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Sightseeing and Social Structure

THE MORAL INTEGRATION OF MODERNITY

The Place of the Attraction in Modern Society

MODERN society constitutes itself as a labyrinthine structure of norms governing access to its workshops, offices, neighborhoods and semipublic places. As population density increases, this maze of norms manifests itself in physical divisions, walls, ceilings, fences, floors, hedges, barricades and signs marking the limits of a community, an establishment, or a person's space.[1] This social system contains interstitial corridors—halls, streets, elevators, bridges, waterways, airways and subways. These corridors are filled with things anyone can see, whether he wants to or not. Erving Goffman has studied behavior in public places and relations in public for what they can reveal about our collective pride, shame and guilt.[2] I want to follow his lead and suggest that behavior is only one of the visible, public representations of social structure found in public places. We also find decay, refuse, human and industrial derelicts, monuments, museums, parks, decorated plazas and architectural shows of industrial virtue. Public behavior and these other visible public parts of society are tourist attractions.

Sightseeing and the Moral Order

The organization of behavior and objects in public places is functionally equivalent to the sacred text that still serves as the moral base

of traditional society. That is, public places contain the representations of good and evil that apply universally to modern man in general.

A touristic attitude of respectful admiration is called forth by the finer attractions, the monuments, and a no less important attitude of disgust attaches itself to the uncontrolled garbage heaps, muggings, abandoned and tumbledown buildings, polluted rivers and the like. Disgust over these items is the negative pole of respect for the monuments. Together, the two provide a moral stability to the modern touristic consciousness that extends beyond immediate social relationships to the structure and organization of the total society.

The tours of Appalachian communities and northern inner-city cores taken by politicians provide examples of negative sightseeing. This kind of tour is usually conducted by a local character who has connections outside of his community. The local points out and explains and complains about the rusting auto hulks, the corn that did not come up, winos and junkies on the nod, flood damage and other features of the area to the politician who expresses his concern. While politicians and other public figures like Eleanor Roosevelt and the Kennedys are certainly the leaders here, this type of sightseeing is increasingly available to members of the middle class at large. The *New York Times* reports that seventy people answered an advertisement inviting tourists to spend "21 days 'in the land of the Hatfields and McCoys' for $378.00, living in with some of the poorest people in the U.S. in Mingo County, West Virginia."[3] Similarly, in 1967, the Penny Sightseeing Company inaugurated extensive guided tours of Harlem.[4] Recent ecological awareness has given rise to some imaginative variations: bus tours of "The Ten Top Polluters in Action" were available in Philadelphia during "Earth Week" in April, 1970.

This touristic form of moral involvement with diverse public representations of race, poverty, urban structures, social ills, and, of course, the public "good," the monuments, is a modern alternative to systems of in-group morality built out of binary oppositions: insider vs. outsider, us vs. them. In traditional society, man could not survive unless he oriented his behavior in a "we are good—they are bad" framework. Although some of its remains are still to be found in modern politics, such traditional morality is not efficacious in the modern world. Social structural differentiation has broken up traditional loyalties. Now it is impossible to determine with any accuracy who "we" are and who "they" are. Man cannot therefore survive in the modern world if he tries to continue to orient his behavior in a traditional "we are good—they are bad" framework. As man enters the modern world, the entire field of social facts—poverty, race, class, work—is open to ongoing moral evaluation and interpretation. This craziness of mere distinctions forces the modern consciousness to explore beyond the frontiers of traditional prejudice and bigotry in its search for a moral identity. Only "middle Americans" (if such people actually exist) and primitives—peoples whose lives are "everyday" in the pejorative, grinding sense of the term—may feel fully a part of their own world. Modern man has been condemned to look elsewhere, everywhere, for his authenticity, to see if he can catch a glimpse of it reflected in the simplicity, poverty, chastity or purity of others.

The Structure of the Attraction

I have defined a tourist attraction as an empirical relationship between a *tourist*, a *sight* and a *marker* (a piece of information about a sight). A simple model of the attraction can be presented in the following form:

[tourist / sight / marker]
attraction

Note that markers may take many different forms: guidebooks, informational tablets, slide shows, travelogues, souvenir matchbooks, etc. Note also that no *naturalistic* definition of the sight is possible. Well-marked sights that attract tourists include such items as mountain ranges, Napoleon's hat, moon rocks, Grant's tomb, even entire nation-states. The attractions are often indistinguishable from their less famous relatives. If they were not marked, it would be impossible for a layman to distinguish, on the basis of appearance alone, between moon rocks brought back by astronauts and pebbles picked up at Craters of the Moon National Monument in Idaho. But one is a sight and the other a souvenir, a kind of marker. Similarly, hippies are tourists and, at home in the Haight Ashbury, they are also sights that tourists come to see, or at least they used to be.

The distinguishing characteristic of those things that are collectively thought to be "true sights" is suggested by a second look at the moon rock example. *Souvenirs* are collected by *individuals*, by tourists, while *sights* are "collected" by entire societies. The entire U.S.A. is behind the gathering of moon rocks, or at least it is supposed to be, and hippies are a reflection of our collective affluence and decadence.

The origin of the attraction in the collective consciousness is not always so obvious as it is when a society dramatizes its values and capabilities by sending its representatives out into the solar system. Nevertheless, the collective determination of "true sights" is clear cut. The tourist has no difficulty deciding the sights he ought to see. His only problem is getting around to all of them. Even under conditions where there is no end of things to see, some mysterious institutional force operates on the totality in advance of the arrival of tourists, separating out the specific sights which are the attractions. In the Louvre, for example, the attraction is the Mona Lisa. The rest is undifferentiated art in the abstract. Moderns somehow know what the important attractions are, even in remote places. This miracle of consensus that transcends national boundaries rests on an elaborate set of institutional mechanisms, a twofold process of *sight sacralization* that is met with a corresponding *ritual attitude* on the part of tourists.

Sightseeing as Modern Ritual

Erving Goffman has defined ritual as a "perfunctory, conventionalized act through which an individual portrays his respect and regard for some object of ultimate value to its stand-in."[5] This is translated into the individual consciousness as a sense of duty, albeit a duty that is often lovingly performed. Under conditions of high social integration, the ritual attitude may lose all appearance of coercive externality. It may, that is, permeate an individual's inmost being so he performs his ritual obligations zealously and without thought for himself or for social consequences.

Modern international sightseeing possesses its own moral structure, a collective sense that certain sights must be seen. Some tourists will resist, no doubt, the suggestion that they are motivated by an elementary impluse analogous to the one that animates the Australian's awe for his Churinga boards. The Australian would

certainly resist such a suggestion. Nevertheless, modern guided tours, in Goffman's terms, are "extensive ceremonial agendas involving long strings of obligatory rites." If one goes to Europe, one "must see" Paris; if one goes to Paris, one "must see" Notre Dame, the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre; if one goes to the Louvre, one "must see" the Venus de Milo and, of course, the Mona Lisa. There are quite literally millions of tourists who have spent their savings to make the pilgrimage to see these sights. Some who have not been "there" have reported to me that they want to see these sights "with all their hearts."

It is noteworthy that no one escapes the system of attractions except by retreat into a stay-at-home, traditionalist stance: that is, no one is exempt from the obligation to go sightseeing except the local person. The Manhattanite who has never been to the Statue of Liberty is a mythic image in our society, as is the reverse image of the big-city people who come out into the country expressing fascination with things the local folk care little about. The ritual attitude of the tourist originates in the act of travel itself and culminates when he arrives in the presence of the sight.

Some tourists feel so strongly about the sight they are visiting that they want to be alone in its presence, and they become annoyed at other tourists for profaning the place by crowding around "like sheep." Some sights become so important that tourists avoid use of their proper names: in the Pacific Northwest, Mount Rainier is called "The Mountain," and all up and down the West Coast of the United States, San Francisco is called "The City."

Traditional religious institutions are everywhere accommodating the movements of tourists. In "The Holy Land," the tour has followed in the path of the religious pilgrimage and is replacing it. Throughout the world, churches, cathedrals, mosques, and temples are being converted from religious to touristic functions.

The Stages of Sight Sacralization

In structural studies, it is not sufficient to build a model of an aspect of society entirely out of attitudes and behavior of individuals. It is also necessary to specify in detail the linkages between the attitudes and behavior and concrete institutional settings.

Perhaps there are, or have been, some sights which are so spec-

tacular in themselves that no institutional support is required to mark them off as attractions. The original set of attractions is called, after the fashion of primitives, by the name of the sentiment they were supposed to have generated: "The Seven Wonders of the World." Modern sights, with but few exceptions, are not so evidently reflective of important social values as the Seven Wonders must have been. Attractions such as Cypress Gardens, the statue of the Little Mermaid in the harbor at Copenhagen, the Cape Hatteras Light and the like, risk losing their broader sociosymbolic meanings, becoming once more mere aspects of a limited social setting. Massive institutional support is often required for sight sacralization in the modern world.

The first stage of sight sacralization takes place when the sight is marked off from similar objects as worthy of preservation. This stage may be arrived at deductively from the model of the attraction

[tourist / sight / *marker*]
attraction

or it may be arrived at inductively by empirical observation. Sights have markers. Sometimes an act of Congress is necessary, as in the official designation of a national park or historical shrine. This first stage can be called the *naming phase* of sight sacralization. Often, before the naming phase, a great deal of work goes into the authentication of the candidate for sacralization. Objects are x-rayed, baked, photographed with special equipment and examined by experts. Reports are filed testifying to the object's aesthetic, historical, monetary, recreational and social values.

Second is the *framing and elevation* phase. Elevation is the putting on display of an object—placement in a case, on a pedestal or opened up for visitation. Framing is the placement of an official boundary around the object. On a practical level, two types of framing occur: protecting and enhancing. Protection seems to have been the motive behind the decision recently taken at the Louvre to place the Mona Lisa (but none of the other paintings) behind glass. When spotlights are placed on a building or a painting, it is enhanced. Most efforts to protect a sacred object, such as hanging a silk cord in front of it, or putting extra guards on duty around it, can also be read as a kind of enhancement, so the distinction between protection and enhancement eventually breaks down. Tourists before the Mona Lisa often remark: "Oh, it's the only one with glass," or "It must be the most valuable, it has glass in front." Advanced framing occurs when the rest of the world is forced back from the object and the space in between is landscaped. Versailles and the Washington Monument are "framed" in this way.

When the framing material that is used has itself entered the first stage of sacralization (marking), a third stage has been entered. This stage can be called *enshrinement*. The model here is Sainte Chapelle, the church built by Saint Louis as a container for the "true Crown of Thorns" which he had purchased from Baldwin of Constantinople. Sainte Chapelle is, of course, a tourist attraction in its own right. Similarly, in the Gutenberg Museum, in Gutenberg, Germany, the original Gutenberg Bible is displayed under special lights on a pedestal in a darkened enclosure in a larger room. The walls of the larger room are hung with precious documents, including a manuscript by Beethoven.

The next stage of sacralization is *mechanical reproduction* of the sacred object: the creation of prints, photographs, models or effigies of the object which are themselves valued and displayed. It is the mechanical reproduction phase of sacralization that is most responsible for setting the tourist in motion on his journey to find the true object. And he is not disappointed. Alongside of the copies of it, it has to be The Real Thing.

The final stage of sight sacralization is *social reproduction*, as occurs when groups, cities, and regions begin to name themselves after famous attractions.

Tourist attractions are not merely a collection of random material representations. When they appear in itineraries, they have a moral claim on the tourist and, at the same time, they tend toward universality, incorporating natural, social, historical and cultural domains in a single representation made possible by the tour. This morally enforced universality is the basis of a general system of classification of societal elements produced without conscious effort. No person or agency is officially responsible for the worldwide proliferation of tourist attractions. They have appeared naturally, each seeming to respond to localized causes.

Nevertheless, when they are considered as a totality, tourist at-

tractions reveal themselves to be a taxonomy of structural elements. Interestingly, this natural taxonomic system contains the analytical classification of social structure currently in use by social scientists. A North American itinerary, for example, contains domestic, commercial and industrial establishments, occupations, public-service and transportation facilities, urban neighborhoods, communities and members of solidary (or, at least, identifiable) subgroups of American society. The specific attractions representing these structural categories would include the Empire State Building, an Edwardian house in Boston's Back Bay, a Royal Canadian mounted policeman, a Mississippi River bridge, Grand Coulee Dam, an Indian totem pole, San Francisco's Chinatown, a cable car, Tijuana, Indians, cowboys, an ante-bellum mansion, an Amish farm, Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Institution and Washington Cathedral.

Taken together, tourist attractions and the behavior surrounding them are, I think, one of the most complex and orderly of the several universal codes that constitute modern society, although not so complex and orderly as, for example, a language.

Claude Lévi-Strauss claims that there is no such system in modern society. I think it is worth exploring the possible base of this claim, which is by no means confined to Lévi-Strauss's offhand remarks. Erving Goffman has similarly suggested that:

> in contemporary society rituals performed to stand-ins for supernatural entities are everywhere in decay, as are extensive ceremonial agendas involving long strings of obligatory rites. What remains are brief rituals one individual performs for another, attesting to civility and good will on the performer's part and to the recipient's possession of a small patrimony of sacredness.[6]

I think that the failure of Goffman and Lévi-Strauss to note the existence of social integration on a macrostructural level in modern society can be traced to a methodological deficiency: neither of them has developed the use of systemic variables for his analysis of social structure. In my own studies, I was able to bypass Lévi-Strauss's critique by working up the very dimension of modernity that he named as its most salient feature: its chaotic fragmentation, its *differentiation*.

Interestingly, the approach I used was anticipated by Émile Durkheim, who invented the use of systemic variables for sociological analysis and who named tourist attractions ("works of art" and "historical monuments") in his basic listing of social facts. Durkheim wrote:

> Social facts, on the contrary [he has just been writing of psychological facts], qualify far more naturally and immediately as things. Law is embodied in codes . . . fashions are preserved in costumes; taste in works of art . . . [and] the currents of daily life are recorded in statistical figures and historical monuments. By their very nature they tend toward an independent existence outside the individual consciousness, which they dominate.[7]

Until now, no sociologist took up Durkheim's suggestion that "costumes," "art" and "monuments" are keys to modern social structure. The structure of the attraction was deciphered by accident by the culture critic Walter Benjamin while working on a different problem. But Benjamin, perhaps because of his commitment to an orthodox version of Marxist theory, inverted all the basic relations. He wrote:

> The uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition. This tradition itself is thoroughly alive and extremely changeable. An ancient statue of Venus, for example, stood in a different traditional context with the Greeks, who made it an object of veneration, than with the clerics of the Middle Ages, who viewed it as an ominous idol. Both of them, however, were equally confronted with its uniqueness, that is, its aura. Originally the contextual integration of art in tradition found its expression in the cult. We know that the earliest art works originated in the service of ritual—first the magical, then the religious kind. It is significant that the existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function. In other words, the unique value of the "authentic" work of art has its basis in ritual, the location of its original use value.[8]

Setting aside for the moment Marxist concerns for "use value," I want to suggest that society does not produce art: artists do. Society, for its part, can only produce the importance, "reality" or "originality" of a work of art by piling up representations of it alongside. Benjamin believed that the reproductions of the work of art are produced because the work has a socially based "aura" about it, the "aura" being a residue of its origins in a primordial ritual. He should

have reversed his terms. The work becomes "authentic" only after the first copy of it is produced. The reproductions *are* the aura, and the ritual, far from being a point of origin, *derives* from the relationship between the original object and its socially constructed importance. I would argue that this is the structure of the attraction in modern society, including the artistic attractions, and the reason the Grand Canyon has a touristic "aura" about it even though it did not originate in ritual.

ATTRACTIONS AND STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION

In the tourists' consciousness, the attractions are not analyzed out as I present them type by type in the next sections and chapters. They appear sequentially, unfolding before the tourist so long as he continues his sightseeing. The touristic value of a modern community lies in the way it organizes social, historical, cultural and natural elements into a stream of impressions. Guidebooks contain references to all types of attractions, but the lively descriptions tend to be of the social materials. Modern society makes of itself its principal attraction in which the other attractions are embedded. Baedeker wrote of Paris:

> Paris is not only the political metropolis of France, but also the center of the artistic, scientific, commercial, and industrial life of the nation. Almost every branch of French industry is represented here, from the fine-art handicrafts to the construction of powerful machinery. . . .
>
> The central quarters of the city are remarkably bustling and animated, but owing to the ample breadth of the new streets and boulevards and the fact that many of them are paved with asphalt or wood, Paris is a far less noisy place than many other large cities. Its comparative tranquility, however, is often rudely interrupted by the discordant cries of the itinerant hawkers of wares of every kind, such as "old clothes" men, the vendors of various kinds of comestibles, the crockery-menders, the "fontaniers" (who clean and repair filters, etc.), the dog barbers, and newspaper-sellers. As a rule, however, they are clean and tidy in their dress, polite in manner, self-respecting, and devoid of the squalor and ruffianism which too often characterise their class.[9]

Georg Simmel began the analysis of this modern form of social consciousness which takes as its point of departure social structure itself. Simmel wrote:

> Man is a differentiating creature. His mind is stimulated by the differences between a momentary impression and the one which preceded it. Lasting impressions, impressions which differ only slightly from one another, impressions which take a regular and habitual course and show regular and habitual contrasts—all these use up, so to speak, less consciousness than does the rapid crowding of changing images, the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance, and the unexpectedness of onrushing impressions. These are the psychological conditions which the metropolis creates. With each crossing of the street, with the tempo and multiplicity of the economic, occupational and social life, the city sets up a deep contrast with the small town and rural life with reference to the sensory foundations of psychic life.[10]

Simmel claims to be working out an aspect of the *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* distinction. It would be more accurate to say that he is describing the difference between everyday life impressions, be they rural *or* urban, and the impressions of a strange place formed by a tourist on a visit, a vantage point Simmel knew well.[11]

Baedeker's and Simmel's stress on the work dimension of society is also found in touristic descriptions of New York City, which is always in the process of being rebuilt, and the waterfront areas of any city that has them. Similarly, Mideastern and North African peoples have traditionally made much use of their streets as places of work, and tourists from the Christian West seem to have inexhaustible fascination for places such as Istanbul, Tangiers, Damascus and Casablanca, where they can see factories without walls.

Primitive social life is nearly totally exposed to outsiders who happen to be present. Perhaps some of our love for primitives is attached to this innocent openness.

Modern society, originally quite closed up, is rapidly restructuring or institutionalizing the rights of outsiders (that is, of individuals not functionally connected to the operation) to look into its diverse aspects. Institutions are fitted with arenas, platforms and chambers set aside for the exclusive use of tourists. The courtroom is the most important institution in a democratic society. It was among the first to open to the outside and, I think, it will be among the first to close as the workings of society are increasingly revealed through the opening

of other institutions to tourists. The New York Stock Exchange and the Corning Glass factory have specially designated visitors' hours, entrances and galleries. Mental hospitals, army bases and grade schools stage periodic open houses where not mere work but Good Work is displayed. The men who make pizza crusts by tossing the dough in the air often work in windows where they can be watched from the sidewalk. Construction companies cut peepholes into the fences around their work, nicely arranging the holes for sightseers of different heights. The becoming public of almost everything—a process that makes all men equal before the attraction—is a necessary part of the integrity of the modern social world.

TOURIST DISTRICTS

Distinctive local attractions contain (just behind, beside or embedded in the parts presented to the tourists) working offices, shops, services and facilities: often an entire urban structure is operating behind its touristic front. Some of these touristic urban areas are composed of touristic *districts*. Paris is "made up" of the Latin Quarter, Pigalle, Montparnasse, Montmartre; San Francisco is made up of the Haight Ashbury, the Barbary Coast and Chinatown; and London, of Soho, Piccadilly Circus, Blackfriars, Covent Gardens, the Strand. Less touristically developed areas have only one tourist district and are, therefore, sometimes upstaged by it: the Casbah, Beverly Hills, Greenwich Village. An urban sociologist or an ethnographer might point out that cities are composed of much more than their tourist areas, but this is obvious. Even tourists are aware of this. More important is the way the tourist attractions appear on a regional base as a model of social structure, beginning with "suggested" or "recommended" *communities*, *regions* and *neighborhoods*, and extending to matters of detail, setting the tourist up with a matrix he can fill in (if he wishes) with his own discoveries of his own typical little *markets*, *towns*, *restaurants* and *people*. This touristic matrix assures that the social structure that is recomposed via the tour, while always partial, is nevertheless not a skewed or warped representation of reality. Once on tour, only the individual imagination can modify reality, and so

long as the faculty of imagination is at rest, society appears such as it is.

The taxonomy of structural elements provided by the attractions is universal, not because it *already* contains everything it might contain but rather, because the logic behind it is potentially inclusive. It sets up relationships between elements (as between neighborhoods and their cities) which cross the artificial boundaries between levels of social organization, society and culture, and culture and nature. Still, the resulting itineraries rarely penetrate lovingly into the precious details of a society as a Southern novelist might, peeling back layer after layer of local historical, cultural and social facts, although this is the ideal of a certain type of snobbish tourism. Such potential exists in the structure of the tour, but it goes for the most part untapped. Attractions are usually organized more on the model of the filing system of a disinterested observer, like a scientist who separates his passions from their object, reserving them entirely for matters of method; or like a carpetbagging politician who calculates his rhetoric while reading a printout of the demographic characteristics of the region he wants to represent. In short, the tourist world is complete in its way, but it is constructed after the fashion of all worlds that are filled with people who are just passing through and know it.

THE DIFFERENTIATIONS OF THE TOURIST WORLD

Functioning *establishments* figure prominently as tourist attractions. Commercial, industrial and business establishments are also basic features of social regions, or they are first among the elements from which regions are composed. Some, such as the Empire State Building, the now-defunct Les Halles in Paris, and Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco, overwhelm their districts. Others fit together in a neat structural arrangement of little establishments that contribute to their district's special local character: flower shops, meat and vegetable markets, shoe repair shops, neighborhood churches. Unlike the Empire State Building, with its elevators expressly for sightseers, these little establishments may not be prepared for the outside visitors they attract. A priest who made his parish famous had

this problem, but apparently he is adjusting to the presence of tourists:

> For a time, in fact, St. Boniface became an attraction for tourists and white liberals from the suburbs. Father Groppi recalled that he had sometimes been critical of the whites who overflowed the Sunday masses at St. Boniface and then returned to their suburban homes.
>
> "But now I can understand their problems," he said. "They come from conservative parishes and were tired of their parish organizations, the Holy Name Society and that sort of nonsense."[12]

Under normal conditions of touristic development, no social establishment ultimately resists conversion into an attraction, not even *domestic establishments*. Selected homes in the "Society Hill" section of downtown Philadelphia are opened annually for touristic visitation. Visitors to Japan are routinely offered the chance to enter, observe and—to a limited degree—even participate in the households of middle-class families. Individual arrangements can be made with the French Ministry of Tourism to have coffee in a French home, and even to go for an afternoon drive in the country with a Frenchman of "approximately one's own social station."[13]

A version of sociology suggests that society is composed not of individuals but *groups*, and groups, too, figure as tourist attractions. Certain groups work up a show of their group characteristics (their ceremonies, settlement patterns, costumes, etc.) especially for the benefit of sightseers:

> At an open meeting yesterday of Indian businessmen, government officials and airline representatives, Dallas Chief Eagle, spokesman and director of the new United States Indian International Travel agency, said the cooperative hoped to be able to offer low-cost group tours to German tourists by June.[14]

Other groups, even other Indian groups, militantly resist such showmanship, even though their leaders are aware of their touristic potential, because this kind of behavior *for* tourists is widely felt to be degrading.[15] Given the multichanneled nature of human communication, these two versions of the group (the proud and the practical) need not be mutually exclusive. The following account suggests that a

member of one of our recently emergent self-conscious minorities can do his own thing and do a thing for the tourists at the same time:

> New Jersey, Connecticut and even Pennsylvania license plates were conspicuous around Tompkins Square yesterday, indicating that the Lower East Side's new hippie haven is beginning to draw out-of-state tourists.
>
> "You go to where the action is," a blond girl in shorts said through a thick layer of white lipstick. The girl, who said her name was Lisa Stern, and that she was a Freshman at Rutgers University, added: "I used to spend weekends in Greenwich Village, but no longer." However, Lisa didn't find much action in Tompkins Square Park, the scene of a Memorial Day clash between about 200 hippies and the police. . . . Yesterday there was no question any more as to a hippie's right to sit on the grass or to stretch out on it.
>
> Some tourists from New Jersey were leaning over the guardrail enclosing a patch of lawn, much as if they were visiting a zoo, and stared at a man with tattooed arms and blue-painted face who gently waved at them while the bongo drums were throbbing.[16]

Other groups—the Pennsylvania "Dutch," The Amanas, Basques, and peasants everywhere—probably fall somewhere in between resistance and acquiescence to tourism, or they vacillate from self-conscious showiness to grudging acceptance of it.

Perhaps because they have a man inside, *occupations* are popular tourist attractions. In some areas, local handicrafts would have passed into extinction except for the intervention of mass tourism and the souvenir market:

> Palekh boxes are formed from papier-mâché and molded in the desired shape on a wood form. A single artist makes the box, coats it with layers of black lacquer, paints his miniature picture, adds final coats of clear lacquer and signs his name and the date. Each box represents two to three days' work. Some of Palekh's 150 artists work at home. . . . I watched Constantine Bilayev, an artist in his 50's, paint a fairytale scene he might have been doing for his grandchildren. It illustrated the story of a wicked old woman with a daughter she favored and a stepdaughter she hated. She sent the stepdaughter into the woods to gather firewood, hoping harm would befall the Girl. Instead, the stepdaughter triumphed over every adversity.[17]

In addition to this cute side of occupational sightseeing, there is a heavy, modern workaday aspect. In the same community with the box makers, there are *real* young ladies triumphing over adversity while serving as tourist attractions. The report continues:

> But the main attraction of this city of 400,000 people is the Ivanovo Textile Factory, an industrial enormity that produces some 25,000,000 yards of wool cloth a year. The factory represents an investment of $55 million. The factory's machinery makes an ear-shattering din. Ranks of machines take the raw wool and convert it into coarse thread, and successive ranks of devices extrude the thread into ever-finer filaments. The weaving machines clang in unison like a brigade on the march —Raz, Dva, Raz, Dva, Raz, Dva as an unseen Russian sergeant would count it out. The 7,500 workers are mostly young and mostly female. A bulletin board exhorts them to greater production in honor of the Lenin centenary.

Along with handicraft and specialized industrial work, there are other occupational attractions including glass blowers, Japanese pearl divers, cowboys, fishermen, Geisha girls, London chimney sweeps, gondoliers and sidewalk artists. Potentially, the entire division of labor in society can be transformed into a tourist attraction. In some districts of Manhattan, even the men in gray flannel suits have been marked off for touristic attention.

Connecting the urban areas of society are *transportation networks*, segments and intersections of which are tourist attractions. Examples are: the London Bridge, the Champs Elysées, Hollywood and Vine, Ponte Vecchio, the Golden Gate, Red Square, the canals of Venice and Amsterdam, Broadway, the Gate of Heavenly Peace, the rue de Rivoli, the Spanish Steps, Telegraph Avenue, the Atlantic City Boardwalk, the Mont Blanc tunnel, Union Square and New England's covered bridges. Along these lines is the following comment on an attraction that is not well known but for which some hopes have been raised:

> The city of Birmingham recently opened its first expressway. To do so it had to slice a gash through famed Red Mountain in order to complete construction and get people in and out of the city in a hurry. To the drivers of Birmingham the freeway means a new convenience, but to the thousands of visitors the giant cut at the crest of the mountain has become a fascinating stopping place . . . a new and exciting tourist attraction.[18]

In addition to roads, squares, intersections, and bridges, *vehicles* that are restricted to one part of the worldwide transportation network also figure as attractions: rickshaws, gondolas, San Francisco's cable cars and animal-powered carts everywhere.

Finally, the system of attractions extends as far as society has extended its *public works*, not avoiding things that might well have been avoided:

> A London sightseeing company has added a tour of London's public lavatories to its schedule. The firm, See Britain, said the lavatories tour will begin Sunday and cost five shillings (60 cents). It will include lavatories in the City and the West End. A spokesman said visitors will see the best Victorian and Edwardian lavatories in the areas with a guide discussing the style of the interiors, architecture, hours of opening and history.[19]

The presentation of the inner workings of society's nether side is, of course, the Paris sewer tour.

Although the tourist need not be consciously aware of this, the thing he goes to see is society and its works. The societal aspect of tourist attractions is hidden behind their fame, but this fame cannot change their origin in social structure. Given the present sociohistorical epoch, it is not a surprise to find that tourists believe sightseeing is a leisure activity, and fun, even when it requires more effort and organization than many jobs. In a marked contrast to the grudging acquiescence that may characterize the relation of the individual to his industrial work, individuals happily embrace the attitudes and norms that lead them into a relationship with society through the sightseeing act. In being presented as a valued object through a so-called "leisure" activity that is thought to be "fun," society is renewed in the heart of the individual through warm, open, unquestioned relations, characterized by a near absence of alienation when compared with other contemporary relationships. This is, of course, the kind of relation-

ship of individual and society that social scientists and politicians think is necessary for a strong society, and they are probably correct in their belief.

Tourist attractions in their natural, unanalyzed state may not appear to have any coherent infrastructure uniting them, and insofar as it is through the attraction that the tourist apprehends society, society may not appear to have coherent structure, either. It is not my intention here to overorganize the touristic consciousness. It exhibits the deep structure, which is social structure, that I am describing here, but this order need never be perceived as such in its totality. Consciousness and the integration of the individual into the modern world require only that one attraction be linked to one other: a district to a community, or an establishment to a district, or a role to an establishment. Even if only a single linkage is grasped in the immediate present, this solitary link is the starting point for an endless spherical system of connections which is society and the world, with the individual at one point on its surface.

3

The Paris Case: Origins of Alienated Leisure

IN Paris, at the turn of the present century, sightseers were given tours of the sewers, the morgue, a slaughterhouse, a tobacco factory, the government printing office, a tapestry works, the mint, the stock exchange, and the supreme court in session. These establishments, and the activities they contain, are the concrete material representations of our most important institutions: law, economy, industry, the balance of man and nature and life and death. The twentieth century has made both a science (sociology) and a recreation (sightseeing) of the study of these institutions. The involvement of sightseers with touristic work displays qualifies as one of Lévi-Strauss's "sciences of the concrete."

The appearance of a mythology of work consigns it to a remote and formative period and marks the end of the industrial age. Work was once the locus of our most important social values and the exclusive anchor point connecting the individual and society. Now it is only one stop among many in tourists' itineraries.

I have termed visits to work displays of the sort listed above "alienated leisure" because such visits represent a perversion of the aim of leisure: they are a return to the work place. Some tourists never visit them, going in more for natural, historical and cultural attractions, or commercialized attractions of the "hyped-up" amusement park type. This makes the existence of visits to work displays and the infrastructure of displayed work that supports them all the more remarkable in that they run counter to common sense expectations for organized leisure activities. Work displays are not central to tourism

> fact, were lined with cement. Even worse, they had never heard of Valjean. The only possible danger, they said, is being drowned by a sudden rise in water. Sewermen no longer fall prey to the "malignant fevers" listed by Hugo because "They're always giving us injections." As for objects of value, they never saw any. Seeing my disappointment, one of the men, a weather-beaten, cheerful fellow with scarcely a half dozen teeth left, reminded his colleagues, "Of course, there was the time you found that sword wrapped in paper. It was a nice one." (*NYT*, p.6.)

These shy and pallid gentlemen who work in the bowels of the city are developing, it seems, a skill once monopolized by writers and motion picture makers. They exhibit a professional responsibility to contribute to the universal drama of work. As they select out (or fabricate) details of their jobs which they feel will be of interest to tourists (the danger, the injections) or have intrinsic appeal (the sword), they create one more bridge between men and make their small contribution to the solidarity of the modern world thereby.

In 1900, as today, there existed a widespread notion of a class of objects known as "articles de luxe," or sometimes as "articles de Paris" which Baedeker lists as "real and imitation jewelry, artificial flowers, toys, articles in leather and carved wood, etc." (*B*, p.xxvii). These items set Paris off from other cities. Along with the naughty stage reviews, they are elements of the essential Paris in the modern tourists' consciousness. ("Paris is essentially a city of fun and amusements.") The overall image they present is opposite to that which appears through the medium of the work display. Paris made her *articles de luxe* famous as souvenirs. The presentation of Paris' everyday life is hidden behind these more pleasant memories. They are its mystification. The work displays, which might have been seen even if they are eventually suppressed from memory and buried in the tourists' unconscious, did not involve the making of *articles de luxe*, nor of any other distinctively Parisian object. What was shown was work that is requisite for the operation of any modern society. The tourist, lured by the West's most seductive city, is permitted to peek beneath her fancy skirts where he can catch a fleeting glimpse of her basic functions—varieties of work in the first place, and not mere work: but fundamentally important work.

4

The Other Attractions

WE like to think of nature and other societies as being outside of historical time and beyond the boundaries of our own cultural experience. In this way, we can draw upon them as endless resources for social change and development. But this exteriority of nature and otherness is mainly fictional as modernity expands and draws every group, class, nation and nature itself into a single framework of relations.

Modern culture stands in sharp contrast to that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the preindustrial era, *Society* was defined as an exclusive subgroup of the collectivity, much as we try to define "high society" today. The lives of members of this *Society* were apparently quite coordinated: culture in the form of concerts, operas, portrait sittings, poetry readings, music lessons and the like fit in not so much as optional extras but as standard equipment. At the very heart of the human community were the opera halls, cathedrals, cafés and salons which accommodated this *Society* and its very high culture. The relics of this system survive today as tourist attractions embedded in a greatly expanded system of attractions including factory tours, inner city tours, museums of all types, historical and industrial monuments, parks and pageants. The attractions in this expanded system are still concentrated in the heart of the human community, but they are also dispersed throughout society and nature. They are much more accessible: they stand in the open air or, in the case of museums, are open to the general public throughout the day.

THE FUNCTION OF THE MUSEUM IN MODERN CULTURE

Although museums are often seen by their curators as important tools of modernization, as forces of resocialization of traditional peoples, and as reinforcers of modern values, I am not prepared to go so far here and accord them causal status.[1] They are only a part of the modern cultural complex. They are emblematic of modern solidarity, however, and some of the necessary experiments toward the modernization of the human mentality have been conducted in museums as these were being converted from collections for scholarly research to the public places they are today. A recent report of the United Nations defines a museum as:

> a building to house collections of objects for inspection, study and enjoyment. The objects may have been brought from the ends of the earth—coral from the Great Barrier Reef of Australia, a brick from the Great Wall of China, an ostrich egg from Africa or a piece of magnetic ore from Greenland; they may be things of today or things of the distant past—a model of a jet-propelled aeroplane or a fossil from the Coal Measures; they may be of natural origin or man-made—a cluster of quartz crystals or a woven mat from India.[2]

Museums and departments of museums are consecrated to *social*, *historical*, *cultural* and *natural* objects. It is by means of their specificity that they can set the totality of the modern world in motion in the tourist's imagination.

The function of museums is not entirely determined by what is sbown; the way in which the objects are shown is also important. There are two main types of museum display: *collections* and *re-presentations*. A re-presentation is an arrangement of objects in a reconstruction of a total situation. Re-presentation always requires an arbitrary cutoff from what would have surrounded it in its original context, a frame, and usually a certain amount of filling in on the part of the museum: painted background, façades of native huts, department store mannequins for the period costumes. Re-presentations of *habitats* are popular features of natural history museums: some nicely preserved specimens of birds and small rodents in realistic postures may be shown occupying their ecological niches among the sands and grasses of the display case. Re-presentation aims to provide the viewer with an authentic copy of a total situation that is supposed to be meaningful from the standpoint of the things inside of the display; from the standpoint of the neolithic man shown crouching in his cave, or the lion cub stalking through the tall grass behind its mother. Re-presentations are occasions for *identification*.

The idea behind a *collection* is to bring together and catalogue diverse examples of a type of object: Eskimo snowshoes, oil paintings, African masks. There is no effort to rebuild a natural, cultural or historical totality. Order is superimposed by an arbitrary scheme like the Dewey decimal system. Whereas re-presentations demand identification, collections require an esthetic. They often generate a juxtaposition of objects that would be meaningless at other than the level of individual taste. A theoretician of museum display writes:

> The skill of collection is a true skill, binding separate objects into a new unity.
>
> The courage and skill of museum officials within the last fifteen years have brought the exhibition of objects to a fine art. To some extent they have borrowed the technique of early religious instruction; their material has been dramatized, creating a pageantry of objects that affects the mind directly through the eye.[3]

Another asks rhetorically:

> Where is the museum where visual chamber concerts would be offered, with a few works of art stemming from different cultures being orchestrated with a beautiful crystal, a rare map, a photograph of excellence, or an exquisite flower arrangement?[4]

Although the taste is different, this same idea, perhaps not so consciously articulated, seems to have animated the collection in a museum in Paris at the beginning of the century where, Baedeker noted, one could see Marat's snuff box, Voltaire's armchair, Napoleon's writing desk, the door of Balzac's bedroom, a copy of the constitution bound in human skin among other interesting items. (*B*, pp.215-16)

The esthetics of collection are, in part, economically determined, especially when it comes to the collection of rare objects such as art masterpieces. The justifications in terms of "harmony" or "subject

matter" for historically meaningless arrangements of paintings in American art museums would not be necessary if the museums had enough paintings. At well-stocked museums such as the Louvre or the Prado, there is usually a group of masterpieces representing every "period" with a logical place, therefore, in the totality for each individual masterpiece.

Re-presentations tend to be associated with natural history museums and collections with art museums, but there is much crossing and recrossing of this line. Some natural history museums are filled with stuffed animals classified not by habitat but according to kingdom, phylum, subphylum, class, order, and species so the dogs are not found among the men, but with the wolves next to the bears. And in the basement of the *Musée de l'Art Moderne* in Paris is Brancusi's workshop, allegedly exactly as it was when he died, every tool in place.

PARKS

Modernity is transforming *nature* from a cruel alternative to community life into a place of play. Leisure-time uses of nature are of two main types, recreational and esthetic. The recreational uses of nature include sport hunting and fishing, rock and mountain climbing, crosscountry jeep, snowmobile and motorcycle racing, skiing, rockhounding, sailing, skydiving. Esthetic uses of nature include sightseeing of two types. One involves looking at *scenery* in the sense of a landscape taken in as a totality or appreciated for qualities spread evenly throughout—mountain ranges, plains, foothills, forests, coastlines. The other involves *landmarks* or outstanding features of the landscape —high-rise mountain peaks, grotesque rock formations, caves, very old trees, a large waterfall. Recreational interests in nature can be reconciled with a love for scenery and vice versa, as in fishing, but they may also be separated. Sometimes there is an antagonism between recreational and esthetic uses of nature. Rockhounds must remove a mountain in order to enjoy it.

Powerful human passions evoked by nature were once available in a wide variety of situations: in the hunt, in the forest on the edge of camp, at sea beyond the horizon. The human group could, and did,

draw heavily on the unknown forest and sea for inspiration in the creation of social solidarity out of opposition of man and nature. The naturalistic standpoint in the human sciences and the control of nature provided by modern life-sciences have done much to undercut this important resource for the construction of solidarities. However, at the same time, modern tourism is reorganizing nature and the touristic experience of it so it may continue to serve as a basis for unity in the family of man. The modern touristic version of nature treats it not as a force opposing man, something we must join together to fight against, but as a common source of thrills, something we must try to preserve. Tours of natural wonders organize the thrills nature provides into discrete experiences, guaranteeing results for those who would take in the approved sights. The following somewhat vulgar account of a trip to Niagara Falls indicates that this touristic normalization of the "thrill of nature" is at least 100 years old:

> Oh Aunt! what can I say that shall give you the least inkling of that wonderful sight! We were silenced, awed by the scene. Alfred, poor fellow! squeezed my hand . . . I returned the pressure; such scenes are so overpowering . . . As for Alfred's friend Plenderleath, he would do nothing but suck on the end of his cane, and ejaculate "By Gad!" at intervals.[5]

The writer wants us to believe that her relationship with Alfred has been strengthened by Mother Nature. This link of social solidarity with nature is integral with modern consciousness and modern social structure. After the nationalization of Yellowstone in 1872, the people of the U.S.A. developed and put into practice the idea that society has the capacity to preserve nature or to institutionalize scenery and landmarks. One of William Catton Jr.'s respondents in a study of the attractiveness of the national parks explained his refusal to answer the questionnaire:

> To rate one more attractive than the others is like asking a person which is more valuable, your eyesight or hearing. Collectively, the national parks help to form a composite representation of the "crown jewels" of our nation. Each in its own way contributes to the whole.[6]

Paralleling the opening up of visitors' galleries at social establishments such as the stock exchange and factories has been a correspond-

ing process of installing social arrangements for sightseers into our newly institutionalized natural settings. At national parks, the rangers delineate and number campsites, pipe and pump in a water supply, provide communal garbage and toilet facilities, grade and blaze roads and paths. At some of the more developed natural areas, there are central campfire rings for group singing and nature talks, public showers, coin-operated laundromats, ironing rooms, and, in each campsight, food storage lockers and stoves. For their part, the visitors bring food, tents, beds, chairs, lamps, and trucks and trailers outfitted like little homes. The incorporation of "nature" as an aspect of modernity, with a particular role to play in the modern world is not complete, but it is quite advanced.

TRADITION

Every society necessarily has another society inside itself and beside itself: its past epochs and eras and its less developed and more developed neighbors. Modern society, only partly disengaged from industrial structures, is especially vulnerable to overthrow from within through nostalgia, sentimentality and other tendencies to regress to a previous state, a "Golden Age," which retrospectively always apppears to have been more orderly or normal. In a recent, helpful study, César Graña has written:

> The destruction of local traditions and the assault upon "the past" perpetuated by industrialization and world-wide modernization seem to make large numbers of people susceptible to an appetite for relics of pre-industrial life. This appetite is so intense that it accounts in part for one of the major and nost characteristically modern industries: tourism. The most ambitious monuments of earlier life-styles, such as the stately homes of England, and even whole nations, like the prototypically picturesque Spain, have now been reduced to the conditions of *objets d'art*. "In the family" events, like the bullfight or royal pageantry, whose mystique was once accessible only to natives, are now marketed to foreign visitors by the well-organized bureaucracies of popularized cultural romance, both private and governmental—that is to say, travel agencies, tourist bureaus, and even tourist ministries.[7]

Graña understands the psychology of slightly snobbish and sentimental tourism, but he has not located the sights and spectacles that

service these sentiments alongside the other attractions or analyzed the contribution of the total system of attractions to the solidarity of modernity. Restored remnants of dead traditions are essential components of the modern community and consciousness. They are reminders of our break with the past and with tradition, even our own tradition. But they are not the only basis for tourism and sightseeing. Tour companies in Paris offer both "Paris Historique" and "Paris Moderne."

Graña might have noted that the tourists' quest is not limited to a search for traditional elements restored and embedded in the modern world; they also search for natural and contemporary social attractions in the same matrix. When tradition, nature and other societies, even "primitive" societies, are transformed into tourist attractions, they join with the modern social attractions in a new unity, or a new universal solidarity, that includes the tourist. Traditional life-styles and modern tourists are brought into face-to-face contact by ethnological exhibits in museums. Care is taken in the setting up of such exhibits not to break up the fragile solidarity of modernity. For example, a student of museum display advises:

> "It seems wise to introduce cultural behavior and values that diverge considerably from those of the monocultural learner, not in terms that stress traditional differences, but rather in terms of common problems." This principle is most directly realized when the re-interpretation attempts to link the foreign reality [in the exhibit] with the visitors' own occupational or hobby interests. The approach may succeed in creating a feeling of appreciation of and admiration for the ways in which some primitive peoples have solved difficult environmental and technical problems with minimal means.[8]

The solidarity of modernity, even as it incorporates fragments of primitive social life, the past and nature, elevates modernity over the past and nature. There is nothing willful in this; it is automatic; it is a structure *sui generis*. Every nicely motivated effort to preserve nature, primitives and the past, and to represent them authentically contributes to an opposite tendency—the present is made more unified against its past, more in control of nature, less a product of history. The future of museums has been linked directly to modernization by a United Nations document which foresees a day in which museums

serve social (industrial) purposes on a regional level and the regions of the world are linked up through their museums:

> And what of the future? One thing is clear—that in many countries, museums which had no active teaching programme now take a very keen interest in this kind of work. What other impulses are actuating museums today? There is, for example, the development of the specialized regional museum. In France, one museum traces the history of the "wine civilization" in Burgundy from Roman times to the present, and displays, for purposes of comparison, material assembled from lands near and far. In this field of museum work, we may well see the start of rational planning (in the past the specialized museum was often a matter of chance), whereby each region will have a museum to record the historical background of its basic local industry, its effect on folklore and the traditional culture of the region and its links with regions of similar character.[9]

This ideal of the museum is one that contributes to the unification of the modern world, to control over tradition and over nature.

Modern museums and parks are anti-historical and un-natural. They are not, of course, anti-historical and unnatural in the sense of their destroying the past or nature because, to the contrary, they preserve them, but as they preserve, they automatically separate modernity from its past and from nature and elevate it above them. Nature and the past are made a part of the present, not in the form of are unreflected inner spirit, a mysterious *soul*, but rather as revealed objects, as tourist attractions.

The museums, monuments, parks and restorations of modern society indicate that the staging of otherness and the organization of disparate elements in collections and representations into a single design of modern making, with the modern world flowing past its designated attractions, renders history, nature and traditional societies only aspects of the structural differentiation of the modern world, and not privileged aspects either, or at least no more privileged than the other attractions.

HISTORY

There are two major scientific approaches to history being subsumed by the development of modern society and culture. *Positivism*

holds that societies everywhere are composed of the same set of elements which combine in varying quantities to form each particular society. History, from the standpoint of this positivist perspective, is a matter of increase or decrease in the amount of a societal element or elements. The causes of development or historical change are usually claimed to be external forces: geography, climate, an infusion of money or ideology or the good or evil genius of a "great" man. Evolutionism is the most sophisticated theory of historical change within the positivist perspective. The second approach, *materialist dialectics*, holds that societies and historical periods are qualitatively different from one another, and that they undergo total change as a result of internal contradictions. The cause of change is claimed to be internal force, traditionally applied by the industrial proletariat. Revolutionary praxis is the most logical approach to social change within the dialectical materialist perspective.

Dialecticians such as Marx and Mao are committed to the priority of the material substratum over theory and ideas. For them, positivism and dialectical materialism are only two opposing world views, that is, merely two different ways of thinking about the world. But the modern world has the capacity to organize itself around ideas, especially the ideas of bourgeois idealists. The entire touristic complex is, in a sense, a dematerialization of basic social relations as, for example, between a man and his work.

One would expect, then, to find enormous opposition to tourism and sightseeing in the socialist world. But this is far from the case. In the Soviet Union, tourism comes close to being the official state "religion", as is evidenced, for example, by the Industrial Park on the outskirts of Moscow, the Hermitage, Lenin's Tomb, the practice of displaying artistic masterpieces in the subway, the recent unrestricted issuance of internal passports to all Soviet citizens over the age of eighteeen years and subsidies for recreational travel.

As our modern kinds of societies (both socialist and capitalist) develop, they eventually arrive at a point where they can develop no further, and they turn in on themselves, elaborating ever more refined internal reflections on their own structure. It is at this moment, when all the miracles they can perform and all their horrors are fully exposed, that they can change. I think we are living in this moment at the present time, and we may be trapped in it for some time to come. Even the lines drawn for the ultimate purpose of warfare, excepting

the standpoint of a handful of politicians, are arbitrary, as between "North" and "South" Vietnam. Real wars are without ideological significance and resemble the war games between the Red and the Blue armies.

Modernity is arriving at its impasse. The West cannot be moved by the East nor the East by the West. The capitalists cannot move the socialists nor the socialists the capitalists. The Third World is holding its own. Bourgeois idealists freely press their plans into reality everywhere, but in so doing, they have sterilized their old motive forces for change. Nature, history, culture and great men are being transformed from agents of change into mere sources for inspiration, into attractions. Socialists press their plans into reality everywhere and in so doing sterilize their old motive force for change: nowhere is the industrial proletariat so nicely domesticated as in the Soviet Socialist bloc. The socialist dream of being the negation of capitalism appears now as a rather limited vision. As the modern world completes itself, socialism is only a part of the equation, not its solution. Modernity is staggering right now, not so much as a result of its "internal contradictions" as of plenitude and stagnation. A civilization in this condition, dizzy with its own fullness, is vulnerable to revolutionary forces within and without.

It is not now possible to describe the end of this particular development of culture. If our consciousness fails to transcend this, it will resolve itself in paroxysm of differentiation and collapse. A more hopeful ending, perhaps, would be the emergence of a reflexive self-consciousness on a community level which would organize history, nature and tradition in distinctive and logical arrangements, and systematically develop their implications. The revolution according to this hypothesis, would be replaced by the cultural revolution—the Chamber of Commerce by the Chamber of Culture—a process already visible in the appointment of Commisars of Tourism and boards and bureaus of tourism.

The eventual results of this development are still hidden in the heart of the worldwide process we call "modernization", which contains many alternative experimental models for cultural re-vision. Cuba alone, for example, provides several imaginative variations on the structure of modernization: with its population dispersed beyond its merely political boundaries, growing colonies in the developed

world, in the U.S.A.; with its dramatic juxtaposition of revolution and socialism on the island with capitalism and counterrevolution on the continent; with its traditional charismatic leadership and its modern paranoic, underground involvements with counterintelligence agencies, the CIA; with its appeal to middle-class North American youth who, as tourist-revolutionaries, depart each year from Canada for a vacation in Cuba where they help cut the cane. Of course, not all modernizing nations have quite so complex a collective self-consciousness as has Cuba: most stick closer to tried and true formulas, "Westernization" vs. revision and reorganization of existing tradition.

Even in the developed world, the war between history and modernization is far from over. But here, as the last fragments of the past are incorporated into modernity, the process is beginning to have both comic and tragic overtones. Our history is increasingly an occasion for a kind of mopping-up operation.

> In public works projects in the Italian capital scholars hover near the laborers most of the time. This is the reason—though not the only one—why the Roman subway is taking so long to build. . . . Pasquale Cutitta, an immigrant from Naples who has for the last six years been ripping open Rome's surface in various construction jobs, says with a grin: "If I see any old stones, I cut right through with the jackhammer. Isn't the Colosseum enough of a ruin for Rome?"[10]

In this crude and final confrontation of past and present, the historical totality is broken into bits and pieces which are admitted into the modern present selectively and one at a time. The safest fragment of the past to admit (from the standpoint of any possible threat to the integrity of modernity) is one of its lone remaining representatives. The most striking example of this mode of accommodation occurred in San Francisco in 1911 when the anthropologists Kroeber and Waterman brought the last surviving member of a California Indian tribe to live out the short remainder of his life in the University of California museum. His story was told much later by Kroeber's wife:

> The museum was overrun with mountebanks and plain and simple exploiters with their offers. There were the impresarios . . . one of whom had the imagination to offer to "take over" both Kroeber and Ishi [the Indian], to promote them as a two man act under a billing of

> "educational" and "edifying". . . . Would-be exploiters and showmen soon dropped off, but a problem remained. Ishi was an attraction, something Waterman and Kroeber had somehow not taken into account until the reality threatened to disrupt all normal activities of the museum. How to cope with the friendly crowd? It could not be put off as could the exploiters. It meant no harm to Ishi, and asked nothing for itself but to be allowed to see, and if possible to shake hands with, to touch, to "know" the last wild man in America. . . .
>
> The museum staff felt a duty to a public it hoped to make its own, as well as to Ishi. The problem was how to do right by both. Waterman remarked gloomily to Kroeber that the only solution he saw was to put Ishi in an exhibition case during visiting hours, where people could see him but would at least be prevented from touching him.[11]

The negative attitude so prevalent in modern society toward anything that is old, *dépassé* or alien dissolves into sentimentality and respect whenever the object in question is the last of its kind.

This turnabout was evident in the case of the "last wild man" in America. It also occurs in the contact of modern society and wild animals such as wolves, which were once feared and hated by men but whose rights to existence are now protected by special laws. Similarly, bits and pieces of outdated material culture are preserved:

> The 46-year-old paddleboat Delta Queen—wooden superstructure and all—will again ply the water of the Mississippi—under a bill passed by Congress. . . . Owned by the Greene Line Steamers Inc., of Cincinnati, the Delta Queen stopped operations several weeks ago under a safety law requiring boats with 50 or more overnight passengers to have metal superstructures. . . . Congress wanted to "assist in saving the last symbol of a bygone era".[12]

In modern society, "symbols" of the past are collected in museums when they are small enough, and when they are too large, they are left outside in parks and called "monuments."[13] Some, as in the case of the paddleboat, San Francisco's cable cars and large old homes, are restored and kept functioning as "living reminders" of the past.

It is by means of these museums, monuments and living reminders that the present frames up its history. Sometimes a little license is exercised, especially by the living reminders. At a Columbus Day parade in Philadelphia, a reporter gathered the following:

> (A) man dressed like Columbus said he was Filindo Masino, a lawyer. "Columbus was a man of the world," Masino said. "He was not Italian, Irish or Jewish. That's the way I feel about it." . . .
>
> "This is one of those days that you have an obligation to take the kids down to see what the past is like," said Frank Gormley . . . who had his nine-year-old daughter with him. "Knowing the past is the best way to understand the present."
>
> Stalking through the crowd was a tall gentleman made up to look like Abraham Lincoln. He identified himself as Albert L. Johnson, of San Jose, Calif., who said he is retired and now travels the country to "recreate the spirit of Lincoln".[14]

Even when modern society gets its historical facts and relationships right (if this is technically feasible), the appearance of the past through the vehicle of the tourist attraction may be loaded in favor of the present which is not shown as an extension of the past but as a replacement for it. An advertisement for the Bureau of Travel Development of Pennsylvania reads: "GO WHERE THE ACTION WAS. . . . Come tour history in Pennsylvania."[15]

5

Staged Authenticity

THE modernization of work relations, history and nature detaches these from their traditional roots and transforms them into cultural productions and experiences. The same process is operating on "everyday life" in modern society, making a "production" and a fetish of urban public street life, rural village life and traditional domestic relations. Modernity is quite literally turning industrial structure inside out as these workaday, "real life," "authentic" details are woven into the fabric of our modern solidarity alongside the other attractions. Industrial Man could retreat into his own niche at his work place, into his own neighborhood bar or into his own domestic relations. Modern Man is losing his attachments to the work bench, the neighborhood, the town, the family, which he once called "his own" but, at the same time, he is developing an interest in the "real life" of others.

The modern disruption of real life and the simultaneous emergence of a fascination for the "real life" of others are the outward signs of an important social redefinition of the categories "truth" and "reality" now taking place. In premodern types of society, *truth* and *nontruth* are socially encoded distinctions protected by norms. The maintenance of this distinction is essential to the functioning of a society that is based on inter*personal* relationships. The stability of interpersonal relations requires a separation of truth from lies, and the stability of social structure requires stable interpersonal relations. This pattern is most pronounced in the primitive case where family structure *is* social structure. In modern settings, society is established

through cultural representations of reality at a level above that of interpersonal relations. Real life relations are being liberated from their traditional constraints as the integrity of society is no longer dependent on such constraints. No one has described the impact of this social structural change so well or so closely as Erving Goffman. He has found that it is no longer sufficient simply to *be* a man in order to be perceived as one. Now it is often necessary to *act out* reality and truth.

I began my analysis of the problem of authenticity by starting across the bridge between structure and consciousness built by Goffman. I found it necessary to extend his conception a little to make it to the other side.

FRONT, BACK AND REALITY

Paralleling a common sense division, Goffman analyzed a structural division of social establishments into what he terms *front* and *back regions*. The front is the meeting place of hosts and guests or customers and service persons, and the back is the place where members of the home team retire between performances to relax and to prepare. Examples of back regions are kitchens, boiler rooms, executive washrooms, and examples of front regions are reception offices and parlors. Although architectural arrangements are mobilized to support this division, it is primarily a *social* one, based on the type of social performance that is staged in a place, and on the social roles found there. In Goffman's own words:

> Given a particular performance as the point of reference, we have distinguished three crucial roles on the basis of function: those who perform; those performed to; and outsiders who neither perform in the show nor observe it. . . . (T)he three crucial roles mentioned could be described on the basis of the regions to which the role-player has access: performers appear in the front and back regions; the audience appears only in the front region; and the outsiders are excluded from both regions.[1]

The apparent, taken-for-granted reality of a social performance, according to Goffman's theory, is not an unproblematical part of

human behavior. Rather, it depends on structural arrangements like this division between front and back. A back region, closed to audiences and outsiders, allows concealment of props and activities that might discredit the performance out front. In other words, sustaining a firm sense of social reality requires some *mystification*.

The problem here is clearly one of the emergent aspects of life in *modern* society. Primitives who live their lives totally exposed to their "relevant others" do not suffer from anxiety about the authenticity of their lives, unless, perhaps, a frightening aspect of life suddenly becomes *too* real for them. The opposite problem, a weakened sense of reality, appears with the differentiation of society into front and back. Once this division is established, there can be no return to a state of nature. Authenticity itself moves to inhabit mystification.

A recent example of a mystification designed to generate a sense of reality is the disclosure that chemical nitrates are injected into hams for cosmetic purposes to make them more pink, appetizing and desirable, that is, more hamlike.[2] Similarly, go-go girls in San Francisco's North Beach have their breasts injected with silicones in order to conform their size, shape and firmness to the characteristics of an ideal breast. Novels about novelists and television shows about fictional television stars exemplify this on a cultural plane. In each of these cases, a kind of strained truthfulness is similar in most of its particulars to a little lie. In other cases, social structure itself is involved in the construction of the type of mystification that supports social reality.

In fact, social structural arrangements can generate mystifications without the conscious manipulation on the part of *individuals* that occurred in the ham and breast examples. The possibility that a stranger might penetrate a back region is one major source of social concern in everyday life, as much a concern to the strangers who might do the violating as to the violated. Everyone is waiting for this kind of intrusion not to happen, which is a paradox in that the absence of social relationships between strangers makes back region secrets unimportant to outsiders or casual and accidental intruders. Just having a back region generates the belief that there is something more than meets the eye; even where no secrets are actually kept, back regions are still the places where it is popularly believed the secrets are. Folklorists discover tales of the horror concealed in attics and cellars, attesting to this belief.

BACK REGIONS AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

As yet unexplored is the function of back regions—their mere existence intimating their possible violation—in sustaining the common-sense polarity of social life: the putative "intimate and real" as against "show." This division into front and back supports the popular beliefs regarding the relationship of truth to intimacy. In our society, intimacy and closeness are accorded much importance: they are seen as the core of social solidarity and they are also thought by some to be morally superior to rationality and distance in social relationships, and more "real." Being "one of them," or at one with "them," means, in part, being permitted to share back regions with "them." This is a sharing which allows one to see behind the others' mere performances, to perceive and accept the others for what they really are.

Touristic experience is circumscribed by the structural tendencies described here. Sightseers are motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived, even to get in with the natives, and at the same time, they are deprecated for always failing to achieve these goals. The term "tourist" is increasingly used as a derisive label for someone who seems content with his obviously inauthentic experiences.

The variety of understanding held out before tourists as an ideal is an ***authentic*** and ***demystified*** experience of an aspect of some society or other person. An anonymous writer in an underground periodical breathlessly describes her feelings at a women's liberation, all-female dance where she was able, she thought, to drop the front she usually maintains in the presence of men:

> Finally the men moved beyond the doorway. And We Danced—All of us with all of us. In circles and lines and holding hands and arm in arm, clapping and jumping—a group of whole people. I remember so many other dances, couples, men and women, sitting watching, not even talking. How could I have consented to that hateful, possessive, jealous pairing? So much energy and life, and sensuality, we women have so rarely and ineffectively expressed. But we did, on Saturday. The women in the band were above performing and beyond competition, playing and singing together and with we [sic] who were dancing. And We Danced—expressing for and with each other.[3]

An earlier, one-sided version of this connection between truth, intimacy and sharing the life behind the scenes is found in descriptions of the ethnographic method of data collection. Margaret Mead has written:

> The anthropologist not only records the consumption of sago in the native diet, but eats at least enough to know how heavily it lies upon the stomach; not only records verbally and by photographs the tight clasp of the baby's hands around the neck, but also carries the baby and experiences the constriction of the windpipe; hurries or lags on the way to a ceremony; kneels half-blinded by incense while the spirits of the ancestors speak, or the gods refuse to appear. The anthropologist enters the setting and he observes. . . .

These writers base their comments on an implicit distinction between false fronts and intimate reality, a distinction which is not, for them, problematical: once a person, or an observer, moves off-stage, or into the "setting," the real truth begins to reveal itself more or less automatically.

Closer examination of these matters suggests that it might not be so easy to penetrate the true inner workings of other individuals or societies. What is taken to be real might, in fact, be a show that is based on the structure of reality. For example, Goffman warns that under certain conditions it is difficult to separate front from back, and that these are sometimes transformed one into the other:

> (W)e can observe the up-grading of domestic establishments, wherein the kitchen, which once possessed its own back regions, is now coming to be the least presentable region of the house while at the same time becoming more and more presentable. We can also trace that peculiar social movement which led some factories, ships, restaurants, and households to clean up their backstages to such an extent that, like monks, Communists, or German aldermen, their guards are always up and there is no place where their front is down, while at the same time members of the audience become sufficiently entranced with the society's id to explore the places that had been cleaned up for them. Paid attendance at symphony orchestra rehearsals is only one of the latest examples.[5]

Under the conditions Goffman documents here, the back-front division no longer allows one to make facile distinctions between mere

acts and authentic expressions of true characteristics. In places where tourists gather, the issues are even more complex.

AUTHENTICITY IN TOURIST SETTINGS

Not all travelers are concerned about seeing behind the scenes in the places they visit. On occasion, and for some visitors, back regions are obtrusive. Arthur Young, when he visited France in 1887 to make observations for his comparative study of agriculture, also observed the following:

> Mops, brooms, and scrubbing brushes are not in the catalogue of the necessaries of a French inn. Bells there are none; the *fille* must always be bawled for; and when she appears, is neither neat, well dressed, nor handsome. The kitchen is black with smoke; the master commonly the cook, and the less you see of the cooking the more likely you are to have a stomach to your dinner. The mistress rarely classes civility or attention to her guests among the requisites of her trade. We are so unaccustomed in England to live in our bedchambers that it is at first awkward in France to find that people live nowhere else. Here I find that everybody, let his rank be what it may, lives in his bed-chamber.[6]

Among some, especially some American, tourists and sightseers of today, Young's attitude would be considered insensitive and cynical even if there was agreement that his treatment of the facts was accurate, as apparently it was. One finds in the place of Young's attitude much interest in exactly the details Young wanted not to notice.

A touristic desire to share in the real life of the places visited, or at least to see that life as it is really lived, is reflected in the conclusion of a tourist's report from a little Spanish town:

> Finally, Frigliana has no single, spectacular attraction, such as Granada's Alhambra or the cave at Nerja. Frigliana's appeal lies in its atmosphere. It is quaint without being cloying or artificial. It is a living village and not a "restoration of an authentic Spanish town." Here one can better see and understand the Andalusian style of life.[7]

There are vulgar ways of expressing this liberal sentiment, the desire

"to get off the beaten path" and "in with the natives." An advertisement for an airline reads:

> Take "De tour." Swissair's free-wheeling fifteen day Take-a-break Holiday that lets you detour to the off-beat, over-looked and unexpected corners of Switzerland for as little as $315. . . . Including car. Take de tour. But watch out for de sheep, de goats and de chickens.[8]

Some tourists do in fact make incursions into the life of the society they visit, or are at least allowed actually to peek into one of its back regions. In 1963, the manager of the Student Center at the University of California at Berkeley would occasionally invite visitors to the building to join him on his periodic inspection tours. For the visitor, this was a chance to see its kitchens, the place behind the pin-setting machines in the bowling alley, the giant fans on the roof, and so forth, but he was probably not a typical building manager. This kind of hospitality is the rule rather than the exception in the areas of the world that have been civilized the longest, a factor in the popularity of these areas with Anglo-Americans. A respondent of mine told me she was invited by a cloth merchant in the Damascus bazaar to visit his silk factory. She answered "yes," whereupon he threw open a door behind his counter exposing a little dark room where two men in their underwear sat on the floor on either side of a hand loom passing a shuttle back and forth between them. "It takes a year to weave a bolt of silk like that," the owner explained as he closed the door. This kind of happening, an *experience* in the everyday sense of that term, often occurs by accident. A lady who is a relative of mine, and another lady friend of hers, walked too far into the Canadian Rockies near Banff and found themselves with too much traveling back to town to do in the daytime that was left to do it in. They were rescued by the crew of a freight train and what they remember most from their experience was being allowed to ride with the engineer in the cab of his locomotive. A young American couple told me of being unable to find a hotel room in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. While they were discussing their plight on the sidewalk, an old woman approached them and led them by a circuitous route to a small apartment where they rented a blackmarket room, displacing the family of workers who slept on a couch behind a blanket hung as a curtain in the living room.

Certain individuals are prone to the kind of accident that leads to these experiences because they seek out situations in which this type of thing is most likely to occur. A report from the Caribbean suggests that a taste for action of this type can be cultivated:

> "But tourists never take the mail boats," said the hotel manager. That clinched the matter. The next afternoon, I jumped from the dock at Potter's Cay in downtown Nassau to the rusted deck of the Deborah K., swinging idly at her spring lines. . . . [The writer describes island hopping on the mail boat and ends his account with this observation.] The next day, while aloft in a Bahamas Airways plane, I spotted the Deborah K. chugging along in the sound toward Green Turtle Cay. She is no craft for the queasy of stomach and has a minimum of the amenities that most people find indispensable, but she and her sister mail boats offer a wonderfully inexpensive way to see life in the Bahamas—life as the natives live it, not the tourists.[9]

Given the felt value of these experiences, it is not surprising to find social structural arrangements that produce them.

STAGED AUTHENTICITY IN TOURIST SETTINGS

Tourists commonly take guided tours of social establishments because they provide easy access to areas of the establishment ordinarily closed to outsiders. School children's tours of firehouses, banks, newspapers and dairies are called "educational" because the inner operations of these important places are shown and explained in the course of the tour. This kind of tour, and the experiences generated by it, provide an interesting set of analytical problems. The tour is characterized by social organization designed to reveal inner workings of the place; on tour, outsiders are allowed further *in* than regular patrons; children are permitted to enter bank vaults to see a million dollars, allowed to touch cows' udders, etc. At the same time, there is a staged quality to the proceedings that lends to them an aura of superficiality, albeit a superficiality not always perceived as such by the tourist, who is usually forgiving about these matters.

An account from Cape Kennedy provides illustration:

> No sightseers at the Manned Spacecraft Center ever had a more dramatic visit than those who, by design or accident of time, found themselves touring the facility last month during the unforgettable mission of Apollo 13. . . . In a garden-like courtyard outside the News Bureau in Building 1, a group of tourists visiting the Manned Spacecraft Center here stared at the working correspondents through the huge plate-glass windows. The visitors, too, could hear the voice of Mission Control. A tall young man, his arm around his mini-skirted blonde girl friend, summed up the feelings of the sightseers when he said, half aloud, "Being here's like being part of it." "Dear God," his girl whispered earnestly, "please let them come home safe."[10]

The young man in this account is expressing his belief that he is having an almost authentic experience. This type of experience is produced through the use of a new kind of social space that is opening up everywhere in our society. It is a space for outsiders who are permitted to view details of the inner operation of a commercial, domestic, industrial or public institution. Apparently, entry into this space allows adults to recapture virginal sensations of discovery, or childlike feelings of being half-in and half-out of society, their faces pressed up against the glass. Some political radicals and conservatives consider "swinging," "massage therapy" and "wide-screen cunnilingus" to be indices of a general relaxation of society's moral standards. These are, however, only special cases of reality displays, public orgasm worked up in the interest of social solidarity.

Other basic (that is, biological process) examples of staged intimacy are provided by the tendency to make restaurants into something more than places to eat:

> The newest eating place in Copenhagen is La Cuisine, strategically located on the Stroeget, the main strolling street of the city. Everyone is flat-nosing it against the windows these days watching the four cooks. In order to get to the cozy, wood-paneled restaurant in the back of the house, the guest must pass the kitchen. If he is in a hurry he may eat in the kitchen, hamburger joint-style.
>
> "The kitchen" bit is a come-hither, actually, admits Canadian-born, Swiss-educated Patrick McCurdy, table captain and associate manager. "A casual passer-by is fascinated by cooks at work, preparing a steak or a chicken or a salad."[11]

What is being shown to tourists is not the institutional ***back stage***, as Goffman defined this term. Rather, it is a staged back region, a kind of living museum for which we have no analytical terms.

THE STRUCTURE OF TOURIST SETTINGS

A student of mine has told me that a new apartment building in New York City exhibits its heating and air conditioning equipment, brightly painted in basic colors, behind a brass rail in its lobby. From the standpoint of the social institutions that are exposed in this way, the structure of their reception rooms reflects a new concern for *truth* and *morality* at the institutional level. Industry, for example, is discovering that the commercial advantages of appearing to be honest and aboveboard can outweigh the disadvantages of having to organize little shows of honesty. There is an interesting parallel here with some of the young people of the industrial West who have pressed for simplicity and naturalness in their attire and have found it necessary assiduously to select clothing, jewelry and hair styles that are especially designed to *look* natural. In exposing their steel hearts for all to see and in staging their true inner life, important commercial establishments of the industrial West "went hippie" a decade before hippies went hippie. Approached from this standpoint, the hippie movement is not technically a movement but a basic expression of the present stage of the evolution of our society.

The current structural development of society is marked by the appearance everywhere of touristic space. This space can be called a *stage set*, a *tourist setting*, or simply, a *set* depending on how purposefully worked up for tourists the display is. The New York Stock Exchange viewed from the balcony set up for sightseers is a tourist setting, since there is no evidence that the show below is *for* the sightseers. The exhibitions of the back regions of the world at Disneyland in Anaheim, California are constructed only for sightseers, however, and can be called "stage sets." Characteristics of sets are: the only reason that need be given for visiting them is to see them—in this regard they are unique among social places; they are physically proximal to serious social activity, or serious activity is imitated in them; they contain objects, tools and machines that have specialized use in specific, often esoteric, social, occupational and industrial routines; they are open, at least during specified times, to visitation from outsiders.

Touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experiences, and the tourist may believe that he is moving in this direction, but often it is very difficult to know for sure if the experience is in fact authentic. It is always possible that what is taken to be entry into a back region is really entry into a front region that has been totally set up in advance for touristic visitation. In tourist settings, especially in industrial society, it may be necessary to discount the importance, and even the existence, of front and back regions except as ideal poles of touristic experience.

Returning to Goffman's original front-back dichotomy, tourist settings can be arranged in a continuum starting from the front and ending at the back, reproducing the natural trajectory of an individual's initial entry into a social situation. While distinct empirical indicators of each stage may be somewhat difficult to discover, it is *theoretically* possible to distinguish six stages of this continuum. Here, the exercise of a little theoretical license might prove worthwhile.

Stage one: Goffman's front region; the kind of social space tourists attempt to overcome or to get behind.

Stage two: a touristic front region that has been decorated to appear, in some of its particulars, like a back region: a seafood restaurant with a fishnet hanging on the wall; a meat counter in a supermarket with three-dimensional plastic replicas of cheeses and bolognas hanging against the wall. *Functionally,* this stage (two) is entirely a front region, and it always has been, but it is cosmetically decorated with reminders of back region activities: mementos, not taken seriously, called "atmosphere."

Stage three: a front region that is totally organized to look like a back region; simulations of moonwalks for television audiences; the live shows above sex shops in Berlin where the customer can pay to watch interracial couples copulating according to his own specific instructions. This is a problematical stage: the better the simulation, the more difficult to distinguish from stage four.

Stage four: a back region that is open to outsiders; magazine exposés of the private doings of famous personages; official revelations of the details of secret diplomatic negotiations. It is the open characteristic that distinguishes these especially touristic settings (stages three and four) from other back regions; access to most nontouristic back regions is somewhat restricted.

Stage five: a back region that may be cleaned up or altered a bit because tourists are permitted an occasional glimpse in: Erving Goffman's kitchen; factory, ship, and orchestra rehearsal cases; news leaks.

Stage six: Goffman's back region; the kind of social space that motivates touristic consciousness.

That is theory enough. The *empirical* action in tourist settings is mainly confined to movement between areas decorated to look like back regions, and back regions into which tourists are allowed to peek. *Insight*, in the everyday, and in some ethnological senses of the term, is what is obtained from one of these peeks into a back region.

TOURISTS AND INTELLECTUALS

There is no serious or functional role in the production awaiting the tourists in the places they visit. Tourists are not made personally responsible for anything that happens in the establishments they visit, and the quality of the insight gained by touristic experience has been criticized as less than profound. David Riesman's "other-directed" and Herbert Marcuse's "one-dimensional" men are products of a traditional intellectual concern for the superficiality of knowledge in our modern society, but the tourist setting *per se* is just beginning to prompt intellectual commentary. Settings are often not merely copies or replicas of real-life situations but copies that are presented as disclosing more about the real thing than the real thing itself discloses. Of course, this cannot be the case, at least not from technical standpoints, as in ethnography, for example. The Greyline guided tours of the Haight Ashbury when the hippies lived there cannot be substituted for the studies based on participant observation undertaken at the same time. The intellectual attitude is firm in this belief. The touristic experience that comes out of the tourist setting is based on inauthenticity and as such it is superficial when compared with careful study. It is morally inferior to mere experience. A mere experience may be mystified, but a touristic experience is always mystified. The lie contained in the touristic experience, moreover, presents itself as a truthful revelation, as the vehicle that carries the onlooker behind false fronts into reality. The idea here is that a false back is more insidious and dangerous than a false front, or an inauthentic demystification of social life is not merely a lie but a superlie, the kind that drips with sincerity.

Along these lines, Daniel Boorstin's[12] comments on sightseeing and tourism suggest that critical writing on the subject of modern mass mentality is gaining analytical precision and is moving from the individual-centered concepts of the 1950's to a structural orientation. His concept of "pseudo-event" is a recent addition to a line of specific criticism of tourists that can be traced back to Veblen's "conspicuous leisure"[13] or back still further to Mark Twain's ironic commentary in *The Innocents Abroad.*[14] In his use of the term "pseudo-event", Boorstin wants his reader to understand that there is something about the tourist setting itself that is not intellectually satisfying. In his own words:

> These [tourist]"attractions" offer an elaborately contrived indirect experience, an artificial product to be consumed in the very places where the real thing is as free as air. They are ways for the traveler to remain out of contact with foreign peoples in the very act of "sight-seeing" them. They keep the natives in quarantine while the tourist in air-conditioned comfort views them through a picture window. They are the cultural mirages now found at tourist oases everywhere.[15]

This kind of commentary reminds us that tourist settings, like other areas of institutional life, are often insufficiently policed by liberal concerns for truth and beauty. They are tacky. We might also suggest that some touristic places overexpress their underlying structure and thereby upset certain of their sensitive visitors: restaurants are decorated like ranch kitchens; bellboys assume and use false, foreign first names; hotel rooms are made to appear like peasant cottages; primitive religious ceremonies are staged as public pageants. This kind of naked tourist setting is probably not as important in the overall picture of mass tourism as Boorstin makes it out to be in his polemic, but it is an ideal type of sorts, and many examples of it exist.

Boorstin is insightful as to the nature of touristic arrangements but he undercuts what might have developed into a structural analysis of sightseeing and touristic consciousness by falling back onto individual-level interpretations before analyzing fully his "pseudo-event" conception. He claims that touists themselves *cause* "pseudo-events." Commenting on the restaurants along superhighways, Boorstin writes:

> There people can eat without having to look out on an individualized, localized landscape. The disposable paper mat on which they are served shows no local scenes, but a map of numbered super highways with the location of other "oases." *They feel most at home above the highway itself, soothed by the auto stream to which they belong.*[16]

None of the accounts in my collection support Boorstin's contention that tourists want superficial, contrived experiences. Rather, tourists demand authenticity just as Boorstin does. Nevertheless, Boorstin persists in positing an absolute separation of touristic and intellectual attitudes. On the distinction between work ("traveling") and sightseeing, he writes:

> The traveler, then, was working at something; the tourist was a pleasure-seeker. The traveler was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him. He goes "sight-seeing". . . . He expects everything to be done to him and for him.[17]

As I have already suggested, the attitude Boorstin expresses is a commonplace among tourists and travel writers. It is so prevalent, in fact, that it is a part of the problem of mass tourism, not an analytical reflection on it.

In other words, we still lack adequate technical perspectives for the study of "pseudo-events." The construction of such perspectives necessarily begins with the tourists themselves and a close examination of the facts of sightseeing. The writers of the accounts cited earlier in this chapter express Boorstin's disappointment that their experiences are sometimes fleeting and insulated. They desire to get in with the natives, but, more important here, they are willing to accept disappointment when they feel they are stopped from penetrating into the real life of the place they are visiting. In fact, some tourists are able to laugh off Boorstin's disappointment. The account of a trip to Tangier from which the following is excerpted was given by a writer who clearly expected the false backwardness she found there and is relaxed about relating it.

> A young Arab pulled a chair up to our table. He had rugs to sell, but we insisted we were not interested. He unrolled his entire collection and spread them out on the ground. He wouldn't leave. I could see beneath his robes that he was wearing well-tailored navy blue slacks and a baby blue cashmere sweater.[18]

Similarly, the visitor to La Vegas who wrote the following has seen through the structure of tourist settings and is laughing about it:

> Along with winter vacationists by the thousands, I will return to lively Las Vegas, if only to learn whether Howard Hughes, like the Mint Casino, has begun issuing free coupons entitling the visitor to a backstage tour of his moneymaking establishment.[19]

For these tourists, exposure of a back region is casual part of their touristic experience. What they see in the back is only another show. It does not trick, shock or anger them, and they do not express any feelings of having been made less pure by their discoveries.

CONCLUSION

Daniel Boorstin calls places like American superhighways and the Istanbul Hilton "pseudo," a hopeful appellation that suggests that they are insubstantial or transitory, which they are not. It also suggests that somewhere in tourist settings there *are* real events accessible to intellectual elites, and perhaps there are. I have argued that a more helpful way of approaching the same facts is in terms of a modification of Erving Goffman's model of everyday life activities. Specifically, I have suggested that for the study of tourist settings *front* and *back* be treated as ideal poles of a continuum, poles linked by a series of front regions decorated to appear as back regions, and back regions set up to accommodate outsiders. I have suggested the term *stage setting* for these intermediary types of social space, but there is no need to be rigid about the matter of the name of this place, so long as its structural features and their influences on ideas are understood.

I have claimed that the structure of this social space is intimately linked to touristic attitudes and I want to pursue this. The touristic way of getting in with the natives is to enter into a quest for authentic experiences, perceptions and insights. The quest for authenticity is marked off in stages in the passage from front to back. Movement from stage to stage corresponds to growing touristic understanding. This continuum is sufficiently developed in some areas of the world that it appears as an infinite regression of stage sets. Once in this manifold, the tourist is trapped. His road does not end abruptly in some conversion process that transforms him into Boorstin's

"traveler," "working at something" as he breaks the bounds of all that is pseudo and penetrates, finally, into a real back region. Tourists make brave sorties out from their hotels, hoping, perhaps, for an authentic experience, but their paths can be traced in advance over small increments of what is for them increasingly *apparent* authenticity proffered by tourist settings. Adventuresome tourists progress from stage to stage, always in the public eye, and greeted everywhere by their obliging hosts.

In highly developed tourist settings such as San Francisco and Switzerland, every detail of touristic experience can take on a showy, back-region aspect, at least for fleeting moments. Tourists enter tourist areas precisely because their experiences there will not, for them, be routine. The local people in the places they visit, by contrast, have long discounted the presence of tourists and go about their business as usual, even their tourist business, as best they can, treating tourists as a part of the regional scenery. Tourists often *do* see routine aspects of life as it is really lived in the places they visit, although few tourists express much interest in this. In the give-and-take of urban street life in tourist areas, the question of who is watching whom and who is responding to whom can be as complex as it is in the give-and-take between ethnographers and their respondents. It is only when a person makes an effort to penetrate into the real life of the areas he visits that he ends up in places especially designed to generate feelings of intimacy and experiences that can be talked about as "participation." No one can "participate" in his own life; he can only participate in the lives of others. And once tourists have entered touristic space, there is no way out for them so long as they press their search for authenticity. Near each tourist setting there are others like the last. Each one may be visited, and each one promises real and convincing shows of local life and culture. Even the infamously clean Istanbul Hilton has not excluded all aspects of Turkish culture (the cocktail waitresses wear harem pants, or did in 1968). For some Europeans I know, an American superhighway is an attraction of the first rank, the more barren the better because it is thereby more American.

Daniel Boorstin was the first to study these matters. His approach elevates to the level of analysis a nostalgia for an earlier time with more clear-cut divisions between the classes and simpler social values based on a programmatic, back *vs.* front view of the true and the false. This classic position is morally superior to the one presented here but it cannot lead to the scientific study of society. Specifically, Boorstin's and other intellectual approaches do not help us to analyze the expansion of the tourist class under modernization, or the development on an international scale of activities and social structural arrangements made *for* tourists, social changes Boorstin himself documents. Rather than confront the issues he raises, Boorstin only expresses a long-standing touristic attitude, a pronounced dislike, bordering on hatred, for other tourists, an attitude that turns man against man in a *they are the tourists, I am not* equation.[20]

The touristic attitude and the structure that produces it contribute to the destruction of the interpersonal solidarity that is such a notable feature of the life of the educated masses in modern society. This attitude has nowhere been so eloquently expressed as it was by Claude Lévi-Strauss:

> Travel and travellers are two things I loathe—and yet here I am, all set to tell the story of my expeditions. But at least I've taken a long while to make up my mind to it; fifteen years have passed since I left Brazil for the last time and often, during those years, I've planned to write this book, but I've always been held back by a sort of shame and disgust. So much would have to be said that has no possible interest: insipid details, incidents of no significance. . . . That the object of our studies should be attainable only by continual struggle and vain expenditures does not mean that we should set any store by what we should rather consider as the negative aspect of our profession. The truths that we travel so far to seek are of value only when we have scraped them clean of all this fungus. It may well be that we shall have spent six months of travel, privation, and sickening physical weariness merely in order to record—in a few days, it may be, or even a few hours—an unpublished myth, a new marriage-rule, or a complete list of names of clans. But that does not justify my taking up my pen in order to rake over memory's trash-cans: "At 5:30 a.m. we dropped anchor off Recife while the seagulls skirled around us and a flotilla of small boats put out from the shore with exotic fruits for sale. . . ."
>
> And yet that sort of book enjoys a great and, to me, inexplicable popularity.[21]

6

A Semiotic of Attraction

A relationship between cultural systems and systems of belief is implicit in most sociology and anthropology extending back to Durkheim, but only recently have some students elected to make this relationship explicit. Most notably, Noam Chomsky and Claude Lévi-Strauss, in their theoretically quite similar studies of language and culture, have independently concluded that there is a universal mind underlying all linguistic and culture behavior.

It is now possible, I think, by applying recently developed techniques in the field of semiotics, to move beyond Lévi-Strauss's and Chomsky's hypothesis to actual studies of the relationship of mind and society.

Semiotics is the science of signs. Its most distinctive theoretical characteristic is its negation of the division of subject from object which is the keystone of traditional Western science. Semiotics locates the *sign*, which it treats as an original unification of subject and object, in the place of the old subject-object split at the center of scientific investigation. In Charles Sanders Peirce's original formulation, *a sign represents something to someone*.

I have suggested that tourist attractions are signs. It was my goal, in my formulation of the attraction as a relationship between a sight, marker and tourist, that it conform precisely to the empirical characteristics of actual tourist attractions *and*, if possible, to the theoretical definition of the sign established by Peirce. The esthetics of the eventual symmetry I was able to achieve between the two, between

the theory and its application to tourism, was a source of great personal pleasure:

[represents / something / to someone] sign

[marker / sight / tourist] attraction

Given the homology between the two, it is possible to remove the development of understanding of signs and modern culture from the realm of theoretical speculation and locate it in empirical studies. In this chapter and the two that follow, we will undertake an explication of touristic consciousness, trying to discover aspects of the relationship between modern society and the mind of modern man.

MARKERS

Usually, the first contact a sightseer has with a sight is not the sight itself but with some representation thereof. The proliferation of touristic representations was apparently quite widespread even before the recent information explosion. Charles Dickens, in what appears to be hyperbole, makes what is, in truth, a factual observation: "There is, probably, not a famous picture or statue in all Italy, but could easily be buried under a mountain of printed paper devoted to dissertations on it."[1] Modifying everyday usage somewhat, I have adapted the term *marker* to mean information about a specific sight. The information given by a sight marker often amounts to no more than the name of the sight, or its picture, or a plan or map of it.

The conventional meaning of "marker" in touristic contexts tends to be restricted to information that is attached to, or posted alongside of, the sight. A plaque reading "George Washington, the First President of the United States, Slept Here," is an example. My use of the term extends it to cover any information about a sight, including that found in travel books, museum guides, stories told by persons who have visited it, art history texts and lectures, "dissertations" and so forth. This extension is forced, in part, by the easy portability of information. Tourists carry descriptive brochures to and from the sights they visit. Some steal plaques and carry them off as trophies.

The official National Monument sign, "George Washington Slept Here," then, will be termed a marker whether it is located over a bed in a room at Mt. Vernon or in a boy's room at an Ivy League college fraternity house. Where it is necessary to distinguish between information found at its sight and information that is separated from its sight, I will use the terms *on-sight marker* and *off-sight marker*.

While extending the conventional meaning "marker" in this way, to include both on- and off-sight markers, I want to limit its use in another way. In common use, "marker" often refers to both *information* and the *vehicle* for the information (to the stone as well as to the inscription on it, in the case of grave "markers"), but here it refers only to the information or the inscription. The distinction I want to preserve here is a common one at the time when a stone or plaque is selected, or when a new one is set in place. But it seems to erode with time. So, for example, the nice separation between plaque and inscription, made by the reporter who filed the following item, is not always so evident as he makes it:

> London, August 12 (AP)—Karl Marx, the father of communism, was commemorated Saturday in this city of capitalism. A round blue plaque was unveiled at 28 Dean Street in the Soho district, one of five places where Marx lived in the 34 years he spent in London. The plaque reads: "Karl Marx 1818-1883 lived here 1851-1856."[2]

It is necessary to preserve this kind of distinction between inscriptions and the vehicles which carry the inscription. Some of these vehicles are themselves tourist attractions requiring separate consideration: totem poles, the Rosetta Stone and the obelisks called "Cleopatra's Needle" in New York, London and Paris.

SIGHT INVOLVEMENT AND MARKER INVOLVEMENT

Sightseers do not, in any empirical sense, *see* San Francisco. They see Fisherman's Wharf, a cable car, the Golden Gate Bridge, Union Square, Coit Tower, the Presidio, City Lights Bookstore, Chinatown, and, perhaps, the Haight Ashbury or a nude go-go dancer in a North Beach-Barbary Coast club. As elements in a set called "San Francisco", each of these items is a symbolic marker. Individually,

each item is a sight requiring a marker of its own. There are, then, two frameworks which give meaning to these attractions. The sightseer may visit the Golden Gate Bridge, seeing it as a piece of information about San Francisco which he must possess if he is to make his being in San Francisco real, substantial or complete; or, the sightseer visits a large suspension bridge, an object which might be considered worthy of attention in its own right. The act of sightseeing can set in motion a little dialectic wherein these frames are successively exchanged, one for the other, to the benefit of both: that is, both San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge are felt to have gained a little weight in the act of looking at the bridge—or they are held to have been, at least to some extent, *meaningfully experienced*.

There is a second possibility. The sightseer perceives the bridge only as a piece of San Francisco and unworthy in itself of his attention. A better way of describing this second possibility would be to say that the bridge has lost its markers and is incomplete as an attraction. This is expressed in the complaint: "So what's there to see? The Verrazzano Narrows is a lot bigger than that."

I will term the sightseeing situation in which a sight has no markers, whether this occurs because they have been taken over by another sight as in the last example, or because the sightseer simply lacks relevant information, *sight involvement*. Mark Twain exhibits little interest in the information made available to him on the occasion of his visit to see a much admired painting, and, consequently, he expresses a high level of sight involvement:

> "The Last Supper" is painted on the dilapidated wall of what was a little chapel attached to the main church in ancient times, I suppose. It is battered and scarred in every direction, and stained and discolored by time, and Napoleon's horses kicked the legs off most the disciples when they (the horses, not the disciples) were stabled there more than half a century ago.
>
> This picture is about thirty feet long and ten or twelve high, I should think, and the figures are at least life-size. It is one of the largest paintings in Europe. The colors are dimmed with age; the countenances are scaled and marred, and nearly all expression is gone from them; the hair is a dead blur upon the wall, and there is no life in the eyes. Only the attitudes are certain.[3]

One result of sight involvement is *disappointment*. Mark Twain also expresses some marker involvement, with quite a different result:

> I recognized the old picture in a moment—the Saviour with bowed head seated at the center of a long, rough table with scattering fruits and dishes upon it, and six disciples on either side in their long robes, talking to each other—the picture from which all engravings and all copies have been made for three centuries. Perhaps no living man has ever known an attempt to paint the Lord's Supper differently. . . . There were a dozen easels in the room, and as many artists transferring the great picture to their canvases. Fifty proofs of steel engravings and lithographs were scattered around, too. And as usual, I could not help noticing how superior the copies were to the original, that is, to my inexperienced eye. Whenever you find a Raphael, a Rubens, a Michelangelo, a Carracci, or a da Vinci . . . you find artists copying them, and the copies are always the handsomest.[4]

Mark Twain means to be ironic, but ironic humor does not succeed unless it exposes some truth. The truth is that marker involvement can prevent a tourist's realizing that the sight he sees may not be worth his seeing it. Mark Twain is trying to combat a tendency on the part of some sightseers to transfer the "beauty" of the calendar version of *The Last Supper* to the original, but his is a losing battle.

Children, more than adults, have a capacity for being at once sight-involved and marker-involved. Some are quick to point out that a specific sight is hardly worth seeing but the information associated with it makes a visit worthwhile anyway:

> New York (AP)—Less than an ounce of moon rock went on display at the American Museum of National History, and 42,195 people, the largest one-day crowd in the museum's history, turned out to see it. "It looks like a piece of something you could pick up in Central Park," one 13 year-old boy said. "But it's cool that it's from the moon."[5]

The examples begin to make clear that the important element in (pleasant?) sightseeing need not be the sight. More important than the sight, at least, is some marker involvement.

Thus, we find that the State of Iowa, which may be as free of sights as any state in the United States, is nevertheless not without its attractions. A brochure reads, in part:

> *Free Guide:* An invitation to the beautiful 5 by 80 area. . . . 5 cooperating towns along Interstate 80. See the historical places in the picture window of Iowa. [The word "Iowa" appears inside an outline map of the state.] Bring your camera. Wonderful picture-taking opportunities at all these attractions.[6]

Descriptions of the attractions are provided by the guide. Following are several examples:

> Kunkle cabin site. In 1848 Benjamin Kunkle and his family became the first permanent settlers of Guthrie County. Mr. Kunkle raised the first hogs in the county. The marker is attached to a large elm tree in the Myron Godwin farmyard.
>
> Casey's Tall Greeter. One of Iowa's tallest living Christmas Trees. In 1921, this tree was planted in memory of Jesse Kite—a World War I casualty. It overlooks a small park and when decorated at Christmas time it is the landmark of the town.
>
> Dale City. . . . about 4 miles west of Dale City on the north side of the road is Glacier Ridge. The Wisconsin Glacier ended here, leaving rich gravel deposits for road building.

More interesting, from a technical (and a touristic) standpoint, is the star attraction of this area. As a sight, it amounts to no more than a patch of wild grass, but it was recently provided with an elaborate off-sight marker by the motion picture industry. The fortuitous acquisition of this new marker apparently caught the promoters of the area by surprise as the following information in the brochure is overstamped in red ink: VISIT THE BONNIE AND CLYDE SHOOTOUT AREA. Also overprinted in red ink is a square box surrounding a sight description that appeared in the original printing of the brochure.

> Quaker Ridge. The hills on the south side of the South Raccoon River. In 1933 the notorious Barrow Gang camped here near Dexfield Park. Two were captured—the other three, including Bonnie Parker, escaped—to be killed later in Louisiana.

Visitors to the "Bonnie And Clyde Shootout Area" cannot be disappointed as Mark Twain was when he visited *The Last Supper*. They do not arrive expecting to see anything and are content to be

involved with the marker. An unusual degree of contentment with sight markers was exhibited by a young couple I observed at the Washington, D.C. zoo in midwinter when many of the birds had been removed from their outdoor cages for protection from the low temperatures. The couple proceeded methodically from empty cage to empty cage, reading and discussing the illustrative markers on each. Even where there *is* something to see; a tourist may elect to get his thrills from the marker instead of the sight. After completing his sociological survey of park visitors, William Catton Jr. visited a museum in Yellowstone and described his response as follows:

> Realizing I was seeing the very spot where mercenery [sic] thoughts were submerged under a noble vision at that 1870 campfire, I felt my spine tingle. A few moments later, in a plain glass case in this little museum, I saw a facsimile copy of The Yellowstone Act. I read these quietly momentous words: "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the tract of land in the Territories of Montana and Wyoming. . . ." I swallowed, and squared my shoulders.[7]

It is necessary to qualify these examples of marker involvement. The behavior of the couple at the zoo is unusual, Iowa is no capital of tourism, and Catton is not an ordinary tourist. There is a practical limit on how far a marker can go in covering over an absence of sights. A raised tablet beside the highway near the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming proclaims the spot where early settlers stopped and broke open the sod under which they found natural deposits of ice which they used in mixing their drinks. This is an interesting piece of information, but not many sightseers are attracted to the place now that better ice supplies are available.

Another sight of the work display type that fails to attract, even though it seems more qualified for this purpose than a prairie, is a car smasher. The reporter followed a lead provided by an advertisement she read in a Wilmington, Delaware newspaper:

> It offered to pay a "reward" for automobiles "dead or alive," with the added inducement: "Come See Your Car Crushed Before Your Eyes." Arthur Ploener, who bought and paid for the advertisement, thought he might have to put up bleachers to accommodate people watching the

> death throes of their automobiles. Not so. The day I was there no one wanted to watch except me. . . . Watching a car-crusher at work is an exciting interlude for tourists, and especially rewarding for those who would enjoy seeing a few vehicles eliminated from blighted roadsides.
>
> Three compact cars make a wafer about as thick as a standard model. The noise of crunching metal is not as loud as the motor of the fork-lift truck. The crusher operator enjoys a fringe benefit: When he sweeps out the crusher bed after each operation, he usually finds some of the small change people are always losing behind the seats. The profit averages about $1 a day.[8]

Famous rocks, it was noted, are attractive to Manhattanites, but manifestly equally famous dust failed to attract the citizens of a nearby city which has some infamous dust of its own:

> Pittsburgh, October 9 (Special to the *New York Times*)—Area residents are not excited by the opportunity to see samples of moon dust brought back to earth by Apollo 11 astronauts. University of Pittsburgh officials say that their moon dust display is attracting about as much attention as a sack of coal dust. "We never get more than a dozen people at the display," a spokesman said. "We thought they'd be breaking down the doors to get in."[9]

Georg Simmel, who was apparently not much concerned about litterbuggery and other forms of man's rape of nature, once suggested that the interest value of archaeological ruins can be traced to the way they reveal a contest between nature and culture, and a proof that the cultural object (the ruin) can resist the ravages of nature. To this I would add that the ruin is emblematic of all tourist attractions which are subject to physical and informational deterioration.

Its markers notwithstanding, moon dust can fail to attract as moon rock attracts, and even though "watching a car crusher can be an exciting interlude for a tourist," an advertisement in a Wilmington newspaper apparently provides insufficient information, or information of the wrong kind, so only a journalist follows its lead. Nevertheless, it must be noted that all the attractions figuring in this section, the Wyoming ice deposits, the *Last Supper*, the "Bonnie and Clyde Shootout Area," etc., have markers, generate some marker involvement, and attract at least a few sightseers—as do even the empty

birdcages at the Washington, D.C. zoo. The boy's comment on the moon rock ("it's cool") reminds us that there are some all-purpose markers available for the sightseers to add to existing ones, or to supply in the case of an unexpected attraction, when other markers are lacking.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF MARKERS (SIGNIFIER) TO SIGHTS (SIGNIFIED)

The most important discovery of the first semiotic, that of Charles Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure, was the principle of the arbitrariness of the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The example most often cited as illustration of this principle is the absence of natural connections between the sound of a word such as "tree" and the object it signifies. This is especially evident when words from different languages that mean the same thing (tree, *arbre*, *Baum*) are compared. In the "Introduction" to a forthcoming book, Peter K. Manning provides some interesting nonlinguistic illustrations of the arbitrariness of the sign:

> The association between the wide-brimmed hat and cultural values of land-owning haciendados in Andalusia . . . ; between orchids and casting of spells to rid persons of evil or of bodily afflictions . . . ; between types of grain and connotations of wealth, purity or spatial locale . . . ; or between crow's meat and incest . . . are *symbolic* and can be understood only by unraveling the *system of signs* in which these associations become unquestioned.

The world of tourism is crowded with similar relationships: the connection between liberty and the Statue of Liberty is a monumental example.

Even as it elucidates the principle of the arbitrariness of the relationship of signifier and signified, the first semiotic can retain traces of the old subject-object duality so long as the signifier is always understood to be a psychological fact, a mental image or idea, while the signified is always understood to be an objective fact "out there." This unnecessarily restricted version of semiotics fits itself neatly into

established scientific frameworks by equating signifier with *concept* and signified with *observation* preserving, thereby, the separation of theory from reality or subject from object.

One implication of the analysis of the tourist attraction in the following sections is that the "principle" of the arbitrariness of the relationship of signifier to the signified is only a corollary of a more fundamental principle: namely, that of the *interchangeability* of the signifier and the signified. For example, the word asterisk signifies one of these: ****. The presence of an asterisk in a text signfies additional information.* The asterisk is both signified and signifier. The referent of a sign is another sign. On a more complex level, the field of the sociology of knowledge has begun to discover that scientific theories, in addition to being reflections of empirical reality, themselves reflect the structure of the groups and classes in which they originate. Men have ideas about things, and these ideas are readily transformed into the object of critical study. If a group elevates things over ideas, or ideas over things, this is only a matter of social values and has nothing to do with the essential structure of meaning which is much more plastic than values (for example, scientific values, or common sense values) make it out to be.

In the actual operation of social life everything appears firmly attached to its meaning. Science is locked in combat with common sense because the way the world ordinarily works is intuitively obvious to anyone who occupies a fairly stable position in his society. It makes no difference if the meaning he attaches to an observation is not correct from the standpoint of science or of someone in another social class or from another culture. Ordinary reality remains intuitively obvious in the way it is structured. The social world is simply saturated with meaning in such a way that does not call attention to itself as it is in the process of becoming meaningful. This is its most mysterious and its most social quality. The immediate meaningfulness of social reality depends on a system of transformations of things into ideas (as is accomplished, for example, by modern science), and ideas into things such as gestures, books, monuments and other cultural objects. Additional analysis of the structure of the attraction provides specific illustrations.

*Located at the bottom of the page.

In the world of the tourist, common sense easily and rigidly segregates information about an object from the object itself (marker from sight) so easily, in fact, that special terms seem unnecessary. Closer examination reveals, to the contrary, that where a distinction is made between a marker and a sight, it is secured through the intervention of modern civilization. The designation of an object as a sight, a factory process, a bit of moon dust, is most often accomplished without any esthetic assistance from the object. Its elevation to sight status is the work of *society*. Markers are sometimes made out of the same stuff a sight is made out of—they might even be a chip off the sight—but once they are in the hands of an individual, they can only be souvenirs, memories of the thing itself.

Any difference between signifiers and signifieds is the result of the superimposition of a system of social values. Nature does not present itself as a collection of signifiers on the one hand and a collection of signifieds on the other. We assign it esthetic and utilitarian values according to our own social structure and social organization. Interestingly, even the language we use in everyday discourse does not automatically distinguish between signifiers and signifieds (between markers and sights). Following is an excerpt from an advertisement for a book, which in this case is a kind of marker for the archeological sights of Egypt. The writer of the advertisement has made clever use of the failure of the language to distinguish sight from marker:

> I would like to examine ANCIENT EGYPT. Please send it to me for ten days' free examination and enter a trial subscription to the GREAT AGES OF MAN series. If I decide to keep ANCIENT EGYPT I will pay $4.95 (plus shipping and handling).[10]

At that price, no one is likely to confuse ancient Egypt with *Ancient Egypt*. Apparently P. T. Barnum was able to bank on the confusion of some visitors to his "Greatest Show on Earth" who, expecting to see a wonderful sight, followed the signs reading "This Way to the Egress" and had to pay a second admission to get back in again.

In the absence of a universal system of values such as those provided by a religion, the capitalist mode of production or modern tourism, we are thrust by our language into a dazzling dialectic of meaning. For example, the relationship between man and his work is

potentially far more complex than the way it is presented within Protestantism, capitalism or tourism. Tourism makes an attraction of the relationship of man and his work and in so doing is often arbitrary and capricious about which aspects of the relationship it elevates to the status of attraction. Consider, for example, a recent case, carefully watched over by specialists in these matters, of a classical kind of work display, a self-portrait of an artist at work. This case involves a painting hanging in a museum in Vienna called *The Painter in His Studio* which bears the mark of the Dutch Master, Pieter de Hoogh. The sight the visitor comes to see is the painting. The marker is the piece of information: this is a picture of Pieter de Hoogh at work. In this case, as is possible in every case, this information is apparently misinformation. *The Painter in His Studio* is now believed to have been painted by Vermeer, de Hoogh's mark having been fraudulently added by an unscrupulous seller before Vermeer's work became more valuable than de Hoogh's in the masterpiece marketplace.[11] The information that the canvas was painted by de Hoogh, information once held to be so important that someone took the trouble to fake it, has now become a curious part of Vermeer's painting, an aspect of the sight with a marker of its own.

The transformation of marker into sight turns the painting into a display of an even more important painter's work. Suddenly, the entire surface of the painting is alive with new information: so that is what Vermeer looked like, so that is the way his studio looked! As the marker is turned into the sight, the sight turns into a marker, and the esthetics of production are transformed into the esthetics of consumption and attraction. The writer of the following account apparently believes that all Dutch paintings function in this way as Time Machines and as fancy travel posters:

> The backgrounds of the paintings of the Flemish masters of the 15th and 16th centuries seem to be identifiable in Brussels and, more especially, in Bruges and Ghent. The people of today's Belgium appear to step out of the paintings of David Teniers, the people of Holland still laugh the way they did in Franz Hals' work and Rembrandt's subjects swarm through Amsterdam. A visit to the area can become a low-key excursion into an earlier age.[12]

A serious art critic might protest that to turn paintings into pictures is to deform them, but such protests are directed at real acts of real viewers (called "naive") and it is with these latter that the human scientist is necessarily concerned.

CONTACT AND RECOGNITION

Sight → marker → sight transformations are not merely something that may occur in the act of sightseeing. They are an essential element of the act. Tourists have been criticized for failing, somehow, to *see* the sights they visit, exchanging *perception* for mere *recognition*.[13] The polemic is not worth entering, but the point that sightseers have the capacity effortlessly to recognize a sight on first contact with it is correct, interesting and worthy of careful description. First, it is necessary to note that not all sightseers recognize what they see as sights. A woman passing a painting by Michelangelo in the National Gallery in London does not stop, but says to her friend, "I just *love* pictures in a round frame!" This lady hangs a marker on the painting in passing, but her marker, nicely intended as it is, does not combine with the sight to make of it an attraction. It is a near miss, though: she *almost* stops to admire the painting just because it has a round frame. The incident reveals that the elementary material of first contact recognition is (1) an off-sight marker that is carried to the sight by the sightseer (in his hand or in his head) and (2) a clear view of a substantial sight.

Mark Twain describes the recognition process on the occasion of his arrival in Paris:

> In a little while we were speeding through the streets of Paris and delightfully recognizing certain names and places with which books has long ago made us familiar. It was like meeting an old friend when we read "Rue de Rivoli" on the street corner; we knew the genuine vast palace of the Louvre as well as we knew its picture; when we passed the Column of July we needed no one to tell us what it was or to remind us that on its site once stood the grim Bastille.[14]

Recognition, as Mark Twain describes it, is a marker → sight replacement. Information about the object gives way to the object itself. This happens quickly, in less than a second perhaps, but the

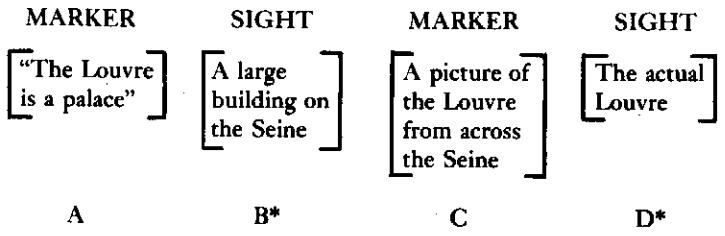
speed of the process should not be allowed to cover the details of its structure. It is possible to examine more carefully this instant which is accepted so naturally, and which is a part of the delight of the sightseer. The analyst is fortunate—"natural" means for slowing down the recognition process are available. Towers for sightseers are constructed, like the "Space Needle" at the Seattle World's Fair, which complicate, minaturize and shift the usual perspective from which the famous objects below are viewed. A guidebook describes for the visitor to the 1900 Paris Exposition what he can expect in the way of experience if he uses the Eiffel Tower:

> The Exhibition with its marvellous palaces and pavilions, its gardens and terraces, is seen to the greatest advantage, and produces an effect of confused architectural magnificence never to be forgotten, recalling in many ways one of those fantastical panoramas conjured up by the vivid imagination of Martin in his extraordinary pictures of ancient Babylon, Rome and Jerusalem. Far away beyond the Champ Elysée [sic] can be seen standing out against the horizon the domes and towers of buildings whose fame is world-wide. Notre Dame, the Louvre, the Tower of St. Germain des Prés, and St. Sulphice [sic], the dome of the Panthéon and the towers of a hundred other landmarks celebrated in history and romance. The night panorama from the Eiffel Tower is even more wonderful than that to be seen by daylight.[15]

What is interesting about this claim is its emphasis on the wonderful quality of seeing actual objects *as if they are pictures, maps or panoramas of themselves.* Apparently the instant just before the sightseer completes his recognition of a famed sight is regarded highly enough by some that they will employ mechanical aids to prolong and savor it. From the Eiffel Tower it is possible both to recognize the Palace of the Louvre and to have an inkling of it.

When the Louvre first comes into view, then, it may not be recognized at all. Partially recognized, it has the momentary status of information about a famous building which the viewer "should know." It appears as an incomplete plan, model or image of itself. Its label or name is not attached to the sight; it is said to be, rather, on the "tip of the sightseer's tongue." The uncertain tourist, less knowledgeable than Mark Twain, may check the image provided by the actual Louvre against its other markers—a picture in his guide, for

example—before he completes first contact recognition. The process can be diagrammed as follows:



Mark Twain described a sudden replacement of Marker A by sight D omitting the embedded sight marker transformation → (B → C) wherein the sight itself serves as the last piece of information the sightseer obtains before definitive first contact recognition. When this happens very rapidly, as Mark Twain claims it did to him, the embedded stage (B → C) may go unnoticed. When it happens a little more slowly the sightseer may do what is called a "double take," turning his head toward the sight, and then away, and then suddenly turning back again. The asterisks in the diagram indicate the points in the process at which the sightseer's head turns toward the sight in a double take.

THE DOMINATION OF A SIGHT BY ITS MARKERS

Constructed recognition: Sightseers have the capacity to recognize sights by transforming them into one of their markers. *Society* has the capacity to "recognize" places, men and deeds by building a marker up to the status of a sight. Compare, for example, *The Painter in His Studio* with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, D.C. The tomb was constructed as a tableau of information, or a carrier of official inscriptions that serves at the same time as a sight for visitors. It is a monumental analogue of de Hoogh's forged signature, standing in for the anonymous but worthy dead man, selected almost at random, who was actually behind or beneath the visible object. Both exhibit the structure of formal recognition. It is characteristic of

formal recognition that the sightseer is not permitted to attach the last marker to the sight according to his own method of recognition. The marker and sight are fused in a single representation, guaranteeing a certain on-the-spot appreciation or marker involvement.

Identification: A second type of marker → sight displacement occurs when an individual seeks to identify himself with a sight by sacralizing one of its markers. This is best represented by a common use of travel posters. Some of these have been made to abandon their original function and have been elevated to become decorative objects. This may not be the case for those found on the walls of the office of a travel agent, which retain some meaning as off-sight markers. It is where they are used to "brighten up" a student's room, or a "French" restaurant in London's Chelsea, that they tend to become just sights, or rather, off-sight markers that are transformed into sights. Under conditions where this achieved with an economy of means, that is, where it is not necessary, as in the case of tombs, to erect a marble edifice on which to hang the marker, we may speak of a simple marker → sight displacement or identification. Many, not all, souvenirs are displaced replicas or effigies of the sight they mark, serving simultaneously as one of its markers and as a little sight in its own right. These are called "charms" and women wear them on charm bracelets. It is also possible to purchase charms that are not effigies of a sight but effigies of a sight marker. For example, in Paris one can buy a little blue and white enamel copy of the street sight that reads "Rue de Rivoli." (Little plastic copies are also available, as are little gold ones.) This street sign charm is a double identification:

	MARKERS	SIGHTS
SIGHTS	[Actual street sign]	[Actual street]
MARKERS	[Inscription on the charm]	[Actual charm]

First, the real street sign displaces the street as the object of touristic recognition, then the charm displaces the street sign as a sight. Only the inscription on the charm, the words "Rue de Rivoli,"

and the actual street have singular status in this set of relationships, the former as marker, the latter as sight. The street sign and the charm are at once both markers and sights. And this is what makes a charm charming (or a totem totemic).

Obliterations: In the early 1950's, a large (perhaps 100′ x 200′) animated neon sign mounted on the top of a building in Tacoma, Washington occasioned a public outcry because it blocked the view of Mount Rainier for some city residents. The sign was an advertisement for an oil company, not a marker for the mountain. In fact, something like the reverse was the case, as each glance toward "The Mountain" from certain districts of the town became a glance at the oil company's trademark. Advertising is an inexact science, as its practitioners are quick to admit, and only rarely does it accomplish its goals with the precision and economy manifest in this example. One might go so far as to say that advertising does not know its exact methods. If these are ever organized and classified, they would include a kind of marker → sight transformation that might be reformulated as being a trademark → commodity obliteration. What this means, in theory, is a supplanting of a commodity by the *name* of one brand of that commodity. This goal has been reached on several occasions: by "vacuum cleaners," which was an early brand of a class of commodities then called "suction sweepers," by jeep, kleenex, zipper and napalm. "Xerox" and "Coke" make a legal point of their being specific copyrighted trade names and not generic terms. Usually, however, when advertisements obliterate an object, it is not their competitor's product but something else, and when the audience for the advertising is the sightseer, it may obliterate a sight. At the intersection of advertising and tourism, a conflict can and does occur between markers and the sight the visitor comes to see:

> Montpelier, Vermont—Beginning tomorrow, travelers to a heavily visited section of Vermont will find themselves part of an experimental project that substitutes color-and-picture coded directional signs for billboards and other off-premise roadside signs.
>
> This is the latest step in Vermont's effort to preserve one of its major attractions—its natural scenic beauty—by ending billboard blight.

> The state-owned-and-operated sign system has already been installed. Signs are grouped in clusters never more frequent than five or six miles along the road, nor closer than five miles to a built-up area.
>
> Vermont's struggle to pass anti-billboard legislation, and the subsequent delays in its implementation, are suggestive of the problems inherent in this type of "esthetic pollution" program. While the bill was approved in just one session of the Legislature, it was not without strong opposition from billboard companies and some legislators. Typical was a prediction from the Senate floor that "in the name of esthetics, we're on the merry road to socialism." However, the billboard lobby's traditional friends—the hotel, motel, and restaurant associations—were lined up this time in favor of the bill. They came to the conclusion that their proliferating signs were polluting the very scenery their patrons came to see.[16]

This pragmatic move on the part of the people of Vermont may solve some economic problems but it is not a solution to the problen of marker → sight obliteration as it is claimed to be. If they achieve the goal of making the state more attractive to tourists who come to partake of the newly unobstructed view, the increased numbers of tourists will reobstruct the view. In August, the first sign that one is approaching Old Faithful Geyser in Yellowstone National Park is a traffic jam extending down the road for several miles on either approach to the sight. This is also a marker → sight obliteration. It is noteworthy that the capacity of an aggregate of tourists and their accommodations to block views seems greater than any set of signs yet devised. An example from London, which has reached a more advanced stage of touristic development than Vermont, illustrates:

> It is only in recent years that London has permitted the construction of high-rise buildings. The first was the Hilton Hotel, built in the early '60's in the face of bitter public opposition. Permission was only granted after a cabinet decision ruled that it was in the interest of the British economy to encourage American tourists, and it was felt that the Hilton would serve this end. That set the precedent for many other tower blocks in and around the city center. The biggest threat to the Georgian areas of London is not offices, but hotels, being rapidly built to cater for the 10 million tourists who will visit Britain every year in the '70's. "The irony is," says Mr. Jenkins, "that they are destroying the very character and scale of the city their customers are coming to see."[17]

The same thing occurs on a smaller scale. The Paris International Automobile Salon, held annually in the Fall, allows visitors— as the New York Show does not—to touch and enter the automobiles on display and to look under their hoods at the engines. In midafternoon on a weekday at the 1970 Salon, persistent search from a dais ten feet above the floor on which over 400 automobiles were on view revealed not a visible trace of a car, or even a small part of a car, except for one experimental model that was suspended by its exhibitors in the air above the spectators. One could only see the backsides of viewers stooped over the cars.

The last transformations: The section on obliteration suggests that sightseeing is a self-destroying structure, but such a conclusion is too hasty. An aggregate of sightseers is one indicator that there is a sight nearby, or a marker, and like all markers it can be transformed into a sight. Mark Twain provides an example from another Paris exposition:

> Of course, we visited the renowned International Exposition. All the world did that. We went there on our third day in Paris—and we stayed there *nearly two hours.* That was our first and last visit. To tell the truth we saw at a glance that one would have to spend weeks—yea, even months—in that monstrous establishment to get an intelligible idea of it. It was a wonderful show, but the moving masses of people of all nations we saw there were a still more wonderful show. I discovered that if I were to stay there a month, I should still find myself looking at the people instead of the inanimate objects on display.[18]

The conservation-conscious epoch in which we live tends to define all marker → sight obliterations as a kind of blight, while in fact this is not the case once the marker is reconverted into a sight. The nongambling visitor to Las Vegas and the shy stroller in the section of Baltimore known as "The Block" may engage in a little interesting sightseeing. If they do, the sights they see are mainly the fanciful signs that are used to advertise gambling casinos (in Las Vegas) and burlesque houses (in Baltimore).

It is noteworthy that *marker involvement* is an original form of a sight → marker obliteration. This is especially evident when a sight is dominated by some *action* that occurred in the past. This was the case

for the "Bonnie and Clyde Shootout Area," where it was hoped that marker involvement would obscure the fact that here was nothing to see. Mark Twain, exhibiting more enthusiasm for a certain tree than he did for the *Last Supper*, provides a similar example:

> I will not describe the Bois de Boulogne. I cannot do it. It is simply a beautiful, cultivated, endless, wonderful wildnerness. It is an enchanting place. It is in Paris now, one may say, but a crumbling old cross in one portion of it reminds one that it was not always so. The cross marks the spot where a celebrated troubadour was waylaid and murdered in the fourteenth century. It was in this park that that fellow with an unpronounceable name made the attempt upon the Russian czar's life last spring with a pistol. The bullet struck a tree. Ferguson [Twain's hired guide] showed us the place. Now in America that interesting tree would be chopped down or forgotten within the next five years, but it will be treasured here. The guides will point it out to visitors for the next eight hundred years, and when it decays and falls down they will put up another there and go on with the same old story just the same.[19]

Without its marker, this tree that he admired so much would be just a tree. It is the *information* about the tree (its marker) that is the object of touristic interest and the tree is the mere carrier of that information.

The withering away of the sight makes possible a common kind of misrepresentation where correct information is given but attached to the wrong object. Twain mentions that someday another tree may be substituted for the "interesting tree" that he saw. He does not reflect on the possibility that this switch may have been made before he saw the tree, or that the bullet missed the tree as well as the Czar and is buried in the ground. The use of the Bois de Boulogne as the duelling grounds for Paris no doubt qualified many of its trees as candidates to be the tree in the story. Any obliteration of a sight by its marker allows a little fraud when it comes to presenting the actual sight, but more interestingly, it forces on the honest keepers of certain sights a special set of problems involving reverse fraud: How does one make a convincing display of honest honesty? Is it possible to construct a true-seeming marker on the veritable spot where the beloved leader fell?

Great historical events of the outdoor variety (wars) often occur in little-distinguished surroundings, and the surviving parties to these events tend to be fastidious in the way they clean up the mess they made. The winning dead are often sent home for honorable burial. The losing dead from the local team may be stripped down to the fillings in their teeth, counted, put in plastic bags and burnt. This leads future keepers of the hallowed grounds precious little to work with in the way of sights, and can lead to some tedious marking procedures. At Verdun, this is not the case: the forest has not grown back; the French have not landscaped the trenches; the remains of the over half million men who were killed there in 1916 have not been much disturbed. At other battlefields, more marking is required. Recorded martial music is broadcast at Waterloo. Watts, the district of Los Angeles burned by dissidents in 1965, marks its event with a spectacle, an annual festival held in the first week of August. At Gettysburg, there are automated reconstructions of battles with military units indicated by flashing colored lights.

Battlefields provide excellent examples of marker → sight obliterations. The sight yields to a standard set of markers, including The Cemetery, The Museum (with its displays of rusted arms), The Monument to a General or Regiment, The Polished Cannon with its welded balls, The Battle Map and the (optional) Reconstructed Fortification. Standardization, here, leads back to the very anonymity it is designed to combat, an anonymity that is only partly relieved by the special markers cited above: the recorded music, festivals and automated maps. Normandy Beach is giving up as an ex-battlefield and is taking on a new identity as a suburban resort community. The identity problem for battlefields is compounded in the case of the famous encampment where cannon, battle plans and fortifications are relatively meaningless bits of marking paraphernalia. Inadequately marked, the preserved encampment, even more than the preserved battlefield, is in danger of being mistaken for a golf course. Tourists arriving at Valley Forge are directed to an "Information Center" where they are politely but firmly requested to watch a free, narrated slide show of Valley Forge before (or even instead of) visiting the actual "sights." (At Waterloo, movies are shown.) The sight of Valley Forge is especially problematical to its keepers. Unlike Normandy and Mark Twain's tree, Valley Forge is in no danger of blending into its surroundings. Rather, it stands out, but the qualities which make it appear so different from its current surroundings (as a barrier, in fact,

to the westward movement of suburban Philadelphia)—its acres of clipped grass and carefully maintained roads, trees, picnicking, and parking facilities—are not much related to expectations for a winter camp of a large revolutionary army. If the tourist does not avail himself of the free slide show, Valley Forge has nothing of the revolutionary encampment about it. It has become a big, clean, grassy backyard for the city of Philadelphia, and on the Fourth of July that is just what it is used for by center-city residents (who do not stop at the "Information Center" to have it transformed for them back into an encampment).

People watching: Just as the great lighted signs at Las Vegas can be converted into sights, it is possible to transform the tourists themselves into attractions. This is not, as yet, a widespread phenomenon. Occurrences of people-watching are clustered at specific locations: the Boardwalk at Atlantic City where the municipality has constructed public alcoves filled with benches facing the walk; Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley; the Spanish Steps in Rome; the late Haight Ashbury and North Beach in San Francisco; the "Boul' Mich' " in the Latin Quarter in Paris; Dam Rak in Amsterdam and Trafalgar Square in London. These areas are not usually filled with local residents but with students, visitors and travelers, a fact which renders the attraction of people watching, in these little capitals of people watching, not that of people in general but of fellow aliens. Mark Twain provided an old example from the Paris Expo of 1868 (cited above), which is a case of sightseeing where the sight seen is a sightseer. The sight, its marker and its seer are the same, or, if they are not exactly the same, two tourists can take turns being all three. This is the most economical kind of sightseeing from the standpoint of sight presentation and the cash and energy outlay of the viewer. It is to be expected, therefore, that its adherents are mainly recruited from economically dependent classes: the aged and infirm and students. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the *behavior* of the students who gather at Dam Square in Amsterdam in the summer is little distinguishable from that exhibited by an outdoors gathering of old folks.[20] Nevertheless, this appears to be the case. The routines are few: dozing in the sun; quiet conversation interrupted by long silent periods; a following with the head and sometimes upper body of almost anything that is moving—a

scrap of paper blown by the wind perhaps; a slow-motion greeting of an acquaintance without conversational follow-up. The students, who need not fear that the gesture can be read as "symptomatic," rest their heads on their arms more; the old folks seem to smile more. Excepting these differences, the summer population occupying the bricks around the monument in Dam Square is interchangeable with that occupying the green benches along Central Avenue in the retirement community of St. Petersburg, Florida, as far as its public behavior is concerned. Unlike the middle-aged tourist, who tends to define the urban outdoors as a tangle of corridors between monuments and museums, the old and young at times define it as a kind of big TV room wherein they are spectator and image alike.

THE MARKER AS SYMBOL

There are two superficially different ways in which a locality can be represented symbolically to a tourist. San Francisco, for example, may be symbolized by food to the tourist who, eating cracked crab and garlic bread at Fisherman's Wharf, believes he is capturing the flavor of the city. The other kind of symbolic representation is that found on some travel posters. In 1968, the United States Travel Service, campaigning to attract European visitors, distributed a poster depicting two cowboys riding across a desert while over their heads, in the sky, appears a large sign: "U.S.A." The idea is that cowboys are symbolic of the U.S.A. We have, it seems to me, given too much attention to the differences between these two types of symbolism, going so far as to include only the travel poster type in discussions of symbols. There are similarities between the two. Both examples suggest that touristic symbolism does not involve a simple cutting off of a part to represent the whole. Care is exercised in the matter of what part of the whole is selected, the choice being limited to sights that are well-marked in their own right: Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, American cowboys.

One result of the analysis of sights and markers clarifies the structure of touristic *symbolism*. A touristic symbol is a conventionalized sight → marker → sight transformation. Thus, the Empire State Building is a sight which serves as a symbolic marker for the

sightseer's Manhattan. Or, the Statue of Liberty is a sight which serves as a symbolic marker for the United States. Under conditions where the symbolization occurs at the sight, as for example, in Paris at the Eiffel Tower, where the tourist partakes of something of the city by taking in the Tower, the transformation can be diagrammed as follows:

MENTAL IMAGE

Sight → [Marker → Sight]

or

Actual Eiffel Tower → [Symbolizes → Paris]

When the Eiffel Tower is used as a symbol of Paris on a travel poster or the cover of a Paris guidebook, the transformation is diagrammed:

PICTORIAL IMAGE

[Sight → Marker] → Sight

or

[Actual Tower → Symbol of Tower] → Paris

In the first transformation the symbolic marker is a mental image (someone might call it an "idea" or "feeling" of Paris) while in the second it is a physical image or picture of the Eiffel Tower representing Paris. Again, it is necessary to note that in the structural analysis of touristic information, some common sense distinctions between "subjective" and "objective" are neither "natural" nor helpful.

After all the marker → sight transformations, the point is that tourist attractions are plastic forms: the eventual shape and stability they have is, like signs, socially determined. It is social determination that makes the attractions, the structural differentiations of society,

appear as *things* to consciousness. And society, not the individual, divides reality into what is to be taken as a *sight* and what is to be taken as *information* about a sight. Through the institutionalization of attractions, material that is capable of being either subjective or objective is made to appear as only one or the other.

Negations: A simple illustration of the social base of the relationship of sights and markers is provided by a class of markers designed to discredit their sights. The American tourists' commonplace that the canals of Venice smell of sewage is a negative marker which could presumably be analyzed by way of a series of references to the Anglo-American "olfactory code" which organizes our collective concerns about armpits and canals. A rare, complete presentation of a negative marker and its socially encoded link with its sights is provided by an advertisement which read, in part: "THE EIFFEL TOWER HAS RUSTY BOLTS." The link between the famous tower and this particular piece of information about it is alive with implications. The tower is presented as old and rundown and, perhaps, dangerous.

SIGHT [Eiffel Tower] MARKER [Has rusty bolts]

This advertisement was made for a 1968 United States Government campaign to keep tourists home. The rest of the advertisement read: "SEE AMERICA FIRST."

SIGHT MARKER

[America] [Sight [Eiffel Tower] Marker [Has rusty bolts]]

The original sight-marker relationship marks "America" by negating her touristic rival. The method is not very efficient because it depends on the patriotic residues that may be left in American society: [See] *America First.*

THE TOURIST

A New Theory of the Leisure Class

by Dean MacCannell

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