



ICELANDIC TOURISM
RESEARCH CENTRE



Images, the social and earthly matters in Tourism Studies

Dr. Martin G. Gren and Dr. Edward H. Huijbens

© Icelandic Tourism Research Centre 2009

Publisher: Icelandic Tourism Research Centre, Borgum v/ Norðurslóð, IS-600 Akureyri
Tel: (+354) 460-8930
Fax: (+354) 460-8919
e-mail: edward@unak.is
Web: www.rmfi.is

Title: Images, the social and earthly matters in Tourism Studies
Authors: Martin G. Gren and Edward H. Huijbens

Cover: Ásprent-Stíll and the ITRC
Printing: Stell (www.stell.is)

Number: RMF-S-07-2009
ISBN: 978-9979-834-90-8

Cover picture: From Geysir, in the Haukadalur valley, Iceland Photo: Jón Gestur Helgason

All rights reserved. This report is not to be copied in any way, such as by photographing, printing, recording or comparable ways in parts or as whole without the prior written consent of the publisher.

**Images, the social and the earthly matters
in Tourism Studies**

Martin G. Gren and Edward H. Huijbens

ICELANDIC TOURISM RESEARCH CENTRE

DECEMBER 2009

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
Images & tourism studies	2
From images to imaginationings	5
Tourism – an earthly business	8
Outline	9
2. Image & destination.....	13
Image & destination.....	14
Into the image	17
At the destination.....	19
The sign, representation & the tourist attraction	21
The commodity & tourism	24
Summing up.....	27
3. Tourism theory.....	31
Tourism studies: a field or a discipline.....	32
On tourism theory	34
An essential tourism trinity with a geographical twist	39
Tourism imaginationings as geographical patterning.....	42
The cartography of tourism imaginationing	48
Tourism research	51
Summing up.....	56
4. Tourism in the world & on the Earth.....	59
The end of tourism - we are all tourists now	61
Tourism beyond global & local	65
Capitalism, neo-liberalism & tour-ism	70
Sustainable development, climate change & tourism.....	74
Summing up.....	82
5. Towards an earthly tourism research agenda.....	85
Still images - on the move	86
Tourist & tourism imaginationings revisited.....	90
Tourism studies revisited.....	91
Tourism theory beyond social theory	94
Tourism in the world - on the Earth.....	97
Earthly methodology	101
REFERENCES	104

1. Introduction

Believe me: an image is more than it appears to be.

- *Ovid*¹

In the middle ages people were tourists because of their religion, whereas now they are tourists because tourism is their religion.

- *Robert Runcie*²

Anyone who enters these lands travels on a tourist visa, the specialized expert no exception.

- *Gunnar Olsson*³

Any tourism researcher has to simultaneously pay attention to how tourism can be understood and explained and how tourism on the ground works and develops. Consequently, this report is an engagement with the field of tourism studies, with a particular focus on tourism theory in relation to social and geographical aspects of contemporary tourism.

By exploring, mapping and problematizing some of these issues we hope to prepare the ground for what is our first objective: *to identify some relevant and important future areas of research on tourism and tourists*. Our investigation will of course not cover all fields of tourism research and aspects of tourism theory, and the emphasis is on certain contemporary matters which we place in a geographical frame of understanding. Yet, we hope that the report will provide a point of departure for subsequent discussions and outlines of more specific research initiatives in the context of both the Icelandic Tourism Research Centre and Icelandic tourism.

It should then be noted that although we will frequently use and refer to tourism in the context of Iceland for illustrative and pedagogic purposes, we are not reporting research on Iceland as a tourist destination. Yet, we believe that the invoked Icelandic references will benefit discussions and considerations about future tourism research in Iceland – albeit tourism is a global phenomenon, it is always geographically situated.

Now, this could well have been our only objective with the report. Yet, the Icelandic Tourism Research Centre should not only promote

¹ Ovid 1955, no pagination.

² Source unknown.

³ Olsson 2007, p. xi.

research but also “education and cooperation in tourism studies”. In accordance with this we have been working also with a second objective: the report should be able to be *read and used as an educational text in tourism studies at undergraduate level*. Consequently, we have written the report as an academic text that introduces tourism theory for that student audience, making it as accessible as we can without abandoning in-depth research insights. In that respect the report is a first pilot version of what will subsequently be transformed into a proper textbook.

It should be noted, though, that we have not tried to write a user’s manual, neither for students nor industry entrepreneurs. We have not been able to avoid academic vocabulary and reasoning, but we hope that this second objective with the report has resulted in a kind of text that could also potentially benefit other readers, such as policy-makers and those who are part of the tourism industry. In addition, underlying both of our objectives has been a wish to convey something of the inherent social, cultural and geographical complexity that we believe characterises much of contemporary tourism. It is our conviction that this complexity will continue to haunt and challenge future tourism as well as tourism theory and tourism research, the component parts of tourism studies as an academic field of inquiry (Aramberri 2009, Butler 2009).

Images & tourism studies

Our empirical point of departure in coming to terms with the reports objectives is: *images*. Everyone who travels on a research visa to the land of tourism studies will, undoubtedly, soon enough find out that images in various forms have since long been a central concern. In this report we align ourselves with this longstanding interest in, and research on images in tourism studies. It should however be noted that we also take a specific and slightly different route of our own which we refer to as “tourist and tourism imaginationings”. What that entails will be outlined further throughout the report, but the key is that we want to expand traditional notions and understandings of images in and of tourism by moving and situating them in broader contemporary social, cultural and geographical contexts.

To begin with, images have been a prolific topic for research in tourism studies for a long time. There are several reasons why they have been regarded as highly important, but among them two interrelated aspects are especially relevant here.

Firstly, what one consumes as a tourist is in a sense images. What one may experience at a tourist destination, an attraction, or throughout the whole adventure of travelling is very much ephemeral and temporal. This means that tourist experiences are not equal to tangible commodities that can be bought, taken home and consumed after purchase. Although tourist experiences may be transformed into travel memories and be sustained by such things as photos and souvenirs, a fundamental part of tourism consumption is also about being there and experiencing a place with one's own body.

Secondly, tourist products and services involve and depend on intangible qualities, such as a friendly atmosphere or beautiful environment. Yet, these qualities are as concrete and place-bound as a tourist destination, or an attraction, itself. Thus any destination or attraction needs to come into being in more de-materialised ways in order to distribute a sample of itself to the tourism market.

It is here that images, or more generally *representations*, come to the rescue. Unlike tourist destinations, as geographically fixed material resources and facilities located somewhere, images are able to become circulating tourism references that can re-present potential place-bound tourist products and possible experiences in other places. To a certain extent images can re-present places for tourism, and their immovable amenities and tourist commodities such as a landscape-scenery or a particular food and service at the local restaurant, and travel to tourist generating regions.

In tourism research and tourism theory images have thus most often been addressed and understood as representations of tourist destinations, attractions and experiences. Consequently, representations in the form of images of places and spaces for tourism produced for tourists, as well as by tourists themselves, have been investigated in tourism studies for a long time. This interest in the relationship between tourism and images comes in particular from the supposed capacity of images to attract tourists and potentially guide and shape their consuming behaviours (Chon 1990, Pike 2002).



Image 1.1: *The Visuality of tourist information.*⁴

⁴ www.visitcheshire.com (retrieved 2009-04-09).

Tourism images have had a longstanding relationship with the visuality of the tourist experience and with visual systems of representation. Of present importance is that these systems are now more prevalent in tourism than ever before. As Feighey observes:

Today, knowledge about the world is increasingly articulated visually and the ocularcentric nature of tourism is widely recognised by tourism 'professionals' and academics, as well as by tourists and 'locals' (Feighey 2003, p. 76).

During recent decades there has indeed been something of an "image revolution" where new technologies for processing information have been developed. Visual images have then moved from mechanical reproduction, like postcards, and entered the age of digital origination and replication. One effect of this digitization has been that images in and of tourism have become embedded in a technologically mediated global environment, the Internet, where in addition purchases of tourist products and services are increasingly being made in real on-line time.

With the means of technological devices, like personal computers, mobile-phones, digital cameras and video cams, tourists are now also able to produce, arrange and display visual images of tourist destinations and attractions themselves in a more wide-ranging and rapid fashion compared to snap-shots arranged in an album at home. For example, to upload and share visual tourist images on the Internet is now only a mouse click away. And we simply cannot here avoid the temptation. Therefore, on Tuesday 10th of March 2009 (at 15.52) we load *Google* and type in "images of Iceland", with the purpose of getting some empirical evidence of contemporary tourist images. In 0.23 seconds we receive the answer in numbers: about 14,500,000 results!

As tourism researchers particularly involved in Icelandic tourism, it is not easy for us to decide whether this is a dream come true, or a daunting nightmare of quantitative empirical overload. So much data piling up on our screen and more questions than answers seem to appear:

- What should we do with all these visual images of Iceland?
- What difference do such images, of Iceland as a tourist destination, really make for tourists in terms of destination and travel choices?
- By what methods shall we investigate them and by what theories shall we understand and explain them?
- What do we really know in tourism studies about how tourists and potential tourists engage with visual images in their home environment and daily practices?
- How much can we learn from studying visual images thoroughly, but in isolation? To what extent do we need to investigate aspects and processes that are beyond what we actually see in front of us? How are the images related to broader social, cultural and in particular geographical settings?

It seems to be beyond doubt that “[i]nformation sources for tourism activities have changed greatly over the past ten years, mainly due to new technologies” (Molina and Esteban 2006, p. 1036). Technological devices like mobile-phones and computers enable images in and of tourism to live a mobile life where they can easily be transmitted to other places and actualized in new settings within seconds. This mobility, which includes numerous possibilities also for the tourism researcher, is but one illustration of the importance and the need of putting the production and consumption of images in contemporary tourism in relation to larger social and geographical surroundings. It should by now have become clear that we are not concerned with approaching and investigating images as isolated phenomena. Neither are we in this report in the business of reducing them to a matter of only visual or textual representations of tourist destinations. However valuable such investigations may be, our own mission here is something else. We want to place, move and explore tourist images in the context of both tourism theory and its outside contemporary world.

From images to imaginationings

In tourism studies it is now possible to understand and study images in quite many different ways. The field has, over the last decades, “experienced rapid changes in research focus and methodological orientation” (Ballantyne, Packer and Axelsen 2009, p. 149). The domain of theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches to images has

gradually expanded and become more complex and varied. For example, and as we illustrated above:

Emerging mobile technologies are changing the nature of vision for both tourists and tourism researchers (Feighey 2003, p. 82).

If there now was an earlier tendency in tourism studies to approach images as predominantly visual, then this has been challenged by various other theoretical understandings and developments. A recent example is performative notions of tourists and tourism. In addition to paying attention to how tourism is done, through practises and active engagements, those with a performative approach emphasize the importance of other senses along with the visual for tourist experience and behaviour (Bærenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen, and Urry 2004, Crouch 2003, Edensor, 2001). If image-mediated tourist encounters and experiences in practice are embodied and involve all the senses, then there is clearly more to images in tourism than their pure visuality.

This further suggests that images need to be placed, understood, and investigated in a broader context. For that purpose we have chosen the umbrella term “tourist and tourism imaginationings”. By this we want to refer to a terrain that covers all kinds of production and consumption of tourism, through the medium of images and imaginationings, by tourists as well as actors and stakeholders in the industry. It also embraces imaginationings of tourists and tourism produced by researchers and scholars in tourism studies, ourselves included.

In this perspective, tourism can be said to live a life in-between meaning and matter, for example, in-between all kinds of concrete things which people attach with touristic meanings. What we refer to as “tourist and tourism imaginationings” is then about ways of bringing meaning and matter together for particular tourism and tourist purposes. In other words, imaginationings here involve processes of signification that translate the physical matters of travelling, locations, and whatever material resources that humans meet as bodies with senses, into various touristic meanings and values. This process of translating and transforming is necessary in order for goods, services and sights on the Earth to be appropriated for tourism purposes and become tourism commodities.

Enlarging the context of images in tourism studies means that one needs to consider also other modalities that are part of the constitution of tourism and tourist imaginationings, for example “globalization”, “capitalism”, “neo-liberalism”, and environmental concerns and public

policies. Quite significantly, it also means to conceive of tourism itself as an ideologically and politically charged imaginationing. We would argue that tourism theory and tourism research need to consider and address how broader processes are related to contemporary and future tourists and tourism mobilities of people, goods, technologies and various imaginationings.

Furthermore, in our understanding, imaginationings are not to be understood in an idealist or social constructivist sense, that is, as being only about ideas, experiences and what people talk about. Tourism and tourist imaginationings are also highly dependent upon non-human material phenomena and their agencies. Indeed without them there would simply not be any tourism. As Franklin has stated:

Tourism cannot be a purely social activity, or at least its social nature also articulates necessarily and in complex ways with non-human objects, systems, machines, bureaucratic processes, times, timetables, sites, photographs, tents, flows, desires, visitors, businesses, locals and so on in a complex materially heterogeneous assemblage /.../ such formations cannot be understood as separable elements interacting with one another with humans as the only mover, the sole agent (Franklin 2004, p. 284).

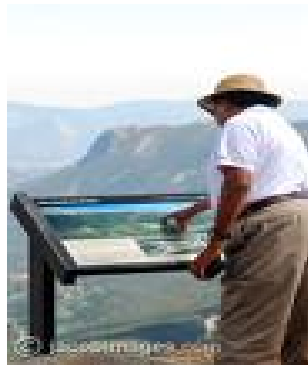


Image 1.2: *Tourist on the Earth engaging with a non-human.*⁵

As we conceive it here, then, the phenomena of tourism intrinsically denotes and necessarily involves a whole range of also non-social phenomena, ranging from transport technologies and hotels to food and natural environments. In other words, tourism is an earthly business.

⁵ www.jacobimages.com (retrieved 2009-04-14).

Tourism – an earthly business

For us the tourist and tourism imagination is about the social, cultural and geographical context of tourism, but within the triad's geographical focus, the Earth itself emerges. The important role that non-humans, like boulders, aeroplanes, landscapes and cars, play in tourism clearly implies that tourism is something that takes place on planet Earth.

That the Earth becomes an explicit plane of reference on which tourism takes place may well sound like a self-evident and trivial truism. Yet, an earthly take does not only mean that tourism is very much about being and experiencing something somewhere, but also has consequences for tourism theory. One of these is that it puts a question mark around one-sided theorizations of tourism as a social phenomenon that occurs only in society. Tourism conceived of as an earthly business means that even such seemingly more “immaterial” things as tourist images are ultimately about relations and processes that re-, and de-territorialize the Earth. Indeed, in our understanding tourism is in essence all about the de/re-territorialization of the Earth for tourist and tourism purposes (Gren and Huijbens, under review).

Although we obviously do speak and write as geographers, we would also argue that there is now a pressing need in tourism studies to more explicitly address the Earth in both tourism theory and in tourism research. By now there is an established discourse around tourism in the context of sustainable development, but there is a rising political focus on global climate change. Regardless of the scientific basis, for example whether or not we are witnessing a warming that is due to human impacts or weather events that are due to climate change or not (for debate see: Lomborg 2007), it poses a host of real and difficult challenges for how to address earthly environmental issues in tourism practices (Davos Declaration 2007). The real destination of climate change is very much the Earth itself rather than a SPA, or one of the too numerous to mention shopping malls or cultural heritage tourism sites that can be found “in society”. In the time of writing there is an upcoming climate change summit to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009, and the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) is “making a strong commitment to ensure tourism stakeholders support the ‘Seal the Deal!’ campaign and lobby for a fair, balanced and effective agreement” which will “power green growth and help protect our planet”.⁶

⁶ http://www.unwto.org/media/news/en/press_det.php?id=4781&idioma=E (retrieved 2009-09-30).

For tourism studies this means that future research will need to move beyond the paradigm of sustainable development and investigate relationships between tourism and climate change in terms of both adaptation and mitigation (Simpson, Gössling, Scott, Hall and Gladin 2008). For example, what does a low carbon society imply for tourism mobilities? How might the discourse on climate change effect tourism imaginationings and trajectories of sustainability for tourism on the ground?

Outline

The report consists of five chapters. In the next chapter (2) we will introduce and explore in more detail two of the central concepts to be found in tourism studies: image and destination. In the chapter that follows (3), we will more formally address tourism theory and move towards issues of imaginationings. After that comes a chapter (4) where we will place tourism and tourists in both the social world and on the Earth. The final chapter (5) consists of a summing up in the form of some suggestive steps towards an earthly research agenda.

As geographers we are simply bound to appreciate maps, especially because a map can provide a comprehensive spatial overview of the terrain one is about to travel through. An alternative, and admittedly a more complicated outline of the report in the form of a map thus looks like this:⁷

⁷ The map is inspired by Olsson's (2007, pp. 225-235) Kantian Island of Truth, but here we in no way pretend to be approaching the truth of tourism. In accordance with our understanding of tourism and tourist imaginationings we believe that the capacity to imagine, to talk and reason about things that are not present, is a characteristic of human beings. Those humans we find on the Island of tourism and tourist imaginationings are thus also what Olsson describes as "a bastardous blend of semiotic and political animals, ironic creatures who after long practice have learned to live with the tensions between identity and difference without going crazy" (Olsson 2007, p. 225).



Image 1.3: *The Island of tourism & tourist imaginings.*

We begin our journey by making landfall on a southward stretching spit of sandy beach whence we can gaze upon our conceptual Island of tourism and tourist imaginings, as it rises from the sea of other fields and disciplines. In the foreground is tourism in the shape of a classic destination resort and in the back of our heads is the aim and purpose of our island sojourn. Having never been on this particular island, our former island encounters frame our view and point of reference, in particular the island Iceland.

Moving around the first tourist resort on the island we ascend to chapter 2, the plateaux of image and destination. There our meandering path, steering clear of issues of theory, takes us to another tourist resort. Our expectations had been framed by the first one we saw on the tourist beach, but here having engaged with our own ideas, the sign,

representations, images and destinations we see a different one, tucked away in the shelter of theory and protected from the high North.

Having explored the destination on the plateaux from the outside we ascend to the base of the tri peaks of tourism theory in chapter 3. We explore their base and thence set out our first attempt at research method, laying the best trail for those yet to come through here. Instead of climbing each peak, we see that the same altitude can be gained East and we see a glimpse of an even higher peak, shrouded in fog.

Ascending further we can now get a view over the island and start to realise how tourism works both in the world and on the Earth. Issues of globalisation, climate change and sustainability gain relevance from this privileged vantage point. In chapter 4 we thus explore these as we move around the base of the fog-clad peak. We are now outside the habitable realm of tourism resort development and see those we have explored and those yet to be explored at a distance.

As we move towards an earthly tourism research agenda in chapter 5, we see how ultimately tourism becomes less another resort development or a different social slice, and more “a total trip problem” of imaginationing matter-movements on and of the Earth. As the fog lifts from the peak we envision a need for Earth led priorities and perspective when exploring tourism imaginationings. The Island of tourism and tourist imaginationings, that every tourism scholar is bound to travel through, is indeed more than what it appears to be.

2. Image & destination

The actual act of communion between tourist and attraction is less important than the *image* or the *idea* of society that the collective act generates.

- *Dean MacCannell*⁸

To compete for tourists, a location must become a destination.

- *Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett*⁹

We have to imagine a foundation with wings on its feet!

- *Michel Serres*¹⁰

The storyline that tourist destination images play a central role in tourism, for example in the transformation of places into tourism commodities, will in different guises appear throughout this report. In this chapter, we will begin by taking a closer look at precisely the two concepts of “image” and “destination”. However important they may be in themselves, we are here primarily interested in their role in tourism theory.

That tourist destinations increasingly must compete on a global tourism market for attracting tourists is something that is often stressed in tourism studies, as well as in the tourism industry. A prerequisite for appearing there is that specific locations on the surface of the Earth manage to ontologically transform themselves through re-presentations into places for tourism. In other words, in order to be successful in the competitive struggle, locations must meet the tourists on the generating market as images with touristic values.

In the literature these are often referred to as “tourist destination images” (TDIs) and they can be found in tourist brochures, adverts, commercials and in various media coverage of places for tourism. These images have been a central concern for marketing agencies and various actors and stakeholders within the tourism industry, in particular because of their assumed capability to influence tourism consumption. That images play a mediating role in tourism is something that also the tourism researcher is facing. As Hunter states:

⁸ MacCannell 1976/1999, pp. 14-15.

⁹ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, p. 152.

¹⁰ Serres with Latour 1995, p. 114.

Before the destination itself can be defined or evaluated, researchers in tourism are already embedded in the complex and inescapable problem of the image (Hunter 2008, p. 355).

It follows that tourist destination images have been investigated extensively in tourism studies, and various forms of “image analysis” have been carried out by tourism researchers since at least the early 1970s (Pike 2002). A major portion of research to date has been concerned with the photographic representations which make “tourism representations real in an immediate way” (Hunter 2008, p. 357). Although this is in line with a common view that the visual is central to the tourist experience, the concerns already raised above should be kept in mind about the privileged status assigned to the visual. Indeed, there is an inevitable gap between what can be seen and what can be imagined, between picture and interpretation. It so happens that this gap also is a characteristic feature of the tourist experience.

Image & destination

Tourist destination images can be found practically everywhere, but many of us are likely to associate them with the likes of tourist guidebooks, tourism advertisements, articles in newspapers containing information on travel and vacationing, films or programmes on TV of other places and environments, and, of course, *the* brochure which “has been identified as the single most important thing in tourism marketing” (Hunter 2008, p. 357). To this we may add the Internet (or “the Web”) that today in fact has almost become something of an important tourist destination in itself.

Tourist destination images, whatever their form and wherever they are to be found, are an inevitable and essential part of tourist imaginationings. This is due to the fact that they facilitate and communicate messages about places in terms of their tourism attractiveness and various tourist amenity values. It is through tourist destination images that a location somewhere on the face of the Earth is able to become a particular kind of place, namely a potential *destination* for tourists.

In as much as any other consumer decision, travel decisions begin with evoking sets of potential destinations and considering options before eventually deciding where to go. This involves a pre-engagement with one or several tourist destinations through images and various imaginationings. A

variety of sources could be used in this early stage of scanning and computing information where a pre-image of the destination is formed, ranging from, say, the Internet to friends who have already visited the destination. This illustrates a common assumption among tourism researchers “that the image of a tourism destination is a key factor in destination site selection” (Hunter 2008, p. 356).



Image 2.1: *Pre-engagement with a destination.*¹¹

That a pre-engagement involves images in one form or another is also well in line with what is usually presented as a unique characteristic of the destination and the tourist product in general: you cannot simply have a little tourist experience *in situ* preceding a purchase. What you can do instead, however, is to read about the destination, look at pictures of it, and talk to your friends about the prospect of travelling there. Whatever sources you will use, you will be able to spur and feed your tourist imagination with thoughts, dreams, expectations, and facts that will become ingredients in your own travel considerations. Is it a nice place for me? What kind of experiences may it offer for me, for us? Are there any particularly interesting attractions? Is Iceland similar enough to home, so one does not get lost, but also sufficiently different so as to offer change?

Questions like these illustrate what the pre-engagement phase is about for an individual potential tourist. The following tourist imaging of *Reykjavík* is an example of what a person flicking through a daily newspaper in Stockholm in the autumn of 2008 could have come across in this phase. A daily newspaper is a medium which implicitly or explicitly often contains sections on travel and tourism.

¹¹ www.visitorsguide.is/.../Images/island_blue.jpg (retrieved 2009-04-13).



Start the celebrations with a hot bath

The Nightlife in Reykjavik is famous. On New Years Eve it is more wild than usual. Join the Icelanders when they take the party out on the street with fireworks, bonfires and singing. There is hardly any other better place for party-animals to ring in 2009. Iceland is cheaper than it has been for a long time, and the clubs and bars are open the whole

Image 2.2: *Start with a hot bath.*¹²

The image consists of both picture and text, which is a common combination found in tourist destination images in general and which potential consumers of tourist products are all familiar with. In principle they have no problems in reading and understanding it. Yet, in tourism studies it is highly important to put a bold question mark around any *naïve* taken-for-granted understandings of images and destinations as simple and unambiguous phenomena “out there” which a researcher simply can “collect” information on.

A theoretical consideration of images reveals that the production of their meanings is often difficult to spatially demarcate and locate. In image 2.2 above one might wonder if the tourist destination image of *Reykjavík* is in the picture or in the text on the right hand side, or is it perchance in the relation between them? Or, could the meaning be located wholly elsewhere? Is it produced in someone’s tourist imagination that includes, among other things, the marking of the destination image of *Reykjavík* through its differences in relation to other destinations and images or previous travel adventures in different places, or at home?

These questions point to the fact that the meanings we assign to destination images are context-dependent. It is very likely that those tourists that we do research on are themselves engaging with tourist destination images in highly complex and varied ways. What kind of information and knowledge a potential tourist will have when pre-engaging with the tourist destination image of Reykjavík above will have

¹² From the Swedish newspaper *Expressen*, 2008-11-26 (photo by Bibbi Johansson and our own translation into English).

consequences for how she or he will read and understand both text and picture. This observation leads us towards a warning sign that is worth stopping at because it sums up a general conclusion about the interpretation of images. In the words of (Stuart) Hall:

It is worth emphasizing that there is no single or 'correct' answer to the question, 'What does this image mean?' or 'What is this ad saying?' Since there is no law which can guarantee that things will have 'one, true meaning', or that meanings won't change over time, work in this area is bound to be interpretative (Hall 1997, p. 9).

This somewhat slippery and evasive, or contextual, interpretative nature of images makes it necessary for us to travel further into the image as a concept.

Into the image

On closer inspection it turns out that the image is a rather hybrid concept. On the one hand, the word image refers to something that has been constructed or even made up. This means that it is possible to understand an image as a kind of fiction or artificial creation. On the other hand, and in accordance with the Latin etymological root of *imitari* ("to copy" or "imitate"), an image may also denote something real like those material amenities that could be found in any space for tourism. Therefore, however partial, selective or imperfect an image may be, it nevertheless has the capability to mirror or reflect some existing phenomena outside of itself. Consequently, an image could then well represent a somewhere in which tourism is to be found.

If we continue with a little etymological excavation we will find that the word image means also "idea". In turn, idea stems from the Greek "to see", and as already pointed out "seeing" (or the visual) is often thought of as a major constituent of the image. Yet, when looking into the image one will discover too that it cannot be reduced to the visual only. Also a picture of what looks like a tourist attraction needs to be interpreted in order to be assigned the meaning "an attraction for tourists". A picture as a pure visual image is in fact not able to tell anything at all. It is always somebody who is doing the telling, and not the picture itself. The old saying that "a picture tells more than a thousand words" is therefore precisely just a *saying*.

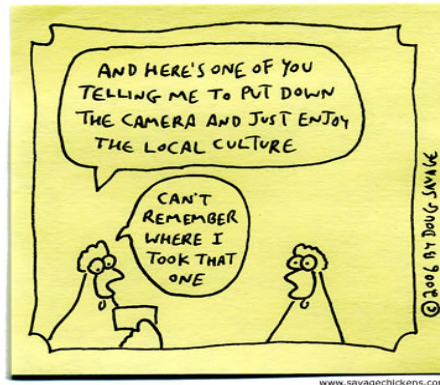


Image 2.3: *Picture the local culture.*¹³

So it is that there is a difference between words and pictures and the rivalry between what you are able to see and what you can read continues. What you see is not always what you will get, and what you experience as a tourist is more than what you are able to catch sight of.

The heart of the matter is that an image may both take us up to the idealist heaven of pure imagination and down to the earthly domain full of phenomena that can be grasped by sense perception. For most tourists this is unsurprising. They are certainly likely to know very well in practice that tourist destination images are both reliable and untrustworthy. In as much as they need to engage with them, they also know the importance of reading between the lines. Yes, when arriving at your destination you will have a “view of the ocean”, but perhaps only if you manage to hang like a lithe chimpanzee over the rail of the balcony.

So it also is that an image may simultaneously attract, imitate, deceive, resemble, replace and animate. Dangerous and safe at the same time! As Latour puts it:

If you stick to them, images are dangerous, blasphemous, idolatrous, but they are safe, innocent, indispensable if you learn how to jump from one image to the next (Latour, in *Latour & Weibel* 2005, p. 19).

When it comes to the production and consumption of images in tourism we are then likely to find “the real and the fictional” in and of images inevitably and irretrievably entangled. As an inhabitant of the in-between the concept image very much resists being trimmed down to

¹³ www.savagechickens.com/2006/04/tourism.html (retrieved 2009-04-15).

either the textual or the visual, a characteristic it very much has in common with the concept destination.

At the destination

As an image, a destination is an ambiguous and polysemic concept, i.e. is characterised by many meanings. Although widely used in both the tourism industry and in tourism studies to signify the whereabouts of travelling, it is not clear where its real “referential destination” is to be found. As Saarinen has pointed out:

Destination is by nature a problematic concept. It refers to a varying range of spatial scales (i.e. levels of representation) in tourism: continents, states, provinces, municipalities and other administrative units, tourist resorts or even single tourist products. Spatial scales and definitions of destinations based on administrative or other such units are sometimes useful and practical, but theoretically they tend to approach tourism as a spatial and geographical phenomenon from a technical and static viewpoint (Saarinen 2004, p. 164).

An important feature of the concept destination, and especially when used in tourism, is that it is relative to spatial scale. The destination to which one is going as a tourist may therefore refer to a local bar downtown as well as a whole continent. Furthermore, what at first may appear as a singular entity at one level of representation comes readily out as multiple on another. A destination, at any one particular spatial scale, may therefore also contain many other potential destinations. So *where* precisely is the “tourist destination”, that one is supposed to be destined to go to? There are several possible answers to the question what and where a destination is. A tourist may well buy an airline ticket to Iceland, but will most certainly not visit the whole country. Instead, the tourist will encounter Iceland through his or her own particular travel routes and stays.



Image 2.4: *Destination?*¹⁴

On the other side of the coin we find those with an interest in marketing destinations through various promotion materials in order to topple the tourist imagination and turning its compass in a particular direction. For example, when doing research Hunter identified four general categories that were used in order to orient tourism representations in a particular direction; “natural landscapes, cultivated landscapes, heritage and material culture, and tourism products” (Hunter 2008, p. 359).



Image 2.5: *One destination?*¹⁵

What one then finds behind the visible screen of images like these are rather practices of “destinationing”, that is, ways of both representing (constructing) and of doing (experiencing) a destination in partial and selective ways. The seemingly stable and fixed end-product of images should not be conflated with the processes of their production. The representation of destinations through images always involves reducing the destination to the particular spatial scale and perspective of the image, in a similar way that any tourist in practice will reduce the destination to her or his specific individual travel geography. Even the tourist experience of a single destination is then:

¹⁴ http://www.sciencemusings.com/blog/uploaded_images/Sign-734023.jpg (retrieved 2009-04-09).

¹⁵ www.grapevine.is/.../Hall%C3%B3-Akureyri (retrieved 2009-03-13),
www.cellonline.org/programs/iceland-program/ (retrieved 2009-03-13).

Composed of numerous small encounters with a variety of tourism principals, such as taxi drivers, hoteliers, and waiters, as well as elements of the local attractions such as museums, theatres, beaches, and theme parks (Zouni and Kouremenos 2008, p. 283).

This leads us to the “changing faces of contemporary tourism” (Cohen 2008), of which one is that the tourist experience is no longer easily reducible to encounters on a destination site only. To a greater extent than before it occurs throughout the total trip of travelling and the tourist experience is thus constituted also by what has been referred to as “intradestination movement patterns” (Lew and McKercher 2006, p. 419, see also Leiper 1995). This means that the travels of tourists may involve a great many traces and experiences that are quite independent of the destination as such (Hui 2009). “It’s the journey, not the destination”, as Hertz car rental agency has advertised for years becomes a salient point.

Of principal importance, to which we will return later and in more detail, is that this also challenges a still common traditional narrative by which tourism is reduced to travels between the origin of home and a destination away, with merely a blank space in-between.

It should now, hopefully, have become clear that the use of the concepts image and destination is intimately tied to “representation”, a crucial issue that needs to be addressed and engaged with in any tourism theory. In order to provide some more conceptual flesh, we will therefore now first turn to a consideration of some elementary semiotics, and then to a brief consideration of the concept of the commodity and its representation.

The sign, representation & the tourist attraction

Semiotics is a science concerned with the theory and study of signs. In the realm of tourism, semiotics translates directly into the important theorization of the tourist and the tourist attraction by MacCannell. His pioneering work, the classic book most often referred to simply as *The Tourist* (MacCannell 1976/1999), very much initiated and established the fundamental importance of signs in tourism that has been part of tourism theory ever since. It re-appears in another classic book in tourism studies, Urry’s (1990/2002) *The Tourist Gaze*, as well as in many theorizations of tourism as being about the consumption of (touristic) signs.

For MacCannell the tourist is someone who is actively on the lookout for signs of touristic value, and it is by those signs that sights are identified as tourist attractions. The dilapidated house in front of you becomes transformed into a tourist attraction through the sign-post which informs you that it once was the residence of a historically very important and famous person. Without that sign-post, what you will look at is just a dilapidated house.

Of particular importance for tourists and tourism, according to MacCannell, are signs of authenticity. Indeed, according to him all tourists in modern society embody a quest for authenticity. This quest is then matched by the development of a modern tourism industry trying to fill, and thereby construct, touristic sights (sites) with authenticity: *real* Icelandic nature, *pure* Icelandic water and the *original* Icelandic sweater.

The crucial theoretical component in MacCannell's account is that "tourist attractions are signs" (MacCannell 1976/1999, p. 109). In semiotics a sign is conceived of as "something that stands for something else" – and thus can be used fundamentally to lie with as Eco (1976, p. 7) half jokingly remarked. Practically everything can be conceived of as a sign: a word, a picture, a restaurant, a mountain, a piece of music, a smile. All share the common characteristics of signs in general. They stand for something else, and what that something else means needs to be addressed and decided by some act of interpretation. However, in semiotic theory the sign that stands for something else is actually a combination of two quite different but inseparable aspects; a physical dimension and one of meaning. As depicted by the formula of the sign itself:

$$\text{Sign} = \frac{S \text{ (the signifier)}}{s \text{ (the signified)}}$$

A sign is a twofold being that for us *linguistic animals* consists of meaning (the signified) and materiality (the signifier). The way we understand and make sense of signs, how we interpret them, is then a function of how we glue signifier and signified together in language. What your eyes will actually meet when you read a tourist brochure is only ink on paper, that is, pure material signifiers. Nevertheless, they will also be meaningful for you, that is, they will simultaneously appear also as signified, i.e. that you are able to understand, and maybe use as guidance towards your next tourist attraction. Once there, when driving a super-jeep nearby or on *Vatnajökull* you are again surrounded by nothing but pure

materiality. Yet, you are able to relate also to that material surrounding in ways that take you beyond your pure physical engagement through bodily sensory perception, perhaps by signifying what you see as something astonishing. This illustrates that:

The material world itself does not convey meaning; it is language systems that express meaning to members of particular social groups by representing concepts in certain terms (Hunter 2008, p. 356).

There are obviously many different ways of naming things-and-relations and depending upon a whole set of factors, ranging from individual to collective, we may assign meanings in both similar and different ways. According to semiotics this is inevitably so, because the relationship between signifier and signified is not fixed or given in language, but instead arbitrary and held together and apart by social convention. Indeed, it is through social convention that sites and places are provided with touristic meaning, and, we may add, also the phenomena of tourism as such. Though bodily movements and travelling have existed for long, tourism, as we have come to know it, is a recent social convention.

This leads us back to MacCannell, because what he eventually managed to achieve was symmetry between tourist attractions and a semiotic definition of the sign, which, in his own words, was “a source of great personal pleasure (MacCannell 1976/1999, p. 110):

SIGN = (a) represents + (b) something + (c) to someone

(TOURIST) ATTRACTION = (a) marker + (b) sight + (c) tourist



Image 2.6: Sign and (tourist) attraction.¹⁶

A (tourist) attraction is then like a sign, in that it too represents something to someone. The sign of a tourist attraction is a sight

¹⁶ Adopted from MacCannell (1976/1999, p. 110).

(something) which marks (represents) it for a tourist (someone). The use of the term “marker” is here extended by MacCannell to cover any kind of information about a sight, including for example what could be found in travel books and in stories told by persons who has visited it before. Today information on the Internet would certainly qualify as important markers.

A tourist attraction is thus a combination of “meaning and matter” (Gren 1994), a sight transformed through markers into something that may fascinate a tourist. This duality, this combination of what we are able to grasp by the perception of our bodily senses and what we can signify and understand by and through language, goes into the very heart of tourism as such. It is not restricted to a semiotic account of the tourist attraction.

More generally it can be said that any tourist experience is in practice the outcome of an embodied encounter with something material that simultaneously is being braided with an interpretation of its meaning. In a similar way, tourism denotes real locations with tangible tourist attractions that real people can travel to and visit. On the other hand, tourism connotes a range of intangible qualities, like various touristic amenity values that may be experienced *in situ* through direct bodily encounters, as well as through an indirect at-a-distance engagement with images of various sorts.

This characteristic of tourism, as in-between meaning and matter, is also present in one of its most important contemporary manifestations: as a commodity.

The commodity & tourism

Today tourism is being produced and consumed very much like any other commodity. Tourism products may have some specific features that make them different from many others, e.g. their intangibility but as an industry tourism is subject to economic rationality and firmly embedded in the orbit of capital transactions.

Long gone are the days of the old relationship between guests and hosts that was knitted together by a thin string of altruistic human hospitality, which meant to grant shelter and provide a bed for a travelling stranger without knowing whether one would ever get anything in return. Nowadays the relationship is one of customers and producers. Tourism has, in a short period of modern times become an industry operationalised with business and economic rationality. On the market of supply and

demand it is mediated by investment capital and circulates as a commodity.

A commodity often appears as a tangible thing, but it has simultaneously another much more abstract and intangible quality. In what is considered a classical account of the commodity, Marx described the commodity as something that at first sight appears as “a very trivial thing”, but that its analysis shows that it is “a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties” (Marx in *Calhoun et al.* 2002, p. 51).



Image 2.7: *The commodity.*¹⁷

A key into Marx’s understanding of the commodity is that he conceived of it as being made of two factors; the use and exchange value. The use value of a commodity comes from its ability to be used, for example a spade is good for digging in the soil. The exchange value of the commodity is something different. It originates from, and continues to be sustained by, social and economic relations of its production and consumption. Spades can be manufactured in a factory and then sold on the market in exchange for money. In other words, it is through the transactions on the marketplace that spades receive their exchange value. There the owner of the factory, that is, the one in control of the means of production, is able to make a profit by selling the spades at a higher price than what he or she is paying the labourers in wages. Far from being “trivial things”, spades are materializations of social and economic relations. As Balibar explains:

¹⁷ http://www.guinecta.com/Images/Commodity_Advisors_Trading_index_Bkgd.jpg (retrieved 2009-04-15)

The mysterious character of the commodity-form consist therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as the objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things (Balibar 2007, p. 57)

This general characteristic of the commodity also applies for production and consumption in the realm of tourism. Indeed, one could describe the whole business of tourism as a process of commodification by which use values are converted into touristic exchange values. The original use value of an old church is religious, but it may be transformed into a tourist commodity with an added exchange value as a tourist attraction. A location is just where people live their lives, but it may become a tourist destination if it manages to appear with touristic exchange value on the tourism market. Without tourism commodification, places and whatever their amenity values cannot be sold on the tourist market. The river close to *Varmahlíð* is just a river, but it may be used for river rafting. The ontological trick that has to be performed by those in the tourism industry is then to transform things and services into commodities, often called tourism products, which one can put a price tag on. Negri, linking tourism to image frustratingly and critically remarks that “[c]orruption of the image has now found an extension in the universal prostitution represented by tourism” (Negri 2008, p. 63).

Of crucial importance is that tourism commodities are very much consumed as experiences, i.e. their exchange value lies in the experience delivered. At the same time, it is not altogether easy to commodify experiences, for example of a landscape or a tourist attraction. These are spatially fixed assets that cannot as such be sold and bought. A major part of tourism commodification thus consists of developing products that are either supplements to the real and instant tourism experience, like a souvenir, or lead people towards a scripted experience with trails and interpretations set in place. This illustrates a fundamental “parasitic”. feature of tourism, i.e. that it eats at the table of others. To a relatively large extent tourism is dependent upon on other resources, such as roads, whales, houses, natural environments *etc.* For tourism to occur, these need to be appropriated and commodified for specific touristic purposes.

The commodification of tourism has not only been understood in terms of use value and exchange value, but also as symbolic value. This refers to tourists assigning something with *symbolic* value, for example as “typical”, “beautiful”, “authentic”, or being able to tell friends back home about their travel adventures. The creation and usage of symbolic value in

tourism reflects broader social and cultural changes so that consumption is no longer only about buying goods and services that one has some kind of direct need or use of. In addition, consumption has become a way to make social distinctions and identity statements through the symbolic values of commodities (Bourdieu 1984). Tourism itself has come to symbolise that one is able to travel, to go vacationing and to do all those things that one cannot do while working and staying in one's home environment.

With the idea of commodification, what has become clear is that these values that drive tourists to certain sights do not come out of the blue. They are produced and reproduced through meanings that are established in the interrelationship between the tourist and her or his society. For MacCannell, writing in the mid 1970s, that was a modern society characterised by processes of modernisation where old buildings, values and practices were rapidly being destroyed, leading to a fragmentation of daily life accompanied by disparate experiences where "everything solid melted into air", as Marx once famously argued (quoted by Berman 1988). To this modern life, without a centre or coherence in which to put the fragments back into a whole, modern tourism appeared as a kind of solution. It promised in response to offer a reality in *other peoples* real material lives and in *other* times, places and cultures. Tourism became a kind of modern pilgrimage where tourists, driven by a quest of authenticity, were travelling on the lookout for signs of roots, history, heritage and perspectives on a world lost at home.

Tourism then reflects a larger social shift from an industrial society to a consumer society in which commodities are consumed also for their symbolic values and their ability to signify taste, fashion and other cultural distinctions. Indeed, tourism has even become something of an icon of this change. It also illustrates well a development, under the regime of commodification, in which an ever greater realm of human life is being mediated and regulated by economic rationality in accordance with the ideologies of capitalism and neo-liberalism (Harvey 2005).

Summing up

In this chapter we began our conceptual travels with an investigation of two central concepts in tourism: image and destination. Instead of approaching them as isolated concepts we gradually tried to unfold them as keys into broader issues of representation that lie at the core of any social and culturally oriented tourism theory. We have thus also avoided the

attempt to erase the inherent complexities of image and destination by trying to define them in a definite way. In actuality they are polysemic concepts and intimately related to other concepts and processes, within as well as outside of tourism. As Hunter observes:

There have been numerous attempts to define and apply destination image research in tourism studies. A huge variety of definitions, research approaches and methodologies have emerged over the 30-year history of destination image research in tourism studies. Yet no consensus has been achieved regarding the definitive approach to destination image research (Hunter 2008, p. 355).

That there has indeed been a strong emphasis on the visual in tourism theory and tourism research is quite unsurprising, given the well documented relationship between the tourist experience and the visual. In turn, this reflects a broader alignment between modernity and the privileging of the visual. MacCannell was thus in good company when he presented tourists attractions as cultural experiences that are consumed visually (there is perhaps no coincidence that he uses the word “sight” and not site). Other tourism scholars, like Urry, have also “argued for the fundamentally visual nature of tourism experiences” (Urry 1990/2002, p. 145).

Of importance to note in the chapter is therefore a gradual change in the theorization of the tourist from a passive consumer of visual signs to an embodied actor participating in the performance of tourist experiences. Being a tourist is not only about consuming visual object by gazing, but also being-there with a body of five senses. That it is more difficult to represent the touch, smell and taste a destination in other places does certainly not mean that all those other senses are not part of the tourist experience. On the contrary, it may be argued that it is precisely for those senses that tourists need and want to travel and bodily experience them somewhere.

It follows from the semiotic definition of the sign (“something that stands for something else”) that there is always an absolute gap between the signs that we use and whatever they are supposed to re-present. That which we refer to by the words of “image”, “destination” and “tourism” are not in any simple unambiguous way those things-and-relations that they are supposed to refer to. However hard we try as tourism scholars and researchers to represent the phenomena we study, there is no way to erase this abyss, this element of imaginative fabrication. It follows that

signification, not the least in tourism, is actively involved in co-constructing that which is re-presented. Tourism does not exist apart from our naming, defining, or classifying “it”. The name is not the thing named. It is through words and concepts that we construct our knowledge claims about tourism, and therefore it is important to systematically pay close attention to them.

One central message of the chapter has thus been about the issue of representation, and it deserves to be repeated here. The *naïve* or simplified taken-for-granted notions of representation, as mirroring or objectively corresponding to a separate reality “out there”, are not adequate or valid. This does not mean, however, that there is no such thing as “tourism” outside of our internal significations in language, nor does it imply that we are forever locked up in a closed idealist realm of signs and words. Tourist destination images are always packaged around a series of selected *real* and imagined features, and they are being constructed and manufactured for specific touristic purposes by marketers and researchers alike. A way of capturing this duality is to follow Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1998, p. 9) stating that:

Tourists travel to actual destinations to experience virtual places.

What we refer to as “tourism and tourist imaginationings” involve, and are highly dependent upon, processes of signification that translate the physical matters of travelling, locations, and whatever material resources that humans meet as bodies with senses, into various touristic meanings and values. It is, in other words, the art of bringing meaning and matter together for particular tourism and tourist purposes. This process of translating and transforming is necessary in order for goods, services and sights on the Earth to be appropriated for tourism purposes and become tourism commodities.

And by these final remarks we are already on the move to the next chapter where we will open the door to tourism theory.

3. *Tourism theory*

Tourism theory and explanation must always move with the cultural milieux in which they arise.

- *Adrian Franklin*¹⁸

Every relation between two instances demands a route. What is already there on this route either facilitates or impedes the relation.

- *Michel Serres*¹⁹

The argument is no longer that methods *discover* and depict realities. Instead, it is that they participate in the *enactment* of those realities.

- *John Law*²⁰

In this chapter we will introduce and investigate tourism theory, that is, that conceptual domain which has as its aim and goal to articulate and develop our understandings and explanations of tourism and tourists. We will particularly focus on “ontology”, that is, the basic assumptions and principles underlying our understandings and explanations of tourism and tourists. In our mapping of this theoretical terrain we will along the way also actualise our own approach to tourists and tourism imaginings.

All research in tourism studies has to engage with tourism theory. Contrary to lay understandings, “facts” and “findings” about tourism and tourists do not pop up on their own on the tourism researcher’s table of analysis. In other words, how we choose to conceptualize and theorize tourism and tourists will inevitably have consequences for how we conduct our studies, what type of research we do, and what kind of knowledge claims about tourism and tourists we are able to make.

In addition, it ought to be kept in mind that theory is not at all a sole concern for researchers or the academia. For example, every tourist is theoretical in the sense of having to make abstract assumptions and calculations about concrete matters such as where to go and what to do. Likewise, anybody working in tourism is dependent upon notions and ideas when reasoning and deciding about how to organise and conduct the

¹⁸ Franklin 2003, p. 279.

¹⁹ Serres 2007, p. 150.

²⁰ Law 2004, p. 45.

business and market to potential customers. Also policy-making involves hypothetical and speculative reasoning. For example, making plans for tourism development is theoretical in the sense that it is about something imaginary. The future does not exist here and now, it can only appear here and now as a pure theoretical object.

That we in this chapter choose to address and put emphasis on the importance of tourism theory is not to be read as advocating theory for its own sake. We do, however, believe that there are some substantial reasons for paying extra careful attention to theory in tourism studies. We agree in principle with Shaw and Williams that “tourism research is still often descriptive, a-theoretical, and chaotically conceptualized in being abstracted from broader social relationships” (Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 1). Although exceptions can readily be found, their argument indicates that one future challenge for tourism theory is to further enhance and develop accounts that situate tourism and tourists in a broader framework informed by contemporary social and cultural theorizing.

What we now need to address first is what theory is, and how it is related to tourism studies. With the student audience in mind, this necessitates a brief introductory tour into the relationship between scientific disciplines and theory more generally.

Tourism studies: a field or a discipline?

One of the distinguishing features of a scientific discipline, for example biology or sociology, is that it has a common theoretical domain consisting of understandings and explanations of the phenomenon being studied. This does not mean that such a domain has to exist in the form of a single unified discipline theory that all its scholars and researchers subscribe to. The point is instead that a discipline theory offers a common disciplinary ground on which theoretical conversations and critical debates can take place. Even if there were to be substantial disagreements and disputes between scholars and researchers, they are nevertheless able to position and locate them on a map of their own discipline territory. So, does tourism studies have a discipline of its own?

The question is not altogether easy to answer. Although tourism studies clearly do exist in terms of formal academic institutional structures, with departments offering university degrees and conducting research on tourism and tourists, it is less certain how and to what extent it is a discipline held together by a common theoretical domain. For a long time

it has been debated whether or not tourism studies is to be regarded as a discipline of its own, or if it is to be conceived of as merely a field of study populated by scholars and researchers from a variety of different disciplines, who in turn may approach tourism from a variety of diverse theoretical perspectives.

Although it is generally acknowledged that tourism studies belong to social science, it can also be placed within any of its disciplines and their respective sub-domains specialised in tourism. Accordingly, one will then find, for example, “anthropology of tourism”, “sociology of tourism” and “tourism geography”, rather than a separate discipline of tourism studies. We can easily add another level of complexity by invoking other neighbouring fields commonly regarded as close to tourism, like “management”, “marketing”, “recreation and leisure studies” and those focusing on “sports and hospitality”.

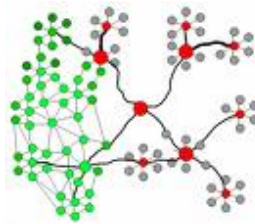


Image 3.1: *Where are tourism studies?*²¹

It thus comes as no surprise that it is common in the tourism literature to recognize that tourism studies are dependent on a mixture of theoretical perspectives originating in particular from other social science disciplines. This state of theoretical affairs has been reflected in an attitude among tourism researchers, which is still common, that tourism studies are best “viewed as an application of established disciplines, because it does not possess sufficient doctrine to be classified as a full-fledged academic discipline” (Bodewes 1981, p. 37). More recently it has been claimed that tourism studies “is not a discipline but a discursive site with multiple disciplinary roots” (Belhassen and Caton 2009, p. 341).

From this follows that tourism studies have also been characterised as being “interdisciplinary”, “multidisciplinary” and even “transdisciplinary”. In essence the basic argument is that tourism studies, as a discipline or as a field of study (as well as any study of tourism), is

²¹ www.jeffvail.net/.../rhizomecentral2-768939.gif (retrieved 2009-05-04).

bound to cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. As Graburn and Jafari argued almost two decades ago:

No single discipline alone can accommodate, treat, or understand tourism; it can be studied only if disciplinary boundaries are crossed and if multidisciplinary perspective are sought and formed (Graburn and Jafari 1991, p. 7).

This suggests that the disciplinary nature of tourism studies is in fact also thought to be intrinsically related to its own object of study. It is not only that there may exist many possible ways of studying tourism, but that tourism is in itself such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that it becomes very difficult to house it in one theory, or within one discipline only. When put in the context of the social world, that which the social sciences investigate, the phenomenon of tourism is difficult to demarcate and locate, for example:

due to its reliance on primary, secondary and tertiary levels of production and service, and the fact that it is so intricately interwoven into the fabric of life economically, socioculturally and environmentally (Fennel 2008, p. 1).

We can then now draw the general conclusion that tourism studies are not held together by a common all-embracing discipline specific tourism theory in a strict sense. What we find is rather a variety of theoretical approaches, from a range of social science disciplines, which all contribute to the understanding and explanation of tourism and tourists. This leads us to refer to tourism studies in the plural. This state of affairs is also a result of the inherent complexity of the phenomena of tourism itself.

This (inter)disciplinary character of tourism studies then forms the social science context in which tourism theory is to be located and assessed.

On tourism theory

Theory may be used and understood in a number of slightly different ways. It can be regarded both as the highest achievement of scientific reasoning and dismissed as representing knowledge that is not to be trusted, as in “well, that is just theory”. Although a theory may be supported or refuted

by observations it should not be considered or evaluated on the basis of being “true” or “false” in any simple way. To this we may add that the meaning and use of theory may not be the same in all areas of science. Although tourism studies are generally regarded as a social science, one will in social science, as well as in tourism studies, find several approaches to theory.

At the most general level a theory is an indispensable conceptual toolbox for understanding and explaining something. In more formal terms one will find in any theory two sets of statements. The first set expresses what kind of phenomena the theory is dealing with and the second set stipulates how matters are related to each other. Hence, in tourism theory there are statements about what tourism and tourists are, and statements that articulate how they are related to other things, that is, what factors influence or “causes” them and thus how they may be understood and explained.

In the first set of statements one will find definitions that articulate and specify what the essential characteristics of tourism and tourists are, which means that they are simultaneously differentiated from other related phenomena. Definitions are not only important but necessary in order to distinguish something to study. If we consider how tourism actually has been defined we will notice first of all its close affinity with travel. Indeed, there has even often been a tendency to use travel more or less as a synonym for tourism. For example, in the *Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology* one can read that:

The term tourism refers to the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of people away from their normal home environments for a variety of purposes (Beaver 2005, p. 380).

Many introductory accounts of tourism, such as those found in tourism studies textbooks, are often centred on definitions and there is no need for us to repeat them in detail here. What is highly important to recognise is that definitions in science are certainly not given once and for all; they are always made in particular theoretical circumstances for specific reasons. Most concepts that are used in science have a range of possible meanings and that “the definition of ‘tourism’ has not yet stabilized” (Beaver 2005, p. 316) should thus come as no surprise.

How we choose to define has consequence for how we conduct our research. If we accept a definition of tourism that necessitates travel, then spending the vacation in ones normal home environment, doing

sightseeing and whatever activities tourists are supposed to do, would not automatically count as tourism. When we do put travel at the centre of a definition of tourism we also have to take into consideration that people go to other places for a variety of different purposes. This means that we need to further refine our definition of tourism so that it can be differentiated from other forms of travel, such as commuting to work or emigrating.

It is certainly not sufficient to merely define tourism and tourists when the task is to make interpretative or explanatory knowledge claims when doing tourism research, or when writing an undergraduate thesis in tourism studies. To be able to make scientific knowledge claims requires the second set of statements in a theory, that is, those interpretative and explanatory ones that inform us about the relations that tourism and tourists are embedded in and subjected to. Such assumptions about reasons and causes are needed in order to answer questions like: Why do people travel to Iceland? Why are the relative proportions of a certain type of tourists higher in Northern Iceland? Why has tourism expanded so rapidly and extensively in Iceland during the previous decades?

In order to be able to answer such “why-questions”, that is, to interpret and explain, one needs some kind of tourism theory that accounts for the factors and processes that are involved in constituting the phenomena under study. To provide understandings and explanations is not altogether easy because the list of potential factors that can be conceived of as influencing, or “causing”, tourism is almost infinite. The candidates one could find in social science include, e.g. society, gender, visual consumption, age, economy, power-relations, a quest for authenticity, fun, technology, culture, nature, leisure, the environment, capitalism, and globalization. This non-exhaustive quick inventory illustrates that it is in research not possible to study every aspect of neither tourism nor tourists. Hence, an important task and function of theory is to reduce an overt tourism complexity to a finite set of factors that is possible to handle in practice.

As the reader may have noted, there is a common and frequent slippage in terminology between using “tourism” and “tourists” in tourism studies. This slippage reflects an important principle divide in tourism theory terminology. Although *tourism* studies and *tourism* theory are terms that are most commonly used, to understand and explain tourism may not be the same as to understand and explain the behaviours and experiences of tourists.

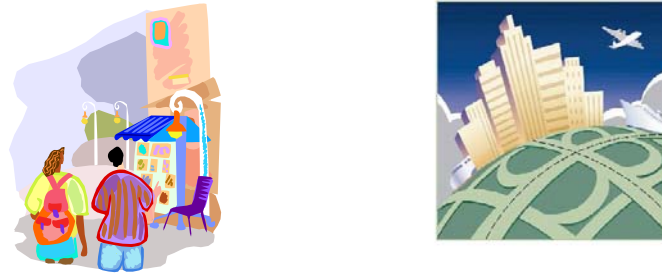


Image 3.2: *Theory of tourists and/or of tourism?*

As true as it is that tourism could not exist without tourists, and vice versa, it is a task of tourism theory to account for how they are differentiated as well as related. How is the individual level of tourists linked to the collective features of tourism systems? Are the destination and travel choices of tourists the outcome of individual decisions or are they determined by economic, cultural or other structural formations?

Although tourism and tourists, as well as their interdependencies, may be theorized in a variety of ways, tourism studies is part of social science and with that come certain theoretical ramifications. For tourism theory this means more specifically that tourism and tourists are primarily conceptualized as phenomena of the social world. In other words, tourism theory is thereby drawn into a common ontological assumption in social science, that is, that human social behaviour and the societies humans create are not the same as physical objects and material phenomena.

Hence, a dominant doctrine in social science is that the social world cannot, or should not, be studied or theorized in the same way as the natural world. As used in natural science, a theory is most often tied to observation so that explanations and hypotheses are tested by examination of “facts”, that is, things or physical phenomena that can be observed and measured empirically. In addition, an important aim in natural science is often to discover universal principles and laws that apply for a phenomenon everywhere. In contrast, one of the constitutional themes in social theory is that humans as social beings are able to learn, develop, and change themselves and their own collective social world. Expressed in the words taken from a practical guide on research methods in leisure and tourism:

Social science research is carried out using the methods and traditions of social science. Social science differs from the physical or natural sciences in that it deals with *people* and their social behaviour, and people are less predictable than non-human phenomena. People can be aware of the research being conducted about them and are not therefore purely passive subjects; they can react to the results of research and change their behaviour accordingly. People in different parts of the world and at different times behave differently. The social world is constantly changing, so it is rarely possible to replicate research at different times or in different places and obtain similar results (Veal 2006, p. 3).

For the social scientists this leads to a situation where it becomes difficult to separate their knowledge claims from the social world that they aim to study. Consequently, a common notion in social science is that the social scientist is always to some extent also a co-creator of the social world that she or he observes. It can then be argued that tourism on the ground and in theory, like societies, is always a “work in progress”. The construction site of knowledge generated in tourism studies is situated in the times and spaces of its production. The role of the tourism researcher can then be:

nothing less than ‘advancing’ understanding of tourism, not as statement of truth or a set of invariable laws. Instead we have to accept that understanding is conditional on place and time (Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 275).

Tourism theory shares with social theory another very deep-seated and particularly important problematic. This is about whether or not its object of study is a phenomenon that exists on its own. One of the key assumptions in modern social theory is that social phenomena are *sui generis*, that is, realities of their own kind. A key contributor to this idea was Durkheim who, in his attempts to establish sociology as a scientific discipline, carved out its object of study, the social, as *sui generis* and consequently non-reducible to psychic and physical phenomena. Durkheim also argued that social facts can only be explained by other social facts, meaning that one cannot explain the social by biological, chemical, technological or other factors (Durkheim, in *Calhoun et al.* 2002, pp. 109-127).

This *sui generis* of the social still haunts our understandings and explanations of the social world, also in tourism studies. At the same time,

this particular notion of a purified social that exists on its own has been critiqued. Various attempts to formulate and develop alternatives have also been made. The core of this alternative argumentation is that there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as a social *sui generis*. Instead, the social ought to be theorised as more or less always involving also various non-social phenomena, for example; technology, material artefacts, or even that which has traditionally been conceived of as the other of the social, namely so called “nature”.

In a similar vein, it can now be argued that there is no such thing as tourism *sui generis* either. Everywhere we go we will find that tourism and tourists are neither purely social nor separately existing phenomena. They are always surrounded by various non-humans, be it aeroplanes, tickets, restaurants, museums, roads, or beverages. In principle, then, everything we might distinguish as tourism or touristic may well be equally regarded as belonging to something else.

Yet, in spite of this parasitic nature of tourism, as earlier discussed, the task of tourism theory is also to bring forth a common theoretical ground by drilling down its own conceptual pillars. In the next section we will outline some essential requirements tourism theory needs to cover in principle.

An essential tourism trinity with a geographical twist

As we conceive it, any tourism theory that aims to understand and explain tourism and tourists would at least have to include the three interrelated essential factors of *ability*, *mobility* and *motivation*. These factors are certainly not exhaustive and do not cover every aspect and realm of what tourism theory can and needs to address. They do, however, articulate a minimum ontological skeleton of tourism onto which other factors may be added, depending on particular research needs and theoretical preferences.

Breaking the *ability*, *mobility* and *motivation* triad into its component parts we see that in order for tourism to occur, people first have to have an *ability* to move from *here* to *there*, be it near or far. In tourism theory this has traditionally been understood and explained with reference to time and money as those basic factors enabling or constraining the ability to travel. According to historical accounts of the development of tourism most people (the rich and the privileged excluded) did not have, prior to the age of modern mass tourism of the 20th century, enough free leisure time available to spend on going somewhere outside their home

environment. If they had, they were likely to be constrained by lack of money or other resources. There are of course other factors, like for example knowledge and bodily physical conditions of various sorts, that might influence the ability to move from *here* to *there* and which tourism theory needs to consider further.

Ability, albeit necessary, is not sufficient in order to understand and explain tourism. It is not enough to have money and time to spend, or a body fit for e.g. hiking, because it must also be materially possible to move from *here* to *there*. Tourism involves and presupposes movement, and can therefore be distinguished as a special form of *mobility*. Tourism mobility presumes a way of getting there, a means of transportation, and access to all kinds of routes that will lead to an elsewhere, in short; a material geography between home and away. Most importantly, tourism mobility is not to be thought of as being only about the movement of people. There are always others that move too:

What travels along the path might be money, gold or commodities, or even food – in short, material goods. You don't need much experience to know that goods do not always arrive so easily at their destination (Serres 2007, p.11).

Tourism mobility includes the mobilities of various material goods and requires all that which participates in enabling or constraining movement: debit cards, mountains, passports, weather, electricity, cars, planes, weather, roads, flight routes, beaches, airports, hotels, computers, and all kinds of services that facilitate mobility. These material ingredients are then central components in geographical accessibility networks, or “scapes” (Shaw and Williams 2004) that enable and channel tourism mobility.

Yet, people still do not have to move from *here* to *there* only because they have the means and possibilities to do it. One could well remain in the home environment although one is living next to an airport and has access to a wallet packed with surplus money just waiting to be spent. Without some kind of motivation to change, and do whatever things that we choose to distinguish as tourism, people would simply not become tourists. In short, *motivation*, in whatever form and under whatever name, is also needed.

In the early days of tourism studies, especially in sociological and anthropological accounts, the investigation of tourism was dominated by the relationship between tourism and modernity as explained in chapter 2.

As we showed, in challenging the depreciation of the tourist, McCannell posited in the early 1970s that moderns were motivated by a quest of authenticity which “caused” them to depart on sightseeing tours. Other motives have later been acknowledged, as shown above and the “post-tourist” may well be motivated even more by artificial and “inauthentic” places. Whatever the particular motives, in tourism theory the factor of motivation thus addresses the behaviour and experiences of tourists. This illustrates one of those situations where “*tourist* theory” may be a more adequate term to use instead of tourism theory. It should however be reminded that one will find various motivations among also non-tourists that contributes to the phenomena of tourism as well, for example those working in the tourism industry and those involved in planning and politics.

Although the three factors of ability, mobility and motivation are essential and necessary to address in any tourism theory, they are not exhaustive. They are also clearly interrelated in various ways. It is, for example, well known that the cost and time of moving people have dramatically reduced in recent years, not least when it comes to the real cost of travelling internationally. One key factor behind this is due to technological developments, such as reduced fuel consumption in aviation, which again implies that tourism in general, and tourism mobility in particular, is as much to be understood as a material phenomenon as a social.

To this ontological skeleton of ability, mobility and motivation we now only have to add a geographical twist. It is for us inevitable that tourism must be theorized in ways that puts its geographical features at centre stage. These include movement, mobility, absolute and relative location between tourist destinations along with the routes that connect and separate places. In this sense the three operational components of the tourism industry (*channelers* of tourists, *transporters* of tourists and *receivers* of tourists) form a production system leading tourism theory to:

An analysis of how the tourism production system markets and packages people is a lesson in the political economy of the social construction of ‘reality’ and social construction of place, whether from the point of view of visitors and host communities, tourism capital (and the ‘culture industry’), or the state – with its diverse involvement in the system (Britton 1991, quoted in Hall and Page 2006, p. 17).

This production system works like a geographical tourism machine that distributes the mobility of tourists on the Earth.

Our argument is that it is important in tourism theory to explicitly interpret and explain tourism also as an innately geographical phenomenon that takes place on the Earth. This is not a novel idea. It may readily be found in many traditional accounts of tourism, and not only those of tourism geography. It is obvious too that the core of tourism since the founding days of tourism studies has been thought of in terms of travelling and going somewhere else, for example; “[t]o be there oneself is what is crucial in most tourism” (Urry 1990/2002, p. 154).

It may further be noted that paying heed to the geographical nature of tourism also means to keep a critical eye on its spatial underpinnings. For example, tourism has in tourism theory often been captured by a spatial imagery that assumes a clear distinction between home and away. The universality of this spatial imagination of tourism has recently been questioned and critiqued as we have alluded to in the above.

Tourism imaginationings as geographical patterning

Human life on the Earth has always involved geographical movements between different locations and environments, be it for survival reasons, for the purpose of work, exploration, curiosity, adventure, or whatever else possible human motives there might be. However, prior to the advent of modern mass tourism there were no touring masses on the road travelling on return tickets for leisure purposes from the origin of home to the away of tourist destinations.

In other words, humans were geographical animals long before they became those touring animals we refer to as “tourists”. Geographical imaginationings, like information and communication about other places and people so central for modern tourism, have also existed as long as humans themselves. Before modern tourism people like adventurers and explorers also wrote about their various experiences and understandings. They then contributed to the development of modern forms of collective geographical imaginationings which later were to become part of tourism imaginationings. In a publication from 1852 one could, for example, read about Iceland in the following way:

This is the island that is shown to us in our geographical books and maps, as a small white spot on the borders of the Arctic ocean, and described as a cold, dreary, and uninteresting region, inhabited by a few dwarfish and ignorant people, who have little knowledge of the world and whom little is known (Miles 1852, in *Boucher* 1989, p. 17).

At that time Iceland was portrayed as cold, dreary and uninteresting. With a population size of approximately 60.000 people, it was usually not geographically imagined as more than a small white dot somewhere in the middle of a North Sea. In cartographic representation it could appear as an insert on the upper left corner on the map of Denmark, its colonial ruler till 1944.

That the country itself [Iceland], or any thing that is to be found here, is worth a journey to see, or that the history or habits of the people possess any degree of interest, has not, probably, crossed the minds of a thousand persons (Miles 1852, in *Boucher* 1989, p.17).

But times rarely stand still. Thomas Cook made tourism history in the midst of European modernity, where modern tourists began to appear mobile on railways, ocean liners, and later in aeroplanes. With the advent of modern tourism came the possibility for places on Earth to mutate into tourist destinations. And so it is that there is another story to be told today about a former remote island like Iceland. After all, “it has not been thought advisable to leave this country entirely alone, especially in an age of travel and discovery like the present” (Miles 1852, in *Boucher* 1989, p. 17). Iceland has become a place in popular domestic and international tourism imaginationing:

with every part of the country, every town or district, making a conscientious effort to offer tourists something special. /.../ Travelling around Iceland to enjoy nature and the local’s way of life is a wonderful and enjoyable activity (Skarphéðinsson 2008, p. 2).

As etymology reminds us, travelling used to be an activity full of labour and associated with all the hard work needed to overcome the difficulty of going anywhere. Modernization changed that by creating a very tangible infrastructure for transportation and geographical mobility over the surface of the Earth. Modernity does not only mean that “everything solid melts into air”, as the ring-road on Iceland well illustrates. Yet, these material processes of modernization were accompanied by modernity, that is, ways of imagining one’s place and possible routes of belonging and escape in a sea of change. By entering the gates of tourism imaginationings some places like Iceland were eventually

able to cross the minds of many thousands of people through the folding of the near and the far in new ways:

Iceland is not only closer than you think, but far different than you ever imagined. Where else can you witness such marvels of Mother Nature as a tremendous icecap and several glaciers, spouting geysers and steaming sulfataras, volcanoes (hopefully dormant), raging rivers and magnificent waterfalls, a multitude of birds, cavorting whales just offshore and many other surprises. Summers are surprisingly warm and winters not as cold as you might expect. Regardless of when you visit, be assured that the warmth shown by Icelanders, their desire to share their culture and the efforts made to make your stay as pleasant as possible will, like the spectacular landscape, never be forgotten²²

In and through the process of modern tourism imaginationing, Iceland was to change from a “cold, dreary, and uninteresting region” to a “cold, peripheral, and ‘different’ destination” (Gössling 2006, p. 120). In the same transformation, Iceland eventually turned from a “small-scale nature-based adventure tourism destination into a soft adventure mass destination” (Gössling 2006, p. 126). Perhaps “the omni-presence of geothermal pools in information materials, notably the *Blue Lagoon*” (Gössling 2006, p. 122) is a case in point.

In due course, Iceland became eventually geographically cloned and scaled in tourism imaginationing into at least two. Reminiscent of the wide-spread tendency in tourism to construct and develop culture and nature as tourist commodities, the city of Reykjavik nowadays “portrays itself as a modern, vibrant metropolis” (Gössling 2006, p. 120), focusing on both art and consumerism in line with contemporary cultural tourism. Yet, “[e]ven though the focus of information booklets and brochures is clearly on culture, the unique character of the island’s ‘nature’ is also part of the city image” (Gössling 2006, p. 120). As for the rest of the country:

pictures modestly depict landscape views, often aerial, ice formations, snow scooters, dogsleads, super jeeps, Northern lights, waterfalls, horses and whales. People shown usually wear sweaters or coats, often raincoats. Headlines read ‘Living on a volcano’, ‘Whale-watching voyages’, ‘Super jeeps’, ‘Glacier experience’ or ‘White, wild and wonderful’. Moreover, these extremes are presented in contrasts, such as fire and ice, heaven and hell, modern and traditional” (Gössling 2006, p. 121).

²² www.visiticeland.is (retrieved: 2009-05-13).

In the marketing of Iceland as a tourist destination, the country has also been further divided into *Reykjavík* and the capital area, East-Iceland, West-Iceland, South-Iceland, North-Iceland, The Westfjords, and The Highlands. In general, though, Iceland has sought to “market itself as an ‘extreme’ and ‘different’ destination through the transformation of its history, culture, and nature into elements of ‘magic’” (Gössling 2006, p. 122). As a “majestic country”, Iceland appears in books with titles such as: “‘Lost in Iceland’, ‘Magic of Iceland’, ‘Wonders of Iceland’, ‘Colours of Iceland’ or ‘Land of light’” (Gössling 2006, p. 122).

The re-make and re-modelling through tourism imaginings draw upon historical narration and myth. Horses are not only horses; they are Icelandic horses, and even “Viking horses”. The local beer is named “Viking”, the vodka “Eldurís” (Fire-ice) and “danger signs in many places enforce the notion of adventure and remnants of extreme events remind of the forces of nature” (Gössling 2006, p. 122). Even the hidden people are becoming suitable enough to be loaded with a high profile tourism exchange value. What else might there be besides the traditional mixture of nature and culture that could put a nation on the map of tourist destinations? Björk might not be considered an elf (or hidden person), but as potential tourism exchange value she is a point in case:

When is an elf bigger than a nation? And if your’re the nation, what to do about it? In Iceland’s case, the answer seems to be: appreciate her [Björk] and ignore her (*The New York Times*, October 25, 2001).

A general pattern in contemporary tourism pro-motional material of Iceland, identified by Gössling, is that of “exploration and adventure elements” (Gössling 2006, p. 122). And why not? Some people “still believe that the Icelanders, or some other people from among the northern nations, once sailed to the American shores prior to the voyages of Columbus” (Miles 1852, in *Boucher*, 1989, p. 17). About 50 years later, in 2005, the president of Iceland enumerated 13 national characteristics to explain Icelanders success in finance:

Eight on my list is the heritage of discovery and exploration, fostered by the medieval Viking sagas that have been told and retold to every Icelandic child. This is a tradition that gives honour to those who venture into unknown lands, who dare to journey to foreign fields, interpreting modern business ventures as an extension of the Viking spirit, applauding the successful entrepreneurs as heirs of this proud tradition (Grímsson cited in *Reykjavik Grapevine* 2009, issue 4, p. 8).

So it is that the old scars of cultural imaginationings cut much deeper than the new recent wounds of the “kreppa”, the financial meltdown that hit Iceland in the fall of 2008. The media coverage that Iceland received during the height of the crises could hardly have been bought for money, and the favourable Icelandic krona exchange rate seems to be propelling the tourism industry into new times and rounds of prosperity. Whatever the future has to offer, it is clear that the financial turmoil has once again put tourism at the centre of Icelandic imaginationing in its position as prime rescuer of the post war resource driven economy (see Jóhannesson & Huijbens, forthcoming). As it was said before the crisis:

In every part of Iceland there are investments that need to bring in a return. If we could manage that, there would be economic growth in all the rural areas. Behind every 50,000 tourists there are around a thousand work years and 60 million dollars in added value distributed through all parts of society (Magnason 2008, p. 273).

This economic imaginationing of tourism may be compared with the parliamentary resolution on tourism, “Tourism strategy 2006-2015”, with its vision of environmental consciousness and features like “purity”, “health”, “safety” and the country’s “beauty” in terms of untouched nature. Incidentally, during the last two decades the cover of Iceland’s Tourist Board’s yearly brochure has predominantly presented an image characterized by water, rather static nature and bluish colours (Gunnarsdóttir 2007). This seems to be well in line with a common rule in tourism of marketing “groomed spaces”. According to Hunter:

Photographic representations in tourism tend to depict vacant and pristine spaces awaiting the tourist. And potentially, it could be suggested that any tourist market would interpret the representation in terms of an experience, awaiting fulfilment at that destination. Specifically, photographic representations in tourism define “groomed spaces” that are readily identified as a tourism product – part of a destination completely commodified and ready for consumption (Hunter 2008, p. 360).

Also the tourist imagination needs to be groomed for particular tourist and tourism purposes. The story about Iceland as a tourist destination that we have now told cannot be separated from our own representation, our selective use of sources for our own purposes here. Tourism imaginings as they appear in promotion and marketing material, advertising, policy documents, books, research articles in tourism studies, or whatever the medium, are not the same as the imaginings of tourists.

Nevertheless, there may also be a cartographic pattern which connects. For if there was no other place to imagine, that is, “to form a mental destination image of”, then why and where should one travel? The point is that without the faculty of human imagination, without the ability to make the absent present and *vice versa*, there would be no tourist destination images and no tourism as we have come to know it. In other words:

Modern tourism is based on the reproduction (and re-enactment) of the coming together of representation and (bodily) experience, of abstraction and materiality (Minca 2007, p. 434).

In condensed form this suggests that the impetus to travel and to become a tourist in the modern sense is driven by imagined possibilities in-between map and territory opened up through cartography and “cartographic reason” (Olsson 2007). In effect this inevitable gap produces a desire as impossible to resist as to realize completely.

Our own conceptualization “tourist imaginings” now appears as situated in the abyss between abstract cartographic representations and the material geographies on the Earth. Triggered by the difference between map and territory many now travel extensively for touristic purposes, yet it is important to remember that for the majority of the world’s population there is still in practice no-where else to.

The cartography of tourism imaginationing

The map is a convenient and efficient representational instrument for displaying information spatially. It can both point out where one is and give directions to where one could travel. Hence, in the cartography of tourism imaginationing there is a co-ordination of real locations with actual destinations on the Earth's surface. In tourism imaginationing there is, like in a map, a combination of picture and story that brings forth a cartographic imagery in which locations appear as tourist destinations possible to be apprehended by a tourist imaginationing.



Image 3.3: *The cartography of tourist imaginationing.*²³

Yet, however important a role the visual plays in tourism imaginationings, it is crucial not to conflate a visual image with a picture: “And this is Iceland! – but I see no ice” (Miles 1852, in *Boucher* 1989, p. 17). As Wittgenstein once put it; “What is imagined is not in the same *space* as what is seen” (Wittgenstein, cited in *Olsson* 2007, p. 124). A picture is what we can see with our eyes, but images of whatever kind live their lives in the space of human imagination, for example as “simplifications of more complex ideas”, or as “the sum of beliefs, attitudes, and impressions that a person or group has of an object” (Nadeau, Heslop, O’Reilly and Luk 2008, p. 84). However image is theorized, it is important to remember that there is “no simple relationship between what is directly seen and what is signified” (Urry 1990/2002, p. 146), as we have shown in chapter 2.

Furthermore, as we have noted several times, the significance of images in tourism is in direct relation to the intangibility of the tourism

²³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/telegraph/multimedia/archive> (retrieved 2009-04-13)

experience. Practically almost impossible to try or test before purchase, the tourism product becomes highly dependent upon its de-materialized appearance in tourism cartographic imaginationing. Unlike Iceland itself, images of it as a tourist destination are spatially mobile and may be transported to a tourist generating region. Tourist representations simultaneously display and erase, reduce and select, just as the cartography of the tourist imaginationing they want to find a place in. For the tourists, here and now, then and there, a cartography that is as real as imagined. So therefore:

Iceland is not a myth, it is actual and real, a solid portion of the earth's surface. It is not, either, what every one supposes, nor what we have reason to believe it is, from its name, its location, and the meager descriptions we have of it. (Miles 1852, in *Boucher* 1989, p. 17).

More formally expressed, the territory of the map is not the territory of its referential other. The cultural product *Blue Lagoon* may appear in the “groomed” guise of nature, and it will work as an efficient tourist destination image because it is unique and therefore *not* representative of Iceland. As always, something more is needed than a mere silent spatial co-ordinate of a location in order to spark off and change the destiny of a tourist imaginationing, for example; “Energy for life through the forces of nature” (see image 3.4).

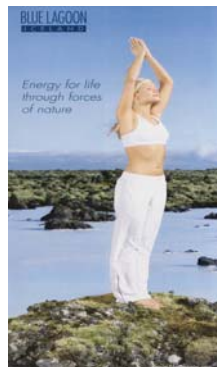


Image 3.4: *Blue Lagoon: forces of culture through nature?*²⁴

²⁴ Marketing of the *Blue Lagoon* in “Map of Iceland, 2008-2009”.

Images of Iceland as a tourist destination, as they appear through branding, in promotion or other material is, of course, not the same as images that particular tourists may have or construct. In a recent study Bjarnadóttir investigated destination image and Iceland as a tourist destination, through Danish tourists who have visited Iceland and tour guides working in Iceland. According to her, the study shows that:

[M]ost of the tourists expected to experience nature in Iceland, and most tourists were definitely not disappointed. According to the guides, nature, purity and diversity are strong motives for the destination image of Iceland. Surprisingly for many tourists, the Icelandic society is more modern than they thought. /.../ Before their visit, the Danish tourists' destination image of Iceland had to do with nature, hot springs, volcanoes, and, in some cases, cultural phenomena such as Icelandic sagas and history. The nature became the middle of the tourist experience, although different parts of nature appealed to different tourists. Aurora borealis, purity, The Golden Circle, black fields of lava, waterfalls and the constant change of scenario are some of the parts mentioned by the Danish tourists (Bjarnadóttir 2007, p. 103).

The powers of cartographic tourism and tourist representation should now be clear. The cartography gives the tourist product a tangible quality which it, in certain ways, lacks itself. By ontologically transforming the intangible tourist experience, bounded and fixed to certain locations, into a mobile form, comes an imaginative ability to attract and influence tourist behaviours, experiences, motivations and consumption elsewhere. Even “nothing” is possible to map:

A certain “nothing” was also mentioned to be part of the touristic experience and left a permanent mark on the tourists' post visit image of Iceland. This “nothing” refers to the Icelandic landscape, which is somewhat different from what the Danish tourists are used to. The naked wilderness and the scattered population contrast the manmade surroundings and heavily populated cities of the world. “Nothing” becomes something positive and desirable and boosts the tourists' experience of nature (Bjarnadóttir 2007, p. 103).

It therefore comes as no surprise that research on tourism destination images, or what is also referred to as “destination imagery”, has traditionally been assigned an important role and function in the travel purchase decision making. The map of tourist imagination again meets the territory of tourism so that:

the individual traveler's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with a travel purchase largely depends on a comparison of his [*sic*] expectation about a destination, or a previously held destination image, and his [*sic*] perceived performance of the destination (Chon 1990, p. 3).

A pre-image of a destination is then a map that will be further interpretatively processed through tourist experiences of the actual encounter with the territory of a tourist destination. Yet, lurking behind is a rather static spatial imagery which suggests a clear division between a cartographic pre-image *here* and tourist experiences of a destination *there*.

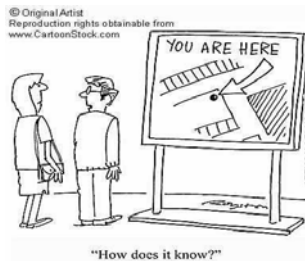


Image 3.5: *Here & there.*²⁵

As it turns out, it may well be that the tourist and the tourism researcher are very much alike when it comes to how they in practice produce knowledge through “cartographic reason” (Olsson 2007) and manage to trespass between *here* and *there*.

Tourism research

While research methodology can be considered to be universal for all science, various fields of research have also developed their own traditions and emphasis in relation to their respective concerns. Hence, tourism research is in general aligned with the methodology of social science and with tourism theory in particular. Here we will consider tourism research methodology in relation to a tourism theory in which mobility and geographical methodology is central.

²⁵ <http://www.cartoonstock.com/newscartoons/cartoonists/rro/lowres/rron2271.jpg> (retrieved 2009-04-15)

Whatever the specifics and forms of these processes of mobility, they reinforce the argument that boiled down to its essentials tourism is a geographic phenomenon. And so is the tourist. As an embodied geographical being every tourist is faced with the challenge of overcoming the friction of distance between different locations and places on the Earth. In that perspective, the tourism production system is nothing but the supplier and constructor of means to overcome that friction and channel flows of tourists in and through particular geographical ways.

To take a place or to give up a place, that is the whole question (Serres 1995, p. 74).

To take, or give up, a place usually involves and requires non-humans with their (im)mobilities and geographies. In tourism mobility this means that tourists simply do not travel to Iceland alone, or by the social force that comes from their human agencies only. Aeroplanes, ships, material accessibility networks, and systems of transportation make them movable too. And when tourists have returned home from travelling the non-humans are there once again, ready to stand in and help memory grasp passed experiences of what forever remains away. Yet, every tourist knows too that the pictures shown and the stories told cannot fully represent the experience of the places visited, nor re-wind the trip as a whole. The difference between being there and representing it here can never be completely erased: “That was such a nice and lovely place. If you don’t believe me, you better go there and see for yourself”.

Such, then, is the geographical condition of the tourist, but what about the tourism researcher? As it turns out, any researcher in any field of science is very much facing the same geographical problem as the tourist, that is, how to make a journey between here and there. More precisely, for the researcher this creates a research methodological problem of how to bridge the geographical gap between *here* and *there*.

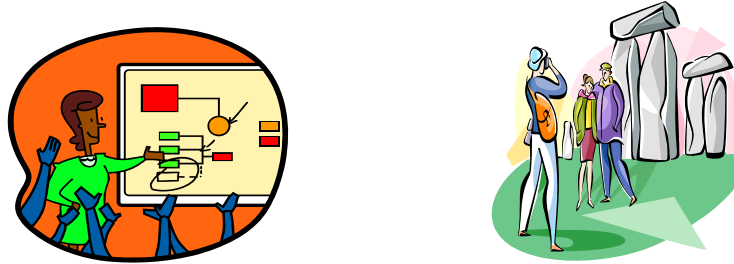


Image 3.6: *Tourism research and geographical methodology.*

The challenge for the tourism researcher is hence to produce knowledge *here* in such a way that it equals the true state of affairs *there*, and be believed when doing so. In minimalist rendering, the formula of knowledge may be condensed into “ $a=b$ ” (Olsson 2007), that is to say, *a there* equals *b here*. This immediately becomes an issue of trust, because anyone and everybody can immediately see and understand that “*a*” does not equal “*b*”. In other words, the statistics of tourist arrivals at Keflavík International Airport, or the findings of a conducted in-depth interview of nature tourists in a research report *here*, are never exactly the same as for tourists arriving or experiencing *there*.

The essence of tourism studies is to make knowledge (or truth) claims about tourism and tourists, that is, to make known something previously unknown about them. The tourism researcher thus shares with the tourist the exercise in finding out, discovering, and mapping something “over there”. Now, everyone can of course make knowledge claims, anybody can have opinions about what is true about tourism in Iceland, but in tourism studies one has to make knowledge (or truth) claims in such a way that also their underlying procedures become transparent. In other words, it is not enough to report tourism knowledge, one also has to be able to legitimise it and account for how it has been made through theory.

The geography of research methodology is then in essence about how to travel in a scientific way between the subject of knowledge *here* and the object of knowledge *there*. It is in this context and for those purposes that various research methods are used. They can all be conceived of as road maps that aim to ensure that the researcher is travelling in a scientific way. Research methods have in common that they provide tools for translating and transporting knowledge from *there* to *here*, and in such a way that also its geography can be re-traced by others in the scientific community. So it is that the researcher has to be prepared for the question:

Are you dressed in the road map of your travels (Serres 1997, p. xiv)?

The choice of what method to use is then dependent upon where one would like to travel and what one would like to bring home, that is, what kind of particular knowledge one wants, or needs, to construct. For example, quantitative methods are deemed appropriate when the task is to construct information (or data) with numerical values, for example estimations of the number of visitors to an attraction. Qualitative methods on the other hand, will not enable the researcher to come back with objective measurements because they are, in principle, focused on constructing qualitative dimensions like meanings, attitudes, and experiences of tourists. As the image below illustrates, both set of methods may relate to the same empirical phenomena, but what travels from the site of tourists to the researcher's computer is different.

During their stay 82% of the tourists went sightseeing.

Ella said that she usually does not use her camera very much because: "When using it, I feel like I separate myself from the place and my experiences".



Image 3.7: *Quantitative & qualitative.*

Qualitative and quantitative methods thus allow and enable the construction, translation, and transportation of, in principle, two different kinds of knowledge. Furthermore, they reflect and illustrate that research methods are not to be regarded or evaluated in isolation. They need instead to be seen and set in a larger research context. If, e.g. the research problem or question is such that numbers, or things that can be counted, are needed, then a qualitative method is not fitting. Qualitative dimensions, in principle, do not lend themselves to quantitative, mathematical or statistical analysis.

Not only are different methods appropriate for different purposes, lurking behind are also deeper-seated issues about what scientific knowledge is or ought to be. Re-search should, in accordance with its

etymology, be conducted under the “act of searching closely”. Yet, if one were to search too closely “over there” one would risk drowning in the object. Some argue that research oriented towards qualitative dimensions of the tourist experience is not scientific enough, because it constructs knowledge that is too close to subjective opinions and speculations that people may have. Research in tourism studies should then not foster such metaphysical speculations, but instead provide objective descriptions and explanations of matters that could be objectively verified or falsified.

To divide methods according to the old and well-worn distinction between quantitative and qualitative, reflected in the opposition amid interpretative and positivist traditions, is still quite common in tourism studies. It is however important to acknowledge that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods has since long been questioned, or deemed too simple and reductionist in social science. This relates directly to considerations about what translations should be allowed to be transported between *there* and *here*. Is it only what can be seen, or is it also knowledge produced by the other senses as well? With this question we are back to tourism theory and its relation to tourism research. One implication for tourism research methodology is that the theorizing of the tourist has changed from visual gazers to embodied creatures which make tourist experiences with all the senses. This tourism research methodology then needs to be considered.

Another similarity between the tourist and the researcher is that both are dependent upon non-humans in helping them to fill in and overcome the friction of distance between *here* and *there*. The postcards, pictures, souvenirs, travel maps and video cameras of the tourist is paralleled by excel sheets, software for statistical computations, pie charts and delegations to non-humans such as book, journals and computers to keep memory of various information. This is another reminder that the existence of some *sui generis* pure social world is at best a sometimes useful and necessary simplification, and at worst a misleading myth. Neither tourist attractions nor tourism research reports are social constructions of a tourist/researcher gaze only.

Summing up

It has often been lamented that “there is a limited theoretical development in tourism studies” (Holden 2005, p. 5). Although it can be debated whether or not that is the case, we have identified “tourism as a geographical phenomenon” as something that tourism theory and tourism research may well need to consider further.

Boiled down to its geographical essentials tourism entails topologically complex geographies that takes us far beyond, say, a descriptive geography of tourism accompanied by tedious mapping exercises of tourist destinations and travel routes. Geography itself, if there were to be such a thing, ensures that there is no safe haven for tourism theory where it could be contemplated at face value. Tourism theory is always in symbiosis with its earthly conditions of production in specific places, *here*, *there*, and most importantly *in-between*. These geographical conditions, as we have tried to illustrate, hold for the tourist and the tourism researcher alike.

Of crucial importance for the present and future development of tourism theory and research is the observation that “[t]ourism studies is coming of age at a time when dramatic change is afoot in the broader domain of social research philosophy” (Belhassen and Caton 2009, p. 335). It seems, however, that tourism studies are still not afoot with this “dramatic change” that Belhassen and Caton refer to. When scanning the tourism literature one gets the impression that much is still written and done in the frame of old distinctions that all since long have been problematized in social research philosophy: interpretative–explanatory, positivism–hermeneutics, qualitative–quantitative, subjective–objective, theoretical–empirical.

In a similar way as the tourist is stitching together and ordering his or her behaviours, perceptions and cognitions, the tourism researcher is also involved in travels from there to here in the construction of scientific knowledge. Traditional research methodologies were developed when knowledge travelled much more slowly. Today knowledge is more readily accessible, circulates more widely and can be quickly transported. What once was produced and belonged to only learned scholars can be disputed or corrected on the spot by an audience of Googling students. The Internet, with its too numerous to mention websites, is now also the place many tourism researchers and potential tourists will visit during their process of deciding on a destination or a research topic. They are then, with or without Google as a gateway, engaging with the contemporary vast pool of easily accessible tourist imaginationings. To decide and select from this

domain of knowledge is not always altogether easy, for customer and researcher alike.

As is well known, and often lamented too, tourism studies and tourism research is haunted by the divide between applied and academic research, between expectations and demands from the industry and independent scientific development of knowledge free from external and partial interests. Perhaps this divide is more evident in tourism studies than many other social science disciplines. Yet, a common core assumption in social research philosophy is that any and every knowledge of the social produced by social science is itself already fundamentally and inevitably a part of the social world.

This means, in principle, that the social scientist has no access to a separate place from where the social world can be observed without involvement. The issue at stake is then not whether the tourism researcher is objective or subjective, in the hands of the “business” or in the head of the academics, but instead about in what ways and from what perspective the researcher is participating. In as much as the focus is on tourism itself, then it also becomes actualized. One could then argue that it is not unusual that tourism research is done under the spell of *de nobis ipsis silemus* (“on ourselves we are silent”) (Farinelli 2009).

According to Shaw and Williams, “[o]ne of the greatest challenges for researchers is to understand how it [tourism] shapes and is shaped by wider societal processes” (Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 3). Yet, as easy as it is to agree that understanding of tourism could benefit from aligning it with “societal processes”, one could still put question marks around the social in tourism theory. What we particularly have in mind is the recent interest in exploring various materialities in the social sciences, which includes a recognition of the role of non-humans and their material agencies in the constitution of what traditionally has been conceived of as social. This “material turn” problematizes attempts in tourism studies to understand and explain tourism and tourists primarily as social phenomena. Given that human tourism mobility is co-produced with material, objects, goods, artefacts, and other non-humans, tourism is only partly social. Indeed, as Franklin puts it:

Tourism abounds with things, tourist things, and tourists are tied up in a world of tourist things for a considerable period of their time. And, yet, if you read all the past and current text books on tourism, and make a list of all the really important explanations of tourism, the key concepts and theoretical developments, you will discover that these things are not held to be very significant (Franklin 2003, p. 97).

A challenge for tourism theory and tourism research, theoretical as well as empirical, is that they must incorporate “objects” as parts of the social world of tourist doings on the ground. To this one could add an expanding body of research which has opened up a space for the performative and embodied character of tourism. No longer is the tourist experience conceived of as a gaze in a visual tourism bubble, but involves crucially all the other senses as well, even the affective register as a domain of pre-cognitive perturbations.

Finally, however important and necessary it may be to revise and develop theorizations of tourism and tourists, such an endeavour will need to be related to, and also affected by, the state of affairs in the phenomena we study. Various contemporary and future processes on the ground, for example, globalisation and technological developments, may lead to changes in tourist and tourism practises which tourism theory needs to respond to and account for.

In the next chapter we will therefore place tourism as a phenomenon in the world and on the Earth. As a social science, tourism studies need to move with the social world it aims to study. Considered in a geographical perspective, tourism studies need to address its earthly situatedness.

4. Tourism in the world & on the Earth

To remain stationary in these times of change, when all the world is on the move, would be a crime.

- *Thomas Cook*²⁶

The current structural development of society is marked by the appearance everywhere of touristic space.

- *Dean MacCannell*²⁷

The world – and tourism as a part of global socio-economic system – is facing fundamental challenges.

- *Bramwell and Lane*²⁸

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate some contemporary social, cultural and geographical issues in which tourism is presently embedded.

The predominant emphasis in tourism studies, as we have shown, has often very much been to investigate tourism from its place in social science and theorize it as a social phenomenon. From this follows not only that tourism is presumed to be a field on its own within and of the social, but also that it is embedded in, and co-existent with, various other social processes and relations that are assumed to constitute the social world. It follows from this relational feature, of tourism *vis-à-vis* a broader social world, that it becomes highly important for research in tourism studies to also follow and keep track of what goes on in that world. As stated by Shaw and Williams:

One of the roles of tourism researchers should be to provide a greater understanding of the underlying processes that shape the emerging tourism landscape (Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 1).

As we noted in the previous chapters there are different ways of understanding and explaining the social world in social science. The theorizations of the social offered by social science and social theory is not

²⁶ Cook 1854, quoted in *Brendon* 1991, p. 65.

²⁷ MacCannell 1976/1999, p. 100.

²⁸ Bramwell and Lane 2008, p. 1.

carved in stone, they are not given once and for all. Instead they are works in progress very much like the social world itself. Social theories are based on different assumptions and offer a variety of views on what the social itself is. This means that understandings and explanations of the social may also vary.

Consequently, the relative importance that we ascribe to tourism happenings in the social world is dependent upon what kind of social theorizing we implicitly or explicitly use. For example, it is possible to conceive of tourism as an *effect* of other courses of events, relations and processes in the social world, but equally as a phenomenon that actively contributes to these. If we choose to conceive of, e.g. globalisation as a process that produces tourism and *causes* it to develop in certain ways and in particular directions, then we are close to reducing tourism to a mere outcome of other social forces. Yet, one could also think the opposite way and consider tourism as one of the most significant producers of globalisation.

In our approach it is also important to consider to what extent the Earth appears in social theorizing. Is globalisation only about politics, the rise and fall of monetary values and social divisions of labour? As the concept itself indicates, globalisation points not only to human intentions and actions in society but to phenomena that literally take place on the globe as the planet we inhabit. In other words, globalisation takes us to the Earth as common denominator for human life.

In recent times this has been most importantly brought to the fore by a rising politics of global climate change where the international community is trying to take various concerted actions against climate change around a commonly agreed framework led by the United Nations (Giddens 2009, IPCC 2007). It is beyond doubt that tourism indeed will be affected by climate change and that it will increasingly have to address its various issues and challenges, as evidenced by the Davos Declaration (2007) and initiatives taken and policies promoted by the UN World Tourism Organisation and others (Simpson *et al* 2008). This strongly implies that various relationships between tourism and the material natural environment on the Earth will need to be further incorporated into the heart of tourism/tourist theory and research.

We will begin this chapter by addressing the tourist and a principal and challenging question for tourism studies: Is tourism a separate domain in contemporary society?

The end of tourism - we are all tourists now

As stated before, there was a time, before contemporary society with its modern systems of transportation and mass tourism, when people in general did not travel very much, and certainly not over very long geographical distances. To go elsewhere and experience whatever could be found there was, for the majority of people, not a real option. For them, those other potential places were in practise clearly separated and differentiated from their own everyday lives and home environments. In other words, there was then a much sharper geographical demarcation between other places *there* and the everyday life places *here*.

This pre-modern world and its geography were all to change through processes of modernity and, notably, the emergence of nation states. Through various developments, in which technology played a fundamental role by paving the way for new forms of mobility, the nation became gradually geographically accessible for its modern citizens. Books and newspaper became accessible for a wider portion of the populations and distributed various imaginationings of the near and far. Bicycles, trains, busses and cars opened up new geographical possibilities for reaching and encountering other lives and places beyond the home, and so eventually domestic tourism developed. For international mass tourism aeroplanes later came to play a similar role in making other places accessible, so that;

in the 1970s it became possible for the swelling ranks of affluent Americans and Europeans to travel outside their nation states and geographical regions (Franklin 2003, p. 265).

The development of the modern world and its modern tourism is a pace with globalisation. In this context it refers to how everyday life in many societies has increasingly become folded and braided internally and externally with various tourist/tourism spaces. Keeping in mind that we here (as elsewhere in this report) do write within the limited frame of a Western tourism discourse (in relation to the world population, tourism is still for those affluent), we can say that what was once accessible only “over there” can now be readily experienced, even inversely in one’s own neighbourhood. The food once signified as “exotic” and possible to try only when visiting a distant country can now be bought in the local shop. As Franklin notes:

some of the things that signalled the authentic lives of others are freely available in every city in the world because cities and their incredible ethnic diversity have become the places where the world outside now flows (Franklin 2003, p. 266).

For many people, in many places, there is therefore nowadays nothing particularly unusual about bumping into tourists on the way to work. One does certainly not need to leave Reykjavík in order to have an Italian espresso or to taste the *tapas* of Spanish cuisine. Remaining stationary in one's home environment will sometimes suffice. Turning the TV on gives an immediate access to life in other places, and on the Internet one can easily gather instant information according to refined individual preferences. The home "has become a communication hub infused with mobile messages" (Larsen 2008, p. 24). The "real-and-imagined" geography of tourism has changed so that people are no longer in the same ways locked into the singular affairs of their own home environments. Tourism is no longer to be found only *there*, but also *here* in one's own place as we have hinted at before:

Indeed, there are now very few places that are not touristic in some sense or another, and those that have escaped touristification themselves are likely to be profoundly influenced by nearby places that have been (Franklin 2003, p. 271).

If tourism was formed and developed in opposition to everyday life, where it existed as something special and exclusive occurring only in particular extraordinary tourist spaces elsewhere, then it has now transformed into something that is very much part of mundane everyday life *everywhere*. It is in this sense that tourism can now be reached and experienced also without travelling, although it remains a fact that travel is still essential in and for tourism as a route to the tourist embodied experience uniquely provided by being *there*. Yet, to travel is no longer the only means of getting access to an elsewhere, and certainly not when it comes to tourist related information.

As a social phenomenon tourism has become increasingly braided with a general time-space stretching of social relations, so it has "become common to have strong ties at-a-distance and sustain them through phone calls, text messages, emails and occasional visits" (Larsen 2008, p. 24). It is no coincidence that a large portion of tourism today is intrinsically related to precisely visiting friends and family, nor is it accidental that

these social relations are often mediated by technologies like mobile phones, aeroplanes and computers.

One clearly identifiable line of contemporary reasoning about tourism thus suggests that “[t]here is much less ‘tourism’ *per se* that occurs within specific and distinct kinds of time-space” (Urry 1990/2002, p. 161). This again means that the line between the everyday and the touristic, the mundane and the exotic, has become increasingly socially and geographically blurred. Regarding tourism theory this puts a serious question mark around traditional definitions of tourism as travel between an exotic extraordinary other and mundane home geographies and everydayness of social life. This spatial and theoretical binary, by which the tourist experience has been separated from everyday life, has been challenged since the 1990s (Uriley 2005) and is now increasingly considered obsolete. In the words of Franklin:

the everyday world is increasingly *indistinguishable* from the touristic world. Most places are now on some tourist trail or another, or at least, not far from one (Franklin 2003, p. 5).

According to the likes of Franklin we are, however, not only living in societies where touristic spaces are folded and blurred with the everyday. Instead of being an exclusive reservoir of escape from the daily grey routines of work, tourism has become a social and cultural characteristic of life in consumer society producing the by now well known euphemism “we are all tourists now”. It does not matter whether we go shopping in our own home environment or go vacationing since the social world itself, regardless of where it takes place, has become “touristified”. In other words, the term “tourist” is cut loose from its sole reference to people spending vacation time on the beach, or hiking in the mountains while on holiday elsewhere. To be a “tourist” thus becomes:

a metaphor for the way we lead our everyday lives in a consumer society. So rather than being an exceptional or occasional state of being in modern societies, or even as some have said, an escape from it, the manner of the tourist has come to determine a generalised *stance* to the world around us (Franklin 2003, p. 5).

There are many roots to this way of conceiving, understanding and explaining contemporary relations between tourism and the social world, but one of the most important in tourism theory leads us directly back to MacCannell. Indeed, the central organizing metaphor of his classic *The*

Tourist was in fact that “we are all tourists” (MacCannell 1976/1999, p. 191). In spite of the title of the book, and its influence in tourism studies, it was in actuality not quite about tourists *per se*, but rather about life in modern society under conditions of modernity. Later, others continued very much in the same path, for example Urry when claiming that the “tourist gaze” is:

increasingly bound up with, and is partly indistinguishable from, all sorts of other social and cultural practices. This has the effect, as “tourism” *per se* declines in specificity, of universalising the tourist gaze – people are much of the time “tourists” whether they like it or not (Urry 1990/2002, p.74).

As the heading of this section points out, the themes of “we are all tourists now” and “the end of tourism”, are very much different sides of the same coin. The more we push the tourist into the midst of the social world, the more she or he seems to become indistinguishable. Yet, on the verge of disappearing underneath the layers of “other social and cultural practices”, the tourist Phoenix arises anew from the ashes. The tourist then returns in mutated form as a grand metaphor, if not an icon, of consumer life in a contemporary society that itself has become like a postmodern palimpsest of “touristified socio-cultural space”.



Image 4.1: *We are all tourists now.*²⁹

One of the most distinguishing features of contemporary tourism is then that it is intrinsically embedded in a surrounding social milieu, even to the extent that it becomes indistinguishable from it. In this reading today’s tourism stands out as “everything and nothing at the same time“. For us this forms a fundamental “paradox of tourism” and, like other paradoxes, it cannot really be solved. Instead, tourism research and theory

²⁹ www.pacificworlds.com/.../images/tourists.jpg (retrieved 2009-10-25)

will have to continuously live and systematically engage with it in practice.

Intimately related to the thesis that society and the social world have become touristified to the extent that “tourism is everywhere” is globalisation. Their intertwined nature is hard to disentangle as it has been suggested that also there “[i]n a globalised world, our stance as consumers are predicated on the tourist” (Franklin 2003, p. 5). So how can we further conceive of globalisation in relation to tourism?

Tourism beyond global & local

During the last decades of the twentieth century, there has been a growing recognition in social science, as well as amongst politicians, grass-root activists, entrepreneurs and the public, however constituted, that a new global world has emerged. Resounding themes such as the world has “gone global”, or that the local is somehow plugged into the global, have become common in various discourses, including many of those in tourism studies.

It is now more or less taken-for-granted that also tourism is a global phenomenon and that tourism firms and destinations have to compete on a global tourism market where their products become subjected to all-embracing anonymous “global forces” beyond local control. With an acceptance of the inevitability of globalisation has come the countervailing realisation of the importance of localisation, that the commodity value of tourism is place specific and should be considered at the destination rather than the national level.

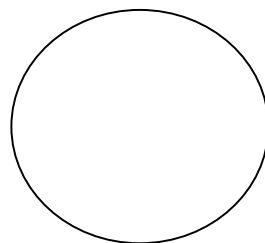


Image 4.2: *Globalisation.*

Globalisation has during a relatively short period of time thus become an overarching concept in social science for denoting a variety of processes that have, and still are, reshaping social structures, economies, cultures and technologies on a global level. It is not uncommon that

globalisation gets attributed exceptional powers to determine a massive range of various outcomes as well as strategies of resistance. Yet, globalisation is also recognized in less homogenous and deterministic ways as “disordered, full of paradox and the unexpected” (Urry 2003, p. x).

Although it is common to conceive of globalisation as intimately related to processes of international economic integration and deregulation of various barriers to free trade, there is more to it than economics and politics. As witnessed by tourism, without developments of transportation networks and information and communication technologies globalisation would certainly not have been what it is today. One of the most crucial and significant factors and common characteristic of the multiple aspects of globalisation is therefore that various technologies, increasingly computer mediated, have enabled humans and whatever materials to overcome the “friction of distance”, meaning that longer distances can be covered and more places reached in a shorter period of time. Although planet Earth is still of the same old size, this annihilation of space by time-reducing technologies has in effect shrunken the world as image 4.2 depicts.

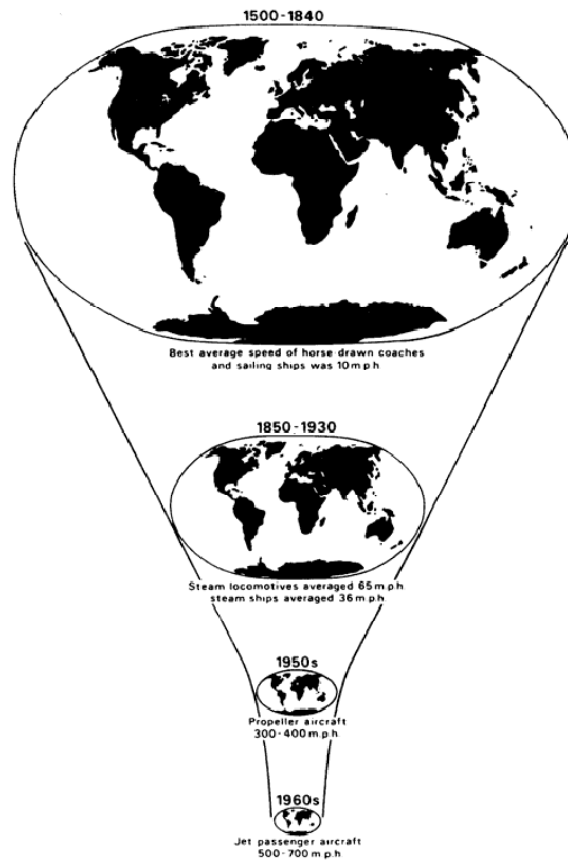


Image 4.2: *The shrinking map of the world.*³⁰

The shrinking map of the world may equally be read as an illustration of the globalisation of tourism through rounds of “time-space compression”. Places that once took weeks or days to travel to, by horse or sailing ships, can now be reached by car or aeroplanes within hours. Of importance to note in the depiction is that there is a real material geography also behind the scale of the global. From that follows that a tourist destination does in a sense not operate on a global market where it meets its competitors on an equal footing but on its own geographic position in a wider transportation network. For example, if a tourist destination does not have an airport, then it is simply not very accessible by aviation. Likewise, potential tourism generating regions with their customers are always geographically situated. If Iceland as a tourist receiving region wants to compete for tourists from China, it will have to

³⁰ Harvey 1989, p. 241, plate 3.1.

do so on the basis of its own specific relative geographical location and the specific accessibility this allows for.

Globalisation, as the word itself suggests, points to the whole globe. Behind notions of a free-floating, de-materialised global tourism market, where prices are set between supply and demand, there is always a material tourism geography of specific nodes and routes that connects and disconnects places as tourist destinations on the Earth. Although *New York* may be marketed as a “global city” this does not mean that it exists or reaches everywhere. *New York*, like all other places on the Earth, is strictly local too. Yet, due to its relative position in a wider network of transportation, communication, economics and politics, it can indeed have a strong influence on other places.

There are then reasons, not least geographical, to be cautious and not take the level of the global for granted. It may well be adequate to use the concept globalisation as denoting horizontal processes and highlighting an increasing interconnectedness of the world, but what one finds behind are networked local places and events. These do not float around as locals in a global container space, but exist through their relative positional connectivity. As Thrift points out, global space:

is no longer seen as a nested hierarchy moving from ‘global’ to ‘local’. This absurd scale-dependent notion is replaced by the notion that what counts is connectivity (Thrift 2004, p. 59).

Contrary to those popular notions and expressions claiming that “the local and the global are related” to each other, or that “they influence each other” in various ways, the local and the global are then not to be conceptualised as two separate entities. In the same vein, this equally applies to the relationship between tourism and the global. As Urry writes when arguing for a hybrid conceptualisation of tourism and the global:

There are not two separate entities, the ‘global’ and ‘tourism’ bearing some external connections with each other. Rather they are part and parcel of the same set of complex and interconnected processes. Moreover, such assembled infrastructures, flows of images and of people, and the emerging practices of ‘tourist reflexivity’ should be conceptualised as a ‘global hybrid’. It is hybrid because it is made up of an assemblage of technologies, texts, images, social practices and so on, that *together* enable it to expand and to reproduce itself across the globe (Urry 1990/2002 p. 144).

In Urry's account it is clear that a large and highly significant part of globalisation also consists of very concrete assemblages of "objects" like information and communication technologies, aeroplanes, fossil fuel, food, natural resources, and in general the geographical mobilities of corporeal humans and material commodities. Like tourism, then, globalisation thus readily transcends divisions between "society and nature" and questions the concepts of society and nature as traditional cornerstones of social theorising. However important and unavoidable these concepts may be, globalisation in the material understanding favoured here, suggests that we before and after society and nature all inhabit the one and the same old globe, that is, the Earth.

Globalization indicates an intention to consider earth in its real form, that is to say as a globe /.../ But if the earth is a globe, where anthropologists nowadays wonder, is twilight? Provided we can find a place for the twilight, this cannot be the same for all (Farinelli 2009, no pagination).

No matter how similar and all-embracing the forces of globalisation may be, on the Earth, globalisation "cannot be the same for all". Different peoples and places will inevitably be affected in particular ways dependent upon the respective specific qualities and relative locations of themselves and their places.

In as much as globalisation refers to actual processes and relations on the ground, for example an increase in international financial integration, divisions of labour and production, it can also be conceived of as an ideology articulated by various actors and reflective of their respective interests. There are those that (re)present globalisation as both inevitable and natural, for example by claiming that "labour markets should be made more flexible and capital should be able to invest or disinvest in industries or countries at will" (Urry 2003, p. 5). Then there are those that distinguish globalisation as an ideology of unifying forces that threaten the independence and identity of local cultures and places as well as countries. Strategies to counter what is considered to be homogenising forces of globalisation include not only adaptive responses, like the marketing of tourist places as distinct and unique, but also political and religious regionalisms and nationalisms that sometimes even evoke and signify tourism as negative or a threatening "other".

Arguing for or against the idea of globalisation its proponents especially rely on a broader context of capitalism in general and neo-liberalism in particular.

Capitalism, neo-liberalism & tour-ism

In social theory capitalism refers to a particular socio-economic growth and wealth generating system which is organised and reproduced in specific ways. A fundamental feature of capitalism is that the means of production, such as factories, tools, natural resources and raw materials, are privately or corporately controlled and owned. This means that the majority of people in such a system will be divorced from ownership of the means of production and instead become workers selling their physical or immaterial labour powers on a labour-market. Those who own the means of production, the capitalists, will generate profits by creating, manufacturing and selling products on the market at a higher price than what they have to pay for labour and for maintaining their means of production.

As we have noted, it is clear that globalisation has very much to do with developments in the economic realm of society, and in recent times especially so in the international financial market. This illustrates that capital has become mobile to an extent never encountered before and now works in real time, moving rapidly through global financial networks. As Castells describes it:

The same capital is shuttled back and forth between economies in a matter of hours, minutes, and sometimes seconds. Favoured by deregulation /.../ and the opening of domestic markets, powerful computer programs and skilful financial analysts/computer wizards sitting at the global nodes of a selective telecommunications network play games, literally with billions of dollars /.../ These global gamblers are not obscure speculators, but major investment banks, pension funds, multinational corporations /.../ and mutual funds organized precisely for the sake of financial manipulation (Castells 1996, pp. 434-435).

This kind of capitalism, “that is structuring a new planetary geography” (Ong 2007, p. 3) with an extensive international financial mobility for capital surplus, has not existed for very long. For several decades after World War II the Keynesian model of capitalist economics ruled. That model was based on a social contract between domestic capital

and labour, and on fine tuning the business cycles of national economies by centralizing measures, raising or lowering interest rates, cutting or increasing taxes. In the 1970s, however, this model was increasingly believed to have reached its conceptual and practical limitations. While concentrating on the domestic economy, the Keynesian economists neglected the overwhelming power of transnational corporations increasingly operating on a transnational or global market. Gradually, another model then took the lead in the reorientation of the economy, as well as other areas of society like the state. As described by Gunder and Hillier:

During the latter part of the 20th century there has been a decline of the perceived ability of the welfare state to deliver public goods, or to do so in a sufficiently efficient way in relation to the market. Hence neo-liberal values and politics have established itself as almost a commonsense of the times which has 'eventually resulted in the domination of market-lead values of competitive globalisation' (Gunder and Hillier 2009, p. 135).

Neo-liberal values and politics have had an enormous impact over the last 30 years and seem to have been implemented in almost every country on the globe, albeit in a variety of ways and forms. The neo-liberalisation of the economy and society is profoundly different from that formed during the Industrial revolution, or that which emerged after World War II. The neo-liberal epoch can be said to have started with the end of the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates and has been followed by rounds of liberalisation and de-regulation of financial markets and a re-orientation of societies towards economic efficiency and international competitiveness (Harvey 2005).

Under the auspices of capitalism in general and neo-liberalism in particular, the role of the state has become increasingly re-oriented towards providing the conditions for the private sector to find ever new sources of profitable activity. This has involved waves of de-regulation and privatisation of previously public goods and services. The ideology and politics of neo-liberalism assert the power and importance of private entrepreneurship, private property rights, the freeing of markets, trade and the de-regulation and the privatization of previously public services and assets.

However, in 2008 a kind of melt-down (or what is known by Icelanders as "Kreppa") occurred in the global financial system and

pushed many economies towards crisis. A deregulated banking sector had acted too much outside the boundaries of safe and trustworthy operations, resulting in a collapse of confidence in economic institutions not seen since the 1930s. Economic breakdowns and crises in many countries generated dramatic social and economic problems, adding in some cases to existing poverty, hunger and inequality. A brute reminder of the fact that behind the notion of free-markets there is also an uneven geography on a global level:

One of the tenets of neo-liberalism is that poor countries should concentrate on producing a few special goods for export in order to obtain foreign exchange, and should import most other commodities (Capra 2002, p. 128).



Image 4.3: *Free trade.*³¹

In the aftermath of the real estate, banking and financial crisis in 2008, which very much started in the United States, the ideology of neo-liberalism has been hotly debated and questioned, as those living in a country like Iceland know all too well. Some commentators drew the conclusion that the confidence in “self-regulating markets” had evaporated and that new regulations by the state were necessary and inevitable:

In the wake of the crisis in financial markets of 2008, the state has made something of a comeback. The period of freewheeling deregulation is over (Giddens 2009, p. 15).

Yet, although all states have been drawn into the orbit of providing means of financial restructuring, there is still little evidence that the slogan “Neoliberalism – so long, we hardly knew ya” (Keil 2009, p. 231) is true. Maybe some of the doors into “freewheeling” have been closed, but it

³¹ http://urbanhabitat.org/files/images/14-1_Page_08_Image_0001_color.jpg (retrieved 2009-09-13)

seems unlikely that neo-liberalism has come to an end, not least because the dominant institutional framework is still very much neo-liberal.

It is also on this social landscape that the success story of tourism becoming one of the biggest industries ever, must be placed. It is rare to find a national or regional tourism plan, a book or article about tourism that does not include references to the substantial growth of tourism and that presents it as one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the past century. The size and number of tourists and tourist destinations has continued to grow exponentially. This further suggests that for the time being tourism is likely to continue to have both capitalism and neo-liberalism as two of its nearest neighbours. For those countries that are dependent on tourism as a source to obtain foreign currency, the road is paved for investing high hopes in tourism as a money-making rescuer (see e.g. Jóhannesson & Huijbens, forthcoming).

Conceived of as an ideology, a “tour-ism”, it fits often rather well with capitalism and neo-liberalism in that both feed upon and privilege mobility and consumption. In the past these ideological affinities have meant an orientation of tourism research towards topics like product innovation and development, public and private partnerships, how to commodify and maximise the potential of regional assets such as landscape and environment, local culture and identity, service diversification, marketing, growth and productivity in order to help tourism destinations and operators enhance their businesses, competitiveness and being able to better face capitalist competition.

What the future has in store is not easy to tell. It seems however quite unlikely that trans- and multinational corporations and those with an economic or political interest in promoting capitalism across the globe will be the first to acknowledge that selling places through “tour-ism” may also involve:

actual social risks. The transformation of a place into a commodity requires symbolic erasure of the untidy, the uneventful and the plain – and directly precedes other more violent types of cultural and historical revisions (Hunter 2008, p. 364, see also Huijbens forthcoming).

Whatever new ideologies of tourism and political and economic policies that will emerge, and whatever forms they will take, they will be central not only to tourism but also to the social questions of our times. Our next stop is at the destination where one of the greatest challenges for tourism is located. What are the implications for tourism on the Earth in terms of sustainable development in general and climate change in particular?

Sustainable development, climate change & tourism

Since the 1970s sustainability has evolved as a significant mode of thought in nearly every field of intellectual activity. In 1992 the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro brought the ideas of sustainability and development to the forefront of global politics, which has been followed since by a series of international summits and the production of policy documents in various fields. There are now many definitions and understandings of sustainable development, but through its frequency of citation and widespread use the Brundtland Commission's definition has become a standard:

[T]he ability to make development sustainable – to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED 1987, p. 8).

In the aftermath of the “Brundtland report” the “three pillars of sustainability” or the “triple bottom line” have become commonly evoked and distinguished, also in tourism. Accordingly, sustainability and sustainable development is divided into the three areas of social, economic and environmental. Ever since the “Brundtland report” was published, in 1987, “sustainability has been the central theme in discussions on tourism and policies for its management” (Saarinen 2006, p. 1123). The buzzwords of “sustainable tourism” are well known as well as worn, and:

the translation of its concepts and principles into actions is slowly progressing. The literature assigns responsibility for implementation to tourism's major stakeholders: consumers, businesses and governments. Tourists must become aware of the impact of their tourism pursuits and adjust their activities accordingly; businesses must recognize the effects of their production processes and modify them appropriately; regulatory agencies must monitor the effects of their tourism policies on destination environments and revise them as necessary (Williams and Ponsford 2009, pp. 396-397).

Although sustainable development is still a central concept in many different discourses, during the last decade or so "climate change" has increasingly been brought to the fore in science and public discourse and is now often added to the three previous areas of sustainability. We therefore now have to consider and address a "quadruple bottom line" in any discourse or practice that is supposed to deal with sustainable development. The fourth line of climate change is based on the observation that there is now:

a high level of agreement among scientists that climate change is real and dangerous, and that it is caused by human activity (Giddens 2009, p. 3).

Climate change is not the same as the concept it has to a large extent replaced, that is, global warming, but the warming of the planet is the most pressing aspect. Serious worries about changes in the Earth's climate have been raised before, but without the documented impact. The scientific evidence of climate change is now less uncertain in comparison with the time when the first report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the UN (IPCC) appeared in the 1990.



Image 4.4: *Climate change.*³²

³² <http://www.reallynatural.com/pictures/climate-change.jpg> (retrieved 2009-09-13)

The IPCC Reports are based on reaching scientific and political consensus. The panel is the most authoritative body monitoring climate change and has had an enormous impact on public understanding and political concern. It is now claimed by the IPCC that climate change is “unequivocal” and that the warming of the Earth’s climate is related to the effects of “non-natural” causes. Although there are still sceptics around, the IPCC states that there is “*very high confidence* that the net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming” (IPCC 2007, p. 5). In essence climate change in terms of warming then:

refers to the fact that greenhouse gas emissions produced by modern industry are causing the Earth’s climate to warm, with potentially devastating consequences for the future (Giddens 2009, p. 1).

One of the real worries among many scientists is that the warming of the climate may reach a “tipping point” (Gladwell 2000), leading the climate system to violently and rapidly convert to a new equilibrium, with potentially catastrophic consequences for life on Earth as we have come to know it. For example, in a recent book by Lovelock we are confronted with the frightening scenario of the human population declining *en masse*, “leaving an impoverished few survivors in a torrid society ruled by warlords on a hostile and disabled planet” (Lovelock 2006, p. 151). The dystopic vision delivered by Lovelock may be extreme, but is unfortunately not so easy to dismiss. According to what represents a more mainstream opinion, the consensus of IPCC claims that:

Anthropogenic warming could lead to some impacts that are abrupt or irreversible, depending upon the rate and magnitude of the climate change (IPCC 2007, p. 13).

The political system has reacted to the scale and urgency of the problem and many countries are now in the process of attempting to introduce ambitious climate change policies. International summits and negotiations aimed at limiting global warming have and will take place (for example those organised by the United Nations in Rio in 1992, Kyoto in 1997, Bali in 2007 and the summit in Copenhagen 2009). Around the world there are many organisations, and even a few governments, making it clear that:

there is now a window of opportunity of maybe a couple of decades during which to intervene on a major scale to slow down global heating /.../ After that window of opportunity, the various “human activities” that are generating increased carbon emissions will make further warming of the planet inevitable and probably catastrophic (Dennis and Urry 2009, p. 8).

As true as it is that tourism “is largely dependent upon climatic and natural resources” (Gössling and Hall 2006, p. 163) it is also a fact that “one of the principal accusations in recent years has been that tourism has become an environmental hazard” (Franklin 2003, p. 47). An outcome of the second “International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism”, held in Davos in 2007, was a document called the Davos Declaration where it was agreed that “there is an urgent need to adopt a range of policies which encourages truly sustainable tourism” and that “the tourism sector must rapidly respond to climate change” and “progressively reduce its Greenhouse Gas (GHG) contribution if it is to grow in a sustainable manner.” The Davos Declaration (p. 2) further stated that this will require action to “**mitigate** its GHG emissions, derived especially from transport and accommodation activities; **adapt** tourism businesses and destinations to changing climate conditions; apply existing and new **technology** to improve energy efficiency; secure financial resources to help poor regions and countries”.

The conference also listed actions for Governments and organizations, such as research institutes and higher education institutions:

- Promote at all levels, interdisciplinary partnerships, networks and information exchange systems essential to sustainable development of the sector.
- Collaborate in international strategies, policies and action plans to reduce GHG emissions in the transport, accommodation and related tourism activities.
- Introduce education and awareness programs for all tourism stakeholders – public and private sector – as well as consumers.
- Develop regional and local climate information services tailored to the tourism sector and promote their use among tourism stakeholders.
- Implement policy, regulatory, financial, managerial, educational, behavioural, diversification, research and monitoring measures, for effective adaption and mitigation.

As evidenced by the Davos Declaration, sustainability and sustainable development have emerged as dominant concepts of tourism, also in various more concrete attempts to locally guide, steer, and change tourism in practice into a more environmentally friendly business. But, as Saarinen argues, it is “important to realize that sustainability is not a one-way street in the global-local nexus” (Saarinen 2006, p. 1134). The issue of climate change in tourism is not only related to behaviours and actions at a particular destination. As pointed out by Bramwell and Lane “sustainable tourism is now seen as more than just a destination issue; it is a total trip problem of global relevance to climate change (Bramwell and Lane 2008, p. 1). It has been demonstrated by several studies that:

tourists consume greater amounts of energy, water and materials in tourism destinations than they do at home. This consumption behaviour significantly limits opportunities for greater sustainability. At the very least then, less consumptive tourist behaviours are required if the sustainable tourism challenge is to be met (Williams and Ponsford 2009, p. 398).

Nearly 25 years since the Brundlandt report, “sustainable tourism development outcomes remain problematic and continue to evoke emotive debate” (McDonald 2009, p. 455). One fundamental reason is that tourism in itself represents a mobility that is deeply problematic in the context of climate change. As Hall observes:

All demand and supply facets of tourism are effected by climate change, but just as importantly tourism has direct and indirect effects on climate change itself over all stages of mobility. Conceptualising tourism in terms of wider aspects of human mobility therefore has considerable importance with respect to assessing the complete impacts of tourism on climate change (Hall 2005, p. 341).

For tourism it is especially problematic that its mobility has so far been fossil-fuel driven, notably cars, buses and aeroplanes. The question at stake is how tourism can be sustained without the carbon supplies that are its lifeblood? In all strategies for mitigating climate change reducing carbon use within transport is crucial, it accounts for 14% of total greenhouse gas emissions (Dennis and Urry 2009, p. 9). As pointed out by Hall, “[a]ny strategy towards sustainable tourism must thus seek to reduce transport distances, and vice versa” (Hall 2005, p. 344). Low carbon

alternatives need to be developed as alternatives to the current high carbon mobility system.

The discourse of climate change, together with the present scenarios of peak oil and the goal of a low-carbon society, have thus brought to the fore the centrality of mobility to social life and urgent pressures to drastically reduce or develop alternative mobilities. Mitigation strategies mean that all kinds of mobilities and movements dependent on fossil-fuels must somehow be reduced, or replaced by other alternative energy sources, in order for a low carbon society to emerge. Changes are likely to come, for example through modifying economic incentives, tax changes and international agreements and policies. For tourism there may soon come times when serious restrictions are put on its mobility. According to Dennis and Urry:

It is clear that air travel would need to be the most heavily rationed of the forms of transport that have so far become commonplace (Dennis and Urry 2009, p. 157).

With a current annual growth rate of about 5% in the Western world, the emissions from flying are expected to about triple in less than 25 years and probably far more if one considers the potentially enormous growth expected from China and other rapidly industrialising nations. This implies that the “energy demands of tourism transport will undoubtedly be a focal point for new regulatory structures” (Hall 2005, p. 343). With regards to aviation, which indeed is central for tourism mobility, it has “been identified as a significant and rapidly growing contributor of emissions of greenhouse gases” and “there is increasing concern of how emissions from this sector can be addressed in view of the global emission reduction needs” (Gössling, Haglund, Kallgren, Revahl and Hultman 2009, p. 1). If emissions from aircraft:

continue to grow at the observed rates, aviation alone may be responsible for the total amount of emissions in the EU that can be considered sustainable in the next 30 to 40 years (Gössling *et al.* 2009, p. 2).

Changing human behaviour and tourism mobility is not easy. At the individual level it seems that tourism consumers “increasingly claim they have greater concern for the environment” but also that “little evidence

supports the position that significant demand for more sustainable tourism product exists” (Williams and Ponsford 2009, p. 399).

Sustainable tourism development evokes a whole range of difficult political and scientific issues and requires a reconfiguration of the economy and society in which tourism is embedded as both receiver and producer. For example, the automobile has become such an integral part of tourism and enables a geographical separation of home, work, business and places of leisure that historically were close to each other. Here, both social life and tourism have come to be “irreversibly connected to the mode of mobility that automobility both generates and presupposes” (Dennis and Urry 2009, p. 58).

Another framing of the environmental discourse in tourism has to do with resources and resource use. Traditionally tourism has been one of the drivers, and money-makers, of an economic growth that in the context of sustainability also involves resource-depletion:

The central enterprise of current economic theory and practice – the striving for continuing, undifferentiated economic growth – is clearly unsustainable, since limited expansion on a finite planet can only lead to catastrophe (Capra 2002, pp. 127-128).

In terms of resources ecological systems and their services to humans have been overexposed to stress, exploitation and destruction and that biodiversity is being lost at an almost unprecedented pace.

One of the greatest obstacles on the road towards sustainability is the continuing increase in material consumption. In spite of all the emphasis in our new economy on information processing, knowledge generation and other intangibles, the main goal of these innovations is to increase productivity, which ultimately increases the flow of material goods (Capra 2002, p. 229).

Opposing these concerns are those who believe that capitalism can become green. Free markets and market-based instruments can still address and solve environmental problems (for overview see: Bowers 1997). There are ways to “offset” our travel, by purchasing “carbon credits” in the form of tree planting or funding alternative energy projects. This may neutralise some of our impacts, but only if everyone takes up the option, and the offsetting carried out is precisely equivalent to what has

been done. This offsetting could, for example, be the gross planting of forests. As one of the advocates of green capitalism put it:

We've put Earth at the brink of climate calamity, thanks to rapid industrialisation and market forces. That's part one. The sequel is how to get out of this fix. I believe it's those same forces, innovation and profit – and nothing else – that can stop global warming (Fred Kupp *cited in Prudham 2009, p. 1595*).

Yet, it is difficult to resist thinking this as “greenwashing” economic growth that at its core has been, and still is, dependent upon fossil fuels and other resource usages. As Gunder and Hillier suggest:

rather than encouraging opportunities for social change that might comprehensively reduce consumer behaviour to those consistent with the earth's carrying capacity, the narrative of sustainable development is often deployed simply to further the interests of an entrepreneurially-supportive state and institutions. This last is a pro-market interpretation of sustainable development, consistent with Smart Growth and globalisation, that dilutes the concept of sustainability to literally ‘business as usual’, with, at best, an objective to partially reduce urban consumer energy consumption and waste outputs, while maximising the potential for economic growth with little regard to overall resource depletion (Gunder and Hillier 2009, p. 136).

It may be true that “current business and destination level environmental initiatives generally fail to address tourism-induced contributions to broader global climatic and environmental changes” (Williams and Ponsford 2009, p. 403), but times of crisis are also times of opportunity, perhaps also for climate change. The financial meltdown has led to a renaissance in public responsibility in a situation where all “governments face deep dilemmas in reconciling climate change and energy policy with sustaining popular support, especially in times of economic difficulty” (Giddens 2009, p. 230).

While many of these measures follow conventional lines of what may be distinguished as unsustainable tourism practices, there is a growing awareness for the need for active policies to create more sustainable tourism practices. “Green recovery”, a global “Green New Deal”, and a “green energy revolution” are catch phrases that now find their way into governance and policy making. In 2010 the United Nation's Millennium Development goals will be a decade old. At present carbon off-setting is in an embryonic stage of usage by the tourism industry and tourists and

“voluntary compensation is still far from firmly rooted in the tourism industry and amongst tourists” (Gössling *et al.* 2007, p. 241).

In sum it is clear that the future of sustainable tourism “hinges on action from all stakeholders” (Williams and Ponsford 2009, p. 403) and there has been:

a general rise throughout the world of public awareness around climate change and a growth in the number of people monitoring their carbon emissions, their ‘carbon footprint’. This is likely to have some effect in inducing some people to modify their long-distance travel and leisure patterns. This could result in the rich north in some growth in domestic tourism as people are encouraged to spend their leisure time closer at home. Exotic travel may in certain social groups be increasingly seen as extravagant, wasteful and ethically inappropriate. There may come to be a shift towards the notion that a ‘good tourist’ is one who flies infrequently, who travels less and who tries to seek out ‘local’ rather than necessarily distant destinations. Some indication of this potential shift in values is given by over 1 million hits on Google for ethical tourism`. However, within much of the world long-haul leisure travel will probably increase. This is especially so where there is a growing middle class that has previously not been able to travel to places around the world (Dennis and Urry 2009, p. 9)

With the above threefold story combining a specific socio-cultural and environmental narrative, tourism has emerged as fundamentally geographical. Does it make a difference if we were to more explicitly acknowledge tourism, empirically and theoretically, as something that occurs on the Earth rather than in the social world? This we will return to in our final chapter.

Summing up

During the last decades there have been many changes in theorizations of the social world that we believe tourism theory needs to consider and address. In this chapter we have questioned tourism as a domain of separate spaces existing somehow apart from the rest of social life. Instead, we have demonstrated how tourism is intrinsically related to something else: technology, climate change, vacation, family and friends, policy making, culture, technology, leisure, history, society, (post)modernity, heritage, mobility, nature, travel, sustainability, everyday life, neo-

liberalism, exotic places, globalisation, home, politics, gender, capitalism, and most notably the Earth.

Of particular interest and importance for our specific concerns here, is what we have referred to as the “material turn” that has taken place in some areas of social science. In essence this turn implies that different aspects of the material have become increasingly understood as involved in the construction of the social. In other words, it becomes difficult to uphold a clear and unambiguous distinction between the social and the material.

Looking through such a lens we can then see that, for example, globalisation does not consist of “social stuff” in any pure sense. It does not merely take place in a social world that exists on its own and where humans as social subjects exchange ideas and values in and through language and social discourses. Globalisation includes, just like tourism, not only humans but also things, objects, artefacts, and whatever else of materialities there are. Thus when discussing “global networks” Urry claims that they:

do not derive directly and uniquely from human intentions and actions. Humans are intricately networked with machines, texts, objects and other technologies. There are no purified social networks, only `material worlds` that involve peculiar and complex socialities with objects (Urry 2003, p. 56).

For tourism theory this suggests that it needs to more explicitly include various “material objects” in understanding and explaining tourism and tourists. Thus we are also once again back to the Earth, a planet on which human travellers have imagined, discovered, explored, charted and opened up almost all of its land surface. Six and a half billion humans with itchy feet is not something that should be taken lightly. And one of the most prominent trends of the present is a rising politics of climate change which is often presented as a serious warning:

[C]limate change resulting from increasing greenhouse gas emissions constitutes the world’s major threat to human life and social organization (Dennis and Urry 2009, p. 4).

How this will affect future tourism is however not easy to predict. On the one hand there are ample reasons to assume that the tourism sector will necessarily be further involved in the politics of climate change in

terms of both adaption and mitigation strategies. On the other hand, there are signs that it will continue to grow with little consideration to the climate. It is however clear that tomorrow's tourism will be predicated largely on social, environmental and cultural trends in which real-and-imagined travel opportunities are developed and perceived. Globalization and capitalism have resulted so far in an expansion of wealth, although unevenly distributed, that has been extremely beneficial for tourism. For the purveyors of future tourism development there are marketing opportunities arising from citizens of economically emerging nations, notably China, as well as a growing number of retired people, such as the baby boomers, from traditional tourism generating regions.

Yet, there are factors that may lower or even drastically change tourism demands. Tourists of a relatively well-educated elite may well in the context of mitigation and adaption policies against climate change, increasingly value principles of environmental sustainability, together with more traditional ones of human equality and cultural diversity, resulting in new or changed sensitivities to the consequences of their travels.

A critical engagement with such worldly and earthly issues is absolutely essential in tourism studies of today and in the foreseeable future. Economy, politics, culture, nature, society, technology, the Earth, and of course tourism itself, is constantly being constructed and dynamically developed. Many tourism scholars and researchers have argued that there is a need in tourism studies to engage more in-depth with these broader issues and trends in the environment of tourism, as well as paying attention to general theoretical and conceptual changes that have taken place in social science. In the next and final chapter we will continue to do so.

5. Towards an earthly tourism research agenda

The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land; it is at last to set foot on one's own country as a foreign land.

- Gilbert Keith Chesterson³³

Tourism studies is coming of age at a time when dramatic change is afoot in the broader domain of social research philosophy.

- Belhassen & Caton³⁴

The fitness of nature and of the Earth thus has the power to challenge blind (ideological) belief in the infinite power of abstraction, of human thinking and technology, and of political power and the space which that power generates and decrees.

- Henri Lefebvre³⁵

Throughout the preceding chapters we have tried to convey a sense of the topological and heterogeneous complexity of contemporary tourist and tourism imaginings in the world and on the Earth. In this final chapter of the report we will not provide a distilled summary, or a list of conclusions. Things do not fall that neatly into place, there are always cracks that “marks the powerlessness to think, but also the line and the point from which thought invests its new surface” (Deleuze 2004, p. 251). These cracks represent to us new frontiers, but also substantial challenges that we believe will haunt research in tourism studies into the future.

In summarising these challenges the chapter will take some steps towards “an earthly tourism research agenda” by which we want to achieve our first objective of this report: *to identify some relevant and important future areas of research on tourism and tourists*. Underpinning our project is an attempt to grapple with the paradox that although tourism is considered an earthly business, the Earth is rarely theorized in tourism studies. Indeed, it seems to us that the arguments that dominate are variations on a theme that, in one way or another, tourism studies is not social enough. Even the standard tourism geography definition of tourism, seeing it as; “activities of people travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment”, is seen as problematic because “it fails to encapsulate any distinct sphere of social practice” (Johnston, Gregory,

³³ Source unknown

³⁴ Belhassen & Caton 2009, p. 335.

³⁵ Lefebvre 1991, p. 330.

Pratt and Watts 2000, p. 840). What we thus seek to answer is how come that not even geographers, coming from a discipline which means precisely “earth writing” (Gren 1994) and “which has a protracted record of published tourism scholarship dating back to the 1920s” (Coles, Hall and Duval 2006, p. 296), seem to be unable to resist the temptation of the social? Our research agenda may be read as a tentative plea for an explicit theoretical re-cognition of the Earth in tourism studies.

Setting this agenda is however also relevant in the context of the second objective of the report, that it should be able to be *read and used as an educational text in tourism studies at undergraduate level*. We recognise that at any given time, a student in tourism studies will learn, as though instinctively, what is admissible. To become educated in the field is to acquire this knowledge of what is admissible, often implicitly. This self-regulation, or set of feedbacks in the network of educational relations, makes up the main constraint for anyone wishing to become a scholar of tourism (Serres 1995, p. 104). With an earthly research agenda we want to add to the fundament which defines the validity of the learned procedure of the tourism student.

The chapter begins with a return to our original point of departure; images, which are elaborated in the context of tourist and tourism imaginings. After that we revisit tourism studies in order to pave the way to a section where we demonstrate how tourism theory can be moved beyond social theory. In particular we are interested in how the Earth has been erased through mapping tourism and tourists onto the reference plane of the social and the possibilities to recapture the Earth and non-humans in tourism theory. We end thus with a brief a note on earthly methodology.

Still images - on the move

Our investigations began with images in tourism and have on several occasions skirted what we now would like to refer to as the “visual paradox of tourism studies”. On the one hand this paradox means that tourism is indeed full of the visual, including visual technologies, and there is also little doubt that the visual part of tourist experiences is highly significant (Urry 1990, Crouch and Lübbren 2003). On the other hand, and in spite of the just mentioned importance of the visual in tourism:

image based-research methods are simply not on the agenda for many tourist researchers” (Feighey 2003, p. 78).

Addressing the first mentioned side of this apparent paradox, it becomes readily apparent that tourism is indeed replete with images. Hence it is unsurprising that the study of “destination imagery”, in a broad sense, has been a major research area in tourism studies. Given that the field, or the discipline, itself has had strong roots in business administration and management it is no wonder that “tourism destination marketing”, among a host of business perspectives, has been an active research area. Nevertheless, there are also signs indicating that research on tourism marketing has often taken quite a narrow perspective:

a significant portion of the tourism marketing literature has focused on a specific set of topics, such as destination image, Internet marketing, and market segmentation (Xiang and Petrick 2008, p. 235).

One result has been that the relationship between tourists and the tourism supply system has often been conceived of as simply one of buyers and sellers in a dematerialized, a-spatial market. In such conceptualizations the task for tourism marketers and providers becomes one of merely assembling different tourism products and service components, and so make them available on the market for the tourists. Accordingly, the marketing of tourist destinations seems to have thrived on a dependence and presentation of clear and concise images (Hunter 2008, p. 360), under the presumption that they come with a capacity to catch the attention of potential tourists and possibly change their behaviour in the direction of a purchase.

The type of destination image research related to this narrow perspective, we would argue, conceives of the relationship between image and behaviour in a too simplistic way suggesting that it becomes important to broaden the picture. Part of that is obviously to recognize the changing state of affairs that the Internet has brought about. Through it tourism destination images are becoming increasingly fragmented and ephemeral in nature (Govers, Go, and Kumar 2007, pp. 977-978).

Today tickets are bought on-line, reservations are made, and plans changed on the basis of destination images accessed on the Internet, also during travel while sitting in a café or when surfing the web from a hotel room. Sometimes, the best way to find a restaurant in *Reykjavík* is to send a text message to Sweden. Under this technological umbrella the tourism business looks more and more like a topologically complex tourism network, where “the tourist is regarded as a creative, interactive agent, as a

co-creator of tourist spaces” (Ek, Larsen, Hornskov, and Mansfeldt 2008, p. 124). The point to be made here is that there is no longer a single tourist customer onto which a clear cut destination image can be projected. The tourist now empirically and conceptually appears in the plural, but in addition they are not only tourists.

Emerging from the narrow focused business and marketing research is also the other side of the visual paradox of tourism studies. It is readily apparent that a touristic site involves more than sightseeing and it seems very likely that “[t]ourists know that looks deceive” (MacCannell 2001, p. 31). Yet, it may also be the case that emerging mobile technologies “are changing the nature of vision for both tourists and tourism researchers” (Feighey 2003, p. 82). As Jansson notes:

The nature of visual representation is becoming more negotiable. Digital photography and video enable tourists to watch their recordings immediately and decide whether to keep them, or to delete and create new images (Jansson 2007, p. 13).

Tourism images in digital code are now instantly made and easy to move, remove, edit, distribute and show in different environments and circumstances. A case in point indicating the lack of research engagement is the fact that “tourist videos have largely been ignored in tourism studies” (Feighey 2003, p. 81), and these are mostly very easily accessible. For example, on “You Tube” (one day in spring 2009) we found about 33.400 video results when typing “Iceland”, 305 on “Images of Iceland”, 25 on “Iceland and Tourism”. In other words, there is now a vast expanding pool of empirical visual evidence of tourism and tourists that at the same time is almost not being researched by tourism researchers.³⁶

So it is that there is considerable potential for the use of new mobile technologies and social media within the context of leisure and tourism, yet little is known about how tourists actually incorporate these technologies into their tourism practices. Research on tourism and technology has tended to focus on the implications of information and communication technologies for the tourism industry, with less attention paid to the creative and often playful ways in which tourists use new mobile technologies and social media to organize their journeys, interact in tourist places, or share their experiences with friends and family. For example, how are gadgets like iPhones and GPS devices, social

³⁶ In a recent (2009) session call for the Annual conference of the Association of American Geographers this was recognised.

networking platforms like Facebook and Twitter, and social media like travel blogs and video sharing sites shaping tourist and tourism imaginings? Another case in point is photography. Although it has a long reputation of being essential for the touristic experience it appears that:

Few studies have analysed how tourists picture the places the[y] visit; what sort of photographs they take and how they exhibit and circulate them (Ek *et al.* 2008, p. 136, see also Scarles 2009, p. 465).

Another related aspect of this second facet of the visual paradox in tourist studies is that when tourist researchers have been using images it seems that the visual often has been relegated to stories about the visual in plain text, or that they are inserted merely for illustrative purposes:

There seems to be a profound mismatch between the importance assigned to the visual in terms of its relation to 'knowing' and the low status of visual data in social research in general and in tourism studies in particular (Feighey 2003, p.79).

If images are on the move, through different mediums in different guises, textual and visual, and if they (dis)appear under a variety of circumstances and locations, then this suggests a need to transcend traditional research methodologies where:

imagery is a non-empirical phenomenon that occurs when a discourse fixes social experience in terms of a language shared by some social group. In tourism studies, researchers have yet to establish the relationship between the phenomenon of imagery and the mechanism of its discourses, the iconography of the tourism experience (Hunter 2008, p. 356).

Research in tourism studies then needs to place, and methodologically approach, images in a broader frame, rather than, say, conceive of images as objects travelling in a neutral medium between sender and receiver. In what ways, for example, may film influence people's travel decisions and induce them to visit, or avoid visiting, particular destinations they have seen on the cinema screen or on TV? How do images from the movies reverberate with those in books, advertisements, "blogs" or, for that matter, good old photography? How

can researchers use photography and video cams in their study of tourism images and how can they develop these techniques also for reporting and communicating their research findings?

Tourist & tourism imaginationings revisited

These still images on the move, we argue are in fact part of the “new modality of networking” (Larsen, Urry, and Axhausen 2007) that holds tourism together, and they do not exist as atoms in a de-materialized vacuum. They are non-human mediators and transformers, circulating around dis/connecting the home and mind of tourists with a travel agency, a hotel, a feeling, an imagination, a destination marketing organization, a tourist office, a booking sheet, a country, an authentic building, a pool for children, a hiking trail, and whatever attractions and expectations are at the real-and-imagined tourist destination.

If that image is reasonably correct, then “what is important for future research is deciphering the interconnections” (Larsen *et al.* 2007, p. 259). That, in turn, requires research methods that are able to construct information and knowledge about the interconnections of mobile images in the enactment of the tourism system more broadly conceived and fundamentally tied to the Earth.

As we have repeatedly emphasised, and tried to show in various ways, an image is certainly not what it may often appear to be at first sight. In the vocabulary of semiotics an image can be understood as an inseparable duo of both signifier and signified, picture and word, meaning and matter, what we see and what we believe, mind and body somehow differentiated but simultaneously braided. In other words, to glue signifier and signified together is part of what it is to be human, and as *linguistic animals* humans live in a social, cultural world of meaning. Yet, they also live on the Earth. In order to emphasise the earthly conditions that faces humans we can rename them “earthlings”.

And tourists are earthlings too. They live and dwell in-between meaning and matter, in-between their perceptions and whatever conditions and facilities that are offered on and by the Earth. What we refer to as “tourist and tourism imaginationings”, then, concern ways of bringing meaning and matter together and apart, for particular and specific tourism and tourist purposes. In other words, imaginationings involve processes of signification that translate the physical matters of travelling, locations, and whatever material resources (the Earth) that humans meet as bodies with

senses, into various touristic meanings and values. This process of translating and transforming is necessary in order for goods, services and sights/sites on the Earth to be appropriated for tourism purposes and become tourism commodities. In this perspective, tourism lives a life in-between meaning and matter where it continuously is involved in the de- and reterritorialisation of the Earth.

When we take such a conceptual step, recognising the fundament of the Earth and how tourism can move beyond the social through this hybrid life in between meaning and matter, we can better realise the earthly emergence of tourism images as imaginationings. It is now hopefully also easier to understand why we did not choose to simply approach images as visual, that we avoided giving them a reductionist treatment, and that we have instead insisted on placing them not only in broader socio-cultural contexts but also in an earthly geographical frame of imaginationings.

With these conclusions in mind we are now ready to revisit the land of tourism studies.

Tourism studies revisited

In the early days of tourism studies there was a lack of attention from the social sciences. Tourism was considered a frivolous topic and an alliance with the tourism industry developed an agenda favouring a more hospitality and management oriented approach serving the particular needs of businesses directly concerned with tourism product development and promotion. This development is further compounded today by competition amongst institutions for students, which creates a need to make courses relevant to industry, but at the same time raises concerns over the quality of provision. These are 'universal' issues in higher education. But the extent to which these issues pervade tourism studies, a relatively new field in higher education, seems to surpass similar influences in mature disciplines in the humanities and social sciences (Aykioru, Tribe, and Airey 2009, p. 214).

Viewed over a 30-year span, the field of tourism studies has changed in terms of research focus and methodological sophistication. Nevertheless, with respect to paradigmatic shifts Xiao and Smith (2006) confirm previous findings that the field is still dominated by the scientific-positivistic paradigm while there is also evidence indicating an emerging contribution from the interpretive paradigm and/or critical theory. What we want to do here is explicate further the emerging contribution from the

latter, in order to set the scene for further development of our own agenda – moving beyond social theory.

Earlier we showed how Shaw and Williams (2004, pp. 275-276) set out the principal challenges for tourism researchers, having to be critical, diverse, and holistic. In turn this challenge is based on the premise that tourism is a social phenomenon and that tourism researchers should contribute to social science understandings of society. Tourism is, as they put it:

deeply embedded in all aspects of life. As such, the understanding of tourism contributes to the understanding of society, and in this way tourism researchers should actively seek to contribute to debates in the other social sciences (Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 276, echoed in Pons 2003, p. 48).

What Shaw and Williams lament is that, when it comes to the social sciences, tourism studies has too often been a passive importer of social science ideas, or a provider of an empirical field for others to harvest. They argue that in order to turn the tables, so the understanding of tourism can contribute substantially to “the understanding of society”, researchers and scholars in tourism studies must map tourism and tourists onto the reference plane of the social. They need to recognize that tourism is deeply embedded in all aspects of life in society and that studies so far have “mostly neglected issues of sociality and co-presence and overlooked how much tourism is concerned with (re)producing social relations” (Larsen *et al.* 2007, p. 245).

An ingredient in this process of rethinking tourism as part and parcel of a greater social realm is the idea of mobility, of which tourism then becomes a special case. Hall (2005, pp. 352-353) formulates a number of implications for theory developments in tourism studies as the social science discipline of mobility:

1. Since tourism is grounded in contemporary capitalism, there is a need to theoretically relate the constructions, processes and implications of this for the tourism phenomenon. This includes aspects of consumption, production, identity and the interaction of structure and agency at various scales.
2. Tourism is global in scope and this implies understanding the processes of mobility as well as globalisation and its corollary localisation and its significance of place competition.
3. Why are people immobile, that is, what are the constraints that prevent people from travelling?
4. Tourism production is ultimately grounded in human interaction with the natural environment which has far reaching consequences and implies conceptualising production in terms of relations between the social, spatial and natural. Introducing environmental concerns also raises issues about social equality and justice as well as the relationship between tourism and security.
5. Different forms of mobilities are interrelated, which means for example that the interrelationships between tourism and migration, as well as diaspora, transnationalism, and the very notion of home are of enormous significance for tourism studies.
6. Concepts of space and time and an understanding of the body moving through space and time are also essential to understanding tourism in different locales.
7. Positionality is also important, one can produce knowledge of tourism as a researcher and school, be a stakeholder and a tourist.
8. All these implications for rethinking tourism studies and the social science of mobility are interrelated and part of the complex web of human society and mobility.

Hall's list above, and his attempts to draw tourism into the orbit of mobility, is also a response to the emergence of more topologically complex contemporary social spatialities of tourism. These new tourism orderings challenge the old, but still quite common, view that "tourism is created and occurs [only] in places" and that "[t]o be a tourist is to experience the world of tourism in places – an experience that has become fundamental to that of human modernity" (Lew 2003, p. 121). Thus there are those that identify a need to overcome "mainstream research" that "still treat tourism as a predominantly exotic set of specialized consumer products that occur at specific places and times" (Larsen *et al.* 2007, p. 245).

Regardless of what contributions tourism studies should, or can, make to other social sciences, what is crucially important for us here is the underlying ontology of a separately existing social realm, albeit now with more topological complexity added in between origin and destination. This ontology is too much assumed and left unquestioned.

Even though the Earth is mentioned the general orientation in social science and theory, is to ontologically transform it into space and other spatial conceptual objects like “regions”, “landscapes” and “places”. This “de-earthification” has also involved a further move of space, together with its neighbouring concept place, towards the reference plane of the social. Not only has this effectively erased the concept of the Earth, but it has also meant an increasing theorization of space as “socially constructed”. It is, we believe, this “de-earthified social spatialism” that, through the usage of concepts like place and space understood as “socially constructed”, has become more or less taken-for-granted in social science. The “cultural turn” of the 1990s and onwards, of society and space, and other spatial units like landscape, does not change much in essence. It does not depart from social spatialism, but takes it even further, as this more recent example illustrates:

This ‘new (global) cultural economy of space’, then, emphasizes a cultural negotiation and interpretation of newly emerging spatial patterns, relationships and impacts; it constitutes more of a culture-centred approach of space rather than one exclusively centred on the uneven geography of costs and revenues. The relevance of a cultural understanding and interpretation of the changing geographical schemata of changing socio-economic relations becomes more obvious and instrumental in the case of the landscape than any other spatial unit... (Terkenli and d’Hautesserre 2006, p. 4).

In order to further push our inquiries into the alignment between tourism theory and the social we need now to re-visit to the theoretical heartland of social science.

Tourism theory beyond social theory

Modern social science and its social theories have always been elaborated variations on the premise of an existence of a distinct sphere consisting “of a specific sort of phenomenon variously called ‘society’, ‘social order’, ‘social practice’, ‘social dimension’, or ‘social structure’ ” (Latour 2005, p. 3), or something similar like “social system”, “social communication”, or “social space” (Luhmann 1995; Lefebvre 1991). As Latour puts it; “the social as normally construed is bound together with already accepted participants called ‘social actors’ who are members of a ‘society’ ” (Latour 2005, p. 247). In the words of one of the founders of modern social theory;

“[s]ocietal unification needs no factors outside its component elements, the individuals” (Simmel 1971, p. 7).

As true as it is that social science and social theory have been articulated and enacted on the basis of a separately existing social, a fracture in this ontology can easily be caused. In fact, it is provided by the material turn in social science. What is enough is to bring in what we in everyday language refer to simply as “things”. Tourism is actually full them and every single tourist is in practice surrounded by them. Nevertheless, in spite of this we reach the conclusion that things have in fact not received a corresponding amount of recognition in tourism theory. This strange paradoxical state of affairs has been spelled out by Franklin (2003, p. 97):

In tourism theory tourist things are both omnipresent and impotent (or inert, passive). Tourist things tend to be significant only in what they represent; as a meaningful set of signs and metaphors (of social things, mainly ideas, values, discourses etc) (Franklin 2003, p.97).

One principal reason why “tourist things” have not been regarded as significant in tourism theory is a preference for the reference plane of the social when projecting tourism phenomena. As we have shown elsewhere, the consequence has been that things have been either neglected or conceptually reduced to passive and inactive material objects, for example to those touristic things that tourists gaze upon in order to decode the socio-cultural meanings they are supposed to represent.

Yet, there are other ways of theorizing things than reducing them to mute passive material objects with only extensive properties whose significance should be measured and realized by the social. As both more and less than mere matter, things may also be distinguished as significant in themselves. As indicated in terms of images above, they may be conceived of as equipped with material agency that enables them to become “active agents in the production of tourism” (Franklin 2003, p. 98). Those simple things may also be understood as “hybrids”, phenomena defiant of purified ontological classification, whose present presence has been haunting social science theorizations for some time now. According to Urry:

[M]ost significant phenomena that the so called social sciences now deal with are in fact hybrids of physical and social relations, with no purified sets of the physical or the social. Such hybrids include health, technologies, the environment, the Internet, road traffic, extreme weather and so on. /.../ The very division between the ‘physical’ and the ‘social’ is itself a socio-historical product and one that appears to be dissolving (Urry 2003, p. 17-18).

One could then argue that the most significant phenomena dealt with in tourism studies are hybrids too. Indeed, according to Franklin and Crang; “[t]ourism is entirely populated by hybrids, and future investigations in tourism will need to enumerate and analyse their potencies” (Franklin and Crang 2001, p. 15). In this account, tourism literally is a hybrid population of bodies, hiking shoes, hotel beds, capitalism, destination images, discursive practices, whales, money, motivations, promises, exchange values, cameras, desires, cars, animals, homes, practices, taxes, tour operators, apples, guides, day dreaming, fuel emissions, electricity, sunbathing, walking, spreadsheets, maps, expectations, promotion brochures, weather, aircraft, food, neo-liberalism, and what not else.

The implication for tourism theory, of this conceptualization of tourism and tourists as unclean mixtures of hybrids or heterogeneous materials, is that neither can be adequately mapped onto the reference plane of a purified social without severe reduction or distortion. That tourism is a hybrid population implies also that it is not something that occurs in society, if we conceive of society as made up of social relations between humans only. Tourists too are at best only partly social, always dependent as they are on non-humans and their material potencies, if for no other reason than simply being able to travel and stay “away from their normal home environment for a variety of purposes” (Beaver 2005, p. 380). One could further argue that tourism is not only “entirely populated by hybrids”, but is itself a hybrid which has been transformed into a delimited phenomena after labours of purification. In other words, what is referred to as “tourism” is then an abstraction from the concrete population of hybrids whose belonging to the domain of tourism are constructed a *post teori*.

The notion of hybrids then objects to an understanding of tourism as a purified social phenomena albeit topologically complex, by highlighting the mixtures of entities with different ontologies, and raises questions about the role of non-human and material agency. The most well known

approach in social science in which hybrids, or non-humans and relational material agency, have been incorporated is Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Consequently, those who have tried to translate ANT into tourism studies (Franklin 2004; Jóhannesson 2005; Van der Duim 2007) have indeed emphasized this hybrid character of tourism as being “held together by active sets of relations in which the human and the non-human continuously exchange properties” (Van der Duim 2007, p. 964).

ANT is thus an approach that treats entities and materialities as enacted and relational effects, and explores the configuration and reconfiguration of those relations. Its relationality means that major categories or ontological domains (for instance “tourism”, “society”, “nature”, “culture” or “human” and non-human”) are understood and treated as effects or outcomes, rather than explanatory resources. Without exchange of properties, mediations, the associations and the performative orderings of humans and non-humans through the configuration of those relations, there would simply be no tourism. Hall’s eight points that we listed earlier might well be viewed as an agenda to investigate these hybrid tourism spaces, with focus on mobility, sustainability, humans and the technologies of travel.

We have indeed no difficulties in subscribing to the view that ANT has indeed much to offer tourism studies, not the least for taking non-humans and material on board and for providing a methodology by which the performative ordering of tourism and tourists can be studied. But for the sake of our project we are obliged to try and “earthify” as much as we possibly can beyond the social. This means that it becomes important to avoid the possibility of understanding tourism as mere self-contained enclosed topologically complex being that produces its own spaces by connecting and disconnecting heterogeneous elements. For our purpose, we need to situate tourism also on the Earth as a plane of reference and provider of consistency for all actor-networking (Gren 2002). This is the fundament for thinking about tourist and tourism imaginationings, and leads us on to exemplifying the “earthification” of tourism in tourism imaginationings.

Tourism in the world - on the Earth

“World” is often used to mean something intrinsically related to human civilization or to specifically human realms of experience, understanding, or the human condition in general. This is the sense of “world” one gets in

social science when it presents its object of investigation as the *social world* and when tourism is articulated as something that occurs in society. Yet, as Serres once remarked:

When we think about society, we are the victims of our images”
(Serres 1995, p. 91).

The word “world” may also refer to the universe or to everything that constitutes reality, or it could also be another name for planet Earth. If we follow this image then tourism becomes very much something that occurs on the Earth. So, here is another image:



Image 5.1: *Tourism and the Earth.*³⁷

As we have repeatedly stressed, tourism is not a single cohesive industry, but a phenomenon that selectively cuts across many traditional sectors and activities that range from basic agriculture to advanced high-tech service industries. Tourism also covers all geographical scales from the “global” corporation to the local farm trying to turn something of its amenities and products into tourist commodities. In other words, tourism on the Earth is indistinguishable from everything else on the Earth. At the same time, tourism is also a guest-domain on its own that participates in creating, changing, altering and reproducing its host-environments. In other words, tourism is always involved in de- and re-territorializations between Earth and territory:

As we have encountered several times, one of the defining characteristics of tourism is that it is “parasitic”, in the sense of being fundamentally dependent upon a host of other resources. The trick of tourism then consists of converting a setting somewhere into a tourism

³⁷ <http://andrewjuderajanathan.wordpress.com/2009/05/03/when-and-how-did-globalisation-begin-and-in-what-ways-has-it-changed/> (retrieved 2009-09-13)

product of some sort worth travelling to for touristic ends. In order to sustain itself tourism needs to appropriate and use a setting somewhere for its own purposes:

Tourism does not simply reflect upon culture and the environment; it also serves to alter and re-create both (Chambers 2009, p. 354).

In terms of sustainable development of tourism and climate change, this has little to do with saving the Earth, it will continue to be a planet, but to preserve the opportunities for human life on Earth. It is obviously a “[r]eductionist views of the world separate nature from humans, regarding it as an impersonal object and also separate facts from values associated with nature” (McDonald 2009, p. 455). The sustainability of a total trip would then need to consider the overall environmental cost of getting to a destination. This can take the form of aircraft emissions, and those due to travel to airports or directly to the destination by car and transfers from the airport to the final location. Also the impact of producing the means to get there in the first place; the building and maintenance of the roads, runways and port infrastructure; the energy required to heat, cool and light the infrastructure need to be included. In addition, the environmental cost of “doing” the holiday in one or more destinations, the consumption of water, materials, electricity and land that the holiday resort, hotel or rented home needs for construction and operation; the pollution generated in the form of sewage and waste materials generated by being a tourist in a different location; and emissions generated by travel once there. It follows that one important task for tourism researchers is to study the nature and the consequences of the performativity of tourism. As Hunter recently argued:

[T]here remains a major need in the field for raised conceptual awareness of what we are doing to the world and to each other through tourism (Hunter 2008, p.355).

Again evoking the term mobilities, Sheller and Urry state:

We refer to ‘tourism mobilities’, then, not simply to state the obvious (that tourism is a form of mobility), but to highlight that many different mobilities inform tourism, shape the places where tourism is performed, and drive the making and unmaking of tourist destinations. Mobilities of people and objects, airplanes and suitcases, plants and animals, images and brands, data systems and satellites, all go into ‘doing’ tourism. (Sheller and Urry 2004, p. 1)

They further argue that “[t]ourism mobilities involve complex combinations of movement and stillness, realities and fantasies, play and work.” (p. 1) Research into tourism mobilities has, to date, primarily focused upon the impact of new technologies and modes of transport and related changing social and cultural practices as well as the creation of new ‘mobile’ places such as airports and internet cafés – with little regard for both alternative innovations and transgressions within mobilities/immobilities (Cresswell 2006). But there is so much more. The concept “mobility” refers to the social, political, historical, cultural, economic, geographic, communicative, and material dimensions of movement. Students and scholars of mobilities focus their attention on the intersecting movements of bodies, objects, capital, and signs across time-space, paying attention as well to the ways relations between mobility and immobility constitute new networks and patterns of social life. The multiple forms of mobility, or mobilities, are often taken to include—amongst others—subjects such as: transportation; travel and tourism; migration; transnational flows of people, objects, information, and capital; mobile communications; and social networks and meetings.

Figuring tourism in terms of mobilities in their myriad fashions gives us a chance to encompass the strands of social discourses presented in broad terms above. So for example, if tourism includes the crucial and substantial contributions from various non-humans, then what challenges does that suggest for tourism policy and political ordering of tourism in society? For the issues discussed above e.g. sustainability cannot simply be a “green” or “environmental” concern, no matter how crucial those aspects of sustainability are. Neither can it be only a matter of social, economic, cultural and economic discourses. The phenomena of climate change is simultaneously a physical transformation and a social object (Hulme 2008, p. 5) and thus a hybrid that transcends the line between the social and the natural that has marked the modern settlement and constitution (Latour 2004). As Latour puts it:

When we believed we were modern, we could content ourselves with the assemblies of society and nature. But today we have to restudy what we are made of and extend the repertoire of ties and the number of associations way beyond the repertoire proposed by social explanations (Latour 2005, p. 48).

Whatever alternatives there may be, it is clear that these would entail an engagement with:

multiple associations of humans and nonhumans waiting for their unity to be proved by work carried out by the collective, which has to be specified through the use of the resources, concepts, and institutions of all peoples who may be called upon to live in common on an earth that might become, through a long work of collecting, the same earth for all (Latour 2004, p. 46).

Earthly methodology

About to reach the end of our journey on the Island of tourism and tourist imaginationings we cannot avoid feeling an affinity with Bob Dylan when he somewhere stated that; “Images are taken at face value and it kind of freed me up”. And method can be freed too. Without the heavy burden of being a set of techniques for providing an image of a given reality “out there” or a subjective order “in here”, method becomes productive of realities rather than merely reflecting them:

Method, then, unavoidably produces not only truths and non-truths, realities and non-realities, presences and absences, but also arrangements with political implications. It crafts arrangements and gatherings of things – and accounts of the arrangements of those things – that could have been otherwise (Law 2004, p.143).

That methods participate in producing realities, like those we find in tourism studies, challenges many of the traditional and standard accounts that one finds in textbooks on method. Most importantly, it signals a kind of ontological politics in research:

What does that mean in practice? The answer is that I do not know. But one thing is clear. In the longer run it is no longer obvious that the disciplines and the research fields of science and social science are appropriate in their present form (Law 2004, p.156, see also Mol 2000, p. 97).

In the short run, we have depicted tourism and images as practices of imaginationing and on-going exemplifications of life in-between

meaning and matter. The research agenda to emerge is one where the constant mobility of tourists is being allowed for and at the same time represented by information technology that allows real-time communication and continual readjustment of that which is being represented. In this mobile world we as earthlings are most certainly co-extensive with the Earth. So:

Beware! Consider what you strike at with so much glee. Look first at what you might risk destroying *instead!* (Latour in *Latour & Weibel* 2005, p. 19).

In methodology there have been calls for a re-conceptualization, so as to include the usage of “nonlinear methods fundamental to complex systems” because “the Earth and its components have been found to operate as an interactive whole” (Farrell and Twining-Ward 2004, p. 276). In tourism this complexity is to be seen in the relationship with the natural environment which is made complex through the involvement of a diversity of stakeholders, the variance of the spatial dimension of its activities, a lack of clear definition of key conceptual themes, and the subsequent difficulties of the systematic planning of its development. For example, whilst most stakeholders in tourism would probably agree that ‘sustainable tourism development’ is a desirable goal, the variety of interpretations of what it actually is, typically lends it a reductionist approach, limited to isolated examples of environmental initiatives and improvements undertaken by tour operators, hotel groups or destinations. This shared observation leads Saarinen (2006, p. 1133) to ask if present local salutations to global challenges are enough, and do they represent all that tourism can do (Holden 2009, p. 374)?

Tourism is a phenomenon that can cook your food or burn your house down. In other words, we all risk destroying the very places that we love the most.³⁸

So it is that images in fact take us to the Earth, and not to a tourism locked inside the bubble chamber of a separate social. Tourism, then, as we conceive it here, becomes less another social slice in and of society, and more “a total trip problem” of imaginationing matter-movements on

³⁸ <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/traveler/features/islandsrated0711/islands.html> (retrieved 2009-12-03).

and of the Earth. If the field of tourism studies has been “dominated by policy led and industry sponsored work so the analysis tends to internalize industry led priorities and perspective” (Franklin and Crang 2001, p. 5, Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 275), then we have tried to open a small window for “Earth led priorities and perspective”.

In doing so we ought to be in good company, for what are tourism studies if not attempts to understand and explain the touring movements of human and non-human earthlings on the Earth?

REFERENCES

- Aramberri, J. (2009). The future of tourism and globalization, *Futures* 41, pp.367-376.
- Aykioru, M., Tribe, J., and Airey, D. (2009). Tourism education – neoliberalism unveiled, *Annals of Tourism Research* 36(2), pp. 191-221.
- Balibar, E. (2007). *The Philosophy of Marx* (London: Verso).
- Ballantyne, R., Packer, J. and Axelsen, M. (2009). Trends tourism research, *Annals of Tourism Research* 36(1), pp. 149-152.
- Beaver, A. (2005). *A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology* (Wallingford: CABI Publishing).
- Belhassen, Y. and Caton, K. (2009). Advancing understandings: a linguistic approach to tourism epistemology, *Annals of Tourism Research* 36(2), pp. 335-352.
- Berman, M. (1988). *All that is solid melts into air* (London: Penguin).
- Bjarnadóttir, E. J. (2007). *Image og oplevelser af turistdestinationen Island*. (Aalborg: Specialeafhandling, 10. Aalborg Universitet).
- Bodewes, T. (1981). Development of advanced tourism in Holland, *Annals of Tourism Research* 8, pp. 35-51.
- Boucher, A. (1989). *The Iceland traveller: a hundred years of adventure* (Reykjavík: Iceland review).
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction a social critique of the judgment of taste* (London: Routledge).
- Bowers, J. (1997). *Sustainability and Environmental Economics* (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman).
- Bramwell, B. and Lane, B. (2008). Editorial. Priorities in sustainable tourism research, *Journal of Sustainable tourism* 16(1), pp. 1-4.
- Brendon, P. (1991). *Thomas Cook: 150 years of Popular Tourism* (London: Secker and Warburg).
- Britton, S.G. (1991). Tourism, capital and place: Towards a critical geography of tourism, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 9, pp. 451-478.
- Butler, R. (2009). Tourism in the future: Cycles, waves or wheels?, *Futures* 41, pp.346-352.
- Bærenholdt, J., Haldrup, M., Larsen, J. and Urry, J. (2004). *Performing tourist places* (Aldershot: Ashgate).
- Calhoun, C., Gerteis, J., Moody, J., Pfaff, S., Schmidt, K. and Virk, I. [Eds.] (2002). *Classical sociological theory* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing).

- Capra, F. (2002). *The Hidden connections: a science for sustainable living* (London: Harper Collins Publishers).
- Castells, M. (1996). *The Rise of the network society* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Chambers, E. (2009). From authenticity to significance: Tourism on the frontier of culture and place, *Futures* 41, pp. 353-359.
- Chon, K. (1990). The Role of destination image in tourism: A review and discussion, *The Tourist Review* 45(2), pp. 2-9.
- Cohen, E. (2008). The Changing Faces of Contemporary Tourism, *Society* 45, pp. 330-333.
- Coles, T., Hall, M.C. and Duval, D.T. (2006). Tourism and Post-Disciplinary Enquiry, *Current Issues in Tourism* 9(4&5), pp. 293-319.
- Cresswell, T. (2006). *On the move: mobility in the Western world* (London: Routledge).
- Crouch, D. (2003). Spacing, performing, and becoming: tangles in the mundane, *Environment and Planning A* 35, pp.1945-1960.
- Crouch, D. and Lübbren, N. [Eds.] (2003). *Visual Culture and Tourism* (Oxford: Berg).
- Davos Declaration (2007). *Climate Change and Tourism Responding to Global Challenges*. Second International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism, Davos, Switzerland.
- Deleuze, G. (2004). *The Logic of Sense* (London: Continuum).
- Dennis, K. and Urry, J. (2009). *After the car* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Eco, U. (1976). *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
- Edensor, T. (2001). Performing tourism, staging tourism: (Re)producing tourist space and practice, *Tourist Studies* 1, pp. 59-81
- Ek, R., Larsen, J., Hornskov, S.B., and Mansfeldt, O.K. (2008). A Dynamic Framework of Tourist Experiences: Space-Time and Performances in the Experience Economy, *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 8(2), pp. 122-140.
- Farinelli, F. (2009). *De nobis ipsis silemus* (unpublished manuscript).
- Farrell, B. H. and Twining-Ward, L. (2004). Reconceptualizing Tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research* 32(2), pp. 274-295.
- Feighey, W. (2003). Negative Image? Developing the Visual in Tourism Research, *Current Issues in Tourism* 6(1), pp. 76-85.
- Fennell, D. (2008). *Ecotourism* (London: Routledge).
- Franklin, A. (2003). *Tourism: an introduction* (London: SAGE Publications).

- Franklin, A. (2004). Tourism as ordering: towards a new ontology of tourism, *Tourist Studies* 4(3), pp. 277-301.
- Franklin, A. and Crang, M. (2001). The Trouble with tourism and travel theory? *Tourist Studies* 1(1), pp. 5-22.
- Giddens, A. (2009). *The Politics of Climate Change* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Gladwell, M. (2000). *Tipping point: How little things can make a big difference* (London: Little Brown).
- Govers, R., Go, F.M. and Kumar, K. (2007). Virtual Destination Image: A New Measurement Approach, *Annals of Tourism Research* 34(4), pp. 966-997.
- Graburn, N.H.H. and Jafari, J (1991). Introduction: tourism and the social sciences, *Annals of Tourism Research* 18(1), pp. 1-11.
- Gren, M. (1994). *Earth writing: exploring representation and social geography in-between meaning/matter* (Gothenburg: The Department of Human Geography, University of Gothenburg).
- Gren, M. (2002). Plattjordingarnas återkomst, in B. Lundberg, Gustafsson, G & Andersson, L. [Eds.], *Arvegods och nyodlingar – Kulturgeografi i Karlstad vid millennieskiftet*, pp. 261 - 274 (Karlstad: Avdelningen för geografi & turism, Karlstad University Studies).
- Gren, M. & Huijbens, E.H. (under review). Earth to Tourism! *Annals of Tourism Research*.
- Gunder, M. and Hillier, J. (2009). *Planning in ten words or less: a Lacanian entanglement with spatial planning* (Farnham: Ashgate).
- Gunnarsdóttir, G.Þ. (2007). Forsíða Íslands: Athugun á landkynningarbæklingum, in I. Hannibalsson [Ed.], *Rannsóknir í félagsvísindum VIII*, pp. 167-187 (Reykjavík: Félagsvísindastofnun Háskóla Íslands).
- Gössling, S. (2006). Iceland, in G. Baldacchino [Ed.] *Extreme Tourism: Lessons from the World's Cold Water Islands*, pp. 115-128 (Amsterdam: Elsevier).
- Gössling, S. and Hall, M. (2006). Uncertainties in predicting tourist flows under scenarios of climate change, *Climate Change* 79, pp. 163-173.
- Gössling, S., Broderick, P., Upham, P.J., Ceron, G., Dubois, P., Peeters, P. and Strasdas, W. (2007). Voluntary carbon offsetting schemes for aviation: efficiency, credibility and sustainable tourism, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 15, pp. 223-248.
- Gössling, S., Haglund, L., Kallgren, H., Revahl, M. and Hultman, J. (2009). Swedish travellers and voluntary carbon offsets: towards the

- co-creation of environmental value?, *Current Issues in Tourism* 12(1), pp. 1-19.
- Hall, C.M. (2005). *Tourism: rethinking the social science of mobility* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited).
- Hall, C.M. and Page, S.J. (2006). *The Geography of Tourism & Recreation. Environment, place and space* (London: Routledge).
- Hall, S. (1997). The Work of representation, in S. Hall [Ed.], *Representation: Cultural representations and Signifying Practices*, pp. 13-74 (London: SAGE).
- Harvey, D (1989). *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell).
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Holden, A. (2005). *Tourism studies and the social sciences* (London: Routledge).
- Holden, A. (2009). The Environment-Tourism Nexus Influence of Market Ethics, *Annals of Tourism Research* 36(6), pp. 373-389.
- Hui, A. (2009). Many homes for tourism: Re-considering spatializations of home and away in tourism mobilities, *Tourist Studies* 8(3), pp. 291-311).
- Huijbens, E.H. (forthcoming). Nation Branding – a critical evaluation, in D. Chartier and S. Ísleifsson [Eds.], *Iceland and Images of the North*, pp. -- -- (Amsterdam: Rodopi).
- Hulme, M. (2008). Geographical work at the boundaries of climate change, *Trans Inst Br Geogr NS* 33, pp. 5-11.
- Hunter, W.C. (2008). A typology of photographic representations for tourism: Depictions of groomed spaces, *Tourism Management* 29, pp. 354-365.
- IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) (2007). *Summary for policymakers*. Retrieved September 6, 2009, from <http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/wg1/ar4-wg1-spm.pdf>.
- Jansson, A. (2007). A sense of tourism: New media and the dialectic of encapsulation/decapsulation, *Tourist Studies* 7(1), pp. 5-24.
- Johnston, R.J., Gregory, D., Pratt, G. and Watts, M. (2000). *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Jóhannesson, G.T. (2005). Tourism translations: Actor-Network Theory and tourism research, *Tourist Studies* 5(2), pp. 133-150.

- Jóhannesson, G.P. and Huijbens. E. (forthcoming). Tourism in times of crisis: Exploring the discourse of tourism development in Iceland, *Current Issues in Tourism*.
- Keil, R. (2009). The urban politics of roll-with-it neoliberalization, *City* 13(2-3), pp. 231-245.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B (1998). *Destination culture: tourism, museums, and heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Larsen, J. (2008). De-exoticizing tourist travel: everyday life and sociality on the move, *Leisure Studies* 27(1), pp. 21-34.
- Larsen, J., Urry, J. and Axhausen, K.W. (2007). Networks and tourism: mobile social life, *Annals of Tourism Research* 34(1), pp. 244-262.
- Latour, B. (2004). *The Politics of nature: how to bring the sciences into democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Latour, B. and Weibel, P. [Eds.] (2005). *Making Things Public - Atmospheres of Democracy* (Karlsruhe: MIT Press and ZKM).
- Law, J. (2004). *After method: mess in social science research* (London: Routledge).
- Leiper, N. (1995). *Tourism Management* (Melbourne: RMIT Press).
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of space* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Lew, A. A. (2003). Editorial: tourism in places and places in tourism, *Tourism Geographies* 5(2), 121.
- Lew, A. and McKersher, B. (2006). Modelling Tourist Movement: A Local Destination Analysis, *Annals of Tourism Research* 33(2), pp. 403-423.
- Lomborg, B. (2007). *Cool It – the sceptical environmentalist’s guide to global warming* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf).
- Lovelock, J. (2006). *The Revenge of Gaia. Why the Earth is Fighting Back – and How We Can Still Save Humanity* (London: Allen Lane).
- Luhmann, N. (1995). *Social Systems* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
- MacCannell, D. (1976/1999). *The Tourist: A new theory of the leisure class* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- MacCannell, D. (2001). Tourist agency, *Tourist Studies* 1(1), pp. 23-37.
- Magnason, A. S. (2008). *Dreamland: a self-help manual for a frightened nation* (London: Citizen Press Ltd.).
- McDonald, J. R. (2009). Complexity science: an alternative world view for understanding sustainable tourism development, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 17(4), pp. 455-471.

- Minca, C. (2007). The tourist landscape paradox, *Social & Cultural Geography* 8(3), pp. 433-452.
- Mol, A. (2000). Pathology and the clinic: an ethnographic presentation of two atherosclerosis, in M. Lock, A. Young and A. Cambrosio [Eds.], *Living and working with the new medical technologies*, pp. 82-102 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Molina, A. and Esteban, Á. (2006). Tourism brochures: usefulness and image, *Annals of Tourism Research* 33(4), pp. 1036-1056.
- Nadeau, K., Heslop, A., O'Reilly, N. and Luk, P. (2008). Destination in a country image context, *Annals of Tourism Research* 35(1), pp. 84-106.
- Negri, A. (2008). *Empire and Beyond* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Olsson, G. (2007). *Abysmal: a critique of cartographic reason* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).
- Ong, A. (2007). Neoliberalism as a mobile technology, *Trans Inst Br Geogr NS* 32(3), pp. 3-8.
- Ovid (1955). *Metamorphoses* (London: Penguin).
- Pike, S. (2002). Destination image analysis—a review of 142 papers from 1973 to 2000, *Tourism Management* 23, pp. 541–549.
- Pons, P.O. (2003). Being-on-holiday. Tourist dwelling, body and place, *Tourist Studies* 3(1), pp. 47-66.
- Prudham, S. (2009). Pimping climate change: Richard Branson, global warming, and the performance of green capitalism, *Environment and Planning A* 41, pp. 1594-1613.
- Saarinen, J. (2004). Destination in Change: The transformation Process of Tourist Destination, *Tourism Studies* 4, pp. 161-179.
- Saarinen, J. (2006). Traditions of sustainability in tourism studies, *Annals of Tourism Research* 33(4), pp. 1121-1140.
- Scarles, C. (2009). Becoming tourist: renegotiating the visual in the tourist experience, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27, pp. 465-488.
- Serres, M. (1995). *Genesis* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press).
- Serres, M. (1997). *The Troubadour of knowledge* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press).
- Serres, M. (2007). *The Parasite* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).
- Serres, M. with Latour, B. (1995). *Conversations on science, culture and time* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press).

- Shaw, G. and Williams, A. (2004). *Tourism and Tourism Spaces* (London: Sage).
- Sheller, M. and Urry, J. [Eds.] (2004). *Tourism Mobilities: places to play, places in play* (London: Routledge).
- Simpson, M.C., Gössling, S., Scott, D., Hall, C.M. and Gladin, E. (2008). *Climate change adaptation and mitigation in the tourism sector: Frameworks, Tools and Practices* (Paris: UNEP, University of Oxford, UNWTO, WMO).
- Simmel, G. (1971). *On Individuality and Social Forms* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press).
- Skarphéðinsson, Ö. (2008). *Around Iceland 2008: A Comprehensive and Concise Visitor's Guide to Iceland* [Brochure] (Reykjavík: Heimur).
- Terkenli, T.S. and d'Hautesserre, A-M. [Eds.] (2006). *Landscapes of a New Cultural Economy of Space* (Dordrecht: Springer).
- Thrift, N. (2004). Intensities of feeling: towards a spatial politics of affect, *Geografiska Annaler B* 86, pp. 57-78.
- Uriley, N. (2005). The tourist experience: conceptual developments, *Annals of Tourism Research* 32(1), pp. 199-216.
- Urry, J. (1990/2002). *The Tourist Gaze* (London: SAGE Publications).
- Urry, J. (2003). *Global complexity* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Van der Duim, R. (2007). Tourismscapes: An Actor-Network Perspective, *Annals of Tourism Research* 34(4), pp. 961-976.
- Veal, A.J. (2006). *Research methods for leisure and tourism: a practical guide* (Essex: Pearson Education Limited).
- Williams, P.W. and Ponsford, I.F. (2009). Confronting tourism's environmental paradox: Transitioning for sustainable tourism, *Futures* 41, pp. 396-404.
- WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development) (1987). *Our common future* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Xiang, R.L. and Petrick, J.F. (2008). Tourism Marketing in an Era of Paradigm Shift, *Journal of Travel Research* 46, pp. 235-244.
- Xiao, H. and Smith, L.J. (2006). The Making of tourism research: insights from a social sciences, *Annals of Tourism Research* 33(2), pp. 490-507.
- Zouni, G. and Kouremenos, A. (2008). Do tourism providers know their visitors? An investigation of tourism experience at a destination, *tourism and Hospitality Research* 8(4), pp. 282-297.



**ICELANDIC TOURISM
RESEARCH CENTRE**

DECEMBER 2009