Visiting Cultures:
A Critique of Tourism and Anthropology

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Sociology/Anthropology Senior Thesis
Swarthmore College
Spring 1999
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you

To Ned, for playing me Beleza Tropical, which planted the seed of Brazil in my head. For offering your apartment in Brooklyn, your internet access, your veteran thesis advice, your guacamole, your constant love and encouragement. To my parents, for paying for everything and providing comforting therapy: Mom for telling me that every thousand mile journey begins with one step, Dad for setting an excellent academic example. To Sam “Shlomo” Dane for keeping skateboarding a crime. To Amy Dalton for her academic genius and previous work in tourism & heritage studies, Janice Gallagher, my honorary room-mate, for her unabashed enthusiasm, Justin Hall for epitomizing the anti-tourist in Honduras, Ben Maulbeck for recommending key texts and sharing inspirational (smoky) moments, Deborah for commiserating and providing much needed electronic support. To my academic counsels, Lisa Hajjar and Bruce Grant, for directing my inquiry.

Obrigada

To my informative tour guide in Pelourinho, Roberto Merced, my study abroad advisor Bill Calhoun for his cynical comments, my Pelourinho partners: Valentina, Ratoya, Amy, Margaret and Fauzia-- Segura Tchan! Amarrá Tchan!-- To Nisrin, for thoughtfully sharing Fortaleza’s cemeteries, slums and beaches, my host mother Adelina, for her slow diction and thoughtful gestures and Beck, who lyrically authenticated Brazil:

“Tropicalia,” from Mutations, Geffen Records, 1998

when they beat upon a broken guitar
and all the streets, they reek of tropical charms
the embassies lie in hideous shards
where tourists snore and decay
when they dance in a reptile blaze
you wear a mask
An equatorial haze
Into the past
A colonial maze
When there’s no more confetti to throw
You wouldn’t know what to say to yourself
Love is a poverty you couldn’t sell
Misery waits in vague hotels
To be evicted
You’re out of luck
...Now you’ve had your fun
Under an airconditioned sun...
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God, I hate tourists. They’ve made a mess of everything. Nothing is real anymore. They obscure anything that was there. They stand around, droves of them, clicking their blasted cameras. Most of them don’t know what they’re gawking at... I usually go to places where there are no tourists--places that haven’t been spoilt. But it’s getting to the stage now where even the size of a city or a country is no longer a defense. You know how mobs pour in and stand around taking up room, and asking the most ludicrous basic questions. They’ve ruined a place like Venice. It’s their prerogative, but the authenticity of a culture soon becomes hard to locate. The local people themselves become altered. And of course the prices go up.

Murray Bail, Homesickness.
I. Introduction: Bem Vindo a Pelourinho

(Welcome to Pelourinho)

“We are all tourists now, and there is no escape.” --Paul Fussell

“I am a pair of eyes and a wallet here,” I scrawled in my fieldwork journal. “I thought I
was an anthropologist.” Writing from Salvador, Bahia, a major port metropolis in Eastern Brazil,
I was referring to my past week’s experience as a visitor to Pelourinho, the recently renovated
cultural center of the city. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the implementation of
a state-directed gentrification project in the late 1980’s created a district of cobblestone streets,
brightly colored Renaissance-style residences, elegant shops, museums, churches and pricey
restaurants out of a former ghetto housing vagrants, prostitutes and drug addicts.

Pelourinho means “whipping post” in Portugese. The area obtained this name because it
was once the site for public castigation of African slaves during colonial rule. Surrounded by
several baroque style Catholic churches in the largest area of colonial architecture in Latin
America, Pelourinho was once home to wealthy landowners, high-level Portugese functionaries
and clergy members. It fell into disrepute as the city of Salvador expanded and wealthy residents
moved to surrounding neighborhoods (Kulick, 22). For almost a century, the district was avoided
by everyone except its destitute and criminal residents (Baedeker, 43). Now, in restorative
splendor, the heritage site of Pelourinho is celebrated as the jewel of the city. Writing about the
profusion of such sites in recent years, tourism scholar John Urry notes,

In postmodernity, we are all aware of problems and troubles, of changes within the
structure of society, of the dissolution of old values and standards... The heritage represents some kind of security, a point of reference, a refuge perhaps, something visible and tangible which... seems stable and unchanged. Our environmental/historical heritage... is a deeply stabilizing and unifying element within our society. (Urry, 109)

Pelourinho’s new proprietors and merchants find that it is more than a psychically unifying space; it is an economic and cultural miracle that has rocketed the city’s tax revenue, rekindled Brazil’s interest in its historic past and transformed Salvador into a desirable destination for the global elite. As shop-keeper Clarindo Silva points out, "Salvador is a city which does not have industry. Our great potential lies in tourism. We weren't showing the tourist what we should have been showing--a historic center which is vigorous, active, especially, one with original characteristics” (Dunn, 28-37). One feature from a local paper, Bahia Hoje (Bahia Today), enthusiastically described the area's new image: "Pelourinho has become a cosmopolitan place, following the example of European metropolises, which transformed their historic neighborhoods into meeting points for the world” (Dunn, 29). Its refurbished structures and resurgent cultural capital beckon throngs of visitors seeking an authentic Brazil.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett conceives of such restoration events not as renovation and refurbishment, but as a new mode of cultural production that adds value to what was once obsolete, mistaken and defunct (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 149-51). A recreated heritage site is not original or authentic. Everything about it has been conceived and executed as planned. It is a controlled environment designed to elicit certain responses from its visitors. Writing humorously about the contained environment of such destination spots, the playwright David Ives asserts,
“It is not enough, from the industry’s perspective, to open the bus and release tourists into the lifespace of their destination-- ‘the Real World’--available everywhere, always open, and free of charge. This industry prefers the world as a picture of itself-- the picture window, cultural precinct, and formal performance” (Ives, 100). Pelourinho is a such a copy; a replica of a previous time-space.

More vivid and commercially attractive than ever before, colonial Pelourinho’s “birthday-cake” facades, festooned with rococo ornamentation, invite a lingering, pleasureful gaze. It is a sight-seer’s paradise. Urry affirms the visual primacy of tourist sites:

All sorts of places (indeed almost everywhere) have come to construct themselves as objects of the tourist gaze; in other words, not as centers of production or symbols of power but as sites of pleasure... what [people] find pleasurable are buildings which seem appropriate to place and which mark that place off from others...The universalization of the tourist gaze has made most other places enhance difference through the rediscovery of local vernacular styles, styles that convey particular histories. (Urry, 80)

The new and improved colonial architecture conveys a particular history, as do the equally beautiful and anachronistic baianas-- women merchants dressed in the traditional frilly costume of Afro-Brazilian spiritual leaders. They sell spicy African-influenced food and call out to passers-by in Yoruban-Inflected Portugese. Most of them are not African, and fewer are actual baianas, who were originally devotees to particular Afro-Brazilian gods that required them to sell food as their spiritual duty. Yet they utilize the quaint image of the simple African devotee to sell their goods. Groups of school-age children parade through the cobblestone streets pounding out African-influenced rhythms on huge ground-sweeping drums. Older groups of drummers,
world-renowned since they were “discovered” by Western musicians Paul Simon and Peter Gabriel, perform at night in several plazas surrounded by swelling, gyrating crowds. Bare-chested young men circle around, fighting friends skilled in the slave-created martial arts dance of capoeira. Local artisans make drums and berimbaus (instrument used for capoeira) which are sold in ubiquitous souvenir shops, along with myriad trinkets, models of Pelourinho architecture and polychrome Brazilian folk paintings depicting dancers in the streets. Hundreds of different designs for Pelourinho T-shirts scream out from the walls, some displaying baianas, youth drum groups, and capoeira fighters— all Afro-Brazilian symbols for Bahia’s culture. With these consumer products, the neighborhood manufactures a cultural image of itself; it creates Pelourinho, aware of which elements of the existing culture would provide viewing and buying pleasure for visitors entranced by Salvador’s unique cultural heritage.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has identified the proliferation of such cultural commerce as an ingenious collaboration of the heritage and tourist industries:

Heritage converts locations into destinations and tourism makes them economically viable as exhibits of themselves. Locations become museums of themselves within a tourist economy. Once sites, buildings, objects, technologies, or ways of life can no longer sustain themselves as they formerly did, they ‘survive’— are made economically viable— as representations of themselves. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 151)

Heritage tourism is a successful strategy of urban development. It is also a mechanism for communities to understand their local and national culture. Pelourinho’s market conveys much more than commercial benefit because it provides the context for Afro-Brazilians to rediscover and invent their cultural history. Australian art historian Christopher Wood describes a similar
new tourist marketing strategy for his country. To attract a sophisticated tourist class, Australia must be re-invented: “...we’re creating a whole new cultural geography based on things other people want to learn about; making Australia... is a museological process” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 154).

Although Pelourinho conforms to an increasingly common development strategy, it is not just a heritage museum, a tourist trap or a delightful shopping district. It is entertainment. It has often been noted that tourism and entertainment are intertwined and mutually dependent. The difference is that the entertainment industry delivers an experience to its customers, whereas the tourist industry delivers its customers to an experience (“Home and Away,” The Economist, 35). Yet Pelourinho is entertainment in which the visitor and resident participate together. It is a stage where the acting roles of Western tourist, merchant, military police officer, street urchin, religious devotee and native are portrayed with life-like realism. Pelourinho is a subdued theme-park, complete with self-referential merchandise that provides tremendous benefit to the culture and economy of the city, but necessarily calls into question notions of authenticity. The production and consumption of authenticity simplifies the relationship between the district’s hosts and its guests. Pelourinho has been cleared of all social and architectural decay. It stands apart from the rest of Brazilian life, much of which is difficult, dirty, economically depressed.

A heritage site is a Foucauldian heterotopia-- a space outside the unpleasant orderings of modernity that proffers up charming commercial protection under the guise of preserved history (Foucault). It provides a window onto the bubbled world of contemporary tourism, which conflates the spheres of heritage, entertainment, commercial enterprise, cultural exploitation and
leisure.

Tourism is the largest industry in the world, and therefore the most important mode for contemporary cultural exchange. Every year, millions of Western tourists embark for leisured adventure in third world countries.\(^1\) Since World War II, extensive international travel has become a common activity of the middle and upper classes. As Valene Smith notes, “The consumption of tourism has become a codified or normal part of expected behavior for citizens of developed countries (Smith, 187). Unlike the standard “nature vacations” to national parks or the sun-sea-sand-sex vacations formerly considered as the optimal means of pleasure possible during leisure time in industrialized nations, more and more tourists are engaging in “cultural tourism” --visits to cities with museums, cultural centers, vibrant arts communities and “exotic” cuisine. This trend finds its historical roots in the post-Renaissance “Grand Tours” in which educated British youth traveled to various cultural sites in Europe to experience the legacies of antiquity (Buzard, 122). Contemporary tourist preferences reflect a global age that Urry suggests is characterized by the “spectacle-ization of place,” in which most urban spaces have been subject to tourist-alluring commodification (Urry, 137).

Like the consumers in Adorno and Horkheimer’s Culture Industry who are transformed into commodities through their consumption of advertised goods, it is not just the commodification of place that characterizes contemporary tourism, but the commodification of tourist desires, and the tourists themselves. Simply experiencing a tourist site is never enough for

\(^1\) Western tourists also travel to non-third world destinations, and third-world tourists travel in their own country, the West and other third world countries, but this thesis will focus on the Western tourist experience in the third world.
the tourist. She is compelled to collect tangible objects that are witness to her travels, what Dean MacCannell refers to as “markers of a tourist site” -- brochures, guidebooks, postcards, reproductions, figurines, art-work, bumper stickers, and most importantly, personalized photographs taken by the tourist (MacCannell, 134). Indeed, the portable camera is an instant signpost for identifying the tourist. It has become metonymically linked to tourists of all nationalities. The camera-as-signifier also manifests the tourist’s veneration of the visual. Urry elaborates the contingency of the tourist’s identity to the camera. “To be a tourist, to look on landscapes with interest and curiosity (and then to be provided with many other related services), has become a right of citizenship from which few in the West are formally excluded” (Urry, 180). This has transformed tourism into a search for the photogenic. Everything in sight is not valued intrinsically, but as a potential souvenir or photograph. The aim of most tourist experiences is to bring back photographs and souvenirs to show evidence of a deed that validates/advances individual social status.

Consumption as a form of tourism is used as a marker of social differentiation (Shaw & Williams, 134). However, tourism is not the elitist project it once was, before technological advances like jet planes, high-rise hotels and computerized reservations. Along with Urry’s concept of the citizen’s right to tour emerges the democratization of tourism: anyone with a modest sum of money and a legitimate passport can go anywhere to gaze in a prescribed way at the scenes that have been constructed and/or accommodated to the tourist. Yet democratization has resulted in a commonly articulated disparagement of mass tourism by guests and hosts alike. The image of the philistine tourist, ignorant and disengaged from his surroundings, rigidly relying
on his language and his customs offends the more sophisticated traveler. In Mary McCarthy’s *Birds of America*, the main character rails against a nationally identifiable tourist horde at the Sistene Chapel, but realizes the futility of his critique against an insurmountable foe: “The place was already packing up with guided tours. He recognized the busload of Germans who had invaded his hotel the night before and monopolized the toilet since shortly after dawn. But he had learned not to be bothered by the crush of humanity and the horrible babble of tongues” (McCarthy, 42).

Emotions unleashed against tourists range from mild annoyance to anti-imperial rage. Are tourists immoral, unethical and inherently exploitative? Jamaica Kincaid writes in *A Small Place*, “The thing you have always suspected about yourself the minute you become a tourist is true: A tourist is an ugly human being. You are not an ugly person all the time; you are not an ugly person day to day” (Kincaid, 14). By chronicling a typical tourist’s visit to her native island of Antigua, Kincaid draws a forceful parallel between British colonialism and the neo-colonialism of modern day tourism. From the host perspective, Kincaid articulates the relations of power and hate that animate the Antiguan discourse on tourism: “[you, the tourist are]... pausing here and there to gaze at this and taste that, and it will never occur to you that the people who inhabit the place in which you have just paused cannot stand you.” This link to colonial modes of interaction is a common theme in texts that attempt to critique the modern tourist project—yet given the attitude of many Pelourinho merchants, tourism cannot be universally conceptualized as unilaterally exploitative.

Though everything and everyone in the host country becomes an object for the
commodifying gaze of the guest, the guest is also objectified by her hosts and herself. She
becomes what I articulated as a spectator in Pelourinho: eyes and a wallet.

II. Feeling Unwelcome in Pelourinho

In Pelourinho I felt particularly alienated from what were supposed to be pleasurable
experiences: gazing on gorgeous architecture and seascapes, interacting with local people in
their language, dining on new cuisine and witnessing displays of local culture. I became
increasingly uncomfortable as I returned to Pelourinho over seven consecutive days to shop,
observe, visit museums and socialize. I believed that my discomfort stemmed from the
differences of gender, race, economic status and colonial history between myself and my hosts.
Reflecting on these feelings, I began to understand what offended me about this tourist
experience.

One of my study abroad advisors commented to me that he rarely went to Pelourinho,
deriding it by calling it "Brazilian Disneyland. That place is a theme-park." Indeed, the
fundamentally constructed and staged nature of the site reminded me of a pleasure periphery--
an area of organized consumer indulgence, such as Florida’s Disney World or the casinos and
hotels of Las Vegas (Turner & Ash, 1). Yet Pelourinho outwardly denied the kind of self-
awareness that Disney World and Las Vegas project to consumers that flock there, knowing that
they are there to pay money to be entertained. Pelourinho pretends to be authentic Brazil -- what
Dean MacCannell calls “staged authenticity” (MacCannell, 91-107). As previously described,
every actor had a prescribed objective role: the tourists were present to gaze and spend money, the performers and itinerant merchants were there to display authentic culture and garner tourist money, street children were real-life cameos of pervading poverty, the police surveyed and provided an authoritative presence to assure tourists that they were visiting a protected consumption area in which they could feel completely at ease. In these roles, the actors were all type-cast by race, nationality and gender. Performance outside of the prescribed role was impossible. Each actor held the others in a powerful network of obedient role-playing. Differentiating from the roles was outside the bounds of rational discourse-- as a white American female tourist I could not behave in a way that supplemented these attributes. That I was a college anthropology student with a family and network of friends and an entire life of experiences was reduced to the signifiers: female, white, American, and foremost, tourist.

I feared that I was also representing the philistine tourist, though I believed myself to be the more sophisticated type of tourist. I tried to demonstrate my sophistication by showing off my Portuguese and knowledge of Afro-Brazilian culture and religious traditions. Yet I felt that I was still treated the same as my fellow Americans, whose familiar English drawl and twang rang embarrassingly in my ears.

Likewise, in my eyes, Brazilian subjects were reduced to their respective roles and the show played out perfectly according to the relationships of international capital and colonial history. In the objectification of historical subjects, Pelourinho became an unauthentic site where only the best, most preserved and unified representations of culture and behavior were put on display for tourists who expected to be shown such neat cultural packages. I repeatedly asked...
myself-- is this real? Is this woman a real baiana? Is this really what Pelourinho looked like 300 years ago? Is this merchandise really the official merchandise of Olodum (the most famous drumming group)? I was seeking authenticity: what Dean MacCannell identifies as the primary quest of the tourist. I was dismayed that I was trapped in the tourist bubble, without any way of escaping the unauthentic representations around me, without any way to escape the unauthentic representation of myself in the eyes of my Brazilian hosts. I knew that the bubble existed to shield me from the actualities of Afro-brazilian life in Salvador. Pelourinho had been cleared of all social and architectural decay for my benefit. The teeming favelas (slums) of jerry-rigged cardboard shacks, diseased and hungry abandoned children, rampant racism and social decay that the white population could afford to ignore were absent. I knew that the tourist agencies wished to reduce the impact of this part of Brazil as much as possible during my stay, so that I would return home with a favorable opinion of Brazilians, their tourist facilities and their government that made it all possible.

I especially wanted to penetrate beyond the tourist bubble and the veneer of constructed-ness that Pelourinho was coated with because I felt that I had authenticating status as an anthropologist. If only I could designate myself as such in a clear way, then maybe I would be comfortable, maybe I would understand the true nature of the site, and be able to know this part of Brazil. (If only all the tourists would disappear?) However, I found the roles of anthropologist and tourist to be more similar than different while observing or participating in the Brazilian culture. I did not know how to reconcile what seemed to me a negative association.

Tourists are commonly considered superficial consumers, pleasure-seekers and the
remnants of an old colonial order that used the colony for entertainment, amusement and mild edification that only served the purpose of solidifying Western superiority. But when I interrogated my assumptions about the privilege I desired as a recognized anthropologist, I realized that anthropologists can be considered just as exploitative and neo-colonial as tourists, and that their presumed authenticity could also be a front for geo-political motives as well as personal motives of career advancement. In the end, I realized that to the natives it didn’t matter whether I was an anthropologist, documentary maker, professor, tourist, missionary or colonizer. I was still a white foreigner with more money, seeking to validate my cultural assumptions about Brazil.

I was also dismayed at how different this site was from other sites I had visited in Brazil. Why was Pelourinho the only place in Brazil that UNESCO had designated a world heritage site and why was it only here that I saw huge throngs of wealthy, European tourists traveling in families and organized tours? Why hadn’t they been frequenting the beaches of Fortaleza or the reggae clubs of Sao Luis? How had Pelourinho been globally marketed to lure the international jet-set elite? How had it successfully appeared on the world stage, the world music market, the world heritage site list? And why?

As I heard tourists conversing, I realized that they considered Salvador’s Pelourinho to be among the world’s must-visit collection, along with Paris, the Holy City of Jerusalem, and the Copacabana neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro. Was it because it really was such an extraordinary site? Or was it just that it was completely given over to attracting tourists, and had equipped itself with everything that tourists desire and require of a popular destination? The comparison
with Disneyland, while a hyperbolized one, seems apt.

Disney fabricates a magical universe of playful leisure, entertainment, spectacle and encourages consumption of reminders of this experience in the form of self-referential merchandise that even expands beyond the borders of Disney's actual tourist sites. Like Disneyland, Pelourinho's texts about itself --auto-ethnographies-- produced through advertising, promotions and mass communication were all self-referential (Dorst, 4). All of the cultural commodities-- postcards, T-shirts, baiana doll figurines, and the museums with exhibits on Pelourinho's history, made little reference to anything outside of the cultural world of Pelourinho. It was a self-enclosed system, circulating material about itself for itself, by itself. The effect of this self-referentiality was to create a type of fantasy island. In the magical world of Pelourinho, all of the tourist's dreams about Afro-Brazilian culture can come true. She can purchase a part of this authentic culturally vibrant world that has been conveniently commodified to take it home and make it part of her, and encourage others to make the trip to consume this culture. The commodified culture was probably the most disturbing aspect of Pelourinho-as-theme-park. I felt like Candomblé's Afro-Brazilian gods couldn't have as much meaning anymore to the Candomblé worshippers if they were depicted like cartoon characters on tourist T-shirts, and the originally sacred function of the baiana seemed purloined by the thin, white impostors. Deprived of their original meaning, these commodities only retained exchange value, not use value. I felt that the cheapening of Afro-Brazilian authentic culture had arisen directly from the creation of Pelourinho as a tourist site.

In attempting to be an anthropologist in Pelourinho, I regarded my time spent observing and
participating as working time, however, my labor was in stark contrast to the labor of the service providers around me. The waiters, police-men, merchants, drummers and cooks were all creating products and services for me to consume, regardless of whether I was consuming them critically and in an informed manner, as I tried to do, or if I was passively absorbing them as I was enjoying my distracted tourist gaze. In either case, the relationship seemed to be that others served me while I enriched myself.

The contrast between servile host and leisured guest (Smith) provoked multiple questions about the nature of the native experience in Pelourinho: how do they view the commodification of their African heritage? How do they really feel about Western tourists who consume their cultural products with an admiration for the antiquated, primitive and traditional, and impute these same values to contemporary Brazilians with whom they come into contact? How do they create a space for themselves that is outside the tourist gaze? How do they deal with the neocolonial relationship that persists despite Brazil’s status as an economically ascending, independent democracy? Why were they docile in their acceptance of tourism and its attendant modalities of consumption, reification, reductionism and ultimate inequality? In the context of the growing Afro-Brazilian cultural rights movement, why were people not resisting the commercialization of their valued cultural resources? Were they really that desperate for the income and the world-renowned cultural status?

Later I would learn that it was because of this type of cultural commodification of the old slave pillory that Afro-Brazilians were able to collectively recover aspects of African culture that previously had been prohibited under Brazil’s 30-year dictatorship, which effectively legislated
racism by outlawing Afro-Brazilian religious and cultural practices. Furthermore, it was Afro-Brazilians who initiated this process of commodification, and used it to the economic, cultural and educational advantage of their poor communities. Once universally denigrated, Afro-Brazilian culture is now regarded as the root of Brazilian popular music, the major influence on the celebration of Carnival and the pride of the state of Bahia. Salvador is known as the nation’s boom-box. My assumptions about the negative aspects of the tourist site were not fully contextualized, and I realized that my dismissal of Pelourinho as a theme-park and a tourist bubble were only partly accurate, because it was also a site of cultural creativity and re-creation. It operated as a site of resistance to the dominant non-African-ness of mainstream Brazilian society.

Yet immediately after leaving Salvador, I concluded that I did not want to travel in third world countries anymore. Being a tourist/anthropologist was just too uncomfortable. I couldn’t situate myself in good conscience with all of the stereotyping, neocolonialism, racism, economic guilt and cultural appropriation that seemed necessarily associated with this project. I shook off the tourist mantle and resumed my life in the United States. Reflecting on my experience as a tourist/anthropologist upon my return, I started to realize how often I was still involved in tourist activities, and that by leaving Brazil I did not stop being a tourist and did not stop employing the tourist gaze on tourist objects.

Correspondingly, I found that the world was conforming to my tourist nature and desires! Obscure historical monuments are transformed into huge attractions, museums are increasingly inviting artists and performers into the hallowed galleries to entertain art-gazers, shopping malls
are filled with virtual reality arcades, carnival rides, galactic-theme restaurants that combine consumption with various forms of media: Hollywood, television, news, sports, video games. It seemed that life was becoming increasingly tourist, and little was required of the tourist except money and a passive gaze that received the manufactured creativity of increasingly centralizing corporations and tourist agencies. I walked into Border’s Books and felt like a tourist, I walked into an art museum and felt like a tourist, I went to the sporting goods store (where I acted the role of a mountain climber on a simulated mountain in the gigantic warehouse store full of the trappings for adventure) and felt like a tourist, I went out to eat and felt like a tourist. I paid for everything with a credit card. What was going on? Would I ever be able to be anything else again? Did I really want to be anything other than a tourist? After all, it was so easy, and the world catered to my needs-- I didn’t have to demand or ask or fight for anything. Would my leisured life-style (that millions of others were simultaneously enjoying) ever be questioned or critiqued to the point of engendering change?

In the beginning of the thesis writing process, I desired a neat conclusion to these dilemmas of contemporary tourism. I wanted to construct a clear condemnation of the commodifying processes of late capitalism that rob local cultures, local businesses and traditional lifestyles of their authenticity only to replace it with a homogenous, fake, comfortable, theme-park tourist destination for gleeful tourists seeking to escape from the drudgery of the post-industrial order. However, in exploring the various anthropological, literary and political discourses surrounding postmodernity, I understand that a characteristic of this epoch is the absence of neatly bounded conclusions and truths. The situations that I am presenting can only be schematized, described,
and for some, experienced. They cannot be reduced to fundamental truths, and the problems that they generate cannot be easily solved.

I know that I will not be able to avoid being a tourist in the future, because my socio-economic status as an upper-middle class white American and my career aspiration of becoming an anthropologist/journalist necessarily entail travel and cross-cultural contact. It is my hope that by investigating tourism in relation to culture I can construct a framework for understanding Pelourinho as a window onto the bubbled world of contemporary tourism. Perhaps by understanding these phenomena from an anthropological perspective, which I believe is best used as a means for cultural critique, I can begin to picture alternative ways of approaching Life: the tourist attraction.²

In the following pages I will situate tourism in the contemporary discourses about modernity and postmodernity, delving into the motivations and desires of varying types of tourists as well as the dynamics of their interactions with tourist sites and the residents of the tourist destination. In the first two chapters, I will explore the benefits and disadvantages that Western tourism in the third-world conveys to the tourists, the hosts, and the tourist destinations. In the third chapter I will address the relationship between tourism and anthropology, finally staking out a position for the future of anthropology and tourist studies in the fourth chapter.

The tourism researcher in search of the origin of tourism and tourist behavior might begin at the dawn of human civilization. From the travels of nomadic cultures to the Medieval Crusades to the first voyages of Cortez and Columbus, history is full of people leaving home for far-off destinations for one reason or another. After the age of New World exploration, travel began to be associated with adventure and thrill-seeking in the land of “the other”. Travelers such as Sir Richard Burton or Captain Cook traveled across exotic lands and seas, conveying their experiences to non-travelers back home in riveting Romantic narratives of discovery, individual achievement and in some cases, conquest.

Travelers were epic heros, creating their own Odysseys for personal satisfaction, public entertainment and most importantly, the advancement of European civilization. Daniel Boorstin wrote in *The Lost Art of Travel* that travel to Africa, Asia and the American new world in the 1500s was a catalyst that gave rise to the Renaissance and then the Enlightenment. He believed that it was the challenging contact with other ways of life that led to profound changes in western civilization (Boorstin, 14). Traveling offered an intimate and shocking glimpse of alternative ways of living and meaning-making that called into question the presumptions and standards of European civilization. Travels were unpredictable and dangerous, and there was always the possibility that the traveler would fail in his adventure, returning with nothing of interest or not returning at all.
Boorstin juxtaposes the current state of traveling to his nostalgic, Homeric ideal of past traveling, lamenting the rise of planned tourism. He calls tourism the artifice of true, authentic travel, because while travelers chart their own course, independently and originally experiencing the terrain (the word travel comes from *travail*—intense, difficult labor), the tourist has her routine pre-planned, guaranteed and clichéd (Buzard, 1-3). The tourist is usually blindly following the well-beaten trails of previous travelers, guided and pampered at every step by agents of the leisure industry. Tourism, as a kind of “travel-lite,” can be seen as both originating from and standing in opposition to Travel. Furthermore, as Boorstin’s lamentation shows, tourists and tourism have gained a negative connotation (Buzard, 1). Influenced by the inspiring, authentic experiences of famous travelers, tourists attempt to replicate their journeys, but ultimately re-enact the mundane. There are simply too many people doing the same things in the same places for travel to be original, daring or profound anymore. Compared with past stories of travel, tourism has become superficial, conventional and commercial in comparison (Fussell, 152-59).

There persists a notion of the contemporary traveler: the savvy sophisticate who manages to get off the beaten path to penetrate the surface of cultural representations, enjoying an *authentic* experience among *authentic native* people or *untouched* wilderness. The pages of any newspaper travel section are full of stories of such escapades in which the reporter ventures to a remote area to get a “real taste” of local life. Recent issues of the New York Times Travel section have featured articles on “Primitive Boating on the Sepik River” “Exotic Buddhist Temple Celebrations in Tibet” or “A Real Brazilian Carnival”. These same stories provide the details of
all of the tourist accommodations in the area, facilitating the reader/traveler’s replication of the
original journey. Yet is there any more traveling to be done in an age of global capital and world-
wide communications during a time of unprecedented population expansion on a planet mapped
to cartographic perfection? Is there a place on Earth where a traveler/tourist can have a unique,
even heroic experience?

Are those who still prefer to be called travelers just trying to distance themselves from
the “golden hordes,” the tourists who crowd every notable location, incessantly photographing
and shopping for souvenirs? Since mass transportation has been able to take anyone anywhere on
a modest sum of money in a short amount of time, the possibility of traveling-- a committed,
extensive and revelatory journeying-- has virtually disappeared.

The present dichotomy between traveling and tourism is actually an historical distinction,
and not a distinction of the individual traveler or tourist’s intentions and behaviors. Calling
oneself a “traveler” just implies that one is repulsed by mass tourism and has a sense of
individuality-- perhaps a snobbishness-- that keeps one from associating with the philistine
crowd. Professing anti-tourism does not mean that one is not a tourist. It is rather a fatuous act of
distancing, because in the middle and upper class West, nearly everyone is a tourist, and no one is
a traveler. While the traveler is often cited as the tourist’s closest precursor and influence, the
specific leisurely, comfortable and visual aspects of tourism correspond more closely to another
historical archetype: the flâneur.

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3The Golden Hordes is the euphemism for tourists used by Turner & Ash in their book of the
same title. By reviving the term previously used for Mongol invaders in the middle ages, the authors
parallel the invasion of barbarians into civilization with the barbary of invading tourist civilization.
From the French word meaning *to saunter*, flânerie and its subject, the flâneur (masculine) and the flâneuse (feminine) denote the activities of the stroller/stranger of late 19th century Paris. The construction of this modern city’s Hausmanian boulevards, arcades and show-cased shops provided the setting for a new kind of travel and consumption. The flâneur was the observer of an age defined by its visuality and increasingly stratified by industrialized society’s laboring and leisured classes (Friedberg, 135). Frequenting the urban streets at all hours of the day, the flâneur strolled, gazing upon everything in urban modernity (Bauman, 78). Idling in high fashion department stores, marginal slums, cafés and arcades featuring proto-cinema among other amusements, the flâneur occupied an ocular world. He was busy being seen while seeing. Employing a leisured gaze, he contrasted the hurried, busy laborer. From within the city crowd, he witnessed the daily dramas of vagabonds, shoppers, prostitutes, wage-workers and other flâneurs with a detached, imaginative consciousness.

Writers like Flaubert and Baudelaire derived aspects of their realist fiction from flânerie. Moving “without past and without consequences,” flâneurs were strangers who “take other strangers as passing surfaces, seeing and knowing them episodically” (Bauman, 79). The flâneur could imagine and construct the lives of those he watched, concocting elaborate, amusing narratives from random social contacts. His leisure let him play and mock the seriousness of proletarianization in industrial France. This leisured gaze of the flâneur is reminiscent of elite European travelers, who took “Grand Tours” in the 16th and 17th centuries to demarcated cultural sites in Europe (Bauman, 69). Viewing the architectural and artistic legacies of the Renaissance and antiquity, young men would stroll in groups through urban streets, excitedly
engaged in the visual. However, these tours were intended to prepare young men for diplomatic careers during an era of constant European conflict, which necessarily entailed interacting with the residents of the country they were visiting. Their gaze was not flânerie in its concerted attachment to subjects and their environment. Yet the act of strolling for pleasure and education--sightseeing--began with these Grand Tours (Bauman, 125).

From Travelers to Grand Tourists to Flâneurs, the motivations and activities of traveling actors have transformed in concordance with the political-economic changes in Western states. While travelers all share a sense of escapism, release from ordinary life and a desire to experience the new, different types of travelers are characterized by their dominant motivation. Travelers in the era of colonial expansion traveled for adventure, but also to locate suitable colonies for mercantile states. Explorer Henry Stanley traveled “Through the Dark Continent” of Africa to fulfill his wanderlust, and wrote his account to satisfy his literary aspirations. But his journey also facilitated Belgian King Leopold’s conquest of the Congo. Grand Tourists traveled to gain intercultural understanding, both to become liberally educated and to better prepare their states for military negotiations. Flâneurs travelled the streets of developed cities observing the social changes resulting from industrial capitalism while displaying their particularly leisured status as French elites. Why do 20th century tourists travel? How does their traveling evince the dominant political, social and economic changes of this era?
Tourist Subjects

The young and burgeoning field of tourist studies combines the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, business, and international development to investigate these questions about tourism (Nash, 2). The field is largely defined by the work of Dean MacCannell, author of *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, and the compilation of tourist theory writings edited by Valene Smith entitled *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*. Smith warns that there are as many motivations for tourism as there are tourists, yet both books have attempted to distill the most prominent motivations for and effects of tourism.

MacCannell situates tourism firmly in modernity, calling the tourist an “agent of modernity,” who is witness to the uneven nature of international development that “leaves the world in various degrees of relation to the modern” (MacCannell, 41). By perceiving the non-modern, the tourist comes to know and disperse modernity in her travels. The chief motivation of the tourist is her alienation from modern society, which propels her to attempt to “recover mythologically those senses of wholeness that are missing in everyday life” (2-3). Alienated from nature and seeking a reunification with pre-modern life, the tourist finds nature in the lives and worlds of the Other. Feeling fragmented by capitalism’s impersonal mechanisms of rationality, the tourist desires an experience outside the bounds of predictable automation. In short, she desires an experience of authenticity that will assuage her feeling of fragmentation and meaninglessness by providing wholeness and profundity. Through travel and interaction with distant lands and cultures, she tries to recreate a mythology of authenticity that modernity destroyed.
Tourists hierarchize tourist sites based on their degree of authenticity. For example, MacCannell almost facetiously remarks that the US makes the rest of the world seem authentic while California makes the US seem authentic (MacCannell, 155). MacCannell’s assertion flies in the face of what most people would consider the general motivation for tourism-- the desire to escape and enjoy oneself. Yet he contends that tourists are not content just with superficial entertainment-- they are seeking authenticity in varying intensities (Cohen, 44). But what exactly is authenticity? Is it just the opposite of falseness, is it, in fact, truth? Is it possible to locate and absolutized notion of truth in culture, which is in the process of making itself up all the time (Greenwood in Smith, 27)?

MacCannell recognizes the fatuous nature of the tourist’s quest for authenticity, and understands also how the tourist is still manipulated by the forces of modernity while seeking authenticity through tourism. The tourist thinks that she is escaping the engulfing regime of modernity by traveling to authentic places to be with authentic people, but the very institutions that make this travel possible co-opt, condition and even stage the authenticity she seeks outside the realm of modernity. Staged authenticity are displays of local culture that are concertedly presented for the tourist viewer/participant, and would not likely occur if the tourist were not present. (Some glaring examples of staged authenticity-- tourist attractions in Bali, Indonesia-- are explored in chapter 3.) However, sometimes the local, putatively “authentic” cultures incorporate the staged authenticities created by the tourist industry into their lives, accepting them as if these same cultural events did not originate in the tourist industry. This happens frequently with

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4 In fact, Freud even validated this, writing that “A great part of the pleasure of travel lies in the fulfillment of early wishes to escape the family and especially the father,” (cited in Fussell, 71).
festivals and dances that were originally only staged for tourists' benefit and looked upon by the locals as cheap and unauthentic, eventually over time they become incorporated into the culture, drawing as many locals as tourists. Ultimately though, whether the authentic culture is really authentic (and this is perhaps impossible to identify in this day and age-- see chapter 4) or if its authenticity is staged through the tourist industry, MacCannell states that the tourist is searching for an authentically good time. If this can be had with the tourist knowing about the staging and manipulation of their ideas of authenticity, then her search has not failed entirely.

Erik Cohen divides MacCannell’s concept of authenticity into two different types (Cohen, 115). First, there is the authenticity derived from feelings of social solidarity. These develop when tourists experience intercultural exchange at the tourist site that helps them overcome their feelings of alienation. Second, they are also searching for an authenticity that is officiated by museum curators, tour guides and anthropologists who comment on the tourist industry. One authenticity is feeling, the other is knowledge. The tourist is after both authentic social relations and sociability (an authentically good time) as well as some sort of knowledge about the nature and society of the chosen destination.

Because the tourist trip involves a lot of imagining, planning and desiring, like any fantasy or recreation, the tourist ends up chasing myths and stereotypes about her destination and the people that live there (Selwyn, ix). However, the tourist is often liberated from every-day constraints by a recognition of their fantastical expectations for the trip. Tourists often involve themselves in elaborate make-believe because traveling outside of ordinary life permits a change in identity. Among total strangers the tourist can try on new identities, and it doesn’t hurt that the
A tourist who travels to the third world is automatically perceived as rich, regardless of his/her socio-economic status at home (Fussell, 152-53).

Many tourism theorists have interpreted this engagement with make-believe, authenticity, and desire to escape the rationality of everyday life as comparable to religion. In The Golden Hordes, the authors go so far as to say that “tourism has replaced religion as a quest for meaning” (Turner & Ash, 36). Calling guide-books devotional texts and the tourist’s route a “sacred pilgrimage,” John Urry notes that there is a highly spiritualized element to the tourist experience (Urry, 88). Tourists seek transcendence through engagement with Otherness, and through escape from the familiar. Tourism, a high-density experience involving all of our senses, offers a trance-like immersion in heightened pleasure and awareness. The everyday experience of low-density, mundane routine is jettisoned in a period of anti-structural time.

Other tourism theorists disregard the pseudo-spiritualism of the tourist experience, which they feel is secondary to the more important socio-political effects of tourism. Dennison Nash contends that tourism is in no way a secular religion because it is so intertwined with modes of leisure— the antithesis of concerted faith (Nash, 15). He is more inclined to contend that tourism is simply a quest for difference and otherness that refreshes the beleaguered modern’s homogenous life (16). During the trip, the tourist indulges herself, conforming to the implicit tourist rule that “one should eat, drink and spend beyond the rules of the ordinary” (Smith, 13).

Whether tourism is a quest for the Other, a religious pilgrimage, or a search for authenticity, there is no doubt that tourism has become a normal and expected activity among middle class people in developed countries (Shaw, 135).
Tourist Sites

As noted in the introduction, tourist sites are increasingly situated at sites of “heritage” because heritage-- a specific historical narrative cathedect onto an object-- is one of the only things that distinguishes the various tourist sites. Tourism, in turn, differentiates local spaces in a global context. Retaining unique cultural traits to promote tourism strengthens the identity of an area, even if it tends to reify and commoditize its culture through exercises of self-presentation and representation. These performances of identity are broadcast and amplified through tourism which brings an ever changing flow of visitors who then transport cultural ideas to other locales (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 12-23).

If tourism was not linked directly to cultural heritage, all tourist sites would be the same. They would be like Club Meds-- insulated vacation resorts that have little to do with the geographical/ cultural/ historical context in which they are situated. While most tourist sites share certain formal similarities-- museums, shops, an official narrative of history, they all differ in content (Boniface, 4).

Before the heritage industry began claiming almost every site, landmark or relic of minimal value, encounters with historical locations (and what location isn’t historical?) were much different. These encounters did not involve a mediation between the visitor and the site, and often the visitor did not recognize that the site had historical importance. The visitor was free to interpret the site in any way. Now, with the creation of official names and histories for heritage sites, they begin to concretize in one sanctioned way in the minds of the visitors. While heritage and history can always be contested, it is definitely easier just to accept an historical narrative at
a heritage site than to form individual ideas about history.

Visitors to heritage sites feel as if they are inheriting a legacy, and they adopt reverent attitudes towards the sites as if they were in the presence of the ghost of a long-deceased ancestor. They are often awestruck by the conditions of the site--“this is the very bed that Lincoln slept in” and honored by the historical narrative portrayed at the site that draws a direct line from the visitor to an almost mythologized past. The sites are coded with symbols and elicit almost religious attitudes. Yet while the visitor is entranced by what they think to be the real site, multiple replications and restorations have occurred to make the site appear “original and authentic” and the actual historical materials are gone. This replication process and the legacy inheritance phenomenon is a form of symbolic exchange, illustrated by this folk story:

“There was once a man whose prize possession was an ax. It was a good ax, but above all because it had come down to him through generations of his family. It was already so old when his grandfather inherited it that the shaft had to be replaced; when his father got it he found that it needed a new head; but the man was inspired every time he used to think that it was the very ax that had been held by all of his forebears.” (Dorst, 131)

Tourism provides a venue for an unviewable history in the form of heritage. It also provides a venue for other experiences not available in everyday life. Just as a Seaworld site brings “unviewable nature” to humans in accessible form, tourist sites catalog a part of nature that might have been previously inaccessible to White Western tourists--in the form of a menagerie, a circus or a world’s fair exhibition (Davis, 13) In these displays of “native” culture,
the same principle that is used for the natural world is applied to human cultures. Pelourinho is a museum display of Afro-Brazilian culture which is usually only accessible to Afro-Brazilians. Yet in these museum-like exhibitions of culture, the displayed culture is usually apotheosized, made larger than life through overly-positive representations. The images and events often conform to pre-figured notions about the specific culture. Tourists who travel to see the Junwasi “Kalahari Bushmen” in the desert of Namibia would be surprised to find these primitives farming the land, wearing Western clothes and speaking English, so tourist promoters pay the Junwasi to act primitive indefinitely to bring in revenue (Marshall, “Kalahari Family”).

Modern tourists travel the world looking for confirmation of the nature of the world as they have been taught about it (Graburn, 168). And tourist sites conform to this expectation, becoming magic mirror sites-- reflecting back to the tourist views of imagined communities of heroic, beautiful, special people that they can approve of and be happy with (Selwyn, 278).

**Tourist Experiences**

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett finds that the tourist industry is immersed in “theatrical mediation,” and that tourist experiences are a kind of “museum of theater” practice (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 19). Tourism is a drama in which the two characters, the host and the guest meet on-stage at the site (Smith, 273). They have prepared for their performances backstage: the tourist has read his tourist brochures, consulted previous visitors, planned his wardrobe, and searched his dictionary or phrasebook before going onstage. His host may “count the house, assess the mood of the audience, arrange the lighting and props, consult with fellow
performers and rehearse a friendly smile” (Smith, 113). Tourists and hosts alter their demeanor, which they would not normally do if their lives did not involve the other. Tourism requires the host to stage a convincing show for which the tourist guest willingly suspends all disbelief about the authenticity of the cultures he is visiting, and is persuaded by the scintillating performances that he is having an authentic experience. Indeed, most of tourism involves acting, confirming theater the basic metaphor for tourism (Bruner, 176).

As spectators in the theater of tourism, tourists employ a particular mode of viewing the subjects and objects of tourist sites that John Urry has called the tourist gaze. The flâneur created the tourist gaze as visual consumption, as a mode of apprehension that signalled movement through public spaces where individuals gazed upon others and were themselves the recipients of other gazes. The tourist gaze marks the access point through which ideas and knowledge about otherness are formed. It is also the primary activity of the tourist who usually travels just to “see” other places. The gaze objectifies the site for the gratification and pleasure of the tourist. Yet the tourist gaze is not searching for random subjects and objects, but very specific, culturally encoded sites that have become signs in a type of tourist semiotics. Tourists are not content with seeing a chateau, a restaurant or an ancient temple. These sites must be characterized by signs of Frenchness, typical Italian behavior, exemplary Oriental scenes, typical American burlesque, traditional English snobbery. Objects become signs that signify larger ideas about cultures and the cultural activities of the area. These ideas are what the tourist really desires, not the material site. And this desirous gaze gets crystallized and commodified in the photograph.

Even though images of tourist sites usually disappoint because the actual site is more
vivid and rich than the reproduction, people keep taking photos, and tourists take them incessantly. Unfortunately, the tourist photographer is usually unaware of how the tourist site has been engineered and restructured to be more photogenic, and he revels in the picturesque photo opportunities that abound in highly touristified sites. Native life is rearranged to fit touristic photograph requirements similar to the way “natural,” “native” life is pleasingly altered for photographic publications like *National Geographic* (Lutz & Collins). Without delving into the problematic construction of this publication in particular, it is enough to say that tourists are often induced to tour certain sites because of a *Geographic* article, and often these articles accompany the tourist on his voyage, pre-figuring the way he sees the site and how he photographs. One might propose that tourism has become a search for *National Geographic*!

Urry describes the origin of our visual culture which affords the eye privilege over all other senses. He derives his critique of visuality from Foucault who, in *the Birth of the Clinic*, identified the complicity of visual faculty with dominance and power. Urry elaborates how the invasive, objectifying gaze of medical professionals was institutionalized within the discourse of medicine, to the detriment of the gazed upon patients. Yet the gaze extended beyond the singular medical gaze into an institutional function of surveillance into which everyone in an institution (including a tourist site) becomes gazed upon by an anonymous authority. Tourists “survey” their hosts in power-laden ways, not unlike the institutional surveillance that Foucault articulates. “Even if no tourist is around,” Urry writes, “the object of the tourist gaze may feel gazed upon.-- there is an interiorization of the gaze for the hosts, a universal visibility that exists
to serve a meticulous, rigorous power,” which is of course, the tourist industry that does not want exploited hosts to escape from service. Yet the tourist cannot have a monopoly on the simple act of gazing. The gaze can always be returned, boomeranged back to the tourist in destabilizing ways.

Tourist Hosts

Cultural tourism promotes pride, self-awareness, self-confidence and solidarity among the hosts. They are honored to have wealthy visitors come to admire them. Yet they also experience a loss of privacy, and a loss of reality that results from the fact that they have to be presentable all the time, and are unable to indulge or suffer the variances of regular life. Furthermore, tourists expect pleasantries at tourist sites, and can become demanding of hosts who do not provide exactly what they need. In the extremes, tourists can be completely insensitive to local situations— to the extent that a pair of German tourists complained to the Sri Lankan Tourist Board that their vacation had been ruined by dead bodies floating down the river they were rafting on! (Selwyn, 175).

In order to escape the sanitation of the tourist world, which presents everything through rose-colored glass, some areas of local sites become off-limits to tourists (Boissevain, 6). Because culture is show-cased, modified and re-invented for tourists, the locals need a space where culture can exist spontaneously. Focus and commercialization in one area can keep tourists away from another area which then serves as a refuge for locals (Boissevain, 13). In Salvador, the tourists mostly remain in the Pelourinho area when visiting Salvador, (just where the city tourist officials
It isn’t just the implicit cultural consequences of tourism that locals want to resist in their own private spaces— it is the invasive and surveying tourist gaze from which they want freedom (Selwyn, 107). Natives of tourist sites are not passive objects of the gaze, but active subjects who are profoundly affected by the industry. The “touristification of society” means more than just equipping a society to accommodate tourists. The cultural traditions that form the identity of a people are “severed from their context, serialized, and combined with a view toward composing a tourist product” (Picard, 46). Tourism cannot be considered separately from culture, it is a culture of its own. Tourism creates cultural self consciousness, wherein culture becomes distant and concrete, able to be copied, reproduced, marketed and exchanged. But in this process that makes culture easily apprehended, the hosts of tourist sites become prisoners of a tourist image promoted by marketers: they are confined to one theatrical, objectified role.

While the tourist is continually experiencing a new land with new diversions, the hosts endure the same routine every day. As the number of visitors at a site increases, the hosts cease to see them as individuals, because their sheer mass renders them stereotypes. Nash writes that the tourist and host relationship is markedly antagonistic, “marked by degrees of social distance and more intense stereotyping that doesn’t exist among neighbors, peers, co-religionists” (Nash, 271). If the site is located on the global tourist circuit, these stereotypes are bound to be distinguished by nationality. Tourists eventually become representatives for their respective nation-states (Smith, 10). As an example, everyone who has been abroad knows that German tourists are loud, rude and obnoxious, Japanese tourists travel in crowds with cameras, and Israeli
male tourists are lecherous and vulgar.

Hosts may become aggravated with the tourists’ choice of language. If the tourist knows the local language, the hosts are usually pleased. However, if the tourist speaks the language in a “corrupted” manner, it may offend the host. Usually, hosts compensate for the tourists’ lack of language skills. The fact that the host culture tends to produce bi- or multi lingual people, while the guests remain unilingual and don’t usually learn the language, illustrates this inequality (Nash, 266).

Furthermore, hosts see how well their visitors are treated by state officials, police officers, and service workers. The cordiality extended to tourists in third world countries sometimes contrasts markedly to the brutality and disregard that many locals receive from their governments and law enforcement. Don Kulick reports that tourist police in Salvador regard crime against tourists more seriously than non-tourist crime because they understand the enormous economic benefit that results if tourists feel safe in the streets (Kulick, 251).

Recent incidents of terrorist backlash against tourists in some third world countries demonstrate that many hosts deeply resent the Western tourist’s presence and want to restrict it. However, because their governments have become so reliant on tourist revenue, they know that they must take their own measures to discourage tourism. In chapter 3, this backlash will be attributed to the neo-colonial positioning of the tourist in the destination country that subordinates the host once again to Western interests.

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5 In October 1998, a Planet Hollywood restaurant-- a very prominent tourist site-- in Johannesburg, South Africa was bombed by an anti-American terrorist group. In February, 1999 eight Western tourists were murdered by Interahamwe rebel forces in Uganda, ostensibly because they represented imperial forces.
More subtle than the anti-tourism of hosts is the anti-tourism of tourists themselves. Every type of tourist feels superior to some other supposedly less sophisticated type of tourist (Pearce 1989, as cited in Smith, 17). Tourists who cultivate an anti-tourism while participating in tourist activities themselves create a solidarity among a privileged elite based on hostility. It is a particular attitude adopted by those who want to maintain a divide between themselves and “the great unwashed” of the tourist class who are ignorant to the effect of their presence in the host country. It is also the moral positioning of a select group that believes in a correct behavioral mode for tourism in third-world countries. The anti-tourists recognize the cultural distortions that arise because of tourism, and they also acknowledge the profound, and often destructive social change that tourism brings (Buzard, 12). They want to show a respectful and uniquely deep appreciation for the host’s land and culture. They desire a meaningful exchange and they are wary of exerting a disturbing influence. These are the types who would prefer to call themselves “travellers” because they believe that their approach to the traveling experience is markedly different from the typical philistine tourist’s. But unless a visitor learns the local language and spends an extended amount of time at a destination in order to intensively experience the culture to the extent of becoming a part of it, she will inevitably contribute to the perpetuation of the industry’s development and constructions of the other, whether she wants to or not. As Paul Fussell states so succinctly: “The anti-tourist deludes only himself. We are all tourists now” (Fussell, 105).
I want to conclude by returning to MacCannell's assertion that tourists are agents of modernity, searching for authenticity, the true, and the Real. Probably the most convincing argument for the tourist’s pre- eminent modernism is that in an era characterized by the absence of any unifying system of ethical or political or artistic standards, in an age of relativism where the objective truth is being challenged by multiple perspectives all claiming an individual truth, tourism provides one area of substantial agreement: what sights are worth seeing. In Paris, the Japanese, the Germans and the Americans all agree on one thing-- you can’t miss the Louvre. Tourist sites, like the seven wonders of the world, make a coherent modernist narrative.

Yet tourist studies literature is not complete with just MacCannell. Karen Caplan refigures his tourist by saying that the tourist is the modern subject *par excellence*, not by inventing modernity through a process of recognition and documentation, but by acting as a witness to the breakup and decay of modernity (Caplan, 54-60). The tourist straddles eras, modes of production, and systems of thought. Much of contemporary tourist behavior and the construction of tourist sites seems to correspond more closely to a different type of cultural dominant-- the highly contested realm of postmodernism.
Chapter 2 Tourism and Postmodernity

“Tourism heralds postmodernism; it is a product of the rise of consumer culture, leisure, and technological innovation” (Caplan, 27).

In *Window Shopping*, Anne Friedberg writes of the general revulsion evoked for contemporary intellectuals by the overuse of the term “postmodern” (Friedberg, 10). Laying aside these visceral reactions, she attempts to chart a workable definition of the word, and finds that “the word postmodern has become a slippery polyseme defined largely through its overusage” (Friedberg, 10). No theorist or cultural practitioner can agree on how to apply the term, arguing “whether postmodernism is a period, a tendency within a period, an aesthetic-philosophical category transcending, indeed deploring, periodization, much less on exactly who or what would constitute the definition of the term even if one of these options were elected” (Bernstein, 45).

Furthermore, by assuming the prefix “post,” theoreticians of postmodernity inevitably imply that modernism is the preceding cultural framework that has been subsumed by its “post” version. However, in everyday life, what theoreticians would describe as postmodern co-exists with the modern, is present in the modern, and was pre-figured by the modern. Modernity developed regimes of knowledge that sought the progressive ordering, control and unification of nature and social life through capitalist enterprises and state administration. Postmodern regimes of knowledge have emphasized fragmentation over unity, disorder against order, particularism against universalism, syncretism against holism, popular culture against high culture (Featherstone, 76).
In responding to claims that contemporary tourism is decidedly postmodern, some analysts re-theorize these claims in modernist terms, demonstrating how contested the separation of postmodernism from modernism can be. They use Weber’s modern concept of rationality as the governing principle of contemporary society to explain the *McDonaldization* of society, wherein the world is seen as growing increasingly efficient, calculable, predictable and dominated by non-human technologies. In the same way that McDonald’s fast food is “flexibly” produced, other products, including social and cultural products and relations are objectified, commodified and sold on demand by the second (Ritzer & Liska, 97). With this example, we can see how much of postmodernity’s rupturings of modernist universals can be schematized rather as an extension of modernist principles.

As Karen Caplan writes in *Questions of Travel*, “If postmodernism engenders new agents and discourses, it also remains ambiguously attached to its temporal progenitor, modernism. They are as linked and continuous as they are distinct and discontinuous,” (Caplan, 8). In short, the Ecclesiastical adage that there is nothing new under the sun applies to postmodernism, which some theorists even believe is just a recapitulation of Romanticism in modernity, with its amoral narcissism and attention to aesthetics (Sugrue, audiotape).

The swelling voices and profusion of texts addressing the subject eventually yield attempts to systematize the theoretical strains. Most salient is the distinction made between the aesthetic, stylistic approach and the social discourse/cultural production approach. The latter focuses on rather fraught, yet distinct relations and conditions within capitalism and capitalist culture that are particularly germane to tourism studies.
Frederic Jameson has been the preeminent theorist regarding this second approach to postmodernity, cataloging its characteristic features in the influential *Postmodernism, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism.* His work is distinguished from others by his assertion that there is a direct correlation between postmodernity as an increasingly pervasive cultural order and capitalism in its third or multinational phase (Jameson, 50).

In his 1984 essay “Postmodernism and Consumer Society,” Jameson presents the idea of postmodernity as a “cultural dominant,” rather than a totalizing system that necessarily entails the end or death of modernity (Friedberg, 45). The idea of a cultural dominant indicates an ever-present ideological hegemony that is neither universal nor impermeable. It presents a “more historiographically rigorous explanation of the continuity and discontinuity between the modern and the postmodern; it allows for the coexistence of the features of both, rather than claiming a temporal moment of rupture, subtle transformation of the increasing centrality of the image producing apparatus” (Friedberg, 170).

Explaining the fundamental structures of postmodernity, Jameson structures a triad of homologies: time and historicity, space and materiality, and the nature of human subjectivity. All of these arenas are characterized by their quality of “depthlessness.” This means that in postmodernity, historical time is flattened out, such that all historical progressions that endow a sense of a meaningful past and a projected future are displaced by an intense focus on the present. Similarly, all material substance and space is flattened into surfaces, two-dimensional reproducible images. Third, the self is no longer a unified individual perceiving with depth of ego and personal emotions grounded in a “core self.” The subject experiences a “decentered condition
of free-floating intensities” that do not inhabit a consolidated consciousness (Gergen, 130). The individual is fragmented by contradictory stimuli.

The central quality of depthlessness describes experiences and attributes of tourist sites: a rapid and disorienting melee of signs and images, the juxtaposition of “traditional” with “modern” codes in pastiche, simulations, hyperreality, emphasis on images and televisuality, conflation of high culture and mass culture, post-Fordist modes of production, the prevalence of comfort and convenience, commodity consumption and loss of a sense of the reality or truth of history and tradition. (Featherstone, 76)

The Western world has been different since the advent of television, mostly because television emphasizes the visual over all other senses and objective qualities. The ubiquitousness of televisual theatrical forms-- perfect fictions of character/consumers which simulate real life-- has changed subjective perceptions and expectations of reality. In essence, electronic media falsify human social relations. Television viewers become accustomed to the reality portrayed in advertisements designed to exploit the viewer’s envy for a richer, sexier, smarter and faster life. Television that most people watch denies the reality they live in, which indoctrinates them in the same denial. But this loss of truth, while recognized by most viewers is irrelevant because under such commodification and decontextualization no one cares what is truthful anymore. We’re all just searching for novelty, the novelty that the rapidly sequenced images on television have programmed us to desire. The tourist, brought up with a televisual reality, is no longer searching for authenticity necessarily, but for more distractions (Rojek & Urry, 53).

Just as the succession of novel images on television serves the greater purpose of
consumerism by employing advertising as its central medium, tourism is no longer about the experience of touring, but the acquisition of cultural packages—souvenirs and photographs. Also akin to the television viewer, the tourist no longer needs an imagination, because the visual stimulus provided by the tourist industry fulfills all of her imaginative. The tourist industry, like the television industry co-opts all creativity and alienates the individual from a reality that is not exciting and pleasurable all the time.

Indeed, like the television viewer, the tourist demands not to be bothered (Urry & Rojek, 29). The tourist world must be obedient to his wishes and desires. Furthermore, it should be predictable and patterned. The tourist expects to have all of the Western conveniences she is accustomed to available in the tourist destination.

These seekers of novelty are fragmented in their desires, like the television viewer under the influence of sixty separate messages an hour. Tourists are rarely convinced that they have experienced something to the fullest during leisure time. They are always aware that their experiences could be better, just as the T.V. viewer is aware that she could be much better if she only had the right products. Making leisure and consumer choices becomes arbitrary; nothing AND everything seems worthwhile. Thus, traveling from site to site becomes an end in itself— it doesn’t matter where we go just as long as we keep moving! Just like it doesn’t matter what you watch, as long as you’re watching, and it doesn’t matter what you buy as long as you’re buying!

Indeed, image-based society and culture is dominated foremost by the commodity. While individual goods and products that can be considered commodities in the most general economic sense are central to the tourist industry, what is most germane to the anthropology of tourism is
the commodification of culture: the process by which cultures are evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value, rather than their inherent use value. When a culture is only valued because its unique features will attract interested tourists and their money, it is conceivable that the cultures loses its original use value—its fundamental meaning.

Former rituals, feasts, folk arts and music become touristic services or commodities. performed or produced specifically for the benefit of tourists. Because tourists need to be presented with ever more spectacular, titillating attractions, cultures then produce contrived cultural products that have no origin in historical tradition.

Alan Greenwood was the first to describe how commodified cultural products lose their meaning and significance for the local people. The public ritual of Alarde in the Spanish-Basque town of Fuentarrabia was a major tourist attraction. Local authorities declared that it had to be preformed twice a day to accommodate tourists, and they hired paid performers to carry out the tourist attraction. Unfortunately, as soon as the ritual became commonplace, local participants lost interest in it. Through meaningless repetition, an authentic ritual became a staged performance that only resembled its progenitor in form (Greenwood in Smith, 58-72).

However, the other side of this process of commoditization resulting from tourism is that a new cultural commodity can in time acquire new meanings for its producers. What used to be a meaningful ritual for an internal audience can in time become a culturally significant self-representation for the external world. Sometimes such performances enable people to maintain a cultural tradition that might have been lost. Also, not every local tourist performer is bothered about commodification because there may still be a degree of continuity with the pre-tourism
tradition. For example, despite the fact that tourists are sometimes present at voodoo rituals in Haiti, the devotees still go into trances and are able to fulfill their spiritual duties (Cohen, 35). The commodification of culture does not necessarily destroy the meanings of cultural products, for the locals or for the tourists, although it may do so under certain conditions. Many tourists are prepared to accept a commodity, and cultural meanings can remain intact in a different medium for the locals.

We cannot just assume that touristic commodification is inherently harmful to non-Western cultures just because it introduces Western capitalist culture into enclaves of traditional culture. This constructs a false division between what the West considers traditional and what it considers modern. Indeed, why shouldn’t there be a McDonald’s in Papua New Guinea? The West has all sorts of Other cultural products in its domain why shouldn’t the Rest? Or is it homogenization of a global McDonald’s culture that people are objecting to?

Tourists are often presented as the dupe of these processes of commodification and postmodern depthlessness. Intellectuals and snobbish tourists depict them as prisoners of capitalism’s mass culture industry who are manipulated into spending their money on cheap, fake amusements that further indoctrinate them in cycles of consumption. However, some tourists do have agency with regard to the construction of tourist sites that evince particularly postmodern attributes. They are conscious of the processes of cultural exploitation and staged authenticity and they recognize their problematic position as voyeurs in the third world.

As tourist sites become more and more postmodern, some tourists react to fragmentation
and televisuality in conscientious ways. The “post-tourist” adopts a sensibility that responds to irony, kitsch, and play in the tourist playground (Urry, 85). She is able to play the tourist game without experiencing a loss of meaning, or a lamentation for the corruption of the non-West by the tourist industry. She accepts tourism as an exploitive industry and then exploits it for his own means. She recognizes that there is no authenticity to be found in touring, unlike MacCannell’s tourist who searched for authenticity, the post-tourist actually searches for inauthenticity and revels in the total fakery and created-ness of tourist sites.

To the post-tourist, destination sites no longer have a uniform, singular and holy significance. Souvenirs are equally, if not more interesting as the real thing for them. Post-tourists don’t mind the throngs of other tourists clouding their pristine postcard view of a particular tourist site, the acknowledgement of the touristic predicament of modernity validates their understanding and meta-enjoyment of the tourist experience. One might think that post-tourists wouldn’t even bother with actually traveling because with developments in virtual tourism and IMAX cinema technology-- which enacts the tourist gaze while the gazer sits passively absorbing, completely fabricated postmodern scapes like Las Vegas-- would keep tourists at home and in front of screens, yet there are more tourists than ever. But for the post-tourist, tourism is not a break from their ordinary state of being or doing. It is epistemologically and ontologically similar to any other activity because all of life has become a sort of tourist experience, and all of the places the post-tourist visits are a type of tourist attraction.

Yet in some ways, the tourist experience is a plane of cultural difference, a fixed standard to which everyday life routines are compared and contrasted. The tourist needs to return to daily
life to appreciate the tourist experience. If more and more of life is becoming like a tour, and post‐
tourists regard the whole tourist show everywhere as play, do they ever want to develop a
genuine dialog with anyone? Are post-tourists ever sincere in their interactions and desires, or is all of life an ironic, kitschy carnival?

Paul Fussell contends that the post-tourist attitude is not pleasurable because it stems from a profound boredom, annoyance and disgust with the contemporary order. Evincing the pragmatic aspects of postmodern philosophy, These new travelers “seem to doubt that the world available for scrutiny is a place where any stable understanding, interpretation or even enjoyment is likely” (Fussell, 81). They articulate postmodernity’s frustration with modernity’s fixed ideas of meaning and certainty.

The post-tourist can find meaning in noting unpleasant facts and repudiating the overly positive representations that the tourist industry spins out. Indeed, the post-tourist, while acting as if she enjoys the contemporary melange of images and commodities is actually *enjoying the awfulness* that she’s experiencing. For the post-tourist-- “awfulness is the contemporary equivalent of the exotic” (Fussell,173).

But most tourists do not conform to either the modernist notions of the tourist or the ideal of the “post-tourist,” they adopt attitudes of both ideals simultaneously. For instance, while in Pelourinho I enjoyed the awfulness of its meaningless commodity carnival, purchasing souvenirs self-consciously and shrinking in embarrassment at my consumer desires. But I also thought that I was witnessing an authentic cultural phenomenon that somehow made my trip worthwhile.
**Pelourinho**

Returning to Salvador, Brazil, and its premiere cultural destination, Pelourinho, I want to apply the preceding analyses of the postmodern cultural dominant to my observations of this tourist site. Along with the blurring of boundaries and divisions characteristic of postmodernity, there has been a blurring of the distinction in tourism studies between the objective and subjective frameworks present at a destination. I want to reiterate for clarification that Pelourinho can be examined as both an objectified domain--as a site, a location, a cluster of architectural structures and ornamentations, as well as a subjectified domain that facilitates the sociocultural relations between hosts and guests.

In many ways, Pelourinho the site was constructed for the postcard. It was constructed to be reproducible and replicable in myriad visual forms. All of its cultural institutions are about itself, all of the wares sold in its souvenir shops make reference to Pelourinho: the identical folk-paintings of the polychrome colonials dotted with street dancers, the drummer dolls, the T-shirts that advertise those same souvenir shops. The neighborhood’s locus of high culture, the Jorge Amado Museum, displays the texts that the author wrote about Pelourinho while living there. In many ways, all of the cultural production in Pelourinho is self-referential and can be perceived as auto-ethnographic (Dorst, 1). The culture of late consumer capitalism, or (postmodernity) consists largely in the processes of self-inscription, indigenous self documentation and endlessly reflective simulation. Theorists of ethnographic representation have for some time now acknowledged that all cultures generate texts about themselves, but postmodernity virtually consists of that activity. It “spontaneously” does for itself, and massively so, the sort of thing
ethnographers and other species of documentarist claim to do. Therefore, the activities of professional ethnographers and what the forces and institutions of postmodernity do are coalescing (Dorst, 131). This issue will be explored further in Chapter 3.

Pelourinho occupies a middle ground between a self-aware tourist site that is capable of commodifying its awareness-- also called a theme-park-- and a site that has unknowingly generated mechanisms of self-referentiality and self-reproduction. Pelourinho is not fully aware of its increasing textuality; it does not theorize its own postmodernity. The changes and renovations in the past decade that have transformed the site can be seen as resulting from inevitable, yet not centrally controlled processes of industrialization. While Pelourinho’s shops market Pelourinho-ness in a very aware fashion, and the cultural events staged in the neighborhood are all intended to commodify the heritage of Afro-Brazilian syncretized culture, they lack the sense of humor directed back at the site that characterizes self-aware theme parks. The tongue-in-cheek jovialness of a Disney site, for example, in which childish desire is given free reign, and common conventions are mocked and ironized in the spirit of play, is absent in the very serious, market-oriented Pelourinho (Hollinshead, 121-156).

Pelourinho could be characterized as an un-funny theme-park. It is a site that lacks self-reflexivity, while prominently displaying its self-referencing. This type of tourist site seems more like the inadvertent effect of the postmodern cultural order and not a concerted attempt to create a postmodern pleasure dome like Epcot Center. It appropriates the techniques of a Disney site without fully incorporating the self-awareness, because this naïveté is necessary to maintain
the veneer of authenticity. In contrast, Disney has no pretensions of being authentic— it acknowledges and revels in its artificial state.

The techniques and tactics of "Disneyfication" are increasingly identified in other locations, the homogenization of the commodity form in public space that was previously more diversified and non-commercial has come to signify the present era. John Urry characterizes this process as “de-differentiation”: the blurring of realms of social and cultural activity (Urry, 82). The boundaries between public and private are collapsing, analogous to the postmodern collapse between high and low culture. The distinctions between shopping, education, entertainment, tourism are all breaking down and their associated modes of presentation are increasingly muddied.

In a facetious (or not so facetious) Village Voice article, culture critic Steven Johnson asks if, in the future, our contemporary cultural formations such as malls, theme-parks, entertainment complexes and restaurants will be seen as authentic to this period? Will they become tourist sites for our progeny as they deferently observe the “heritage” they will inherit from this era? Will they make pilgrimage to the cityscapes like the Disney-fied rendition of Times Square currently under construction where “the glitzy facades of familiar buildings artfully conceal the suburban mall that lies behind” (Johnson, 75)? The current “mallification of America” and the decline of public space, where corporate sponsored environments “squeeze out the rough and tumble vitality of the traditional sidewalk” may be treasured as the relics of our “authentic culture” for future generations (Johnson, 75). By posing the question, Johnson answers another. Will tourists flock to our urban entertainment development projects containing the same Planet
Hollywood, IMAX cinema and national department store chains just as we flock to heritage sites all around the world? Well, we/they already do. We are tourists in our own era because as entertainment, shopping and tourism become conflated, and “authenticity” is consumed and packaged by corporate America, the shopping mall and cinema seem equally appropriate locations for deploying the tourist gaze. Charles Acland articulates the almost “magical” quality of such tourist expansion:

Tourism’s current tendency to expand into virtually any realm of social life, through an alchemical process by which every place and event has the potential, with the right development, promotion and merchandising, to be transformed into a cash cow tourist attraction, only heightens its pervasiveness. (Acland, 438)

These huge entertainment/tourist/shopping sites also eliminate the local-ness of specific sites, and eliminate our social problems by building massive synthetic environments where local-ness and all of its attendant realities once pervaded. “Disney-fied” projects like the Mall of America or the New Times Square put a delusional spin on realities of poverty and homelessness. Urban redevelopment usually just replaces the problem it was intended to resolve with cheery commerce, rather than dealing with its root causes.

And even the act of traveling is being taken out of the construction and enjoyment of tourist sites with the creation of virtual touring through IMAX “cinematic transportation” technology (Acland, 437). Increasing technological capacity is decentering the project of tourism, and spinning it out into the realm of pure entertainment.
In this chapter I have attempted to flesh out the perceptions of the tourist/anthropologist and situate Pelourinho more firmly in the theoretical discourse about the tourist sites. While retaining distinctly modernist qualities, Pelourinho as a tourist site is also rupturing into postmodernity. Ultimately, though, the question is not: Is postmodernity displacing modernity in tourist sites? But rather, do post-modern ideas cast a new and interesting light on tourism that can help us understand our role as tourists? (Ritzer & Liska, 102).

It has become increasingly difficult to differentiate between tourism and other sociocultural processes, as so many of us are now tourists for much of the time: “for previous ages it might well have been the case that the tourist gaze was distinct from other forms of experience, but in our present postmodernist, mass communications world we have very much seen a universalization of a mode of perception and being which might be termed ‘touristic” (Crick, 206). Is there any way to participate in other cultures outside of the tourist paradigm?
Chapter 3

Touring Anthropologists, Anthropological Tourists

My discomfort in Pelourinho was partially caused by the aporia I felt between my presence as a tourist and my role as a student anthropologist. I was distressed that the social relations were structured so that I felt that I couldn’t be a white American woman without also being a typical tourist, which I felt to be contradictory to my assignment of producing an anthropological manuscript about the tourist site. I was treated by all of the Pelourinho actors as if I was a tourist, despite the fact that I spoke Portuguese, acted suspiciously observant and lacked the tourist signifier par excellence—a camera. I was doing my best to appear as anti-tourist as possible. This experience of wrestling with my identity as an anthropologist in the field, which was complicated by tourism, and by my reluctant status as a tourist, is not unique. Recently, anthropologists have been writing about tourism, both as a subject of study and as a complicating dynamic in the field-work process. The relationship between anthropology and tourism is a very salient and pressing one because virtually every site of anthropological fieldwork now doubles as a tourist site. There are few places in the world where anthropologists and tourists do not co-exist. As tourism becomes the world’s largest industry, the trend of tourist presence in the field is only going to increase. Understanding the dynamics of tourism in relation to anthropology will be essential to the discipline in the 21st century.

There are several operating assumptions regarding my experience in Pelourinho that I will interrogate below. While in Brazil, I understood the practice of anthropology to be completely
separate from that of tourism. Anthropology seemed to me to present a more respectable, authentic and rigorous method for approaching the tourist site than simple sight-seeing. However, many anthropologists currently question this division between their “science” and tourism’s non-methodological apprehension.

Is anthropology glorified tourism? Are anthropologists just as self-serving, unauthentic and leisured as tourists on vacation? Do they reveal any special knowledge that can’t be discovered through tourism? These issues have been addressed by Quetzil Castañeda, Edward Bruner and other anthropologists who have chosen not to ignore the interrelations unfolding between anthropology and its back-country cousin, tourism (Bruner, 108).

The first generation of anthropologists working simultaneously in the field with tourists chose to ignore them. Their presence was regarded as interfering with the authentic and “contained” cultures whose patterns they were trying to distill into ethnographic text. The anthropologists’ disparaging attitude toward the despoiling activities of the tourists was rationalized as an attempt to repudiate the neocolonial framework in which the tourists were situated. However, by doing this, anthropologists themselves were unwittingly upholding colonialist notions of preserved, intact, and whole cultures that needed protection from the engulfing forces of modernity-- forces such as tourism. After admitting that tourists were indeed present at their ethnographic sites, anthropologists began including the interfering tourists in their ethnographic accounts, which signalled a more sophisticated approach to the discipline’s repudiation of colonialism. Many anthropologists are now embracing tourism. There are more and more ethnographies of tourists, accounts of tourist-host and tourist-anthropologist interactions, as well as studies of what natives think of hosts and
anthropologists.

The anthropological documentary film “Cannibal Tours” directed by Dennis O’Rourke (1987) examines the attitudes of native Papua New Guineans toward the tourists that visit their community on the Sepik River in search of authentic aboriginal art and ritual practice. The film places the European guests and the aboriginal hosts in an antagonistic opposition that directly parallels the colonial administrator’s relationship with the colonized. By juxtaposing interviews with natives and with the European tourists’ impressions of their encounter with the natives, O’Rourke displays the Europeans’ naivete and subtle racism, articulating the typical discourse of development surrounding primitives which positions them as children in relation to the adult status of Westerners (Fabian). In contrast to the Europeans’ reductionist views, the aborigines evince a surprisingly entrepreneurial and critical attitude toward the colonizer tourists. On camera, they criticize the Europeans for wanting to bargain with them, because it is obvious to the Papuans that they can afford any price the artists might ask for their wares. They also articulate their frustration at posing for tourist cameras. In this film, there is little difference between Enlightenment age explorers’ attitudes toward discovered savages, and the modern tourist discovery of native New Guineans posing as savages.

O’Rourke’s project is a positive development, because it demonstrates how anthropology functions as cultural critique. Sympathizing with the natives, O’Rourke’s camera opposes the tourists. Yet O’Rourke is a Westerner himself. How can he transcend the colonialist paradigm in which he is historically situated simply because he personally resists the “primitivizing” discourse of the tourists? With money, a camera and a desire to experience Papuan culture, how is he really any different?
Is Anthropology Tourism?

operating assumptions:

1) The anthropologist becomes immersed in local culture and conducts an in-depth study that benefits both the local people and the Western academy. She contextualizes local culture in a political-historical framework and is aware of the ways tourist marketing distorts this reality for economic benefit. Her anthropology is considered serious work.

2) Tourists are superficial, unaware, and harmful agents for the anthropologist’s culture of study.

3) Therefore, tourists and anthropologists are completely different in their motivations and activities.

If anthropology is the study of the difference of the other, and tourism is often characterized as a “quest for the Other” and a “quest for difference” (either in the tourist’s subjective or outward experience) it seems easy to draw a parallel between the two (Rojek, 91). Despite their attempts to escape the image of tourist superficiality, anthropologists have been called part-time tourists, in-depth tourists, critical tourists, refined, sophisticated, elite tourists and third-order tourists. Depicting themselves as “immersed” in native culture, the anthropologist attempts to dig deeper than tourists in a quest for authenticity, but often the same social structures that don’t allow tourists to become immersed in native culture-- difference in economic status, race, gender, religion, or simple outsider-dom-- also confound the anthropologist.

Often the only difference between anthropologists and tourists is the difference that the anthropologist projects onto herself as a measure of status and as a way to remain separate from the tourist hordes. Knowing that tourists are often otherized by the destination population, she wishes
to avoid that kind of distance with her culture of study. Yet the difference that the anthropologist so cautiously defends doesn’t necessarily appear to anyone else. The tourist and theorist are both sightseers, but the theorist wants to be a seer in the connotation of know-er (Van Den Abelle, 31). She wants to feel unique and superior by virtue of this knowledge in comparison to fellow sightseers, who she thinks are uneducated commoners. Many anthropologists have acknowledged that their subjects of study are apt to equate them with tourists, which complicates the ethnographic project. Hildred Geertz says about her ethnography of Bali, “the Balinese never let me forget that I was just one more tourist among the others” (Bruner, 171).

Perhaps this difficulty to form a different kind of bond with the local population stems from the fact that neither tourists nor anthropologists routinely aid local populations in tangible, immediate ways. Why should these strange travelers be reserved any special position in local society when they are present for their own benefit? In fact, anthropologists sometimes even deceive their subjects about the nature of their relationship in an attempt to secure data (Crick, 107). They end up trying to build immediately trusting relationships that are inevitably unreciprocal because of the timed demands of their dissertation or other research. The relationship is seen as impositional, and natural bonds of affection and trust are impossible because the situation in the field is so forced (Crick, 108).

It is true that the different types of tourists that are compared to the anthropologist change the comparison. A “post-tourist” is aware of his role as a tourist, the staged authenticity of cultural displays, and acts on his ability to maneuver playfully among various cultural representations while maintaining a sense of distanced, critical and ludic involvement. His position in a destination may be
more similar to an anthropologist’s educated, informed and contextualized position than a “modern”
tourist. In this comparison, is there a difference between the post-tourist gazing at a spectacle and
the anthropologists theoretical gaze?

While abroad, both tourists and anthropologists work on something that will advance their
status back home. Both travel to collect and appropriate what they value from the other and then
report back to the home base (Crick, 210). The cultures that tourists and anthropologists choose to
visit are also selected for similar reasons. For cultural tourists, the more modern the locals are, the
less interesting they are to tourists. If the locals step out of their assigned roles in exotica, they lose
their ability to profit (diLeonardo, 55). The same measure of exotica used to be the norm for
anthropologists. They would seek out cultures with the most contrasting difference to Western
culture, such as the Masai in Africa or the Yanomami in Brazil. The operating rule was: the more
exotic and primitive, the more of a contrast with western culture could be illustrated in an
ethnographic account, which meant the shock effect of Otherness would market the ethnography
product to the academy and the masses (diLeonardo, 1-23).

Some critics of anthropology contend that the idea of an anthropologist’s complete immersion
in the local culture is a myth. Margaret Mead ate nothing but American food while in Samoa,
Malinowski gathered a lot of his ethnographic testimony in war hospitals and portrayed his
interviews as on-site. Likewise, there is a misconception about the hermetic quality of the tourist
bubble, which is permeated frequently by perceptions of local political struggle and realizations
about the exploitive nature of tourism in the third world. As a recent edition of The Nation
illustrates, regular tourists are aware of a public discourse about the difference between “responsible
tourism” and “destructive tourism” (The Nation, Oct. 7, 1997).

The assumption that an anthropologist’s duties are all work is also false, because much of the time anthropologists are playing at being inside another culture. Much of an anthropologist’s work is recreation, hanging out with the locals, doing pleasurable activities with them in their leisure time to gain their trust (Bruner, 177).

Erik Cohen writes that tourists and anthropologists share a similar alienation from contemporary life, which propels them to seek out the authentic in the cultures of others. “Because educated drifters and intellectuals share senses of alienation, they are drawn to the authentic” (Cohen, 7). The greater the alienation of the tourist, the greater the search for authenticity. This presents interesting criteria for evaluating tourists who seem more like anthropologists-- are they aspiring anthropologists? Are anthropologists and tourists kindred spirits in an age when most people don’t recognize their alienation? Susan Sontag answers this query:

...anthropology conquers the estranging function of the intellect by institutionalizing it. For the anthropologist, the world is professionally divided into home and out there, the domestic and the exotic, the urban academic world and the tropics. The anthropologist is not simply a neutral observer. He is a man in control of, and even consciously exploiting, his own intellectual alienation. (Sontag, 85)
Anthropology and Neocolonialism

operating assumptions:

1) anthropology has always been the vanguard of liberating sciences that seek to use knowledge to improve society

2) anthropology has jettisoned its colonial framework in the current post-colonial era

James Clifford writes that the nature of anthropology is one of nostalgia. As a discipline, it has set about creating a preserving cage for the “primitive” in ethnographic text (Clifford, 41). Lamenting the modernization of primitive cultures, anthropology constructed myths about the fate of such cultures, asserting that they would be “lost” if they were not preserved in their “original” state. Hidden in this assertion lies the less-advanced, ergo less human, autonomous and conscious position that the West imputed to the “primitive.” Tourist myths about exotic destination cultures correspond to these myths that anthropology created about the Other. These myths, because they reflected the West as more advanced, revealed more about how the West saw itself than how the Other actually lived (Selwyn, 77).

In Time and the Other, Johannes Fabian articulates how anthropology as a modern discipline “climbed on the back of adventurers and travelers” (Fabian, 6-9). Anthropologists continue a historical trajectory that began with travellers and explorers, who were followed by missionaries, succeeded by colonial administrators, who paved the way for visiting anthropologists. Furthermore, anthropologists have been accused of contributing directly and indirectly to maintaining the structures of power represented by the colonial system (Huggan, 92). The discipline also has been
charged with conspiring in imperialist representation, and of silencing those on behalf of whom it claims the right to speak. Given this colonial context for the founding of anthropology, is there any way to extirpate the discipline from its colonial heritage? Some contemporary anthropologists are attempting to recuperate the motives of their colonial era forebears. Wendy James asserts that these anthropologists were “frustrated radicals, aware that their work was bound up in, and accountable to dominant systems, but providing the methodological tools for those systems’ self-critique” (Huggan, 92). It would be reductionist to say that all anthropology was just a reflection of colonial ideology. Despite the discipline’s articulated repudiation of its initial dependence upon the colonial paradigm, aren’t there still colonizing pretenses behind anthropology’s quest for knowledge of the other? Once the colonial paradigm has been established, can it ever break down?

Tourism and Neocolonialism

*operating assumption:* tourism in the third world cannot be anything except neocolonial given the persistence of the economic disparity between former colonizer and formerly colonized.

In many areas of the Third World, two decades after colonial rule has ended Westerners return in the form of tourists. They visit and view the same spaces that were created by and for their precursors (Caplan, 34). The economic world is still aligned in much the same way as it was in the
colonial era, with the international capitalist order guaranteeing that the peripheries are tied economically to centers. Because tourists simply follow the conduits paved by colonizers in previous centuries, tourism can be seen as a continuation of essentially colonial labor relations and attitudes. Tourists simply follow a chain of visitors in the third world, beginning with travelers and explorers who opened the way for missionaries, who paved the way for colonial administrators, who sanctioned the presence of anthropologists, who in turn inspired millions of tourists, who are further encouraged by international alliances among local elites to gaze at these distant cultures/lands.

Besides the tourists’ physical occupation of the same space and positionality of previous visitors to the third world, they also continue the modes of surveillance and the discursive systems used in the colonial era to rationalize Western power and dominance. John Urry diagnosed the “democratization of the tourist gaze and the spectacle-ization of place” as a “distribution and reinvestment of the forces of orientalism and colonization” (Urry, 120). Ever present, demanding service because of economic privilege, tourists coerce subservient and decorous behavior from their hosts.

Through their physical presence that allows for the continuity of the colonial historical trajectory, as well as the colonialist cultural assumptions about the Other that they utilize in their subjective and public discourses, anthropologists and tourists are in many ways neocolonial figures.
Anthropology is NOT Tourism

Yet others disagree with the analogy of anthropology as a more involved tourism. Without negating the structural similarities of travel, observation and utilization of colonially established cultural conduits which tourism and anthropology share, it can of course be contended that the two are fundamentally different. The putatively serious, and often political work of anthropologists contrasts strongly to the ludic and superficial nature of the tourist’s experience.

As an illustration, if we examine a particular site where anthropologists and tourists are present, we can see how their attitudes, activities and purposes oppose one another. At a religious ritual in Bali where tourists are present, the anthropologist is likely to approach the event as an introduction to the complexities of a religious tradition, while the tourist is likely to view it as a unique aesthetic spectacle. While observing the dance, the anthropologist may be taking notes, recording oral observations, recording the music or transcribing the various choreographed movements of the dance. It is a studied, formal observation. The tourist may be enraptured by the beauty of the performance, disrupting his or her aestheticizing tourist gaze to capture the moment on film, or to comment to another tourist about the event. Upon the conclusion of the event, the anthropologists knows that he or she needs to do much more contextualizing to understand what happened in the dance and what it meant for the performers inside the cultural context. He may be planning a series of interview questions or determining how to locate resources about the particular dance. The tourist, on the other hand, is finished with the event, has consumed it like a product and is ready to move on to another consumable site, event or product. In sum, being present at a ritual is just the start of an intense investigation of understanding for the anthropologist, yet for the tourist it is the end, the product to
be collected like a souvenir. The tourist desires “thin description” while the anthropologist seeks the ethnographic technique of Geertzian “thick description” created after repeated encounters and multiple interpretations of a single cultural phenomenon (Crick, 202).

Additionally, the anthropologist is often characterized as a defender of cultures while the tourist is characterized as a pillager of culture. Tourists have little interest in the autonomy or political struggles of the countries they are visiting. They desire to see, but not necessarily understand others who are primarily engaged in traditional subsistence, performance and religious observation. This is part of the objectifying process of the tourist gaze, which depoliticizes as it deprives the others of their full subjectivity. The tourist is chasing after cultural myths— the “idyllic French castle,” the perfect little Italian goat farm” the “happy Amazonian natives”, which are served up to him by the culture pimps in the tourist industry. Indeed, if we accept his interpretation of the role of anthropology, Malcolm Crick asks, how can an industry involved with so much fantasy, myth and hedonism be associated with anthropology which aims to present an accurate picture of other cultures? (Crick, 210). The political work of the anthropologist who speaks for the oppressed and knows about world political economy and is able to situate local culture sensitively is the antidote to tourist denial of political reality in Shangri-La.

Furthermore, the willingness of the anthropologist to acculturate himself by learning the language and spending considerable time with his population of study contrasts with the tourist's fleeting shopping trip in the third world.
Anthropology of Tourism

Anthropologists can recognize tourism in two ways. They can make a distanced reference to the industry in their writings, or they can construct a dialogic relationship with the industry, by assuming a counseling position that engages anthropological issues in the industry such as cultural representation in tourist marketing, curricula for tours, proper contextualization to prepare tourists responsibly for cultural sites they will visit. The possibilities for applications of applied anthropology in the tourist industry are endless. Yet Nash reports that there is very little dialogue between anthropologists and the tourist industry. There is even less coverage of tourism. Malcolm Crick diagnoses anthropologists as prone to producing monographs as if the international tourist industry didn’t exist (Crick, 205). Yet, anthropology cannot conscionably ignore the largest peacetime movement of people across borders (Crick, 207).

In The Anthropology of Tourism, Dennison Nash questions why anthropology has virtually ignored a very important area of study. He attributes the deficit to anthropology’s impulse for self-preservation as well as residual neo-colonial ideas about cultures and cultural representations.

Until recently, anthropology had an ambivalent attitude toward tourism and typically denigrated tourists and tourist activities as unauthentic, tacky and commercial (Bruner, 181). Tourist culture was regarded as a truncated version of a fuller, more authentic culture over which anthropology was the sovereign authority. Anthropologists consciously ignored their association with tourism, fearing that an unauthentic, frivolous past-time would begin to replace their studious reign over the exotic, the distant (Crick, 203).

Deborah Gewertz and Frederick Errington, anthropologists studying tribes in Papua New
Guinea, admitted to their concerted erasure of tourists in their field in their accounts of tribal life. Writing to correct this inaccurate depiction in a later account, they agreed that “the justification for doing anthropology vanished for us if it was contended that anthropologists and tourists are fundamentally alike” (Gewertz & Errington, 39). Though in a second version of their account they did mention tourist presence sparingly, their original elision underscores the assumption that tourism "assaults" the ethnographer’s authority.

Similarly in Assault on Paradise, Conrad Kottak’s book about the encroachment of modernity on a rural Brazilian village, he relates how he was initially threatened by the presence of hippie tourists in his field-site. After many encounters in which tourists assumed to know more than he about local culture, he became upset and planned to leave them out of his account. He also admits to engaging in activities to rid the village of their presence, not just in his text. In his book the reader notices a sense of jealousy, competitiveness and defensiveness whenever he discusses the hippie tourist presence. While these anthropologists certainly found tourists and tourism to be a nuisance to their fieldwork, the fact that they later reported their original tourist erasures is a reflection of the new developments in anthropological thinking about tourism. While some still acknowledge their opinion that tourism is inherently destructive to local populations, other anthropologists are critiquing this stance. Valene Smith, in one of the first anthropological studies of Tourism, Hosts and Guests, asks, “who are anthropologists to say or demonstrate that tourism is uniquely destructive or evil? The anthropological community should resist the temptation to condemn tourism as unnecessarily intrusive, as exploitive, as deculturative” (Smith, 273). She sees the anthropologists’ disparagement of tourism as indicative of the superior status that academics in toto wish to attain vis-
To re-cap, the anthropological study of tourism was originally accidental among field researchers who went to a remote location expecting to be the only westerner, and found that they were sharing the field with other non-natives. The general trend in anthropological coverage of tourism was to grudgingly mention the interference of tourists who were seen as despoilers of pure ethnographic data. Some accounts would leave out the presence of tourists entirely. However, with their growing presence and the expanding tourist market, anthropologists were forced to address the tourist phenomenon on its own terms, rather than on the terms of the ethnographer in search of pure untainted culture (Crick, 195).

The field of tourist studies is very recent in anthropology, but seems to be a very rich area for research because “all or most of the questions that have preoccupied socio-cultural anthropologists turn up in the study of tourism,” making it one of the most important fields of study to the development of the discipline (Nash, 3-4). Writing about travel and travelers has been a common theme in literature since the 19th century but the close, careful scrutiny of the tourist/traveler experience from an anthropological perspective only began in the 1970’s with the publication of Dean MacCannell’s The Tourist. Fortunately, anthropologists realized the deliberate misrepresentation they were committing by ignoring tourists in their field-work.
Case Study: the Critical Anthropologist as Tour-Guide

While critics have equated anthropology with tourism and/or fiction writing, others have argued that anthropology’s enduring legitimacy comes from its unique ability to represent the voices of disempowered peoples. But while ethnographies are not reducible to mere fictions, they nevertheless assume a fundamental dissociation of their writers from their subjects, reflected in the former’s propensity to deconstruct the later’s realities as representations. This dissociation becomes especially paradoxical when anthropologists are engaged by tour groups to expound on local culture, but are constrained by the tour structure and the tourists’ desires. (Kaspin, 53)

E.M. Bruner calls the border between tourism and anthropology “clouded, porous and political” (Bruner, 110). In his work as an anthropologist in Bali, Indonesia, he has studied tourism in multiple ways: as a tourguide, as an ethnographer, and as a tourist himself. From these multiple perspectives he was able to closely perceive tourist attitudes and desires in relation to his attitude and desires as an anthropologist in Indonesian culture.

Employed by an Indonesian travel company as a tour-guide, Bruner oversaw an ethnographic tour package for a group of 20 upper-middle class American tourists. He intended to study his tour group for an ethnography he was writing, while introducing them to the rich culture of the islands. Because he couldn’t conscionably perform the generalizing narrative of the typical Indonesian tour-guide-- being a critical and reforming anthropologist-- he attempted to critically assess the tourist development for his tourists. He explained how Indonesia’s “exotic” culture had been commodified by state programs designed to bring in foreign revenue. He showed them staged authentic dances, and then showed them real authentic dances for comparison. They preferred the staged version, calling it the “sacred tourist dance” (Bruner, 134). He introduced the tourists to anthropologists that he knew
and let them explain their cultural research. In general, his tour expanded beyond the typical tour’s cheery optimism by offering multiple interpretations and criticisms of the tourist industry.

Performing several roles at once, Bruner admitted that it was difficult to keep separate his touristic and ethnographic roles while tourguiding. As a tour-guide he was an authenticator, explaining the customs and religious rituals of “native” Indonesians. As a critical tour-guide he was even more of an authenticator. Yet while guiding, he was also studying the tourists, who were studying the tour and studying him, who was studying himself through the tourists study of his representation of the culture. The recursiveness of this experiment yielded choice observations about the nature of the hermeneutic frameworks of tour-guides and anthropologists.

Bruner found that he had an ambiguous position vis-á-vis the natives because he could speak their language and articulate the intricacies of their cultural traditions, which marked him as different. Yet as a tour-guide, he was absorbed within the hegemonic tourist circuit (Kaspin, 55).

The insider status conveyed to the anthropologist in the context of mass tourism is a theme of Quetzil Castañeda’s film, “Incidents of Travel at Chichén Itzá.” After conducting field work for two years with Mexican Mayans, Castañeda is present with a videocamera at the Chichén Mayan ruins for a festival celebrating the serpent of sunlight that appears on one of the ziggurats every equinox. He interviews some of the cadre of American New Age devotees who come to witness what they believe is the coming of the Age of Aquarius. In fluent Mayan, he interviews local merchants who have been re-located by the Mexican state out of the path of the visiting throngs. He converses with Western tourists who are unaware of the spiritual significance the site holds for the New-Agers, and unaware of the local merchant oppression. The tourists say the site would be better
without people, because they could take better photos.

Using his status as a Princeton anthropologist, he is able to move among all of the various visitors to the site, simultaneously identifying with the Americans as an American, as a Mayan because of his family heritage, and as a tourist because he is present at a tourist site. By demonstrating their positions through documentary, Castañeda did not need to literally describe the way his anthropology endowed him with uber-mediator status. As a cultural broker, he interrogated the assumptions that the New Agers held about the Mayan beliefs, revealing their superficiality just by asking the right questions. He portrayed his sympathy for and understanding of the Mayans, who were themselves rather ignorant of the traditions that were presumed to be theirs. Through his research, he learned that the ancient Mayan traditions that the New Agers spoke of were actually ancient rituals *re-constructed* --and certainly *constructed*, he implies-- by anthropologists excavating the site. Through this investigation into the mythological layers surrounding the site and its visitors he was able to show how anthropology constructs its object in the process of attempting to neutrally, positivistically explain it. Yet through all of his mediations, which lack a master narrative, the viewer begins to get a fuller idea of the complex experience of Chichén Itzá as: a tourist site, a sacred Mayan site and a commodified capitalist market for New Age spirituality. As viewers, we see the impossibility of locating truth in such a fully depicted experience, and this irreducibility we come to understand as a type of truth. The video montage becomes a more accurate rendering of the everyday collage-like construction of the Real (Taussig, 440-65).

This is the type of understanding that Bruner was attempting to provide for his tourists on his tour by portraying the hidden machinations of the tourist industry while simultaneously exposing
them to the flat surfaces of tourist representations. To his dismay, the tourists remained ensconced
in their tourist bubble, fully engaged in the status-making and pleasurable aspects of the tour
experience. Furthermore, they began to idolize him as the hero tourguide, who surpassed the other
non-revealing tourguides who did not deftly deconstruct tourist packaging for them while touring.
His tour turned into a magic unveiling, not unlike the studio tours that take movie fans behind the
scenes to display the “real workings” of special effects, make-up and elaborate staging. Because they
were seeking the tourist backstage, Bruner served as their ultimate backstage pass (MacCannell, 12).
Despite many of their post-tourist interpretations, such as the "sacred tourist dance" incident which
showed how tourists are sometimes wise to the ways authenticity is manipulated by the host
culture, they were still mired in their enchantment with the Other as a source of spectacle and truth-
endowing difference.

By studying the tourists as they were experiencing a trip mediated by him, Bruner was
essentially studying himself. He likened himself to Kaluli healing shamans who create the meaning
that they discover in their patients, because he was creating the meaning of Indonesia for the tourists,
and then studying the meaning as if he had discovered it! Yet is this really any different from what
most anthropologists do anyway? Throughout the history of the discipline, hasn’t anthropology
revealed more about the culture and institutions of interpretive knowledge of the anthropologist than
about the culture of the Other? And aren’t anthropology’s representations of other cultures more
about our imagination of the other than the actual other? In effect, isn’t the anthropological field site
just a “house of mirrors” reflecting images of the anthropologist and her culture back to her? (Kaspin,
53). These questions are contested, directing anthropology toward an even more uncomfortable
question that it would rather avoid: Is anthropology useful anymore? Is it relevant to a contemporary world?

Returning briefly to Pelourinho in postmodernity, we saw that the cultural phenomena at the tourist site displayed in text and cultural institutions functioned as "auto-ethnography." Indeed, this is part of a larger, ubiquitous trend of institutional self-knowledge. Every aspect of the late capitalist cultural world is becoming self-conscious in multiple self-reproductions of itself. Films like “The Truman Show” reflect that popular culture is conscious of its own manipulations of itself—everything becomes self-referential and self-mocking. Is this kind of awareness really ethnographic? Ethnography can be described as the inscription and interpretation of culture, then postmodernism seems to render the ethnographer superfluous. Postmodernism abolishes the difference between the site of ethnographic experience/observation and the site of ethnographic writing— the very separation that ethnography relies on. Mass marketing and advertising—central to postmodern culture—engage in ethnographic research and generate countless ethnographic texts that we see everyday in all types of media. Given that commerce has cultural analysis under its wing, what is the point of writing about a site that already knows all about itself and willfully projects these analyses out to the public? Through the process of exploiting its cultural heritage and history, Pelourinho’s designers and choreographers practiced a utilitarian, market-oriented ethnography. However, the market ethnographies are rarely as critical or progress-minded as those produced by trained, skilled anthropologists. Anthropologists are still necessary to hold the positivistic ethnographies of the culture industry in check.
Chapter 4

New Anthropology, New Tourism?

Anthropology is emerging from a prominently colonialist framework and charting new territory, influenced by theoreticians in cultural studies. “Anthropologists are... deeply indebted to cultural studies which has helped them to problematize their concepts of lived experience and to begin to deconstruct the process of fieldwork itself” (Swedenberg & Lavie, 9). Meanwhile, tourism’s framework of cultural representation is still very colonialist. Given the parallels between anthropology and tourism, it is ironic that tourism actually seeks and occupies the ethnographic present the very discursive space that ethnography has long since abandoned (Bruner, 439). Far more people learn about other cultures through tourism than through anthropology courses or texts, which means that many people learn about cultures through what contemporary anthropology considers an inaccurate and out-dated discourse about cultures. How can anthropology rectify this crisis of cultural representation permeating the tourist industry?

In his book, Routes: Travel and Translation in the Twentieth Century, James Clifford attacks the ideas of his anthropological predecessors who treated culture as whole, bounded and fixed in

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6 The ethnographic present is used to connote the practice of using the grammatical present tense for all verbs while describing “primitive” cultures in ethnographic texts. It is objectionable because the present tense implies that the activities of the culture did not happen in the past, and will not change in the future but will remain frozen in the way they were captured in language by the ethnographer-- continually present, continually the same. This tense is inaccurate because it denies “primitive” cultures the capacity to change at the same rate as “civilized” cultures (paraphrased from Fabian).
location. He presents the idea of *traveling cultures*: cultures that are not fixed in space and time to particular locales or people, but are portable and mobile. In the traditional conception of culture and travel, people traveled from one fixed culture to other fixed cultures inhabiting specific territory. Cultures remained situated in one geographic place and could be commodified and transported intact as souvenirs or totalizing ethnographies. Clifford points out that all cultures have always travelled and intermixed, not remaining fixed in location. He also critiques the assumptions of travelers themselves who travel to new locations, assuming that the people they encounter the people there were purely local, and had never travelled. Clifford demonstrates that this is not the case. The best example that he presents is that of Squanto, the Native American guide that the Pilgrims encountered upon their arrival in the New World. To the surprise of the English, Squanto had been to Europe, was familiar with the canon of Western civilization, and had learned English. Because of his traveling, he was able to act as an intermediary between Native Americans and the English, facilitating the Pilgrims’ settlement.

Clifford then connects traveling cultures to the anthropological field, reconsidering the boundedness of the space of anthropological analysis. The field was originally viewed as a fixed space that encompassed all of the social actors in the culture of study. Clifford reveals that there really is no such thing as a “native-in-place,” and no such field, save for the world, that could encompass all of the social actors in a culture (if we even believe the proposition that culture is inherently tied to people). He makes the claim that travelling and dwelling are not separate attributes of separate types of cultures-- all cultures are not rooted in a place or firmly identifiable as the outgrowth of a single “people” (Hollinshead, 122-24). He argues that cultures should not be
conceptualized as an original pure state. In fact, “natives that were unspoiled by cultural contact have probably never existed,” (Appadurai, 357).

The most damaging anthropological myth that Clifford deconstructs is of a “pure culture.” Imagining some cultures as pure, untainted and unable to incorporate aspects of modernity denied the context of capitalist colonization in modernity that made anthropology possible. The breakdown of the barriers between the “West and the Rest” that resulted from modernity’s expansionism was not the first penetration of these boundaries. They have, to an extent, always been permeable and fluid, as examples like Squanto show. But to retain its dominance, the West had to assume that its first encounter with the other was through its own expansion and agency. The West reserved the facility of traveling for itself and attributed to primitive cultures a less developed, and static cultural framework incapable of changing or traveling.

With the advent of postmodern discourses, anthropology has experienced a crisis of confidence, similar to most disciplines that must undergo refiguration once their assumptions of universal, objective truth have been disbanded by the assertions of multiple truths and perspectives (Fox, 341). The discipline is now reorganizing, determined to retain its status as the “reformer’s science” (Marcus & Fischer).

Clifford utilizes the concept of transnationalism to assert that multiple borrowings and appropriations of cultures over the history of humanity have led to a melange in which it is difficult to assign ownership to particular cultural traits. This cultural heterogeneity which has reached unprecedented extremes in the present era is the product of cultures that have always mixed and travelled, gone extinct, transformed and lost essential aspects throughout a history of appropriations,
resistances, and accommodations (Clifford, 78).

The task for the sub-trend of transnational studies in the current experimental moment is to revise conventions of ethnographic description of culture away from measuring change against its previously self-contained, homogenous, ahistorical framing. It attempts to incorporate the view of cultural situations as perpetually in flux—a continuously sensitive state of resistance and accommodation to broader processes of influence that are equally inside and outside the local context. Leaving aside the previous solid, unified and singular culture concept, they are creating new conceptualizations of hybridity, syncretization, flow, travel, and globalization. The point of transnational ethnography is not to master the other, but to provoke mutual teaching between us and the other (Marcus & Fischer).

This realization in anthropology corresponds to the emergence of a transnational order in which the economy is organized not in terms of the production of separate nation states trading with one another, but in terms of the global production of goods produced in pieces all over the world, orchestrated by companies that occupy numerous locations all over the world. The new economic order of flexible boundaries and flexible production leads to greater movement across the globe. These processes are everywhere creating new communities of insiders and outsiders, new patterns of inter-ethnic relations and new hybrid cultures (Boissevain, 13). These movements and changes, augmented by new transportation and communications technologies, can be conceptualized as just an acceleration of Clifford’s traveling cultures.

Previously, “anthropology’s own self-conception depended on a notion that ‘they’ were supposed to be ‘there’ and we were supposed to be ‘here’—except, of course, when we showed up
‘there’ as ethnographers, tourists, missionaries, or development experts and they started appearing here, as the descendants of slaves, immigrants, refugees, nomads, vagabonds, tourists, pilgrims, laborers and students in our universities. The first world is beginning to be “third-worlded” (Koptiuch, 238). In the US, it is possible to see Balinese performers in our theaters, hear Brazilian music in our jazz clubs, taste Vietnamese food at local restaurants. Despite the unification of national economies and modes of commerce which might lead to an increasing similarity of cultural forms--all of these cultural phenomena retain a certain distinctiveness that contrasts with the homogeneity of American corporate culture.

An interesting by-product of third-worldization is the marginalized, humorous status that white Westerners attribute to hybridized cultural productions. Juxtapositions of “traditional” culture with first world culture (such as the sheik on a cell phone) appears outlandish and weirdly funny due to the persistence of Western notions of culture as forever fixed and impermeable. Yet these “juxtapositions”-- if we even want to acknowledge the logic of a system that can’t fully acknowledge Moroccan peasant women on the internet without viewing their identity as complex-- are a matter of routine life and for the third world. Colonial era flows of populations, armies, goods, and capital mainly moved outward, and results of these flows, syncretisms and hybridities, were not visible to the Western world, until the global age. But the hybridities from the combinations of disparate cultures necessarily implies that all cultures are already syncretized, always in the process of transformation. Intercultural creations “expose as a hoax the modernist and colonialist discourse concerning the homogeneity of cultures-- a myth sustained chiefly by the center’s stranglehold on the global political economy” (Swedenberg & Lavie, 4).
It must be noted that these are not just happy hybridities and smiley syncretisms that spring into the world well-adjusted and productive. There is pain and loss and death in spaces of cultural fusion. For Gloria Anzaldua, the borderzone where Mexican and American cultures meet is an “open wound... where third-worlders grate against the first world and bleed” (14). The violence and loss that occurs as a result of cultural contact acknowledges even further that the borderlands of culture are in a constant state of transition.

Transnational actors will crowd anthropology’s field in the 21st century. The research of transnational anthropologists presents a major challenge to radically rethink the universalizing assumptions about the fixity of culture. They reveal that the processes of “globalization” don’t necessarily entail the growing cultural homogenization of a McDisney World. Globalization and its transnational actors are largely responsible for the production of new diversity which opens up multiple new fields for intercultural understanding.

As Micaela di Leonardo writes in Exotics at Home, anthropology’s “study of the exotic by the eccentric” is equally revealing at home. The number of anthropological dissertations written on the United States in comparison with those written outside the US in past years has shot up dramatically (diLeonardo, 54). If we understand that anthropology’s traditional concern with documenting other cultures inadvertently produced a self-critique, and that there exist multiple opportunities to study other cultures in our own domain, it would be logical to think that the study of culture might be better if begun at home, and then expanded outward (Huggan, 91).
In the same way that anthropology encounters the other at home, tourists are encountering the other at home as well-- and not just because of the persistent touristification of our urban spaces. “Visitors” to our home are becoming our hosts here. It is common for third world immigrants to immediately secure employment as hotel door-men, taxi drivers, service personnel and cleaning staff upon arrival in the US. If a host is defined by providing hospitality, and if a guest is defined by consuming hospitality, then much of upper and middle class America is developing into a “tourist class” that never has to serve, clean, drive, work or provide hospitality in any way. Ironically, while labor in the so-called “global cities” of the US is now done by immigrants from the third world, the leisured class largely ignores the opportunity for meaningful cultural exchange at home, and travels to visit third-world people in their “original” exotic setting. In essence, Western tourists travel thousands of miles to find what they already have in their urban centers! The apparent increasing global integration of late capitalism suggests not the elimination of cultural diversity, but rather, “opportunities for counterposing diverse alternatives that nonetheless share a common world, so that each can be understood better in the other's light” (Hannerz, 136). This might also be the goal of “mutual understanding” that transnational anthropology is seeking (Marcus & Fischer, 111-37).
Conclusion

So what does all of this mean for understanding the distinction between and the future of tourism and anthropology? The golden hordes will keep touring, and the anthropologists will keep seeking to fully understand the other, whether “here” or “there.” Inasmuch as we are all tourists now, the anthropologist can’t help being a sort of tourist. The identities of the two undeniably overlap in some structural ways, yet I must contend that there IS a fundamental difference between tourist and anthropologist. Like Deborah Kaspin, I believe that anthropologists are “uniquely positioned to transcend the ethnocentrism of the western gaze precisely because of the seriousness with which we investigate culture” (Kaspin, 53). I believe that anthropologists cultivate a politically informed voice that often times CAN speak for the other in an accurate fashion. So if anthropology is to have any kind of emancipatory or decolonizing effect on the cultures in which it works, and which it represents, then we must maintain that anthropology is epistemologically separate from tourism, as it exists presently.

If one of the most reprehensible crimes of the tourist industry is misrepresentation, can recent anthropological innovations in the fields of transnational identities rectify these misrepresentations? It is foreseeable that anthropologists may take a collective role to advise touristic representations. They already occupy a prominent role as tour guides, perhaps making tourists more critical and aware of the cultural constructions presented to them. Maybe the fact that I have taken my tourist experience so seriously is acceptance of the anthropologist’s more involved role in touring. Future anthropological work will only be complicated increasingly by intruding tourists, and
I expect that in the future, every single ethnographic account will have to address tourists and tourism and the impact on the local culture. Again, understanding tourism is crucial for anthropology in the 21st century. Likewise, understanding tourism and touristic modes of perception is crucial for maneuvering as critical individuals (and critical tourists) through the de-differentiating realms of entertainment, shopping, education and heritage sites in our home countries. Will we accept the stereotype of the tourist, or will we all become more like anthropologists in life-- gazing, but gazing critically, contextually and respectfully?

Anthropology has always had somewhat of a reforming tendency, as Marcus and Fischer defend in *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*. I contend that critical anthropology is needed as a creative force (in both imaginative and productive senses) during a time when cultural creativity is constantly being corporatized into products and objects that exist only to be gazed upon-- not to be challenged, questioned or remanipulated. Anthropologists, by seeking out difference, and in effect, negating (in a Hegelian sense) their culture with stark comparisons with other cultures, act as dialectical agents, devising and progressing new formations in history. Having followed anthropology’s trails, tourism, as the “business of difference and the other, par excellence” still does not utilize the idea of culture in movement, in creation, and certainly does not recognize current cultural forms of hybridization in its representations (Hollinshead, 121).

Tourism practitioners and researchers in the business of the commodified representation of peoples and places have much to learn from what anthropology has discovered about “their own quiet and often unsuspected participation in the subjugation of people and the silencing of identities” (Hollinshead, 154). An intelligent, respectful and ennobling representational mode for tourism must
be established, otherwise the continued “McDonaldization” of the world will distribute reductionist images and narratives that satisfy mass consumption and convenience rather than faithful and considerate representations of local societies as they change and grow. Homi Bhaba believes that this new representational mode will be possible because “the modernist/colonial rationality of universalism and assimilation is steadily receding against the postmodern/post-colonial logic of pluralism and difference” (Bhaba in Hollinshead, 127).

Ideally, there would develop ways for anthropologists of tourism to explore the emergent identities and the combinant nationalities of hybridity in order to convey “the ambivalences and ambiguities of in-between forms of culture to the presentations and performances of tourism” (Hollinshead, 130).

Tourism is heavily driven by Westerners’ desire to experience time-immemorial differences between themselves and others, but it is itself a strong inventive and performative creator of those believed longstanding differences. Cultural hybridity is “that liminal space between constructed, fixed identifications which entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (Hollinshead, 25). Cultural hybridity, bridging formerly polarized identities, offers an empowering paradigm for resisting colonial representations. Perhaps tourism could incorporate hybridity as its operating paradigm, instead of commodification, which would more accurately facilitate intercultural exchange.

In any case, we can’t stop traveling and touring because it often provides the only conduit for a genuine intersubjective experience with the other, and culture contact often results in surprising innovations and political directions. As Laurent Dubois writes in an essay about maleness, travel and anthropology:
Travel provides a possibility for an intellectual uprooting, for deterritorialization that can be channeled into the fight against xenophobia and racism that are on the rise in the US and Europe. Travel—like the migrations which so many of us, in very different ways, have experienced—join us with what Homi Bhabha has called gatherings of exiles and emigres and refugees, gatherings on the edge of foreign cultures... gathering in the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues... gathering the past in a ritual of revival; gathering the present. As Iain Chambers explored evocatively in *Migrancy, Culture & Identity*, contemporary migrancy and nomadism constantly challenges, through our daily experience, a confidence in a unitary, occidental mode of interpretation and forces us instead to engage with the historical and cultural contingencies of interpretation and representation. As Europe and the US veer increasingly toward a historically unconscious violence and xenophobia, the appreciation of migrancy and metissage as processes deeply embedded within our cultures can provide a foundation for a reaction against these tendencies (312).

Despite all of the disparagement, perhaps the 21st century tourist will be the great emancipator.
Final Reflections

Returning to the beginning of this investigation, I ask myself what I think of Pelourinho now that I have spent the good part of a year analyzing it. Would I return there? Do I really have a new way of approaching the tourist site-- or just a more contextualized understanding?

I think I have both.

I cherish the time I spent in Pelourinho, despite my uncomfortable realizations. Also, since Brazilian culture has become chic in the US (I can’t go many places without hearing Brazilian music, glimpsing the glaring yellow of the national soccer team’s jersey, or running into Brazilians themselves,) I see how I gained valuable cultural capital while abroad. I realize that my time there was a real, transformative, intercultural exchange. As my field study director said, “When you go home, you’ll realize that you are now partly Brazilian.” In whatever tiny way-- I have become a cultural hybrid, able to understand Brazilian cultural codes in the context of America, and in the context of my already hybridized identity. Pelourinho will always intrigue me, but I don’t know if I’ll ever go back, because so much of Pelourinho is here.

Now, at the beginning of spring at Swarthmore College, tours of prospective students and their parents are appearing on every stone-paved path on campus. The “golden hordes” are crowding my home, consuming the pre-packaged interpretation of Swarthmore-as-spectacle performed by carefully rehearsed tour-guides. I wonder, facetiously, if any of the young “tourists” are anthropologists-in-utero, attempting to distinguish themselves from the ignorant masses with a more contextualized and critical approach to my home, the tourist site.

These kids seem to confirm my simple thesis that we are all tourists now. But my position as a “native” --viewing the commodification and touring of my home-- makes me understand that we are all hosts, too.

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Post-script (Disclaimer)

Where is race in this thesis? Where is post-coloniality? What about women and the tourist experience? Men and the sex-tourist experience? Where is non-leisured tourism that has profound personal meaning such as new kinds of “retracing the diaspora” tourism for Jews, Armenians and African-Americans living apart from their “home-lands”? What about developments in sustainable tourism, eco-tourism? Are missionaries tourists? Are colonizers tourists?

These analytical tools-- race, gender, postcoloniality-- would have been very useful for the topic of tourism, given that I was a white, first-world woman tourist investigating an Afro-Brazilian tourist site. Also, new kinds of tourism are very important for how the industry is changing as a whole. However, tourism as an academic topic is so multi-valent and germane to contemporary experiences that I chose the analytical frameworks that seemed to shed the most light on my field experience.
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