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*Contents*

A Conversation with Noam Chomsky	ALEJANDRO DE ACOSTA & FALGUNI SHETH	1
The Leisure of Walking: Resisting the Busyness of Consumption	ZACHARY DAVIS	19
Relocating the Non-Place: Reading Negri With/Against Haraway	MARGRET GREBOWICZ	39
Control and Expose: The Work of Neoliberalism	TRENT H. HAMANN	55
Transitional Truth and Historical Justice: Philosophical Foundations and Implications of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission	LEIGH M. JOHNSON	69
The Global Duty to Care and the Politics of Peace	SARAH CLARK MILLER	107
Race and the Politics of Citizenship: The Conflict over <i>Jus Soli</i> and <i>Jus Sanguinis</i>	MICKAELLA L. PERINA	123
Toward an Ethics of Place: A Philosophical Analysis of Cultural Tourism	MARY C. RAWLINSON	141
The Case for Comparison Between Nazism and the War Against Terror: A Study in Bio-Politics	LISSA SKITOLSKY	159
The Dignity of Labor? A Marxist Challenge to Traditional Marxism	AMY E. WENDLING	179
Contributors		195

## TOWARD AN ETHICS OF PLACE: A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL TOURISM

Mary C. Rawlinson

Never before, when it is life itself that is in question, has there been so much talk of civilization and culture. And there is a curious parallel between this generalized collapse of life at the root of our present demoralization and our concern for a culture which has never been coincident with life, which in fact has been devised to tyrannize over life. . . . One of the reasons for the asphyxiating atmosphere in which we live without possibility of escape or remedy—and in which we all share, even the most revolutionary among us—is our respect for what has been written, formulated, or painted, what has been given form, as if all expression were not at last exhausted, were not at a point where things must break apart if they are to start anew and begin fresh.

—Antonin, Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*

Those Cultured Americans: Attendance at museums in the past few years has exceeded attendance at professional sporting events throughout the U.S. This little known fact is one of the reasons cited by Bellagio brainchild Steve Wynn whenever he is asked why he chose to open a spectacular art gallery at his hotel-casino instead of a sports arena.

—*Lonely Planet Guide to Las Vegas*, 2001

Today's tourists destroy any cultural monument.

—Martin Frohlich, "Is There a Tourist Culture?" *International Scientific Symposium on Cultural Tourism*, ICOMOS, 1993

At a time," Hegel remarks, "when the universal gathers such strength, the individual must expect less for himself, and less must be expected of him" (*PS*, 72). What marks "our time" is the

material triumph of general forms: the supercession of the particular consciousness by corporate agencies of massive proportions and immense regulatory powers, more or less hostile to individual life. Though Hegel does not see beyond the bureaucracy of the State to the economic forms and technologies of communication that threaten even the hegemony of the State in our time, he does prescribe a bureaucracy of normalization by which an "economy of the Same" is reproduced indefinitely in virtually all domains of human life. On the one hand, all the registers of actual life are subjected to the analyses of a multiplicity of empirical sciences and to the formative and regulatory practices inevitably produced by them. On the other, the material registers of actual life, as fields of particulars, are regularly replaced by their symbolic representatives for the purposes of manipulation and distribution. The reduction of the specificity of individual difference in the general image facilitates the management of whole populations. Thus, for example, in the United States in the early '90s, political and economic powers secured the opportunity to dispose of an impoverished underclass by selling a racially coded image of the "welfare mother" to an anxious middle-class. Through the strategy of what Merleau-Ponty called the "second positivity," a generalized image is substituted for the specificity of a field of particulars, so that those particulars can be assessed and managed through the techniques and policies the image authorizes (VI, 45).

This Hegelian horizon defines European philosophy after 1945 in two ways. First, metaphysics gives way to discursive analysis. The work of Michel Foucault or Francois Lyotard, for example, analyzes the prescriptive force of philosophical concepts, which, rather than merely describing or explaining, authorize or justify the deployment of material practices upon the actual bodies of living beings. Discursive analysis demonstrates how concepts and images operate with and against material forces, as well as subjective intentions, to institute and maintain regimes of truth and power.

Second, after World War II a variety of European philosophers focused on what Artaud identifies as the problem of "exhaustion." Philosophers from Heidegger to Derrida have wondered whether or not there is, as Bataille put it, anything new under the sun after Hegel.<sup>1</sup> Is Hegel's account of the inexorable reduction of individual difference in the general image not applicable everywhere, in every register of experience? To be is to be an instance, not a particular, the repetition of a general form, rather than a unique difference. Thus, under the heading of the problem of novelty, philoso-

phers like Derrida worry obsessively about escaping the Hegelian enclosure and seek to elaborate strategies for subverting the relentless logic of generalization.<sup>2</sup>

Neither concepts, nor works of art seem exempt from this logic. Nothing can be uttered that is not prefigured by some regime of truth. No artifact can be produced without invoking familiar forms and tropes. Moreover, these conceptual determinations have come to frame discursive practice itself. "Cultural studies" approaches the work of art or the philosophical concept in order to reveal it as the symptom of some cultural code or the effect of a machine of production. Like anything else, the philosophical concept or the work of art is analyzed as an instance within a general economy, while the idea of unique difference exudes the scent of nostalgia.

Cultural tourism, marrying education or acculturation with economic policy, emerges concomitantly with this postwar logic of generalization.<sup>3</sup> Not only is the work of art to be read as a symptom of culture, but it can be appropriated, like anything else, by the ruling market economies. It can be put to work as a general image in the packaging and marketing of culture as entertainment in the guise of education. Thus, decisive gestures in the remaking of Las Vegas as a family destination for the upper half of the class scale were the inclusion of the art gallery in Steve Wynn's *Bellagio* and the presentation of *The Venetian* as a decorative arts project more massive and serious than anything since the time of the Doges. The *Mirage* opened the upscale *Renoir* restaurant, not because its Renoirs escape the logic of generalization to offer a novel experience, but precisely because the Renoirs are so *well-coded* as to be seen readily as markers of class, reassuring the patrons of the authenticity of their own leisure.

Places escape this ruthless logic of generalization, no more than works of art. Given the circulation of global capital, as well as the hegemony of Anglo-European models of urban and suburban life, one city seems doomed to look and operate formally much like any other. The American schedule defines time, just as the American skyscraper, coke sign, or chain store does space. Ironically, the preservation of the distinct identity of a place seems to depend on turning it into a tourist destination, i.e., on its "having an image." Actual places, subject to the forces of global capital, tend toward sameness, while images of place and their material representations seem to retain a distinct identity. Paris, then, is not so much its skyscrapers or working class apartments, which might be anywhere,

as it is the Arc de Triomphe or the Tour Eiffel. These are the "real" Paris, a Paris that everyone has already seen and come to know, without even actually visiting the place.

Cultural tourism, then, raises two equally pressing, but very different philosophical questions. First, *is* there anything new under the sun? The tourism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was advanced as an acquisition of culture, i.e., of one's *own* cultural heritage. When a German or an Englishman visited Rome or Greece, or even India or China, he was encouraged to think of what he encountered as the foundation of his own culture, an idea consistent with the Hegelian view of history as a development from East to West. Post-war cultural tourism, conversely, emphasizes the value of *difference* and the educative importance of encountering *alien* cultures on their own terms. Yet, cultural tourism promises an experience of novelty that seems impossible in the post-Hegelian world of the logic of the Same.

Second, and from the other side, what happens to places under the logic of cultural tourism? What happens to a place when it becomes a tourist destination? The literature of cultural tourism tends to focus almost exclusively on the problem of environmental degradation of sites and monuments, admittedly a serious problem, but one that is amenable, in principle, to technological amelioration. The more serious problem is the effect of tourism on culture itself.<sup>4</sup> Can the integrity of a culture be maintained when it is packaged as a tourist product? Does the identification of a place as a tourist destination immediately divest it of any distinction and render it yet another instance in a global "economy of the same?"

In approaching these questions, I consider three places, each one an iconic tourist destination: Paris, Las Vegas, and Bali. In reflecting on Paris I show how tourism creates a *detachable aura* substituting via the logic of generalization an image for the actual place. Las Vegas exemplifies the confusion of education with entertainment in cultural tourism, and the power of their fusion in creating place and marketing experience. Las Vegas offers the authenticity of the touristic experience in the absence of any indigenous reality and endeavors to foreclose any encounter with the genuinely alien or novel. Bali, on the other hand, would seem to exemplify concerns about the corruption of indigenous culture by tourism. Indeed, the concept of a corrupted "touristic culture" was developed in relation to Bali. To the contrary, however, Bali exhibits the power of place in resisting and, in fact, in co-opting cultural tourism. In doing so, as Artaud foresaw, Bali offers a detour that

provides an unanticipated approach to the cultural "exhaustion" and logic of generalization in our post-Hegelian time.

### I. PARIS: THE DETACHABLE AURA

Paris exists in the imagination of thousands of would-be expatriates as an idealized city of *petits cafes*, fine wines, and stoic romanticism. But, as our extensive archive shows, there are as many versions of Paris as there are uses for *pieds de cochon*.

—*Travel and Leisure Website*, January, 2005

Paris, Vegas—I'm strolling down a cobblestone street, beneath a cloud-speckled Paris sky. Past Le Village Buffet, Napoleon's cigar and cognac lounge, past Parcage. . . . Let the real Parisians treat the casino with amused disdain. I think it's positively magnificent to stand on the Lido and see the Eiffel Tower rising along the banks of Lake Como. Call it globalization.

—Maureen Dowd, "Viva Las Vegas," *New York Times*, 9/5/99

Here there were a few women dining in pairs without male escorts, robust Englishwomen with boyish faces, teeth as big as palette-knives, cheeks as red as apples, long hands and long feet. They were enthusiastically attacking helpings of rump-steak pie. . . .

In the course of his sedentary life, only two countries had exerted any attraction upon him—Holland and England. He had surrendered to the first of these two temptations; unable to resist any longer, he had left Paris one fine day and visited the cities of the Low Countries, one by one. On the whole, this tour had proved a bitter disappointment to him. . . .

Still thinking of this past disappointment, he once more consulted his watch: there were only ten minutes now before his train left. . . .

"Get up, man, and go," he kept telling himself, but these orders were no sooner given, than countermanded. After all, what was the good of moving, when a fellow could travel so magnificently sitting in a chair? Wasn't he already in London, whose smells weather, citizens, food, and, even cutlery, were all about him? What could he expect to find over there, save fresh disappointments such as he had suffered in Holland? . . . When you come to think of it, I've seen and felt all that I wanted to see and feel, and I've been steeped in English life ever since I left home, and it would be madness to risk spoiling such unforgettable experiences by a clumsy change of locality. As it is, I must have been suffering from some mental aberration to have thought of repudiating my old convictions, to have rejected the visions of

my obedient imagination, and to have believed like any ninny that it was necessary, interesting, and useful to travel abroad.

—J. K. Huysmans, *A Rebours*

Frequently cited as the most popular tourist destination in the world, Paris is so securely identified with certain iconic experiences that it is now necessary to market it as exceeding its own icons. Of course, the *Travel and Leisure* site quoted above goes on to market the Paris that everyone knows, focusing on art, monuments, food, shopping, and, of course, romance. This material reproduction of the place in imagination yields a *detachable aura*, which manifests itself in at least two ways. First, it identifies the place with a certain narrative atmosphere: Paris, e.g., is elegant, romantic, chic, and slightly rakish, while London, is stolid, practical, and beefy. Hence, Huysmans' evocation of London in the long hands and long feet of the Englishwomen with "teeth as big as palette-knives" who were "enthusiastically attacking helpings of rump-steak pie." So immediate is the identification of place and atmosphere, that one way of realizing romantic intentions is simply to go to Paris, as thousands of ads suggest.

Second, through the aura the place is reproduced in specific talismans: berets and baguettes for Paris, Beefeaters and Bobbies for London. While actual places tend toward a loss of distinction, their identity is preserved in disposable images that are easily recognized, reproduced, and disseminated. The operation of the detachable aura hides both the homogenization of actual places that is an essential effect of global capital and the commodification of certain places as tourist destinations.

This detachable aura allows for the distribution of place throughout space or in other places. Des Esseintes is in Paris the entire time that he is "in" London, just as Maureen Dowd visits Venice or Paris without ever leaving Vegas. Paris does not exist only on the banks of the Seine. It is, rather, disposed throughout the bistros, cafes, and restaurants that serve up its atmosphere and talismans, to which customers go seeking that essentially Parisian experience of romance and fashion. This imaginary Paris actually exists all over the world, wherever this detachable aura is used to sell a certain experience or self.

The detachable aura, then, effects a "Disneyfication" of place. As Carl Hiaasen has remarked, the problem with Disney is not that it degrades nature, but that it improves upon it. "Under the Eisner reign, nothing in the real world cannot be copied and refined in the name of entertainment, and no place is safe" (TR, 79).

Similarly, in the commodification of place through the detachable aura, the real Paris is edited down to its talismans, and the promise of a certain kind of experience (romance, adventure) substitutes for the real discovery of an actual place. The tourist visits Paris (whether on the banks of the Seine or in his local bistro) not to discover Paris, but *in order to be a certain self*. It's not Paris, but romance that is sought, or rather promised. It's "simply up to Paris—that most practiced of seducteurs—to start working its charm!" (TL).

Moreover, what the tourist is buying may not be so much an actual experience, e.g., an experience of romance, as it is a commodified experience, one that is already packaged for circulation. Thus, what the tourist actually buys are his photos and videotapes or the ability to say later in conversation "Oh, I've been there." His images and mementos, more than the actual place, deliver on the expectations of tourism induced by the detachable aura and can be traded in his own economies. Tourism, then, is not so much an adventure, an opportunity for novelty, but part of the furnishings of a well-appointed, duly commodified self.

In fact, the very term "resort" which has come to refer not only to actual places, but also to a whole *style* of place (which many actual, non-resort places seek to emulate) implies a lack of novelty, a return or repetition. The resort satisfies or at least corresponds to images that already exist for the tourist, images that he has brought with him as part of his luggage. Moreover, this image is not his own, but one carefully crafted and disseminated for the very purpose of reproducing this consumer as tourist and bringing him to the resort. What he realizes in his vacation is the skillfully marketed dream of the corporate tourist industry. Going to Paris makes me romantic, not because of some novel experience of love, but because Paris has been successfully marketed as the city of "amour."

Yet, the material and social patrimony of Paris is sufficiently dense that it resists this commodification. Paris remains an evolving organism, a working city with a future, as well as a past. The indigenous culture of work schedules, social rituals, cuisine, and spatial organization maintains its own trajectory in spite of the onslaught of global capital, Disney, or the American labor model. While effectively marketing itself through its detachable aura, Paris remains intact, perhaps undiscovered by the tourist. Perhaps, in the case of Paris those detachable aura are like the jewels

of John Donne's mistress, meant to capture the eyes of men, so that they would see *them*, not *her*.

## II. LAS VEGAS: THE ANTI-PLACE

Paris, Vegas—I'm strolling down a cobblestone street, beneath a cloud-speckled Paris sky. Past Le Village Buffet, Napoleon's cigar and cognac lounge, past Parcage.... Let the real Parisians treat the casino with amused disdain. I think it's positively magnificent to stand on the Lido and see the Eiffel Tower rising along the banks of Lake Como. Call it globalization.

—Maureen Dowd, "Viva Las Vegas," *New York Times*, 9/5/99

What happens, however, when this substitution of the detachable aura for the actual place takes place in a site that does not enjoy the historical and social ballast of Paris? What happens to a place, materially and politically, when it is recreated as a tourist destination, either by being overwhelmed by its own aura, or by becoming, like Las Vegas, a site for the operation of multiple auras? Not quite a hundred years old, Las Vegas had no time to establish itself as a distinct place, before an array of these detachable auras was set to work economically. Due to its abundance of water, the railroads founded Las Vegas on May 15, 1905, as a stop along the way to Los Angeles. The development of "the Strip" as a site of large hotel-casinos took place in the late '40s and early '50s. By 1960 Las Vegas had become a major convention destination, famous for supplying all the desires of the traveling businessman. Shifting demographics in the mid '80s ushered in a new era of family oriented travel, and Las Vegas responded quickly. Its new identity as an array of themed megaresorts targeting families was inaugurated in Fall, 1989 with the opening of *Mirage*. Based on a tropical paradise motif, it included themed spaces, attractions for children such as an erupting volcano, a free-form pool with mountain water slide, and the white tiger park, as well as an array of restaurants at various price points and, of course, a massive casino.<sup>5</sup> New building strategies carefully sited the gambling and other "adult" spaces, so that families could travel from the lobby to their rooms or from their rooms to the pool and retail spaces without exposing the children to "sin." Six months later *Excalibur* opened, marketed even more explicitly to children. It was followed quickly by *Luxor*, *Treasure Island*, *Caesar's Palace*, and the *MGM Grand Hotel and Casino*. In addition to its desert and western themes, Las Vegas now covered the South Pacific, Egypt, the Caribbean of

pirates, ancient Rome, and Hollywood. In less than ten years it would add Paris, New York, Persia, Venice, and Lake Como, as well as even more luxurious South Seas venues and additional Wild West sites. In fact, the family-oriented Las Vegas created in the '90s constitutes a veritable repository of aura: without its own identity, an anti-place, a transit site, Las Vegas absorbed and marketed any place. What are the strategies by which Las Vegas constitutes itself as the anti-place of all these places?

The two most important strategies defining the Las Vegas "Strip" are drawn directly from the playbook of the Disney Company, arguably the creator of the resort concept. First, key to the resort experience is the control of the far horizon. Walt Disney himself considered Disneyland a failure, because he had been unable to protect it from encroaching development and, thereby, was unable to extend the illusion of the resort experience to the edge of the customers' vision. In an attraction at Disneyworld, conversely, the tourist is completely surrounded. It is impossible to see anything not consistent with the marketed experience. This concern to insure that the tourist is completely enveloped in the resort experience clearly guided construction on "the Strip" in the last twenty years. Resort infrastructure is hidden underground or behind the great facades of the themed casinos, insuring the seamlessness of the touristic illusion.

This physical separation of the touristic Vegas from the working class Vegas reflects and reinforces the social separation of the two populations. The transformation of service personnel into characters at the Venetian or the Parisian, where, as Maureen Dowd points out, everyone has been taught to speak enough bad French to make any tourist feel superior, is the second strategy taken straight from Disney. Underneath Disneyworld is a honeycomb of tunnels through which service personal and "characters" move: to appear above ground out of costume, or rather out of character, is to court dismissal. Similarly, service personnel at the themed resorts in Vegas are now required to adopt the accent and manner stereotypically appropriate to their resort, whether it be a bad French accent in Paris or a bad Brooklyn accent in *New York, New York*. Thus, the tourist in Vegas no longer interacts with other human beings who are serving his needs in various ways: he interacts with *characters*, now twice-removed from his own position of subjectivity. To the extent that the resort experience is complete there is no possibility of meeting a "native." The indigenous Ve-

gan is not himself, and the relation between the tourist and the service personnel has already been packaged as part of the tour.

This physical and social segregation or alienation is reflected in the marketing of Las Vegas itself. From its beginning it has been marketed not only as an entertainment capital, but also as a quintessentially Western city, representative of conservative American values (Selant, CC). Thus, "the *real* Las Vegas (my emphasis) promotes a staunchly conservative sense of values that insists upon a nightly curfew for youngsters and boasts an ordinance mandating its judges to double the sentence of anyone convicted of committing a crime against a senior citizen."<sup>6</sup> Its association with Hoover Dam, as well as nearby military installations, complicates Las Vegas' licentious image. In this scene of frivolity the locals very much keep their heads and remain serious. This ambivalent image is carefully manipulated, its conservative face employed to attract investment and new labor, while its glitzy, seductive side is used to rope in the sucker.

The result is a relatively expensive city with commuting stress and crime well above the national average, schools well below the national average, and plenty of employment in service industries, though little upward mobility. Local publications regularly chronicle the contempt of locals for both the tourist and his venues. The local refrain is "I never go on the Strip." Not a city like Paris, but a new form of organization, Las Vegas' collection of megaresorts supports services such as schools and clinics for a relatively itinerant population, providing a site of hollow structures sustained by global capital through which both tourists and "locals" move continuously. Without indigenous physical and historical ballast, it supplies no difference by which the tourist might be surprised and dislodged from his own identity. It hides no possibility of novelty.

### III. BALI: CULTURE BEYOND TOURISM

In the temple we ask for a blessing and at a hotel we ask for money.

—Budi, Balinese guide

Bali seems to embody the central contradiction of cultural tourism: the culture that draws tourists, and which tourism would be used to sustain, is itself corrupted and irretrievably altered by being marketed as a touristic product. Cultural tourism, as Michel Picard argues in his landmark study of Bali, transforms the in-

digenuous lifeform into a "touristic culture." Picard's study focuses on the way in which a lived culture becomes an object for its own participants, no longer immediate, but disposable and offered to the foreign tourist for a price.

Picard's own analysis, however, displays the way in which the Balinese had already objectified their own culture. Bali's theatre depends on the role of the *panasar*, who offers jocular and biting critiques of the antique characters, relating them to contemporary events. As Picard himself notes, the *panasar* provide the Balinese with a constantly renewed commentary on their society, "endowing it with that specific reflexive character which observers find so intriguing" (BSS, 53). Moreover, the rituals, dances, songs, and shadow plays of Bali were already objects of observation long before the advent of tourists. "The Balinese have realized, with the utmost rigor, the idea of pure theatre, where everything, conception and realization alike, has value, has existence only in proportion to its degree of objectification *on the stage*" (Artaud, TD). The issue is not culture's objectification, but whether it is offered to the gods or the critique of the Balinese themselves or subjected to the tourist's gaze (McCollister, OS).

The Balinese have not only succeeded in confining tourism to particular sites, while most of the island remains undisturbed, but they have developed clear strategies for harvesting tourists to serve their complex cultural performances.<sup>7</sup> Most local enterprises related to tourism are communal projects whose proceeds are directly channeled back into local cultural activities.<sup>8</sup> There is virtually no emigration from Bali and very little resettling within the island itself. Ordinary people are overwhelmingly absorbed in the aesthetic rituals, from the disposable art of daily offerings to the elaborate musical and theatrical performances of the temples, which in the Balinese culture maintain not only the harmony of life on Bali, but indeed the world. These practices must be sustained: that tourists should pay to observe them is an added bonus, which serves to support the practices themselves.

In 1998 during my first trip to Bali I went one night to a remote village for a rare performance of the Calon Arong, in which a powerful witch is defeated by the Barong, a holy animal whose manifestations are part of each village's patrimony. Literally, the Barong is a costume worn by two men, one for the head and one for the tail. The dance is not a conventional Western struggle between good and evil. Both characters are sacred and necessary. Their interaction must be repeated time and again to preserve the



harmony of the village, the island, and the cosmos. The whole village is there, standing to one side waiting for the performance. A few chairs have been put out for the handful of tourists who have discovered the performance and paid a modest sum which will be used to clothe dancers, buy instruments, or preserve and repair the barong. It is a stunning and magnificent performance in the unadorned courtyard of the village. The barong is splendid, and Rangda the witch, with her long knife-like fingernails, appropriately terrifying. At the end, I hope to talk to some of the villagers, as well as the musicians and the dancers, but I find I'm being hurried out, almost rudely, which is shocking as the Balinese are unflinching polite. The more I tried to explain that I wanted to stay and talk to people, the more insistently and rudely I was shuffled toward the gate of the village. Finally, just as I was leaving I saw a light come on in the little temple at the other end of the village from the courtyard that had been used as a stage. There under the light was the real barong, not the one used for performances for tourists, but the real spirit of the village, who now, because of the spiritually compromised performance that had just been put on for the tourists, had to be appealed to and appeased. At this point, the several men who had been quite roughly ushering me out, forgot me and immediately returned to the courtyard where the whole village was kneeling, palms pressed together at their foreheads, venerating the true barong. The guide Budi, not a member of the village, came over and said with an uncharacteristic and unequivocal firmness "time to go."

In considering the "exhaustion" and "demoralization" of European culture, Artaud prescribes "lessons in spirituality from the Balinese theatre." Whereas Western culture has based itself upon "philosophical systems" that "do not have the capacity to support life," Bali offers a "culture in action." The "intellectual efficacy" of its theatre directly addresses the post-Hegelian problem of the exhaustion of expression and the impossibility of novelty in the face of an inexorable logic of the same. Whereas Western science and philosophy "work relentlessly to reduce the unknown to the known, to the quotidian and the ordinary," thus producing the "asphyxiating atmosphere in which we live without possible escape or remedy," Balinese theatre translates ideas into a sensuous performance that continuously surprises and dislocates the viewer, despite its repetition of ancient forms. It attacks the spectator, not merely with words, but in every register of meaning, "on all possible levels." Thus, it has the "power, not to define thoughts,

but to cause thinking, ... [to] entice the mind to take profound and efficacious attitudes toward it from its own point of view" (TD, 69). Its aim is not so much to teach, as to *disturb*. By confining one's tour to the segregated resorts of Kuta Beach, it is no doubt possible to find in Bali only the tropical paradise of the tourism industry, but the expectations of the tourist are continually at risk and vulnerable to the intrusions of an alien spirituality. The self-consciousness of Balinese culture both protects it from tourism and makes it dangerous to the tourist.

#### IV. TOURISM v. TRAVEL: TOWARD AN ETHICS OF PLACE

For Huysmans and Proust tourism necessarily invokes a logic of expectation and disappointment, not only because the actual place fails to deliver on the experiences promised in its detachable aura, but also because the satisfaction of a desire produced by convention is joyless. It is impossible to genuinely visit another place if we carry with us the horizon of our own predetermined expectations, and few places seem capable of functioning like an effective *epoche* to dislodge us from our native horizon. The possibility of novelty seems especially remote in our time with its well-organized and well-funded industries for generating and satisfying desire.

Moreover, ethics and political philosophy typically criticize tourism as a form of exploitation: in the pursuit of pleasure and entertainment wealthier societies effect both cultural and environmental degradation upon more fragile, economically dependent communities. Tourism, it is argued, commodifies culture, alienating local populations from their own heritage, while overtaxing developing infrastructures and delicate ecosystems. Given the predominance of global capital, tourism produces limited local economic benefit, creating low-level service employment that often involves the displacement or reallocation of formerly independent farmers or merchants. Tourism, in sum, is the continuation of colonialism or the class structure by other means.

Yet, the values essential to tourism—security, mobility, and leisure—are precisely those associated with human rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The flourishing of tourism indicates a concomitant increase in global political freedom and well-being. Where there is war and terrorism, there is no tourism. Where there is economic well-being and security, tourism grows. Cultural tourism can create subject positions for both tourist and

host that provide an escape from the cultural homogenization effected by the hegemony of massive corporate agencies and the circulation of global capital. While 19<sup>th</sup> century tourism emphasized the appropriation of the foreign to one's own cultural heritage, cultural tourism after World War II emphasizes the value of *difference* and the educative importance of encountering *alien* cultures on their own terms. Mobility implies not only physical liberty, but the liberation from one's own perspective, as well as liberation from the homogeneity of culture toward which global capital tends. Though Michel Picard's classic analysis of Bali produces the concept of a "touristic culture," Bali, in fact, exemplifies the resistance of place to commodification and homogenization, even as it provides the opportunity for an educative self-displacement for the tourist. In contrast, Las Vegas exemplifies a form of tourism in which both tourist and host are reduced to moments of a market economy wherein the differences of both culture and individual consciousness are reduced. The contrast between these two places makes clear the conditions and strategies that are necessary to insure that tourism serves its own values of mobility (liberty) and leisure (the pursuit of happiness), while preserving both economic and environmental security (life).

Proust privileges travel as a metaphor for philosophical method, implying a profound distinction between tourism and travel (RTP, 704). The tourist brings to the experience an imagination already constructed by those marketing forces that seek to determine his consumption. He "resorts" to images that are already familiar and effectively coded to reinforce the tourist's role in the marketed experience. Proust, however, insists that travel, rather than bringing two places closer together, makes them seem as far apart as possible. He suggests that travel, to the extent that it presents us with a novel experience in every register from the sensuous to the linguistic, can effect a disruption in the inexorable logic of generalization or convention and open up the possibility of a thought and experience not reducible to any code.

The current commodification of culture is nothing new. Art has always served power. Nevertheless, changes in the technologies of power and money have produced a ubiquitous and relentless logic of generalization which *almost* overwhelms any possibility of an identity that exceeds the logic of code/instance. The resilient genius of Bali, co-opting and eluding the forces of commodification to which it is subjected, while assaulting its visitor with a penetrating sensuous spirituality, grants us the saving

power of that *almost*. No doubt, there are other places, too, that succeed in capitalizing on a tourist economy in order to preserve a local integrity. These places retain the capacity to surprise and invoke wonder. They offer the possibility of a disruption of the logic of the same and a dislocation of its "exhausted" and "asphyxiated" self. When cultural tourism succeeds in embodying its own values, it preserves and enhances place, while displacing the tourist and revealing for him a novel horizon. At its best, it is both epistemologically and ethically sound.

#### NOTES

1 See Bataille, George, "Letter to X, Lecturer on Hegel." See also Heidegger's discussion of the "ersatz" in "The Question Concerning Technology" or Derrida's discussion of the Hegelian "economy of the same" in "From Restricted to General Economy: An Hegelianism Without Reserve," in *Writing and Difference*.

2 Derrida's famous neologism *différance*, for example, constitutes a conceptual strategy directed precisely at Hegel. Whereas Hegelian difference is always already dialectically reduced to the same, through *différance* Derrida endeavors to advance a thought of identity as an effect of an irreducible difference. Similarly, his strategic translation of *Die Aufhebung* as *la relève* invokes a logic of substitution that escapes the circle of Hegel's Absolute and the reduction of difference to the same.

3 Arguably, cultural tourism is the oldest form of tourism, part of the rite of passage for the wealthy from ancient Greece and Rome to modern Europe. Certainly, the conditions for modern cultural tourism are laid down in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the emergence of mechanized transportation, a significant middle class, the concept of leisure, and a genre of guide books that prescribe the destinations and activities essential to the production of a "cultured" European. While a number of guides emphasized the salubrious moral effects of the sublime in nature, the definitive guides of the period issued by Badeker from 1829 laid out a cultural program and prefigured the current standard guidebook practice of rating works and sites according to their cultural importance. Nevertheless, what is distinct about postwar cultural tourism is the explicit marriage of tourism as education or acculturation with economic policy. In 1947 the International Union of Tourism Organizations, precursor of the World Tourism Organization, met in Paris and adopted resolutions on the importance of tourism in disseminating knowledge and on the essential role of "cultural travel" in economic development. By 1960 UNESCO had identified cultural tourism as integral to its mission and in 1963 it spon-

sored the first United Nations Conference on Tourism and International Travel where the economic value of cultural tourism is emphasized. In 1967 the United Nations announced "International Tourism Year" and the United Nations Development Program agreed to fund cultural tourism projects.

4 The first UNESCO report focused specifically on the cultural impact of tourism was published in 1979. It was not until the 1990s that the effect of tourism on "intangibles" became a main theme in the international debate on the ethics and politics of tourism. See Appendix H, "A Chronology of Major International Events Related to Cultural Tourism," *Tourism Handbook for World Heritage Site Managers*, ICOMOS, 1993.

5 As Steven Schiff notes, with the opening of the *Mirage*, Las Vegas begins its metamorphosis from "Sin City" into "Disney with slot machines." *The New Yorker*, 1996.

6 In thinking about the influence of the West on Balinese culture, it is important to remember that to the Balinese themselves India was the primary colonial power. A Hinduized dynasty ruled in Bali from about 1000 AD. While the Dutch East India Co. was well-established on Java by the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, it virtually ignored Bali, given its lack of coffee and spices. By the time the island is brought under their military control in 1908, the Dutch had lost their taste for controlling Bali in particular and colonialism in general, in large part due to the *puputan* of 1906.

The *puputan*, or "fight to the finish," marked a turning point in Dutch colonialism and in the relation of Bali to the West. The Dutch, looking for a pretext to bring the remaining independent Balinese rajas under their rule, claimed damages from the raja of Badung over a shipwreck. When the raja rejected the claim, Dutch troops landed at Sanur beach and were greeted by a magnificent procession led by the raja, flanked by his family, including wives and children, priests, the court, and all his subjects in their finest finery. As the Balinese drew near to the Dutch, they brandished their sacred *kris*, knives signifying both social and spiritual status. The Dutch promptly opened fire and killed the raja. As the Dutch were shooting, the Balinese threw their gold and jewels at them in a gesture of contempt and turned their *kris* upon themselves, until everyone, including the children, was dead.

This self-destruction caused an enormous outcry in Holland and spawned a "leave Bali to the Balinese" movement. The government developed an "ethical policy" in which it recognized a "moral obligation" to the people of the "Indies." Ironically, their interests then became less narrowly economical, and they began to tamper with the culture, in a program of "re-Balinizing Bali." The government also called for and supported the development of the modern industry of exotic travel, aiding companies in marketing Bali and Java as unique cultural entities. So was

born the central *aporia* of cultural tourism which protects the culture in order to market it. See Picard, pp. 2-27.

The Balinese, moreso than the Javanese, whose society had already been made more vulnerable by the cultural imposition of Islam, became very skilled at distinguishing between what was Balinese and what was tourism. Not only its unusual colonial history, but also Bali's complex social organization, comprising *banjars* (village councils), *subaks* (irrigation societies), *pasars* (markets), and temples, give it considerable ballast against the onslaught of global tourism.

7 Tourism is concentrated around Kuta south of Denpasar which is segregated from the rest of Bali. Other tourist areas are localized in Ubud and the coasts. While Bali does not have the material ballast of Paris—there are no World Heritage Sites in Bali—its undulating volcanic terrain resists the sort of development that is easily deployed in the open spaces of the Las Vegas valley. Moreover, Bali's cultural ballast makes it almost impervious to foreign appropriations. After nearly 100 years of aggressive tourist development, by the Dutch before World War II and by the central Indonesian government after, Balinese village life remains intact.

8 By some estimates, as much as 80% of the proceeds from tourism leave Bali, yet it is clear that the income from tourism supports the current flourishing of Balinese art and culture, while its social forms have remained intact. (Only about 15% of Balinese are engaged in tourist related activities.) Tourism has produced some negative environmental effects, notably the plundering of the offshore coral reef for building material. Arguably, the environmental degradation caused by centrally dictated agricultural policies is a more pressing problem.

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## THE CASE FOR COMPARISON BETWEEN NAZISM AND THE WAR AGAINST TERROR: A STUDY IN BIO-POLITICS

Lissa Skitolsky

It has proved dangerous to make any sort of comparison between Nazism and the U.S. led war against terrorism. When Senator Richard J. Durbin likened American mistreatment of detainees to the acts of Nazis or some mad regime "that had no concern for human beings," he was denounced by Democrats and Republicans until he formally apologized (Stolberg, LDA). When Professor Ward Churchill referred to some victims of the twin towers as "little Eichmanns," he was placed under investigation, the president of his university resigned, and then he resigned as chair of his department. And when the German Justice Minister Herta Däubler Gmelin made a vague comparison between the methods used in the war in Iraq and those used by Hitler she was also forced to resign.

Why have these individuals been so attacked and maligned for invoking the crimes of the Nazi regime in describing the horror of the current war? Long ago we heard Cheney's remark that the war against terror requires that we go "to the dark side" and utilize any and all means at our disposal. This comment suggested that we must allow for otherwise unethical, criminal, or sadistic behavior. We were warned, and then we learned that the reasons that led us to war were false, the Geneva Convention no longer applied, and that U.S. soldiers were taking pictures of themselves torturing Iraqi men. The outcry over any comparison between Nazism and the war against terrorism is due in part to the belief that Nazism represents an extreme and unique form of evil against which we can affirm the value of our own socio-political institutions.