permanence of photographs (figure 3). Human memory and actual experience is portrayed as fallible and inferior to its celluloid

trace. My favourite evocation of how taken for granted this devaluation of unaided memory can be is the shock I felt when reading the following anecdote:

‘When Joe Louis was asked shortly before he died whether he would like to see a film of his greatest triumph (the second fight with Max Schnellling), he tersely declined: “I was there” . ’

(Murphy 1993:ix)

It is not only a matter of personal memory, the audience can also be other people, be they relatives or friends (present or future). In which case we need to bring in dynamics of status display; the easiest (clichéd) example would be showing off holiday slides to neighbours. While there are clearly differences between the visitor who described trawling through remote Polish railway lines, and taking illegal pictures from the car in the former East Germany, to catch them ‘before they were modernised’ and a visitor simply catching a moment in their children’s growth, one focusing on the transient object the other on the transience of life, the future perfect (will have been) sense of photography stretches across both. We might then see this taking the logic of reminiscence further until being there is less crucial than having been (Kelly 1987, 1986). Of course, a similar function for a spatially removed audience can be performed by postcards -- where the message written may be ‘wish you were here’ but it is also clearly, ‘I was and you are not’. Snapshots are also temporally mediated forms of display, in terms of the social trajectory of the takers. Thus they may be used years or decades after the event when the social circumstances of the keepers may have changed considerably.

This focus on self-image manipulation seems too instrumental a vision of tourism. Self-awareness and self-presentation should not necessarily imply a nexus of social calculation

and cynicism. The ideology of photographs is also one of authenticity -- preserving the instant, unposed, and spontaneous. This works to make people already aware of the possibility of taking or being in pictures and comes to be part of normal self-presentation. We might look to a middle class 'Kodak culture' (Chalfen 1987) where photographs are used to affirm the values of success, earned leisure and familial happiness that are privileged by that class fraction. Similarly Bourdieu (1990) discusses family photography where the picture both celebrates the object (the family) and the practices serve to reinforce the rituals of the family. So we might find a similar circularity, without intentionality, in touristic pictures. As Sontag put it, '[i]t seems positively unnatural to travel for pleasure without taking a camera along. Photographs will offer indisputable evidence that the trip was made, the program was carried out, that fun was had' (1977:9). Photographs are social evidence of achievement, but pleasurable evidence. While thus far I have stressed the evidentiary qualities of pictures as 'record of achievement' in fact we should be equally alert to the humorous sides. I say this because so often research methods work to stress the functional and instrumental aspects of tourism. Reading study after study of tourism, it is very hard to get a sense of people actually enjoying themselves or having fun. We might call it the social reproduction of seriousness in academic studies.

This account of the after-life or circulation of snapshots does not exhaust the time-space shifts in pictures. If we think of the earlier comments on a hermeneutic circle then we have to see photographic images pre-figuring the experience as well. Not only that but our preparedness to take pictures is a pre-disposition structuring the experience. A predisposition also mediated by the particular technology that also has social implications. Thus we might ask who is taking the pictures. Certainly some technologies are more strongly gendered as masculine than others -- thinking of, say, camcorders. The scene that most brought this home

to me was where a family with whom I was working visited a castle with the camcorder I had lent them. The father and son went off filming a boy's own adventure of the son exploring the ruined grounds. As they emerge from the moat one scene was of the mother still sitting on a tumbled wall engrossed in her book. In a later interview the father narrated this incident with the comment that ruined castles to her were a pile of rock, while to the son the opportunities this provided for climbing and adventure were the very point of the sites. There can also be whole hierarchies of taste over cameras -- from throwaway one offs, to automatics to professional ones with lenses and so forth. The logic need not simply be one of increasing price and complexity; it may be that having too expensive a camera may suggest the photographer is trying too hard, or indeed some may reject a camera all together in a reflexive gesture aimed to recover authentic experiences (Redfoot 1984; Bourdieu 1990).

Meanwhile studies of the use of photographs suggest that women are often more active in their collecting editing and display (Lesy 1980). There can also be whole hierarchies of taste over cameras - from throwaway one offs, to automatics to professional ones with lenses and so forth. The logic need not simply be one of increasing price and complexity; it may be that having too expensive a camera may suggest the photographer is trying too hard, or indeed some may reject a camera all together in a reflexive gesture aimed to recover authentic experiences (Redfoot 1984; Boudieu 1990). And of course the spaces of display and archive are entangled in this discussion. Those pictures that will move into albums, will be different from those condemned to the loft, those on the bedside table different from the best room's mantelpiece; those on video different from those made into slides; family slides different from those that become adapted to illustrate lectures or books. The practices within which these pictures sit are not solely visual but rather are endlessly storied. I have never been shown a picture in total silence. Indeed, the presence of the 'owner' or 'keeper' with the person looking at tourist shots, as part of an occasion for social interaction, means pictures

are offered with preferred interpretations and guidance. Within the heritage business there is a whole circulation of archive pictures appearing in books, in exhibits, in 'ye olde Aletaster' and even in supermarkets.

Pictures allow the possibility of a capitalisation of experience. To use Benjamin's phrase they convert the 'erlebnis' of actual experience into 'erfahrung' of deceased experience (Benjamin 1971; Sontag 1977:7). The practices of photography insert a new form of time into the events. It is not merely that the event becomes located in a series but that seriality enters into the event itself. It is not merely the presented past that is a foreign country but also the event of going to see its monuments -- pictures double encode the sense of loss and presence. The possibility of the photograph as a souvenir converts a journey into an excursion (Stewart 1984) where experience is allowed to be accumulated rather than lost, or, rather the acknowledged loss of the experience is what produces aesthetic charge in the picture -- perhaps explaining why other people's holiday snaps can be so tedious. This is encapsulated by what Agamben (1993:33) calls the fetish-paradox: 'the fetish confronts us with the paradox of an unattainable object that satisfies a human need precisely through its being unobtainable'. The context of display also plays a mediating role in the relationship to these lost moments. Very few pictures are viewed singly but more often as part of an album or even more grandly an archive and we need to think how the assemblage of images affects them. Events can be piled up or brought together through a narrative in the sequence of images. This is perhaps most obviously evident in the genre of photographic journeys spawned by the early spread of photography. We can find systematic examples in the practices of imperialist propaganda but equally in early tourism (Bate 1992; Ryan 1996). Thus the photographer August Léon was employed by the financier Albert Kahn as part of his project to create a photographic 'planet archive'. Léon travelled through Sweden and round Lake Siljan in

1910, and his itinerary and experiences were accumulated to form a picture of a particular regional culture as suggested by the exhibition of these pictures, a version of which was published as 'Med hyrbil och kamera till Dalarna 1910' ('Through Dalarna in 1910 with Hired Car and Camera'; Leksands Kulturnämnd 1994). We need then to think about the ways structures of journeys and particular technologies of travel intersect with those of representation (Löfgren 1985:95-6) -- where travellers will liken photography to looking from a train window (Hutnyk 1996:151). From a spatial practice of travel was built up a picture of a folk culture and a region before the camera lens. Chance events and encounters are frozen as representatives of that culture. Of course these pictures were prefigured by an artistic movement that celebrated the region as worthy of depiction and the pictures (and similar ones) went on to shape expectations of later tours. The pictures thus traced back examples of local culture promoted through Swedish pavilions at world fairs, themselves another version of the world as exhibition, and also recorded the locals as tourers already installed as theatrical guides in museums, and the invented 'folk' costumes of hotel staff as well as authentic folk costumes then being formalized, redefined and canonized as part of a nationalist movement. This journey brings us back to earlier suggestions of how voyages also set up incidents in an inter-textual system related to each other rather than being self-present. If we turn from the ever receding originary moment and think instead of the practice of an accumulatory project, it opens up possibilities for thinking through the interaction of tourism practices, social formations and self-definition.

Modern Stories and Knowledge in Tourism

The sense of an accumulatory project is not a universal or necessary part of photography, but it is strongly linked to tourism. We need only think of the colloquial phrases of 'doing Italy'

or 'doing Scandinavia' to see an energetic inquisitiveness in the process. It is one Bourdieu (1990) linked strongly to his concept of a new petite bourgeoisie. For this class fraction, Bourdieu saw a strong ethos of self-improvement typified by acquiring cultural knowledge and symbols. In contrast he suggested a more haute bourgeois stance was one where unmediated experience was more highly valued, and was enabled by taken-for-granted cultural competences. Without these competences tourists create a middle-brow form of knowledge that aspires to the same aesthetic criteria but works through self-education. The ability of photography to capitalise experiences provides an opportunity for the accumulation of cultural symbols which appears to fit this *modus vivendi*. We can echo Strathern's (1992:x) question as to whether 'this is the last of a long line of middle-class projects, one wonders: middle-class because this is the class that makes a project out of life, that makes experience out of interactions' (emphasis added). Given this is the class background of most visitors to heritage attractions the use of cameras seems to offer a way of keying into a mode of touristic experience and knowledge production.

The capitalisation of experience allowed also keys in to debates over the relationship of commodification and everyday life. It also offers the possibility that photography is a form of self-narration suitable for the modern age. It is a form of self-creation that is based around a fractured and presentational existence, worked through technologies of representation (Walker & Moulton 1989; Reme 1993:36). Whereas classical autobiography has been dominated by linear, chrono-logical forms these popular productions might be seen more as spatial stories. Conscious tellings of lives through particular spaces. Seeing the pictures as thus embedded in time-spaces of self-(re-)presentation and narration seems to offer some mileage beyond the world of circulating images so often suggested. We also need to think then of pictures not simply as about loss but also connectivity and contact. The snapshot, like

all souvenirs, is not simply a pictorial form but an object. An object that connects us to other times and spaces by its material presence. The logic is not purely metaphoric and iconic but also metonymic -- its presence reminds us of a larger whole. So in thinking about pictures we need to see them as props, perhaps as topoi, on which certain memories and events are hung (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton 1981). Or less consciously perhaps see them as reminders or madelaines that may unbidden trigger memories of past occurrences. In this way we can use pictures to reinsert an eventfulness and temporality often strikingly absent in totalising visions of tourism.

The academic gaze often replicates the practices of tourism. So much of what is produced is couched in a rhetoric of 'peering beneath the veil', seeing what is really going on -- as though that did not also comprise part of the practice being studied. We do not have to accept a total isomorphism of the manner of study and the object of study to see strikingly similar logics. The trip into the field to acquire knowledge, the gathering of material, the souvenirs as strips of deceased experience (Hastrup 1993), the presentation of pictures as proof of having been to authorise our stories (Levi-Strauss 1973:17-8), the perpetual present of the moments we talk about and the conversion of all this to academic capital (de Certeau 1988); the parallels are striking. Indeed so are the framing of an academic gaze and the way it too shapes places into sites of knowledge. I hope this essay has set in motion some thoughts about the relationships between forms of knowledge. The phrase 'knowing tourism', is meant to open a threefold field. First, the sense of academics knowing about tourism. Second, the focus on practices also shows tourists as self-knowing. I do not mean this in the sense of a post-tourist with an ironically mocking self-awareness -- for which I think the evidence is mixed. I mean it in the general sense of self-presentation and self-monitoring, thinking about our performances and who may see them when and where -- which does not exclude ironic

detachment as one among other strategies. Thirdly, I have been trying to suggest that tourism producing knowledge about ourselves and the world. Not immaculate or academic knowledge but knowledge none the less. In order to see this knowledge as active I have suggested we need to look at the practices of tourism and the way they are embedded in and, in turn, transform times and spaces.

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Captions

Fig 1 Stanley park Vancouver. The visitors are taking turns being photographed in front of the poles.

Fig 2 The campaign for Beamish Museum Co. Durham from 1994, clearly and knowingly parallels the staging of the landscape in the open air museum with the staging of historical epic films.

Fig 3 The Nation's Storyteller. This Kodak advert from the 1930s is typical in inscribing photography as a necessary part of modern autobiography.

Fig 4 The cartoon 'Every Picture Tells a Story' by Posy Simmonds where self-presentation is the story told.