Introduction

ELSEWHERELAND

In the winter, summer becomes inescapably visible. Walking through a vacationland in January feels rather like an archaeological expedition through the remains of an alien culture. I am the only inhabitant of this wintry landscape out at the coast, moving freely between the abandoned houses, crossing lawns, and glancing through windows.

The barren bushes and threadbare winter grass mercilessly expose frost-bitten leftovers from summer: lost toys, tennis balls, a Martini bottle cap, faded confetti from end-of-season parties. Looking through veranda windows, I can see the artifacts from a life of leisure, now in patient hibernation: barbecue grills, croquet mallets, sandals, and straw hats. Along the bathroom windowsill are faded plastic containers with

all kinds of strange ointments, sun blockers, insect repellants, *après-soleil* lotions. In the bleak winter light this abandoned vacation culture seems very exotic. A strange tribe of ultrahedonists has been living here, leaving only traces of a life for pleasure.

I am on the west coast of Sweden but could just as well be exploring the ghost towns of vacationlands on the other side of the Atlantic, in Maine or North Carolina. These are silent landscapes stripped of their inhabitants. Many in the local population have been priced out, some make a living as caretakers and service personnel for the short but intensive season and the long stretch of the off-season. This forlornness makes the materiality of holiday life stand out very clearly: all the props and stuff silently waiting for their fun-loving owners to return.

In other ways, however, this landscape is not abandoned at all but densely populated by daydreams, images, and fantasies—mindscapes of staggering proportions. Back home in the cities people are busy remembering past summers, scheming, and dreaming about upcoming ones. The travel sections of the daily papers burst with fantasies about your next vacation, promising everything from a magical vacation package, invitations to the "fine art of overindulgence," "truly genuine experiences," perfect adventures, holidays you'll never forget, getaways, and escape routes.

Simultaneously moving in a physical terrain and in fantasylands or mediaworlds, we create vacationscapes. Personal memories mix with collective images. The view down at the beach, the little cottage by the meadow, the sunset over the cliffs, these are sceneries constantly framed, packaged, and promoted, shaped by at least two centuries of tourist history. Ruins and relics from earlier periods of vacationing are strikingly evident, even in the town where I am writing these words. Santa Cruz reads like an archaeology of California vacationing. In 1866 people gathered down at the shore to watch that new breed called tourists disembark from the steamer from San Francisco. They were visitors to what was now called the Naples of the Pacific coast. Other attempts to market this growing seaside resort likened it to the isles of Greece, where "Sappho loved and sang." A swimming tank had been built close to the beach and for a couple of dollars tourists could also get swimming lessons in the surf or in the river that empties into the bay.

The railways over the mountains and along the coast provided the necessary step for further development. In 1888 a traveler described the ride over the mountains as "an airline through the woods to the ocean." People from San Francisco and the inland started to build seaside cottages for summer vacations. Already in the 1870s there was a "most English-looking cluster of cottages" on the beach of nearby Capitola. Today most summer cottages have been engulfed by the urban sprawl. Tourists were attracted not only by the beach but by the redwood forests, advertised as "the Switzerland of America" (great camping!). Around the turn of the century there were a hundred thousand visitors in town each summer.

Down at the beach stands the boardwalk, the last one left along the coast, opened in 1907, with both a casino and "the Most Brilliant Natatorial Exhibition to be Found on this Continent." This giant indoor swimming pool had a sun-room balcony with potted palms and hundreds of dressing rooms and plaster statues of gods, goddesses, and water babies of the sea. Today the casino houses a deafening array of arcade games and laser shoot-outs, the old natatorium has been converted into a minigolf course. Just across the road the vast parking lot marks the location of the once so fashionable seaside hotel, Casa del Rey, built in Spanish style and opened in 1911 with two hundred beach cottages attached to it. Then the new slogan was Visit the Riviera of America. The Casa was turned into a retirement home in the 1950s and was torn down after the earthquake in 1989. Today the beach cottages are the city's problem area, which tourists are told to avoid.

Parallel with the boardwalk run the old railway tracks, which back in 1931 saw the first Suntan Special arrive from San Francisco, signaling that California beaches had entered the new era of sun worship. At the site of the old Sea Beach Hotel lies the Dream Inn, built in 1963, a classic example of the modernist California resort hotel. At this stage California dreaming was an export commodity and the surfing pioneers, celebrated in the little surf museum close by, were becoming a world movement, with a little help from the Beach Boys.

The tourist history of Santa Cruz illustrates a constant linking of the local and the transnational, a steady in- and outflow, not only of tourists, but of marketing strategies, images, icons, fantasies, and tourist

Figure 1. Santa Cruz beach between the boardwalk and the sea in the 1920s. (Photo Special Collections Library, University of California, Santa Cruz)

technologies. But the town also reminds me of the ways in which tourists differ. Up at the old mall visitors stroll in search of galleries and bookstores, cappuccino or sushi, down at the boardwalk there are Buds and burgers. By the lighthouse the surfers hang out, while the hikers and mountain bikers roam the Santa Cruz mountains. Santa Cruz thus contains many vacationscapes, kept separate not so much by physical as by cultural space: the tastes and interests, the mindframes and selective visions of its visitors.

Vacationlands may appear like territories of freedom, freedom from work, worries, rules, and regulations. But behind this carefree facade there are many unwritten rules. The skills of vacationing have a long history, and into each new vacationscape we bring expectations and anticipations as well as stable routines and habits.

LEARNING TO BE A TOURIST

"What is a tourist?" asked the Swedish author Carl Jonas Love Almqvist in a series of newspaper articles from Paris back in 1840. In those days "tourist" was still a novel concept, imported from Britain and surrounded with a good deal of curiosity. What is a tourist, how do you become a tourist? A new mode of consumption was emerging, based on the idea of leaving home and work in search of new experiences, pleasures, and leisure.

A hundred and fifty years later tourism occupies a large and rapidly growing part of people's consumption in the northern hemisphere. We invest a lot of money, time, and emotional energy in vacationing but may find it hard to think of these activities as producing the world's largest industrial complex. What started as a quest to get away from it all, often as a form of anti-consumption, to breathe fresh air, relax, do nothing, gradually became institutionalized into sites of production, providing hotel beds, breathtaking sights, transport systems, snacks, and souvenirs. Maybe it is the lightweight airiness of a few days at a beach or a hike in the wilderness that makes us forget the massive infrastructures needed to provide such moments on a large scale. During the last few

decades the growth rate has been staggering. In the mid 1990s around 7 percent of the total workforce, some 230 million persons, were employed in tourism, with over 600 million arrivals per year, and a spending of $3.4 trillion dollars. For a long time this growth was concentrated in the Western world and the northern hemisphere, but toward the end of the twentieth century new mass destinations and new groups of tourists emerged all over the globe. After the Americans and the Germans, the Japanese are the biggest spenders on the market, and in countries like India, the fast-growing middle class forms an expanding market of millions for international tourism. For the year 2020, tourist organizations predict that 1.6 billion of the world's 7.8 billion people will make a trip abroad.[1] The rapid growth rate produces not only new vacation packages but also new, albeit unevenly distributed, wealth, as well as new environmental and social problems.

Since the late eighteenth century the tourist industry has spearheaded new forms of production and consumption. It has developed the production sites of hedonism—a great weekend, an unforgettable event, a week of family fun, an exciting adventure—commodities carrying a heavy symbolic load.

The label "the tourist industry" bundles together very different kinds of actors: a Bombay bus owner taking locals on weekend excursions, a municipal licensed guide offering walks through Marrakech, a global resort chain always on the lookout for new beach-front property, a deck chair rental on Majorca, an international airline company, a Thai bar owner providing drinks and prostitution in Pattaya, a publisher specializing in guidebooks, Somalian peddlers trying to make a living on Italian beaches, a helicopter pilot selling sightseeing flights in Hawaii, investors moving capital from destination to destination, armies of migrant laborers doing anything from hotel laundry to washing dishes.

Research on tourism has become quite an industry, a densely populated field of interdisciplinary studies. It has also developed into a specialty, which has not always been a good thing. Specialized tourist researchers often feel a need to legitimate their seemingly frivolous topic by pointing out its economic and social importance, but surely tourism is too important a topic to confine within the boundaries of "tourism re-

search." Over the years the most interesting work has come from scholars who explore this field in order to get a more general understanding of the workings of the modern world.[2]

This book looks at some of the ways in which vacationing has evolved as such an important part of modern life, exploring how tourists have pioneered new ways of seeing the landscape, of claiming space and taking place, searching for new experiences and understandings. I view vacationing as a cultural laboratory where people have been able to experiment with new aspects of their identities, their social relations, or their interaction with nature and also to use the important cultural skills of daydreaming and mindtraveling. Here is an arena in which fantasy has become an important social practice.[3]

Tourist dreams colonize all those other fifty weeks, when we are not on vacation. Since we construct vacations in terms of otherness, of getting away from it all, they make some facets of our everyday lives and tensions more visible. Vacations remain one of the few manageable utopias in our lives. As utopian ideas they attract a great deal of cultural energy but also frustrations and disappointments.

My book attempts an archaeology of the present. It explores two centuries in the making of modern tourist experiences and sensibilities. There are many ways of writing the history of tourism, and some of these narratives risk falling into evolutionary or devolutionary traps, like "from the Grand Tour to Europe on $5 a day," and their straight narratives may also crowd out or marginalize certain tourist experiences. I want to use the historical perspective as an analytical tool to problematize the present, comparing very different eras and arenas of vacationing. How have we acquired the skills of taking in a sight, having a picnic on the beach, or producing a holiday album? In learning to be tourists we haul along a lot of baggage from earlier periods, often in rather unreflective ways.

This is why it is often rewarding to look at some of the settings where new forms of tourism emerge: the first Riviera hotel to open for the summer season, the early honeymoon site of Niagara Falls, or the fresh experience of auto camping. In the formation of a new phenomenon, there is often an uncertainty, an openness that routine soon closes off, making

the experience obvious and trivial. What is a resort? or great scenery? or an afternoon at the beach?

The tensions between past and present play an important role in the tourist industry, which is based on a strange mix of stubborn traditionalism and a constant search for novelties: new sights and new experiences. Much of the marketing of a vacation resort or the organization of a tour program depends on cultural forms already developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The industry constantly reinvents itself, there is a strange kind of stable changeability or persistent fickleness in which new destinations, attractions, and holiday programs emerge and old ones grow stale. Novel concepts and trends like post-tourism, "event management," eco-tourism, or heritage industries may in a longer historical perspective turn out to be oscillations within a rather stable structure. Many views expressed in the discussions of postmodern tourism are strikingly ahistorical.

Another tension in the world of vacations is central to the book: it has to do with the relations between the local, the national, and the transnational. Tourism often appears to be the ultimate form of globalization, an industry so standardized that any resort weekend basically would look the same elsewhere, as long as there are some palm trees and a stretch of sandy beach available. Tourism has always been a transnational mode of production. Even in the attempts to develop or market tourism with a local profile of uniqueness, tourist boards and tour operators borrow freely across national borders as, for example, in the case of Santa Cruz. This mode makes the history of tourism a rewarding field for studying the long-term processes of the localization of the global. The tourist industry illustrates the ways in which cultural differentiation results from a standardized marketing of appetizing, exotic otherness.

It is important, however, to see that standardized marketing does not have to standardize tourists. Studies of the staging of tourist experiences in mass tourism often reduce or overlook the uniqueness of all personal travel experiences: two vacations will never be identical. Many discussions on mass tourism slip into the dangerous genre of the prefabricated experience, the packaging of the package tour, and join two centuries of tired stereotypes that set "the real traveler" against the *turistus vulgaris*.

For these two reasons this book travels widely in time and space, but I am not aiming at a global reach. I limit myself mainly to a comparison of the making of some European and North American vacation worlds, although as I will show in the later part of the book many of the ideals and routines produced in these settings are today truly global. In the tourist fashion, I will follow certain cultural phenomena as they are transplanted and developed in various spatial, temporal, and social settings, from the French Riviera to Yosemite. Most of my own research (like most of my tourist life) has been focused on Scandinavian and Mediterranean vacationing, which means that material from other places draws heavily on the rich literature of tourism.[4]

There is one more reason for this comparative approach. The frequent talk about Mr. and Ms. Tourist underplays the very different modes of becoming and being a tourist. Tourist research sometimes bundles together the highly varied experiences made by tourists into "the Tourist Experience." Far too often it gives vacationers the role of easy prey, unwitting objects of manipulation: herded into charter buses and transported from sight to sight. Or the research gives a rather one-dimensional version of tourist life: focusing on the making of "the tourist gaze." Tourists become all eyes, no bodies (and sometimes no brains).[5] My focus is on the broader scope of vacationing, with an emphasis on the everyday practices and routines of tourist life: spending a day at the beach, watching the sunset, hiking in the wilderness, or taking the family for a vacation by car.

The book has three parts. The first two explore a polarity, which the French sociologist Jean-Didier Urbain calls the tension between the Phileas Foggs and the Robinson Crusoes of the tourist world. Most tourist research focuses on the male and middle-class model of Phileas Fogg—the ardent and hurried traveler in search of new sights. There is, Urbain reminds us, another important tradition, whose literary model would rather be the Robinsonian desire "to get away from it all"—to find an unspoiled corner of the world, to relax and build up an alternative life.[6] Yet the lives of traveling Foggs and Robinsons illustrate another slant on the tourist experience. To explore the dimensions of class in narratives of tourism over the centuries, I follow the ways in which

the talkative and often distinction-ridden middle classes have set the norms of vacationing, defining others as outsiders, marginalizing others' experiences.

The first section, "Landscapes and Mindscapes," deals with the microphysics of traveling and sightseeing, learning to enjoy a sight, setting body and mind in motion, producing vacation memories. It explores some basic aspects of tourist experiences, mainly in the Phileas Fogg tradition.

The second section, "Getaways," deals with the making of the Robinsonian quest of looking for elsewherelands, first in the development of "cottage cultures" of summering in Scandinavia and North America, and second by following the ways in which the Grand Tour to southern Europe developed into the mass tourism of package tours to the Mediterranean sun and beaches, which later would become the model for the global quest for a tourist paradise of eternal sunshine, palm trees, and white sands.

The third section, "Between the Local and the Global," treats some of the ways in which tourism is both standardized and constantly transformed in the transnational flows of ideas, props, and travelers. Its first two chapters look at the making of the global beach and the resort experience, while the last chapter starts by dealing with the most favorite pastimes of tourists—observing all those other tourists—and ends by discussing the ways in which tourism has shaped the modern world, from the eighteenth-century pioneers to the cruise ship's passengers at the end of the twentieth.