



# WONDER THAT IS CULTURE

**T.B. Subba**



This book is an effort to unravel the contours of culture through the works dedicated to Professor P.K. Misra, who probably was himself one of the most well known in the field of Cultural Anthropology in India. In this festschrift to him are included articles written by some of his friends and colleagues who are not necessarily his closest but who share a common ideological platform with him.

The culture in this book has to do with the downtrodden, the exploited, the socially and economically disadvantaged, the peripheral in India as well as overseas. This culture is often ignored and maligned by its dominant counterpart but it is most subtle, sophisticated and integrative. Understanding this culture holds some hope for the future of the humanity as a whole.

This book combines amateur authors with veterans, fuses tribes with castes, transcends boundaries between cultures, religions and countries. There is also a lot of self-questioning in this book. It should be of interest to those who are into tribal, caste and cultural studies and could be prescribed as a reference book for students of anthropology and sociology.

Rs. 495





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ISBN 81-7099-667-8

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Festschrift to Professor P K Misra

*Edited by*  
**T. B. SUBBA**



**MITTAL PUBLICATIONS**

**NEW DELHI-110059 [INDIA]**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am first of all grateful to all the contributors to this volume. Without their kind cooperation this volume would never be possible. I am particularly happy and obliged that some of my junior colleagues could participate in this venture. I am also grateful to my colleague, Dr R K Pathak, for extending administrative help towards the preparation of this volume. Mr. K.M. Rai Mittal deserves my sincere thanks for honouring my proposal to publish this manuscript. Finally, my wife Roshina and my daughter Tarona deserve thanks for bearing with me as usual.

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## RE-READING P K MISRA

*T B Subba*

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### **Introduction**

'Re-reading' P K Misra in a volume felicitating himself? I was asked this question by many with whom I discussed the plan of this volume. It was only after some explaining that I could hear "Oh, I see". First of all, it is not a biography of him in literal sense. Who would like to read about one P K Misra when most of us have not read the biographies of even Mahatma Gandhi or Jawaharlal Nehru? Then, if I simply say what he has written on, where, and when only a few eyebrows may be raised, that too seconds later than I would expect. But if I make him speak, argue, even defend himself here through my writing the readers might find the effort at least worth their time and effort.

I have interacted with him, more intensely, for the last four years only: he was away teaching in the University of West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago, when I joined the Department of Anthropology, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong in September 1991. He returned to this Department in 1993 but we did not hit off immediately. We spent almost a year to assess each other, adjust our wavelengths, and to learn to interact as two human beings. In this short period, I have seen him not only as an anthropologist par excellence but also as an able administrator, as a loving husband to his

(now) deceased wife, as a father to his only child studying abroad, and as a friend to many students and colleagues. He has a variety of interests but the one that excites him most is certainly anthropology. I remember how excited he would be whenever a brilliant idea struck him, and how restless he got to explain the idea and write it down. I never realized that he was more than two decades older than myself. He was never hesitant to seek my suggestions, comments, and even appreciations.

The reader might have noticed a tendency here to go towards a biography of him. Although I have denied this article to be one in the beginning itself I think there is some element of biography in every piece of social or cultural anthropological writing. In one way or the other we do end up writing imagined biographies of social relations, institutions, groups, etc. If this writing is called a biography in this sense, let it be called so.

Misra has written extensively—about 10 books, over 100 articles and 30 odd review articles or book reviews in the last 36 years of his writing career, taking his 1961 article on “bullock carts” as his first publication. To review all his writings in this article is not possible and what I have tried to do here is to make this possible, mostly at his cost.

One must bear in mind that no review is complete. One rereads what one wants to and no one can be persuaded or forced to read what one does not want to. In the case of Misra, I have tried to read all his books and articles but not all were available with himself or in any library nearby. Even if I had all his writings before me I would obviously read only what I would like to and write what I would like to. He did refer occasionally to one or two of his writings to be important contributions in his own eyes but such allusions have not influenced my review here because I never noted it down when he said so and I did not remember them when I was reviewing them. If some of his writings are ignored and some other highlighted here it is purely the result of my reading and I take full answerability for that. I



would probably have discussed my reading of his work with him prior to finalising this review but for his stay away in Canada during this period.

### **Chronicling Misra**

His paper on the "bullock carts" published in *Peasant Life in India* (1961:53-56) is, as stated above, perhaps his first publication. Trained along with other young researchers then like Baidyanath Saraswati by none other than a person of Nirmal Kumar Bose fame he shows in this paper what he had learnt from Bose - to quantify or measure observations and classify data meticulously. Although 'material culture' as a field of cultural anthropology is much maligned today it is perhaps one of the best fields for training students in the techniques of observation and measurement.

The article on the worship of a female deity in the district of Chanda published in 1962 shows the halo of Bose still overshadowing him. The study of India as a civilization to which the great and little traditions have contributed equally was a favourite subject for those belonging to Bose's generation and was continued for much longer after their heyday. In this paper, Misra shows the same interest in his study of a female deity which is found everywhere in India albeit in different forms and names.

He did not publish anything for the next three years except a short paper on the nomadic Gadulia Lohars (1965:165-71). He was obviously busy completing his doctoral thesis on the Gadulia Lohars, which he submitted to Lucknow University in 1966. In his thesis, he brings out two points very clearly: one, the nomads move within a fairly well defined region and seldom stray away from it; and two, the nomads are in symbiotic relationship with the settled people. In one other article published in 1969 he evaluates the efforts of the Rajasthan Government to rehabilitate the nomads in Chittorgarh and Beawar colonies. He makes another important contribution to the study of



nomads in a volume edited by Surajit Sinha (1970). This paper delves into the problems of definition and classification of nomads, an attempt which is found quite successful. His sevenfold classification of nomads in India is primarily based on their occupations. This paper also carries a comprehensive bibliography on nomads.

The Gadulia Lohars are his pet subject of discussion almost throughout his academic career. In his long and brilliant career he has worked and written on many other populations of India, particularly southern India, but his eyes sparkle and he is in his elements whenever he gets an opportunity to speak about the Gadulia Lohars. In fact, they find themselves represented even in his writings or lectures on some other populations. I think this happens with many anthropologists. I have seen many senior anthropologists who were never tired of talking or writing about their first fieldwork. Oftentimes it is like the first love in life but it may also happen so because many never do another fieldwork!

The Gadulia fieldwork was not the first and last for Misra. In 1970, he published an important article on the Jenu Kurubas, a scheduled tribe found mostly in the forest area of the southern districts of Mysore. He compares the Jenu Kurubas with Betta Kurubas, another neighbouring tribe but whose economic condition is better than that of the former. He tries to explain how, given the same environmental resources, one is enterprising and another is not. He does this on the basis of relationship between economic initiative, personality and social structure (1970:78-86).

In 1971 he, along with C R Rajalakshmi and I Verghese, publishes a small book of 87 pages on the nomads in Mysore city. The book includes 19 nomadic communities found in this city. It describes their camp life, equipment, dress and ornaments, occupation, marriage and family, religious practices, attitudes of the settled people towards the nomads, etc. Though small in size, the book is rich in description. In fact, most writings by Misra have rich description of the people and place. In the following two years he wrote two

articles (1973, 1974) which show his disillusionment with social science research and the university system. He finds them wasteful and socially irrelevant. He has expressed his disillusionment even in later years (1976, 1977, 1981). In 1973, he also wrote an article on the Gadulia Lohars showing how they function as a part of the wider economic, social and ritual system of the region they inhabit. A more detailed piece on the region of their movement and composition of a band is published in 1974. The mutual interdependence between them and the settled people are brought out very well in another of his paper published in 1975.

Misra is back with Jenu Kurubas in 1975 with an article of nine pages and a book published as one of the issues of *Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India*. In this article he mainly discusses the problems of development for the Jenu Kurubas as they live in highly exploitative situation. He also presents a package of nine suggestions which are reflective of Elwin's tribal *panchasheel* enshrined in *A Philosophy for NEFA* (1959). The book is based on his three months' fieldwork on this food-gathering tribe living in Bagur forest area of Heggaddavankote taluk, Tamilnadu. It describes their habitat, patterns of family and marriage, material equipment, economic organisation, etc. The last piece of writing on this tribe by him is found in 1977 in a book edited by Surajit Sinha and B D Sharma. In this article, he writes more as a humanist than an anthropologist. The frequent starvation, exploitation by contractors and government and a high juvenile mortality seem to have moved him deeply while writing this piece.

The other two important contributions in this year (1977) are more conceptual than tribe-specific. Of these two, one is essentially a review of literature on inter-tribal relations, and the other on the untenable distinction between tribe and caste. The common message in both is that there are no clearly discernible boundaries between tribe and caste and any discussion on tribe cannot afford to ignore caste and vice versa. Two important conceptual articles in 1977



were followed by two equally important articles on methodology in 1978. One deals with the problems of fieldwork among the nomads, which is rather autobiographical in nature, and the other is critique of fieldwork as an exploitative relationship between the anthropologist and his/her subject. Anthropological fieldwork has been the subject matter of his criticism even later (1982).

The concern for the lowliest of human beings, the subjugated, exploited, and downtrodden is found in almost all his articles, which I link up with his tryst with Marxism during his youth. The Marxist wave in the 60s and early 70s did turn many an eye towards directions earlier ignored. Take, for instance, his article on the biography of a washerman (Ramu) of Mysore city; or his article with D B Sastry on the Kuruchian, an agricultural tribe of Kerala; or the one on Gadulia Lohar women or the tribes of Andaman Islands, all published in 1978. The rebel in him is also caught in another article by him on rural development (1979). 1978 also marks his editorial debut with the publication of *Cultural Profiles of Mysore City*. By now he is a senior ranking officer of Anthropological Survey of India and an established anthropologist.

Come the 80s and Misra goes post-modernist with his article on the cave-dweller Cholanaickans (1980). This is an interesting account of how this food-gathering tribe has organised its territorial divisions of the forests for peaceful exploitation of resources. The other three contributions made in 1980 (with Jakka Parthasarathy) also contain the post-modernist fervour. For instance, there is an article with Anand Bhanu on conflict (considering consensus modernist), one on local wisdom (which the modernists have ever ignored), and one on Lakshadweep culture (peripheral culture). I find him going post-modernist with the onset of this decade for one more reason: since this decade his answers to many questions are 'yes' as well as 'no'. Many questions cannot indeed be answered in clear cut yes or no.

1982 has apparently been a very productive year for



him. This year saw the publication of one book on rural development by himself, another book on nomads edited with K C Malhotra, and five articles out of which two are with his wife, Rajalakshmi. Whether the book and articles deal with caste or tribal societies, they all deal with the economic aspect. There is one more common thread running across these publications, that is, the concern for the subjugated, exploited, backward, section of the society. He draws attention of the readers to what he thinks are responsible for the failure of development programmes. And he has strongly believed that such sections of society could be uplifted only by mobilizing them. 'Tribal mobilization' is incidentally the theme of his only article published in 1983.

His four publications in 1984 are quite variegated, with one falling in 'environment', the second in 'anthropology of religion', and the last two in 'political anthropology', more specifically 'dispute resolution'. This interest is also found in another article of his published in 1987. His publications in 1987 have even more varied themes. There is one book on the bibliography of tribes in south India, which is edited with four other persons. Then there is The David McAlpin and Sally Sage McAlpin Lecture for 1986 on tribal transformation. He returns to Gadulia Lohars once again in this year but the treatment is more theoretical here. Finally, there are two articles in anthropology of food, which his colleagues and friends in Shillong associate with him. He enjoyed eating good food, appreciating the host(ess), and talking about its cultural contours.

Misra comes up with the biography of Dr Narasimhan in the form of a book in 1988 written jointly with his wife. This is the biography of a person who devoted his life to the development of tribes even before the concept of tribal development had struck roots in India. In 1990, he published two articles, one on the impact of technology on culture and the other on the mediating role of *kwai* in the Khasi social structure. In the second article, which is analytically rich, he brings out symbolism as a powerful factor in explaining cultural behaviour.

His first ever writing on Indian diaspora is published in November 1991. This article is on the Diwali festival in Trinidad, the role it plays in reaffirmation of social ties and formation of an identity. But I must make a special mention of the other article published in this year. This article is titled 'Anthropology of Surajit Chandra Sinha'. Nobody else could perhaps have done a better job of it than Misra has done. This is partly biographic and partly an appreciation of Sinha's academic contributions.

He returns to his nomadic friends once again in 1992 but with greater sophistication. He almost seems to have identified the factor which is responsible for decrease in cultural and linguistic diversity, self-reliance, and environmental quality. The other two articles written in this year are on Indian diaspora. Of these two one is theoretically interesting in the sense that he brings out the wonders that culture can do whereas the other is ideologically arresting because it tells the story of the Dhangars, the commonest of the Indian emigrants, in the Caribbeans. His one article and one book review published in 1993 are both on Indian diaspora only.

The last ever article that I have in hand is published in 1995 and is again on Indian diaspora. This theme seems to have assumed a lot of importance for him for he himself was in that situation in Trinidad and Tobago during 1991-93. Apart from giving classes on Indian diaspora his sensitive heart and mind could not be oblivious of what had happened and what was happening there, with particular reference to his one favourite subject—culture.

### **Subheading Misra**

Subheading the works of one who is dynamic and ever ready to plunge into new fields is indeed difficult. Personally I am aware that he was, till the day he left for Canada, crazy about the sacred groves and he daunted many odds to get a first hand experience of such forests. A major work on Indian diaspora is pending completion due mainly to his,



what I call 'supercop' responsibilities in this University. I know he would like to write passionately on subjects related to environment too. Without not much sense of crime about what I have done with his works, I have categorised them into the following:

- (a) nomads
- (b) conflict resolution
- (c) economy of tribes
- (d) higher education and society
- (e) tribal development
- (f) concepts and methods in Anthropology
- (g) Indian diaspora
- (h) religion, and
- (i) miscellaneous.

It is fine up to this. The problem begins when I start deliberating on how I should present these subheadings. Should I, for the benefit of the readers, arrange these in a broad time framework without being too chronological? Should I start from the least to the most important theme or the other way around? Should I do it in alphabetical order? Should I make an objective criterion like number of articles or books on each theme to decide which is more important than the others? I tried all that and yet I was not satisfied. The number of publication is, to my mind, a poor yardstick for measuring the contribution of a scholar. I had already done enough violence to his works; I did not want to do more. The (dis)order in which the various themes are presented below is the consequence of trying to become methodical.

### ***Miscellaneous***

There are many publications of Misra that I have categorised as 'miscellaneous', which simply means that they have no single theme and each is a part of a broader theme. To be



true, he has just one theme in all his publications, that is, culture. This theme runs through each and every publication of his like the thread through a garland. Yet, for more general audience, I have classified his writings on a number of themes and one such theme itself is 'miscellaneous'.

This is by no means the least important collection of his publications but the same are not pursued further in a systematic manner subsequently. Some of the publications included under this subheading are indeed brilliant works and some of them have been picked up by his students for doctoral research. 'Miscellaneous' is actually his intellectual character: he is not dogmatic about any idea or field, not even about his pet word 'culture'. He does not allow himself to be left out in the changing academic or information scenario of the world of which anthropology is just a part. He is ever ready to take up the cudgels for anthropology with the so-called 'scientists'.

The miscellaneous writings include, chronologically ordered, writings on bullock carts, folk communication, the marginal man (a washerman), Lakshadweep culture, environment, food, tribal transformation, technology and culture, *kwai* (areca nut) chewing and sharing, anthropology of Surajit Sinha, etc. Among the books in this category, mention may be made of his edited work on *Cultural Profiles of Mysore City* (1978), *Economic Development and Social Stratification* (1982), *Tribes in Southern Region: A Select Bibliography* (1986), *Dr Narasimhan's Life Story: Experiments in Tribal Development* (1988), and the like.

### ***Nomads***

'Nomads' is by all means the most important theme of Misra's research, writing and lectures. Starting from his doctoral work submitted to Lucknow University in 1966 he never really abandoned them. His doctoral work on the nomads was confined to Rajasthan but he extended his work later to the nomads in Mysore and other parts of Karnataka also. The main subthemes of his writings on them are:

nomads-settled people relationship and symbiosis, regional economy and environment based nomadic movement, rehabilitation and development of nomads, definition and classification of nomads, etc.

His doctoral thesis was published by Anthropological Survey of India in 1977 and titled as *The Nomadic Gadulia Lohar of Eastern Rajasthan*. This book, according to Misra, "seeks to present a descriptive analysis of the economic system of the nomadic Gadulia Lohar of Chittorgarh region" (p.3). On the basis of eight months' fieldwork spread over three trips he concludes:

The nomadic character of the Gadulia Lohar is closely tied with their economic, social and political life, particularly economic as a single factor. They are part of the economy of the villages they visit within their region and often in the neighbouring regions. Their household equipment, composition of the households, and economy are all geared to suit the nomadic life. Settling them in houses does not mean that their nomadic life has been changed altogether. Nomadism is a way of life (p.203).

This stand about the Gadulia Lohars remains unchanged throughout his writings including the one published as late as in 1992. He refines his conclusions, brings in fresh data and description in each new article or book on the nomads but the substratum of his knowledge, formed in the 60s, remains unshaken even in the 90s. Broadly speaking, his writings on nomads are rich in description towards the earlier half whereas they are rich in analysis towards the latter half beginning roughly in 1980.

Like the nomadic bands, Misra too seems to have formed a band of scholars to follow the nomads through their itinerary. His small band consisted of, first and foremost, his own wife and his friends K C Malhotra and I Verghese.

As regards his theoretical position *vis-a-vis* nomads he seems to have adopted a Marxist-like view of the nomadic



society. He seems to believe that the region within which they move, the composition of their bands, their interrelationship with the settled population, and even their future as nomads depends on economic compulsions. For instance, in one article (1982), he writes: "The traditional form of nomadism will have to go, whatever will remain of it, will be owing to utter economic compulsions" (p.22). In spite of such theoretical stand he is never behind to point out the cultural reinforcements which the nomads bring to the settled people and *vice versa*, or to see the cultural consequences of the nomadic life for the nomads as much as for the settled people.

### ***Tribal Development***

Some of the most backward and lesser known tribes are found in the hills of south India and Misra has paid attention to some of them like Jenu Kurubas, Betta Kurubas, Kuruchian, Cholanaickan, and the tribes of Andaman Islands, Of these tribes, the Jenu Kurubas occupy the most important place in the agenda of Misra's tribal research. He has not only written many articles on them but even a book published as volume 18, no 3 of the *Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India* (1975).

The Jenu Kurubas are found in the forest areas on the south of Mysore. Traditionally, they were honey collectors (hence, the name of their tribe), food gatherers, hunters, and shifting cultivators. They are one tribe which has failed to take advantage of development programmes and has remained one of the most backward. The Betta Kurubas are also a forest-dwelling tribe living in the neighbourhood and sharing the same natural resources. But the latter have a better socioeconomic condition. Misra has tried to explain this anomalous situation in a couple of articles on the basis of relationship between economic initiative, personality, and social structure.

The lack of economic initiative of the Jenu Kurubas is also analysed in the light of the severe exploitative situation



in which they live. He also shows the ill-consequences of development activities like 'Project Tiger' on the forest tribes like the Jenu Kurubas. The only way to draw them out of this damned life, according to Misra, is to educate and mobilize them. His study of a matrilineal-archal tribe called Kuruchian of Kerala is also important as it shows the futility of a rigid demarcation of boundary between caste and tribe.

Compared to his writings on these tribes, his works on the Cholanaikkan, a cave-dwelling tribe of Kerala and numbering just 202 in 1980 or his works on the tribes of Andaman Islands do not appear very serious. Though he makes some profound observations on these tribes these appear more based on his experiences on other tribes than on the tribes in question. Making such an observation is quite easy on Misra for he combines his head and heart in most of his works. Where his heart is missing is not where he belongs.

### **Economy of Tribes**

Misra has published a number of articles on the economy of tribes, some of which are published in K S Singh edited *Economies of the Tribes and their Transformation* (1982). There is one article by him titled 'Tribal Economy in the Southern Zone' published in this volume in which he classifies 'tribal economy' into six categories, viz., (1) food collection, hunting and fishing, (2) settled agriculture, (3) agrestic serfdom, (4) service, (5) pastoralism, and (6) barter. Knowing him now he would wink his eyes or twist his lips and brush aside the expression 'tribal economy' for there never was anything that could be called so. But in 1982 he did not consider this expression necessary even to be put under inverted commas though he was aware that:

The tribal economy cannot be considered in isolation of the forces operating in the wider frame of reference. For instance, there are unmistakable signs of the growth of

capitalistic farming in the rural areas of India but feudal or semi-feudal economy still persists (1982:92).

The economic life of the Gadulia Lohars was the core of his doctoral research and he had ideological inclination towards Marxism for quite some time, as I pointed out above. Thus he had the training as well as intellectual penchant for dealing with economic aspects of tribal societies. He has amply demonstrated this in many of his publications.

### **Concepts and Methods in Anthropology**

His ideas on the various concepts and methods in anthropology are spread about in his writings but there are some publications which he has devoted specifically to these aspects. He has quite a reputation as a field worker and most would agree that without fieldwork experience most anthropological concepts and methods would not be clear at all.

One of the concepts in anthropology that has bothered him for many decades now is 'tribe'. He never seems happy with this but seems to realize that the alternative concepts are even less satisfactory. Hence, his choice seems to adopt this concept and yet go on demystifying the beliefs and ideas surrounding this concept. He writes that "it cannot be assumed that the tribal, whichever way they are defined, interact only with other tribes" (1977:85). He further writes: "A tribe may have several subgroups. In some cases these subgroups have been listed as independent tribes and in some others as part of the parent tribe" (1977:87). One other article published in the same year critically examines the contributions made by anthropologists like F G Bailey and Surajit Sinha to the debate on where 'tribe' ends and 'caste' begins. He argues that efforts to distinguish between the two are unimportant on the basis of case studies from the Niligiris, Wynad neighbourhood, and Visakhapatnam. According to him, production relations are basic to both tribe and caste and in this sense the above debate is a 'non-issue' (1977:149).



Misra has written a couple of interesting articles on fieldwork. The first one under review here is published in 1978 and deals with problems of fieldwork among the nomads such as locating the groups, presentation of identity of the field worker, keeping the contacts alive, and rejection of the field worker. Though some of these problems are also associated with fieldwork among the settled populations these problems seem to have different 'feel' in the context of the nomads. Autobiographical in nature, the paper shows why nomads are still poorly studied and understood. The other paper, published in the same volume in memory of T C Das, is quite different from the first. The latter is a condemnation of the role anthropologists assume in relation to their informants. This relationship, according to him, is not only unequal but also exploitative of the subjects of enquiry. To my mind, this problem is closely associated with 'Other culture' studies, which anthropological studies invariably were until the other day. However, with the rise of self-culture studies in many countries of the world today much of the guilt that Misra shows is unwarranted.

A lot of Misra's criticism (1982) of Malinowski's perceptions of the natives as revealed through his field diary published in 1967 is also true of some Indian anthropologists working on the tribes. But he brings out two points which are significant: one, his argument that anthropological fieldwork is far from any precision, and second, the field worker no longer has the privilege to publish anything s/he likes as it was possible earlier. The people on whom a book or article is written can read it and respond accordingly.

### **Higher Education and Society**

Misra has written a number of articles arguing that higher education in India is pompous, unrealistic, and irrelevant for Indian society. The most important yardstick for measuring the significance of higher education, according to him, is social relevance. Though 'social relevance' is perhaps one of the most ill-specified concepts, his writings do prick a conscience or two.



The first article in this theme is published in 1972. In this, he argues that researches by Indian social scientists "are not relevant to the immediate or future needs of the society, (and) they are not fulfilling their responsibilities towards the society which supports them" (1972:89). He further writes: "Issues and problems which they take up for study are either fashionable in the 'developed' world or the 'developed' world is interested in them. This state of affairs in social sciences is stated to be due to the colonisation of mind of the Indian social scientists" (1972:91). The same sense of disgust is reflected in his article titled "University and Society" published in 1973 or in "Science, technology and people" published in 1976. The latter says that development in the field of science and technology has not benefited the rural areas in general and food-gathering tribes in particular. In other related articles (1977, 1981) he argues that many activities related to higher education are without purpose or vision: they simply show that our minds are still colonised.

There are many scholars who have no difficulty in agreeing with the above ideas of Misra. But it has to be admitted that many higher educational institutions themselves have done a lot of soul-searching on this issue. Besides, continuation of a colonial heritage and fulfillment of social needs might not be too difficult a task to combine provided there is enough academic will to do so. But given the post-colonial academic scenario, which is devoid of any social or human concern, there is a need for serious debate on this issue.

### **Conflict Resolution**

There are three publications of Misra on this theme in intervals of three years (1981, 1984 and 1987). The first was an article published in *The Eastern Anthropologist* based on a multi-caste village in Karnataka, 14 kilometres from Mysore. In this village, called Yelwal, Misra finds that conflicts "neither challenge the system nor provide any alternative and therefore the resolution of such conflicts either way do not bring any significant change" (p. 286).

That he attached a lot of importance to conflict resolution as a field of anthropological study is clear from the theme he chose for his inaugural lecture at the Tribal Research Centre of Tamil University, Thanjavur, in 1984. This lecture, running into 35 printed pages, was titled as "System of Dispute Resolution in Indian Society: An Anthropological Perspective". According to him, both conflicts and "their resolutions occur within the framework of a culture" (p. 1). He says that "the traditional system of dispute resolution was integrated through the dominant ideas of the society, (whereas) the modern legal system is not fully integrated" (p. 2). He further says that the modern legal system is an "instrument to maintain the status quo in the society and is therefore a hurdle to the transformation of society" (p. 27). The 1987 publication on conflict resolution need not be discussed here because it does not say anything new.

### **Religion**

Of late, particularly after the sad demise of his wife, he seems to be taking quite an interest in religion, not as a field of anthropological research but as an agendum for discourse and practice. Religion was never an important subject for research or writing for him. This is evident from the fact that he wrote only two articles in the last 36 years or so in a gap of 22 years (1962, 1984).

In the first article, Misra says that the practice of worshipping female deities is widespread in India though there may be regional variations in it. The second article deals with the changing role of the priests of Tirumala-Tirupati-Devasthanam under secular authority. His conclusion is that the caste structure is further reaffirmed rather than being secularised in temples under modern bureaucratic structure.

### **Indian Diaspora**

This is a theme which he started in 1991, after joining the University of West Indies as a visiting professor, a theme



that seems to have reaffirmed his faith in the wonders that culture can do, a theme on which the best is yet to come out of him, and a theme on which he has, excepting the latest one published in *The Eastern Anthropologist* (1995), chosen the newspapers of Trinidad and Tobago as the fora for expressing his views. He has written on the Diwali festival, on the Dhangars from Chotanagapur, and the adaptability of Indian culture. Here his audience is the people of Indian origin with a strong sense of roots developed over the years in Trinidad.

The last article is truly an academic piece that discusses how the East Indian cultural identity was created, manifested, and asserted. In his own words: "On arrival in Trinidad the Indian 'coolies' were kept segregated and pressure was built on them to become Christians. For decades Hindu and Muslim traditional marriages were not given legal recognition and children from such unions were called 'illegitimate'. The East Indians did not care and hardly 10% of them got converted". He adds: "Though influenced by the overall Christian environment, the East Indian Hindus retained their separate identity in marriage, the family, interest in films and music, etc. Temple architecture, early morning temple service and the role of Pandit are notable innovations in the East Indian Hinduism. Tharia-Lota network and the Indian cuisine are other binding factors" (1995 : 201).

His experience of Trinidad seems to have strengthened his sense of pride in being Indian, not that he lacked it earlier, and in anthropology as a study of Indian culture. This might be clear from his diaspora publications in future.

### **Summing Up**

The foregoing pages partly depict what Misra has done as an anthropologist in the last 36 years or so. I say 'partly' because no such account of a person's lifetime work can be complete in true sense. Such an account can also not take into account what he said and taught in this period. However the idea here is not to document his life and works but try



and make him speak through his writings. Of course, one does not need to read all this to know that he was a very successful teacher and a dear friend to many in India and abroad. More than anything else I have written this piece and edited this book to felicitate him for this and show a sense of gratitude for his guardianship to me and my family members in Shillong.

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## DESIGNING DESTINATIONS

### Advertising and Touristic Desire

*Prem K Poddar and T B Subba*

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#### I

Tourism studies have come of age. Between the brief article by T. Nunez published in 1963 and *Anthropology of Tourism* by Dennison Nash (1996) much has been mapped by the discipline of tourism studies. But the occidental tourists' (henceforth tourists) looking at the 'Other' worlds, and how such 'looking' is shaped by their constructed desires, the advertisement industry, and marketing of the destinations is one field that has not been adequately discussed in a comprehensively focussed theoretical framework. This essay seeks to make a contribution by situating tourists within a theory of development that encompasses both the tremendous imbalances of the global political economy and an expansionary and dominating social formation in the more wealthy nations. Such a project needs to explore the symbiotic relationship between the image of the Third World in tourist advertisements and the broader practices—both touristic and otherwise—that it mediates.

Here, John Urry's use of Foucault's concept of the 'gaze' provides a useful framework for a critique of the occidental tourism—for looking at tourists' looking—by bringing



together both the socially constructed nature of the gaze and its power to organize experience (Urry 1990). As the amalgamation of power, social communication, and visual imagery, the tourist gaze has many strong affinities with the advertising image. One could say that tourism participates in a 'symbiotic' relationship with its advertising (Truong 1990:124-25).

## II

Although one could trace the history of travel as far back as the history of mankind itself (Nash 1996:10) mass tourism in developing countries is a relatively recent phenomenon, emerging only after the Second World War. In conjunction with social legislation that guaranteed paid vacations (such as the Holiday Act of 1938 in Great Britain), an upsurge in First World 'guests' resulted from a post-war economic boom that saw not only higher incomes, but the corporate expansion of leisure services in an effort to absorb this surplus income (Truong 1990:98). These factors combined with the post-war surplus of aircraft to generate large-scale international air travel and tourism in the developing world. Because of geo-economic disparities, the pattern of mass tourism is essentially privileged people from the 'North' travelling in places where inhabitants do not have the means to travel; there, hotel labour and artisan goods are cheap (Rossell 1988:2). As Truong points out, it is crucial to note that the expansion of leisure services in the Third World did not arise from the initiative of developing countries. This lingering external influence is closely connected with the expansion of multinational corporations into the Third World, with interests in air transport, hotels, and tour operation (1990:99). In this way, tourism as a development strategy sadly parallels broader mis-development policies of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, fostering dependency upon both a single industry and multinational capital. Within the context of 'dependency theory', tourist policy can be seen as facilitating the integration of Third World

countries into a 'new world order' of production closely allied with the goals of 'free' enterprise (Truong 1990:116-23).

The general trend toward vertical and horizontal integration in the tourist industry also means that industrialized countries tend to control the advertising industry which, to a large extent, shapes and determines demand. This consolidation within the industry has implications for some of the particular qualities of the touristic advertisement. The high 'quality' of brochures is one manifestation of an integration that allows for huge advertising budgets in order to attract the rich consumer's attention. J. C. Holloway remarks: "While some might contend that there is today a disappointing similarity among leading tour operators' brochure covers, taken individually the quality and professionalism of brochure design is exceptional" (1989:141). The 'disappointing similarity' is certainly a second consequence of an integration that requires transnational marketing (Wyer and Towner 1988:23).

### III

One thing that distinguishes the tourist product from other commodities is that it is a service rather than a tangible good; made more intangible by the fact that it does not occur at the place of purchase, and thus cannot be inspected before being bought. This makes it a highly 'speculative' investment, with images occupying a more central role than they do in the case of tangible commodities. In some cases, Third World destinations are not very well known, and it requires elaborately contrived advertising to build up some consciousness of place.

The primacy of images is enhanced by the fact that the tourist product is more than just services; it is an *experience*. A holiday is not just a packaged dream but also a change of experience from the ordinary routine life to a sacred, 'high' existence (Graburn 1989). It is speculative of both the future and the future-past, of both anticipation and memory (and



the visual memory of photographs). We all travel with Lacan: anticipation becomes an element of the product itself.

Further, the tourists' dream vacation is shared by a million others with democratization and 'commoditization' (Greenwood 1977) walking arm in arm. The role of advertising to create demand for international travel in order to fill the post-war planes has succeeded despite economic recessions in the industrialized world. In the age of mechanical reproduction, many destinations are constructed to be as interchangeable as their brochures. This culminates in what the industry unabashedly calls 'Identikit' destinations - tourist ghettos such as Club Mediterranees and other, cheaper resorts - that have been built to guarantee the mass demand that is perpetuated by advertising (Holloway 1989:35). The reproducibility of the tourist experience is, in effect, its consumer guarantee; and Third World countries find themselves pictured formulaically in advertising in part as a reflection of a broader tourist 'bliss' formula of 'sun, sea, sand, sex, and servility'. Economic dependency on tourism and fierce competition within the industry combine to make it very risky to deviate from the formula. As Cynthia Enloe remarks, "to be a poor society in the late twentieth century is to be 'unspoilt'" (Enloe 1989:31)

The tourist product is a 'positional' good; aspects of it are either scarce or subject to congestion or crowding (Urry 1990:43). Hence, there is tremendous value placed upon the "unspoilt" - a word that appears in almost all brochures and advertising for Third World destinations. Urry traces the genesis of this quest for the unspoilt in the rise of what he calls the 'romantic gaze' (1990: 45-47). The romantic gaze - as opposed to the collective gaze - seeks pleasure and, more importantly, authenticity through the solitary 'speculation' of unmarred sights. 'Firsts' become important: the first tourist to go to this destination, see this tribe, walk on this beach, experience this panorama. Part of what makes tourism positional is that the romantic gaze tends to usher in the collective gaze and 'spoil' it; the romantics are the pioneers

of mass tourism before mass migration. In the words of Turner and Ash, there is a 'pleasure periphery': new places give pleasure for their unspoilt beauty and novelty, which then brings more people there causing congestion, which in turn acts as a stimulus for the romantic gaze to leave the well-tried locale in favour of virgin sights (Turner and Ash 1975). It is not hard to discern a form of neo-colonialism in this expansionary pattern, though Nash (1996:85) warns us that we need to look into "other aspects of this contact" as well.

The primacy of the virginal helps to explain the profusion of environmental imagery and the rhetoric of isolation in Third World tourist advertising. Almost every Third World destination includes some isolated beaches having "uninterrupted, brilliant white sand" and "lush green vegetation". An immense resort becomes "an isolated location", "delightfully secluded", "unspoilt", "unsophisticated", "a perfect retreat" (Turner and Ash 1975:24). And a potential native is 'prehistoric', 'primitive', and 'untouched' (Bruner 1991:239).

There is also an implicit class character to the romantic gaze, with the prevalence of the romantic desire for positional goods residing largely among the middle and upper classes (Urry 1990:47). Thurot and Thurot discuss the trickle-down effects of tourist locales:

All destinations or all models of touristic consumption associated with the idea of belonging to a specific social stratum must in turn infiltrate the next lower stratum, while those at the top have to process the renewal of the "signs" in order to maintain social distance between the classes (Thurot and Thurot 1983:180).

They argue that this renewal of the signs of social differentiation is represented by the 'aristocratic' lifestyle in tourist advertising - the depiction of a 'jet set' and their accouterments of cruises, tennis, cocktail parties, casinos, being served, and so on.



Advertising of the 'aristocratic' is of course not targeted toward the aristocracy; it is aimed at the upper middle class: the collective gaze is attracted by the romantic gaze. Thurot and Thurot identify four ideological models that appear in tourist advertising - traditional (aristocratic), clerical/executive, youth, and the 'intellectual class' - that all depend in part on the playing off of tensions between the romantic and collective gazes.

Another aspect of the tourist product that enhances the role of advertising is highlighted by both Truong and Jost Krippendorf (Truong 1990:124-25, Krippendorf 1984:22-24). They argue that the tourist market is essentially a 'symbiotic market' that brings together factors that are normally associated with the home (food, accommodation, rest), and which become tourist attractions only when processed into goods. Thus advertising functions symbiotically in its mediation and ideological transformation of household-related services into tourist experiences. "In this connection, the significance of the ideological constructs of the advertising industry cannot be separated from tourism itself" (Truong 1990:125).

Tourism becomes tautological semiology with holiday areas confirming the images, dreams and pictures that are mainly shaped by tourist advertising. This provides insight into the phenomena of local cultures adapting to tourists' preconceived images in what Dean MacCannell has called 'staged authenticity': heritage is constructed, tribal dances that never occurred become traditions, gentrified seafronts are artificially restored to squalor (MacCannell 1976: ch.v). Now we are traveling with Baudrillard in hyperreality, witnessing the "imperialism" of the tourist operators: those "present-day simulators (who) try to make the real, coincide with their simulation models" (Baudrillard 1981:2). In his book on the image, Daniel Boorstin describes both tourism and advertising as 'pseudo-events' (1987). Both function as 'self-fulfilling prophecies': just as "the tourist's appetite for strangeness ... seems best satisfied when the pictures in his

(sic) own mind are verified in some far country", so too is the 'novelty' of the advertisement merely "the appeal of the contrived" (Boorstin 1987: 109,224).

John Berger also describes advertising as a kind of 'pseudo-event', but gives it a somewhat more pernicious character than Boorstin. Publicity is essentially *eventless*. For publicity all real events are exceptional and happen only to strangers... Publicity, situated in a future continually deferred, excludes the present and so eliminates all becoming, all development. Experience is impossible within it. All that happens, happens outside it (Berger 1972: 153).

Publicity's distinct 'way of seeing' the world, coupled with its enormous influence within capitalist culture, "marks what is happening in the rest of the world" (Berger 1972:149). Thus to refer back to Baudrillard's vocabulary, the primacy of 'simulation models' in Third World tourism relates not only to the mass reproduction of tourist 'pseudo-events', but also to the interests of tour operators to conceal the 'real'; their interests in both simulation and dissimulation. Although tourism can be organized around negative sentiments (e.g., trips to concentration camps), it is generally marketed with the characteristic 'euphoria' of advertising images (Barthes 1990: 33). When people's leisure is at stake poverty is not a strong selling point. The creation of 'environmental bubbles' is essential in order to prevent tourists from minding the gap between advertising images/rhetoric and the unesthetic realities of Third World poverty. The ambiguous nature of advertising's symbolic power is foregrounded by the nature of the tourist product: "promoting a society, especially a developing one, is not the same as marketing soap, no matter how commoditized travel has become" (Go 1989: 175).

#### IV

No matter how commoditized or reproducible the tourist product has become, homogeneous advertising methods



have serious strategic limitations for successful marketing. In a competitive market it is not enough to be an easily interchangeable warm place, one must promote a distinct image in order to "ensure a product with a differential, competitive edge" (Go 1989:177). This involves Third World countries promoting not only their distinct natural assets (e.g., a Kenyan safari) but especially cultural assets like architecture, folklore, arts and crafts. The tourist advertisement thus shares with other types of advertising - and the tourist experience generally - a propensity for things novel: new places, new sights, new cultures, culminating in a new and improved self.

However, too much novelty is not the answer: a little 'difference' can be quaintly aestheticised; too much can be threatening. Many advertisements thus simultaneously present novelty while attempting to assuage the tourist's preoccupation with personal safety and creature comforts. Hence the average Third World destination appears to be "a land of contrasts", embodying both the thrill of the exotic and the comforts of home-genity.

The tension between the strange and the familiar in the tourist advertisement is characteristic of the element of contradiction latent in touristic desire. One aspect of this relates to the previous discussion of tourism as a 'symbiotic market' - that tourism involves household-goods becoming commodified. The tension here is between the personal and the professional: the tourist's desire for a commercial 'home away from home' leads, for example, to the 'emotional work' of the attendant who must smile, pamper, and exchange pleasantries while serving food and drink. Another relates to the tension between the romantic and collective gaze: Third World tourist sites are advertised as simultaneously "unspoilt" and yet with all the amenities. Any potential contradiction between tourism development and its corrosive self-destruction through growth - the way in which tourism destroys tourism - slickly elided. As a development strategy, tourism exemplifies much that is problematical in the



philosophy of 'sustainable development': tourist advertising, however, skillfully incorporates both poles of dichotomy, unproblematically highlighting both untouched nature and extensive facilities.

These tensions and ambiguities co-exist on the semantic field of the tourist advertisement because both the advertisement and the tourist product are geared toward satisfying a multitude of fantasies. The advertisement brings together the diverse elements of tourists' desire under the umbrella of a kind of overarching, diffuse mythology. Advertising in the tourist industry is a form of discourse. As David Uzzell points out, tourist advertisements function not through the superficial attributes portrayed in brochure photographs (sun, sea, sand), but by utilizing the discourse of advertising to provide the reader with a range of cultural tools with which fantasy, meaning and identity can be created and constructed (Uzzell 1984: 79-99). The tourist advertisement constitutes "a vast meta-system where values from different areas of our lives are made interchangeable" (Williamson 1984:85). Uzzell emphasizes that tourists are not motivated by the specific qualities of the destination, "but rather the matching of a destination's major attributes to the tourist's psychological needs" (1984: 80). The repetitiveness of the imagery and messages of packaged holiday advertisements thus highlight the semiological 'code' by which our cultural system constructs escape and fantasy.

In addition to his general semiological approach, Uzzell brings to his analysis of tourist advertising two further elements from Roland Barthes: myth and photography. He underlines the manner in which both myth and photography involve a collusion of the natural and the cultural: how they both serve an ideological function of naturalization (Uzzell 1984: 87). This can operate at several levels in the tourist advertisement through what Barthes calls 'connotation procedures': from 'poses' that reinforce physical male power and women's subordination to the gaze, to the 'syntax' of a brochure whose composition can juxtapose the various images of tourists' desires (Barthes 1977: 87).



Partly because he is focussing upon the packaged holiday brochure generally and not specifically Third World advertisements, Uzzell ignores certain relevant supplements to the connotation procedures. For example, in his discussion of 'pose', he provides a strong analysis of the ritual subordination of Western women holiday-makers in the brochure photographs. However, he neglects the ubiquitous discourse of the exotic/erotic in the construction of the female Third World host. Similarly, the category of 'objects' - referring to the use of objects as colourful cultural backdrops - can be expanded to account for the use of cultural minorities such as the hill tribes of northern Thailand or the Masai of Kenya are put on exhibition to promote 'ethnic tourism' and come to represent a variety of things: authenticity, spirituality, nature, uncomplicated honesty.

## V

Uzzell's semiotic analysis of the discourse of advertising in the tourist brochure must be supplemented with an investigation into the discourse of the 'Other' —a dominant mode of understanding Third World cultures in the West, and prominent feature in the advertising of Third World destinations. MacCannell emphasizes that any accurate understanding of tourism must discuss the central role of "consciousness of otherness". He argues that it is largely responsible for the symbolic import of many destinations, noting that "original macrodifferentiations of the tourist world were labeled by outsiders - The Wild West, The Dark Continent, The Mysterious East" (MacCannell 1976:141). Uzzell's insight into the cultural narcissism of tourist advertising can be supplemented with an analysis of how self-discovery is linked to this search for an Absolute Other, and the structural context for interpreting this discourse. A contextualising of tourist advertising's discourse of the Other within the structural context of capitalist modernity may serve to historicise tourists' desire more effectively than Uzzell's analysis. These two unifying theoretical concepts of the

discourse of the Other and its relation to modernity demand further elaboration.

One of the most penetrating analyses of the discourse of the Other is Said's *Orientalism*. Said describes orientalism as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident'" (1978:2). It is sustained and reproduced by discourses about 'the Orient' which serve to reinforce the asymmetrical relationship of power, domination and complex hegemony between the West and the East. Orientalism is thus a discourse that aid the 'systematic discipline' by which European culture manages others politically, socially, militarily, and so on (Said 1978:3). It is a "Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1978: 3).

Said's work is particularly relevant to the manner in which the Third World 'destination' is constructed in tourist advertising. It highlights once again how it is the West that produces and controls most of the discourses about the Third World. It calls attention to the asymmetries of the international information order: the Third World has very little control over the information and images produced. Truong points out that the control of information and knowledge about the tourist market that has emerged as a consequence of economic integration has particularly important consequences for an 'experience good' like the tourism product because of the way in which intangible products are to a greater extent influenced by their advertising (1990: 198-99). Control over information promotes the "ontological and epistemological distinction" between the West and the Third World (in collusion with the economic distinction) and enhances the travel destination's status as a liminal zone. The West has effectively restructured the Third World as 'exotic', 'simple' and 'natural', as essentially 'Other'.

But 'Other' than what? What is this 'Same' that structures the discourse of the Other in Third World tourism? One



cannot ignore the enormous role that the structural context of an affluent capitalist modernity in the West plays in constructing the Third World Other of tourism. In this sense tourism is as much ideology as physical movement; it is a package of ideas not only about Others, but about industrial, bureaucratic life. Third World tourism represents for many an escape from modernity (Turner and Ash 1975:19).

Mass tourism is a product of a developed phase of capitalism. "It requires both large, claustrophobic cities and the means to escape from them"; "the urge to escape uniformity and complexity" (Turner and Ash 1975:21). The Third World has come to symbolize an uncorrupted anti-modernity, a Shakespearean 'Green World' whose 'innocence' may serve as the hope of cultural salvation. For moderns, reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere; in other periods and cultures. This explains the particular attraction to 'ethnic tourism' focussed on cultural minorities, "represented as an earlier stage of humanity, closer to Origins and Nature" (Rossell 1988:5).

Some of the insidious effects of this discourse can be seen by reversing the dictum "that to be poor society in the late twentieth century is to be 'unspoilt'". As John Sinclair puts it, the western counter-cultural identification is pernicious, "to the extent that this view romanticized wretchedness, conflated all non-Western cultures and patronized genuine Third World aspirations for material improvement" (Sinclair 1987: 158).

The discourses of the Other can amplify into particularly harmful effects for women and cultural minorities, groups that serve as archetypes of Difference. At the intersection of discourses concerning Third World societies and presumptions of masculinity and femininity, Third World women become the "quintessence of the exotic", "something to be experienced" (Enloe 1989: 28).

The discursive element of the Other in advertising legitimizes sexual availability while eroding moral boundaries.

This attitude is clearly manifest in the enormous international sex-tourism industry, which depends upon economically dependent women and men from affluent societies with visions of available and submissive women of colour in their heads (Enloe 1989:36). Many Asian airlines play up this stereotype of the exotic/erotic oriental woman in their advertising through the ubiquitous presence of the female flight attendant: "Singapore Girl. . . You're a great way to fly", Air Lanka: "When your business is business . . . our business is pleasure". Another advertisement—from a German travel company, Rosie Reisen, is a more explicit articulation:

Thailand is a world full of extremes and the possibilities are unlimited. Anything goes in this exotic country, especially when it comes to girls . . . (now) you can book a trip to Thailand with exotic pleasures included in the price (Enloe 1987: 37).

Sex tourism in the Third World can be seen in one light as a resistance to modernity. In this reading, the attenuation of male power in an urbanized modern world - and the destabilization of subjectivity in postmodernity - see their antithesis in the regressive, oppressive assertion of masculinity by the male sex-tourist. Tourist advertising strives by the very logic of its representation to overcome fragmentation. Its figuration - sunset/moon = romance, 'fun' = sex, exotic = erotic, woman = object = servile, cultural minority = nature - is a constant effort to naturalize sex and gender relations. This is in keeping with the earlier analysis of the naturalizing functions of both myth and photography.

Whether through the naturalizing of gender roles or the fantasy of the 'noble savage', there is a great deal of nostalgia motivating tourism. If 'the past is a foreign country', so too is 'a foreign country the past' in the tourists' imaginings (Urry 1990). Touristic nostalgia can be situated within modernity partly as a reaction against disintegrating social formations, partly as the 'alienated leisure' that accompanies



alienated labor, and partly as a function of defining oneself in the modern world: "the death of the social, the loss of the real, leads to a *nostalgia* for the real: a fascination with and desperate search for real people, real values, real sex" (Kroker 1991: 85). MacCannell relates this nostalgia to the developing world: "The deep structure of modernity is a totalizing idea, a modern mentality that sets modern society in opposition both to its own past and to those societies of the present that are premodern or un(der)developed" (MacCannell 1976: 7-8). MacCannell lucidly identifies how the cult of naturalism and the premodern is merely one of the "spoils" of victory:

Interestingly, the best indication of the final victory of modernity over other sociocultural arrangements is not the disappearance of the nonmodern world, but its artificial preservation and reconstruction in modern society (MacCannell 1976: 8).

This 'museumification' of the premodern is one of the tasks of the tourist advertising agency, which constructs a Third World even more 'primitive', 'exotic', and nonmodern than in life; "more smiling, more authentic, . . . like the faces in funeral parlors" (Baudrillard 1981:23). Tourist locations that - like Baudrillard's Tasaday Indians - die for having been discovered, are embalmed and preserved for the collective gaze of posterity through advertising photographs and 'staged authenticity'.

## VI

One of the tendencies in analyses of advertising is to problematically project the advertising message onto the consumer's subjectivity: in other words, to highlight the standpoint of the 'capitalist imaginary', the fantasy of the capitalist control of agency (Kellner 1989: 28). But this is clearly a fantasy, as frustrated marketing agents will admit. Hopefully, this essay will have pointed out some of the ways in which political, economic, and symbolic systems structure

the context of the tourist's gaze - at advertising and Third world 'sights' - without positing a transparent subject. The tourist subject is not passive: as Uzzell suggests, understanding the advertising message involves an active construction of meaning; an act of collusion with the 'tools' of the advertisement that inform the social differentiation of consumption. Identifying the symbolic nature of both consumption and advertising is only one part of the process: one must ask the question 'symbolic for whom and with what ends?' (Jhally 1990:6). The contextualising of the active power of symbolic 'tools' as discourse/practice helps to account for their functioning within modern subjects, their appropriation and production by the tourist industry, and their participation in the perpetuation of global inequalities between rich nations and poor nations.

In closing, it is interesting to speculate on the future of the Third World tourist advertisement. The short-term future of the tourist industry looks very bright from a *fin de millennium* perspective: it is currently the fastest growing industry worldwide, and is projected to be the world's largest industry in the twenty-first century. The economic integration of the tourist industry - particularly relevant to the omni-present multinationals in the Third World—is continuing to 'open up' more places for the tourist gaze. The market is becoming more segmented and individuated, reflecting the increasing diversity of consumer demand. But, as John Berger states, the world depicted in advertising is perhaps not so diverse:

The entire world becomes a setting for the fulfillment of publicity's promise of the good life. The world smiles at us. It offers itself to us. And because everywhere is imagined as offering itself to us, everywhere is more or less the same (1972: 149).

The equivalence of places as subjects of the tourist gaze and the general 'spectacleisation of place' are the setting for Urry's postmodern 'post-tourist'. One of the features of the post-tourist is that she does not have to leave her home



in order to see many of the typical objects of the tourist gaze: i.e., "with TV and video all sorts of places can be gazed upon, compared, contextualised and gazed upon again" (Urry 1990:100). More and more travel agencies are in fact using video technology in order to preview the sights and sounds and sites of destinations on their premises: a multimedia effort to reduce the risks and ambiguities of a 'speculative' investment. Perhaps it is not science fiction to imagine an ever increasing identification between tourist advertising and its product. In other words, perhaps the post-tourist will one day be able not only to see but experience many of the typical objects of the tourist gaze from her own house. The growing sophistication of holography and 'Virtual Reality' technology is enough to make one speculate its implications for not only the tourism industry, but also its potential effects on leisure more generally conceived.

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