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Tourist objects, tourist rituals

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Here is a paradox. 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. At least, not in themselves, that is. This needs immediate qualification. 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.). In *The Tourist Gaze* this is particularly evident when Urry talks of the *fleeting* nature of the gaze upon tourist objects: whatever the significance of an object, and its relationship to the specific social discourses that authorises the gaze upon it, we can say that it is

purely semiotic. Elaborating this we can say that through discourse, tourist objects are purposefully mantled with *socially* relevant sign values (see also Hitchcock, Teague and Graburn, 2000 for the relevance of souvenirs for memory and meaning).

So, in *themselves* they are secondary, passive, arbitrary, inactive, inert; their meaning and significance is measured in other terms. As Law (1994: 23) argues, 'often it seems to me that it is *only* human agents and their knowledge, certain kinds of social interactions, and texts that are taken seriously'. This paradox (tourism abounds with objects, which in the literature refer mainly to, or reflect, the non-object human world) and its solution provide the main framework for this chapter. The solution to this paradox is remarkably simple: tourism teems with tourist things because they are absolutely essential for its very existence; because tourism is comprised of necessary and important *links* and *relationships* between humans, machines, animals and plants and an enormous universe and variety of objects, and because their interrelationship produces *effects* that ought to interest us. As with any form of organised, ordered activity, tourism can really only be thought about in terms of these assemblages because to think about only say, the human dimension, is to artificially reduce the complexity and the number of relationships and (assemblages of relationships that have consequences), at our disposal; tools and props needed to understand how and why particular tourist things happen. What I will be suggesting then is that things (as well as humans) play an enabling role in tourism, they enable it to happen and they enable those processes that are central to tourism to unfold.

It might appear difficult to grasp at this stage but I am saying that tourist things are active agents in the production of tourism. This is difficult because we are used to thinking about the world as if everything in it is arranged into classes of things, each class having specific and defining features of its own. In this way we are used to according agency mainly to humans (depending on who you are, degrees of agency are also attributed to some animals of course) and we tend to find the idea of an object (such as a stick of seaside rock or a postcard) as having agency absurd. However, this is only because we confuse agency (the ability to create effects or products) with consciousness (the ability to have a conception of oneself as active in the world). To put it another way, there is a social life of tourist objects without which tourism would not work. John Law again:

> . . . there would be no social ordering if the materials which generate these were not heterogeneous. In other words, the somatic – the resources of the body – though these are already heterogeneous, are altogether inadequate to generate the kinds of social effects that we witness around about us. For orderings spread, or sometimes seek to spread, across time and space. But, and this is the problem, left to their own devices *human actions and words do not spread very far at all*. For me the conclusion is inescapable. Other materials, such as texts and technologies, surely form a crucial part of any ordering. Law, 1994: 3)

Celia Lury (1997: 76–7) is one of the few contributors to tourist studies who have begun to analyse tourism in this way.

> . . . objects help to comprise tourism; more than this, it is not simply objects-in-motion but also objects-that-stay-still that help make up tourism. It is further suggested that looking at the career or biography of objects, as they move or stay still, will add to what we can say about the lives of people that travel (and then go home), that is, tourists.

What is it that the analysis of objects can add to our understanding of tourism? As with much of the new literature on the social significance and 'activity' of objects, Lury draws on Appadurai's influential book, *The Social Life of Things* (1986):

> Tracing the social and cultural movement of objects, Appadurai claims, helps identify the dynamic, processual aspects of social life, illuminating not simply the small scale shifts in an object's meaning, but also broader transformations in social organisation itself. What I want to do here is to consider both some of the ways in which the capacity of objects to travel and stay still is constituted in and helps secure particular relations of dwelling-in-travel and travel-in-dwelling, and also to suggest that these relations are constitutive of both the very objectness of objects and the organisation of space. (Lury, 1997: 77)

We will pick up Lury's intriguing argument that exemplifies the approach advocated in this chapter (Law, 1994: 23 has called it *relational materialism*) shortly. This will form part of a sequence of other ways in which relational materialism or the social life of things approach can be useful for understanding tourism. First, we will take seriously Appadurai's notion that it is in the biography of objects that their agency and social life becomes apparent. I will use as an example here the social life of a tourist souvenir, in this case, bark cloth souvenirs from Fiji. I will examine Ewin's claim that cultural efflorescence in Fiji could not have come about without the persistence of bark cloth production for tourism. This is an interesting finding in the light of arguments that claim the opposite, that tourism systematically threatens or destroys authentic cultures. Continuing the theme of identity and especially the link between tourism and nationalism, I will explore the value of the concept *interpellation* as yet another mode in which objects enter our social life and create social effects. This will be useful at later point in the book where interpellative effects are noted. We will return to Celia Lury's analysis of 'objects of travel'. I will then consider the relationship between objects and the ritual base(s) of tourism. Of all theoretical accounts of tourism my students are normally most inspired by the work of Shields (1991) (and others) on the ritual nature of much tourism activity. This body of analysis has been widely read and applied to many new cases but it still sits alone and is poorly connected to other general accounts of tourism. What is especially intriguing, though poorly realised by its authors, is the material basis of this activity. It will be argued that in common with almost all human

ritual activity, it is really very dependent upon ritual *objects*. We will look at a series of examples of this from contemporary heritage sites in the USA in which objects are used to focus attention on national life and belonging, and through an extended exploration of both the rituals of carnival and pilgrimage.

Before that, I want to explore in more detail the place of tourist objects in what we might call a social constructivist or humanist tourism theory. By doing so we will be better able to locate its origins and antecedents as well as to draw contrasts between it and approaches based on relational materialism.

Social constructionist or humanist tourism theory

To repeat an argument from earlier in the book, the two most influential explanations of tourism identify the significance of tourist objects and what they signify to tourists, but that is as far as they go. They do not ask what sorts of relationship tourists have *with* tourist objects, or whether tourist objects engender responses from tourists and whether those responses themselves have implications for new social and cultural forms. Also, they have not considered the cultural ramifications of hybrid tourist forms that combine technical and machinic objects with human counterparts: humans and cars (but see Urry, 1999); families and motor caravans; individuals and video cameras (but see Crawshaw and Urry, 1997); children and games machines (but see Law, 2001); tourism clothing and gadgetry (but see Michael, 2001). This chapter argues that tourists are inextricably intertwined with tourist objects and that this relationship matters or has important implications for tourism behaviour, the experience of tourism, the social relations of tourism and the impact of tourism on the world. This sort of argument is very different from previous explanations and investigations of tourism because they focused only on human social and mental constructions of the world; it was as if tourists were insulated from the non-social, inside their own cognitive self-absorption. So, for example, the explanations of tourism that Rojek and Urry (1997) identified as dominant in the literature suggest that tourism reduces to the search or quest for authenticity missing in everyday modern life. It is the search for a true and Arcadian humanity as opposed to the synthetic, simulated and ephemeral world of modernity. In this, objects can confirm or deny authenticity but they are essentially passive; objects that really only require the tourist to have a brief encounter with them, and even that is largely visual rather than embodied, interactive or performative. Urry's tourist gaze idea also only requires objects to confirm or deny difference and hence provide a pleasurable encounter with otherness, a welcome relief from the repetitive and the everyday. The tourist gaze theory also postulates a relatively passive tourist subject who is exposed to socially specific and differentiated

discourses that authorise the nature of particular gazes. This of course links tourism and tourists to the wider notion of social order, domination and power that make subtle but effective 'ordering' moves through popular cultural forms, surveillance and visual technologies as well as through the control of movement. But again, objects themselves are essentially passive providing a vocabulary of meaning and a material manifestation for social discourses – ideas and arguments that in their assemblage and operation are intended or attempt to lead to particular patterns of behaviour and social order.

If you think about it in another way however, tourism does seem on the face of it to be more *object-* rather than simply *idea-* or *discourse-*orientated. Tourists have an intimate and complex relationship *with* tourist sites, heritage buildings, museum artefacts, art gallery objects, souvenirs and postcards, cameras and videos, foods and drinks, tickets and passports, planes and trains. However it is not just physical objects that we must count because tourism also abounds with commodities, or things that have an exchange value, and these can range from tourism services (guiding for example) culture (for instance rituals performed for a fee) and nature (payment to visit or see natural objects, habitats, species etc.). These tourist things are intertwined in the practice of tourism, we do not merely look at them or search them out. We become *involved* with them. We collect souvenirs and we may even display them in our homes. We make gifts of souvenirs to people and we send messages to people on postcards. As Franklin and Crang (2001) argue:

> Even thinking about the pre-eminent visual and representational practice of photography, it is clear that this is not just promoting or affirming an image of places, but also about things circulating around and with tourists. Thus, picture postcards that circulate among and sustain social networks, snapshots that are composed, posed, taken, developed, selected or discarded, stored or displayed all are, not just symbols but, material practices that serve to organise and support specific ways of experiencing the world (see Crang, 1997). (Franklin and Crang, 2001: 15)

We like to be in an old building, to hear the echo perhaps in an old cathedral or to smell the aroma of an ancient castle. We carry objects around with us that mark us out as visitors and tourists, we have maps in our hands, cameras across our shoulders and we trail suitcases around with us. Some might prefer the pose of traveller to tourist but both can be identified by their tourist things, and their enthusiasm for these things. We actively engage with a whole series of machines that transport us, house us, support us, entertain us, permit us to be creative and protect us. The other day I met a man who said 'for me, a holiday means driving' and in part he meant being in a car, his car; driving his car. What he could see from the car entered into this passion but part of the pleasure came directly from the car, from movement and mobility and the sum total of experiences and outcomes that result from the interaction between a

machine and a person, namely *driving* (which is a human−machine hybrid experience). Other theories or accounts of tourism (for example, Wilson, 1995) would tend to emphasise what he could see from his car but what of *driving* itself, the relationship between the machine and the person? In Wilson's own terms the car/tourist has had a major impact not only on the development of a car-based tourism in the USA but also on how tourism objects were framed to be viewed and experienced from car windows, car parks, camping grounds, the non-space of motels and so on (see Auge, 1995). A similar 'object effect'has been noted for the riverboat in the process of nationalisation in the USA (see Sears, 1989).

Tourists like to shop too, and shopping has been recognised as extremely important to contemporary tourism, both to the tourism industry as well as to the enjoyment of being a tourist. Shopping is listed as one of the most common tourist activities and a tourist city would certainly be judged on the basis of its shopping. For Americans travelling overseas for example, shopping was reported as their second most important activity (Travel Industry Association of America, 1998). Some cities such as Singapore are shopping tourist cities. London and Paris are also shopping tourist cities, in part. However, one is hardly escaping modern society for authentic humanity in the international branded electrical shops of Singapore or indeed finding respite from constant simulation and change when one buys branded fashion goods from London or Paris. Further, one can hardly tell the *difference* between any shopping centre in the world, particularly in terms of the goods sold, so Urry's central emphasis in *The Tourist Gaze* on a pleasureability that derives from difference would struggle to explain the significance of much contemporary shopping to tourism. So, again could it be that we need to look instead for the sorts of relationships that tourists have with tourist-shopping objects? Should we look instead for the performative, embodied and interactive relationships (and their consequences) with these objects? What is going on when tourists 'pick out' and 'pick up'; when they haggle and bargain; what is it for them to have and to hold and to touch and to imagine the object into their lives? Why do they collect, give and assemble objects and how are the consequences of these *hybrid* activities constitutive of social life and culture?

As tourists we are also very close to a multitude of objects and in part, tourism is all about *attending* to those objects, adopting the correct manner before them, taking sufficient time to see and read them, making sure we are attentive to the landscape and city scapes that they jointly compose. We like to feel the sand beneath our feet, to smell delicious foods, to find seashells and to watch craftspeople at work, making things − to sell to tourists. These are not particularly profound observations, but it is worth making them if only because so many writers on tourism barely touch upon this dimension. For most tourism books the centre stage is entirely taken up with tourists themselves (*their* behaviour, what *they* are doing, what *they* want and why, how *they* vary and change, what motivates *them*) and the places (and peoples) they visit (resorts, sites, regions, tours, cities,

villages, cultures, settlements, natural areas and so on). Places are import-
ant to tourist studies because these are the natural regions, the planning,
commercial and accounting units of tourism. Places have marketing
budgets, places have specific tourism associations and departments, tour-
ism strategies, tourist surveys and what we could call a touristic- or place-
identity. Places are also frequently the measurable units for assessing
tourism impacts. Places are also things of course but they are massive
amalgams of all the things and what we might call the 'thinginess' of
tourism. Places gather these numerous things together into views, land-
scapes, cityscapes, marinescapes and postcards provide a device (for dis-
courses) to define and frame what is deemed relevant to the visiting
tourist.

I am going to argue that this inevitable emphasis on place also inadvert-
ently masks the significance of things to tourists and tourism. We may
notice here that theories and methods that try to understand tourism from
a commercial and economic angle can obscure the cultural content and
implications of tourism. Indeed I am going to argue that all manner of
objects that are associated with tourism from the most sacred sites to the
most kitsch souvenirs and kiss-me-quick hats of the English seaside
holiday hold tourism together as a cultural activity. I am going to argue
that far from being the ephemeral, epi-phenomena of tourism, they are
central to its very possibility.

However before I introduce these arguments and materials I want to
consider one other reason why tourist studies have been prevented from
fully grasping the significance of tourist things. This, I want to emphasise,
has to do with conceiving tourism as a predominantly visual activity.

John Urry has argued that tourism is an *essentially* visual activity, an
activity in which the objects of the gaze are there just to be seen, to be
appreciated for their difference, to be recognised and then left behind in
the restless quest for yet more visual novelties. At the extreme, under what
we might call *postmodern visualism*, things themselves are potentially
redundant as the sign becomes more important than the signified, the
things themselves. However, even signs (images, frames, adverts etc.) are
things. Of course the tourist industry knows only too well how appro-
priately framed visual representations of tourist objects work their magic
on consumers. But to note this is not to exhaust the role that objects play
in tourism – it is to miss perhaps the main significance of things to
tourism, indeed it tends to mask their participation in the *social life* of
tourism. This is because the tourist gaze tends to render objects passive in
contrast to the effect of the mental activity of humans. For example, the
visualism of the Romantic gaze emphasised most particularly the signi-
ficance of the *imagination*, the ability to conjure mentally the meanings
and significances of what is seen. Only humans have imagination, only
humans can learn to appreciate and develop their imagination though
education and intellectual attention and only humans can direct their
attention and their imagination (primarily) through their gaze. The visual

has been placed in this dominant sensual position precisely because of its special relationship to cognitive, mental or intellectual processes, but in so doing it shifts our attention to the agency of humans as the principal source of agency in the social world. The humanist perspective, and we should note that most western academic perspectives are, or have been humanist for at least 300 years, places humanity at the centre of analysis and privileges humanity in models of agency. Humans in this account are both the most important object of analysis and the proper subjects of history. For a number of reasons this anthropocentric view of the world has come under sustained critique in recent years, a twin prong critique in which both the notion of human privilege and the uniqueness of human agency are questioned. Humanist concepts and theories such as national-ism and nation formation or tourism only seem to call forth or require the activity and agency of humans and in such accounts non-humans are required simply to be inactive symbols, metaphors and metonyms. Their existence and significance is entirely mediated by the social and as Peter Berger once said of animals, they remain mysterious from us and retain their unknowable secrets in silence. Animals, stars, sites and things become merely a linguistic palette for cultural creativity. Pickering defines the humanities as humanist 'inasmuch as they study and theorise a world of humans amongst themselves' (2000: 3). So a humanist perspective also tries to create a world of humans separate from non-humans and to insulate this world of humans from any direct or important non-human intervention. This was achieved initially by the arbitrary classificatory division of academic labour that separated the human from the natural sciences. In this way, we could say that rocks, engines and dogs were properly the domain of natural science while economies, societies and tourists were properly the domain of social sciences. However, this separa-tion was consolidated when Durkheim and the subsequent *social* sciences established the case for a domain of facts that was entirely *social*. Here was a world of social facts, of social institutions, practices, cultures and struc-tures that was focused on, and created by humans, among themselves. There was great excitement about this because it was as if a major discovery had been made, a new dimension of life that had hitherto been hidden. Much work was required to discover and name the manner by which this entirely human world worked, as if one was setting about discovering how a machine or the planets operated; to discover the secret or unseen ways in which human societies worked or how they were socially ordered. Con-cepts emerged to describe these invisible *social* forces that almost matched those that ordered the physical or natural world such as gravity, electricity and energy: sociologists discovered ideology, hegemony, fetishism, capitalism, discourse, the panopticon and so on.

Among the more influential of these in the history of tourist studies was the discovery by Foucault of the development of new visual technologies of surveillance as a means of maintaining control and order in the dramatically reconfigured urban spaces of the early nineteenth-century

western city, the early years of mass society. The metaphor for these new technical means of ordering, not through direct physical punishment but through observation and surveillance was the panopticon, a new model prison in which all prisoners can be watched from a single vantage point, and as a result of which prisoners took part in their own self-ordering. Crawshaw and Urry identify the social implications of this technology for tourism in the following way:

> The reverberating economy of gazes that is established is taken by Foucault as a mechanism of surveillance that can then be widely applied. And it is a mechanism that has parallels with photography, as the modern traveller both subjects others and is subject to, an increasingly interiorised gaze. Both the panopticon and photography involve the material production of bodies, of the bodies that are gazed upon and the bodies that undertake the gazing (Batchen, 1991: 25). Crary interestingly argues that Foucault's opposition of surveillance and spectacle seems to overlook how the effects of the two regimes of power can in effect coincide (1990: 18). This is because of the ways in which people become objects of observation, and in particular how vision itself becomes a modality of surveillance and discipline. (Crawshaw and Urry, 1997: 182)

However, visual technology not only promised social order that extends from the control of deviance to the control of leisure/pleasure, it promised truth itself and Crawshaw and Urry offer an illuminating summary of the ways in which visual description and data based on observation became foundational for scientific procedure, debate and the establishment of modern epistemology. The more the visual became the proper means of apprehending the truth of the world in the emerging sciences, the more widely the visual and visual technologies became used and desired generally, in education, art and exploration. This spread widely among the middle and upper classes and gave rise to travel not for scientific purposes but for aesthetic purposes, and a new connoisseurship emerged for buildings, architecture and natural landscapes. The Romantic gaze therefore linked the notion of truth and beauty to the visual sense, but also to the prepared, sophisticated and trained the mind's eye of the viewing subject. Paradoxically, the technology of photography was brought into being by the build up of a desire to *fix* the fleeting nature of the gaze and not the other way around. And it is therefore not a mere coincidence that the first major tourism companies and the arrival of photography occurred in within a few years of each other, around the year 1840.

This new technical–aesthetic innovation produced ripple effects through the nineteenth century world of art, design and literature and gained an extremely solid place in high culture, the officially recognised domain and standard of intellectual and artistic excellence. Such a pedigree infused touristic practices with an air of cultivated elevation that quickly and visibly created lines of social and cultural distinction among the new middle classes that were emerging as a result of commercial and industrial expansion. In particular the cultured imagination required for tourism

could be used to debar or disqualify the uneducated working classes, travelling in larger groups, from appreciating the same touristic spaces. Wordsworth, for example, was particularly against opening up the English Lake District for workers outings, giving this reason for his antipathy. Tourism had become and should remain, poetic. But it was also Romantic, which is to say striving for the very highest standards of civilised behaviour. As connoisseurs, the new tourists sought experiences of the aesthetic sublime; a spiritual experience of the world that could only be conjured by the educated imagination. Above all else it was an intellectual activity or effect and the visual path into it involved 'a prolonged contemplative [look] regarding the field of vision with a certain aloofness and disengagement, across a tranquil interval' (Bryson, 1983: 94, cited in Crawshaw and Urry, 1997: 181).

> The photographer and then the viewer are seen to be above and dominant over a static and subordinate landscape, which lies out beyond us inert and uninviting our inspection (Taylor, 1994: 38–9). Such photographic practices thus demonstrate how nature was to be viewed, as dominated by humans and subject to their mastery; the mode of viewing being taken as emblematic of the relationship of domination of humans over nature, and also of men over women. (Crawshaw and Urry, 1997: 183)

The figure of the aloof tourist, standing away from and frequently above nature or city created a necessary distance or perspective between the viewing subject and the touristic object and although 'the view', 'perspectives' and visually framed constructions have remained a part of tourism, it is questionable whether our understanding of tourism should be based on this as the essential practice. Put another way, one would not want to dispute the foundational and influential nature of the tourist gaze, but we might say that it is only one among many types of touristic relationship with objects and that many others do precisely the opposite: close the gap between tourist subject and tourist object; make the relationship interactive rather than anthropocentric; create hybrid forms and networks of agency between humans and objects rather than a separable world of the human and the non-human; contribute to a heterogeneously ordered world rather than one characterised by a social order.

As we have noted earlier, accounts that emphasise the tourist gaze as the central cultural content of tourism create a distance or perspective between the viewing tourist and the viewed object. Put another way, our understanding of tourism as organised through visualism focuses everything on the viewing subject. It is the tourist who is doing everything while objects are simply the chosen backdrop and the carrier of signs and meanings. This view of the world in which it is only humans who are actively doing things, or at least doing things that are relevant to understanding the social and cultural world, has recently become the subject of some major rethinking in social and cultural theory. This human-focused approach (or humanism) not only privileges the human as the principal agent in the

construction and creation of a social and cultural world, it also privileges certain kinds of specifically human forms of agency. For example, the social and cultural world we inhabit (and tourism is a part of this) is thought of as an intellectual construction, wrought mainly through cognitive and symbolic processes, a world that is mapped out, designed or conceived mentally prior to its realisation. Social order, for example, is thought of as an intellectual design or blueprint that precedes its implementation. In this scheme, nature and non-human objects are only of interest in the light they throw on the symbolic construction of the human world, as they are called upon to symbolise or carry social and cultural meanings. In this way a significant amount of sociological and anthropological work has been spent on deconstructing the cultural meanings of objects. The tendency has been to ask questions such as 'what is the significance (for this specific human group under examination) of this pattern or that sculpture, or this mask or that animal or this ritual or that story'? The non-human world of objects then becomes saturated with human meanings that can provide valuable clues about the nature of our social and cultural life. In particular we have asked how these meanings and the discourses they belong to, establish particular patterns of social order. This seems a perfectly reasonable way to proceed on the face of it, but in recent years the very idea of a singular social order, based on the metaphor of a master plan system of the like that characterises engines and computers, has been effectively questioned. In place of a homogeneous unifying order, of the sort Foucault identified at several earlier stages of modernity, we are now inclined to believe such edifices are unlikely. There is a growing suspicion that something so massive as a social order is unlikely to arise from a single organising cluster of agency or from multiple simultaneous ordering agencies. Rather, we should recognise the messiness of social and cultural life, the incomplete and multiply contested nature of social ordering, the sheer multiplicity of configurations of humans and non-humans and objects that have implications, intended or otherwise, for the way they interact with each other and with orders of smaller and larger magnitudes around them. This is a world full of surprises, unanticipated occurrences and relationships that arise from the heterogeneous and uncontrollable clustering and arrangements of humans and non-humans, and as social scientists we should be attentive to this field of possibilities, and not fixated on discovering the blueprint that explains everything. There is no ultimate explanation, or order to find, only 'orderings', 'explanations'. So these new theoretical possibilities call on us to reflect on tourism with this in mind. The general theories of tourism that groan under the burden of having to explain too much can be laid to rest, or at least unpacked and made to do less (Rojek and Urry, 1997). In particular we can abandon, hopefully forever, the search for singular or megalithic functionalist explanations for tourism, that is to say, explanations that describe how tourism contributes to or relates to a social order. In doing this we are freed up to explore the more heterogeneous and

unfolding or open-ended sociology/geography/political economy (etc.) of tourism. Further, this will not be constrained by humanism or an anthro-pocentric tourism, we are free to examine for the first time tourism as heterogeneous clusters of humans and non-humans, clusters and networks comprised of touring humans and touristic objects.

The social life of souvenirs

Souvenirs are a fascinating class of objects, not only because they enable the recreation of a touristic experience to occur but also because they seem to embody and retain, something of the place (and its significance) where they were purchased. This is nowhere clearer than in the case of souvenir objects sold to pilgrims. In the case of 'pilgrim badges' of Thomas Becket sold from his pilgrim shrine at Canterbury Cathedral, these objects themselves were 'often regarded as secondary relics themselves' taking on some of Becket's miraculous powers, to heal the blind for example (Lyle, 2002: 81). However in the case of Ewins' (1999; 2002) study of bark cloth souvenirs sold to tourists in Fiji it is clear that tourist objects can trace an interesting biography during which they play a critical role in social change.

Bark cloth is a papery material made from certain native plants of Polynesia. In Fiji they are called *tapa*; an onomatopaeic word that refers to the tapping sound made during its production. Before tourism came to Fiji *tapa* was made for clothing, ritual garments and bedding. It was ornately stencilled by patterns that were emblematic of the particular locality of its makers. When steam ocean liners first called in on Fiji local artefacts were frequently bought at markets and this spawned a manufacturing industry of especially small pieces of tourist *tapa*. Ewins argues that tourism is frequently blamed for the 'trinketisation' of local indigenous cultures, part of the process whereby tradition is trivialised, commodified and extinguished. However, Ewins' research reveals that tourist *tapa* in Fiji actually had the opposite effect: it enabled the efflorescence of tradition to stand as a bulwark against forces of change and a weakening of indigenous Fijian culture.

In Fiji, as elsewhere, cheap manufactured cloth quickly replaced the wearing of *tapa* clothing during the twentieth century but tourist *tapa* remained a lucrative source of income for women on islands such a Vatulele. Tourist *tapa* became the main reason why *tapa* continued to be made even though in addition to the small pieces made for tourists, some of the larger pieces continued to be made for ritual exchange (weddings, funerals and other ritual occasions). Tourist *tapa retained* a large propor-tion of women in certain localities in full time artisanal production, and throughout this period the skills were passed on to new generations.

During the 1980s and 1990s, indigenous Fijians were threatened by a loss of political power to migrant Indian cultures whose power base was in business. The ownership of land in Fiji was dominated constitutionally by

Figure 5.1   *Tourist* tapa*, Fiji*. Source: Rod Ewins.

the pre-colonial chiefs but the value of this land had declined, as agriculture was now less profitable. A profound challenge to their historic, or traditional social ascendency. As a result of this Ewins is able to show that traditional ritual life became more intensified. Not only were ritual occasions more elaborately performed but also more indigenous Fijians, including lower status groups were now performing traditional ritual more frequently. Since *tapa* is central to ritual observations both in terms of wearing it and as gifts, the very fact that the tourist trade had maintained the craft skill base meant that when this new demand occurred they had the resources to switch from tourist production to supplying the local market.

Objects of travel

In an essay of this title Celia Lury (1997) explored the ways in which culture can become detached from place and travel, often enough in the form of the flows and travels of objects. It is the ability of culture to become spatially detachable from place and context of origin though flows of objects that make a touristic everyday world possible. This is not a world

where cultures exist discretely in their own separate spaces (one of the assumptions in a great many tourism texts) but travel and flow, having no cultural epicentre or boundedness. We do not have to travel to other cultures, they travel to us in multiple and infinitely nuanced forms, through objects themselves, through media and advertising, through images on television, internet and print media, through foods, aromas and technologies. Of course not everyone lives in this touristic everyday world (at least, not quite yet); for Lury it is an artefact of what she calls global cosmopolitanism, but, as the name implies, it is an infectious state and has no obvious or permanent boundaries. 'In this way, global cosmopolitanism contributes to the formation of new hierarchies, and transforms the terms of object − people practices in tourism'. In global cosmopolitanism people are *open* to objects, curious and highly interested in objectness and the cultural genealogies and fusions that they permit. In a similar way, Lury argues that objects themselves are increasingly building global cosmopolitanism into them: their 'user friendliness is the quality in objects that reciprocates the open-mindedness of people' (Lury, 1997: 82).

Lury is interested in the way these objects of travel become re-embedded elsewhere as travel-in dwelling and she cites the manner in which key retailers (Habitat, Benetton etc.) transfer meanings conventionally associated with places and cultures elsewhere to ordinary household objects: such that 'travelling is superimposed *within* dwelling to create objects of travel that dwell' (Lury, 1997: 83). Lury interestingly shows how Swatches are believed by their manufacturers and their consumers to somehow embody Swiss-ness, and as a result of this, benefit from a generalised sympathy towards the Swiss: as their senior executive remarked, 'We're nice people from a small country. We have nice mountains and clear water' (Lury, 1997: 86).

Of course the way in which these 'object effects', as she calls them, work is by drawing on repertoires of experience in tourist−object relationships. So for example, prior to the formation of global cosmopolitanism where we can say that the distinction between 'dwelling' and 'travel' has merged into a new way of life, travellers, trippers and tourists established a variety of relationships and practices with objects that travel. Typically the traveller establishes a fascination for what Lury calls *traveller-objects*. These include arts and crafts and items of historical, political or religious significance 'in relation to national or folk cultures' (Lury, 1997: 78). These are objects 'whose ability to travel well is integrally linked to their ability to signify their meaning immanently, most commonly by an indexical reference to their 'original dwelling'. Their meaning and integrity is based on what Lury calls practices of symbolic binding whereby they are completely tied to their specific place of origin, in many cases they are tied or even prevented by law from being moved from their dwelling. As such, it is often only their image that travels.

In complete contrast, are *tripper-objects*, including mass produced souvenirs, 'found' objects such as pebbles from the beach or 'incidental'

objects such as bus tickets, or matchboxes. Their meaning is not given in their places of origin as with traveller objects but in their final resting place, 'as something to be brought home'. 'While the object may have 'personal', 'sentimental' meaning in its final resting place, this is a meaning that is not intrinsic to the object and thus is not publicly valued. Tripper-objects are objects whose object-ness is lost in space, as the binding practices in which place and culture are combined in physical characteristics are undone (or rather, never take shape) in the travelling-dwelling practices of tripping' (Lury, 1997: 79).

Finally Lury describes *tourist-objects*, objects that are self-consciously located in *mobility* itself. They are in-between objects, neither meaningful as a result of their place of origin or their final resting place but by their very nature, in between – embodying the very movement of travel itself. They might include clothing such as t-shirts referencing the fact of having visited somewhere, 'through television programmes and alternative health products to types of food' (Lury, 1997: 80).

Of course this is a schematic account of tourist-object relationships and in fact there will be less distinctiveness and indeed, in the biography of individual objects there may even be a degree of switching from one to another. But the point of this is to show how objects undermine the fixity of culture and place in specific spaces and show how they constitute an important range of touristic experiences before, during and after the physical movement of humans themselves. But in addition it shows that the movement of objects and humans are not synonymous, objects do not always accompany humans and they engender effects separate from those of the travellers themselves. Before the arrival of global cosmopolitanism, the shrinic collections of tripper souvenirs in many western household not only brought back memories of place and tales of travel but they were physical manifestations of local social solidarities – they were the annual exchanges of people who might be missed as they travel away from home; those people who were thought about 'while away' from them; those people who could not be left out of gift exchange. Not merely sentimental, they might also describe to attentive visitors, various routes of social mobility as seaside wares were replaced by Spanish castanets or a Swiss cuckoo clock. In these various ways, tourist objects have a life of their own and have a variety of effects on social identity, social and cultural relationships and consumption. They also assisted in ushering in a more generalised global cosmopolitanism where cultures were no longer bound by space and tourism no longer required travel.

Ritual and tourism: Heritage, carnival and pilgrimage objects

In this next section we explore the ritual character of tourism. Ritual analysis is useful because it forces us away from megalithic or general

theories of tourism to precise practices of specific people in specific times and places; we are forced in other words to see tourism not as an inevitable singularity nor as something that exists independently of the people (and objects) who perform it. Rather, tourism has a performative quality that adheres to, and makes sense only in relation to, those who perform it and the tourist objects, without which it could not function. We can say that almost all types of tourism take a ritual form but that the ritual form it takes varies very considerably as do the objectives or effects of the ritual performance of tourism (Cohen, 1988: 38–41; Graburn, 1983: 11–17, 1989; Lett, 1983; Connerton, 1989; Ryan, 2001; Jervis, 1998; Jokinen and Veijola, 1997). This becomes clearer when we understand the nature of ritual activity at tourist sites. Most tourism rituals correspond to what van Gennep (1960) called 'rites de passage' or rituals of transition.

> . . . all rites de passage (rites of transition) are marked by three phases: separation, limen or margin, and aggregation. The first phase comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or group, either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from a relatively stable set of cultural conditions (a cultural 'state'); during the intervening liminal phase, the state of the ritual subject (the 'passenger' or 'liminar') becomes ambiguous, he passes through a realm or dimension that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state, he is betwixt and between all familiar lines of classification; in the third phase the passage is consummated, and the subject returns to classified secular or mundane social life. The ritual subject, individual or corporate (groups, age sets and social categories can undergo transition) is again in a stable state, has rights and obligations of a clearly defined structural type, and is expected to behave in accordance with the customary norms and ethical standards appropriate to his newly settled state. (Turner and Turner, 1978: 2)

In traditional societies these were associated with the principal life stages of an individual's life – for example, birth, naming, puberty, initiation, betrothal, marriage, death. All around the world these transitions are marked by rituals that also seem to follow a recognisable pattern (see pp. 000). These rituals typically involve the movement of the relevant congregation to a place away from the village or settlement to a special sacred place. These spaces are frequently on borders or margins or they may have some anomalous geographical or spatial feature. Once the ritual begins, the ritual subjects, those who are in the process of transition and often the congregation who accompany them too, enter a liminal state: it is a time and place suspended in between states of being, between the old state of affairs and before the new state that is to emerge. Typically these rituals involve behaviour that is different to, opposed to or inverse from those of everyday life. There are examples of gender and status inversions, mockery of status, extremely free and liberal sexual practices, the use of intoxicants or narcotics to produce an altered state of consciousness; the use of music, dance, songs and chants to produce a specifically different aural environment and embodied foci; altered states of time and the production of ritual

time. Once the ritual has been *performed*, things return to normal with the exception that the ritual subject(s) have been altered, typically elevated to a new and higher status. Tourism seems to be a ritual of a similar kind in that:

1. Tourism often involves a period of time spent away from the *mundane* space of the everyday. Indeed the metaphors of 'get away', 'a change' and 'escape' are central to the language and practice of tourism in its formative years.
2. Tourism tends to create special liminal spaces different from the everyday spaces of living and working. They can be ludic, for example a theme park village or seaside resort, or sacred, as in a special national monument or natural or religious site.
3. Behaviour among tourists at these places is often different from their everyday behaviour. They do different things, they often wear different clothes, their time schedule is warped by their performance of tourism; new and different activities often produce a different state of mind (awe, wonder, exhilaration, fatigue, humility, excitement etc.); such states are induced by a variety of objects, texts, performances, devotions, substances or activities; a variety of officiates are often present to guide and contain the ritual activity away from non-congregants. Importantly, like pilgrims before them, they spend a large amount of their time *in devotion* to the objects and places they come to see and the embodied, performed practices associated with them.
4. Upon return to the everyday, tourists often enjoy some sense of transition. This can range from the accretion of additional status that is frequently conferred on the well-travelled (and there is a long association between travel and education in the west and elsewhere), or the consumer of luxury experiences (as Bauman (1998) argues, in a consumerist society an individual's competence and standing is judged in relation to their consumption practices/achievements) or to a spiritual, intellectual or experiential transition to a new, heightened or improved state of mind (this might be the case with pilgrims, those on intellectual, literary or artistic quests or even those seeking sexual or sporting experience). In some cases, travel might involve transition in all three types of sense. In contemporary Japan, a country noted by its reluctance to travel as much as other modern societies, overseas travel is seen as critical to corporate, social and spiritual careers (see Moeran, 1983) and of course, the metaphor *career* also describes a series of life changes.

Graburn (1989) follows the anthropologist Edmund Leach who argued that 'the regular occurrence of sacred–profane alternations marks important periods of social life or even provides the measure of the passage of time itself' (Graburn, 1989: 25; Leach, 1961: 132–6). With this in mind Graburn

modelled modern time into periods of work/profane and episodes of tourism/sacred. In this model, point A stood for the profane, B the entry point into tourism/sacred, C the experience of tourism itself, D the departure back to the profane world of work and E the next bout of profane/work time. It is not an elegant model we might say but Graburn is better at locating its truth in the language and performance of American touristic rituals:

> Our two lives, the sacred/nonordinary/touristic and the profane/workaday/stay-at-home, customarily alternate for ordinary people and are marked by rituals or ceremonies, as should the beginning and end of lives. By definition, the beginning of one life marks the end of another. Thus, at time B, we celebrate with TGIF (Thank God it's Friday) and going-away parties, to anticipate the future state and to give thanks for the end of the ordinary. Why else would people remain awake and drink all night on an outbound plane en route to Europe when they are going to arrive at 6.40 A.M with a long day ahead of them? The re-entry ritual, time D, is often split between the ending-party – the last night in Europe or the last night at sea – and the welcome home or welcome back to work greetings and formalities, both of which are usually sadder than the going-away. (Graburn, 1989: 26)

Graburn (1989: 28) reminds us also that 'a journey is seldom without purpose, but culturally-specific values determine the goals of travel'. It is important to keep in mind that whatever these goals may be at any one place and time, they relate in important and often specific ways to the culture of the tourists and in this way, they have a great deal of autonomy from those who frame and narrate tourist sites and objects. In this sense they are not socially determined and may even be under-determined, as people enter tourism spaces, rather as they entered pilgrimage spaces, 'making it up' largely as they went and for reasons/motives they did not need disclose to others. As Lofgren puts it we might

> [. . .] view vacationing as a cultural laboratory where people have been able to experiment with new aspects of identities, their social relations or their inter-actions with nature and also to use the important cultural skills of daydreaming and mind-travelling. Here is an arena in which fantasy has become an import-ant social practice. (Löfgren, 1999: 6–7)

For these sorts of reasons, I reject claims that ritual approaches to tourism are functionalist (or are inevitably so): to say that people enter ritualised spaces, to say that tourists look for or anticipate transformative experience and to say that we can observe ritual effects of tourism is not to say, as Edensor (1998: 4) argues, 'that the actions and meanings of tourists merely act to reinforce social cohesion'. Indeed, tourism can be and has been one of ways people transgress, break rules or engage in new forms of experience. The history of sexuality and nudity on the tourist beach in the

nineteenth and early twentieth century counters any such claim. In addition, Jervis has argued that tourists at Albert Dock found to be mainly 'doing nothing', are not merely doing nothing. Taking an eager, enthusiastic stance to national heritage, is part of what he calls *project*, the approved leisures associated with the progressive and improving character of modernity. Therefore, to stand before these iconic objects of collective memory and significance and to ignore them, and do nothing with them is not only an anti-ritual but a ritual 'of ideological complacency' and wasting time in repetitive bouts of doing nothing 'questions the world of project, of purposeful activity especially work' (Jervis, 1998: 322–3). The accusation of functionality also seems to miss, precisely, the way in which tourism is caught up in the transformative nature of modernity, not tying people to tradition but breaking it. We shall see in Chapter 6 how this was a distinguishing feature of seaside culture in the twentieth century. And by culture I do not mean anything so awkward and general as national culture; rather I mean the heterogeneous and fast changing sub-cultural lifeworlds of tourists. It is also important to consider that in transitional terms the tourist is like the Christian pilgrim: tourism is essentially about individual transition, salvation, redemption but what these mean varies radically from one individual and one sub-culture to another (Urry, 1990: 10). However, there are examples of transitions that involve more than the individual and outcomes that do intend (and result in social cohesion). Honeymoon tourism is of course related to a major rite of passage. At various times and places, towns and work groups have gone away together and experienced a collective transition. More recently, work-based groups often go away to retreats, frequently luxurious and pleasurable, to achieve organisational change or improved productivity. Some team-based groups in companies are sent on challenging walking or survival courses that are supposed to achieve the transition to trust, cooperation, and effective teamwork. One says 'supposedly' because writers have been extremely cynical about their results. Television series such as 'Pie in the Sky', 'The Bill' and 'Hamish MacBeth' have all used such settings for dramatic irony: to show how they provoke social tension rather than cohesion.

Seen in these ways, the ritual nature of tourism cannot be understood in a purely functionalist way. Individual people may be looking for something in terms of transition for themselves; governments and companies may wish to promote certain kinds of transition, and there may be broad patterns of correspondence in any particular time and place but as Crang (1994) argues, correspondence or symmetry is unlikely in heterogeneous nations with histories of economic inequalities and differential power relations (see Hinchliffe, 2000 for a good discussion of outdoor management training). According to Crang (1994: 344–5) writing on heritage tourism, for example, '[t]hese [heritage] rituals give distinctive opportunities to certain groups to acquire cultural capital' and '[t]he ritual performed is not reliant on the content – for power is inscribed in the very ability to perform the ritual.'

Antecedents to rituals of tourism

It will be useful to try to make some historical connections between the rituals studied by anthropologists, largely outside advanced modernised cultures with the rituals of modern tourism. We can do this by looking as some forms of ritual leisure activity that prefigured modern tourism. The most obvious choices here are the *carnival* and *pilgrimage*. Both of these provide some cultural roots for modern tourism, but they also enable us to understand the connection that contemporary tourism has with ritual.

It is also noteworthy, especially for Chapter 6 on seaside that follows this chapter, that hitherto British ritual spaces were not characteristically set on beaches but inland, in areas central to farming districts, particularly at the level of former land units called 'hundreds', which were pre-Norman land units of administration (Meller, 1976). This is typically where the main carnivals and fairs or revels were held although some were focused around certain churches and villages, for example, Padstow in Cornwall, while others seem to be associated with trade and sacred sites. The earliest glimpses of evidence on English fairs and the carnivalesque date back to the period of the Anglo-Saxon kings. Here we see something of a pattern emerging:

> Fairs had been held probably since prehistoric times, and often on tribal boundaries, for communities needed to exchange their surpluses and special-isms. Some fairs were concerned with a specific commodity: horse fairs appear to have been particularly ancient. A number of places are called long ports, 'port' being Old English for market (thus showing the original nature and purpose of seaports). One such place is Lamport in Northamptonshire. I wonder whether such places were the locations of fairs strung out along a road or street and how many were on ancient boundaries. Fairs were one reason for coming together, another was the holding of annual sports or games, and sometimes the two went together. Brigg Fair in Lincolnshire was held at a bridge, as its name implies, but the place was also known as Glanford, from the Old English gleam, which as well as being the root of our word 'glamour', also meant 'revels', 'festivities, 'games'. Close by Glanford Brigg is Hibaldstow, and stow in Old English means a place of assembly – in this case to visit the resting place and shrine of St Higbald, a bishop of Lindsey. Stow frequently has a religious connotation, but sometimes it is difficult to decide on a religious or secular explanation for the gathering. Bristol means 'bridge stow' and could equally refer to assembly for buying and selling, and assembly to visit a holy place. Again, both could co-exist. Indeed, within a mile or so of each other in Gloucestershire there were in the late medieval and early modern period, annual games at Coaley, a fair at Nympsfield, and a shrine at Nympsfield . . . also . . . Nympsfield means in Old English 'the cleared land of the sacred place' – nemet, a British borrowing – and this can only refer to the Romano–British healing shrine of Mercury at adjacent Uley, whose temple was replaced by a Christian church, probably in the fifth century. (G.R. Jones, 1999: http://www.le.ac.uk/elh/grj1/asl.html)

So, the English evidence seems more or less consistent with evidence from all around the world: important rituals take place on borderlands

between specific social groups; spaces between them where trade took place. These spaces of assembly were also overlaid by, or intertwined with, sacred or religious signification. The British evidence laid out above is confusing in its detail but it is indisputable that a characteristic pattern of association existed between these places and trade, religion and periodic social gathering. However, there is also evidence that these places did not emerge in an arbitrary fashion or simply as continuities and accretions from an ancient past. It is possible to identify, particularly perhaps at that time, an organising narrative in their construction as well as links between them.

This was a time long after the order of Roman Britain had entirely collapsed, but it was also the time in which the new order of the Saxon kings was being built – out of which, in the dimly lit figure of King Athelstan, we glimpse the first sight of England *as an agrarian nation state*. In building a large-scale princely state, these kings relied on a systematic gathering of taxes and the maintenance of judicial and administrative order. In order to do this the King and the court had to travel; indeed, even the later Norman kings were more or less permanently on the move. Systematised and legitimated fairs were built into the cycle of this wider national economy and order, and there was a hierarchy of towns that fulfilled other functions. However, there is also some evidence to show that these early foundational kings used religion and ritual, particularly their enthusiasm for the cult of saints, to build nationally orientated religious sentiments, sentiments that were orientated to travel to the various sacred sites of specific (national) saints – as we saw in the case of St Higbald above (Wood, 2000: 175). It is hard to exaggerate the significance of these cults to the coterminous emergence of the nation state and a sense of national culture and cultic tourism (or pilgrimage) at this time. Significant for our purposes here is that the places and spaces of significance in the lives of these saints together with *objects* or relics associated with them become central to the *realisation* of a cult, literally a following. Saints' cults together with their royal patronage (kings in particular visited such places frequently) encouraged pilgrimage and travel on a dramatic scale:

> The cult of saints and saints' relics was one of the biggest currents in the intellectual life of the Dark Ages. It generated a vast amount of comment and speculation in the ninth and tenth centuries: Saints' *Lives*, martyrologies, relic lists, and gazetteers of saints' resting places, not to mention sermons and poems like the *Menologium*, which mentions the festivals observed 'at the behest of the English king throughout the kingdom of Britain': this was all part of the way the divine order was believed to interlock with the earthly. Saints' shrines were focuses of royal power, and their patronage was one way of increasing a sense of unity in the state. (Wood, 2000: 175–6)

This is perhaps most revealed as those parts of the former Danelaw regions of northern England gradually fell to the Wessex Kings. The saints associated with these regions were quickly and emphatically elevated into

this cultic order, encouraging whatever residues of ambiguity and hostility towards such territories to be soothed by religious observation and ludic festivities and importantly, pilgrimage travel. The presence of a travelling king and his court and entourage was a spectacle in its own right but through the cult of the saints and their associated festivities, the spectacle was heightened and dominated the annual calendar in all localities. 'In the tenth century, gatherings on the big festival days ran into hundreds and sometimes thousands of people, all descending for a few days on to a small royal estate for a particular saint's day, or for a law-making jamboree, or to witness the hegemonic rituals by which kings kept their thumbs on recalcitrant vassals' (Wood, 2000: 196).

So, even before the Norman Conquest in 1066 we can say that carnivals and pilgrimage were central to English culture at all levels of society. We can now move to describe briefly these two types of pre-tourism in readiness for the subsequent two chapters that will ask first, whether we can analyse modern forms of tourism as rituals, second whether we can identify anything about their ritual nature that points to experiences of transition or potential (Turner and Turner, 1978: 3) and third, whether and how tourist objects are involved in tourist rituals and help secure particular effects?

Carnival

I have used carnival as a generic name for that group of ritual festivities all across pre- modern Europe that are variously called festas (Italy), fiestas (Spain), fetes (France) festivals/carnivals/fairs/revels (Britain) and so on. There are of course many other synonyms for the same basic activity in other European countries but they all refer as we have seen above, to quite specific forms of celebrating and performing holy days, particularly saints' days. Rather like the aboriginal songlines that describe the places of emergence of totemic ancestors and their subsequent journeys in the Australian bush (see Chatwin, 1987; Fullagher, 2003) inscribing a sacred cartography on the landscape, the saints of the early medieval period also left traces or paths of their saintly lives throughout Europe. These were often former Archbishops or priors of monasteries or other noted holy individuals, and their careers and teaching described specific life routes – where they worked and lived, where they stopped, preached, prayed or performed some miraculous transformation. As with aboriginal totemic ancestors, their journeys and their presence at particular places was believed to hold some continuous significance for the living: some of their saintly power and affect continued to reside in these places but *particularly* in their relics, objects associated directly with their life. Again, in common with aboriginal totemic cults, these powers seem to be most concentrated in particular places and perhaps even more so in artefacts or relics

associated specifically with them. While these sacred sites and collections of artefacts became the places of pilgrimage, very often they coincided with trade and annual fairs held in their name. So there is clearly an overlap between pilgrimage and carnival. However, while pilgrimage had very wide catchments of followers of a particular saints cult (a good example is Thomas Becket martyred in Canterbury cathedral in 1170 who attracted vast numbers of pilgrims from all across the UK but also from France and Holland), the carnival was a ritual belonging to and defined by the restricted congregation of a *locality*.

The carnival is always identified with a particular town, especially in Italy or Spain, or a particular rural district as in the premodern carnival in England, and in this way it was a ritual occasion performed by and for a specific local culture. The carnival was, like the social composition of its congregation, an inward looking, insular and self-sufficient affair. As Bakhtin argued, carnival comprised

> forms of protocol and ritual based on laughter and consecrated by tradition . . . which were sharply distinct from the serious official, ecclesiastical, feudal and political cult forms and [ritual] ceremonials. Carnival is a spectacle lived by people who are all participants, actors, not spectators. [. . .] [they] offered a completely different, non-official . . . extra political aspect of the world, of man and of human relations; they built a second world and a second life outside officialdom. (Bakhtin, 1984: 5–7 quoted in Shields, 1991: 89)

It had a number of common characteristics that established it as a liminoid, ritual activity:

- It typically began with a procession to the special place on a specific local Saints Day (importantly it was an annual, one-off event), a day (or two) when the hierarchical nature of these localities was made manifest, particularly through ritual robes and vestments. At the head of these processions were the ritual objects, typically statues of saints and objects and representations of his/her life.
- Over a specified number of following days, carnivals involved an ordered or ritually proscribed disordering in which there was considerable inversions of roles and practices. There was a heightened party atmosphere generated by more excessive drinking, feasting, dancing and music, but also theatre and games or sports. Critically, much of this behaviour would not be tolerated during the rest of the year.
- Characteristically, carnival involved a ritual language, often derived from market argots and gestures 'permitting no distance between those who came in contact with each other and liberating them from norms of etiquette and decency imposed at other times' (Bakhtin, 1984: 10 quoted in Shields, 1991: 90). Similarly, normal observation of low and high culture within the community was undermined and inverted through the use of the grotesque body, which lowered 'all to the material level of the earth and body, asserting the primacy of life'. This

offers a critical clue to understanding carnival: it is a celebration of 'the collective, ancestral body of all people' (Shields, 1991: 93) and in the specific case of the medieval carnival, the relative isolation and inter-dependence of the communities that gathered to perform them.

- The invocation of a primal grotesque body was achieved partly through a language of lewd gestures and slang and ritual plays, theatre, games and foolery, but also through objects, grotesque statues, masks and costume. Adding to the performance of the grotesque by local people was the mysterious presence (turning up on time and melting away afterwards) of migratory professional entertainers, owners of grotesque side shows (who offered glimpses at freaks of human and other nature, exotic wild animals embodying the idea of monsters, anomalous and mysterious objects), travelling theatre companies and so on.

By the time Brighton, UK was becoming a seaside town, in the mid-nineteenth century, the rural communities that supported these very old festivals and revels were largely urbanised. Those that continued into the nineteenth century, such as the Bedminster Revels near Bristol, were gradually terminated by statute. The Bedminster Revels, a former carnival focused on the ancient Hundred of Bedminster, was banned after a large crowd politically incensed by the failure of a political reform bill, stormed the city at Whitsun 1831, opened the jails, and fought the army on the streets for several days before civil order was restored. As Meller (1976) makes clear, the Revels had always attracted an international and national travelling group of entertainers, sideshows, musicians and theatre. Their annual economy was based on the cycle of festivities and carnivals all across Europe and beyond. When the rural English carnivals dried up many stopped coming and confined their attentions to Europe where they were still tolerated and are still performed to this day, for example Pamplona etc. However, the geography of leisure and entertainment in England had already shifted and differentiated – towards, for example, medicinal spas that had become important, exclusive foci for the affluent aristocracy and emerging commercial classes. These had begun in a rudi-mentary way as early as the sixteenth century (Shakespeare had played at Tunbridge) but by the eighteenth century and the building of elegant centres and cities such as Bath Spa, the leisure industry was becoming more sedentary if still seasonal. By the early nineteenth century most seasides had accreted a considerable semi-permanent assembly of carnival-esque entertainers and sideshows and as Shields argues, the carnivalesque itself had shifted or displaced to the seaside. Shields argues that in this new space, away from the stratified rural societies that gave it meaning and function ('an unlicensed celebration of a socially acknowledged interdependence of all people'), the seaside carnivalesque was nonetheless similar:

Figure 5.2 *The Palace Pier, Brighton.* Soruce: Ian Britton

> The realisation, rehearsal and celebration of this same interdependence are at the heart of the scene of holidaying Commoners who shifted aside the weight of moral distinctions of the Sabbath and propriety to practice carnivalesque forms of unlicensed, commodified, leisure 'attractions' that lined the beach. Particularly through humour, such transgressions deny class barriers founded on moral reasoning. The rowdy fun and mockery of the holidaymakers instigated a heightened level of reciprocity within the crowd from which it was difficult to withdraw and from which no one was exempt. (Shields, 1991: 96–7)

Shields has used the word carnivalesque, meaning carnival-like. It was not the same but its form and ritual nature had evolved into the new spaces and socialites of modern urban cultures. This involved one further elaboration, the new idea of the spectator at the carnival. Jervis puts it well:

When Goethe, discussing the Roman Carnival of 1788, claimed that one participated as 'both actor and spectator', one was perhaps witnessing the fate of carnival in our own time, the transformation of carnival into carnivalesque, into spectacle, but nevertheless still a resource for popular appropriation; not so much the people's second life, but still a distinctive aspect of culture, embodying a distinctive 'form of critical reason' . . . (Jervis, 1998: 331)

Jervis cites Docker (1995: 284): 'the flow of mass culture may possess its own forms of reason, not reason in a rationalist sense, of attention to discrete ordered sequences of information and interpretation, but of sudden juxtapositions, swift contrasts, heterogeneity . . . carnivalesque remains an always dangerous supplement, challenging, destabilising, relativising, pluralising single notions of true culture, true reason . . .'.

In sum, the carnival was a ritual (or as Shields called it, an anti-ritual) of annual renewal of collective social life in the premodern period. They were not simply functional to the power hierarchy of their day in allowing the otherwise common people their day to let off steam, they were more complex. Carnival stressed the necessary interdependencies, duties and mutual obligations and social contract of the feudal and post-feudal order; in mocking the existing hierarchy, and posing its hold on power as contingent it asserted the universality and commonality of the people. It pointed always to higher powers, saints, kings, God and the sacred but reminded everyone of their essentially corporeal life on earth. The notion of collectivity that the carnival embodied was at odds with the emergent individualism of capitalist society, which is one underlying reason why capitalist nations such as Britain gradually suppressed them in that form. The Bedminster Revels showed that they were bad news in theory and in practice. As we shall see it was for similar reasons that the early capitalist societies of seventeenth century Protestant Europe banned or discouraged pilgrimage. However, carnival belonged to the common culture and it could not be silenced or banished. Rather it found new forms in the emergent mass society and popular culture

Pilgrimage

. . . a tourist is a half-pilgrim, if a pilgrim is a half-tourist.
(Turner and Turner, 1978: 20)

Pilgrimage can be defined as journeys away from the everyday, mundane world of work and home to specific sacred sites formalised, recognised and maintained by major religions. The type of pilgrimage that prefigured tourism in the west belongs to the same social order of feudal or semi-feudal rural societies that characterised much of Christian Europe from the fifth to the sixteenth century. Pilgrimage to places such as Glastonbury in Somerset, UK or Cloagh Patrick in Eire were places of religious pilgrimage prior to Christian adoption, and although they remain principal places of

pilgrimage, they were joined by a much larger number of pilgrimages to the shrines and other sites associated with saints, such as at Rocamdour, France from 1193; Canterbury UK from 1170 or Loreto, Italy from 1294. Even before the Norman conquest of England, the Anglo-Saxon kings of England and others who had the resources to undertake such journeys, made specific pilgrimages to Rome, to the Catacombs and St Peters. Even though most people during this period were tied to a local economic and religious life, 'Christianity developed its own mode of liminality for the laity. This mode was best represented by the pilgrimage to a sacred site or holy shrine located at some distance away from the pilgrim's place of residence and daily labour' (Turner and Turner, 1978: 4).

> . . . the map of Europe came to be crisscrossed with pilgrims' ways and trails to the shrines of European saints and avocations of the Holy Virgin (varieties of mode of address, such as our Lady of Walsingham) and to churches containing important relics of Christ's ministry and passion. Such pilgrim centres and ways, frequented increasingly by the poor, can be regarded as a complex surrogate for the journey to the source and heartland of their faith. (Turner and Turner, 1978: 5–6)

In the case of pilgrimage what were the rationales and anticipated benefits of such arduous, extended and dangerous travel? First, pilgrimage offered the chance to get away from the mundane world, its 'small grievances over trivial issues [that] tend to accumulate' or the 'store of nagging guilts' (Turner and Turner, 1978: 7). At the same time the trials and tribulations of the journey provide 'a release from the ingrown ills of home'. Second, pilgrimage offered an initiatory quality, a chance 'to enter into a deeper level of existence than he has known in his accustomed milieu' (ibid. p.8). The pilgrim is exposed to powerful religious sacra (shrines, images, relics, liturgies, curative waters, ritual circumambulations of holy objects and so on' (ibid. p.8). Third, the individual moral unit of the pilgrimage 'seeks salvation or release from the sins and evils of the structural world' (ibid. p.8). Fourth, the pilgrim receives a powerful inspiration or guidance into the future. In the final stages of pilgrimage, in or around the shrine centres, the pilgrim is bombarded with 'religious buildings, pictorial images, statuary, and sacralised features of the topography. Linking these together are often the essential thoughts and feelings of a founder's religion or those of influential followers, but in combination they permit the exhausted but receptive pilgrim to receive 'the pure imprint of para-digmatic structure' which gives 'a measure of coherence, direction and meaning to their action' (ibid. p. 11). Finally, pilgrimage also promised to many, the release from afflictions of the mind or body. Some affliction rituals elsewhere are rites of passage, which transform the patient into an adept ready to learn the mysteries of the healing cult' (ibid. p. 12).

As Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* makes abundantly clear, although pilgrims may have started off on their own, with their own reasons for completing a pilgrimage, they very soon found themselves on the busy

highways of pilgrims ways, staying at Inns along the route and frequently forming parties of fellow travellers. First it was safer to do so, but second, part of the liminal space and culture of pilgrimage was characterised by play, games, drinking and merry making – things, one suspects, that made these journeys all the more compelling and attractive in the first place.

One of the intriguing elements of the history of European pilgrimage was its banishment in the major Protestant countries as they emerged from the religious grip of Rome. Religious devotion was not the object of these bans so much as the decorative use of idols and images and the confusion of cults before which the pilgrims bowed and devoted so much time. It was of course associated with Catholicism, but also in the minds of its Protestant detractors was its association with ludic play, which to them was a dangerous distraction for the solemn business of prayer and work. The pilgrims in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* mixed serious religious and spiritual intent with a great deal of play, and that play was of the ritual kind described above, tending towards an especially heightened form of excitability, aided by drinking, sexual freedom, and generalised merry-making. Associated with the pilgrim trail was what we might call today disorderly conduct – and this was of course part of its liminoid phase, a social space or journey betwixt and between the orders of daily life. The attempt to prevent such lapses of order, and indeed to introduce a total regime of protestant/capitalist social order marks the beginning of what Rojek (1995) has usefully called Modernity 1. Essentially what Rojek argues, following Nietzsche and perhaps also Elias, is that the passions and tension of life that gave rise to ritual institutions such as carnival or pilgrimage could not be swept under the carpet by the instigation of bans and the introduction of more approved diversions. Crudely, we might say that with pilgrimage banned in the seventeenth century and carnival banned in the early nineteenth century, tourism emerged (very much after the innovation by the religious enthusiast, Thomas Cook) soon after to fill their place. There are good reasons why this came to happen, though the innovations that Cook was to make were hardly inevitable. The approved leisures of Protestant cultures (reading, poetry, art, crafts for example) that resembled more work than pleasure and release, specifically avoided addressing the inevitable tensions and pressures of daily life and of the life course. In Protestant religion, the salvation offered by work and the need for recognition of success added to the pressure to succeed in daily life and to secure a strong, upwardly moving career trajectory. Rojek argues that these passions, tensions and pressures gave rise first to a secretive world of desires and illicit behaviours, tolerable only if practised away from the centres of civil society, hence the development of what Shields identified as the connection between tourism and places on the margin. In addition, of course, such a pressured life produced tensions that were not easily resolved in their place of origin, hence we find the huge popularity of therapeutic spa travel in the eighteenth century. In a different context, why did Thomas Cook get the idea for tourism? He found himself increasingly

drawn into his amateur life as a preacher in the religious revivals that accompanied the most pressured and difficult times of the hugely expanding British industrial towns of the early nineteenth century. These religious revivals of nonconformist religiosity existed outside the established churches and as if to emphasise their marginality and potency, these were often held a long way outside towns in the country, on temporary greenfield sites. People travelled long distances to them and there was something about the large numbers of the congregation travelling and assembling together at the destination (as well as the Salvationist tones of the preaching) that produced a powerful liminoid ritual effect. Cook had the germ of the idea of 'a tour' when walking to one such revival on a very hot day. Why not hire a steam train and several coaches at a discount price, and then sell individual tickets to the revival? This proved profitable but Cook noticed something important: the effect of forming a touring party was immensely enjoyable in its own right; he observed a special effect about the collective nature of the journey itself. As Cook elaborated on the revival tours by organising new trips to other sacred sites of the day – the Romantic Lake District, the Scottish highlands, or the Great Exhibition of 1851, he made sure that they maintained that essential ritual form, with himself (and others) the guide officiating. By 1869, Cook had initiated tours to the Holy Land, largely for people like himself, but in this case the difference between tourism and pilgrimage were particularly blurred:

> Low Protestantism did not make much room for traditional notions of pilgrimage; so perhaps being a tourist might actually have been a new, acceptable way for Evangelicals to express a widespread religious impulse. Chaucer has planted in the popular mind the notion that people who were officially pilgrims might have hoped to gain some pleasure from the journey. These tourists, conversely, were people who were officially pleasure seekers, but who longed to derive some spiritual benefits from their travels. (Larsen, 2000: 341)

So the point is that tourism mimics pilgrimage (and vice versa); it was a novel form of ritual that used the performance of travel to secure the liminal spaces of personal and group transition. This helps us to understand some if not all aspects of the *seaside*, a phase of tourism in which pleasurability and rituals of transition were once again reasserted and gained a new universality. However, in so doing, and this is a point that makes reference to the discussion of the nature of contemporary tourism in Chapter 2, the conditions were established for the movement of the ritualised pleasure peripheries to return to the centre, or more correctly perhaps, to lose the necessity for spatial distanciation or differentiation. This is the essential point about Rojek's definition of Modernity 2. Spatial escape attempts become an illusion under the generalised distribution and economy of leisure, and here we might say that new technologies of leisure were called into existence by this desire rather than the other way around. This is particularly the case for a society that during the heyday of seaside was progressing from a producer to a consumer society. Here the distinction

of work/everyday and leisure/holiday is significantly blurred by the dis-
tribution of consumerism into both. This is why Rojek was able to argue
that there is no escape through tourism and leisure in postmodern times,
because one is only likely to find the same consumerism, the same empha-
sis on pleasureabilty that one experiences at home. Theme parks reproduce
the everyday, only according to Rojek, in a heightened form. And here the
study of rituals of transition do help to identify areas of social and cultural
change, they pinpoint the aims and desires of a society as well as its tensions
and problems.

  Some of the aims and desires of contemporary postmodern society are
embodied in the lives of celebrities, and celebrity itself is a specifically
post- or late modern phenomenon deserving serious sociological attention,
(but see Rojek, 2001). Think for just one moment how much of our time is
wrapped up in seeing their images, watching them, reading about them
and talking about them. Why is that? The tracings of their working lives
(for example, the *Cavern* club in Liverpool where the Beatles played in their
early days), their homes (Elvis Presley's *Graceland*) and their graves (Jim
Morrison's grave in Paris) have all become sacred sights and places of
pilgrimage for modern tourists. An interesting connection to make here is
the assertion that much popular culture, of the type created by Elvis, The
Beatles and The Doors, is a recomposed form of carnivalesque:

> Again, much popular culture explores the margins, the inversions, the not
> barely respectable, the out-of-bounds. In short, much of this is carnivalesque,
> challenging the harshness of fate and history. The grotesque body returns, for
> example, in forms of popular humour, in wrestling, in advertising. . . . Hence
> carnivalesque parody, inversion and grotesque humour retain an ability to
> unsettle both the defenders of the rational, disciplined zone of project, and the
> modern avant-garde, revealing the truth in Shiach's observation that 'Basically
> "the popular" has always been "the other"'. This may be even more true,
> though, of those elements lying on the far boundaries of popular culture itself,
> or beyond: the hippies, the crusties, travellers, ravers, eco-warriors, and other
> denizens of the nightmare world of the respectable middle classes . . . (Jervis,
> 1998: 330–1)

Although we can think about Rojek's Modernity 2 as a feature of our times,
we need to remind ourselves that forces embodying Modernity 1 have
always been in a powerful position, always moving reluctantly towards
Modernity 2, always behind, conservative. As I write there are conservative
governments in the USA, Australia, Italy and Scandinavia. This is what
gives some aspects of popular cultural celebrity their frisson of danger,
and, also through them, the promise of transition, of salvation: thoughts
that give them an aura of the sacred. Other celebrities embody the every-
day, the everyone, you and me struggling with our impossible lives, failing,
hurting. Almost unbelievably this is how many ordinary people reacted to
the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. *Despite* her privilege and her high
birth and marriage, what launched her into sacred celebrity status were her
human failings and human struggles. Memorials to her have appeared

Figure 5.3   *The Beatles Story, Albert Dock, Liverpool.* Source: Ian Britton

spontaneously in official and personal spaces, with the Internet being now a particularly rich ritual space for this kind of thing (see personal memorial below). When Diana, Princess of Wales died, the intention was for her to be buried in the parish church of St Mary's near her family home of Althorp, but such were the fears that it would become a shrine and overrun by visitors (or pilgrims?), that a decision was taken to bury her on the island of the lake in the grounds of Althorp itself. However, as the box below suggests, her resting place in her family home at Althorp has become a de facto shrine.

Box 5.1

This page is just my little 'memorial' to Princess Diana. I have always loved her ever since I can remember seeing her on the cover of People Magazine. *She was beautiful, stylish and no matter what pain she was suffering always remained composed with that famous shy smile. She was a saviour to world . . . the sick, poor, unfortunate and even to those who were not. Diana will remain an icon of the world, as we know it today. 'Goodbye, English Rose . . . may you grow in our hearts . . .'*

home.nyu.edu/~jpk4/diana.htm

Box 5.2

ALTHORP SET FOR RECORD YEAR

Dated: 01/04/2001

Althorp House is proving to be one of the most popular visitor attractions in Britain this year – the year Diana, Princess of Wales would have celebrated her 40th birthday. Advance bookings are well up on last year and more than 800 slots have already been allocated to visitors travelling by coach in July and August and weekend availability is now limited.

Jessica Hogan, Group's Co-ordinator at Althorp – the country seat of the Spencer family – said: 'We have received a considerable amount of interest much earlier this year and people are booking even now. We are also getting a remarkable number of repeat visitors who appear to be very interested in seeing how the Exhibition dedicated to Diana, The Princess of Wales, has evolved.'

'Obviously there could be a degree of added poignancy this year because there has been and I suspect there will be a lot more publicity about how the Princess would have celebrated her 40th birthday this year. It is very encouraging to see how many of the new visitors are coming on the recommendation of others who have already been. I think we can honestly say that Althorp House is now well and truly on the map for visitor attractions both for people in Britain and from abroad'.

The facilities for visitors to Althorp have been consistently praised since their opening in 1998. Every moment of each person's visit has been meticulously planned from arrival to departure, ensuring that Althorp fulfils Earl Spencer's ambition of being in a 'different stratosphere' from any other stately home.

New for this year

A new room in the Exhibition dedicated to the work of The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, showing exactly where all the money raised has been spent.

A new location for the famous bridal gown and bridesmaids dresses. New captions for the main gallery, which displays 28 of the Princess's most eye-catching outfits showing how she used her unique sense of style to draw attention to the causes she supported.

www.althorp.com/news-media/index.asp

Finally, in addition to what might be called celebrity pilgrimage, we should add that there has been a substantial revival and growth of religious pilgrimage itself, and as with medieval pilgrimage, it is difficult to distinguish it from tourism. So for example, to take the extraordinary revival of the pilgrimage to Santiago over the past twenty years, we can note that the route was 'declared the first European Cultural Route by the Council of Europe in October 1997, and inscribed as one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites in 1993 (The Confraternity of St James, 2002: 1). Both the route and the Cathedral at Santiago benefit hugely from this revival which grew from around 2,500 pilgrims receiving the *Compostela* (a certificate of pilgrimage) in 1986 to 61,418 in 2001. Over that time the numbers have grown steadily but in Holy Years the numbers more than double (154,613 in 1999). A similar story can be told of the pilgrimage to Walsingham in Norfolk, which in the thirteenth century ranked alongside the pilgrimage to Santiago. This too has enjoyed a massive revival by Roman Catholic and Anglican pilgrims, but in the numerous websites dedicated to it, the commercial touristic content sits alongside the religious content, the assumption being that the two will be combined. Islamic pilgrimage is also a major component of the Islamic travel and tourism industry. Before Saudi Arabia had revenues from oil, it was very reliant on its earnings from the Haj. The two million pilgrims to the 2001 Haj, for example, spent an estimated US$2.7 billion and could easily grow more if the Saudi's lifted national quotas.

In addition, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia has recently instigated the promotion of 'religious pilgrims as well as regular visitors' to major Buddhist sites in India, Nepal, Laos, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Thailand (Travel Impact Newswire, 2002: 4–5).

Activity box 5.1

In the essentially secular nature of western cultures the notion of the sacred and social identity has diversified into a great range of cultural activities, sub-cultures, spaces and institutions. To some extent the increase in travel and tourism can be attributed to new configurations and patterns of secular pilgrimage. For some, Anfield, the home of Liverpool Football Club will be a place of pilgrimage and not merely the place where they watch Liverpool play. The Second World War has produced massive pilgrimages to war graves and battlefield sites (Lloyd, 1998; Walter, 1993) all over the world. Celebrity, and especially the death of celebrity, produces what Rojek calls the St Thomas effect, 'the compulsion to authenticate a desired object by travelling to it, touching it and photographing it. Fans manifest the St Thomas effect by stalking and mobbing celebrities and in obsessively

constructing celebrity reliquaries' (Rojek, 2001: 62). Consider the truly significant objects of your enthusiasm, identity and passion. How relevant and desirable is a pilgrimage to these objects and places? What would you get out of such a pilgrimage and what sorts of activities and objects might be involved? To what extent is it actually possible, commercially exploited or potentially exploitable?

Nationalist heritage and the interpellative nature of national objects

Tourist sites, and spaces of special or even sacred national significance are visited regularly and sometimes repeatedly by tourists. In performing the pilgrimage to these places and through observing the rituals appropriate to them, citizens are making a number of possible performative links to the higher social formation referenced at the site and to which they are *variously* connected. Despite the fact that nations are messy affairs with strange, unequal, contested and often violent biographies attaching to its mixtures of peoples, national tourist shrines often deliberately seek to assimilate all citizens in some way, to underlie the fact of their relevance and connection, no matter how shameful, scandalous or heroic their place in national biographies may be. Indeed some interpretations of history at tourism sites may even reverse negative connotations and seek to show how all have contributed to the national character. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (1998) analysis of the new heritage centre at Ellis Island, New York is a good example of this. Ellis island was an administrative office that sought for much of its life to keep certain types of migrant out of the USA . It was the aperture through which all migrants landing in America had to pass for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and where highly selective policies of inclusion and exclusion were practised. Paradoxically, in its current reincarnation as a heritage centre, its main message now is one of celebration and valuation of the ethnic diversity of the nation and it permits a number of performative links to be made by migrants and their descendants from all national and ethnic origins.

Another good example comes from the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Washington, where *Within These Walls* was one of its virtual exhibitions for 2001. Occupying the centre of an enormous room, an entire 1760s built house from Ipswich, Mass. was reassembled. Around it was constructed a chronological/biographical path for visitors to follow. The house and its occupants and their things tell an interesting story and we are invited to 'Meet five ordinary families whose lives within the walls of the house became part of the great changes and events of the nation's past, and learn how to look for clues to the history of your own home and neighbourhood.' Note how we are invited to make a connection between ourselves and the nation with this move. The visitor can look to their left

Figure 5.4   *Ellis Island*. Source: Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

and see cut-away sections of the house exposing social spaces and artefacts or look to their right at groups of artefacts, documents, materials and images. As I wandered around this exhibit I became aware of the ethnic and racial diversity of the other browsers and wondered how they would or could make the link into their own personal lives as the exhibition's authors suggested – what would all those histories amount to? In the early period we are told 'Abraham Dodge, a patriot who fought in the Revolutionary War, bought this house in 1777. A few years later, he married his second wife, Bethiah. The Dodge household also included an African American man named Chance, who most likely was a slave during the war.' For me this introduced a tension into the room, a divisive narrative. We the visitors did not possess a common reference to exhibits but one that has continued to divide us in a profound and disturbing way. Such a thought was reinforced by the next exhibit. It spoke of the military foundations of the American social order and also of their social elites. 'This is the regimental coat of Col. Peter Gansevoort, 3rd New York Regiment of the Continental Line, a rare surviving symbol of the sacrifices patriots made.' Looking to my left this tension was reinforced by a small and functional doorway. The inscription read: 'This door led to the unheated attic where the Dodges' African American servant, Chance, most likely slept.' More tension. However as I walked on I came across this: 'The American Revolution transformed this household. By 1786, the year Abraham died, the Dodges were no longer British subjects and slavery had legally ended in Massachusetts. Still, Chance remained tied to the Dodge household as a servant in the transition from slavery to freedom.' The stark division evident from the very first period is transformed by this and we see the exhibit pointing up a national trajectory of civil rights. However, this is also intertwined now with a patriotic theme that overrides social and racial division. We see a picture of a battle by Alonzo Chappell, 1859. It reads: 'Peter Salem was one of about 5,000 African Americans, free and enslaved, who fought the British during the Revolutionary War.'

As with all nation formation mythologies, the best strategy is always to identify the other. In this case various references to the wicked British enable everyone in the room to feel American. Everyone it seemed had

fought the enemy to build a free and heroic America. Now we have a bond going between us, except of course that I had forgotten something. I was British.

It is easy to explain how these heritage constructions work their nationalistic magic, providing ways of including and celebrating their imagined community, but how easy would it be without the objects that they typically use and how *do* these objects work such magic? If we focus specifically on the objects themselves, what are they doing? At one level they are part of a coherent narrative, a textual pleading with the visitor to see the world the way they do. A narrative uses props such as objects to illustrate the veracity of its cause and argument. Narratives are designed to speak to a general audience and to implant a standardised account of the relationship between the individual and the nation. However objects can also work in the way they interpellate the person or persons in their presence, which is to say, they can speak directly to them, hailing them in *personally*. This is how national memorials seem to work since they typically employ very little narrative persuasion. Instead they rely on embodying an idea that can be directly related to by individuals or crowds. The statue of *Boudicca*, placed on the north side of the Thames, opposite the Houses of Parliament, is a large Victorian bronze of the warrior queen in full flight on her chariot against the invading Roman army. To the British tourist, already dwarfed by the sheer scale and intensity of the Houses of Parliament themselves, this figure interpellates them in a genealogical manner, for is not this queen a native ancestor to all subsequent Britons whose national distinctiveness has been to defend the British isles against invaders? Interpellation consists of an object hailing an individual, speaking directly and meaningfully to them, binding them into an idea but also a community of others who share a similar relationship. So the interpellative powers of objects consist not only of pulling individuals into an idea, it also suggests lines of association and alignment with untold others; it suggests in other words, an identity *and* a corporation. However, it is important to note that in the case of this figure there is clearly a message from the sculptor as well as the positioning of it close to the very heart of a nation, that suggests nationalistic themes. But since the concept of interpellation reveals the role that objects can have in *suggesting* social ideas and corporations, it is not restricted to those objects with specifically targeted effects, such as *Boudicca*. Interpellation occurs spontaneously in the course of everyday life, and is as much the result of an individual's biography as it is the biography of objects themselves. Thus although the constructors of *Within These Walls* could be reasonably certain that the objects chosen would interpellate most visitors, a feat made easier by the suggestive powers of narration, there is generally less control and coordination of interpellative processes. As Crang (1994) makes clear in his analysis of heritage, the designers and interpreters of heritage sites cannot control the pattern and direction of interpellation since they cannot figure in to their constructions the individual biographies of the visitors, it is always underdetermined.

Durkheim realised the power of objects to take a part in the social life of people during his analysis of the totemic cults of aboriginal people of Australia. In the case of Australian aborigines the clan ancestors allegedly emerged from the earth in a period known as the Dreaming, when the earth became animated with life and from when human clans were initiated. Aboriginal clans are seemingly religious or ritual communities as much as they are cognatic communities, because marriage rules, which dictate that clan members must marry outside the clan, mean that clans are not necessarily the day-to-day groups formed by marriage and birth. The multi-clan day-to-day groups or bands are highly scattered spatially and therefore clans tend to meet together only rarely, for special occasions associated with the life of the clan − matters relating to its continuity, death, birth, marriage, initiation and so on. Initially, one theory held that totemism was a misguided attempt to harness and pacify natural powers through ritual observation in nature cults. The social logic of kinship was drawn on to establish links between the key subjects, clans and species. Just as clan members are bound to support and protect one another, so such a relationship was incurred between human clans and natural species. This made little sense to Durkheim who asked why it was that the little, apparently insignificant plants and creatures (for example, the gum tree grub; edible roots and small birds) were the object of such social alliance rather than the really dreadful powers of nature, fire, thunder, flood and wind? For Durkheim there could be only one answer to the riddle: the relationship with the natural world represented by totemism was nothing other than a projection and representation of the clan itself. This is illustrated for Durkheim in the apparent strength of totemic powers vested in different objects. In individual clan animals or plants it was relatively weak, gaining strength in various body parts and fluids, yet more strength in pattern representations and ultimate power in the highly abstract nature of the sacred objects, stones often with highly cryptic minimal marks. For Durkheim these levels of power relate to the relatively insignificant status of an individual clan member as compared with the more abstract and fragmented nature of the clan itself. Totemic powers were at their most potent in their most abstract expression in centralised hidden locations, just as the clan was at its most potent when it was gathered together on those rare occasion to administer the continuity of its social existence. Durkheim wondered at the unequivocal nature of his source material when it described the state of great excitation at clan gatherings: 'The smoke, the blazing torches, the shower of sparks falling in all directions and the dancing, yelling men,' say Spencer and Gillen, 'formed altogether a genuinely wild and savage scene of which it is impossible to convey any adequate idea in words' (Durkheim, 1976: 218).

He considered it plausible that the psychosocial dynamic of the situation gave rise to a sensing of collective powers at work and also of the existence of 'two heterogeneous and mutually incomparable worlds':

> One can readily conceive how, when arrived at this state of exaltation, a man does not recognise himself any longer. Feeling himself dominated and carried away by some sort of external power, which makes him think and act differently than in normal times, he naturally has the impression of being himself no longer. It seems to him that he has become a new being: the decorations he puts on and the masks that cover his face figure materially in this interior transformation. . . . And at the same time all his companions feel themselves transformed in the same way and express this sentiment by their cries, their gestures and their general attitude, everything is just as though he really were transported into an environment filled with exceptionally intense forces that take hold of him and metamorphose him. How could such experiences as these, especially when they are repeated every day for weeks, fail to leave him the conviction that there really exist two heterogeneous and mutually incomparable worlds. (Durkheim, 1976: 218)

The undoubtable reality of these experiences combined with the impossibility of explaining them exactly favoured their objectification in an external source:

> He does not know that the coming together of a number of men associated in the same life results in disengaging new energies, which transform each of them. All that he knows is that he is raised above himself and that he sees a different life from the one he ordinarily leads. However he must connect these sensations to some external object as their cause. Now what does he see about him. On every side those things which appeals to his senses and strike his imagination are the numerous images of the totem. They are the *waninga* and the *nurtunja*, which are the symbols of the sacred being. They are *churinga* and bull-roarers, upon which are carved combinations of lines having the same significance. They're the decorations covering the different parts of his body, which are totemic marks. How could this image, repeated everywhere in all sorts of forms, fail to stand out with exceptional relief in his mind? Placed thus in the centre of the scene, it becomes representative. The sentiments expressed fix themselves upon it, for it is the only concrete object upon which they can fix themselves. It continues to bring them to mind and to evoke them even after the assembly has dissolved, for it survives the assembly, being carved upon the sides of rocks, upon bucklers etc. Everything happens as if they inspired them directly. [. . .] So it is from it [the totem] that those mysterious forces seem to emanate with which men feel that they are related, and thus they have been led to represent these forces under the form of the animate or inanimate being whose name the clan bears. (Durkheim, 1976: 220–1)

Summing up his analysis Durkheim realises that the social reality of the clan could not be grasped without the intervention of these totemic objects. 'In a general way, a collective sentiment can become conscious of itself only by being fixed upon some material object; but by this very fact, it participates in the nature of this object, and reciprocally, the object participates in its nature' (Durkheim, 1976: 236). In this way, paradoxically, social groups, societies and cultures are not so much held together by ideas as *objects*, that permit them to *think* of social collectivities and to perform them through rituals. Now although we have strayed a fair distance from the subject at hand, contemporary forms of tourism, it should

be clear that tourist objects enable similar types of connection and performance to be made. Perhaps, it is through the action and performances of tourism that contemporary cultures have a chance to reflect upon and perform their collective sense[s] of identity, their connections to space, ethnicity, nation, lifestyle group and so forth.

Further Reading

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