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Establishing tourist places: between social constructionism and phenomenology

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Introduction

This research attempts to question and come to an understanding of the moment of encounter in urban settings between the representation of places and the objects there within during the actuality of their witnessing. The focus of the research will be tourists who, being from places distant of the one in question, will have images of the place they are visiting based solely on notions from the societal stereotypes their place of origin hold for the place being visited. This is in a hope to come to a better understanding of which of the two, societal images or personal experiences, becomes more dominant in the understanding of foreign places. This moment, where "either the imaginary gives way to the thing itself, or the thing is appropriated by fantasy" (MacCannell 2011:74) has been referred to as "the most underexamined moment in the tourism research literature" (MacCannell 2011:75). This question seeks to establish a threshold regarding the exact place in a subject's experience from which the experience ceases to be constructionist in nature and begins to be phenomenological. A purely constructionist understanding of place would be one that germinates solely from the opinions of the society a particular tourist comes from, while a phenomenological understanding would entail an understanding generated from actual lived experience of being in the place in question. An additional difficulty that will be later considered is to what extent the constructionist understanding comes to influence the phenomenological understanding, as well as how, cyclically, the phenomenological understanding then goes on to influence the constructionist understanding. The immediate answer would be that this line is at that moment when a subject goes out into the world to experiences the places in question. However, researchers in the field of sociology of tourism have proposed that this may not be the case; that the constructionist perspective may influence the very experienced phenomenology of a place. The suggestions say that not only does the constructionist view strong-arm its way into the territory of phenomenological experience, but as well there are suggestions that this line cannot be pushed back even in the face of contradictory experiences. This research hopes to analyze to the best of its ability the location of this threshold as well as to what extent it is mutable.

Content of the research

   The focus of this research is the pursuit of the following question:

After having had a touristic experience within a place, do tourists' understanding of that place derive from their personal experiences of that place, or are the understandings derived from society generated stereotypes?

   Answering this question will require an understanding of how places are identified with, both before and after actually having visited a given place. In the first chapter of this research, information on the sociological nature of the identity of places will be synthesized, in hopes of bringing forth information that will illuminate how people come to an understanding of places. Specifically, the concepts of *place identity* and its subsidiary term *place image,* as expressed by Edward Relph in his 1976 work *Place and Placelessness*, will each be explored. There will also be some remarks about the way *place image* affects tourism, and as well some notions on the cyclical nature the relationship between the terms have, one feeding back into the other.

   The second chapter opens with considerations on how *place image* affects the understanding of tourists during sightseeing moments (in order to create a newer *place identity)*, as well as an understanding of how tourism functions, as is considered by such thinkers in the sociology of tourism as Dean MacCannell and John Urry. Afterwards, three models of how place is experienced by tourists are offered, namely *anter videre* which deals with how an understanding of place is developed prior to having any phenomenological experience of that place*; post videre,* which attempts to explain how an understanding of place is elaborated starting from the notions gained in the *anter videre* model and building upon actual lived phenomenological experiences; and lastly *nova videre*, where it will be considered how an understanding of a place comes to be formed in situations where there is either little or no previous understanding of the place in question. The three models are meant to represent the complex ways in which the experience tourists are having may or may not collide with the image driven expectations of that place.

   The third chapter will synthesize and analyze data collected from the fieldwork. This will be done in hopes of answering the central question, namely to find if tourists understand places through images or through personal experiences. As well, we hope to understand to what extent

are the expectations of the touristic experience predetermined by the images of a place as well as to what extent are the previous understandings tourists have of a place derived from societal stereotypes. The fieldwork was conducted over the course of one week in the city of Rome. In this investigation, tourists were asked a serious of open-ended questions regarding the city, their expectations of it, and their feeling towards it after having visited it. This was done in hopes that some information could be gleamed about how the city is understood by tourists, both before and after their having visited it. An emphasis on trying to establish what understanding these visitors had of the city of Rome prior to their visiting it was made, and in particular trying to come to an understanding of where and how certain notions of the place were generated. The questions as well forced the participants to consider the experiences they had in the city in light of the knowledge they brought with them in the form of *place images*. The city of Rome was chosen because the investigator had some knowledge about the city, and thus could more easily hold a conversation about it. This allowed the researcher to better follow what the participants were referring to during the interview.

The conclusion will summarize the research and make some claims about how the possibilities there expressed may in turn impact tourism scholarship.

Chapter 1: Understandings of Place

This chapter aims to establish an understanding of two fundamental concepts; *place identity,* the ways in which all of us come to understand and have attachments with place, and *place image¹,* those representations of places that can do much to help us generate a *place identity.* As well, this chapter will try to illuminate how a place with a heritage object may be identified with, as well as how tourists may identify with such a place. To begin with, however, we must examine our subject and the object this subject experiences, thus it must be considered what exactly a place is, what exactly is the heritage in that place, and who exactly is a tourist and exactly what kind of place this tourist is experiencing.

'Place' is a term that initial strikes one as being intuitively understood - in fact, its usage in the English language is rather common. However, ask one to give you a precise definition of 'place' and that person may be given some pause in attempting to do so. To simplify this matter one can take the definition stated by the human geographer Tim Cresswell, who gives "a meaningful location" as the "most straightforward and common definition of place" (2004:7). This definition lines up well with the common parlance understanding of the term as well as how it is used by the other sources cited in this research.

'Heritage' is an equally problematic concept. And just as with 'place,' although most people would not have a moment's hesitation to use the term, they may come across some problems if cornered into trying to define it. This is rather clearly articulated in Rodney Harrison's article *What is Heritage*, where he opens the discussion by nominating two very distinct places that are both given the label 'world heritage sites' (2009). Harrison's thorough analysis nominates all the many problems of giving a straight forward definition to the term. In the middle of this analysis, he comes to give an initial rudimentary definition of Heritage by saying that

> The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'heritage' as 'property that is or may be inherited; an
> inheritance', 'valued things such as historic buildings that have been passed down from previous

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¹ For the purpose of clarification, *place image* will always be italicized when used in Relph's sense, and to distinguish it from a literal image of a place. Relph occasionally uses 'the image of a place' interchangeably with *place image.* This will be avoided where possible.

generations', and 'relating to things of historic or cultural value that are worthy of preservation'. The emphasis on inheritance and conservation is important here, as is the focus on 'property', 'things' or 'buildings'. So (according to the Oxford English Dictionary, anyway), heritage is something that can be passed from one generation to the next, something that can be conserved or inherited, and something that has historic or cultural value. Heritage might be understood to be a physical 'object': a piece of property, a building or a place that is able to be 'owned' and 'passed on' to someone else (2009:9).

It must be again emphasized that this is not a definitive definition. In fact, Harrison moves on from this point to nominate 'practices of Heritage' and other such variations. But if we focus on the notion 'relating to things of historic or cultural value that are worthy of preservation' we come away with a rather useful working definition. When we as well consider that, by UNESCO's labels, many of these places are World Heritage sites and thus it "implies that it is owned (at least, culturally) not only by the local people but also by the world community" (2009:8). Thus, the places we are coming to understand in this research are meaningful locations that; as a part of this meaning, are understood to be of historical or cultural significance and thus worthy of preservation and admiration.

Who is a tourist?

Having established those two definitons, one must now consider another problematic concept that must be tackled; the question of what a tourists is. Speaking of this difficulty, Brucculierei has said that "the central point of a semiotic approach to tourism is the recognition of the constructed characteristics of the entities (places, activities, subjects) that inter-define themselves at the center of this universe: there do not exists 'tourist places' in such, nor exist in such 'tourists' or 'travelers', but only a plurality of discourses that come together to define them[2]" (2009:16). Perhaps the simplest way we can put this is to say that a tourist is a person who commits an act of tourism. This however, leaves with a new problem of defining an act of

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[2] Original text "il punto centrale di un approccio semiotico al turismo e` il riconoscimento del carrattere costruito delle entita` (luoghi, pratiche, soggetti) che si interdefiniscono all'interno di questo universo: non esistono luoghi turistici in se', ne' esistono in se' viaggiatorri o turisti, ma vi e` una pluralita` di discorsi che concorre a definirli." All translations or Brucculieri are my own.

tourism. Again, Brucculieri has some insight for us when she tells us that "Tourism, therefore, has at its base not only a movement in space, but as well a certain determination that defines it in the negative (in that it excludes a labour-based/productive aim) and a temporal dimension (relative to free time / working time dichotomy)[3]" (2009:8). With this second citation, we have some insight to what the 'plurality of discourse' that can coalesce to define the tourist could be. In defining a tourist, there must be a consideration of a movement from one place to another for the purposes that are recreational in nature. Therefore, in this research, the 'tourist' that will be referred to is a person who makes a journey (with the same point at its beginning and end) for the purposes of pleasure, interest, culture, holiday, recreation etc. It should be emphasized that how this is done is not a consideration, as is not considered any attempt to differentiate between higher and lower classes of tourists. The word tourist here is by no means meant as a pejorative, and should never be taken as such. In an attempt to come to an answer of the questions of how people come to understand places that are foreign to them, the tourist is an ideal candidate for observation. The tourist functions as an *other* in the society he is visiting, and can be a witness to many aspects of this foreign (from the tourist's perspective) culture without particular difficulties[4]. As well, a tourist is a person whose ideas and notions of a place are often not yet determined by any form of personal experience of that place. Thus the focus of this research is on tourists. It takes someone who is functioning as an *other,* a person who will not already have ideas and notions of the place determined by personal experience, in a determined place to witness the clash between preconceived understandings and personal experiences. Not considered in this research are those people who are re-visiting a place, as those people would already have a determined amount of personal experience with that place, and therefore would not be constructing their initial understanding from *place images* alone. The function of the tourists in this research is to be the *other* mentioned above, while the latter two are present mostly for the purposes of comparison. It may not be so simple to understand what is referred to

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[3] Original Text: "Il turismo, dunque, ha alla base non solo uno spostamento nello spazio, ma anche una certa motivazione che si definisce in negative (poiche' esclude una finalita` lavorativa/produttiva), e una dimensione temporale (relative alla dialettica tra tempo lavorativo e tempo libero)."
[4] There can be some arguments to what extent a tourist functions as an *other*. To a certain extent it is true that a person need not go somewhere foreign to be considered a tourist, and that one could easily do something within one's own hometown that could be called a tourist activity. In these cases, it is necessary to point out that the activity that is being engaged in is one that is out of that person's everyday patterns. In this respect, he can considered other to the people and places he is interacting with, even if he has only gone down the block.

with the term *tourist*; as well much has been already said about the complexity of coming to understand this term (see McCabe 2009:26-40).

For the purposes of this research we can give a definition that is slightly more specific, for we can say that we are dealing with tourists with a specific interest in heritage sites. This distinction is arbitrary, and much of what will be said in this research could apply to other forms of tourism just as easily. But for the sake of delimiting the argument into a manageable form, this specific form of tourism will be considered. This is not meant to suggest that an increased significance exists for tourist in tourist places with heritage objects. In fact, it has been pointed out that "in the spaces between the "important" must sees, the banal objects of the everyday play a larger role in the creation of a sense of place than has been surmised in the tourism literature" (Metro-Roland 2011:40). This is done merely to delimit the object of our study; the specific tourist we are interested in considering is one that is interested in seeing such place and has thus consumed *place images* revolving around that subject. The research here would be just as valid for a tourist interested in naturalistic landscapes, and this distinction is meant to be opposed to a tourist who is less interested in the place they are going to and therefore might have had a more dispassionate relationship with the *place images* of that place. It is as well worth mentioning that distinctions will in this paper be made around notions of understanding from *place images* as well as understanding from experience within a site. These two distinctions are constructs for the purpose of argument. The only extent to which it can be argued that these two notions reflect in reality is that a person who has not yet travelled to a place can have an understanding of that place only from *place images*. But it is foolish even to make this distinction, for a person in this category is technically not yet a tourist to that place.

Heritage objects in urban settings

The focus of this research has much to do with how different groups can react to a given object in different ways. It is for this reason that it has been chosen to deal with the heritage objects in *urban* settings. This is not to say that heritage objects in other settings are diminished in value or somehow immune to the social process that will be referred to, but simply because it is felt that the amount of interpretations of heritage objects in secluded or non/urban places is somewhat limited. It is hard to imagine many contemporary people going to the Pyramids of

Giza or to Stonehenge for any other purpose than tourism. As well, it has been said that "cities are repositories of capital, both economic and symbolic" (MacCannell 2011:91). It is this wealth of symbolic capital that creates the variation in significances that abound throughout the city. Making a very similar point, Metro-Roland has said that

> Cities offer a beguiling array of possibilities for the tourists from theatres to museums, from parks to palaces. They are the ideal locus for the provision of entertainment and dinning and the presentation of culture. Capital cities in particular are replete with cultural meaning, since it is here that the nation is reified in material form, through government buildings, monuments and museums (2011:5).

On the other hand, the identity of those non-urban places wield is in a respect much thinner than if we were referring to a place that sees a significant amount of diverse urban traffic. Some good examples of such urban places would be the *Piazza di Santa Maria in Trastevere* of Rome or the *Odos Dimitriou Gounari* in Thessaloniki. These are place that do get a rather large amount of tourist traffic, but also have other objects and places that are more linked to the life of the everyday citizen than to the tourist. With this diversity of infrastructure, a place can have a wider range of significances; if one if a waiter at a café it can be a place where one works; for the students skipping school it can be a place to hang out, for the business man it can be a relaxing place to have a lunch break; for a different business man it may be the location of his office; to a tired tourist it can be a place to enjoy a drink in a nice ambiance; to another tourist it can be a place where there is an object they are interested in seeing; for all these people and many other the place can be one of commerce. The identities of this place are endless, an infinite number more than that of a more simplified place that lacks these infrastructures. On the other hand, a place like the *via dei fori imperiali* of Rome is something of a vestigial organ for the native population, and would therefore be a rather bad example for this research, despite being in the very center of a city. It serves a certain aesthetic function, but often it is not worth the trouble for a native to go to see, as there is no real commercial, business or leisure infrastructure (there are a few shaded benches where one can rest and enjoy a view, and there are some food trucks). The emphasis on places that have a more broad range of uses is because it would be in these places where cross cultural experiences would happen to the tourist. In mono-thematic place the tourists is obliged to develop an understanding only from the object of interest and the immediate

infrastructure around it, infrastructure which very likely will be maintained solely for the tourists, while in more diverse places there could be any number of objects to grab a person's attention. This is all from a belief that "The city, essentially and semantically, is the place of our meeting with the *other*" (Barthes 1986:96). Combine this with the way "Tourists are liminally positioned in the space between two or more normative orders" (MacCannell 2011:211) and we begin to understand one of the importance's of such travels, the anthropological understanding of ourselves through observations of the other.

As regards the objects of heritage themselves, which here have been understood "as the use of the past as a cultural, political and economic resource for the present" (Ashworth 2007:3), they will be used in this research mostly as a way of delimiting the field. This is not to ignore the massive significance heritage has on tourism, but merely because trying to add in the variety of ways a heritage object is understood by various groups would add a level of complexity to the research that would overburden it. The complexity of Heritage stems from the fact that

> the study of heritage does not involve a direct engagement with the study of the past. Instead, the contents, interpretations and representations of the heritage resources are selected according to the demands of the present and, in turn, bequeathed to an imagined future. It follows, therefore, that heritage is less about tangible material artefacts or other intangible forms of the past than about the meanings placed upon them and the representations which are created from them. (Ashworth et al, 2007:3).

It may not always be the case that the heritage object signifies in a strikingly different way to a tourist than to a native. For instance, a tourist might be from a neighboring and culturally similar country, or perhaps the tourist and the place visited might have a colonial history together, in which case as well the heritage objects being visited might have a unified meaning for both. However, for the sake of the research this aspect of how places are understood will not be heavily commented on. We can understand that "the formation of the semiotic subjects as counterparts in communication and thus in interaction both with and by objects is always social, linking the individual to the societal, since objects have gained their 'starting-point meaning' due to sociocultural circumstances" (Randviir 2001:612). The impact of this on heritage is just about the same; our initial meaning for the objects of heritage we consume stems from our

sociocultural circumstances, so how we understand them would be a lesson in the understanding of a specific culture, not how foreign places mean generally.

What then, does the heritage object give us? Before going to a destination a tourist will always encounter an amount of *place images* (*place images* being any kind of information about a specific place, in any form that information may take, including actual images, photographs, written descriptions, videos, opinions, other forms of second intentions[5], and any other way information may be conveyed or held) of the place she will travel to, which already before the trip begin to influence that person. It will be argued later in the research that these images of heritage objects have an indexical function that greatly affects a tourist's perception of the place.

And as a final note, in that we are dealing with a place with a heritage object, the kind of tourism we are speaking of also becomes very specific. Tourism is an umbrella term that can refer to a whole host of activities, some being very different from the next. The kind of tourism to which this research wishes to focus on could perhaps better be labeled sight-seeing. But to refer only to those people who are actively sightseeing would perhaps narrow the field of inquiry to far, and some of what is later proposed could in turn be applied to people engaging in other such tourist activities as simply strolling about.

Place Identity

This research attempts to consider the concept of *place identity*. As has been previously mentioned, Tim Cresswell suggests that "the most straightforward and common definition of place" is "a meaningful location" (2004:7). What this does not answer is 'meaningful to whom' and 'meaningful how', and so some further considerations must be taken. These two questions are not as simple as they seem. Places can be "socially constructed by the people who live in them and know them; they are politicized, culturally relative, and historically specific multiple constructions" (Low 2009:22). For a different group of people, however, the very same place would be constructed in a different way. This is because "Identity of place is as much a function of intersubjective intentions and experiences as of the appearance of buildings and scenery, and it refers not only to the distinctiveness of individual places but also to the sameness between

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[5] ""Second intention" [intention secunda] is a term used by medieval philosophers to refer to knowledge involving not the thing itself but the mental or linguistic act of knowing the thing" (Parmentier 1994:28).

different places" (Relph 1976:44)[6]. We begin to see here what is the nature of the *place identity*, and it is not exclusively something to do with the physical setting of the place. Commenting on such phenomena, the Austrian author Robert Musil noted how:

> Monuments are so conspicuously inconspicuous. There is nothing in this world as invisible as a monument. They are no doubt erected to be seen – indeed, to attract attention…You can walk down the same street for months, know every address, every show window, every policeman along the way, and you won't even miss a dime that someone dropped on the sidewalk; but you are very surprised when one day, staring up at a pretty chambermaid on the first floor of a building, you notice a not-at-all-tiny metal plaque on which, engraved in indelible letters, you read that from eighteen hundred and such and such to eighteen hundred and a little more the unforgettable So-and-so lived and created here (2011:19).

So let us elaborate this example by considering a place that has a monument in it. Let us add to that, two people, one who is on his way to buy some groceries when he first noticed a pretty Chambermaid, and then noticed a plaque nominating the life of such and such. Now, at the same time another person were walking down the road, carrying his trusty Baedeker, looking for this exact plaque. Let us consider the identity of this place in light of these two people. For the person, the place has a more varied *function*; he has walked this street a thousand times, knows every little feature about it and feels a general kind of comfort in it. For the second person, the place has a more specific *function*; he for the most part does not know what he will find when he walks down the road, except that at a certain point there should be a plaque that he is interested in seeing. For the first, the place itself will have a wealth of meanings; he may know or have some kind of intimacy with just about every shop there and every person who frequents those shops. For the second, that one determined object has a very strong and important meaning, while the other objects located in that place will take on meanings of weaker strength. The specific object this second person has sought may however in turn lend meaning to the surrounding place (for instance, if the plaque tells us that So-and-so lived in the building where the plaque is situated, the meaning of the plaque has now been extended to the whole building).

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[6] The Canadian Human Geographer Edward Relph, whom during the 1970's had grown "dissatisfied with what [he] felt was a philosophically and experientially anemic definition of place"(Seamon 2008:43), wrote Place and Placelessness, a book where he attempts to "explore place as a phenomenon of the geography of the lived-world of our everyday experiences." (Relph 1976:6)

Generally, it can be assumed that often is the case that the first person would not be in total ignorance of the plaque, but this is just a particularity of our example. The varying circumstances, driven by the different purposes of two people in the same places, can create two very distinct meanings in that same place.

If there is some confusion in the above example, it may be due to the making of a distinction between 'identity with' a place and 'identity of' a place. Relph notes that identity *of* a place "refers to a persistent sameness and unity which allows a thing to be differentiated from others" (1976:45). This refers largely to the physical characteristic of a place, that by which we immediately recognize it, "that which provides its individuality or distinction from other places and serves as the basis for its recognition as a separable entity" (Relph 1976:45). The three components to the identity of a place that Relph identifies are "the static physical settings, the activities, and the meanings" (1976:47). It should be noted that a bit of confusion is generated here, perhaps from Relph's inclusion of 'meanings' into his components of the identity of a place. It does not seem that meaning is needed to recognize a place, or to "provides its individuality or distinction from other places" (Relph 1976:45). It would seem that without the notion of meaning thrown in, we would have a more refined understanding of the notion of *identity of a place*, one that more easily separates from the notion of an *identity with a place*. If we discard this notion, then the identity of a place is the objective understanding of a place, that which is the same to all viewers, while the identity with a place is that very same place with a viewers meaningful understanding of that place ascribed to it (in other words, a subjective understanding of that place). What Relph is trying to establish here can be compared to what Kevin Lynch said in *The Image of the City:*

> An environmental image may be analyzed into three components: identity, structure, and meaning. It is useful to abstract there for analysis, if it is remembered that in reality they always appear together. A workable image requires first the identification of an object, which implies its distinction from other things, its recognition as a separable entity. This is called identity, not in the sense of equality with something else, but with the meaning of individuality ore oneness. Second, the image must include the spatial or pattern relation of the object to the observer and to other objects. Finally, this object must have some meaning for the observer, whether practical or emotional. Meaning is also a relation , but quite a different one from spatial or pattern relation (1966:8)

But going back to Relph, he later goes on to note that "the three fundamental components are irreducible one to the other, yet are inseparably interwoven in our experience of places" (Relph 1976:48). This is to say that our understanding of what a place is, is grounded heavily in the meanings of those places, and that "the meanings of places may be rooted in the physical settings and objects and activities, but they are not a property of them – rather they are property of human intentions and experiences" (Relph 1976:47). As far as meaning is concerned it is very important to note that meaning is not in a place in such a literal sense, but that we ascribe meaning to places. It is also important to note that meaning is ascribed to a place as we dwell in it, and the longer one stay the more meaning is ascribed to that place. To explain this phenomena, Relph cites an example where it is recounted that

> St. Bruno and his followers made them [places] meaningful in terms of this intention – they became 'dangerous' or 'safe', 'useful' or 'inhospitable'. And subsequently as their intentions changed, as they found a suitable site and began to look for land for cultivation, or as his followers now try to get rid of troublesome tourists, so their situation was modified. (Relph 1976:47, citing Stephan Strasser 1967:508-509)

This identity of a place is what allows us to not mistake one place for another, but does little to take into consideration the identity *with* a place, that is how different people react to a given place. As a preface to understanding how we relate with places, we should consider for a moment human egocentrism. "Human beings, individually or in groups, tend to perceive the world with 'self' at the center. Egocentrism and ethnocentrism appear to be universal human traits" (Tuan 1990:30). And this egocentrism has a lot to do with how we structure our understanding of the world around us how we give hierarchical value to what is around us. It must be considered that "the idea of 'center' and 'periphery' in spatial organization is perhaps universal. People everywhere tend to structure space-geographically and cosmologically- with themselves at the center and with concentric zones (more or less well defined) of decreasing value beyond" (Tuan 1990:27). To this information we can add the notions of *insideness* and *outsideness*, and a typology of the degrees of each of these two categories. For Relph (1976:49) "the inside-outside division thus presents itself as a simple but basic dualism, one that is fundamental in our experience of lived-space and one that provides the essence of a place." *Insideness* and *outsideness* is a rather important tool of comprehension that all of us employ in

our understanding of the world around us, and comes into play almost every time we give one thing importance over another. We can think of it in this way; *insideness* refers that which we feel a part of or relate to, that which in some way we consider ourselves close to or belonging to. For Relph (1976:49) "to be inside a place is to belong to it and identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with that place." *Outsideness* on the other hand is that which we do not feel in any way related or linked to, or perhaps something we feel only a marginal relation with. When speaking about how space metaphors color our perceptions, Gaston Bachelard (1969:211) comments that "Outside and Inside form a dialect of division, the obvious geometry of which blinds us as soon as we bring it into play in metaphorical domains," and going on to argue that it is with his concept that our 'us vs. them' distinctions begin. This organization of our conceptions stem from the fact that "the reality of everyday life is organized around the 'here' of my body and the 'now' of my present" (Berger, Luckmann, 1967:36) which is to say that largely what we feel an affinity which might not be due to any actual relationship with that object, but due perhaps to link between our proximity to a place and our interest in it. "These zones are defined by our intentions; if our interest is focused on our home then everything beyond home is outside, if our concern is with our local district then everything beyond that district is outside, and so on. In short, as our intentions vary, so the boundary between inside and outside move" (Relph, 1976:50). Determining exactly what this relationship is can be rather complicated in that the circumstances can greatly vary from person to person. Relph offers us some categories of varying kinds of *insideness* and *outsideness* to which we can use to better understand the way people identify with a place. Although Relph crafted seven categories of varying degrees of *insideness* and *outsideness,* only a few of them are relevant to this current research. This is not to say that the full list is not of some use, but only that in respect to this current analysis it was not considered, largely because some of the terms would evidence more in the psychological state of tourists than in their understanding of place. The modified list is as follows: the first term to consider is 'Objective Outsideness' which is "the deliberate adoption of a dispassionate attitude towards places in order to consider them selectively in terms of their location or as spaces where objects and activities are located, involves a deep separation of person and place" (Relph 1976:51); it is as well important to consider 'Vicarious Insideness', where "it is possible to experience a place in a secondhand or vicarious way, that is, without actually visiting them, yet for this experience to be one of deeply

felt involvement" (Relph 1976:52); lastly there is 'Behavioral Insideness' which "consists of being in a place and seeing it as a set of objects, views, and activities arranged in certain ways and having certain observable qualities" (Relph 1976:53).

These categories are particularly useful in that "if places are to be more thoroughly understood, one needs a language whereby we can identify particular place experience in terms of the intensity of meaning and intention that a person and a place hold for each other" (Seamon 2008:43). On the other hand, the fact that these terms are not commonly disseminated within our society means that people do not gauge themselves by these terms or with these terms (or similar ones) in mind. In that no participant of this research confessed to feeling a sense of 'Vicarious Insideness' with a place, it is only with some reluctance that these terms are later applied to the fieldwork.

Place identity does not sum up easily. The term is extremely subjective; a *place identity* is never a fixed thing but rather one thing for this viewer and something else for another. It has determined components such as, physical settings, the activities that take place there and the meanings a person takes from either of the two. But it must be kept in mind that any observers in place will come to identify it through their intentions and activities. Whether we are speaking of how a place is identified *with* or the general identity *of* a place (which does imply a 'for whom') it can be simply put that *place identity* is the total understanding of a place a person experiencing that place comes to have.

Place Image

Now that we have understood something about the components of the *place identity*, we should begin to come to an understanding of the social structuring of place. The social aspects of place can be understood through the concept of *place image. Place images* can be summed up by the following:

> The Image of a place consists of all the elements associated with the experience of individuals or groups and their intentions towards that place. Insofar as these intentions are focused and are

specific, such images may be considered as narrow and biased, but for those who hold them they are complete and constitute the reality of that place (Relph 1976:56).

These images function on the level of communicative consensus, and express what a group of people really believe about a place. *Place image* manifests itself anytime a person from a given society mentions a place. Summing up this idea, Kotler et al. (1993:141) defines "a place's image as the sum of belief, ideas, and impressions that a people have of a place. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and 'essentialize' huge amounts of data about a place." In a respect, *place images* are just means to a *place identity; place images* are the way a person gleams an understanding of place (in other words, a *place identity*) from images of it.

The term *place image* has a collection of terms that are very similar to it. Specifically regarding tourism, the term *destination image* has also been used to much of the same effect, the only distinction being the fact that the images refer to a place that for at least one group of people is a tourist destination. As well, Dean MacCannell (1990:110) has used the term *marker* "to mean information about a specific sight[…] use of the term extends it to cover any information about a sight, including that found in travel books, museum guides, stories told by persons who have visited it, art history texts and lectures, 'dissertations' and so forth." Nothing on this list would not also be on a list describing *place images*. The plurality of terms here seems to be frivolous, as they all refer to the concept of *place image*. The term *place image* does not refer solely to literal images, in the sense of visual representations, but all forms of representations of that place, be they visual, written, oral, etc. As well, it is important to note that any visual image that depicts a place that actually exists is a *place image.*

Earlier we mentioned that one of the components of the identity of place is the meaning of that place, but it must be emphasized that this meaning is not specific to the place, but is an identity that "varies with the individual, group, or consensus image of that place" (Relph 1976:56). The social aspect of the identity of place can be summed up by the notion of *place image*, which in reality is a component of the identity of place. So it cannot be stressed enough that "the image of a place is its identity and that to understand something of the social structure of images is an essential prerequisite for understanding identity" (Relph 1976:56). Certainly it

should first be considered that the image of place can be a largely personal experience, in that "each individual experiences place from his own unique set of moments of space-time, but more especially because everyone has his own mix of personality, memories, emotions and intentions which colours his image of that place and gives it a distinctive identity for him" (Relph 1976:57). What this in effect means is that these images branch out into a multitude of different ways of seeing one place, so that "different people can hold quite different images of the same place. One person may see a particular city as a childhood hometown while others may see it as a bustling city, an urban jungle, or a great weekend getaway destination" (Kotler 1999:161). But while these individual images are fascinating, they do not really do much to help us understand the social nature of *place image*. What we should instead bear in mind is that individual images are not as individual as we would like to think, and that in reality "individual images have been and are being constantly socialized through the use of common languages symbols and experiences" (Relph 1976, pg. 56).

The journey between a private understanding and one that is in turn understandable by a society is rather complex. Perhaps an analogy that can be looked to in order to come to grasp with this is one from Eco. In *Kant and the Platypus* Eco, recounting the tale of how the Aztec king Montezuma came to understand what a horse is, says "This 'idea' [of a horse] is the nucleus of the CT [cognitive type] that he temporarily constructed on the basis of the NC [nuclear content] received in the form of interpretations" (Eco 2000:138). In this particular example, by CT Eco refers to the individual interpretations (by the Aztecs who witnessed them) of the Spanish horses newly arrived in Aztec territory. By NC Eco refers to the cultural collective understanding of the Horse, which he says is the "communicative consensus" (2000:138) of that idea. In terms to better understand the distinction between the two, it is important to keep in mind that "the CT is private, while the NC is public" (Eco 2000:138). So long as we are dealing with the physical description of horses, this relation between CT and NC seems a little easier to digest. But if one is dealing with places, and specific places at that, then the process becomes more complicated. The complication likely arises from the fact that the 'communicative consensus' about a determined place may be rather thin. For a given group of, for instance Australians, Madrid is the Spanish Capital and located roughly in the center of the country. But a more specific identity cannot really come to bear fruit unless the members of the group agree to it. This is perhaps what Parmentier is referring to when he claimed that "The attainment of true

opinion is a communal activity, since the inferential process arrives at a "settled belief" among scientifically logical minds. But if the is what people ultimately agree on, it is not because a social group has collectively decided upon some belief but rather because a scientifically rigorous community of minds will ultimately agree on the representation of reality"(1994:20). This, however, gives us some degree of difficulty, particularly in establishing who it is that possess these 'scientifically logical minds'. When we consider that there can be a great deal of disagreement about true opinions, the plot thickens. How exactly this is established must be abandoned for a research dealing with that exact topic. For now, it can be conceded that at some level, this does take place.

Individual notions of place merge to form a group understanding of it, which leaves us with a rather large number of different understandings of that same place. This would lead us to wonder how various groups can come to an understanding of place when communicating with each other. But just as those individual notions merge, so do group notions find, in Relph's words, a 'Lowest Common Denominator' (1976:58). Relph suggests two different versions of this lowest common denominator; the first is *public identity,*

> that which is common to the various communities of knowledge in a particular society, and comprises the more or less agreed on physical features and other verifiable components of place. It is a consensus because it has developed out of the free opinion and experience of groups and individuals, although descriptive regional geography in providing facts about a place may constitute much of the basis of such a consensus identity. But in essence the public identity of a place is merely a particularly pervasive form of sociality in community at a rather superficial level of integration of interest, and one which ties together group images of places. (1976:58)

The second Lowest Common Denominator is *mass identities of place:*

> Rather than developing our of group and individual experiences, mass identities are assigned by 'opinion-makers', provided ready-made for the people, disseminated through the mass-media and especially by advertising. They are the most superficial identities of place, offering no scope for empathetic insideness and eroding existential insideness by destroying the bases for identity with places. This is so because mass identities are based not on symbols and significances, and agreed on values, but on glib and contrived stereotypes created arbitrarily and even synthetically. (1976:58)

But when we read this we should beware that Relph (and as well Parmentier) is perhaps suffering from the "widespread belief, nearing of certainty, that the mass media are a powerful instrument of influence on opinion and of effects on behavior" (McQuail 2010:454). To some extent what

Relph says is true, in that there certainly are certain individuals who form 'opinions' about places, but these are more likely to be, at least as far as tourism is concerned, the work of marketers. This is not to say that there are no 'opinion-makers' within societies, and surely one can find examples of moments where 'glib and contrived stereotypes' are used instead of more sound opinions. But that would have to be saved for a research with that as its scope. For the purpose of this research, we should take this divide with a large grain of salt, and bear in mind that "it makes little sense to speak of 'the media' as if they were one thing rather than the carriers of an enormously diverse set of messages, images and ideas. Most of the material does not originate with the media themselves but 'come from society' and is 'sent back' to society by way of the media" (McQuail 2010:455). We will be obliged to take it at face value that if the *place images* stemming from mass media are not based on symbols but arbitrarily constructed, then these are as well the opinions of that society. It may be safe to assume that the consensus of all the 'various communities of knowledge in a particular society' would be a very thin consensus indeed, if it were to exists at all. It would be a common ground between such diverse groups as the very well educated and the very poorly educated on the one hand, and the groups without the means to travel to locations and those with the means to travel to locations on the other. Each of these two pairs is unlikely to come to a consensus about much of anything, so even if all four emerged from the same society it is rather difficult to speak of the 'images' said society produced – or rather, it would be difficult to speak of it with any form of determination. It would be much more fruitful to try to establish from what group these images derive.

To help us understand how we identify with a place, Relph offers the following:

> Images of place have both a vertical and horizontal structuring. The vertical structure is one of intensity and depth of experience and has layers corresponding basically to those of the various levels of insideness and outsideness. The horizontal structure is that of the social distribution of knowledge of places within and between individuals, groups, and the mass (1976:56).

This is simply to say that the closer your proximity to a place, the more your identity with it is based on personal experiences, while the further a place is from the more opinions of it are based on generalizations and those opinions already prevalent within the society one is a part of.

There are many assumptions that the level of identification with a place that you have is the one you always keep, an understanding that leads to such statements, found often in sociological understanding, as:

> "But for outsiders, those who experience a place only in terms of a crass level of behavioral insideness and who know only its mass identity, preconceptions and established attitudes always outweigh direct experience. Observations are fitted into the ready-made identities that have been provided by mass media or into *a priori* mental schemata, and inconsistencies with these are either changed or explained away" (Relph 1976:60).

This last line is a rather risky assumption, for it assumes that at the moment of an encounter the opinions one goes into the place with are automatically the opinions one keeps, despite the fact that they may be receiving personal experience to the contrary. Notions such as these assume that even when we bring what was once outside into our inside, it somehow remains distant from us.

So far we have considered two keystone concepts of the phenomenology of place; *place identity* and *place image*. *Place images* (which, again, is more than simply the literal image of a place) can be considered all the ways an individual or a group conveys or holds information about a place, in all potential ways and forms. At a collective level, these various atoms of understanding collect to form a more unified understanding of place, a *place identity*. *Place Identity* encompasses a multitude of ways we can come to understand and cognize a place. The most important bisection is between *identity with a place*, which refers to how individuals or groups come to understand places contextualized to their relationship with the place and the activities therein, while *identity of a place* comes to refer to how that places is categorically distinguished from other places by means of their geographical locations and physical features. Another important bisection is the distinction between *public identity of place*, which is the specific identity a determined group of people come to have with a specific place, and the somewhat similar notion of *mass identity of place*, which distinguishes itself from the former by being informed solely on the basis of place images without any lived experience of the place in question.

Some Potential Identities

We have up till this point considered *place identity* and its principal components as well as *place image,* those representations of place which can do very much to create identity in those situations where a person has not experienced place first hand. Having considered this information, we can now begin to consider the identity of a tourist place as well as how tourists can identify with a place. To reiterate a previous point, the type of places that are here envisioned are ones that are rather ripe with activity not just for a tourist but for members of the given community that surrounds the site. However, what is listed below is meant to be more hypothetical than conclusive; it is meant to be a framework by which we can later come to better examine the recounted experiences of the participants of the fieldwork. This is because "tourism places are complex mixes of: the material objects produced by past investments in facilities, such as piers, marinas, promenades and parks; various forms of tourism and non-tourism companies; host communities[…]; the local state[…]; and various tourism and non-tourism practices…"(Shaw, Williams 2004:186). This is to say that these places are very wide ranging in their components, and therefore very wide ranging in the activities and meanings that can be found there.

Identity of a Heritage Site

Relph (1976:47) gives us three fundamental components of a place, being "the static physical settings, the activities, and the meanings" but even such a seemingly concrete definition is slightly illusive. Of these three, the physical setting is the one that is most constant, while the other two are seemingly opened to a plurality of understandings depending on the context of the situation. Anyone could utilize the physical characteristics of a place for any purpose; but it is when a given person comes into contact with objects and physical characteristics of a place that both the activity and the meaning of that activity are given flesh. This is because "meanings exist as ongoing habits and practices that are related to different sign-vehicles in different contexts. Objects of perception are basically interpreted and understood in terms of habits that are related to them" (Määttänen 2007:456). As far as natives and non-tourists are concerned, the activities of such a place are as wide ranging as the infrastructure of that place allows, as there

would be in any normal place. What can be said to be different is that the heritage object can change some of the receptions of the place. In other words, it could be a place where people go and have a drink in the presence of that heritage object which may inspire feelings, aesthetic or perhaps patriotic, in them. But it is important to note that in these cases the heritage object takes a second tier in the function, the first being generated from the activity of the principal object of the setting. The complex interlinking between activity, place and meaning is particularly pronounced in tourism. For an act of tourism to be committed, by definition a person must be in a determined tourist place and participating in a determined activity within that place. One of the main ideas is that the tourist engages in an activity they could not do in their home environment; so to speak tourist "occupy the non-ordinary world of 'life-in parenthesis'" (Shaw, Williams 2004:171). This can be fulfilled just with a setting; it would be a tourist activity if a tourist sat at a café that was in proximity of a heritage object and simply had a drink in view of the object which produced a feeling within him of aesthetic response or cultural fulfillment. According to Urry (1995:131) "the minimal characteristic of tourist activity is the fact that we look at, or gaze upon, particular objects, such as piers, towers, old buildings, artistic objects, food, countryside and so on." So at first glance the identity of this place would seem very similar for both the tourist and the non-tourist, for the activity in this example seems about the same. The difference is that for the tourist the *heritage object* is more of a priority, while for the native or non-tourist it might not be. The tourist may not notice, or for that matter may not care, about the quality of the café he is sitting at, while for a native who has had the time to gain the knowledge of the local infrastructure the quality of such a place may be of a higher importance. Being in the presence of heritage objects is of primary concern to the tourist, while for a native it may just be pleasant background noise. Another way to consider this is in light of the fact that "central to tourist consumption then is to look individually or collectively upon aspects of landscapes or townscapes which are distinctive, which signify an experience which contrasts with everyday experience. It is that gaze which gives a particular heightening to the other elements of that experience, particularly to the sensual" (Urry 1995:132). This is to suggest that the biggest difference between this tourist and this native who are doing what seemingly is the same activity is that for the native to be at a café near a heritage place can be a daily occurrence, while for the tourist it is an exceptional one.

Identifying with a Heritage Site

How the various groups identify with a site is perhaps even more complicated, as there is no template that can easily be applied to sum this up. Largely, how a person identifies with a place is personal, and can have very little to do with whether that person is from a place or not. It is not absurd to consider a situation where a visitor to a place, who has been fascinated with that place, feels more connected to that place than a native of it who for some reason feels particularly alienated from it. Considered here are some minimum characteristics of how certain groups identify with a heritage site.

How natives react to the places they feel at home in is, though very interesting, beyond the scope of this research. The focus here is mainly that of the tourist, though a few brief notes may be made about the natives. As was previously mentioned, for a native the heritage object is to a degree secondary in importance regarding their identity of a place. This would lead to a degree of *incidental outsideness* (Relph 1976:52). The difficulty then is coming to terms with the amount of *insideness* a native experiences in places that he or she is familiar with, for surely to qualify as a native they must have a degree of *existential insidenss* (Relph 1976:55). As was mentioned earlier, the further a place is from your center, the more your personal experiences shade your understanding of it, which is to say that the politicized or socio-cultural meaning that the heritage object has with the native may as well be secondary to the personal meanings the person may have with it. The heritage object may in reality signify to a native the good times he had playing there with his friends as a child. That the same place marks the location of such and such historic event might even become secondary.

As far as tourists are concerned, the first distinction we should make is between those that have visited a place and those that have not. For those who have yet to experience a place it is definitively outside, and more specifically the person would have a relationship of *objective outsideness* (Relph 1976:51) with the place. What they know of the place is just the very basic facts about in terms of location. At the very minimum the person in question knows that the place is not located in their home. Potentially, a person may have a different attitude towards the unvisited place, that of *vicarious insideness* (Relph 1976:52). Those people are the tourists who have an active interest in that place, and having educated themselves about it they have much more knowledge about that place despite not having visited it yet. Upon visiting the place both

of these two will have a degree of *behavioral insideness* (Relph 1976:53), in that they will almost immediately understand the functions and structures of the place in question. They will understand if nothing else what activity they are doing within that place. For those who have returned to a place there is a degree of *insideness* that is something more than the other tourists and something less than natives. Personal experiences will color the perception they have of that place, but not nearly to the extent of richness a native may have. The fact that the person has returned to a given place suggest a degree of *empathetic insideness* (Relph 1976:54); having opted to go back to a place instead of seeing something new suggests that the first visit was a pleasurable one in which the person identified with the place in a more passionate manner.

It should be noted that there seemed to be a wealth of *insideness* here, despite the fact that we are dealing with a person who is in actuality not from the place in question. If this is the case then the tourist should not come to feel lost in this new place, for a few reasons. Despite at some level knowing that he does not belong to the place in question in the strictest sense, he should feel like it is fine to be there because he is committing to an acceptable activity that many other people commit to. If all things have gone well for the tourist, he should at a minimum feel as if he were somewhere in a middle ground between at home and alienated. There is on his part a recognition that he is a foreigner, but one that is in this given place with a purpose, unlike perhaps a sailor in a foreign port who is wandering about knowing not what to do. Should anyone ask what exactly it were that he was doing in that place, the tourist could simply point to the heritage object in question and it would be clear that he is there as a sightseer. This having a purpose in that place gives a very strong validity to one's being there. There are of course hundreds of other factors that should be taken into consideration before a definitive judgment can be made, but if we had to try say something in brief about how a tourist identifies with a place housing a heritage object, it should be said understood that overall it is with a semi-sense of belonging.

Chapter 2: Semiotics and Tourism

The previous chapter illuminated the concepts of *place identity,* the ways in which all of us come to understand and have attachments with place, and *place image,* those representations of places that can do much to help us generate a *place identity.* This next chapter will speak of the how tourists come to understand the touristic experience.

It seems to have been rather well established that the act of tourism can be considered an activity of applied semiotics, for "in their most specifically touristic behavior […] tourists are the agents of semiotics: all over the world they are engaged in reading cities, landscapes and cultures as sign systems" (Culler 1990:2). But how exactly is this reading different from one any other person would do in his or her day to day life? It would seem that in our daily life we spend a great amount of time decoding the sign systems that are present around us. So to understand the difference between semiotic daily life and the semiotic experiences of tourism, Michele Metro-Roland has suggested that "the condition of being a tourist is unique in that it puts this daily act of interpretation in the foreground since tourism entails travel to other places, places which must be made sense of" (2000:277). It is this making sense of places that is the concern of this research, but much more specifically how we make sense of these places in the light of the identity we already have of the places prior to visiting them. As tourists, even if we have never visited a place, even if for us such a place is as far reaching into our conceived *outsideness* as possible, we do have some identity of the place. If we did not, we would not be able to plan on going there as tourists; for to get to a place (as tourists) we must first have as a minimum an understanding of where said place is. If a place can be conceived of, an identity of that place, however minimalistic, already exists.

Here are proposed three models, crafted by the author, for how tourists render meaning from a place, *anter videre, post videre,* and *nova videre.* These three models will be considered in more detail at the end of this chapter. The first of these models deals with the understanding a person comes to about a place prior to seeing it. In that we are dealing with how a person understands a place prior to his experiencing it, this understanding can only come from *place images*. The second terms can be seen to function in conjuncture with the first, as it deals with the meaning extracted from a place when a person witnesses it, but this understanding suppose that the viewer already has a notion of a place as they would had they been exposed to images of

it. Lastly, *nova videre* is a model that attempts to analyze how we extract meaning when what is witnessed is something unexpected, and therefore no previous image for it exists.   One can take each of these models and explain them through Eco's notions of Cognitive Type and Nuclear Content as had been used previously. Eco's model closely resembles the two terms taken from Relph, *place image* and *place identity.* There are however, a few additional complexities linked to Eco's model. If the first model is superimposed onto the other, we could say that Cognitive Type is linked to *place identity* while the Nuclear Content is linked to *place image.* For Eco, however, "the CT is private, while the NC is public" (2000:138) and it should be mentioned that this is not a distinction Relph makes in his model, where both *place identity* and *place image* can both be seen as either pertaining to groups or individuals. However, there is a charm to this imposition. With Relph phrasing, there seems to be a disconnect between the relationship of the actors in a society and the *place images* of that very same society. From the analogy Eco gives us to understand these two terms, we understand immediately that there is a relationship between the two that causes the first, CT, to spring up from the second. This is how we can come to cognize a thing we have had no previous experience of, as Eco claims by saying that "A CT does not necessarily spring up from a perceptual experience; it can be transmitted culturally (in the form of NC) and lead to the success of a future perceptual experience" (2000:138).

The first model is meant to illuminate the sense tourists make of a place from place images alone, and therefore the CT (in other words, the *place identity*) this viewer has come from a NC that consists entirely of *place images.* The second model on the other hand is meant to show how sense is made from the actually viewing of a place, but on the assumptions that an understanding of the same place was first gleamed from the place images of that place. In this model the CT (again the *place identity*) will now come from the actual witnessing of the place in questions, though it should be said that the initial *place image* of the place (the CT from the previous model) still lingers in the mind of the viewer, and can in some respects be considered a part of the NC of this new experience. Having in the previously model seen place images of the place that is now being seen in actuality, it will later be argued that the viewer will come to at least partially interpret the place in light of those images. Lastly, the third model will focus on how sense is made of a place that is in some respect unexpected, one in which no previous images are known to the viewer. In this model the NC we are dealing with is things that are

somehow cognitively related to the object the viewer is engaging with, from which he is developing a new CT by which he understands it.

The three models in conjuncture will hopefully allow the tourist experience to be considered more accurately by allowing for more specific understandings of how notion of place are developed in the context the previous understandings a person may or may not have. Specifically, it is hoped that when the first and second model are used together to analyze data, an understanding of how opinions can be changed when the viewer goes from an understanding based solely on *place images* (anter videre) to an understanding that is based as well on actual lived experiences (post videre).

There are as well a few more reasons why these models are being considered. In *The Tourist* MacCannell offers a binary way of understanding the relationship between tourists and their understandings of place. His analysis divides the ways of understanding between *Sight Involvement* and *Marker Involvement,* the first of which is "the sightseeing situation in which a sight has no markers" (1990:112) and deals with a tourist understanding the sight by what is physically there, while in the second a tourist understands the sight by the markers (*place images*) that highlight it. MacCannell's binary viewpoint would suggest that every interpretation act in sightseeing falls into either one of his categories or the other. He nominates only one point of intersection between the two: the times when a person recognizes a place as valuable only because of its markers: "Children, more than adults, have a capacity for being at once sight-involved and marker-involved. Some are quick to point out that a specific sight is hardly worth seeing, but the information associated with it makes it worthwhile" (1990:113). This seems to suggest that people are in some kind of select 'mode' when they are cognizing places. The models offered below in their totality represent a passage taken by tourists on the journey of their understanding. In every encounter with an object there is a chance that their previous understanding is supplanted by new information that would lead to a more richer, more complex understanding of that place, because "the process of semiosis can always be re-entered when our beliefs are disturbed by facts which do not fit our interpretative narrative"(Metro-Roland 2011:136). It would seem rather unlikely that a person could manage a whole trip without ever at one point abandoning the simpler understanding they came to from images.

Tourism Phenomenology

Before speaking of the touristic experience, a few things should be considered about tourism phenomenology. It should not be discounted that tourism is in actual fact an experience that requires all of the senses, and not just the visual. There has been criticism that the field of tourism scholarship, has been "dominated by visualism" (Franklin and Crang 2001:12), and it is certainly in no one's favor to think about tourism in such ways. We should keep in mind that the touristic experience is extraordinarily varied and can involve all of our senses. We should also keep in mind, as Merleau-Ponty (2012:237) reminds us, that perceptual experiences can rarely be considered to belong to only one sense, but is likely to have elements of synesthetic experience. That being said, in the beginning of this research only the visual elements are being considered. This is not to suggest that in developing an understanding of the identity of a place people discount the other sense; the other senses are present, and can have a very large effect on the overall tourist experience. But if this research considers the beginning of the touristic experience to be not in the place proper but at the viewing of *place images,* then a strong emphasis on the visual must be used. MacCannell's (2011:182) suggestions that visual images imply the other senses is certainly interesting, but perhaps a little too courageous to be considered here.

The cathedral may be a good example to use so that the difficulty about this notion of visual dominance can be better considered. It is difficult to argument very specifically what and/or how we are supposed to consume a place of heritage. If we are in a cathedral should our attention be focused solely on the architectonical features of it? Should this be done while ignoring the smell of the pine pews, or the musk of the ageing stones and molded tapestries? These questions will likely boil down to a matter of taste. A better question may be, would anyone go to the cathedral strictly for those smells, ignoring the sights? At least with this example, it would seem likely that people will go to the cathedral first to see it. The other sense utilized there are a consequence of the desire to see it. Yi-fu Tuan makes a better, and more general, argument for visual dominance:

> Of the traditional five senses man is more consciously dependent on sight to make his way in the world than on the other senses. He is predominantly a visual animal. A larger world is open to him, and far more information that is detailed and specific spatially reaches him through the eyes than through the sensory systems of hearing,

smell, taste and touch. Most people probably regard sight as their most valued facility, and would rather lose a limb or become deaf or dumb than to sacrifice vision (1990:6).

We are not satisfying a visual desire by going to places, but it is through the visual sense that we confirm our being in that place. Perhaps a blind person will be obliged to understand that he is in a cathedral from its smells alone, but for the rest of us, we receive that confirmation from looking. As well as this general dominance of the visual among our senses, Henri Lefebvre says much in favor of a visually centered understanding of space:

> In the course of the process whereby the visual gains the upper hand over the other senses all impressions derived from taste, smell, touch and even hearing first lose clarity, then fade away altogether, leaving the field to line, colour and light. In this way a part of the object and what it offers comes to be taken for the whole …
> Any non-optical impressions – a tactile one, or a muscular (rhythmic) one – is no longer anything more than a symbolic form of, or a transitional step towards, the visual…
> The eye, however, tends to relegate objects to the distance, to render them passive. That which is merely seen is reduced to an image – and to an icy coldness…. Inasmuch as the act of seeing and what is seen are confused, both become impotent. By the time this process is complete, *space has no social existence independently of an intense, aggressive and repressive visualization.* It is thus- not symbolically but in fact – a purely visual space [my emphasis](1984:286).

The suggestions here, that the other senses melt into the visual, is rather courageous, but the line of reasoning seems to be on solid ground. It does seem accurate that space has no social existence independent of the visual.

To return to a previous point, if we are dealing with places of heritage objects, the way these places are consumed is largely visual. There are certainly some exceptions to this, such as the famous Wailing Wall of Jerusalem, but such examples seem to be the exception more than the rule. Other places can have a certain tactile participatory aspect to it, such as the fact that many tourists sit on the Spanish Steps while they are there. Again, this would be the exception and not the rule, and to what extent it can be said that a tourist went with the expressed determination of sitting on the steps is debatable. But those instances aside, if what we are consuming is, let us say a Triumphal Arch, it will produce no sound for us to hear, as well as no odor for us to smell. There might be a very large crowd around the Triumphal Arch, and this crowd may produce certain smells or noises or other forms of pollution, but the point the arch was certainly meant to be looked at. Often it is prohibited for us touch it, and going so far as

licking it would likely get us treated as if we were maniacs, if not arrested. But this is not to say that the places that have such heritage are barren to the other senses - on the contrary, they are likely to be ripe with information bombarding all of our senses; from the smells of bars and restaurants and various other odors, perhaps from pollutants, of the city; the clanking of plates, table conversations, passing vehicles; the innumerous things one can touch; the innumerous things one can eat or drink. How this is resolved depends greatly on the person, for if a person's focus is the heritage of the place, then all of these other sensations would be discounted as noise.

Perhaps a last consideration about why tourism appears dominated by the visual sense is the fact that the tourist experience is constructed in visual manner. Souvenir stands sell little iconic semblances of tourist places or books of photographs of the said same places. Brochures often contain as many pictures as written descriptions and even guide books liter the pages with pictures of the places on question. Tourists starting point understanding of tourist places very often come from a similar source, and for this reason do they with such ease seek out the very same place so that they may 'gaze' (to take Urry's term) upon them. If the tourist experience really is dominated by the visual, it may be solely due to the fact that tourists are often bombarded by so many visual *place images* of those places.

What all this is meant to suggest about the sightseeing-experience is that it is initially understood through the visual sense. It can perhaps be said that the visual is needed to inform a tourist that this is indeed the place the tourist wanted to see. The other senses will certainly be used to inform the viewer on the other aspects of place, and certainly they will be used as a measure for whether the experience of being there was enjoyable or not. But for the initial confirmation of the place, they visual is dominant. It is perhaps for these reasons that the vast majority of *place images* are indeed visually orientated. The visual seems to lend itself to reproduction, as Lefebvre comments "that which is merely seen (and merely visible) is hard to see – but it is spoken of more eloquently and written of more and more copiously" (1984:286). The cliché that pictures are worth a thousand words here seems validated.

Construction of Place

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, *place images* have a very strong impact on our understanding of place, particularly those places that are distant from us, thus having an even greater impact in tourism. As has already been established, there are for any given tourist site a plethora of images of that very site, and very often these images are a potential tourists first encounter with a place. This has much to do with the rise of photography, which is referred to by Urry (2011:155) as "the most important technology for developing and extending the tourist gaze" and "central to … tourism more generally" (Urry 2011:186). This means that when these images are encountered a person might not be engaging in tourists activity, but it will be through these images that the desire to visit another place will appear. These images may seem rather simple, but in actual fact they have a rather complex nature that greatly affects the nature of tourism. Speaking of these images, Culler, who refers to them as 'markers', gives the following understanding

> A marker is any kind of information or representation that constitutes a sight as a sight: by giving information about it, representing it, making it recognizable. Some are 'on-site' markers, such as plaques telling that 'George Washington slept here' or that this vial of dust comes from the moon. Some are mobile markers, such as pamphlets and brochures designed to draw people to the site, give information at the site, and serve as souvenirs or representations off the site (1990:5).

Here we already begin to see the first complications; for a marker "constitutes a sight as a sight." This means to say that in some cases a certain significance of a tourist object or tourist place exists only because of the marker. For instance, in Warsaw's old town there is a very ordinary flight of stairs that lead into an alley. The stairs are not particularly noteworthy in any way, nothing about the physical structure of these stairs make them any different from any other set of stairs in any particular urban setting, and in fact from simply looking at them it is just as likely that a person finds them unappealing as that a person finds them appealing. But if one consults a pamphlet or a guidebook about the city, one finds that Napoleon walked up these stairs. Now, for those tourists that take an interest in this particular kind of history, the stairs have a significance that is out of the ordinary; after all, the emperor didn't walk just anywhere.

Therefore it must be kept in mind that to a certain extent images make the place. In the words of Urry:

> Places are chosen to be gazed upon because there is an anticipation, especially through day-dreaming and fantasy, of intense pleasure, either on a different scale or involving different senses from those customarily encountered. Such anticipation is constructed and sustained throught a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, newspapers, TV, magazines, records and videos which construct the gaze. Such practices provide the signs in terms of which the holiday experience are understood, so that what is then seen is interpreted in terms of these pre-given catagories (1995:132).

We can perhaps gleam an understanding of this from a literary anecdote. In his 1984 book White Noise, Don Delillo has a very brief section, about a page and a half in length, that tackles some very interesting notions about tourism. The protagonist is asked by his friend Murray to go see a "tourist attraction". As they approach, they begin to see signs of that advertise this attraction as "THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED BARN IN AMERICA" Murray, who seems much more taken by this spectacle then the silent protagonist, makes seem rather bold statements about what he is seeing. Much have a pseudo spiritual air to them, but the nucleus of his argument, though said in a rather creepy tone, is rather correct. Much he does say seems like it would be up for debate, particularly when he mentions that "No one sees the barn… Once you've seen the signs about the barn, it becomes impossible to see the barn" (DeLillo 1984:12). His own strange beliefs are mixed in with some valid understandings from tourism studies, such as when he mentions that "we're not here to capture an image, we're here to maintain one. Every photograph reinforces the aura…the thousands who have been here in the past, those who will come in the future. We've agreed to be part of a collective perception… a religious experience, like all tourism" (DeLillo 1984:12). But there is a large amount of validity in some of the things he expresses, particularly in how it relates to the relationship between the object of interest and the markers set up to nominate it. DeLillo's example works particularly well because of the seeming paradoxical nature of it. The place is referred to only as 'THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED BARN IN AMERICA' and this in turn calls people to it to come photograph it. It's very existence, is dependent on the fact that people are photographing it, and we are left to wonder whether it was the most photographed barn in America before the signs declaring it as such were up. If it was

and there were not signs posted about it, would it still be a tourist attraction. DeLillo is to some extent addressing the fact that a tourist attraction is in fact created by the signs that market them, though none that I can think of operate quite to the extent that Delillo's lampoon does.

A troublesome notion attached to all this is that of authenticity, for it is becoming a concern that "the proliferation of markers or reproductions confers an authenticity upon what may at first seem egregiously inauthentic" (Culler 1990:5). This is to say that we can never be sure if our interest in a tourist object is genuine or driven by the fact that it is an object that we have been ordered to be interested in. To take DeLillo's example, we ask ourselves if the signs indicate that the barn is the most photographed in America, or if the sign has created the most photographed barn in the world by its statement.

This construction aside, images have an even greater role in understanding a place. Images can never be of the place as a whole, images must in their nature be selective of what to include and what not to include. Notions of authorship aside, the result of this is that the immediate understanding of the place will be of what is shown, and it is "In this way a part of the object and what it offers comes to be taken for the whole" (Lefebvre 1984:286). But in a respect, all images are counterproductive to notions of space, exactly because of this problem. Lefebvre argues that "the claim is that space can be shown by means of space itself. Such a procedure (also known as tautology) uses and abuses a familiar technique that is indeed as easy to abuse as it is to use – namely, a shift from the part to the whole: metonymy" (1984:96). This metonymic nature prevents other forms of understanding from emerging from the image; as it focuses attention to one simple aspect of it. This is a betrayal of the complex nature of place identity, particularly in those places that consist of more than just the monument they house. It is perhaps because of this that "'heritage' is often seen as something that imbues a town, district or region with a 'sense of identity' that somewhat dispiritingly is often boiled down to a promotional tool for the garnering of visitors" (Brown 2011:158). This dissatisfaction is often heard from the natives of a place. For them, the focus of a place is never simply the articles of heritage that are to be found there, and this is because the relationship they have with such places is often more complex than these images could possibly provide.

There is another form of construction of place that happens as a result of the place image. MacCannell speaks much of just how much content is removed from tourist imagery, noting that "Something almost never depicted in travel poster imagery is the one thing most noticeable at

popular tourists destination: crowds" (MacCannell 2011:187) as well as "the workers who made the path and planted and tended the trees are absent so as not to disturb our view" (MacCannell 2011:182). It is assumed that all of this will lead to an expectations that those things will not be present when we travel to our destinations, and that upon finding them these things a tourists reaction will be negative. This is another limiting factor in the understanding of a place. We must realize that places require maintenance and that just as we have decided to go visit it, so will many others. But the larger point is that images are almost always doctored to make a place look and feel a certain way. MacCannell comments on this as well, saying that:

> The "other" in the travel poster is pure backdrop to the tourist gaze. The tourist ego is the virtual focal point of the images. The first rule of the scenic representation for tourists is that the landscape should be devoid of human figures, leaving the viewing ego to examine itself it be the one and only. There are three exceptions to this conclusion. Humans are admitted to the scene on the condition that they are tourists enjoying themselves. This is the default program for the tourist photographic souvenir: "Here we are at ____." The second exception admitting the human into the frame is locals who are there to serve the tourists: chefs, guides, hotel workers, cabdrivers, et cetera. The final exception is individuals and small groups uniformly attired in traditional costumes, colorful figures functioning as part of the scenery. (MacCannell 2011:187)

Urry provides similar information with a more empirical backing:

> Promotional images also stage alluring tourist places through collective and family gazes (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003). Dann's study of 'the people of the tourist brochures' in '11 representative summer holiday brochures targeted at the British public' shows that some 40 per cent of the photographs depict 'tourists only', often within clearly demarcated tourist ghettos. 'In such photos the emphasis was on the tourist group – eating together, on the beach together, relaxing by the communal pool together, enjoying themselves as one large happy family' (Dann, 1996a:72). In contrast, some 24 per cent of photographs show places without people (predominantly landscapes and sights) and locals appear in only 7 per cent (often working under the tourist gaze or reduced to cultural markers of locale-ness) (Urry 2011:175).

All of this is in hopes of stimulating 'desires for 'transporting one's body' to the photographed place' (Urry 2011:173) "by 'staging' geographies that thrill and seduce the eye" (Urry 2011:174). Images thus lead tourists to the perception that places will be a certain way, and therefore the "tourists arrive with preconceived images and motivations, which shape their interactions with local communities" (Shaw, Williams 2004:171). The hope is that at the end of all this

the tourist who has in mind simple stereotypes about a tropical beach locale discovers, when (or if) she travels beyond the tourist bubble, that the tropical paradise belies poverty and suffering for the local population. This would constitute the beginning of real exploration about place, compelling the visitor beyond the trite symbolic characterization of sun and sand. (Metro-Roland 2000:277)

Lastly, it should be mentioned that there is something of a cyclical process to these images. Tourists, it is believed, go to places to see things as they are advertised, and it is only in satisfying those advertisement driven expectations that those images can continue to thrive. "The perceptions, motivations and expectations of tourists need to be confirmed by their experience if interest in, and demand for that destination is to be sustained, as Williams argues, 'in this way, tourists images tend to become self-perpetuating and self-reinforcing'(1998)" (Shaw, Williams 2004:169).

To give an example, a tourist sees a picture of a pleasant square and monument in some city. If upon going there he finds the place to be run down or for some reason unappealing (or unfitting of his preconceived perceptions, motivations and expectations), he will go back home unsatisfied, and might be very vocal about how bad his experience was. If on the other hand the place in question does satisfy what he was expecting, he will in that place take pictures or buy souvenirs which will be seen later by people within his community which will in turn spark desire to go see that place. As Urry puts it "and it ends up with travelers demonstrating that they really have been there by showing to friends and family their version of the images they had seen before they set off. A photograph furnishes evidence that someone really was there or that the mountain was that large or that the culture was indeed picturesque or that one really had a lovely family time." (Urry 2011:179)

Urry seems to suggest a light at the end of this cyclical tunnel, one that is largely fueled by the amount of new digital and mobile technology that empowers tourists to create their own images of places. He claims that "tourist photographs can violate existing place-myths and contribute to new ones while commercial photographs mirror photographs by tourists rather than the other way around" (Urry 2011:187). If this is the case then perhaps in the future, as this process continues, people will have an understanding of the mass media that is more akin to understanding of it that we found in the previously cited McQuail, according to whom "most of the material does not originate with the media themselves but 'come from society' and is 'sent

back' to society by way of the media" (McQuail 2010:455). As it were, Urry already mentions that "marketing managers employ market research of ever-changing tourism preferences to obtain knowledge of how tourists do in fact gaze upon and experience place and what are its positive and negative place-myths" (Urry 2011:187). The tourist consumes images and then decided to visit the places seen in those images, while the tourist marketer sees the images this tourist in turn creates to then promote the same place in new ways. This is the cycle of tourism economy.

Place Images, Indices, Icons and Metonymy

Place images are most certainly signs, in that they do 'stands for another thing to a mind' (1873 - MS 380 - Of logic as a study of signs). However, there are different kind of signs which function in different ways. Of these different kinds of signs, Peirce says:

> I had observed that the most frequently useful division of signs is by trichotomy into firstly Likenesses, or, as I prefer to say, Icons, which serve to represent their objects only in so far as they resemble them in themselves; secondly, Indices, which represent their objects independently of any resemblance to them, only by virtue of real connections with them, and thirdly Symbols, which represent their objects, independently alike of any resemblance or any real connection, because dispositions or factitious habits of their interpreters insure their being so understood." ('A Sketch of Logical Critics', EP 2:460-461, 1909)

Considered as a sign, the sight of smoke indicates that there is a fire, though it tells us nothing of what it is that is burning. In the same way, markers tell us that there is something for the attention of tourists, though they tell us little else of the place in question, or even why the object we are looking at should be looked at. As well, they indicate our attention to a particular point in that place. This is to say that all tourist markers give a certain focus on certain aspects of places in favor of all the others, thus indicating certain features to be noted by the consumers of those *place images*.

Peirce says of indices that they "assert nothing; it only says "There!" It takes hold of our eyes, as it were, and forcibly directs them to a particular object, and there it stops" (Peirce 1992:226). Each individual image will function as the kind of sign they are normally as well, so that an image of a particular object within a place will still be an icon, and a written description

of it will still be a symbol. But in terms of the relation these images have to tourists the indexical function seems to be very strong, in that these images suggest to the tourist where their focus should be in such places. For instance, a tourist may see a picture of a church, and upon going to the place where that church is located, finds that it is situated in a rather heavily trafficked square. The tourist's attention will be first to that church, and then to all the other things in that square; after all, the tourist went to that place to see that thing. Metro-Roland comments that "in tourism, tour guides, guide books, locals, previous travel all help to frame the interpretative process" (2000:274). This is pretty much to emphasize that how we understand the trips we take is through those objects that helped us to construct it.

This is heavily related to how we understand something as authentic. It is because of all the various markers of the object that we understand to value the object itself. It can be asserted that "The existence of reproductions is what makes something an original, authentic, the real thing—the original of which the souvenirs, postcards, statues etc. are reproductions—and by surrounding ourselves with reproductions we represent to ourselves ... the possibility of authentic experiences in other times and in other places" (Culler 1990:5).

So to reiterate, a tourist first encounters *place images* of determined places which will in turn inform and guide that tourist to the places where such places actually exist. The most effective of these markers are those that function visually, that is to say those signs that function as, per Peirce, icons. But, it should be emphasized that, because not all *place images* are visual images, it is not an iconic nature of marker's that has this effect on tourists, but the indexical one. The best of these are of course pictures, as we can see by the large amount of them in tourist paraphernalia. To this effect, Eco (2000:220) says

> it would be hard for me to give someone a description of my hometown that would enable him to find it in analogous circumstances. What would I say? That it is a city whose streets are usually parallel, that there is a very high bell tower in the shape of a pencil and a river that separates the tower from a citadel? Not enough; the description would not be sufficient to identify the place. Sometimes these private CTs are most vivid; we can tell ourselves what our town is like, without being able to tell anyone else.

Here, we can really begin to see why people believe pictures to be worth a thousand words. So to give another example, unless a tourist has an extraordinary amount of knowledge of architectonic techniques, that tourist may not be able to find the tower that stands on the Champ de Mars in Paris, a tower that is made from wrought iron in a lattice pattern. But with a picture,

that very same person would be a lot more likely to find it, and with much less difficulty. Verbal descriptions could again fail if the tourist is looking for a baroque church on a street that happens to be lined with several baroque churches. In such situations and many others, a picture is certainly going to be either more useful or more easily used to everyone involved but the blind.

A last influence to consider would then be the intent of tourists. In that tourists are going to specific places to see specific things, much of what they see that are not those things may come to be ignored. It is said that "Sometimes it seems that tourist travel is a strategy for the accumulation of photographs and hence for the commodification and privatization of personal and especially family memories" (Urry 2011:178). This striking criticism may be at the heart of the problem, for if tourists are simply on a race to collect picture at the various locations they already know from images, they may not be taking the time really absorb the environment around them. Tourists nature as 'amateur semioticians' does not help. If it is true that "As people become photographers, so they become amateur semioticians and competent 'gazers'. They learn that a thatched cottage with roses round the door represents 'ye olde England'; or that waves crashing onto rocks signifies 'wild untamed nature'; or especially that a person with a camera draped around his/her neck is a 'tourist'" (Urry 2011:178) then the tourists may be too busy looking for very specific signs to notice a sign that could contradict their expectations.

It is with the intersection of these iconic images functioning as indices of places that we begin to see how such *place images* come to function metonymically for certain places. These visual images are usually of rather grandiose objects that are easily recognizable. These objects then become a symbol for the whole place, and a reference point for that place. In this way does a single image of the Eifel Tower give off an idea of 'Parisness'. To illustrate this phenomenon, Brucculeri cites a Barcelonian pamphlet that informs us that "The spectacular dimensions of the project have made it thus that the Sagrada Família has become the undisputed symbol of the city"[7] (2009:16). In turn, these images manifest themselves over and over in tourism advertisement, which provokes tourists to seek these specific objects out over other objects within the same place. While this cycle is lamented as generating some of the inauthenticity of the touristic experience, it as well does much to explain why a certain consistency of images comes up when tourists talk about their travels.

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[7] Original text: "Le spettacolari dimensioni del progetto hanno fatto si` che la Sacra Famiglia *diventasse il simbolo indiscusso della citta*"

A Note on General and Specific Understandings

While representations in the form of *place images* will always refer to very specific places, the understanding that is generated from them may indeed be not about the objects represented alone, but of the place that house these representations more generally. This is to say, from seeing a picture of the Spanish Steps, the viewer will come away with not just an understanding of the architectural object, but of the piazza they are located in as well as the city that piazza is located in. To what extent a viewer does one, the other or both is something here not calculated, but it is assumed that both are happening to some extent. This means that when dealing with the concept of *place identity* it might be necessary to distinguish between how a person identifies with a specific place, such as the Coliseum, or a more general place, the city where the Coliseum can be found. Regardless of this, the models proposed work in both circumstances, and whether we are dealing with how a person identifies with a specific place or a general place does not change much.

Anter videre

The first situation here considered is that situation where, from *place images* alone, the tourist begins to develop a *place identity* with the place in question. It is impossible in this research to speak about the initial germinating moment of a place's identity for a tourist, as some understanding of said places must stem from social knowledge, and will likely occur prior to their deciding upon it as a tourist destination. It should be assumed that some initial understanding of other places must exist; otherwise the person would not be able to travel to them. But for the sake of this analysis, it shall be assumed that the knowledge held prior to the very seeing of images is at some kind of minimum. This section here is concerned with the very germination of an understanding of place, which must happen one image at a time. And so a first image is viewed. In this model the NC is the *place image,* or the collection of *place images* being consumed by the tourist prior to their visit to the place in question. The impression about that place that the tourist gleams from this viewing of *place images* can be called the CT, or the *place identity*. And it should be said that in a respect, at this point the identity *is* that

representation, and whatever information the viewer can gleam from that representation, which of course depends largely on the information provided.

This process begins with one representation, from which an initial understanding is cultivated. But it is very unlikely that the tourist will stop at only one such representation. This process will be repeated again and again for other pictures viewed of the same place. These images will consolidate into a certain understanding of that place. In an essay dealing with how literature is understood, Delany (2009:4) speaks about how the separate words on a page come together to form a narrative and how frozen images come together to form a film:

> Let's look more closely at what happens in this visual journey. How, for example, does the work of reading a narrative differ from watching a film? In a film, the illusion of reality comes from a series of pictures each slightly different. The difference represents a fixed chronological relation which the eye and the mind together render as motion. Words in a narrative generate tones of voice, syntactic expectations, memories of other words, and pictures. But rather than a fixed chronological relation, they sit in numerous inter- and overweaving relations. The process as we move our eyes from word to word is corrective and revisionary rather than progressive. Each new word revises the complex picture we had a moment before.

This is a good metaphor to perhaps understanding how *place images* come together to form an initial *place identity* that the tourists will hold for the place in question. But there is a difference here; for a written narrative the image by image process is one of modification, for film the process is sequential, but for *place identity* the process is one of union. Each new image is added to the previous one forming something of a patchwork of understanding of place. These various locations are understood to pertain to that one particular place, though the relative position of each and the various geographical details that hold them together might not be understood. We see something of a similar understanding from Walter Benjamin (2006) and his description of the technological progresses that seemed to highlight the wealth of Paris in the 19th century. The various (and seemingly unrelated) points Benjamin make in this work collage together to form a portrayal of Paris as a whole. Similarly, here distinct images will come together to form a whole understanding of a place, and that understanding of a place is a *place identity* of that viewer and of that place.

A few comments may be made about what exactly a person may infer about a *place identity* from a *place image*. As was mentioned previously, there are three principal components to *place identity* are the physical settings, the activities, and the meaning attached to the two. *Place images* generally show or describe places by their physical settings, which give the viewer that much part of the information. Activities can from that information be inferred – a picture of the beach suggest beach activities, while a picture of a heritage object suggest that the object may be looked at. In the same way, from someone saying (for let us recall that *place images* are not strictly 'images' in the traditional sense of the word) that 'The Guggenheim is a wonderful museum' it is rather clear that the Guggenheim is a place and that a certain activity happens there. Even from statements a little more vague, such as 'Paris is a romantic city' an understanding of the place and some potential activities in that place (in this case some vaguely defined romantic activities) can be gleamed from *place images*.

Images collect in our imagination, which constructs an imaginative model of that place, particularly if we consider the imagination to be "the capacity to represent an object even without its being present in the intuition" (Eco 2000:81). But identity, as what stated in the previous chapter, is more than just what a place looks like, which seems to be what these images are limited to. Place Identity has a lot to do with the activities going on in that place and the meaning given to both the activities and the physical settings. If the assertion about the limited nature of place images is correct, than the understanding of activities there available may be limited, but for sure the tourist will be able to understand something of what there is to do in such places. Even if there are no people shopping in the picture, that fact that it shows shops or restaurants will lead the viewer to understand that these activities take place.

But this alone might not be enough to construct an understanding of places. Individual images can function as the building bricks of understanding of places foreign to us, but a mortar of similar experiences are necessary. If a potential tourist knows that he is going to Madrid, he will extrapolate much of what Madrid will be like from what he knows of other place that are categorically like Madrid[8]. At a minimum, the person will know that Madrid is a city, and will thus make extensions of logic based on what said person knows about cities. Although cities can

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[8] It should be here noted that even a non-urbanite will have a collection of such knowledge. As Metro-Roland tells us "Even for those who are not themselves urban dwellers, literature, film and other mass media entities ensure that cities, as an idea, are well understood" (Metro-Roland 2011:6).

at times be extraordinarily different from one another, some understanding will still be gained through this, for " even with regional and cultural differences, urban areas around the world share morphological similarities in their constituent elements that give them shape" (Metro-Roland 2011:6). Thus the viewer will in mind have some understanding of what a place must have to be considered a city. How many extensions of logic the viewer makes depends on how much knowledge of this kind of place he has. He will reach a more complex understanding depending on how much he knows about cities, capital cities, Spanish cities, cities in Mediterranean countries, etc. This as well holds true when dealing with understandings of specific places. A person will be informed a certain way from seeing a representation of the Arch of Constantine, but after that what else he understands of it and the place that houses it will come from his general knowledge of Triumphal Arches, monuments of patriotism, places of heritage, grandiose architecture, etc.

A single index may indeed assert nothing, but a collection of indices may assert something indeed. The images of a place tend to be focused on certain kinds of objects that are considered to be of prime interest to the tourist, and this in turn can often (but not always) lead these images to be repetitious. The thematic thread of these images (that which unites them) comes to have a metonymic effect on the tourist, causing the viewer to expect such things from the place they go to, perhaps to the exclusion of other things there available. For instance, in a place that is known for a wealth of heritage in the form of antiquity, those very pieces of antiquity become the metonym of that place. We see this in Cairo; despite it having a diversity of visual aspects to it – everything from tall modern buildings to the minaret of Muslim mosques – the metonym of that city will be the pyramids, which remain firmly outside the city. But that is beyond the point – a large majority of tourists, provoked by images, go to Cairo to the see the Pyramids and that which the pyramids symbolize – Egyptian Antiquity.

Post Videre

Of the three models here proposed, this one is of particular importance. Partially because it seems to be "the most underexamined moment in the tourism research literature" (MacCannell 2011:75) as well as because of the frequency with which it happens. Every act of sight-seeing, if

not tourism in general, is a moment of encounter between the structures of the place and how the tourist understands it. Relph states

> It is easy to visualize a person who visits a town for the first time developing an image of that town which comprises a number of centres of varying significance linked by particular routes. But this is misleading, for it implies that he begins with something akin to a *tabula rasa* and that the identity of that place for him develops solely out of observation and experience. In fact the process of identity construction appears to consist of a complex and progressive ordering and balancing of observations with expectations, *a priori* ideas with direct experience, until a stable image is developed. (Relph 1976:59)

The importance of this model is because the tabula rasa situation simply does not happen. As mentioned previously, even when a tourist has consumer only images of a place he has enough knowledge to determine that the place in question is a place distant from him. But this quote from Relph touches upon exactly what this model hopes to illuminate; that process by which we consider place in light of what we already know of them.

The model here is slightly different from the previous one. While the NC remains largely the same in that it still consists largely of the *place images* consumed by the tourists prior to their visiting the site, this NC will now be modified by the information gleamed from the actual visiting. In this way, the CT the tourist has of the place in question becomes either verified by the recognition of the place or becomes modified by the addition of the new information.

The construction of *place identity* in these circumstances can happen in one of two ways. One possibility is that the viewer continues to develop a more complex understanding of place, as per how it was mentioned in the previous chapter. The *place images* seen before are supplemented in the mind with the mental images created from experiencing the place first hand. This kind of addition supplements the previous identity in a profound way, for all the things that could not be conceived of (or were simply omitted) in images will now be experienced and accounted for. The understanding of place will now in all circumstances be more complex; the viewer will have a taste of the place. The hiccoughs that occurred from the conflict between expectation and what is found should dwindle away with an understanding that places are, after all, rather complex. This would be how the touristic image of a place (often accused of being artificial) turns into something that can be considered more grounded.

We should consider the potential that the opposite happens, a belief that seems to be commonly held amongst those who study tourism. In these circumstances it would be better to say that the tourist over-interprets what he sees in light of the images he saw beforehand than to say that the place is appropriated by fantasy. The tourist sees the place as would any of us, but he sees it through a lens of those images he has already seen. Upon this seeing, he is not creating a more complex identity of a place, but simply keeping the one he had and molding the new information he is getting to fit that model.

Although it should be said that this may not happen, it is here that potentially we could begin to consider a conflict between what the person expected to see (that *place identity* as was constructed from *place images*) and what he in fact did find (the *place identity* as constructed by what the person finds there). As was stated previously, images of place are not always sincere in their representations. If this insincerity is obvious, it could lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction in the tourist. One of the questions this research aims to investigate (particularly with the fieldwork) is to what extent such moments actually occur, or if in these situations a tourist discounts conflicts in faith of what images have instructed him to find in such places. If we are speaking of a situation where we are dealing with a specific understanding of place (how a tourist comes to identify with determined objects with a place) then the tourist in question will have to modify that mental image to synchronize with the new understanding he gained from the witnessing of the objects. If, for instance, the represented object is shown to be well kept when in reality it is mal-maintained, this could lead to a sensation of dissatisfaction in the viewer, as well as causing him to modify how he understands that place. This would be evidenced in the tourist's recounting of his thoughts on said place; when asked how the object was an answer will be given that expresses dissatisfaction and the reason for this dissatisfaction. Another example of such a situation would be when the object that was represented in the *place image* is for some reason underwhelmed by the other objects in that area. This would again lead to similar reactions of discontentment, which may be expressed when the person recounts their thoughts about the place in question.

Another consideration is that this negative reaction happens with how a place is understood as a whole; in other words, not a reaction to a particularly aesthetically pleasing bridge, but to the city that houses it. This can be thought of as a conflict between the metonymic nature of the images, which might have failed to realize, and what a person finds in that place

instead. If a person was expecting a place to be calm and quiet, and comes to find that it is rather hectic, he would be dissatisfied indeed. Often this could be the reaction to those vague attributes that may be given to certain places, as when some places are referred to as romantic. A person who does not come to find this may come to feel dissatisfied, and it will again be noted in the way he speaks of the place. Something very similar to this is considered in the next model as well.

The list about how a viewer modifies his understanding of places he has consumed would be incredibly long, there being all manners of ways in which the expectation generated from *place images* lead viewers to expect something they will in turn not find. It should be mentioned that this reaction will not necessarily be negative; a person may be expecting to find something he would normally detest and instead find something that he considers pleasurable. The point being made is that these situations do indeed arise, and likely very often. A tourist can only be informed from *place images* to a certain and very limited degree, and this is partially because *place images* are limited in their nature. A viewer may not consciously reflect on the difference between what was expected and what was found; in fact a viewer may adjust his mental image of that place without realizing it at all. But this is happening, and to some degree it is exactly for this reason that people go to places of heritage at all. Pictures of famous heritage sites are disseminated widely, but because the pictures are known to be insufficient in describing what it really feels like to be in the presence of these objects, people travel distances to witness such places first hand.

Nova videre

This last model offered here deals with how place are cognized when encountered in a place by a person who has witnessed no previous *place images* of it. Previously the situation encountered have all supposed that the *place identity* the tourist in question holds is based first on *place images* and then modifying this understanding with personal experiences had in the place in question. This model supposes an encounter where no previous *place images* are used to develop this initial point *place identity.* But to what extent this happens is rather specific. The very stumbling upon something not previously seen implies that the person has been in the place long enough to develop an understanding of that place, however complete or limited. This model

can really only apply to specific places, though this knowledge can later have an effect on the person's general understanding of the place. There are no doors into Narnia; no situations where a person suddenly finds himself in a new place completely removed from any of conceptions.

In this model, unlike the previous ones, the NC is not the place images of the place that is being cognized, but whatever mental images that help this viewer come to any kind of identification with the object in question. This will in turn produce a new CT about the place this person has come to find. In this situation the tourist cognizes the place in question in the context of the other places he has seen in the same vicinity. For instance, a person walking about Athens may stumble upon some ruins that he was unaware of. The viewer will understand this place first in the light of what he knows about Athenian ruins, and from this knowledge certain assumptions will be made about what there was found.

As well, the viewer may encounter an object that he does not immediately understand, and so cannot contextualize it amongst other things of the same type. In this case, the person will be obliged to contextualize it on the basis of what he knows about the location as a whole. So if a traveler stumbles upon some heritage object or the other in Lisbon, it will be contextualized in light of what that person knows about the city of Lisbon and the history of that place.

That last examples assume that the new place found fits seamlessly into the general understanding of a place the viewer has, and this might not always be the case. There may be circumstances where a person stumbles on to something that was unexpected in regards to his expectation of the place in general. To clarify this we could take the example of a person traveling about a country that is understood to be wholly Catholic and then finding a community of a different religion. It is the very knowledge the tourist had of the country being visited that gives him pause about the community he is now seeing, and where it not for that knowledge the community would not really be anything of extraordinary note. What here becomes modified is the tourist's understanding of the place in general. This in a respect can be a breaking of the metonymic understanding of the place. That thing that was emblematic of the place in question (in this example, Catholicism) has become less significant, and the viewer in question comes to realize that the place is more complex than that. An understanding of the complex aspects of the place he is in come to stand out, and so the place he is in is no longer understood as wholly one thing, but largely one thing with scatterings of other things.

Chapter 3: Fieldwork

interview #	age	origin	Gender
a	40	brazil	m
b	30	brazil	m
c	19	brazil	m
d	26	australia	f
d1	26	australia	f
e	18	holland	m
f	23	australia	m
g	35	brazil	m
h	21	Canada	m
i	18	Canada	f
j	25	USA	m
k	51	egypt	f
l	24	Chile	f
m	26	Mexico	f
m1	26	Mexico	f
n	24	london	f
o	20	texas	f
o1	27	texas	m
p	29	argentina	f
q	28	brazil	f
q1	23	brazil	f
q2	26	brazil	m
r	26	Nashville	f
s	25	australia	f
s1	23	australia	f
t	23	Switzelan	m
u	31	australia	f
u1	32	australia	f
v	23	london	f
w	22	Arkansas	m
x	24	Lebanon	m
y	50*	USA	f

This chapter looks at the data collected from a fieldwork committed in order to shed some light on the topic of this research. The synthesis of this information is catalogued here in the following manner; a first section considers certain limitations of the research as well as some background information; a second section brings forth some general analysis of the data; a third section considers some data supporting the three models offered in the previous chapter; and a final section considers some concluding remarks.

Attached here is the full participant list of the research. This list contain the age, gender and place of origin of each of the participants. The research will refer to participants by a letterthat is in parenthesis after every mention. This number refers to the order in which the interviews took place. In cases where multiple participants were interviewed at once, a number is added to the number to note the other participants.

The aim of the fieldwork was to attempt to establish some of the validity of the models listed in the previous two research chapters, as well as to come to a better understanding of how the theoretical aspects of tourism sociology and place phenomenology actually fit to the

experience of tourism. It is hoped that this can be demonstrated by engaging tourists, who have recently completed a tourism experience, to speak about what they have seen, particularly in light of the *place images* they encountered prior to partaking on their trip. By getting the participants to do such, they might be able to discuss how places where cognized prior to their journey, as well as how this cognition was modified during the actual witnessing of the trip. In this way we can gain knowledge about how these tourists identify with those places in question. From there, this data can be examined to perhaps draw some conclusions regarding the implication of this interpretation and reinterpretation. As well, it is hoped that a heavy examination of to what extent the tourist experience is constructed previous to its occurrence can shed some light in a form of a response to the initial research question: at what point does a tourists experience cease to be constructionist and begin to be phenomenological. By making the participants talk about their experiences, and thus forcing them to think about their experience in terms of *place images* seen prior and actual experience happening only after, and to a certain extent because of, those *place images,* it is hoped that they can shed some light on the differences they encountered between the two. It is here that that line dividing the two forms of experience should manifest, and it is as well hoped that in acknowledging that difference between how places are versus how were demonstrated to be can force the participants into some illumination regarding the research question.

General information and limitations of the research

The fieldwork that is mean to accompany this research was carried out in the city of Rome from the 16th of April to the 23rd of April 2012. Open ended interviews were carried out with touristsabout the impressions they had of the city both before and after their having visited it. The interviewer attempted to have guided conversations with his participants. This format was chosen over other possibilities (such as a questionnaire) under the notion that the information that would be gathered would not necessarily surmise very easily into a questionnaire form. Having open ended conversation with participants allowed for them to express notions of place that might be slightly more complicated, whilst a questionnaire might

limit their answers to one of the choice available or whatever can fit into the lines provided. It was felt that this would not be conducive to giving complete answers. Particularly in those circumstances where an understanding of place might have rater personalized origins, it was felt that giving the participants a platform to speak at their leisure was preferable. The risk of this was, of course, the fact that interviews are more time consuming and not many participants would be willing to give up some of their time for an interview (which is something to consider in regards to the number of interviews that happened).

Specifically, four questions were used in an attempt to guide these conversations. The questions were as follows:

- What images do you remember seeing prior to coming to the city or Rome and what impressions did you have of what the city was going to be like?
- Have you seen anything in the city the struck you, either positively or negatively?
- Did you encounter anything in the city that you were not expecting to find here?
- Having now spent some time in the city, what is your overall impression of the city?

-

Based on the responses to these questions, the interviewer asked them to expound on points he found might be central to the research argument. As these interviews were conducted, certain information was not asked of the participants, specifically information about their education and social background. Regarding education, some of the participants provided that information without being asked. Most of the participants did not offer information about their level of education, and in that this research tried to cast a wide net in terms of the variety of people interviewed, the education level of the participants was not asked. Despite the fact that it will be later argued that education level can be said to have an effect on the amounts and kinds of*place images* the participants had been exposed to, in order tohave as unbiased a sample as possible, the participants were not asked questions about their education level during the interviews. Only considered here are those cases where education level has had some demonstrable influence on the touristic experience

In total, thirty-two people were interviewed for this research; nineteen of them were interviewed individually, while ten people were interviewed in five pairs, and one group of three

tourists were as well interviewed.Italians were specifically excluded from the interviews. The reason for this was that as Rome is the capitol of Italy, any Italians that might have been visiting the city as tourists would have a wealth of information about the city of Rome (in the form of various *place images)* from their general cultural background and education. This is neither advantageous nor disadvantageous; it merely places them into a separate category that by default has a notion of *insideness* (perhaps *vicarious insideness*, in that it is *their* capitol city) not available to the other tourists.
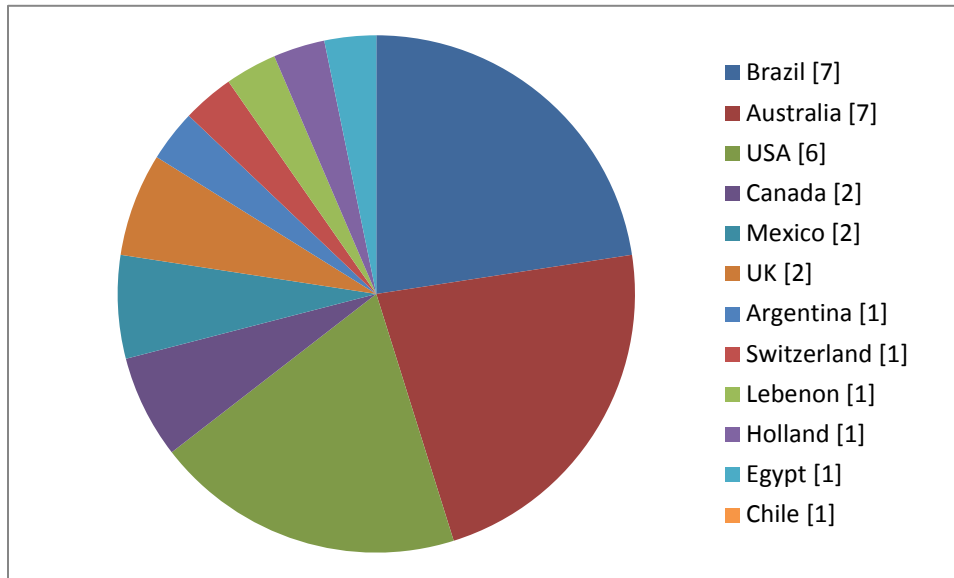
Table 1: Number of participants by nationality

- Brazil [7]
- Australia [7]
- USA [6]
- Canada [2]
- Mexico [2]
- UK [2]
- Argentina [1]
- Switzerland [1]
- Lebenon [1]
- Holland [1]
- Egypt [1]
- Chile [1]

Tourists were approached and interviewed in the common room of a hostel where they were staying. This hostel, Alessandro Downtown, is located in the center of Rome, a very short walk from Rome's central station. The hostel does not have an enforced age limit (it is not a 'youth' hostel), though its Spartan accommodation may dissuade the elderly from staying here. In fact, the mean age of the participants is 26, while the youngest participant was 18 and the oldest was 51. Having no reason to feel that it would affect the results, no age range was limited in this research. The hostel offers dormitory style accommodations, where a person can book a single bed as opposed to a whole room. The hostel does not use a fixed price system, but floats their prices depending on availability and seasons, so it is difficult to determine any characteristics about the people who stay there from this. With this pricing system, a person who plans well in advance can get a bed for about 10euro, while a person who books at the last minute can find himself paying twice that much. Participants were not asked what their accommodation cost. The participants were approached in a common room of the hostel, either in the early morning or in the early evening. While it might have been preferable to have consistently interviewed tourists from only one country (and thus perhaps analyzed a specific cultures *place identity* and *place images* with Rome more concretely), tourists from a multitude of various places were selected so that it could not be said that any phenomenon discovered was limited to only one place. This means that in this research how one specific cultural group understands a place cannot truly be analyzed, though it was hinted at and suggested throughout the interviews. Of the participants interviewed,87.5% (28 of 32) were not from Europe . In that proximity to a place can affect the knowledge of that place, this means that only a small portion (about 12.5 %)

might have had further understanding of the city of Rome based on more complex images than those that market places. In fact, if being from Europe did increase those participants general knowledge of the city of Rome, evidence of this failed to manifest itself in this research. It was impossible to tell how educated or not the participants were, nor to what social class they belonged, and despite the fact that these factors might have influenced what kind and what quantity of *place images* these tourists were exposed to, what is relevant to this research (information about the particpants exposure to *place iamges*) can be found by the very asking of questions about what kind and how many *place images* they encountered. The length of each interview varied greatly, depending on the willingness of the participants, but averaged out to about 15 minutes each, the shortest being about 4 minutes and the longest being about 27 minutes.

Interviewing tourists from only one determined country would have been commendable in that it would have allowed for a better analysis of the touristic images that country produce regarding the city of Rome. However, considering that the research was meant to be a general understanding and did not consider one country's specific understanding of the city of Rome, the participants questioned during the course of the fieldwork where from a multitude of different countries, in the hopes that this would demonstrate the broad applicability of the research. This would have increased the potential of consistency of images seen by the participants before coming here. If place images, at least in terms of the ones that manifest in the form of *mass identity of place* or *public identity,* are the social side of place identity, then having participants from the same nation could perhaps have led to there being some consistency in the data; if two, for instance, Estonians referred to 'Romeness' it would be easier to assume that the notions being referred to are similar than if one Japanese and one Kosovar are saying it. Nations may market a place in different ways, though it would seem that for the city of Rome the focus would always be one of history and the heritage that is scattered about the modern city because of that history. But, other notions that may influence a traveler's perception of place are culturally determined, particularly in the case of those countries that had a large amount of Italian immigrants (nations such as Brazil, Argentina, and the United States). The immigrants to these countries certainly colored the way the population of that country understands Italy and Italians, but not necessarily in a consistent way between two different countries.

Something that could not be foreseen was the lack of willingness found amongst tourists to participate. A minority of the participants who agreed to respond to the questions did so begrudgingly, which can perhaps be reflected in some of the poor answers received. There were a total of eight participants who seemed not to be very willing to answer the questions, though some of these participants did give some information that was helpful despite this. This lack of willingness manifested itself in the forms of giving short or one-word answers (such as answering the questions "What images do you remember seeing prior to coming to the city of Rome and what impressions did you have of what the city was going to be like?" with 'I don't know'), giving non-sequitur answers (such as answering the same question as previously mentioned with "I came to study culture") or simply saying that everything was fine.

All things considered, it is extraordinarily difficult to have any kind of reassurance regarding the initial images participants saw. It was assumed that simply stating that they saw determined objects was sufficient enough to elaborate on the starting point understanding the participants had. This was likely a fault of the way the first question ("What images do you remember seeing prior to coming to the city or Rome and what impressions did you have of what the city was going to be like?") was phrased, though as much emphasis as possible was put on the word 'impression'. 'Images' is perhaps a word too stuck on a consistent meaning, and perhaps a better choice could have been found, one that would have made it clear that anything that expressed information about the city would have sufficed. As well, this poor word choice likely led to a misunderstanding about what could have been spoken about during the interviews, and thus the first question was often supplemented with suggestions about what kind of information would be considered valid. Though not all the participants fell into this trap, some looked as if they were struggling to find something to say, as if their own thoughts, whatever they might have been, did not seem valid enough. At the heart of it, all comments were considered equally valid.

It should also be brought up that the respondents were not prompted to speak about place in any specific way. Each participant responded to the question in the manner of their liking, and focused on the details that were of concern to them. This unfortunately means that the amount of topics touched upon during the course of this research is rather broad, though a good number of

consistencies did come up. On a similar note, it is important to bring up to what extent participants preferred to speak of small details when asked about their experiences.

Another severe limitation of the research was that while it attempted to draw conclusions about the tourist's present understanding of places, it does nothing to consider how these opinions and impressions may change with the passage of time. The experience these tourists have had might be singular, but the exposure to images of this place will be reinforced when those tourists reintroduce themselves back into their society. What this study does not address is to what extent do the personal experiences people have remain with those very same people over time, or to what extent are they forgotten, or perhaps modified, as time goes on. Ideally, better results could be gained if these participants had been followed for a greater length of times and their opinions collected at varying points. Unfortunately, this was not possible.

General Analysis of the Data

Consistency of Images

The first thing that must be established at the beginning of the fieldwork is the consistency of *place images* reported on by the participants. In the theoretical parts of this research, as well as in much of the writing on the sociology of tourism, it was taken for granted that certain places are favored over others in the tourist's conception of the place they were travelling to. In that the tourists of the fieldwork had no previous lived experience in the city of Rome, they by default have a starting point understanding that Relph nominates as either a *public identity* or a *mass identity of place,* a term explained by Relph in a rather pejorative tone to say that people with this understanding are subject to simplified stereotypes from (unspecified) 'opinion makers' (1976:58). Both of these terms belong to a larger category that Relph calls Lowest Common Denominator, and should be considered the way people identify with place most closely linked to notions of outsideness. We can assume this to reiterate tourist's outsider status in the place they are visiting. Illustrating that there is some across the board consistency in the images nominated by the tourists demonstrates that validity of the existence of various markers and other *place images* that have come to construct the tourist experience. Had there not

been consistency in the nominated places, then it would be very difficult to argue that the touristic experience was socially constructed.

That place images exists seems to be beyond arguing; in that, as was already once mentioned, the very understanding that a place is even in existence qualifies as a *place image*, anyone who has gone to a new place must have had some exposure to some minimum of *place image*. All this being said, what is important is to know is that these images reoccurred with a certain frequency. This would illustrate that the place images are not wholly individualistic, and that something akin to Eco's nuclear content does indeed occur throught a determined population (or potentially even globally). Listing and counting the references to certain places, people, and activities that are brought to the mind of participants by through the first question of the interview helps us come to an understanding of to what extent this occurs.
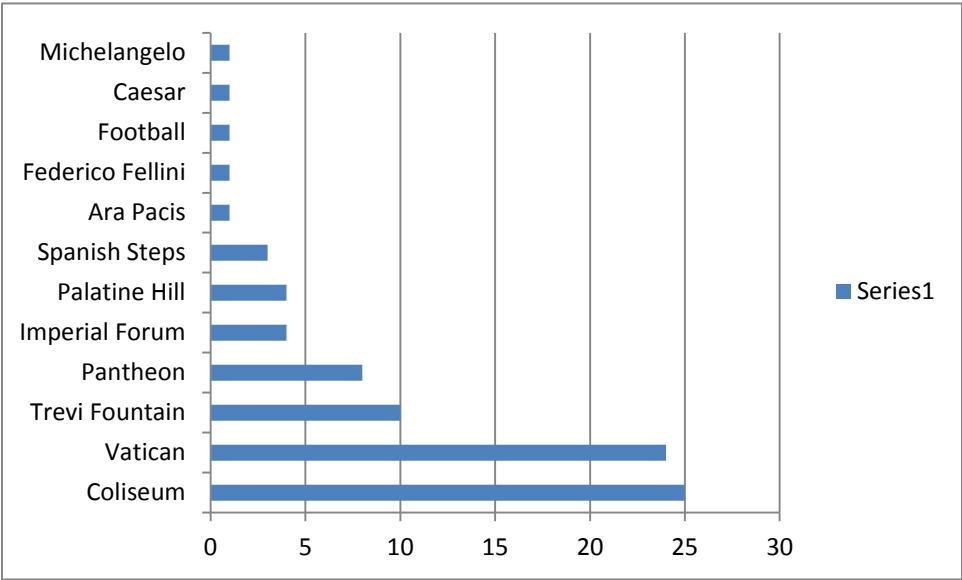

Table 2: Frequency of *Place Images* as nominated the participants in response to the first question.

When the first question was asked to the participant, almost every interviewee began with a list of places and objects the participant could recall having seen prior to their visit to the city of Rome. This list of places can be seen to represent a fraction of what could constitute the *place images* seen by the participants of this fieldwork. It is of course limited by their memory, and is in this way not meant to be in any way a definitive list. It is not surprising that the Coliseum and the Vatican came up most often, as these two monuments are the ones most metonymically associated with the city of Rome. It could be argued that no two places could be more emblematic for the city of Rome than these two, each representing a different period of the city's past. With only a few exception (notably the works of Federico Fellini, the mention of football, and the mention of the

reconstruction of the *AraPacis*) all the places and things mentioned centered around Rome's ancient past. This is important to note in light of the nature of *place images.* The overwhelming majority of things mentioned referred to things that could be seen in the city, some notable exceptions being a mention to Ceasar (we can assume this refers to Gaius Julius Caesar, the famous Roman statesman) and a mention of Michelangelo (we can assume this refers to Michelangelo di LodovicoBuonarrotiSimoni, the famous Tuscan painter who worked for a period of his life in the city of Rome). But even these two references can refer in some way to places and objects within the city; be they statues of Gaius Julius Caesar: or the ruins at Largo Argentina where supposedly he was killed: or the many works of Michelangelo scattered about the city. Only four [c, h, i and r] participants expressed having a previous understanding of the character of Romans and Italians prior to coming to the city. In all of these cases, this understanding was vague, and the participants did not seem ready to offer any elaboration for these sentiments. The first of these, a 19 year old Brazilian male [c] expressed that he expected Romans to be rude; a 21 year old male Canadian [h] expressed that he expected to see what he referred to as 'that Italian image' – which he defined as 'a positive attitude, of people that work very hard but still manage to enjoy life'; an 18 year old Canadain female [i]and an 26 year old female from the United States [r] both expected to find friendly people, but neither of the two commented further on this expectation.One could wonder for a moment to what extent this cases suggest the "glib and contrived stereotypes" nominated by Relph(1976:58). There does not seem to be enough evidence here to suggest either way, but it is worth remarking that even when provoked these comments could not be elaborated on.As well, this evidence would also suggest much about how the city of Rome is cognized by those who are not from it, and we can now consider again what Urry (2011:175) and MacCannell(2011:187) have said about the nature of touristic images being overly focused on the certain physical aspects of the city meant to attract tourists while removing anything that would be off-putting to the tourists. As well, Urry and MacCannell talk heavily about the constructed nature of touristic experiences, and how the initial *place images* the tourists encounter prior to their visit in a respect construct the expectations of what that place will be like. We can make the argument here that this list of images can be considered the touristic constructed side of the city of Rome. This reflects from what people mentioned they were shocked at seeing; information we can gleam from certain response to the second and third questions they were asked.

Peppered among the interviews were cases of curious statements, many of which seemed derived from stereotypes. These instances suggest that the images certain people are consuming have very complex ideas attached to them, and that the viewer are bringing such ideas with them to places. Often these ideas were expressed in very unclear ways, but in a very strong and determined language. Most typical of these examples were the two 26 year old female Australian participants [d, d1] who came to Rome with an understanding that it was 'not real Italy'. As they saw it Italy was a country of small village communities. Almost identical to this were the two female Australian participants, 25 and 23 years old respectively [s, s1] who mentioned that Rome was not 'quintessential Italy' by which they mean to say that Italy was not a large city but smaller ones with people 'lazying about'. Rome, for these two, should have more closely resembled the Amalfi Coast.

With all of these examples the participants were, to some extent, forcing themselves to acknowledge that this impression they held was false. So then it is perhaps most curious that two examples, a 24 year old woman from London [n] and a 21 year oldmale student from Canada [h], remained convinced. The first claimed that one of the things she was expecting to find on this trip to Italy was a 'strong, national identity' on part of the Italians. When asked from what it was that she expected to see this, she could not say exactly. There was an implication that it was obvious. The second of these two referred to expecting to find 'that Italian image', defined by the very same participant as 'a positive attitude, of people that work very hard but still manage to enjoy life'. He seemed to be sure that he has seen this, but could not really articulate where or how.

As well, five participants [b,m1, r, u1, v and w] reported finding the cultural diversity and the social problems of the city to be rather unexpected. When asked what he had found in the city that he had not been expecting, a 30 year old Brazilian male [b] mentioned "the Chinese, the umbrella sellers [who are immigrants from Bangladesh] and the gypsy beggars"; a 26 year old Mexican female [m1] insistently (despite being vague on what specifically was the problem) referred to the city as 'unsafe';a 26 year old female from the United States [r] expressed a dissatisfaction at finding a consolidated neighborhood of Chinese immigrants, referring to the neighborhood as 'inauthentic'; a 32 year old Australian [u1] mentioned not expecting to see 'the massive amount of gypsy beggars, all of whom exploit the Catholicism of the country'; a 23 year

old female Londoner [v] expressed a dissatisfaction with 'the crowd at the end of Termini station [this refers to the location of a homeless shelter, frequented by a large number of African immigrants]'; and lastly a 22 year old male from the United States [w] claimed not to have been expecting to see 'all these dirty gypsies'; Some other participants (h,l and w) commented on being shocked at the overwhelming amount of tourists they found in the city, mentioning that while they were expecting there to be some people here, they never imagined just how many they would find. This second list determines, at least as far as these nominated participants are concerned, some of the things that are, if we agree with Urry and MacCannell, masked from the tourists initial conception of a place, thus constructing an initial sanitized version of that place.

With this first information we can begin to establish some proof for the social construction of the touristic experience, as well to what extent initial point understanding of a place is socially consistent amongst these participants. Considering that the list of places they mentioned was not just a randomized assortment of various place picked at random, it would seem likely that certain determined places do have a strong social life amongst tourist, as the sociology of tourism does suggest. It should be mentioned that although this information was meant to establish a grasp on what the initial point understanding of the tourists was, the distinction between *public identity* and *mass identity of place* could not really be identified. Though there was just a bit to suggest the presence of a *mass identity of place*, there was nothing to comment on strongly. If, true to its name, the *mass identity of place* truly had a mass appeal, it is felt that it would have appeared more consistently throughout the collected interviews.

Expectations from Previous Knowledge

What did demonstrate itself very clearly is that a good portion of how we cognize places stems also from what we know of similar things. The importance of evidencing this is, again, as a confirmation of the social construction of touristic places. Images give us a concrete understanding of only determined features of what a place will look like. Our brains, providing information borrowed from other areas of our knowledge, provide the rest. A 26 year old female Australian participant [d] commented on this when she mentioned that she was expecting Rome

to be 'just a normal city'. When provoked about to what exactly she was referring, she mentioned that 'there really is nothing old in Australia.' She expected Rome to have certain determined features of antiquity either scattered about or concentrated into one area. That remnants of antiquity would be ubiquitous around the city shocked her. She mentioned that she had expected that the majority of the city would be long straight shop lined avenues. This comment was to some extent mirrored in another interview with a 35 year old Brazilian male [g]who claimed he felt odd about finding himself in a 'city built around ruins'.

A 24 year old Londoner [n] riddled her interview with parallels between her hometown of London and the city of Rome, going so far as saying that 'nothing felt out of place' and that she 'felt a bit at home.' Though she did begin by saying that Rome was 'more magnificent' than she had imagined, her overall impression of Rome was that it was a large, bustling city, 'just like London.' As well, she made a point of saying that she was not overly bothered by the ethnic diversity she found in the city, commenting that it was 'just like London.'

Making a similar point, though at odds with the results, some participants [v,w and x] experienced dissatisfaction with the city of Rome because they thought it was going to be like some other European capitals they knew. The first of these was a 23 year old female Londoner [v] who had high expectations of the city of Rome, expecting it to be 'big, modern and cosmopolitan, like Paris.' She did not find this to be the case, finding the city to be cramped, dirty, 'not aesthetically pleasing.' As well, she mentioned finding parts of the city, such as the Trevi fountain, to be kitschy, something she claimed London and Paris never are. Rome was compared to London and Paris by another participant, a 22 year old male from the United States [w], who said that 'European capitals should have Fashion and a functioning transportation system. Rome has gypsies and dirt. What is this place?' Another comparison was with the Spanish cities of Barcelona and Madrid, commented on by another participant, a 24 year old Lebanese male[x], who expected Rome to resemble these 'Mediterranean' cities. The 'Mediterranean' aspects he expected to find were that a place would be 'open, chaotic, fun, full of culture'. What he found of Rome was that it was 'laid back, but not fun, not a party city, too big, and a little snobbish.'

A 31 year old Australian female[u] found herself feeling comfortable walking to her hostel alone at nights. This seemed a little odd to her. Having traveled to a large number of

other cities, she found that this activity always left her worrying a bit. But in Rome she did not seem to feel afraid. Exactly the same thing was commented on by another participant a 29 year old Argentinean female [p], who was using the city of Buenos Aires as a point of comparison for how she expected the city of Rome to be like.. When asked to elaborate why she expected that Rome would be a dangerous city, she simply stated that "Buenos Aires is dangerous, I thought Rome was going to be like Buenos Aires." All of this is to show how our starting point understanding of a place comes from places we already know. A traveler [t] from Geneva was expecting Rome to have much more nightlife than he had so far found. When asked why he felt he was going to find this, he said that 'Geneva has a lot of nightlife, and Rome is a bigger city, so it should have more.'

Tourist could also be informed by the knowledge they acquired from specialized education. This manifested itself in only three interviews, but it colored the whole interview in a rather strong way. These participants expressed a more specific understanding of the places they would encounter in the city. The first of these participants [a] was a 40 year old male Brazilian architect, who mentioned some uncommon places such as *campo de' friori, piazza San Silvestro*, the *AraPacis*, and the Arch of Constantine as well as the more common places such as the Coliseum, Vatican and the Pantheon. Not only was this participant able to nominate such places, his reaction towards what he saw was based on his education as an architect. While he found Campo de' fiori to be ugly, he expressed how shocked he was to see the size of the dome of the Pantheon, wondering how a dome of that size could have been built without modern construction. He had a similar reaction to the Coliseum, being mostly impressed by just how massive it was (though in this reaction he was far from alone). His list of desired places to see in Rome was not limited to the remnants of Rome's history. He claimed to have wanted to see the Galleria Alberto Sordi as it for him was a rather interesting modern construction. As well, his interest in the AraPacis was both in the altar itself and the modern construction that houses it.

The second of these participants who were informed by their education was a 21 year old male Canadian student of religion [h] who on top of the Vatican, Trevi fountain and the Pantheon mentioned as well having seen pictures of San Giovani in Laterano, Castel Sant'angelo, Church of the Gesù, the Basilica di San Paulo and the Tempietto of San Pietro. And the knowledge he had of these places was by no means superficial, knowing for instance

that the main cathedral of Rome was in actuality San Giovanni in Laterano and not St. Peter's basilica. Despite this rather broad knowledge, he still expressed being shocked by the vast 'religiosity' of the city. As well, he was quite shocked to see the Vatican's presence sprawled out in so many parts of the city. His words suggested that even knowing as much as he did about the Vatican's historical influence over the city of Rome, the amount of it was even greater than he imagined it. He was not expecting to find papal seals in so many places about the city.

The third of these tourists who demonstrated being informed be their training was a 29 year old Argentinean woman working as a graphic designer [p], who had spent some time studying Roman antiquity as a source of inspiration. In addition to having seen the Coliseum and Vatican, she made a point of mentioning her trip to the Baths of Diocletian, the Baths of Caracalla and the Circo Massimo, as well as expressing an interest in the *AppiaAntica*. This young woman recounted going to such places in order to be inspired to compose works in a similar style to those of the 18th century Italian artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi. With all of the place she mentioned, she demonstrated an uncommon historical understanding of them.

One important aspect of these last three examples is that it begins to show at one point people can begin to get away from what Relph would call a Lowest Common Denominator identification with the city. What they managed to convey from their interview was a starting point understanding that broke away from anything that resembled either the *public identity* or the *mass identity of place*. What their words did seem to illustrate, particularly from the enthusiasm they described the rigor with which they had studied the city prior to their coming here, was a certain degree of Vicarious Insideness with the city. They, more than many other of the participants, expressed much satisfaction with their visit.

What all of this together certainly seems to suggest is that to a certain extent we should not take constructionist notions to completely delimit what a person's understanding of a place is. Even if a person can be said to come from stereotypes or very basic descriptive features, these stereotypes and descriptive features must go through a process of interpretation. This interpretation can create a multitude of different understanding regarding the same place. Only if two different people had the same exact interpretive process regarding place could we really consider them to have the same understanding of places, either those experienced or those not yet.

Evidence of anter videre

Antervidere was a situation in which a viewer, upon the consumption of place images, develops a mental understanding of a determined place. This situation is something of a very common occurrence, and is the very basis for our social understanding of places. These first understandings of place can be said to come from two components; first, the images of place and second previous understandings of how similar places manifest themselves.

While much of the previous information suggests that people cognize places from images alone, very little of it definitively proves it. To understand to what extent people cognized an understanding of Rome from its representations, we must consider the reactions to those things that are definitively Roman. Previously, it was mentioned that a 23 year old female participant from London [v] expressed dissatisfaction with the city of Rome, expecting it to be more like London and Paris. This participant claimed an understanding of the city largely from the works of the Italian director Federico Fellini, and the many movies he filmed in this city. These movies can be said to put a coat of make-up over the city's blemishes. So when this participant came to the city she was rather shocked to find the city to be dirty (a word she repeated numerous times). The participant had a particularly strong reaction against the Trevi fountain. Fellini's 1960 *La Dolce Vita* movie has a rather famous scene of a woman dancing in this fountain, and this participant generated a rather strong desire to see this fountain on the basis of this movie. Her reaction to the actual object was one of massive disappointment, describing the object as tremendously "kitschy", saying that is looked like something that belonged in Las Vegas. From the representation she saw, this participant developed an understanding of what the Trevi Fountain was going to be like (in this case, a romantic place). We gather this from her recounting about what it was she was hoping to find. And the Trevi fountain was an object that had adverse reaction more than once. Two other participants, a 35 year old Brazilian male and a 26 year old Mexican female [g and m1], reported finding it to be disappointing in that it was hidden away too much by either buildings or crowds.

Another object that consistently had a reaction to it was the Coliseum. While this object is often depicted or described, from these descriptions an accurate understanding of its size is rarely understood. Close to half of the participants commented on being shocked at the shear immensity of the Coliseum's size. Many as well commented on the fact that how large the Coliseum is simply cannot be grasped from pictures. The consensus was that it was much bigger than they would have expected. Particularly interesting was a 26 year old Brazilian man [q2], who imagining the Coliseum to be rather large, had envisioned it either in the suburbs or somehow out of the city (for reasons of its very immensity). It was in reality much larger than he expected, and in the very center of the city. This again would suggest that the viewer had an idea of the place constructed in his mind prior to seeing it. Although he never recounted what images he saw to generate his understanding of the Coliseum, he has given us some insight into how he 'saw' it in his mind's eye prior to coming to Rome; a Coliseum slightly smaller than it was in reality, standing in some kind of seclusion in an ex-urban area.

To fully determine whether the *antervidere* model is completely correct would entail access to information that is not available not only to the research, but potentially to the interviewed tourist as well. At the moment we get the possibility to check the factuality of *antervidere* model, it becomes a *post videre* experience.We very often are not able to articulate where the expectations we had came from, though sometimes we may be able to guess that a person who watches a Romanticized film of a place will in turn romanticize that very same place. But it is important to emphasize here that most of the interviewees demonstrated having some prior conception. We can from there only guess the rest; it could be from the fact that most modern cities put stadiums out of the center that people would assume such is the case with the Coliseum: it could be from considering older civilizations to be less sophisticated than our own that causes us to consider the Coliseum a wonder of ancient engineering. A similar reasoning could be behind all such statements; the shock at how grandiose things are may come from the inability to believe that they were built without modern technology.

Another point that came up in the research dealt with certain previous experiences that were considered by the participants to be either heavily personalized or difficult to communicate. A 28 year old female Brazilian participant [q] recounted how many of her expectation derived from a Brazilian soap opera that takes place in the city of Rome and hinges on (Brazilian) Italian

stereotypes. Though she laughed while recounting this, she seemed genuine in expressing that she expected Rome to be as that image. This particular example lies heavily on the notion of some part of this participants understanding is fundamentally cultural, in that it germinates from an artifact that is specific to her culture. She could perhaps communicate the point to someone else from Brazil, but striggled to talk about it with the interviewer. Another participant, a 22 year old male from the United States [w] communicated that he had no expectation of the city of Rome because prior to coming on this trip his obsession was with the city of Venice, a place he claimed to have gotten to know largely through a mural of that city in an Italian restaurant in his hometown. With these two examples the source of their understanding could be tracked down and analyzed with enough effort, and can thus be analyzed to give information about what specific meaning they in turn give to their viewers.

With some other participants, some of the understandings that were expressed were of such a personal level that it could never really be communicated, such as the 40 year old male Brazilian participant [a] who was of Italian decent and thus claimed to already 'really understand the culture' or the 29 year old Argentinean female [p] who was expecting that Italians would be nice because a former employer of hers was both an Italian and a nice person. Although both of these last two examples do qualify as *place images,* the problem with using them in the research is that we cannot really know very much about them. In that later case it is known that this former employer was 'nice', but beyond that nothing is known about that said person, so nothing else can be understood about how this affected the participant.

Evidence of post videre

Post videre is a situation in which, having already consumed place images of a determined place, a viewer then goes to said place and experiencing it firsthand modifies his mental image of it to fit the evidence found. We can potentially carry with us a place image for the entirety of our lives if we never visit the place in question. But the moment we do the mental image we had generated will morph into something that more closely resembles what is actually there.

If the above examples illustrate that the participants had indeed formed opinions of places from images alone, they would as well demonstrate that said understanding was later modified in light of what was found in the city. A way to better see this would be to imagine that some of the comments from the section above were not said to a researcher but to another potential tourist. In this example, the first person would mention that 'the Coliseum is much grander than the photos suggest'. These nine words would function to the recipient of them as a place image of the Coliseum. But it would be a very particular one, in that it would suggest that the other place images up to this point consumed had been somewhat misleading, making the object in question seem smaller than it actually was. It is in this way that these comments can said to express a notion that the act of witnessing these objects suggests a change in the previous understanding.

Meeting with these participants in a hostel did not modify the interpretive experience of the participants. These same questions could have been asked on location and the answers would have been the same. What perhaps did was the fact that the meeting occurred during a time when they were close (in terms of location and in time) to the witnessing of the objects that had earlier encountered as *place images*. Tangent to this fact, these participants were as well distant from the initial *place images* they initially encountered. The interpretive process can work both ways, and so a person can come to modify his understanding of the initial *place images* in light of the actual witnessing of the places in question.

Another problem here is perhaps taking into consideration when people refute the modification. Thankfully this did not occur very often. Two female Australian participants, 25 and 23 years old respectively[s and s1], seemed to remain convinced that Rome, due to the fact that it was a large city, was not 'Real Italy.' This piece of information is particularly hard to analyze. To begin with the participants were not asked what other places in Italy they had been to, and to what extent this notion had been verified by those places. The one thing that is known for sure is that they held this piece of information as a fact and they felt that it was at odds enough with their Roman experience to nominate it to me. We could also consider the use of the word 'inauthentic' by one 26 year old participant from the United States [r]. This participant used this word to describe *piazza Vittorio* and the surrounding neighborhood, a neighborhood where a high concentration of immigrants live. As you walk through this neighborhood you may

begin to get the impression that the language of choice here is Chinese. Though the word 'inauthentic' was used to describe a place the participant was not expecting to see (and thus will be considered in the coming sub-chapter) it still remains that to some degree the notion she carried with her remained constant in light of new information. 'Inauthentic' is a rather biting criticism, particularly when it is used about a rather real place. To say that a place is inauthentic is to say that it somehow is not what it was said to be. This suggests that the sentiment this participant is attaching to the place is one of rejection, that the place somehow does not pertain to the overall theme of the city of Rome. It is difficult to fully understand the implications of this statement. It would seem that she has accepted this place as a part of Rome, but in that she has attached this label to it, one would wonder if *piazza Vittorio* will remain that way or at some point slip out of her conception. These answers in the negative do not necessarily refute post videre. It could still be argued that their conceptions were modified and the participants simply failed to make a note of the change to themselves. The above examples are strange in this respect, for, as was stated earlier, their very bringing up of the fact that things were indeed different from their expectations nominates that the difference was experienced. What this illuminates, at best, is a preference in these participants for the *place images* they had encounter previously to what they experienced firsthand.

Despite this, the overwhelming majority of respondents to this interview framed their comments in a way to imply that the expectations they brought with them had been modified by the experiences they had, thus suggesting an interpretive process occurring during tourist activities.

Evidence of nova videre

Nova videre is a situation in which a person views a place without having encountered it previously in the form of place images. In these situations we construct an understanding of that place solely from the experience we have had of similar places, without the influence of any kind of specific reference to these concrete places.

Only a few participants expressed finding things that were unexpected to them. It might be the case that only a few of them encountered such things that made a lasting impression, enough for them to desire to comment on it. Many of the participants simply responded to this question with facets of the city they had observed but had not been expecting to see, such as: beggars, traffic, other tourists, 'the rat race of humanity', large amounts of other people, things under construction, graffiti or that it was just a very busy city. It would appear that the *place images* failed to comment of the everyday aspects of city life. And these previous comments can perhaps be said to illuminate where the participants had gaps in their mental projections of that place, gaps that were not patched by the *place images* that do not show elements of daily life. None of these things in this list are particularly out of place in any given city, and very likely one would not bat an eyelash encountering them in one's own city. What perhaps makes these things so noticeable in a foreign place is that we did not take them into consideration when we first conceived of these places. But some participants gave examples of instances where they encountered specific places that they were not expecting to encounter. One participant, a 24 year old Lebanese male [x] mentioned being particularly taken by *Villa Pamphili* and *Villa Borghese*, two large estates of the once Roman aristocracy that now function as public parks in the city. This participant, who expressed his trip in Rome as being less than satisfactory, had nothing but nice things to say about these parks, considering them to be the most romantic part of the city. He felt they were a 'beautiful mix of cultivated and wild', something he expressed was missing from other parks he had seen. What delighted him about such places was how you could wander about in 'a very raw wilderness' and suddenly find yourself in the presence of a fountain, monument, statue or in some cases a museum. This participant described these places as being 'typically Roman' in the way they were respected but only marginally looked after or cleaned up. He compared them to Parisian parks, which he described as being overly cultivated. It is hard to say whether he framed this experience in the light of others he had in Rome or vice versa. The participant did not say at what point in his travel he discovered these parks, nor what he had seen prior to them. But it is certainly interesting that he chose to describe them as something he considered to be 'typically Roman'. The way he described the park is then something that we can extend to his whole understanding of the city of Rome. Taking the notion more broadly to apply to the city of Rome, this could also be used as well as evidence of *post videre*. This

participant had a notion of the what the city would be like that he was obliged to modify in light of this new information.

A 25 year old female Australian participant [s] found the *via delcorso,* a long shop-lined avenue, to be something she did not expect to find in Rome. There was something about this shopping street, where almost every store is of a popular consumer brand, that did not sit well with what she had imagined Rome to be like. When asked to elaborate she mentioned that she had not conceived that consumerism would figure so prominently in the life of this city. From her words it seems that she was shocked both by the scale of this place (as the *via delcorso* runs rather far) as well as the nature of it. Nothing this participant said seemed to suggest that she framed this place in light of the other things she had experienced in the city of Rome. What she did hint at was that this place was largely at odds with certain expectations she had about the city of Rome in general, and how this particular place felt at odds with it. We can take this opportunity to consider this information in the light of the *nova videre* model. For this participant, the *place images* she had encountered prior to coming to the city did not include notions of consumerist habits, nor that they would be so centralized and glamorized. The*place identity* this participant has in mind is now modified with this new information. Aside from the notions of antiquity that seem so prevalent as *place images* of Rome, she must now consider this consumerist aspect of the city, one that is often associated with Milan and not Rome. Upon returning to her home, she may take it upon herself to enrich the collected *place images* that her community hold of the city of Rome be disseminating this information.

A last participant, a 26 year old female from the United States [r] was rather shocked at the concentration of immigrants living in the area around *piazza Vittorio,* which she had nicknamed 'Chinatown'. She commented on this area as being one that was for her very inauthentic, though she gave no real justification for this statement. When provoked about this reaction, she simply said that couldn't have imagined such places existing in Italy. She knew they existed in the USA (her home), but could not have imagined them in Rome. As was mentioned previously, this participants choice of the word 'inauthentic' to describe this place is something of a complicated statement. In this context, the word has been taken to mean a rejection of what she saw. Not a denial of its existence, but a refusal to come to terms with how this place fits in into her conception of the city of Rome. Here again we may take a moment to

consider this in light of the *novevidere* model. Despite her dissatisfaction with the place in question, she is obliged to reconsider her understanding of the place in terms of the cultural diversity that she found there in that neighborhood. Even if she wishes to codify the experience with the pejorative label 'inauthentic', it must be made clear that she still must have a new conception of the city of Rome, one that includes a determined amount of 'inauthentic' places. Again, when this person returns to her home, she will find herself with the potential of modifying the *place images* of her community by including the information that there are some places that can be considered 'inauthentic'. One can also make the argument that the label she has chosen for this place reflects an attitude of o*bjective outsideness* with that place. Clearly the participant showed an "dispassionate attitude towards place in order to consider them selectively in terms of their location or as *spaces where objects and activities are located*, involves a deep separation of person and place" (1976:51). Certainly the very label of inauthentic seems to suggest a deep separation between this participant and the place in question – the only way it could be otherwise was if she considered herself in some way inauthentic.

With the first example the participant did seem to frame what he witnessed in terms of some notion of 'Romaness'. But with the second two examples, the notion of 'Romaness' they brought with them to these places was greatly at odds with what they encountered. In the recounting of these situations, the participants in questions have unfortunately not demonstrated with any consistency how such situations are handled (and in fact, the second to examples seems almost opposed to one another). It is unfortunate that these people could not have been contacted with the passing of some time, to see if something would have changed in their opinions about such places.

Considerations on the central question and concluding remarks

This fieldwork aimed to illuminate how exactly travelers came to understand places. Though not conclusive, it was demonstrated that initially people come to understand places at least partially through the use of *place images* as well as through people's relating the new place to those they are already familiar with. As well, this fieldwork demonstrated that people will not

simply stop at the impressions created by these *place images,* but supplement them with the personal experiences they have in those places. As well, it was shown that when encountering an unexpected place a person may use knowledge about the location they are in to frame the experience. Overall, it is felt that this fieldwork demonstrated that people visiting new places come to understand those places through their own experiences, their interpretations of these experiences, as well as evaluations of those experiences.

At the beginning of this research a question was proposed, namely 'After having had a touristic experience within a place, do tourists' understanding of that place derive from their personal experiences of that place, or are the understandings derived from society generated stereotypes?' The information gathered from this fieldwork suggests that the overwhelming majority of people come to hold an understanding of place built largely from personal experiences. Understandings of place, particularly places that are foreign to us, are initially generated from our societies. But the moment we begin to have actual encounters with such places, it is our personal experiences that dominate. Early in this research, the following citation was encountered:

> "But for outsiders, those who experience a place only in terms of a crass level of behavioral insideness and who know only its mass identity, preconceptions and established attitudes always outweigh direct experience. Observations are fitted into the ready-made identities that have been provided by mass media or into *a priori* mental schemata, and inconsistencies with these are either changed or explained away." (Relph 1976:60)

In light of the information of this fieldwork, it is interesting to take another look into this citation. It is difficult to understand if Relph here refers to any of the large number of people who would be outsiders in a place or specifically those people who are functioning through his notion of behavioral insideness. Regardless, we should take another consideration at the assumptions here given. From the fieldwork, it would seem that observations are fitted into readymade identities only when the one fits into the other. When this is not the case there seem to be two reactions: one of modification and another of stasis. At the simplest levels, many examples of how people modified their understandings of a place in light of the experiences they

had can be documented, be this the people who were expecting a small city and found a large one, or people who were expecting solely an ancient city and found that it could as well be rather modern. It would seem that it is much easier to modify a previous understanding than to modify the experience one is having to fit into it. Even when we consider those examples where a person's previous understanding was at odds with what was found, it is very difficult to say that such people 'either changed or explained away' the contradicting evidence. Even in the most troubling of these examples, the 26 year old female from the United States [r], this was not the case. In this situation, the person had written off the place as being inauthentic, but she still acknowledged that it existed. It is rather difficult to say exactly how this should be considered, but it would seem that an understanding of this place that did not fit into her mental schemata would continue to persist. The example that perhaps best supports Relph's statement is the one from the two female Australian participants [s, s1] who simply wrote Rome off as not being 'quintessential Italy'. In this case do we really see something being explained away – for these two participants, Rome is simply not typical of what Italy is.

The other examples of situations where experienced perception and pre conceived understanding meet are also difficult to digest. It can be wondered to what extent the 24 year old Londoner [n] who understood Italy to have a 'strong national identity' would still be under this impression if she spoke Italian and could therefore insert herself into Italian politics. To what extent this notion was confronted at all remains in the air. Another example, a 21 year old Canadian male [h], was perhaps too vague to ever really be commented on at all. This participant did struggle to elaborate on what he meant by 'that Italian Image', and seemed convinced that the term would be simply understood. One should wonder to what extent an idea that is not heavily articulated in one's own mind actually can be confronted by experiences.

Of the thirty-two participants spoken to, only two of them can be said to have definitively explained something away as they encountered it. Two other held notions too vague to prove or disprove, and one other simply seemed unsatisfied with something found, though how exactly this would be dealt with seems unclear. All of the rest of the interviewees seemed to supplement their previous expectations with personal knowledge.

The research did not touch on the very popular notions on authenticity, although such notions certainly were a common consideration of the fieldwork. The research avoided this subject for fear of becoming overly massive and trying to put itself into far too many categories.

It focused instead just on how places were understood by viewers, without taking much time to consider the implications of such notions. All that being said, the term 'inauthentic' certainly came up enough that it is worth commenting on. The term 'authentic' can be understood as meaning to describe when something is closely related to the actuality of a certain subject. It is therefore rather strange for anyone to refer to something they have seen firsthand as being 'inauthentic' (for the inarguable fact remains that they, by their own reporting, have witnessed as actual the thing they have labeled as inauthentic). This would suggest the this label is being given in comparison to some understanding they have hold on to that does not match with the place in question. In that these participants had no prior lived experience with the city of Rome, it can be concluded that these notions likely come from *place images*. For instance, it can be suggested that the participants [s, s1] that expected the city of Rome to be more like the Amalfi coast said as much because they were provoked to by a wealth of images from the Amalfi coast. As well, the numerous participants who expressed problems with the ethnic diversity of some of Rome neighborhoods are likely commenting on this because the wealth of images they had seen had not included such features. These participants can be said to be reacting to the constructed image of the city of Rome, and are in a way expressing a preference to that construction.

This fieldwork was unfortunately very far from conclusive. It at best skimmed the surface of this issue, without being able to definitively determine how people come to understand places. To have done this better, one could have chosen to study a determined group of tourists from one specific place over a much lengthier period of time. This would have allowed for a closer examination of the *place images* that influenced them, which would in turn have allowed for a stronger understanding of the expectations they had of the place prior to coming to it. As well, be following them for longer periods of time one could analyze how the understandings of that place changed over time. However, it was felt that the fieldwork truly did assist in showing, perhaps to a minor extent, the three models that the research suggested. In the hopes that the fact that the novelty of their experience of place (as well as the fact that the place in question was one that was foreign to them) would facilitate an understanding of their own semiotic process during these moments, the questioning of actual participants of the tourist experience seemed to be the best way of bring to light the cognation and recognition of place. The participants all did demonstrate aspects of the interpretive process that was expected to be found in relation to how they dealt with the concept of this place. As well, certain aspects of Relph's typology were as

well verified. In that the participants seemed to be able to easily distinguish between the *place*

images they had seen prior to the experience and how they related to the actual experience of

seeing the places, this line of questioning that the tourists responded to as well suggests that the

interpretive process is not something that is unknown to them. To some extent, the fieldwork can

be said to have been successful.

At the beginning of this paper, it was mentioned that within the sociology of tourism

there are certain broad-brushed statements regarding tourism. To this effect, Brucculeri

mentions that ".". As we have anticipated, the tourist is target of numerous criticisms. In the

socio-anthropological field, for example, this figure is often accused of superficiality and

ignorance (Boorstin 1964) entrenched and protected inside an environmental bubble made of

services, comfort and pre-organized packages, the tourist is seen as unable to grasp the truth of

the places he visits, letting himself be fascinated by pseudo-events and banalized forms of ad

hoc, prepared places for a precise tourist use."[9] (2009:66). DeanMacCannell seems to be

suggesting exactly this when he makes the claim that:

> Sightseers do not, in any empirical sense, see San Francisco. They see Fisherman's Wharf, a
> cable car, the Golden Gate Bridge, Union Square, Coit Tower, the Presidio, City Lights
> Bookstore, Chinatown, and, perhaps, the HaightAhsbury or a nude go-go dancer in a North
> Beach-Barbary Coast club.

The suggestion here is that these various parts of San Francisco do not add up to a meaningful

whole of San Francisco. While this may be the case, if it were true it would be true for a native

as much as a tourist, for even natives to a place have only ever seen a limited amount of that

place. It would seems much more prudent to say that the tourist (and the native alike) have seen

San Francisco, only they have not seen it in any exhaustive manner. The notion that a tourist has

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[9]Original text: "Come abbiamoanticipato, ilturista e` statobersaglio di numerosecritiche. In ambito socio-
antropologico, per esempio, questafigura e` stataspessotacciata di superficialita` e ignozanza (Boorstin, 1964):
trincerato e protettodentrounabollaambientalefatta di servizi, comfort e pacchettipreorganizzati, ilturistavienevisto
come incapace di cogliere la veritadeiluoghi in cui sireca, lasciandosiaffascinareingenuamente solo da pseudoeventi
e forme di banalizzazionedegliusilocalipredisposti ad hoc, per unafruizione per l'appunto di tipoturistico

not seen a place gives a certain privileged position to the native which may not be the case by default. It as well reinforces the notion that tourists cannot see beyond that which has been labeled a part of the touristic experience. Do tourists simply see the Fishermen's Wharf, or do they see the hoar and hairy fishermen that populate it? Do they simply see the City Lights Bookstore, or do they see the street it is one and the infrastructure around it? Such comments suggest an immature notion of how place are experienced.

Another important scholar of tourism, John Urry, has said as well made some interesting claims about the 'commoditization' of tourism: "sometimes it seems that tourist travel is a strategy for the accumulation of photographs and hence for the commodification and privatization of personal and especially family memories" (2011:178). This is meant to be an attack on the way tourists, informed by certain *place images* they consume prior to going to a place, in turn go to those very same places and have themselves photographed in the same location. It is unclear what exactly is the problem with these kinds of experiences. Perhaps it is being suggested that the experience is somehow becoming like a mass market product, where everyone can have one identical to it in every respective home. But in so far as these experiences are personal, then that is not really the case. Yes, the photograph might be the same, but the experience it represents will continue to be as personal and subjective as those individuals who went the distance to get to those places. There is another statement from Urry that we may consider :"as people become photographers, so they become amateur semioticians and competent 'gazers'. They learn that a thatched cottage with roses round the door represents 'ye olde England'; or that waves crashing onto rocks signifies 'wild untamed nature'; or especially that a person with a camera draped around his/her neck is a 'tourist'" (2011:178). To say that tourists become 'competent gazers' is to suggest that the skill being harnessed is the ability to look at a landscape and pick out only certain features, in this case signs of 'ye olde England'. But even if this is the case, does this really determine anything about the way these tourists are experiencing the place? Could it be that the people in question photograph such things for other reasons.

As well as the above, the attempt to distinguish between the way a native and a tourists consume place can be noted in the following passage:

We suggest making an operational distinction between place identity and its image, to help us distinguish between local and tourist perceptions of place. Place image and identity can be viewed as two complementary notions. Whereas place identity is like an insider or local perspective on location, place image is possessed by Others coming from outside the place.[note: previously in the article, the authors stated that "place and location are used as interchangeable notions referring to any geographical position that residents or tourists may occupy…" see footnote on pg 111](Külmoja and Kiviselg-Lindeberg 2004:114).

This quote is an unnecessary oversimplification. It is not correct to say that *place image* is something possessed by those who are outsiders, as it is incorrect to say that *place identity* is something that pertains to insiders. An insider may hold certain believes about that place he is native to that are generated from images alone, while a person who visits a country (and then leaves) will have an identity of that place not necessarily generated by images, though said person will still remain an outsider to that place. Consider dictatorial countries whose governments propagandize information to their citizens. These citizens would have *place identities* of their own nations that would be entirely fueled by *place images*. A visitor to the very same country would have very real experiences that would generate a *place identity* that is not based on *place images*. This is perhaps not the most likely of examples, but it does illustrate why this operational distinction falls flat. As well, *place image* and *place identity* are not complements of each other. Rather, *place image* is a way by which a person may arrive to a *place identity*. It cannot be emphasized enough that *place images* are little more than one single ingredient to *place identities*. The reason this distinction is an important one to make is because, as mentioned earlier, the above citation does not seem to work when considered that the outsider may travel to that place. While it is true that outsiders possess a *place identity* that is largely fueled by *place images*, these *place images* will not be the only thing that inform their understanding of those places. As well, when the outsider comes and goes to that place, he will modify how he identifies with that place, remaining always an outsider.

Conclusion

This research considers the complexities of how people come to identify with *other* places; places that are not close to them. This was done considering the case of tourists, who are a very typical example of how people come to experience places that are foreign to them. First, the general means by which people come to identify with places was discussed, as well as how such *place identities* can be born of *place images*. Secondly, three models were proposed to potentially illuminate how a person's identity with a place changes when that person comes into contact with the actual place. Each of these models began with a different kind of *place identity* for the place in question. Thirdly, tourists were interviewed in order to understand how they had cognized the places they visited. This data was analyzed for evidence of the three models proposed in the second chapter.

Tourism and sightseeing go far beyond the simple acts of going to places and seeing them. For those participating in it tourism is an encounter with other people and other places, and every aspect of the experience is taken into consideration, not just those that are marketed or represented beforehand via *place images*. Almost every participant of this research was able to comment on the places they encountered in a way that demonstrated an understanding that distinguished itself from that one would gain from *place images* alone. This strongly suggests that an initial *place identity* is generated from *place images* alone, but as a person experiences the places he supplements this understanding with one that comes with experiences. *Place images* are very prominent in how a person develops a *place identity* when the place in question is firmly beyond his reach, when it is something that remains a part of his *outside*. A *place identity* based solely on *place images* is something a person has *before* they become a tourist, certainly not during and certainly not after. The act of tourism is one where a person broadens the zone of what is his inside, even if he does so for a very brief period of time. During this act he makes these places his own, though certainly not the extent that someone from that place would. When a person is from a certain place, that place is for that person filled with significances and meanings. Prior to being in a place, from knowing only the *place images* of it, the significances can only be reduced to what is deduced from these *place images*. A person who travels begins to fill his own world with significances, he begins the process of making those places a part of his *inside*. The length of a normal trip may not be enough time to fill up

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these new places with the kind of meanings a person would have from the places they are from. But this is how the process begins. Where this person to stay longer, gradually the places he frequents would become so saturated with personal meanings that the place would become his own, and he would feel a sense of belonging there. As well as these personal meanings, the person would also begin to learn social understandings of the place that would help him to have greater belonging with that place. Such social understandings help better integrate him with the local population of such places. With enough time, this person would be completely integrated. So what it is that makes the way a tourists identifies with a place different from the way a native identifies with a place is the amount of time spent in that place. If the understandings a tourist have of a place are somehow superficial, it is not due to some inability to see beyond *place images,* but due to a lack of time to immerse oneself within that place.

More should be researched to more properly and more definitively conclude how places are understood, and to what extent are the expectations we have used to prop up our understanding of the places we consume. As well, more should be researched about how these expectations react to the experiences we eventually have. The implications of this research go beyond just tourism in many ways. Conclusions about how places are identified with allows more steps to be taken to engineer places in better ways, as Relph (1976:45) has already commented on. And the models that were proposed in this research would function as well to comment on how just about anyone comes to understandings of places that are in some way new to them. The research done here suggests that the boundary between the social constructed side of tourism and the phenomenological act of being in the place is a little more fluid than the tourism literature has initially suggested. This being the case, some basic assumptions about the nature of how people come to consume places can as well be reconsidered.

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Summary in Estonian

Kokkuvõte

Turismikohtade loomine: sotsiaalse konstruktsionismi ja fenomenoloogia vahel

Käesolev uurimus püüab välja selgitada, kuidas turistid mõistavad külastatavaid kohti, iseäranis selliseid, milles asub kultuuripärandiobjekte. Erilist tähelepanu pööran sellele, kuivõrd toetub külastatava koha mõistmine varasemale teadmisele või kohapeal kogetule. Peamiselt toetun Edward Relphi raamatule „Place and Placelessness", millest pärinevad mõisted 'kohakuvand' (ingl. k. *place image* – koha erinevad kuvandid, millega inimene kokku on puutunud) ja 'kohaidentiteet' (ingl. k. *place identity* – kuidas inimene kohaga suhestub). Enne koha külastamist saab inimese samastumine antud paigaga põhineda kohakuvandil või sellel, kuidas kohta esitletakse. Käesolev uurimus näitab, mil määral on turist teatud koha külastamise järel võimeline täiendama kuvandipõhist arusaama isiklike kogemustega. Iseäranis huvitav on seda vaadelda kultuuripärandit sisaldavate paikade puhul, kuna kultuuripärandiobjektid kalduvad toimima metonüümidena kogu koha suhtes ning teatud ulatuses domineerima inimese arusaama kõnealusest kohast.

Mõned turismisotsioloogid, teiste seas Dean MacCannell ja John Urry, on väitnud, et turismikogemust raamistab laias ulatuses see, kuidas kohta esitletakse: alates reisibrošüüridest, monumentide koopiatest ja pildiraamatutest ning lõpetades reisikirjandusega ja erinevate arvamusavaldustega. Need esitlused, mis kõik peaksid arvesse minema kohakuvanditena, on mõeldud turistidele mõju avaldama. Äärmuslikumatel juhtudel kõnealune koht „tekitatakse", näiteks siis, kui turismiobjekt on pealtnäha tavaline koht, nagu maja, kus kuulus inimene elanud ja töötanud on; lihtsamal juhul esitlused üksnes kindlustavad ja meenutavad vaatajale turismiobjekti olemasolu. Selgitamaks viise, kuidas turistid mõistavad kohti, pakun välja kolm semiootilist mudelit. Neist esimene, a*nter videre*, eeldab, et algpunktis ehk enne kohakülastust konstrueerib turist oma arusaama kohast nähtud piltide ning vaadeldava kohaga sarnaste paikadega seotud kogemuste põhjal. Teine mudel, *post videre*, on seotud olukorraga, kus

vaadeldava kohakülastuse ajal muutub turisti a*nter videre* mudelis loodud kujutluspilt, sobitumaks arusaamaga, mille ta omandas kõnealuses kohas olles. Viimane kolmest, *nova videre* mudel, rõhutab situatsioone, mil turist puutub kokku paigaga, millest tal varasem kuvand puudub, ning seega peab ta jõudma arusaamisele kohast varem kogunenud teadmiste kaudu.

Nende mudelite alusel võtsin ette välitöö Rooma linnas, kus uurisin turistide kogemusi „igavese linna" külastamisel. Avatud vastustega küsimused püüdsid kannustada vastajaid jagama teavet selle kohta, mida nad näha lootsid ning millisena nad linna ette kujutasid. Palju teavet tuli ka selle kohta, kuidas linna tegelikult kogeti. Oli ka rida arvamusi, millest saab teha kokkuvõtteid selle kohta, kuidas turistid kokkupuutel kohaga paika mõistavad. Uuringust järeldus, et kui küsitletuid saab vaadelda kui piisavat valimit, täiendab enamik inimesi kohakuvandipõhist kujutluspilti kogemusega, mille nad saavad kohta külastades. Järeldust saab silmas pidada, kui vaagitakse turismisotsioloogia väiteid, mis üldistavad turistide arusaamu kohast ning mõnikord kalduvad ületähtsustama representatsioonide rolli kohaidentiteedi kujunemisel.