

Beyond Stendhal: Emotional Worlds or Emotional Tourists?

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Introduction

Some years ago I visited the World Heritage Site of Petra in Jordan, the ancient Nabatean City built into encircling red sandstone cliffs.¹ Without any detailed knowledge of the Nabateans and their place in the history of the region, it is clearly an impressive place by virtue of its scale, by virtue of the craft of its construction and, particularly, by virtue of its seeming seclusion. I was especially struck by the way the site seems to have its own physical narrative, which blends the natural features of the deeply gorged cliffs with the creativity of its sixth century BCE founders in striving to hide this city from the rest of the world, and, also, the creativity of those who have long recognised the allure of the place to visitors. For most visitors, to reach this ancient site you have to walk, and the walk takes you from a relatively commonplace and bustling entrance of open, rough and stony land which promises little, through a high-sided and, at times, claustrophobic narrow gorge – known as the ‘siq’ – to a position where your sight is drawn from bare wall and dusty ground to a powerful vision; a true glimpse into another world. For as one moves out of the siq, one is faced with the sheer power of a monument; the magnificent façade of what is known as the Treasury, carved out of, and into, the solid wall of the high cliffs. This impressive monumentalism is repeated a number of times as the valley opens up to the skies, and one is able to wander through what feels like a hidden kingdom. But it is the drama of the first encounter with the Treasury as it is perceived as one emerges through the narrowness of the gorge which impresses the most and which causes the tourist cameras to click. My visit was technically not as a leisure tourist but as an academic engaged with the place as a heritage site and, though I remember feeling impressed, it was, in truth, hardly more than a fleeting affect.

Undertaking the journey to Petra during the day is rewarding in itself, but at night a further sense of awe is generated and the darkness fuels a sense

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¹ Petra was declared a World Heritage Site in 1985. In 2011, according to Jordan’s Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority, the site attracted approximately 630,000 visitors.

of mystery. 'Petra by Night,' as it is called, has been established for a number of years now, where, lit by strategically positioned candles, tourists walk along the path and through the siq to the Treasury where the drama of revelation is intensified. As I walked cautiously along the path as it squeezes itself between the vertical cliffs, occasionally looking up to the deep blue of the night and a myriad of stars, I heard, a little distance ahead, an English couple talking. Although they were in silhouette against the silence of the evening, I could hear them remarkably clearly. They were engaged in a hushed but tense discussion, which seemed to be about the man complaining about suffering from the effects of sunburn, and the woman summarily warning and scolding him about the dangers of not applying sun-tan lotion. The intensity of their discussion was suddenly halted as they reached the end of the siq and saw the Treasury lit by a myriad of candles where a Beduol musician was playing to an entranced audience. The woman ended her scolding and in a changed tone, remarked quizzically to the man: "Oooh. Isn't that beautiful. That's beautiful that is. Isn't that beautiful?" "Very nice," was his short, staccato reply. And then, as if they had wholly consumed the moment, their discussion reverted to the perils of not applying sun-tan lotion. Several minutes later I self-consciously moved away from them as they walked into the shadows. It was only when walking back out of the site that I started to recount the evening's event. Faced with the spectacle of a World Heritage Site, more recently voted in a global telephone poll as one of the New World Wonders, and provided with an added dramatic effect by way of the stars, candlelight and music, this couple did not seem to be overly affected, or at least could only communicate a few words to convey the impact of the view and of the event. Again, I have to be honest in my own recall of the evening. For despite the brochure's promise of a night-time spectacle and a 'quasi-mystical encounter,' I felt rather vacant about the whole experience. Indeed, what made an impact on me was not the site, but the discourse of an unknown couple. I do remember, in a rather trite way, feeling some sense of oneness with the night at the time, and that it was indeed a landscape which was like no other I had seen, but, in the main, and as in the day time, I cannot say that 'Petra by Night' generated no more than momentary reflection.

I use this example from my own experience in order to begin a discussion which attempts to position the emotions in the *becoming* and *being* a tourist and the *doing* of tourism. Many questions spill out of this recollection: Should I have been in some way 'moved' by my encounters with Petra? Despite their apparent indifference to the occasion, were the couple I observed impacted in any emotional sense by the site? Can we communicate our emotions at the time of the encounter or are we destined to filter our feelings,

our sensualities through the conventions we carry with us? Does not being emotionally charged at the time of being a tourist mean that we are not subject to the transformative power of tourism? In our ‘sight-seeing,’ in our encounters with otherness, and in the outer and inner journeys we embark upon as tourists, what emotions *do* we experience? Can we sensibly speak of ‘emotional destinations,’ sites/sights which somehow induce emotional reactions? Is there something about being a tourist which heightens our emotional engagement with the world? And, more critically, are our emotional states when doing tourism contingent upon our experience of difference – of new places and cultures – on *what* we apprehend, rather than *how* we apprehend? I cannot fully elaborate on all of these questions in this paper, but I hope to give some shape to an inter-connected series of themes which I would suggest are not widely articulated in tourism studies, or in wider discussions relating to the philosophical and psychological understandings of the emotions. In this paper I wish to explore the idea of the ‘tourist’ as an emotional being, exposed to the dramas, adventures, and immediacies of difference; a being capable of experiencing the joys of the sublime, but who is, at the same time, part of a far more fluid, complex, and elongated process that is the well-worn metaphor of the life journey. The tourist’s journey and the associated dwelling in otherness would seem to not only straddle traditional ideas of non-cognitive emotional encounter and the more culturally framed ideas of cognitive emotional engagement but, in Martin Heidegger’s terms, also points to a pre-cognitive means of revealing “being-in-the-world.”²

Since the earliest emergence of sites and ‘attractions’ for tourists, producers and promoters of such attractions have engaged in ways of enhancing and accentuating the emotional experience by virtue of techniques of display, the use of technologies, and particularly through suggestive narrative; all as part of a staging process. The contemporary tourism sector is able to offer a highly sophisticated environment attuned to generating emotional reactions and apparent spontaneous affect and the multi-sensory, multi-media approaches to interpretation in theme parks lies upon the same horizon as that employed in many museums. The extent to which the emotions are now embedded in the multifarious theatrical landscapes of modern tourism bears witness to a belief that they are capable of being manufactured, or at least ‘teased out’ of the individual. Of course, this is merely an extension of the

² In this sense I mean that the interpretation of the experience, as constituted by where we are, begins with precognition – a ‘transcendental-like’ pre-judgement which shapes our understanding and effectively denies neutral interpretation. See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 25ff.

wider engulfing life-world, its emotional resonances and the social phenomena of consumerist marketing which works on the premise that goods and experiences are life-enhancing and capable of generating 'positive' emotions. While acknowledging that the tourism sector is indeed capable of some degree of emotional staging and manipulation, though working in dialogical fashion with varying degrees of tourist reflexivity, playfulness, and performativity, this paper focuses more upon the tourist condition, tourist agency, and response.

The Emotional Complexities of the Tourist

Over the years the tourism studies literature has moved a long way from largely neutral accounts of tourists as beings gazing onto the world, or responding to it. When tourism undoubtedly becomes a consumptive act, there is more to the construction of identities and inter-subjectivities than mere consumption. Rather, the tourist is imbued with agency and subjective intimacy, and is active not only in the exploration of the world but in iteratively re-configuring it, performing it, ordering knowledge, and constructing and accumulating stories about it. Importantly, as part of this re-configurative process tourists are exploring the self and the subjective intimacies which surface during, and as part of, the experience of moving *through* the world. Chloe Chard sees tourism as an "adventure of the self."³ The word "adventure" emphasises that even the most ordinary act in the context of a different place and culture can be readily accelerated as a form of exploration testing the boundaries of our own identities and our own cultural contexts.

Work by the likes of Scott Lash and John Urry,⁴ David Crouch,⁵ Crouch and Luke Desforges,⁶ and Soile Veijola and Eeva Jinen,⁷ draw upon the phenomenological explorations of Michel de Certeau and Maurice Merleau-Ponty to explore the agency of the tourist, and specifically the body of the

³ Chloe Chard, 'Lassitude and Revival in the Warm South: Relaxing and Exciting Travel (1750–1830),' in *Pathologies of Travel*, eds Richard Wrigley and George Revill (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), pp. 179-205.

⁴ Scott Lash and John Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space* (London: Sage, 1994).

⁵ See, for instance, David Crouch, 'Encounters in Leisure and Tourism,' in *Leisure/Tourism Geographies: Practices and Geographical Knowledge*, ed. David Crouch (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 1-16; David Crouch, 'Spacing, Performing, and Becoming: Tangles in the Mundane,' *Environment and Planning A*, vol. 35, no. 11 (2003), pp. 1945-1960; and David Crouch, 'Flirting with Space: Thinking Landscape Relationally,' *Cultural Geographies*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2010), pp. 5-18.

⁶ David Crouch and Luke Desforges, 'The Sensuous in the Tourist Encounter – Introduction: The Power of the Body in Tourist Studies,' *Tourist Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2003), pp. 5-22.

⁷ Soile Veijola and Eeva Jokinen, 'The Body in Tourism,' *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 11, no. 3 (1994), pp. 125-151.

tourist, in the production and co-production of tourist space and experience. Our understanding of the tourist is no longer as a passive being but as an active one, engaged in the acts and performances of becoming, doing, and dwelling. Emerging foremost out of sociology and cultural geography, such work takes us deeper into the world of the tourist as working within geographical knowledge in negotiating and making sense of space and place, however, the question of what constitutes this knowledge, where it comes from and how it is used remains. It is certainly more than geographic knowledge. This leads us from some of the firm terrain of the *rational* social sciences from whence tourism studies emerged, and into more exploratory and necessarily uncertain territories of imagination, memory, narratives, and emotion. In effect, what this communicates is that tourism is complex. As Dean MacCannell notes: “Taken together, tourist attractions and the behaviour surrounding them are one of the most complex and orderly of the several universal codes that constitute modern society.”⁸ Moreover, the tourist is complex. Of course this should be no surprise, for while tourism works within an ostensibly rationally organised material world, as Noel Salazar reminds us, the tourist is defined by his or her human-ness.⁹ By extension, and as recognised by scholars such as Tim Edensor,¹⁰ Jonas Larsen,¹¹ and Mike Crang,¹² the doing of tourism *blends* with the practices of everyday life; the contexts and actions of the ordinary. This forces us to consider not only the immediate situation of the tourist as being ‘out-of-the-ordinary,’ as some discrete and disconnected category, but rather as part of a longer and richer chronology that roots the tourist in the home and the being-ness of everyday life. This blurring of ‘being’ presents the researcher with both a methodological challenge and an ontological critique regarding where the *being* a tourist and the *doing* of tourism begins and ends.

Even in recognition of the complexities accompanying attempts to understand tourists, little attention has been directed toward the emotions as they surface in tourism. In part this relates to the traditions and difficulties of empirical investigation and, arguably, it reflects a long-standing reticence to

⁸ Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 46.

⁹ Noel Salazar, *Envisioning Eden: Mobilizing Imaginaries in Tourism and Beyond* (New York: Berghahn, 2011).

¹⁰ Tim Edensor, ‘Walking in the British Countryside: Reflexivity, Embodied Practices and Ways to Escape,’ *Body and Society*, vol. 6, nos. 3-4 (2000), pp. 81-106.

¹¹ Jonas Larsen, ‘De-exoticizing Tourist Travel: Everyday Life and Sociality on the Move,’ *Leisure Studies*, vol. 27, no. 1 (2008), pp. 21-34.

¹² Mike Crang, ‘Circulation and Emplacement: The Hollowed-out Performance of Tourism,’ in *Travels in Paradox: Remapping Tourism*, eds Claudio Minca and Tim Oakes (Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2006), pp. 47-64.

link the emotions with rational modes of scientific enquiry.¹³ It would seem *prima facie*, however, that tourists, by virtue of their being tourists, do have emotional experiences, or at the very least they report *having* a feeling or sensation which they equate with an emotional state. Indeed, the desire to experience positive emotions would seem to be part of the mosaic of motivations behind any vacation. Dominant amongst the ways of explaining how tourists can have an emotional experience is the idea that the tourist responds to external stimuli presented outside of the ordinary and the response accords to an emotional state which can express itself in psychological and physiological terms.¹⁴ This condition, as apparently induced through encounter, is widely referred to as the ‘Stendhal syndrome’¹⁵; the term being coined in 1989 by Professor Graziella Magherini as she witnessed the distressed emotional states of tourists in her home city of Florence apparently in response to the works of art on display in the city.¹⁶ Magherini drew upon Stendhal’s visit to Florence in 1817, where he recorded: “As I emerged from the porch of Santa Croce, I was seized with a fierce palpitation of the heart – the same symptom which, in Berlin, is referred to as an *attack of the nerves*; the well-spring of life was dried up within me, and I walked in constant fear of falling to the ground.”¹⁷ This reads in the Romantic trope as literally a suffering for the beauty of art but in effect, and aside from any poetic licence, it may have had more to do with the ill health that Stendhal suffered throughout his life rather than anything else. Similar psychological conditions have been reported as the ‘Paris syndrome,’ where Japanese tourists are reported to break

¹³ The persistent tension between the emotions and scientific rationality is well summarised by Robert Solomon, ‘The Philosophy of Emotions,’ in *Handbook of Emotions: Third Edition*, eds Michael Lewis, Jeanette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett (New York: Guilford Press, 2008), pp. 3-16.

¹⁴ The idea that the tourist’s emotions are essentially reactions to encounters to places and attractions, and are also specific to the condition of being a tourist, is reflected in the limited literature in tourism studies which deals with the emotions. See, for instance, Mary E. Farber and Troy E. Hall, ‘Emotion and Environment: Visitors’ Extraordinary Experiences Along the Dalton Highway in Alaska,’ *Journal of Leisure Research*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2007), pp. 248-270; and Cees Goossens, ‘Tourism Information and Pleasure Motivation,’ *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2000), pp. 301-321.

¹⁵ Named after the French novelist Marie-Henri Beyle (1783-1842), whose most frequently-used pen name was Stendhal.

¹⁶ Clinical probing of individual cases enabled Magherini to establish that the impact of artistic masterpieces can touch and bring to the surface repressed emotional experiences. The theme of powerful emotions generated when encountering art is also explored by James Elkins, *Pictures and Tears: A History of People Who Have Cried in Front of Paintings* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

¹⁷ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples and Florence*, trans. Richard Coe (London: John Calder, 2010).

down in response to being disillusioned with the city falling short of its reputation for romance and beauty, and the ‘Jerusalem syndrome,’ which though long reported as a psychic condition brought on by the impact of the Holy City, is dismissed as uncommon, exaggerated, and related more to existing psychotic disorders than anything spontaneous.¹⁸

The ‘Magical’ Power to Move Us

Thinking through the idea of the Stendhal syndrome directs us to consider a number of key questions and themes that run through the tourist-emotion relationship. Is there such a thing as the ‘power’ of attraction – a force inherent within the object, site, or sight which can induce an emotional reaction amongst tourists? Any cursory reading of promotional literature certainly indicates that there is. Historic monuments, landscapes, contemporary buildings, and natural environments in particular, are liberally dressed with superlatives that promise an emotional encounter, frequently suggested as visceral in its impact so that we may be moved to tears or the hairs on the back of our neck will stand on end. To dismiss this long established, emotion-tugging language as frivolous is to deny the creative power of language and our own reflexivity. Akin to Ludwig Wittgenstein’s private language games, we are willingly complicit in the way that the world is promoted and presented to us. In what is sometimes referred to explicitly as ‘emotional marketing,’ organisations responsible for branding and promoting destinations appeal directly to potential tourists using emotional signifiers such as the Cyprus Tourism Agency’s recent promotional campaign which headlines “In Your Heart,” or similarly the long standing campaign for Taiwan Tourism which reads as “Touch Your Heart.”

Almost instinctively tourism generates hierarchies of attractions, with those deemed to have strong emotional appeal leading the way. So, for instance, standing on the Grand Canyon Sky Walk – a glass platform that overhangs the edge of the Canyon – would appear to have strong emotional resonance for visitors. The deliberate accentuation of gazing directly over a vertical drop of up to 240 metres induces fear from some tourists who will not walk on it, apprehension from others who also walk upon it, and a pride or triumph from those who do not show any fear. Certain heritage sites are linked to the emotional responses that they generate, and when heritage is lifted into the realms of ‘World’ Heritage by virtue of inscription by UNESCO, it would seem to possess a greater capacity to impress and to ‘move’ tourists. World

¹⁸ See Eliezer Witztum and Moshe Kalian, ‘The “Jerusalem Syndrome” – Fantasy and Reality: A Survey of Accounts from the 19th Century to the End of the Second Millennium,’ *Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences*, vol. 36, no. 4 (1999), pp. 260-271.

Heritage as officially designated as *possessing* 'Outstanding Universal Value,'¹⁹ makes a default claim towards having intrinsic value and, through this, a power to generate stronger affection. Again, the tourism sector has long sought to mobilise and elaborate the apparent capacity of such sites to stimulate non-cognitive emotional responses. Interventions such as timing visits with sunrises and sunsets, dressing sites with *son et lumière* effects, and initiatives such as 'Petra by Night,' all seek to extract a greater emotional response and somehow *reveal* the power inherent in the attraction. As Claudia Bell and John Lyall²⁰ have discussed, technology has long been used, particularly since the nineteenth century, to 'accelerate' the notion of the sublime by creatively highlighting what Joseph Addison, in his *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy*, termed the three pleasures of the sublime; beauty, greatness, and uncommonness.²¹ It should be noted that the intention of designating a heritage site as having outstanding significance is *not* to induce emotional responses to it, and there are many World Heritage Sites that would be hard-pressed to stimulate any significant emotional response from tourists. The 'world' claim, however, does elevate heritage and raises expectation that at such places the emotions can somehow be touched more intensely.

The notion that places and objects hold some intrinsic emotional resonance is readily challenged on many levels and draws us to giving deeper consideration to the nature of emotions and what exactly we *do* feel. In what is a somewhat paradoxical process driven by the rationalities of scientific exploration, emotional states can be dissected as highly structured and episodic psychological states of varying length that assist us in coping with the world.²² Emotions provide a link between the physical and the psychological; between

¹⁹ UNESCO uses the term 'Outstanding Universal Value' as the key criteria for deciding whether a cultural (or natural) site is worthy for inscription on the World Heritage List. The category of 'World Heritage' works mainly within a largely Eurocentric, neo-Kantian framework of universal value and aesthetics.

²⁰ Claudia Bell and John Lyall, *The Accelerated Sublime: Landscape, Tourism and Identity* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002).

²¹ Joseph Addison, *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c: In the Years 1701, 1702, 1703* (London: J. Tonson, 1726).

²² Peter Goldie refers to an emotion as being typically "complex, episodic, dynamic and structured." The idea that emotions are processes does beg the question as to how they are stimulated, structured, and sequenced; however, although there are variations discussed in the literature, a common conception is that an emotion is made up of 'episodes.' See Peter Goldie, *The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). See also Richard S. Lazarus, *Emotion and Adaptation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Phoebe C. Ellsworth, 'Levels of Thought and Light Levels of Emotion,' in *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions*, eds Paul Ekman and Richard J. Davidson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 192-196.

feeling, thought, and behaviour. While we can usefully draw from the psychology literature regarding the origin and nature of emotions, it would be safe to conclude that they remain surrounded by considerable debate and semantic confusion.²³ While there would seem to be a non-cognitive dimension to the emotions in terms of instinctual reactions, in their ‘strategic’ deployment, they are also intentional. As Jean-Paul Sartre outlines in his *Sketch for a Theory of Emotions*, “the emotion is a specific manner of apprehending the world.”²⁴ Coming from his phenomenological position, Sartre saw the emotions as used in a functional, almost performative way to direct action, shape motivations, and transform our experiences in an almost ‘magical’ way.²⁵ As Sartre puts it, echoing Heidegger: “Emotion is not an accident, it is a mode of our conscious existence, one of the ways in which consciousness understands its Being-in-the-World.”²⁶ In addition to the intentionality of emotions, they also exhibit considerable variability. As ‘episodes,’ the emotions initially work to provide us with an evaluation of our circumstances and the relevance of our experience. Then follows an episode of appraisal, where we further evaluate what actions are possible in relation to, for example, concepts of time, social mores, and cultural learning. Following this is what is largely seen as the core of an emotion; the act of readiness. At this stage, the processing of evaluated information occurs and there is prioritisation of, and planning for, possible actions. It is at this point where bodily changes such as sweating or a dryness of the throat can be detected. The duration and intensity of these episodes, or affective states, varies from being quite rapid to more cumulative. Broadly speaking, however, we can consider an accumulation and elongation of these episodes as emerging as a more general ‘mood’ which, unlike an emotion, is somewhat disconnected from a particular object of attention and not so immediately and visibly expressed.²⁷

Accumulations and a Loss of Innocence

The variability of emotional states and their strategic role in our shaping of the patterns of human behaviour challenges the notion that there is some intrinsic power within an object or site that can stimulate the emotions. Rather, it directs

²³ The distinction between the terms ‘mood’ and ‘emotion’ is not clear in the literature of psychology. For a useful discussion of the attending issues see Christopher J. Beedie, Peter C. Terry, and Andrew M. Lane, ‘Distinctions Between Emotion and Mood,’ *Cognition and Emotion*, vol. 19, no. 6 (2005), pp. 847-878.

²⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Sketch for a Theory of Emotions* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 35.

²⁵ For Sartre, consciousness is ‘directed’ towards changing our relationship with the world not by acting on the world itself, but by ‘magically’ attributing new qualities to the world.

²⁶ Sartre, *Theory of Emotions*, p. 61.

²⁷ Nico H. Frijda, *The Laws of Emotion* (London: Psychology Press, 2006).

us to consider cognitive processes fed, as they are, by messy and complex cultural contexts. Clearly the tourist is not immune from the accumulations of culture. In a social-constructionist approach, and as I have argued elsewhere,²⁸ the tourist is “trans-textured,” laden with previous and cumulative knowledge and experience. As Ovar Löfgren puts it: “Our vacation experiences are hopelessly cluttered up with sediments of associations, clichés and images.”²⁹ These are derived from beyond any surface-information or impression of a place, and reside in the fuzzier realms of memorised pre-tourist knowledge, ever prior to and related to other texts. Tourists work within personal, social and cultural histories and make sense of the world against certain references. Within a Northern European constituency, how we ‘read’ a site, a landscape, or work of art, and how we respond to it emotionally, is a learned process drawn from the oft-repeated, collective, and almost sub-conscious inscriptions of romanticism. This cultural movement, far from being consigned to history, continues to direct us toward what and how we should value in the world, and also how we should react emotionally. The well-trodden pathways to the Alpine views ‘discovered’ by Friedrich Schiller, or the ‘scenes’ of life in the Istanbul Bazaar, are ceremoniously walked and ritually photographed by tourists still.³⁰ When *first* encountered, the scenes of the world may well have elicited emotions in the most visceral of ways amongst travellers who had little in terms of context or prior experience to appraise. Such emotions may well have been all the more dramatic in their intensity and duration precisely because of the immediacy of encounter. In the context of contemporary tourism, rather than as early travellers and explorers, we already ‘know’ the world, consciously, deliberately, but also passively and fleetingly. A seeming never-ending circulation of images and texts of places and peoples greet us every day, whether we wish them to or not. Difference is not so different, or at least we are able to be better prepared for it than ever. Tourists generally have multiple reference points to work with, in terms of pre-discovery images and texts which can raise expectations while at the same time numb the emotions of first contact.

Seeing places and doing things for the *first time* generates the strongest emotions, however, total innocence from some kind of encounter is increasingly rare and we are overlain by a variety of texts and narratives which,

²⁸ Mike Robinson, ‘The Trans-textured Tourist: Literature as Knowledge in the Making of Tourists,’ *Tourism Recreation Research*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2005), pp. 73-81.

²⁹ Ovar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (London and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

³⁰ Mike Robinson and David Picard (eds), *The Framed World: Tourism, Tourists and Photography* (London: Ashgate, 2009).

as Paul Ricoeur has noted, are referential texts, bringing the world to us and working with our imaginations.³¹ The implication of this for us as tourists is that it seems we are destined to be trapped within a vortex of imaginaries, which carry us along to destinations that we have, in effect, already visited. As I have suggested elsewhere, “it seems impossible to un-imagine the world once presented to us.”³² As Chris Rojek and Urry have argued, we work within ‘travel cultures,’³³ and as a society we are increasingly well-versed in the codes, behaviours, and performances of tourism. We are experienced tourists; intellectually and emotionally. Three inter-connected reflections emerge from this. The first relates to the need to understand or at least appreciate tourist histories and how their emotional encounters flow from a wider set of experiences. Stendhal’s famous emotional outpouring over the art of Florence came when he was at the age of 34. Arguably, had Stendhal been immersed with the artistic outputs of *more* European cities during his earlier life, he may well have experienced a yawn of indifference rather than a gasp of excitement. At the same time, as David Wakefield points out in his biography of Stendhal, he was “essentially sublime by nature ... he believed that an artist’s prime concern should be for beauty.”³⁴ Stendhal’s preoccupations for art, his pursuit of pleasure through art, and the cultural framing of the arts at that time (and the importance of travel within such a frame) assist us in understanding his well-noted emotional outburst. Moving out of one’s cultural frame, losing the reference points or having them challenged in some way, would seem to produce more intense emotional states.

A second reflection is one that continues to challenge theorists of the emotions for, as soon as we move away from the most basic non-cognitive reactions and into higher cognitive processes, we have to take cultural differences into account. Notions of awe, wonder, and the discourses which surround these would appear to be culturally located and closely connected to aesthetic sensibilities and general life experience. Leaving aside the general problem of accessing the emotions of others, it would seem sensible, if somewhat simplistic, to assume that the emotions experienced by tourists who normally dwell in cities but who visit the mountains will be different to those

³¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative and Imagination*, trans. David Pellauer (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995).

³² Mike Robinson, ‘The Emotional Tourist,’ in *Emotion in Motion: Tourism, Affect and Transformation*, eds David Picard and Mike Robinson (London: Ashgate, 2012), p. 37.

³³ Chris Rojek and John Urry, *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1997).

³⁴ David Wakefield, *Stendhal: The Promise of Happiness* (Bedford: Newstead Press, 1984), p. 58.

who normally live in the mountains and then visit cities. Tourism constantly plays with such oppositions and dislocations but this does not mean that either the city or the mountains are in themselves somehow gifted with the power to produce an emotional state in the tourist. Such thoughts move us into the realm of what is often discussed as ‘culture shock,’ where emotions are tested and can be understood as part of the process of negotiating sudden or dramatic immersion in otherness. Aside from the basic differences of environment, the ways in which the latter is *framed* differs. While Urry makes the point that the ‘romantic gaze’ has been generalised and exported worldwide,³⁵ and while many parts of the world may have sought to fashion place-myths and the objects of tourism in ways that mimic a romantic vision, the attuned and accumulated faculty for interpreting the world through the knowing cultural lens of *romanticism* ostensibly remains a European cultural trait and is dominated by a particular aesthetic sensibility, an idealised conceptual ‘space’ for the imagination and subjective intensity, and a drive for some notion of authentic self.

A third reflection cuts across social learning practices and culture, and relates not only to the ways we respond to the world but the ways by which we communicate our responses. In the eighteenth century a new vocabulary was developed to identify the sublime found in the works of nature, but which also would assist in expressing the ways in which travellers were responding to these. As Ian Ousby reminds us however, this language was not spontaneous but rather an element of the wider ‘cults’ relating to the sublime and the Gothic that allowed “people [to] find something appropriately exciting, gloomy or frightening about even the neatest ruin or smallest crag.”³⁶ Then, as now, touristic discourse generates, maintains, and reproduces its own lexicon of words and phrases that not only describe the world emotionally but prescribe how the world should be apprehended in an emotional way.³⁷ The language we

³⁵ John Urry, *Consuming Places* (London: Routledge, 1995).

³⁶ Ian Ousby, *The Englishman’s England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 110. See also Chard on the problem of ‘hyperbolising’; Chloe Chard, ‘From the Sublime to the Ridiculous: The Anxieties of Sightseeing,’ in *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000*, eds Hartmut Berghoff, Barbara Korte, Ralf Schneider, and Christopher Harvie (London: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 47-68.

³⁷ Michael Bamberg, among others, has made the distinction between language as a way of *performing* emotions (i.e., being emotional produces a particular form of communication), and language which reflects and *refers to* emotions, enabling us to talk *about* them. See Michael Bamberg, ‘Emotion Talk(s): The Role of Perspective in the Construction of Emotions,’ in *The Language of Emotions*, eds Susanne Niemeier and René Dirven (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997), pp. 209-225.

use to convey our emotions varies across cultures, sub-cultures, and generations,³⁸ but it is contextually recognisable as emotional language. That tourists mobilise a remarkably similar vocabulary when confronted with some instance of drama or beauty would tend to indicate that the emotions are rehearsed. Faced with substantive difference, newness, scale, and bodily challenge, tourists learn that they *should* be engaged in some emotional state; and for the majority of the time that is a key part of why they have become tourists. There is a tacit knowledge of what the appropriate words are to convey our feelings to the point of predictability. Listening to tourist groups at impressive tourist sites ensures that we hear words such as ‘wow,’ ‘incredible,’ ‘beautiful,’ etc. Such words are used at the moment of encounter and in future recollections, but these are the words we have already learned and are choosing to apply to reflect a certain experience.³⁹

Inscribing and Communicating Feeling

In the case of the couple’s encounter with ‘Petra by Night’ as relayed at the start of this paper, it would be tempting to conclude that based upon the language used at the moment of revelation, their emotional experience was not that significant. The woman merely referred to what she saw as beautiful and not to whatever impact that beauty was actively having upon her. Her repetition of the word “beautiful” and the audible exclamation of “Oooh” would indicate that this moment had some significance. In contrast, the man’s understated tone, in short-lived agreement, that the scene was indeed “very nice,” did not seem to convey as great a significance. This is all speculation, of course. Attempting to gauge emotions through discourse at the time is difficult enough and of course is dependent upon some audible expression; anyone observing me at this time, in more or less the same way that I was observing the couple, would have heard nothing. In post-trip narrative recollections of encounters, emotionally-laden language is frequently used. For instance, the myriad number of online blogs recording journeys and tourist site experiences are littered with declarations of ‘love’ to the point of banality. To say that one ‘loves’ every place visited tells us very little about the emotion of love, nor does it provide detail from which to make meaningful judgments about what may have been experienced. This is not a criticism but merely a wider reflection on the imprecision relating to how language is being used. Tourist

³⁸ Carol Stearns and Peter Stearns, *Emotion and Social Change* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1988).

³⁹ Norman Denzin makes the distinction between ‘deep’ emotions and what he terms surface or ‘spurious’ emotions, separate from what is ‘really’ being felt. See Norman Denzin, *On Understanding Emotion* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984).

recollections of their emotions are already mediated through further experience and reflection, and there is also inevitable loss of meaning when moving between languages. As Jenefer Robinson states: “Different languages have different words for carving up the emotion landscape corresponding to the different values, interests, and goals characteristic of different cultures.”⁴⁰ Robinson also makes the point that the differences in the labelling of emotions relates to the learning process and reflects the differences in emotional states. So, for instance, while there would seem to be a clear distinction between the expressed emotions of fear and the emotion of happiness, distinctions may be more blurred between, say, the emotions of sadness, sorrow, self-pity, regret, and remorse.⁴¹

The ways in which the world is presented to us as tourists, and the subtle undercurrents of social and moral pressure that can permeate the moments of our holiday, suggests that we come to expect some pleasurable, or at least memorable, emotional return on the emotional investments we make to get to a destination or attraction. Experiencing the emotion of ‘joy’ in the time-framed liminalities of *doing* tourism blends feelings such as amusement, enjoyment, happiness, satisfaction, and delight. These may be better expressed in terms of a general mood, rather than an intense emotion,⁴² and may be experienced just as much by lying beside the hotel swimming pool as by seeing Michelangelo’s David for the first time. Within the context of what John Tomlinson terms the culture of immediacy,⁴³ and linked to the erosion of innocence which hypermediatisation seems to have contributed to, the emotional stakes of tourism have also increased. Of course, the emotional hits we seek are exactly the ones that will bring us pleasure and we generally go on holiday to ‘enjoy ourselves.’ MacCannell makes the point that tourists are ever-more being driven by a ‘new’ social commandment to ‘enjoy,’ an imperative of pleasure which is embedded in wider social life.⁴⁴ In ways that are far from being straightforward, the emotions associated with the realm of pleasure are many and intertwined. The historical development of tourist destinations and attractions reveals the growing complexity and intensity of emotions that

⁴⁰ Jenefer Robinson, *Deeper than Reason: Emotion and its Role in Literature, Music and Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 90.

⁴¹ David R. Matsumoto, *People: Psychology from a Cultural Perspective* (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing, 1994).

⁴² It must be reiterated that the distinction between the term ‘mood’ and ‘emotion’ is not clear in the psychological literature. Again, see Beedie, Terry, and Lane, ‘Distinctions Between Emotion and Mood,’ pp. 847-878.

⁴³ John Tomlinson, *Speed: The Coming of Immediacy* (London: Sage, 2007).

⁴⁴ Dean MacCannell, *The Ethics of Sight-Seeing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

tourism and tourists work with. The promises are many; re-creation is more 'real,' involvement is more intimate, interpretation is more intense and interactive, the rides are faster, and the moments more meaningful. The pleasures offered and the standards of luxury which are equated with enjoyment and happiness continue to increase. But as the tourist-search for joy strives for greater scope and intensity, so too does the risk of experiencing the emotion of sadness as the peaks of pleasure are not fully attained.

The emotion of fear and its declinations such as alarm, shock, fright, horror, terror, panic, or hysteria are capable of being mobilised under the pleasure label; witness the competition between theme parks seeking to present the scariest rides. Even sadness is harnessed as a 'must-feel' emotion for tourists. Nostalgia, far from being any form of psychiatric disorder, through tourism and its many entry points into the heritage world, is transformed as a positive emotion, with a strategic function of identity-shaping and bringing meaning to the present self in anticipation of the unknown future.⁴⁵ There are attractions and destinations that, through history, bear association with grief, sorrow, hurt, and remorse. Such emotional landscapes,⁴⁶ carrying the markers and memories of death and disaster, are almost expected to generate the emotion of sadness and, in the process, become further inscribed in the collective consciousness/conscience. This idea of sites 'scaped' through their emotional resonance hints at some intrinsic quality and transformative power. These, however, are clearly culturally located, and are open to change and the act of forgetting, so that there is no automatic emotional engagement. Furthermore, such sites are more likely to be heavily mediated, carrying all-important instructive narratives. Thomas Thurnell-Read, for instance, in his analysis of young tourists visiting Auschwitz, points to the sense of moral obligation to visit the site to learn and understand. In his words: "Individuals readily speak of their engagement with the site yet do so in the somewhat standardized manner of the meta-narrative of holocaust remembering."⁴⁷ As tourists we arrive at many such sites with our own frame of emotional

⁴⁵ For a discussion of nostalgia as a positive emotion, see Constantine Sedikides, Tim Wildschut, and Denise Baden, 'Nostalgia: Conceptual Issues and Existential Functions,' in *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology*, ed. Jeff Greenberg (New York: Guilford Publications, 2004), pp. 200-214.

⁴⁶ This is a term that is increasingly used. See, for instance, Beatriz Pichel, 'Making Sense of Verdun: Photography and Emotions During the First World War in France,' in *Making Sense of Suffering: Theory, Practice, Representation*, eds Bev Hogue and Anna Sugiyama (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2011), pp. 203-213.

⁴⁷ Thomas Thurnell-Read, 'Engaging Auschwitz: An Analysis of Young Travellers' Experiences of Holocaust Tourism,' *Journal of Tourism Consumption and Practice*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2009), p. 48.

expectation derived from a collective consciousness, and yet we still are effectively left to experience a site personally, which may, or may not, coincide with the collective view.⁴⁸

Discussion

Tourism provides an explicit acknowledgement of the emotional world. It provides opportunities for emotional encounters stimulated by difference and a reflexive distance from our normative roles in life. To draw from Heidegger, in a sense it is not just 'being-in-the-world,' but, rather more acutely, *feeling* that we are actively 'dwelling-in-the-world.' As Norman Denzin emphasises, to be emotional is the way that we understand ourselves to be human; "all persons are joined to their societies through the self-feelings and emotions they feel and experience on a daily basis."⁴⁹ Such perspectives feed into a concern with authenticity; a long-time preoccupation of tourism scholars.⁵⁰ This is not in the rather simplistic objective sense where the real or 'true' is positioned against some notion of the un-real or 'false,' but rather in a far more existential vein. As I have pointed out, the idea that emotional intensity is somehow geared to the 'realness' or 'truth' of the object and revealed to us, or discovered by us, falls at the hurdle of cultural contingency. What Denzin alludes to is a notion of 'authentic self' in Heidegger's terms, or the 'narrative self' where our identity is shaped by, and through, the stories we accumulate and which we find ourselves within.⁵¹ The emotions provide both a sense/feeling of time – a hereness (*Da-sein*) – as well as an element of drama, and they are implicated in a wider cognitive process that organises and gives meaning to our experience. This positions the emotions as not so revealing of either the discontent of

⁴⁸ See Jessica Rapson, 'Emotional Memory Formation at Former Nazi Concentration Camp Sites,' in *Emotion in Motion: Tourism, Affect and Transformation*, eds David Picard and Mike Robinson (London: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 161-178.

⁴⁹ Norman Denzin, *On Understanding Emotion*, p. x.

⁵⁰ Tourism studies, with much muddy water and misunderstanding, has concerned itself with notions of authenticity and the idea that tourists somehow quest for the authentic. Early influential works on this by Dean MacCannell focus on the authenticity of tourist settings and not, as is sometimes activated, on authenticity as a motivation. More recent work has tended to focus upon the status of the tourist as engaged in a process of experiencing and validating the authentic self. See, for instance, Dean MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings,' *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 79, no. 3 (1973), pp. 589-603; MacCannell, *The Tourist*; Ning Wang, 'Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience,' *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1999), pp. 349-370; and Philip Pearce, 'Persisting With Authenticity: Gleaning Contemporary Insights for Future Tourism Studies,' *Tourism Recreation Research*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2007), pp. 86-89.

⁵¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative: Volume 1*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

staged authenticity, or the comprehension of the ‘real thing,’ but rather *part of* the discovery of the authentic self. As tourists, it would seem that not only are we exposed to more and arguably greater depths of emotion, but we are also more exposed to, and aware of, our emotional states, even expectant and receptive of some feeling of connectivity, the bridge between mind and body and between body and situation. This is well understood by a tourism industry which playfully and dialectically engages with our human desires, and there is undoubtedly some play on the part of the tourism sector with regard to a Goffmanesque ‘staging’ of events⁵² in a kind of ‘hide and reveal’ manner, based around object-space-performance relations. To visit the World Heritage Site of Petra, as with other attractions and destinations, is to – temporarily at least – buy into the *promise* of momentary, and occasionally life-changing, transformation. The caveat in relation to the tourist world is that the emotions promised are the ones that can be associated with pleasure. Authenticity, in the sense of an awareness of being and meaning through experience, is not only constituted by extra-ordinary and positive emotions, but by *all* the emotions of the everyday.⁵³

Mirroring the very development of leisure tourism as a project of modernity, aesthetics plays a pivotal role in providing a key gateway to emotional engagement. Petra with its drama of its own revelation, its immensity, its ‘hidden-ness,’ its craft and the redness of the sandstone, etc., finds a willing audience in the romantically attuned ‘western’ tourists *still* sharing and seeking the visions of the orientalist, the antiquarian, and the explorers of the primitive. Sensory engagement and some degree of non-cognitive emotion is clearly present, but never wholly independent of cognitive processes, and while aesthetic sensibilities differ and tastes can change, they reflect a remarkable degree of continuity in the tourist realm. It is useful to use the Stendhal syndrome as a reference point to remind ourselves of the power and persistence of meta-narratives in tourism. The realities of Stendhal’s encounter with the beauties on display in Florence, and whether indeed he fainted in response, is somewhat secondary to the drama and romance of the *story* of his encounter. Akin to stories of discovery of sublime nature and subsequent personal transformations, Stendhal’s story of his emotions, initiated by his own hand, has persisted and has been absorbed in the European collective consciousness as a way of conveying and reproducing the idea that

⁵² Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1959).

⁵³ Heidegger uses the term ‘entanglement’ of *Da-sein* to refer to the way in which the everyday is interwoven and inter-connected into a being-in-the-world. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 163-165.

art holds a power that can affect us deeply in psychological and physiological ways. The myth that something exists within the world which is the embodiment of all known beauty or purity is a persuasive (and arguably universal) idea, akin to the stories surrounding the Golden Fleece of Greek mythology or the Holy Grail in Christian culture. Despite, and arguably in reaction to, the Enlightenment, the working belief that objects, events, places, and peoples are present in the world, which can produce significant and visceral emotional reactions, and which confirm and transcend our own humanity, is powerful and persistent. The ancient triad of God, nature and 'man,' in various measures, which feature in the narrative of every journey and somewhat paradoxically within the rationalities of *modern* tourism, feed and maintain a belief in a sort of ancient power to draw out the passions of humankind.⁵⁴

I, along with so many others, arrive at a site such as Petra with considerable intellectual baggage. Our tacit knowledge intertwines with the immediacy of the moment, but it also has to fit with the on-going daily life that follows us on every tourist journey. Moreover, our singularly personal experiences frequently surface within a social context, when we are amongst family, friends, fellow tourists, and sometimes in front of an audience. Our emotions emerge within, and are filtered through, the socialities of the occasion, and one could expect some degree of adjustment not in the feeling of emotion, but in its expression, and as a function of the socio-cultural mores we transport with us. The reactions from the couple in front of me, relayed through their overheard discourse, illustrated the continuities of the everyday, even in the face of, and in the search for, dramatic intervention and the ever-ultimate tourist experience. Tourism, however, is designed to be a series of opportunities for meaningful and pleasurable emotional encounters, and so it is also infused with strings of non-pleasurable 'coping' emotions such as fear, surprise, and anger. When we live within a different physical and cultural environment we generate a series of worries directed not only to the immediacy of the holiday, but also to what has been temporarily left behind (loved ones, specific comforts, the security of the home) and what there is to return to (life and work problems). In this way, the tourist experience, whole or in part, is given over not only to the Stendhal-like emotional engagement, but is interspersed with uncomfortable feelings of apprehension, angst, worry, and discontent; the emotional worlds we find difficult to escape from.

⁵⁴ The romantic trope, cultivated, reproduced, and disseminated in and from Europe, over several centuries, continues to frame contemporary touristic experiences of, and encounters with, both nature and culture. See Urry, *Consuming Places*; and Richard Eldridge, *The Persistence of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

My own reaction to an evening at Petra, which of course is what I am able to access, even with the distortion of memory, was far from being emotional in the common-sense use of the word. Arguably, trained reflexivity and my 'difficult to escape from' position as an observer (my concentration was on the couple) prevented me from any affect. But leaving aside my own condition, there is a wider consideration which requires much further interrogation in tourism studies, and that is an acknowledgement that tourists often gain limited or at best bland experiences from the sites/sights they encounter. We gaze but we do not see. The destinations and landscapes we can move through can leave us with no related feeling at all. The work which has been led by cultural geographers and sociologists and which has importantly revealed the embodied and sensuous nature of the *doing* of tourism also needs to be tempered with the notion that the tourist condition can also be passive and empty. Though we are presented with, and indeed may seek, the dominant trope of an *aesthetic* experience, our actual experience may be an anaesthetic one – where we feel nothing at all.⁵⁵ This is not the same as my 'disinterestedness' in Petra implying a reflexive, objective position, but rather it is about taking no position at all. We have moved beyond Stendhal, the romance of his innocence, his search for pleasure, and a sense that the world is pregnant with emotion, to consider scenarios where through the compression of experiences and repetitive engagement, together with the intersections with our ordinary lives, the anaesthetic may increasingly be the norm.

⁵⁵ A point to consider is the extent to which routine and mechanistic viewings of the world are subsequently recalled/re-imagined in a more poetic fashion, as if to compensate for the numbness of a first impression.